

## Merger Ahead: Jefferson and Abington Health Sign Letter of Intent

*“We are uniquely positioned to do something bold and different together that offers our patients and students even greater value, while preparing us for a brighter and more innovative future in health care, health sciences education and research.”*

– Stephen Klasko, MD, MBA  
President and CEO, TJU and Jefferson Health System

With a few more strokes of a pen – and ongoing discussions – Jefferson and Abington Health are, together, poised to build a model for the future. It’s a model that will deliver the right care at the right time at the right location and at the most affordable cost for patients. In October, both health systems met to sign a “letter of intent,” which created a framework for merging our organizations. The letter also ensured that our discussions continue to remain exclusive, while the two organizations exchange greater detail about our respective institutions and explore ways we can partner in the emerging healthcare climate created by the Affordable Care Act.

The resulting strategic partnership will help ensure that we thrive in the future as we care for our patients and educate our students in this rapidly evolving healthcare environment.

“Personally, I have had great discussions with the leadership of Abington, led by Larry Merlis, Abington’s President and CEO and Dr. Jack Kelly, CMO,” said Dr. Klasko. “It is clear that we share very similar cultures and are aligned regarding our thoughts about the future of health care and our commitment to the patients, students, employees and communities we serve.”

“Jefferson and Abington are extremely excited about the tremendous potential this merger has to deliver the best care and medical education in the region – where and when our patients and students desire them most. Simply put, we are uniquely positioned to do something bold and different together that offers our patients and students even greater value, while preparing us for a brighter and more innovative future in health care, health sciences education and research.”

Both organizations have begun the due diligence process in order to work toward a definitive agreement (finalized terms of a merger) in 2015.



Jefferson and Abington Health signed a letter of intent on October 29, allowing us to work together to create a framework for merging our organizations in 2015. Pictured at the October 29 “letter of intent” signing are Stephen Crane, Chair, Abington Health; Larry Merlis, President and CEO, Abington Health; Stephen Klasko, MD, MBA, President and CEO, TJU and Jefferson Health System; and Richard Hevner, Chair, TJU Board of Trustees.

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## Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Signs Affiliation Agreement with Jefferson

Representatives from Thomas Jefferson University's School of Population Health recently met with members of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) faculty and staff to sign an agreement that will allow PCOM students in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program the opportunity to receive a Master of Public Health degree from Jefferson while completing their coursework at PCOM. Those embarking on the dual-degree path can attain both degrees in as little as five years.

Through the partnership, DO students can attend Jefferson full time for the year between what traditionally would be the third and fourth years of PCOM's osteopathic medical program. In addition to MPH students, PCOM students will study alongside other dual-degree students, including Sidney Kimmel Medical College at TJU students, who are also pursuing a graduate public health degree. The master's portion of the program for PCOM students is completed by combining public health capstone work with a rotation at one of PCOM's Philadelphia healthcare centers. The rotation – developed by Michael Becker, DO, Associate Professor, Family Medicine at PCOM – applies public health and clinical competencies to the chronic care management of special-needs patients.

"There is a natural synergy between public health and osteopathic medicine, so we see this partnership as the teaming up of two very similar professions," said Caroline Golab, PhD, Associate Dean, Academic and Student Affairs at Jefferson's School of Population Health. "Today's healthcare environment puts more of an emphasis on primary care, and through this agreement, we can prepare future doctors to become effective practitioners."

"This partnership with Jefferson offers our students an even wider range of learning opportunities," said Robert Cuzzolino, EdD, Vice President, Graduate Programs and Planning at PCOM. "By providing our students with a medical and public health background, we are training them to address some of today's most crucial health issues."



PCOM students in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program now have the opportunity to receive a Master of Public Health degree from Jefferson while completing their coursework at PCOM. Pictured at the recent agreement-signing ceremony are Ken Veit, DO, Provost, Senior Vice President and Dean, PCOM; Caroline Golab, PhD, Associate Dean, Academic and Student Affairs at Jefferson's School of Population Health (JSPH); and Rob Simmons, DrPH, MPH, CHES, CPH, Director, MPH Program and Clinical Associate Professor, JSPH.

PCOM's Ken Veit, DO, Provost, Senior Vice President and Dean added: "PCOM offers a unique osteopathic tradition and culture, which strategically positions students to take advantage of this opportunity with Jefferson. This formal added education will be critical for the healthcare leaders of the future."

## Jefferson Partnership with Retirement Community a Win-Win

Imagine investing resources with a group of your friends, colleagues and neighbors to create a continuing care retirement community in the neighborhood where you have lived and worked all of your life. That is exactly what the founders did when they created *The Hill at Whitemarsh* in Lafayette Hill, Pa.

What's more, they chose Jefferson to ensure convenient access to the highest quality of care for the rest of their lives. The unique partnership between Jefferson and *The Hill* provides residents with the connection to an academic medical center, right at home. It is rare for a continuing care retirement community to choose an academic medical center to provide the care for their residents, but that choice has proven to be a win-win – providing residents with the highest level of care and students with a truly unique learning environment. Students come from a variety of Jefferson programs including Family Medicine residency and fellowship, Pharmacy, Nursing, Physical Therapy and Medicine.

*The Hill's* Medical Director, Danielle Snyderman, MD, is a Jefferson geriatrician and faculty member in the Department of Family and Community Medicine and treats residents in all areas – independent living, assisted living and skilled care.

The practice she runs with Jefferson colleague, Michele Zawora, MD, located on *The Hill's* campus,

provides specialized care, five days a week. Over time, Dr. Snyderman and Dr. Zawora get to know each of their patients more personally, which allows them to more effectively manage transitions in their patient care and guide them through difficult end-of-life decisions.

Students benefit from observing patient-centered care that is delivered through a multidisciplinary team.

"Students who have completed a rotation at *The Hill* report a deeper understanding of providing end-of-life discussions and care," Dr. Snyderman said. "They love getting to know the residents and learn a great deal from them."

Judy McGruther, President and CEO of *The Hill*, regularly receives positive feedback regarding the partnership.

"Residents are connected to the resources of a large, academic medical center, for example, clinical trials," McGruther said. "Residents also enjoy the inter-generational contact; more time with and easier access to their physician; and they feel that they are giving back to the community by supporting the education of tomorrow's health professionals."

Visit [Jefferson.edu/GeriatricMedicine](http://Jefferson.edu/GeriatricMedicine) to learn more about Jefferson's Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Care.



Frieda Sander meets with Dr. Snyderman at *The Hill*.

## Empowered to Further Serve Women and Babies in Our Area:

### Jefferson's Labor & Delivery Unit to Expand, With Help of \$1.5 Million Award

In September, Jefferson received a substantial means of assistance in helping to serve the women of the Philadelphia area and surrounding communities. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, represented by Governor Tom Corbett, presented Jefferson with a \$1.5 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) Award to renovate and expand our Obstetrics Program/Labor and Delivery Unit.

#### The Need for Funding

Over the past few years, TJUH has experienced significant growth in the areas of obstetrics and maternity services, maternal fetal medicine and reproductive endocrinology. This growth is largely the result of a reduction in the number of local health providers that offer obstetrical care. According to the *Philadelphia Business Journal*, approximately 19 hospitals provided obstetrics services in the Philadelphia area in 1999. Today, that number is down to six. As hospitals struggle to provide OB/GYN services in a cost-effective manner, many are opting to eliminate their obstetrics departments. This elimination of services exacerbates the demonstrated need for increased access to OB/GYN services, as highlighted in the TJUH FY 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The CHNA identified access to maternal and pediatric health care as a priority health need in the neighborhoods around TJUH.

#### About Jefferson's Obstetrics Program and Our Expansion

The Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals is a recognized leader in its specialty and is a tertiary referral center for high-risk obstetrics. The Labor and Delivery Unit provides approximately 2,000 deliveries per year. The TJUH Obstetrics Program Renovation project involves the relocation, expansion, and comprehensive upgrade of the hospital's Labor and Delivery Unit. Last updated more than 30 years ago, the Unit is too small to meet current demands for services. The expansion will provide more than 16,000 sq. ft., more than doubling the currently-available 7,900 sq. ft. of labor and delivery space.

## Jefferson Hosts Jordanian Nurses for Advanced Skills Immersion



Her Royal Highness Princess Muna Al-Hussein (pictured at right) toured the TJUH Center City campus in October, in connection with a nursing exchange that will span three months. The Jordanian Nursing Partnership is aligned with Jefferson Nursing's mission to strengthen nursing and leadership locally, nationally and internationally through collaboration and partnerships. Jefferson's School of Nursing, the TJUH Department of Nursing, staff supporting Jefferson's Innovation Pillar and the Office of International Affairs collaborated on the project.

## In the Spotlight

### Jefferson Teams Up with Flyers and 76ers

Jefferson and the Rothman Institute are now offering expert care to more of Philly's most illustrious athletes. Together, we are the Exclusive Hospital and Orthopaedic Partner for the Philadelphia Flyers and the Philadelphia 76ers.

### New Prognostic Genomic Test Offered Free to Breast Cancer Patients

Jefferson now has the capability to perform leading-edge genomic analyses of breast cancer in house – using the Prosigna™ Breast Cancer Prognostic Gene Signature Assay. The test significantly reduces turnaround time for test results and allows patients to begin effective treatment sooner. In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness month, throughout the month of October Jefferson offered the test free of charge to Jefferson patients recently diagnosed with breast cancer and who were being evaluated and treated by a Jefferson medical oncologist.

### Innovating Care: Jefferson Opens Comprehensive Spine Unit

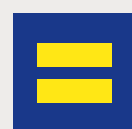
Building on our expertise in spine care,\*Jefferson recently opened a special 16-bed unit in the Gibbon Building, under the medical direction of Drs. James Harrop and Alan Hilibrand. The Jefferson Comprehensive Spine Unit ( JCSU) is designed to care for intermediate- and general-level patients through to discharge, serving the needs of adolescent, adult and geriatric patients who have undergone surgical spine procedures. If you would like additional information, please contact Kristen Vogl at [kristen.vogl@jefferson.edu](mailto:kristen.vogl@jefferson.edu) or call **215-955-6119**.

\*Jefferson is one of only a few hospitals in the US that is both a Level 1 Trauma Center and a federally designated regional spinal cord injury center.

### New Cutaneous Lymphoma Center Offers Specialized Treatment

Jefferson has opened a new clinic to provide multidisciplinary care for patients with cutaneous lymphoma – a rare and typically slow growing type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma that can often be misdiagnosed or commonly mistaken for inflammatory chronic skin conditions such as psoriasis or eczema. The range of specialists available at the Center includes dermapathologists, medical oncologists, dermatologists, radiation oncologists, pathologists and nurses. For more info, please contact MaryKate Cellmer at [mary.cellmer@jefferson.edu](mailto:mary.cellmer@jefferson.edu).

## More to Celebrate



#### Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation has recognized Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals as a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality" in the Healthcare Equality Index 2014.

#### Prestigious Recognition for Stroke Care

Thank you to our dedicated staff for helping Jefferson achieve recognition from the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA). *The Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award* – and recognition on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll for our "door-to-needle times" – mean Jefferson is part of an elite group of hospitals recognized by the AHA/ASA. The acknowledgements recognize Jefferson's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of stroke care by ensuring that stroke patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted standards and recommendations.

#### Celebrating 10 Years of Heart Transplantation

In November, Jefferson celebrated the renewed health of Tom Washington, our first heart transplant recipient, and marked our 10th year of offering leading-edge heart transplantation. Note: Independence Blue Cross has designated Thomas Jefferson University Hospital as a Blue Distinction Center for Transplants®.

# Free Shuttle Service for Patients and Visitors Now Operating

Have you thought about taking the train to Center City to get to your Jefferson doctor, but aren't up to walking a couple of blocks once you get to the city?

The Jefferson Patient & Visitor Shuttle was created to give patients and visitors with a safe and convenient – and free – means of getting to appointments at Jefferson from nearby Jefferson Station (formerly Market East). Handicapped accessible, the Shuttle originates from The Gallery and makes stops at six Jefferson buildings in Center City, Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## Drop-Off and Pick-Up Locations:

- Jefferson Station/The Gallery (10th Street – between Filbert and Market)
- 925 Chestnut Street (at the building's 10th Street side entrance)
- Gibbon Building (10th Street)
- 1100 Walnut (in front of Wendy's)
- Thomas Jefferson University (Locust Street, between 10th and 11th)
- Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience (9th Street)
- 833 Chestnut Street

The Shuttle is another way we're innovating at Jefferson to put Patients and Families First – one of the key components of our Blueprint for Strategic Action.

## Get the Shuttle Map Now!

Your Jefferson doctor's office – and many other Jefferson locations – have flyers that include the route. You can also find the map online by visiting [Hospitals.Jefferson.edu](http://Hospitals.Jefferson.edu) (see "Patients and Visitors" section).

## The Giving Spirit of Jefferson Triumphs – More than 218,000 Times!

### American Heart Association 2014 Philly Heart Walk:

#### We Baked, Laughed and "Changed" Our Way to the Finish Line!

Through many months of fundraising that included bake sales, a healthy cook-off, an ice cream sundae celebration, an after-work gathering for staff, loose-change drives and more, we made it to the American Heart Association 2014 Philly Heart Walk on November 8, with funds to spare! Jefferson raised well over its \$175K fundraising goal (generating more than \$218,000), and signed up more than 1,100 walkers from throughout the organization, along with family members and friends. All for a great cause: to fund much-needed research for the #1 and #4 killers of Americans – heart disease and stroke.

Jefferson served as the signature sponsor of the event and David McQuaid, EVP, Clinical Affairs, Jefferson Health System, and President & CEO, Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals, proudly served as Philadelphia Chairman for the Walk. We are proud to have achieved the ranking of Top Health System in fundraising and to have broken the Philadelphia single company/health system fundraising record!

### One Jefferson, Living United: 2014 Jefferson United Way Campaign

Jefferson staff members from throughout the organization dug deep this year and pledged more than \$194,000 to help our neighbors from the Philadelphia area all the way to the Jersey shore. Thank you to our generous, giving colleagues for showing your spirit of compassion and for taking action to make a positive difference in the lives of those around us.

## People

Jefferson welcomed **Anne Boland Docimo, MD, MBA**, as the new Chief Medical Officer of Jefferson Health System in September. Dr. Docimo now serves as a thought leader and catalyst, empowering our physician leaders to successfully evolve and advance evidence-based and high-value care throughout our system. She previously served as CMO for the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) Health Plan and as Senior Medical Director for the Hospital Division of UPMC.

**Cristina G. Cavalieri, BSN, ESQ**, was honored by the Justinian Society of Philadelphia with the *Judge Lisa A. Richette Outstanding Woman in Law Award* in October. Cris is Sr. VP, Chief Legal & Governance Officer, Secretary, TJU General Counsel, and Secretary, Jefferson University Physicians.

The *New York Times* featured **Kara Chromiak, RN**, as a finalist in its 2014 *Tribute to Nurses*, in the category of Volunteerism & Service. She is a nurse at Jefferson's Methodist Hospital.

**Danielle Duffy, MD, FACC**, was recently named the 2015 *Woman of Heart* by the Philadelphia Go Red for Women Campaign and the Philadelphia American Heart Association. Throughout 2015, Dr. Duffy will serve as a spokesperson for the Go Red for Women movement and attend numerous speaking engagements educating the public about women and heart disease.

The National Medical Association has announced **Edith Mitchell, MD, FACP**, is its President-Elect. Dr. Mitchell's installation will be August 4, 2015. She is Clinical Professor of Medicine and Medical Oncology, Program Leader, Gastrointestinal Oncology, Department of Medical Oncology; Director, Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities; and Associate Director, Diversity Affairs, Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson.

**Margaret O'Grady, RN, MSN, OCN, FAAMA**, has been appointed to the Pennsylvania Cancer Control Prevention and Research Board. In 2014, she was also named the 2014-2015 President of the Pennsylvania Society of Oncology and Hematology – the state-wide American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) consortium. A nurse for 30 years, she is Director of Nursing for medical oncology at the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Thomas Jefferson University.

## JeffNews

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