



RECENT PRESENTATION The STAR system

Andrew Vickers demonstrated the STAR (Symptom Tracking and Reporting) system for patient-reported outcomes after radical prostatectomy at a meeting at UCLA in July. The STAR system is a web-based interface that allows patients to answer questions of interest to clinicians and researchers on a computer in the clinic or from home. Andrew Vickers recently reported the efficacy of the STAR system in a paper, "Validation study of a web-based assessment of functional recovery after radical prostatectomy." The paper was also coauthored by **Caroline Savage, Marwan Shouery, James Eastham, Peter Scardino, and Ethan Basch.**

THIRD NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS OF EPIDEMIOLOGY

Montreal, Canada
June 21st-24th, 2011



As co-chair of the meeting, **Jonine Bernstein** invites you to attend the Third North American Congress of Epidemiology. Twenty-five epidemiologic societies and over 100 Congress Faculty are involved in sponsoring and planning this event. Participants will include epidemiologic researchers, methodologists, educators, and policy makers from academia, public health, government, and industry. This is the most significant meeting in the field and it is held only once every 5 years.

Please consider submitting a proposal for a symposium by **October 31, 2010**. Abstract submissions will be accepted from November 1, 2010 to January 5, 2011. View the Congress website for submission guidelines, preliminary agenda, and other meeting details. Registration information will follow in the next few months.

We look forward to seeing you in Montreal on June 21st-24th, 2011!



DEPARTMENT CHAIR
Colin Begg, PhD

EDITORS
Sharon Bayuga, MPH
Rick Church, MPH
Brian Denton, MS
Joshua Mirkin
Brendan Phalan

IN THE NEWS

Screening for Prostate Cancer

Andrew Vickers was lead author on a paper published in the *British Medical Journal* demonstrating a single measure of prostate specific antigen (PSA) at age 60 is associated with a man's lifetime risk of death from prostate cancer. The majority (90%) of deaths from prostate cancer occur in men in the top quarter of PSA concentrations (>2 ng/ml), though only a minority of such men will develop fatal prostate cancer. Men aged 60 with concentrations ≤1 ng/ml can be told that though they might have cancer, though it is unlikely to become life threatening. At least half of men at age 60 can be exempted from further screening and chemoprevention. The article was also featured in the *New York Times*.



Andrew Vickers, PhD



❖ "Prostate specific antigen concentration at age 60 and death or metastasis from prostate cancer: case-control study." **Andrew J Vickers, Angel M Cronin, Thomas Björk, Jonas Manjer, Peter M Nilsson, Anders Dahlin, Anders Bjartell, Peter T Scardino, David Ulmert, Hans Lilja.**

This publication continues Dr. Vickers' distinguished work in methods for early detection and treatment of prostate cancer. The current use of PSA as a prognostic indicator for prostate cancer has proven problematic. Dr. Vickers' work is aimed at developing methods that can improve the predictive capabilities of this marker.

COLLEAGUE SPOTLIGHT

Elyn Riedel has been working at MSKCC for 17 years. She first started working with the Data Management Resource Group when they were still part of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. After six years, she then transitioned to the Biostatistics Service as a biostatistician. She is now a Senior Research Biostatistician and works among 13 other master's level biostatisticians in the department. Elyn manages the biostatistics consulting service, oversees the randomization assignments for all MSKCC protocols requiring randomization, and serves as co-chair of the Biostatistics Design and Analysis Workshop, which meets weekly on Wednesdays.

When not working, Elyn and her husband Michael Stubblefield, who also works at MSKCC as a cancer rehabilitation physician, spend as much time as possible traveling. Michael has been a wildlife photographer for more than 20 years. This pursuit has led them to travel to many exotic places such as Bali, North Sulawesi, the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, South Korea, and most recently, Antarctica. They are also certified scuba divers and have accumulated over 175 dives during the last three years!



Elyn Riedel, MA *courtesy of Michael Stubblefield*

JOINT STATISTICAL MEETING

Vancouver, Canada / July 31st – August 5th, 2010

Ronglai Shen and Adam Olshen (UCSF), a former colleague in the department, co-organized an invited session at the 2010 Joint Statistical Meeting in Vancouver titled "New Frontiers in Integrative Genomic Analysis". The session highlighted recent methodological developments to integrate genomic data from multiple sources.

UPCOMING SEMINARS

Prevention, Control, and Population Research Seminar Series

Main Campus, 1275 York Avenue,
Room M-107, 4:00 – 5:00 PM

- ❖ **October 19th:**
Joellen M. Schildkraut, PhD
Professor, Department of Community and Family Medicine; Chief, Division of Prevention Research, Duke University Medical Center
- ❖ **November 9th:**
Jennifer W. Mack, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor in Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School; Attending Physician, Department of Medicine, Children's Hospital Boston; Attending Physician, Department of Pediatric Oncology, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Biostatistics Seminar Series

307 E. 63rd Street,
3rd Floor Conference Room, 4:00 – 5:00 PM

- ❖ **October 6th:** **Ann Zauber**
Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- ❖ **October 13th:** **Howard Thaler**
Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- ❖ **October 20th:** **Peter Gilbert**
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
- ❖ **October 27th:** **Ewout Steyerberg**
Erasmus MC, University Medical Center Rotterdam
- ❖ **November 3rd:** **Katherine Panageas**
Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- ❖ **November 10th:** **Mithat Gönen**
Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- ❖ **November 17th:**
Venkatraman Seshan
Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

CRG CORNER

The Clinical Research Database (CRDB) runs on three platforms including CRDB Client, CRDB Web and CRDBi. The Computer Resource Group (CRG) introduced forms, reports, and additional data collection tools. A listing of these enhancements and new modules for CRDB follow:

- ❖ HLA Patient and Donor system. Data Entry form and Report
- ❖ T-cell. Protocol WT1-OKT3, set up and follow up forms
- ❖ BMT UPN. New data entry form, protocol migration
- ❖ Specimen Tracking System, Updated Request, Specimen Distribution, and Monthly Billing Report
- ❖ MDS Module



CRDBi is the web client platform of the Clinical Research Database. The release version is currently CRDBi 1.20.3.

RECENT PUBLICATION



Ann Zauber is the senior author on a paper recently published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. This study showed that the computed tomographic colonography (CTC) is currently not a cost-effective option for colorectal cancer (CRC) screening in the Medicare population compared to other established modalities. However, CTC could be cost-effective if the reimbursement rate per scan were to be substantially lower than that of screening colonoscopy or if CTC would significantly increase the number of unscreened people to accept CRC screening. The paper is accompanied by an editorial by Russell Harris

(UNC) who suggests that cost effectiveness analysis in general should also present a separate listing of benefits and harms of a new procedure relative to established procedures.

- ❖ Knudsen AB, Lansdorp-Vogelaar I, Rutter CM, Savarino JE, van Ballegooijen M, Kuntz KM, **Zauber AG**. Cost-effectiveness of computed tomographic colonography screening for colorectal cancer in the medicare population. *J Natl Cancer Inst*. 2010 Aug 18;102(16):1238-52. Epub 2010 Jul 27

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome New Staff!

- ❖ **Anne Eaton, MS** Assistant Research Biostatistician, Biostatistics Service
Anne Eaton holds a Masters in Biostatistics from the University of Minnesota. She served as a Research Assistant at the Coordinating Centers for Biometric Research at the University of Minnesota. Her thesis is titled "Comparing Methods to Correct for Lead-time Bias in Cox Regression."



- ❖ **Hilda Enriquez, MS** Senior Laboratory Technician, Epidemiology Service
Hilda Enriquez recently joined the Molecular Epidemiology Laboratory. Her research interests include studies aimed at unveiling DNA damage/repair capacity and genetic characteristics that predispose patients who undergo chemotherapy to the development of cognitive dysfunction. Hilda holds a B.S. in Human Biology, Health and Society from Cornell University and an M.S. in Biological and Physical Sciences from the University of Virginia.



- ❖ **Deborah Kuk, MS** Assistant Research Biostatistician, Biostatistics Service
Deborah Kuk holds a Masters in Biostatistics from Johns Hopkins University. She worked in the Bloomberg School of Public Health as a Research Assistant at the Center on Aging and Health and a Data Analyst at the Center for Clinical Trials. Her Masters thesis is titled "Model Selection in Competing Risks Regression."



- ❖ **Emily Zabor, MS** Assistant Research Biostatistician, Biostatistics Service
Emily Zabor holds a Masters in Biostatistics from the University of Minnesota. She served as a Research Assistant at the Coordinating Centers for Biometric Research at the University of Minnesota. Her research includes several diverse studies in epidemiology and anthropology.



- ❖ **Behfar Ehdaie, MD** Urology Fellow, Health Outcomes Group
Behfar Ehdaie recently completed his residency in urologic surgery at the University of Virginia. He is a native Virginian and graduated with a BA in Biology at the University of Virginia. He graduated from medical school at Georgetown University. He is currently a urologic oncology fellow at Memorial Sloan-Kettering and enrolled in the MPH program at Harvard University. Behfar will be involved in comparative and outcomes studies in prostate and bladder cancer using the SEER/Medicare database with Elena Elkin.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Departmental Holiday Party will be Thursday, December 9th

Creative and resourceful volunteers are sought to help make this year's event as memorable as parties past. The planning committee is a great way to meet people from across the services of the department. **Volunteers and those with party suggestions, please contact [Shireen Lewis](#).**

2010 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

Center emails will go out in late October to initiate this year's performance appraisal period for research, informatics, and administrative positions. These conversations provide both the employee and his/her supervisor an opportunity to discuss how well established expectations and performance goals have been met and to discuss the employee's developmental needs and career opportunities. All can help facilitate the success of this process by preparing notes and gathering feedback. If you have any questions on the performance appraisal process, please contact [Shireen Lewis](#).