Med School Watercooler
NEWS FROM FREDERICK P. WHIDDON COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

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Students and residents celebrate The Art of Medicine

Sponsored by the Wellness Council and the Gold Humanism Honor Society, The Art of Medicine showcased students' and residents' artistic talents. The event was held Nov. 14 in the MacQueen Alumni Center Grand Ballroom.

Seventeen medical students, two doctoral students, and two residents participated as artists at the event, which featured paintings, ceramics, jewelry, drawings, singing, and piano and guitar playing.

In honor of the late Cindy Sheets, M.D., the groups collected book donations for USA Health's Reach Out and Read Program.

Additionally, the event raised $4,540 for the Dr. Cindy S. Sheets Endowment for Early Literacy. The total includes a $1,000 matching gift from John Marymont, M.D., M.B.A., dean of the Whiddon College of Medicine and vice president for medical affairs.

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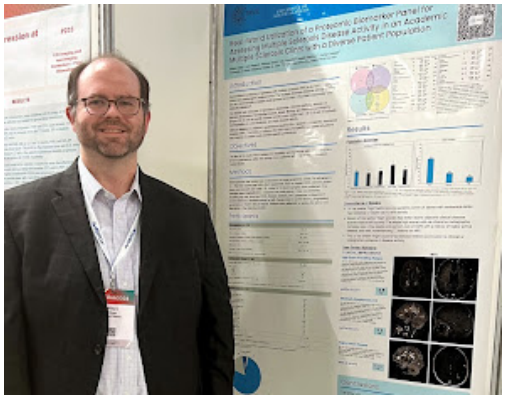
Kilgo presents results of using unique blood test at world MS research meeting



William Kilgo, M.D., presented at MS Milan 2023.

William Kilgo, M.D., a neurologist with USA Health, recently shared research findings using a first-of-its-kind blood test that monitors multiple sclerosis (MS) disease activity in a poster presentation at MS Milan 2023, the world's largest research meeting on the topic.

Kilgo, who also serves as director of the neurology residency program and assistant professor of neurology at the Whiddon College of Medicine, specializes in MS treatment.

MS is a disease in which the immune system attacks the protective covering of nerve fibers, potentially disabling communication between the brain and spinal cord. Vision loss, pain, fatigue, and impaired coordination are among its common symptoms. However, each person's experience with MS can be widely different, varying from nearly symptom-free for some to others experiencing chronic severe conditions.

Physical therapy and medications that suppress the immune system can help address symptoms and slow disease progression.

But the Multiple Sclerosis Disease Activity (MSDA) test, created by Octave Bioscience, Inc., a leading precision care company, could offer patients new hope. Typically, MRIs conducted annually provide insight into a patient's MS journey. The MSDA test, which can be done more frequently, can indicate earlier signs of disease activity, characterized by a breakdown of the nervous system.

The MSDA test helps provide insight into the behavior of MS in each patient. It can help determine treatment therapies, monitor stability or slow decline, evaluate new symptoms, and conduct routine surveillance.

Kilgo applied the test to a diverse group of patients to determine the feasibility of its real-world application and concluded it is a reliable indicator of disease activity.

"We found a high concordance between the MSDA test and clinical and radiographic assessments of disease activity and noted a few prognostic case studies where the test showed a high score prior to subsequently identified clinically evident disease activity," he said. "The test is a reliable indicator of objective disease activity, and we look forward to future studies on its capabilities."

He presented those findings at the 9th Joint ECTRIMS-ACTRIMS Meeting in Milan, Italy. ECTRIMS, the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis, and ACTRIMS, Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis, are both dedicated to the understanding and treatment of multiple sclerosis.

New data from Octave's clinically validated multivariate biomarker blood test, the first of its kind designed specifically for MS, was presented in nine posters, including Kilgo's, at the international conference.

"We are proud to share work at this year's MS Milan conference that continues to demonstrate the accuracy and reliability of the MSDA test in real-world settings with diverse patient populations," he said.

Kilgo said future research will include further investigation into how different patient populations experience the disease.