



practice notes

A monthly newsletter for physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants & other health care professionals



**NORTH MISSISSIPPI
MEDICAL CENTER**

November 2021

NMMC Launches Neuroscience Institute

NMMC's Neuroscience Institute at Longtown Medical Park is a regional destination for comprehensive, innovative care for a wide range of brain, spine and neurological disorders.

"As one of the few integrated, free-standing neuroscience centers attached to a major hospital in the region – and the only one in Mississippi to offer this level of physician and ancillary offerings – we are well positioned to be the market leader in providing the best patient- and family-centered neurological health care, rehabilitation, pain management and imaging services," said neurosurgeon Jason Stacy, M.D.

The Neuroscience Institute includes:

- **Neurology Consultants of North Mississippi** – medical specialists who treat diseases of the brain and spinal cord, peripheral nerves and muscles including epilepsy, stroke, sleep disorders, multiple sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease
- **North Mississippi Neurosurgical Services** – surgical specialists who treat disorders of the central and peripheral nervous system including trauma, brain, spine and stroke
- **North Mississippi Regional Pain Consultants** – specialists in medication management, addictionologists



NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE



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- and a psychologist, who offer treatment options to improve function and treat chronic pain
 - **North Mississippi Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation** – physicians who treat injuries and illnesses that affect mobility
 - **Longtown Imaging** – convenient access to radiology procedures
 - **Pre-Anesthesia Testing and Admissions**
 - **Outpatient Rehabilitation Services** – physical, occupational and speech-language therapy for adults and children
- For more information, visit www.nmhs.net/neuroscience-institute.

Community Hospitals Offer 3-D Mammography

As of Oct. 1, the North Mississippi Health Services hospitals in Amory, Eupora, Iuka, Tupelo, Pontotoc and

West Point, all offer 3-D mammography. The technology is also coming soon to our Hamilton, Alabama, hospital. This new technology, along with annual screenings, will give patients their best chance to find cancer earlier.

"Having 3-D mammography services available at all of our hospitals will provide area women easier access to this life-saving technology," said Shane Spees, NMHS president and CEO. "These access points with state-of-the-art equipment, paired with our dedicated health care providers and staff, will have an impact on the detection and treatment of breast cancer throughout the communities we serve."

Tailored to the structure of each woman's breast to deliver a better patient experience with less compression, these new 3-D mammography machines can measure breast density right at the workstation and assess risk before a person leaves the exam. Screening mammograms can be scheduled by the provider or patient.

For more information, visit www.nmhs.net/breast-care.

EPs Studying Blood Thinner vs. Device

NMMC cardiac electrophysiologists are participating in a clinical trial that compares the WATCHMAN FLX™ device

To submit information, call (662) 377-3712 or email drpugh@nmhs.net.
Visit www.nmhs.net/practice-notes to read this newsletter online.

to blood thinner medication for preventing stroke in people who have atrial fibrillation (AFib).

“There are two ways to prevent stroke – blood thinner and the WATCHMAN device,” explains NMMC cardiac electrophysiologist Jim Stone, M.D. “With the WATCHMAN device, we basically plug off the entrance to the left atrial appendage so that blood can’t get in there to clot. It’s a plug, and after a period of time, the body covers over it with tissue, so it’s like that appendage was never even there.”

While the device is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, guidelines require doctors to treat the patient initially with blood thinners.

NMMC’s cardiac electrophysiologists have implanted more than 400 WATCHMAN devices over the years. “It’s very comparable to blood thinner without the bleeding risk,” Dr. Stone says. “The question is, are we starting with the wrong therapy?”

This is precisely the question the CHAMPION-AF clinical trial aims to answer.

Individuals considered eligible for the study must be willing to take one of the following medications: Pradaxa (dabigatran), Xarelto (rivaroxaban) or Eliquis (apixaban). For more information, call the research nurse at (662) 620-6875.

to include surgical services throughout NMHS. He remains as the administrative leader of cardiovascular services in Tupelo.

These NMHS Vice Presidents have expanded their roles:

Angie Everett is responsible for all post-acute/long term care, rehab/therapy services and case management.

Todd Davis is responsible for all facility management and construction.

Domingo Valpuesta is responsible for hematology and oncology, radiology and pharmacy.

Melody Poole leads organizational performance/quality/accreditation, infection control and medical staff support services.



Everett



Davis



Valpuesta



Poole

NMHS Announces Reorganization

NMHS President and CEO Shane Spees recently announced the promotion of several senior leaders as part of a “systemness” reorganization:

David Wilson has assumed the role of NMHS Chief Operating Officer in addition to his current role as NMMC- Tupelo President and now has operational responsibility for all NMHS hospitals and existing joint ventures.



TJ Adams’ role as Vice President has been expanded to include the role of NMMC Tupelo-Administrator and his current surgical service line responsibilities have been expanded



NMMC Welcomes New Physicians

North Mississippi Regional Pain Consultants welcomes addiction medicine specialist **Brent Boyett, D.M.D., D.O.** Dr. Boyett treats all forms of substance abuse disorders, including alcohol, opioid, drugs and others. He is board certified in family medicine and addiction medicine, as well as preventive medicine and dental anesthesiology. He is recognized as a Distinguished Fellow by the American Society of Addiction Medicine.



Dr. Boyett graduated from the University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Dentistry in 1994. He completed his medical degree at the University of Health Sciences in Kansas City Missouri, in 1998

and completed NMMC’s Family Medicine Residency Program in 2001.

He founded Pathway Healthcare, LLC, and served as chief medical officer prior to serving as medical director of an inpatient drug and alcohol treatment facility.

For more information, visit www.nmhs.net/neuroscience-institute, or call (662) 377-5199.

NMMC-Tupelo welcomes **Billy R. Carstens, D.O.**, to its Rehabilitation Institute from Wellsville, New York, where he has worked in pain management and rehabilitation since 2001. He earned his medical degree from Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine in Illinois in 1994. He completed a residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Rehabilitation Foundation Inc. in Wheaton, Illinois.



Dr. Carstens is board certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. For more information, call (662) 377-7218 or visit www.nmhs.net/rehabilitation-institute.

HOPE Fund Benefits Patients

The HOPE Fund is a physician-driven annual giving program that directly benefits your patients in ways that are important to you and your colleagues. As a physician, you have first-hand insight into what projects would make the most significant impact on your patients. Meeting the health needs of our region’s patients and their families is complex and requires partnership and collaboration. Giving to the HOPE Fund through the Health Care Foundation of North Mississippi is an investment that will make a meaningful difference. Read more at www.nmhs.net/hope-newsletter.

NMMC Names Justice to Lead APC Fellowship

NMMC has named **Angel Justice, MSN, FNP-BC**, as director of the Advanced Practice Clinician Fellowship.

Justice completed her master’s degree in nursing and family



nurse practitioner training at Mississippi University for Women. She graduated from NMMC's Advanced Practice Clinician Fellowship and has been serving as program coordinator since January 2021. Justice began her NMMC career in 2004.

NP Shumpert Joins NMMC Heart & Vascular Institute

Nurse practitioner **Eurieka Shumpert, FNP-C**, recently joined NMMC's Heart and Vascular Institute.

She completed her master's degree in nursing and family nurse practitioner training in 2018 from South University in Savannah, Georgia. Shumpert joined the NMMC staff in 1989.



and CEO Shane Spees. "Addressing community health needs directly relates to our mission 'to continuously improve the health of the people of our region.'"

Dr. Cummings will lead NMHS efforts in partnership with various community organizations to "close the gaps" created by health disparities. "We recognize that our health system cannot provide everything to everyone, but we can lead and organize communitywide efforts to improve ALL determinants of health, not just our clinical care," Spees said.

Dr. Cummings joined NMHS in 2004. She has a Ph.D. in educational and counseling psychology from the University of Mississippi. To learn more, visit www.nmhs.net/improve-health.

NMHS Partners with Ambetter

NMHS signed an agreement with Ambetter from Magnolia Health (Ambetter) to ensure Ambetter members in northeast Mississippi have in-network access to NMHS providers and facilities.

Mississippi counties included in this agreement are Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clay, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Lowndes, Marshall, Monroe, Oktibbeha, Pontotoc, Prentis, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union, Webster and Yalobusha.

Chief Strategy Officer Expands Role

Ormella Cummings, Ph.D., is now serving as NMHS' Chief Strategy, Health Equity and Inclusion Officer.

"Dr. Ormella Cummings' job title has been amended to reflect NMHS' enhanced focus on health equity and inclusion. In addition to supporting our strategic planning efforts, Dr. Cummings has led our system's effort to better integrate learnings from assessments of community health needs into our strategic plans," said NMHS President



IRB Update

The NMHS Institutional Review Board (IRB) currently oversees more than 80 biomedical and behavioral studies. The IRB meets monthly and the following studies were approved and renewed on September 16, 2021.

New Studies

Study: A Randomized, Placebo-controlled, Double-blind, Multicenter Study to Assess the Efficacy and Safety of Nipocalimab in Adults with Primary Sjogren's Syndrome (pSS) (80202135SJS2001)

Investigators: Charles King, M.D. (PI); Robyn Dalton, FNP-C

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine if nipocalimab is safe and effective for treating subjects with primary sjogren's syndrome.

Study: A Phase II, Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled, Dose-ranging Study to Evaluate the Safety and Efficacy of ABBV-154 in Subjects with Polymyalgia Rheumatica (PMR) Dependent on Glucocorticoid Treatment (M20-370)

Investigators: Charles King, M.D. (PI); Maegan Flynn, FNP-BC

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine if ABBV-154 (antibody-drug conjugate) is safe and effective to treat subjects with polymyalgia rheumatica who are dependent on glucocorticoid treatment.

Study: Selatogrel Outcome Study in Suspected Acute Myocardial Infarction (SOS-AMI) Multicenter, Double-blind, Randomized, Placebo-controlled, Parallel-group Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of Self-administered Subcutaneous Selatogrel for Prevention of Allcause Death and Treatment of Acute Myocardial Infarction in Subjects with a Recent History of Acute Myocardial Infarction

(ID-076A301)

Investigators: Barry Bertolet, M.D. (PI); Cardiology Associates

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine the efficacy and safety of self-administration of selatogrel in subjects having a heart attack.

Study: EXPANSE-PTCA – A Study to Exhibit Percutaneous Coronary Artery Dilatation with Non-slip Element Balloon (RDX-CL-5000)

Investigators: Barry Bertolet, M.D. (PI); Joseph Adams, M.D.; Dane Ballard, M.D.; Benjamin Blossom, M.D.; Michael Boler, D.O.; Roger Williams, M.D.

Summary: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the study device in subjects with narrowed coronary arteries.

Study: HI-PEITHO – A Randomized Trial of Ultrasound-facilitated, Catheter-directed, Thrombolysis versus Anticoagulation for Acute Intermediate-high Risk Pulmonary Embolism: The Higher-risk Pulmonary Embolism Thrombolysis Study (S2479)

Investigators: Benjamin Blossom, M.D. (PI); Cardiology Associates

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine if treatment with anticoagulation medications in combination with the EkoSonic™ Endovascular device with a dose of a clot-dissolving drug can reduce the risk of death and other serious problems when compared to anticoagulation medication alone.

Study Renewals

Study: HEART FID – A Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Study to Investigate the Efficacy and Safety of Injectafer® (Ferric Carboxymaltose) as Treatment for Heart Failure with Iron Deficiency (1VIT15043)

Investigators: Barry Bertolet, M.D. (PI); Cardiology Associates

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine if Injectafer® will work to reduce death and hospitalizations associated with heart failure and improve daily function when administered to treat heart failure with iron deficiency and reduced ejection fraction. Enrollment is open.

Study: CHAMPION-AF – WATCHMAN FLX versus Non-vitamin K Antagonist Oral Anticoagulation (NOAC) for Embolic Protection in the Management of Patients with Non-valvular Atrial Fibrillation (S2437)

Investigators: Jim Stone, M.D. (PI); Karl Crossen, M.D.; Karthik Prasad, M.D.; Chris Bell, ACNP; Lee Ferguson, ACNP; Katie McDuffie, FNP



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Studies Continued

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine if left atrial appendage closure with the WATCHMAN FLX™ device is a reasonable alternative to oral anticoagulation therapy. Enrollment is open.

Study: SOLVE CRT – Stimulation of the Left Ventricular Endocardium for Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy in Non-responders and Previously Untreatable Patients (CSP-03035)

Investigators: Karl Crossen, M.D. (PI); Steve Carroll, M.D.; Karthik Prasad, M.D.; Jim Stone, M.D.; Chris Bell, ACNP; Lee Ferguson, ACNP; Katie McDuffie, FNP

Summary: The purpose of this study is to test a new way to pace the left side of the heart without using pacing leads, using the WiSE CRT System. Enrollment is open.

Study: ABT NG DES 48 Study - A Clinical Investigation to Assess the Abbott Next Generation Drug Eluting Stent 48mm

Everolimus Eluting Coronary Stent System in Treatment of de novo Native Coronary Artery Disease (ABT-CIP-10321)

Investigators: Barry Bertolet, M.D. (PI); Joseph Adams, M.D.; Dane Ballard, M.D.; Benjamin Blossom, M.D.; Michael Boler, D.O.; Roger Williams, M.D.; Chris Bell, ACNP; Lee Ferguson, ACNP; Katie McDuffie, FNP

Summary: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the safety and performance of the ABT NG DES 48 stent for the treatment of long narrowed heart vessel sections in subjects with heart disease. Enrollment is open.

Study: WaveCrest versus Watchman Transseptal Left Atrial Appendage Closure to Reduce Atrial Fibrillation-Mediated Stroke 2 (CHX_IP 014)

Investigators: Jim Stone, M.D. (PI); Karl Crossen, M.D.; Karthik Prasad, M.D.; Chris Bell, ACNP; Lee Ferguson, ACNP; Katie McDuffie, FNP

Summary: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the WaveCrest device in subjects who have atrial fibrillation by comparing it to a similar device called the Watchman left atrial appendage closure device. Enrollment is currently on hold.

Study: A Phase II Open-label Study of Sacituzumab Govitecan (IMMU-132) in Subjects with Metastatic Solid Tumors

Investigators: Paschal Wilson, M.D. (PI); Andrew Kellum, M.D.; Charles Montgomery, M.D.; Jiahuai Tan, M.D.; Ashley Gilliland, NP; Jessica Glidewell, NP; Tammy Pelegrin, NP

Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine whether treatment with sacituzumab govitecan can shrink or eliminate tumors in subjects with metastatic lung, endometrial or head and neck cancers. Enrollment is open.



Continuing Medical Education

We encourage you to check out our online educational offerings at www.nmhs.net/online-learning.