

CREIGHTON MEDICINE

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The Omaha VAMC Medicine Resident Clinics: An Innovative Approach to Teaching Outpatient Medicine

by **Erica Cichowski, M.D.**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE



Erica Cichowski, M.D.

Exciting and innovative changes have occurred at the Omaha Veterans Administration Medical Center outpatient medicine clinics. Not only is the décor brand new, but a novel approach to medical education is underway within. The master mind behind many of these changes is Dr. Joann Porter. Dr. Porter began as Chief of Primary Care in the spring of 2005 and has made some remarkable renovations on several levels. The goal was two fold: better patient care and improved resident education.

In order to meet these goals, the number of scheduled patients for each resident per clinic has been lowered to better match the Residency Review Committee guidelines for each resident year. The smaller patient panel allows for more thorough investigation of the often complex medical problems our veterans suffer from. It also allows for more time spent on teaching with more attending involvement in patient care. The result is more emphasis on evidence based medicine, treatment guidelines and health care maintenance. The residents in turn are allowed to better practice these skills rather than just reading about them.

Additionally, office visit slots are left open in order for patients to be added for acute care visits that day. Prior to this alteration, residents assigned to continuity clinic at the VA had very little exposure to acute care outpatient problems such as sinusitis, urinary tract infections and acute abdominal pain. This change has also lifted the burden of the VA's Admitting Area, where nearly all acute

problems had to be dealt with before. Now there is an alternative option for our veterans to be treated for medical conditions that are acute but not emergent.

The Omaha VAMC has utilized a state of the art electronic medical record for many years now. Faculty and residents have been typing their own progress notes and entering orders for lab work, radiology, ancillary services and follow up visits for some time now. While this seemed cumbersome at first, the residents have perfected the art of using electronic templates. The value is not only in time saved, but also in the education of what medical information is required to bill certain levels of service for the care provided to their patients. Such knowledge is invaluable to our residents as they complete their training and head out into practice.

The latest electronic capability at the Omaha VAMC includes electronic encounter forms. In a sense, the residents are now being taught how to do their own billing. While the benefit may not be immediately obvious to many of them, such an exercise trains them about coding and the documentation requirements for billing certain levels. Those finishing their residency training will leave with three years of practice in a skill that is quite complicated and has huge implications for productivity once in practice.

The new relationships developing between our residents and those training at the University of Nebraska Medical Center is an additional perk. The new resident clinic requires residents from both schools to work together and to share educational experiences. Such a relationship is beneficial to both schools on many levels.

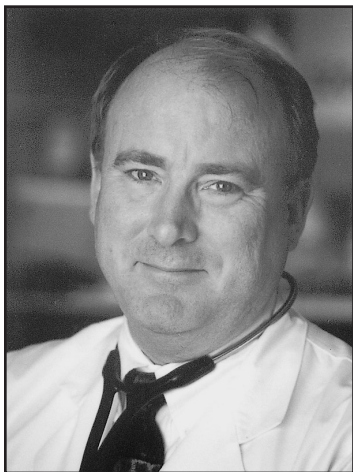
Much has changed in the VA resident continuity clinics since the arrival of Dr. Joann Porter. While change sometimes makes for a challenging transition for those involved, the benefits of improved patient care and enhanced resident education are evident to all.

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From the Chair



Eugene Rich, M.D.

As I write this column, it is the end of January. This might seem a quiet time at a medical school but everyone in **Creighton Medicine** is actually quite busy. Our Office of Education is feverishly arranging for the final interviews of prospective residents and finishing dossiers to support our “applicant ranking meetings”; there our educational leaders will debate the merits of various candidates, following which Dr. Dunlay will draft the fateful “rank list” for my consideration.

Meanwhile graduating medical students are preparing their own rank lists; in March the computers of the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) will print out the assignments. Hopefully once again our Creighton medical students and our internal medicine residency leadership will be happy with the results!

Our Office of Academic Affairs is preparing once again for annual faculty evaluations. We first share with the chiefs of our eleven specialty divisions various information we’ve received over the year including teaching evaluations (by medical students and residents), clinical service evaluations (e.g. from referring physicians), research accomplishments, and divisional performance in the areas of clinical service, education, and research. The individual faculty members review this and other information with their division chief, and discuss the objectives they wish to accomplish in the coming year. Then I get the pleasure of reflecting with each division chief on their group’s accomplishments over the past 12 months, and discussing how best to achieve faculty and Departmental aspirations over the next academic year.

The faculty evaluations also contribute crucial information for the Department’s budget for the next academic year and our Department administration is already busy laying the ground work for our budget process. These months are a busy time for our individual faculty as well. Clinically, many of our subspecialty divisions have their busiest inpatient months in January, February, and March. From a research standpoint, major grant deadlines occur in January and February, as do the deadlines for submitting scientific work to many national meetings. Our educational leaders conduct annual reviews of the success of our various student and resident rotations. Now is when they plan any improvements since student course catalogues, elective offerings, medical school schedules, and educational budgets are all influenced by their proposals.

So, it is a busy, exciting time in our Department. I look forward to reviewing what all our Creighton Medicine faculty have completed

this past year, and all they propose to accomplish in the next. And I look forward to sharing some highlights in the next issue of **Creighton Medicine**.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Rich'.

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

Clinical Trials Office

New Research/Clinical Studies – currently enrolling patients. For information regarding these studies, please call (402) 280-5975.

Novartis: Exhaled Breath Condensate and NO: Non-Invasive Evaluation of Lung Disease after Treatment with Xolair. This study is designed to examine the effects of Xolair on non-invasive markers of lung inflammation. Principal Investigator: **Robert Townley, M.D.**

Novartis: Effects of Omalizumab (Xolair) On Airway Hyperresponsiveness. This study is designed to examine the effects of omalizumab on airway hyperresponsiveness and inflammation. Principal Investigator: **Thomas B. Casale, M.D.**

Primary Immune Services: Human Pasteurized C1 Esterase Inhibitor Concentrate (CE1145) in Subjects with congenital C1-INH Deficiency and Acute Abdominal or Facial Hereditary Angioedema (HAE) Attacks. This study is designed to examine the therapeutic potential of C1 esterase inhibitor to abort acute HAE attacks. Principal Investigator: **Agindra Bewtra, M.D.**

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Creighton
UNIVERSITY
Medical Center

Pillars, Past and Present



Richard L. O'Brien, M.D.,
F.A.C.P.

Richard L. O'Brien, M.D., F.A.C.P., University Professor, member of the Center for Health Policy & Ethics and member of the Department of Medicine

Dr. O'Brien was Dean of the School of Medicine from 1982 to 1992 and Vice President for Health Sciences from 1984 to 1999. He graduated from the Creighton University School of Medicine in 1960. He trained at the Columbia Division at Bellevue Hospital in New York and the University of Wisconsin, was in the Army at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, and a

faculty member at the University of Southern California and the Université de Genève in Switzerland.

You returned to Creighton in 1982 after 22 years away. What brought you back?

The nature and culture of the university and the medical school. My years as a student were very nurturing and propelled me on a career path that led me into several interesting endeavors; but more important, my years as a Creighton student impelled me to commit myself to the well-being of others—patients, students, faculty colleagues. Therefore, it was very appealing to me to assume a leadership role in the institution that was so important to my development, to contribute what I could to its culture and mission.

Why did you choose academic medicine as a career?

I made the conscious decision after my second year of medical school. It seemed to me that one can have greatest impact on more persons over a longer time by teaching and research. The impact of a practicing physician is on one patient and family at a time. One can parlay the impact of teaching and research by influencing and facilitating the practices of many others. The effect on any given patient may be relatively small but over the course of a career one can affect the careers and practices of thousands of physicians and contribute to their care of patients, or in some cases, in their teaching and research careers. This impact can extend for generations.

What has had the greatest effect on you career?

That's easy; the Creighton culture and the influences of a number of dedicated and talented people who have taught me, encouraged me, inspired me, supported me, criticized me, and collaborated with me. My list of "heroes" is pretty long and extends from high school years to the present time. Names that will be known to at least some around here include, Bauman, Sheehan, Wilhelmj, Brody, Koszewski, and Heaney. There are more from Creighton and many from a number from other places including Bellevue, the University of Wisconsin, the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and University of Southern California. And I would be remiss if I didn't mention the continuous support of my family, my wife, children and others. The important message is that we are all dependent on others in all we do; without the help and support of others, we accomplish little.

What about your career has been most satisfying?

Everything that has had a positive effect on others. In some instances, this has been the provision of resources. I was a key player in the development of the Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Kenneth Norris Jr. Cancer Research Institute and Hospital at USC. I played key roles in the development of several buildings on the Creighton campus. I conceived of the Center for Health Policy & Ethics and assisted at its birth and during its development. But most satisfying is to observe the career development and accomplishments of students and faculty colleagues that I have assisted and guided. I am particularly proud of the progress in the School of Medicine while I was Dean. I have strived to be a builder, but not so much of bricks and mortar as of professional development of students and colleagues. I count among my greatest satisfactions, the recruitment of very talented people to do important jobs and providing them the resources necessary to succeed.

Have you had frustrations or failures?

We all have failures and make mistakes and I have made my share. Fortunately, most are correctable and haven't done much lasting damage. My greatest frustration is that one can always think of more good things to do than available resources allow.

It has been forty-five years and much has changed since you graduated from medical school. What do you see as the most important challenges of medicine today?

For practitioners, it is keeping up with the increasing complexity of medicine and assuring that they provide high quality care equitably to all, no small challenge in today's world. Because medicine has become more effective, people are living longer and healthier. But the kind of care we provide is very costly and access to care is very inequitable. This is a big challenge to society; how do we assure the just distribution of the fruits of medical research and development so that all can benefit equitably?

Do you have any advice for young physicians and faculty members?

Yes, do every job you have, everything you undertake, to the absolute best of your ability and call on and rely on others who are smarter and more talented than you to help. I was once asked if success depends on setting goals and sticking to them. My response was that it is too simple a question. We live in a continuously changing world with evolving opportunities. And the opportunities present themselves largely because we have done something well. In consequence, one ought not to set very specific goals; the best goal is to do the best one can with what one has available for the task at hand. It is also important to lead a balanced life with interests other than one's profession. Take breaks; smell the roses.

What interests do you have outside of medicine?

My family, back-packing, cycling, collecting wine, and the arts, in particular music with an emphasis on opera.

What are your thoughts about retirement?

I will retire when I feel, or someone tells and convinces me, that I am no longer contributing something of value; or when something else more important, like family needs, demands my full attention. I haven't reached that point yet.

Division News

Allergy / Immunology

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

Faculty Activities

Thomas B. Casale, M.D.

Participated in a filmed video for the Respiratory and Allergic Diseases Foundation on the Role of IgE in Asthma.

He made the following presentations at the Annual American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Meeting in Anaheim, CA: "Practical Aspects of the Use of Omalizumab," Nov. 6, 2005, and "Rethinking Asthma Control: What Is It and Can It Be Achieved?" November 7, 2005.

Dr. Casale presented to the Bay Area Allergy Society "Anti-IgE Monoclonal Antibodies Imparts Safety and Efficacy for Allergen Immunotherapy." San Francisco, CA, January 19, 2006.

Dr. Casale completed his term as President of American Board of Allergy/Immunology after the December meeting in Chicago. He will remain on the Board for an additional two years.

Jeffrey Stokes, M.D.

Presented to Internal Medicine Grand Rounds on "Severe Asthma." He has participated in weekly Allergy/Immunology Grand Rounds at Creighton University, and the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology Journal Club which meets monthly.

Robert Townley, M.D.

Participated in weekly Allergy/Immunology Grand Rounds at Creighton University, the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology Journal Club, which meets monthly, and the Internal Medicine Research Conferences.

Dr. Townley has participated in the following activities in the local community: Asthma Alliance Omaha; Epidemiology of Asthma Deaths Committee, State of Nebraska; conducts allergy clinics at the One World Community Clinic for the underserved in Omaha area; volunteered his services at Project Cure Clinic, for the underserved in Omaha area, and is a member of the Nebraska Academy of Allergy/Asthma/Immunology.

Russell Hopp, D.O.

Presented "Adult Asthma: Is It a Pediatric Disease?" at CUMC – Internal Medicine Grand Rounds, September 14, 2005.

Dr. Hopp has been appointed to the Board of Health, State of Nebraska, 2006-2010. He was also appointed to the Editorial Board of Pediatric Asthma, Allergy & Immunology in 2005.

Publications

Casale, T.B., Busse, W.W., Kline, J.N., Ballas, Z.K., Moss, M.H., **Townley, R.G.**, et al: "Omalizumab Pretreatment Decreases Acute Reactions After Rush Immunotherapy for Ragweed-Induced Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis." J Allergy Clin Immunol 2006; 117:134-40.

Brownell, J., Lin, H., **Bewtra, A.**, **Townley, R.**, **Casale, T.B.**: Necrotizing Pneumonia With a Questionable Lung Mass In A 59-Year Old Man. Ann Allergy Asthma & Immunol 2006; 96:116-121.

Chiang, D.T., Clark, J., **Casale, T.B.**: "Omalizumab in Asthma: Approval and Postapproval Experience." Clin Rev Allergy Immunol 2005, 29(1):3-16.

Stokes, J., **Casale, T.B.**: The Approach to the Patient with Allergic Asthma. Resident & Staff Physician: August, 2005.

Hopp, R.J.: Atopic Characteristics of Children with Recurrent Wheezing at High Risk for Development of Childhood Asthma. (Letter to the Editor) J Allergy Clin Immunol 2005; 116(4):1282-7.

Kostis, J.B., Kim, H.J., Rusnak, J., **Casale, T.B.**, Kaplan, A., Corren, J., Levy, E.: Incidence and Characteristics of Angioedema Associated With Enalapril. Arch Int Med 2005; 165(14):1637-42.

Stokes, J., Clark, C., **Casale, T.B.**: Future Therapies of Asthma. In: Asthma Prevention, W.W. Busse, R.F. Lemanske (Eds.) 2005; Vol 195:591-614.

Lai, L., **Casale, T.B.**, **Stokes, J.**: Pediatric Allergic Rhinitis: Treatment. Immunology and Allergy Clinics of North America 2005; 283-299.

Clinical Activities

The **Division of Allergy/Immunology** Clinic and Clinical Research Program has relocated to 3M. The Allergy/Immunology fellows and Dr. Agandra Bewtra have also moved their offices to 3M.

New Research/Clinical Studies – currently enrolling patients. For information regarding these studies, please call (402) 280-5975.

Pharmaxis: A Phase III Multicenter Study to Demonstrate the Sensitivity and Specificity of Aridol (Mannitol) Challenges to Predict Bronchial Hyperresponsiveness as Manifested by a Positive Exercise Challenge in Subjects Presenting with Signs and Symptoms Suggestive of Asthma but Without a Definitive Diagnosis. This study is designed to determine the best methods to diagnose asthma. Principal Investigator: **Thomas B. Casale, M.D.**

Astellas: Phase II Multicenter, Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Parallel Group Study of the Safety and Efficacy of Tacrolimus Inhalation Aerosol in subjects with Persistent Asthma Principal Investigator: **Thomas B. Casale, M.D.**

Schering Mometasone: Effects of Mometasone DPI on Markers of Airway Inflammation. This study is designed to examine the ability of the newly FDA approved inhalation steroid, mometasone, to inhibit airway hyperresponsiveness and inflammation. Principal Investigators: **Thomas B. Casale, M.D.**, **Jeffrey R. Stokes, M.D.**

Dyspnea and Obesity In African-American Females. This study is designed to determine whether dyspnea in obese African American females is due to asthma or other causes. Principal Investigators: **Jeffrey Stokes, M.D.**, **Thomas B. Casale, M.D.**

Novartis: A 26-Week, Randomized, Double-Blind, Parallel-Group, Placebo-Controlled, Multicenter Study To Evaluate The Effect of Xolair (Omalizumab) On Improving the Tolerability Of Specific Immunotherapy In Patients With Persistent Allergic Asthma. This study is designed to examine whether omalizumab pretreatment will make allergen immunotherapy safer for allergic asthma. Principal Investigator: **Thomas B. Casale, M.D.**

Cardiology

Web Site: <http://thecardiaccenter.creighton.edu>

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

Carotid Stenting

Carotid stenting was first performed by Creighton Cardiology faculty in 2005. Carotid stenting is a minimally invasive procedure,

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Division News

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which uses a combination of balloon angioplasty and a stent implant to unblock and reopen the carotid artery. Carotid stenting is a new therapy recently approved by the FDA for prevention of stroke for patients at high risk for stroke or may need carotid endarterectomy. **Thomas J. Lanspa, M.D.** with Creighton Cardiology was the first in Nebraska to utilize the newly approved stent device.

Creighton Community Health Center

The Creighton Community Health Center (CCHC), located at 5420 NW Radial Highway, is now under the direction of **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.** The center, formerly known as the Women's Community Health Center (WCHC), currently operates as a section of Cardiology and exists to address the health disparities in underserved minority populations in the greater Omaha area. The CCHC focuses on prevention, outreach, education and research in cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity and asthma in men and women.

Smoking Cessation Program

Tim Grollmes, Tobacco Treatment Specialist for The Cardiac Center, recently received national certification from the University of Massachusetts Medical Center as a Tobacco Treatment Specialist - Masters Level. Tim is currently the only certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist - Masters Level in the region. This certification allows Tim to provide tobacco treatment to patients. Tobacco treatment was recently approved for reimbursement by The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS will cover two new levels of counseling for smoking cessation: intermediate and intensive. Tim has provided tobacco cessation treatment at The Cardiac Center for the past 4 ½ years and has been a key factor in hundreds of patients "kicking" their tobacco habits. For more information, call Tim Grollmes at The Cardiac Center at (402) 280-5287.

Awards

Syed Mohiuddin, M.D., Chief of Cardiology, is the first recipient of the Richard W. Booth, M.D. Endowed Professorship in Cardiology. The Booth Professorship will support Dr. Mohiuddin's efforts to conduct research and education related to the cardiovascular health of the community Creighton serves. A reception was held in Dr. Mohiuddin's honor on September 13, 2005.

Mark Williams, Ph.D., received the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Award of Excellence for 2005. He was presented with the award at a ceremony in Milwaukee, WI on October 20, 2005.

The Creighton Heart Education Center has been chosen to receive the 2005 Leadership in Nutrition Education Award for its outstanding work in raising awareness of dairy's important role in minority health. Each year the American Dairy Association/Dairy Council of Nebraska recognizes a select group of individuals and organizations for their unique contributions in the area of nutrition education and dairy promotion.

Athena Ramos, Health Educator for The Cardiac Center, has been named one of the Ten Outstanding Young Omahans of 2006 by the Omaha Junior Chamber of Commerce and is the recipient of the UNO Women of Color Award. Ms. Ramos is president of both the Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition and the South Omaha Neighborhood Association.

Faculty Activities

Publications

Thambidorai S, **Shen XD**, **Nair C**, **Li H**, **Holmberg MJ**, **Mohiuddin SM**. The Incidence of Embolic Stroke in Patients with Left Atrial Thrombus and/or Thoracic Aortic Plaques Assessed by Transesophageal Echocardiography. *Journal of the Society of Echocardiography* 2005; 18(5):564.

Lakkireddy DA, Valasareddi SL, Ryshon K, Basarkodu K, **Rovang K**, **Mohiuddin SM**, **Hee T**, Schweikert, Tchou P, Wilkoff B, Natale A, **Li H**. The Impact of Povidone-Iodine Pocket Irrigation Use on Pacemaker and Defibrillator Infections. *Pace* 2005, 28 (8): 789-794.

Shen XD, **Li H**, Lakkireddy DJ, **Holmberg MJ**, Cloutier D, **Rovang K**, **Hee T**, **Mooss A**, **Mohiuddin SM**. The Impact of Anticoagulation on Cerebrovascular Accidents in Patients with Atrial Fibrillation and Left Atrial Thrombi Documented by Transesophageal Echocardiography. *Journal of the American Society of Echocardiography* 2005; 18 (5):561.

Thambidorai S, **Shen XD**, **Nair CK**, **Li H**, Lakkireddy DJ, Cloutier D, **Holmberg MJ**, **Mooss AN**, **Mohiuddin SM**. The Incidence of Embolic Stroke in Patients with Left Atrial Thrombus and/or Thoracic Aortic Plaques Assessed by Transesophageal Echocardiography. *Journal of the American Society of Echocardiography* 2005; 18(5):565.

Hilleman DE, **Hunter CB**, **Mohiuddin SM**, Maciejewski S. Pharmacological Management of Atrial Fibrillation Following Cardiac Surgery, *American Journal of Cardiovascular Drugs*, 2005; 5(6):361-369

Tsutsui JM, **Kusler M**, Porter T. Intravenous Myocardial Contrast Echocardiography for the Diagnosis of Coronary Artery Disease. *Current Opinion in Cardiology*, 5/03/2005

Lanspa TJ, **Esterbrooks DE**, **Williams MA**. Stenting of the Left Carotid Artery to Relieve Anginal Symptoms. *Catheter Cardiovascular Interventional* 2005; 64:223-226.

Lanspa TJ, **Williams MA**, Heirigs RL. Effectiveness of Ulnar Catheterization After Failed Attempt to Cannulate a Radial Artery. *American Journal of Cardiology*, June, 2005.

Lakkireddy DA, Valasareddi SL, Ryshon K, Basarkodu K, **Rovang K**, **Mohiuddin SM**, **Hee T**, Schweikert, Tchou P, Wilkoff B, Natale A, **Li H**. The Impact of Povidone-Iodine Pocket Irrigation Use on Pacemaker and Defibrillator Infections. *Pace* 2005, 28 (8): 789-794.

Li H, Lakkireddy D, Korlakunta H, **Rovang K**, **Hee T**. Pacemaker Utilization During Permanent Atrial Fibrillation in Patients Who Received Pacemaker Implantation for Sinus Node Dysfunction. *American Journal of Cardiology* 2005; 96:942-945.

Salaria V, Mehta NJ, Abdul-Aziz S, **Mohiuddin SM**, Khan IA. Role of Postoperative Vasopressor Use in Occurrence of Atrial Fibrillation After Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting. *American Journal of Cardiology* 2005; 95:247-249.

Nair CK. Treatment of Refractory Angina Pectoris, *Int J Cardiol*, May 2005; Vol. 101(1):1-7.

Leon AS, Franklin BA, Costa F, Balady GJ, Berra KA, Stewart KJ, Thompson PD, **Williams MA**, Lauer MS. Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease. *Circulation* 2005; 111:369-376.

Division News

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Lakkireddy D, Korlakunta H, Bhakkad J, **Mooss AN**, Ryschon K, **Shen XD**, **Mohiuddin SM**. The Impact of Diabetes as the Prognostic Efficacy of Duke Treadmill Score in Patients Risk Stratified for Coronary Artery Disease. *Journal of American College of Cardiology*, 2005; 45:134A

Nair CK, **Shen XD**, **Li H**, Lakkireddy D, Thambidorai S, Cloutier D, **Holmberg MJ**, **Mooss AN**, **Mohiuddin SM**. Does the Aortic Atherosclerotic Plaques Severity Correlate with Embolic Events? *Chest*, October 2005, 128(4): 283S.

Shen XD, **Nair CK**, **Li H**, **Hee TT**, Lakkireddy D, **Holmberg MJ**, Cloutier D, **Rovang KS**, **Mooss AN**, **Mohiuddin SM**. Does Mitral Regurgitation Provide Protection Against the Formation of Left Atrial Thrombus and Embolic Cerebral Vascular Accident in Patients with Atrial Fibrillation? *Chest*, October 2005, 128(4): 283S.

Burns TL, **Mooss AN**, Hilleman DE. Antiplatelet Drug Resistance: Not Ready for Prime Time. *Pharmacotherapy* 2005, 25(11): 1621-1628.

Presentations

Amy Arouni, M.D.

Physician Gender and Patient Care. AAMC Physician Workforce Research Conference "Expanding the Science, Enhancing the Impact," Washington, DC, 5/2005.

Dennis Esterbrooks, M.D.

Lipid Management: The Evolving Strategies; American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Annual Meeting, AACVPR Convention, Milwaukee, WI, 10/20/2005.

Claire Hunter, M.D.

AHA Lecture – Guidelines for Congestive Heart Failure: Dealing with the Failing Pump, Mahoney State Park, 12/01/2005.

Methamphetamine Challenge: Cardiac Complications with Methamphetamine Use, Qwest Center, Omaha, NE, 12/02/2005.

Joseph Lynch, M.D.

Service, Immersion & Faith, The ILAC Experience, Vermillion, SD, 9/2005.

Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.

"Religious Issues and the Physician/Patient Relationship." When Taking Medication is a Sin: Religious Traditions and the Presence of Animal Products in Medications Conference; Boys Town National Research Hospital, Omaha, NE, 11/04/2005.

Risk Factors for Cardiovascular Disease: Early Detection & Management, Nebraska Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Conference; North Platte, NE, 9/16/2005.

Disparities in Cardiovascular Care, Nebraska Minority Health Conference, Omaha, NE, 10/25/05.

Birth of a Plaque, AACVPR Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI, 10/21/2005.

Lipid Management, The Evolving Strategies; AACVPR Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI, 10/21/2005.

Aryan Mooss, M.D.

The Incidence of Embolic Stroke in Patients with Left Atrial Thrombus and/or Thoracic Aortic Plaques Assessed by Transesophageal Echocardiography. 16th Annual Scientific Sessions of the American Society of Echocardiography, Boston, MA, 06/15-18/2005.

Chandra Nair, M.D.

Dyslipidemias, Armed Forces Medical College Alumni 16th Annual Convention, 07/30/2005, Chicago, Illinois.

Myocardial Ischemia and Chest Pain, Electrocardiography in Critical Care Medicine: An Interactive Learning Session, American College of CHEST Physician Conference, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 10/31/2005.

Rate Control is Superior, Panel Discussion: Acute Perioperative Atrial Fibrillation: Rate or Rhythm Control? What about Prevention? American College of CHEST Physician Conference, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 10/31/2005.

Postoperative Dysrhythmias, Critical Care Issues in the Postoperative Cardiac Surgery Patient. American College of CHEST Physician Conference, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 11/01/2005.

Cardiology: Diagnosis and Treatment of Heart Failure. Original Investigation. American College of CHEST Physician Conference, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 11/02/2005.

Cardiology in Obstetrics, Symposium, Kodungallur, India, 11/19-21/2005.

Alternative Therapy as an Adjunct to Cardiovascular Disorder, Symposium, New Delhi, India, 11/23-28/2005.

Mark Williams, Ph.D.

"Keeping Your Heart Fit." 6th Annual Black Hills Annual Cardiovascular Symposium, Rapid Hills, SD. October 2005.

"Exercise and Secondary Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease." 6th Annual Black Hills Annual Cardiovascular Symposium, Rapid Hills, SD. October 2005.

"Risk Factor Modification for the Elderly" American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI. October, 2005

"AACVPR Resource Manual and Guidelines for Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention Programs" American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI. October, 2005

"Making the Case...Again." American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI. October, 2005

"Cardiac Rehabilitation/Secondary Prevention Programs as a Quality Indicator-Summary." American Heart Association Scientific Sessions, Dallas, TX. November, 2005

Research News

The Black Education And Treatment (BEAT) Hypertension Study will compare the benefit of a comprehensive high blood pressure education and support program to routine health care. All patients will receive an EKG, lab work, and FDA approved high blood pressure medications during the course of the 3-year study. For more information, please contact **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or the Creighton Community Health Center Study Coordinator at (402) 558-1574.

Division News

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The Division of Cardiology is conducting a study comparing Telmisartan, Valsartan, and placebo for the treatment of Stage I and Stage II hypertension. This 12-week study will provide an EKG, lab work, and study medication. For more information, please contact **Aryan Mooss, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or the Study Coordinator, Sandy Byers, R.N., B.S.N., at (402) 280-4961.

The RELY trial studies the efficacy and safety of two blinded doses of dabigatran etexilate with open label warfarin for the prevention of stroke and systemic embolism. Patients with history of chronic atrial fibrillation (AF) or have been newly diagnosed with AF, plus at least one other risk factor for stroke are eligible to participate. For more information, please contact **Amy Arouni, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or the Research Pharmacist, Stephanie Maciejewski, Pharm.D., at (402) 280-4292.

The Division is also comparing the safety and efficacy of fenofibric acid and simvastatin combination therapy to fenofibric acid and simvastatin monotherapy in subjects with mixed dyslipidemia. Participants will receive all study-related care, including physical exams, lab tests and study medication free of charge, and may be eligible for a 12-month open-label combination fenofibric acid and simvastatin continuation study. For more information, please contact **Syed Mohiuddin, M.D.**, Principal Investigator, or the Study Coordinator, Sandy Byers, R.N., B.S.N., at (402) 280-4961.

Gastroenterology

Submitted by **Mary Gordon**

Clinical Activities

Effect of Exercise on the Colonoscopy. This is a prospective study to see patients who exercise on a regular basis and if a colonoscopy is easier for these patients. Principal Investigator: **Syed Bin-Sagheer, M.D.** For more information, please contact Asma Dajani at (402) 449-4692.

General Internal Medicine

Submitted by **Susanne Astley**

Kathryn Huggett, Ph.D., Joann Porter, M.D., Henry A. Sakowski, M.D., et al. received an American Medical Association Medical Education Research Consortium Planning Grant for 2006 in the amount of \$15,000.

Kathryn N. Huggett, Ph.D. presented and moderated the session "Concepts in Evidence Based Medicine" at the Annual Meeting of the International Association of Medical Science Educators, Los Angeles, CA; July 16-19, 2005.

On December 2, 2005, more than 200 health care and law enforcement professionals attended a conference at the Qwest Center titled the "Methamphetamine Challenge" that reviewed the current information about the drug and its impact on Omaha and the surrounding communities. **Bruce Houghton, M.D.**, Associate Professor was a co-course director.

Dimensions of Clinical Medicine: An Interclerkship Program. **Henry A. Sakowski**, Ronald J. Markert, William B. Jeffries, Robert

M. Coleman, **Bruce L. Houghton**, Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, Mark D. Goodman, **Eugene C. Rich**. Teaching and Learning in Medicine, 2005, Vol. 17, No. 4, Pages 370-375.

Hematology / Oncology

Submitted by **Joann Reynolds**

Peter Silberstein, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine at Creighton University School of Medicine was among a team of 24 cancer survivors, advocates, caregivers, physicians, and researchers selected for the nine-day journey across America to share their powerful stories about the promise of cancer research. Throughout its journey, the Team encouraged people to learn more about the benefit of cancer clinical trials and to "make the Promise."

Infectious Diseases / Omaha VAMC

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



Martha J. Gentry-Nielsen, Ph.D. (pictured above in the middle) received this year's Mary Lucretia and Sarah Emily Creighton Award along with Susan A. Calef, Ph.D., assistant professor of theology. Gentry-Nielsen's research, sponsored by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, focuses on pneumonia disease in patients with alcoholic liver cirrhosis. Her other research interest is detrimental effects of ethanol ingestion and smoking on immune defense against microbes. Along with her research, she has written for a wide variety of publications and has given many lectures.

The 26th annual spring symposium in infectious diseases features speakers on antibiotic resistance, bioterrorism, post-travel fever, vaccinations, and overcoming psychiatric barriers to HIV care. The event will take place on Friday, April 28th at the Gallup riverfront campus located at 1001 Gallup Drive.

Gary Gorby, M.D. prepared slide sets on the topic of avian and pandemic influenza in cooperation with Nebraska Health and Human Services System. The slide sets are available on the Center for Biopreparedness Education website (<http://www.bioprep.org>). Instructions on how to download the slide sets, become a member of the speakers bureau, and how to choose the appropriate slide set based on the intended audience are on the website.

Drawing on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's "Pursuing Perfection" program, health services scholars from the VA's national Center for Organization, Leadership & Management Research are launching a multicenter program to improve hand hygiene. The Omaha VAMC is in the first wave of this project, with **Marvin Bittner, M.D.** as the local Principal Investigator.

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The project, funded by a VA Health Services Research and Development grant, arose from a paradox: Many practices are well supported by evidence—yet are often not adopted by physicians and other health care workers. The project hypothesizes that adoption can be hastened in a medical center with management commitment. Hand hygiene is the practice studied in this trial. Management consultants will work with VA hospitals in the Midwest to develop management commitment to hand hygiene. VA hospitals in two other regions will serve as controls.

The Omaha VAMC has a new front entrance, and work is underway on a series of other construction projects. At the top of the list is remodeling of the urgent care area. Others include a new intensive care unit on top of the outpatient building and a new evaluation unit and infusion therapy area.

Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine

Submitted by **Dan Schuller, M.D.**

New Research/Clinical Studies – currently enrolling patients. For information regarding these studies, please call (402) 280-4486.

Probiotic prophylaxis of ventilator-associated pneumonia. This randomized controlled clinical trial is enrolling patients in order to evaluate the safety and efficacy of using probiotics (living bacteria) to prevent pneumonia in mechanically ventilated patients. Principal Investigator: **Lee Morrow, M.D.**

The ECLIPSE Study. Looking at surrogate markers and novel endpoints to measure and predict COPD severity and progression over time. Principal Investigator: **Dan Schuller, M.D.**

A Multidisciplinary Intervention to Optimize the Recovery of Elderly Patients Hospitalized with Community Acquired Pneumonia. Patients are being enrolled into this randomized controlled trial to assess whether a comprehensive and multidisciplinary assessment can be used to minimize the functional decline of geriatric patients who are admitted to the hospital for pneumonia. Principal Investigator: **Lee Morrow, M.D.**

A prospective observational study for the psychometric validation of a patient-reported questionnaire in acute exacerbations of COPD. Exploring new tools to assess exacerbations in patients with severe COPD. Principal Investigator: **Dan Schuller, M.D.**

Dexmedetomidine compared to IV midazolam in ICU subjects requiring greater than twenty-four hours of continuous sedation. This multicenter randomized clinical trial is being conducted to determine the safety and efficacy of a novel sedative (dexmedetomidine) in patients requiring mechanical ventilation. PI: **Lee Morrow, M.D.**

The Bard silver-coated endotracheal tube for the prophylaxis of ventilator-associated pneumonia. The utility of a novel silver-coated endotracheal tube is being studied in this multicenter randomized controlled clinical trial. Principal Investigator: **Lee Morrow, M.D.**

A Randomized, Double-Blind, Parallel Group, 52-week Study to Compare the Effect of the Fluticasone Propionate/Salmeterol DISKUS Combination Product 250/50 mcg BID with Salmeterol DISKUS 50 mcg BID on the Annual Rate of Moderate/Severe Exacerbations in Subjects with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Principal Investigator: **Dan Schuller, M.D.**