Baylor recognized for community impact

The Greater Dallas Chamber awarded Baylor Health Care System a major business award, the Community Investor Award for 2002. Baylor was recognized for having the largest positive impact on the community overall, winning over the Dallas–Fort Worth International Airport in this category. Baylor’s 100-year anniversary and history of contributing to the community were noted at the event, which was attended by area chief executive officers and company presidents.

BUMC again ranks among US News’ “best hospitals”

For the 11th consecutive year, BUMC ranks among the nation’s top hospitals in the US News & World Report 2003 “America’s Best Hospitals” guide. BUMC was listed among the 50 top hospitals in digestive disorders, orthopaedics, gynecology, urology, and cancer.

New tool allows physicians to customize drug prescriptions and identify drug interactions for patients

Paul Sokal, MD, an internist on the medical staff at BUMC, recently announced his use of Signature Genetics, a tool designed to help physicians customize drug prescriptions based on a patient’s unique genetic makeup. Four to six weeks after blood and cheek swab samples are sent to a laboratory, a report that covers more than 150 of the most commonly prescribed medications, over-the-counter drugs, and herbal remedies metabolized by cytochrome P450 enzymes is sent to the physician’s office. This report also provides information on drug interactions with these enzymes. Once a patient has been tested and an initial report issued, the physician can easily query Signature Genetics regarding any additional drugs under consideration for that patient. Through this process, the physician receives information specific to both the drug and the patient before actually prescribing the new drug. Codeine and warfarin are examples of drugs whose metabolism is affected by genetic variations.

BUMC launches comprehensive heart failure program

The Baylor Heart Failure Program is now available to provide medical treatment, education, and rehabilitation. The program strives to reduce emergency department visits and hospital readmissions while improving the quality of life for patients with heart failure. Program services include specialized medical and nursing care; extensive education on medication, diet, and lifestyle changes; exercise and cardiac rehabilitation; outpatient intravenous inotropic medications; and clinical excellence at BUMC, served as the first Richard E. Wilson Visiting Professor of Surgical Oncology in the Department of Surgery at Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School, on June 25, 2003.

Three BUMC nurses were recently recognized by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses: Michael Williford, RN, received the Critical Care Nurse of the Year award from the Dallas County chapter; Bobbi Leeper, RN, published 2 papers in the May 2003 issue of Clinical Issues in Critical Care and was selected to be on the journal’s editorial board; and John Dixon, RN, was elected to the association’s national board of directors.

BUMC board member W. W. Aston was recently recognized for excellence in hospital governance by the Texas Healthcare Trustees Foundation’s Texas Academy of Governance.

ACCOLADES

John S. Fordtran, MD, who has served as chairman of the Department of Internal Medicine at BUMC and president of Baylor Research Institute, was recently honored with the Health/Science Award from the Dallas Historical Society.

M. Alan Menter, MD, served as guest editor of a supplement to the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology. The supplement, entitled Psoriasis for the Clinician: A New Therapeutics Era (“the Biologics”) Beckons, was published in August 2003.

Marvin J. Stone, MD, is the new president of the American Osler Society. He also completed a year serving as the first chair of the American Society of Clinical Oncology’s Career Development Committee.

Harold C. Urschel, MD, chair of cardiovascular and thoracic surgical research, education, and clinical excellence at BUMC, served as the first of the Richard E. Wilson Visiting Professor of Surgical Oncology in the Department of Surgery at Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School, on June 25, 2003.

INFUSE Bone Graft, an innovative spine surgery for patients suffering from debilitating lower back pain. The INFUSE Bone Graft/LET-CAGE Lumbar Tapered Fusion Device, recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration, contains a genetically engineered version of a naturally occurring protein capable of initiating bone growth, or bone regeneration, in specific, targeted areas of the spine. For patients who require spinal fusions, the use of this novel biologic in surgery can reduce the pain and complications associated with treating degenerative disc disease by eliminating the second surgery required to harvest bone from a patient’s hip, as is done in traditional spinal fusion procedures.

Baylor Specialty Hospital continues expansion

Baylor Specialty Hospital opened its second affiliate facility: a new 16-bed long-term acute care hospital, Baylor Specialty Hospital at Irving within Baylor Medical Center at Dallas. In 2000, a 12-bed Baylor Specialty Hospital opened on the campus of Baylor Medical Center at Garland. Both affiliates operate under the leadership of the original Baylor Specialty Hospital, a 68-bed hospital on the BUMC campus.

“Because of chronic illnesses or frailty, some individuals need additional hospital care before they return to their homes. The clinical personnel working in this unit make up a multidisciplinary team trained to offer the intensive, coordinated treatment needed for a patient with catastrophic illness or a complex body system failure,” says Gerry Brueckner, president, Baylor Specialty Hospital.
Hospital. Typically, patients at Baylor Specialty Hospital remain hospitalized 25 to 30 days.

Baylor Specialty Hospital is recognized for its expertise in specialized therapies to treat wounds or to address respiratory problems, areas in which acute care patients frequently need additional help.

- Baylor Grapevine offers new artificial cervical device

On June 3, 2003, a North Texas man successfully underwent a new surgery at Baylor Medical Center at Grapevine to implant an artificial cervical disk as part of a nationwide clinical research study. The procedure was the first implant of this new cervical device in Texas. The artificial cervical disc, which resembles a ball and socket-type device, is designed to replace a diseased disc in the cervical spine. Once implanted, the disc may reduce preoperative neck pain and provide for neck motion that is absent when a fusion surgery takes place. If successful, the new spinal implant may be an alternative to a conventional procedure in which bone is harvested from the patient’s hip bone and used to promote fusion in the cervical spine. The study’s primary investigator, neurosurgeon Joseph Stachniak, MD, and a group of physicians from about 30 US institutions will report results on 550 patients implanted with the new device, comparing those results with results from implantation of an allograft and a cervical plate.

- Customer service focus decreases wait time in emergency department

Baylor Medical Center at Grapevine’s emergency department implemented a new registration process aimed at reducing the wait time and shortening the visit to the emergency department. “What we have now is a bedside registration procedure,” says Laura Cheney, director of access services for Baylor Grapevine. “As long as a room is available, our goal is to send the patient directly to an exam room after triage.” Complete with a wireless, laptop computer on a rolling cart, a member of the clerical staff gathers all the necessary information in the privacy of the patient’s room. “We implemented the process in September 2002, and it seems to be working very well,” says Ken Stackhouse, RN, director of emergency services. Construction began on the new emergency department, which will increase the number of treatment rooms, add 8 new observation beds, and expand the urgent care center. Baylor Medical Center at Grapevine is in the midst of constructing a $50 million, 6-story patient tower, which will open in late 2003.

- Senior Health Network marks a decade

Employees and patients of the Baylor Senior Health Network celebrated its tenth anniversary on June 23, 2003. The network emphasizes wellness and prevention and screens for preventable and correctable problems to enhance seniors’ quality of life. Made up of 8 centers, the Baylor Senior Health Network provides timely access for Medicare patients who may have trouble finding a primary care physician.

- Blood and marrow transplant team celebrates 20th anniversary

Baylor Sammons Cancer Center’s blood and marrow transplant team celebrated 20 years of excellence on May 6, 2003. In 1983, Baylor performed North Texas’ first adult marrow transplant. Other milestones include performing Texas’ first matched unrelated donor transplant in 1988; being one of the first 6 centers in the USA to receive accreditation from the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy; and being one of 13 centers in the world to be designated as a transplant, collection, and donor center for the National Marrow Donor Program. In its first 20 years, the program has performed more than 2500 transplants, recruited more than 30,000 potential donors to the registry, and been recognized as a leading bone and marrow transplant center for patient care and clinical research.

- All Saints Health Foundation receives an additional $1 million gift for use in nursing

For Fort Worth health care boosters Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Faxel made a $1 million gift to the All Saints Health Foundation. Of that gift, $800,000 was designated for the Mary W. and Ralph E. Faxel Endowment for Nursing, and $200,000 was made available immediately for nursing programs and initiatives. This endowment fund was established 2 years ago by the Faxes to demonstrate their appreciation for the nursing care they and their family have received at Baylor All Saints Medical Centers. To date, the Faxes have endowed $3.3 million for nursing and provided $700,000 for immediate use in nursing programs and initiatives.

UPCOMING CME PROGRAMS

The A. Webb Roberts Center for Continuing Education of Baylor Health Care System is offering the following programs:

- Past, Present and Future: A Celebration of a Century of Neonatal Care, October 10, 2003, at Baylor University Medical Center
- Cardiovascular Disease, the Metabolic Syndrome, and Ethics, October 18, 2003, at the Adolphus Hotel, Dallas
- Sears Radiology Seminar, October 28–29, 2003, at Baylor University Medical Center
- Solutions and Advances in Liver Disease: Tumors, Viruses, and Transplantation, November 1, 2003, at Lakewood Country Club, Dallas
- Seventh Annual Tyler Breast Conference, March 27, 2004, in Tyler
- Second Annual Course: Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Trauma, May 6–8, 2004, at Four Seasons Resort and Club, Las Colinas

For more information, call 214-820-2317.

In addition, Focus on Research forums at BUMC offer CME credit. The following speakers will be featured:

- C. Richard Boland, MD, October 13, 2003: Discovering the causes of colorectal cancer
- Harold Urschel, Jr., MD, et al, November 10, 2003: Cardiovascular research at BUMC
- John Dixon, RN, moderator, December 8, 2003: BUMC nursing research update

The October and December forums will be held in the Folsom Room, 17 Roberts, at 5:00 PM; the November forum will be held in the Cree Auditorium at Baylor Heart and Vascular Hospital at 5:00 PM. For more information, contact Angela Fleming Sayin at 214-820-4090.