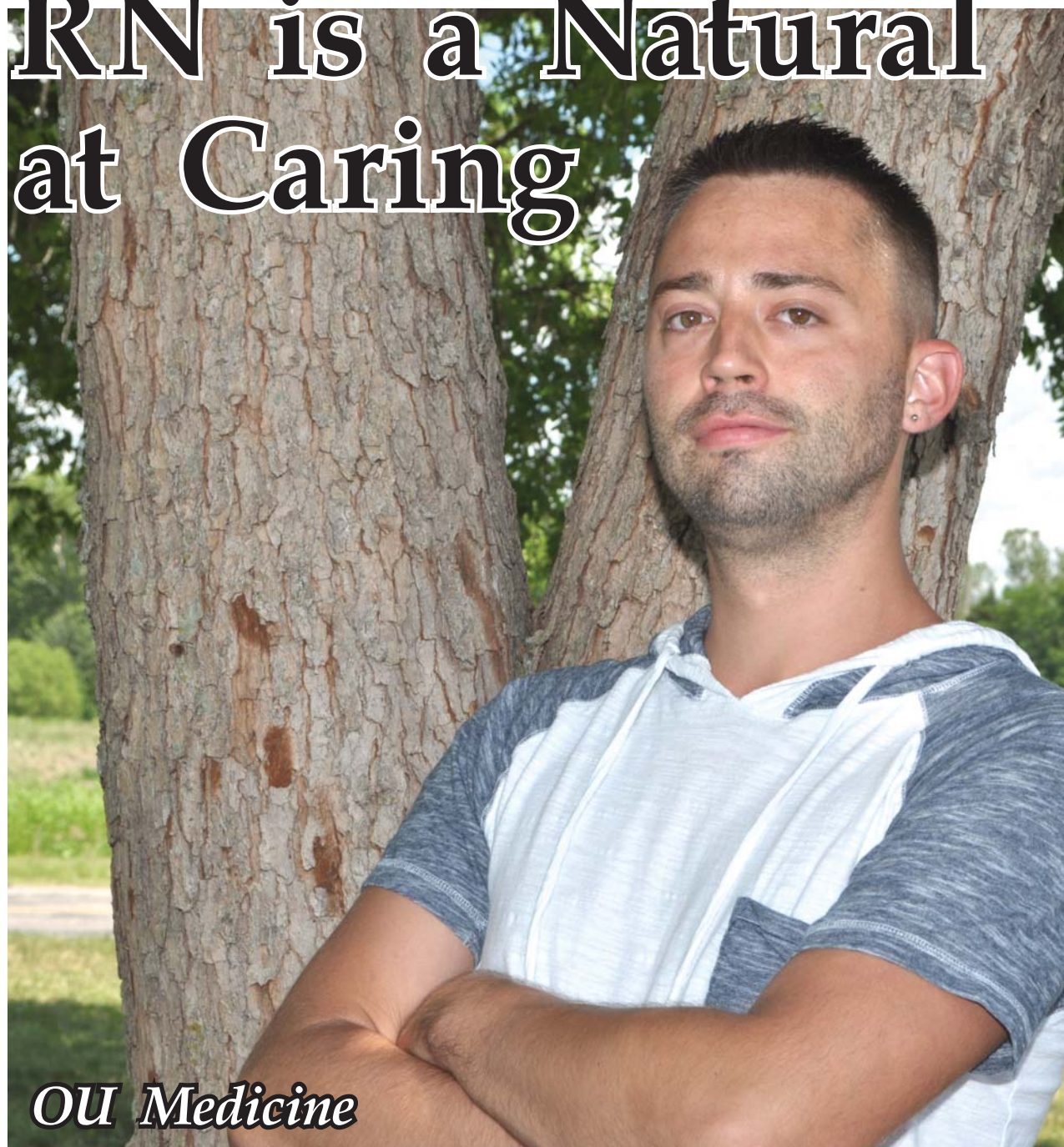


RN is a Natural at Caring



With a desire to help others, Kris Buckley, RN is dedicated to his job, taking on a leader role as he sets his goals high. Kris enjoys working at OU Medicine.

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

There are many nurses that give their all in their work. That is the case for Kris Buckley, RN. You will find Kris caring for patients at OU Medicine. A top-notch individual, Kris is always willing to help.

"I finished LPN school in 2014 and became an RN in 2016. I have always been an empathetic person and felt it was in my nature to care. As a child, I would bring home

sick and injured animals every chance I got with the intent of nursing them back to health," Kris commented. "When I was eighteen years old, I followed in my mom's footsteps and became a CNA. Over the years I cared for mostly geriatric patients in LTC and hospice until I became an LPN at the age of twenty-eight. I continued to work in hospice until I graduated college with my RN and decided to try critical

See NATURAL Page 2

Flu shot more important than ever, experts say



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D. (Photo Courtesy Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation).

Getting the annual flu shot is always important. But this year, it might be essential.

The SARS-Cov-2 coronavirus is surging throughout the state and much of the country, and many health experts are predicting an epidemic-level wave during the fall and winter months, right in the heart of the annual flu season in the U.S.

"That timing could be potentially disastrous for a number of reasons, but the most obvious is that the combined fight against coronavirus and influenza is potentially more than our

See FLU Page 2

NATURAL

Continued from Page 1

care. After three years of working full time in MICU and a level I trauma ICU, I was ready for a change in pace," he added.

Growing up in Enid, OK, Kris moved to Oklahoma City at the age of eighteen. "My first job as a nurse was with Crossroads Hospice where I had been working as a hospice aide for six years prior to graduating nursing school. I attended Rose State College and SWOSU," Kris said.

Asking Kris what qualities make a good nurse, he replied, "Nurses need to be knowledgeable and skillful above all else. We also must be compassionate and thoughtful to provide quality care. Nurses should be tolerant and accepting of all people regardless of differences."

As a nurse, Kris explained what his biggest reward is. "To me, when I finish a shift and leave work, I have a feeling of accomplishment; That happens when my team and I run a code in

the ICU and save a life. What an overwhelming feeling," Kris said. "To know that we actually helped save someone."

On the other hand, Kris' biggest challenge is common among nurses. "I can't and don't need to handle all of the world's problems. I always complete tasks meticulously and sometimes become anxious when there is a problem that I can't solve. I'm working on letting go of the problems in life that I cannot control," he commented.

Kris' desire to be a nurse was sparked by his mom. "At an early age, it felt natural to go into nursing as an adult. Actually, when I was little, I wanted to be a vet. I guess I didn't get too far from it."

"One of my top mentors in school was a nursing professor from Rose State College, Debbie Hill Murphy. She taught me to become a logical caregiver both in the classroom and in the field during clinicals. After finishing nursing school, I remained in contact through social media. She continues to guide me with

encouragement, praise and social support. For that I will be forever grateful."

Do you consider yourself a leader or a follower? "I consider myself a leader. I've always stepped up and done whatever I need to whether I had support or not. I don't expect anyone to follow, I'm just an independent person."

Do you have any hobbies? "My favorite hobby is to travel with my family. When we're not traveling I like to spend time outdoors, hiking, camping, fishing and gardening. I live with my partner Travis who is also in nursing and I have a nine year old son named Lyle."

We have two dogs Sahani and Merlot and a cat named Pig. We also have a duck named Darkwing and an aquarium with a pufferfish and moray eel."

Advice I would give to someone going into the medical field? "I would tell somebody going into the medical field to first take care of their own mental and physical health at all times. You cannot provide quality patient care if you aren't taking care of yourself."

"My family and friends were my greatest mentors. My grandmother passed away a month after I started my nursing program and through my education, my family continues to remind me how proud she would have been. It motivates me to continue on when times are tough."

Kris was recently recognized on KFOR for his outstanding work as one of the nurses on the frontline. Over the years, he was selected as employee of the month when he worked at Crossroads Hospice.

FLU

Continued from Page 1

healthcare system can handle," said Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation physician-scientist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D.

Since the coronavirus first started spreading across the U.S. earlier this year, it has resulted in almost 2.3 million confirmed cases and 120,000 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as of June 22. Those numbers – and the associated strain on hospitals and healthcare resources – could be compounded by the flu, which in the 2019-20 season infected as many as 56 million Americans, with 740,000 hospitalizations and nearly 62,000 deaths, according to preliminary CDC data.

"Efforts taken with the shutdown, like social distancing and wearing masks, have kept rates low enough to keep coronavirus patients separated from others who need other routine care," Chakravarty said. "Add another outbreak and toss in a fast-spreading virus like the flu, and all that progress could go out the window."

Chakravarty also worries about people getting exposed to both viruses. "Each of them is deadly enough individually, but we know

they are especially dangerous for those with compromised immunity or lung function," she said. "You don't want to catch both if you're already compromised."

The good news is that there are ways to avoid this nightmare scenario, said OMRF President Stephen Prescott, M.D.

"We have to maintain already sensible practices, like physical distancing, wearing masks, and washing our hands," said Prescott, a physician and researcher. "An obvious additional step is to get the flu shot. Even if you don't normally get one, this is the time to do it."

Flu shots are generally inexpensive or free, and drive-thru vaccinations may become widely available. And while the shots are far from perfect, typically providing between 40 and 60 percent protection, "Some protection is better than none," said Prescott.

Even if you contract the flu after receiving your shot, vaccination often leads to a milder case, said Chakravarty.

"A less-severe version is always a good thing, but now it might also save you or a loved one a trip to the hospital where coronavirus exposure is possible," she said. "So, the bottom line is that flu shots save lives – this year, maybe more than ever."



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CAREERS IN NURSING

GIVING BACK: OKC INDIAN CLINIC

by Vickie Jenkins - Writer/Photographer

Working at the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic is the place where Deborah Nicole Byrd, RN wanted to work from the time she became a nurse almost two years ago. "I have a genuine love to help people. I work here because I feel like I am giving back to an overlooked community," Deborah said.

"This is was my first job as a nurse," Deborah said. "I love my team here! I see the dedication of the nurses, providing service and seeking resources for the Native population. This is just one of the many motivating moments that I get from working here and I definitely want to do my part," she added.

Deborah was born in Paramount, California but later moved to Del City, OK. She attended Platt College in Moore, OK. Being a nurse wasn't exactly the first thing Deborah wanted to be when she was

a little girl. "Actually, I remember that I always wanted to be an accountant. I have always loved numbers! I taught my Geometry class in tenth grade because the students related to my examples of how to solve the problem. As I made it through my second semester of college for Accounting, I had my first child and realized that I was very interested in healthcare, as a whole. I began my healthcare journey as a Medical Assistant, rooming patients and taking vital signs. I quickly learned Phlebotomy and gathering lab specimens. From there, I journeyed into a pharmacy technician role, where I could learn the medication side of things. Feeling I was ready, I changed my major one last time to Nursing."

Asking Deborah what qualities make a good nurse, she replied. "I think a nurse needs to have compassion for others, along with

being a team player, be trustworthy and dedicated to putting the patient first, have integrity, be able to problem solve quickly and be a welcoming patient encounter plus be a team-player."

Deborah's mother had a big influence on her life. "My mother was an LPN when I was a young child. I admired her for the way she was always there for me and she had a caring heart for everyone. When I was in nursing school, I made friends with the girls that were in the nursing program with me. We studied as a group and held each other accountable. We all pushed each other everyday and for that, I appreciated each one of them. We all became lifelong friends," Deborah commented.

What is your biggest reward that you receive by being a nurse? Deborah replied, "That would be coming into contact with a certain

person that is feeling at their worst, and being able to provide complete compassion and care. Even when we can't fix them instantly, the patient leaves, knowing that I did everything the right way and I am able to assist them in every way."

Are you a leader or a follower? I asked Deborah. "Actually, I am very shy and soft spoken, so naturally, I stray away from being a leader. But, my ability to remain calm in chaos, to adapt in any situation and to get along with anyone, gets me nominated to lead," she said with a smile. "I'm just laid back, easy going, fun-spirited and dependable. I am always willing to help anyone in any situation."

On a personal note, Deborah is a single mother of two teenagers; A fourteen year old son, Kaydrion and a sixteen year old daughter, Auhnesty. Her hobbies include cooking, music,

See BYRD Page 5

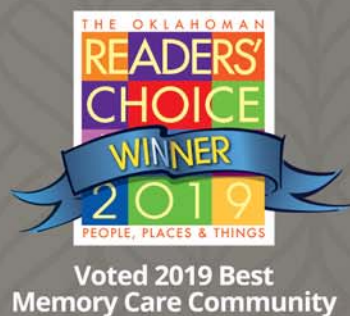


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Deborah Nicole Miller, RN has a heart of gold as she cares for patients at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic, giving back to an overlooked community.

BYRD

Continued from Page 4

playing pool, bowling and anything competitive. “I can honestly say that I am a nurse because everything I do is done whole-heartedly, paying close attention to detail and I have learned a lot about patience,” Deborah said.

Asking Deborah how the Coronavirus has changed her life, she replied, “I don’t feel like the Coronavirus has changed my life

very much. I’ve always known the proper way to sneeze into my sleeve, wash my hands often and use sanitizer, given people space when in public spaces. I am happy to see that things are beginning to return back to normal. Being one of the nurses on the frontline, I am grateful that my company provides all needed PPE so I don’t fear coming in to help others.”

If you could sum up your life in one word, what word would that be? “Fun-loving,” she answered.



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SITUATION
UPDATE: COVID-19

- As of this advisory, there are 13,172 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- There is one additional death; it did not occur in the past 24 hours.
- One in Oklahoma County, a male in the 65 and older age group.
- There are 385 total deaths in the state.
- The OSDH has launched a new testing site dashboard, which includes an interactive map and updated site contact information. Please call test sites to make an appointment and confirm hours of operation before visiting.
- For more information, visit coronavirus.health.ok.gov.

COVID-19
Oklahoma Test
Results

Confirmed Positive Cases	13,172
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date (As of 6/26)	313,021
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date (As of 6/26)	327,683
**Currently Hospitalized (As of 6/26)	329
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	1,489
Deaths in the Past 24 hours	0
Total Cumulative Deaths	385

*The total includes laboratory information provided to OSDH at the time of the report. Total counts may not reflect unique individuals.

**This number is a combination of hospitalized positive cases and hospitalized persons under investigation, as reported by hospitals at the time of the report. The data reflect a change in calculation and should not be compared to prior data.

***The purpose of publishing aggregated statistical COVID-19 data through the OSDH Dashboard, the Executive Order Report, and the Weekly Epidemiology and Surveillance Report is to support the needs of the general public in receiving important and necessary information regarding the state of the health and safety of the citizens of Oklahoma. These resources may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be used in any way that would determine the identity of any reported cases.

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health.

*As of 2020-06-29 at 7:00 a.m.



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Index to Classifieds

- 1 0 0 Ambulatory
- 1 0 8 Administrative
- 1 1 3 Case Management
- 1 1 5 Chemical Dependency
- 1 1 8 Clinical Instructors
- 1 1 9 Collection
- 1 2 1 Critical Care
- 1 2 3 Certified Medical Assistant
- 1 2 4 Certified Nurses Aide
- 1 2 7 CRNA
- 1 2 9 Dental
- 1 3 0 Dialysis
- 1 3 1 Dietary
- 1 3 7 Education
- 1 4 0 General Nursing
- 1 4 3 Geriatrics and Long Term Care
- 1 4 6 HMO
- 1 4 9 Home Health
- 1 5 2 Hospice
- 1 5 4 Housekeeping
- 1 5 5 Infection Control
- 1 5 6 Instructor
- 1 5 8 IV Therapy
- 1 6 1 Licensed Practical Nurse
- 1 6 4 Managerial
- 1 6 5 Massage Therapy
- 1 6 7 Medical/Surgical

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- Pharmacy Tech, PT

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- RN Pre Op/Phase II Recovery, FT
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- RN Pre-Admission Testing, FT & PRN
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Gray said the next cohort is forming now with an expected March 2 kickoff. After that another will begin in May with no caps on enrollment.

"We adjust the number of faculty members based on the number of students," Gray said. "A faculty mentor is assigned to each individual student and stays with them throughout the program monitoring progress, evaluating and really just being a coach right there with them all the way through the program.

Students are allowed to work at their own pace and pay a flat rate for each term. Gray said students range from taking the full three terms to finishing in just one.

"I think most nurses if they have family or any other responsibility it's probably going to be three terms," she said.

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PHF Awards \$200,000 to Children's Hospital Foundation for Pediatric Heart Research

Presbyterian Health Foundation (PHF) has awarded a \$200,000 grant to Children's Hospital Foundation (CHF) in support of a one-million-dollar campaign for research and clinical programming focused on heart-related illnesses in children.

The funds will be used to support the pediatric heart research of cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. Harold Burkhart, the holder of the CHF Brandon Weeden Endowed Chair. Burkhart and his team are researching new technologies to treat symptoms of pediatric heart conditions, developing nonsurgical procedures to improve the health of pediatric patients, and investigating genetic links that could one day help prevent congenital heart conditions in newborns.

"The research and clinical efforts led by Dr. Burkhart have tremendous life-saving potential for Oklahoma's children and families who are faced with critical heart conditions," said PHF President Tom R. Gray, III. "PHF is proud to support the efforts of Children's Heart Center to accelerate their cardiothoracic research and offer the best treatments available to our kids right here in Oklahoma."

PHF has long supported children's health in Oklahoma, having contributed approximately \$5.7 million in total support to Children's Hospital Foundation since 1992.

With support from PHF and other generous donors, Burkhart and his team are taking a two-pronged approach to battling children's heart disease through conducting groundbreaking research and offering the best in clinical treatments for heart-related illnesses. This campaign is a part of a two-million-dollar fundraising goal with the first million raised by former National Football League quarterback, Brandon Weeden, to support an endowed chair for Burkhart. The second million, seeded by PHF's gift, is being raised for the research.

"Research to improve the care and outcomes of children with cardiac defects is critical to our mission at the Children's Heart Center," said Burkhart. "This cannot be accomplished without foundation and community support. I want to express my sincerest gratitude to the Presbyterian Health Foundation for their generous gift supporting research that will ultimately allow us to make a difference in the lives of Oklahoma's cardiac kids. A special thanks to the Children's Hospital Foundation as well, for their continued care and support of our heart children."

The diagnosis of a child's heart condition can be terrifying and life changing. As soon as a diagnosis is received, time is of the essence—it is critical for families to be close to a highly specialized treatment team with experience, knowledge, and the most cutting-edge technology. In the past, finding that level of care meant traveling out of state. Now, thanks to the work of Children's Heart Center, top of the line treatments are available at Children's Hospital in Oklahoma City.

The Children's Heart Center offers the highest pediatric cardiac care available in Oklahoma by utilizing a multidisciplinary team of heart specialists and surgeons, specialized pediatric operating rooms, and the only dedicated pediatric cardiovascular intensive care unit in the state.

"Dr. Burkhart has an incredible team that takes care of children with heart defects, and it's unmatched anywhere in the state," said Brooks Altshuler, CHF Board President. "We are thrilled to have Dr. Burkhart hold the CHF Brandon Weeden Endowed Chair and to be able to care for our pediatric cardiac patients, and grateful for the support of generous donors who understand this need."

Rainbolt Survives COVID-19 Diagnosis; 91-Year-Old Ready to Get Back to Work Fighting Cancer

Back in early March, Gene Rainbolt began having trouble breathing. At first, he thought it was his spring Oklahoma allergies kicking in. But tests showed it was something much more serious—COVID-19.

"I have always had severe allergies," he said. "My doctor had been treating me for chronic bronchitis and put me on some heavy doses of Prednisone. That weakened my immune system and made me more susceptible to viruses."

At age 91, the Oklahoma City businessman and civic leader was admitted to the hospital on March 19. Rainbolt says he never experienced the usual symptoms health experts say to expect.

"I never had fever or chills," he said. "But my oxygen levels were extremely low, and I struggled for each breath. Fortunately, I wasn't in ICU or on a ventilator. But I remember my medic sitting by my bed and telling me to breathe through my nose and exhale through my mouth."

At one point, Rainbolt says he made a conscious decision he was going to live.

"The thing I remember most was that it seemed like I could either take one more breath or I could quit," he said. "My son was on the phone and said 'Dad, I need to see you again and your grandkids need to see you again.' Right then I made a specific decision to keep living."

After 23 days, Rainbolt was finally strong enough to return home. He's walking every day and working with a trainer to



regain his strength.

"I feel better than I have all year," he said. "I run out of breath easily when I walk too far, but I am getting there. I just hope everyone takes this virus seriously. Wearing a face covering is something everyone should be doing. It's foolish not to protect yourself and it's foolish not to protect others."

Rainbolt says he is also anxious to get back to work. He is co-chair of the American Cancer Society of Oklahoma's Hope Lodge campaign, along with former Oklahoma State Treasurer Scott Meacham. The project is moving toward groundbreaking in early fall and will give cancer patients with limited income a place to stay when they travel to Oklahoma City for treatment.

"I am so pleased Hope Lodge Oklahoma City is going to finally be a reality," he said. "It will give hope to people who have no hope. I'm all in to do everything I can, because the cancer fight is not over. COVID-19 affected me, and it also took a financial toll on organizations like the American Cancer Society. They are struggling and need our help. I just need to get better so I can get back in the ring and help finish this fight."

NURSE TALK

My super power would be to start an IV with one stick!



Amy Ambrose, RN,
House Supervisor

I would like to be in more than one place at a time.



Megan Lemus, RN,
BSN

If you had a super power at the hospital, what would your super power be?



McBride
Orthopedic
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I would take all of the pain away from the patients.



Stephanie Stewart, RN

My super power would be the healing power of touch!



Haley Landreth, RN



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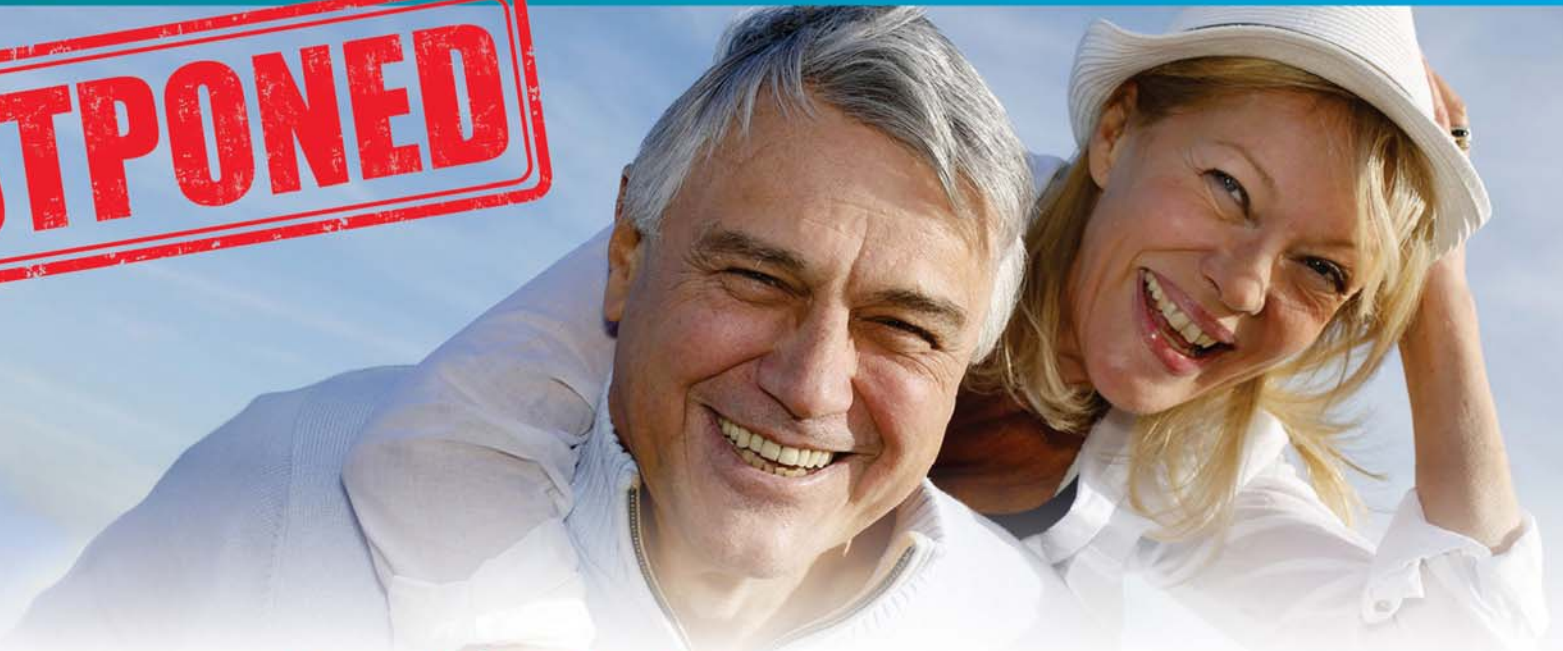
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Stephenson Cancer Center Part of Trial Resulting in New Treatment for Metastatic Prostate Cancer

Stephenson Cancer Center at OU Medicine took part in an international clinical trial that proved the effectiveness of an oral medication for metastatic prostate cancer, the first treatment advance for that disease in many years.

Results of the trial, which studied the drug relugolix, were published in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine. One of the lead authors is Michael Cookson, M.D., Stephenson Cancer Center urologic oncologist and chair of the Department of Urology in the OU College of Medicine.

The mainstay of treatment for metastatic prostate cancer is androgen deprivation therapy, also called hormonal therapy, in which a man's testosterone level is lowered in order to put cancer cells into a state of remission. For many years, the therapy has been available only in the form of an injection, which sends a signal to the brain to shut down the production of testosterone. The

new trial studying the oral drug relugolix showed the same ability to lower testosterone, perhaps even better, as well as a decrease in several side effects that occurred with the injection.

"Prostate cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among men," Cookson said. "This study is exciting because it is the first trial to demonstrate that men can take a pill instead of having to go to the doctor's office for shots, and the cancer control is just as effective. But there were several additional findings that are also positive."

One of the trial's bonus findings centers around how a man's testosterone is lowered, Cookson said. Injections work by stimulating the pituitary gland so that there is initially a slight overproduction of testosterone before it starts to lower. That "flare" of testosterone after the injection delays the effectiveness of the therapy. However, the drug relugolix is able to tell the brain

to stop producing testosterone immediately without a flare.

"In addition, because the pills directly send the message to stop testosterone production, they lowered the testosterone level faster than injections do, and kept it lower over the duration of the study," Cookson said. "And perhaps even more interesting is that once men stopped taking the pill, their testosterone level rebounded fairly quickly, whereas men who received injections can take up to a year to go back to their normal testosterone levels."

Another important finding of the trial was a decrease in cardiovascular side effects in men who received the oral drug vs. the injection. While cardiovascular side effects were not eliminated in men who took the pill, they were significantly lowered, Cookson said.

Stephenson Cancer Center was one of many centers around the world that collectively enrolled

more than 900 men to the trial. The patients were randomized to receive either the injection or the oral drug, then their health was monitored for 48 weeks. The next, and final, step is to seek approval from the Food and Drug Administration to offer the drug relugolix to patients with metastatic prostate cancer.

Because Stephenson is a National Cancer Institute-Designated Cancer Center and one of the nation's top enrollers in NCI clinical trials, it treats many men with metastatic prostate cancer, Cookson said.

"This clinical trial is part of our portfolio for men with this disease," he said. "Our prostate cancer program is unique because it is truly multidisciplinary, offering the most advanced medical, surgical and radiation therapy treatments with access to clinical trials, all at the same center."



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