

NOVEMBER 2009



JUNE HUMPHREY

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UC Health

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## Phone Program Enhances Access for Referring Physicians

UCMD is open for business, and that's good news for doctors and patients alike.

UCMD is shorthand for the telephone system designed to increase referrals by giving referring physicians better access to UC Health physicians and specialties. The number to call is (513) 475-UCMD (8263).

In operation since September, UCMD has been rolled out across the University of Cincinnati Physicians organization, says Karen Adams, director of operations for the clinical practice group. It is currently being introduced to Alliance Primary Care physicians and ultimately will encompass the entire Tristate.

UCMD received funding for its first two years of operation from a community donor. The service is staffed from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, with after-

hours calls (MD to MD consults only) answered by (513) 584-BEDS. UCMD's two staffers, Theresa Mock and Renee Hawthorne, are based at the UC Health Medical Arts Building in Clifton. ●



Renee Hawthorne

Theresa Mock

### *With UCMD, referring physicians can:*

- Consult with a UC Health specialist.
- Find UC Health physician offices convenient for their patients, including primary care.
- Locate UC Health practice sites and hours of operation.
- Coordinate "urgent" patient appointments within a medically appropriate time and facilitate urgent patient matters associated with timely scheduling.
- Facilitate communication back to referring physicians—for example, calling the referring physician back to let him or her know that a patient has received an appointment within the desired timeline.
- Connect to a UC Health physician (MD to MD) in any specialty for a telephone consultation within three minutes (each department or division provides an on-call schedule for UCMD).
- Facilitate the coordination of multiple physician or diagnostic testing appointments.
- Facilitate admission requests with University Hospital's admission line, (513) 584-BEDS (2337). ●

## Impact of Jewish Hospital Sale on the College of Medicine and University Hospital

COLLEAGUES,  
The Cincinnati City Council has hosted two public hearings to determine the impact on the Health Alliance by the proposed sale of Jewish Hospital to



*David M Stern*

Mercy Health Partners and the ability of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and University Hospital to fulfill their historic missions.

Jewish Hospital's departure from the Health Alliance is the tipping point for the financial viability of the health system. Absent a broader affiliation with other partners, a significant operational and financial burden will

rest with University Hospital as the primary institution in the community providing health care services for the uninsured and underinsured. University Hospital also could not sustain the exceptional community benefit—totaling nearly \$100 million annually—it now provides without significantly reducing its commitment to the College of Medicine if it were a stand-alone hospital.

The College of Medicine will have significant challenges recruiting new researchers and clinicians and attracting vital research dollars that help sustain our local economy if it is left without a strong health system to support its clinical care mission.

Much is at stake for the residents

of our region who need and deserve the highest quality medical care. We must ensure that we secure the futures of the College of Medicine and University Hospital before any financial transaction is consummated around the sale of Jewish Hospital.

I urge you, as employees of University of Cincinnati Physicians, to make your opinions known. A date has not been set for the final public hearing, but we'll keep you informed.

**DAVID STERN, MD**  
Chairman, University of Cincinnati Physicians Board of Directors  
Vice President for Health Affairs, UC Dean, UC College of Medicine

## We're all UC Health

*June Humphrey*  
Housekeeping

### Connected

Connected is a monthly publication for physicians and staff of University of Cincinnati Physicians. Send your comments and ideas to [ucpmarketing@ucphysicians.com](mailto:ucpmarketing@ucphysicians.com) or call (513) 475-8006.

#### Editor

Amanda Harper

#### Marketing Director

Chris Ralston

#### Contributors

Katy Cosse, Keith Herrell,

Dama Kimmon, Angela

Koenig, Katie Pence

#### Photography

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Before the sun is up, June Humphrey is standing alongside Montgomery Road in Norwood awaiting the No. 51 Metro bus. Her destination: the UC Health Medical Arts Building (MAB) in Clifton, where she is responsible for keeping the public areas and corporate offices clean.

It's an all-day job, with a result that's pleasing for patients and staff alike. That's a source of satisfaction to Humphrey, a familiar figure as she goes about her duties each day either inside the MAB or outside, particularly along the heavily trafficked area between the MAB and the UC Barrett Cancer Institute at University Hospital.

In addition, she says, "I really enjoy the people I work with. My boss, Steve Knost, is a great person to work for."

Knost returns the favor: "June is a great employee. I can't think of another person who has had a greater positive impact on our customers' satisfaction."

"Cleaning up after the public could

put any of us in a bad mood, but somehow June always manages to keep a positive attitude, regardless of the situation," Knost adds. "I'm grateful that she works with us."

Humphrey has been a University of Cincinnati Physicians employee since 2006, working for a short time at the

Montgomery office before moving to the MAB. Previously, she worked as a housekeeper at the Radisson Hotel in Covington.

Humphrey grew up in Lower Clifton and attended Western Hills High School. These days, her interests are focused on her family—including two grandchildren, ages 9 months and 2 months.

"When I'm not at work, I love to spend time with them," she says. •



# Diabetes Center Gets ‘Self-Check’ on Quality

Physicians Quality Reporting Initiative focuses on tracking outcomes

A closer look at the health records of a specific population of UC Health Diabetes Center patients was an eye-opener for center director Barbara Ramlo-Halsted, MD. Only one quarter of this group, all with diabetes and chronic kidney disease, met their goal for optimal blood sugar control.

While each individual case would have been flagged for better case management during a regular office visit, the newly mined data for the entire group was telling a story about a difficult-to-manage subset of patients.

“The ability to track this specific population showed us that there may be more than just individual differences among the patients,” says Ramlo-Halsted. “We could now see what could be a trend in their diabetes management and could re-think the way we care for and manage this entire group.”

UC’s team of endocrinologists and diabetologists has joined the Physicians Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI)—a three-year-old program aimed at improving patient outcomes through quality measures, reporting and

incentives. This is expected to be supported even further by health care stimulus dollars and offered to physician groups based on what is termed “meaningful use” of electronic medical records. Reporting quality measures is one of the criteria for meaningful use.

It was changes made to the Diabetes Center’s electronic medical record system in advance of PQRI reporting that allowed the center to enter and capture specific data about its chronic kidney disease patients.

PQRI, which is run by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), requires clinicians to report specific quality measures, either through claims or patient registries, by capturing data during an office visit.

The Diabetes Center has been tracking PQRI data since August. In mid-October, it began submitting reports to CMS.

Team members say the initiative has offered them a new look at workflow issues and has increased communication between physicians, clinical staff and the billing office.

Kelly Fischbein, manager of quality initiatives for University of Cincinnati Physicians, says that although it’s not simple, tracking outcomes helps UC Health to better describe and quantify quality. •

## >> **PATIENT APPOINTMENTS**

UC Health diabetes specialists see patients in Avondale, Clifton, West Chester and Lawrenceburg, Ind. For appointments, call (513) 475-8200.

**More information about the Physicians Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) can be found at [cms.hhs.gov/pqri](http://cms.hhs.gov/pqri).**



## CAPTURING AND TRACKING DATA

*about an entire patient group opens new understanding on care management, workflow issues and team communication, all aimed at improving patient outcomes.*

# Anesthesiologists Take Global Approach to Care

## Fellowship-trained team of subspecialists also serve in critical care role

Anesthesiologists have heard all the jokes—most of them involving gas.

And yes, they have a sense of humor, but they're also serious about getting the word out that their role has moved far beyond just being the

person who puts you to sleep before surgery.

"You can think of anesthesia like you think of internal medicine, with subspecialties that cross over into many other areas of patient care," says William Hurford, MD, a UC Health anesthesiologist and chair of the University of Cincinnati's (UC) anesthesiology department.

Since Hurford's appointment in 2003 the field—and the department—has evolved dramatically: The UC faculty has doubled from 18 to nearly 40, and its number of cases at UC Health hospitals has increased nearly 40 percent to top 20,000 annually.

The department's physicians, almost

all of whom hold fellowship-trained subspecialties, practice at multiple locations

throughout Greater Cincinnati such as UC Health University Hospital, West Chester Medical Center, UC Health Surgical Hospital, Shriners Hospitals for Children—Cincinnati and two UC Health pain management centers.

"Our team is the highest trained in the city if not in the state," says Steven Lisco, MD, director of anesthesiology critical care services, co-medical director of the SICU at University Hospital and medical director of the 18-bed critical care unit at the new West Chester Medical Center. Both the SICU at University Hospital and the ICU at West Chester Medical Center are operated and staffed by UC Health anesthesiologists who, along with surgeons, have subspecialty expertise in critical care medicine.

"Most people don't think of anesthesiologists as critical care doctors, but our attending physicians, fellows and residents are trained to take a global approach to health care," adds Lisco.

Many times, he says, patients who have had no prior health issues receive their first full health assessment when they are faced with a surgery and undergo the health scrutiny of an anesthesiologist. ●

*UC Health anesthesiology subspecialties include:*

- **Critical care medicine**
- **Pain management**
- **Burn**
- **Cardiac care**
- **Peri-operative care**
- **Obstetrics**
- **Pediatrics**
- **Orthopaedics**
- **Ambulatory**

*"You can THINK OF ANESTHESIA like you think of internal medicine, with subspecialties that cross over into many other areas of patient care."*

William Hurford, MD  
chair, UC's anesthesiology department



### Science-Driven Pain Management Services

Everyone's tolerance for pain is different. That's why the physicians with UC Health's Pain Management Center focus on the individual and the latest in proven pain management techniques.

"Our goal here is to follow the best academic guidelines and provide the absolute best in care," says Hammam Akbik, MD, an assistant professor at UC and division director for UC Health's Pain Management and Palliative Care clinics since 2005.

Akbik credits the expansion and success of the clinics—at UC Health University Hospital, the Barrett Center building and a new freestanding clinic in West Chester—to a business model that supports melding the academic and clinical approach to reducing or alleviating pain.

UC Health, he says, has one of the top 10 pain management fellowship programs in the country with four fellows rotating annually, one of whom focuses solely on research. **For UC Health pain management appointments, call (513) 475-8282 or visit [universitypain.com](http://universitypain.com) for more information.** ●

**>> FOR MORE INFORMATION about UC Health anesthesiologists, visit [ucphysicians.com](http://ucphysicians.com).**

# Options Increase for Pulmonary Hypertension Cases

## Two new FDA-approved drug therapies help patients lead more active lives

**H**undreds of new pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) cases are diagnosed each year in the United States, pushing the total number of cases over the 200,000 mark.

Although the progressive disease is often under-recognized, sometimes misdiagnosed and has no cure, there are new treatments that can improve the quality of life for some pulmonary hypertension sufferers, says Jean

Elwing, MD, a UC Health pulmonologist.

PAH is a blood vessel disorder of the lungs in which pressure in the pulmonary arteries, the blood vessels that lead from the heart to the lungs, rises above normal levels.

Symptoms include chest pain, dizziness, fatigue and shortness of breath which can occur even during routine activities such as walking across the room.

Elwing says people suffering from pulmonary arterial hypertension mistakenly think their symptoms are caused by aging, being out of shape or weight gain.

"Pulmonary arterial hypertension is a serious disease and can be life-threatening," she says. "Symptoms should not be ignored."

Two new medications were recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of World Health Organization (WHO) Group 1 PAH: Treprostinil (Tyvaso), an inhaled medication, and Tadalafil (Adcirca), an oral therapy.



Jean Elwing, MD

WHO Group 1 cases include those that are idiopathic (arising spontaneously), genetic or are associated with other diseases including lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, HIV and sickle cell anemia.

"Tyvaso was approved for PAH therapy in July 2009," says Elwing. "It is administered via a specialized nebulizer four times daily. It has been shown to increase exercise tolerance in PAH patients."

Elwing says Adcirca is another treatment option that is taken once a day in the form of two tablets and has also been shown to improve patients' exercise tolerance.

"Both of these medications treat the illness while allowing patients to lead active lifestyles," she says. "The average life expectancy for someone with untreated pulmonary arterial hypertension who is diagnosed in the later stages of the disease is only about three years. But if it's detected in the early stages and treated, people can live a semi-normal life. We want people to be aware of the symptoms of PAH and ask their physician for help."

She says echocardiograms are generally used to check for PAH, but heart catheterization is needed for confirmation.

Elwing receives funding from the makers of Tyvaso in the form of a patient education grant. She also serves on the advisory board of United Therapeutics, the maker of both medications. ●

**>> PATIENT APPOINTMENTS**  
**For an appointment with a UC Health pulmonologist, call (513) 475-8523.**



**People suffering from pulmonary arterial hypertension mistakenly think their symptoms are caused by aging, being out of shape or weight gain.**

istockphoto

Jean Elwing, MD, says people should see a doctor if they experience the following:

- Shortness of breath with minimal exertion
- Fatigue
- Decreased exercise tolerance
- Chest pain
- Dizzy spells
- Fainting

# in brief

## Hospital Recognized for Organ Donation Leadership

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recognized UC Health University Hospital for its leadership in organ donation with the department's Medal of Honor at the Fifth National Learning Congress on Organ Donation and Transplantation held Sept. 30, 2009, in Dallas, Texas.

University Hospital was recognized for achieving a 75 percent or higher donation conversion rate over a 12-month period. The hospital is among 28 in the Tristate that work with

LifeCenter Organ Donor Network to save, enhance and change lives through organ and tissue donation.

Staff from University Hospital who attended the awards ceremony included Rick Hale from the Office of Decedent Affairs and Valerie Johnson from Spiritual Care. LifeCenter's Executive Director Barry Massa, Organ Operations Director Missy Holliday and Hospital Development Manager Lynn Beebe also attended.

## UC Bearcats Recognize UC Health Orthopaedics for Service

The UC Health orthopaedics team was recognized for more than 30 years of service and care provided to UC athletes at the Sept. 26, 2009, UC football game against Fresno State. Surgeons (left to right in UC Health shirts) John Wyrick, MD, Anthony Guanciale, MD, Angelo Colosimo, MD, Peter Stern, MD, T. Toan Le, MD, and Ferhan Asghar, MD, attended the ceremony.



Courtesy of UC Athletics

### SAVE THE DATE—Blood Drive Dec. 22

University of Cincinnati Physicians will host its second employee blood drive for Hoxworth Blood Center on Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009. Employee blood donations can be made at the outpatient locations in Clifton (Medical Arts Building), and West Chester (Medical Office Building) as well as Victory Parkway. All donors will receive a Hoxworth Blood Center winter T-shirt and be entered in a drawing for prizes. Appointments can be made online at the following addresses or by calling Eric Schmaltz at (513) 558-1343. Walk-ups will also be accepted.

- Medical Arts Building** ..... 11 a.m.–1 p.m.  
[www.hoxworth.org/groups/MAB](http://www.hoxworth.org/groups/MAB)
- Medical Office Building** ..... 11 a.m.–1 p.m.  
[www.hoxworth.org/groups/UP](http://www.hoxworth.org/groups/UP)
- Victory Parkway** ..... 9 a.m.–3 p.m.  
[www.hoxworth.org/groups/VP](http://www.hoxworth.org/groups/VP)

## Employees Participate in Diabetes Walk

UC Health physicians and clinical staff joined more than 1,400 people at Lunken Airport Playfield on Oct. 17, 2009, to raise funds for Step Out: Walk to Fight Diabetes. Members of the *Diabetes Now!* program staffed a table in the expo area to educate participants about diabetes and the clinical services provided by UC Health. The annual walk raises money for education and research and helps raise awareness about the growing prevalence of diabetes. The American Diabetes Association estimates that more than 23 million Americans have diabetes—with nearly 6 million of those cases yet to be diagnosed.



Courtesy of Internal Medicine

## Welcome New Clinicians



**Robin Favor, MD**  
Trauma/Critical Care Surgery



**Martha Ferguson, MD**  
Colorectal Surgery



**David Foote, MD**  
Internal Medicine



**Olugbenga Olowokure, MD**  
Hematology/  
Oncology



**Olivier Rixe, MD**  
Hematology/  
Oncology



**Alexander Sauper, MD**  
Trauma/Critical Care Surgery

# UC Health Addressing West Chester Wayfinding Challenges

As UC Health's West Chester campus continues to grow, it has become even more important to resolve the wayfinding challenges patients face trying to find physician outpatient appointment locations.

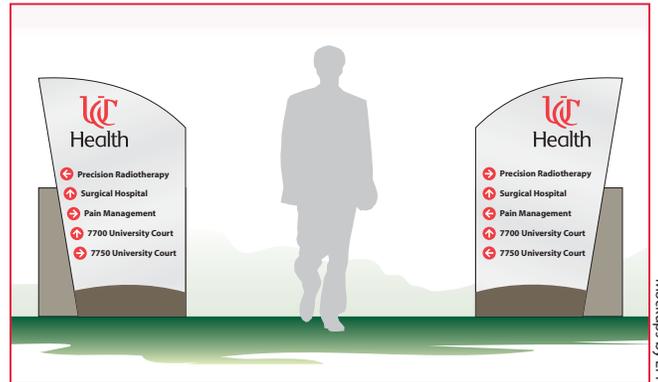
"Between the UC Health Medical Office Building, West Chester Medical Center and the nearly dozen other practices on the campus, about 50 patients experience confusion about where they need to be for their medical appointments weekly," says Karen Adams, University of Cincinnati Physicians director of operations. "That confusion is frustrating to both the patients seeking care and the medical staffs trying to maintain on-time patient schedules. This is a major operational challenge that we are working hard to resolve."

UC Health recently received approval from West Chester Township officials regarding specific plans—including building and ground signage as well as signage on light poles—to fulfill the organization's needs to improve patient satisfaction while also meeting township zoning regulations. There are six entrances to the West Chester medical campus, numerous new buildings and a general lack of clear signage.

By early 2010, several highly visible changes will be made including:

- Installation of large **overhead signs** on the Medical Office Building branded with UC Health
- More than a dozen UC Health **banners** on the north end of the campus to be hung from light poles.
- New UC Health **ground signage** similar to the current West Chester Medical Center signage. This will replace the current University Pointe placards and is intended to give the area a more connected medical campus feel.
- Updated **signage reflecting the renaming** of several UC Health-affiliated facilities, including the UC Health Surgical Hospital (formerly the University Pointe Surgical Hospital),

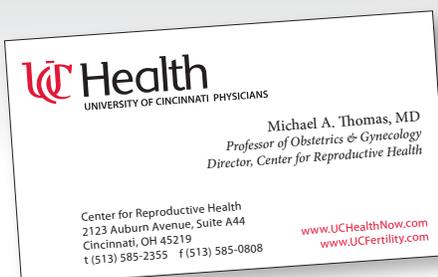
the UC Health Surgical Hospital Imaging Center and the UC Health Surgical Hospital Sleep Center (formerly the University Pointe Sleep Center). ●



## UC HEALTH COLLATERAL MATERIALS NOW AVAILABLE

To help your team transition to the UC Health brand, numerous collateral materials are now available on the [ucphysicians.com](http://ucphysicians.com) Intranet site for employees, including templates for PowerPoint and promotional fliers, branding guidelines and information about ordering business cards, appointment cards and lab coats.

If you have trouble accessing the Intranet site, contact Steve Knost at (513) 475-7270. For questions about marketing collateral material, contact Chris Ralston at (513) 475-8006. ●



LOCATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> Center for Reproductive Health 2123 Auburn Avenue, Suite A44 Cincinnati, OH 45219 t (513) 585-2355 f (513) 585-0808	<input type="checkbox"/> UC Health Medical Office Bldg. 7700 University Court, Suite 3000 West Chester, OH 45069 t (513) 475-8266 f (513) 475-8267
APPOINTMENT	
Date	Time

HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

# Emergency Cardiac Angioplasty Saves Canadian Patient's Life

The Fourth of July holiday is typically filled with grilled food, fireworks and family. Luella Philp traveled from Toronto, Ontario, to West Chester with just that in mind, but ended up being rushed to the hospital after fainting while visiting at her daughter's home.

"I was just sitting in the back yard getting some sun when I suddenly collapsed," says Philp, 79, who was rushed to the emergency room on July 3, 2009.

At the hospital, doctors found a complete blockage in her left carotid artery; her right carotid artery was 80 percent blocked. The carotid arteries, located in the neck, supply oxygenated blood to the head and brain.

Massoud Leesar, MD, medical director of the cardiac catheterization lab at the West Chester Medical Center and cardiologist with UC Health, says a stress test revealed blockages in her cardiac arteries as well.

"We weren't sure which blockage caused her fainting spell," Leesar says, adding that there was a push to send Philp home to Canada to receive insurance-covered treatment. "I strongly discouraged this. Just driving from Ohio to Toronto could cause fatal problems. She needed interventions immediately."

Concerned with Philp's situation, Leesar contacted a social worker in Toronto who could manage the insurance roadblocks and guarantee the patient could get the care she needed as soon as possible, outside of the country and without added cost.

With consent given, Philp was trans-



Courtesy of Luella Philp

Luella Philp (right) with family

ferred to UC Health University Hospital, where Leesar discovered just how dire the situation was.

"Two of her coronary arteries were completely blocked, and there was 90 percent blockage in a third," he says. The cardiac team at University Hospital performed cardiac angioplasty on Philp. Following the procedure, she didn't experience chest pain or faintness.

This calmed Leesar's fears about the patient's travel plans, allowing her to return home for the treatment of her carotid artery blockages. Philp, who says she feels much better, thanks Leesar for the quality care she was given and the extra steps he took to save her life.

"The care I received was wonderful," she says. "I couldn't ask for better doctors."

Susan Chrestensen, Philp's daughter, adds: "If I ever need a cardiologist, I know where I'm going. I'm so thankful that my mom is healthy and back to her old self again." ●

**>>UC Health cardiologists see patients in Clifton, Montgomery and West Chester. For appointments, call (513) 475-8521.**

## Regular Checkups Valuable for Older Patients 'Feeling Fine'

Massoud Leesar, MD, says it's important for older patients to receive regular checkups, noting that a checkup could have prevented Luella Philp's problems.

"She hadn't been to a doctor in roughly 15 years," he says. "Those in the older population may have a lot of medical problems—like hypertension—but feel healthy overall; then, they suddenly die from a heart attack or stroke. Luella's case was definitely a close call.

"It's very important to get your yearly or bi-yearly checkup. It's never too late to stop illness from progressing." ●

upcoming

### Aiming Higher for Health System Performance

Dec. 14, 2009  
noon–1 p.m.

More information at (513) 558-2721



ucphysicians.com

CLIFTON  
FOREST PARK  
MONTGOMERY  
RED BANK  
WEST CHESTER  
WYOMING

(513) 475-8007