

A Closer Look: The Clinics at the Outpatient Center

Dermatology

When it was housed in the Blake Wilbur Outpatient Clinic, the dermatology clinic was designed to handle 12,000 patients annually, but physicians now see more than 20,000 people every year. “We’re offering more complex services, and our patient volume has been growing rapidly every year,” said Al Lane, MD, chair of the Department of Dermatology.

The majority of the dermatology department’s clinical practice has moved to the Redwood City facility. Lane predicted that physicians in the clinics will be able to provide timelier services and outstanding care for complicated dermatological conditions. “If you have something on your skin that’s uncomfortable, you don’t want to wait to be seen,” he said. “At the Redwood City facility we have more space, and we hope to expand the number of same-day appointments.”

Clinicians will continue to offer special services for patients with common and complicated skin cancers. In the new facilities, for example, they will excise skin cancers with a procedure known as Mohs surgery to minimize scars and improve the opportunity to remove an entire cancer in one day. Under local anesthesia, the skin cancer is peeled away, layer by layer, and the removed skin is examined to ensure the cancer is removed. Then the skin can be repaired by the most cosmetically effective method. The cutaneous lymphoma and melanoma clinics will remain on the Stanford main campus in the Cancer Center. Pediatric dermatology patients will continue to be seen in the clinics at Stanford, Mountain View and Los Gatos.

Digestive Health

As the initial occupants settle in, the director of at least one program is looking to the future of the Outpatient Center. “At first, we’ll have a relatively small clinic, where gastroenterologists will see patients, and we’ll have an endoscopy suite for routine outpatient procedures, such as colonoscopies,” said Pankaj Jay Pasricha, MD, professor of gastroenterology and hepatology, and director of Stanford’s new Digestive Health Center.

Pasricha and a handful of physicians already have moved to the Redwood City facility, but the majority of the staff of the Digestive Health Center won’t arrive until the spring or summer of 2010.

At that point, Pasricha plans to unveil a “truly multidisciplinary clinic where we hope to have our gastroenterologists, hepatologists, surgeons and radiologists seeing complex

patients together." These include patients with inflammatory bowel disease, abdominal pain and motility problems, gastrointestinal cancers and pancreatic, biliary and liver problems, as well as those requiring difficult endoscopic procedures.

Among the innovations being considered is a one-stop shop for virtual colonoscopy and fiber optic colonoscopy, which will offer convenience and value to patients. The Digestive Health Center also will be positioned at the forefront of minimally invasive and endoscopic therapies.

Imaging

The Radiology Department's imaging services have already expanded recently, at the new Stanford Medicine Imaging Center in Palo Alto. At the Outpatient Center, patients will have access to another state-of-the-art array of MRIs, CT scanner, ultrasound, fluoroscopy and x-ray machines just down the hallway from exam rooms.

Imaging's specialists in musculoskeletal and abdominal studies will be close to patients at the Outpatient Center's Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine Clinic and Digestive Health Center. "This subspecialty expertise adds tremendous value to the interpretation of images," said Gary Glazer, chair of the Radiology Department.

The next-generation MRIs and the software developed at Stanford to enhance the detail in images "is years ahead of what's available anywhere else," Glazer said. "To a radiologist, the better the equipment the more confidence we have in our ability to make a diagnosis." Physicians wanting to check the condition of knee and hip replacements or spinal fixation hardware will be able to do so without image distortion using the advanced MRIs at the Outpatient Center. The MRIs will also enable image-guided injections of platelet-rich plasma for tendon and muscle injuries.

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine

With the move of 25 physicians and surgeons to the Redwood City facility, the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine is the largest program at the new complex. It includes the Boswell Joint Replacement Center and the George and Charlotte Shultz Center for Orthopaedic Tumor Surgery, as well as specialty services in sports medicine, trauma, spine, hand and upper extremity surgery, and foot and ankle surgery. Maloney said his clinicians now will be able to offer a "multiplicity of services for musculoskeletal care," with the department's many clinics gathered under one roof. Because he and his colleagues depend heavily on imaging for making accurate diagnoses, Maloney is especially pleased with the ground-floor imaging center, with its state-of-the-art MRI and CT scanners.

Because "much of what we deal with as orthopaedic surgeons is pain-related," Maloney said that patients with chronic pain problems now can be seen just down the hall from their surgeons' offices. "Orthopaedic patients also can get physical therapy for non-operative conditions, and there's physical therapy and occupational therapy available for post-op rehabilitation," he said.

Pain Management

“We are very excited about the possibilities for patient care our expanded space at the Outpatient Center will support,” said Pain Management Center director Sean Mackey, MD, PhD. “We also know that our proximity to other clinics in the Outpatient Center will enrich our ability to offer patients the most convenient coordinated care, to help them understand how they can help themselves to modify and control their experience of pain.”

The Pain Management Center already works closely with surgeons and other physicians in pioneering approaches to pain relief and control. The Center’s holistic treatment philosophy and its innovative techniques using nerve blocks and other procedures gained its recognition as one of 12 Centers of Excellence nationwide recognized by the American Pain Society. The new location for the Center means easier access to the state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment it employs for patient evaluations.

The Center’s team of pain specialists will also find it easier to collaborate to build multidisciplinary treatments for their patients, Mackey said. “And we’ll be able to see more patients, provide them with more treatment options in one place and take advantage of the synergy you get when you’re not scattered about.”

Sleep Medicine Center

For the first time, the Stanford Sleep Medicine Center—the world’s first sleep clinic—and the Stanford Center for Human Sleep Research will be housed under one roof. At a time when more than 70 million Americans suffer from sleep disorders, clinic and center staff will provide enhanced patient care in state-of-the-art facilities and laboratories.

“The facility enables us to use the latest techniques and equipment to diagnose and treat sleep disorders in a comfortable environment for our patients,” said Clete Kushida, MD, PhD, acting medical director of the clinic and director of the sleep research center. “With new procedure rooms, we have new ways to capture information, such as using fiber optic scopes to view the upper airway.”

Take-home devices also will allow the staff to diagnose sleep apnea in patients’ homes, and an expanded faculty will be available to treat patients with insomnia. The new sleep medicine center now features bedrooms for 14 overnight patients and an additional four rooms for research studies. Each bedroom has the latest in sleep monitoring equipment, and the rooms have been specially designed to minimize sound to make overnight stays more comfortable.