Telemedicine: Sharing our medical expertise

We may not be able to clone the medical expertise that exists here at Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center, but we can certainly share it.

Thanks to continued advancements in communications technology and to innovation in several Medical Center areas, Ohio State is expanding initiatives that provide the highest quality of care to a greater number of Ohioans through telemedicine.

Similar to the way in which Skype and FaceTime allow families to see, hear and interact with one another in locations across the street or across the nation, telemedicine connects Ohio State care specialists with practitioners in many of Ohio’s rural hospitals.

Ohio State experts are now offering varied forms of telemedicine consultation related to diagnosis, treatment or follow-up care in several specialty service areas. In the coming year, Ohio State expects to expand these telemedicine services as new hospitals join our network and is also investigating growth opportunities in additional medical services.

While this rapid expansion of telemedicine is recent, Ohio State has a history of providing expert care to patients in distant facilities. Ohio State pioneered its first telemedicine program in 1995 through a contract with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. For nearly two decades, telemedicine consultation has supported safe, high quality, cost-effective care for inmates.

Today, most of Ohio State’s telemedicine consultations are in real-time. Some, such as telestroke, support lifesaving emergency care. Our telemedicine programs help mitigate health disparities in our state; promote a savings for patients in terms of transportation costs, readmissions and elongated stays; and support improved outcomes.

“Sharing our medical expertise to help patients have better outcomes and to help other hospitals in Ohio as they care for these patients is the right thing to do. It’s also a plus when a program such as telemedicine benefits all of us by making better use of valuable medical resources,” says Peter Geier, COO of Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center.

Two of Ohio State’s more prominent telemedicine programs provide consultation for patients with stroke and burns.

**Telestroke** – Ohio State’s stroke program is accredited by the Joint Commission, which means our stroke program provides the highest level of quality care and safety. Unlike most hospitals, Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center has an experienced team of medical professionals, specifically trained in stroke care, available on an around-the-clock basis. Accurately diagnosing a stroke and delivering timely and appropriate care are critical for the best survival of a stroke patient.

In 2011, telestroke went live at seven collaborating hospitals, providing these communities with access to time-sensitive stroke care. When a patient suspected of having a stroke arrives at the emergency department of one of these hospitals, a Stroke Alert is activated both at the community hospital and at Ohio State. Ohio State’s neurovascular stroke experts assess the patient and consult with the community hospital team via video conferencing and Web-based software to determine the best treatment options for the patient.

When a patient arrived at a Cambridge, Ohio, area hospital with symptoms of a stroke, the Stroke Alert was activated at that community hospital and at Ohio State. Using video and Web-based technologies, physicians at both hospitals examined the patient, made a diagnosis and immediately began treatment that led to the best outcome for that patient.

**Teleburn** – 20 Ohio State offers the only Burn Center in central Ohio verified for the treatment of adults with burns, and the Burn Center is part of Ohio State’s nationally ranked critical care program. The OSU Burn Center is verified by the American College of Surgeons and the American Burn Association. Only 62 burn centers nationwide meet the rigorous standards demonstrating that these centers can provide optimal care for burn patients from injury through rehabilitation.

When Larry Jones, MD, became director of Ohio State’s Burn Center in July 2011, he listed among his priorities the initiation of telemedicine services to improve burn injury care for Ohioans and to solidify relationships with community physicians, hospitals and emergency services. The Adena Medical Center in 2012 became the first hospital to join Ohio State’s teleburn program and additional members are expected in 2013.

Better use of healthcare resources – As telestroke, teleburn and similar outreach efforts continue to grow, Ohio State is also investigating telemedicine opportunities in maternal fetal medicine, rehabilitation, general neurology, critical care, cardiology, cancer and psychiatry.

In each of these areas, telemedicine offers opportunities for improved care and better use of healthcare resources through better access to specialty services and a remedy for areas with shortages of healthcare practitioners.

Visit OneSource for additional information on Create the Future Now, Digital Innovation and Telemedicine. Learn more about Create the Future Now during the State of the Medical Center address on Jan. 29. Plan to attend this event at 4 p.m. in Melding Hall or listen in via OneSource.
The College of Medicine launched its fifth annual Faculty Teaching Scholars Program (FTSP) in December. Chosen for this honor are: Kimberly Bates, MD, OSU Internal Medicine & Pediatrics at Grandview; Gary Bixler, MD, Nationwide Children's Hospital; Jack Kopechek, MD; Beth Lee, PhD, SBS-Physiology & Cell Biology; Lori Meyers, MD, Anesthesiology; Kenneth Moran, MD, Anesthesiology; Christopher Pierson, MD, PhD, Pathology; Jonathan Rock, MD, director of Autopsy Services; Jillian Schwaab, MD, Emergency Medicine; Summit Shah, MD, Diagnostic Radiology; Katherine Kelly Shirley, MD; and Griffin Stout, MD, Psychiatry.

Westman Named Assistant Dean for Foundational Sciences
Judith Westman, MD, as the assistant dean for Foundational Sciences, will be responsible for oversight and integration of foundational sciences content across all parts of the new Lead. Serve. Inspire. (LSI) curriculum, with a strong focus on Part 1 and on the role of expert educators in enhancing the student learning environment and process. Westman has a distinguished history of educational leadership within the College. She is a nationally recognized expert in medical education and a professor of Medicine in the Division of Human Genetics.

Med Students Honored
During a research symposium at the American Medical Association Interim Meeting, Kelly Regan, a first-year medical student at Ohio State, was the overall winner in the medical student/clinical outcomes and healthcare improvement category. Her award-winning research is titled, “Expression-anchored Gene Ontology Signature Predicts Clinical Outcome in Lung Adenocarcinoma Patients.” In addition, medical student Jonathan McKean was named a TYLENOL® Future Care Scholar, in recognition of his leadership qualities, academic excellence and passion for community involvement.

Medicine and the Arts
Wendy Pramik and Eric Geier | The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Medicine and music were in perfect harmony Dec. 11 as the College of Medicine’s fledgling orchestra performed its first concert in Meiling Hall. From the opening notes of “Themes from Scheherazade” to the final orchestral version of “Carmen Ohio,” the two dozen faculty, staff and students who make up the orchestra demonstrated they are as talented with musical instruments as they are with medical instruments.

Dean Charles Lockwood, MD, spoke for many in attendance when he commented: “I was incredibly impressed by the elegance and talent of our College musicians who played at our first College of Medicine Orchestra concert.”

The orchestra is part of the Music in Medicine project and the larger Humanism in Medicine initiative that focuses on ways to foster a humanistic environment in which to serve our patients, educate our students and residents, and pursue research.

“Those of us who work in the medical center see ourselves as a community that strives to serve our patients, educate our students and residents as well as support our research network. In an effort to give back to this community of caring individuals, the leadership of the College of Medicine decided to collaborate with the arts community to bring the performing and visual arts into our medical center and our medical school,” explains Linda Stone, MD ’79, who has been a leader of the Humanism in Medicine initiative.

Led by Laura Hill of Ohio State’s School of Music and coordinated by medical students Katharine Collier and Corey Coles, the orchestra demonstrates the value of One University in which the College of Medicine and School of Music can work together for the benefit of all.

Participation in the orchestra is open to all associated with the College who share a love of music. “A lot of us haven’t played since high school,” says Collier, a second-year medical student who plays cellos. “It’s great to get back into it. We joke around and have a lot of fun.”

Those at Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center can see and hear the orchestra by visiting OneSource. For additional information, contact Collier.181@osu.edu or Corey.Coles@osumc.edu.
If you met Elmahdi Elkhammas during his normal work day, he might greet you with "Marhaba," which means "hello" in Arabic.

Elkhammas, MD, a surgeon at Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center, says his inspiration to go to medical school came from his father. Growing up in the small village of Abu Eesa in Libya, Elkhammas lived across the street from the building where his father worked as a nurse. It was not uncommon for him to hang around the medical center there while working on his homework.

“I saw the doctors helping patients, and how they were respected, and knew that’s what I really wanted to be,” Elkhammas recalls.

One day, Elkhammas noticed a long line of students outside of the medical center waiting to interview for medical school and decided to turn his dream into reality.

“I stayed there until they finished all of their assigned students,” Elkhammas explains. “I’m a student, I’d love to be a doctor, but I was assigned to engineering school and I think I’m just going to drop out,” Elkhammas told the interviewer.

“The interviewer asked me to sit down, asked me a lot of questions, and four or five days later, I was told I was accepted to medical school,” he recalls.

Elkhammas completed his medical degree at Garyounis University in Benghazi, Libya. He then took a great interest in liver transplantation during his surgical residency at Ohio State. Elkhammas is now a specialist in liver, kidney and pancreas transplantation within Ohio State’s Division of Transplant Surgery. Since 2009, Elkhammas has been named among the “Best Doctors in America” in Surgery by Best Doctors, Inc.

“I love the liver transplant because of the challenge of it. It’s really challenging and each case is different from the one you did before,” Elkhammas says.

With the challenge comes the opportunity for great rewards for the patient and for the surgeon. Elkhammas explains that it is very gratifying to him knowing that he can help provide a new, improved quality of life to a person through liver transplantation.

And Elkhammas hasn’t lost that awe and respect for medicine and its practitioners that he first developed as a boy outside of the medical center in a small village in Libya: “We cannot guarantee life, but when our patients live 20 or 30 years after the liver transplant – that’s just amazing to me.”

See and hear Elkhammas’ journey to Ohio State at go.osu.edu/Elkhammas.

About ‘Journey to Innovation’

Diversity in people and ideas is a core value and strength of The Ohio State University and its Wexner Medical Center. The video series “Journey to Innovation” shares the stories of 12 foreign-born physicians who made Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center their destination. Follow the series in Insight and online at www.YouTube.com/OSUMedicalCenter (search “Journey to Innovation”).

“Journey to Innovation” was made possible by a grant from the OSU Medical Alumni Society, Ismail Nabeel, MBBS, MPH; the OSU Wexner Medical Center Diversity Council; and the Department of Marketing and Strategic Communications.
UP CLOSE AND PERSONALIZED

Dr. Russell Lonser is a nationally recognized neurosurgeon and researcher whose unmatched expertise in brain and spine care further establishes Ohio State as the best neurological program in central Ohio. Like Dr. Lonser, THE WORLD’S BEST AND BRIGHTEST HEALTHCARE EXPERTS ARE COMING TO OHIO STATE to create the future of medicine.

What attracted me to Ohio State? Ohio State has a singular commitment to excellence and the advancement of medical care. These characteristics have made Ohio State a national leader in providing innovative treatments for patients with neurological disorders. As an academic neurosurgeon, I cannot imagine a more enriching and rewarding environment.

How am I advancing personalized health care at Ohio State? Ohio State is uniquely qualified to provide comprehensive, leading-edge surgical care for any neurological disorder. Through the focused and expert skills of our team of neurosurgeons and support staff, we offer the highly specialized and personalized treatments that are necessary for the optimal care of each patient.

But for Ohio State...I would not have the opportunity to work with world-class physicians, collaborate with transformative biomedical researchers and be engaged in training the next generation of neurosurgeon-scientists.

Over the next decade, OHIO STATE PLANS TO ATTRACT 500 WORLD-CLASS FACULTY LEADERS WHO WILL PROPEL DISCOVERY in the fields of health and wellness, energy and environment and food production and security. Through this effort, Ohio State will truly lead the way in finding solutions to the technological, social and environmental stresses faced by our community and our world.

Russell Lonser, MD
Chair of The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center Department of Neurological Surgery
Head of the NFL’s Research Subcommittee and member of the NFL’s Head, Neck and Spine Medical Committee
Came to Ohio State from the National Institutes of Health, where he was the chief of the Surgical Neurology Branch