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Abbott partners with NIH on BRAIN initiative

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Partnership with NIH aims to increase understanding and accelerate the application of neurostimulation therapies



Abbott has announced that it has partnered with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on the BRAIN (Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies) initiative to accelerate advancements in neuroscience research.

As part of the agreement, Abbott will provide the company's neuromodulation technologies—including directional deep brain stimulation (DBS), spinal cord stimulation (SCS), and dorsal root ganglion (DRG) therapy—for research related to these NIH initiatives to explore their application for chronic pain and progressive movement disorders, like Parkinson's disease.

Nick B. Langhals, Program Director for Neural Engineering within the Division of Translational Research at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke said, “The NIH is investigating the application of these devices for the treatment of a wide range of neurological and neuropsychiatric conditions and chronic pain. The neuromodulation technologies provided by Abbott will help us determine the inner workings of the nervous system to help fill gaps in our current knowledge of the brain and provide opportunities for exploring how the brain interacts with the human body in patients with neurological conditions."

Neurological disorders and diseases present a significant burden to the United States healthcare system, with over 100 million people experiencing at least one of the known neurological disorders.1 With age being a contributing factor to many neurological diseases such as Parkinson's disease, this number is expected to increase by 2050.

Launched in 2013, the BRAIN Initiative looks to understand the functions of the human brain by researching and developing new uses for innovative technologies.

Keith Boettiger, vice president, Neuromodulation, Abbott said, "Researchers at Abbott are continuously striving to better understand how neuromodulation technology can benefit people living with chronic pain or movement disorders. In addition to our own research efforts, including clinical and real-world studies, working together with world-class scientists at the NIH will help us further validate our neuromodulation therapies and explore new avenues where they may benefit patients affected by devastating neurological conditions."

For people living with chronic pain and movement disorders, Abbott's neuromodulation portfolio of therapies help them move and feel better, allowing chronic pain patients to reduce or stabilize the long-term use of opioids and get back to living their lives, while helping patients with movement disorders combat the symptoms of their condition.