

DECEMBER 2011



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**SAVE THE DATE**

**Monday, Jan. 30, 12:15 p.m.**

**Medical Sciences Building**

Myles Pensak, MD, will give an update on the clinical mission of the UC College of Medicine.

## Medical Purchasing Project Expected to Yield \$5 Million in Annual Savings

As part of a system-wide effort to reduce the acquisition costs of implants and implantable devices for total joint, spine and trauma procedures, UC Health engaged MedAssets' physician preference item (PPI) consulting services to review purchasing practices. UC Health expects to realize nearly \$5 million in annual savings based on the company's review of purchasing practices and supply expenses.

"MedAssets is a data-driven organization. Building on its considerable expertise in conducting PPI initiatives of similar scope and complexity, MedAssets collaborated with UC Health to help drive this change process," said Dennis Robb, senior vice president, business operations and chief supply chain officer for UC Health.

Supplies and drugs represent 25 percent of a typical hospital's operating budget, and about 40 percent of the supply budget is spent on physician preference items. UC Health's total joint, spine and trauma project is reducing acquisition costs of supplies for procedures in these areas, while preserving physician choice from a roster of multiple vendors.

As part of the consulting process, MedAssets worked with UC Health to organize and analyze data for existing purchasing practices for implants and implantable devices related to total joint, spine and trauma categories. The MedAssets team then collaborated with UC Health physicians to place products in logical categories for comparison,



identify current pricing for products from vendors in each of these categories and benchmark against aggregate data showing what is considered fair market value for each product.

Using this collaborative process and building on the equity gained from previous projects requiring physician/administration alignment, UC Health was able to gain physician support for its PPI initiative findings. This leverage is essential to successful negotiations with vendors for contracts that meet fair pricing standards developed from the PPI consulting process.

"We have gained fair market pricing based on a like-to-like formulary of products purchased from 23 vendors at nationally market-competitive value," said Robb. "Working with our surgeons, administrators, contracting team and MedAssets has produced an extraordinary outcome. We have lowered hospital expenses and can serve our community by passing those savings on to our patients." ●

**>> FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For questions about the medical supply review, email [Dennis.Robb@UCHealth.com](mailto:Dennis.Robb@UCHealth.com).

## Connected Newsletter Expands to UC Health

COLLEAGUES,

This month, we are excited to bring *Connected* to all 9,000 UC Health



employees for the first time. For the past three years, *Connected* has served as a single source of information for employees of University of Cincinnati Physicians. Now it will serve as the central publication for all of UC Health.

Our goal is to bring you pertinent information about

the organization's strategic vision and specific goals for the future, while also introducing you to the many impressive programs, teams and individuals who make UC Health the amazing organization that it is.

This publication is intended to keep you up to date on important issues—but is also a place to celebrate our collective successes. For example, in each issue we include a patient success story. This is, after all, why we are all here: to improve the health of people in our community.

There is no shortage of these patient stories, in fact many of you have thick files of thank you letters from your patients. We'd love to share them with the rest of the UC Health family. Please email them to CorporatePR&Marketing@UCHealth.com.

As always, we are listening and look forward to hearing your ideas.

**JIM KINGSBURY, FACHE**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

## We're all UC Health

### Jennifer Powers

Medical Assistant, UC Health Neurology

Medical assistants have a variety of duties: assisting physicians, performing laboratory procedures, obtaining patient vital signs, cleaning out the

refrigerator in the staff break room...

Yes, that last one was all in a recent day's work for Jennifer Powers, a medical assistant for UC Health

Neurology. She did it with a smile on her face, too, and had to be coaxed into a chair to talk about her job at the UC Health Physicians Office in Clifton.

As medical assistant for six physicians, Powers stays busy with the above duties and more, all within sight of her birthplace, UC Health University Hospital. She has worked for UC Health since January 2009 and doesn't hesitate when asked about the favorite part of her job.

"I love my patients," she says. "It's a great feeling to be able to help them when they have a problem. Also, because I grew up around people of different backgrounds, I feel like I can relate to all types of patients."

Powers graduated from Taft High School in the West End and received additional training at Deaconess Hospital before beginning her medical career. She and her husband, Bill, live in Delhi Township and have four children, ages 3 to 11.

Somehow, she finds time for reading—"anything I can get my hands on." Among her recommendations: "The Help," by Kathryn Stockett, and "The Graveyard Book," by Neil Gaiman. ●



### Connected

*Connected* is a monthly publication for clinicians and associates of UC Health. Send your comments and ideas to CorporatePR&Marketing@uchealth.com.

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# Chronic Heartburn? UC Health Doc Offers Relief

## Ablation procedure reduces risk for esophageal cancer

**M**ost of the population has experienced heartburn or acid reflux on one occasion or another.

But more than 15 million Americans have recurrent acid reflux issues, known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), which can cause much more than discomfort.

"GERD occurs when stomach acid and sometimes bile flows back into the esophagus," explains Nathan Schmulewitz, MD, a UC Health digestive diseases expert and director of gastroenterology at UC Health West Chester Hospital.

**More than 15 million Americans have recurrent acid reflux issues, known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), which can cause much more than discomfort.**

"The backwash of acid irritates the lining of the esophagus, causing acid reflux and heartburn."

He adds that over time, cells of the lower esophagus become damaged from repeated exposure to stomach acid and a condition called Barrett's esophagus can occur. In Barrett's esophagus, the tissue lining the esophagus is replaced by tissue that

is similar to the lining of the intestine.

"Although only a small proportion of people with GERD will develop Barrett's esophagus, identifying it can be useful because the condition greatly increases one's risk for esophageal cancer," Schmulewitz says.

For those with Barrett's esophagus, and particularly for patients with precancerous dysplasia found on biopsies, an ablation procedure can greatly reduce this risk.

The technology—called HALO—uses radiofrequency ablation via an electrode to burn away the potentially cancerous lining. Schmulewitz and his colleagues perform the procedure at UC Health West Chester Hospital.

The burn can be applied circumferentially to the esophagus or just to smaller areas.

"Previously, the only way to treat Barrett's was through surgery—taking out the portion of the esophagus that was affected and pulling the stomach into the chest—or photodynamic therapy (PDT), which also involves burning the esophageal lining. PDT causes a deeper burn, predisposing patients to higher complication rates and possibly leading to severe skin burns," Schmulewitz says. "The new technology is essentially treating the disease with a minimally-invasive procedure." ●

### >> **APPOINTMENTS & REFERRALS**

**Schmulewitz sees patients at UC Health West Chester Hospital. To schedule an appointment with digestive diseases, call 513-475-7505.**

### **Warning Signs of GERD**

- Heartburn or acid reflux at least two times a week
- Chest pain
- Difficulty swallowing
- Dry cough
- Hoarseness or sore throat
- Sensation of lump in the throat

**Nathan Schmulewitz, MD**



### **Inpatient and outpatient GI services are now available in West Chester.**

Therapeutic and diagnostic endoscopy, radiofrequency ablation and endoscopic ultrasound are offered at the University Pointe Surgical Hospital and UC Health West Chester Hospital. Anti-reflux surgery is also available at West Chester Hospital.

# in brief

## Chief Nursing Officer Named at West Chester Hospital

Patrick A. Baker has been named vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer of UC Health West Chester Hospital. Baker formally joined the hospital's leadership team this month and will be responsible for overseeing nursing staff and the patient care services division.



Baker

Baker has served in a variety of leadership positions, most recently as patient care services administrative director at Mount Carmel St. Ann's Hospital in Westerville, Ohio. Prior to that, he served as vice president and chief nursing officer for Madison

County Hospital. He has also held nursing leadership positions at Kettering Medical Center in Dayton, Deaconess Hospital and the VA Medical Center in Cincinnati. He is also a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force.

## Dell Recognized in Press Ganey Patient Perception Survey

Kevin Dell, MD, PhD, assistant professor in the UC division of general internal medicine and a



Dell

UC Health hospitalist, was recently recognized positively—by name—on a Press Ganey Patient Perception Survey. The tool measures patient perception regarding the level of

## UC HEALTH DOMINATES CINCY MAGAZINE'S 'BEST DOCS' LIST

Eighty six percent of the doctors named to the just-published 2012 "Best Docs" issue of *Cincy* magazine have connections to the UC College of Medicine. There are 347 (71 percent) who currently hold UC faculty appointments, 106 (22 percent) who are graduates of the College of Medicine and 157 (32 percent) who received residency training at UC. Thirty-seven of the doctors are graduates, trained at UC and are now faculty members. For a full list of the doctors in the December 2011 issue, visit [ucphysicians.com](http://ucphysicians.com).

skill and service that he or she received at UC Health University Hospital.

## UC Research Funding Update

UC and its affiliates topped \$418 million in research funding for fiscal year 2011. UC alone received \$251 million in research funding—with 53 percent attributed to the

College of Medicine.

Affiliates included in UC's research-dollar total are Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Shriners Hospitals for Children—Cincinnati and clinical trials at UC Health University of Cincinnati Physicians.

## Application Rate Soars at UC College of Medicine

College experiences nearly 9 percent increase, many from out of state

The number of applicants to the UC College of Medicine has reached its highest point in 15 years and is outpacing national increases.

Applicants to the first-year medical school class entering the College of Medicine in the fall of 2012 totaled 4,334, the highest since 1996 when 4,787 people applied to the college.

Nationally, 32,654 people applied to begin medical school in 2011, an increase of 2.6 percent from 2010, and the number of first time applications reached a record high according to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). The number of applicants to UC increased by 8.8 percent this year, 360 more applicants than last year.

"The rise in applications to medical school is due not only to the increased

number of college graduates, but the surge in students graduating with science and science-related degrees," says Stephen Manuel, PhD, assistant dean in the College of Medicine's office of admissions.

While there has been an increase in the number of medical schools and the enrollment among medical schools, this growth is not keeping pace with the number of students who would like to attend medical school. According to data from AAMC, over the last 10 years, the number of seats in U.S. medical schools has increased by approximately 10 percent, but the number of applications to medical school has risen by 25 percent.

"Our growth area is out-of-state applicants because in the south the

number of college graduates has increased; thus, more college graduates are applying to medical schools and this increases our overall yield of the out-of-state applicants," adds Manuel. Out-of-state applicants jumped from 2,864 last year to 3,228 this year.

For Ohio students applying to the medical school, the numbers are in their favor because the incoming class is typically 65 percent in state; however, for those students applying as an out-of-state student, the competition continues to grow, says Manuel.



UC President Greg Williams participated via the stadium's big screen.

UC HEALTH RECENTLY HONORED MORE THAN 50 PHYSICIANS who were named Best Docs in America, Top Doctors in *U.S. News & World Report* and/or Top Doctors in *Cincinnati Magazine* at the UC Bearcats football game.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE "CAUGHT CARING AWARD"

**UC Health University of Cincinnati Physicians is proud to recognize these outstanding employees with the "Caught Caring Award."** Individuals were nominated by their peers for exemplifying the WE CARE philosophy of providing responsive, innovative and personalized care to patients.

**Nominations**

Do you know someone who deserves recognition for their commitment to the WE CARE philosophy? Nomination forms are available under Faculty/Staff on [ucphysicians.com](http://ucphysicians.com) or from your unit manager. ●

*Putting Patients at Ease*  
**UNIVERSITY POINTE SURGICAL HOSPITAL NURSING STAFF**

It wasn't just one person—it was an entire nursing staff—that caused a patient to sing the praises of the University Pointe Surgical Hospital team. He had gone to the short-stay hospital for a skin graft. As the patient put it, he was "more than a little apprehensive ... but the care shown by every medical person I encountered—before the operation, after the operation and in between—helped put me at ease. I don't know where you found such accomplished professionals, all having a distinctive human touch, but I'm glad you did! They were there when I needed them."

*Positive and Gracious*  
**BONNIE CARTAYA**  
Residency Program Coordinator,  
Internal Medicine

According to nominator Kimberly Benna, no matter what the situation Bonnie Cartaya will rise to it without a single complaint. Benna, who serves as a senior administrative assistant with UC Health Internal Medicine, cites a recent example where she was unable to assist a faculty member with audiovisual set up for their meeting due to another commitment. Cartaya graciously agreed to open the conference room, set up the equipment and return it to storage after the meeting. Adds Benna: "Bonnie is always pleasant, courteous and has a smile on her face. She reflects positivity in all that she does. I can always rest assured that if I ask her for help the job will be done and done correctly."

*Personal Accountability*  
**KARLA BERNARD**

*Nurse, UC Health Oral Surgery*  
This summer Sandy Wise, receptionist with UC Health Neurology, had bone grafts and a sinus lift and one of the grafts failed. She was in extreme pain and didn't know what to do. UC Health Oral Surgery nurse Karla Bernard had given Wise her home telephone number just in case she needed her, telling her to call anytime. Recalls Bernard: "She was definitely there for me, and I don't know what I would have done without her."

*Easing Patient Anxiety*  
**PHYLLIS THOMPSON**  
Echocardiography Technician,  
UC Health Cardiology

A diagnostic imaging patient recently gave Phyllis Thompson praise—which is a common occurrence among both patients and colleagues. The patient's comments sum it up best: "I just wanted to give a four-star review for one of the most pleasant office visits I can ever recall having. This morning, I had an echocardiogram done by Phyllis at the UC Health Physicians Office in West Chester. She was so warm, professional, friendly and funny. I was actually disappointed when it was time to leave because it was so quick, and I was having such a good time. I know that sounds crazy, but it is true! Phyllis was such a delight and you are lucky to have her on your team. She actually made my 7:45 a.m. visit (after getting up, getting me and my kids ready and the kids to school) enjoyable! Miracle worker? She just may be."

*A True Team Player*  
**ANGELA BRYANT**

*Human Resources Consultant, University of Cincinnati Physicians Human Resources*  
When Tina Cousins had an issue in one of the departments she supports, fellow human resources consultant Angela Bryant assisted on short notice and was very helpful in addressing issues that arose during the process. Bryant performed like a true team player and treated Cousins' needs as if they were her own. In her nomination, Cousins commented: "Angela went above and beyond her duties by making herself available on short notice with her own busy schedule and contributing to a solution for the issues in my department. She is a joy to work with and I appreciate her professionalism, politeness and camaraderie."

*'Shining Star' of Office*  
**SUSAN DUNAVENT**  
Medical Secretary,  
UC Health Hematology Oncology

According to colleague Patricia Krotchen, Susan Dunavent is a "bright, shining star" in the hematology oncology office: "When people approach Susan she automatically smiles a big smile and says, 'How can I help you?' Whenever she ends a phone call or makes a follow-up test or an appointment for someone, she responds with, 'It's my pleasure,'" explains Krotchen. "There has not been one day in the office when Susan has yet to have a consistent smile and cheerful attitude at work all day. Susan is a true example of 'WE CARE' 100 percent of the time."

*Perpetually Positive*  
**IRA GARRETT**

*Senior Medical Assistant,  
UC Health Orthopaedics*

Simply put, Ira Garrett comes to work with a positive attitude that his colleagues notice and appreciate. As explained by ophthalmology senior receptionist Donna Myers: "Ira Garrett is always extremely professional and very nice. He gives the impression that he really loves his job and it is not a burden, which I'm sure it is sometimes. We all need to be more like him."

*Team Mentality*  
**ASHLEY SEVLIN**

*Medical Assistant,  
UC Health Hematology Oncology*

When UC Health's family medicine staff expressed concern that their refrigerator for storing vaccines may not be working properly, Sevlin took immediate action. She gathered coolers and began emptying out their vaccines, moving them to the hematology oncology division's refrigerator. The quick action saved about \$10,000 worth of vaccines, according to nominator and hematology oncology medical secretary Patricia Krotchen. And it all happened at the end of the day.

*Timely Patient Service*  
**JOYCE WARNER**

*Medical Secretary,  
UC Health Orthopaedics*

A patient and his wife recently nominated UC Health Orthopaedics medical secretary Joyce Warner for taking their questions and concerns very seriously, always answering their questions in a timely and thorough manner, citing in the nomination: "Joyce was very warm and kind over the phone and in person. She was very helpful above and beyond what we expected. She is a valuable employee!" ●

**Events Aim to Raise Disease Awareness**

**Two UC Health teams hosted November events designed to raise awareness of pulmonary disease and pancreatic cancer during the national observance month.**

Physicians, nurses and caregivers in the UC Health Pulmonary Hypertension Program as well as members of the Tri-State Pulmonary Hypertension Support Group set up an informational booth in UC Health University Hospital. The booth provided not only pamphlets on this serious lung illness that affects mostly women but also featured patients who relayed their stories and spoke about the importance of early diagnosis.



At the table (left to right) are: Amber Lanich, nurse practitioner for the UC Health Pulmonary Hypertension Program, Barbara Linser, pulmonary hypertension patient, Kerry Gaines, patient, and Pamela Carner, from the Tri-State Pulmonary Hypertension Support Group and a pulmonary patient.

The UC Cancer Institute held a community reception at the UC Health Barrett Center. Patients shared their stories of hope with attendees, and UC Health staff and community organizations distributed information about pancreatic cancer. During the reception, the pancreatic disease team accepted two private donations—totaling \$20,000—for pancreatic cancer research from BSI Engineering and the Give Hope/Bethany Siningler Flege Pancreatic Cancer Research and Awareness Fund. ●



Left to right are Susan Pavlech of the Give Hope/Bethany Siningler Flege Pancreatic Cancer Research and Awareness Fund and the UC Health GI team: Syed Ahmad, MD, Jeffrey Sussman, MD, Milton Smith, MD, Olugbenga Olowokure, MD, and Michelle Mierzwa, MD.

HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

# Patient Back to Enjoying Life Thanks to Multidisciplinary Care Team

Laurence Breen, 71, has the “fighting Irish” in him, says his wife, Katie. After having a lung removed in 1997 and a large abdominal aneurysm in 1999, Breen, a native of Ireland, had his third major medical issue arise in September 2011. But with the help of doctors from the Cincinnati Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center and UC Health and a positive attitude, Breen is still going.

The Ft. Thomas, Ky., resident came to the VA for a checkup after experiencing increased shortness of breath, fatigue and other heart-related symptoms.

“Mr. Breen has multi-vessel coronary artery disease involving the left main coronary artery, left anterior descending artery (LAD), and right coronary artery stenosis, or narrowing,” says Massoud Leesar, MD, a UC Health interventional cardiologist.



Leesar



Effat

Mohamed Effat, MD, another interventional cardiologist who sees patients at the VA and UC Health University Hospital, performed a cardiac catheterization test, revealing the need for heart surgery.

“Dr. Louis Louis and Dr. Eric Okum (cardiac surgeons at University Hospital) thought that a quadruple bypass and valve replacement might be needed,” Breen says.

But the risk of surgery with only one lung was high.

“It was a tough call, and they told us to go home and think about it,” recalls Mrs. Breen. “They said he’d have about a 50/50 chance of making it.”

They decided to proceed with the surgery, but the day before it was scheduled, the team did another echocardiogram and found that the valve was not nearly as damaged as previously thought. “Our team

agreed that stenting the left main coronary artery and LAD would be the best option for Mr. Breen,” says Leesar.

Leesar was able to perform the procedures at University Hospital using intravas-



Laurence Breen with his grandchildren

Courtesy of Laurence Breen

cular ultrasound, which involves using an ultrasound image and a wire that is inserted into arteries to test the extent of a blockage.

“With the collaboration of the VA and University Hospital teams and the careful use of the ultrasound technology, Mr. Breen did very well and was able to leave the hospital the very next day,” Leesar says. “We were able to work together and determine the best possible treatment for our patient—a true strength of UC Health and our affiliate partners.”

Breen says he feels great and is having fewer breathing problems, although he’ll always have to use oxygen.

“Dr. Leesar was awesome, and he was pleased as punch to see how well Laurence was doing,” Mrs. Breen says. “We’re so happy with the fast, effective care he received from doctors and also the outpouring of prayers from our parish priest, Father Eric Knapp, our wonderful family and so very many great friends. We hope to continue seeing improvement.” ●



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Inpatient and outpatient services available in the following communities:

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- RED BANK
- SPRINGDALE
- TRENTON
- WEST CHESTER
- WESTERN HILLS
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- WYOMING

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