Layton Center Joins with Intel and Other Partners on Major Technology & Aging Initiative

This fall, the Layton Center, in collaboration with its partners in the Oregon Center for Aging & Technology (ORCATECH), enrolled volunteers for the pilot phase of a major new study funded by the National Institute on Aging. This $7 million grant, the Bioengineering Research Partnership (BRP), will develop technologies that will help elders live independently. Through ORCATECH, the Layton Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Center is working closely with the OHSU Departments of Biomedical Engineering and Medical Informatics and Clinical Epidemiology, as well as industry partners Spry Learning and Intel Corp’s Digital Health Group. Portland-area retirement communities are important community partners, as recruitment efforts will focus on enrolling volunteers at several sites around the city.

Advancing knowledge through new methods of data collection

The BRP study will test in-home technologies, motion sensors placed in the home and computers, as means to detect changes in activity and memory. These innovative methods provide information on a continuous basis and thus, improve the ability to detect change in activity and memory functioning. The standard way of assessing patients is to see research subjects in the clinic once a year or perhaps every six months. At these visits, motor function - how quickly one moves over a certain distance - as well as memory is assessed. It takes a number of visits that span months or even years to collect enough information to make good comparisons from visit to visit.

More importantly, periodic visits do not capture the normal ups and downs that people experience every day. By collecting information every day about people’s activity in their

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To find out more about the research studies discussed in this newsletter or about other research and clinical trials at the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center, check our Web site (www.ohsu.edu/research/alzheimers) or call Joyce Lear at 503-494-7615.
Opportunity for persons with Mild Cognitive Impairment

The “Living Well with MCI” research project (eIRB# 2913) is designed to teach memory skills and compensation techniques for people with mild memory problems. Volunteers should either have a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or have experienced a decline in memory over the past year or two. People with an established diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease or other form of dementia are not eligible. Volunteers will be interviewed by telephone for eligibility. The interview will include information about age, education, health, and a short memory examination. Volunteers also need to have a study partner who participates by assisting the volunteer with skills and assigned home exercises. The project takes place in Multnomah Village, Portland.

Volunteers interested in participating in weekly meetings for the 10-week program beginning on January 23rd should call the Oregon Health & Science University’s researchers Diane Howiesion, Adrianna Seelye, or Luis Sauced at 503-494-7701 by January 10, 2007.

Opportunities for Oregon Residents

Alert! Oregon Prescription Drug Pooling Program (OPDP)
You may be eligible even if you are on Medicare

The cost of caring for someone with Alzheimer’s care can be substantial. One new program may help: You are eligible for the Oregon Prescription Drug Pooling program (OPDP) if:

1. You are an Oregon resident, and
2. You do not have prescription drug coverage.

Medicare Part D will not disqualify you from participating in this program. The OPDP discount card may give you a better discount than your Health Plan gives you when you are paying 100% of the drug cost. For example, when you are meeting a Plan’s deductible or during the “gap in coverage”. This gap --sometimes referred to as the “donut hole” --happens when an individual’s prescription drug expenses are between $2,250 and $5,100 in a given year and they are responsible for 100% of their drug costs.

For more information go to the Oregon Health Division website: http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/OPDP/index.html or call 1-888-411-OPDP (411-6737).

✓ CHECK-OFF for Alzheimer’s Research

Support Alzheimer’s research by making a donation through your Oregon tax form.

Oregon Partnership for Alzheimer’s Research (OPAR) promotes promising research on Alzheimer’s disease in Oregon.
For information about this program, contact Linda Boise (boisel@ohsu.edu) or 503-494-6370.

Save The Date!

Enriching the Moments – Caregiving at Its Best

For information: 800-733-0402
www.alzheimers-oregon.org
The ROAM model is an adaptation of the Assessing Care of the Vulnerable Elders (ACOVE-2) model developed at UCLA and RAND Health in Los Angeles. It uses a variety of methods to improve practice, including prompts in patients’ medical charts, specially designed forms to screen and diagnose dementia, patient/family activation and education, and decision support for the clinician. Dr. Linda Boise, principal investigator, will analyze the outcomes to find out if the intervention increases the number of diagnosed cases of dementia and referrals for community resources. She will also evaluate whether or not the model increases clinician confidence in diagnosing and managing dementia and will interview the participating clinicians to identify ways to improve the program.

We are excited that the ROAM study will be helpful to us by showing if a screening tool can quickly and accurately find dementia at an early stage, said Robbi Law, M.D., from Dunes Family Health Clinic, Reedsport, one of the seven clinics participating in the study.

“Identifying dementia early will be valuable to prevent basic risks for a patient’s safety, for instance, medication errors, or problems in remembering to make and keep follow up appointments. This will also encourage planning to avoid a crisis if a patient eventually cannot live independently, and to find resources to help patients cope with changes in their functioning.

“ORPRN is a terrific way to investigate this question by having rural clinicians doing the research in their own practices, where the results of the study will have direct impact, which is somewhat different from traditional academic research methods,” Law said.
Projects Funded by the Oregon Partnership for Alzheimer’s Research Tax Check-Off Program, 2006

Seven diverse research projects are underway with support from the Oregon Tax Check-off Alzheimer’s Research Fund. Created by the Oregon legislature in 1988, this fund supports research grants of up to $25,000 for clinical, biological, behavioral, or health systems research that will advance the understanding, treatment, and prevention of Alzheimer’s disease.

Two of the projects funded this year involve persons with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) though in very different ways. One study is a preliminary test of a training program to help people with mild cognitive impairment compensate for memory loss. The other is a nutrition-related study. Persons with MCI have a risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia, but they do not have memory deficits serious enough to affect their day-to-day activities.

The training program, called “Living Well with MCI”, is a series of class sessions that provide education about mild cognitive impairment, exercises to improve memory, and training in techniques such as tracking telephone messages and appointments to compensate for problems with memory.

The other study will develop a method to assess nutrient biomarkers in patients with mild cognitive impairment. This study is being conducted by Gene Bowman, ND, a fellow at the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center. The long-term goal is to test the hypothesis that dementia incidence may be reduced with dietary intervention. It is based on research that suggests that nutrients including antioxidants, omega 3 fatty acids, cholesterol, and B vitamins, play a role in the development of dementia.

The Oregon Partnership for Alzheimer’s Research (OPAR) is a community program of the Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center. Representatives from Portland area hospitals, Oregon universities, and Alzheimer’s service organizations serve on the OPAR advisory committee. OPAR’s mission is to foster the development of promising research on Alzheimer’s disease in Oregon. Priority for the Oregon Tax Check-off Alzheimer’s Research Fund is given to investigators just entering the field of dementia research and to new or innovative projects. Special attention is given to projects that foster collaboration across disciplines or institutions. OPAR is receiving applications for its 2007 grant cycle between now and March 5, 2007. For information, contact Linda Boise, PhD, MPH, Education Core Director, Layton Aging & Alzheimer’s Disease Center at boisel@ohsu.edu or 503-494-6370.
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