Living with Brain Tumors
An Educational Event for Patients and Families
Sponsored by the Center for Neuro-Oncology

September 7, 2013
Dear Friends,

It is an exciting time at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center (DF/BWCC). Over the past few years, we have made important strides in research and the development of new treatments for patients with brain tumors. The goal of this conference is to update you on these new developments, as well as to provide you with information that you will find useful in your everyday lives.

With the help of many of our patients, Dana-Farber participated in a large study of the drug Avastin, which blocks a tumor’s ability to form the blood vessels that allow them to thrive and grow. Avastin proved effective in patients with recurrent glioblastomas and was approved by the FDA in 2009. While Avastin is not a cure, it has helped many patients. One goal of the research at Dana-Farber is to find ways to improve the effectiveness of Avastin by understanding why tumors become resistant to it and develop more effective strategies.

Another major focus of research at Dana-Farber is to characterize the molecular and genetic abnormalities in brain tumors. It is our hope that, over time, this information will enhance our ability to uncover the causes of each person’s tumor, allowing us to select the most appropriate treatment to achieve truly personalized molecular medicine and to speed the development of new, targeted therapies.

We are already making progress. Dana-Farber researchers have assisted with the development of targeted molecular drugs for glioblastomas and are identifying the most promising and best combination for our patients. Clinical trials of new drugs that target PI3 kinase, one of the most critical pathways in glioblastomas are ongoing. We also have a large research program studying the biology of tumor stem cells, which are resistant to treatment, and finding the best drugs to kill them. Another area of great excitement is the development of therapies that stimulate the immune system to fight brain tumors.

Although a major focus of research at Dana-Farber is finding better treatments for gliomas, we also have active research programs for meningiomas, CNS lymphomas, ependymomas, brain metastases, and other tumor types.

With your help, we hope to find cures for brain tumors. If you would like additional information or are interested in supporting this innovative research, please consider donating to the Adult Brain Tumor Research Fund by contacting me at patrick_wen@dfci.harvard.edu or 617-632-2166; or contact Susan Korsmeyer at susan_korsmeyer@dfci.harvard.edu or 617-582-8393.

Thank you so much.

Patrick Wen, MD
Director, Center for Neuro-Oncology
Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center
Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School
7:30 – 8 a.m.
Registration

8:00 a.m.
Patrick Wen, MD
Welcome and Introduction

8:10 a.m.
David Reardon, MD
Clinical Trials

8:20 a.m.
Mikael Rinne, MD, PhD
Science of Brain Tumors

8:30 a.m.
Brian Alexander, MD, MPH
Radiation Therapies

8:40 a.m.
Ian Dunn, MD
Brain Tumor Surgery

8:50 – 9:50 a.m.
Panel discussion, with questions from the audience

9:50 – 10 a.m. BREAK

10 a.m.
Bambi Mathay, LMT, NCTMB, RMP
Integrative Therapies

10:20 a.m.
Theresa Ochenkoski, LMT, NCTMB, RMP
Reiki and Massage

10:30 a.m.
Weidong Lu, MB, MPH, PhD, Lic.Ac.
Zhi Ping Li, MB, MA, Lic.Ac.
Acupuncture

10:35 a.m.
Nancy Campbell, MS
Exercise

10:45 a.m.
Stacy Kennedy, MPH, RD, LDN
Nutrition

11:05 a.m. – Noon
Panel discussion, with questions from the audience

Noon – 1 p.m. LUNCH

1 p.m.
Debra LaFrankie, RN, OCN
Gastrointestinal Symptoms

1:10 p.m.
Andrew Norden, MD, MPH
Seizures

1:20 p.m.
Jennifer Rifenburg, NP
Fatigue

1:30 p.m.
Eudocia Q. Lee MD, MPH
Brain Swelling

1:40 – 2:15 p.m.
Panel discussion, with questions from the audience

2:15 p.m.
Nancy Goldsmith Tharler, LICSW
Caring for the Caregiver

2:25 p.m.
Halyna Vitagliano, MD, Msci
Thinking and Memory

2:40 p.m.
Clare Humphreys, PhD
Behavioral Difficulties

2:55 – 3:15 p.m.
Panel discussion, with questions from the audience

3:15 p.m.
Patrick Wen, MD
Closing Remarks
Multidisciplinary brain tumor clinic: A team approach, focused on your needs

The Multidisciplinary Clinic for Patients and Families at the Center for Neuro-Oncology gives patients and their families a single time and place to meet with many different specialists from Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center, including specialists in surgical, medical, and radiation oncology. This approach focuses on your needs and ensures carefully coordinated treatment and support.

The clinic is held on the 8th floor of Dana-Farber’s Yawkey Center for Cancer Care. To schedule an appointment, call 617-632-3703.

Meet the Speakers

All speakers are affiliated with Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center, unless otherwise noted.

Brian Alexander, MD, MPH, is a Radiation Oncologist specializing in cancers of the central nervous system. He is also an Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology at Harvard Medical School. He earned his medical degree from the University of Michigan and completed his residency as part of the Harvard Radiation Oncology Program.

Nancy Campbell, MS, is an exercise physiologist in the Adult Survivorship Program. She began her career at the Institute in 2005 and has been involved in numerous research studies involving cancer survivors and exercise. A Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer, she also leads fitness classes for female cancer patients and survivors, and provides no-cost exercise consultations to male and female patients and survivors.

Lisa Doherty, APRN, BC, OCN, is a Nurse Practitioner in the Center for Neuro-Oncology. Doherty has extensive experience caring for adult patients with primary brain tumors, including patients on clinical trials. Prior to Dana-Farber, Doherty worked with hematology and oncology patients at University of Massachusetts Memorial Medical Center and the Lahey Clinic.

Ian Dunn, MD, is a neurosurgeon specializing in the surgery and academic study of benign and malignant brain tumors of the cerebral hemispheres, skull base, and pituitary region. He received his medical degree from Harvard Medical School, where he is now an Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery.

Clare Humphreys, PhD, is an Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and a Clinical Neuropsychologist in the division of cognitive and behavioral neurology at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Her clinical work and research interests focus on the cognitive impact of living with cancer and other chronic health conditions, and strategies for improving cognitive functioning and quality of life.

Stacy Kennedy, MPH, RD, CSO, LDN, is a senior clinical nutritionist and integrative nutritionist. She also works in private practice in the Boston area. Kennedy is featured in the award winning documentary, Fat, Sick and Nearly Dead. She is a certified personal trainer and fitness instructor through the American College of Sports Medicine.

Debra LaFrankie, RN, OCN, is a Program Nurse in the Center for Neuro-Oncology. She is a co-leader of the Dana-Farber Brain Tumor Support Group, and facilitates the weekly multidisciplinary
brain tumor board conference. She is also captain of “Team Neuro,” which helps raise brain tumor awareness and research funds through the annual Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk.

Eudocia Q. Lee, MD, MPH, is a Neuro-oncologist and an Assistant Professor in Neurology at Harvard Medical School. Her research focuses on novel treatments for glioblastoma and on brain metastases. She earned her medical degree from Washington University and completed her postgraduate training at Dana-Farber, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and Massachusetts General Hospital.

Zhi Ping Li, MB, MA, Lic.Ac., has practiced acupuncture and Chinese medicine for more than 25 years. He earned his degree in traditional Chinese medicine from Shanghai University in 1984 and spent 5 years in extensive training of both Chinese and Western medicine. He earned his master’s degree in public health from Harvard School of Public Health and his PhD in integrative medicine from Beijing University of Chinese Medicine.

Maria Barbara (Bambi) Mathay, LMT, NCTMB, RMP, holds a doctor of medicine degree from the Philippines and is a graduate of the Muscular Therapy Institute in Cambridge, Mass. She has been practicing massage and Reiki for 12 years. For 10 years, she has specialized as an oncology massage therapist and Reiki practitioner at Dana-Farber’s Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies. She has always been interested in integrative and comprehensive healing and well being, as well as working in the hospital setting. Her goal is to partner with and empower all patients in improving quality of life through healing touch, in every step of their journey.

Weidong Lu, MB, MPH, PhD, Lic. Ac., is a researcher and lead oncology acupuncturist at Dana-Farber’s Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies. He is also an instructor in medicine at Harvard Medical School. Originally trained in China as a physician specialized in Chinese Medicine, he has been actively practicing acupuncture for cancer patients at Dana-Farber for more than 12 years. He earned his master’s degree in public health from Harvard School of Public Health and his PhD in integrative medicine from Beijing University of Chinese Medicine.

Andrew Norden, MD, MPH, is a Neuro-oncologist in the Center for Neuro-Oncology and an Assistant Professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School. He has conducted a number of clinical trials of new treatments for high-grade gliomas and meningiomas. Norden attended medical school at Yale University and completed a neuro-oncology fellowship at Dana-Farber and Massachusetts General Hospital.

Theresa Ochenkoski, LMT, NCTMB, RMP, began working as a Massage Therapist with oncology patients through Dana-Farber’s Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies in 2006. In addition to being a nationally certified and licensed massage therapist, Ochenkoski is a Usui Reiki Master Practitioner and a nationally certified Foot Reflexologist who practices restorative massage therapy, Reiki, and foot reflexology at Whole Person Health in Stoughton, Mass.

David Reardon, MD, is Clinical Director of the Center for Neuro-Oncology. He previously served as the Associate Deputy Director at the Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke University Medical Center. His work includes using clinical therapeutic agents to improve the cure rates in patients with brain and spinal tumors.

Jennifer Rifenburg NP, works with adult patients with primary brain tumors, including those on clinical trials, in the Center for Neuro-Oncology. Previously, she served as nurse educator for the vascular surgery unit at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

Mikael Rinne, MD, PhD, is a Neuro-oncologist in the Center for Neuro-Oncology and an Instructor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School. He treats patients with primary brain tumors and conducts laboratory research investigating genetic vulnerabilities of malignant gliomas. He earned his medical and graduate degrees at Indiana University School of Medicine and completed his residency and fellowship training in the neurology and neuro-oncology programs at Harvard Medical School.

Nancy Goldsmith Tharler, LICSW, is the Ambulatory Neuro-oncology Social Worker in the Center for Neuro-Oncology. She sees patients, couples, and families to help with adjustment issues and provides access to available resources. In 2009, she received the National Neuro-Oncology Social Worker of the Year Award. She also runs the Brain Tumor Support Group with Debra LaFrankie, RN, OCN.
Halyna Vitagliano, MD, MSci, is an Attending Psychiatrist in Dana-Farber’s Psychosocial Oncology department. She provides neuropsychiatric evaluations, treatment, and follow-up for patients with psychiatric and cognitive issues that result from brain cancer and hematological malignancies and their sequelae. A graduate of Tufts University School of Medicine, Vitagliano completed her residency and fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Patrick Wen, MD, is Director of the Center for Neuro-Oncology, Director of the Division of Cancer Neurology in the Department of Neurology at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School. His research focuses on novel treatments for brain tumors, including targeted molecular therapies and inhibitors of angiogenesis.