Building a Better ED: Jefferson Hospitals Reduces Wait Time, Speeds High-Quality Patient Care

After the opening of Jefferson’s expanded Emergency Department early last year, a task force at Jefferson worked over the course of 2009 to develop and deliver strategies that improve patient flow in the ED and reduce overcrowding. The initiative is part of the Jefferson Balanced Scorecard, a group of projects in progress to drive positive results in measurable ways. The funding for the team’s continuing efforts comes from Urgent Matters, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded learning network of just six hospitals across the country working collaboratively to implement rigorous performance measures, assess existing operations and develop strategies to improve ED throughput and output.

So far, the results include a significant reduction in wait time and the amount of time from check-in through discharge. Although the Urgent Matters initiative at Jefferson has focused on Fast Track (non-urgent) patients, many of the benefits have positively affected all ED patients.

“Our goal for 2010 is to further reduce the time patients spend in the ED at Jefferson, while continually maintaining the highest quality patient care,” says Linda Davis-Moon, Executive Director for ED Strategic Initiatives. “Our target turn-around time for patients is 90 minutes.”

So, how did Jefferson achieve a better-operating ED, as highlighted in an article in a December 24 Philadelphia Inquirer article? A new quick-registration system to prioritize patient care levels, the development of staff dedicated to taking care of non-critical injuries and better utilization of space are just a few of the initiatives that made the difference.

The groundbreaking work being undertaken by Jefferson’s Urgent Matters team will ultimately help hospitals across the country tackle the difficult issue of ED and hospital overcrowding, as well as significantly advance the field of quality improvement performance measurement for emergency departments.

Jefferson is an officially designated Level 1 Regional Resource Trauma Center and is one of only 18 hospitals in the United States that is both an official Trauma Center and a federally designated Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center.

Patient and Caregiver Grateful to Jefferson Neurosurgeon for ‘Mystery’ Diagnosis

Nelson Anzoategui had suffered greatly before he was brought to Jefferson and came under the care of neurosurgeon James Evans, MD, in June 2008. Previously misdiagnosed by physicians at other facilities, Nelson had undergone three surgeries to remove brain tumors and receive a shunt placement – procedures that left him still ailing.

Upon meeting with Nelson for the first time, Dr. Evans immediately conducted a comprehensive medical history and told him that he did not think his prior tumors, located around the brain stem, had been acoustic neuromas, as was first diagnosed. Dr. Evans insisted on getting complete medical records for Nelson and when he received them, diagnosed him with a cranial base epidermoid tumor, a benign tumor that can occur along the cranial base which can be devastating when recurrent.

“Epidermoid tumors do recur, they can often be near impossible to completely remove and can affect critical neurovascular structures, placing the patient at risk,” says Dr. Evans. “If left untreated, these tumors can progressively enlarge, compress the brain stem and cause neurological deterioration, such as weakness, numbness, impaired vision, hearing loss and swallowing difficulty.”

It is still not known why epidermoid tumors form in some people.

“The prior surgeries that Nelson had undergone resulted in cognitive deficits, so I went with him to every office visit,” said Debra Rubin, Nelson’s friend and caregiver. “Dr. Evans not only listened to Nelson, but also gave me as much time as I needed to ask him questions. That kind of bedside manner is such a luxury these days.”

In November of 2008, Dr. Evans operated on Nelson to remove the tumors. A follow-up surgery took place in December. Then, in June 2009, Nelson’s case was presented to the Jefferson Brain Tumor Board, a group of physicians who bring together expertise from many medical and surgical disciplines.

Jefferson Awarded Multi-Million Dollar NIH Grant to Create Autoimmune Disorders Center of Excellence

The Department of Neurology at Jefferson Medical College (JMC) has been awarded a multi-million dollar grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for the creation of a center of excellence to study autoimmune diseases from basic science research to its translation into clinical applications. The five-year grant initially totals over $4 million, but could be as much as $10 million by the end of the award period. The center is one of nine in the country and the only one in Pennsylvania.

“Our priority for this award and center is to translate basic science research into practical, clinical applications in autoimmune diseases,” said Abdolmohamad Rostami, MD, PhD; Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurology at JMC and at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital; Director of the Multiple Sclerosis and Neuroimmunology Research Laboratory; and Director of the new center.

“Primarily we will be focusing on multiple sclerosis (MS) and systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), but we will also be investigating other autoimmune diseases like scleroderma. The center’s team will investigate how these diseases are produced, with the ultimate goal of finding new and successful ways to treat them.”

Currently, Dr. Rostami is investigating the role of Th17 cells, a pro-inflammatory T-cell subset in MS and ways to suppress these cells in the hope of finding better treatments for the disease.

Other researchers of the Autoimmune Diseases Center of Excellence at Jefferson are: Sergio Jimenez, MD; Timothy Manser, PhD; Thomas Leist, MD, PhD; Guang-Xian Zhang, MD, PhD; Bogoljub Ciric, PhD; and Ziaur Rahman, PhD.
made numerous contributions to the field of colorectal surgery. Pictured are Drs. Charles J. Yeo, Jefferson faculty for nearly 50 years, Dr. Marks has had a distinguished surgical career and has

The portrait of Gerald J. Marks, MD, FACS, FASCRS, was recently presented to Thomas Jefferson University. Dr. Marks is an Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society graduate of Jefferson Medical College where he received his general surgery and colorectal surgical training. A member of the Jefferson faculty for nearly 50 years, Dr. Marks has had a distinguished surgical career and has made numerous contributions to the field of colorectal surgery. Pictured are Drs. Charles J. Yeo, Gerald Marks, John Marks (Dr. Marks’ son) and Jay Bannon.

An ongoing research study by Jefferson staff members has found that patients who adopted a healthier lifestyle – including reducing total calorie intake and getting some exercise – have a 34 percent lower risk of developing diabetes. Those patients who embraced the lifestyle changes also experienced drops in heart disease risk factors including blood pressure, cholesterol and triglycerides.

The study, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Indian Health Service and the American Diabetes Association, was conducted in 27 centers nationwide and included over 3,800 patients who were at a high risk of acquiring the disease.

Jabbour, MD, Interim Director, Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolic Diseases Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University and his co-authors reported their findings in the online edition of The Lancet.

The Diabetes Prevention Program Outcomes Study (DPPOS) is a continuation of the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) which began in 1996. DPPOS will continue through 2013.

“Diabetes has become a problem of literally epidemic proportions here in the United States," said Dr. Jabbour. “This study shows that people at high risk can delay the onset of this disease for years by embracing some moderate lifestyle changes. This delay can save both the patient and the healthcare industry millions of dollars in treatment and resources.”

“After 10 years of these combined studies our results point to weight loss being the key to delaying the onset of diabetes. Learn more online at www.jeffersonhospital.org/news.

Long-Term Lifestyle Changes Result in 34 Percent Lower Risk of Developing Diabetes

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Accessions and Designations

• Joint Commission Re-Accreditation
• Blue Distinction Center for Spine Surgery and Knee and Hip Replacement
• Get With the GuidelinesSM: Stroke Gold Performance Achievement Award
A team from the Jefferson Center for Applied Research on Aging and Health (CARAH) and Center in the Park, a senior center with which CARAH collaborates, received an award from the National Institute of Senior Center recognizing outstanding, innovative research in the senior center field. The team's winning research project was entitled: "Harvest Health: Translation of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program for Older African Americans in a Senior Setting.”

Researchers at Jefferson’s Kimmel Cancer Center have identified a new mechanism of blocking HIV-1 from entering cells. The results of the Jefferson study might also be extended to understand the activities and limitations of drugs including local anesthetics, antibiotics and immunosuppressive agents used in clinical practice.

Positron emission tomography (PET) imaging of non-small cell lung cancer prior to receiving radiation therapy should not be the basis for determining areas that may benefit from higher doses of radiation, according to research presented by TJUH investigators at the 51st American Society for Radiation Oncology Annual Meeting. Findings indicate that it may be more appropriate to do a scan halfway through treatment and plan an additional radiation dose around that.

Jefferson received a Distinction Award in the category of Best Employee Recruitment Site at the 2009 eHealthcare Leadership Awards ceremony. The awards recognize the very best websites of a wide range of healthcare organizations.

Researchers from Thomas Jefferson University, the Pasteur Institute in Paris, and Yale University have identified a mechanism that helps bacteria avoid destruction in cells. They reported in PLoS ONE a way in which intracellular pathogens exploit the biological attributes of their hosts in order to escape destruction.

Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals is first in Pennsylvania to offer an FDA-approved device that helps individuals with certain types of spinal cord injuries breathe on their own again, without the support of a ventilator. Michael Weinstein, MD, Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery at Jefferson, is among the first surgeons in the United States to implant the NeuRx DPS™ in patients with spinal cord injuries who lack voluntary control of their diaphragms.

Thomas Jefferson University is expanding its stem cell research program with a new academic department at Jefferson Medical College: Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine. The department will have two main focuses. The first is the use of stem cells as therapy for a variety of diseases, such as atherosclerosis, diabetes and neurogenerative disorders, among others. The second focus is on cancer stem cells, identifying cancer stem cell markers and cancer stem cell treatment targets.

A Jefferson study may redefine how a chronic autoimmune disease is diagnosed. Researchers from Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience have taken a novel approach in looking at the variables associated with chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP). Their study appeared in the Journal of Clinical Neuromuscular Disease.

Researchers from the Biotecnology Foundation Laboratories at Thomas Jefferson University have identified a way to increase the oil in tobacco plant leaves, which may be the next step in using the plants for biofuel. Their paper was published online in Plant Biotechnology Journal.
February – April 2010

Show Your Jefferson Pride and Support Tju.
Visit www.jefferson.edu/license_plate.

Be a Hero: Donate Blood

February 11

Tuesday, February 23

- Rehabilitation Medicine, Spastic
  Dystonia, 4 to 5 p.m., Outpatient Rehab
  Medicine Office, 25 S. 9th St. Contact Addy
  Schuller, CCC-SLP/L at 215-955-0122 or e-
  mail: Addie.Schuller@jeffersonhospital.org

Wednesday, April 5

- Nursing, Parent Education, "Grandparents
  Night" 7 to 9 p.m., 1400 North 25th St.
  Free program. RSVP to 1-800-JEFF-NOW.

Thursday, April 22

- Kimmel Cancer Center, "Hereditary
  Gynecological Malformations," National
  Rosenblum, MD, Professor, Department of
  Obstetrics, Tju. This program will provide
  an overview of ovarian cancer treatment with
  an emphasis on hereditary gynecological
  malignancies related to BRCA 1 and 2
  mutations and other hereditary syndromes.
  Noon to 1:30 p.m., G312 Kimmel Cancer
  Center. To register, call 215-955-8370,
  1-800-JEFF-NOW or register online at
  jeffersonhospital.org/cancerprograms

Jeff News

Robert L. Barchi, MD, PhD, President, Tju
Thomas J. Lewis, President and CEO, TJUH
Gallatin J. Brown, Senior Vice President for
Marketing, Public Relations and Communications
Barbara Henderson, Director of Communications and Managing Editor
Camille DuPont, Editor
Ruth Stephens, Calendar Editor
Communications and Managing Editor
Christine Doughty, Director of Communications
Laura McCausland, Managing Editor
Pat Bucur, Design/Proofs Manager

Ruth Stephens, Calendar Editor
Communications and Managing Editor
Christine Doughty, Director of Communications
Laura McCausland, Managing Editor
Pat Bucur, Design/Proofs Manager

Friday, March 26

- Inspirational video presentation/Bible study,
  1 to 2 p.m., Room 220, Hamilton Bldg. Contact
  Addy Schuller, CCC-SLP/L at 215-955-0122 or email:
  Addie.Schuller@jeffersonhospital.org.

Thursday, March 25

- Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson, Current
  Topics in Cancer, David Andrews, MD, Professor,
  Department of Neurosurgery, TJUH, "Approaches
to Healthy Eating, " Noon to 1:30 p.m., 101 BLSB.
  Contact Barbara Baskin, MS, at 215-955-2534,
  email Barbara.Baskin@jeffersonhospital.org,
or Nancy Travers, MA, at 215-955-6713.
  Also, Thurs., Mar. 18 and Apr. 15, 2010.

Wednesday, March 24

- Breastfeeding Class (free program to all
  expectant and new moms), 6 to 8 p.m.,
  Jefferson Pavilion. An 8-week course: Tuesday
evenings 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Gibbon, W . Atrium,
  11th St. Also, Fri., Apr. 23.

Wednesday, March 23

- Rehabilitation Medicine, Dysphonia, 4 to 5 p.m.,
  Outpatient Rehab Medicine Office, 25 S. 9th St.
  Contact Addy Schuller, CCC-SLP/L at 215-955-0122 or e-
  mail: Addie.Schuller@jeffersonhospital.org.

Monday, April 5

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  Free program. RSVP to 1-800-JEFF-NOW.

Thursday, April 22

- Kimmel Cancer Center, "Hereditary
  Gynecological Malformations," National
  Rosenblum, MD, Professor, Department of
  Obstetrics, Tju. This program will provide
  an overview of ovarian cancer treatment with
  an emphasis on hereditary gynecological
  malignancies related to BRCA 1 and 2
  mutations and other hereditary syndromes.
  Noon to 1:30 p.m., G312 Kimmel Cancer
  Center. To register, call 215-955-8370,
  1-800-JEFF-NOW or register online at
  jeffersonhospital.org/cancerprograms

Tuesday, April 20

- Women’s Health Source, Danielle Duffy,
  MD, "Women’s Health and oncogenic
  women in planning for their health and well
  being? Join us for this powerful program.

Wednesday, April 19

- Women’s Health Source, Danielle Duffy,
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Thursday, April 18

- Women’s Health Source, Danielle Duffy,
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Wednesday, April 17

- Women’s Health Source, Danielle Duffy,
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