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Boston University School of Medicine News



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Newton resident David Atkinson, Ph.D., an associate research professor of medicine and biochemistry in the Biophysics Institute at Boston University School of Medicine, recently was awarded a \$36,000 collaborative research grant from the Whitaker Health Sciences Fund.

The Whitaker Fund, which supports joint biomedical research between the BUSM and Massachusetts Institute of Technology faculties, awarded the one-year grant to Atkinson and co-investigator John G. King, Ph.D., an MIT professor of physics, for their project titled "The Binding of Water to Membrane Lipids."

Lipids are fatty molecules that form the biological membrane surrounding all cells. These molecules have two parts to their chemical structure. One part is soluble in water and the other, because it is a fat, is not. The ways the membranes function are determined by the way the molecules interact with water. Using a technique called dynamic desorption, the researchers will study the properties of membrane lipids and the manner in which water interacts with them.

Atkinson, a native of England, graduated with honors from the City University of London with a B.Sc. degree in applied physics in 1969 and received his Ph.D. in biophysics in 1975.

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He joined the BUSM faculty in 1975 as a research associate in the department of medicine and was appointed to his current position in 1982. His previous experience includes a position as a scientist at Unilever Research in Welwyn, England. He also is currently a guest associate scientist at the Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island.

Atkinson is a member of several professional organizations, including the American Heart Association, the British Biophysical Society, the American Biophysical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In addition, he is an established investigator with the American Heart Association.

He has conducted seminars and delivered lectures at numerous national and international scientific meetings and has been involved in various research projects since 1969. Atkinson is the author or co-author of many articles published in scientific journals and currently is on the editorial board of the Journal of Lipid Research.

Atkinson resides on Priscilla Road with his wife Francine.

Boston University School of Medicine is the site of several major interdisciplinary research centers, including the Hubert H. Humphrey Cancer Research Center and the Cardiovascular Institute of Boston University. The School is an innovator in medical education, offering several alternative curricula leading to the M.D. degree.