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Advancing the knowledge and practice of medicine for neurological disorders through clinical research

Tragedy Leads to Improving Lives Through Research and Education

On July 20, 2003, 22-year-old college student, Justin Parker, sustained a severe traumatic brain injury due to an unfortunate accident. Justin’s family immediately came to Colorado to be by his side. Local hospital staff, nurses and chaplain helped the Parker family cope with several days of anguish and uncertainty until his death on July 31, 2003. While they lost a son and brother, Justin’s family gained a community of friends in Northern Colorado.

Shortly after Justin’s death, the Justin Parker Neurological Institute (JPNI) was founded in 2003 by Boulder Neurosurgical & Spine Associates (BNA) surgeons, Justin’s father, Dr. John Parker, and his family in memory of their son and brother. The Parker family wished to extend their appreciation to all the individuals involved in Justin’s care during his last days, while also leaving a legacy wherein Justin’s name would be synonymous with improving the lives of other individuals with neurological conditions through clinical research. JPNI is an accredited 501(c)(3) nonprofit scientific research organization primarily focusing on brain and spine conditions including traumatic brain injury, tumors, degenerative spinal disorders and pain syndromes. JPNI also provides fellowship and internship opportunities to neurosurgical and orthopedic spine surgeons and students who are pursuing careers in medicine. Continued medical education events are presented annually on the latest advancements in the treatment of cranial and spinal disorders to promote evidence-based medicine to health care providers.

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“A patient experience

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The Need for Clinical Research and Your Support

Innovations in medical technology, surgical techniques and pharmaceuticals are driving forces in advancing the medical industry. Medical device and pharmaceutical companies have traditionally sponsored prospective clinical trials that led to the approval of new products. Unfortunately, there is now a lack of independent research organizations and clinical studies to evaluate emerging technologies and clinical outcomes in many brain and spinal disorders. Maintaining the highest standards of integrity and ethics, JPNI was in part created to conduct clinical trials and objectively assess the safety and efficacy of novel therapies for those impacted by neurological conditions.

The majority of JPNI’s funding is derived from grants, community health needs assessments help us to rapidly implement emerging translational and clinical opportunities. JPNI’s involvement in FDA-controlled and industry-sponsored clinical trials has allowed us to treat patients with the most technically advanced and novel technologies, which would not otherwise have been available. This experience has enabled us to drive forward technological innovations and new treatments such as targeted neuroprotective pharmacological therapies in traumatic brain injury patients, utilization of amniotic membrane for scarring prevention in spine surgeries, CO₂ laser-assisted and minimally invasive spine surgeries, stem cell therapy, and dynamic stabilization and motion preservation devices as alternatives to fusion surgeries.

The Benefits of JPNI Research

JPNI has initiated and conducted numerous prospective clinical trials that have been extensively published, presented and recognized at national and international meetings. The physicians of JPNI were granted the BrainLAB Community Neurosurgery Award by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) for our work that studied survival of malignant brain tumor patients treated with stereotactic radiosurgery. We also received the Best Paper Award from the North American Spine Society (NASS) for a study that analyzed how sagittal alignment can improve clinical outcomes in patients undergoing cervical spine surgery. These are just a few examples how clinical research enables us to provide the best possible clinical outcomes to patients and promote evidence-based medicine that reaches far beyond our community.

Beyond our Community

We also believe that our responsibility for patients reaches beyond our local community. Our humanitarian missions to locations such as Inner Mongolia not only help patients with severe spinal deformities, but also provide a unique hands-on training and experience for the local physicians.

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The majority of JPNI’s funding is derived from grants, collaborative industrial partnerships and private donors. As traditional research funds are becoming less available, we must seek more diverse funding streams. A donation to JPNI will allow our researchers to continue their work more efficiently and identify superior methodologies to diagnose, treat and manage neurological conditions. Your support to JPNI is a commitment to a better quality of life for all individuals with neurological conditions, as well as those who may be impacted by a neurological condition in the future.

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 JPNI's funding is derived from grants, community health needs assessments, and private donations. These funding sources help the organization to conduct clinical trials and assess the safety and efficacy of novel therapies for patients impacted by neurological conditions. JPNI's research efforts have led to numerous clinical trials, many of which have been published, presented, and recognized at national and international meetings. The physicians of JPNI have received awards for their work, including the BrainLAB Community Neurosurgery Award from the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and the Best Paper Award from the North American Spine Society (NASS). These achievements demonstrate the high standards of integrity and ethics that JPNI adheres to in their research.
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