

Division of Transplant Surgery

Jorge Reyes, MD, Chief

The Division of Transplant Surgery faculty are academically and clinically active, and engaged in a wide range of initiatives of importance to the field of abdominal transplantation.

Selected Faculty Activities

James Perkins, M.D.: Dr. Perkins continues to be academically productive, with publication of several articles on factors influencing liver transplant survival rates, including recommendations on optimum MELD scores for liver transplantation. In 2009 Dr. Perkins completed his four-year term as Special Editor, *Liver Transplantation Worldwide*, for the journal *Liver Transplantation*, in which he wrote a monthly column reviewing the world literature for recent advances in the field. In his Departmental role as Vice Chairman for Quality, Dr. Perkins is helping to develop methods to collect and present performance measures for the Department. Current initiatives include planning a Departmental educational web site for quality, and leading a UWMC Liver Transplant team through the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's "expedition" on multidisciplinary rounding. He continues his teaching work by mentorship. Most recently, he has served as mentor to resident **Oliver Lao**, as he has become very productive in his work on pediatric transplantation outcomes.



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Jeff Halldorson, M.D., Ph.D.: Dr. Halldorson is busy clinically, and in addition, has recently published several influential articles and presented them at national meetings. In one such article, Dr. Halldorson describes a new statistic, D-MELD, useful for improving the quality of donor/recipient matching in liver transplantation. In a separate article, Dr. Halldorson demonstrates the remarkable adaptation of pediatric kidneys when transplanted into adults and suggests that prior restrictions on recipient size may no longer be necessary. In addition to these accomplishments, Dr. Halldorson has also produced the first study in the surgical literature that links surgeon fatigue to patient outcomes.

Ramasamy Bakthavatsalam, M.B.B.S.: In addition to his significant clinical presence, Dr. Bakthavatsalam continues to be a leader in Transplant Surgery education with residents and fellows, acting as Education Program Director for the Division. He recently attended the American Society of Transplant Surgeons Conference on Fellowships, and discussed a number of issues being considered at the national level. Of particular importance was the discussion and implications of transplant fellowship programs, given that transplant surgery is currently a fellowship program (nation-wide) that lies outside of ACGME accreditation.

André Dick, M.D.: Dr. Dick is the most recent addition to the Division and is already proving to be invaluable to our group. Dr. Dick's primary focus is on pediatric transplantation, though he continues to also work on adult transplantation at UWMC. He has initiated important investigations analyzing the impact of obesity on transplantation, and is investigating and proposing mechanisms to eliminate health disparities for minorities undergoing solid organ transplantation. Dr. Dick recently published an article on BMI as a predictor of transplantation survival which has been well received in academic circles and also noted in the popular press. Dr. Dick was also recently awarded an NIH ARRA R-01 supplement in conjunction with Bessie Young, M.D., M.P.H., a colleague in Nephrology. Notably, Dr. Dick was also recently appointed to serve a two-year term as the Region 6 Representative on the OPTN/UNOS Pediatric Transplantation Committee.

Jorge Reyes, M.D.: Dr. Reyes continues a full clinical load along with his duties as Chief. In addition, he has reached the second phase of an NIH-supported Tolerance Research study which proposes to wean liver transplant recipients from immunosuppressive drug therapy. This is a multi-center study which is a result of other successful

weaning trials performed by Dr. Reyes and his colleagues. In the same venue, using sophisticated multi-parameter flow cytometry to compare levels and functional capabilities of multiple lymphocyte subsets, **Fances Malone, ARNP, Ph.D.**, at the Transplant Tolerance Research Laboratory, is performing studies looking at peripheral lymphocyte profiles/subsets with varying levels of immunosuppression.

Clinical Outcomes

The Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTS: www.ustransplant.org) has reported superior outcomes for UWMC (above the national average) in all abdominal organ transplants for adult and pediatric patients. This report attests to the skill and hard work of our dedicated surgeons. In addition, our work in pediatric transplantation has fostered a successful pediatric intestinal rehabilitation and transplantation program which provides this important clinical service to the children of the Pacific Northwest.