



Foundation Awards \$300,000 High-Impact Grant to Investigate Co-morbidities in Older Adults Living with Parkinson's Disease

ALEXANDRIA, VA, October 18, 2010--The Foundation for Physical Therapy is proud to announce that its largest funding opportunity since 2002, the \$300,000 Clagett Family Research Grant, has been awarded to Laurie King, PT, PhD, of Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU), for her project, "Effectiveness of Physical Therapy in Chronic Neurologic Disease; The Role of Co-morbidities and Delivery of Physical Therapy Services."

"The Foundation is excited to fund this two-year research grant focusing on older adults living with Parkinson's Disease and other co-morbidities associated with aging. We are confident that this study has the potential to produce clinically-relevant research that will improve the quality of life for many of today's patients," said Foundation Board of Trustees Chair William G. Boissonault, PT, DPT, DHSc, FAPTA, FAAOMPT.

The Clagett Family Research Grant was established by the Foundation to investigate exercise interventions for older adults living with multiple chronic conditions. The grant was made possible by the bequest of late couple Lansdale and Gladys Clagett, in gratitude for the physical therapy Lansdale received, enabling him to walk on his own again after living in a wheelchair for almost 30 years.

The purpose of King's project will be to investigate the most beneficial mode of exercise intervention: individual therapy in a clinical setting, a home exercise program, or a group class. For each group, she will characterize the impact of other common co-morbidities associated with both Parkinson's disease and aging on the success of the intervention.

"There is no surgery or medication currently available to help mobility, but exercise intervention has received an increase in recognition as an effective treatment for enhancing mobility. We want to determine if the delivery of the intervention affects outcomes in patients, and how co-morbidities play into these outcomes. Although there is a move to provide community, group and home exercise programs for elderly people with mobility disability, it is very important to determine when and if a group setting versus individual therapy is appropriate, given the complex nature and chronic disease. It's easier to focus on patients with only one chronic condition, but this study can apply to more general clinical settings rather than a specific population," said King.

King received her Physical Therapy training at Mayo Clinic in Rochester Minnesota and her PhD at Medical College of Virginia. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at OHSU, where she has served as a co-investigator on other grants under the mentorship of Dr. Fay Horak. The Clagett Family Research Grant will be her first grant where she serves as a Principal Investigator. The research project will also be conducted in collaboration with the Portland VA Medical Center in Portland, Oregon.

The Foundation for Physical Therapy was established in 1979 as a national, independent nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality and delivery of physical therapy care by providing support for scientifically-based and clinically-relevant physical therapy research and doctoral scholarships and fellowships.

Contributions to the Foundation for Physical Therapy are tax-deductible and can be made online at www.FoundationforPhysicalTherapy.org or sent to its headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. The mailing address is 1111 N Fairfax St, Alexandria, VA 22314. For more information, e-mail foundation@apta.org or call 800/875-1378.