

PHYSICIAN

ALVARADO HOSPITAL FIRST IN WESTERN UNITED STATES TO EARN DUAL CERTIFICATION

Alvarado Hospital's stroke rehabilitation program has earned the Gold Seal of Approval™ from The Joint Commission. With this designation, Alvarado becomes the *first* hospital in the western United States to earn dual certification as a Primary Stroke Center and as a Gold Seal of Approval™ stroke rehabilitation program.

Alvarado Hospital is also the first hospital in California to earn the Gold Seal of Approval™ for its stroke rehabilitation program, and currently is one of very few community hospitals in Southern California with this prestigious designation.

"Alvarado Hospital joins an elite and small group of hospitals in achieving Joint Commission certification of its stroke rehabilitation program," said Patrick Delaney, MD, stroke program director at Alvarado Hospital. "We are proud of the comprehensive stroke care provided for our patients and the community."



L to R: Dr. Patrick Delaney, stroke program director, and Dr. Lance Stone, medical director of SDRI.

Additionally, Alvarado Hospital was recognized by the American Heart/Stroke Associations at the 2010 International Stroke Conference for achieving the Gold Performance Achievement Award for Stroke Care.

By being recognized by the Joint Commission and the American Heart/Stroke Associations, Alvarado Hospital has demonstrated it has met the highest standards in stroke care across the continuum.

"This special recognition validates the dedication of our interdisciplinary rehabilitation team," said Lance Stone, DO, medical director of San Diego Rehabilitation Institute (SDRI). "Neurologic recovery requires an experienced team to return survivors to a new and satisfying life following a stroke, and now our team is recognized among the best in the U.S."



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CHIEF OF STAFF CORNER

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *Alvarado Hospital Physician* newsletter. The physician editorial board and I envision this newsletter as a means to provide important information of broad interest to the medical staff.

We start the year with many additional regulatory burdens and reimbursement hurdles amidst a swirl of Congressional healthcare reform.

As we cope with these many changes, it is helpful to reflect on our paramount mission of quality medical care. To that end, I believe that the medical staff at Alvarado Hospital consists of the best and brightest physicians who consistently practice medicine in an exemplary fashion. The caring nursing staff and excellent ancillary personnel combine to make Alvarado Hospital the place that I would go for acute care.

As chief of staff, I will have an open-door policy to discuss any issue related to the governance of the medical staff. Please feel free to drop by the pathology department anytime to talk.

Sincerely,

Curtis McGuver MD

Curtis McGuver, MD, Editor



ER DOOR-TO-DOCTOR LESS THAN 30 MINUTES

The 2009 numbers are in, and they are impressive. Since taking over management of the Alvarado Hospital emergency department in April 2008, Medical Director Kevin Kelly, MD, and his team have implemented strategies that have reduced length of stay and boosted volume.

"The time to see a doctor in our ER is under 30 minutes," said Dr. Kelly. "Our LOS goals are three hours for admission and two hours for discharge, respectively, and we are getting close."

In comparison, county data reported by participating San Diego hospitals from June 2008 through July 2009 averaged 5.9 hours for admission and 3.4 hours for discharge, respectively.

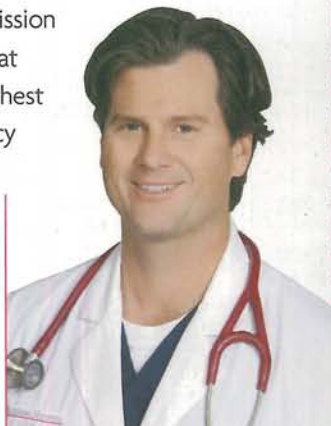
Another dramatic improvement has been the 86% reduction in ER diversion. During 2007, the Alvarado ER was closed for 350 hours. Last year, the ER closed for a total of 47.8 hours. During 2009, there were months with zero diversionary hours.

At the same time, ambulance visits to Alvarado have increased by 16%, and total ER volume has increased by 12.7%. Overall, the hospital has seen a 6.7% increase in ER admissions.

To accomplish a reduced LOS and diversion, the physicians have implemented several important changes, including expanded physician coverage. The ER now has 36 hours of physician coverage per day, with double coverage during the busiest times.

"For us to succeed, the hospital has to succeed," Dr. Kelly said. "The expectation of the community is that there will be an emergency bed when they need it at Alvarado. Our mission is to remain open and available at all times, and to provide the highest quality, most efficient emergency medicine possible."

Dr. Kevin Kelly, medical director of the emergency department, has spearheaded several ER improvement projects.



BY THE NUMBERS

-86%
diversion hours

2007—350
2008—126
2009—47.8

+16%
ambulance visits

2007—7,322
2008—8,434
2009—8,755

+12.7%
overall ER volume

2007—22,954
2008—23,983
2009—26,307

+6.7%
ER admissions

2007—5,360
2008—5,632
2009—5,747



ALVARADO AUXILIARY GOLF INVITATIONAL MAY 21

Please mark your calendar for the 17th annual golf tournament to be held Friday, May 21, at the Eastlake Country Club in Chula Vista. The shotgun start is at 1 p.m.

A portion of this year's proceeds will help fund the 2010 *San Diego Stroke Resource Guide* published by the American Heart/Stroke Associations. Any additional proceeds will go toward the auxiliary's philanthropic fund.

To register, call 619-229-4619 or download a form online at www.alvaradohospital.com.

CME EVENTS

Tumor Board—Case Presentation

Thursdays, April 1 & 15, 12:30-1:30 p.m., Classrooms 1-3

Skull-Base—Case Presentation

Fridays, April 2 & 16, 12:30-1:45 p.m., Conference Center

Sexual Medicine Rounds—Case Presentation

Wednesday, April 7, 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Conference Center

Grand Rounds—HRT

Larry Emdur, MD
Tuesday, April 20, 12:30-1:30 p.m., Classrooms 1-3

Grand Rounds—Thyroid Disorders

Carole Spencer, PhD
Wednesday, April 28, 12:30-1:30 p.m., Classrooms 1-3

General Medical Staff—Urologic Considerations for the Non-Urologist

Simon Wu, MD
Wednesday, April 28, 6-8 p.m., Conference Center

For more information, contact Ellsworth Huling at 619-229-3113.

DOC TALK

REAPPOINTMENT APPLICATION EASIER TO COMPLETE

Many physicians may not be aware that a great deal of the information on the reappointment application is now "pre-populated." All pertinent information is already filled in (i.e., address, training, hospital affiliations, etc.).

If you have no changes to this pre-populated information, you can simply sign the pages where indicated. If you have had changes, cross out the

inaccurate information and add the updated information.

Please note that when you receive your reappointment application, it must be returned within 30 days. This allows the medical staff office sufficient time to credential your application and put it through the appropriate process prior to your appointment expiration date. This avoids any interruption to your medical appointment and privileges.

MEDICAL RECORDS SUSPENSION

Medical records should be completed within required timeframes to avoid being placed on suspension. This becomes even more important for those on the emergency department back-up panel. Suspended physicians cannot appear or serve on this panel.

If you are on medical records suspension, you must complete your records no later than 4 p.m. the day prior to being on call.

TAX BREAKS IN ENTERPRISE ZONE

Alvarado Hospital is located in the San Diego Regional Enterprise Zone. Like Alvarado Hospital, private practices operating in the region may qualify for substantial California tax credits.

These credits include a hiring credit and a credit for certain equipment purchases. The hiring credit could be worth as much as \$37,440 for each qualified new employee hired by your practice since Oct. 15, 2006. The equipment credit is equal to the sales tax paid on qualified equipment purchased since Oct. 15, 2006.

For more information or to find out if your practice can take advantage of these beneficial tax credits, contact Eugene Goodwin at RSM McGladrey at 626-405-4514 or e-mail him at eugene.goodwin@rsmi.com.



NATIONAL 2010 PATIENT SAFETY GOALS

Alvarado Hospital has achieved compliance excellence with The Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals (NPSGs), according to Karin Bernsten, director, quality and risk management.

"Over the course of the last three NPSG surveys, including a full laboratory survey and two stroke certification surveys, The Joint Commission had no negative findings with Alvarado Hospital's compliance," Bernsten said.

"The Joint Commission puts a tremendous amount of time and focus on the patient safety goals," she added, "It is a remarkable accomplishment for Alvarado to continually be in full compliance."

Goal 1—Improve the accuracy of patient identification.

Goal 2—Improve the effectiveness of communication among caregivers.

Goal 3—Improve the safety of using medications.

Goal 7—Reduce the risk of health-care associated infections.

Goal 8—Accurately and completely reconcile medications across the continuum of care.

Goal 9—Reduce the risk of patient harm resulting from falls.

Goal 14—Prevent healthcare-associated pressure ulcers (decubitus ulcers).

Goal 15—The organization identifies safety risks inherent in its patient population.

Pharmacy Update



- **Heparin Change in Potency**—FDA notified healthcare professionals and patients of a change to heparin. The change, which will also harmonize the USP unit dose with the WHO International Standard unit dose, will result in approximately a 10% reduction in the potency of the heparin marketed in the U.S.
- **Promethazine (Phenergan®)**—FDA is requiring a boxed warning for promethazine (Phenergan®) products to better communicate the risks of severe tissue injury associated with administration of this drug. Perivascular extravasation, unintentional intra-arterial injection and intraneuronal or perineuronal infiltration of the drug may result in irritation and tissue damage, including gangrene. Alvarado Hospital currently has warnings in Pyxis and on the MAR that the medication should be diluted to 10 ml with normal saline when administered IV. The pharmacy does not stock any concentration higher than 25 mg per ml.
- **Medication Formulary Additions**
 - **Prasugrel (Effient®)** is a new medication that inhibits platelet aggregation similar to clopidogrel (Plavix®). It is a more potent inhibitor of platelet activation and aggregation than clopidogrel (Plavix®), with a more rapid onset of action. Prasugrel (Effient®) is indicated, along with aspirin, to prevent cardiovascular events post-PCI in acute coronary syndrome patients.
 - **Tapentadol (Nucynta®)** is a new oral Schedule II opioid analgesic for the relief of moderate to severe acute pain in adults. Tapentadol (Nucynta®) is an oral, centrally acting synthetic opioid analgesic that is considered to be more potent than tramadol (Ultram®). The exact mechanism of action is unknown.
 - **Dronedarone (Multaq®)** is an antiarrhythmic agent for the treatment of atrial fibrillation or flutter.

LOOKING AHEAD IN 2010

As many of you are aware, we just initiated the largest capital investment in Alvarado Hospital in over a decade. This signifies a commitment to continue to reinvest in Alvarado so that we are positioned well in the community and to foster future growth.

Work on phase two of the information systems improvement project is underway, and elements of it are scheduled to be completed this year. These include RIS/PACS, electronic RN charting, physician portal and pharmacy safeguards.

Part of this investment includes technology upgrades. The new 64-slice CT scanner (pictured upper right) is installed and ready to be placed into service. We have commenced construction on replacement of our cardiac catheterization laboratory, which will energize the cardiology program here at Alvarado. The MRI project is undergoing OSHPD review, and we anticipate approval momentarily. All of these capital expenditures are necessary and required for Plymouth Health and Alvarado Hospital to continue to grow.

While we have experienced growth in admissions in 2009, we have also continued our efforts to be more efficient and have been successful in reducing lengths of stay by another 10%. In this area, we are close to top hospital status thanks to the efforts of our physicians and staff.

With this newsletter, we are even more committed to communicating with you about improvements and enhancements taking place at Alvarado Hospital.

Sincerely,



Harris Koenig, Chief Executive Officer



FLIBANSERIN MAY IMPROVE SEXUAL LIBIDO

The result of a long-term clinical trial of the first medication that seeks to improve sexual libido in women has been released. The medication, flibanserin, was tested among 1,378 pre-menopausal women with hypoactive sexual desire disorder (HSDD). The frequency of sexual satisfaction increased significantly in women taking flibanserin 100 mg (increasing from 2.8 at baseline to 4.5 at study end) versus placebo (2.7 at baseline increasing to 3.7 at study end) over the 24-week study period. Women using flibanserin reported having two more satisfying sexual experiences per month, compared to one extra for women taking the placebo.

"This is the first medication to address the issue of diminished libido in women," said Irwin Goldstein, MD, director of the sexual medicine program at Alvarado Hospital and one of the drug's developers. "Women with HSDD typically suffer from a very low sexual desire. This medication may help millions of women who suffer silently."

In the study, released by the drug's manufacturer, Boehringer Ingelheim, flibanserin was shown to work directly on neurotransmitters in the brain that control desire. The drug's sexual urge benefit was discovered by accident while the manufacturer was studying a new fast-acting medication for depression. One of the side effects of most antidepressant medications is diminished libido. In flibanserin, researchers have found that the medication actually increases the levels of sexual desire, while lowering the distress related to sex.

Next year, Dr. Goldstein plans on conducting a new round of studies to determine the drug's effects on men and post-menopausal women.

WELCOME NEW PHYSICIANS

Barry Katzman, MD, Ophthalmology
6945 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, CA 92115
619-697-4600

Ryan Krause, DO, Emergency Medicine
6655 Alvarado Road, San Diego, CA 92120
619-229-3130

Ozanan Meireles, MD, General Surgery
200 W. Arbor Dr., 2nd Floor, San Diego, CA 92103
619-471-0701

Gitane Patel, MD, Ophthalmology
6945 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, CA 92115
619-697-4600

Bryan Sandler, MD, General Surgery
200 W. Arbor Dr., MC 8400, San Diego, CA 92103
619-543-2897

PHYSICIAN EDITORIAL BOARD

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Gladys Chaverst, Director, Medical Services
Laura Gilbert, Director, Communications,
Managing Editor

The mission of the newsletter is to communicate information of importance to the medical staff of Alvarado Hospital. For more information about the newsletter or to submit a story idea, contact Dr. Curtis McGuyer at 619-229-3135 or Laura Gilbert at 619-229-3249 or at laura.gilbert@alvaradohospital.com.

ALVARADO HOSPITAL
Advanced medicine. Personalized care.