

Krembil Neuroscience News

September Issue

Movement Disorders Clinic – Celebrating the DBS Journey

When William, Ian, Joan, Bonnie, Renne and Thomas decided to undergo Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) they were pinning their hopes on a little known surgery that involved implanting electrodes in their brain. But for them, ending the contorting, twisting postures caused by dystonia or the involuntary shaking of essential tremor and Parkinson's disease, compounded with the side effects of medication, was well worth the initial uncertainty. While not a cure, DBS virtually eliminates the symptoms associated with movement disorders.

"Before the surgery, I felt like a prisoner in my own home – but now I have my independence back and the best part was being able to return to the hockey rink to see my son play," said DBS patient Ian Pearson.



Dr. Elena Moro and Dr. Andres Lozano

On September 10th the Movement Disorders Clinic recognized some their first DBS patients, all of whom have helped pave the way for this treatment and have enabled doctors, scientists and surgeons at the Krembil Neuroscience Centre to become world leaders for DBS and apply this treatment to other conditions such as depression and obesity.

"We wanted to thank and honour our patients, who put their trust in our hands to help them improve their quality of life," said event organizer and neurologist Dr. Elena Moro. "For us this is like a family reunion and together we can share our experiences, lend support and give each other hope."

A little over a decade ago, doctors at TWH embarked on a new frontier of medicine known as Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS).

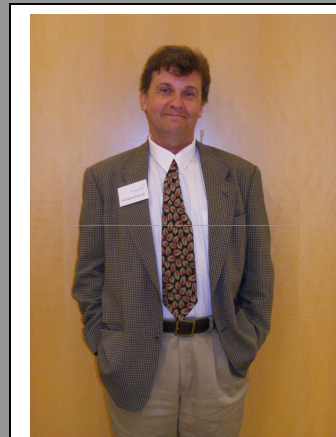


Dr. Elena Moro, Yu-Yan Poon, NP and TWH DBS Patients

The electrical stimulation is like a pacemaker for the brain that "pinpoints these areas of the brain that are malfunctioning and stops their abnormal behaviour," according to Dr. Andres Lozano, the first neurosurgeon in North America to perform DBS.

Patients of the Movement Disorders Clinic and their families gathered to listen to the emotional and inspiring stories of some of UHN's first DBS patients. Among the guest speakers was Dr. Ronald Tasker, a UHN neurosurgeon who helped pioneer the treatment.

Dr. Tony Lang, Director of the Movement Disorders Clinic sent a video message to patients highlighting some of UHN's research around Parkinson's and how drug therapies and surgery have helped battle the symptoms of Parkinson's.



William Orłowski, nationally renowned Canadian tap dancer and DBS patient



Dr. Andres Lozano performs deep brain stimulation surgery .

William Orłowski, a professional tap dancer shared his experience with being diagnosed with Dystonia, a type of movement disorder in 1999. "I had always lived my life as a dancer and then Dystonia became my new dancing partner," said Mr. Orłowski. "The only problem was, she wanted to lead."

For years, William tried to disguise the symptoms of his Dystonia in order to keep dancing on stage. But eventually he could not hide the pain associated with the disease. When William learned about DBS he opted for the surgery in 2005.

"I have learned to incorporate what has happened to me into my art," said Mr. Orłowski. "Today, I am teaching dance to help autistic children and now I look at it as a gift."

Medical-Surgical/Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit Team Charter

In September, the Medical-Surgical/Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit (MSNICU) introduced a Team Charter for staff, which articulates the behaviour that each individual should strive for and the commitment to providing the best possible patient care. The ultimate goal for staff is to make the MSNICU the best place to work.

The MSNICU is a unique environment within a hospital setting and the staff face many challenging situations on a daily basis. The Charter was developed to enhance respect and teamwork in order to build a high performance group. According to Dr. Peter Singer, putting together this kind of document meant staff had to take an honest look at behaviours that weren't working and to have a meaningful dialogue about how to improve the team.

The process of creating the Charter took place over many months and incorporated feedback from staff at all levels. The unit staff explained that creating the charter and having a living document enables self-reflection and self awareness around behaviours. "We are very proud of the final document," said Diana Harris, Nurse Manager, MSNICU. "The leadership team is also committed to living the Team Charter, to ensure that the principles we have developed are reinforced consistently at all levels."

The unit has also identified ways to measure how well staff are following the Team Charter and to ensure continuous feedback.

"I want to congratulate everyone who took part in this very important process and look forward to us all living the charter on a day to day basis," said Mary Ann Neary, Clinical Director of KNC and Critical Care.

Krembil Neuroscience Centre Strategic Planning

The ground work for developing a new strategic plan for the Krembil Neuroscience Centre is underway. Senior leadership at TWH has been working with staff throughout the centre to establish a roadmap that will guide our decisions and work over the coming years.

Our goal is to reaffirm our vision and develop a unifying mission that will enhance our world-class treatment and innovations, as well as grow our international reputation for excellence in neuroscience care, teaching and research.

As part of this process, KNP has engaged Corpus Sanchez International Consultancy to conduct broad consultations through a series of interviews with key stakeholders to identify and gain consensus on emerging strategic directions. As part of this process, there will also be site visits by external reviewers.

Many interviews have taken place and we are on track to bring together all of the information given by staff and stakeholders at the strategic planning retreat in November.

We look forward to presenting the new plan and building on the tremendous successes that have been achieved at the Krembil Neuroscience Centre.



Members of the MSNICU Team and UHN Senior Leadership gather around the Team Charter

Awards

Congratulations to Dr. Andres Lozano who was recently elected as a fellow to the Royal Society of Canada. Founded in 1882, the Royal Society of Canada is considered one of the country's oldest and most prestigious scholarly organizations. Scholars are selected for the honour by their peers and are those the society believes have had a profound impact on sciences, arts and humanities in Canada.

KNC in the News

[Globe and Mail](#) – Dr. Michael Tymianski's study on preventing cell death in the brain published in Nature Neuroscience

[Globe and Mail](#) – Dr. Andres Lozano speaks about Parkinson's disease and the UHN/Michael J. Fox Foundation event

Upcoming Conferences

The 8th Annual Tator-Turnbull Lectureship Series in Spinal Cord Injury
October 2, 2009
11:00am – 5:00pm
The Colony Grande Ballroom,
Chestnut Residence – U of T
89 Chestnut Street, Toronto

The Toronto West Stroke Network, Ontario Stroke System, presents an Educational Conference:
Collaborating in Stroke Care: Building Best Practices in Stroke Care for Nurses
Monday November 2, 2009
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Toronto Western Hospital



Krembil
Neuroscience
Symposium

Back to the Bedside
November 27, 2009
Chestnut Residence – U of T
89 Chestnut Street, Toronto