

# Resource

Issue 7, November 2010

## Trinity Offers WNY Physicians a New Practice Option



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The healthcare landscape is shifting quickly and dramatically. From healthcare reform to technology, the practice of medicine is being shaped by outside influences like never before. For many physicians in private practice, either as solo practitioners or in small groups, these outside influences are becoming an overwhelming burden and detracting from what they really love to do – treat patients.

According to the latest government figures, 12 percent of physicians in the U.S. were self-employed in practice as of 2008. Fifty-three percent of doctors employed in a salaried position worked in the offices of other doctors while 19 percent worked in hospitals. Other doctors worked in various government capacities, in outpatient centers or educational capacities. From 2005 to 2008, the number of physician-owned private medical offices showed a decline from approximately 66 percent to less than 50 percent, and researchers say the trend is continuing downward.

Concerned with the impact of these changes and what they might mean to the number of physicians in

Western New York, Catholic Health has become a strategic partner with Trinity Medical, Western New York, P.C. (Trinity) – a private practice that offers physicians an “employed” environment backed by the resources of the Catholic Health System.



Michael Edbauer, DO

“Our structure offers physicians great opportunity to practice medicine without the hassle of being a highly regulated small business owner,” said Michael Edbauer, DO, president of Trinity. “In addition

to physicians who are wrestling with things like electronic medical records and meaningful use, Trinity is also an attractive option for those who are facing the challenge of designing a practice succession plan.



Trinity Medical, Western New York, P.C. is located at 3050 Orchard Park

Road in West Seneca. A second location is currently being considered. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about opportunities with Trinity Medical, please contact Dr. Michael Edbauer at (716) 862-2164.

## Advancements Continue in Single Incision Laparoscopy

Keeping pace with the latest advancements in minimally invasive surgery, Catholic Health's Mercy Hospital became the first hospital in the region to offer Single Incision Laparoscopic Surgery in January 2009. Since that time, specially trained surgeons have been using the "single-incision" procedure for cholecystectomies (gallbladder removal) and appendectomies (appendix removal).

In June, Catholic Health surgeon, Kenneth Eckhert III, MD, continued to advance the program by successfully using the single-incision technique to remove a diseased right colon (a right-hemicolectomy procedure). According to local representatives from Ethicon, manufacturer of the single-site laparoscopic port, Dr. Eckhert is the first surgeon locally to perform the single-site surgery



Kenneth Eckhert, III, MD

for removal of the right colon.

"One of the major advantages of this procedure is that it utilizes only one incision through the belly button versus traditional laparoscopic procedures involving three or four incisions," said Dr. Eckhert. "As a result, there is improved patient satisfaction with little

or no visible scarring, less pain and complications, and a faster recovery."

The single-site laparoscopy procedure is made possible through the use of a flexible laparoscopic port that contains several small holes for both a camera and surgical instruments to work. Other Catholic Health surgeons utilizing this advanced surgical technique include Richard Bloomberg, MD, Rurik Johnson, MD, and Catherine Falkner, MD.

"We are thrilled to be at the forefront of a new kind of surgery that continues to transform the minimally invasive arena, resulting in even better experiences for our patients," said Dr. Eckhert. "My hope is to continue to expand our minimally invasive surgical capabilities. Our next step forward may be robotic-assisted single incision laparoscopy."

## Catholic Health Sleep Disorder Resources

A University at Buffalo study published in the *Annals of Epidemiology* shows that people who slumber less than six hours a night during the work week were three times more likely to have elevated levels of blood sugar than those who slumber six-to-eight hours, thus, complicating diabetes.

A September 2006 issue of *Archives of Internal Medicine* looked at the link between sleep and health, noting that "without sleep, you become more susceptible to health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity

and depression." According to the National Commission on Sleep Disorders, an overwhelming majority of sleep disorders remain undiagnosed and untreated.

Catholic Health's newest SleepCare Center at Kenmore Mercy Hospital is now open and offering medically monitored sleep studies to help diagnose and treat a variety of sleep disorders. Catholic Health also offers sleep testing services at Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus and Mercy Hospital of Buffalo. For more information, visit [www.chsbuffalo.org/Services/Sleep](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/Services/Sleep)

## Key Positions Support Quality in Cardiac and Women's Service Lines

Underscoring the importance of Catholic Health's service line strategy is the announcement of two new professionals joining the ministry in key clinical positions.

Shelley Wojtaszczyk, FNP has joined the Cardiac Service Line and will be working at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo where she will serve as a cardiac educator/consultant, researcher, and clinician to provide patient and associate education, and apply standards and research protocols to enhance the quality of care for patients with congestive heart failure (CHF).

Shelley brings with her 13 years of clinical experience as a nurse practitioner, three of which include specialization in cardiology. Working under the supervision of Aravind Herle, MD, chief, Division of Cardiology at Mercy Hospital, Shelly will help to extend the Heart Failure Program at the hospital. This is the first of what is expected to be a system-wide program to provide patient-focused assessments at the time of diagnosis to ensure patients are placed in the right level of care, with the right delivery of services, and disease-specific education to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions.

This is a critical area of focus for Catholic Health as CHF is the most

prevalent admission diagnosis at each of the ministry's acute care sites.

Shelley will make daily rounds on patients with congestive heart failure and provide patient education and clinical recommendations. She will also collect data to help assess length of stay,



Shelley Wojtaszczyk, FNP



Candice Gerrity, RN, MSN, FNP

reasons for readmission, core measure compliance, and patterns of care.

### Gerrity Joins Women's Services

A clinical professional with more than 15 years of experience, Candice Gerrity, RN, MSN, FNP, is creating the role of Breast Cancer Navigator in Women's Services. Candice will play a critical role in helping guide women through their pre- and post-breast cancer diagnosis by providing compassionate consultation on services and linkages to follow-up care and additional support.

Catholic Health recently introduced a Breast Cancer Patient Navigation Program, a complimentary support

service that provides a specially-trained nurse to guide breast cancer patients through cancer care treatment.

Candice holds a master's degree in Nursing from D'Youville College and is a certified breast patient navigator in both imaging and cancer (CBPN-IC) by the National Consortium of Breast Centers in collaboration with Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Breast Cancer Patient Navigation Program is designed to assist women who have been recently diagnosed, are already living with the disease or have had a recurrence of the disease. The navigator serves as a guide, educa-

tor and advocate for patients and assists physicians with case management to provide a value-added service for patients who are experiencing both physical and emotional stress. In addition to being qualified to answer medical questions, the navigator provides patients and their families with information on insurance and other useful resources within Catholic Health and the community, as well as helps streamline appointments and paperwork.

For more information on this free service, contact Candice Gerrity at 716-698-9464.

## Direct Peroral Cholangioscopy

Catholic Health is the only hospital system in Western New York offering a new state of the art procedure in a clinical trial for patients experiencing liver difficulties.

Direct Peroral Cholangioscopy (DPC), being performed at Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus, provides direct visual assessment of the bile ducts, tissue sampling, and therapeutic interventions. Delineation of intraductal lesions equivocal with direct cholangiography, differentiation between malignant and benign biliary strictures, and assessment of longitudinal extent of cholangiocarcinoma are major indicators for diagnostic cholangioscopy.

Peroral cholangioscopy is readily performed at an initial endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography. Owing to substantial refinement in terms of image quality and technical feasibility achieved with the development of a new video cholangioscope,

peroral cholangioscopy has become a powerful tool.

"This new technology is incredible," says Ramesh Luther, MD, a Catholic Health Gastroenterologist. "It offers visual improvements to the physician making it easier to detect cancers and stones in the bile duct region."

This new procedure has been clinically proven to have many key advantages such as allowing doctors to obtain access to the bile duct. DPC uses a small inflatable balloon to secure its position in the duct. A tiny camera is then inserted into the area to view the inside of the duct, which is only a few millimeters in diameter.

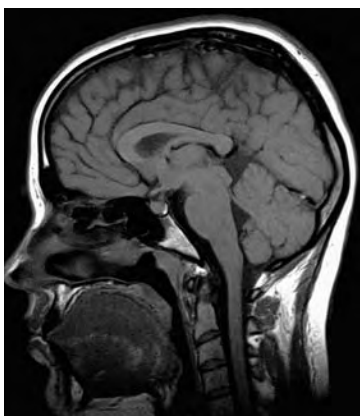
DPC has two major advantages for physicians. It reduces the number of operators from two to one, with only a single set of controls, and brings new therapeutic and diagnostic capabilities into the biliary tree thanks to its high-resolution imaging and slim two millimeter channel size scope.



DPC performed by Ramesh Luther, MD

Physicians and their patients will benefit from a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic options under direct visualization, such as dilation and stenting.

## New Imaging Technology Nears Implementation



The long-awaited replacement for MagicWeb, is well into its pilot phase and has performed extremely well. syngoWeb, new technology from Siemens Medical Solutions for viewing diagnostic images works seamlessly with Catholic Health's picture archiving and communications system (PACS). Unlike MagicWeb, syngoWeb is fully integrated with PACS and this integration will improve both reliability and performance.

The pilot program began in mid-October and users have been pleased. Imaging Services in coordination with Catholic Health's IT Department are working on a system-wide implementation schedule. Catholic Health IT is also testing options that will make it easier to use these tools when working off-site. "Once fully implemented, we believe that our physicians will have a more robust and dependable tool to view images," said Mike Reilly, vice president, Primary Care and Imaging Services for Catholic Health.

## Celebrating First Year of LIFE

### *Program Keeps Seniors at Home/Coordinates Care*

Catholic Health's Living Independently For Elders (LIFE) a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) has just celebrated its first year of service to the community. The program is a capitated benefit authorized by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 that features a comprehensive service delivery system and integrated Medicare and Medicaid financing.

The comprehensive service package permits participants to continue living at home while receiving medically-necessary services, rather than being placed in a long-term care facility.

For seniors who voluntarily enroll in the program, LIFE's professional staff coordinates all necessary medical and support services. Services offered through LIFE include all inpatient and outpatient medical care, rehabilitation



services, social work, nutrition services, home health care, dental care, mental health services, eye care, podiatry services, prescription drug management, and social and recreational activities. Transportation is also provided.

Participation in Catholic Health LIFE is open to Erie County residents age 55 or older who qualify for nursing home

care, but can have their needs safely met at home with assistance and in the LIFE Center. The cost of the program is covered by Medicare and/or Medicaid. Private pay options are also available.

"While LIFE participants must change their primary care to our own medical staff, we do receive several referrals from area primary care physicians," said Karen Shalke, regional LIFE representative for Catholic Health. "Often times, LIFE participants have chronic conditions that require a significant amount of primary care resources. For a busy practice, it can be challenging to manage the care of these types of patients." The LIFE program's medical and social services are provided at the LIFE Center located within the OLV Senior Neighborhood in Lackawanna.

## LIFE Program Services At A Glance

- Physician services, by physicians who specialize in care for the elderly
- Nursing
- Rehabilitation therapies (physical, occupational and speech therapies)
- Social work services that may include (but are not limited to) re-certification for Medicaid or food stamps, counseling for both participants and caregivers, and assistance with living wills and establishing a healthcare proxy
- Spiritual care
- Nutritional services
- Personal care such as showering or bathing
- Recreational and educational activities scheduled throughout the day, in addition to independent activities, such as reading, watching TV or playing cards
- Round trip transportation to and from the center and other medical appointments

To learn more about Catholic Health - LIFE, please call our intake coordinator at (716) 819-LIFE (5433).

## Catholic Health Leads the Region in Robotic-Assisted Surgery

*Mercy and Sisters Hospitals use da Vinci Surgical System in minimally invasive surgical procedures*

Robotic surgery has been advancing for a decade and at Catholic Health, it has been in use for more than half that time. The reasons are simple - robotic tools allow surgeons to cut less, leave less scarring and pain, and probe with greater precision than ever before.

Catholic Health, the area leader in robotic-assisted surgery, is pleased to announce the addition of two new da Vinci Robotic Surgery Systems at Sisters of Charity Hospital and Mercy Hospital of Buffalo. The new systems are the latest generation da Vinci technology, providing doctors with the most advanced robotic surgery equipment available today. The new robot at Mercy Hospital replaces one that went on-line in 2005.

Currently, Catholic Health is the only area health system with two da Vinci surgical robots offering patients greater choice, comfort and convenience. Mercy Hospital, an early pioneer of the da Vinci technology in 2005 for prostate cancer surgery, is now the only area hospital using the system for advanced minimally invasive heart surgery through the Catholic Health Heart Center. Sisters Hospital brought the state-of-the-art system to its Main Street campus earlier this year for advanced gynecologic and urologic procedures.

"The da Vinci technology is an important resource for Catholic Health



surgeons and an advantage that referring physicians should know about, said Richard Ruh, MD, senior vice president, service lines. "The applications for this technology are growing and having them available at two acute care sites allows us to help more and more patients."

The da Vinci System consists of a unique surgeon's console, the "command center" for the surgeon, and the four-armed robotic unit, which contains the slender surgical instruments. The console provides the surgeon with

highly magnified, three-dimensional images of the surgical field and special hand controls that direct the robotic instruments with unparalleled precision and accuracy beyond that of the human hand. They say that while no machine can ever replace a surgeon's instinct, no surgeon can replicate a robot's steady hand.

Today, many Catholic Health surgeons are the first to introduce new robotic procedures to the Western New York community. John Bell-Thomson, MD, chair of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Mercy Hospital, performed the region's first robotic-assisted mitral repair. Ali Ghomi, MD, gynecologic surgeon at Sisters Hospital, is the only physician in Western New York performing Sacrocolpopexy Prolapse surgery (pelvic floor repair) using the da Vinci robot. In October, Dr. David Marchetti, an Obstetrics and Gynecology Oncology surgeon at Sisters Hospital, assisted in the first Radical Hysterectomy in Western New York at Sisters Hospital using the da Vinci. A Radical Hysterectomy involves removing a woman's uterus, cervix, ovaries and fallopian tubes.

Catholic Health continues to advance scope of minimally-invasive surgery in Western New York, offering more robotic surgery procedures than any other area hospital or health system.

## Catholic Health Cardiovascular Symposium

Catholic Health's Second Annual Cardiovascular Symposium was held at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery on October 2. More than 150 area physicians and health care professionals attended the event to learn about the latest advancements in cardiovascular care.

Speakers included: Julie LaManna, RN, Catholic Health senior director of Cardiovascular Services, who presented "*The Hybrid Imaging Operating Room (OR): The New Sandbox*;" Joseph Gelormini, MD, FACC, FSCAI, director of echocardiography at Sisters Hospital and St. Joseph Campus, presenting "*Radial Artery Approach to Diagnostic Coronary Angiography and Intervention*;" John Bell-Thomson, MD, MBA, chairman



of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, presenting "*Mitral Valve Repair: Why The Robot?*;" Husam Balkhy, MD, chairman, Department of Cardiac Surgery and director, Center for Robotic and Minimally Invasive Surgery at the Wisconsin Heart Hospital who delivered the keynote address: "*Integrating Robotics and Anastomotic Devices in a*

*Totally Endoscopic Approach to Coronary Bypass Surgery*;" Iris Hudson, DO, Department of Anesthesiology at Mercy Hospital, who presented "*The Art Form of Anesthetic Management of the Off-Pump Coronary Artery Bypass (OPCAB)*;" Lee Guterman, PhD, MD, director of neurology, medical director of Catholic Health Stroke Services, and Catalina Ionita, MD, Catholic Health director of neuro-critical care, who spoke on "*Endovascular Therapy for Combined Carotid and Coronary Disease*;" and Roger Walcott, MD, Department of Vascular Surgery, Catholic Health, who presented "*The Current Management of Ruptured Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms*."

## Conti Named Physician Liaison



Bridget Conti

Bridget Conti, a communications and marketing professional with more than two decades of experience, has joined Catholic Health as a Physician Liaison. A professional resource for all Catholic Health physicians, Conti will work primarily with the medical staff serving Sisters of Charity Hospital. Her goal is to help enhance relationships with existing medical staff and develop new relationships with non-Catholic Health physicians by listening to physician needs and concerns and keeping them informed

of the services and resources available to them and their patients in Catholic Health.

Conti joins Catholic Health's team of Physician Liaisons that include Carrie Raimy and Steve McKee, also in acute care, and Joanne Ryan and Dawn Hart in Laboratory Services.

Most recently, Conti served as director of communications and marketing for Excelsior Orthopedics. Her health-care experience also includes the pharmaceuticals industry and benefits management. Conti received a Master's degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science degree from Syracuse University. She can be reached at (716) 862-1982 or [bconti@chsbuffalo.org](mailto:bconti@chsbuffalo.org)

## ABOUT CATHOLIC HEALTH

**Our Mission:** We are called to reveal the healing love of Jesus to those in need.

**Our 2020 Vision:** Inspired by faith and committed to excellence, we will lead the transformation of healthcare in our communities.

**Our Values:** Reverence, Compassion, Justice, Excellence

## ABOUT THE PHYSICIAN RESOURCE

The Physician Resource is a quarterly publication intended to illuminate the resources, programs, and initiatives available to physicians and mid-level providers that make Catholic Health's continuum of care the clinical environment of choice for private practice physicians in Western New York. It is published by the Marketing and Public Relations Department of Catholic Health.



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