Children’s Hospital re-verified as Level I Children’s Surgery Center by American College of Surgeons

UC Davis Children’s Hospital has been re-verified as a Level I Children’s Surgery Center by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) for the next two years. The designation from the ACS Children’s Surgery Verification Quality Improvement Program focuses on the nation’s first and only multi-specialty standards of surgical care for pediatric patients. UC Davis Children’s Hospital remains the first hospital on the West Coast, and only the fourth in the nation, to earn this distinction.

The American College of Surgeons’ Children’s Surgery Verification program was developed to improve the quality of children’s surgical care by creating a system that allows for a prospective match of every child’s individual surgical needs with a care environment that has optimal pediatric resources. The guidelines ensure that children facing surgery receive care under a multidisciplinary program with quality improvement and safety processes, data collection and appropriate resources provided to them as patients at the hospital.

“UC Davis Children’s Hospital is dedicated to providing world-class care for its pediatric patients, and we are honored to receive this re-verification. This recognition reflects our team’s leadership in its field and our commitment to safety and quality of care in every surgical procedure,” said Diana Farmer, chair and Pearl Stamps Stewart professor of the Department of Surgery and surgeon-in-chief at UC Davis Children’s Hospital. “It’s proof positive that the best surgical care for their children is right here at UC Davis Children’s Hospital.”

UC Davis receives the 2018 Women’s Choice Award as a Best Children’s Hospital

UC Davis Children’s Hospital has been named as a Best Children’s Hospital and Best Children’s Hospital for Emergency Care by the Women’s Choice Award, America’s trusted referral source for the best in health care.

“Our Best Children’s Hospitals award helps raise awareness of the top quality care offered for children, not only the critically ill, with specialists, services and technologies for their unique needs,” said Delia Passi, founder and chief executive officer of the Women’s Choice Award, and former publisher of Working Woman and Working Mother magazines.

The list of 67 award winners, including UC Davis Children’s Hospital, represents hospitals that meet the highest standards for child care.

“We are honored to receive the Best Children’s Hospital designation from the Women’s Choice Award, which is made possible by the excellence and dedication of our health care teams,” said Ann Madden Rice, chief executive officer of UC Davis Medical Center and UC Davis Children’s Hospital.

Visit womenschoiceaward.com/best-childrens-hospitals for more information on the 2018 Best Children’s Hospitals.
UC Davis, NEC Society launch project to increase use of probiotics in preemies

Thanks to the leadership of Mark Underwood, chief of neonatology at UC Davis Children's Hospital, and the NEC Society’s Scientific Advisory Council, the NEC Society is launching a Multi-NICU Probiotic Quality Improvement (QI) Project. It is the first project of its kind to capture data from neonatal intensive care units (NICUs), that are ready to start routine administration of probiotics to very low birthweight infants at risk for necrotizing enterocolitis.

Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) is a leading cause of death in premature infants, with case-fatality rates of 20 to 30 percent. For fragile and premature infants in the NICU, NEC is a relatively common disease of the intestinal tract in which the tissue lining the intestine becomes inflamed and dies. It is the most common, serious gastrointestinal disease affecting newborn infants, and is considered a medical, and oftentimes a surgical, emergency.

Providing mothers’ milk to premature infants helps to reduce the NEC risks by fostering a healthy gut microbiome. There is also solid empirical evidence demonstrating improved outcomes in fragile neonates with probiotic administration, including decreased risk of necrotizing enterocolitis, death and feeding intolerance. Yet despite probiotics’ promising protective qualities for preemies, many NICUs are not utilizing this potentially lifesaving intervention.

The NEC Society’s Probiotic QI Project seeks to change this.

Three probiotic products have been selected, based on the literature and on testing conducted at UC Davis.

“This project is the result of feedback gathered at the 2017 Necrotizing Enterocolitis Symposium, presented by the NEC Society and the UC Davis Department of Pediatrics. Many NICU representatives voiced interest in offering probiotics to their most fragile and premature patients, but did not know where or how to begin this intervention,” said Jennifer Canvasser, founder and executive director of the NEC Society.

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Participating NICUs can choose which product they use (they can also choose a different product if they wish). Those who participate will collect data before, during and after probiotics are administered. They then will share the de-identified data with the NEC Society for eventual publication. The goal is to have the participation of approximately 100 NICUs.

“We hope that this novel project will help empower more NICUs to use probiotics to improve outcomes and reduce risks of necrotizing enterocolitis, death and feeding intolerance among our most vulnerable babies,” said Underwood.

This is not a clinical trial and there is no placebo arm, no randomization and no blinding, he added.

The more NICUs that provide the secondary outcomes data, the more robust the final published data will be to improve the care of very low birthweight babies.
UC Davis Children’s Hospital celebrates partnership with County’s Primary Care Center

UC Davis Children’s Hospital celebrates nine months of partnership with the County of Sacramento’s Primary Care Center this month, with UC Davis pediatricians providing pediatric services to this county-operated Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) for low-income families in Sacramento.

“We are all very excited about this clinic and the care that we can bring to this population in our community,” said Albina Gogo, UC Davis pediatrician and associate residency program director. “We’re able to serve healthy children, as well as children with chronic and complex medical cases, in this practice. For families who are looking for comprehensive care, this can be their medical home. This is the place to come.”

Gogo, along with UC Davis pediatricians Mitch Ratanasen, Laura Kester and Jihey Yuk, take shifts working in the Primary Care Center’s pediatrics clinic. Pediatric residents and UC Davis medical students will soon make their rotations at the Primary Care Center.

UC Davis pediatricians also provide medical care for underserved populations at the following community clinics:

- WellSpace Health, an FQHC in Oak Park. Five general outpatient pediatric faculty members supervise 17 UC Davis pediatric residents who see patients in their weekly Continuity Clinics.
- Sacramento Native American Health Center, an FQHC in Midtown Sacramento, a partnership which began in May. Three UC Davis pediatricians work in this clinic on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.
- In January 2018, UC Davis pediatric residents will do rounds at the Elica FQHC Clinic in Arden Park.

OB/GYN SPOTLIGHT

Q&A with Debra Wright

Since 2004, Debra Wright has been doing the “wright” thing at UC Davis, as director of maternity services and clinical professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Q: What do you like most about working for UC Davis?
A: I love working with such a great group of people. I love working with residents and medical students.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of your job?
A: Watching a new life enter the world is beautiful every time. I love the collaboration to improve patient care on labor and delivery (L&D). Obstetrics, family medicine and anesthesia physicians work closely with L&D nurses to improve patient safety and quality of care.

Q: What is the best part of your day?
A: I love that each day is different. I never know what to expect when I walk in the door.

Please welcome Arundhati Kale, professor and new pediatric kidney transplant medical director at UC Davis Children’s Hospital. She previously worked as a pediatric nephrologist at Texas Children’s Hospital.

Her current responsibilities: Overseeing compliance with regulations, update and implement pediatric specific policies and procedures, ensure good outcomes, report to CMS and UNOS and maintain accreditation in compliance with JCAHO.

Her goals and priorities: In addition to overseeing compliance, her goals are to standardize care so it will be easier to track outcomes, participate in CQI activities and projects, streamline post-operative care of pediatric patients, ensure patient safety and participate in the education of all team members.
Five-year-old Zoey Kenison slips her feet onto the bike pedals and begins cycling, hands gripping the handle bars. But this is no ordinary bike. It’s a pediatric cycle ergometer, a fixed stationary bike that measures her heart rate, blood pressure, electrocardiogram and breath-by-breath respiratory indices, including volumes and the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Kenison has a rare and complex form of congenital heart disease called levo-transposition of the great arteries. The chambers within her heart are connected abnormally and the arteries leading the body and lungs are also connected abnormally. She has undergone one cardiac surgery and the timing for her next surgery is unclear since it is such a rare disease. Changes seen by imaging of the heart or a change in her exercise tolerance provide further criteria for surgery. But how do you gauge a change in a small child’s exercise tolerance? For Kenison, formal cardiopulmonary exercise testing with respiratory analysis and exercise echocardiography at the Pulmonary Function and Exercise Testing Lab at UC Davis is just what the doctor ordered. This lab has become an increasingly integral part of patient diagnosis, prognosis and follow-up for pediatric and adult patients with congenital heart disease. The results of these stationary bike tests can provide an objective measure of exercise capacity, as well as potential causes of exercise limitation on the heart, lungs, muscle, metabolism or a combination of these. And thanks to a grant from the Children’s Miracle Network at UC Davis, the team has the ability to offer this kind of testing to children as young as five years of age. Forty five tests have been conducted since the lab opened in 2015, four of which were conducted on the new pediatric cycle ergometer. The results from these tests have been indispensable to the care of UC Davis patients.

For Kenison, her exercise capacity test results proved excellent and her surgery has been postponed for now. Additionally, a new baseline for Kenison has been established. For more information about cardiopulmonary exercise testing, please contact the UC Davis Pulmonary Function and Exercise Testing Lab at 916-734-2657 or the UC Davis Pediatric Heart Center at 916-734-3456.

Fernandez y Garcia receives best poster award at International Conference on Communication in Healthcare

Erik Fernandez y Garcia, associate professor of clinical pediatrics at UC Davis Children’s Hospital, has been awarded the best poster presentation at the 2017 International Conference on Communication in Healthcare and Health Literacy Annual Research Conference in Baltimore this month. His poster presentation, titled “Obtaining Mothers’ Views on a Pediatric Maternal Depression Care Intervention,” included UC Davis co-authors Debora Paterniti, Jill Joseph, Greg Simon, Emily Hanes and Richard Kravitz. In this research, he conducted focus group and individual interviews with 35 English and monolingual-Spanish speaking mothers, who had sought maternal depression care. The mothers reviewed and helped to rewrite an intervention to help pediatricians talk with mothers about depression, using language that was more relatable to mothers. The mothers also emphasized the importance of having pediatricians communicate that mothers are valued and important. “We are very happy to see Erik’s important research receive this recognition,” said Kevin Coulter, interim chair of the UC Davis Department of Pediatrics. “His work in the field of identifying maternal depression has been critical in better understanding how pediatricians can better identify this problem and provide intervention in a culturally sensitive manner. This award is much deserved for Erik’s hard work and advocacy on the behalf of mothers struggling with depression.”

“(Erik’s) work in the field of identifying maternal depression has been critical in ... understanding how pediatricians can better identify this problem and provide intervention in a culturally sensitive manner.”

Kevin Coulter
Drive-through donations!

UC Davis Children’s Hospital makes new-toy donations easy this holiday season

To make the donation of toys and other gifts easier for generous businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals who would like to make the season brighter for hospitalized children, UC Davis Children’s Hospital is offering donors the opportunity to drive up and drop off donations for the holidays.

"We really appreciate all of our donors who make the holiday season brighter with their gifts," said Diana Sundberg, manager of the UC Davis Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department. "The kindness of donors will make an important difference in the lives of many families who have a sick child in the hospital this time of year."

The gifts will be given to hospitalized children during the holidays and throughout the year, helping kids mark the end of treatment or the completion of tests and other procedures. Toys and gifts also will be used in hospital playrooms and waiting areas throughout the year. View this year's holiday wish list.

The wishlist provides suggestions for items that fair well in the hospital environment as well as serve as great gifts to help us celebrate special milestones and holidays that the children may experience while in the hospital. For safety reasons we ask that you avoid ride on toys or any toy weapons.

Due to infection control policies, all items must be brand new with tags.

Infants* (0 to 18 months) toy brands to consider include: Fisher-Price, Lamaze, Chicco, Playskool, Sassy, Tiny Love, and Baby Einstein, Usborne, Jellycat, Infantino, Gymboree and Manhattan Toys. Items are suggested from these companies as they have been identified as well constructed and safe for infants.

Toddlers/preschoolers (18 months to 5 years) please consider: Fisher-Price, Leap-Frog, Playskool, Little Tikes, Melissa & Doug, Crayola. Items from these companies have been identified as well constructed, safe and educational for toddlers.

Other gift categories include: School-age (6-12 years), Teens* (12 -17 years) and the Child Life & Creative Arts Therapy Department.

You can also order something from our Amazon wish list online to be delivered directly to UC Davis Children’s Hospital.

* Area of high need
Dec. 1-2: California International Marathon Expo. UC Davis Children’s Hospital will have three booths at this event. 12-7 p.m. Friday. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday. Free.

Dec. 3: California International Marathon. UC Davis Children’s Hospital is the medical partner and sponsor of this event. 7 a.m.-2 p.m. State Capitol. https://runsra.org/california-international-marathon/

Dec. 9: Cancer Center Holiday Party. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Dec. 20-23: UC Davis Children’s Hospital Toy Drive. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. MIND Institute Driveway, 2825 50th St., Sacramento.

UC Davis Children’s Hospital in the news

Fourth-annual UC Davis Human Genomics Symposium shares cutting-edge research – Capital Public Radio

11,000 schools across California have not tested water for lead – KCRA

Lead, arsenic, copper found in drinking water in some NorCal schools – KCRA

Loophole in California vaccination law leads to rise in medical exemptions – ABC10

Little visitors energize Aggie Football workout – Davis Enterprise

Patient gives Aggie Football team inspiration – ABC10

Special team captain at Saturday’s Aggie Football game – Fox 40

Davis doc hears from Puerto Ricans ‘Thank you for helping’ – Davis Enterprise

Hurricane relief in Puerto Rico – Capitol Public Radio

Hepatitis A outbreak – KTVU San Francisco

Extra Life gaming at UC Davis Children’s Hospital – KCRA

Preventing pertussis – ABC10

Bullying prevention tips – Sac&Co.

Bullying prevention month – ABC10

“"My husband and I have a beautiful son named Marcus. He is a smart, sassy, strong and thriving 3 year old.”

Two days after we brought Marcus home from the hospital after his birth, we received a call that he had a positive newborn screening test for LCHADD (Long-chain 3-hydroxyacyl-CoA dehydrogenase deficiency). Further DNA workup confirmed this diagnosis, which is one type of Fatty Acid Oxidation Disorder.

The expanded newborn screening test done in California saved his life!

LCHADD is an inborn error of metabolism; it is inherited in an autosomal recessive manner. Most literature states the incidence is unknown, other literature states it occurs in 1 in 200,000 to 1 in 300,000 people. Essentially people with LCHADD have problems breaking down fat into energy for the body. LCHADD does not have a cure and requires strict lifelong management to help prevent many short-term and long-term complications.

Although our boy is doing quite well compared to many others with LCHADD, we have already encountered our fair share of barriers and challenges associated with having a child with a rare and scary disease.

For the first year of his life, I was on the phone to the UC Davis registered dietitian Staci Collins every other day. He was diagnosed with Failure to Thrive and was at 3rd percentile on the growth chart. He had severe reflux issues, was not tolerating his medical formula well on top of having a very restricted diet. Staci was so understanding and never made me feel like I was annoying her with my questions and worries.

Marcus has been hospitalized seven times so far, six of them being at UC Davis Children's Hospital. The metabolic clinic at UC Davis has been such a blessing for us. Everyone we have encountered has been caring and knowledgeable. The team listens to our concerns, follows up in a timely fashion, has been a great source of support and advocates for our son.

Marcus goes to the clinic about every six months now and he loves the children’s play area. We continue to manage his condition by monitoring lab work, ensuring he takes his medical formula and supplements, trying our best to prevent illnesses, and keeping him on a very low-fat diet.

Along with Staci Collins and the specialized team at the UC Davis MIND Institute, we are especially grateful for Marcus’ primary doctors Dr. Martin and Dr. Herman.

– Laura Vick

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Facebook.com/ucdavischildrenshospital has 11,679 likes!

Twitter.com/ucdavischildren has 2,774 followers

Instagram.com/ucdavischildren has 1,854 followers!