

Summer
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MANAGED CARE CONTRACTING NEWSLETTER



Medicine that touches the world.

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North Pavilion



Women and Infants Center: Gynecological Oncology Services



Ronald D. Alvarez, MD

When UAB's Women and Infants Center opens in 2010, it will house the Division of Gynecologic Oncology, a component of UAB Women's Services. The move will bring all faculty, support staff, and patients together and is expected to improve the division's functional efficiency.

Inpatient care for medical and postsurgical gynecology, and gynecologic oncology health care are among the center's new services.

"With the administrative offices and outpatient services on the ninth floor and our patients on the seventh floor, we will have the opportunity to be more responsive to patient needs," says

Ronald D. Alvarez, MD, director of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology. "The relocation will enhance our ability to deliver highly technical medical care in a signature facility that will continue to raise UAB's standing as a provider of specialty women's services.

"The new center will have the amenities women look for in a health care facility," he says. "It is designed to make their experience the best it can be at a critical time in their lives, whether it is delivering a baby or undergoing a complex gynecological procedure or cancer treatment. Patients also will be assured they are receiving the best care from top-tier physicians and other staff in remarkably comfortable and inviting surroundings."

The gynecology unit also will feature two bariatric rooms equipped for patients with mobility limitations, two lead-lined rooms for patients with radioactive implants or therapies, and an isolation room. The seventh-floor gynecology inpatient unit has a family lounge, playroom, and pharmacy suite, and patient, clinical, and professional support spaces.

The UAB Division of Gynecologic Oncology is a major regional referral center known for providing a compre-

hensive, evidence-based approach to detection and treatment of gynecologic malignancies. The division also has a strong research component with a team of investigators dedicated to reducing incidence of gynecologic cancer and improving patient outcomes.

UAB was one of the first institutions in the nation named an NIH Specialized Program of Research Excellence in ovarian cancer and continues to advance novel therapies for this deadly disease.

Division physicians see about 2000 new patients each year and perform more than 1900 surgeries annually. "Each year approximately 4 out of every 1000 Alabama women receive a gynecological cancer diagnosis. Alabama's uterine cancer rate is particularly high," Dr. Alvarez says.

"We are committed to the women of our state. The care we provide is not just about offering patients breakthrough medical and surgical therapies in a nationally recognized hospital. It also involves getting to know each patient, making time to hold a hand and listen to fears and concerns, and going the extra mile to make sure every one of our patients feels truly cared for," he says.

UAB and Children's Hospital Named State Leaders for Pediatric Brain Injury Network

UAB and Children's Hospital will be named a Lead Center of Excellence for a national network focusing on pediatric brain injury, authorities said.

Participants in the National Pediatric Acquired Brain Injury Plan, an initiative created by the Sarah Jane Brain Project, were officially announced at a news conference in Washington.

The network is being formed to expand research, develop treatments and build awareness of pediatric acquired brain injury, the leading cause of death

and disability for children younger than 15 in the United States. It causes 5,000 deaths and a million hospitalizations annually, according to estimates.

UAB's Division of Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine will coordinate the project for Alabama. The clinical practice is based at Children's Hospital, and is the only acute pediatric inpatient rehabilitation service in the state.

The national network will have a lead center in each state. The Sarah Jane Brain Project was created by the family

of a child who suffered brain injury at 5 days old after being shaken by a nurse.

"There is a tremendous need for funding and resources so we can better understand the natural history of brain injury and develop appropriate interventions," says Dr. Drew Davis, director of the UAB-Children's center.

Falls, bike crashes, motor vehicle collisions, sports injuries and violence are leading causes of pediatric acquired brain injuries.

UAB Hospital Among 'America's Best' in Latest U.S. News & World Report Rankings



CEO Michael Waldrum,
MD, MS, MBA

Eight UAB Hospital specialty programs are among the nation's top 50 – and six are in the top 25 – of the 16 categories evaluated at 4861 U.S. hospitals this year by *U.S. News & World Report*. The rankings appeared in the magazine's 19th annual "America's Best Hospitals" July issue found at newsstands, and is also accessible online.

With its eight ranked programs, UAB Hospital was one of only 174 hospitals, or about 3% of U.S. institutions

studied – and the only hospital in Alabama or Mississippi – to rank high enough in even one specialty to make the magazine's national Best Hospitals list.

Highlights for UAB Hospital this year include:

- Rheumatology program, 8th; 18th consecutive year ranked
- Kidney disorders, 13th
- Geriatrics, 16th
- Respiratory disorders, 21st
- Cancer, 23rd
- Urology, 24th
- Gynecology, 26th
- Heart and Heart Surgery, 27th

"UAB is committed to providing high-quality, compassionate patient care, and we are very pleased to be recognized once again in this important listing," said UAB Hospital CEO Michael Waldrum, M.D., MS, MBA. "It is a credit to the caring and professional UAB Hospital employees and medical staff who strive each and every day to make a difference in people's lives."

According to the magazine's published methodology, the ranking for 12 of the categories is based on 3 equal parts: reputation, mortality and a mix of care-related factors such as nursing and patient services. The 50 hospitals in each of these specialties with the highest scores are listed. Rankings for ophthalmology, psychiatry, rehabilitation and rheumatology are based strictly on reputational scores, and the magazine lists the top 25 programs for each.



Verified: UAB Only ACS Level 1 Trauma Center in State

UAB Hospital again has been designated as the only adult Level 1 Trauma Center verified by the by the [American College of Surgeons](#) (ACS) in Alabama, a distinction held since 2000.

The Alabama Department of Public Health designates hospitals as trauma centers using modified ACS criteria, and three other state hospitals have met the state's requirements; only UAB has ACS verification.

The ACS cited several strengths of the UAB program in its latest site review, including the leadership of Loring Rue, MD, chief of the Section of Trauma, Burns and Surgical Critical Care; Sherry Melton, MD, trauma medical director; and Holly Waller, RN, trauma program manager. Dr. Melton was named trauma medical director in February.

"We have an outstanding cadre of trauma surgeons who serve UAB, our

local community and the state at large," said Dr. Rue. "UAB is recognized as a leader in trauma care in the Southeast and is contributing to the efforts to develop a comprehensive statewide network for emergency response and trauma care."

The ACS also made special note of the commitment of neurosurgery and orthopaedic surgery to the trauma program, the involvement of the state trauma system, and the overall level of care provided as program strengths.

ACS-verified trauma centers must meet essential criteria that ensure trauma care capability and institutional performance as outlined by the ACS' *Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient* manual. These include resources to care for the injured patient from injury through rehabilitation; availability of specialists from orthopaedics, neurosurgery, cardiothoracic surgery and plastic surgery; an in-

house trauma surgeon around-the-clock; and a commitment to professional education, injury prevention, and research.



Loring Rue, MD

UAB's James Kirklin Elected President of International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation



James K. Kirklin, MD

James K. Kirklin, MD, director of the UAB Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, has been elected president of the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation for 2010.

The International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation is a multidisciplinary professional organization dedicated to improving the care of patients with advanced heart or lung disease through transplantation, mechanical support and innovative therapies via research, education, and advocacy. It was created in 1981 and has more than 2500 members from more than 45-plus countries, representing at least 14 dif-

ferent disciplines involved in the management and treatment of end-state heart and lung disease.

Dr. Kirklin is widely known for his surgical expertise and for spearheading the UAB Heart and Lung Transplant Program, establishing it as one of the leading heart-lung transplant programs in the world. Heart transplantation began at UAB in 1981, and in 1986 Dr. Kirklin became the director of the program, which later expanded to include lung transplantation.

Dr. Kirklin was instrumental in the formation of the Cardiac Transplant Research Database and the Pediatric Heart Transplant Study, and in establishing UAB as headquarters for both programs. Clinical information from the major heart transplant centers in the United States is funneled into these databases for use in analyses that help guide doctors in the management of heart transplant cases.

Dr. Kirklin also is the principal investigator of INTERMACS, or Interagency Registry for Mechanically Assisted Circulatory Support. INTERMACS is a national registry that tracks patients who are receiving mechanical circula-

tory support device therapy to treat advanced heart failure. The registry is a joint effort of the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Food and Drug Administration and clinicians, scientists and industry representatives. Researchers at UAB coordinate data collection and analysis, and the United Network for Organ Sharing is responsible for maintaining the database.

For the past 9 years, Dr. Kirklin has served as editor of the *Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation*, the official publication of the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation. He is listed among "The Best Doctors in America," and as one of the best doctors in cardiac surgery by *Good Housekeeping*, *American Health*, and other publications.

A graduate of The Ohio State University and Harvard Medical School, Kirklin trained at Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital, as well as at UAB. He joined the UAB faculty in 1981, performing congenital and adult cardiothoracic surgery.

UAB First in U.S. to Offer Speedier Precise Cancer Therapy

UAB this month became the first US medical center to offer a speedier cancer radiation therapy. The new technique can turn a 20-minute radiotherapy session into a 90-second session for selected patients.

Additionally, the new therapy saves healthy human tissue from unwanted radiation exposure at rates that are the same or better than other radiotherapy techniques, according to doctors at the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The new therapy is called RapidArc, which is the next-generation of intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT). Conventional IMRT was introduced in the 1990s as a way to deliver multiple beams of radiation to a tumor and minimize damage to nearby healthy tissues. RapidArc is an advancement on the earlier technology, with radiation delivery times up to eight times faster than conventional IMRT, says the system's manufacturer Varian Medical Systems, Inc.

"RapidArc is an important advance for us and our patients," says John Fiveash, MD, an associate professor of radiation oncology at UAB and a cancer center scientist. "Knowing that we can reduce delivery times to less than 2 minutes per day is important considering what cancer care involves emotionally and physically."

Alabamian First in Nation to Benefit

Varian technicians added the RapidArc capability to UAB's existing IMRT machine during the last week of April 2009. The upgrades serve as a kind of guidance system, much like a jet's automatic pilot, so that IMRT delivery can happen during a single rotation of the machine's arm around the patient.

The first US patient to be given the new therapy is an Alabama man with early-stage prostate cancer whose treatment started May 6, Dr. Fiveash said.

"Faster radiation delivery times re-

duce the chances that a slight move will affect the accuracy of the radiotherapy targeting," said Richard Popple, PhD, an assistant professor of radiation oncology and UAB's RapidArc team leader. "Also, it means patients spend less time and feel less discomfort in the treatment position."

"We presently treat many patients with very complex treatment plans," says John Brinkerhoff, RPh, MBA, CMPE, executive administrator of UAB's Department of Radiation Oncology. "We have a head and neck cancer plan that would normally require a patient to lie still for 20 minutes with their face in a cushioned stability mask. With RapidArc, they are required to remain still for only 90 seconds."

The new system incorporates powerful computers to help doctors arrive at a radiotherapy treatment strategy after pouring over thousands of biological and mathematical variables, including medical scans of each patient's tumor.

Eye Foundation Hospital Clinical Laboratory Gains Accreditation

The clinical laboratory at the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital at UAB has been awarded accreditation by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) based on the results of a recent onsite inspection.

Joyce Horn, the laboratory's director, says the CAP cited the laboratory for the excellence of the services being provided. The Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital clinical laboratory is one of nearly 7000 CAP-accredited laboratories nationwide.

During the CAP accreditation process, inspectors examine the laboratory's records and quality control of procedures for the preceding 2 years. CAP inspectors also examine the entire staff's qualifications, the laboratory's equipment, facilities, safety program and record, as well as the overall management of the laboratory. This stringent inspection program is designed to specifically ensure the highest standard of care for all laboratory patients.

Check it Out

UAB Health System
www.uabhealth.org

UAB Magazine
www.uab.edu/uabmagazine/

Travelers' Health Clinic
<http://start.tripprep.com/uabtraveldoc/>

UAB Opens Geriatric Unit at Highlands

UAB Highlands Hospital has created a specialized unit for geriatric patients, part of a comprehensive plan to anticipate and accommodate the health care needs of our aging population. The number of Americans older than age 65 is expected to more than double, to 20% of the total population, between now and 2030.

The new Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Unit is designed with the needs of older patients in mind. While nursing and care staff have received advanced training in the care of frail older adults and special enrichment opportunities for patients are available in the unit, the centerpiece of the program is an interdisciplinary team approach that allows increased recognition and management of geriatric issues that often go unaddressed during hospitalization.

Through daily meetings, the interdisciplinary team links a geriatrician and nurse practitioner in geriatrics to the patient's own nurse and attending physician.

Health care professionals from every field that may have a role in treatment are represented, including physical and occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, social workers, care man-

ers, educators, and volunteers.

"Treating an older adult who now requires hospitalization presents complications and challenges not seen in a younger population," says Kellie Flood, MD, assistant professor in the Division of Gerontology, Geriatrics and Palliative Care at UAB and the medical director of the ACE Program.

"It's been said that nowhere is the practice of medicine more art than science than it is in the care of older adults. The interdisciplinary team gives the attending physician access to health care professionals experienced and trained in recognizing the often subtle signs and symptoms associated with older patients," she says.

Geriatric patients being admitted for an acute illness often have co-existing conditions such as memory loss, functional decline and depression. They may be on multiple medications.

These circumstances can adversely impact their hospitalization if not recognized and addressed. The ACE Unit's daily team meetings help to increase recognition of these issues, while providing ongoing education for staff.

Managed Care Contracting Staff Directory

Director:

J.C. Herring (205) 934-6230 jherring@uabmc.edu

Contract Development Managers:

Gerry Casey 934-9393 gcasey@uabmc.edu
 Shirley Naro 975-9457 snaro@uabmc.edu
 Teri Roberts 975-5259 tproberts@uabmc.edu

Contract Administrator:

Henrietta Horton 934-5713 hhorton@uabmc.edu
 Delaine Rashid 975-9951 drashid@uabmc.edu

Database Analyst III:

Lee Crapet 975-5258 lcrapet@uabmc.edu

Mailing Address:

UABHS MANAGED CARE CONTRACTING
 John N. Whitaker Building, Suite 506 • 500 22nd Street South
 1530 3RD AVE S
 BIRMINGHAM AL 35294-0500
 Fax: (205) 975-7888