MERCY, IOWA HEART REACH CLINICAL MILESTONE WITH 500 MINIMALLY INVASIVE HEART VALVE REPAIRS

Mercy and Iowa Heart Center’s Structural Heart program recently performed its 500th transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) in July. This milestone would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the highly-skilled Mercy professionals who interact with the program and patients. To show appreciation to the many individuals and departments that help make this program a success, a reception was held to recognize their contributions.

“Our program is only successful due to the support we receive from every person who touches our patients,” said Dr. Atul Chawla, Iowa Heart Center cardiologist and medical director of the structural heart program.

The program originated in July of 2011 as part of the Medtronic CoreValve clinical trial and quickly developed to become the most experienced and largest center in the region. Now four treatment options are available for patients with severe aortic stenosis, a debilitating narrowing of the heart’s aortic valve that causes shortness of breath, lightheadedness and fatigue. The minimally invasive TAVR procedure replaces the aortic valve by implanting an artificial valve through a catheter, or thin tube, inserted through a large artery in the leg or chest in patients.

Drs. Atul Chawla and David McAllister, interventional cardiologists, work jointly with cardiothoracic surgeons – Bart Jenson, M.D., Marnix Verhofste, M.D., Ganga Prabhakar, M.D., and David Hockmuth, M.D. – to treat patients with valvular heart disease.

“TAVR and our other transcatheter valve procedures offer patients – most of whom have no other option – a second chance at life,” said Dr. Chawla. “We have been privileged to be a leader in one of the greatest innovations in the history of cardiovascular care and treatment. It is a joy and honor to watch these significantly ill patients thrive after their procedures.”

Mercy and Iowa Heart Center’s structural heart team recently celebrated its 500th TAVR (transcatheter aortic valve replacement). The team, pictured above, consists of interventional cardiologists, cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons, nurses, and cath lab and surgery staff who all work together to offer this life-changing, minimally-invasive procedure to patients who suffer from severe aortic stenosis.

AUGUST

LIVEUP RECOGNITION SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

During the month of August, Mercy colleagues were busy recognizing their colleagues for Living Up. The recognitions can be viewed at https://mercydsmliveup.isrewards.com.
LONI TOIGO RECOGNIZED WITH DAISY AWARD

LONI TOIGO, R.N., is Mercy’s newest DAISY Award recipient. She was surprised with the award at a ceremony Aug. 30 in the Cardiac Surgical Intensive Care Unit, with several of her colleagues and Mercy nursing leadership in attendance. Loni was nominated by the daughter of a past patient, to recognize the kind and compassionate care she provided to the patient’s entire family following surgery.

Following is an excerpt from the nomination form: “Loni was so kind to us and answered an endless amount of questions. It felt like she really, truly cared about us. She cared enough to call the following day to check on my parents even though she was not working. I’m sure she is a blessing to many people.”

The DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) Award is an international recognition program that honors and celebrates the skillful, compassionate care nurses provide every day. Mercy implemented the DAISY Award program in April to honor our nurses, who consistently provide compassionate and remarkable care while demonstrating clinical excellence. Winners are presented with a certificate, pin and a hand-carved stone sculpture entitled A Healer’s Touch. Additionally, everyone in the honoree’s unit is treated to cinnamon rolls.

The DAISY Foundation was established by the family of J. Patrick Barnes after he died from complications of the autoimmune disease ITP in 1999. During his hospitalization, the Barnes family deeply appreciated the care and compassion shown to Patrick and his entire family. When he died, they felt compelled to say “thank you” to nurses in a very public way. More than 2,500 health care facilities in 15 countries and 50 states now honor extraordinary nurses with The DAISY Award.

Find out more about the award or submit a nomination at mercy.dm/daisy.

MERCY CLINICS TO MANAGE REVENUE CYCLE SERVICES INTERNALLY

Mercy Clinics leaders have decided, along with leaders at CHI national, to change how revenue cycle services, including billing and collections, are managed. Instead of managing our medical group billing and collections through a third party (currently MedSynergies, which is owned by Optum), the function will be brought in-house. This change should bring improved performance and greater flexibility to Mercy Clinics revenue cycle services.

“We are excited to again have our own physician billing office (PBO),” said Kent Carr, M.D., Mercy’s Interim Chief Physician Executive. “We expect this will bring new jobs to Mercy and our community.”

The change will also impact CHI Physician Services (CHIPS) human resources services currently provided by MedSynergies. Mercy’s local human resources team will soon start supporting these services. This only applies to human resources services; clinic employees will continue to be employed in the CHI Physician Services corporation (CHIPS).

Mercy Clinics leaders are actively working on this transition. Along with other CHI national and other CHI-affiliated medical groups, we plan to work cooperatively with MedSynergies and Optum to ensure a smooth transition to be completed as soon as possible and no later than Dec. 8, 2017.