

# ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS AND UPDATES FROM DR. W. P. ANDREW LEE

February 2, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce the appointment of **Heakyung Kim, M.D.**, as the new Chair of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) effective May 1. She will hold the Kimberly-Clark Distinguished Chair in Mobility Research.

Dr. Kim joins us from Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) and NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, where she serves as Vice Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine and Director of Pediatric Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. She is the A. David Gurewitsch Professor of Rehabilitation and Regenerative Medicine, Professor of Orthopedics and Pediatrics at CUIMC, and Professor of Clinical Rehabilitation Medicine and Pediatrics at Weill Cornell Medicine. She also serves as Associate Director of Rehabilitation for the Weinberg Family Cerebral Palsy Center at CUIMC.

After receiving her M.D. from Ewha Woman's University College of Medicine in Seoul, South Korea, Dr. Kim trained in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine of Yonsei University College of Medicine in Seoul. She completed her combined pediatric and PM&R residency at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences in New Jersey, and then joined the faculty at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), where she served as the Medical Director of the Cerebral Palsy Clinic and Section of Rehabilitation Medicine.



As a clinician, Dr. Kim is an expert in Single Event Multi-Level Chemoneurolysis (SEMLC) with botulinum toxin and phenol. Dr. Kim led the development of the Spasticity Management Program at CHOP, which decreased orthopedic surgery by 70% for children with cerebral palsy. She established an institutional multidisciplinary drooling management program with botulinum toxin injections to the salivary gland, which prevented repeat pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) admissions of children with frequent aspiration pneumonia and decreased PICU length of stay. For the Weinberg Family Cerebral Palsy Center, she led an interdisciplinary team that built a life span-care model for individuals with cerebral palsy.

Her body of research – funded by the National Institutes of Health, pharmaceutical industry, academia, and private organizations – focuses on spasticity management, robotic therapy, and exercise for weak muscles in children with cerebral palsy. She is also studying quality of life for adults with cerebral palsy.

A dedicated educator, Dr. Kim has been recognized three times as teacher of the year by her trainees. She developed the Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine Fellowship Program at Columbia University and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital and served as its inaugural Director.

Dr. Kim is actively involved in national and international PM&R professional societies, having volunteered with various nonprofit organizations to bring the same standard of care in rehabilitation medicine to countries with less-developed rehabilitation practices. She is part of the World Health Organization's effort to bring standardized rehabilitation medicine across the world.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Elan Louis for his service as Chair of the Search Committee, and to all the Search Committee members – Dr. William Dauer, Dr. Beth Kennard, Dr. Benjamin Levi, Dr. Elizabeth Paulk, Dr. Gail Peterson, Dr. Ross Querry, Dr. John Sweetenham, Dr. Babu Welch, Dr. Jon Williamson, and Dr. Dane Wukich – for the dedication and insights they brought to this comprehensive national search. I would also like to recognize Dr. Kathleen Bell, who has served most capably as Chair of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation since 2014, and will continue as a part-time faculty in the Department.

Dr. Kim's clinical expertise, patient-centered research, and proven leadership record of integrating PM&R in key areas of health care promise to further elevate the PM&R Department at UT Southwestern Medical Center in clinical excellence and innovation.

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Kim to Dallas and UT Southwestern.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  
Dean, UT Southwestern Medical School

Copyright 2022 UT Southwestern Medical Center. All rights reserved.

*Academic Connections* is a publication of Communications, Marketing, and Public Affairs (CMPA) at UT Southwestern Medical Center.