

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Care

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Risk Stratification of Family History

By Deborah Smith

Family medical history can be used as a means of identifying individuals at increased risk for chronic diseases (Yoon, Scheuner, & Khoury, 2003). One strong evaluative measure of risk is a tool devised by Scheuner and colleagues that stratifies family risk history into high, moderate, and average risk categories for several common chronic diseases on the basis of the number of affected relatives and their age at disease onset (Scheuner, Wang, Raffel, Larabell, & Rotter, 1997). The goal of risk stratification is to identify those at risk so that lifestyle support to prevent expression of common chronic diseases can be initiated.

A vital component in optimizing and putting family history to work is that of risk stratification. Scheuner and colleague's risk stratification tool represents a vast improvement to this end. I recommend copying this tool to guide risk stratification when reviewing family history with your patients.

Why is risk stratification important? My research with overweight and obese patients cared for in ARNP practices, assessed and risk stratified family histories of hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease. The same patients were asked to consider their family history and rate their risk of developing hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease as average, moderate, or high; their response indicated their perceived risk. The results suggested a tendency on the part of the respondents to underestimate the actual genetic risks conferred by family history. Risk was perceived as "average" by the majority of respondents but in risk stratification by the researcher, high risk predominated. This finding suggests that in the application and translation of family history, respondents deflated their actual risk.

In sum, this study of overweight and obese respondents found a gap between objective risk stratification of family history of hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease and the respondent's perception of this risk. In practice, ARNPs need to understand that this knowledge gap exists. To combat it, they need to translate family histories and ascertain that patients understand their individual risks as conferred by their family history, concurrently advising behavioral modifications to strongly counter to those risks. Simply put, personalizing knowledge of family history and being apprised of the risks conferred may strongly motivate a course to negate risk status by adopting healthy behaviors. Currently, the

impact that family history might have on adoption of positive health behaviors is diluted by underestimation of risk, and an opportunity is missed for positive change. Holistically focused ARNPs are ideal health care providers to make this information meaningful to patients, with recognition of the gap in knowledge between risk stratification and patient perceptions of risk.

Deb Smith is an FNP practicing in Spokane, WA who just received her clinical doctorate.

Spotlight on a Member: Patricia Baxter ARNP

Patricia has been an ARNP for 8 years. For the past three years Patricia has been working for the U.S. State Department/Foreign Service. She is the medical officer for the Embassy personnel in Bolivia. Prior to this assignment she was in New Delhi, India for two years. Most embassies around the world have health units (varying in size) and their mission is to provide as close to a U.S. standard of care as possible. Often, the local resources are rarely up to U.S. standards, so at times, they must medically evacuate people to the U.S. or other first world country for surgeries or evaluations that are not possible in the host country.

La Paz, located at 13,500 feet above sea level is one of the highest cities in the world. Altitude sickness spectrum, from mild headache and nausea to pulmonary or cerebral edema, is a common presenting medical problem. Fortunately, Patricia has seen only one case of cerebral edema in a 12 year old healthy child. The child's clinical condition miraculously improved once she was flown to sea level. In India, Patricia frequently dealt with exotic diseases such as Dengue Fever, Chikungunya, and Typhoid. It was a crash course in tropical medicine. Patricia states that she is never bored in this job.

As a RN, Patricia worked for a home care and hospice agency for 12 years in Thurston and Mason Counties (WA state).

Patricia was a *National Health Service Corps Scholar* in graduate school, so upon finishing, she worked for 2 years in a government funded community health care clinic in Tacoma, WA. Patricia then co-managed a nurse practitioner run family practice clinic for underserved people in Olympia, WA for 1 1/2 years.

Patricia chose family practice because she wanted the flexibility to work in a variety of settings and did not

want to limit herself to one specific population. She is currently considering a co-specialty in mental health.

Patricia feels that as an ARNP there is always something new on the horizon. She has accumulated more than 25 years as a health care provider and has been able to expand and reinvent her role in each new job setting. Currently, Patricia has begun teaching yoga in the Embassy as part of a stress management program. She loves the flexibility to follow her interests.

As an ARNP Patricia wants to make sure that ARNPs are regarded as competent primary care providers that practice independently. She feels that with that comes the enormous responsibility of keeping abreast of the literature, trends, and maintaining a high level of professional engagement.

In the future Patricia would like to see fully funded health care for all first and foremost and also with that, school and community based health clinics run by NP's who provide holistic care to all age groups.

CFIDS Information

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the CFIDS Association of America have partnered to offer free, evidence-based educational materials on chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) to health care professionals as part of the first-ever national CFS public health campaign.

CFS, also known as chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome (CFIDS), is a serious chronic illness that results in profound fatigue and a number of other debilitating symptoms.

CDC research indicates that more than four million Americans have CFS. Unfortunately, less than 20% of them have been diagnosed.

The research also indicates that delays in diagnosis and treatment can lead to poorer therapeutic outcomes.

CFS has proven to be both complex and mysterious, and there is still no known cause or cure. However, there is abundant scientific evidence that CFS is a real biologic illness, not a psychiatric condition.

There are treatment options that can help patients manage symptoms, cope with the impact of the illness, improve function and manage activity levels.

Due to the national campaign and the media outreach surrounding it, health care professionals in Washington may see an influx in the number of patients who ask about CFS. So we want to make the medical community aware of the new evidence-based educational resources that are available from the CDC and the CFIDS Association.

The CFS Toolkit for Health Care Professionals includes quick-read fact sheets covering several aspects of CFS care. The toolkit and other resources for medical professionals and patients are free of charge and available in print or online. We encourage program directors to request copies of the resources for their residents and students.

To obtain a copy, visit www.cfids.org/treatcfs/tools2use.asp, e-mail meded@cfids.org or phone the CFIDS Association of America at 704.364.0016.

Seeking Board of Directors Members for ARNPs United of WA State

We need your help. This October, at the Primary Care conference, we will hold an election for a new board of directors. 5 BOD positions are open; the old board members have the option of running, as does every AUWS member. The bylaws call for 5 to 9 members on the BOD, with 4 of them serving as Board officers - President, President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Chair of the Legislative Committee is automatically on the BOD as well (Legislative Committee members meet separately.) Board officers will be determined by the BOD after the election. The term of service is 3 years. The time involved is approximately 5-10 hours per month, as we have monthly to quarterly board meetings (which can be attended via conference call) and subcommittee work based on your area of interest. Our subcommittees include the ARNP Care newsletter, the website, membership, and public relations.

If you are interested, know someone you would like to nominate, or have any questions about this opportunity to serve Washington's ARNPs and their clients, please feel free to email tracy@nurse.net.

HHS Wants Providers To E-prescribe

Medicare is starting a new program to encourage physicians to adopt e-prescribing systems. Incentive payments will be available beginning in 2009 for physicians who meet the requirements of the program.

Beginning in 2009, and during the next four years, Medicare will provide incentive payments to eligible professionals who are successful electronic prescribers. Eligible professionals will receive a 2 percent incentive payment in 2009 and 2010; a 1 percent incentive payment in 2011 and 2012; and a one-half percent incentive payment in 2013.

Beginning in 2012, eligible professionals who are not successful electronic prescribers will receive a reduction in payment. Eligible professionals may be exempted from the reduction in payment, on a case-by-case basis if it is determined that compliance with requirement for

being a successful prescriber would result in significant hardship.

To read more, see the entire HHS Fact Sheet at <http://www.hhs.gov/news/facts/eprescribing.html>.

Classified Ads

Tacoma, WA – ARNP – Adult Medicine

Internal Medicine group seeks a full-time Adult Nurse Practitioner to work in a collaborative practice providing comprehensive primary healthcare in all aspects of internal medicine. Position offers a great opportunity for the NP to provide care in nursing homes and assisted living facilities if desired. Candidates must be eligible for licensure & certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please reference opportunity #680-840

Nurse Practitioners Wanted

Support the mission of Planned Parenthood of Western Washington (PPWW) by joining our talented & dedicated medical team. You may be eligible for a sign on bonus!

Seeking **Clinician** candidates to provide comprehensive reproductive health & family planning services.

WA State NP/CNM/PA-C w/prescriptive authority, current certification & CPR card required.

PT Float (S Puget Sound area)

PT Float (N Puget Sound area)

FT Float (Central)

PT Marysville (Tu, W, F)

PT U District & Seattle (Sat)

PT Bremerton (Th & every other W)

PT Tacoma (M, F, Sa)& Tacoma Jail (W)

PT University Place (W, F)

PT Everett (Tu, Th, Sa)

Please submit cover ltr/resume to jobs@ppww.org; fax: 206.328.6818; or Mail: PPWW/HR, 2001 E. Madison, Seattle, WA 98122
www.ppww.org EOE

Gig Harbor, WA – ARNP – Medical Aesthetics

Gig Harbor MultiCare Healthy Reflections Medical and Day Spa is seeking on-call medical aesthetics nurse practitioners to support our client's desires to restore, rejuvenate or enhance their image through education, medical aesthetic procedures and products. This is the ideal position for a provider who wants to set their own work schedule. Candidates must be eligible for licensure & certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800-621-0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please reference opportunity #717-900

Tacoma, WA – ARNP

Tacoma Family Medicine (TFM) seeks a part-time nurse practitioner to work in a collaborative practice providing comprehensive primary healthcare in all aspects of family practice. Position provides flexibility in work hours/days. TFM is a fully accredited Family Medicine Residency Program and a proud member of the University of Wash-

ington's Family Practice Network. Candidate must be eligible for licensure and certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800-621-0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please reference opportunity #723-889

Urgent Care ARNP – Auburn, WA

Full-time opening for a nurse practitioner to provide quality healthcare to patients of all ages in our Auburn Urgent Care Center located within 30 minutes of downtown Seattle. Experience in urgent care and family practice is preferred. Candidates must be qualified for licensure & certification in Washington State as a PA or NP. You will enjoy excellent compensation and benefits, flexible shifts and system-wide support, while practicing your own patient care values. You'll live the Northwest lifestyle and experience the best of Northwest living, from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800-621-0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please refer to opportunity #729-910

CE Opportunities

UW professional programs to take your career and healthcare to the next level!

The University of Washington offers convenient evening certificate and degree programs that address critical topics facing the healthcare community. Programs include Medical Management, Healthcare Regulatory Compliance, Health Informatics and Health Information Management, Psychological Trauma, Geriatric Mental Health, Gerontology (online) and more. Apply now to start this fall! Visit www.extension.washington.edu or call 1-888-469-6499.

Free online Continuing Nursing Education from the Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation

Visit www.nphealthcarefoundation.org/ce

OTC Advisor: Advancing Patient Self-Care - 7 Modules, 17 Contact Hours total

Managing Type 2 Diabetes and Promoting Metabolic & Cardiovascular Health - 1.5 Contact Hours

Breast Cancer Prevention - 1.5 Contact Hours

Adult Smoking Cessation - 2.0 Contact Hours, including 1 Pharmacology

The Pain Management Dilemma: From Persistent Pain to Palliative Care - 1.5 Contact Hours in Pharmacology

Protecting the International Traveler - 4.25 Contact Hours

Travel Vaccines and Medications - 1.5 Contact Hours

Pacific NW 31st Annual Conference for Advanced Practice in Primary and Acute Care

October 1-4, 2008 • 6.0-21.5 contact hours • Washington Washington State Convention & Trade Center, Seattle, WA Enhance your clinical competencies • Acquire new assessment and management skills • Examine critical issues in health care at the state and national level • Foster a strong coalition of providers in advanced practice • Learn about new products, services, and pharmacotherapeutic agents at this highly-acclaimed conference.

For information call CNE, 206-543-1047 email: cne@u.washington.edu Web: uwce.org. The URL for the Advanced Practice in Primary and Acute Care brochure:

<http://www.son.washington.edu/cne/conf/PDFs/08130-A-C.pdf>

Medical Trivia

- The average human body contains enough fat to make 7 bars of soap
- The surface area of your lungs is large enough to cover a tennis court
- Every 2 weeks the stomach produces new stomach lining...or it would digest itself
- 1 inch of skin has 100 sweat glands
- The weight of skin on an adult is 4-5kg

Meetings

Puget Sound NP Association

Join us! Puget Sound Nurse Practitioners Association is a non-profit organization supporting ARNPs in Puget Sound since 1998. We meet every other month and offer a social hour/networking and a CME talk. Annual dues are \$35/\$17.50 for students. Apply for membership and find meeting information at <http://PSNPA.org>

Ad Information

Copy deadline is the second Tuesday of the month prior to publication. Ads may be accepted later than this on a space-available basis. Position Available Ads of less than 66 words are \$45, of 66 to 130 words are \$75, and greater than 130 words are \$105. Position Available Ads are priced per insertion. Continuing Education Announcements of less than 65 words are \$70, of 66 to 130 words are \$105, or 131 words or greater are \$130. Continuing Education Announcements are per offer-

ing for up to three (3) consecutive insertions. New Product Announcements per product for one insertion of 130 words or less are \$75. Ad Inserts are \$550 for one issue. All ads are subject to space limitations and editing. Call for detailed rate information. Mail copy to ARNP Care, 10024 SE 240th St, #102, Kent, WA 98031. Phone 253.852.9042. Fax 253.852.7725. Email care@nurse.net.

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