NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY LEADERSHIP TEAM

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Medical Director, Skull Base Program

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Director, Medical Student Program

Amgad Hanna, MD  
Medical Director, Peripheral Nerve Program

Bermans Iskandar, MD  
Medical Director, Neurological Surgery Inpatient; Outpatient Pediatric Services

John Kuo, MD, PhD  
Medical Director, Brain Tumor Program

Wendell Lake, MD  
Medical Director, Deep Brain Stimulation Program

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UW HEALTH NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY

Mission
The Department of Neurological Surgery at the University of Wisconsin provides outstanding care and treatment for patients with brain, spine, and peripheral nerve diseases, disorders, and injuries; advances neuroscience knowledge through basic and clinical research; and trains students, residents, and fellows.

Goals
To treat patients and their families with care, compassion and candor as an extension of the referring physician care plan
To conduct innovative and ever-expanding research studies that go beyond conventional therapies to develop promising new neurosurgical treatments
To bring our fellowship-trained surgeons, specialty-trained nurses, neurosurgical expertise and real-world experience to the most difficult issues within the full breadth of patient cases
To lead the way as researchers, educators and physicians for what’s new and what’s next through our multidisciplinary, customized, patient-specific approach

Overview
The Neurological Surgery Department consists of 14 adult neurosurgeons, two pediatric neurosurgeons, one basic science faculty member and more than 60 researchers, research staff, fellows, residents, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, clinic and administrative staff.

The department has 14 residents (two per year) and offers clinical fellowships in endovascular neurosurgery and spine neurosurgery. The department also is an active participant in the AANS International Visiting Surgeon Fellowship Program.

UW Health Neurological Surgery is staffed with physicians who are recognized both nationally and internationally as leaders in the field. In 2015, we were ranked 29th by U.S. News and World Report and placed 16th in neurosurgery department funding by the National Institutes of Health. We are a world-class center for state-of-the-art treatment based on compassionate patient care and pioneering research. Our multidisciplinary approach links the knowledge of primary care physicians and other referring professionals with the expertise developed from our nationally recognized, forward-looking research studies. This combination of the latest in technique, technology and treatment is how we have earned the trust and gratitude of thousands of patients and their referring physicians.

As a national and international leader in neurological surgery, we are dedicated to providing the very best clinical neurosurgical care for the many disorders of the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nervous system, as well as the blood vessels which support them including:

- Brain tumors
- Ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke
- Brain hemorrhages from aneurysms (congenital or acquired abnormalities)
- Spinal cord injuries or degenerations of the spinal and peripheral nerve disorders
- Pediatric and congenital disorders of the central and peripheral nervous system
- Peripheral and brachial plexus nervous system
- Degenerative disorders of the brain and spine
- Surgical interventions for epilepsy and movement disorders
- Neuroendovascular intervention
- Trauma-related surgery
We are a team of physicians, scientists, nurses and staff dedicated to the concept that the disorders that we treat are a major threat to the lives, comforts, and abilities of our patients. Therefore, we are dedicated to continually improving those treatments here in Wisconsin and worldwide. We have a very active research program and educational program for students, residents and graduate physicians. Our research program is continuously examining each aspect of neurosurgery and the central and peripheral nervous systems to determine new ways to diagnose, treat, and improve the lives of our patients. Our HCAPHS and Avatar scores indicate continuously high patient satisfaction.

**History**

The specialty’s history dates to 1942, when it began as a division of the Department of Surgery transitioning to an independent department in 1989. Today, the department has a national reputation for innovative research and clinical excellence in all aspects of neurosurgery and continues to attract top-notch resident applicants.

With only three department chairmen in more than 70 years of existence, the group has had consistent growth as a teaching and research facility. Early studies remain some of the definitive work on cerebral localization. Pioneering work on the use of osmotic agents for control of intracranial and intraocular pressure also established the department as a leader in the field.

Recent developments include:

- Multidisciplinary Stroke Program, which was the sixth facility in the nation to receive Comprehensive Stroke Center recognition from The Joint Commission, and first in Wisconsin.
- Frame-based, Frameless and Interoperative MRI suite to facilitate Deep Brain Surgery
- Critical Care division with a Neurosciences ICU
- Brachial Plexus Clinic
- Spasticity Clinic
- Robust multidisciplinary Cerebrovascular and Tumor divisions
- Intraoperative biplane and OR angiography
- Clinical cerebrovascular research
- NIH StrokeNet upper Midwest coordinating site
- Numerous pediatric specialty clinics (cerebral palsy, neurocutaneous disorders, craniosynostosis, neuro-oncology, spina bifida, spine, spasticity, movement disorders, brachial plexus, Chiari, vascular anomalies)
- Many other extended services for patients, families and referring physicians

**Services**

UW’s award-winning neurosurgery clinical programs treat adult and pediatric patients with a focus on brachial plexus, brain tumor, cerebrovascular/stroke, epilepsy, functional and restorative, neuroendovascular, skull base, spine and trauma surgery. Achieving top-quality, patient-centered care is, and always will be, our priority. We will continue to perform above mandated standards.
Outreach
Sites outside of Dane County where we provide clinical services

Adult Neurosurgery/Spine
Beloit Beloit Health System
Fort Atkinson Fort Health Care
Reedsburg Reedsburg Area Medical Center

Pediatric Neurosurgery
Appleton Affinity Health System
LaCrosse*

*Start date TBD

Provider Advocacy Team
The UW Health Provider Advocacy team was created to effectively serve the needs of medical professionals and the patients they serve. Our Provider Relations Coordinator is a hospital-based advocate for referring providers, their staff, referral coordinators and health plan staff. The team also consists of four Physician Liaisons who assist with relationship-building activities, such as UW Health physician visits to community physician offices or CME presentations. Every year, dozens of such events involving UW Health neurologists and neurosurgeons occur in places like Dubuque, Fond du Lac, Wausau, Neenah, Appleton, Beaver Dam, Stevens Point, Rockford, Freeport, Monroe, Oshkosh, Mauston, Portage, Minocqua, Appleton, Wisconsin Dells, Reedsburg and Fort Atkinson.

Support groups and community education activities
- Understanding Stroke: Stroke awareness talk for public
- Life After Stroke: Seminar for patients and families
- Stroke Camp: Three-day event for survivors and families
- Brain Aneurysm and Stroke Support Group (Fresh Start)
- Monthly Brain Tumor Support Group
- Stroke Night: Educational events for EMS

Research: Clinical studies and grants
During FY2014, the Department of Neurosurgery had 30 active grants. In October 2013, the department received one of 25 NINDS Grants as an NIH StrokeNet Regional Coordinating Center.