



LOOKING FORWARD

BEYOND THE REVOLUTION: RIORDAN CLINIC'S VISION FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

WRITTEN BY the Riordan Clinic Editorial Team

Inspired by a recent Real Health Podcast interview with Dr. Ron Hunninghake

The conference room buzzed as physicians and providers from Japan, Algeria, India, China, and other countries gathered at Riordan Clinic's recent Cancer Care Reimagined conference. It was a moment that would have made Dr. Hugh Riordan smile; here was proof that his vision of a worldwide epidemic of health was becoming a reality.

As Riordan Clinic celebrates our 50th anniversary, the organization stands at a pivotal crossroads. The pioneering work that once seemed radical has become the foundation of a growing movement in integrative medicine. But the clinic's leaders aren't resting on past achievements. Instead, they're asking a bolder question: What if the next medical revolution isn't about choosing between conventional and functional medicine, but about integrating both into something even more effective?

Three Revolutions, One Vision

Dr. Ron Hunninghake and Dr. Michelle Niesley recently outlined a framework positioning Riordan's work within medicine's broader evolution. The first medical revolution, beginning in the 17th century, introduced the scientific method, marking a turning point in the development of medicine. Doctors learned to identify germs, develop antibiotics, and understand the mechanisms of how the body functions. Powerful, but depersonalized.

The second revolution, which Dr. Riordan helped pioneer, brought back the right-brain perspective through holistic and functional medicine. This recognizes that health isn't just treating disease, but optimizing human function across every dimension of life.

Yet even this wasn't enough. As Dr. Ron explains through the metaphor of a bird searching for seeds, you need both perspectives. The left brain helps the bird focus on distinguishing seeds from pebbles, but without the right brain monitoring the environment, the hawk swoops down unnoticed. You need both focus and perspective.

The third medical revolution represents true integration, where opposing forces work together at a higher level. This is where Riordan Clinic positions itself today. ▶

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The Co-Learner Philosophy

At the heart of this integrated approach lies a concept that remains revolutionary: the co-learner relationship.

Dr. Riordan understood that medicine had become efficient at diagnosis and protocols, but inefficient at understanding the unique factors sustaining each person's illness. Multiple patients might share the same diagnosis, such as breast cancer or heart disease, but have completely different root causes. One person's condition might stem from heavy metal toxicity, another's from chronic stress, a third's from genetic factors.

The co-learner model flips the traditional medical hierarchy. The physician brings medical knowledge and pattern recognition. The patient brings intimate knowledge of their body, life circumstances, and capacity for change. Together, they collaborate on what Dr. Riordan called "sustained illness." Dr. Riordan preferred this term over "chronic illness," as "sustained" implies that specific factors keep the illness active, and by addressing those factors, healing becomes possible.

Generations of Growth

The Riordan Clinic story unfolds across three generations. The first was Dr. Riordan himself, paired with Mrs. Olive Garvey's visionary philanthropy. She understood from managing farmland that soil quality determines crop health.

When she wanted her grandchildren's nutrient levels tested, and no doctor knew how, she found in Dr. Riordan a kindred spirit—a psychiatrist questioning whether nutritional factors underlie psychiatric conditions.

The second generation, led by Dr. Ron for over 35 years, sustained and expanded that breakthrough. The clinic continued to hold international scientific conferences on human functioning. They refined protocols like high-dose intravenous vitamin C until even the University of Iowa adopted them, tripling survival rates for advanced pancreatic cancer patients.

Now, the third generation steps forward with physicians like Drs. Rose, Dunn, and West, along with nurses and staff who embody that integrated vision from day one. Their energy and enthusiasm, Dr. Ron believes, will powerfully lead the clinic into its next era.

Connection, Collaboration, Community

As Riordan Clinic moves into its next half-century, three themes emerge as guideposts, or what Dr. Niesley calls "the three Cs": connection, collaboration, and community.

The clinic is reimagining how it connects with co-learners. The old luncheon lectures served their purpose but were limited by physical space. Now, with digital platforms and educators like Dr. Aks, Riordan can create dynamic, interactive educational experiences reaching far beyond Wichita. This isn't passive content consumption, but a true conversation where patients and providers learn together in real time.

Collaboration extends to how Riordan interacts with the broader medical community. The third medical revolution requires conventional and integrative physicians to respect what each contributes. The path forward demands recognizing that optimal health requires precision, holism, and mutual respect for each other, while acknowledging that bias on each side exists.

This collaborative spirit shone at the Cancer Care Reimagined conference, where practitioners from multiple countries and disciplines gathered to share knowledge—evidence that Dr. Riordan's vision of a worldwide movement is materializing.

Community may be the most crucial element. Healing doesn't happen in isolation, it happens when people feel connected and supported. When they're not just patients receiving treatment, but co-learners engaging in a shared journey toward health.

A Celebration and a Commitment

As Riordan Clinic prepares for our 50th anniversary gala (more information coming soon), the occasion represents more than nostalgia. It's a moment to honor the courage of those who came before: Dr. Riordan's willingness to challenge orthodoxy, Mrs. Garvey's visionary support, and the thousands of co-learners who trusted this approach when it seemed radical.

But it's equally a commitment to the future. The clinic has set ambitious goals: bringing the Riordan approach to 10,000 new co-learners over the next decade, expanding access, and advancing research.

Every Riordan employee undergoes the same comprehensive lab testing offered to co-learners, embodying the principle that knowing your biochemical individuality empowers better choices. This isn't just good practice, it's a statement of values.

Dr. Ron has practiced medicine both conventionally and integratively. His perspective is clear: "This is really the doctor of the future. A doctor who can not only have the best of the left brain and the best of the holistic right brain, but be able to communicate both sides in a way that takes people to this higher level of co-learning."

Dr. Riordan would ask audiences, "What's the most important nutrient?" Most guessed vitamin C or D. He would then say, "The one you're personally lowest in." Because you can optimize everything else, but if that one crucial element is missing, it's affecting the whole system.



This principle extends beyond nutrients to the broader philosophy of personalized integrative medicine. There's no universal protocol or single intervention that heals all diseases. There's only the patient-specific, biochemically-informed approach that honors each person's unique path to health.

Carry On and Be Courageous

If Dr. Riordan could see the clinic now—the worldwide adoption of his protocols, the next generation of providers carrying the vision forward, the growing acceptance of integrative medicine—what would he say?

Dr. Ron knows exactly:

“Carry on and do your best! Be courageous!”

Courage has always been required to walk this path. Courage to question established protocols. Courage to trust patients as partners. Courage to pursue research that others dismiss. Courage to keep showing up when the work seems thankless and the establishment skeptical.

As Riordan Clinic enters its next fifty years, that courage is bearing fruit in ways the founders could only dream of.

The oddly domed building that once seemed strange now stands as a landmark of innovation. The protocols that were dismissed as alternative are now being adopted by major universities. The integrative approach that seemed radical is becoming the standard of care for those seeking true healing.

The United States may rank 48th in health outcomes despite having the world's most expensive healthcare system. But at Riordan Clinic, a different model has always existed—one that favors the individual over institutions, that invests in education and prevention, that trusts in each person's capability to achieve higher functioning given the right knowledge about their own bodies.

That's not just a clinical philosophy. It's a movement. And as the third generation takes the helm, with international recognition growing and thousands of co-learners waiting to discover this approach, the epidemic of health that Dr. Riordan envisioned seems not just possible, but inevitable.

The revolution continues. The integration deepens. The co-learning expands. And fifty years later, the courage that started it all still lights the way forward. ■



Listen to Dr. Ron's "Looking Back and Moving Forward" episode on the Real Health Podcast



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LOOKING FORWARD

CANCER CARE REIMAGINED

Highlights from the 25th International Conference on Human Functioning

In November, the Riordan Clinic hosted the **25th International Conference on Human Functioning: Cancer Care Reimagined** at Woolsey Hall on the Wichita State University campus. The event brought together more than 120 in-person attendees and a global virtual audience, continuing a tradition that began nearly five decades ago. Clinicians, researchers, and lifelong learners gathered with a shared purpose: to explore new insights in integrative oncology and deepen their understanding of human health.

Carrying Forward a Legacy of Curiosity

The International Conference on Human Functioning was first introduced by Dr. Hugh Riordan in 1977. His vision was to create a space free from commercial influence where scientific inquiry and nutritional research could flourish. Each conference since has reflected that purpose, offering a platform for diverse perspectives on biochemical individuality, metabolism, immunology, and human function.

This year's conference honored that history and brought forward voices that continue to shape the future of integrative cancer care.




Presenters and Themes

Ron Hunninghake, MD — “The Third Medical Revolution: Reuniting the Divided Brain”

Dr. Ron explored how combining analytical and holistic perspectives in medicine can support a more complete approach to cancer care. His perspective drew on decades of clinical experience and emphasized the importance of balanced, integrative thinking.

Michelle Niesley, ND, MS, FABNO

As both CEO and Director of Research, Dr. Niesley outlined how the clinic is advancing integrative oncology through research and education. She and Dr. Ron presented together, highlighting the role of precision, collaboration, and individualized care.

Thomas Levy, MD, JD — “Vitamin C and Cortisol: Synergistic Immune Partners”

Dr. Levy discussed how vitamin C and low-dose cortisol may interact in ways that support the immune system’s ability to respond to stressors.

Dan Rubin, ND, FABNO — “Double Loaded Dendritic Cells: Restoring Relevance for Integrative Oncology”

Dr. Rubin revisited the role of dendritic cells and how they contribute to immune system communication.

Ilyes Baghli, MD — “Targeting the Mitochondrial–Stem Cell Connection in Cancer Treatment”

Dr. Baghli offered insights from his clinic in Algeria, focusing on mitochondrial function and the stem-cell connection within cancer research.

Lise Alschuler, ND, FABNO — “Fungi: Healing Synergism”

Dr. Alschuler explored research on medicinal mushrooms and their supportive role in integrative oncology.

Manickam Mahalingam — “Hallmark of Cancers: The Genetic–Metabolic Crosstalk”

Manickam examined the communication between genetic and metabolic pathways that contribute to cancer development.

Mark Lintern — “A New Perspective on the Origin of Cancer: Exploring a Suppression-Based Model”

Mark presented a concept involving fungal suppression and how it may influence cancer processes.

Nasha Winters, ND, FABNO — “What’s Working: Reimagining Cancer Care Through the Terrain Lens”

Dr. Winters shared practical insights from the terrain-based model of cancer care, focusing on whole-system awareness.

Paul Anderson, NMD — “Oncology Treatment Targets and Stratification”

Dr. Anderson discussed treatment considerations in the context of long-term cancer care.

Richard Z. Cheng, MD, PhD, ABAARM — “From Mutation to Metabolism: Integrative Orthomolecular Cancer Therapy”

Dr. Cheng reframed cancer therapy through a metabolic approach and emphasized the importance of nutritional strategies that may support the body’s systems.

Neil Riordan, PhD, MA — Moderated Discussion

After a discussion about stem cells, Dr. Riordan closed the event with a conversation about the future of integrative oncology and the direction of emerging research.

Shared Insights from the Day

Several themes connected the day’s presentations:

- ▶ **Individualized understanding remains essential.**
Each person’s biochemical makeup informs their unique path.
- ▶ **Collaboration strengthens progress.**
Clinicians, researchers, and global partners each contribute meaningful perspectives.
- ▶ **Metabolic and terrain-focused approaches are gaining attention.**
Presentations highlighted immune communication, genetic-metabolic dynamics, and broader system awareness.
- ▶ **Community matters.**
Attendees valued the opportunity to gather, learn, and exchange ideas in person.

Looking Ahead

Reaching the 25th conference marks an important chapter in the Riordan Clinic’s history. The same values that guided Dr. Hugh Riordan—curiosity, collaboration, and a commitment to understanding human health—continue to shape the clinic’s direction today.

The 2025 conference reflected a community of learners and practitioners who remain dedicated to asking thoughtful questions, sharing new insights, and contributing to a broader understanding of cancer care. The conversations sparked at this year’s event will continue influencing research, education, and clinical practice in the months and years ahead. ■

Couldn’t Attend the Conference?

A paid virtual-access option is available for those who would like to view the full presentations.

To learn more, reach out to our team at marketing@riordanclinic.org.

HONORING THE PEOPLE WHO CARRY THE MISSION FORWARD

During our Cancer Care Reimagined Conference, we recognized individuals whose work reflects the heart of Riordan Clinic. Each award highlights a different expression of service, leadership, and impact—values that have shaped this Clinic from its earliest days.

Olive W. Garvey Trailblazer Award Recipient: Dr. Ron Hunninghake

What it signifies:

This award honors leaders who advance bold ideas with courage, curiosity, and compassion—traits embodied by Olive W. Garvey and Dr. Hugh Riordan. Dr. Ron has carried their shared vision forward for more than 35 years, expanding access to integrative approaches and empowering co-learners around the world.

Ripple Award

Recipients: Robin Daly & Ivelisse Page (Believe Big)

What it signifies:

The Ripple Award celebrates community advocates whose work creates meaningful, widespread impact. This year's honorees have built organizations that equip patients and families with resources, support, and hope.

Pearl Maker Award

Recipients: Dr. Nasha Winters & Dr. Paul Anderson

What it signifies:

This award recognizes thought leaders who elevate the field of integrative oncology through research, education, and collaboration—individuals who help illuminate complex science for practitioners and patients alike.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Recipient: Dr. Thomas Levy & Dr. Atsuo Yanagisawa (not pictured)

What it signifies:

This award honors pioneers whose enduring contributions have influenced the direction of integrative medicine and helped define the Riordan Clinic legacy.



Pictured: Robin Daly and Dr. Kirsten West



Pictured: Ivelisse page and Dr. Kirsten West



Pictured: Dr. Nasha Winters and Dr. Kirsten West



Pictured: Dr. Paul Anderson, Dr. Ron Hunninghake, and Dr. Thomas Levy



HOLIDAY HOURS

The holidays are a time to slow down, gather with loved ones, and focus on what nourishes us most — connection, gratitude, and health.

Please note our upcoming holiday hours so you can plan your visits and supplement orders in advance.

Christmas Week

Wednesday, December 24
Closing early at 3:00 pm

Thursday, December 25
Closed for Christmas

Friday, December 26
Closed

New Year's Week

Wednesday, December 31
Open (regular hours)

Thursday, January 1, 2026
Closed for New Year's Day

Friday, January 2, 2026
Open (regular hours)

We wish you a joyful season filled with peace, reflection, and good health.

Riordan Clinic is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), integrative health center with locations in **Wichita and Overland Park, Kansas**. The clinic was co-founded by Olive Garvey and Hugh D. Riordan. We intersect lifestyle and nutrition to help you find the underlying causes of your illness. Since our inception in 1975, the mission has been clear and unwavering to “...stimulate an epidemic of health.”

To become a patient at Riordan Clinic, call 1-800-447-7276

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