

Request for Applications for Member Center in the Hydrocephalus Clinical Research Network (HCRN)

Application Deadline: August 1, 2010

Background:

The Hydrocephalus Clinical Research Network (www.hcrn.org) was established in 2006 with a mission to dramatically improve the lives of kids suffering from hydrocephalus by conducting important and field-changing multi-center clinical research.

Current HCRN Centers (Investigators) include: University of Utah/Primary Children's Medical Center (J Kestle, M Walker, J Riva-Cambrin, T Simon), University of Utah/Data Coordinating Center (R Holubkov, M Langley, J Yearley), University of Alabama Birmingham/Birmingham Children's Hospital (J Oakes, J.C. Wellons); Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's Hospital, Houston (T.G. Luerksen, W.E. Whitehead); University of Toronto/Hospital for Sick Children (J.M. Drake, A.V. Kulkarni); University of Washington/Seattle Children's Hospital (S. Browd). (<http://www.hcrn.org/hydrocephalus-research-team.asp>)

The HCRN is currently requesting applications from interested centers who wish to join the HCRN, initially as a Trial Member Center and, eventually, a Full Member Center (see below). Interested centers will be high-volume pediatric neurosurgery centers with a dedicated and proven interest in high-quality hydrocephalus clinical care and research and the ability and willingness to work in a collaborative and collegial academic environment.

Selection Process:

All applications received before **July 16, 2010** will be reviewed. Selected center(s) will be offered Trial Member Center status. HCRN reserves the right to offer no membership, if no application is deemed to be appropriate. Applicants will be notified of decisions within **4-6 weeks** of the application deadline and invited to participate in our semi-annual investigator meeting on September 29,30, 2010 in Salt Lake City.

Acceptance into the HCRN is initially offered on a **6 month** trial basis as a Trial Member Center. For the 6 months as a Trial Member Center, a number of specific milestones will be outlined such as obtaining IRB for specific studies and/or accrual of a certain number of patients on HCRN studies. At the end of the 6 month trial period, a center will be designated a Full Member Center or asked to leave the HCRN or, under exceptional circumstances, Trial Member Center status could be extended for another **6 months**.

HCRN Commitment:

Upon acceptance as a Full Member Center, a negotiated level of funding will be provided by the HCRN to support the local Research Site Coordinator. The job of the Research Site Coordinator will include, but not be limited to, identifying eligible study patients, obtaining study consent (where appropriate), collecting data, entering data, verifying data, participating in HCRN Coordinator conference calls, and attending HCRN meetings (approximately 2 per year lasting 2-3 days each).

Submission Package Requirements:

1. A letter from Division Chief which should include:
 - a) reasons for their center's interest in joining HCRN

b) who they will designate as the Site investigator and how much protected time will be guaranteed for that individual for HCRN-related activities (One pediatric neurosurgeon within the center will be designated the Site Investigator (SI). The SI will be responsible for the successful completion of HCRN studies at the center.)

c) description of local institutional support and resources (including available funding) for clinical research

d) the number of dedicated pediatric neurosurgeons with university appointments.

e) the number of hydrocephalus procedures per year (new shunt insertions, shunt revisions, and endoscopy for hydrocephalus).

f) the center's past experience with collaborative multicenter clinical research

2. A letter from the individual designated to be the local Site Investigator outlining

a) their specific area of interest in hydrocephalus research,

b) their interest in participating in HCRN activities and how such activities would integrate into their current clinical and research practice.,

c) their track record in clinical research in hydrocephalus

d) their training/experience in clinical trials/ clinical epidemiology/ research methodology

e) Their commitment to attend all HCRN meetings (approximately 2 per year [Spring and Fall] lasting 2-3 days each with the location rotating among the HCRN Member Centers) and all HCRN conference calls (every other Wednesday 4 pm MST)

3. Curriculum vitae of the potential Site Investigator.

4. A summary of the center's hydrocephalus research activities, limited to the last 10 years. This should include a list of: peer-reviewed publications, non-peer-reviewed publications, oral presentations at national and international meetings, peer-reviewed grant funding, and patents/inventions.

5. A commitment from all pediatric neurosurgeons within the division that they will, in good faith, support HCRN research activities within their division. This is important since many HCRN research studies require flexibility and changes in how patients are managed peri-operatively by the treating neurosurgeons.

Electronic applications (Word or PDF) are required and should be sent to John.Kestle@hsc.utah.edu