

# PEDIATRIC CANCER CARE:

- *Outstanding  
Success Rates*
- *Innovative  
BMT Unit  
Opens*



**PLUS** Rooms in BMT Unit for Families **6** New Hospitalist Program **8** Creating A Better Surveillance Tool **10**



**6**



**8**



**10**



## A LETTER FROM JOHN SCHREIBER, MD

Dear Colleague,

I am pleased to introduce to you the first edition of **Working Together for Healthy Futures**, Floating Hospital for Children's new publication created just for our referring physicians. As part of our recent rebranding announcement (we are now Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center) and my arrival here, we have renewed our commitment to frequent communication with our valued referring physicians. This publication is just one way we plan to update you concerning the advances, new services and new physicians at Floating Hospital. In the content of this publication, you will see how working together as community physician and academic medical center we can have a significant impact on the well-being of our region's children and truly create many healthy futures.

We have also dedicated ourselves to making it easier for you to reach our physicians and access the exceptional services available at Floating Hospital. To that end, we created a one phone number, no hassle method for having your patient admitted to Floating Hospital or to obtain a consultation. Our hospitalists are available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by dialing **877-KIDS-FHC**. These highly-skilled physicians coordinate admissions and provide consults to you. They oversee your patient's entire hospital stay and remain in contact with you so you are acutely aware of your patient's condition and treatment plan.

We have also established one phone number for scheduling **sub-specialty clinic appointments**. Patients and referring physicians can simply call **617 636-8100** to receive personal assistance from one of our call center professionals.

There are many other developments at Floating that you should know about as well. In this edition, you will read about the opening of our incredible new **Neely Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplant Unit**. It is the only BMT unit in the region that includes parent rooms and communal areas right on the unit in the HEPA-filtered environment. This unit is just one example of our robust hematology and oncology division and a testament to Floating Hospital's commitment to family-centered care. I hope that you will refer your patients in need of expert cancer care to this team. You will not be disappointed.

Floating has also brought on board a new chief of our pediatric intensive care unit. We will be profiling Rashed Durgham, MD in our next edition of Healthy Futures. Dr. Durgham hails from Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital and Case Western Reserve University and has brought a wealth of talent and new ideas with him that are having an outstanding impact on further advancing the way we care for the region's sickest children. I know you will enjoy working with him and his new PICU team on any future patient needs.

Finally, we have new faculty in our divisions of Neurology, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, General Surgery, and ENT. We recognized that our community needs more access to specialists in these areas; we are striving to fill this need for you.

I look forward to updating you quarterly through this publication but please feel free to contact the team here at any time. I would welcome the opportunity to provide you a tour of Floating and discuss how we might work in concert with you to serve your patients in the warm, personal atmosphere at Floating Hospital. **Call me to set up a tour or discuss your ideas at 617 636-8031; it is always a pleasure to get a call or e-mail from our referral partners.**

All the best,

John Schreiber, MD  
Pediatrician-in-Chief, Chief Administration Officer  
[jschreiber@tuftsmedicalcenter.org](mailto:jschreiber@tuftsmedicalcenter.org)  
**617 636-8031**

# PEDIATRIC CANCER CARE: *Success on Many Levels*



**P**ediatric cancer care at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center stands out for many reasons: a solid history of excellent patient outcomes, a medical staff that is available 24 hours a day for referrals and consultations and staying in regular communication with referring physicians. In addition, the service prides itself on providing an enhanced system of patient and family support that is evidenced in numerous ways, both large and small.

“Our approach is to give patients all the state-of-the-art technical power available in an academic medical center with the boutique feel of personal attention,” says John Schreiber, MD, Pediatrician-in-Chief.

The Floating Cancer Center provides comprehensive surgical, medical, radiation and transplantation services to combat the various forms of childhood cancer and blood disorders. And the results speak for themselves: the Hematology/Oncology

Division has a 90 percent overall survival rate for acute lymphocytic leukemia; 85 percent of patients treated here with this disease are still in complete remission after five years.

The center is known for its international expertise in neuro-oncology, neuroblastoma, germ cell tumors and pediatric hematology. All pediatric cancer patients are cared for by senior oncologists and are also highly served by having ready access to board-certified pediatric specialists and sub-specialists in all disciplines, including neurosurgery, radiation oncology, pediatric emergency medicine and pediatric surgery, among others. Pediatric Surgeon-in-Chief Brian Gilchrist, MD, who completed a fellowship in pediatric surgical oncology at St. Jude’s Hospital, is just one example of the talented staff here to serve the region’s sickest children.

Understanding that quick decision making is crucial when a child is diagnosed with cancer, Floating’s cancer care team

[\(continued on next page\)](#)

Below is a quick referral list of Go To people in Hematology / Oncology who can address all of your patients' needs.

### Howard Grodman, MD

Having performed numerous successful transplantations since 1995, Howard is the Director of the Neely Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit.

### Cynthia Kretschmar, MD

Cynthia is the "go to" neuro-oncologist for second opinions by patients and doctors both locally and nationally.

### Maria Pelidis, MD

Maria provides world-class care for patients with Sickle Cell Disease, Hemoglobinopathies and Hypercoagulable states.

### Brian Gilchrist, MD

Brian is the Pediatric Surgeon-in-Chief and completed a pediatric surgical oncology fellowship at St. Jude's Hospital.

### Carl Heilman, MD

Carl is one of only a handful of pediatric neurosurgeons with extensive tumor experience in the city.

### Cathy Rosenfield, MD

Cathy is the interim Chief of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology and the most sought after coagulation physician for children in New England.

### DOCTOR'S NOTES

To refer a patient to the Cancer Center at Floating Hospital at Tufts Medical Center, or to learn more about the new Bone Marrow Transplant Unit for pediatric patients and their families, call 617 636-5535.

### Pediatric Cancer Care, *continued*

can provide rapid first and second opinions, in most cases within 24 hours of a patient's referral.

"We are constantly trying to fulfill the Floating mission of putting patients and families at the center of everything we do," says Schreiber. "We don't expect patients to find their way through the process. We take them by the hand."

The expertise of the entire Hematology/Oncology Division is evident in its state-of-the-art bone marrow transplant (BMT) program. The program is the second largest bone marrow transplant program in New England, and Floating physicians handle the most complex cases in the region and have demonstrated success rates above the national average.

The BMT program is accredited by the Children's Oncology Group and the Federation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapies, and participates in the Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Consortium. These essential alliances give the BMT team access to treatment protocols that are not widely available.

Led by Howard Grodman, MD, the BMT program's accomplishments are considerable. In 2007, the transplant team performed four autologous transplants on three patients; these patients are all alive and doing well with no evidence of disease. (The benchmark is 95 percent immediate post transplant survival.)

In addition, 13 allogeneic transplants were done for 11 patients. Donor sources included siblings, matched unrelated donors (MUD) and umbilical cord stem cells. Children were transplanted for neuroblastoma, solid tumors, leukemias, and for blood and bone diseases. Two patients received an experimental protocol for a very high risk relapsed solid tumor. One of these patients had an excellent response and is disease free over a year later. Six of these 13 high risk allogeneic transplants were successful and all of these patients are alive and disease free.

BMT is a procedure of "extraordinary complexity," says Grodman. But, he says, this team's success with this treatment is illustrative of the department's capacity to care for all pediatric cancer patients.

Just this year, the BMT program was further distinguished by an extraordinary gift. A beautiful new unit dedicated to pediatric BMT patients and their families was given by The Cam Neely Foundation for Cancer Care.

While BMT is a treatment option for some of the most serious types of pediatric cancers, the majority of patients will be treated successfully with surgery and chemotherapy, sometimes combined with radiation. The Floating Cancer Center is part of the Children's Oncology Group and the National Cancer Institute and the Hemophilia and Thrombosis Research Society. The professionals of Floating's Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology are continually evaluating new protocols and working together to determine which treatment is the best choice for each individual patient.

Additionally, patients benefit from Tufts Medical Center's acclaimed Radiation Oncology Department, which was one of the first clinical sites to develop and test Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy. Our radiation oncologists are extremely accessible and offer a full range of radiation services, including Northern New England's only Gamma Knife for treating brain tumors.

Beyond cancer care, the Division also provides expertise in hematological disorders, including hemophilia, von Willebrands disease, anemias, coagulation defects, white cell disorders, hemoglobinopathies, bone marrow failure, thalassemias and sickle cell disease. Cathy Rosenfield, MD, is the most sought after coagulation physician for children in New England, and Maria Pelidis, MD is well-known for her hemoglobinopathies work.

Grodman says that he spends a good deal of time consulting with primary care pediatricians about their patients with blood diseases. Our clinic provides, free of charge, a service to referring physicians to review blood smears and provide consultation.

## Working in Partnership

The team knows that the success they achieve with their young pediatric patients is dependent on and supported by the partnership they have with referring physicians.

“It’s our job to be there for the referring physicians — first as a referral source and then every step along the way during the patient’s treatment,” says Cathy Rosenfield, interim Chief of the Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology.



*Howard Grodman, MD, Director of the Neely Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit.*

## COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

**Complete hematologic and oncologic services for children with all forms of malignant disease and common and uncommon hematology problems.**

- **Surgical services**
- **Chemotherapy**
- **Radiation therapy**
- **Bone marrow transplantation**
  - Autologous transplants
  - Allogeneic transplants (sibling, matched unrelated donor, cord transplants)
  - Treatment of graft vs. host disease
  - Treatment of marrow failure syndromes
  - Treatment of hematologic and metabolic diseases

**The Floating Children’s Cancer Center is known for an expertise in neuro-oncology, including the treatment of neuroblastoma and germ cell tumors.**

**We are equally expert in the treatment of hematologic disorders, including:**

- **Prothrombotic disorders**
- **Bleeding disorders such as hemophilia and von Willebrand disease**
- **Anemias and hemoglobinopathies such as thalassemias and sickle cell disease**
- **White cell disorders**
- **Platelet disorders**
- **Bone marrow failure syndromes**

The team demonstrates this commitment to working with referring physicians in several ways, beginning with providing information and being in regular communication. For example, if a doctor calls in the morning, he or she gets a return call no later than that afternoon. “There’s no waiting time,” says Grodman.

And, when referring physicians do call, they speak to an attending directly, not a fellow and never a student. They get thorough feedback and they get it quickly.

“It is beneficial for us to make information available to pediatricians because the families expect it,” continues Grodman. “If we support the pediatrician with up-to-date information on all the disease and treatment issues so they can then be a resource and comfort for the patient’s family, then we’ve done our job.”

## Taking Care of Everyone

The entire staff at Floating does everything they can to make very sick children—and their families—feel well cared for.

Child Life specialist Carol Farwell makes each child feel safe, comfortable, and most of all, relaxed and happy. Armed with bubble makers, stuffed toys, and 16 years of experience and tricks designed to make a child laugh and be distracted during a painful procedure, Farwell is an integral part of the hematology/oncology care team.

“At other places, child life intervenes when there is a problem,” she says. “But here, we’re a part of everything.”

Beyond her work with the young patients, Farwell—who may be more aptly called a “family life specialist”—also works with siblings and other family members, to coordinate the VIBS, which stands for Very Important Brothers and Sisters, support group. She also oversees a sibling bereavement group.

“We’re very family focused,” she says. □



# BMT Unit Lets Families be Together During a Difficult Time

Parents and families of children undergoing the grueling six- to eight-week process of a bone marrow transplant procedure just received an enormous gift from the Cam Neely Foundation for Cancer Care that will make their lives a little easier. Thanks to the foundation's tremendous generosity, Floating Hospital for Children's Cancer Center at Tufts Medical Center now can offer parents a temporary home near their child's bedside.

The Neely Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, the first of its kind in New England and possibly the country, features a fully furnished and well appointed family suite inside the BMT transplant unit itself, where parents can stay while their children are being treated. A highly sophisticated HVAC system circulates clean air throughout the BMT unit and the apartments, keeping the entire area as germ-free as possible. This system, when paired with diligent hand-washing and other forms of infection control, enables parents—as well as hospital staff—to interact with children without having to wear masks and gowns.

“This goes a long way to improving peace of mind of the parents,” says Howard Grodman, MD, Director of the Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplantation program at Floating. “That translates to having children feel better, which makes the entire process better for everyone. In the past, bone marrow transplantation could be very isolating for a child, but this new unit opens things up to them and to their families. It provides for a more positive experience.”

The suite includes three parent rooms and comes complete with a kitchen, sitting area and even a washer and dryer. Its proximity allows parents to have a respite and a little time to themselves but be with their children within seconds if need be.

The patient area of the new unit is also completely renovated with modern and welcoming amenities. The unit includes five sunny new pediatric BMT treatment rooms, including one that is decorated in Boston Bruins memorabilia, in honor of Cam Neely, NHL Hall of Famer who is now part of the Bruins management group. There is also a play area for patients.

“The greatest reward of the new unit is knowing that it physically moves families closer together and increases their time together during this difficult process,” says Cam Neely, President of the Cam Neely Foundation for Cancer Care.

“This is the epitome of family centered care,” says Scott Neely, Cam Neely Foundation for Cancer Care Executive Director. “Caring for your child during hospitalization is difficult; this space takes away some of the hassles of traveling to the hospital, getting laundry done, and instead lets the family focus on being with their child. Parents and children can all rest comfortably knowing they are only steps away from each other.”

Grodman points to the unit as being one more reason why referring patients to the Floating’s Cancer Center is the right choice.

“The well-being of the entire family is very important during bone marrow transplantation. This space provides a concrete example to referring physicians and families that Floating is a unique option in the market and we tie together a commitment to the family to a commitment to excellence in bone marrow transplant success rates,” says Grodman. □



*“The greatest reward of the new unit is knowing that it physically moves families closer together and increases their time together during this difficult process.”*

*— Cam Neely  
President, Cam Neely  
Foundation for Cancer Care*



# HOSPITALIST Improves Access PROGRAM and Communication



**IN JUST A SHORT TIME**, the new Hospitalist Program at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center has already had a powerful impact, both on patient care and on enhancing relationships between referring physicians and specialists at the hospital.

The Hospitalist Program, which includes Claudia Lavin, MD, Elisabeth Schainker, MD and Prya Garg, MD builds on what has always been a Floating standard: open and continual communication with referring physicians combined with an integrated plan of care for their patients. Under this new initiative, the Floating's long tradition of personalized care has gotten even better.

"The most important aspects of the Hospitalist Program," says Lavin, "is that it allows referring physicians to have immediate contact with Floating, and it ensures that every patient stay is of the highest quality and that care is delivered in a timely manner."

The streamlined process of the new program makes the entire referral process easy and stress-free for the referring physician. Floating hospitalists are there to handle the details. Referring physicians now have one phone number, **877-KIDS-FHC (877-543-7342)** to call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for consultations and admissions.

The highly-trained pediatric hospitalists provide regular and personalized communication to referring physicians, including a first-day report following admission, daily updates and discharge reports.

“We talk to the primary care physicians all the time, so they are informed about what happens to their patients,” says Lavin. “Connecting and working with referring physicians is one of the best parts of my job.”

Lavin, Schainker and Garg have extensive experience in primary care and adolescent medicine and they are committed to teaching residents and students and providing superior customer service to referring physicians.

Floating is known for its specialized care, and a major component of the hospitalist’s role is to coordinate the sub-specialty care of each patient. This involves making sure that specialist services are completed in a timely manner, that each patient is followed and monitored from one specialty service area to another, and that communication between everyone involved remains open, frequent, and informed. “A high level of collegiality and mutual respect among specialists makes this part of the job easy,” says Lavin.

### *Providing Comprehensive Quality Care*

The Hospitalist Program also improves a patient’s experience because one team is in charge of the child’s entire care plan.

“With the hospitalist as an advocate, a patient returns to the comforts of home as soon as possible because of the efficient coordination of specialist care. And, with its emphasis on evidence-based medicine, the program also ensures patients get the right procedures and treatments at the right time. This coordinated care benefits patients, their families, referring physicians and the hospital,” she explains.

The hospitalists also make sure that patient areas are in top shape and that families’ needs are met. “The hospitalists help ensure consistent quality all day, every day,” Lavin says. Her ultimate mission is increased satisfaction from referring physicians and families: “We want people to want to come here because they received exceptional care and had a great experience in every aspect,” she says. “We want Floating Hospital to be known across the region and around the country as one of the best hospitals for quality and customer service.” □

### DOCTOR’S NOTES

To admit a patient to Floating or for more information about the Hospitalist Program at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, contact our skilled hospitalists at 877-KIDS-FHC (877-543-7342).

**Claudia Lavin, MD**  
Director, Hospitalist Program,  
Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center

**Elisabeth Schainker, MD**  
Hospitalist

**Prya Garg, MD**  
Hospitalist



# CREATING A BETTER SURVEILLANCE TOOL

to Monitor Development and Behavior of Young Children

Specialist seeks input from pediatricians

**I**N January of this year, Mass Health initiated a program requiring pediatricians to administer a behavioral screening assessment at each well-child visit to parents of all children, age 0 to 21, who receive Medicaid. When dealing with children younger than five years of age, this is particularly challenging, as toddlers have at least five such visits in the first year. This frequency makes the currently available paper-based assessment tools unwieldy, for both the parents and pediatricians.

Ellen Perrin, MD, Director of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, is creating a user-friendly tool for this regular monitoring of the youngest children.

Currently, pediatricians have eight measurement tools approved by Mass Health from which to choose when assessing a child's behavior. Only four, however, are suitable for children younger than age 5, explains Perrin. Of these, each has qualities that make them challenging to use, particularly multiple times a year. For example, several are lengthy to complete and cumbersome to score. One question asks parents if they are generally "concerned" about their child's behavior, but does not ask for specific information that might help physicians learn about the particular behaviors that children display.





### *Using the Power of Technology*

Perrin's tool is being developed with members of her research group Chris Sheldrick, PhD and Brandi Henson, PhD and will address all of these concerns and enhance the field of early child developmental-behavioral evaluation.

Perrin's new tool will be delivered on an electronic platform in order to provide a flexible robustness that current paper evaluations lack. Parents will be able to complete the short questionnaire online or via telephone, in the privacy of their own homes or while they are waiting for the physician visit. The instrument will be scored electronically, and results will be provided either on paper or through an electronic medical record if the office already has converted to EMR.

"The computer program will automatically tailor questions not only to a child's age, but also to the parent's previous responses," says Perrin. "Thus it will create a developmental growth curve and provide much more useful information than isolated responses at a single point in time."

Perrin cites an example concerning questions related to a child's language abilities. If the answers to questions at one visit are that a child says a limited number of words or no words, then at a follow-up visit a month later, the parent would not be asked whether the child is speaking in full sentences. Instead, this parent would be asked to answer questions about how many new words the child has learned to say, and how he or she understands simple requests. These cascades of questions are crucial to being able to distinctly evaluate each individual child. For example, as a parent answers

questions about the child's behaviors, answers that suggested a problem would prompt an additional set of questions to delve deeper into that area.

Results lead to three levels of recommendations for pediatricians to share with parents: 1) fine; 2) watch, but with no referral necessary; 3) child needs immediate attention. Data aggregators and charting functions allow pediatricians and parents to survey a child's development over time.

### *Help from Community Pediatricians*

Perrin, who launched her study with a planning grant from the Commonwealth Fund, will have a template of the new tool ready soon. In the meantime, she is looking for input from community pediatricians to lend assistance and advice:

- Participate in an advisory group to help design the instrument
- Allow her group the opportunity to pilot test the new instrument in your office □

### **DOCTOR'S NOTES**

If you are interested in talking to Ellen Perrin, MD about her new behavioral-development assessment tool for children age 0 to 5, contact her at 617 636-8010, or e-mail at [eperrin@tuftsmedicalcenter.org](mailto:eperrin@tuftsmedicalcenter.org)

# ON CALL

*A regular feature introducing the specialists at the Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center*

## PEDIATRIC GASTROENTEROLOGY

Three new, talented pediatric gastroenterologists have joined Alex Flores, MD, Chief of the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center. This newly enlarged division, with its seven satellite clinics around Boston and in Nashua, NH, is now one of the most robust in the city treating children's gastrointestinal disorders.

In addition to providing excellent care and state-of-the-art diagnostic and monitoring services, this practice is committed to being partners with the physicians who refer their patients here. A key goal is maintaining ongoing communication between the referring physician and the Floating gastroenterologist. This includes relaying information about the initial consultation, hospitalization, if required, and discharge and follow-up programs. All details are shared and the doctor treating the patient is always only a phone call away.

The Division of Gastroenterology services include the diagnosis and therapy for a wide range of pediatric intestinal, liver and neuro-digestive disorders, as well as management of patients with complex motility disorders.

In addition, the gastroenterology practice offers nutrition services, including evaluation and management of nutritional status and related growth failure, obesity, malnutrition and eating disorders.

State-of-the-art gastrointestinal diagnostic procedures include esophageal dilation, upper gastrointestinal endoscopy, colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, small bowel biopsy, wireless video capsule endoscopy and impedance motility studies, among many others.

This depth and breadth of expertise and specialized medical and nursing care along with the Division's commitment to working closely with you, the referring physician makes the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition an excellent choice for the care of your young patients with gastrointestinal disorders. □

Floating Hospital for Children offers a wealth of expert specialists to assist you in the care of your patients. During the past several years, we have added new physicians in many specialties to better serve you. This feature highlights several of our newest physicians, your newest referral resources. **To learn more about our new specialists, visit [floatinghospital.org](http://floatinghospital.org) and click on "find a physician."**

*To refer your patients to the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, call 617 636-3266.*



**ALEX FLORES, MD**

Chief, Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition;  
Director, Pediatrics NeuroDigestive Center at Floating Hospital for Children

**Medical School**

Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala  
School of Medical Sciences

**Fellowships and Post-graduate Training**

Children's Hospital Boston

**Board Certified**

Pediatric Gastroenterology

**Specialties**

GI motility disorders

**Languages**

English and Spanish



**PETER NGO, MD**

Director, Endoscopic Unit

**Medical School**

University of California, Los Angeles

**Fellowships and Post-graduate Training**

University of California, Irvine Medical

Center, Children's Hospital Boston, Massachusetts General Hospital

**Board Certified**

Pediatric Gastroenterology

**Specialties**

Inflammatory bowel disease, eosinophilic GI disease and allergic gastrointestinal disease



**BRIAN REGAN, DO**

Pediatric Gastroenterologist

**Medical School**

New York College of Osteopathic Medicine

**Fellowships and Post-graduate Training**

Winthrop University Hospital,  
Schneider Children's Hospital on Long Island

**Board Certified**

Pediatric Gastroenterology

**Specialties**

Inflammatory bowel disease



**BHANU SUNKU, MD**

Director of Clinical Services and Education

**Medical School**

Boston University School of Medicine

**Fellowships and Post-graduate Training**

Winthrop University Hospital,  
Children's Memorial Hospital, Chicago

**Board Certified**

Pediatric Gastroenterology

**Specialties**

Functional gastrointestinal disorders, abdominal migraines, irritable bowel syndrome, and cyclic vomiting syndrome

## SEE OUR PEDIATRIC GI AND SURGICAL TEAM IN ACTION

View a Webcast of our Chief of Pediatric GI Alex Flores, MD and Chief of Pediatric Surgery Brian Gilchrist, MD performing an innovative new method of Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy, or "PEG." Traditional PEG surgery places a feeding tube in a patient who is not getting proper nutrition, usually due to metabolic or digestive disorders. The new more advanced version developed by Flores called "LAPEG" improves patient safety and outcomes through the use of laparoscopic surgical techniques to visually confirm correct placement of the feeding tube even in very young infants, avoiding many of the risks of complications posed by conventional PEG surgery.

See it anytime at <http://www.or-live.com/tuftsmc/2166/index.cfm>

# WORKING TOGETHER

*Real experiences from our referring physicians*

## JOE LEADER, MD

**Joe Leader, MD, Medical Director of the thriving pediatric practice Woburn Pediatrics, has been associated with Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center for 40 years. He trained at Floating as a young resident from 1963 to 1965, and he has been referring his patients and their families to Floating ever since.**

“The relationship I have had with the physicians and staff at Floating has been very positive,” says Leader. “Our patients and families consistently tell us that they have had very good experiences at Floating. That is important information for a referring physician to receive.”

In addition to a close referring relationship, Leader’s practice is also near Floating’s Pediatric Specialty Center/Woburn. This proximity works well for everyone. Physicians in Leader’s group find it beneficial to consult with the Floating specialists concerning a child’s special needs and progress, and parents very much appreciate the convenience of seeing a leading specialist in cardiology, neurology and other specialties right in their hometown, next to their trusted pediatrician.

Families have also told Leader that they value the expert care and service available at Floating’s Emergency Department. They are especially appreciative of the short wait times at the Emergency Department at Floating, says Leader. “Given the option of going across town and waiting four or five hours or coming to Floating and being seen right away, the option is pretty clear.”

Leader also points to Floating’s family-centered philosophy as being important to him when making referrals. He recalls that while playrooms are now common in pediatric in-patient centers, Floating was among the very first to put one in place four decades ago.

“Kids are treated in a friendly, compassionate manner, and less as a disease entity,” he says. □

***To refer your patients to Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, call 877-KIDS-FHC (877-543-7342).***

***For appointments at our Pediatric Specialty Center/Woburn, call 781 897-0240.***

At Floating Hospital for Children, we value our referring physician partners and are committed to doing all we can to make it easy for you to refer your patients here. It is our mission to ensure that they, and you, have a positive experience during the entire referral process. If you have a story to tell about your experience with Floating Hospital, please contact us at [healthyfutures@tuftsmedicalcenter.org](mailto:healthyfutures@tuftsmedicalcenter.org). We would love to include it in a future Working Together column.





# Pediatric Emergency Department is a **Number One Choice**

**A** pediatric emergency requires specialized expertise fast. The Pediatric Emergency Department at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center has specially trained and dedicated physician and nursing staff who can manage even the most complex and traumatic pediatric emergencies. This expertise combined with the emergency medical staff's access to a comprehensive set of specialists and 30-minute wait times upon entry makes the Pediatric Emergency Department at Floating Hospital a number one choice for the referral of very sick children.

*continued on next page*



## DOCTOR'S NOTES

### RON RUFFING, MD

Director, Pediatric  
Emergency Department

#### Medical School

Wayne State University School  
of Medicine, Detroit

#### Fellowships and Post-graduate Training

University of Minnesota,  
University of Colorado

#### Board Certification

Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine

To refer a patient to the Pediatric Emergency Department at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, call the Floating hospitalists at 877-KIDS-FHC (877-543-7342) or call the Pediatric ED directly at 617-636-KIDS (5437).

*“We have a philosophy that these are unique events in the lives of children—and their families—and we address and respect that.”*

*— Ron Ruffing, MD*

## Pediatric Emergencies, *continued*

Among the department's multiple assets is its highly trained medical and nursing staff. Dedicated pediatric emergency physicians oversee care during the peak hours of noon to midnight. In addition, all members of the department nursing staff have Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) certification.

“We have highly skilled pediatric ER nurses,” says Ruffing. “All of them are exceptional at conducting complex procedures on pediatric patients.”

Ruffing also points out his department's commitment to maintaining a high level of communication among his staff, and referring physicians who send their patients here.

“There have been many instances where my one-on-one conversations with referring physicians have been extremely valuable in caring for an incoming patient,” says Ruffing. “A patient's care can be started over the phone and we really encourage doctors to make that call so they can get all of their questions answered.”

## Specialists in Pediatric Trauma

In 1981, the department was the first to be included into the Kiwanis Pediatric Trauma Institute, KPTI. Today, Chief of Pediatric Surgery Brian Gilchrist, MD leads a certified pediatric trauma program that remains a top choice in New England for the acute treatment and follow-up care of the most serious and complex childhood injuries. Referrals from emergency departments as far away as Maine have come into this department.

Traumatic injury is the leading cause of death in children, from infancy to age 20. Because of this frightening statistic, the KPTI also conducts ongoing training for physicians as well as for patients on injury prevention. For more information on the KPTI, contact Pediatric Trauma Nurse Coordinator Leslie Rideout, RN at 617 636-6381.

## Taking Away the Fear Factor

“But perhaps one of the biggest reasons why families of children who need emergency care are glad they came to Floating,” says Ruffing, “is because of the department's commitment to making the experience seem as normal and least frightening as possible.”

“We have a philosophy that these are unique events in the lives of children—and their families—and we address and respect that,” says Ruffing. “Nice things don't usually happen to kids at health facilities, so it's appropriate that kids will be terrified when they show up here. We do a lot of things to make this experience less scary.”

Bells, whistles, bubbles, jokes and brightly painted murals of jungle animals in the treatment rooms, all designed to give kids something to focus on instead of strange-looking equipment and sharp objects, are all evidence of this philosophy.

“The physicians have the job of handling the most complex cases and getting a child healthy. It's my job to make it as fun as possible while the child is being treated,” says Child Life specialist Bridget Riley.

“It is a commitment on the institution’s part to make people feel cared for,” says Ruffing, who acknowledges the work of Riley and her Child Life team make his job easier. In the Emergency Department, that means making children feel welcome, relaxed and most importantly, unafraid.

### Time is Valuable

Beyond making children feel secure, much of the focus in the Floating ED is on time: patients and their families not spending more of it than necessary in the waiting room, and the staff taking all the time necessary to talk to patients and families so they know their concerns are heard and that they have received the valuable information they need.

The Floating ED strives to keep families waiting no longer than 30 minutes in the waiting room.

Time is crucial, especially if a child comes in with a complex injury or disease. Having all the resources of a tertiary care center and a full staff of pediatric specialists he can communicate with at a moment’s notice behind him adds to the tremendous strength of the Floating Emergency Department, says Ruffing.

He points again to the commitment of the institution to support the staffing necessary to provide the type of care that allows him to spend time with parents to answer all their questions. It’s that same commitment that ensures that an attending physician—never a fellow—answers a referring physician’s phone call.

“We want our patients to have a healthy experience here,” he says. □

# Community Specialty Clinics

## *We’re bringing our best doctors to you*

**Floating Hospital for Children created our Pediatric Specialty Centers to make life easier. It’s a faster, more convenient way to see some of the best pediatric specialists in the nation. We are now at two convenient locations, in North Chelmsford and in Woburn.**

### **Current North Chelmsford Services:**

- Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
- Genetics and Metabolism
- Pediatric Cardiology
- Pediatric Endocrinology
- Pediatric Gastroenterology
- Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
- Pediatric Nephrology
- Pediatric Neurology
- Pediatric Rheumatology
- Pediatric Pulmonology and Allergy

**20 Research Place  
North Chelmsford, MA 01863  
Phone: 978 937-6362  
Fax: 978 703-4176**

### **Current Woburn Services:**

- Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
- Pediatric Cardiology
- Pediatric Endocrinology
- Pediatric Gastroenterology
- Pediatric Nephrology
- Pediatric Neurology
- Pediatric Pulmonology and Allergy

**7 Alfred Street  
Woburn, MA 01801  
Phone: 781 897-0240  
Fax: 781 897-0243**



# Health Sheet

## LAUREL LESLIE, MD

Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Medicine

### Medical School

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### Residency

University of California, San Francisco

### Board Certification

General Pediatrics, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics

## DOCTOR'S NOTES

To make an appointment, refer a child, or to learn more about the Learning, Education and Attention in Pediatrics (LEAP) Clinic at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, call 617 636-7242.

## ADHD Q&A

# with Laurel Leslie, MD developmental-behavioral specialist

**ATTENTION** deficit hyperactivity disorder, ADHD, affects an estimated 3 to 5 percent of all children. Frustrating for them, their families and their teachers, this neurobehavioral disorder has an enormous impact on individuals and on public health. Children with ADHD frequently have trouble concentrating on their school work, and, when they reach adulthood, may have difficulty in certain workplaces.

Laurel K. Leslie, MD, MPH, the pediatric developmental-behavioral specialist who heads a clinic for children with school problems, including ADHD, at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, answers some basic questions about this condition.

### *What are some early symptoms of ADHD?*

Hyperactive children often appear to be in constant motion; they have trouble playing or sitting quietly. Impulsive kids often have trouble waiting for their turn or they interrupt others often. Some early signs of inattention may include trouble listening, daydreaming, being easily distracted and forgetfulness. Children with the combined subtype have both types of symptoms.

### *Is there an average age that children who are affected will start to show signs, or can it happen at any age?*

Many children with ADHD have had problems since they were infants and toddlers, particularly those children with the hyperactive/impulsive or combined subtypes of ADHD. However, it is difficult to diagnose young children with ADHD because children are developing rapidly and high-energy behaviors in preschoolers are quite common. Children with the inattentive subtype of ADHD may not have trouble in school until they reach junior high or high school when their schoolwork becomes more complicated.

### *Is ADHD a life-long condition or will some children mature out of it?*

Results of current research now suggest that many ADHD symptoms continue into adulthood and that approximately two-thirds of children with ADHD may continue to experience ADHD symptoms when they are older. Until very recently, most researchers and clinicians believed that children "outgrew" their ADHD symptoms during adolescence. This may be because symptoms like hyperactivity often become less prominent during the teen years. Positive aspects of ADHD in adolescents and adults include creativity, openness to new ideas and high energy levels. Challenging aspects of ADHD can include trouble at work, in relationships and in other areas of functioning because of problems with procrastination, staying on task, and completing projects.

### **What treatments are available?**

We recommend a multi-modal treatment approach for ADHD that includes:

- Parents and caregivers learning all they can about ADHD and being their child's advocate
- Medication, particularly the stimulants, which have been researched extensively
- A good behavior modification program at home and at school
- School interventions that address areas that challenge children
- Identifying strengths the child with ADHD has and building on those as much as possible

### **How useful are treatment programs focused on nutrition, psychotherapy, exercise or other forms of nonpharmacological interventions?**

A variety of alternative therapies have been proposed for ADHD, including special diets, vitamin and mineral supplements, herbal remedies, biofeedback, hypnosis and meditation. Generally speaking, most treatment alternatives lack systematic research to support their appropriateness and efficacy.

Studies of elimination diets (Few-Food Diets), sugar-restricting diets and macronutrient supplements have not produced convincing evidence of improving ADHD symptoms in most children. Approximately 2 percent of children will have less irritability and better attention when certain additives, especially red dyes, are removed from their diets. Treatments that focus on mineral supplementation (Iron, Zinc, Magnesium) may merit further study, but current data suggest that they are only useful when a true deficiency has been demonstrated.

Studies of homeopathic or herbal remedies, such as ginkgo biloba, kava-kava and spirulina are limited, but some findings may warrant further investigation. For example, there is some evidence that melatonin may be effective and safe for some types of sleep problems (i.e. delayed sleep phase) in children with ADHD.

Finally, studies of alternative interventions such as laser acupuncture, biofeedback, hypnosis, channel-specific perceptual tuning and vestibular stimulation are inconclusive as to their effectiveness in the reduction of ADHD symptoms.

## **RESOURCES**

National Institutes of Mental Health, [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics) and click on ADHD

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Activity, [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org) or their joint website with the Centers for Disease Control, [www.help4ADHD.org](http://www.help4ADHD.org)

### **What is the best advice you can give to parents who have a child with ADHD?**

Parenting any child can, at times, be a stressful, frustrating, and tiring job, and this is especially true for a parent of a child with ADHD. It is important to remember that you are not alone. Many parents find it helpful to seek support of other parents who have children diagnosed with ADHD. Here are some tips:

#### **Talk to your spouse and/or partner to make sure you are working as a team. For example:**

- Work together on a consistent approach to discipline and structure
- Find ways to show support for each other
- Arrange time for taking turns so that each of you can take a break

#### **Seek support**

- Talking to other parents who are experiencing similar challenges can help you know that you are not alone and can help you feel supported
- Look into options before you are at the "end of your rope" so that you will have resources in place when you need them
- There are many support groups available, for example, CHADD, the ADDA and Exceptional Family Resource Centers

#### **Refuel – parenting a child with ADHD is hard work**

- Arrange some time to be good to yourself
- Take a break! Have a neighbor, spouse or family member care for your child so you can take some time off ☐

Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center is the principal pediatric teaching hospital for Tufts University School of Medicine  
<http://www.floatinghospital.org>

Floating Hospital  
for Children  
at **Tufts** Medical  
Center

***Working Together for Healthy Futures*** is for pediatricians who are interested in learning more about referring patients to Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center. We value your partnership with us and want your patients, their families and you to have a positive experience. Our physicians at Floating Hospital recognize that children and families must be cared for as individuals and their overall physical and emotional health, not just their illness, is essential. It is our mission to treat each of your patients as if he or she was our own child.

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***Schedule a Clinic Visit***

To refer a patient to one of our specialty clinics in Boston, call 617 636-8100.

For our Chelmsford Specialty Center, call 978 937-6362.

For our Woburn Specialty Center, call 781 897-0240.

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***Admit a Patient***

For inpatient admission, call our Hospitalists at 877-FHC-KIDS (877-543-7342).

***Have Our Physicians Visit You***

Interested in hearing directly from our physicians? If you would like to schedule a meeting with any of our physicians or have them to your hospital for grand rounds or other educational sessions, please contact our Physician Liaison Jennifer Roberts (formerly Bush) at 617 636-1398 or [jroberts2@tuftsmedicalcenter.org](mailto:jroberts2@tuftsmedicalcenter.org)

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