Parkinson’s Foundation Center of Excellence is not a distinction we give out lightly. To date, we have designated 45 Parkinson’s Foundation Centers of Excellence — including 31 in the United States and 14 around the world. These facilities meet our strict criteria for providing the highest level of expert care for 145,000 people with Parkinson’s disease (PD), leading the way in science toward a cure and setting the standard for care facilities across the globe.

How to become a Center of Excellence
Parkinson's Foundation Centers of Excellence must meet detailed standards in four core areas:

1. **Comprehensive Care:** Centers of Excellence must care for at least 700 people with Parkinson’s each year and provide them with a full spectrum of services that address motor, non-motor and cognitive symptoms. The care team must include a neurologist with training in movement disorders or Parkinson’s, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a speech-language pathologist, and patient and family support services.

2. **Research:** Centers must advance care and quality of life through cutting-edge research in distinct areas such as clinical trials, translational research, basic science research or epidemiological research. The findings must be published and shared with their peers in peer-reviewed journals or the equivalent. Many centers also participate in our Parkinson’s Outcomes Project, the largest-ever clinical study of Parkinson’s, with more than 12,000 participants.

3. **Professional Training:** Quality care can improve the quality of life for people with Parkinson’s. That’s why Centers of Excellence must show commitment to clinical training through fellowships and programs for medical professionals at their center and in recognized underserved communities.

4. **Education and Community Outreach:** We must continue to empower the public to better understand Parkinson’s in order to help people with the disease live well in their own communities. To qualify as a Center of Excellence, medical centers must facilitate educational events for patients and families, promote access to wellness programs and provide the community with current information about the disease in the vicinity of the center and in recognized underserved areas.

Applicants that meet these rigorous criteria receive a site visit from at least two external reviewers along with two Parkinson's Foundation staff members. If the facility scores high enough on this review, they will earn the Center of Excellence designation for five years, using it to grow even stronger in Parkinson’s care, research and leadership in the Parkinson’s community.

With the help of donors like you, the Parkinson’s Foundation plans to expand the center network to help even more people in our underserved PD community. **To find a Center of Excellence near you, visit Parkinson.org/Search.**
Each year, with the help of our generous supporters, the Parkinson's Foundation awards millions of dollars in research grants. Milton Biagioni, MD, a grant recipient, recently reported back on the progress he's made in his research. Dr. Biagioni is studying a new device and its usefulness in reducing fatigue and slow thinking, two of the most prevalent symptoms of Parkinson's.

Dr. Biagioni gave study participants a portable non-invasive brain stimulator device called transcranial direct current stimulator (tDCS) that they use at home, with the goal of alleviating these common Parkinson's symptoms. While the participant wears the device, Dr. Biagioni performs therapy via a video conferencing platform and monitors results in his lab. He said, “We were a bit concerned about potential barriers in our participants’ ability to operate the technology, however our experience showed the device is easy to operate and all participants were able to safely perform the required procedures. In addition, participants were very happy to participate from the comfort of their homes or offices.”

So far, Dr. Biagioni has completed 440 tele-monitored tDCS (tele-tDCS) sessions, and the results are promising, particularly for decreasing fatigue severity. Added benefits include improved sleep quality, overall motor and non-motor symptoms of PD and decreased depression. This study could be influential in developing large clinical trials for the at-home device.

Thanks to you, the Parkinson's Foundation was able to advance this effort, not only through financial support, but also by helping to modify certain logistical aspects of the study. Dr. Biagioni said, “There has been excellent communication with the Foundation throughout our research process.”

Dr. Biagioni plans to increase the number of participants and duration of the intervention in his tele-tDCS study. As a result, this research could be an innovative first step in having large clinical trials occur from the security of one’s home and could shape the future of at-home palliative care.

Learn more about the Parkinson’s Foundation latest research initiatives at Parkinson.org/Research.

“Thanks to the Parkinson’s Foundation, we have this amazing opportunity to bring a Parkinson’s clinical trial to participants’ homes.”
– Milton Biagioni, MD
Research Grantee

Dr. Biagioni (left) was awarded a research grant for at-home non-invasive brain stimulation for fatigue and cognitive slowing.
Supporting, educating and assisting caregivers makes life better for people with Parkinson’s. This past December, the Parkinson’s Foundation hosted the bilingual Caregiver Summit to empower caregivers with information that can help them care for their loved ones and themselves.

Michelle Rios served as primary caregiver for her mother, Maria, who had Parkinson’s. After her mom passed away, Michelle became a Parkinson’s support group leader in her Arizona community. Thanks to your support, Michelle received a scholarship from the Parkinson’s Foundation to attend the summit — and it had a big impact.

“There was information that I know will be very beneficial to the Hispanic Parkinson’s community,” she said. For example, during the Spanish portion of the Caregiver Summit, Michelle learned that in many Latino households, adult children believe they are the only ones who can provide the best care for their parent. The summit provided information about how different family care styles and beliefs contribute to health problems in caregivers.

This information resonated with Michelle because she always put her mother’s needs before her own, and Michelle’s health suffered as a result.

“You cannot pour from an empty glass,” Michelle said. “When I attended the Caregiver Summit, I learned so much about using resources that would have been great for myself and my family, had I only been able to identify them.”

Now Michelle intends to take the information back to participants in the Parkinson’s support group she leads, primarily for Spanish speakers. “I want to be able to help my Hispanic Parkinson’s community understand the disease, learn about resources out there to help them manage their symptoms and learn about services available to them. I also want to help caregivers ... they need support, too.”

Watch recorded Caregiver Summit sessions at Parkinson.org/Summit.

The Caregiver Summit was designed for anyone caring for someone living with PD, including spouses, partners, children or friends.

**BECOME A PARKINSON’S HERO!**

Parkinson’s Heroes are a special group of donors who provide reliable, monthly gifts that allow us to do more research, education and outreach.

If you know someone with Parkinson’s or someone who is a caregiver ... you know that they are strong. But it is not easy. And the people we help need a hero — someone like you who they may never meet ... but who is quietly supporting and rooting for them behind the scenes.

You can be that person. Become a Parkinson’s Hero today. To join, visit Parkinson.org/Hero.
Nancy Redkey knows that "exercise is at least as important as Parkinson's meds." A former public school teacher and now hospital administrator, 78-year-old Nancy discovered the power of exercise when her husband, Ed, was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2001.

"I remember asking his doctor if exercise would help," Nancy said. "Well, it can't hurt," he said. Nancy realized in that moment how little the general medical community knew about Parkinson's. Those well-versed in Parkinson's disease know exercise can slow the decline in quality of life for people with Parkinson's.

For several years after Ed's diagnosis, Nancy and Ed lived a normal life — they travelled overseas, visited grandchildren and spent time with loved ones as often as they could. But soon they began adapting to Ed's changing abilities.

Nancy saw firsthand how essential the Foundation was to her family and felt so grateful for the help they received. She wanted to inspire others to be proactive in the fight against Parkinson's — and to know they are not alone. That desire is what led her to become Board Chair of her local Parkinson's Support Group, and since then she has raised more than $150,000 through various fundraisers, walks and events.

This year, Nancy organized a local walk as part of the Parkinson's Foundation Moving Day Community Walk program. This new program gives volunteers like Nancy, who are personally touched by Parkinson's, the chance to help raise money and generate awareness in neighborhoods where a Moving Day event is not already taking place.

For Nancy, organizing a walk like this comes easily. Since 2011, Nancy led a similar annual event called "Walk on Water" that benefitted the Parkinson's Foundation. Her husband, Ed, passed away soon after that first walk. "One of my favorite memories of Ed's last year was the picture of his smiling face as he proudly crossed the finish line with our daughter at his side."

This year, as she prepares for her Community Walk, Nancy can't wait to see families come out in support of their loved ones and see the pride on the faces of all the walkers.

"I want people to understand that like my favorite quote, life is not about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning how to dance in the rain. I want those with Parkinson's and their families to know that they are not alone, ever, but they need to reach out, stay connected and keep moving — mentally and physically."

To learn more about organizing a Community Walk in your hometown, please visit Parkinson.org/CommunityWalk.

CONTRIBUTION FORM

☐ YES! I want to help everyone who is affected by Parkinson's disease lead better lives and advance research toward a cure. Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift to the Parkinson's Foundation in the amount of:

☐ $35  ☐ $75  ☐ $150  ☐ $500  ☐ Other $_____

Name ____________________________________________________________________________

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Please make your check payable to the Parkinson's Foundation. You may also give online at Parkinson.org/Voice. All gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law.