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Early Detection of Cerebral Palsy Conference showcases research funded by Pedal-with-Pete Foundation

(Columbus, OH) With financial support from the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, the Pedal-with-Pete Foundation, and other contributors, the Implementation of Early Detection and Intervention for Cerebral Palsy Conference was held on Friday and Saturday, April 6 and 7 at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

The conference showcased critical research on early detection of cerebral palsy that Pedal-with-Pete financed with funds raised in 2015. This research is being conducted and incorporated into clinical practice around the world at a record pace.

Approximately 200 attendees from the U.S., Canada, Europe, India, and Australia participated in the two-day conference. This was the first conference for Early Detection and Intervention to both promote new methods and translate this knowledge into practice, which the Cerebral Palsy Foundation states as an urgent need.

According to the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, healthcare professionals in the United States often inadequately implement best practices for Early Detection and Intervention of Cerebral Palsy. The conference explored ways to help healthcare providers recognize and address developmental disability more effectively.

Richard Ellenson, CEO, Cerebral Palsy Foundation, shared his thoughts about this conference and the direction in which clinical practice is moving: *"This conference is incredibly important, because it's not just about methods of detection and intervention of cerebral palsy, it's about implementing those methods. And implementation is not something we can take for granted."*

One of the conference's key presenters was Nathalie L. Maitre, MD, PhD, director of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Developmental Therapies and Follow-up Programs at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Dr. Maitre provided the introduction for the Keynote Session on Saturday. Pedal-with-Pete was the program sponsor for this keynote session. Dr. Maitre opened her address by saying, *"Pedal-with-Pete is a wonderful organization that raises monies through cycling and walking events to*

fund cerebral palsy (CP) research, and perhaps most importantly, Pedal-with-Pete funded our most recent research on early detection of CP, which is the central focus of this conference."

Specifically, Dr. Maitre's research was initially funded by a seed grant from the Pedal-with-Pete Foundation. Working at Nationwide Children's Hospital here in Columbus, Ohio, and at another facility in Italy, Dr. Maitre and her team developed a method to diagnose and detect cerebral palsy at the earliest stages of infancy based simply on a baby's movement patterns in the crib or incubator. This is so important because the earlier CP can be diagnosed, the earlier a child can be helped, and earlier treatments are usually more effective.

Dr. Maitre's grant request, like most of the grants that Pedal-with-Pete funds, was referred to the organization by the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine (AACPDM). Ernie Larger, Pedal-with-Pete Board President, said, *"Our partnership the AACPDM to review and select grants for funding has been mutually beneficial. This conference gave us the opportunity to meet with several current and past AACPDM Officers with whom we had previously only spoken via telephone or email. I think we all valued the personal dialogue this conference enabled."*

Professor Roslyn Boyd, Ph.D. from The University of Queensland, Australia, and Past Research Director for the AACPDM shared her gratitude for the Pedal-with-Pete/AACPDM partnership. *"Pedal-with-Pete has been one of the best things that's happened with the AACPDM,"* Dr. Boyd said. *"Not only are we grateful for seed grants Pedal-with-Pete awards to researchers in the field, but also, exposure to Pete's story shifted the focus of researchers to explore the benefits of leisure therapy, such as with cycling, as an alternative to patients' typical physical therapy regimen."*

Determined to demonstrate that handicaps are not always limiting, Pete Zeidner, dealing with serious case of cerebral palsy, rode a recumbent bicycle with joy and purpose. Pete started the Pedal-with-Pete Foundation in 1993 with the goal to raise \$1,000,000 for cerebral palsy (CP) research. Under his leadership, that goal was surpassed in 2015 and that number continues to grow.



Pedal-with-Pete Foundation is a philanthropic organization, dedicated to raising funds for research leading to better prevention strategies, treatment protocols, or cures, that improve the quality of life for people who live with cerebral palsy, their families, and caregivers. Our vision is a world where preventable cases of cerebral palsy are prevented, where treatable cases are treated, where curable cases are cured, and where every individual impacted by cerebral palsy can reach their fullest potential in life. The Foundation's community of volunteers work to raise funds for CP research through bike rides and walks. Established by Pete Zeidner, who has CP, in Kent, Ohio, these events have spread to Columbus, Ohio and Emmetsburg, Iowa. Through these events, grants of approximately \$50,000 per year are awarded to researchers to further their work developing treatment for CP, research that is truly making a difference for people with CP – 800,000 in the US alone. Pedal-with-Pete works in partnership with the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine. For more information, visit www.pedal-with-pete.org.

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