DEAR COLLEAGUES,

I am pleased to present to you the current issue of the Operative Word, an electronic newsletter brought to you by the University of Chicago Medicine Phemister Society. Here, you will read about exciting updates and developments from the Department of Surgery.

I am proud to announce our institution's plans to affiliate with nearby Ingalls Health System, based in Harvey, IL. The potential affiliation will enable providers across the two institutions to improve healthcare delivery throughout the south suburbs of Illinois.

Additionally, our faculty have been hard at work, pushing the envelope of what’s possible in surgical care. Christopher Wigfield, MD, surgical director of lung transplantation, is leading a clinical trial designed to establish the safety and efficacy of ex vivo lung perfusion. The outcomes of this unique trial could shape the future standard of care for patients with end-stage lung disease.

Within this newsletter, we also provide an overview of our faculty’s other clinical and academic achievements, as well as their educational endeavors, over the last several months. Among them, our institution has been recognized as an HHT Center of Excellence, solidifying our commitment to the highest level of care and compassion for patients with hereditary hemorrhagic telangiectasia. This could not have been possible without the leadership of our own Issam Awad, MD, director of neurovascular surgery.

If ever you would like to learn more about our department’s clinical, academic or educational efforts, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us. We look forward to communicating and engaging with our alumni around the globe.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY B. MATTHEWS, MD, FACS
Dallas B. Phemister Professor of Surgery
Chairman of the Department of Surgery
The University of Chicago Medicine is now the first hospital in Illinois to offer ex vivo lung perfusion (EVLP) to improve the viability of donor lungs for lung transplantation in patients with end-stage lung disease.

Donor lungs often do not meet the required criterion for transplantation for a wide range of reasons, including less-well understood cellular processes that take place in the body after a donor’s death. As a result, only approximately 20 percent of donor lungs are successfully transplanted in patients with end-stage lung disease.

Following extensive investigation of its safety and efficacy in two large clinical trials, the EVLP system was approved for use by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration in 2014. The highly innovative EVLP system may be the key to bridging the gap between the supply and demand of donor lungs. UChicago Medicine offers EVLP as part of a nationwide clinical trial that continues to collect long-term safety data as patients are monitored post-transplantation.

What is EVLP?
Prior to transplantation, the donor lungs are temporarily placed on a perfusion system and perfused with a special solution, which slowly warms the organs after cold transport and re-establishes normal tissue flow in the lung vasculature. After a certain point, the lungs are re-ventilated in a gradual, controlled process that is not otherwise feasible in the recipient.

The process gives transplant surgeons time to optimize and assess the donor organs’ function. Once a surgeon determines the donor organs are suitable for transplantation, patients who consent to EVLP will undergo standard lung transplantation and follow-up care.

The goal of this novel approach is to optimize donor lungs currently not accepted for immediate transplant and therefore also to increase the overall pool of donor lungs. Additionally, it allows transplantation teams more accurate avoidance of poor-functioning donor lungs. This will give selected candidates with end-stage lung disease additional hope for life without their debilitating condition.
“EVLP gives us the opportunity to utilize lungs that we wouldn’t normally,” said Jamie Bucio, clinical trial coordinator. “That means about 50 percent more lungs that would have been discarded in the past could become viable for centers that participate in this trial. The eventual goal of this endeavor is to grow the pool of lungs so more patients can be transplanted.”

Improving Lung Transplantation at UChicago Medicine

Thanks to the leadership of Christopher Wigfield, MD, associate professor and surgical director of lung transplantation, the University of Chicago Medicine is one of 15 centers in the United States — and the only one in Illinois — that is monitoring the long-term outcomes of lung transplant patients who receive donor organs through EVLP, as part of a nationwide clinical trial.

The UChicago Medicine team includes transplant and procurement surgeons, anesthesiologists, procurement specialists, pulmonologists, perfusionists, OR staff and nurses. These individuals undergo extensive training to ensure a seamless transition from the moment donor lungs are transported through the patient’s post-operative recovery.

Dr. Wigfield says the short-term application of EVLP is to improve the pool of donor lungs for patients who may otherwise die while waiting for donor organs.

“The current application is incredibly important, but EVLP will lend itself to further investigation, including the question of how we optimize lungs even more efficiently under this system,” Dr. Wigfield said. “In other words, how do we make lung transplantation an even more predictable endeavor?”
PARTNERING TO ADVANCE THE CARE OF PATIENTS WITH END-STAGE LUNG DISEASE

If you know a patient with end-stage lung disease who you believe may benefit from lung transplantation using ex vivo lung perfusion, we’re here to help.

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<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<td>What are the inclusion criteria?</td>
<td>Patients seeking lung transplantation via ex vivo lung perfusion must be at least 18 years of age and must provide informed consent to participation in the clinical trial.</td>
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<td>What is EVLP?</td>
<td>Prior to transplantation, the donor lungs are perfused with a special solution, which slowly warms the organs after cold transport and re-establishes normal tissue flow in the lung vasculature. Once the donor organs are deemed suitable for transplantation, patients who consent to EVLP will undergo standard lung transplantation and follow-up care.</td>
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<td>What should my patients expect after surgery?</td>
<td>Participants in this clinical trial must consent to being followed by our clinical care team for three years. During this time, we will collect data on all our patient participants in order to establish data on the long-term outcomes of EVLP on lung transplant patients in the United States.</td>
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<td>Who can I contact for more information on this clinical trial?</td>
<td>You may contact Jamie Bucio, CPTC, EMT-P: <a href="mailto:jbucio@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu">jbucio@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu</a> 773.834.9024</td>
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For Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia (HHT) patients and their families in Chicago and beyond, the University of Chicago Medicine is now designated as an HHT Center of Excellence by Cure HHT, the worldwide advocacy group for the disorder. This honor recognizes UCM as the 22nd center in North America and the only facility in Illinois that specializes in the diagnosis and comprehensive care of HHT.

Modeled to deliver the latest evidence-based evaluations and treatments, the HHT Center of Excellence at UCM brings together experts from every medical subspecialty required to manage the many facets of the disease. Under the leadership of Issam Awad, MD, John Harper Seeley Professor of Surgery and director of neurovascular surgery, UCM has assembled a team of leading physicians with the knowledge, resources and expertise to address the specialized needs of HHT patients.

“The University of Chicago Medicine is uniquely equipped to treat HHT,” said Dr. Awad, who serves as medical director for the HHT Center. “Here, there is no extra effort required to find specialists who are familiar with HHT, and who can access the most advanced infrastructure in their specialties to serve both adults and children.”

HHT is a genetic disorder that affects more than 1.4 million people worldwide. An estimated 90 percent of people with HHT remain undiagnosed. Formerly known as Osler-Weber-Rendu Syndrome, it causes varying degrees of abnormal blood vessel formation throughout the body, usually manifesting in the form of skin lesions on the lips, nose, fingers and other areas. Lesions in the lining of the nose cause frequent nosebleeds, a common hallmark of HHT. Patients also typically suffer frequent nasal complications and severe anemia. Many patients harbor blood vessel malformations known as AVMs in organs such as the lungs, liver and brain, some of which can be life threatening if untreated.

When a Chicago-area HHT patient was diagnosed with AVMs in her brain and lungs, she had few places to turn. But her doctor had previously worked with Dr. Awad and knew of his expertise in HHT. After a quick call and referral, she arrived at the University of Chicago Medicine.Highlighting the complex nature of HHT care, Dr. Awad arranged for a number of tests and evaluations by a multidisciplinary team of specialists.
She was genetically screened by Darrel Waggoner, MD, medical director for human genetics, to verify the precise genetic mutations that caused her disease. Neurosurgeon Bakhtiar Yamini, MD, oversaw her neurosurgical care, and Seon-Kyu Lee, MD, PhD, director of interventional neuroradiology, treated her brain AVM through embolization. Brian Funaki, MD, section chief of vascular and interventional radiology, helped screen her and rule out a life-threatening pulmonary AVM.

“This is a disease that affects multiple organs,” Dr. Awad said. “Patients need treatment for anemia and nosebleeds. The skin lesions require dermatological input. Every patient needs to be screened for lung and brain AVMs. They need genetic screening, and to be checked for colon cancer or liver AVMs if they have particular mutations. In order for patients to live chronically with HHT, we have to identify all potentially fatal problems and eliminate the ugly features of the disease.”

Delighted with her treatment, the patient and her family spread the word to other Chicago-area HHT patients. Soon, awareness swelled in the HHT community, and the University of Chicago Medicine was invited by Cure HHT to establish an HHT center.

“We are delighted that HHT multidisciplinary care will now be a reality in Chicago and the surrounding states,” said Cure HHT executive director Marianne Clancy. The Center deploys a uniform screening and triage protocol, ensuring that patients receive the needed testing and are connected with appropriate specialists. Each patient is seen in an initial comprehensive multisystem evaluation by the Center’s medical director.

Subsequent care is coordinated with the appropriate specialists at UCM and patient’s physicians in the community. Nine of the doctors on the HHT team have been named as “Top Docs” by Chicago magazine.

In addition to comprehensive clinical care, many UCM physicians involved in the Center have dedicated their research careers to vascular malformations such as those seen in HHT, including Jessica Kandel, MD, surgeon-in-chief of the University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children’s Hospital and chief of the Section of Pediatric Surgery.

“It was almost a ‘no-brainer’ for us to make the decision to come together and establish an HHT center,” Dr. Awad said. “The team culture is well established here. It’s in our DNA to work together.”

For preliminary screening or to access our HHT Center specialists, patients or referring doctors should call (773) 702-4452.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MEDICINE AND INGALLS HEALTH SYSTEM ANNOUNCE INTENT TO COMBINE

The University of Chicago Medicine and Ingalls Health System recently announced that they signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to pursue a combined integrated health delivery system. The decision marks the culmination of Ingalls’ seven-month process of identifying a health system partner that will complement and enhance healthcare for patients throughout the southwest area of Chicago.

“Ingalls is pursuing a relationship that will combine the resources of the leading integrated health delivery system in Chicago’s Southland with one of the nation’s leading academic medical institutions,” said Eugene Feingold, chair, Ingalls Health System board of directors. “The University of Chicago Medicine shares our commitment to quality and vision for healthcare in the south suburbs. We remain dedicated to providing the personalized care that our community has come to expect from Ingalls.”

The Ingalls Health System board of directors voted to sign the LOI with the University of Chicago Medicine, and announced the decision to staff and doctors. Although non-binding, the LOI is a reflection of the two organizations’ commitment to the partnership.

When the transaction is finalized, Ingalls will join UChicago Medicine’s health network that includes the main medical campus in Hyde Park, numerous outpatient facilities including the
planned Centers for Advanced Care in Orland Park and the South Loop, as well as the University of Chicago Medicine Care Network of physicians.

“This partnership between UChicago Medicine and Ingalls underscores our commitment to improving health and access to quality care in our communities,” said Kenneth S. Polonsky, MD, executive vice president of medical affairs and dean of the Biological Sciences Division at the University of Chicago. “Our collective patients and communities will benefit from the complementary services and greater options.”

Ingalls offers a regional network of top-rated outpatient services from highly respected physicians and specialists in modern settings close to home. It also features innovative service offerings, such as macular degeneration treatment from world-class retinal specialists, spine surgery from renowned experts, and more oncology clinical trials than any other community hospital in the region. Ingalls shows its community stewardship in myriad ways, such as free screening events, educational programs and health fairs that reach thousands of south suburban residents.

“We’re pleased that our patients will have access to the expertise of one of the best academic medical centers in the country,” said Ingalls president and CEO Kurt Johnson. “Through this partnership, Ingalls will be able to invest in our facilities and enhance our technologies at an accelerated pace, which will help us continue our focus on providing innovative services and a strong regional network of top-rated outpatient services close to home.”

The University of Chicago Medicine is comprised of the University of Chicago Medical Center, Pritzker School of Medicine and the University of Chicago Biological Sciences Division. The medical campus offers a full range of specialty care services for adults and children through more than 40 institutes and centers, including an NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. It has a long history of breakthrough research: 12 Nobel Prize winners in physiology or medicine have been affiliated with UChicago Medicine.

“The promising breakthroughs from our faculty and staff, and the high quality of education from the Pritzker School of Medicine provides the next generation of physicians and researchers,” said Emily Nicklin, chair of the Medical Center’s board of trustees. “We look forward to collaborating with the leadership, physicians and staff at Ingalls.”

In the next several months, Ingalls and the University of Chicago Medicine will engage in exclusive negotiations, carry out due diligence and begin planning the terms of their potential transaction. A formal closing date is expected late spring/early summer of 2016. Any affiliation would be subject to a definitive agreement and the necessary regulatory approvals.
Section chief Neil Hyman, MD, moderated a session at the American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress 2015 on the use of opioid receptor antagonist alvimopan in colorectal surgery. Dr. Hyman is the chair of the ACS advisory council for colon and rectal surgery.

**General Surgery**

Peter Angelos, MD, PhD; Jeffrey Matthews, MD; and Mitchell Posner, MD; were named “Top Doctors” in Chicago for Chicago magazine’s January 2016 issue.

Gary An, MD, received an $80,000 grant from the Knowledge Lab at the university as seed money to support his work on theory-driven biology and with the Department of Energy’s BAASiC Initiative.

Patricia Turner, MD, was promoted to clinical associate professor in the Section of General Surgery, as of 11/1/15.

**Neurosurgery**

The Heinrich Kluver Memorial Lectureship Endowment’s latest CME event tackling the cost and value of spine care took place January 20, 2016. David Frim, MD, PhD, and Ben Roitberg, MD, led the Value-Based Spine Care CME lecture for physicians, residents and other spine care providers.

**OHNS**

Elizabeth Blair, MD; Fuad Baroody, MD; Jacquelynne Corey, MD; and Robert Naclerio, MD; were named “Top Doctors” in Chicago for Chicago magazine’s January 2016 issue.

Michael Gluth, MD, co-wrote a textbook titled The Chronic Ear, which will be released in March 2016. He worked on the project with Dr. John L. Dornhoffer to publish one comprehensive source for chronic ear disease treatments.

Dana Suskind, MD, has conducted numerous interviews to promote her research and book on using speech to close the achievement gap and build children’s brains. She has been featured in the Boston Globe, USA Today, NPR, The Washington Post and the Freakonomics podcast, including being interviewed by Al Sharpton.

**Pediatric Surgery**

Jessica Kandel, MD, was named to “Top Doctors” in Chicago for Chicago magazine’s January 2016 issue. Dr. Kandel was also named a fellow of the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine program at Drexel University.

On Monday, Nov. 16 at Comer Children’s Hospital, five pediatric general surgery patients received bicycles and helmets, courtesy of the Department of Surgery Employee Engagement Committee, pediatric surgeon Grace Mak, MD, and pediatric section administrator Liz Hood. The team partnered to raise more than $500 to purchase and give away the five bikes and helmets.

The Dr. Donald Liu Visiting Professor Lecture took place Oct. 14, 2015, featuring keynote speaker Arnold G. Coran, MD. Dr. Coran gave a talk titled, “A Professional Lifetime with the Foregut and Hindgut Colon: Re-do Surgery of the Esophagus and Rectum in Infants and Children.”

Deborah Loeff, MD, was named as a governor of the American College of Surgeons.
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

David Chang, MD; Lawrence Gottlieb, MD; Raphael Lee, MD; and section chief David Song, MD; were named “Top Doctors” in Chicago for Chicago magazine’s January 2016 issue.

At the American Society of Plastic Surgeons annual meeting in October, David Song, MD, MBA, was sworn in as the 2016 president and gave his presidential address.

The Fresh Start Caring for Kids Foundation recently was awarded the Make it Better Foundation’s Philanthropy Award for the health and wellness category. Each year, the foundation picks six winners in six categories. Fresh Start Caring for Kids was chosen for its work bringing necessary plastic and reconstructive surgeries to economically disadvantaged children at no cost to the patients’ families. Russell Reid, MD, PhD, helped bring Fresh Start Surgical Gifts to the University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children’s Hospital.

Lawrence Zachary, MD, won the Best Hand Paper Award at the American Society of Plastic Surgeons 2015 annual meeting this October. His paper was titled, “Fat Grafting to the Hand in Patients with Raynaud Phenomenon: A Novel Therapeutic Modality.”

Transplantation

Yolanda Becker, MD; section chief J. Michael Millis, MD; and John Renz, MD, PhD; were named “Top Doctors” in Chicago for Chicago magazine’s January 2016 issue.

J. Michael Millis, MD, was recently featured in Crain’s for the work he has done to end a corrupt organ transplant system in China, which included using organs from executed prisoners.

Urology

Gregory Bales, MD; Mohan Gundeti, MD; section chief Arieh Shalhav, MD; and Gary Steinberg, MD; were named “Top Doctors” in Chicago for Chicago magazine’s January 2016 issue.

Mohan Gundeti, MD, director of pediatric urology, was recognized by the hospital with a “Making a Difference” patient experience award for care of a spinal bifida patient.

Norm Smith, MD, was promoted to professor in the Section of Urology, as of 10/1/15.

Vascular Surgery & Endovascular Therapy

Ross Milner, MD, has been selected for induction to the Alpha Omega Alpha Beta Chapter Class of 2016 Faculty Honorees. Every year medical students in the AOA class honor faculty, alumni and housestaff who have demonstrated excellence as physicians, displayed an eagerness to teach and modeled humanism in patient care.

Research

Jack Gilbert, PhD, professor in the Section of Surgical Research, has worked to create an open-access journal published by the American Society for Microbiology, mSystems. He is also serving as the founding editor in chief.

This past fall, Karl Matlin, PhD, led an intensive laboratory course called “Experimental Biology by the Sea,” at the University-affiliated Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Mass. Before taking a Darwinism course, students took Matlin’s course as part of the larger “Whale Program,” designed to introduce them to the biodiversity of the ocean and give evolution a physical context.
WE ARE HAPPY TO INTRODUCE THE FOLLOWING NEW FACULTY MEMBERS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY.

**Nishant Agrawal, MD**
Professor of Surgery  
Section of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery  
Director of Head and Neck Surgical Oncology  
Clinical Interests: otolaryngology, head and neck cancer, head and neck surgery

**Adam Bodzin, MD**
Clinical Associate of Surgery,  
Section of Transplantation  
Clinical Interests: liver transplantation, renal transplantation, pancreas transplantation, hepatobiliary surgery, vascular access, general surgery

**Sarah Faris, MD**
Assistant Professor of Surgery  
Section of Urology  
Clinical Interests: male urethral strictures, erectile dysfunction, male incontinence, voiding dysfunction, female incontinence, urethral diverticulum, fistula repairs, ureteral strictures, pelvic organ prolapse, overactive bladder

**Jack Gilbert, PhD**
Professor of Surgery  
Section of Surgical Research  
Research Interest: microbiology

**Zhen Gooi, MD**
Assistant Professor of Surgery  
Section of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery  
Clinical Interests: otolaryngology, head and neck cancer surgery, head and neck reconstruction, transoral robotic surgery

**Thomas K. Lee, MD**
Professor of Surgery  
Section of Pediatric General Surgery  
Clinical Interests: pediatric surgery, neonatal surgery, minimally invasive surgery, pediatric cancer surgery, anorectal malformation, Wilms' tumor, chest wall deformities, neuroblastoma, inguinal hernia, undescended testes, soft tissue tumors

**Tae Song, MD**
Clinical Associate  
Section of Cardiac & Thoracic Surgery  
Clinical Interests: cardiac surgery, thoracic surgery, lung transplant