

UPMC MAGEE-WOMENS HOSPITAL

DEPARTMENT OF OB/GYN/RS

Working Collaboratively for Healthy Mothers and Babies

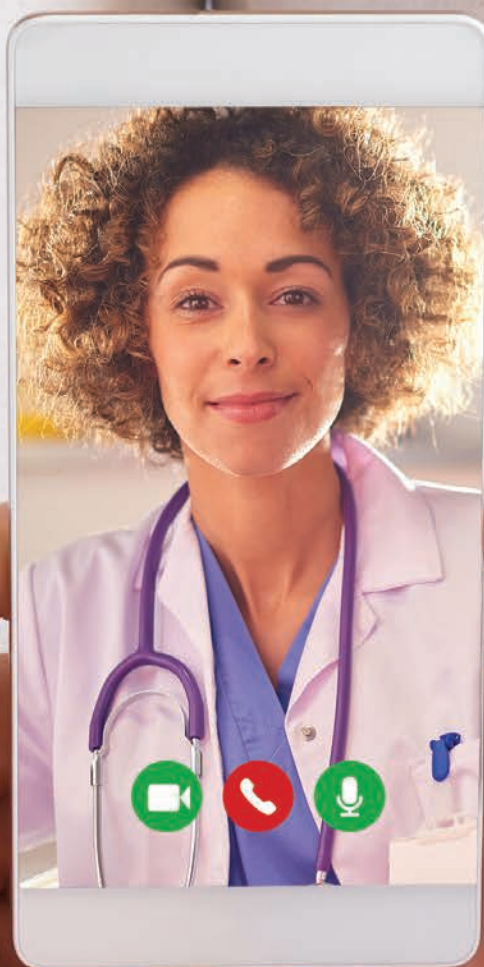
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How COVID-19 Accelerated Telemedicine
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A MESSAGE FROM Dr. Robert Edwards

Magee family,

The last several months have brought significant changes – the international COVID-19 pandemic brought parts of the world to a halt, and through it, we faced unprecedented challenges when it came to providing compassionate, high-quality patient care. Caring for our families, not to mention ourselves, on top of practicing medicine was no small feat. This hasn't been an easy time so more than anything, I hope this issue of the Magee Ob-Gyn newsletter finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe.

In this issue, we share how UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital accelerated our telemedicine program for our prenatal patients. We went from routinely handling 40 or so calls a week to over a thousand, virtually overnight. Under the direction of Dr. Hyagriv Simhan, Dr. Glenn Updike, Director of Hospital/Health Plan Operations Beth Quinn, Director of UPP Special Projects Jennifer Chaney, and with the administrative support of myself and Vice-President of Operations UPMC Magee Maribeth McLaughlin, we successfully transitioned the majority of our routine prenatal visits to virtual consultations. The efficiency with which we achieved this speaks to groundwork we already had in place, and our team's ability to quickly pivot when circumstances change.

We also feature Dr. Steve N. Caritis, now in his 50th year as a practicing specialist in Maternal-Fetal Medicine at Magee. Dr. Caritis gifted \$500,000 in support of obstetrical residents and MFM fellows to explore clinical research. His gift is meant to spur research interests in trainees so they can explore clinical research and see if it inspires them.

This year, our Alumni Day, Alumni Reception, and class reunions will be virtual. The 45th Alumni Day is scheduled for Friday, October 2, 2020, and will be held through Microsoft Teams. Dr. Richard Guido will emcee the event, and our guest speakers include Drs. Nicole Donnellan, Dennis English, Lisa Keder, Madeline Courtney-Brooks, Kate Bochenska, and Amber Samuel. Dr. Richard Sweet will take a few moments to honor Dr. William Crombleholme and others who passed in the last year.

We will also celebrate those having class reunions – 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2010, and 2015.

The event is free. Please watch your email for additional details, and make sure we have an updated email address on file by contacting Colleen Straub at cstraub@magee.edu. We look forward to seeing you for this as well as for the virtual reception the evening of Thursday, October 1.

Your commitment to caring for your patients during this extraordinary time is inspiring. As Magee alumni, I know your training and dedication made an impact on patients around the country. We look forward to the day we can meet again in person.

Best regards,

Robert P. Edwards



Leaving a Legacy: Magee Physician-Scientist Funds Research Program

“I’ve had an enormously gratifying career,” said Steve Caritis, M.D. “The opportunity to balance patient care with clinical research has been incredible, and my hope is to pass that kind of satisfaction onto residents and fellows who care for pregnant women at Magee.”

Now in his 50th year as a practicing specialist in Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, Dr. Caritis has gifted \$500,000 in support of obstetrical residents and MFM fellows to explore clinical research. He hopes his gift will spur trainees to explore research and see if it inspires them.

“Our residents have little time to conduct research during their residency as they are often overwhelmed with their clinical work,” Dr. Caritis explained. “Our MFM fellows, on the other hand, have the time and are required to undertake research as part of their training but frequently do not have access to funds to support their research. This lack of opportunity discourages trainees from considering research as a part of clinical care in their career. My goal in providing research support is to enable trainees in obstetrics to participate in research to see if it is something they would like to pursue.”

Over the course of his career, Dr. Caritis pursued research in addition to his clinical practice. His early work focused on understanding the causes of premature birth, while his more recent work examines pharmacology as it relates to pregnant women.

“Most medications taken by pregnant women have not been studied in relation to her physiology. The dose of a medication for a pregnant woman is based on research done on men and non-pregnant women,” he said. “The physiologic changes in pregnancy affect every aspect of how a medication is handled by the body. Thus, dosing for pregnant women is woefully inaccurate. This commonly leads to excessive medication for some women and an inadequate dosage for other women. This is something we want to change.”

Currently, Dr. Caritis directs projects studying buprenorphine and 17-hydroxyprogesterone caproate in pregnancy. Buprenorphine is used to treat opioid use disorder and may have advantages over methadone for women struggling with the condition. 17-hydroxyprogesterone caproate is a medication that may reduce the risk of preterm birth in women who previously experienced preterm birth.

“If a person is interested in clinical research, the opportunities at Magee are unparalleled,” Dr. Caritis said. “Not only is the leadership – both academic and administrative – incredibly supportive, but we have incredible resources here. In addition, our patient population is diverse, and, as a referral center, Magee is a magnet for complicated pregnancy cases. This allows research studies to be done that cannot be done in smaller centers. It’s a real opportunity for anyone working in obstetrics.”

Over time, Dr. Caritis would like to see his gift grow through funding from Magee alumni.*

“Our residency and fellowship programs are the most sought after in the country. The training provides people who chose a life in pregnancy care the support and education they need to succeed. Our training programs have populated the field of obstetrics and gynecology and Maternal-Fetal Medicine nationally; Magee educators, researchers and administrators should be proud of this achievement,” he said.

The gift will begin funding resident research in the spring of 2021.

**If you are interested in supporting Dr. Caritis’ fund, please contact Colleen Straub at cstraub@magee.edu or 412-641-8978.*



The Doctor Will See You: How COVID-19 Accelerated Telemedicine for UPMC Magee's Prenatal Care

As the mother of two small children, when Molly Knorr found out that telemedicine appointments were an option for her current pregnancy, she jumped at the opportunity to check in with her provider without the added challenge of finding childcare.

"I was on board from the get-go," says Knorr, whose third child is due Sept. 15. "Overall, I think it's a really positive thing, particularly for parents who have children."

Early this spring, when the COVID-19 pandemic prompted widespread stay-at-home orders around the country, thousands of expectant mothers began to follow suit. At UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, the groundwork that staff had already laid for virtual visits proved invaluable for a rapid expansion of appointments to keep both providers and patients safe while simultaneously ensuring continuity of care.

"The scale and pace at which we did that was fairly ambitious; but within a week to 10 days, we were able to go from practices never having done this at all to really scaling up," says Dr. Hyagriv Simhan, director of clinical innovation for the Women's Health Service Line and executive vice chair for obstetrics.

Telemedicine is nothing new at Magee, having originated as a pilot project in the department about seven years ago as a consulting service to remote locations. Other tools include MyHealthyPregnancy, an app and digital engagement platform; ConnectedCare, which monitors women with postpartum hypertension and gestational diabetes remotely, and telelactation service to provide breastfeeding guidance. The hospital's neonatal intensive care unit used telemedicine to consult with other hospital nurseries.

"The scale and pace at which we did that was fairly ambitious; but within a week to 10 days, we were able to go from practices never having done this at all to really scaling up."

—Dr. Hyagriv Simhan



“Patients really liked it,” Quinn says. “They thought it was a great way to engage,” plus they didn’t have to drive to the city, pay for parking, or take time off from work.

◀ pictured:
Dr. Glenn Updike
Medical director for clinical informatics for the Women’s Health Service Line

Anatomy of a transition

In late 2019, an innovation grant from The Beckwith Institute funded a pilot program to allow a few practices in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology to mix video visits in with traditional face-to-face appointments – which allowed patients like Molly Knorr the chance to sign up early. To encourage participation, Magee scheduled all new patients for a video visit unless they opted out, says Beth Quinn, a director of operations for the Women’s Health Service Line. It was an instant success. “Patients really liked it,” Quinn says. “They thought it was a great way to engage,” plus they didn’t have to drive to the city, pay for parking, or take time off from work.

A nurse would call patients in advance of the first virtual appointment to make sure the patient was comfortable using the technology and that everything worked. Patients received blood pressure monitors and learned how to use them so their providers could supervise their health remotely.

The pilot quickly expanded amid the pandemic.

“When COVID happened, we had this really big impetus. Prenatal care obviously needs to continue, but we wanted to keep patients and providers safe,” explains Dr. Simhan. “We used this technology to scale up prenatal visits and patient

care across the entire department, rather than these couple of practices.”

For the Magee team, the effort was nothing short of herculean.

“My team of nurses went from 40 calls a week to over a thousand, basically overnight,” recalls Quinn, adding that the team expanded to accommodate the increased volume and rose to the occasion, helping patients understand what to expect in the virtual visit.

“When COVID happened, we had this really big impetus. Prenatal care obviously needs to continue, but we wanted to keep patients and providers safe.”

— Dr. Simhan

“It was very stressful for those few weeks for the staff, but they were able to manage it,” she adds. “Patients were usually very accepting and loved the call.”

Knorr, who expects to use a combination of in-person and telemedicine visits for the duration of her pregnancy, suggests that women come prepared to virtual sessions with a list of questions, just as they would if they were going to the office.



All hands on deck

An initial shipment of 1,000 blood pressure cuffs arrived at the hospital, and doctors, division administrators, even family members of the staff – including Quinn’s son – pitched in to get them to patients for remote monitoring. Dr. Halina Zyczynski, an investigator with Magee-Womens Research Institute and medical director of its new Erie location, delivered a batch two hours north to that city. When 5,000 more cuffs arrived, the process started all over again.

For providers, the transition turned out to be much smoother than expected. Working under the same pandemic constraints as their patients, they appreciated the added safety of practicing remotely, and they are also able to take more time with each appointment and not have the added pressure of other patients waiting in another examining room.

The U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is now allowing billing codes to cover telemedicine, and indications suggest that this practice will continue, says Quinn.

For the UPMC health care system, the next step in telemedicine will be Hatch, an initiative led by Dr. Simhan along with Quinn; Dr. Glenn Updike, medical director for clinical informatics for the Women’s Health Service Line as well as MyUPMC; and Jenn Chaney, a director of operations for the Women’s Health Service Line. One of the initiative’s goals is to accelerate advances in virtual care.

“The notion of how providers do outpatient care is fundamentally changed by a technology like this,” says Dr. Simhan. “I think we may get to a point in care where we have virtualists – people who provide care remotely by using technology,” similar to the evolution of the hospitalist’s role.

Quinn agrees that telemedicine is here to stay.

“COVID is not going away for the foreseeable future, and has forever changed the way we practice healthcare,” she says. “When change is thrust upon you, it becomes easier to embrace.”

Curious About Telemedicine For Your Practice? Magee Can Help.

Magee alumni who are interested in information about strategies for incorporating telemedicine into their own practices can contact

Hatch@upmc.edu.



Celebrating Research Achievements

The Annual Research Day, scheduled for May 22, 2020, was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic; but Resident Research Day was held virtually on May 27. The event included resident presentations as well as an enlightening lecture from guest speaker and former resident trainee Amy Park, MD. Amy completed her residency in 2006 at Magee and is now at Cleveland Clinic and the Section Head, FPMRS (Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery) in the OB/Gyn & Women's Health Institute. Amy presented "Online 'Presence:' Leveraging the Power of Social Media and the Internet."

Resident Society & Procedural Skills Awards

The Margaret Searce Compassionate Care Award
Jennifer de Groot, MD
 Third-Year Resident

Society for Gynecologic Oncology Residency Award
Jason Conger, MD
 Second-Year Resident

Ryan Program Resident Award for Excellence in Family Planning
Kristen Venuti, MD
 Senior Resident

MWH Junior Resident Award for Excellence in Family Planning
Rachel Dang, MD
 First-Year Resident

AAGL Special Excellence in Endoscopic Procedures
Susan Lang, MD
 Third-Year Resident

SLS Outstanding Laparoendoscopic Resident
Kristen Venuti, MD
 Senior Resident

ASCCP Resident Award
Mackenzey Radolec, MD
 Third Resident

AUGS Resident Award for Excellence in FPMRS
Abby Stork, MD
 Third Resident

NASPAG Outstanding Resident Award
Carolyn Elbaum, MD, MPH
 Second-Year Resident

Morris Turner Procedural Teaching/Guidance Award
Taylor Orellana, MD
 Senior Resident

SASGOG Resident Award
Nina Ragunathan, MD
 Third-Year Resident

Best General OB Skills by an Intern
Kymberly Forsyth, MD
 First-Year Resident

SMFM Resident Award for Excellence in OB
Latima Collins, MD
 Second-Year Resident

Receiving the **Marvin C. Rulin, MD Resident Research Day Award** was **Camila Cabrera, MD**, for her presentation "Disparities in the Treatment of Severe Postpartum Hypertension." Her research mentor was **Alisse Hauspurg-Janicki, MD**.

Runner ups included **Taylor Orellana, MD**, for "Flatus After Undergoing Surgery: Creation of Nomogram to Predict Postoperative Ileus After Gynecologic Oncologic Exploratory Laparotomy," (research mentor: **Sarah Taylor, MD**) and **Nina Ragunathan, MD** for "Assessment of Racial Disparities in Aspirin Prophylaxis for Preeclampsia Prevention" (research mentor: **Stacy Beck, MD**).

Faculty & Fellow Teaching Awards by Residents

CREOG National Faculty Award for Excellence in Resident Education
Laura Nywening, MD
 Division of OB Specialties

OB Faculty Teaching Award
Alisse Hauspurg, MD
 Division of MFM

Outpatient Faculty Teaching Award
Daniel R. Lattanzi, MD
 Division of Gyn Specialties

SASGOG Faculty Teaching Award
John A. Harris, MD, MSc
 Division of Gyn Specialties

Gyn Fellow Teaching Award
Christine Foley, MD
 MIS Fellow

OB Fellow Teaching Award
Tiffany Deihl, MD
 MFM Fellow

Teaching Awards by Medical Students

APGO Excellence In Teaching Award
Rebecca Waltner-Toews, MD

[Maternal-Fetal Medicine Alumni Event]

February 6, 2020, Gaylord, TX



Alisse Hauspurg, F '19; Lauren Carlos, F '21; Mitch Onslow, F '21; and Camila Cabrera, R '21



Hy Simhan F '02; Kavita Vani, R '18; Naggin Mokhtari, R '18; and Alisse Hauspurg, F '19



Steve Caritis, R '73 and Hy Simhan F '02



Christy Scifres, Sarah Bernstein, F '14 and Sara Sakamoto, R '11 & F '14



Jackie Atlas, R '19 & F '22; Eric Baran and Jackie Phillips, F '22

[CREOG/APGO Alumni Event]

February 27, 2020
 Orlando, FL



Graduating Fellows

Female Pelvic Medicine
& Reconstructive Surgery

Amanda Artsen, MD, MSc
Faculty, Univ. of Pittsburgh SOM
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital
Dept. OB/GYN/RS, Pittsburgh, PA

Jessica Sassani, MD
Faculty, Allegheny Health
Network, Division of
Urogynecology, Pittsburgh, PA

Gynecologic Oncology

Lauren Hand, MD
Faculty, Baptist MD Anderson
Cancer Center, Jacksonville, FL

Adria Suarez Mora, MD
Faculty, Cleveland Clinic Florida
Gynecology & Women's Health
Dept., Weston, FL

Minimally Invasive
Gynecologic Surgery

Christine Foley, MD
Faculty, Women & Infants
Hospital, Dept. OB/GYN
Providence, RI

Laura Newcomb, MD
Faculty, University of Virginia
Dept. OB/GYN
Charlottesville, VA

Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Anna Binstock, MD
Faculty, Univ. of Pittsburgh SOM
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital
Dept. OB/GYN/RS, Pittsburgh, PA

Christina Megli, MD, PhD
Faculty, Univ. of Pittsburgh SOM
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital
Dept. OB/GYN/RS, Pittsburgh, PA

Sarah Rogan, MD
Faculty, Univ. of Pittsburgh SOM
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital
Dept. OB/GYN/RS, Pittsburgh, PA

Reproductive Endocrinology
& Infertility

Emily Barnard, DO
Faculty, Shady Grove Fertility
Maryland Offices



Family Planning

Kavita Vinekar, MD
Dual Faculty, VA Greater LA/
UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

Graduating Residents

Kristie Charek, MD
East Suburban OBGYN
Associates, Pittsburgh, PA

Alison Garrett, MD
Gynecologic Oncology
Fellowship, UPMC Medical
Education, Pittsburgh, PA

Alexandra Melnyk, MD, MEd
Female Pelvic Medicine and
Reconstructive Surgery
Fellowship, UPMC Medical
Education, Pittsburgh, PA

Taylor Orellana, MD
Gynecologic Oncology
Fellowship, UPMC Medical
Education, Pittsburgh, PA

Kathleen Pombier, MD
Nellis Air Force Base
Las Vegas, NV

Emily Redman, MD
Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Fellowship, Case Western
Reserve University,
School of Medicine
Cleveland, OH

Anna Romanova, MD
Female Pelvic Medicine and
Reconstructive Surgery
Icahn School of Medicine
at Mt. Sinai, New York, NY

James Ross, MD
Female Pelvic Medicine and
Reconstructive Surgery
Fellowship, Cleveland Clinic
Cleveland, OH

Katie Jean Turgeon, MD
UPMC Womancare East
Pittsburgh, PA

Kristen Venuti, MD
Northwestern Medicine Prentice
Women's Hospital, Chicago, IL

Incoming Residents

Paige Anderson, MD
The University of Toledo College
of Medicine and Life Sciences

Sarah Bennett, MD
Geisel School of Medicine at
Dartmouth

Molly Eckman, MD
Vanderbilt University School
of Medicine

Isabel Janmey, MPH, MD
Case Western Reserve University
School of Medicine

Brigid Mumford, MD
Drexel University College
of Medicine

Lauren Sutherland, MD
Johns Hopkins University School
of Medicine

Ariel Trilling, MD
University of Maryland School
of Medicine

Alysia Wiener
George Washington University School
of Medicine and Health Sciences

Emily Wilson
Mercer University School of Medicine

Incoming Fellows

Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Aalok Sanjanwala, MD
University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL

Malinda Schaefer, MD
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, MN

Tiffany Wang, MD
Georgetown University Hospital
/ Washington Hospital Center,
Washington DC

Female Pelvic Medicine &
Reconstructive Surgery

Marina Guirguis, MD
Nova Fairfax Hospital, Falls Church, VA

Alexandra Melnyk, MD
UPMC Residency

Family Planning

Mack Goldberg, MD
Vanderbilt University Medical Center,
Nashville TN

Minimally Invasive Gyn Surgery

Sarah Allen, MD
Wake Forest School of Medicine,
Winston-Salem, NC

Nathan King, MD
McGraw Medical Center of
Northwestern University, Chicago IL

Reproductive Endocrinology
& Infertility

Monica Schointuch, MD
University of Alabama,
Birmingham, AL

Sally Vitez, MD
Columbia University
Medical Center, New York NY

Gynecologic Oncology

Alison Garrett, MD
UPMC Residency

Taylor Orellana, MD
UPMC Residency

UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

VIRTUAL ALUMNI DAY

Friday, October 2, 2020

The 45th Annual Alumni Day will be a virtual event through Microsoft Teams. **Dr. Richard Guido** will emcee the event. Our guest speakers include **Drs. Nicole Donnellan, Dennis English, Lisa Keder, Madeline Courtney-Brooks, Kate Bochenska and Amber Samuel. Dr. Richard Sweet** will take a few moments to honor **Dr. William Crombleholme** as we will also honor the others who have passed in the last year. We will also be celebrating those having classes reunions - 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2010 and 2015.

Although the event is free this year, you must register in order to receive the private link. Watch your emails and your mail for more details. Please make sure we have an updated email address on file so that we can send you the private invitation to the event. Please contact **Colleen Straub** at cstraub@magee.edu.

AUGS - MAGEE ALUMNI RECEPTION

There will be no reception this year during the virtual AUGS conference, but we hope to meet up again next year.

AAGL - MAGEE ALUMNI RECEPTION

November 4-8, Aurora, CO - TBD

SHARE YOUR STORY

Magee offers one of the most robust OB/GYN training programs in the nation, and we're proud of our alumni. If you trained at Magee and have a story to share about how you're applying those skill sets within your practice, we'd love to hear from you - and possibly feature you in an upcoming issue of this newsletter. Please contact Colleen Straub, cstraub@magee.edu.

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!

Help us keep you informed!
Please join our email list to stay
up-to-date on the great things
happening at Magee. It's easy.
Just email Colleen Straub at
cstraub@magee.edu or call
at 412-641-8978.



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mageewomens.org



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Pittsburgh, PA 15213

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There are many other gift options to choose from including life insurance, gifts of real estate, and gifts of stock. For more information about making a meaningful gift to Magee, contact Colleen Straub at cstraub@magee.edu or 412-641-8978.

Three ways to give. So many lives to touch.

1. **Bequest** – You can remember Magee through your will.
2. **IRA** – Name Magee as a beneficiary on a retirement account.
3. **Charitable Remainder Trust** – Create an income stream for your life while also making a gift to Magee.

