

October 6th, 2017

HRI and NCAN's LaunchPad Entry Helps the Spinal-Cord Injured Improve Walking Ability

Health Research, Inc. (HRI) and the National Center for Adaptive Neurotechnologies (NCAN) have entered "LaunchPad," a Rehabilitation Technology Innovation Competition sponsored by the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM).

The inaugural competition will be held on October 25th, 2017 at the ACRM Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, the largest interdisciplinary rehabilitation research conference in the world.

Contestants will pitch an original rehabilitation technology business or solution to a panel of rehabilitation industry experts and an audience of clinicians, researchers, engineers, and decision-makers to receive feedback and win prizes.

The HRI-NCAN entry will be presented by Dr. Amir Eftekhar of NCAN. Dr. Eftekhar is an HRI employee funded by HRI to clinically translate neuro-rehabilitation technology at NCAN. Researchers at the Wadsworth Center of the New York State Department of Health, in collaboration with Helen Hayes Hospital, developed the original technology and protocols for operant conditioning of spinal-level reflexes. Several studies have shown that this conditioning creates beneficial changes in spinal cord neurons and synapses, both anatomically and physiologically. The method can be thought of as creating "guided beneficial plasticity."

This unique approach has been shown to have widespread positive effects on locomotion previously impaired by spinal cord injury. These beneficial effects include reduced spasticity, easier stepping, increased walking speed, improved gait symmetry, and decreased dependence on assistive devices. Notably, the effects appear to be independent of the duration of the injury, improving walking in patients with long-established injuries, and well as those with more recent injuries.

LaunchPad contest winners will be recognized during the [2017 ACRM Annual Conference](#)—stay tuned!

To learn more, follow these links:

National Center for Adaptive Neurotechnologies

<http://www.neurotechcenter.org/>

New York State Department of Health - Wadsworth Center

<https://www.wadsworth.org/>

Helen Hayes Hospital

<http://helenhayeshospital.org/>

Health Research, Inc. Technology Transfer - From Bench to Bedside

<https://www.healthresearch.org/office-technology-transfer/>

HRI has a long and distinguished history of recognizing, protecting and developing novel technologies. Successful technology transfers include a number of major medical technologies, such as the prostate specific antigen (PSA) test, photodynamic cancer therapy, pox virus vectors, a diagnostic assay for HIV tropism, and the blood thinner Angiomax.

To learn more about collaborating with HRI or about licensing technology for commercial applications, contact Robert L. Gallo, Director of Intellectual Property and Licensing, at robert.gallo@healthresearch.org or (518) 431-1208.