

MATTERS OF THE HEART



A SECOND CHANCE:
DeStefano at the MGH following her surgery

MGH first in New England to use new transplant technology

NATIONALLY, there are 2,000 heart transplants performed every year. That number could double or even quadruple within the next few years thanks to an innovative organ transportation device that recently benefitted MGH patient Amy DeStefano, 40, the first person in New England to receive a heart transplant employing the novel technology.

“What a truly life-changing experience and what an incredible team of health care providers,” says DeStefano, who has now returned to her home in Portsmouth, N.H. “I always felt they had my best interests in mind after 32 months of heart failure. I’m responding well to physical therapy, and although I know it’s going to take time, I’m on my way. I’m forever grateful to my donor and his or her family for giving me the opportunity to raise my two beautiful children and for second chances.”



HEART IN A BOX: The portable Organ Care System

The so-called “heart in a box” technology is vastly different from the traditional method of packing a donor heart on ice until transplantation. Instead, the portable Organ Care System – created by TransMedics, Inc. – delivers warm, oxygenated, nutrient-enriched blood to the heart after it is removed from a donor and monitors it while it continues to beat in a nearly normal state.

“It’s very innovative,” says Bruce Rosengard, MD, surgical director of Cardiac Transplantation, who performed DeStefano’s transplant. “We are really excited because there is tremendous promise for the future. The trial has found that the hearts have been preserved safely and effectively.”

The new technology slows a heart’s deterioration, which may allow for longer transport times in the future. Using current methods, four hours is the longest a heart can be sustained before it becomes unusable. “This limits us geographically and affects which organs we can use,” Rosengard says. “We hope to dramatically increase the number of transplants we will be able to perform.” ■

Joint Commission survey window opens

WITH THE NEW YEAR comes a new opportunity to showcase Excellence Every Day – the MGH’s commitment to providing the highest quality, safest care that meets or exceeds all standards set by the hospital and external organizations. The window for the MGH’s triennial Joint Commission survey has

opened, and surveyors are expected to visit between now and August 2012. The Joint Commission last visited the MGH in August 2009, and the survey report was excellent, with only two direct impact findings. This year’s goal is to complete the survey with no direct impact findings.

“We view the survey as a chance

to demonstrate at a national level the commitment of MGH staff to Excellence Every Day,” says Peter L. Slavin, MD, MGH president. “We uphold the highest standards of quality and safety not because it is required but because it is the right thing to do.”

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– Joint Commission

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The 2012 survey will be very similar to previous ones. Six surveyors will notify the hospital of their arrival upon the first day of the survey. During the course of the five-day visit, the surveyors will visit patient care units and practice sites across the MGH and will be escorted by staff members at all times.

“Every MGH employee should expect to interact with a surveyor and be able to talk about his or her role in Excellence Every Day,” says John Belknap, director of Corporate Compliance. “If you have questions about what to expect during the survey, speak with your supervisor, department quality chair or call the Compliance Office at 617-726-5109.”

Throughout the coming months, the Excellence Every Day Communications Subcommittee – a subgroup of the MGH Joint Commission Operations Committee – will be ramping up communications about topics that will be key to a successful survey. These topics include:

- Knowing the top institutional performance improvement goals for 2012;
- Understanding that each and every employee has a role in the quality and safety improvement process;
- Closely adhering to policies to reduce the risk of hospital-acquired infections, whether using proper hand hygiene or eliminating the presence of food and drink in patient care areas;
- Ensuring appropriate management of medications, including reconciling patient medications in inpatient areas and ambulatory practices; and
- Maintaining the safest possible environment of care for patients, for example, by keeping patient areas clear of unnecessary items or equipment.

Once the surveyors arrive, staff will be kept updated about the survey’s progress through hospitalwide communications. To learn more about ensuring Excellence Every Day for MGH patients and their loved ones, visit the recently redesigned website at <http://intranet.massgeneral.org/excellenceeveryday>.



COUNTLESS BENEFITS:
From left, Slavin, Warshaw,
Rattner, Flier and Lillemoe

Healthy brain, healthy life

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE to change your brain. That was the key message at the Jan. 19 Senior HealthWISE “Boost Your Brain Power” event, where MGH neurologist Marie Pasinski, MD, spoke to a standing-room-only crowd about the importance of keeping the brain healthy, vibrant and resilient. “Your brain is very dynamic. It’s constantly changing and making new connections,” Pasinski said. “It has the ability to make new brain cells throughout your life. It truly is your most important organ.”



PASINSKI

The key to enhancing brain power is to increase neuroplasticity, or the brain’s ability to remodel itself. Pasinski, author of *Beautiful Brain*, *Beautiful You: Look Radiant from the Inside Out by Empowering Your Mind*, presented three key methods that can be introduced into one’s daily life to help with this process.

Indulge in the new. “This is the use it or lose it mindset,” Pasinski said. “You have to do more than puzzles or Sudoku because if you keep doing them, it’s no longer challenging the brain. Take up a new activity and make it a truly educational experience. Learning physically changes the brain.” For example, an artist who tends to use the right side of the brain should try a new computer program or play chess to challenge the analytical side of the brain.

Commit to exercise. “Exercise is one of the most important, wonderful things you can do for your brain. It increases brain blood flow which promotes the growth of new neurons and synapses. It also improves mood, lessens anxiety and decreases the risk of dementia,” Pasinski said.

Socialize the mind. “Your brain is designed to socialize,” Pasinski said. “Seek out a new group of people with similar interests, or catch up with an old friend to keep the brain involved and engaged. The way you use your brain determines its structure – and it’s never too late to think about changing your brain for the better.”

For more information about MGH Senior HealthWISE, call 617-724-6756. ■

Rattner named first incumbent to Warshaw Family Professorship

AN ENDOWED HARVARD PROFESSORSHIP

offers countless benefits to its recipients, to the MGH and to the field of medicine. On Jan. 20, Harvard Medical School (HMS) Dean Jeffrey Flier, MD, and MGH President Peter L. Slavin, MD, welcomed guests to a celebration of the new Warshaw Family Professorship in Surgery. The chair was established to honor former MGH surgeon-in-chief Andrew L. Warshaw, MD, and his wife, Brenda, a former MGH nurse. The first incumbent is David Rattner, MD, chief of the Division of General and Gastrointestinal Surgery.

Warshaw, who practiced at the MGH for more than four decades, served as chief of the Department of Surgery from 1997 to 2011. He remains on staff as a senior physician consultant for the Partners and MGH International Programs and for MGH/MGPO Network and Center Development.

“It is truly unique that this professorship unites two individuals who have shared a mutually beneficial relationship for more than 30 years as a mentor-mentee and as close personal friends,” said Keith D. Lillemoe, MD, current surgeon-in-chief, who introduced Warshaw. “Together, they have advanced general and gastrointestinal surgery at the MGH and throughout the United States.”

In his remarks, Warshaw expressed the value of endowed professorships: as surgeon-in-chief, he was the first incumbent to the chair created in honor of his predecessor, W. Gerald Austen, MD, chair of the MGH Chiefs’ Council, who also was present at the Jan. 20 event. “An endowed chair is so much more than an inanimate honorific,” said Warshaw. “Funding supports and enables one’s life work, facilitating the path to acquiring new knowledge and improving

the care of our patients, which is the charge of academic leadership.”

Warshaw described how Rattner has already proven to be a leader in his field. Among his numerous accomplishments are facilitating the team that performed the first transanal resection of the rectum for cancer; founding the Natural Orifice Surgery Consortium for Assessment and Research; co-founding the Center for Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology; and serving as the first surgeon elected president of the world’s two leading gastrointestinal surgical societies.

“It is a tremendous honor to be the first Warshaw Family Professor of Surgery,” said Rattner. “My thanks to those patients, colleagues and friends of Andy whose gifts made the establishment of this endowed professorship possible. I will do my best to carry the torch that you helped light.” ■

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YEAR OF THE DRAGON: Members of the Cambridge Center for Chinese Culture Dance Group perform during the Lunar New Year celebration.



Happy New Year!

MORE THAN 150 people from throughout Partners turned out for the annual MGH Chinese Scientists and Staff Association’s (CSSA)

Lunar New Year celebration on Jan. 27 in the Thier Conference Room. The holiday celebration is traditionally one of the biggest festivals in China and other Eastern Asian countries and is one of the CSSA’s largest events. Performers included MGH staff as well as other Boston-area dancers and musicians. Guests also dined on a full buffet of authentic Chinese cuisine during the three-hour celebration.

“This annual event is one of the most important for the Chinese community at MGH,” said Ying-Hua Wang, PhD, research scientist in the Center for Regenerative Medicine, who serves as co-president of the CSSA. “It was a beautiful celebration to welcome the Year of the Dragon, which is associated with the earthly branch symbol and is considered the luckiest year in the Chinese Zodiac.”



WHAT'S HAPPENING**MGH Senior HealthWISE**

MGH Senior HealthWISE will host the following free events for seniors age 60 years or older: a lecture, "Eating Right With Color," Feb. 16 from 11 am to noon in the Haber Conference Room with guest speaker Tara Linitz, RD, LDN, MGH Be Fit dietician; a book club discussion of "The Brothers Bulger" by Howie Carr Feb. 16 from 3 to 4 pm at the West End Library; and hypertension screenings Feb. 27 from 1:30 to 2:30 pm at the West End Library. For more information or to register for the lecture, call 617-724-6756.

Clinical Research seminars

The MGH Clinical Research Program is offering the following seminars in the Simches Center, Room 3.110:

- "Ethics and Clinical Research Protocols" Feb. 21 from 3 to 4:30 pm. Participants will receive an overview of the ethical foundation

of Human Subject Protection in clinical research.

- "Applied Biostatistics for Clinical Trials" March 6, March 13 and March 20 from 3 to 4:30 pm. Elkan Halpern, PhD, chief statistician for the Department of Radiology, will present a statistical approach to problems commonly encountered in research.

Register at <http://hub.partners.org>. For information, contact Suzanne Powell at smpowell@partners.org.

Provider directories available online

Medical provider directories for the health plans offered to MGH employees are available online:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield: <http://www.bluecrossma.com/partners>
- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care: <http://www.providerlookuponline.com/Harvardpilgrim/pa7/Search.aspx>
- Tufts Health Plan: <http://www.tuftshealthplan.com/partners>

For questions about medical plans or the online provider directories, contact the Benefits Office at 617-726-8133 or email ibenefits@partners.org.

'Go Red for Women'

In collaboration with the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women campaign, the MGH health centers and the MGH Community Health Associates Wellness Center will host a series of heart health events for women during the month of February. Events will feature information about heart and vascular health, stress reduction, diabetes, smoking cessation and relationship safety; blood pressure screenings and body mass index measurements; and a "Wheel of Fortune for Heart Health." All events will be held from 10 am to 2 pm on Feb. 7 at the Revere HealthCare Center, Feb. 10 at the Chelsea HealthCare Center, Feb. 14 at the Charleston HealthCare Center, Feb. 16 at North End Waterfront Health and Feb. 21 at Everett Family Care. For more information, call 781-485-6400.

Black History Month film

The MGH Patient Care Services Diversity Program and the Department of Psychiatry Diversity



GREEN MAKES GOLD: The Herscot Atrium of the Lunder Building

Lunder Building earns gold

THE LUNDER BUILDING has officially received a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification level, the internationally recognized mark of green building excellence, from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED measures sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials used and indoor environmental quality.

Dyson appointed scientific director

NICK DYSON, PHD, has been appointed scientific director of the MGH Cancer Center. Since joining the center 20 years ago, Dyson has established himself as an international leader in the study of cell cycle regulation. His findings have the potential to guide the design of novel, genetically focused therapies for many cancers.

"Dr. Dyson brings to this position an outstanding record of scientific accomplishments, a strong commitment to the success of our basic and translational cancer research programs, and an exceptional dedication to supporting and mentoring our junior faculty and trainees," says Daniel Haber, MD, PhD, director of the Cancer Center.

In his new role, Dyson will oversee laboratory investigators within the Center for Cancer Research and help shape the scientific vision of the Cancer Center. He succeeds Jeffrey Settleman, PhD, who left the MGH last year to lead oncology discovery at Genentech.



DYSON

Committee will present a film, "Can We Talk: Learning from Boston's Busing/Desegregation Crisis," Feb. 10 from 10 to 11 am in the O'Keefe Auditorium. For more information, call Deborah Washington, RN, at 617-724-7469.

IN GENERAL

The MGH Compliance Office was recognized with a Best Practice Award for the Integration of Compliance, Quality and Patient Safety from the Health Ethics Trust. The award acknowledges the MGH for its efforts to align its internal

compliance reporting structure, as well as its ongoing work in developing a process for Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement.

The MGH was named a finalist of the prestigious 2011 Foster G. McGaw Prize for Excellence in Community Service from the American Hospital Association and will receive \$10,000 to support its community health initiatives. The award honors the MGH's broad-based efforts to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of its community.



Submit news tips and story ideas to **MGH Hotline**

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