John Muir Health + Stanford Children’s Health

Milestones you’ll want to see: Our partnership turns five this season, and our Pediatric Intensive Care Unit turns two and earns accreditation! – see inside

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Rishi Desai, MD
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Pediatrician Bob Kadas, co-medical director of the John Muir Health + Stanford Children’s Health partnership, recalls when the hospital was busy treating children for diseases that are now history, thanks to immunizations and better antibiotics.

Yet while the picture for today’s children has changed, their needs are more acute. “Compared to 20 years ago, pediatric patients are sicker. To care for more complex patients, we needed a subspecialty network,” he says.

The origin of the partnership

“Stanford Children’s Health came along with the idea of a partnership that would keep patients here,” says Dr. Kadas. “The joint partnership allowed us to develop that necessary network. Our goal was to be a first-class pediatric service in a community hospital.”

“A lot of brilliant minds were behind this,” says William Kennedy, MD, chief of pediatric urology at Stanford. “Traditionally, pediatric subspecialties were based in major academic centers — not where most children live. Patients were forced to travel to us. Recognizing how Silicon Valley had grown and how difficult it was to travel to Palo Alto, Stanford Children’s Health first ventured into the San Jose area with enormous success. We then realized most growth in young families was occurring in the East Bay and North Bay, and we started looking for partners. John Muir Health was perfect, due to its stature in the community, high volume of primary pediatric care, a need for more local pediatric subspecialists and no academic affiliation.”

The rest is history. The partnership was forged, and now the number of specialties offered in Walnut Creek has grown to 16 specialties. A state-of-the-art, fully accredited PICU was established, along with hospitalist services, a specially trained nursing staff, a Child Life specialist and much more.

Beth Lannon, John Muir Health’s executive director of Children’s Specialty Services, says, “What we’ve built has exceeded our own expectations. Local pediatricians now have all these resources right near their patients. Our program has exceptional Stanford specialists coupled with the best staff and technology possible.”
WHEN A CHILD IS SICK, IT’S NOT JUST THE CHILD THAT IS AFFECTED. IT’S ALSO THE MOTHER, FATHER AND SIBLINGS. NOW, IT IS SO MUCH EASIER FOR THEM TO GET GREAT CARE CLOSE BY. THE RESPONSE FROM OUR PATIENTS HAS BEEN OUTSTANDING — THEY ARE SO MUCH HAPPIER TO BE SO CLOSE TO HOME” – DR. KENNEDY

“There are not many programs like this,” agrees Dr. Kadas. “It’s so unusual to have a sophisticated PICU in a community hospital. We now have an intensivist in the hospital as well as ten pediatric anesthesiologists, on a 24/7 basis.”

As specialty services have increased, so has the census. “Sometimes, you have to blink to realize what we’ve done. We reached our five-year goal two years ago.” Dr. Kadas notes.

“The joint venture’s board has been very careful to bring on subspecialties as the community has requested them in order to supplement care currently provided,” Dr. Kennedy says.

“Pediatricians like having specialists right in their community to do work that they would have referred out. If a family can be seen and have their child treated by a specialist in their backyard, it’s so much better than having that fresh post-op child sitting for hours in a car,” he says. “Everybody wins.”

Looking to the future

What comes next? Beth Lannon says that the next big service she’s planning is transport for critically ill infants and children.

Dr. Kadas wants to see a freestanding pediatric specialty outpatient facility at the Walnut Creek Medical Center, with specialists and lab, x-ray and physical therapy services.

Dr. Kennedy would like to add more complex surgeries: “With our inpatient infrastructure, we can add surgeries that require a hospital stay and more complicated post-op care.”

The partners agree that the five-year anniversary is extremely gratifying. “We are building a community. Pediatric grand rounds are incredibly popular,” notes Dr. Kennedy. “It helps elevate the discussion of state-of-the-art pediatric subspecialty care for everyone.”

Solving the problem of distance to services

Dr. Kennedy gives an example of the impact of travel on care: “A local mom brought her child to me at Stanford for two years and then saw me in Walnut Creek. She said ‘It used to take me over one and a half hours to get to you, with screaming twins in the car. Today, I drove here in five minutes. You know, this is the first time I am really calm enough to truly understand what’s going on with my child.’”
THE PICU TURNS TWO AND EARN ACCREDITATION

Just two years ago, the John Muir Health and Stanford Children’s Health partnership collaborated on a major achievement: bringing a state-of-the-art inpatient pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) to Contra Costa County.

Creating the PICU was a keystone in the partnership, which was forged in 2012 with the aim of establishing fully comprehensive children’s specialty services in the region.

Earning recognition — and fast
Recently, the PICU received full accreditation by California Children’s Services — a great endorsement of the program.

“To achieve this, you have to show the state that you are capable of taking care of chronically ill children in a way that will meet the strict requirements of California Children’s Services. This includes 24/7 pediatric subspecialties, social services, physical therapy, pharmacy, Child Life specialists and more. We have built our services to this point even faster than expected, and the whole team should be credited,” says Budi Wiryawan, MD, PICU medical director.

Lyn Dos Santos, MD, pediatric clinical medical director of the John Muir Health + Stanford Children’s Health partnership, says, “To do all this in two years is incredible.”

Safe, high-quality care
Adding the PICU has opened the door to a whole different level of services. According to Dr. Dos Santos, “We are definitely better able to treat children with chronic illnesses. We have added hospitalist services and multiple specialties, which has changed the complexity and acuity of the patients we care for.”

Dr. Wiryawan adds, “This includes those with pediatric cancer, cystic fibrosis, and diabetes as well as neurosurgery and orthopedic surgery patients who often stay for weeks in the hospital. The patient needs a support system, not just from nursing and respiratory therapy, but from nutrition, pharmacy and social services. We have what our families have needed but previously had to travel for.”

Telling the community “We are here”
“Community outreach has also been great,” says Dr. Dos Santos. “Our specialists do presentations and visit local pediatricians to discuss what we offer. Many didn’t know, for instance, that we have hematology and oncology, and they were surprised by our full breadth of specialties.”

“I think we are the program to choose because we provide care at a level equal to a tertiary care center while allowing the patient to remain at a community hospital with a personal touch,” she adds.

“We go over and above to see that the families are comfortable and their needs are met. You don’t find that everywhere.”

Says Dr. Wiryawan, “We have seen tremendous support from the community — not just from Contra Costa and neighboring counties, but from as far away as Marin, Napa and Solano counties. I think we are becoming integral as we build recognition for our outstanding services.”

FAST FACT
SINCE THE PICU’S OPENING IN 2015, NEARLY 700 PATIENTS HAVE BEEN ADMITTED
Popular Pediatric Clinical Topics 2017

November 13–16, 2017

Location: Mauna Lani Hotel & Bungalows, Kohala Coast, island of Hawaii

The Popular Pediatric Clinical Topics 2017 course will highlight recent advances in pediatrics through presentations by a variety of clinical faculty covering topics such as neurologic emergencies in your office, trauma and concussion, hypertension in infants, sports injuries, cardiology, pediatric psychiatry, groin mass, asthma, and sleep in adolescents. This course is presented in a mini-seminar format that includes cases, Q&A and time for interaction with the faculty.

For registration and more information, please visit: www.cme.stanfordchildrens.org
Contact: Marifin Besona, CME Coordinator — lpchcme@stanfordchildrens.org, or call (650) 498-6757.

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October
*26 Musculoskeletal Management, Mary Leonard, MD

November
*2 C-Difficile, David Vu, MD
*9 Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome, Margo Thienemann, MD
*30 Perinatal CME/M&M

December
*14 Issues of Neonatal HSV, James McCarty, MD-ID

*Webinars | Webinars are available via the internet starting at 7:30 a.m.
To access navigate to: https://johnmuirgm.globalmeet.com/CMEConcord
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INTRODUCING

RISHI DESAI, MD
Specialty: Infectious Diseases
Education: UCSF School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA
Fellowship: Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, 2010
Practice Philosophy: “Infectious disease is a unique specialty. Instead of performing procedures, I listen to patients discuss their symptoms to figure out a diagnosis. Prescribing medication is easy. Getting people to understand the implications of their condition and their health is difficult. Helping people understand how to care for their wellness makes my job so rewarding.”

CINDY EPPSTEIN, PHYSICIAN LIAISON

Cindy Eppstein’s role as a physician liaison with Stanford Children’s Health brings her career full circle. Cindy started her career working for a pediatrician in Oakland, and she has spent the past 26 years serving the dental community in various roles.

For help with physician referrals or for more information about John Muir Health and Stanford Children’s Health pediatric specialty services, please contact Cindy by email at: ceppstein@stanfordchildrens.org or by phone at (650) 646-1518.

ABOUT OUR PARTNERSHIP

Through our partnership, patients can now see Stanford Children’s Health specialists locally in the East Bay. When hospital-based care is needed, patients can be treated at John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek. It all adds up to: your patients can receive excellent quality specialty pediatric care, close to home.