

# St. Joseph diabetes program lauded

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) Education Recognition Certificate for a quality diabetes self-management program was recently awarded to St. Joseph Mercy Health System, Ann Arbor. ADA believes this program offers high-quality self-management education that is an essential component of effective diabetes treatment. The Association's Education Recognition Certificate assures that educational programs meet the National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education Programs. Programs applying for

recognition voluntarily submit to a rigorous review process by experts in the field of diabetes, who evaluate each program on its ability to provide patients with a comprehensive individualized education program. The St. Joseph Mercy Center for Diabetes at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital provides comprehensive, individualized diabetes education and management services in a collaborative relationship with patients' doctors. The program emphasizes the role of the patient in the health care process and empowers patients to make day-to-day decisions to

manage their diabetes. The program at SJMHS is accredited by the American Diabetes Association. According to the ADA, there are 17 million people in the United States who have diabetes. While an estimated 11.1 have been diagnosed, 5.9 million people are now aware that they have this disease. Many will first learn they have diabetes when they are treated for one of its life-threatening complications: heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, nerve disease and amputation. Diabetes is the fifth deadliest disease in the United States and has no cure.

## NEWSMAKERS

### Nursing appointment

The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) has selected Karen M. Adkins-Bley of Redford, a registered nurse for the Women's Birthing Center at the University of Michigan Hospitals in Ann Arbor, to serve on an advisory panel focused on nursing professional issues. As an organization of over 20,000 health care providers, AWHONN is dedicated to advancing women's and newborn's health. Advisory panel members will discuss and provide recommendations to AWHONN's Board of Directors on significant issues impacting the nursing profession, such as the nursing short-

age that is currently sweeping the U.S., and how it affects nurses and those they care for. The panel is comprised of health care experts from across the U.S. "Karen M. Adkins-Bley is a nurse leader who brings a unique understanding of the complexity of the issues that nurses face in their professional lives on a daily basis. Her guidance and counsel will greatly benefit our organization and its members in the coming year," said Gail Kincaid, executive director of AWHONN. Adkins-Bley received a bachelor's in nursing from the Mercy College of Detroit, a master's from the Madonna College, and a law degree from the Detroit College of Law.

# University of Michigan study takes a closer look at polio's lifelong effects

Polio, a disease that has the potential to paralyze and even kill its victims, was once prevalent in the United States before a vaccine was made available to the public in 1955. And with no new cases of polio reported in the U.S. for more than 20 years, the only reminder of this past epidemic are its survivors - a group, like many others with disabilities, that is now living longer than ever before.

But despite the growth in this segment of this population, very little is still known about how the effects of aging - especially menopause - impacts polio survivors' quality of life.

Now researchers in the University of Michigan Health System's Rehabilitation Psychology and Neuropsychology Division of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation will take a closer look at the menopausal experience of women polio survivors, including an extensive study of aspects of both male and female survivors' current health.

The study, "Women with Polio: Menopause, Late Effects, Quality of Life, and Psychological Well Being," is funded through a \$25,000 award from the Gazette International Networking Institute's (GINI) Post-Poliomyelitis Research Grant. As its name suggests, the study will explore the relationships between menopause, late effects, hormone replacement therapy risks, life satisfaction and emotional distress in the overall quality of survivors' lives.

Past evidence has found that women with a history of polio may have a greater prevalence of late effect symptoms like pain, fatigue and weakness after the age of 50. However, it is not known whether or not those symptoms are influenced by menopause, says Claire Z.

Kalpajjian, project manager and co-investigator.

"For women survivors, developing pain and fatigue about 30 years after having polio typically coincides with menopause," she explains. "What we hope to uncover is the influence menopause, if there even is one, has on polio survivors' pre-existing conditions and whether pre-existing conditions such as fatigue and pain make the menopausal transition harder for some women."

To find out more, a group of 800 to 900 women with a history of polio, the majority of whom will be middle-aged, will be recruited from the International Polio Network. The network will also help recruit 800 to 900 men from the same age group with a history of polio. The balance of men and women subjects in this study is important since most polio studies tend to report on a greater number of females. Both groups will complete a mailed survey questionnaire.

For the menopause component of the study, the men will serve as the control group to allow researchers to compare the differences between men and women. This will show the impact, if any, that menopause has on female polio survivors.

"This comparison between genders will also allow for an in-depth exploration of differences between men and women in terms of late effects of polio and other health problems they may be experiencing. As we learn and understand more about how men and women polio survivors differ as they age, we'll be able to help identify the best treatment and health management approaches for both groups," says Kalpakjian.

To learn more about polio research and treatment at the U-M Health System, call (734) 936-7052.

### FACTS ABOUT POLIO

Polio is an orally contracted virus. Some cases do not cause serious illness, however other cases may lead to paralysis or even death.

In 1916, a polio epidemic began in the United States that killed 6,000 Americans and paralyzed 27,000 others annually. By the early 1950s, more than 20,000 cases of polio were reported each year. Once the polio vaccine became available to the public in 1955, the cases of the disease began to drop. By 1979, there were only 10 cases reported in the country. However, the disease is still common in other parts of the world.

Today, polio survivors are one of the largest disabilities groups in the U.S. A 1987 survey conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics found that 1.6 million Americans had contracted and survived polio. About 640,000 of those cases resulted in paralytic polio, which increased the risk for post-polio syndrome.

Post-polio syndrome occurs about 10 to 40 years after the initial onset of polio. It can cause fatigue, muscle weakness, joint pain and muscular atrophy. The severity of post-polio depends on how serious the polio attack was initially.

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