'Lead. Serve. Inspire.'

Through decades of excellence and innovation in medical education, Ohio State's College of Medicine has built a solid reputation for preparing physicians with exceptional clinical skills. With the entry of its 2016 College of Medicine class last August, Ohio State is once again enhancing this reputation as a national leader in medical education with its new Lead. Serve. Inspire. (LSI) curriculum.

"The college has redefined its broad approach to how we train our future physicians — the curriculum has been revamped into a modern and holistic approach to medicine that will position our students to be not only excellent physicians, but worldly thinkers with the capacity to truly change the world," explains Charles J. Lockwood, MD, dean of Ohio State's College of Medicine and holder of The Leslie H. and Abigail S. Wexner Dean's Chair in Medicine.

With the new LSI curriculum, the college is positioned to keep pace with the fluid changes in health care, Lockwood explains. LSI integrates basic science learned in the classroom with clinical science applied in the field. The competency-based framework of this innovative curriculum ensures that the College of Medicine is preparing future physicians to provide high caliber health care to a diverse population. The notion that Ohio State medical students develop into agents of change in the field of medicine with a commitment to the highest ethical standards and full world view is inherent to the spirit of LSI.

Even as the LSI curriculum rolls out, College of Medicine educators are examining and evaluating its success. On Jan. 16, more than 100 college faculty and staff gathered for the inaugural Medical Education Research Conclave in the OSU Biomedical Research Tower auditorium.

“Our goal for the conclave was to generate research ideas and connect faculty and staff with common research interests who otherwise might not meet each other,” said Daniel M. Clinchot, MD, vice dean of Education and associate professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Clinchot, who assumed the vice dean position in July, has played a central role in growing Ohio State's national reputation for curricular innovation. His method for evaluating the new curriculum is just as innovative. Using Medical Education Research Groups, or MERGs, he hopes to quickly gain insight from faculty and staff about what's working and what's not working in order to modify the curriculum and promote scholarship opportunities accordingly.

Clinchot put the MERG method to the test at January's conclave, which served as sort of a meeting of the minds set to a speed-dating-like process. Nine tables were assembled, labeled with signs signifying nine topic areas that had been deemed “ripe for research.” Among the topics were faculty development, learning technology and curricular innovation. Each table would become a Medical Education Research Group, with an assigned lead investigator and scribe. Guests were invited to join two research conversations over a 2-hour period.

“Attendees at the 'Curricular Innovations' table discussed the integration of clinical and foundational science in the Lead. Serve. Inspire. curriculum,” Clinchot said. “Faculty from Surgery, Pediatrics and the School of Health and Rehabilitation Services had research questions in this area and were able to discuss and connect with each other at the conclave.”

The topic of curricular innovation drew the most participants among the nine topics. John Davis, MD, PhD, associate dean of Medical Education, facilitated the conversation. He was chosen for his experience in research and scholarship in the area.

"I believe the topic was popular because it represented a multitude of possibilities, attracting people with ideas ranging from the use of iPads in clinical settings to measurable outcomes with ePortfolios in medical education," Davis said. "We are currently processing the data collected at the conclave and will be scheduling follow-up meetings with attendees who expressed an interest in participating in our research efforts."
Can You Prevent a ‘Broken Heart?’

Ginny Halloran  |  The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Many hearts will be filled this Valentine holiday, but a few will also be “broken.” That’s because being in love, or in any relationship, means taking a risk that all won’t go as planned.

Entering into a love relationship, especially a romantic one, can make you vulnerable because it gives the other person importance in your life. His or her behavior and choices can be a source of encouragement and support or rejecting and hurtful. There are no guarantees against the emotional pain of being vulnerable in this way, says George Gibbs of Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center. However, there are some behaviors we can practice to improve the likelihood that our relationships with loved ones have a better chance for success.

“Maintaining personal mental health is an important foundation for everything we do and certainly so for loving relationships. It can be self-defeating to focus on the other person in such a way that it deteriorates one’s own mental health. This will undermine all relationships eventually,” says Gibbs.

Gibbs is a pastoral care provider and clinical counselor involved in the support of patients and families as they work through mental or behavioral health challenges. Individual and group counseling are examples of the ongoing support offered patients and families at Ohio State’s Harding Hospital and Talbot Hall.

In addition to keeping personal mental health as a foundation, Gibbs offers these suggestions for building stronger relationships:

- **Focus on the positive.** Practice verbal and non-verbal expressions of affection and keep shared interests and activities a priority.

- **Practice forgiveness.** Even the best relationships include disappointments and hurts. Forgiveness entails the ability to acknowledge the pain, talk about it and, in time, to make an active decision to no longer dwell on the anger and disappointment, so that you can return to a more positive relationship.

- **Take personal responsibility.** Recognize that your own behavior can contribute to relational health or injury. Blaming your partner when you are unhappy in a relationship is the ‘common cold’ of relational conflict. Such blame becomes contagious and keeps relationships stuck. We have no direct control over the other person’s choices and behavior, which is why we become vulnerable in love. We do have control over our own choices and behaviors that can improve the emotional environment of the relationship and keep our mental health in balance.

Good mental health, just like fitness and physical health, requires a conscious effort and putting into practices healthy habits. Together, physical and mental wellness can add to greater enjoyment of life for us and our loved ones.

Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center offers a comprehensive program of Behavioral Health Services for all ages on an inpatient, partial inpatient and outpatient basis at OSU Harding Hospital (614-293-9600) and Talbot Hall (614-257-3760). For more information, visit medicalcenter.osu.edu > Patient Care > Healthcare Services > Mental Health & Psychiatry. If you are experiencing a crisis situation, dial 9-1-1 for help.

Stipends support students’ quest to help others

As Ohio State medical students prepare to help those who traditionally have had less access to quality health care, a government partnership program will help them focus more on providing care and less on medical school debt. Through the Medicaid Technical Assistance and Policy Program (MEDTAPP) Health Care Access Initiative (HCA), selected medical students receive stipends for their medical school education in exchange for a three-year commitment to work in a high-volume Medicaid site upon their graduation.

MEDTAPP is a University-Medicaid research partnership combining nonfederal and federal funds to support the efficient and effective administration of the Medicaid program. Funding consists of 50-percent Federal Financial Participation and 50-percent qualified nonfederal funds.

Typically, qualified nonfederal funds include university faculty and facility support. Recently, state general revenue funds and private contributions have also been used as funding sources. The program was designed to align with established, successful programs and leverage existing resources to train and retain healthcare practitioners to serve Medicaid beneficiaries in several areas, such as Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Pediatrics, Family Practice, and Dentistry.

During 2012, Ohio State’s College of Medicine completed its largest allocation of MEDTAPP awards for its third and fourth year students. “Medical school debt is a significant financial commitment which raises concerns among many students regarding future reimbursement and the ability to repay loans,” says Matt Flanigan, who received a stipend to complete his medical school training. “The MEDTAPP HCA Initiative support eases these concerns by providing financial incentive for students to participate.”
Brain pacemaker is used to treat Alzheimer’s disease

Eileen Scahill | The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

During a five-hour surgery last October at Ohio State’s Wexner Medical Center, Kathy Sanford became the first Alzheimer’s patient in the United States to have a pacemaker implanted in her brain.

She is the first of up to 10 patients who will be enrolled in a Food and Drug Administration-approved study at Ohio State to determine if using a brain pacemaker can improve cognitive and behavioral functioning in patients with Alzheimer’s disease. The Alzheimer’s study will run through 2015.

The study employs the use of deep brain stimulation (DBS), the same technology used to successfully treat about 100,000 patients worldwide with movement disorders such as Parkinson’s disease. In the study, researchers hope to determine whether DBS surgery can improve function governed by the frontal lobe and neural networks involved in cognition and behavior by stimulating certain areas of the brain with a pacemaker.

Ohio State’s Douglas Scharre, MD, a neurologist and director of the Division of Cognitive Neurology, and Ali Rezai, MD, neurosurgeon and director of the Neuroscience program, are conducting the study.

“If the early findings that we’re seeing continue to be robust and progressive, then I think that will be very promising and encouraging for us,” says Rezai, who also directs the Center for Neuromodulation at Ohio State. “But so far we are cautiously optimistic.”

The deep brain stimulation implant is similar to a cardiac pacemaker device with the exception that the pacemaker wires are implanted in the brain rather than the heart.

“Basically, the pacemakers send tiny signals into the brain that regulate the abnormal activity of the brain and normalize it more,” says Rezai. “Right now, from what we’re seeing in our first patient, I think the results are encouraging, but this is research. We need to do more research and understand what’s going on.”

The study, which will enroll people with mild or early-stage Alzheimer’s disease, will help determine if DBS has the potential to improve cognitive, behavioral and functional deficits.

Sanford continues to be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the technology, says Rezai. She says she volunteered for the study to help others avoid the angst she has suffered as Alzheimer’s slowly disrupted her life.

“I’m just trying to make the world a better place,” says Sanford. “That’s all I’m doing.”

Her father, Joe Jester, says he is proud that his daughter is participating in the study, and is pleased to see her showing improvements.

“This study seemed to just give us hope,” says Jester. “I guess we were at the place where you just don’t do anything and watch the condition deteriorate over the years, or try to do something that would give us hope and might stop the progression of this disease.”

Alzheimer’s disease is the most common form of degenerative dementia, affecting about 5.5 million Americans and costing more than $100 billion per year, ranking it the third costliest disease in terms of health care expenditures in the United States.

Alzheimer’s disease—which has no cure and is not easily managed—becomes progressively disabling with loss of memory, cognition, worsening behavioral function, in addition to a gradual loss of independent functioning, says Scharre.

The Ohio State Neurology team is nationally renowned for expertise in dementia and Alzheimer’s care and research. In addition, the Neuromodulation team at Ohio State has pioneered the use of DBS to treat Parkinson’s disease, as well as exploring the use of DBS for other neurological and neurobehavioral conditions. Researchers at the Neuromodulation center are completing a study of DBS in patients with traumatic brain injuries, and they have initiated a study of DBS for treating obesity.

This pioneering Ohio State research has been highlighted in national and international media. Additional media are scheduled to visit Ohio State to learn more. For updates on this story, go to OneSource (the Medical Center’s intranet) or the News & Media Room at medicalcenter.osu.edu.

‘Journey to Innovation’

Yvonne Efebera, MD, assistant professor of Hematology, grew up in Freetown, Sierra Leone, a place of many different languages and cultures. Among the many lessons she learned there, none has been more important than respect for people and family.

Raised by her grandparents, Efebera took on family responsibility at a young age. In fact, she used part of her loan for medical school at Penn State to help support her family.

“I had to pay the rent. I had to pay for school for the children…it was a hard time,” Efebera recalls.

A tradition that Efebera brought with her to the United States and shared with her two sons is to refer to elders as “aunt” and “uncle.” In Sierra Leone, this was considered a sign of respect.

“My oldest son will ask me, ‘Mom, how are we related to that person?’ And, I say you’re not [laughing] but he or she is older than you and so you have to give them that respect,” says Efebera.

Efebera carried that respect for and appreciation of family into her professional life as a hematologist. Hematology, a Division of Internal Medicine, cares for patients with diseases and disorders of the blood and blood-forming organs. As Efebera talks with patients describing their conditions, she wants her patients to feel comfortable and at ease. When she discusses treatment options, Efebera says she gives advice as if the patient truly is a family member.

“They’re part of me; they’re part of who I am. Obviously we can’t cure every cancer patient, but I try to be a part of their family and they really, really like that aspect…that they have a physician who really cares,” she explains.

Efebera credits her strength and compassion to her grandmother, who died when Efebera was a teen. Her grandmother always told Efebera that she would one day be her doctor.

“She taught me to ‘be who you are and say what you think.’ I’m sure she’s proud of me,” says Efebera.

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

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 print and online at 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.
Dr. Bryan Whitson is a leading cardiothoracic surgeon whose experience in heart and lung transplant further establishes Ohio State as one of the best adult transplant centers in the country. Like Dr. Whitson, THE WORLD’S BEST AND BRIGHTEST PHYSICIANS AND RESEARCHERS ARE COMING TO OHIO STATE to create the future of medicine.

What attracted me to Ohio State? I was excited to join a team that has a unified vision and a drive toward national excellence. At Ohio State, I have an opportunity to participate in leading-edge transplant care and innovative organ perfusion research that truly improve people’s lives.

How am I advancing personalized health care at Ohio State? I collaborate with my colleagues in pulmonary and cardiac medicine to create personalized treatment plans for patients with advanced lung and heart diseases. Each plan is tailored to meet each patient’s specific needs, which may include specialized medical management, cardiothoracic surgery, thoracic transplantation or mechanical support.

But for Ohio State...central Ohioans would not have access to the latest lifesaving and life-improving cardiopulmonary therapies, or the experts who create them.

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.

Bryan Whitson, MD, PhD
Cardiothoracic surgeon in Ohio State’s Division of Cardiac Surgery
Specializes in heart and lung transplant and mechanical assist devices
Came to Ohio State from the University of Minnesota

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