

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF McLAREN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

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Dr. Patrick Atkinson

McLaren Physician Teams with Kettering Professor on Full-body Cast Crash Testing for Children

Children with medical conditions requiring full-body casting present parents with potentially dangerous transportation options. Researchers are working on a “cure” for the problem.

Dr. Patrick Atkinson, associate professor of Mechanical Engineering at Kettering University, and Julie Zielinski, M.D., M.S., orthopedic surgery resident at McLaren Regional Medical Center, are researching the safest way to transport children immobilized in full-body casts.

Atkinson and Zielinski were motivated to study this issue after both heard anecdotal information about how parents dealt with the problem of transporting children after orthopedic procedures to correct hip displacement, broken limbs and other conditions related to the lower extremities.

“It makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to put a child in a car seat when they are in a full body cast,” said Atkinson. “Some parents ride home with the child in the arms of one of the parents or they lay the child in the back seat and use the adult seat belts to hold the child in case of accident. Others try to get the child in the car seat in ways it wasn’t designed to be used.”

Atkinson noted that parents are already apprehensive about their child’s welfare because of the casting and/or surgery.

“This transportation problem just adds to their stress,” he said, noting that this situation can last between four weeks to six months, depending on the nature of the orthopedic condition, rate of healing and the number of doctor’s visits required.

“We are testing all the scenarios in the Kettering Crash Safety Center,” Atkinson said. “We are using 20 different crash tests including front and side impact and varying sizes and models of car seats.”

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Dr. Julie Zielinski, orthopedic surgery resident at McLaren Regional Medical Center, cuts the cast off a crash test dummy after a side impact crash test while Kettering student Kevin Xie, a junior from Sterling Heights, wipes off the blue chalk.

Full-body Cast Crash Testing *Continued from page 1*

He noted the testing is currently one-of-a kind. Similar testing was done in the 1980s, but was conducted using dolls instead of crash dummies. Atkinson and Zielinski put full body casts on infant and child-sized crash test dummies that are equipped with diagnostic instrumentation that indicates potential and probable injuries.

Approximately 2,000 children per year in the U.S. are immobilized in full-body casts. This medical procedure is commonly used because “you can’t tell a child not to be weight bearing on a limb,” said Zielinski. “It’s better for their recovery if they are put in a cast from chest to toes to keep them off the limb and to promote healing.”

Atkinson noted the Hippo car seat by Britax is designed for a child in a full body cast. He said the seat is not widely publicized so most parents don’t know to ask for it, and many hospitals don’t know it exists. Additionally, the price tag is a healthy \$495, beyond some parent’s financial reach.

Based on initial observations from the crash testing, Atkinson stressed the long term solution centers on education. This includes educating parents on available resources, or at minimum how to correctly utilize their existing car seat. It also involves educating doctors on the potential of modifying the cast position at the time the cast is put on and asking hospital personnel to give parents discharge instructions for transportation.

Initial findings are in keeping with car seat use in general – it is better to use a car seat than not.

“How you transport your child in a cast does matter,” said Atkinson. “We’re finding the probability of injury is directly related to how you fasten your child in a car. We saw drastically different levels of injury based on how we restrained the child dummy.”

The initial crash test showed there is less injury if the child is in a car seat and more injury if parents just use vehicle seat belts. And even though vehicle seat belts are not as good as a car seat, it is better to use them than for a parent to hold a child on their lap.

One issue that Atkinson and Zielinski noted are potential breathing difficulties a child in a full body cast might experience while in a car seat.

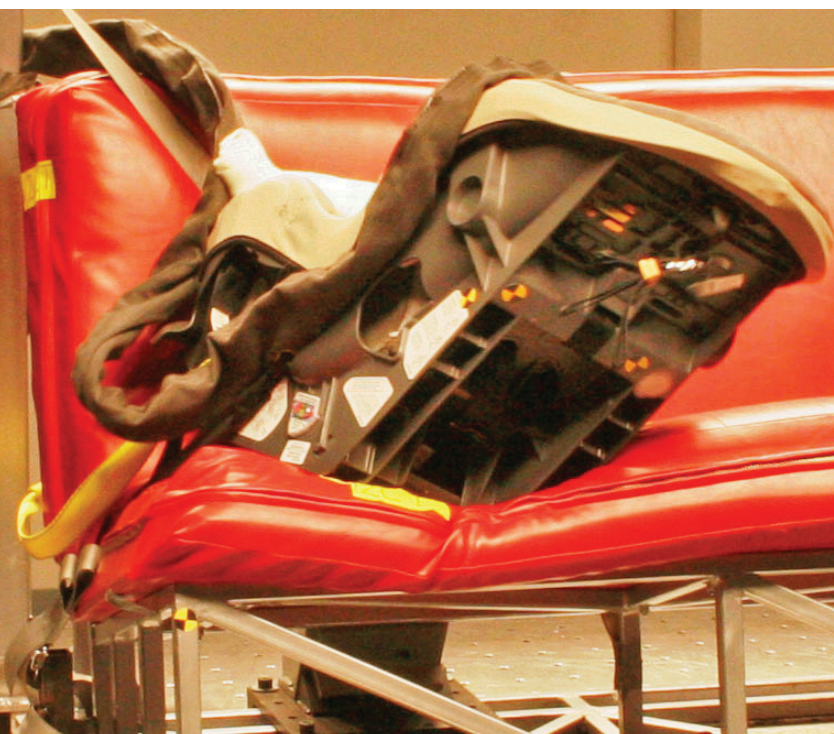
“Our recommendation would be that an adult ride in the back seat with the child to monitor breathing during transportation,” Atkinson noted. Upon completion of testing, Atkinson and Zielinski will publish their data worldwide.

Zielinski originally earned an undergraduate degree in Bio-mechanical Engineering and a master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering prior to attending medical school. Her work with Atkinson is one rotation of her orthopedic surgical residency through McLaren Regional Medical Center. ■



Ready to ride, the crash test dummy representing a nine-month-old, is casted and secured in the car seat. The blue chalk on the face is to determine head movement during the crash event.

Photo: Kettering Communications.



Caught at the moment of “impact,” the force of the side impact crash event is evident in how far to the right the car seat moves and the pressure it exerts on the seat on which it is mounted.

Photo: Kettering Communications.



Red Rules! Employees Support Go Red for Women Day

Members of McLaren's stroke committee did their part to promote heart health in February, which is designated as heart month. At the beginning of the month, the committee put together a display and educational materials that was featured in the lobby. On February 2 the committee invited McLaren employees to wear red for the American Heart Association's "Go Red for Women" day. Participants met at the escalators for a group photo. ABC 12 came out to cover McLaren's "Go Red" effort and interview Carol Higgins, Critical Care Nurse Specialist, and heart attack survivor Judy Carrier of MRMC's Communications Department. The committee also wrote informational articles that ran in Update throughout February. Thanks go out to the committee for their awareness efforts and everyone who wore red to remind all of us that heart disease is the number one killer of both men and women in the United States. ■



Tom Donaldson, Vice President of the McLaren Foundation, poses with a member of Chezzam whose wardrobe reflects the evenings theme of "The Year of Good Fortune."

Club 401: Year of Good Fortune

McLaren Regional Medical Center's annual Club 401 fundraiser lived up to its billing as an evening of fun and fundraising. The event drew more than 300 participants and generated nearly \$60,000 for the Child Evaluation Clinic housed at McLaren's Family Practice Center.

For the past 15 years, Club 401 has been the sole source of funding for operations at the Child Evaluation Clinic, which provides medical and psychosocial evaluations of children who are suspected victims of sexual abuse. McLaren physicians Edwin Gullekson, M.D., medical director of the Child Evaluation Clinic, and Mischa Pollard, M.D., are specially trained to perform complete physical examinations of children from infancy through age 18 who are potential victims of sexual abuse. Other staff at the Clinic include specially-trained nurses, social workers and support staff.

The Child Evaluation Clinic at McLaren is one of only five such clinics in the state and serves a multi-county region. More than 140 children are seen at the clinic each year, and this number continues to grow. According to a recent Priority Children Report, the rate of confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect in Genesee County is 19.5 per 1,000 children. This is almost twice that of the State of Michigan

as a whole. Experts associated with the investigative process indicate the number of cases reported is just the tip of the iceberg.

The Child Evaluation Clinic is one aspect of a communitywide collaborative to address the issue of child abuse and neglect. Suspected cases are first reported to the Department of Human Services or local police departments. These entities coordinate an interview with the suspected victim at the Child Advocacy Center of Genesee County. There, a specially trained forensic interviewer sits down with the child in a comfortable, child-friendly room. In a separate room at the Center, a member of law enforcement, the Department of Human Services, the Prosecutor's office, and mental health services each watches and listens as the interview takes place. Once complete, the team discusses appropriate next steps, including potential referral to the Child Evaluation Clinic at the McLaren Family Practice Center.

The medical evaluation performed at the Child Evaluation Clinic is vital in the process. Physical evidence obtained at the clinic helps the prosecutor's office prove beyond a reasonable doubt that sexual abuse occurred. A lack of physical evidence can also clear someone who is being wrongly accused.

(Below) The 2007 theme for Club 401 was "The Year of Good Fortune." Entertainment was provided by Chezzam.





Club 401 attendees enjoy the singers and dancers of Chezzam out on the dance floor.

Club 401: Year of Good Fortune *Continued from Pg. 4*

Inability to pay for the services of the clinic is never an issue. Services are free to all who need them, regardless of their ability to pay. The Child Evaluation Clinic is a vital community resource which depends on financial support generated through McLaren's annual Club 401 fundraiser.

Proceeds from Club 401 fund all clinic operations as well as other child advocacy needs. Recent allocations have funded training in forensic interviewing techniques for law enforcement and Child Advocacy Center staff as well as a video monitoring system to facilitate the forensic interview process. Proceeds have also funded educational and awareness sessions for educators throughout Genesee County.

"Thank you to everyone who supported Club 401, either through attendance, sponsorship, auction donations or other means," noted Laurie Prochazka, administrative coordinator for the event. "These generous donations truly make a difference in the lives of these children and families who come to the Clinic for support and services."

Committee members include: Nanette Beer, chairperson, Beth Griffin, Patti Kooy, Kristen Skivington, Deb Pascoe, Joy Martinbianco, Lori Stauffacher, Shamiah Specht, Sandra Winn and Barbara Worrell. ■

(Right) McLaren Regional Medical Center's Chairman of the Board, Kristen Skivington, and her husband Jim light up the dance floor.

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Laurie Prochazka



Surgeon Shares Talents to Serve Others

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” – Winston Churchill

It may not be your typical family vacation, but for David Fernandez, M.D., and his family, a medical mission trip to the Dominican Republic proved to be an enriching experience that has strengthened their family and their faith.

Dr. Fernandez, an orthopedic surgeon with Family Orthopedic Associates in Flint, has made the trips an annual tradition for his wife and two teenage sons. In January of this year, they returned from their third mission trip, bringing back with them souvenirs, new friendships and an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the opportunity to serve others.

Over three years ago, Dr. Fernandez and his sons attended a weekend event at Camp AuSable in Grayling. Here, representatives spoke about Teen Mission Impact trips through the Pathfinder Organization. Pathfinders is a world-wide organization sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Teen Mission Impact trips are special events offered to provide teens an opportunity to provide direct patient care, under the guidance of medical professionals, and learn the rewards of helping others. Dr. Fernandez’s eldest son David, then 13 years old, was moved by the presentation and wanted to go. Dr. Fernandez and his wife, Liesbeth, supported his choice and accompanied him on their first trip in 2004. Both Dr. Fernandez and his wife had valuable talents to offer to the mission. Dr. Fernandez and his wife, a registered dietician, were perfectly suited to care for some of the medical needs of the patients they encountered. Their fluency in speaking Spanish was also a great asset. Dr. Fernandez was born in Puerto Rico and educated in the United States. His wife was born in Peru. They raised their two sons to be familiar with the Spanish language.

On the most recent trip to the Dominican Republic, the Fernandez family was part of a 36-member

medical mission. The group held 10 free clinics during their stay and treated over 4,400 people. Fernandez’s two sons David, 16, and Darren, 15, were frequently called to translate between patients and staff members.

“The environment and the responsibilities all of the teens encountered helped them grow,” said Dr. Fernandez. “Being far from home in rustic living conditions and doing things that are outside of their comfort zone made the teens learn more about themselves. There is a lot of self discovery and spiritual growth that occurs.”

Mrs. Fernandez provided nutritional counseling to anyone with special dietary needs such as diabetics and pregnant mothers. Dr. Fernandez was able to provide general medical care as well as perform orthopedic surgical procedures using local anesthetic. He noted the conditions were less than ideal for performing surgery. The clinics were set up in any building available in the various villages. On one occasion, a four year-old boy with a sixth finger on his right hand was brought into the church where the clinic was held. Since there was no electric lighting available, Dr. Fernandez removed the extra digit by flashlight for sufficient lighting.

Both the clinic and the lodging accommodations were rustic by American standards. To protect themselves against insect bites, illness and other threats, Fernandez and his family slept in mosquito tents, drank only bottled water and took preventative medicine.

The entire group also toured the sights and sampled the culture of the Dominican Republic during their stay. Aside from swimming in the ocean and visiting national landmarks, the group was invited to join several church and government officials participating in the inauguration of the newly built Adventist hospital, Vista Del Jardin.



David Fernandez, M.D

“The trips have been very fulfilling for me personally,” said Dr. Fernandez. “There are two goals to the mission trips: providing free medical care to those who need it, and instilling in the participants the sense of duty to serve others. I feel that in both respects the trip was a success.” ■

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David Fernandez, M.D

Community Benefit Corner

Priority Children

McLaren Regional Medical Center was a key sponsor of the Children's Champion Award Breakfast, presented by Priority Children on February 9. Priority Children began giving out its Children's Champion Awards in 1996 to recognize shining examples of those in the community doing good things for children. The awards are designed to recognize and thank individuals, businesses and organizations for their tremendous contributions toward improving the lives of children. Laurie Prochazka, marketing/communications director at McLaren, presented two awards at the event, which drew more than 700 people from area schools, businesses and organizations. Representing McLaren at the breakfast were Roxanne Caine, David Desimone, Dave Haddon, Barbara Blanton., Rande Lake and Laurie Prochazka.

United Way

McLaren Regional Medical Center once again topped all other area hospitals in contributing to the United Way of Genesee County. McLaren topped its goal of \$63,000 by raising \$64,273 in this year's campaign. The hospital's contribution, along with that of other organizations and individuals throughout Genesee County, was recognized at a recent Campaign Celebration Dinner at the IMA Brookwood. Attending on behalf of McLaren were John Tracy, Barbara Worrell, Pam Tracy and Laurie Prochazka. McLaren is also a platinum sponsor of the United Way of Genesee County.

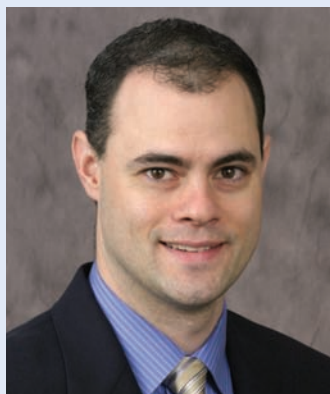
Shoes That Fit

The results are in. Donations for the Shoes That Fit program from all Flint hospitals combined to achieve impressive totals. A total of 1,049 pairs of shoes, 9 boots, and 9,690 socks were distributed. With additional dollars donated another 85 pairs of shoes were purchased for a total of 1,134. Also, 3,290 gloves, hats and scarves were distributed. Hospital employees donated \$805 in addition to the shoes purchased.

The Heart of a Woman all Ages and Stages

In an effort to increase awareness that heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States, McLaren held a heart program just for women called "The Heart of a Woman, all Ages and Stages," on Tuesday, February 13, at the Holiday Inn Gateway Centre. Free heart-related screenings were available, as well as an educational program that covered risk factors and guidelines, nutrition, exercise, stress, and hormone replacement therapy options. The program speakers were then joined by an expert panel of physicians to take questions from the audience. Despite the cold, wind and slippery roads that Mother Nature brought that day, half of the 150 women who registered for the event managed to attend. Attendees received one-on-one attention during the screening process, extensive information during the program and question and answer session, as well as delectable food samples prepared by McLaren's Nutritional Services Department. A big thank you to everyone who participated, as well as Coldwater Creek for donating two shopping gift cards, and St. Jude Medical, Medtronic, Santa Fe Adventis, and Astellas for their sponsorships. ■

Welcome to the Medical Staff



Ronald Martin, D.P.M.

Ronald Martin, D.P.M., a board certified podiatrist, has joined the MRMC medical staff and the practice of podiatrists Scott Byron and Donald Lutz located at G-3302 Beecher Rd., Flint. Dr. Martin completed his residency at Southeast Michigan

Surgical Hospital in Warren. He received his medical degree from Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine in Chicago, Illinois.



Sabry Mansour, M.D.

Sabry Mansour, M.D., a board certified urologist, has joined the medical staff at McLaren Regional Medical Center. He is seeing patients at the McLaren Community Medical Center in Lapeer. Dr. Mansour completed his residency at the University of New

Mexico Medical Science Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He received his medical degree from Wayne State University in Detroit.



Donald H. Williams, M.D.

Donald H. Williams, M.D., a board certified psychiatrist, has joined the medical staff at McLaren Family Practice Residency as a faculty member. Dr. Williams completed his residency in the Department of Psychiatry at University of Illinois,

Research and Educational Hospitals in Chicago, Illinois. He received his medical degree from University of Illinois College of Medicine. ■



(Above) Disaster drill participants pictured above are reading over the disaster scenario. Many participants in McLaren's latest drill were taken out of their comfort zone and placed in unfamiliar roles.

Emergency Management Committee Conducts Disaster Drill

Learning how to handle potential crisis situations was a key goal of the recent Disaster Drill sponsored by the MRMC Emergency Management Committee. The drill's intent was to introduce the new HICS documents that will be used for such events from now on. Binders have been made that contain the new documents and other paperwork that will build a living document, capturing lessons learned and developing improvement plans for identified needs.

The scenario was to effectively and efficiently identify, triage, isolate, treat and track a surge of potentially infectious patients and staff, as well as manage the uninjured/asymptomatic

family members and media. Many people who attended were selected to fill roles that were not their area of expertise. It proved to be a good way to test the new books to determine if they were easy to follow regarding each person's focus and responsibilities.

The Emergency Management Committee thanks those who participated in the drill and provided feedback. An action plan has been put together to improve the binders and the Incident Command process before the next disaster drill. ■

New Board Chairperson Elected at MRMC



Kristen Skivington, Ph.D.

Kristen Skivington, Ph.D., was recently elected Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of McLaren Regional Medical Center (MRMC). She succeeds David Doherty, Ph.D., in this position.

Dr. Skivington has served as a member of the MRMC Board of Trustees since 1997 and most recently held the office of secretary from 2002-2006. She has served on the Executive Committee of the Board for the past five years and chaired the Finance Committee.

Dr. Skivington is Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement at the University of Michigan-Flint. Her community involvement includes 10 years as a member of the Board of Directors of the YWCA of Greater Flint, including two years as president.

Other members of the MRMC Board of Trustees who were recently elected as officers include: Sandra Applegate, Vice-Chairperson, and Ed Abbott, Secretary. ■

Connection

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McLAREN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

MISSION: McLaren Health Care Corporation, through its subsidiaries, will be Michigan's best value in healthcare as defined by quality outcomes and cost.

VISION: McLaren Regional Medical Center will be the recognized leader and preferred provider of primary and specialty healthcare services to the communities of mid-Michigan.

Visit our website and view Connection online: www.mclaren.org