

FROM THE DESK OF

Amy Tucker, MD, MHCM, Interim Chief Medical Officer, Upstate University Hospital  
Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, College of Medicine  
Vice President, Ambulatory Services and Population Health, Upstate Medical University

OCTOBER 2018

## Frozen Sections

Applies to All Physicians

The on-call anatomic pathology attending and resident, on-call, cover after-hours and weekend intra-operative consultations for frozen sections at the University Hospital Downtown and Community campuses. Until recently, after-hours frozen sections at the Community Campus were a rare event. With greater utilization of the operating rooms at Community by Upstate surgeons, requests for frozen sections after-hours have become more common. For patient safety reasons, it was decided to forgo a plan to use remote telemicroscopy (Mikroskan system) to be able to perform frozen sections simultaneously at both campuses. Instead, Community Pathologists, Drs. Rohin Mehta and Kerry Whiting, will provide frozen section coverage at Community until 8 pm on weekdays, while the on-call pathologist and resident cover frozen sections downtown. After 8 pm on weekdays and on weekends, the on-call pathologist and resident will cover frozen sections at both campuses. Because neither the attending pathologist nor the resident on-call is in-house, frozen sections need to be scheduled at least one-hour in advance to provide enough time for the pathology team to be ready, as has always been the case. It is, therefore, imperative that all frozen section requests after 8 pm on weekdays and on weekends be made before the surgery starts so that appropriate frozen section coverage can be arranged. Failure to do so may result in either significant delays or inability to perform a frozen section.

## Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI) Monthly Tip

Applies to All Physicians

### Your monthly tip from Dr. Emily Albert and Dr. Ali Khan, Co-Directors, Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI)...

Attendings – this is a simple one that we can all easily do and can make a BIG difference. Please sign Alternate Level of Care (ALC) orders right away to ensure we get the patients in the correct level of care to avoid retrospective denials. ALC days not captured concurrently with some payors will be denied with no option to appeal. Any questions or comments, please contact the CDI team at **315-464-5455**.

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## Human Trafficking Reminder

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Beth Erwin, Director, Medical Staff Services...

A reminder to all members of the medical staff that human trafficking education was supposed to be completed by 7/31/2018. You can read the informational packet here:

<http://www.upstate.edu/medstaff/pdf/HumanTrafficking.pdf>, and take the post-test here: <http://www.upstate.edu/cgi-bin/QuizTest/quiztest.cgi?humantraffickingeducationposttest>. Please complete these state mandated education as soon as possible.

## ICD 10 Codes for Human Trafficking

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Beth Erwin, Director, Medical Staff Services...

29 new ICD-10 codes will be available on October 1, 2018 to allow providers to identify and assist victims of human trafficking, and coding professionals to translate that information into data that will provide greater insights into the problem. Those codes, a fact sheet (attached), and video are available on the American Hospital Association (AHA) website:

<https://www.aha.org/combating-human-trafficking>

## Physician of the Year Excellence in Healthcare Award

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Dr. Brian Johnson, Director of Addiction Medicine, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and Professor of Anesthesiology...

I am pleased to announce that Dr. Sunny Aslam, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, has been selected to receive the Physician of the Year Excellence in Health Care Award at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Excellence in Healthcare event on October 24, 2018. The Excellence in Healthcare Awards recognize professionals in the healthcare field that have made a significant impact on the quality of care and services in our community. As an honoree, Dr. Aslam will be featured in the event special section of the *Business Journal News Network* and the *Healthcare Provider E-Newsletter*.

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## Flu Vaccine Notice

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Dr. Jarrod Bagatell, Medical Director, Employee Health...

Come and get it!!! Upstate will be offering its major **Flu Clinics during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of October (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>) at the UH 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Small Cafeteria and on October 4<sup>th</sup> at the Community Campus Employee Health Office (1<sup>st</sup> floor)**. In addition, for your convenience, **flu vaccines will also be available from 5 pm – 6 pm, before the start of the annual medical staff meeting on October 16<sup>th</sup> at the New Academic Building 4<sup>th</sup> floor**. As a reminder, members of the medical staff, regardless of staff status, must receive a flu vaccine no later than 72 hours after the NYS Health Commissioner declares widespread flu prevalence in New York State. While the use of a mask during flu season may mitigate the spread of influenza and protect the user from the flu, wearing a mask is not an acceptable alternative to getting the required flu vaccine.

Do not wait until the mandate! Come and get your flu shot at one of the offered clinics. If you receive your vaccine for influenza elsewhere (your private physician's office, a pharmacy, or at another hospital), please provide this to Upstate's Employee/Student Health office via portal <https://eshportal.upstate.edu/> and add scanned document into your immunizations, or send by fax to 315-464-5471 so that your vaccine can be documented.

## Livanta Audit

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Bobbie Jo Massena, Director of Utilization Management...

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) relies on a network of Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) to serve as the primary operational contact between the Medicare Fee for Service (FSS) program and the health care providers enrolled in the program. MACs are multi-state, regional contractors responsible for administering both Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B claims. Livanta is an MAC contracted by CMS in May 2018 to complete an audit of 25 random short stay Medicare charts for medical necessity. Of the 25 charts, they determined that we had 8 charts with an error, therefore putting us at a 32% error rate which is in the **Major** concern category with CMS. In July, we had a telephonic education session with Livanta's Medical Director where Dr. Housam Hegazy appealed 5 of the 8 cases. The other 3 we agreed with Livanta. After the telephonic appeal, we agreed with Livanta on 1 of the 5, citing that we did not have a valid co-signed admission order. We executed the next level of appeal on the remaining 4, which was a written appeal. Livanta overturned their

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decision on 2 and upheld their decision on 2. We have asked for a redetermination appeal and have sent our appeals for those 2 to National Government Services (NGS) for the next level of review and are awaiting a determination. At this point, we are still at a 24% error rate which remains in the major concern category.

Common factors that caused us to lose our appeals that are easy to overcome are: not having a valid co-signed admission order and not clearly documenting the reason the provider feels that inpatient status is appropriate to safety care for the patient. There are currently small group meetings underway to address these.

## Vizient Quality & Accountability Rating (Star Report)

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Jim Legault, Director of Clinical Practice Analysis and Support...

Each year, Vizient (formerly UHC) provides hospitals with their Quality & Accountability ranking (star report). Vizient is a consortium of academic medical centers and community hospitals throughout the country. The Vizient star report is designed to encompass a broad spectrum of patient activity. Vizient has used the Institute of Medicine's six domains of care – safety, timeliness, effectiveness, efficiency, equity and patient centeredness as a guide to structure the performance categories of mortality, safety, effectiveness, efficiency, equity and patient centeredness to determine rankings. The data sources used to generate each hospital's report comes from the Vizient Clinical Data Base (CDB), CMS core measures, National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS). The annual Q&A ranking includes a full year of the most recently available data from the data sources listed above. The mortality domain is broken down into service lines and is reported as an observed to expected ratio. The safety domain is based on patient safety indicators (PSIs), infection rates, 2 laboratory metrics, CMS core measure of VTE and total hip and knee complication rates. The effectiveness domain includes readmission rates, excess days, CMS core measures for the emergency department and 2 laboratory metrics. The efficiency domain focuses on length of stay (LOS) and direct cost. The equity domain measures equity using three CMS core measures focused on the emergency department based on gender, race and socioeconomic status. Finally, the patient centeredness domain is based on the nine HCAHPS domains (nurse communication, doctor communication, pain management, communication about medications, cleanliness and quietness of hospital, responsiveness of hospital staff, discharge information, overall rating of hospital and transitions of care).

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# CMO REPORT

UPSTATE  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

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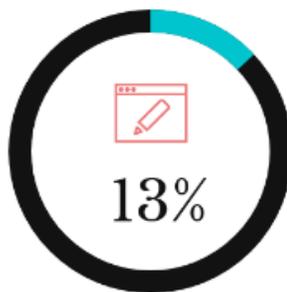
## Discharge Improvements

Applies to All Physicians

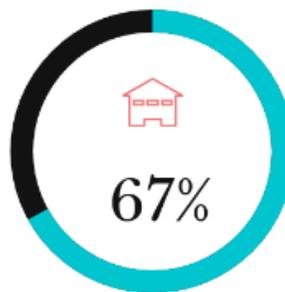
A message from Dr. Jeremy Joslin, Associate Chief Medical Officer for Capacity and Throughput...

### Discharge Improvements

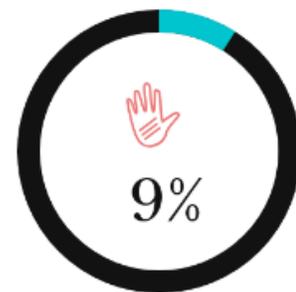
*The discharge process starts at admission...*



Across all units, only 13% of patient discharges are happening before noon.  
Our goal is 40%



Fully 67% of patients are discharged within an hour of AVS being printed. This is great, but we can do better as we aim for 99%



Only 9% of discharged patients had a Delay entered. Adding Delays helps us track resource needs and process improvement needs

We are close to the 2-month mark of launching EPIC Milestones & Discharge Delays. The following are a few lessons learned and interesting data gleaned from a sample of our last 4 weeks of discharges.

#### Discharge orders:

Discharge orders written the night before intended discharge should be pended and then signed the morning of intended discharge. Our institutional expectation is that **40%** of discharges will be accomplished by noon. We are currently at **13%** for all admitted patients (excludes observation).

#### Milestones:

The average interval of time between when the discharge order is written and when the AVS is printed is much too long, and needs to be improved. Once the AVS is printed, our goal is for discharge to occur within 1-hour. I'm happy to report that **67%** of the time this occurs!

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## Delays:

Ideally, there would be no time between the discharge order and printing of the AVS, but we know that sometimes delays occur. We need to track these delays so that we can focus process improvement projects and resources towards them. Here are a few points to consider:

- **88%** of discharged patients had no delays entered.
- **38%** of delays were labelled as “other” instead of a pre-defined delay. Please use pre-defined delays whenever possible.
- The most used delays (besides other) were related to ride delays (**15%**) or destination delays (**15%**). This helps us understand the value of developing a discharge lounge so that we can free up rooms sooner.
- We are monitoring data to evaluate for opportunities with laboratory resulting and physical / occupational / speech therapy prioritization.
- **We will only have data when delays are properly considered and added.**

## Connecting Clinicians and Community-Based Programs to Improve Health

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Dr. Jef Sneider, Medical Director, HealtheConnections...

HealtheConnections has launched its expanded referral platform that provides healthcare professionals with the tools they need to refer patients to evidence-based community programs.

HealtheConnections was able to begin referrals to the National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP) in seven Central New York counties. The success of these initiatives has led to the current expansion of the platform, increasing the number of counties covered by the service and adding three new evidence-based programs: Chronic Disease Self-Management, Diabetes Self-Management and Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring.

The benefits of the platform lie in the ease of choosing and making the referral, and opening a bi-directional channel for feedback. Using HealtheConnections' extensive and diverse participant base and HIE infrastructure, it allows healthcare providers to select the community-based program best suited for the patient, complete an online referral form, and submit the form directly to the receiving organization via Direct Mail. The recipient organization can then begin working with the patient to obtain consent and use HealtheConnections' Patient Lookup to view other medical information that may be vital to the patient's improvement plan. The entire referral process is HIPAA-compliant and

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supports bi-directional communication between the provider and the community-based organization, thereby helping providers meet their value-based care delivery targets. The vision and goals for the platform directly support the mission of improved care for all patients. HealthConnections is motivated to continue growth in this area, expanding on current services and seeking out innovative approaches to improve health in our region and beyond.

For more information on the HealthConnections Referral Platform, please contact HealthConnections' Susan Fox RN, Clinical Practice Facilitator 315-671-2241 x190. For more information accessing HealthConnections, setting up training or other information, please contact your account manager Tamie Kiniry, 315-671-2241 x350.

## Change in BRC-ABL Testing Done in Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Dr. Antony Shrimpton, Director of Upstate Molecular Diagnostics...

The Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory will be converting from the current laboratory developed assay to the QuantideX® qPCR BCR-ABL IS Kit for the quantitation of BCR-ABL1 RNA. The same major breakpoint translocations will be detected. The FDA approved multiplexed assay allows for the computing of a specimen's %IS value. The results are reported as the percent ratio of BCR-ABL1 to ABL1 expressed on the International Scale (%IS) and as a molecular reduction (MR) value.

During internal validation studies, the results generated using the QuantideX® qPCR BCR-ABL IS Kit have shown an approximately one order of magnitude greater analytic sensitivity than the LDT test used previously. The reported trending chart will be modified to help facilitate following patient result trends with the more sensitive test results. Of note, patients with previous "below detection threshold" results may now have positive results below 0.01%IS which reflect the greater LOD of the new assay, rather than an increase in tumor burden.

Please note that the QuantideX® qPCR BCR-ABL IS Kit does not detect or quantitate the p190 minor translocation (e1a2) which will continue to be tested with the current laboratory developed test (LDT).

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## Change from Routine Stool Cultures to a Gastrointestinal (GI) Panel

Applies to All Physicians

### A message from Dr. Scott Riddell, Director of Microbiology/Virology...

Beginning September 20, 2018, the UH Microbiology Laboratory will replace routine stool cultures with the FilmArray Gastrointestinal (GI) Panel. The FilmArray panel detects multiple bacteria, parasites and viruses (see Table) and will be performed daily from 7:00 AM – 2:30 PM.

Bacteria	Parasites
<i>Campylobacter (C. jejuni/C. coli/C. upsaliensis)</i>	<i>Cryptosporidium</i>
<i>Clostridium difficile</i> toxins A/B	<i>Cyclospora cayetanensis</i>
<i>Plesiomonas shigelloides</i>	<i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>
<i>Salmonella</i>	<i>Giardia lamblia</i>
<i>Vibrio (V. parahaemolyticus/V. vulnificus/V. cholerae)</i>	Viruses
<i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i>	Adenovirus F 40/41
Enteraggregative <i>Escherichia coli</i> (EAEC)	Astrovirus
Enteropathogenic <i>Escherichia coli</i> (EPEC)	Norovirus GI/GII
Enterotoxigenic <i>Escherichia coli</i> (ETEC)	Rotavirus A
Shiga-like toxin-producing <i>Escherichia coli</i> (STEC), including <i>E. coli</i> O157	Sapovirus (Genogroups I, II, IV and V)
<i>Shigella</i> /Enteroinvasive <i>Escherichia coli</i> (EIEC)	

**EPIC Name:** Community-Acquired Diarrhea Panel

**Specimen:** Acceptable – Passed stool in Cary Blair transport medium.  
Unacceptable – Any specimen other than above or stool collected >3 days after admission.

**Transport:** Stool samples in Cary Blair may be stored at room temperature or refrigerated but must be within 4 days of collection.

**Turn-around-time:** Within 24 hours of receipt.

**Notes:**

- This test is intended for the evaluation of community-acquired diarrhea and should not be ordered when *C. difficile* is the most likely infectious etiology.
- Culture and (if appropriate) antimicrobial susceptibility testing will be performed automatically when specific bacterial pathogens are detected.
- PCR tests are more sensitive than traditional methods and may detect nucleic acid from non-viable organisms. Therefore, results for this test should be interpreted in light of clinical context and should not be used as a test of cure.

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## Upstate Body Fluid Test

Applies to All Physicians

### **A message from Dr. Mahesheema Ali, Assistant Professor, Core Laboratory and Dr. Katalin Banki, Medical Director of Laboratories...**

Starting in September, 2018, most body fluid tests will be send-out tests and performed at our reference lab. This change is temporary, and we expect to resume in-house testing in a few weeks-months.

CSF protein and glucose are still performed in-house. The following **body fluid** tests will be sent out: Lipase, Amylase, Cholesterol, Triglycerides, Creatinine, Lactate dehydrogenase, Glucose, Albumin, and Total protein. The turnaround time is maximum 7 days. Body fluid creatinine is sent to Crouse Hospital with a turnaround time of 2 hours.

As the Laboratory moved to its new space in the Cancer Center, these tests had to be validated and approved by the New York State Department of Health. We will resume in-house testing pending permission by the NYS DOH.

Due to the Laboratory's move, there are also occasional delays in other tests as well. Please be patient. Our staff worked extremely hard to make this move and provide uninterrupted laboratory services.

## Upstate Community Giving Campaign

Applies to All Physicians

### **A message from Dr. Gennady Bratslavsky and Dr. Mark Schmitt, Community Giving Campaign Co-Chairs...**

The Upstate Community Giving Campaign will begin on October 1. We know that through our contributions we help many agencies improve the quality of life for many.

Those who make a year-long pledge of \$1,000 or more are members of the Hamilton White Society, named in honor of a local 19<sup>th</sup> century philanthropist. For those who have made this special contribution in the past, and continue to do so, thank you. Your generosity brings a greatly appreciated level of commitment and energy to our campaign.

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New this year, those who make a year-long pledge of \$2,000 or more will be members of Upstate's new Elizabeth Blackwell Society, named in honor of the 1849 graduate of our College of Medicine and first woman MD in the United States.

An email with a link to the ePledge will go personally to all employees on October 1 and again on October 9. This is an easy way to donate, and for those who do so through this link there is a special incentive with several \$100 drawings. Thank you for considering a donation. Together we can make a difference in our community and at Upstate.

## BE A HERO.

### Choose 1 of 4 ways to give:



- 1. Give to the United Way of Central New York.**  
Support 87 health and human services programs that help our local community. **No fee.**
- 2. Give to other community agencies.**  
Support other local, national or international agencies. **Small administrative fee.**
- 3. Give to the Upstate Foundation and/or Upstate Alumni funds.**  
Support fund(s) that benefit patient care, research and community health programs at Upstate Medical University. **Small administrative fee.**
- 4. Give to a variety of agencies.**

## Outstanding Physician Comments

Applies to All Physicians

Below are comments from grateful patients receiving care on the units and clinics at Upstate:

**Adolescent Medicine:** *Dr. Karen Teelin – THE BEST! I thank her for her knowledge, care, and concern.*

**Adult ED:** *Dr. William Santiago – wonderful!*

**Adult Hematology Oncology:** *Dr. Adham Jurdi is great, very personable. Dr. Rahul Seth is wonderful.*

**Breast Care Center:** *Dr. Lisa Lai is everything you want your MD to be. Consider yourselves blessed to have Dr. Prashant Upadhyaya – incredible!*

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**Center for Children's Surgery:** *Dr. Satish Krishnamurthy – very good, explained procedures very well and in detail.*

**ED – Community Campus:** *Dr. Elizabeth Nicholas was very caring and understanding. She listened to my concerns and addressed them accordingly. Dr. Christine Courtney was nice asking questions about my symptoms and she explained what steps she was going to take to find out what's going on.*

**Family Medicine:** *Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is a very caring man. Privileged to be his patient! Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is fantastic! Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is always concerned, listens, and goes out of his way to help you. Dr. Kaushal Nanavati took extra time to suggest some foods and exercises for better health and gave me a printout of fundamentals of wellness which I've been following. Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is the BEST doctor I have ever met. There are just none other like him! Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is the BEST of the best! Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is the best doctor!! He listens to me and I feel like he genuinely cares about my physical and mental health. Dr. Kaushal Nanavati is the best!! He really listens to his patients and cares about them like family! Dr. Clyde Satterly always impresses me. Dr. Clyde Satterly is always a joy to work with. We love Dr. Clyde Satterly. I just started seeing Dr. Clyde Satterly and was very impressed with his knowledge of my medical history. Dr. Clyde Satterly is the most caring and thorough doctor I have ever had. I recommend him to people ALL the time. I always feel like I must be his only patient because I never feel rushed or dismissed. He is truly the best! Dr. Clyde Satterly has been my doctor for years and he is an excellent doctor I don't ever want to lose. He knows me and my problems well.*

**Interventional Radiology:** *Dr. Mitchell Karmel treated me very well, and answered all of my questions to my satisfaction. Dr. Tomas Mujo – concerned, compassionate and did a great job.*

**Joslin Center for Diabetes:** *I am impressed with Dr. Nidhi Bansal. I always feel she gives me her undivided attention, explains things very well, and never rushes me. She always answers all my questions. I am so glad my PCP recommended her to me. Dr. Nidhi Bansal is very smart and she takes time to explain things and listen to your concerns. I feel very confident that she is truly an excellent doctor. I am very happy with her. Dr. J Kurt Concilla – kind and caring. Dr. J Kurt Concilla – great! Dr. J Kurt Concilla is awesome. He is kind, caring and takes his time to explain everything to you. Dr. Ruban Dhaliwal is very knowledgeable about my less common ailment. Dr. Ruban Dhaliwal is extremely nice, caring, professional and knowledgeable. I love Dr. Barbara Feuerstein. I appreciate the time she spends with me. Dr. Barbara Feuerstein always impresses me! She is kind, considerate, and always listens to me. Dr. Rachel Hopkins – wasn't rushed, engaged, warm, and professional. She was present which makes me feel confident in my care. Dr. Rachel Hopkins has always been very pleasant and informative. I feel very confident in the care she provides, and is easy to talk to. Dr. Rachel Hopkins is warm, professional, and thorough. I have*

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*been a patient of **Dr. Roberto Izquierdo** for several years. I was pleased that he requested a few blood tests just to see my range as my PCP is within another health system closer to where I live. **Dr. Roberto Izquierdo** always treats me with care and concern. He is a wonderful doctor and human being! **Dr. Roberto Izquierdo** is always excellent in his attentiveness and care; and is very knowledgeable. **Dr. Prashant Nadkarni** – incredible doctor. **Dr. Prashant Nadkarni** is always great. **Dr. Prashant Nadkarni** is one of the kindest doctors I have ever had. He was so thorough and compassionate with my son that I had my primary refer me to him, too. He explains everything and tries to help find solutions. I have seen him several times over the years and he is always great, every time. **Dr. Angela Mojica Sanabria** is very knowledgeable, caring, and really takes time. **Dr. Angela Mojica Sanabria** is excellent. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** has been so helpful in efforts to get my glucose monitoring supplies. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** listens to all my concerns and makes recommendations that aren't impossible to accomplish. She makes sure I stay on track with things and if something is off in a blood test she follows through until she figures it out. She always sends a follow-up message to go over blood test results. I am thankful she is my endocrinologist and would highly recommend her to anyone in need of a specialist in that field. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** was excellent. She listened and talked to me about my symptoms and included me in my treatment plan. This was the best medical appointment I have ever had. She has made a difference in the way I am approaching my recent diagnosis. I wish all providers were like her, she is truly an asset to your medical facility. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** is a great doctor. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** – friendly and personable. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** – very knowledgeable, seemed to be concerned with my illness, listened, answered all questions, and very nice. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** – caring individual. **Dr. Beth anne Piper** – amazing! **Dr. Beth anne Piper** is super! I learn new information each time I see her. She is always professional and answers all my questions. I am most grateful for the care, compassion and expertise of **Dr. Ruth Weinstock**. I am impressed by **Dr. Ruth Weinstock's** thoroughness, knowledge, sensitivity and attentiveness to any concerns I have. **Dr. Ruth Weinstock** – she just cares – the best! **Dr. Ruth Weinstock** is an outstanding care provider. She is professional, knowledgeable about diabetes, and always able to help me improve my management. **Dr. Ruth Weinstock** – the best! Have been seeing her for years! **Dr. Ruth Weinstock** gives you the care and attention needed. She gives you the time and information you need.*

**Medicine Subspecialties:** **Dr. Kumar Ashutosh** – kind, informative, and very friendly. **Dr. Eduardo Bonilla** – excellent! **Dr. Eduardo Bonilla** – the best – blessed to have him on my health team. I was very impressed with **Dr. Eduardo Bonilla** and his appearance – very clean cut. **Dr. Konrad Dziamski** was very knowledgeable and took good care of my needs while explaining very well. **Dr. William Elliott** – wonderful doctor. Looking forward too many years of his expertise. **Dr. William Elliott** – very informative. **Dr. William Elliott** was friendly, knowledgeable about my condition, and treated me very well in all my follow-up appointments. **Dr. Hiroshi Kato** is just a fantastic doctor and caring human being. We are fortunate to have him in our health care community in Central New York. **Dr. Hiroshi Kato** – caring and concerned. I am consistently

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# CMO REPORT

FROM THE DESK OF

Amy Tucker, MD, MHCM, Interim Chief Medical Officer, Upstate University Hospital  
Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, College of Medicine  
Vice President, Ambulatory Services and Population Health, Upstate Medical University

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UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

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*impressed with the level of care that **Dr. Hiroshi Kato** provides. He is extremely polite, very thorough, and is quite willing to explain (even on paper) answers to my questions. I wish that I could convey just HOW GOOD **Dr. Hiroshi Kato** is with my care! **Dr. Hiroshi Kato** is always careful to assure that I understand his explanation of my care plan. **Dr. Hiroshi Kato** is fantastic. He always explains what is going on, lays out a plan, follows up on any changes and explains why. I have recommended him and he is now helping two of my family members. I am so happy to have had him to care for me! I thank god for **Dr. Hiroshi Kato**. He is very skilled and very understanding. **Dr. Hom Neupane** took the time to really review my labs and diagnoses, as well as, recent health events and medications with me. I felt much more comfortable with my understanding of my condition leaving his office after this visit. I trust **Dr. Hom Neupane** with my life and he deserves all the praise in the world for the wonderful care he's given me. He goes above and beyond. **Dr. Hom Neupane** always treats me with dignity and respect. **Dr. Hom Neupane** is an excellent provider!! **Dr. Dana Savici** goes above and beyond expectations. She is good at listening, asking questions, explaining diagnosis and seems to really care about her patients. **Dr. Jianghong Yu** is never running late, always greets me with a smile, and is genuinely concerned for my condition. **Dr. Jianghong Yu** always makes us feel like we are important and that our needs really DO matter. **Dr. Jianghong Yu** knows her stuff and is very involved with patient care – making sure I understand exactly what is going on. **Dr. Jianghong Yu** ALWAYS takes the time to listen, answer any questions, and is very pleasant and eager to help. **Dr. Jianghong Yu** is fantastic. She takes the time to listen to me and address all my concerns.*

**Peds ED:** **Dr. Elliot Rodriguez** – very attentive.

**Pediatric Urology:** **Dr. Matthew Mason** is always fantastic, explains things well and answers any questions we might have thoroughly. We never feel rushed. **Dr. Matthew Mason** explained everything clearly and left the decision up to me as to how I wanted to proceed with treatment for my child. He gave his honest recommendation as well which helped me make the decision. **Dr. Jonathan Riddell** is a skilled surgeon with a wonderful bedside manner. **Dr. Jonathan Riddell** is very friendly, knowledgeable, caring and great with my son. Thankful for everything he has done to save my son's life. **Dr. Jonathan Riddell** has a wonderful bedside disposition. He is a skilled surgeon and makes both my sons at ease when they have questions or concerns. Top notch!

**Radiation Oncology:** **Dr. Jeffrey Bogart** – the best!

**Radiology – CG:** **Dr. Tomas Mujo** – concerned, compassionate, and did a great job! **Dr. Dianbo Zhang** – wonderful! **Dr. Dianbo Zhang** was very quick and precise with the procedure and made it practically painless.

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**Regional Perinatal Center:** *Dr. Robert Silverman* was amazing. I sincerely appreciate *Dr. Robert Silverman's* clear and direct manner of communication with all that was going on with my baby. He never instills unnecessary fear, is supportive, and genuinely cares. *Dr. John Nosovitch* has been very knowledgeable, understanding and compassionate in my care. He is very good at educating the patient.

**Surgery – UH LL022:** *Dr. Mark Crye* – excellent care and very caring to me and my family. *Dr. G. Randall Green* – positive and professional. *Dr. G. Randall Green* is a super surgeon and people person. I can't say enough good things about *Dr. Moustafa Hassan*. *Dr. Moustafa Hassan* impressed me the most with his professional manner blended with his friendliness and compassion. *Dr. Moustafa Hassan* was excellent. He took the time to explain everything and did an exceptional job! So happy with *Dr. Richard King's* work!

**Surgery – UH:** *Dr. Palma Shaw* answered all my questions. It was a very good visit with *Dr. Palma Shaw*.

**The Surgery Center – CG:** *Dr. Jiri Bem* – awesome! *Dr. Kristine Keeney* - excellent! *Dr. Prashant Updahyaya* is outstanding and easy to talk to. I would recommend *Dr. Howard Weinstein* to everyone. Top doctor that knows his field inside and out.

**Transplant Center:** *Dr. Oleh Pankewycz* is the most caring and compassionate doctor that I have come across in a very long time. He has restored my faith in doctors. *Dr. Oleh Pankewycz* is outstanding and cares deeply about all his patients. *Dr. Oleh Pankewycz* is an outstanding doctor with a dedicated spirit and such attention to detail. You have a great nephrologist with *Dr. Oleh Pankewycz*. He was great! Best doctor ever! *Dr. Oleh Pankewycz* is wonderful. I can't find anyone that can replace his care, intelligence, patience and dedication to his field of expertise and patients.

**UHCC – Neurology:** *Dr. Robert Beach* is fantastic. I would recommend him above anybody else!!! *Dr. Anuradha Duleep* is the most caring and compassionate provider I have ever had. She speaks to you with such warmth and kindness that makes you feel so comfortable and that your care is important to her. She explains everything in an easy to understand way, and listens to your input. When she is with you, she makes you feel as if you are her only patient; never rushed or inconvenienced by your questions or concerns. She is extremely knowledgeable and shows concern for not only your neurological health, but your overall health as well. She is truly amazing. I feel lucky to have access to such great care by *Dr. Anuradha Duleep*. *Dr. Anuradha Duleep* is a marvelous, knowledgeable, and compassionate physician. She has been a blessing to me and many others! I would highly recommend *Dr. Anuradha Duleep*. *Dr. Anuradha Duleep* – helpful and knowledgeable. *Dr. Ahmed El Dokla* - very efficient. I had an excellent experience with *Dr. Burk Jubelt*. He was easy to talk to and I never felt rushed through my appointment. *Dr. Burk Jubelt* is

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very nice, concerned and a knowledgeable person. He will go the extra mile to see to your needs. **Dr. Melissa Ko** – very nice and helpful. I really liked **Dr. Sulada Kanchana**. She treated me with much respect and kindness and I instantly felt comfortable with her. She did not rush me, she listened to me and really heard me, explained everything very well and I feel as though if I have any questions or concerns I am sure that I could call her which is something that is important to me as I often think of things I may need to ask after the fact. I am so happy that she is my neurologist now here in Syracuse and feel comfortable and confident in her treatment of me. I can't say enough about how grateful I am that I was referred to her. I was very happy with how quickly I was able to get in to see **Dr. Sulada Kanchana**. **Dr. Sulada Kanchana** was pleasant, knowledgeable and seemed interested in my husband's problems and how she could help. We visited her to have another opinion in addition to our long time neurologist. It was our first time talking to another doctor about his condition which he has had for 26 years. She understood this was our reason for coming and gave us her opinion concerning his prior care, talked about his meds and how we might tweak them to help him more, and invited us back any time if we wished another opinion. We liked that. **Dr. Dragos Mihaila** – great! **Dr. Dragos Mihaila** – very good. **Dr. Dragos Mihaila** is the absolute best neurologist and I have recommended him to many people. He is a 12 on a scale of 1 – 10. We have recommended **Dr. Dragos Mihaila** to many people. I believe his caring, understanding, and medical knowledge makes him one of the best neurologists in our area. I am thankful he is here for us! I have been a patient of **Dr. Michael Vertino** for a number of years. He is absolutely remarkable in dealing with patients and health issues. I would not see anyone else if I had a choice and hope he practices for many years. We need more doctors like him. **Dr. Michael Vertino** is wonderful to me. I have great faith in him. **Dr. Eufrosina Young** is the best and always takes time to answer my questions. I notice when she has medical students or residents with her, she explains and tutors them with patience. I can't say enough good things about here. I am lucky to have her as my doctor.

**University Cardiology:** **Dr. Luna Bhatta** is very professional and truly goes into depth with medical history to provide the best care. I am very satisfied with **Dr. Luna Bhatta's** knowledge and compassion. I recommend her to everyone. The best! **Dr. Luna Bhatta** is incredibly responsive, a true listener, so respectful, and draws on information from previous visits. She is very impressive, has a good sense of humor, and really understands challenges faced by women. **Dr. Robert Carhart** is top notch. I trust him and respect him. He is a wonderful combination of brains and perfect bedside manner. I have recommended him to others. He is not afraid of a challenge and will work to give patients the best quality of life possible. I am very thankful he is my doctor. **Dr. Robert Carhart** was knowledgeable, sympathetic, listened, and action was immediate. After being misdiagnosed and pinged here and there, **Dr. Robert Carhart** was on the ball. He knew exactly as to what I have and what my symptoms could be. My husband and I are happy with him. **Dr. Robert Carhart** is always impressive. **Dr. Tamas Szombathy** was very patient in working through a care plan with me.

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**University Center for Vision Care:** *Dr. Samuel Alpert is a great physician. Dr. Samuel Alpert knows his stuff! Dr. Samuel Alpert was very professional and caring. Dr. Robert Swan – caring and patient. Dr. Robert Swan was fantastic! Dr. Robert Swan was great interacting with my daughter. He talked to her on her level and joked around with her. I was very impressed with his interactions with her while still getting needed information from me.*

**University Geriatricians:** *Dr. Andrea Berg was outstanding. She showed a lot of concern for me. Dr. Andrea Berg was extremely personable and made sure to talk directly to my mom and let her know she was interested in what she had to say. Dr. Andrea Berg is a very considerate and compassionate person. Dr. Sharon Brangman seemed very sincere and knowledgeable. Dr. Sharon Brangman is very connected to whomever she is working with. She listens and genuinely cares about all aspects of the patient and family members with the patient. Her guidance is invaluable.*

**University Internists:** *Dr. Barbara Krenzer is the optimal healthcare provider I could imagine. Dr. Barbara Krenzer is very good, compassionate and sincere. She listens to my concerns and advises me to call anytime I need her. Dr. Barbara Krenzer is one of the most caring providers I've ever experienced. Upstate is so lucky to have her as are her patients. I cannot imagine a better doctor than Dr. Barbara Krenzer. Dr. Barbara Krenzer is always thorough and compassionate. Dr. Barbara Krenzer – her positive attitude and caring nature are invaluable to me. Dr. Barbara Krenzer – excellent! Dr. Barbara Krenzer is thorough and patient. I could not ask for a better health care provider! Dr. Barbara Krenzer is the best physician I have worked with. She is logical, caring, and has excellent communication skills. I always leave her office with a positive feeling and I have faith that she will not give up and will continue to suggest new treatments. I have always been treated with respect throughout visit, never felt rushed, and always enjoyed my visit with Dr. Vincent Frechette. He is thorough, kind and very compassionate. I would highly recommend going to see Dr. Vincent Frechette. Each visit is the same...I am treated as though I matter to him and he listens carefully to any concerns and suggests things that might help. We visit and talk about light things as well as any medical concerns. Dr. Vincent Frechette – the best! Dr. Vincent Frechette is and has always been the best example of a caring and competent physician I have known. I am always impressed with Dr. Vincent Frechette's caring and dedication for his patients. I am very lucky to have Dr. Vincent Frechette as my provider. He is uncanny in his ability to recognize conditions. He shows great and genuine concerns about me, the patient, and I am very relaxed and confident with the outcome at each visit. I always look forward to my scheduled visits with Dr. Vincent Frechette. He listens well, asks and answers my health questions, and I have the utmost faith in his ability to give me the health care I need. Dr. Vincent Frechette is wonderful personally and professionally. He is among the very, very best and a person I appreciate and respect. Our care from Dr. Vincent Frechette is better than "Very Good" – it is "Excellent"! Dr. Vincent Frechette – top notch! Dr. Vincent Frechette is the best doctor we have had. His kindness and understanding is fantastic. His knowledge, endless. He gets to what is important and spends a great deal of time with us and our*

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issues. He never rushes. We have 100% trust in him, and feel safe having him in control of our healthcare needs. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** – best ever! **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is an excellent doctor. Without a doubt, **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is the best PCP in the Syracuse area. He is excellent in all respects and we are always very satisfied with his care. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is outstanding. He is an excellent clinician, shows great concern and is always friendly and professional. I have nothing but positive things to say about his as a person and my physician. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** always takes good care of me. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** – great physician. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** – friendly, thorough, decisive and reassuring. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is awesome! I feel so blessed to have **Dr. Vincent Frechette** as my doctor. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is the first doctor I found that listened to me and did not push me aside. I wouldn't trade him. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is awesome! I always feel totally confident with **Dr. Vincent Frechette**. I have been going to him for years and have always come out of the office feeling optimistic. He is gentle and always treats me with great respect and I never feel rushed. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** is the best. He takes the time to listen and explain. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** has concern for my medical issues, takes his time and explains things in a way I can understand. He has excellent judgement. **Dr. Vincent Frechette** – he is all that a physician should be! **Dr. George Gluz** is very thorough and well prepared. I like **Dr. Stephen Knohl** very much. I'm always pleased with **Dr. Sarah Lappin's** professionalism, knowledge, caring, and willingness to explain/answer my questions. **Dr. Sarah Lappin** is above and beyond excellent. **Dr. Sarah Lappin** is excellent. **Dr. Sarah Lappin** takes good care of you and listens. I'm always pleased with **Dr. Sarah Lappin's** care and time spent. **Dr. Suman Swarnkar** takes care of me very well and I am very impressed with her. I couldn't ask for a better doctor than **Dr. Suman Swarnkar**. She is always there for me. **Dr. Suman Swarnkar** is the best physician. I have recommended her to many family members. **Dr. Suman Swarnkar** is knowledgeable, really listens to the patient and shows empathy and consideration. She is an outstanding physician.

**University Pediatric & Adolescent Center:** Both my daughter and I love **Dr. Steven Blatt**. He talks to her in a way that engages her and is great about spending time and listening to both of us. I have always admired the care and consideration **Dr. Joseph Nimeh** gave to my daughter, so that is why I chose him to be my son's provider as well. **Dr. Karen Teelin** was kind, concerned, and took time with us as parents and our daughter as the patient. She was an active listener and connected with our primary to assure the best care for our daughter.

**Upstate Pediatrics:** **Dr. Tobey Kresel** has been consistent and caring / competent forever. **Dr. Tobey Kresel** is the best! She is kind, caring, professional. So glad she is my daughter's doctor. **Dr. Tobey Kresel** is the best! We appreciate **Dr. Tobey Kresel's** care and concern. **Dr. Ellen Schurman** – awesome! **Dr. Ellen Schurman** – always remembers us, our situation, and is very kind, caring and helpful. I couldn't ask for a better provider and will be sad to leave the practice when my daughter ages out of a pediatrician. I really like **Dr. Ellen Schurman**. She is easy to talk to and great with my children. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** has impressed me for the past 3 years. She was the pediatrician that

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came to see my daughter when I first had her and I fell in love with how she cared for my daughter right away. She is always excited to see my daughter and my daughter always looks forward to going to the doctors because of her. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** is always very kind, helpful and informative. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** is very friendly and professional. She is an excellent pediatrician. I am happy to her for my son. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** is the most caring, compassionate doctor. My children love her and her bed side manners are phenomenal! I recommend her to everyone! We love **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind**. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** is a joy to see! **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** is absolutely amazing. I refer her to everyone I know when they're looking for a pediatrician. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** was recommended to me by a friend and I will always recommend her to others in need of a pediatrician. **Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind** always has a smile and talks to my children so they will understand.

**Upstate Urology:** **Dr. Stephen Blakely** is a superb provider and a great human being! **Dr. Stephen Blakely** – trust him with my life. Great doctor! **Dr. Gennady Bratslavsky** – excellent! **Dr. Gennady Bratslavsky** is an excellent physician. He takes time to truly understand how I am doing and provides me with thorough information in answering my questions as well as ensuring I understand my current health status. He is caring, compassionate, and an outstanding medical professional and excellent role model for other in his field. **Dr. Gennady Bratslavsky** is concerned for his patients, caring, and the best there is. **Dr. Timothy Byler** took great care of my needs. **Dr. Timothy Byler** – wonderful and cares about my needs. **Dr. Elizabeth Ferry** is awesome! Very knowledgeable and she makes everything OK. **Dr. Elizabeth Ferry** is considerate, caring, and professional. **Dr. Natasha Ginzburg** – excellent, outstanding, pleasant manner. **Dr. Natasha Ginzburg** is a great doctor! She listens to what you have to say, gives you a lot of information on what medicines and medical treatments there are. **Dr. Natasha Ginzburg** is just amazing, so friendly, and has a lot of information to provide to her patients. **Dr. Natasha Ginzburg** is wonderful. I would highly recommend her to anyone. **Dr. Natasha Ginzburg** is very professional with an excellent “bedside manner”. I would highly recommend her!!! **Dr. Natasha Ginzburg** is extremely knowledgeable and listens to every concern even it is not within her area of expertise and will direct you to the area that you can get help. **Dr. Joseph Jacob** has been informative and responsive. He was very responsive to questions during in-person meetings and in emails. Excellent! **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** is a very caring health provider. **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** – always prepared, easy to talk with, understanding and explains things very well. **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** – very good medical professional. **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** is a terrific urologist and a great person. **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** always impresses me. **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** hears health problems with concern and good will to help all that he can. Glad to meet him. **Dr. Zahi Makhuli** has treated me for over 30 years. He is a first rate, courteous, helpful and knowledgeable physician. I'm just so pleased with **Dr. Dmitriy Nikolavsky**. **Dr. Dmitriy Nikolavsky** is amazing and wonderful. **Dr. Oleg Shapiro** is an amazing doctor. I feel very comfortable with his expertise. **Dr. Oleg Shapiro** was great fitting me in for a last minute emergency visit. Great care and follow-up. **Dr. Oleg Shapiro** is an expert in his field who still listens and takes the time to speak with me no matter what. I feel so fortunate to have found him as my doctor. **Dr. Oleg Shapiro** is clearly an

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*outstanding physician. **Dr. Oleg Shapiro** was great. **Dr. Oleg Shapiro** is always concerned about my health and is a very professional and caring person. Love the care I receive from **Dr. J. Trussell**. I have recommended him more than once to family/friends.*

**Urology at Community Campus:** ***Dr. Rakesh Khanna** is GREAT! **Dr. Rakesh Khanna** is very understanding, easy to talk to, and a good listener.*

**Wellspring Breast Center:** ***Dr. Katherine Willer** – excellent!*

**3West – Community Campus:** ***Dr. Housam Hegazy** was very nice and well informed.*

**4 North – Community Campus:** ***Dr. Po Lam** is a true professional! His care and compassion for me and what he does is top notch. I would definitely recommend him for sure!*

**05 West Inpatient Psychiatry – CG:** ***Dr. Justin Meyer** – super professional!*

**06A:** ***Dr. Amit Dhamoon** came to my room several times a day to check on me. When discharged he called to follow-up to see how I was doing. He kept myself and family informed about everything. He was fantastic!*

**06I:** *I can't speak higher of **Dr. Amit Dhamoon**. He is professional, attentive, caring, an amazing physician and person.*

**6<sup>th</sup> Floor – Community Campus:** *I am pleased with the skill level of **Dr. Robert Sherman**.*

**07A:** ***Dr. Ambika Eranki** was very thorough and attentive. **Dr. Timothy Damron** – thorough, professional, master of his craft, excellent doctor.*

**08G:** *Special thank you to **Dr. Avneet Singh** and **Dr. Timothy Ford***

**09G:** ***Dr. Gaddum Reddy** took the time to explain things in a way we could understand and was very attentive to needs. **Dr. Anuradha Duleep** was able to explain diagnosis in a clear and understandable manner. I feel she was highly professional and very thorough with my care.*

**10E:** ***Dr. Sheila Lemke** is a fantastic doctor. **Dr. Sheila Lemke** showed real concern and tried to answer all questions.*

**11E:** ***Dr. Kathryn Palomino** and **Dr. William Lavelle** – fantastic! **Dr. Kathryn Palomino** – amazing!*

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**12E:** *Dr. Tamer Ahmed and Dr. Joseph Resti – well informed about all health conditions of patient showing genuine concern for health and comfort. Dr. Melissa Schafer was amazing. She acted like my child was her own. She wanted to make sure we were getting all the answers we needed before making any decisions.*

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