

Building a Vision

Creating a Remarkable Environment for Brain and Spine Patients

By Patti Green | Photos by Jerome Hart, Jeff Krausse and David Lawton

To build a remarkable house, you start with a well-designed blueprint. You need people skilled in their crafts, proper tools, and the best lumber, stone, steel and fabric. With these, you could build a highly functional, even award-winning home.

The same is true of medical excellence. With the right design, the right talent, the right equipment and the right timing, you could build a remarkable environment for patients.

That is exactly what a visionary team of doctors, administrators, staff members and philanthropists is building through Providence Brain Institute.

Reading the blueprint

Providence Brain Institute is a virtual neurosciences center, bringing cohesive guidance to all neurology and neurosurgery services offered by Providence Health & Services in the Portland area. The institute focuses solely on patients who suffer from diseases or injuries of the brain or spinal cord.

Four years into its existence, Providence Brain Institute has a solid clinical presence. It has a foundation of specialists, a framework of services and excellent technological furnishings. It is even winning awards, most notably from The Joint Commission, American Stroke Association and national ALS Association for excellence in the care of patients who have strokes or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease). >>>



PROVIDENCE BRAIN INSTITUTE *Defining tomorrow*



◀ Providence ALS Center

Kim Goslin, M.D., Ph.D. (right), infuses a positive outlook into each patient's care at Providence ALS Center, a nationally certified Center of Excellence for ALS care. As patients struggle against diminishing mobility, Dr. Goslin's team gives them options and dignity.

Providence Center for Parkinson's Disease ▶

Besides monitoring symptoms, such as tremors, rigidity and postural instability, Richard Rosenbaum, M.D., medical director of the new Parkinson's Center, and a team of experts offer patients coordinated access to a cadre of medical specialists, rehabilitation, clinical trials and community resources.





Technology, co-location and research development are the major topics facing Tom Lorish, M.D., medical director of neurosciences, orthopedics and rehabilitation and of Ambulatory Services, and Bonnie Smith, administrator of the Providence neurosciences program and Providence Brain Institute. These three issues will determine the success of the institute over the next five years.



◀ **Providence Cognitive Assessment Clinic**

The ability to copy simple patterns is part of the evaluation at Providence Cognitive Assessment Clinic. Led by Michael Mega, M.D., Ph.D., the clinic diagnoses, evaluates and treats memory disorders at the earliest possible stages, maximizing treatment effectiveness.

Providence Cranial Services ▶

Neurosurgeons affiliated with Providence Cranial Services specialize in minimally invasive surgery, open skull procedures, Gamma Knife procedures, neurointerventional techniques, spinal surgeries and skull-based surgeries.



Tom Lorish, M.D., medical director of neurosciences, orthopedics and rehabilitation and of Ambulatory Services for Providence Health & Services in Portland, remembers when it all started. “We wanted to provide the very best neurological care to our community. Our vision is based on the Mission of Mother Joseph. We’re here to serve our community, and the patients we see here are among the most vulnerable.”

While university hospitals typically emphasize research, followed by education and then clinical care, the Providence model is exactly opposite. “We put patient care first, believing that education and research will follow,” says Dr. Lorish.

According to Dr. Lorish, the reason is simple: “If we concentrate on patient care and do that very well, patients will come because of the high-quality, coordinated care we provide. The very best doctors will come because it’s interesting and rewarding to work here. External funding will come because we have the patient population to support research and development.”

Laying the foundation

Historically, The Oregon Clinic has helped Providence Portland Medical Center establish and maintain a strong neurology presence on the east side of Portland. Ten years ago, however, on the west side of town, Providence St. Vincent Medical Center did not have enough neurologists, but it did have a strong neurosurgical and spine program. Additional neurological services were needed, and Providence responded to this community need.

To start, a state-of-the-art neuro biplane interventional lab was built at Providence St. Vincent. This remarkable hybrid suite – the first of its kind in Oregon – is equipped with 3-D imaging equipment, as well as with catheters, guidewires and tools that can navigate through tiny blood vessels of the brain. This combination of 3-D imaging and catheterization equipment allows physicians to take highly detailed, real-time images while they perform minimally invasive procedures to remove blockages that cause stroke and to repair potentially deadly brain aneurysms.

New staff and services followed. Ted Lowenkopf, M.D., was hired from Saint Louis University to start Providence Stroke Center, followed closely by Stanley Cohan, M.D., Ph.D., from

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– TOM LORISH, M.D.

Georgetown University, who launched Providence Multiple Sclerosis Center.

With these additions, the foundation was in place. Providence now had the sheer number of specialists and physician leaders necessary to continue to strengthen its neuroscience services.

Building the rooms

Dr. Lorish then approached Providence Medical Foundations: “We have the foundation in place for a full-spectrum brain institute. We have bricks. We need mortar – the mortar of philanthropy to hold together our efforts around research and technology.”

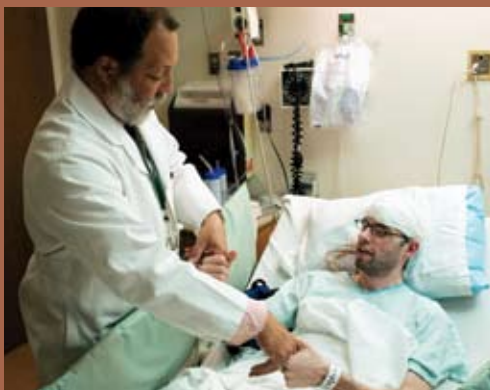
In 2004, the Foundation named Providence Brain Institute as one of four major programs that would benefit from the largest capital campaign in Providence history. By the end of December 2007, the Providence Together campaign had raised \$6.9 million for growth and development of Providence Brain Institute.

Specialty services have become the “rooms” in the Providence Brain Institute “house.” With stroke and MS programs already in place, the institute collaborated more closely with Providence’s Gamma Knife Center of Oregon and Providence Acute Rehabilitation Center. It also developed specialty programs for epilepsy, ALS, cognitive health, cranial and spine surgical services and, in 2007, Parkinson’s disease.

Harvesting the orchard

Three short-term objectives have been outlined for the continued growth of the institute. Dr. Lorish hopes to achieve these within five years:

- Strengthen the research program to support Providence Brain Institute’s specialty programs and to augment the ability to increase the number of clinical trials and to attract translational scientists with national funding.



◀ Providence Epilepsy Services

Mark Yerby, M.D., M.P.H., assesses the strength of a patient plagued by seizures since age 13. Now a patient of Providence Epilepsy Services, he is undergoing inpatient diagnostic testing to determine if surgery to remove a small brain lesion will prevent further seizures.

Providence Multiple Sclerosis Center ▶

With a subspecialty in neuro-ophthalmology, Mark Morrow, M.D., keeps a close eye on the vision problems that often affect multiple sclerosis patients. Dr. Morrow works at Providence Multiple Sclerosis Center, which treats more MS patients than any other clinic in Oregon.





Collaboration among Providence Brain Institute leaders has paved the way for growth and development. Tom Lorish, M.D. (left), and administrator Bonnie Smith seek input from Stan Cohan, M.D. (right), Ph.D., and Daniel Rohrer, M.D., as they prepare to launch the next phase of development – construction of an intraoperative MRI suite.

- Co-locate Providence Brain Institute physicians and services on each hospital campus. This will enhance physician synergy and collaboration while significantly improving patient convenience through a coordinated care model. Currently Providence Brain Institute physicians are spread across 10 sites on three campuses.
- Furnish the institute with additional state-of-the-art technology, starting with an intraoperative MRI suite at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center. Like the neuro biplane suite, the intraoperative MRI will be unique in the region. This cutting-edge technology offers patients the very best care and supports the recruitment of additional high-caliber specialists and physician leaders.

Each of these five-year goals is rooted in Providence’s Mission and core values. Each goal supports the commitment of Providence Brain Institute physicians and administrators to provide the highest-quality care to their patients.

The serendipitous result of achieving these goals is clear. “We will then become a self-propagating, self-funded, ongoing enterprise,” says Dr. Lorish. “Our efforts will turn

from constantly putting out seed money to working a functioning orchard. We’ve planted the trees with our seed money, and we’re just beginning to see the fruits of our labor.”

A new day for neurosciences

When Dr. Lorish considers the future of neurological services and the role Providence Brain Institute will play, he likes what he sees.

“We’re in a new frontier,” says Dr. Lorish excitedly. “We can now do things in the brain that we couldn’t do before. In the 1960s and ’70s, cardiac programs were developing new technologies to treat heart conditions definitively. Now that’s happening in the neurosciences. Gamma Knife. Intraoperative MRI scanners. Deep brain stimulation. Neurointerventional techniques. We’re in an area of firsts in the brain. It’s a huge opportunity for us.”

Unlike universities and for-profit health care systems where research or education might take priority, Providence Brain Institute is all about the patients. As Dr. Lorish puts it, “We’re here to serve the poor and vulnerable. And I believe that if we do that really well, we will build an excellent neurosciences house.” ■



◀ Providence Spine Services

Most spinal conditions can be successfully treated without surgery. But if surgery is necessary, Providence patients have access to the newest options for spinal treatment, including minimally invasive techniques and clinical trials.

Providence Stroke Center ▶

Rapid response – from emergency care to rehabilitation – is key to recovery for stroke patients. Lisa Yanase, M.D. (right), associate medical director of the nationally award-winning Providence Stroke Center, meets daily with the stroke team, ensuring that each patient receives prompt care for maximum recovery.

