For many years, the Departments of Pediatrics at both Creighton University and UNMC have worked with Children’s Hospital in developing an outstanding residency. Formal agreements have been lacking and often there is confusion as to expectations. In the past 1½ years, since our RRC review, we have solidified our partnership with Creighton University and Children’s Hospital. We are in the process of finalizing an agreement that would make UNMC the sponsoring program and would identify Children’s Hospital and Creighton University Medical Center as major participants. In future recruitment the program’s name would be listed as UNMC/Creighton University/Children’s Hospital. This would also solidify our fiscal commitment and Children’s Hospital would contribute one-third of the excess costs above resident lines that often run in the range of $300,000 per year.

The Department, working closely with UMA, has been able to arrange a very favorable agreement with the Children’s PICU physicians to cover our Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and, so far, the results have been outstanding. Our pulmonologists at UNMC have done a superb job over the years, but felt they needed more support from intensivists and, I believe, the Transplant Team has been very pleased with the results. This is one area we hope to expand as an elective in the future since it would be an outstanding teaching rotation.

The Administrative Team of the Department of Pediatrics and the Administrative Team at Munroe-Meyer Institute have worked hard to begin to share resources and develop programs in a joint fashion. The emergence of autism as a strong research and clinical translational program has been, in part, due to both programs. The funding has been through the President of the University, MMI, and appointments in Pediatrics. The successful recruitment of two tenured Full Professors from John Hopkins University in the area of Applied Behavioral Analysis and Autism is an outstanding example of cooperative efforts between MMI and Pediatrics.

I believe the most important accomplishment over the past 1½ years has been the development of an outstanding Administrative Team, based on the outstanding individuals we have in the Department. I would like to personally thank all of my Administrative Team for their efforts. To administrate a complex department like Pediatrics, that is both decentralized and allows Sections a great deal of freedom, is much more difficult.

Chairman (Continued on page 6)
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Moves

After nearly 40 years in the same location, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at The Nebraska Medical Center will soon have a new, larger home. With the completion of the Center for Clinical Excellence, the NICU opens in mid-November.

“There were three major goals for the new unit,” said Dr. David Bolam, neonatologist and medical director of the NICU. “One was to ensure that the facility is developmentally appropriate and that light and sound will not negatively impact the babies’ development. The second is that it is a family friendly environment and third is that patients have individual rooms.”

Several years have gone into the development of the creation of the new NICU. An architect from Chicago along with HDR worked on the new design based on model units in Salt Lake City, northern and southern California. Dr. Robert White from the Indiana University was consulted to aid in making the new design developmentally appropriate.

The new unit features private rooms and expands from 5,600 square feet to 20,000 square feet. The space has controlled lighting and will be carpeted to reduce noise. A noiseless alarm system has been installed to ensure the sound remains below 70 decibels.

Since the neonatologists are active educators of medical students, residents, nursing students, and other ancillary support, there is going to be ample room for teaching activities. A large conference room will be available for teaching rounds and there is lounge space for students and residents to study.

There is also going to be learning space for families. The NICU will have a library and televisions with DVD players so the staff can educate parents about the care of their child. To ensure the noise level is kept minimal, head phones are required use with the televisions.

An open house is scheduled for employees on October 28th and another for the general public on October 30th. The official move to the new space is scheduled for November 16th. A special open house for referring physicians will be held on October 28th from 5-7PM.
Summer Undergraduate Research Flourishes

Summer research for undergraduate students is a tradition in the Department of Pediatrics. Andrea Wilson, now a junior at University of Nebraska – Lincoln, just finished her second summer in the laboratory of Pascale H. Lane. Her project involved culture of kidney slices from male and female rats in media with and without estradiol or dihydrotestosterone. As Andrea related the value of the experience, “I left with a solid foundation of the world of research, gaining knowledge about type 1 diabetes, as well getting to know an amazing research team. I believe that it is the atmosphere and people who made a lasting impression.”

The summer research program is a good way for potential students to experience UNMC and the world of medical science. Andrea plans to attend UNMC once her undergraduate studies are complete, with a long-term goal in Pediatrics. She is particularly interested in the problem of childhood obesity and the rising rate of type 2 diabetes in children.

Applications for summer research become available via the web in the spring. A list of available projects and investigators will be posted so students can apply.

Journal Publications

- Ellis CR, Hale KL. Autism.


- Ryan J, Reid R, Epstein MH, Ellis C, Evans JH. Pharmacological intervention research for academic outcomes for students with ADHD, Behavioral Disorders, 30, 135-154, 2005.


Neonatologist Comes “Home”

Ann Anderson Berry, M.D., grew up outside of Casper, Wyoming, on a ranch, and attended the University of Wyoming with an Honors degree in Zoology and Physiology. She then attended Creighton Medical School, and completed her pediatrics residency at UNMC from July, 1998 to June, 2001.

She fell in love with neonatology early in medical school, and continued to enjoy the NICU throughout residency. Ann did a fellowship in Neonatology at the University of Utah School of Medicine in Salt Lake City Utah, and after fellowship arrived back "home" to practice here at The Nebraska Medical Center.

She was thrilled to have the opportunity to come back to Omaha, and she has enjoyed working with all of her partners, the neonatal nurse practitioners, nurses, and the rest of the staff in the NICU.

“We have a fantastic team, and will soon have a unit that will truly be state of the art,” said Dr. Anderson Berry.

She is married to her college sweetheart, Thomas Berry, DDS, who is opening his dental practice this fall. They have a 3-year-old daughter, Elizabeth. They are eagerly anticipating the birth of their second child in March.

New Critical Care Service at The Nebraska Medical Center

Critical Care coverage for the UNMC Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) is now being provided by a group of physicians with a new focus. According to Dr. George Reynolds, Pediatric Intensivists are trained as generalists in a subspecialty setting. “We tend to focus on the coordination of care between a wide variety of specialists. Communication is key.”

Dr. Reynolds and his partners, who are Critical Care Specialists, have recruited a new physician to join them to support this additional critical care coverage at UNMC and the ongoing demands at Children’s Hospital. “We have been very busy since we started the new coverage” says Dr. Reynolds, “which truly validates the need for these services at UNMC”.

Dr. Reynolds’ group includes Drs. Mohan Mysore, Ed Truemper, Jayesh Thakker, Andrew Macfayden, Jeff DeMare, Luke Noronha and newly recruited Susan Day. Dr. Paul Sammut, Pediatric Pulmonologist, will continue his work in the PICU as a key member of the new team. A search for a full time nurse practitioner is currently underway to additionally enhance the service.
The UNMC Department of Pediatrics Quarterly Nexus is back. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide volunteer faculty, resident alumni, and all of our readers with updates about what is happening on campus in patient care, research and education.

Under Donna Kuntzelman’s leadership, an editorial board was developed to streamline the publishing of the Nexus. Due to increased responsibilities, Donna could no longer take on this task. With Gary Beck back at the helm, the editorial board is once again interviewing staff and planning future editions.

The Nexus is going to be published in January, March, July, and October.

If you, the reader, have events or ideas for information that may be published in this newsletter, please feel free to contact Gary at gbeck@unmc.edu or (402) 559-7351 or any one on the editorial board. The board consists of the following individuals: Dr. Pascale Lane, Patty Davis, Maureen Fitzgerald, Priscilla Phillips, and Melanie Schrack.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and find the information useful.