

January 2018

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## Thank You

I truly believe it is an honor and privilege to work with you as part of our medical staff at UnityPoint Health. Each year you confirm this through the care you provide to our patients and your generosity in donating your holiday gift back to us to help our community.

This year, through your generosity, we were able to donate 10 gift cards to the Catholic Worker House, 160 gift cards to Abbe Health, and many went to our own associates in need. We were also able to donate food to various organizations so they could serve those in need.

I received thank you notes regarding the monetary donations we made to the two free clinics we have in Cedar Rapids on behalf of the medical staff. Community Health Free Clinic will use their donation to help patients with emergency dental needs that have nowhere else to go. His Hands Free Clinic will purchase medications for individuals who can't afford them. They are able to purchase medications at a reduced rate so our gift will leverage \$20,000 of medication! It's wonderful to see and work with all of the charitable people here and to be a part of serving very deserving charities!

I hope you all were able to take some time to celebrate the occasion, the opportunities and the people in your lives. May you all continue to go above and beyond in all that you do. We look forward to our continued relationship through the year.

Hannv 2018!



## Enjoy retirement, Dr. Barnett

With new advancements and technology in the medical field, especially in cardiothoracic and vascular surgeries, Dr. Mark Barnett has never stopped learning. "Things change and you have to go with the times and learn new techniques, otherwise you're doing surgery that's 40 years old," says Barnett.

The open heart program started at St. Luke's in 1978. Barnett joined the open heart team in 1994, and the list of new procedures and techniques he's been a part of, is long. "I was sitting down with my nurse, June, who has been with me all this time, and we came up with quite a list of changes," he says. A lot of the changes are in the recovery time of the patient. "We look for ways to minimize the size of the incision and make the surgery less invasive on the patient," he says. According to Dr. Barnett, St. Luke's has been on the cutting edge in vascular and cardiothoracic surgery. "The equipment's better, the techniques are better, and I'd like to think I've improved as well," he says. But it's not just him doing the procedures. "It's absolutely vital to have a team that knows what they are doing. They care about the patient and everything that goes on in and outside of the operating room." It's because of the care he and his team has provided that's saved countless lives at St. Luke's for the past 24 years. "I believe this place is a level above the rest, and it shows in the surgeries, surveys and follow-up appointments," says Barnett. "I've been very happy here, and I've enjoyed working with good people," he says.



We've enjoyed your talents too, Dr. Barnett. Enjoy retirement!

## Hydromorphone Shortage

Hurricanes and product recalls have generated a significant impact upon the procurement of pharmaceutical and surgical supplies. A critical shortage of parenteral hydromorphone has presented. The following are recommended contingencies:

1. If the patient is taking oral medications, transition parenteral agents to the oral route.
2. Consider morphine as an alternative to parenteral hydromorphone:

Agents	Equivalent PO	IV/SQ/IM dose	Ratio PO/IV
Morphine	30 mg	10 mg	3:1
Hydromorphone	7.5 mg	1.5 mg	5:1



Dustin Arnold, DO  
CMO

All indications at this juncture, is that the impact may be sustained and permanent for some suppliers. Resources are dedicated to solving this supply chain disruption. Thank you in advance for executing the above contingencies. If questions remain please have no trepidation in contacting Dr. Arnold.

## Potential Problems with Opioid Prescriptions

Prescribers may receive calls from pharmacies having issues processing prescriptions for opioids (morphine, oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, etc.) because insurance plans are placing more restrictions on their use. This includes opioids used for all indications, including pain and cough.

### Potential issues include the following:

- **Quantity limit per day** (some plans limit patients to as few as six tablets per day)
- **Quantity limit per prescription** (some plans limit to 240ml of liquid or #42 tablets per Rx)
- **Days' supply limit** (some plans limit prescriptions to a seven day supply only)
- **Refill too soon** (some plans require 90% of the tablets to be gone before a new prescription can be filled)
- **Number of times patients can fill prescriptions** (some plans allow as few as two prescriptions per sixty days)
- **Any use of a long acting opioid** (such as MS Contin or Oxycontin) without prior approval

### Potential consequences of these issues may include any of the following:

- **The pharmacy may not able to process prescriptions through the patient's insurance.** This results in the patient having to pay out of pocket for the entire cost of the medication. Depending on the medication prescribed, costs to patients may be substantial.
- **Pharmacies may be able to fill only a partial quantity of a prescription.** This is primarily an issue with C-II narcotics (oxycodone, hydrocodone). For example, if a prescription is written for #60 hydrocodone tablets but insurance limits to #42 tablets, the pharmacy would notify the prescriber. The patient then will not legally be able to receive the rest of the #18 tablets on the prescription once it is partially filled (certain exceptions for hospice patients).
- **Physicians may have to obtain prior authorization (PA) in order to exceed these guidelines, which may vary depending on the insurance plan.** Unfortunately, there are no guidelines that are consistent across all insurance plans at this time. PA information and formulary listings are available by calling the toll free number on the back of the patient's insurance card or by going to the insurance plan's website. Insurance plans may require a certain form for PA submission, which would be available on their website. Other plans may allow PA requests to be done over the phone.

Please note that pharmacies are typically unable to obtain prior authorizations for patients, since requests must come directly from the prescriber or the prescriber's agent.

# CMO Update

## Documentation Update

Accurate Documentation includes not only the diagnosis but also Clinical Indicators. The Clinical Indicators are what helps your documentation to reflect the NEED for hospitalization. CDI nurses send out queries asking for Clinical Indicators.

Example:

Dr. \_\_\_\_ Respiratory failure has been documented, can you please add additional clinical indicators to support this diagnosis.

OR

Dr. \_\_\_\_ Sepsis has been documented. Can you please add your clinical indicators per SOFA criteria for sepsis OR has sepsis has been ruled out. If ruled out, please document sepsis ruled out.

These additional clinical indicators can be documented anywhere within the progress note; the subjective, objective, physical exam, or assessment/plan sections. Be sure your documentation is clear, with no contradictions. Such as:

Subjective Data: appears SOB, using accessory muscles when breathing.....

Physical Exam: No distress, respers easy, 18

**This Documentation is contradictory and puts the chart at risk for insurance denial.**

Remember also: If your patient stays <2 overnights to write your "Rapid Recovery Statement". This statement should convey the message that the patient got better more quickly than was initially expected.

If you have any questions please Contact a member of the Documentation team – Lynne Johnson 369-7073 / Carrie Bantz 286-4307 / Kelly Pottebaum 558-4959 / Rhonda Holtkamp 560-6928 or the Office of Medical Affairs.

## Diabetes and Kidney Fund

On behalf of the many individuals who struggle every day with Diabetes and Kidney disease, Unity Point Health has started a Diabetes and Kidney Fund which provides financial assistance to patients who have chronic kidney disease and reside within the Cedar Rapids community.

The Diabetes and Kidney Fund is a vital community resource – to date we have been able to help more than 75 patients in the community since its establishment in 2015. The fund helps individuals better manage factors affecting their already complex medical condition. It helps defray costs related to: Medication Expenses/Supplies, Mobility Aids, and Transportation Costs.

The Diabetes & Kidney fund assists eligible patients who have chronic kidney disease stage 3 and/or diabetes. Patients are eligible to apply for funds once in a rolling 12 month period with a maximum payout of \$250/year.

Success can only be achieved with the assistance of individuals such as yourself. **Your support can help us to continue this vital important work.** I would like to invite you to consider donating to this wonderful cause that has proven successful outcomes for individuals right here in our community. If you have any questions, or would like to make donation arrangements, please contact Holly White at [holly.white@unitypoint.org](mailto:holly.white@unitypoint.org) or by phone at (319)298-2258. Your support will continue to make this important work possible and improve the quality of life for our families, friends, and neighbors.



Abha Saxena, MD, PhD  
Chair, Diabetes & Kidney Fund

# Upcoming Events and Information

## Addressing Rural-Urban Disparities in Acute Stroke: The AirDoc Trial Experience

Enrique Leira, MD, University of Iowa

Tuesday, January 30 at 12:00 p.m.

CRMEF Conference Room

RSVP to Cherie Weber at (319) 297-2306 or cweber@crmef.org

## MakerHealth Event

The first MakerHealth Pop Up Lab at UnityPoint Health – Cedar Rapids was on Dec. 8. MakerHealth is a national initiative which encourages nurses and healthcare professionals to get creative and improve and create new tools and devices that lead to better patient care. Several UnityPoint Health employees participated in the pop up lab and we look forward to seeing those ideas come to life. Keep your creativity coming!

## Paging Physicians

St. Luke's has received information from physicians about being paged back to only a four digit number. When outside the hospital it is impossible to know what prefix to use and delays the time for the physician to return a call. Please remember to enter all seven digits in the call back number any time a physician is paged. Also, when outside the hospital, the last four numbers that begin with a "2" or a "3" cannot connect from an outside number so please verify the call back number.

## Welcome Dr. Aluri

UnityPoint Clinic Diabetes & Kidney Center welcomes Vidya Aluri, MD to endocrinology team. Dr. Aluri attended medical school at Rangaraya Medical College in India, completed her residency at Rochester General Hospital in New York, and her fellowship at the University of Iowa Medical School and College. She is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.



Dr. Aluri believes that a physician must be up to date with the most current medical research data. She says, "It is important to me that patients are treated as a dignified human being and not as a number or a statistic. I chose pursue an endocrinology specialty as it is a cognitive specialty. It allows me to play "medical detective" where I integrate the patients labs, history, records, imaging studies to diagnose and treat them appropriately. I listen to my patients and try to educate them through every step of their therapy as they need to be informed decision makers."

**As a healthcare provider, she is motivated each day by** the ability to help a patient achieve a better quality of life and to learn something new each day from patients and their medical condition. "I believe in a total commitment to the doctor patient relationship and treating my patients as a whole, their condition, concerns and fears."

Dr. Aluri performs thyroid biopsies and her areas of expertise/clinical interests include thyroid disease, bone densitometry, osteoporosis, pituitary gland, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, obesity, and weight management.

To discuss or refer a patient to Dr. Aluri, please call 319-298-2200 or use the direct provider line at 319-298-2294.



### Contact:

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**UnityPoint Health**  
Cedar Rapids