



HILL TOPICS

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of New England Baptist Hospital

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Atrium Project Takes Shape

Like an early holiday present, the first phase of the Atrium Project was unveiled in the last few weeks, much to the joy and satisfaction of patients and staff alike. Patient Access/Registration relocated to its new space on November 29 and the new Patient and Family Waiting Area, Surgical Services Locker Room and Ambulance Drop-Off opened in quick succession during the first two weeks of December. With stylish furniture and finishes and newly landscaped green space, the Atrium epitomizes the Hospital's Dress to Impress mindset and has a bright and airy feel.

"The Atrium Project is the first of the four major projects outlined in our master facility plan," says NEBH President & CEO Joe Dionisio. "Its completion represents a significant improvement for our waiting areas. Not only does this space offer more comfortable and attractive areas for our patients and their families to wait, it will serve the Hospital's long-term goals by providing adequate support space to enable us to handle greater

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Employees in Patient Access love their new space!

The Joys of the Season

A message from our President & CEO

I attended the League's Children's Holiday Party on Sunday afternoon – what a great time the kids had! As I watched the nearly ninety children working so diligently on their sock snowmen, I was reminded that we often forget the true meaning of the holiday season and therefore miss the joy. No matter your religious beliefs or the traditions you embrace, I believe the holiday season is about joy and serenity. Some find serenity in the gathering of family and loved ones or in doing for others. For me the joy of the season is the opportunity to do for and share with others.

I have been told that once again the NEBH family came together to support the many needy families in our community through the donation of gifts and food. I am most grateful for your willingness to help those in need



Children making sock snowmen at the League's Children's Holiday Party.

through our Giving Tree, the Coats for Kids program, and your support of the Home for Little Wanderers here in Mission Hill. Your generosity and caring is truly touching.

Calvin Coolidge once said, "Christmas is not a time or a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace

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Medical Mission to India is an Eye-Opener for Surgeon and Daughter

Living for several years in a relatively poor region of Eastern Europe did not prepare Kenneth Leavitt, DPM, for what he would encounter on his recent trip to India. Dr. Leavitt and his 17-year-old daughter, Rebecca, embarked on their odyssey in August to care for a patient who reached out to him via the Internet.

In May of 2005, Dr. Leavitt received an e-mail from Arpita Pattnaik, a 25-year-old woman living in Bhubaneswar in the Orissa Province of Northeast India. After extensive research, Pattnaik had come



Dr. Kenneth Leavitt with Arpita Pattnaik.

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across Dr. Leavitt's name and appealed to him for help with the drop foot condition she had as a result of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS), a neurological disorder affecting the nerves in her arms and legs. Due to the condition, she had lost most of the muscle function in her lower legs and was unable to raise her feet at her ankles. Because her toes

remained pointed downward (drop foot), she was unable to stand or walk.



After several months of correspondence, Dr. Leavitt offered to donate his time to travel to India to perform her reconstructive foot surgery. Pattnaik made arrangements

for Dr. Leavitt to travel to India in August, hosted by Sanjay Das, MD, at the Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Hospital in Orissa. In addition to operating on Pattnaik, Dr. Leavitt agreed to lecture and consult on other cases.

The trip alone was daunting, taking a full two days to reach their destination. Upon arrival, they were struck by the overwhelming poverty and desperate living conditions in the country where diseases like leprosy (Hansen's Disease) and polio are still commonplace.

Despite their reservations, Dr. Leavitt and his daughter made the trek to the hospital, which was located at the edge of the jungle and consisted of 20-bed open wards with no bathroom or shower facilities. Surprisingly, however, the 100-bed hospital was affiliated with relatively sophisticated physical therapy and prosthetic schools.

He performed the complicated bi-lateral foot reconstruction on Pattnaik's feet using instruments and supplies he brought with him and working by flashlight at several points when the lights went out. During the three days he was at the hospital, he lectured to 10 orthopedic surgeons, three anesthesiologists and 20 physical therapy and prosthetic students. In addition, he consulted on several cases and operated on a young boy with spastic deformities in his feet resulting from cerebral palsy.

Since his return to the United States, Leavitt and Pattnaik have been in regular contact and she reports that the fusions in her feet are healing well. She will soon begin attempting to walk, however, she is still in need of hip



At several points during the procedure, the lights went out, so the team had to continue by flashlight.



Rebecca Leavitt and Dr. Sanjay Das.

surgery to remove ossified muscle tissue resulting from a condition known as myositis ossificans. Dr. Leavitt is gathering advice from physician colleagues to pass on to his patient.

"I see the relationships I formed during my trip as an opportunity for the future," he says. "If you truly have a physician's heart, you are moved to help those in need because you have to."

Affiliated with New England Baptist Hospital since 2001, Dr. Leavitt served for five years as medical director and foot and ankle surgeon in residence of the non-profit Baltic-American Medical & Surgical Clinic in Lithuania. His next move will take place in January when he relocates his practice from Brookline to the NEBH campus, Suite 390 in the Main Building. ■

Another Quality Star for the Baptist

During the week of November 13, you may have seen some suited consultants in our patient units, along with members of the Hospital leadership, observing patient care. They are a sign that we have been recognized yet again for our outstanding commitment to quality improvement, recognition that may translate into a substantial grant.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts has spent the past year looking for partners in a program to achieve "transformational change," which means a radical improvement in quality by a focus on process improvement. After reviewing our quality improvement initiatives, Blue Cross executives proposed a grant, contingent upon agreement on three quality improvement goals. We will be able to use this grant to improve medication safety, infection control, and other processes that support the care of our patients.

A Hospital team, comprised of physicians and members of the Executive Team, has been working with consultants from a health care consulting firm called Value Capture, based in Pittsburgh, PA. The Value Capture consultants have spent time observing case managers, PTs, nursing assistants, unit secretaries, nurse practitioners and pharmacists. They are using their observations to discover what barriers we are encountering daily and to better understand our challenges.

Look for more information about Value Capture and our work with the Blue Cross Blue Shield transformational change initiative in the next issue of *HillTopics*. ■