



Pancreas Surgery In the News at Providence St. Joseph Hospital

In April, **Hisham El-Bayar, MD**, Director of the Liver, Bile Duct and Pancreas Program at The Center for Cancer Prevention & Treatment, performed Providence St. Joseph Hospital's first robotic-assisted Whipple surgery (Pancreatoduodenectomy). The 60-year-old patient had a periampullary tumor with stage II pathology. Her minimally invasive procedure took just under five hours, and she is doing well, according to Dr. El-Bayar, who estimates she has a greater than 60% chance for extended (5 year) disease-free survival.

Pancreatic cancer affects 60,000 people in the US. About 20% of patients have tumors at the head of the pancreas and localized disease, and are eligible for the Whipple procedure.

"It takes our entire team to take care of these patients," he says. "Our multidisciplinary hepatobiliary program includes gastroenterologists, interventional radiologists, oncologists, radiation oncologists, an NP nurse navigator, and support services such as nutrition and rehabilitation. With time, I believe more cases currently considered resectable due to tumor location will be done with robotic assistance, in part because of the greatly improved visualization."

Dr. El-Bayar continues, "Surgical outcomes are about the same using the robot, but it's a much easier recovery for the patient because of the small incisions, less pain and early mobilization – that's the benefit."

Medical Director of Robotic Surgery Abtin Khosravi, MD, adds, "Robotic-assisted minimally invasive Whipple surgery is a major milestone for cancer care at St. Joseph's. It is one of the

most complicated operations a surgeon can do, and very few in our area perform it. This is a great accomplishment for Dr. El-Bayar and our Robotics program."

HAPPENING SOON: Robert Naraghi, MD, and his team are prepared for the first kidney/pancreas transplant. This transplant operation benefits patients who have End Stage Renal Disease and also Type I diabetes. While at St. Vincent Medical Center in Los Angeles, Dr. Naraghi received Silver recognition for Patient Access to Kidney-Pancreas Organ Transplant by the U.S. Dept. of HHS. His program also had the shortest wait time and highest transplant rate of any kidney/pancreas program in California.



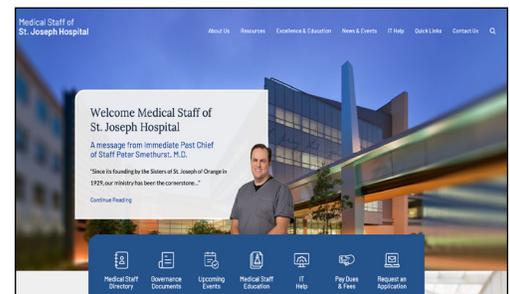
Medical Staff Website: Rolling Out a "One Stop Shop"

Find relevant news, links, updates, directories, educational materials and Medical Staff Briefs

Immediate Past Chief of Staff **Peter Smethurst, MD**, who helped bring sjmedicalstaff.org to fruition, shares, "In 2022 the hospital administration began discussing the need to modernize how we share information. With approval and guidance of Staff Officers and Medical Executive Committee and generous support of SJO, the vision of a dedicated Medical Staff website began active development in March 2023. We owe a huge thank you to Beth Miller in Medical Staff Office and Director

of Communications Connie Martin for hours and hours of work on this project.

"Resources include the medical staff directory, direct access to the Burlaw Library (where you can find PubMed, UpToDate and more), IT links, our governing documents, how to contact the Medical Staff Office, and even links to apply to the medical staff and pay dues. I hope my colleagues are as excited as I am for its potential and find it to be a very useful resource. We



are looking to improve and evolve so please feel free to share your ideas with the medical staff office and/or your MEC representatives."



Blue Shield Falls Short of What Our Patients Deserve

For months, Providence negotiated in good faith for a new agreement with Blue Shield of California. After multiple delays, Blue Shield requested an extension to continue negotiations but made little movement from their original position. Unfortunately, Blue Shield's proposal falls far short of what is needed to adequately support the wages of Providence nurses, doctors and employees.

Blue Shield, which has seen recent gains in net revenue, continues to deny or delay coverage for necessary patient care at an alarming rate, with denials increasing by almost \$250 million from 2019 to 2023. So far this year, Blue Shield denials are already up 11.7%. Many patients are being denied treatment for essential care, including medications, therapies and procedures, and Providence is not being paid for care provided. Additionally, Blue Shield of CA has increased accounts receivable from

24.9% in 2019 to almost 37% in 2023, resulting in delayed payment to the health system for care provided. Providence continues to finance the cost of the high-quality care we provide while Blue Shield earns high interest rates on the funds in their bank accounts.

This is not sustainable or acceptable for our patients or caregivers," says Lauren Driscoll, RN, chief executive of Providence's California Division. "Denials are adding unnecessary stress to the patients and fail to reimburse our hospitals and providers for services provided."

Providence relies on adequate and timely reimbursement to pay its employees market-competitive wages and to cover the rising costs of pharmaceuticals and supplies, which increased 19% from 2020-22. "We've covered these rising costs at an operational loss for several years and simply can't continue to finance the cost of providing care all alone. We need a

partner," said Ms. Driscoll. "They must adjust their rates to compensate for the increased financial pressures on wages, pharmaceuticals, supply costs and advanced technology that helps us improve patient outcomes."

Providence continues to negotiate in good faith, and must stand strong on behalf of our patients, hospitals, clinics and physicians. It is essential that Blue Shield respond to the increasing cost of care so that Providence can maintain the services it provides to Blue Shield members and the community.

Providence's commitment to our Mission has not wavered. In 2022, Providence California invested \$704 million in our communities to provide care, housing, food and other critical resources to the poor and vulnerable.

Patients impacted by Blue Shield's actions are encouraged to contact Blue Shield directly at 800-393-6130.

MEDICAL STAFF BRIEFS

A Publication from the Chief of Staff and Chief Medical Officer

April/May 2024



1100 W. Stewart Dr.
Orange, CA 92868
www.providence.org/stjoseph

SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT:

Please send news items to 714-771-8056
or SJO-MEDICAL-STAFF@stjoe.org

WOMEN DOCTORS OF ORANGE COUNTY (WDOC) NETWORKING EVENT

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 | 5:30 pm–7:30 pm
Providence St. Joseph Hospital
Helen Caloggero Women's and Family Center
363 S. Main Street, Orange

Meet our newest chairs and tour the newly opened
Helen Caloggero Women's and Family Center.

RSVP to Rosa.Martinez@stjoe.org
or (714) 771-8000 ext.12617

Co-Chairs: Tanuja Bhandari, MD; Melissa Rudolph, MD;
Shalizeh Shokooh, MD and Laura Tangredi, MD



GRAND ROUNDS

Providence St. Joseph Hospital
Physician Education

"A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE DIZZY PATIENT"

Thursday, May 30, 2024
12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Zoul Auditorium
(Option to attend virtually via
TEAMS available bit.ly/442EccB)

Presented by Steven Zuniga, MD,
Shohet Ear Associates, Double
board-certified otolaryngologist
and neurotology specialist.

Geared toward Emergency
Department Physicians, but all
specialists are welcome.

Welcome New Medical Staff



Ifegwu Ibe, MD
Pathology
Affiliated
Pathologists MG



Monica Levine, MD
Gyn/Oncology
Hoag Gynecologic
Oncology



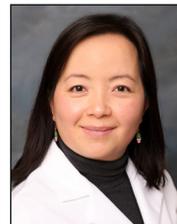
Kate Monahan, DO
Internal Medicine
St. Joseph Heritage
Medical Group



George Schiffman, MD
Sleep Medicine
Mission Heritage MG



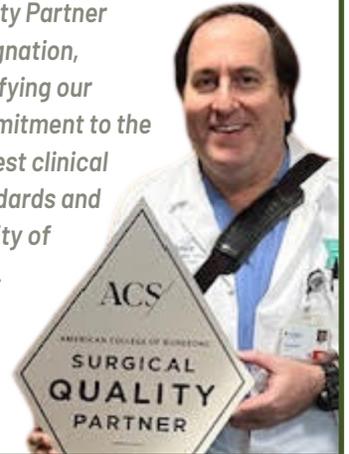
Nasim Shabazi, DO
Nephrology
Balboa Nephrology
Medical Group



Jade Tran, MD
Pediatric Cardiology
CHOC CS Cardiology

ACS Award Honors Surgical Team

Congratulations to Director of
Thoracic Oncology **John Maurice,
MD**, and our entire Providence
St. Joseph surgical cadre on
receiving the prestigious American
College of Surgeons' Surgical
Quality Partner
designation,
signifying our
commitment to the
highest clinical
standards and
quality of
care.



*National Nurses Week, May 6-12:
Celebrating the incomparable,
indispensable & invaluable
Providence St. Joseph
Hospital Nurses*



The Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange invite you to Art in the Garden on Saturday, May 4, 3 - 6 pm, 440 S. Batavia St., Orange. Celebrate in the St. Joseph Center Gardens the Sisters service to the world. Enjoy an afternoon with friends, appetizers, music, a silent auction, lacemaking demonstration, tours and more. To purchase sponsorships and tickets please visit ourfundraiser.link/ArtintheGarden2024.