Supporting our Midwest compassion

Expanding organ transplant program reflects patient needs

Earlier this year in Wichita, a clinic opened offering something unique to the area: an easier connection to The University of Kansas Hospital’s kidney transplant experts.

Two days a week, physicians and staff from the Center for Transplantation in Kansas City travel to Wichita – an area that accounts for more than 60 percent of the center’s organ transplant referrals – to meet with potential new patients and provide follow-up care for recent organ recipients.

“We wish to provide Wichita with the best and most compassionate care,” said Bruce Kaplan, MD, medical director of the new clinic. “It is an honor to be able to serve the community.”

Although surgeries are still performed in Kansas City, the new clinic illustrates our transplant center’s expanding role in the Midwest, said Timothy Schmitt, MD, center director.

“As we continue to increase the number of lifesaving organ transplants, we want to ensure the program is convenient for patients who live far away,” he said. “Providing continuity of care closer to their homes is a major part of that plan.”

Working closely with Midwest Transplant Network, the hospital’s organ transplant program helps more patients every year (see By the Numbers, below). The growth is due in part to Midwest compassion, where organ donation rates are among the nation’s highest.

The transplant center team, which encompasses more than 90 physicians, nurses and others, also is key, as are hundreds of staff on units 63-64, who care for patients after transplant surgeries.

The hospital’s commitment to organ transplants is especially on display in April, which is National Donate Life Month:

- National Blue & Green Day is Friday, April 17. While hospital staff don those colors, donor families and recipients, known as ambassadors, hand out carnations, cookies, Donate Life pins and more to hospital guests.
- Also on April 17, the Kansas City Royals and our hospital host Transplant and Organ Donation Awareness at The K.
- The hospital’s annual Rose Ceremony is Saturday, April 25, honoring the lives of donors from the past year.

The goal of the events: Raise awareness of organ donations and encourage more people to register as organ, eye and tissue donors at YesTheyWantMe.com.

“The hospital couldn’t set transplant records without the help of all these wonderful people who provide inspiration to both donor families and recipients alike,” Schmitt said. “They bring hope to people every day.”

By the Numbers: Organ Transplants

The University of Kansas Hospital’s Center for Transplantation performed 242 organ transplants in 2014, most in the region.

3,392

Through April 7, 2015, total liver and renal transplants since the programs began (1990 liver, 1969 renal)

Liver transplants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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Liver includes kidney, simultaneous pancreas-kidney, simultaneous liver-kidney and pancreas only

Kidney transplants*

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*Includes simultaneous pancreas-kidney transplants
Events

► Beauty focus – Join Plastic Surgery staff 6-8 p.m. Thursday, April 9, at KU MedWest in Shawnee. They will discuss a range of aesthetic services and products, including rhinoplasty, face-lift, blepharoplasty, otoplasty, Botox, Perlane, Restylane, Juvederm, Sculptra, Voluma and Restylane Silk. Register at 913-588-1227 or kumed.com/beauty.

► Blood drives – The Community Blood Center’s monthly blood drives at the main campus are 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday, April 20, and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday, April 21, in the Student Center’s Francisco Lounge. Walk-ins are welcome. The center is the primary supplier of blood to patients at The University of Kansas Hospital.

► Head and neck cancer fundraiser – Sample area chefs’ specialties at the Sixth Annual Tasting Event – Culinary Creations from Soup to Dessert. The event, which benefits The University of Kansas Cancer Center Head and Neck Cancer Support Group, is 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, in the Westwood Campus Atrium. Tickets are $15. For information contact Jane Myer, LSCSW, at jmyer2@kumc.edu or 913-588-3630.

► Melanoma fundraiser – Outpacing Melanoma, a 5K run/walk, is 8 a.m. Sunday, May 3, at Corporate Woods in Overland Park. Proceeds benefit our cancer center. Register by Thursday, April 30. Details are at outpacingmelanoma.org.

► Melanoma screening – Melanoma Monday is the largest free skin cancer screening event in the area. It is available to the first 100 people 1-5 p.m. May 4 in the Medical Office Building’s Dermatology Clinic. Email bgroneman@kumc.edu or call 913-588-4719 to reserve a spot.

More events are at kumed.com/event-detail.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Pioneering RRT: 10th lifesaving year

Rapid Response Teams are so crucial to The University of Kansas Hospital’s consistently low mortality rates that it’s easy to forget the program is only a decade old.

In February 2005, the hospital was among a small handful in the nation to implement a Rapid Response Team. Turns out it was a pioneering move: RRTs are now standard among hospitals nationwide.

In its initial month, our RRT was activated 20 times to provide rapid medical intervention at the first sign a patient’s condition was deteriorating. Ten years later, the RRT has logged more than 14,000 calls – about 200 a month. That number doesn’t include calls logged by specialty RRTs, which respond to stroke, heart conditions, behavioral issues, pediatrics, trauma and burn activations.

“The impact of our Rapid Response Teams is evident in the hospital’s survival-to-discharge numbers,” said Akiko Kubo, RN, Code Blue and Rapid Response Team program manager. In 2005, 78 percent of patients survived to leave the hospital after an RRT call. In 2014 the survival rate had reached nearly 91 percent, even though the hospital cares for far more patients, and sicker patients, than a decade ago.

About 130 hospital staff are trained to respond around the clock to a rapid response call (913-588-5656). The team arrives within five to seven minutes anywhere on the main or Westwood campuses, including parking areas.

During a response, an ICU nurse begins immediate triage/assessment and hands-on interventions. A second ICU nurse looks up chart information, communicates with the patient’s primary caregivers and handles documentation.

A respiratory therapist provides oxygen or breathing treatment, takes blood samples and runs tests at the bedside for immediate lab results. Central Transport is also an integral part of the RRT. Others who may be alerted include a healthcare tech, IV therapist and chaplain for family support.

“The frontline staff takes tremendous pride in being part of the RRTs,” said Kubo. “Our program has been successful due to the unique culture of collaboration and teamwork we have among all disciplines.”

EXPOSURE

New look for IR program

The University of Kansas Hospital’s Interventional Radiology program is one of the busiest in the nation, performing an average of 50 procedures a day. To make way for the increasing demand, IR on March 30 opened several newly renovated areas, including 23 pre/post rooms, a dedicated waiting room, consult rooms and sonography suite.

Hospital staff enjoyed a sneak peek at the new areas. IR renovations are expected to be completed in June.
In the News

A recap of recent articles, TV segments and other media coverage of the region's leading academic medical center

► Barefoot running may be harder on older runners – The New York Times, April 1. Older runners who switch to barefoot running may not adjust as naturally to the process as younger runners do, according to a University of Kansas Medical Center study. Teenagers who switch to barefoot running shift the way they run, landing more on the balls of their feet, which is more beneficial, but older runners who go barefoot continue to land on their heels.

► Pittsburg State player fighting cancer – The Joplin Globe, March 29. At 6' 6" and 268 pounds, Robert McField was a standout receiver for the Pittsburg State Gorillas. But then he learned he had cancer – non-Hodgkin lymphoma – and his Joplin caregivers sent him to specialists at The University of Kansas Cancer Center. Though surgeries and chemotherapy have taken their toll, McField discussed how the support of physicians and his young family keep him believing he will return to the team one day.

► The benefits of watching resuscitation efforts – Reuters Health, March 24. Letting family members watch physicians try to bring a loved one back from the brink of death may not hurt patients' odds of survival, according to a study at a medical center in Seattle. Steven Simpson, MD, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at The University of Kansas Hospital, was not involved in the study, but he explained why he also supports the decision to let families watch resuscitation efforts – in part because it provides closure. “I have never had a family member say ‘I wish I hadn’t been there,’ and I have had numerous people say ‘thanks,’” he said.

► Ebola hits children harder – HealthDay News, March 25. Ebola appears to do its damage faster in young children than it does in adults, according to a new study from the World Health Organization's Ebola Response Team. Although scientists are studying why Ebola is so much more devastating to children, fluid loss probably is a major factor. “By the time they’re behind on fluids, they’re really behind,” said Lee Norman, MD, chief medical officer at The University of Kansas Hospital. “Catch-up is harder, and everything is accelerated in terms of the severity of their illness.”

Milk may be good for the brain, too

New research conducted at the University of Kansas Medical Center has found a correlation between milk consumption and the levels of a naturally-occurring antioxidant in the brains of older, healthy adults.

The research was published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Debra Sullivan, PhD, and In-Young Choi, PhD

“We have long thought of milk as being very important for your bones and very important for your muscles,” said Debra Sullivan, PhD, professor and chair of dietetics and nutrition, who worked on the project with In-Young Choi, PhD, an associate professor of neurology. “This study suggests it could be important for your brain as well.”

Choi’s team asked 60 study participants about their diets in the days leading up to brain scans, which they used to monitor levels of glutathione, a powerful antioxidant.

People who had drunk milk recently had higher levels of glutathione in their brains. This is important, the researchers said, because glutathione could help stave off oxidative stress and the resulting damage caused by reactive chemical compounds produced during the normal metabolic process in the brain.

Oxidative stress is known to be associated with a number of different diseases and conditions, including Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease and many other conditions, Choi said.

“You can basically think of this damage like the buildup of rust on your car,” Sullivan said. “If left alone for a long time, the buildup increases and it can cause damaging effects.”

Royals are back – so is healthcare team

With this week’s opening day at Kauffman Stadium, the defending American League Champion Kansas City Royals began their fifth year with The University of Kansas Hospital as the team’s Official Healthcare Provider.

Once again, physicians from the hospital’s Sports Medicine & Performance Center take care of players – including six minor league affiliates – while other hospital staff care for fans at the K’s first-aid stations.

Royals head athletic trainer Nick Kenney said his relationship continues to strengthen with our hospital medical staff, including Vincent Key, MD, head team physician and medical director.

“They take care of the team I take care of, and we want the best care possible,” Kenney said. “If The University of Kansas Hospital is good enough for the best of the best, then it should be good enough for the best fans in this area.”

This year’s player physicals at spring training in Surprise, Ariz., included a twist: With the measles outbreaks around the country, physicians checked players’ immunization statuses. Any player found not to have immunity received a booster shot.

Perfect ‘Match’

Every year during the third week of March, graduating medical students across the country observe a rite of passage: Match Day, when they learn where they will spend four years of residency. At the University of Kansas Medical Center, 190 new physicians (and some of their families) participated in letter-opening ceremonies on stage in front of their cheering colleagues. Jenica Wessels-Harwood, MD, with baby Bennett, learned she is going to the Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency Program in Salina, Kan.
Our People

Exceptional Employee Spotlight
– Early in his 20-year career at the University of Kansas Medical Center, Howard Robinson learned about the importance of how you treat others.

“When I first started at KUMC, I remember someone warning me how difficult a certain employee was to work with,” Robinson said. “However, this person turned out to be just the opposite and was as nice as could be. In my experience, how you treat others is how they will treat you back.”

This golden rule is Robinson’s overarching approach to every interaction, and in his role as network specialist in system support, he has many. He meets and works with different people every day resolving desktop-related issues.

“I would say Howard is tenacious,” said Noel Field, manager of system support. “He is dedicated to making sure KU Medical Center faculty and staff have the most painless and understandable computing and technology experience possible.”

Outstanding resident – Internal Medicine’s Jenny Kendall, MD, has received The University of Kansas Hospital’s Outstanding Resident Award. Hospital nurses each quarter recognize a medical resident who demonstrates excellence in practice.

Unit 62 staff, who nominated her for the award, lauded her poise and sensitivity in challenging situations, as well as her warmth for patients and families. “Patients who weren’t smiling did when she entered the room due to her fantastic bedside manner and her focus for putting the patient first,” said Shannon Schroeder, Unit 62 coordinator.

The Outstanding Resident Award, which is open to any of the approximately 500 residents at the hospital, honors excellence in professionalism, quality and patient and family care.

DAISY Nursing Awards – Every quarter, several nurses at The University of Kansas Hospital receive the DAISY Award, a national program that honors extraordinary nurses for their clinical skills and compassion. The awards are based on comments by patients and colleagues.

Congratulations to our most recent individual and team winners (with testimonials from their nomination forms):

- Megan Wells, RN, Neuroscience & ENT Progressive Care – “Although she is a new RN, her bedside manner is one to be admired. Her care and compassion are beautiful to witness. She also was amazing with my students – exactly the role model I would hope for.”
- Jordan Bain, RN, Neuroscience & ENT Progressive Care – “Jordan made us feel welcomed and important. She made us very comfortable and helped reduce our postsurgery anxiety. We loved having her come in and talk to us.”
- Idalina Lene, RN, Cardiovascular Progressive Care – “When I came in as a patient from the Emergency Department with chest pain, Idalina became my nurse. She had other patients to attend to … but she always was kind, considerate of how I was feeling and never once made me feel it was a job to her.”

The Rodgers family with Cardiac ICU team

Cardiac ICU (Team Award) – “These nurses cared for a young man who had a heart attack. His wife was scared and tearful. Not only did the staff care for the patient, but they cared for his wife and children. The nurses even created a children’s book for the family called ‘The Day the Fireman Needed to be Rescued’.”

- Units 41/42/45 (Team Award) – “My husband has non-Hodgkin lymphoma. The overall care during both five-day stays was just phenomenal – full of smiles, sincerity, patience, compassion and consistently smooth shift changes with seamless communication between nurses.”

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Second Annual Chiefs Fantasy Camp
Tuesday Evening, August 25
and Wednesday, August 26
Arrowhead Stadium

Break down film, gear up in the locker room and take the field with former Chiefs greats.

Hurry – only 100 roster spots!
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Benefiting the Center for Concussion Management at The University of Kansas Hospital.

The University of Kansas Hospital