

## Aging Well with Post-Polio Syndrome

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Growing older comes with a number of benefits, including increased wisdom and experience. But growing older also can pose challenges that can limit participation in many valued life activities. This can be particularly true in people who have a history of polio, who not only have to face the residual effects of polio, but who as they age develop the symptoms, such as muscle weakness, pain and fatigue, associated with post-polio syndrome (PPS). Other problems associated with aging can also include increased sleep and mood disturbance. At the same time, researchers have not given adequate attention to identifying, developing and testing effective treatments for problems in people with a history of polio.

To address this gap, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research has recently funded a Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) at the University of Washington's Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, with the purpose of better understanding the challenges faced by those aging with PPS and other physical disabilities. The target objectives of the RRTC are to better understand the natural course of aging with a disability, to test the effectiveness of interventions for combating depression in people with disabilities as they age, to enhance the employment experience of those with a physical disability, and to disseminate the findings to people with disabilities, their family members and their healthcare providers.

To aid in the goal of disseminating the findings, we plan to publish a quarterly informational column called "Aging Well with Post-Polio Syndrome" in *Post-Polio Health*. The column will be based on the best science available, including a summary of important new findings from the research literature and the findings from our RRTC as they become available. ▲

For more information, please send an e-mail to [agerrtc@u.washington.edu](mailto:agerrtc@u.washington.edu).

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### **The Final Inch to be on HBO; Receives Oscar Nomination**

*The Final Inch* by Irene Taylor Brodsky of Vermilion Films in collaboration with google.org, follows the massive – and yet highly personalized mission – to eradicate polio from the planet. Polio is described as “one of history’s most feared diseases. Now largely forgotten, polio has become a disease of the world’s poor.”

The film includes footage of “a quiet army” of individuals who go door-to-door to reach the last unvaccinated children. In the most marginalized Muslim enclaves, children are hidden from vaccinators because American-made medicines are not to be trusted.

*The Final Inch* includes film of polio survivors Martha Mason, North Carolina, who has been living in an iron lung for 60 years and Mikail Davenport, who rode his hand-cycle 950 miles across his native Texas to raise awareness about polio.

To learn more about the film and watch a trailer, check out the website [www.thefinalinch.org](http://www.thefinalinch.org). ▲



*The Final Inch* received an Oscar nomination in the short documentary category.