Peds specialty care extends to area hospitals through telemedicine

When children with medical complexities become acutely ill and arrive at your hospital, wouldn’t it be helpful to have an extra level of support? Gundersen Health System now offers the live video expertise of its pediatric intensivists through a program called Pediatric Critical Care Telemedicine.

This innovative program provides tri-state area hospitals with immediate access—day or night—to Gundersen’s pediatric intensivists and enhances Gundersen’s existing MedLink telephone consultation services.

“This new telemedicine service will allow our pediatricians to more effectively participate in the assessment of a child’s illness and formulate a follow-up care plan in conjunction with the regional provider and the child’s family,” explains Mark Neumann, MD, medical director of Gundersen’s Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

“Our goal is to help keep children and their families in their hometown hospitals, whenever possible, by bringing expanded services to them.”

One likely use of the Pediatric Critical Care Telemedicine could be to aid in the evaluation of children with medical complexity who are presenting with new acute symptoms. This includes patients with medical, metabolic, neuromuscular and/or genetic conditions that augment the complexity of their healthcare plans, such as:

- Rare metabolic disorders
- Uncommon genetic conditions
- Neurodegenerative conditions
- Children with medical technology dependencies, such as gastrostomy feeding tubes, tracheostomies and ventilator dependency, or ventricular shunts

“When children with these multiple and complex issues become acutely ill, they are frequently transferred for a higher level of care,” says Dr. Neumann. “In some cases, assisted evaluation and establishment of a plan of care in the child’s local hospital could prevent unnecessary transfers.”

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Gundersen offers a full range of treatments for heart patients

Gundersen Health System has the largest and most comprehensive cardiovascular program in the Tri-state Region. If you have a patient that needs specialized heart care, please consider a referral to Gundersen’s Heart Institute. For more information about the services we offer, including those described below, visit gundersenhealth.org/heart or call Gundersen cardiology via MedLink at (800) 336-5465 (in La Crosse at 775-5465).

Angina relief with Enhanced External Counter Pulsation

If you have a patient struggling with chronic or intermittent angina, noninvasive Enhanced External Counter Pulsation® (EECP) may offer safe, effective relief. Patients with EECP report significant improvement in their ability to perform daily activities with little or no angina.

EECP improves circulation and cardiac output and may recruit collateral blood vessels. EECP also improves neuro-hormonal factors and endothelial function, and reduces arterial stiffness. Some patients may also notice other circulatory improvements.

Candidates for EECP are patients who are optimized on medications and may have had bypass surgery or angioplasty with few other options available. It’s often done in conjunction with cardiac rehab to improve stamina and blood flow. In most cases, EECP is very effective at controlling angina and improving quality of life.

Treating aortic stenosis

Aortic stenosis is a common heart valve disease with a poor prognosis once severe and symptomatic. People who have developed symptoms have about a 50 percent chance of living two years and only 20 percent for surviving five years. But with intervention, symptoms and mortality are improved.

The most effective long-term treatment is aortic valve replacement (AVR). At Gundersen we perform surgical AVR, and for high-risk patients who meet certain criteria we can offer transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR).

To determine the best course of treatment for your patient, consider a referral to our Valve Clinic. Our team of specialists will evaluate your patient, conduct further testing as indicated and recommend treatment.

We also offer a free quick guide reference card, “Interventional therapy for aortic stenosis.” It includes treatment options, who and how to refer to our Valve Clinic and more. Request your free quick guide card or a consultation by contacting the Valve Clinic through MedLink at (see number above) or calling (608) 775-TAVR (8287). The card can also be downloaded at gundersenhealth.org/AS.

Enhanced care for women in Tomah, Sparta and Hillsboro

Robert Holness, MD, Gundersen Obstetrics & Gynecology

Gundersen Tomah Clinic has expanded obstetrics and gynecology services, including specialty care, with the addition of a permanent, full-time obstetrician/gynecologist, Robert Holness, MD.

If you have a patient experiencing irregular periods, abnormal bleeding, pelvic pain, pelvic organ prolapse and bladder problems, consider referring her to Dr. Holness. He evaluates and treats patients with abnormal Pap tests, infections, polycystic ovarian syndrome, uterine fibroids, ovarian cysts, and gynecological cancers and pre-cancerous conditions. The clinic is equipped to do outpatient gynecological procedures such as a colposcopy, cervical biopsy and loop electrosurgical excision procedure.

Dr. Holness has specialized training to handle high-risk pregnancies, and he performs Cesarean deliveries when needed at Tomah Memorial Hospital. There, he also performs hysterectomies, fibroid and cyst removal, and other gynecological surgical procedures, including minimally invasive keyhole surgery.

You can also refer patients to Dr. Holness at the Gundersen Sparta Clinic and Gundersen St. Joseph’s Hospital and Clinics in Hillsboro—whichever location provides specialty care closest to home for your patient.

To schedule a referral appointment with Dr. Holness, contact Gundersen Tomah Clinic at (608) 372-4111.
Women’s Health services expand to Boscobel

Women of all ages have unique healthcare needs. That’s why Gundersen Health System is pleased to expand its gynecological services to Gundersen Boscobel Area Hospital and Clinics.

Board-certified gynecologist Shannan Stephens, MD, sees patients in Boscobel to consult and manage conditions, such as:
• Abnormal bleeding
• Pelvic pain
• Uterine fibroids
• Endometriosis
• Uterine prolapse
• Contraception including permanent options
• Office procedures such as colposcopy
• Surgical care

Dr. Stephens will provide consults for newly referred patients—from menarche to post-menopause—as well as follow-up care and surgery. Providing gynecological outreach is a great benefit to the Boscobel community, and Dr. Stephens is pleased to save patients and their families the extra 130-mile roundtrip drive to La Crosse.

To refer a patient to Dr. Stephens, call Gundersen Boscobel Area Hospital and Clinics at (608) 375-4144. You can also contact her for a consult via MedLink at (800) 336-5465.

Otolaryngology specialty services now offered in Hillsboro

Patients in the Hillsboro area who need specialty care for ear, nose and throat conditions can now be referred to Gundersen St. Joseph’s Hospital and Clinics in Hillsboro.

Gundersen otolaryngologist and Hillsboro native, Luke Peterson, MD, is now traveling to Gundersen St. Joseph’s to provide medical and surgical evaluation and treatment including:
• evaluation of hearing and hearing aides
• medical and surgical treatment of ear infection and hearing problems
• nasal and sinus problems
• tumors or masses in the head and neck
• speech and swallowing problems
• snoring and sleep apnea
• head and neck cancer
• facial plastic surgery/facial trauma

“Anytime you can offer specialized care closer to patients’ hometowns it is a great benefit for patients because it saves them the time and expense of driving. I will work hard to provide a continuity of care with area providers so that each patient has an opportunity to be treated for their otolaryngology needs and then return to their primary care provider for care,” reports Dr. Peterson.

To schedule an outreach appointment for your patients, call MedLink at (800) 336-5465 or in La Crosse call 775-5465.

Medical Education

2016 Primary Care Winter Refresher
March 10-11, 2016, Lunda Center Western Technical College, La Crosse, Wis.

Contemporary Issues in Cardiology & Vascular Medicine 2016
April 8, 2016, Lunda Center Western Technical College, La Crosse, Wis.

Dr. Ken Purdue Optometric Review 2016
April 20, 2016, Integrated Center for Education Gundersen Health System, La Crosse, Wis.

2016 Pharmacology Conference
May 6, 2016, Lunda Center Western Technical College, La Crosse, Wis.
Tapping into one of nature’s best-kept secrets

In 2012, Gundersen Health System began using essential oils as an additional method to support the health and healing of patients.

“While listening to a presentation on essential oils, I was intrigued and thought this was an option that could be helpful for our patients,” says Denise Nicholson, BSN, RN, Gundersen certified clinical aromatherapist, who spearheaded the first use of essential oils with Orthopaedic surgical patients of Edward Riley, MD.

Today, essential oils are available to patients in nearly all Gundersen hospital units, and several clinic and long-term care settings.

“Patients trust that their care team will partner with them to create the best environment to heal. Essential oils are one way our nurses can help create a more holistic environment,” states Denise.

These essential plant oils are used to support patients who may be experiencing pain, nausea and vomiting, anxiety, insomnia or smoking cessation. When inhaled, essential oils trigger the limbic system. When applied to the feet, the active elements in the oils are absorbed. Some patients have described a change almost instantly.

While essential oils have become increasingly popular, they are not meant to be a substitution for medical treatment. Essential oils are often used in conjunction with medication at Gundersen, according to Denise.

“We have a policy to guide our use of essential oils with patients, and all staff must go through training first. In addition, we have a provider champion in each department who uses the oils, and we take this relationship very seriously,” notes Denise.

Gundersen obtains its essential oils from a registered and certified aromatherapist who dilutes and prepares the oils, and provides a list of ingredients. “We chose the Healing Concepts brand because of its reputation and therapeutic qualities,” Denise says.

All of the plants are grown without chemicals and the oils come to Gundersen diluted with a carrier oil known as jojoba. “Essential oils contain highly concentrated properties of the plants. They need to be used carefully and in safe amounts. That’s why we use a diluted solution and remind patients that the oil(s) should not be overbearing,” she adds.

While essential oils are very safe when used correctly, Gundersen does not use them for children under age 2 or women in the first two trimesters of pregnancy.

To learn more about essential oils, contact Denise Nicholson via MedLink at (800) 336-5465. In La Crosse, call (608) 775-5465.

Interventional radiologists offer host of minimally invasive treatments

At Gundersen Health System, interventional radiologists use the latest advances in digital imaging and minimally invasive technology to diagnose and treat an ever-widening range of conditions.

“We don’t focus on one organ system or class of disease. The one thing that connects all the procedures and types of patients we treat is our use of imaging [CT scans, MRIs, fluoroscopy, ultrasound and X-ray]. Because no large incisions are made, the procedures are typically faster, less risky and require shorter hospital stays,” states Ezana Azene, MD, one of three interventional radiologists at Gundersen.

Patients who are referred to Interventional Radiology are evaluated in the Interventional Radiology outpatient
clinic—either in person in La Crosse or via telemedicine at many of our regional Gundersen clinics.

“We have close working relationships with our referring providers. Whenever our treatment decision is going to affect another disease process or problem the referring provider is already managing, then we have a discussion ahead of time,” notes Dr. Azene.

Below is just a sample of conditions and diseases that interventional radiologists evaluate and manage, along with accompanying procedures performed at Gundersen:

- Peripheral, mesenteric and renal vascular disease: endovascular intervention
- Uterine fibroids: uterine fibroid embolization
- Vertebral compression fractures: vertebroplasty
- Lifestyle-limiting ascites or pleural effusion in patients with cancer or chronic liver disease: TIPS (chronic liver disease only), PleurX catheter and Denver shunt
- Liver, lung, bone and soft tissue tumors: chemoembolization, radioembolization and ablation

Given the depth and breadth of medical specialties at Gundersen, our interventional radiologists have created partnerships to benefit patients. For example, Dr. Azene worked closely with Gynecology to create a Uterine Fibroid Clinic earlier this year. “Any patient I see for symptomatic uterine fibroids is required to see a gynecologist before we recommend an intervention,” explains Dr. Azene. “If patients are candidates for uterine fibroid embolization, our gynecologists send them to the Interventional Radiology Clinic.”

Patients and referring providers can expect thorough follow-up care, too. “We don’t just do the procedure. We monitor patients longitudinally in Interventional Radiology as long as they continue to have a risk for post-procedural morbidity, an active disease process or could potentially benefit from our therapies in the future,” adds Dr. Azene.

To refer a patient or for more information, contact Interventional Radiology via MedLink at (800) 336-5465. In La Crosse, call 775-5465. You may also use Epic to place a “Consult to IR” request. For a complete list of conditions treated, visit our Interventional Radiology website.

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Pediatric surgeons expand access and surgical specialties

One of the major advantages that Gundersen Health System’s Surgery department brings to patients and referring providers is the depth and breadth of our surgical service. This includes specialized pediatric surgery.

Thanks to our long-standing collaboration with UW Health, we now offer you and your patients the expert services of three of their finest pediatric surgeons, at Gundersen in La Crosse.

**Charles M. Leys, MD**
Dr. Leys specializes in minimally-invasive approaches to pediatric and newborn surgical diseases, including congenital anomalies, thoracic disorders, chest wall deformities, tumors and gastrointestinal disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease and gastroesophageal reflux. His training includes an oncology research fellowship and a master’s degree in clinical investigation.

**Peter F. Nichol, MD, PhD**
Dr. Nichol is board certified in pediatric surgery. In addition to pediatric general surgery, including minimally invasive procedures, he specializes in pediatric thoracic and trauma surgery. He has particular interest in pediatric nutrition and congenital anomalies of the intestine, and is the director of UW Health’s Pediatric Short Gut/Intestinal Failure Clinic.

**Daniel J. Ostlie, MD**
Dr. Ostlie specializes in minimally invasive pediatric and neonatal surgery, thoracic and oncologic surgery, chest wall deformities, hernia surgery, surgical critical care and trauma, and hypospadias repair. His fellowship training includes pediatric surgery, surgical critical care and surgical research.

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Erin Connolly, NP
Erin has worked in the department of General Surgery at Gundersen for four years. She is expanding her practice to work in collaboration with the UW surgeons to help provide continuity of care for pediatric surgery patients.

The Pediatric Surgery team provides evaluation and treatment of a full range of pediatric conditions that may require surgical intervention such as:
• Appendicitis
• Cancer
• Chest wall deformity including pectus excavatum and pectus carinatum
• Gastrointestinal reflux
• Hernia
• Large or small bowel problem
• Lung mass or cyst
• Malnutrition with need for gastrostomy tube
• Neonatal birth defects
• Pyloric stenosis
• Soft tissue mass

For a referral or consultation, please contact Pediatric Surgery via MedLink at (800) 336-5465 or in La Crosse at 775-5465.

Gundersen Telemedicine invites you to take the next step

At the heart of telemedicine is a basic question—whether you’re a provider or a patient: Why drive two hours for a 15-minute follow-up appointment?

To help you as a provider answer that question, Gundersen Health System Telemedicine now has a full-time program manager. Jessie Miller, RN, has set her sights on growing regional reach.

Gundersen has provided this service for 10 years now. Services in more rural communities that just were not available before are nearer at hand with Gundersen Telemedicine, where a Gundersen specialist acts as a consultant in collaboration with you as the primary provider. Together, use clinical telemedicine for:
• Exams, post-operative follow-up
• Monitoring ongoing treatments
• Interpreting diagnostic tests
• Discussing prognosis and treatment options

Telemedicine allows referring providers to give patients a continuum of care while saving patients’ time, money and stress of traveling to appointments far from home—trips that could require all day for what might otherwise be a 15-minute appointment. And time you save for patients is time you save for your practice.

Gundersen has clinical telemedicine equipment established in 28 locations in the Tri-state Region, in and outside Gundersen’s 19-county coverage area. There are 87 specialists in 28 specialties (and growing!) who participate in services ranging from bariatric surgery consults to genetic counseling to pediatric surgery.

Jessie will develop strategic plans, goals and direction for growing the services. She began her Gundersen career in Telephone Nurse Advisors in 1996 and has also served as an RN in Family Medicine.

To discuss how Telemedicine will help you in your practice, contact Jessie at (608) 775-3031, or by email at jemiller@gundersenhealth.org. Alternatively, contact Regional Services and Telemedicine via MedLink at (800) 336-5465 to learn more about this valuable service.

Visit gundersenhealth.org/telemedicine to learn more about telemedicine services and locations.
New SMART Coil: next generation in the treatment of cerebral aneurysms

When an intracranial cerebral aneurysm ruptures, about half of the patients won’t make it in 30 days. For those who do, many suffer serious brain damage.

Gundersen Health System offers an endovascular coiling procedures that improves outcomes for many patients. Aneurysm coiling is a minimally invasive procedure that allows neuroendovascular surgeon Mouhammed Kabbani, MD, to treat both non-ruptured and ruptured cerebral aneurysms.

Dr. Kabbani has been performing brain coiling at Gundersen for about five years. In September, he was selected to be among the first to try a new FDA-approved SMART coil made by Penumbra—the next generation in this innovative technology. (Dr. Kabbani was among the first to use an earlier generation of coils made by Penumbra as well.)

“SMART coils are made using technology that has never been done before (or thought could be done) with a goal of making the aneurysm coiling surgery safer and more efficient,” explains Dr. Kabbani.

The new SMART Coil combines the characteristics of two different coils in one with ultra-stretch resistance and a more flexible hybrid detachment pusher to deliver the coils into the aneurysm. The .0125” diameter coil has both standard and soft components all in one coil. Nitinol (metal alloy of nickel and titanium) has both shape memory and super-elasticity that may provide better packing and less compaction.

Dr. Kabbani is the only neuroendovascular surgeon in the Tri-state Region performing cerebral aneurysm coiling. Using fluoroscopy to guide him, he threads a small catheter from the groin up to the aneurysm in the brain and uses the coils to fill the aneurysm to achieve occlusion. For aneurysms that haven’t ruptured, the procedure can prevent it from breaking open and bleeding. For an aneurysm that has ruptured it repairs the aneurysm and prevents further bleeding.

“Our goal is to find an aneurysm and repair it with endovascular coiling before it ruptures. However, that’s not always possible, and brain coiling also offers a treatment option for patients who have suffered a rupture,” Dr. Kabbani explains.

Gundersen offers the only neurointerventional services in the Tri-state Region, providing you and your patients with specialized treatment for blood vessel disorders that can affect the nervous system, such as stroke.

For a referral appointment, consultation or more information, call Dr. Kabbani via MedLink at (800) 336-5465 or in La Crosse at 775-5465.
New Practices

Rachel Biemiller, MD
Neurology and Movement Disorders
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Lauren Castro, MD
Oral Surgery
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Brad Collins, OD
Optometry
Gundersen Eye Clinic
Prairie du Chien

Jody Harmsen, MD
Family Medicine
Gundersen West Union Clinic

Christine Jacobsen, MD
Family Medicine
Gundersen Tomah Clinic

Pratima Kamada, MD
Nephrology
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Mark Moeller, DDS
Pediatric Dentistry
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

John Reynen, MD
Anesthesiology
Gundersen La Crosse

Deepa Sathiah, DDS
Oral Surgery
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Michael Schonberger, DO
Neurology and Movement Disorders
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Justin Shurts, DO
Pulmonary
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Kent Summerfield, OD
Optometry
Gundersen La Crosse Clinic

Janine Zee-Cheng, MD
Pediatric Hospitalist Services
Gundersen La Crosse
New Outreach and Telemedicine Service

**Outreach**

**Cardiology ECHO/GXT**
Janice Schroeder, NP  
Location: Gundersen Tri-County Hospital and Clinics, Whitehall, Wis.

**Pediatric Gastroenterology**
Victor Uko, MD  
Location: Mile Bluff, Mauston, Wis.

**Orthopaedic Surgery**
Russell Norris, MD  
Location: Gundersen West Union Clinic, Iowa

**Podiatry**
Devin Simonson, DPM  
Location: Gundersen Tri-County Hospitals and Clinics, Whitehall, Wis.

**Telemedicine**

**Family Medicine**
Matt Thompson, DO, and Dan Wientzen, DO  
Location: Gundersen West Union Clinic

**Interventional Radiology**
Ezana Azene, MD  
Locations: Gundersen Decorah Clinic, Iowa; Gundersen Prairie du Chien Clinic, Wis.; Gundersen Boscobel Area Hospital and Clinics in Boscobel, Fennimore and Muscoda, Wis.; Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics, Hillsboro, Wis.; and Gundersen Tri-County Hospitals and Clinics, Whitehall, Wis.; Gundersen Tomah Clinic, Wis.

**NeoNET (Neonatal Newborn Emergency Telemedicine)**
Ngozi Nduka, MD; Kate Richmond, MD; and Richard Strauss, MD  
Locations: Gundersen Tri County Hospital & Clinics, Whitehall, Wis. and Gundersen St. Joseph’s Hospital and Clinics, Hillsboro, Wis.; Vernon Memorial Hospital, Viroqua, Wis.

**Nephrology**
Pratima Kamada, MD  
Location: Gundersen West Union Clinic, Iowa
Peds specialty care extends to area hospitals through telemedicine – continued from front

Of the many benefits telemedicine offers, Dr. Neumann says one of the most useful features is the visual connection with patients and families. “It’s so helpful to confer directly with the mother. In fact, the demeanor of the mother can tell us a lot about the severity of the child’s condition. The visual connection is equally reassuring to parents if their child must be transferred to La Crosse,” he adds.

Pediatric Critical Care Telemedicine is available for consulting on children from any health system, not just Gundersen patients. Tomah Memorial Hospital in Tomah, Gundersen St. Joseph’s Hospital and Clinics in Hillsboro and Gundersen Tri-County Hospital and Clinics in Whitehall are the first to use the program. Additional locations are expected to be added in 2016.

To consult a pediatric intensivist or to arrange a transport, call MedLink at (800) 336-5465. To learn about setting up a telemedicine program in your facility, contact Jessica Miller, Telemedicine program manager, Regional Services, at (608) 775-3031 or Kimberly Hable, RN, Regional Services, at (608) 799-6548.

Telemedicine services at Gundersen
Pediatric Critical Care Telemedicine expands Gundersen’s already comprehensive telemedicine services throughout the region, including:
• NeoNET, newborn emergency telemedicine with Gundersen’s neonatologists
• TeleStroke, stroke telemedicine with Gundersen’s Primary Stroke Center specialists
• An array of specialists providing non-emergent consultations and office visits