



A Look Back: Our Largest-Ever Clinical Conference Re-Confirms We're 'All in This Together'

Every two years, hundreds of ALS health care professionals come together to discuss new trends, share best practices and guidelines, exchange ideas and successes, and talk about challenges and potential solutions. To capture the collaborative power of the 2018 event in Fort Worth, Texas – our largest-ever Clinical Conference, with more than 500 attendees – we put together a short video highlight reel.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=tdTDvvCL-sE

“One of the beautiful things, I think, about the Clinical Conference is that everybody’s really all in this together and we’re all trying to do everything we can for the patients and their families,” Dr. Melinda Kavanaugh, MSW, LCSW with the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, said.

Attendees of the three-day conference include physicians, speech-language pathologists, assistive technology professionals, physical therapists, occupational therapists, registered dietitians, respiratory therapists, nursing professionals, and social workers.

“The [Clinical Conference] is [...] an exceptional opportunity for folks who are across disciplines, for people who are really hands-on, deeply engaged with patients and caregivers in the community [to]

really learn from each other in a very non-intense or non-threatening environment,” Dr. Kavanaugh added. “Sometimes research symposiums can be pretty overwhelming.”

Alisa Brownlee, ATP, CAPS, an assistive technology specialist and consultant for The ALS Association, said, “The disease doesn’t change, but how we approach it [can] change in an instant, because that’s how quickly technology changes.”

The 2018 Clinical Conference included 62 platform presentations and a poster session featuring 27 presentations. Click [here](#) to read biographies of the speakers. And nearly 30 companies focused on durable medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, nutrition, assistive technology, and home health shared the latest on their product and service offerings with attendees in the exhibit hall.

During a special ceremony, we awarded the Lawrence A. Rand Prize to Frances (Fran) McClellan, a passionate advocate and health care provider for people living with ALS. Fran serves as a nurse coordinator for our Certified Center of Excellence at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center (Cleveland VAMC) in Cleveland, Ohio, and as a board member for The ALS Association Northern Ohio Chapter.



“Our Clinical Conference is truly special because it helps to build a network of health professionals who specifically support the advancement of ALS knowledge and disease management options,” Dr. Neil Thakur, executive vice president for mission strategy for The ALS Association, said. “Attendees gather invaluable information about novel approaches and solutions to ALS clinical management challenges as they strive to meet their ultimate goal of improving the quality of life for people affected by ALS.”

Dr. Lou Libby, a pulmonologist with Providence Portland Medical Center in Portland, Oregon, said, “We share ideas, we learn from each other, and we learn best practices, and in the long run, it helps patients with ALS.”

These and other generous sponsors helped make the 2018 Clinical Conference possible:

- Presenting Sponsor – Quantum Rehab
- Notable Sponsors – Mitsubishi Tanabe Pharma America, Inc., Biohaven Pharmaceuticals, ITF Pharma
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The next Clinical Conference will be held in 2020