



**UCLA HEALTH SCIENCES MEDIA REPORT  
For the week of March 29-April 4, 2013**

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**The Healing Power of Therapy Dogs**

PBS's docu-series on pets adopted from shelters called "[Shelter Me: Let's Go Home](#)" April 3 featured a segment on the UCLA People-Animal Connection (PAC) program at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. The show profiled five volunteer human/dog PAC teams who provide animal-assisted therapy to patients at UCLA. Erin Rice, director of the People-Animal Connection, and Jack Barron, the program's former director, were spotlighted. In addition, [The Malibu Times](#) April 3 profiled Rice, a Malibu resident, and quoted Kathie (KC) Cole, a cardiac nurse at UCLA, who started PAC almost 20 years ago. Also, the [Century City-Westwood Patch](#) reported April 2 and [Examiner.com](#) April 1 featured a story about PAC's role in "Shelter Me."

### **NY Times Explores Ways Hospitals Reduce Readmission Rates**

The March 29 [New York Times](#) delved into the complex issue of how hospitals, including UCLA Health System's ambulatory medical home care coordinator program, are striving to reduce readmission rates. UCLA's Comprehensive Care Coordinators help navigate high-risk patients inside and outside of the health system. Through planned interventions, care coordinators guide patients in what can be a confusing healthcare system, particularly for those with multiple health problems and the additional physicians, specialists and appointments that come with their health complications. Dr. Samuel Skootsky, chief medical officer of the UCLA Faculty Practice Group and Medical Group, was quoted. A UCLA stroke patient and Tiffany Phan, a care coordinator, were also cited.

### **NPR Highlights the International Medical Graduate Program**

NPR's "[All Things Considered](#)" April 4 aired a report about the UCLA International Medical Graduate (IMG) program, which assists bi-lingual, bi-cultural immigrant medical school graduates from Latin America, who reside in the U.S. legally, to earn their California medical licenses and obtain residencies in family medicine. The UCLA program is privately funded and covers all educational costs and includes a stipend. In exchange, the IMG physician must commit to practice in one of the state's more than 500 underserved communities for two to three years after completing their three year family medicine residency. The IMG program was co-founded by Dr. Michelle Bholat, vice-chair of the UCLA Department of Family Medicine, who is the program's executive director. She co-founded the program with Dr. Patrick Dowling, chair of the department. Dowling and Dr. Jose Chavez Gonzalez, a graduate of the program and a family medicine resident at Riverside County Medical Center, were interviewed in the report.

### **Heart Failure Medications Highly Cost-Effective**

[Imperial Valley News](#) reported March 31; [MedIndia](#), [MedLinx](#), [PharmaLive](#) and [BrightSurf](#) reported March 29; [Examiner.com](#), [Science Codex](#), [Bio-Medicine](#), [Health Medicine](#), [Health Canal](#), [Medical Express](#) and [Newsline](#) reported March 28, and [MedPage Today](#) reported Feb. 22 on a UCLA study showing that heart failure medications recommended by national guidelines are highly cost-effective in saving lives and may also provide savings to the health care system. Dr. Gregg Fonarow, Eliot Corday Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine and Science and director of the Ahmanson-UCLA Cardiomyopathy Center, was quoted in the coverage.

### **New Institute Fosters Unified Approach to Curing Pediatric Diseases**

[Examiner.com](#), [Scrubs Report](#), [Health Canal](#) and [News Medical.net](#) April 3 reported on the recently launched UCLA Children's Discovery and Innovation Institute which will bring together pediatric physician-scientists and faculty experts from a variety of fields across the UCLA campus to help drive multidisciplinary research collaborations focused on children's health and disease and speed the translation of groundbreaking pediatric research findings into clinical practice. Dr. Sherin Devaskar, physician-in-chief of Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA and assistant vice chancellor for children's health, who holds the Mattel Executive Endowed Chair in the UCLA Department of Pediatrics, and Dr. Eugene Washington, dean of the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and vice chancellor for health sciences, were quoted.

### **Media Tracks Potential Meth Addiction Cure**

[The Huffington Post](#), [Medical Daily](#), [Annenberg TV News](#) and [Newser](#) April 3, and [msnNOW](#), [Scallywag & Vagabond](#), and [Motherboard](#) April 4 ran articles about the Food and Drug Administration having fast tracked a clinical trial under way at UCLA on what may be the first cure for methamphetamine addiction.

Aimee-Noelle Swanson, research director for the Center for Behavioral & Addiction Medicine in the department of family medicine, was quoted in the Huffington Post.

### **Diabetes Drugs May Damage Pancreas**

[Seeking Alpha](#) April 3, [Medical News Today](#) March 29, [News-Medical.net](#) March 28, and [EmaxHealth](#) and [KSBY-Channel 6](#) (San Luis Obispo) March 27 reported on a study led by Dr. Peter Butler, chief of the division of endocrinology and director of UCLA's Larry L. Hillblom Islet Research Center, finding that individuals who took a type of drug commonly used to treat Type 2 diabetes showed pancreatic abnormalities that may be associated with an increased risk of neuroendocrine tumors. Butler was quoted.

### **Predicting a Woman's Final Period**

[MedPage Today](#), [Daily Bhaskar.com](#), [Zeenews.com](#), and [Helio.com](#) March 28 reported on research led by Dr. Gail Greendale, professor of medicine in the division of geriatrics and director of the UCLA Women's Health Center. She and her colleagues developed a new way to predict when a woman will have her final menstrual period. Greendale was quoted.

### **Military Pub Features Operation Mend**

The April 1 [Stars and Stripes](#) picked up a Los Angeles Times March 26 profile on a Vietnam veteran who walks to raise money for UCLA's Operation Mend, a Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center partnership with Brooke Army Medical Center and the Veterans Affairs Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System that provides free reconstructive surgery and other medical services to U.S. soldiers disfigured during service. Ron Katz, program founder and UCLA Health System board member, was quoted.

### **Business Journal Reports on UCLA's Planned Expansion into Santa Clarita Valley**

The [Santa Clarita Valley Business Journal's](#) April edition contained a front-page story on UCLA Health System's plans to open a medical office in Valencia in 2014. Dr. Matteo Dinolfo, medical director of the UCLA Department of Medicine's community offices and associate professor of internal medicine, was quoted.

### **Hospital Trade Places UCLA Hospital in Top 100**

The 2013 edition of *Becker's Hospital Review's* [100 Great Hospitals in America](#) released March 29 listed Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center as one of the nation's top hospitals. Becker's cited these organizations as innovators for medical treatments, research, technology and care delivery. [California Healthline](#) picked up the story on April 2.

### **New York Times, CNBC Cover Wireless Technology and the Brain**

A March 31 column in the [New York Times](#) and an April 2 [CNBC](#) story about children growing up surrounded by wireless technology and the neurological effects included interviews with Dr. Gary Small, Parlow-Solomon Professor on Aging, a professor at the Semel Institute and director of the UCLA Center on Aging. He is also author of the book "iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind." The New York Times story was picked up by the [Business Insider](#).

### **Aging Blog Highlights Memory Training**

An April 2 post in the blog [Help! Aging Parents](#) for aging boomers and their parents reprised an article from U Magazine on a UCLA study demonstrating that a memory fitness program offered to adults in their senior living communities helped improve their ability to recognize and recall words, benefitting their verbal learning and retention.

### **LA Times Seeks the Calm of Meditation**

Diana Winston, director of mindfulness education at the UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center, was featured in a March 30 [Los Angeles Times](#) article about a first person account of trying to learn the practice of mindfulness meditation.

### **Local TV Warns about Air Pollution & Autism**

A March 29 [KTLA-Channel 5](#) news segment discussed a study by researchers at the Fielding School of Public Health that found that babies exposed to traffic pollution in the womb have an increased risk for autism.

#### **Examiner.com Notes Autism Award**

Dr. Daniel Geschwind, professor of neurology, psychiatry, and genetics, and director of the Center for Autism Research at the Semel Institute, was featured in an April 3 [Examiner.com](#) article about a five-year, \$10 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to expand and continue his current research into the genetic causes of autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). The new research will emphasize further understanding of ASD among African Americans.

#### **Nurses Play Key Role in Reducing Deaths**

A March 28 story in [NurseZone](#) spotlighted the World Health Organization report co-authored by Linda Sarna, professor and Lulu Wolf-Hassenplug Endowed Chair in Nursing at the UCLA School of Nursing, on nurses' role in reducing non-communicable diseases.

#### **Nursing Professor to Give Coveted Lecture**

[Nurse.com](#) April 1 featured a story about Mary Woo, professor of nursing in the UCLA School of Nursing, who was selected to give the prestigious National Institute of Nursing Research's Directors' Lecture.

### **BRIEFS**

An April 1 article in [AIDSmeds.com](#) referenced a 1995 study led by Dr. Yvonne Bryson, professor and chief of pediatric infectious diseases at Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA and member of the UCLA AIDS Institute, about a baby that was functionally cured of AIDS.

The UCLA Kidney Transplant Program was mentioned in an April 2 [Tehachapi News](#) story about a man who is waiting for a donor.

A March 28 [CNN](#) story about a helicopter-crash survivor's efforts to heal others through art referenced UCLA's Operation Mend, a partnership between Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, Brooke Army Medical Center and the Veterans Affairs Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System that offers free reconstructive surgery and other medical care for U.S. military personnel severely wounded and disfigured during service.

Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA was cited March 18 in a [KBAK-Channel 29](#) (Bakersfield) story of a local 8-year-old boy who recently threw out the first pitch at a baseball game just weeks after undergoing brain surgery at UCLA for a seizure disorder called cortical dysplasia.

A March 31 [Fresno Bee](#) article about undocumented immigrants and health insurance cited a 2011 study by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research at the Fielding School of Public Health estimating that approximately 84 percent of California's 7 million uninsured residents will qualify for coverage when provisions of the Affordable Care Act go into effect in 2014.

A March 30 [Long Beach Press-Telegram](#) article about a plan by the city of Downey, Calif., to develop more bicycle-friendly roads cited research by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research at the Fielding School of Public Health indicating that more than 40 percent of children in fifth, seventh and ninth grade in Downey are overweight or obese.

Articles in Britain's [Daily Mail](#) April 1 and India's [DNA](#) April 3 cited a study by Wendie Robbins, professor of nursing in the UCLA School of Nursing, showing that eating two handfuls of walnuts a day improved sperm quality among younger men.

### **QUOTABLES**

Dr. Tanya Altmann, assistant clinical professor of pediatrics at Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA, was interviewed March 29 by [NBC Nightly News](#) in a report about a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study which found no link between childhood vaccines and autism.

Susan Bowerman, assistant director of the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition, commented March 27 in a [Women’s Health Magazine](#) online article about reducing sodium in the diet.

Dr. Lin Chang, professor-in-residence of medicine in the division of digestive diseases, commented April 1 in a [Wall Street Journal](#) article about enzyme supplements that might help digestion.

Dr. John DiFiori, chief of the UCLA Sports Medicine Program in the department of family medicine, was interviewed April 4 in a Sirius XM “Doctor Radio” report about children and sports injuries.

Dr. Mitchell Fink, professor of surgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, was quoted March 28 in a [Health Aim](#) article about the use of mice for modeling human disease.

Dr. Gregg Fonarow, Eliot Corday Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine and Science and director of the Ahmanson–UCLA Cardiomyopathy Center, commented April 1 in a [HealthDay News](#) article about poor health habits among U.S. teens. In addition, he commented April 3 in [HealthDay](#) and on [NBC.com](#) about research on a possible link between male baldness and cardiovascular disease risk.

Dr. Patricia Ganz, director of cancer prevention and control research at UCLA’s Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center, professor of health policy and management at the Fielding School of Public Health and professor of medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine, was quoted March 30 in a [Los Angeles Times](#) story highlighting a new study by the Women’s Health Initiative that strongly supports previous research on increased breast cancer risk and mortality among menopausal women who take hormone replacement therapy.

Dr. John Mazziotta, associate vice chancellor, health sciences, and chair and Stark Professor of Neurology, was quoted April 3 in a [Los Angeles Times](#) story about President Obama’s scientific initiative aimed at mapping the human brain.

Linda Sarna, professor and Lulu Wolf-Hassenplug Endowed Chair in Nursing at the UCLA School of Nursing, was quoted April 2 in a [New University](#) story about UCLA choosing April 22—Earth Day—as the start day for the campus going tobacco free.

Dr. William Suh, assistant clinical professor of medicine in the division of cardiology, commented April 1 in the trade [TCTMD](#) regarding a study on the possible expanded use of a new minimally-invasive treatment to replace the main valve in the heart without traditional open-heart surgery.

Hsian Rong Tseng, associate professor of molecular and medical pharmacology and member of UCLA’s Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center and the California NanoSystems Institute, was quoted April 3 in a [nanowerk.com](#) story on the use of his invention, the NanoVelcro diagnostic chip, by a team of researchers from UCLA and Cedars Sinai.

Gail Wyatt, professor of psychiatry and director of the UCLA Sexual Health Program, was quoted April 4 in a [Bloomberg News](#) story about a study showing that three of four women in the U.S. have lived with a partner without being married by the age of 30, an increasing trend that suggests cohabitation is now a regular part of family life in the U.S.

Dr. Antronette Yancey, professor of health services at the Fielding School of Public Health and co-director of the UCLA–Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity, was quoted in a March 31 [Herald Tribune](#) article about fitness programs at work.

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