Member Spotlight: Dr. Henry Walters

Dr. Henry Walters is the Chief of Department of Cardiovascular Surgery at the Children’s Hospital of Michigan and Professor of Surgery at Wayne State University School of Medicine. A graduate of Baylor College of Medicine, Dr. Walters completed his training from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and Cardiovascular surgical as well as research training from University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Walters is a senior CHSS member.

Your CHSS Data Center talked to Dr. Walters about his personal life and asked for thoughts on our research studies. Below is an excerpt:

Can you please tell us more about yourself and your family?

I enjoy living on a working sheep and hay farm with my family for the last 10 years. My wife, Katherine, does most of the farm work since I am at the hospital most of the time. In addition, my wife home-schooled both of our daughters from kindergarten through 12th grade. One daughter, Grace, is now an undergraduate at Wheaton College aspiring to become a nurse. My oldest daughter, Hannah, graduated from Wheaton College and is studying for a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology. Hannah, having worked with children affected by AIDS and having worked in our cardiac transplant program, hopes to eventually work with children affected by chronic diseases.

What encourages you to support the CHSS research efforts?

Katherine and I understand, from personal experience with three of our own children, the deep emotions and difficulties associated with congenital diseases. For years, the CHSS has performed the highest quality multi-institutional research on congenital heart disease. These studies of relatively rare congenital heart diseases are important because they include larger numbers of patients than can usually be enrolled in single-institution studies. I recommend supporting the work of the CHSS because vitally important advances in the clinical treatment of children with congenital heart diseases will come from their multi-institutional studies that are well designed and that use very sophisticated techniques of data analysis.

Work in Progress: Functional Health Status and Transition to Adult Care in the TGA Cohort

Since the annual meeting we have successfully assembled a working group for the IAA FHS and transition to adult care projects. With this analysis well under way, the next project for which we will be having a call for participation is the TGA FHS and transition to adult care projects. At this time, our dataset is closed and we have collected questionnaire data from just over 200 patients on these two topics. Both the analysis plan and some preliminary data from this study were reviewed at our January work weekend.

Some preliminary findings taken from the SF-36 questionnaire relate to self-reported general health in comparison to 1 year ago, and show that the majority of patients feel they are about the same compared to one year ago, with both atrial and arterial switches having similar results. In addition, when general health is assessed, without any reference to time, the majority of patients (atrial and arterial switch) feel that their health is very good with a larger proportion of patients with arterial switch reporting excellent health.

(Continued on Pg. 2)

Work Weekend Summary

At the recently concluded Winter Work Weekend (14-16 January, 2011), many existing as well as new CHSS member surgeons engaged in a highly productive discussion about various aspects of CHSS research. We have combined a summary of these discussions in a document and made it available to CHSS member surgeons. You can log-in through CTSNet or through the “CHSS Member Surgeons Only” area on our website. We hope you will find the summary useful and inviting to participate in the next work weekend.
Work in Progress: Functional Health Status and Transition in TGA cohort  
(Continued from Pg. 1)

Although these graphs simply represent the raw data, we look forward to delving further into this interesting analysis.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions about this exciting project, please send an email to Anusha Jegatheeswaran, our Kirklin/Ashburn research fellow, at anusha.jega@sickkids.ca.

Research Coordinators at Work Weekends

Your CHSS Data Center recently organized a successful work weekend at Toronto. We discussed important ideas, analyzed data and reviewed research proposals. While we hope to continue to follow up on our discussion, we take this opportunity to invite participation from research coordinators from all member institutions. Active participation and sustained input from research coordinators is crucial for success of CHSS studies. We would also like to increase our interaction with them to learn how we can improvise our data management and help them participate in more efficient fashion. Any member center wishing to send their research coordinators to the work weekend can contact us at chss.dc@sickkids.ca.

Thank you for your participation!

We take this opportunity to present our annual enrollment update in the year 2010. The graph below provides an overview of enrollment in all CHSS Studies that are actively enrolling patients. We received 200 patients in total from all participating CHSS member institutions. These studies include:

1. Tricuspid Atresia (TA)  
2. Pulmonary Conduit (PC)  
3. Critical Left Ventricular Outflow Tract Obstruction (LVOTO)  
4. Anomalous Aortic Origin of a Coronary Artery (AAOCA)

We have seen phenomenal success with AAOCA cohort this year with many new centers contributing their patients’ data. We are grateful to everyone involved in generating new knowledge through their active participation at these institutions.

Finally, we are always grateful to our patients and their parents for allowing us to use their data so that we may find better treatment options for other children like them. We hope you will continue to be with us and help us navigate the future course of Congenital Heart Disease treatments.

A Big Thank You to all the Donors!

The CHSS Data Center staff received a pleasant surprise towards the end of last year with a donation cheque from a patient’s family members. We are eternally grateful to our patients for the data they send to us every year in response to our follow up questions.

Congenital Heart Surgeons’ Society is a registered 501(c)(3) organization in the United States. In Canada, all the donations can be directed to SickKids Foundation, another charitable organization, with a note to direct the funds to the CHSS Data Center. We will issue tax receipts to all the donors. You can also make a donation online by visiting the secure websites below:

For donors from the United States:  
http://www.chssdc.org/donate

For donors from Canada/Pour les donateurs Canadiens:  
http://www.sickkidsfoundation.com/donate/

In general, how would you say your health is?

Annual Enrollment in CHSS Studies

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