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Study to evaluate services for kids with special health needs

Are Hoosier children with special medical needs receiving timely and quality care from the state? That is the key question researchers hope to answer in a study at Indiana University School of Medicine.

Nancy L. Swigonski, MD, MPH, is principal investigator of a \$1.18 million private and federally study that will examine the impact of Indiana's Children's Health Insurance Program on the outcomes of the children it serves.

"These are children who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally," she says.

Between 12 percent to 16 percent of Hoosier children are said to have a variety of health care, social, emotional and psychological needs. Their conditions vary in severity and the amount of health care needed.

"Behavior problems, learning disabilities, asthma and premature birth are some of the more common conditions," says Dr. Swigonski, "but also included are children with Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy and childhood cancers."

Early next January, the State of Indiana will enroll children in the second phase of a CHIP program that covers children without health insurance whose families meet income eligibility requirements. For example, a family of four with an annual income less than \$33,400 may qualify for CHIP coverage

"Although this is a federally funded project, we will work close with the state CHIP and Medicaid offices to obtain and provide the most timely and useful information to promote the health and care of all

children in Indiana," says Dr. Swigonski.

Lisa E. Harris, MD, an investigator with the IUSM-based Regenstrief Institute, will look at patient satisfaction, and Debbie Freund, P.D, formerly of IU and now at Syracuse University, will evaluate health care costs. Donna Gore Olsen of The Indiana Parent Information Network will provide information and help in understanding the views of families of children with special health-care needs.

The study is funded by the U.S. Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration.

IU now on Web page for clinical trial inquiries

Clinical trials at IU now have a presence on CenterWatch, a clinical trials on-line listing service for potential study volunteers seeking information on clinical trials and for pharmaceutical companies seeking sites for trials. The Internet address is <http://www.CenterWatch.com> and the address for IU's profile is <http://222.CenterWatch.com/pro450.htm>.

The CenterWatch Web site receives more than 150,000 hits a month. It is a free service to potential study volunteers, who can use the site's search engine to more efficiently locate information of interest.

The site now includes an IU profile page for sponsors, created by the Outpatient Clinical Research Facility and the Clinical Trials Program. The profile provides pharmaceutical sponsors a glimpse of IU and a link to the CTP web page and is a "teaser" for sponsors to seek additional information about our medical center and the clinical research that is conducted here. The goal, of course, is to encourage selection of IUMC as a study center.

IU investigators can utilize the service to advertise clinical trials. For additional information on the process, contact Tony Antonopoulos at 278-2865 or Marta Sears 274-3974.

Targeting Gun Violence

IUSM Department of Pediatrics and Riley Hospital for Children are taking aim to reduce firearm deaths and injuries in Indiana. A \$500,000 grant from The Joyce Foundation, a Chicago-based philanthropy, will create the Indiana Partnership to Prevent Firearm Violence.

The project seeks to bring together various departments and programs at IUSM and Riley Hospital, civic

and government organizations from around the state, says Marilyn Bull, MD, who spearheaded formation of the partnership.

Patricia Lao was appointed director of the partnership in October. In that role, she will oversee public education and advocacy training workshops and will help develop a statewide firearm injury surveillance database to track the health, psychological and sociological conditions of firearm victims and their families.

John May, MD, Midwest regional medical director of Prison Health Services Inc., a private firm providing medical care to Indiana prison inmates, is working with Dr. Bull on the project.

December seminar speakers announced

Four speakers are scheduled for the December Combined Seminar Series. The presentations are from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the IU Cancer Research Institute auditorium.

Dec. 1 -- Ahmad Safa, PhD, professor of pharmacology and toxicology, IUSM, "Drug Resistance in Cancer: A Puzzle with Many Pieces."

Dec. 7 (Special date) -- Tim Huang, PhD, Department of Pathology & Anatomic Sciences and laboratory director of cytogenetics, Ellis Fischel Cancer Center University of Missouri Health Sciences Center, "Epigenetic Alterations in Cancer."

Dec. 15 -- Thomas Hamilton, PhD, Department of Medical Oncology, Fox Chase Cancer Center, topic to be announced.

Dec. 22 -- James Campbell, PhD, Stanford University, "Chemokine/Receptor Pairs in Tissue-Specific Lymphocyte Homing and T-Cell Development."

Dec. 29 -- no seminar

Briefs

Ficklin fete

Fred Ficklin, EdD, is retiring as assistant dean of medical student academic affairs and associate professor of medical student academic affairs, effect Dec. 15. He has worked at IUSM since September 1976 and was employed at IU-Bloomington for 10 years before joining the medical school dean's office.

A party in his honor will be from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 15, in the President's Room at University Place Hotel. Robert Holden, MD, will make a presentation at 3:30 p.m. Robert Holden, MD, will present dean's presentation.

RSVPs are requested by Wednesday, Dec. 8, to 274-8157.

Wigand to speak

Tobacco industry whistleblower Jeffrey Wigand will speak from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2, at the Ruth Lilly Health Education Center.

Wigand is the top-ranking tobacco industry executive who gained national prominence when he came forward with a tale of industry-wide disregard for public health in an interview with 60 Minutes.

Attendance is free, but donations will be accepted to fund tobacco control programming for children. Seating is limited to 500 people. To make reservations, call 924-0904; fax your information to 924-0233; or e-mail the center at hec@healtheducationcenter.org. Your name, address and phone number are needed for reservations.

Beat the holiday rush -- send your Scope stories today

Only one more issue of Scope will be published in 1999. That issue will hit campus mailboxes Dec. 13. Items about December or January events should be submitted no later than noon Dec. 3.

There are three easy ways to submit story ideas or information to SCOPE:

- -- fax the information to 278-3502;
 - -- e-mail the information to mhardin@iupui.edu;
 - -- or mail the information to Mary Hardin, LO 401, IUPUI.
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<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>
