Area patients with pulmonary hypertension – an incurable, life-threatening lung disorder – can now receive the highest possible standard of care and most advanced treatments without traveling hundreds of miles.

The University of Kansas Hospital last month became one of just 26 Pulmonary Hypertension Comprehensive Care Centers in the country and the only accredited program between St. Louis and Denver. Also accredited last month: Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Mayo Clinic Florida and Harvard Medical School in Boston.

Pulmonary hypertension (PH) is high blood pressure in the lungs, a rare condition affecting 20,000 to 30,000 Americans. It occurs when walls of the lung’s arteries thicken, constricting blood flow. Forced to work harder and harder to pump blood, the heart grows weak. The person becomes increasingly short of breath and deeply fatigued. Walking across the room can pose a challenge.

Without effective treatment, average survival rate after diagnosis is 2.5 years.

For some patients, treatment involves carrying a small pump, which continuously infuses medication through a chest catheter. Other treatments include oral or inhaled medications. Medications cost $20 to $200,000 annually.

“Before the first PH treatment was developed in 1998, this diagnosis was a death sentence,” said Timothy Williamson, MD, director of our hospital’s PH Comprehensive Care Center. Five-year survival rate now: 90 percent.

“There have been phenomenal strides made in PH drug therapies and treatments,” he added. “They not only have lengthened survival but, more important, vastly improved quality of life for PH patients.”

Lewis Satterwhite, MD, Leslie Spikes, MD, and Williamson treat and monitor about 400 PH patients. Unit 66 is the flagship location for PH inpatients, many of whom require complex care because of related medical conditions or advanced disease. Also, three highly trained specialty nurses assist with outpatients in the Medical Office Building’s pulmonary clinic.

Accreditation from the Pulmonary Hypertension Association (PHA) signifies a program demonstrates expertise in making a proper PH diagnosis and meets exacting criteria for comprehensive treatment and management of PH patients.

By the Numbers: Driving hazards

As part of National Trauma Awareness Month, Trauma staff at The University of Kansas Hospital remind drivers to buckle up, pay attention and stay sober.

89% Observed seatbelt rate among staff and physicians at The University of Kansas Hospital and KU Medical Center

Source: 2015 Trauma Center Seatbelt Challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of drunk drivers in fatal crashes Source: CDC, 2012</th>
<th>21-24</th>
<th>25-27</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Who is most likely to drive drowsy? Source: National Science Foundation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adults with children in the household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women</td>
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4.6 seconds Average amount of time a driver’s eyes are off the road while sending or receiving a text Source: Virginia Tech Transportation Institute
**Events**

- **Being mindful about chronic pain** – Explore the practice of mindfulness and how simple mindful techniques can decrease the intensity of chronic pain and its impact on your quality of life. The program spans three sessions starting 2-3 p.m. Monday, July 20, at Turning Point: The Center for Hope and Healing in Leawood. Call 913-574-0900 to register.

- **Stress and your immune system** – When hit with stress repeatedly, your immune system defenses are often impaired. Learn about the inner workings of our stress response system, its links to the immune system and strategies for managing it in more effective ways. The class is 10-11 a.m. Wednesday, July 22, at The University of Kansas Cancer Center-Lee’s Summit. Call 913-574-0900 to register.

- **Blood drive** – The Community Blood Center’s next blood drive at the main campus is 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday, July 22, 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.

- **Komen race** – The University of Kansas Cancer Center is forming a team for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. The annual event, a fundraiser for breast cancer research and patient care, is Sunday, Sept. 13, at Worlds of Fun. Deadline to register online is 9 p.m. Sept. 4. To register for our team online:
  - Go to komenkansascity.org
  - Select “Komen Race for the Cure,” then “Register”
  - Select “Join an Existing Team”
  - Log in or select “First Time Registration”
  - Find “Company/Corporate Name”
  - Select “The University of Kansas Cancer Center” and join

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

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**Using complex math to battle cancer**

Not all research at The University of Kansas Cancer Center takes place in labs using test tubes and microscopes. Some of it relies on sophisticated statistical and computational tools.

Consider faculty and staff in Biostatistics and Informatics Shared Resource. Among their many initiatives, they use bioinformatics – a combination of computer science, statistics, mathematics and engineering to study biological data – to explore why patients with a certain type of cancer respond differently to the same treatment.

“One of the biggest challenges in the treatment of many cancers is the large variation in patients’ responses to common therapies,” said Director Brooke Fridley, PhD.

She points to ovarian cancer. It is the fifth-leading cause of cancer death among U.S. women, though more than 70 percent of patients initially respond well to therapy.

“Not all ovarian cancer tumors are the same, even if they are clinically denoted as being the same cancer type,” Fridley explained. “Since each woman and her cancer is unique, the development of a ‘molecular signature’ – which is able to sub-classify tumors based on key genomic events – would allow physicians to make individualized treatment decisions for patients.”

In their research, Fridley’s staff dive deep into the DNA, RNA, and other complex molecular features of the tumor. To support the work, the lab is developing integrative molecular clustering methods. The methods are applied to data from The Cancer Genome Atlas, a national organization, and a Mayo Clinic cohort with whom Fridley collaborates.

Through these methods, they hope to determine molecular subtypes that might explain the difference in outcomes between ovarian cancer patients.

“The key is to detect the patterns,” Fridley said. “Cancer genomics and pharmacogenomics have the potential to reduce the cost of treatment by determining the correct treatment and dose for each individual – thus increasing efficiency in response to treatment while reducing side effects.”

Read more at kucancercenter.org/about-us/news.

**EXPOSURE**

**Attracting future RNs**

What’s it like being a nurse? Approximately 45 high school students got a taste of the profession during the annual Nurse Academy, hosted by The University of Kansas Hospital and KU School of Nursing. During last week’s two-day event, students practiced hands-on skills such as CPR – taught by Medical ICU’s Taylor Robertson, RN (right), learned about different areas of nursing and toured several departments.
In the News

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

► Funding for end-of-life counseling – KHI News Service, July 9. The federal government is proposing Medicare reimbursements for physicians who discuss end-of-life plans with patients. Christian Sinclair, MD, a specialist in hospice and palliative care at The University of Kansas Hospital, applauds the move as an important shift toward valuing physician-patient collaboration. “There’s still plenty of questions on how this is all going to shake out, but the fact Medicare got behind this is really encouraging,” he said.

► FDA warning about cough syrup for kids – KSHB, July 9. A new FDA warning about children’s syrups containing codeine isn’t news to certain physicians. “The FDA is not saying anything that’s shocking or surprising to pediatricians,” said Grace Brouillette, DO, Pediatrics at The University of Kansas Hospital. “For some time we’ve been cautious about using cough and cold medicines and any medication with codeine.” She believes more natural remedies, such as honey, can be just as effective.

► Avoiding groin injuries not easy – Fox 4 News, July 9. Groin strains like the one suffered by the Royals Alex Gordon can be difficult to prevent. All it takes is a “unintended twist or misstep or fall” to trigger the injury, said Randy Goldstein, DO, Sports Medicine at The University of Kansas Hospital. “Because they’re unpredictable, they’re hard to completely prevent. Certainly a stretching and prevention program will help.”

► Woman warns about fireworks hazards – KMBC-9 News, July 7. Two years ago, Julie Durand suffered burns over 19 percent of her body during a fireworks mishap. Now Durand, who was treated at The University of Kansas Hospital, is warning others about the hazards. The hospital this year treated 21 patients with fireworks injuries; eight of them were serious enough to be admitted, including three patients with finger amputations.

With new clinic, services expand in JoCo

The University of Kansas Physicians has opened a multi-specialty practice in Overland Park, expanding our academic medicine services in Johnson County.

The practice, called The University of Kansas Physicians Quivira Specialty Care, is at 12000 W. 110th St., adjacent to The University of Kansas Cancer Center-Overland Park.

The renovated facility will house six specialties: Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Pulmonary, Rheumatology, Urogynecology and the Center for Pelvic Pain and Sexual Health.

The 10,000-square-foot space contains 14 exam rooms and one procedure room. To schedule an appointment, call 913-588-1227 or visit kumed.com/find-doctor.

‘Letters for Alex’ campaign sets record

Alex Dewey is something of a celebrity at The University of Kansas Hospital.

The nine-year-old patient on July 13 received 192 get-well cards and letters, the most ever on one day at the hospital. The previous record was 72.

Alex faces several more surgeries, and several months in the burn center, after suffering an accident last month that left him with burns on 50 percent of his body. To cheer him up, his family took to Facebook, encouraging friends to send him cards and letters.

A local TV station picked up on the campaign and broadcast a story last week, triggering the outpouring of support.

“I looked at all the letters and thought, ‘That has to be a record!’” said volunteer Ralph Long, who has been sorting patient mail here for about 15 years. “I had to deliver them in a truck.” (Not really.)

Patients can sign up for MyChart online

It’s even easier for patients to sign up for MyChart, The University of Kansas Hospital’s online electronic medical record.

Online self-signup, which debuted last month, allows patients to simply choose the Sign Up Now button at mychart.kumed.com. Answer a few questions to confirm your identity and you’re in!

Enrolling in MyChart allows patients to see parts of their medical records and communicate with their care teams via secure message.

Patients can continue signing up the “old” way, too: working with staff during a visit, using the activation code provided on the after-visit summary or calling or emailing to request an activation code by mail.

Those requesting proxy access to a child’s or family member’s record will need to call 913-588-4040 to initiate the process.

‘Hot Summer’ fundraiser

More than 400 people on June 27 enjoyed the inaugural “Hot Summer Nights,” a fundraiser for Turning Point: The Center for Hope and Healing. Turning Point is a program of The University of Kansas Hospital, which hosted the festivities on a transformed 12th Street Bridge near downtown.

The fabulous evening — led by co-chairs (from left) Joe and Suzanne Donnelly and Liz and Perry Brandt — featured cuisine, drinks and entertainment from around the world.

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Our People

Blazing a new TRAIL – Growing up in Haiti, Deste Baptiste saw the benefits firsthand of U.S. medical missions in his community. Inspired, he came to America in 2001 to become a nurse.

And a very good one at that. Less than two years after graduating from nursing school, he has received the TRAIL Award, a new recognition from Internal Medicine residents at the University of Kansas Medical Center. Every year they plan to recognize a nurse at The University of Kansas Hospital who demonstrates exceptional teamwork with residents, along with other characteristics.

“It is a privilege coming to work knowing I can have an impact on patients,” said Baptiste, part of the hospital’s hematology-oncology Units 41/42/45. He especially likes to talk to residents about patient needs.

“I’m always asking: ‘How can we improve patient care?’ We must be an advocate for the patient,” said Baptiste, who is pursuing his DNP and hopes to return to Haiti one day to open a clinic.

His commitment to patients and colleagues caught the attention of Neurology resident Hala Samman, MD, who nominated Baptiste for the inaugural TRAIL award.

“He is a great nurse: excellent with his patients, very compassionate and caring and is also one of his patients’ biggest advocates,” she wrote. “He is also such a great communicator with the rest of the team, making sure the important issues are taken care of.”

TRAIL is short for Teamwork, Respect, Amicable, Insight and Learning. “The TRAIL award,” according to its criteria, “recognizes our nursing partners who value the teamwork it takes to gather information from the patient and their caregivers and to provide them with necessary diagnostics and interventions in an effective and safe manner while educating those care providers who are part of the team.”

Outstanding dietetic educator – Heather Gibbs, PhD, RD, assistant professor in Dietetics and Nutrition at the University of Kansas School of Health Professions, has received the Kansas Dietetic Association’s Outstanding Dietetic Educator Award for a Dietetic Internship Award.

The award recognizes faculty teaching, mentoring and leadership activities. Gibbs has practiced as a registered dietitian since 2000 in areas including inpatient and outpatient medical nutrition therapy, telehealth-delivered medical nutrition therapy, and undergraduate nutrition and/or dietetics education.

Gibbs’ research interest focuses on nutrition education, with particular interest in nutrition literacy – a person’s capacity to use nutrition information to make healthy dietary choices. Her 2013 pilot study to adapt her nutrition literacy assessment instrument (NLit) for the breast cancer population found relationships between nutrition literacy and diet quality.

New Physicians

- Eric Hockstad, MD
  Cardiovascular Diseases

- Nishank Jain, MD, MPH
  Nephrology

- Travis Langner, MD
  Pediatrics/Critical Care

- John Miles, MD
  Endocrinology

- Timothy Ryken, MD
  Neurosurgery

- Meenakshi Singh, MD
  Pathology

Huddle Up!

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!
Buy your ticket at kchiefs.com/fantasycamp.

Benefiting the Center for Concussion Management at The University of Kansas Hospital.