

# CREIGHTON MEDICINE

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY ✦ DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE ✦ JANUARY 2003 ✦ VOL. IV, No. 1

## Creighton Family Healthcare

by **Kirk B. Muffly, M.D.**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE



Kirk B. Muffly, M.D.

Approximately one year ago I was appointed chief of the newly-created Primary Care Section of the Division of General Internal Medicine at the Creighton University Medical School. The Section, consisting of the physicians of the former Heartland Physicians Incorporated, was formed by **Dr. Eugene Rich** when that group was transferred from Tenet/Saint Joseph Hospital to the School of Medicine at Creighton University.

Administration was transferred to the Department of Medicine, with **Judy Franksen** continuing her role as the onsite financial officer.

The Department of Medicine maintains an active interest in the activities of the section, including twice-monthly meetings with **Dr. Rich**, **Dale Davenport**, Administrator of the Department of Medicine, **Ms. Franksen**, and myself. The Section members meet quarterly as a group, as well as attending monthly division meetings and quarterly department faculty meetings.

The Section operates two clinic sites under the Creighton Family Healthcare banner, the Dundee Clinic at 51st & Capitol Avenue, and the South Omaha Clinic at 25th & "L" streets. **Michael Davidian, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, and myself were joined at the Dundee Clinic by **Devin Fox, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, in July of this year. **Dr. Fox** was Chief Resident in Medicine at Creighton last year and we feel fortunate to add him to our group.

The original South Omaha group of **Drs. Satish Mediratta**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, **Joann Derby**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, and **Larry Brown**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, and of Pediatrics, added **Dr. Theresa Townley**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, in July and **Dr. Martina Tribulato**, Assistant Professor of

Medicine, in September. Both are children of Omaha physicians. **Dr. Townley's** father, the longtime and esteemed head of Allergy and Immunology at Creighton University, needs no introduction. **Dr. Tribulato's** father is a retired orthopaedist.

Obviously, education is one of the primary missions of the Primary Care Section. To that end, we have been teaching medical students in the office, and residents in the hospital for some time. In addition, **Drs. Derby** and **Brown** conduct outpatient resident clinics at their site. **Dr. Brown** is, in fact, the Medicine Pediatrics Residency Program Director. **Dr. Derby** is the Ambulatory Residency Director and Associate Program Director for Curriculum Development. As our newer physicians mature their practices, they will be contributing even more to this education mission. **Dr. Fox** has twice received the Golden Apple award for his teaching efforts, and **Dr. Davidian** has received the Distinguished Teaching Award, as well.

To improve the resident experience in the hospital, we have now formalized a fourth medicine service at Creighton University Medical Center, that has more continuity and structure than previously. This has taken some getting used to by our established physicians and patients who are used to seeing their patients/doctor in the hospital on a daily basis, but seems to be working.

On the research front, **Dr. Brown** continues to devote a good deal of his effort to the CRIB project, dealing with infants. I understand this is a rather unique cooperation between a national medical society and Creighton University. I believe there will be some abstracts forthcoming and should contribute further to the stature of the University.

**Dr. Derby** is currently doing a fellowship in curriculum development at Michigan State University and is working on developing a

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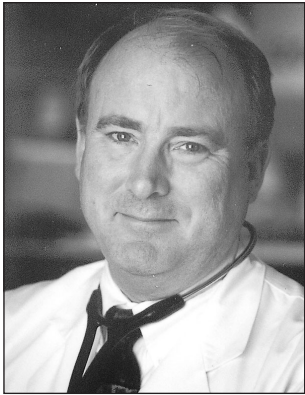
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# From the Chair



Eugene Rich, M.D.

*“Nothing is permanent  
but change.”*

*Heraclitus*

Since I wrote my last column for **Creighton MEDICINE**, members of our Department have experienced a startling number of changes — some profoundly sad, some extraordinarily exciting, some inevitable, some unexpected. As I write this in the waning weeks of 2002, it seems particularly appropriate to reflect on

the many transitions of the past year.

For me, the most shocking loss was the untimely death of **Walter O’Donohue**. Everyone who knows Internal Medicine at Creighton knows how important Walter was to us, both personally and professionally. The material in the last edition of **Creighton MEDICINE**, prepared by Editor **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**, offered eloquent testimony to Dr. O’Donohue’s importance for all at Creighton University.

In September, **George Clifford** (Creighton University Medicine Chair from 1972-85) left us, dying quietly in his home, a death with dignity and on his own terms. While I did not have the privilege of knowing George as well as did many others at Creighton, I enjoyed our many conversations over the years. His advice was most sagacious, when I could overcome his reticence to seem intrusive of the Chair’s domain.

Then in early October, we in Medicine were all startled and saddened by the death of **Dr. Todd Hendrickson**. Todd was everyone’s “favorite” psychiatrist, and a friend and close colleague to many in our Department.

These are just a few of the sobering transitions we suffered this past year. Many faculty and staff lost loved ones as well; parents, siblings, children, spouses, and lifelong friends. Age, illness, accident, and misadventure have taken their toll on our Creighton Medicine family in 2002.

Fortunately, the living are not meant to be consumed by such losses. Instead we transcend the sorrow we rightly feel, and embrace the opportunities presenting with each new day. We at Creighton are particularly fortunate to have been blessed this year with many wonderful new colleagues. They bring their own unique ideas, energy, and aspirations, joining with us who remain to build on the wonderful legacy of our departed friends. **Jeff Stokes, Ademola Abiose, Devin Fox, Akhlish Sharma, Theresa Townley, Martina Tribulato, Adrian Caracioni, Peter Silberstein, Dan Schuller, and Lee Morrow** are each extraordinary individuals who add much that is important and new to our Department. They represent all that is good, exciting, and right in the universality of change.

“The old order changeth yielding place to new,  
And God fulfills himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.”

*– Tennyson, Idylls of the King.*

Eugene Rich, M.D.  
Tenet Professor and  
Chair Department of Medicine

# Clinical Trials Office

by **Thomas Casale, M.D.**  
PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE

If you have patients who would benefit from participation, please contact either the Principal Investigator or the Study Coordinator for the respective trial.

## Clinical trials outside the Department of Medicine

Management of post-operative pain in patients undergoing lower abdominal surgery. For more information, please contact **Robert McQuillan, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Anesthesiology and Clinical Ethics, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinators: **Tony Romero, M.S.** at 402-280-5960, and **Sharon Kochanowicz, R.N.**, at 402-280-5972.

Management of post-operative pain in patients undergoing knee arthroplasty. For more information, please contact **Robert McQuillan, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinators: **Tony Romero, M.S.** at 402-280-5960, and **Sharon Kochanowicz, R.N.** at 402-280-5972.

## CREIGHTON MEDICINE Editorial Board

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Creighton  
UNIVERSITY  
Medical Center

# Hematology/Oncology Division Update

by **Peter Silberstein, M.D.**

PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, CHIEF, DIVISION OF HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY



Peter Silberstein, M.D.

## Patient/Physician Communication

The Hematology/Oncology Division has implemented several changes designed to improve communication between the patient and physician.

Prior to the patient's first visit, a nurse calls the patient to orient them on what they can expect during their initial visit and answers any questions or concerns they might have prior to their arrival.

Two rooms have been modified into patient consultation rooms. These rooms create a more comfortable "living room" setting with couches, tables and chairs. These consultation rooms are large enough to comfortably seat more than 10 people, which accommodates most families. These rooms are used for all initial visits.

Because it has been proven that most patients have poor retention of their initial consultation as a result of their emotional distress, we offer them a tape recording of this session. Additionally, the patients will receive a patient resource manual that includes information on the hematology/oncology staff and physicians, procedures, patient education materials as well as an area to store their test results. This allows the patient to keep all their information in one central place.

At each visit, patients are asked to fill out an interval questionnaire. It contains questions regarding emotional and spiritual issues and physical problems including pain and distress. This tool provides us updated information that allows us to address the patient's physical symptoms as well as psychosocial issues.

We've experienced positive feedback since implementing these changes. We believe it is in everyone's best interest to spend as much time as possible with the patient and to provide open and in-depth communication that addresses his or her specific disease as well as treatment options and potential outcomes.

## Resident/Medical Student Teaching

A didactic teaching schedule has been developed that incorporates a full set of lectures including a review of hematology, oncology, coagulation, pain and symptom management as well as breaking bad news to a patient.

Every month **Henry Lynch, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine, gives an overview of genetics and **Michelle Mango, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Radiology, reviews radiation therapy with our residents.

The Pulmonary residents are invited each month to our lecture on lung cancer. The OB/GYN residents attended our lecture on Thrombocytopenia, discussing hypercoagulable states and we are also working on having joint lectures with the pathology residents.

Lectures are provided to M2 students on a variety of hematology and oncology topics.

## Chemotherapy Infusion

The infusion area of the Hematology/Oncology Division will be available for infusion therapy, such as Remacade, to be done

in conjunction with Creighton's Rheumatologists and Gastroenterologists. A system of double checking orders versus published literature and triple signing of chemotherapy orders has been instituted to prevent chemotherapy medication errors.

**Suzanne Walsh, B.S. Pharm.**, the new clinical pharmacist, has been instrumental in improving patient education materials, implementing the chemotherapy error prevention program and personally instructing patients on the side effects of drugs.

## Prevention of Nausea and Vomiting

There are treatments that have been proven to be very effective in preventing nausea and vomiting in chemotherapy patients including prescribing Dexamethasone (Decadron) and Zofran (5-HT3 antagonist). These medications are given prior to chemotherapy as well as at home.

Additionally, we have begun prescribing compounded gels that the patient rubs into their wrist to stop emesis. The advantages of the gels include not having to be ingested orally or rectally by the patient and they are relatively inexpensive. The gels consist of ABH (Ativan, Benadryl and Haldol) or RBC (Reglan, Benadryl and Decadron) and have been used effectively in hospice situations. We will be conducting research to further define their role in the treatment of chemotherapy induced nausea.

## Patient Waiting Time

In our ongoing efforts to improve patient satisfaction we have asked for patients to notify us if they have waited more than 15 minutes for their appointment. If this occurs, we will take measures to ensure it doesn't happen a second time.

We have instituted several new policies with the laboratory that will shorten the amount of time required for a CBC thus reducing the patient's waiting time.

## Palliative Care

A palliative care task force, chaired by Dr. Peter Silberstein, **Teresa Butler, R.N., B.S.N., O.C.N.**, Nurse Manager for the Hematology/Oncology Division and **Holly Adams, C.M.S.W., L.M.H.P.**, Social Worker for the Hematology Division, has been developed to address the comfort and spiritual level of our patients. The task force includes oncologists, radiation oncologists, anesthesiologists, nurses, social workers, primary care doctors, pain management specialists, pharmacists, representatives from Pastoral Care and members of the Center for Health Policy and Ethics. One of the outcomes of the task force is the availability of a chaplain to all our clinic patients.

Through process improvement, the Hematology/Oncology Division is committed to providing current, compassionate and comprehensive care to all our hematology/oncology patients.

# Nephrology's First Things First Clinic

by James Frock, M.D.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE



James Frock, M.D.

The First Things First Renal Clinic is the newest service provided by Creighton Nephrology Associates and Dialysis Clinic, Inc. It is directed by **Anne Harty, M.S., A.P.R.N., F.N.P.** (photo) The purpose of the First Things First Renal Clinic is to educate patients about kidney disease, help patients make informed decisions for themselves, help patients cope with issues related to kidney disease, and help answer questions about kidney disease.

It is hoped that this new First Things First Renal Clinic will enable all renal patients to enjoy a smooth transition from pre-end-stage renal disease therapy to dialysis.

The goals of the First Things First Renal Clinic are: 1. Help improve or maintain the patient's current health status; 2. Help keep the patient from having to start dialysis emergently; 3. Encourage the patient to take an active role in their care; 4. Help the patient to take control of their disease and life; 5. Ensure that the patient has a permanent dialysis access in place before starting dialysis.

The vast majority of patients referred to the First Things First Renal Clinic have



Anne Harty, M.S.

come from the nephrologists' clinics. However, if any physician in the area has patients who may benefit from this program, please feel free to contact Anne Harty through Creighton Nephrology Associates at (402) 341-3141.

The First Things First Renal Clinic is offered in two parts, a basic class and an advanced class. The basic class criterion includes a creatinine of greater than 1.5-3.5 and renal replacement therapy to be expected in 12-24 months. The basic class is taught by Ms. Harty and lasts approximately two hours. The advanced class criterion includes a creatinine of greater than 3.5 and renal replacement therapy to be expected in less than 12 months. During the advanced class, the patient meets with the nurse practitioner as well as a renal dietitian and renal social worker.

With the addition of our fourth nephrologist, Dr. Patrick Adams, the Nephrology Division is now able to provide a dedicated physicians to Creighton University Medical Center, Bergan Mercy Hospital, Immanuel Medical Center, and to Midlands Hospital. The nephrologists are also available for consultative services at Methodist Hospital, Nebraska Health System Hospitals, Midlands Hospital and Jenny Edmundson in Council Bluffs.

Our nephrologists also continue to provide outreach services in Denison, Red Oak and Council Bluffs, Iowa and in Columbus, Nebraska. In addition, the division continues to provide dialysis services to patients in Atlantic, Council Bluffs, Onawa, Red Oak, and Shenandoah, Iowa, and in Columbus, Nebraska.

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## Division News

### Allergy

submitted by **Thomas Casale, M.D.**

#### New faculty

#### Professional and educational activities

Dr. Casale has been elected co-chair elect of the American Board of Allergy and Immunology, which means he will be chair in two years.

Dr. Casale received the Distinguished Research Career award from the Creighton University School of Medicine on November 4, 2002. This award recognizes a faculty member for making significant contributions to the advancement of an area of biomedical, behavioral, or medical research.

#### Clinical trials

Evaluation of the safety and clinical activity of idec-152 (anti-cd23) monoclonal antibody in patients with mild persistent to severe persistent allergic asthma. For more information, please contact **Dr. Casale**, Principal Investigator, or **Lori Mahon**, Study Coordinator, at 402-280-5968 or the Allergy Asthma and Immunology Research Office at 402-280-5975.

Study comparing the efficacy and safety of fexofenadine 120 mg BID, fexofenadine 240 mg QD, and placebo in subjects with perennial allergic rhinitis. For more information, please contact **Robert Townley, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or **Kris Kenealy**, Study

Coordinator, at 402-280-5961 or the Allergy Asthma and Immunology Research Office at 402-280-5975.

Study evaluating the safety of intranodal vaccination with bee venom immunotherapy in subjects with allergy to bee stings. For more information, please contact **Agindra Bewtra, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinators, **Sharon Kochanowicz, R.N.**, at 402-280-5972, or **Mary Jansen, R.N.**, at 402-280-4403.

Trial to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of SYMBICORT (tm) pMDI as compared to placebo in adults and adolescents with asthma. For more information please contact Dr. Casale, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Jean Kessler**, at 402-280-5965 or the Allergy Asthma and Immunology Research Office at 402-280-5975.

Trial to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of SYMBICORT(tm) pMDI in Children and Adolescents 6-15 years of age with asthma. For more information, please contact **Russell Hopp, D.O.**, Professor of Pediatrics and of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or **Christy Babutzke, R.N.** at 402-354-5543.

### Cardiology

submitted by **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**

#### CHEC Program

The Cardiac Center has been awarded a contract with the National Institutes of Health and the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

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# Pillars, Past and Present

## Division News

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John D. Hartigan, M.S., M.D.

**John D. Hartigan, M.S., M.D., F.A.C.P.**, Clinical Professor of Medicine, graduated from Creighton University Medical School in 1943, followed by Internal Medicine Residency at Mayo Foundation 1944-47. Became an Instructor in Medicine in 1947, and has served as lecturer and preceptor for over 50 years.

### **Who were your most influential teachers?**

While in medical school I was fortunate to be a student of Dr. C.M. Wilhelmj. He was a clinician and physiologist. He made physiology a pleasure and provided a superb role model. Later, I worked under Dr. Carl Morlock, who stressed a careful history and physical exam.

**What would be your advice to a newly qualified physician?** Value and respect the trust, confidence and hope patients give you when they submit to you their symptoms, their fears and their bodies. Avoid first name use unless the patient is an old friend. And listen carefully to the patient. If the patient is grievously ill, sit down next to them. Talk to them and touch them. Talk patiently and sympathetically to the family. Maintain a well-groomed appearance. The patient is entitled to that.

**What changes in medicine have affected you most?** Penicillin appeared the year following my graduation. Other antibiotics followed. Prior to penicillin, sulfas were the main defense against infection. The appearance of the "third party payor" in medicine, though necessary as medicine became more complex and costly, has become the dominant force in medical practice.

**What do you see in the future for medicine?** The development of medical organizations to protect the individual physician. The insurance industry, the hospital organizations and government are becoming forces too large for the individual physician to handle. Unionism? Perhaps. Unions came into being to address grievous injustices born by the forming members. Some form of this will be needed to shield the individual doctor in the not too distant future.

**What are your favorite interests?** Travel in foreign countries, seeing their customs, their museums, etc. is a great pleasure. Music, opera, musical comedy and drama are my favorites.

**What is your main regret?** Over-emphasis on medical career in the use of my time and, as a result, the reduction of time I should have given to my family life. I wish I had learned golf. It is a relaxation that can continue through many years.

### **Would you enter medicine again, if possible?**

Emphatically, yes. There is no more satisfying life.

to establish the Creighton Heart Education Center (CHEC). The CHEC program will work to assist members of the community, particularly African-Americans, in meeting the NHLBI goals of 1) adopting heart healthy behaviors to prevent the development of cardiovascular disease risk factors, 2) early detection and treatment of risk factors, 3) early recognition and treatment of acute coronary symptoms, and 4) prevention of recurrence and complications of cardiovascular disease, by providing unique and culturally appropriate educational opportunities.

New Cardiac Center programs under this CHEC contract would include 1) an RV to provide the community-based screening and education, 2) heart health fairs, 3) cooking schools, 4) heart healthy shopping tours, 5) community-based nutrition and physical education classes, 6) educational seminars for health professionals and community members, and 7) a community awareness campaign to increase knowledge and response times for heart attack and stroke.

### **ALLHAT Trial**

Less costly, traditional diuretics work better than newer medicines to treat high blood pressure and prevent some forms of heart disease, according to results from the largest hypertension clinical trial ever conducted. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the National Institutes of Health, sponsored the "Antihypertensive and Lipid-Lowering Treatment to Prevent Heart Attack Trial (ALLHAT) that studied over 42,400 participants aged 55 and older in 623 clinics and centers across the USA and in Canada, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Dr. Mohuddin was the Creighton Cardiac Center's Principal Investigator in the ALLHAT Trial—one of four sites, and the only academic medical center—in Nebraska. Findings of the ALLHAT Trial appear in two articles in the December 18, 2002 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The take-home message is that doctors should begin drug treatment for high blood pressure with a diuretic," said Dr. Mohiuddin. A great majority of patients can tolerate a diuretic but, for those who can't, then a calcium-channel blocker, an ACE-inhibitor, or a beta blocker may be used to start treatment at only a fraction of the cost of newer drugs.

### **Educational and professional activities**

**Aryan Mooss, M.D., Professor of Medicine**, received the Master Clinician award from the Creighton University School of Medicine on November 4, 2002. This award recognizes a faculty member who has an outstanding reputation for knowledge of disease processes, skill in the diagnosis and treatment of disease, and care of patients.

**Nirav Mehta, M.D.**, Cardiology Fellow, was selected as one of five finalists for the 2002 Laennec Society Young Clinician Award Competition sponsored by the Council on Clinical Cardiology of the American Heart Association. The award was presented on November 17th during the AHA Scientific Sessions.

### **Clinical trials**

Amlodipine vs. valsartan in the treatment of hypertension compares the efficacy of angiotensin II receptor antagonist valsartan (Diovan™) to calcium channel blocker amlodipine (Norvasc®) in the management of mild to moderate hypertension in African-Americans. For more information, please contact **Kathleen Packard, Pharm.D.**, at 402-280-4292.

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# Division News

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The I-PRESERVE Study assesses the use of angiotensin II receptor blocker irbesartan (Avapro®) in the treatment of heart failure in patients with preserved systolic function. For more information, please contact **Antonio Reyes, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinator, **Lois Rasmussen, R.N.**, at 402-280-4618.

The PLUS Study assesses the use of a new ultrasound-emitting device to enhance the efficacy of thrombolytic therapy during an acute myocardial infarction in patients with ST-segment elevation. For more information, please contact **Aryan Mooss, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinators: **Sandy Byers, R.N.**, at 402-280-4961 or **Lois Rasmussen, R.N.**, at 402-280-4618.

The ICE Study is testing the efficacy and safety of a new vasopressin receptor antagonist in patients with euvolemic or hypervolemic hyponatremia. For more information, please contact **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or **Kathleen Packhard, Pharm.D.**, Sub-Investigator, at 402-280-4292 or Study Coordinator **Lois Rasmussen, R.N.** at 402-280-4618.

## Dermatology

Submitted by **Sharon Kochanowicz, R.N.**

### Clinical trial

Trial to evaluate the effect of hydrocortisone probutate cream on the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis in the pediatric population. For more information, please contact **Christopher Huerter, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Medicine and Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinators: **Tony Romero, M.S.**, at 402-280-5960, or **Sharon Kochanowicz, R.N.** at 402-280-5972.

## Endocrinology

submitted by **Mark Johnson, Ph.D.**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE AND OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

### Professional activities

A recent publication, "Caffeine Intake Increases the Rate of Bone Loss in Elderly Women and Its Interaction With Vitamin D Receptor Genotypes," authored by **Prema B. Rapuri, J. Christopher Gallagher, H. Karimi Kinyamu, and Kay Ryschon**, in our Bone Metabolism Section Research Group, (*Am J Clin Nutr*, Vol 74:694-700, 2001), has been selected as one of the 25 papers for the 2001 issue of the Annual Bibliography of Significant Advances in Dietary Supplement Research. This selection has been made by the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) at the NIH and the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA). Dr. Gallagher is a Professor of Medicine.

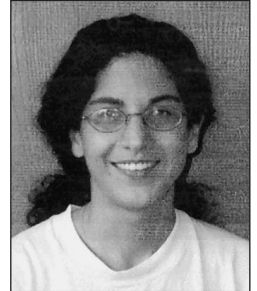
**Robert Anderson, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine and of Biomedical Sciences, presented a paper, "Thermostable Phenol Sulfotransferase (SULT1A1) is Present in COS-1 Cells and Catalyzes the Sulfation of 3,3'-Diiodothyronine," *RJ Anderson, PE Kudlacek, and X-Y Li*, at the European Thyroid Association meeting in Goteborg, Sweden on September 8, 2002. The paper was published in the *Journal of Endocrinological Investigation* 25:59, 2002.

Dr. Mark Johnson, Osteoporosis Research Center, presented a Plenary Lecture entitled, "Lessons Learned from the Autosomal High Bone Mass," at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual American Society of Bone and Mineral Research Meeting in San Antonio, TX on September 20-24, 2002. The

talk was also selected by the ASBMR for presentation in a press conference to members of the news media at the meeting.

## General Internal Medicine

Submitted by **Mary Ann Scramstad**  
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR OF  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



Martina Tribulato, M.D.

### New faculty

**Martina Tribulato, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, joined the Primary Care Section of the Division at the South Omaha Clinic in September 2002. Dr. Tribulato is a 1999 graduate of the Creighton University School of Medicine. She then completed her Internal Medicine Residency at Creighton. Dr. Tribulato is board certified in Internal Medicine.

## Infectious Diseases/VA Hospital

Submitted by **Marvin Bittner, M.D.**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY,  
AND OF MEDICINE

### Professional activities

Dr. Bittner gave several invited lectures. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, he spoke on "Gram-positive Infections" to the South Dakota Infection Control Council of Sioux Falls. On October 30<sup>th</sup>, he spoke on "Influenza" to the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Support Group at the Omaha VA Medical Center. On November 6<sup>th</sup>, he spoke on "Sepsis" at Grand Rounds at the Ft. Meade, South Dakota VA Medical Center. On November 14<sup>th</sup>, he spoke on "Health Advice for International Travel" at Internal Medicine Grand Rounds at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, Ill. Dr. Bittner also attended the meeting of the Governing Council of the International Health Medical Education Consortium in Seattle on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Gary Gorby, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Medicine presented a poster on "Detection of Opa Receptor Transcripts in Human Fallopian Tube Tissue" at the Pathogenic Neisseria Conference in Oslo, Norway from September 1-6, 2002.

As the Governor for Nebraska of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, **Laurel Preheim, M.D.**, Professor of Medical Microbiology and Immunology, and of Medicine, chaired the ACP-ASIM Nebraska meeting October 17-18 at the Scott Conference Center on the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus.

**Martha Gentry-Nielsen, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Medical Microbiology and Immunology, and of Medicine, presented an abstract on "Ethanol Ingestion and Smoke Inhalation Decrease Ciliary Clearance of Bacteria," at the annual meeting of the Infectious Disease Society of America, in Chicago, October 24-27, 2002.

Drs. Bittner and Gentry-Nielsen spoke at the Nebraska Hospital Association/Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) symposium in Lincoln on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Bittner spoke on tuberculosis and Dr. Gentry-Nielsen spoke on "A Healthcare Worker's Guide to Bioterrorism."

### Clinical trials

Trial comparing the safety and efficacy of piperacillin/tazobactam with that of ampicillin/sulbactam in the treatment of diabetic foot infections. This is limited to VA patients.

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# Division News

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Trial studying the relationship between *Legionella* colonization of health facility water systems and *Legionella* nosocomial pneumonia. This trial is underway at the VA Medical Center.

If you have questions or patients who would benefit from participation, please contact the Principal Investigator, Marvin Bittner, M.D., or the Study Coordinator, Willy Arnold, M.S. at 402-221-8052.

## Nephrology Division

submitted by Robert Dunlay, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Medicine and of Pharmacology

### Professional activity

Congratulations to A.J. Meares, M.D., Instructor of Medicine, who recently passed the certifying examination of the American Board of Internal Medicine.

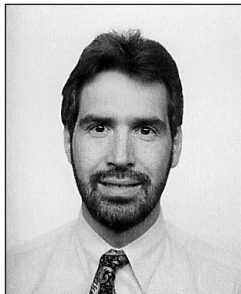
## Pulmonary Division

Submitted by Mary Ann Scramstad

### New division chief

The Department of Medicine is pleased to welcome Dan Schuller, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine, to the position of Division Chief of Pulmonary/ Critical Care Medicine on November 2, 2002. Dr. Schuller comes to us from Washington University in St. Louis, where he was an Associate Professor of Medicine and the Director of the Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship program. He was also Director of the Pulmonary Consult Service at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

Dr. Schuller is a 1985 graduate of the National Autonomous University of Mexico in University City, Mexico. He completed three



Dan Schuller, M.D.

years of Internal Medicine Residency at Sinai Hospital of Detroit. He subsequently completed a three-year Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship at Washington University in St. Louis, where he also served as Chief Medicine Resident for one year. Dr. Schuller is certified in Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Diseases and Critical Care Medicine.

Dr. Schuller has clinical and research interests in respiratory tract infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, pulmonary hypertension, ICU outcomes and living lobar transplantation.

We are very pleased to have Dr. Schuller step into the role of Division Chief, which has been filled on an interim basis by J. Clayton Campbell, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine, since the death of Dr. Walter O'Donohue in July 2002.

### Clinical trials

A study to evaluate the effectiveness of drotrecogin alfa as compared to placebo in adult patients with early stage severe sepsis. For more information, please contact Naresh Dewan, M.D., Professor of medicine, Principal Investigator, or Study Coordinators: Sharon Kochanowicz, R.N. at 402-280-5960 or Tony Romero, M.S. at 402-280-5960.

## Rheumatology Division

Submitted by John Hurley, M.D.

Associate Professor of Medicine

### Grant awarded

The Rheumatology Division has received an educational grant from Pharmacia for an arthritis learning center.

### Outreach clinic to move

The Rheumatology Division's Bergan Mercy Outreach Clinic will move from the hospital to the South Tower office building to see patients starting in January 2003.

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# Creighton Family Healthcare

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curriculum in Genomics in Medicine here at Creighton. The Department of Medicine has been very supportive of her efforts.

As some may know, Dr. Townley is Medicine/Pediatrics trained. In addition, she has a background in public health and is planning on devoting a significant part of her time to research in this area.

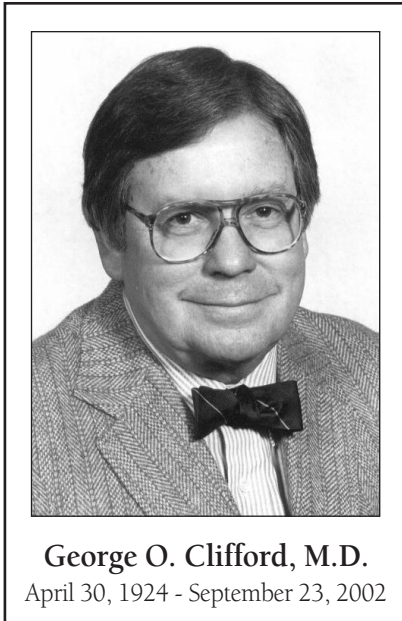
I believe our other main mission in the section is patient care. To that end I feel we have some very talented, committed compassionate physicians who truly enjoy patient contact and interaction. The cultural diversity that surrounds the South Omaha clinic makes for an interesting mix of patient experiences and expectations. It also can present some barriers to delivery of care. Dr. Townley is fortunately bilingual, and the others have picked up some useful Spanish or enlisted the aide of our bilingual staff to overcome the language barriers.

At any rate, we are all working hard to build and maintain a patient base for education and as a referral source to Medicine Department specialists and other departments in the Medical School. With all these missions in mind, I believe we have an excellent group of physicians dedicated to student education and patient care now in place.

On a personal note, I have found my new role to be educational, interesting and an invigorating challenge. With the help of the physicians and staff of the section and the department, I believe we can achieve a fiscally sound and rewarding environment that will continue to allow all involved to accomplish their individual goals and serve the higher ideals of being a physician in the true sense of the word.

# George O. Clifford, M.D.

from the Editor



The Creighton University School of Medicine and especially the Department of Medicine was greatly saddened by the loss of Dr. George Clifford, who was a highly respected and greatly admired member of the Department. Dr. Clifford died on September 23, 2002.

Dr. Clifford attended Harvard University and Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston and served on the faculty of Wayne State University, Detroit Medical Center in Michigan, as well as

Cornell University Medical College in New York City before coming to Creighton University School of Medicine.

He joined the Creighton University School of Medicine on January 1, 1972 as Chairman of the Department of Medicine, a post he held for 13 years. During his long and exemplary career he taught thousands of medical students, residents and other house officers at Creighton.

He also served on the staff of the Omaha Veterans Administration Medical Center until a few months before his death.

Dr. Clifford played a major role in developing and expanding the Department of Medicine. He was instrumental in moving the clinical functions of the Creighton University Medical School from the former Saint Joseph Hospital on 10th Street.

Dr. Clifford was honored by his colleagues who awarded him the Master Clinician Award in 1987 and the Distinguished Service Award in 2002.

George Clifford, M.D., was a superb teacher and scholar. His many contributions to the Department of Medicine and Creighton University School of Medicine will never be forgotten.



**Attn: Larry Maxwell**

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