

ECU PATHOLOGY

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Brody Patient Care Laboratories Accredited by CAP

Brody School of Medicine at ECU Patient Care Laboratories, Greenville, North Carolina, has been awarded an accreditation by the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation of the college of American Pathologists (CAP), based on the results of a recent on-site inspection.

Overall direction of the laboratories is provided by Peter J. Kragel, MD, who was advised of the accreditation and congratulated for the "excellence of the services being provided." The laboratories under Dr. Kragel's direction include Specialty Immunohistochemistry under Donald Hoffman, PhD, Dermatology under William Burke, MD, Ob-gyn Fetal Maturity under Chuck Hodson, PhD, ECU Women's Physicians under Cal Hayslip, MD, Mohs Surgery under Valerie Laing, MD, and Cytogenetics under John Wiley, PhD.

Kragel commented that the inspectors found no deficiencies during the inspection. "This is a real tribute to the quality of our laboratory program and the technologists and doctors who supervise these programs. The CAP inspectors are meticulous and thorough, for them to find no deficiencies means that we

are doing an outstanding job."

The CAP accredits more than 6,000 laboratories nationwide. The accreditation program is recognized by the federal government as being equal to or more stringent than the government's own inspection program.

During the CAP accreditation process, inspectors examine the laboratory's records and quality control of procedures for the previous two years. CAP inspectors also examine the entire staff's qualifications, the laboratory's equipment, facilities, safety program and record as well as the overall management of the laboratory. This stringent inspection program is designed to specifically ensure the highest standard of care for the laboratories patients.

The college of American Pathologists is a medical society serving nearly 16,000 physician members and the laboratory community through out the world. It is the world's largest association composed exclusively of pathologists and is widely considered the leader in laboratory quality assurance. The CAP is an advocate for high-quality and cost-effective medical care.

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Screening for Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.

During the past six months, a team led by Drs. John Christie and Larry Dobbs and consisting of Jason Barnhart, Ruth Ethridge, Mary Mayancsik, Nancy Ruttle, Donna Smith, Deborah Taylor, and George Williams has developed the Molecular Microbiology Laboratory at PCMH. At present, the main purpose of the laboratory is to provide screening of all patients admitted at PCMH for colonization by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. Screening of these patients is by a molecular assay that provides 24-hour-turn-around time. The patients who are colonized with this bacteria are placed in contact isolation then treated with a short course of a topical ointment along with cycloheximide baths. This program represents a response by PCMH to the growing problem of this resistant organism which is not only an established pathogen in hospitals but has become an emerging problem in the community setting. This program may eventually be a part of routine admission procedures at all UHS hospitals.

Christie Presents

It has been a busy month for Dr. John Christie. At the Annual Meeting of the Carolinas Antibiotic Stewardship Endeavor (CASE) in Charleston, South Carolina, Dr. Christie presented two papers. The first entitled "Antimicrobial Stewardship: Will It Grow on Microbiologists?" was co-authored with Dr. Lisa L. Steed, Medical University of South Carolina, while the second, "Antimicrobial Management Program Update from Pitt County Memorial Hospital", was co-authored with Dr. Paul P. Cook, Department of Internal Medicine, Brody School of Medicine. The purpose of CASE is to improve the appropriate use of antibiotics and to halt the growing level of antibiotic resistance in North and South Carolina.

Dr. Christie presented another paper, "MRSA Universal Screening Program at Pitt County Memorial Hospital" at the February North Carolina Lab Response Forum meeting. The Forum is composed of directors of North Carolina Clinical Microbiology Laboratories and members of the North Carolina Department of Public Health who are interested in strengthening the capacity of the state to deal with bioterrorism events and outbreaks of emerging infections.

Bode Publishes Work

Recently, Dr. Arthur Bode published a paper in the *Journal of Biomedical Materials Research*. He co-authored the paper entitled "Hemostatic properties of glucosamine-based materials," with T.H. Fischer, M. Demcheva and J. N. Vournakies.



Hoffman invited to Present in San Diego

Dr. Donald R. Hoffman recently attended the 2007 Annual Meeting of American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology in San Diego where he was invited to give a seminar "Update on Fire Ant Allergy." While he was there, he presented on two other topics, "Production and analysis of allergenic venom serine protease from *Polistes dominulus*," which he coauthored with C.D. Fitch and M. Schmidt, and "The uses of MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry in characterization of Allergens."



Fitch Participates in ST*AR Program

Christina Fitch attended the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) in San Diego as a participant of the ST*AR program. All the participants submit original research and present it at the meeting, attend special ST*AR presentations by AAAAI members and receive information about opportunities in allergy, asthma and immunology research. The goal of the program is to provide PhD candidates and PhD post docs an environment to learn more about research in the allergy and immunology fields. Christina is working on her PhD in Interdisciplinary Biological Science.