Clinician Partner Newsletter (Spring 2021)
Updates for our collaborators

For questions, please contact: Lenore Jackson-Pope, RN, MSM, CCRP: ljackson-pope@bwh.harvard.edu
Gad A. Marshall, M.D.: gamarshall@bwh.harvard.edu

Please find the MADRC 2021 Keep In Mind newsletter for review [here](#). This newsletter reflects some of the work our center has been doing this year and shares some of the innovative research happening across our research centers. We share this annually with the community and our colleagues to keep them informed of what is happening with our team. In this edition we highlight work being done to advance digital technology, as well as open observational studies open like the Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Study mentioned below. A few of our novel clinical trials are also highlighted and discussed below. We hope you enjoy reading about our work.

**Instrumental Activity of Daily Living (IADL) is an innovative observational study.** Dr. Gad Marshall hopes to advance and modernize daily functioning testing in a three-year study to determine if newly developed telephone, smartphone, and computer-based tests can help track early changes in daily tasks. Some tests can be done at home and others will be done at the research center. These studies will be comparing information collected via digital technology evaluations to standard evaluations (questionnaires about daily functioning and paper and pencil memory and thinking tests) and MRI and PET scans of the brain.

This study also aims to learn more about mood and behavior, especially apathy or lack of motivation and interest. Mood and behavior are important to study in order to improve early detection and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease. We are looking for individuals to participate—those who are 55-90 years old, have mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or have apathy. For more information on observational studies visit our website at [www.madrc.org](http://www.madrc.org) and for information on the IADL study for your patients and families see this link [https://rally.partners.org/study/study_iadl](https://rally.partners.org/study/study_iadl)

**Promising new treatment for individuals with MCI and Early Alzheimer’s Disease.** In early 2021 we learned that the phase II Trailblazer trial showed promising results for individuals with MCI and Early AD. The investigational drug, donanemab, which is a monoclonal antibody against amyloid, was highly effective in removing amyloid plaque from the brains of participants. It also resulted in a modest slowing of cognitive and daily functioning decline over 18 months. The Center for Alzheimer Research and Treatment (CART) at Brigham and Women’s Hospital is now participating in Trailblazer 2, a phase III trial that aims to replicate these results in a larger group of participants. This trial will help determine more definitively whether donanemab is effective in slowing cognitive decline and reducing amyloid plaque in people with early-stage AD. The researchers will measure cognition, daily functioning, as well as changes in the brain using MRI and PET scans. Dr. Marshall, the site principal investigator of this trial at CART hopes Trailblazer 2 will be effective in the fight against Alzheimer’s Disease. For more information on clinical trials for individuals with MCI and early AD visit our website at [www.madrc.org](http://www.madrc.org) and for information on the Trailblazer 2 trial for your patients and families see this link [https://rally.partners.org/study/trailblazer_2](https://rally.partners.org/study/trailblazer_2)
Cutting-edge prevention research. A recently launched Alzheimer’s disease prevention trial called the AHEAD Study aims to break new ground in research by finding a treatment that prevents memory loss earlier. Dr. Reisa Sperling, Director of CART is one of the overall leaders of this international prevention trial. The trial opened in the summer of 2020 and is recruiting both English and Spanish speakers age 55 to 85 who do not have symptoms but are at risk for getting Alzheimer’s disease based on intermediate or elevated amyloid in the brain assessed as part of the trial. For more information on the AHEAD study for patients at risk due to age or a family history please see this website https://www.aheadstudy.org/

We are here to help and support you. This month we launched a new program in our Road Map Series-physician edition. The Road Map to Behavioral Management guide can be found here. This program aims to support clinicians with resources to use when supporting patients and families dealing with behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), also referred to as neuropsychiatric symptoms, which are some of the most stressful concerns facing caregivers and family members. Primary care physicians are on the frontlines, supporting caregivers with direction and guidance. We are also developing a program for patients and families and hope to have it to you before our next newsletter. If you would like a virtual education program for your team, please contact Lenore Jackson-Pope Jackson-Pope@BWH.Harvard.edu

The Rapid Diagnostic Clinic (RDC) is open and here to support you. This one-time clinic is run in collaboration between the Center for Brain Mind Medicine (CBMM) and CART. The aim of the RDC is to support clinicians with help in making a diagnosis and offering access to research opportunities. Referrals can be made on Epic or by emailing Behavioral Neurology Support - BWHBehavioralNeurology@bwh.harvard.edu