

## Conference Summary

**Grant Number: 1R13AR059422-01**

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The Malignant Hyperthermia Association of the United States (MHAUS) recently sponsored a scientific conference entitled, "MH- New Insights and Connections with Other Myopathies." This event was held at the University of Pittsburgh's Medical Center (UPMC), Mercy Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA, on April 23-24, 2010. Financial support for this conference was provided by NIH (NIAMS and ORD), UPMC, and MHAUS.

The overall purpose of the conference was to allow clinicians and scientists to share data in an effort to advance the diagnosis, treatment, and management of MH-susceptible (MHS) patients. The conference sessions included advances in basic research, clinical applications of knowledge, as well as challenges for the future with regard to research, clinical diagnosis and treatment (see attached agenda).

A total of 74 individuals attended the conference, including 15 speakers, MHAUS MH Hotline Consultants, basic scientists, academic- and community-based anesthesiologists (including residents and fellows), nurses involved in perioperative care, geneticists, MHAUS Board members, and Biopsy Center Directors. Our two European colleagues participated by teleconference due to flight cancellations because of volcanic ash. Although this was a highly technical conference, patient safety was always at the forefront, with one of our speakers a fierce patient safety advocate, and two patients in attendance as well (see attendee list attached). To provide additional opportunities for participation, we encouraged attendees to present posters; authors of the top 2 posters (a total of 11 were presented) received a travel award to cover the cost of their attendance at this conference. Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits were also offered for conference attendees. The total number of attendees exceeded that projected (approximately 40-60) in the initial grant application, indicating that our advertising and promotional efforts for this conference were well received.

MHAUS is pleased to report that our conference succeeded in meeting its goals as set forth by the Conference Organizing Committee. As the primary objective of the conference was to advance the state of MH research and patient care through education, statements from attendees indicating the professional changes they would implement as a result of attending the conference provide tangible indications of the conference's success and impact. Examples of these statements include: *I will now be able to recognize MH more quickly; I will treat every case individually (as there is a great variability in this disease); I have increased awareness of high risk groups; I will advocate for genetic and muscle contracture testing; I have an improved understanding of the relationship between myopathic conditions and MH; I can take the information back and teach it to residents; I will use temperature monitoring consistently; I will do a better family history; and I will pursue more collaborations.*

It was apparent, from both the speaker presentations and the discussions throughout the conference, that existing collaborative efforts (e.g., between Drs. Muldoon, Hamilton, and Dirksen) were strengthened, and newer ones (e.g., between Drs. Vladutiu, Brandom, and Muldoon) were fostered. Also, several individuals indicated they were planning to focus their professional interests on issues related to MH. Finally, the conference provided an important platform for the introduction and promotion of new patient safety initiatives such as guidelines for the transfer of an MH patient; as well as for discussions regarding the need for updates to MHAUS consensus statements or recommendations.

Moving forward, MHAUS expects to continue to sponsor a scientific conference approximately every 2-3 years to provide an update on progress in the field of MH research, patient care and treatment, and to continue to encourage research collaborations. An Executive Summary of this conference is currently being prepared to be shared with all conference participants; this summary will be placed on the MHAUS website for all interested parties. In addition, a manuscript resulting from the presentations at the conference is currently being designed for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.