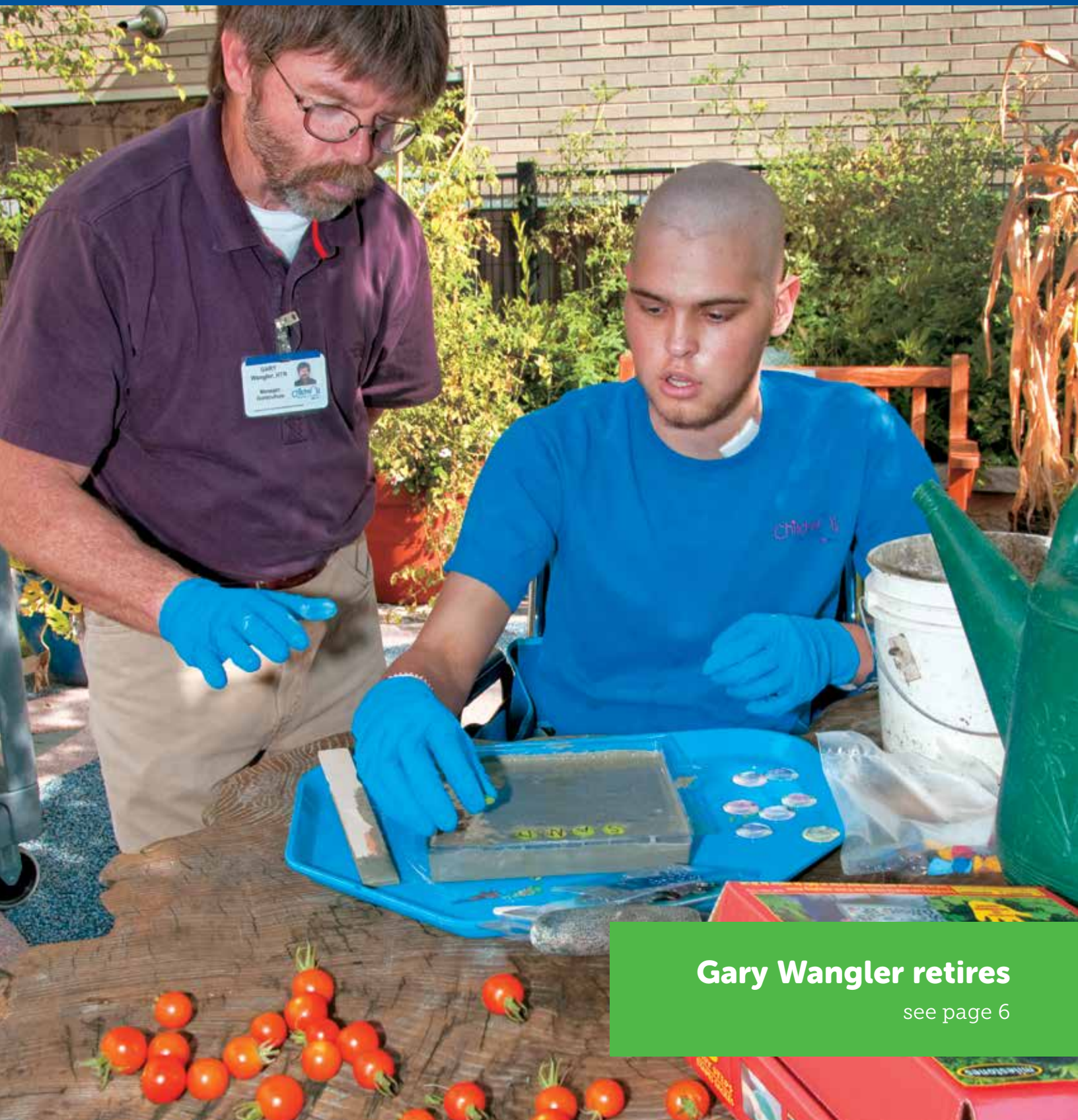


WINTER 2019

Pediatric

PERSPECTIVES

ADVANCING PATIENT CARE SERVICES AT ST. LOUIS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



Gary Wangler retires

see page 6



St. Louis Children's Hospital is recognized as a Magnet hospital. SLCH is also recognized among America's best children's hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*. For more information about nursing opportunities at a Magnet hospital, visit: StLouisChildrens.org/jobs



ON THE Cover

Horticulture manager Gary Wangler works with a patient in the Olsen Family Garden.

WINTER 2019

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April 25 • 2019
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Contact Stacy Herndon, BSN, RN, Clinical Educator at **314.353.2281** or stacy.herndon@bjc.org



From Peggy

the only constant is **Change**

2018 took this statement to a new level.

Our teams tackled the multiple and simultaneous challenges of:

- Occupying a new tower
- Managing record high volumes
- Completing our June 2 Epic go-live and year-end Joint Commission survey successfully

As always, you continued to deliver outstanding care and service to our patients and families. Thank you!

In this issue of *Pediatric Perspectives*, we reflect on the contributions of our retiring colleague, Gary Wangler, who has been the horticulture manager and therapist for our award-winning Olsen Family Garden. In this role, Gary tended to our patients in a most creative way, as well as tending to the beautiful garden on our 8th floor rooftop. We will miss Gary, as he retired this year, but will ensure his legacy lives on through the garden.

Another major change you will read about is the integration of the Women & Infants program with Barnes-Jewish Hospital as the Parkview Tower and expanded Newborn ICU opened last winter. The integration of the Special Care Nursery into the Newborn ICU resulted in many changes to workflow, and growth of this patient population. The team demonstrated incredible flexibility, creativity and tenacity in managing these dramatic changes and continued to deliver excellent care throughout the transition.

Another article describes the accomplishments of our Healthy Kids Express Asthma team, which won a national award from the American Hospital Association this year! The NOVA award recognizes hospitals that improve community health through work in the community in non-traditional

ways. We are so proud of our Healthy Kids Express Asthma program and the Child Health Advocacy and Outreach team for being recognized in this way.

Lastly, read about our bone marrow transplant program and what it takes to become certified as a BMT nurse. With the opening of our new tower, SLCH now has the largest pediatric BMT unit in the state. Patients are being cared for in an environment with plenty of natural light and views of Forest Park. This life-saving treatment requires children to be in the hospital for several weeks, much of the time confined in their specially isolated room, to protect them from infection. Caring for this population requires special skills that our BMT certified nurses and nurse practitioners provide.

I hope you enjoy reading about the work of your colleagues and reflect on how much we have accomplished in the busy year of 2018!

Peggy

“ We are so proud of our Healthy Kids Express Asthma program and the Child Health Advocacy and Outreach team for being recognized in this way. ”

– Peggy Gordin

Women &

State-of-the-art facility opens to serve the whole family

The year 2018 brought about the unveiling of the Women & Infants Center in February. The new facility houses the Women's Assessment Center, Labor and Delivery, Antepartum, Postpartum, and Newborn Assessment Center. All are now located in the new Parkview Tower, which is conveniently connected to the SLCH Newborn ICU.

The Women's Assessment Center provides triage services for pregnant and postpartum women. More specialized than an urgent care or emergency department, this area provides peace of mind for the expectant mother. If care escalation is needed, the mother can be admitted to a room in the Labor and Delivery unit just down the hall.



Infants



Newborn Assessment Center

Babies at least 36 weeks estimated gestational age born in Parkview Tower and requiring specialized care during a short period of observation are admitted to the Newborn Assessment Center. This area was created to allow babies a few hours to transition from intrauterine to extrauterine life without being admitted to the Newborn ICU. This keeps babies closer to their moms in the time after birth. If the baby stabilizes and specialized care is no longer needed, the baby is discharged to be with mom. If the baby's condition requires advanced or continued support, the baby is admitted to the Newborn ICU.

Keeping Moms and Babies as Close as Possible

When Labor and Delivery was located in Barnes Jewish Hospital (BJH) South, postpartum mothers, fathers and families had to trek 15 minutes through the pedestrian link connecting to

SLCH. When they were tired or ill, they still had to make the return trip.

In Parkview Tower, the inpatient mothers with babies in the Newborn ICU need only cross the enclosed skywalk over Parkview Place. This walkway affords greater privacy, as it is only for Women and Infants Center patients, families and staff.

Newborn ICU

All babies born at Parkview Tower who are less than 35 weeks gestational age, or babies of any age who require complex medical care after birth, are brought to the SLCH Newborn ICU by a team of specially-trained nurses, respiratory therapists, and doctors. The new tower features 36 private rooms, including several twin rooms, resulting in a unit total bed capacity of 125. Each room has a parent area complete with a recliner and an expandable sofa for parents to rest at their baby's bedside.

As the old saying goes, "If you build it, they will come." And come, they

have. Babies who, in the past, would have stayed at BJH in the Special Care Nursery are now automatically admitted to the Newborn ICU. The unit's patient census has increased dramatically. Patient volumes increased to 1,295 new admissions, a 44 percent increase over 899 admissions in 2017. This increase led to staffing, supply, and workflow challenges. Additionally, babies arrive to the Newborn ICU significantly faster than ever before, often within 15-20 minutes after birth. Health care team members adapted their practice to accommodate new workflows.

The Newborn ICU team experienced significant changes with the opening of the new tower, the closing of the Special Care Nursery at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, and being geographically closer to where the babies are birthed. However, each team member showed creativity, resilience, and flexibility to ensure each patient and family receives the highest quality of care. ●

a garden grows pathways to healing



Gary Wangler shares his love of growing things with two future gardeners in the rooftop Olson Family Garden.

Growing a legacy

Gary Wangler retires after 18 years

St. Louis Children's Hospital is recognized annually as one of America's best children's hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*. The hospital has also received national recognition for The Olson Family Garden found on the eighth floor rooftop. This recognition is due largely in part to the dedicated service of a horticulture manager and therapist who has cared for the garden since its inception.



“my most touching moments included working with patients and employing horticulture as a therapy.”

Gary Wangler joined SLCH in 2000 when the 7,500-square-foot garden was installed. He retired in summer 2018 after 18 years of maintaining the garden and designing horticulture therapy programs for SLCH patients. Today, Children’s has two rooftop gardens, one on the seventh floor and one on the eighth floor.

The Facility Services department honored Gary with a tribute plaque in the shape of a beautiful red flower. This plaque was installed on a garden wall along with a new donor tree, which provides giving opportunities to enrich the garden and horticulture therapy for patients. Each leaf of the tree is available for tribute inscriptions with a donation to the Olson Family Garden.

In an interview before his retirement, Gary said he was honored to be chosen to maintain the garden, and he will miss working with the kids in horticulture therapy. Gary was proud to introduce horticulture therapy to SLCH as another pathway to healing. He worked with a variety of patients over the years including transplant patients and those involved in rehabilitation programs. Despite the challenges, he was touched by the individual patients and felt he witnessed miracles.

Gary wanted to create the most positive experience possible for patients and families. Thanks to Gary’s 18 years of dedication, visitors to the rooftop garden will see his legacy for years to come. ●



Certified Bone Marrow Transplant Nurses Give Hope

With the addition of new space in the hospital expansion, SLCH now has the largest bone marrow transplant (BMT) center in the state of Missouri. There has already been an increase in the number of children receiving such transplants this year.

Children and teens require bone marrow transplants for many reasons. SLCH performs both autologous and allogeneic transplants. Children with relapsed solid tumors and certain types of brain tumors receive autologous BMTs. This is when a patient's own stem cells are collected, frozen and stored for infusion after the child receives high doses of chemotherapy. Children with blood cancers, sickle cell disease, certain immunodeficiencies and other genetic conditions often require allogeneic transplants. In these cases, the BMT team performs a search on the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)/Be The Match Registry to determine if there is an available match for the patient. Siblings can also be tested to

see if they are a compatible match. In some cases, there are no viable

matches on the registry, and a parent is able to donate as a half match (or haploidentical). Once a donor is identified, allogeneic transplants are often performed the same day that the cells are harvested.

Many people believe that bone marrow transplants are a surgery; however, transplants are infused through the patient's central line, much like a blood transfusion. The difference is that stem cell products are infused to gravity instead of infusing over a pump as to not damage the cells. Frozen stem cell products are infused quickly via IV push after thawing the product in a water bath. Fresh stem cell transplant products are infused over the course of minutes to several hours, depending on the volume and how well the patient tolerates the infusion. Patients are given pre-medications to reduce the risk of side effects of the transplant. They are monitored closely during the infusion process.

In each of these cases, transplant products are infused by BMT certified nurses and nurse practitioners. To receive this certification, nurses must be well-versed on BMTs and have



A mother applauds as her son rings the bell signaling the end of cancer treatment.

experience caring for children during transplants. The training process for certification requires observations of stem cell infusions and then demonstration of competency in this process by a certified BMT nurse. Nurses must independently perform two transplants per year in order to maintain certification.

Nurses infusing the transplant products must be able to quickly recognize side effects and notify the physician for intervention. The most frequent side effects are hypertension, volume overload and anaphylaxis. Bone marrow transplant recipients are at a high risk for infection. In order to help protect them, they remain in a positive pressure, HEPA-filtered isolation room on the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit from the time of receiving high dose chemotherapy in preparation for the transplant through recovery several weeks later. ●

For more information contact Kat Von Brandt at katvon.brandt@bjc.org.





Being the nurse who is able to infuse stem cell products is an honor and a privilege. Patients and families have so much hope for a healthy future on transplant day. There is often anticipation and anxiety related to a transplant but most frequently, patients are celebrating a new lease on life.

Witnessing this miracle as a BMT certified nurse, especially for patients who thrive afterward, is a special and rewarding experience.

Healthy Kids Express earns national award

The Healthy Kids Express Asthma Program was one of five recipients of the American Hospital Association NOVA Award celebrating their collaborative efforts to improve community health. The award was established in 1993 to recognize hospitals for improving community health by working with community stakeholders outside their four walls, working in innovative ways to address economic and social barriers to care.




as part of the Child Health Advocacy and Outreach division, the Healthy Kids Express asthma team works to “do what’s right for kids” in the community and school systems by increasing access and addressing many existing asthma disparities by providing free school-based asthma specialty care. The team assists schools in zip codes with a high use of emergency room or hospital visits. The multidisciplinary outreach team includes a nurse, nurse practitioner, social worker, asthma coaches for high risk patients, mobile health drivers and community health workers.

This year the asthma team reached K-7th grade students in 14 schools within 5 school districts. Children visit the van during school hours, usually without their guardian, which reduces barriers, empowering the students to advocate for themselves. Students enrolled in the program receive asthma education and management which includes asthma equipment, asthma action plans and lung function tests. The team works with community physicians to improve patient outcomes. The program collaborates with Washington University’s Pulmonary and Allergy physicians. Education is also provided for the families, school staff and school nurses. The program encourages guardians to participate in shared decision making.

Efforts have led to positive measures and outcomes. For example, 88 percent of families surveyed report the program as “excellent.” Students show a 21 percent improvement in proper medication delivery and a 17 percent increase in knowledge. An individualized Asthma Action Plan was completed for 100 percent of students, with copies for the school nurse and guardians. Families enrolled with asthma coaches had a 98 percent rate of attending a follow-up doctor’s appointment within one year. A 13 percent decrease in school absenteeism was noted for the 2015-16 school year.

The NOVA Award is an honor and testament to the diligent work the team delivers throughout St. Louis to improve the health of children. SLCH provides this service free of charge, thanks to donations to the Children’s Foundation. The program improves children’s access to health care and ultimately leads to both more time in the classroom for students and a better understanding of their health needs. ●

For more information contact Lisa Henry at lisa.henry@bjc.org.

A silhouette of a person's head and hand using an inhaler, set against a purple circular background. The person is shown in profile, holding the inhaler to their mouth and pressing the canister.

Asthma Team from Cincinnati Tours SLCH

The Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center team visited SLCH. They were here to learn effective strategies for caring for children with asthma in the community. Two SLCH asthma coordinators spent a day sharing aspects of the program, including time with asthma coaches starting with in-patient care, to the Severe Asthma Outpatient Clinic at Washington University, and finally observing the asthma van.

staying up for kids **After Hours**



Elizabeth Schickler, a nurse practitioner at the After Hours service, examines a patient.

St. Louis Children's Hospital After Hours, a pediatric convenient care center opened in December 2017. The goal is to provide high quality, low cost care dedicated to pediatric patients in St. Louis County and surrounding areas.

nurse practitioners evaluate and treat low acuity complaints ranging from respiratory illnesses to sprains and strains. Services include radiology, laboratory specimen collection, first dose of medication, respiratory treatments and point of care testing (for example, rapid strep, influenza, and urinalysis). The After Hours team works with primary care providers to coordinate patient care.

More than 3,200 patients were evaluated and treated at the clinic in the first six months. Patient volume is highest on weekends, Sunday and Saturday respectively; followed by Monday and Friday. 42 percent of patients are younger than two years old. Most patients come from south St. Louis County, Jefferson County and west St. Louis County.

Plans include a partnership with the Answer Line for results follow-up, continued marketing to the pediatricians and families in the primary service area, and development of a second After Hours site in the greater St. Louis region. ●

SLCH provides access to world-renowned care all across the community.

