New Chapter for Lung Transplant

As part of a long-term strategic plan for the Comprehensive Transplant Center at the Wexner Medical Center, Dr. Higgins and his team have been completing a strategic planning update that includes reactivation of the Lung Transplant Program in 2012. This mission critical effort will complement the outstanding cardiac and abdominal organ transplant programs and will establish one of only a few comprehensive transplant programs in the region. Dr. Ahmet Kilic was recruited from the University of Virginia with a background and advanced experience in heart and lung transplantation to join the staff. Dr. Higgins has had a number of clinical and administrative roles leading successful thoracic and abdominal organ transplant programs dating back to 1993 when he initiated a Medicare approved lung transplantation program at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

Patients who would benefit from this program in Central Ohio include those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, cystic fibrosis and pulmonary hypertension. In conjunction with a strong pulmonary medicine team, led by Amy Pope-Harman MD, we are actively recruiting additional staff including a lead surgeon and pulmonologist who are critically important to the success and initiation of this program.

Stay tuned for exciting announcements about pending recruitments to sustain this effort in the coming months.

From The Director

2011 was an exciting year for the Division of Cardiac Surgery at The Ohio State University Medical Center. A number of important milestones were achieved including the initiation of the Transcatheter Core Valve aortic valve program (TAVR) in collaboration with the division of cardiology, the recruitment of Dr. Ahmet Kilic, and preliminary application for reinstatement of the lung transplantation program. Each of these important milestones was further evidence of the resurgence of the division of cardiac surgery as one of the key programs in the cardiovascular signature program.

In support of these successes, the division and its partners in anesthesia, nursing, perfusion and physician’s assistants came together to fortify its commitment to go from “Excellence to Eminence”. On February 6, 2012, close to 100 members of the cardiovascular enterprise convened to review cardiovascular surgery program goals and objectives in the areas of mechanical circulatory support, heart transplantation, valve surgery, aortic surgery and minimally invasive approaches to cardiovascular disease management. Participants in the Cardiovascular Surgery Retreat reviewed strengths and opportunities for continued success and identified individual and team strategies to grow the programs regionally and nationally.

Understanding the importance of individual commitments to overall team success, the group recognized key strategies to accomplish their goals. Mutual respect, professionalism and teamwork were all identified as key principles to accomplish the program goals. On behalf of the leadership of the cardiovascular enterprise I want to thank each and every participant in this activity as we strive to join the elite ranks of cardiovascular programs across the country. Like any “team sport”, individual commitments directed to a common vision often lead to great collective success and we look forward to a bright future with these principles in mind.

Robert S. D. Higgins

OSU Medical Center Changes Its Name!

The Ohio State University Board of Trustees voted February 10, 2012 to name The Ohio State University Medical Center in honor of university alumnus Leslie H. Wexner in recognition of his three decades of leadership and service to the university. The medical center is now known as Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University.
Noteworthy News

♦ In May Dr. Patrick Ross will be featured in a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) special highlighting his advancements in Photodynamic Therapy. Congratulations Dr. Ross!

♦ Dr. Michael Firstenberg co-authored an article published in the 1/18/12 issue of JAMA entitled “Bridging Antiplatelet Therapy With Cangrelor in Patients Undergoing Cardiac Surgery”. Congratulations Dr. Firstenberg!

♦ Dr. John Sirak participated in the January 30 Poster Crawl: STS 48th Annual Meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. He presented: “The Five-Box Thoracoscopic Maze Procedure: Interim Results”

♦ Dr. Chittoor Sai-Sudhakar co-authored “Therapeutic Targeting of PTEN Modulates Vascular Remodeling in Chronic Hypoxia-Induced Pulmonary Hypertension” and presented January 30 at the STS 48th Annual Meeting.

♦ Ryan Campagna & Lorraine Fowler, participants in our 2011 Summer Scholars Program, made their inaugural trip to their first STS Annual Meeting. Both received funding support for their trip based on merit and commitment to cardiac and thoracic surgery.

♦ The Division of Thoracic Surgery and The Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute is hosting its First Annual Symposium on Photodynamic Medicine on May 11 and 12, 2012 in Columbus, Ohio. Contact Erin McAvoy for further details.

♦ Recent graduate Dr. Jason Rousseau along with faculty member Dr. Michael Firstenberg, recently wrote a chapter in the book Front Lines of Thoracic Surgery entitled "Post Myocardial Infarction Ventricular Septal Defect". Congrats Dr. Rousseau & Dr. Firstenberg!

Aortic Center of Excellence

The Aortic Center of Excellence (ACE) has been established at the Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University with a specific focus to treat aortic pathology. The ACE combines the expertise of vascular surgeons, cardiac surgeons, cardiologists, anesthesiologists and radiologists in the shared mission to provide exemplary, individualized multidisciplinary care. The ACE offers the latest advanced imaging technology both in and out of the operating room for the benefit our patients. Through various avenues, including monthly roundtable discussions involving all of the specialties, a comprehensive consultation approach is taken in deciding on a treatment course for each patient. Conventional open and endovascular techniques are discussed, with the availability of the hybrid operating room having the capacity to perform both open and stent grafting in one setting. In addition to surgical evaluation, the ACE in combination with Nationwide Children’s Hospital, has a large database of patients with Marfan’s syndrome to allow for genetic testing and counseling for family members. The 24 hour/7 day physician hotline of 1-855-204-1200 is available for any further information or referrals to the Aortic Center. The creation of the Aortic Center of Excellence at the Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University is another example in the commitment to transition from "Excellence to Eminence."