New Role for Dr. Kari Simonsen!

Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Dele Davies, M.D., has announced leadership changes in academic affairs to better integrate and coordinate support for faculty.

Kari Simonsen, M.D., will spearhead the creation of the Office of Faculty Affairs and has been named interim assistant vice chancellor for faculty affairs. She currently serves as vice chair for clinical and academic affairs in the Department of Pediatrics and division chief of pediatric infectious diseases.

"The creation of the Office of Faculty Affairs will ultimately lead to more efficient allocation of resources and enhanced support of faculty. Dr. Simonsen is a wonderful fit for this position because she possesses the leadership skills, collaborative spirit and passion for developing faculty that is necessary to making the office a success," Dr. Davies said.

Under the new structure, the assistant vice chancellor for faculty development role has been eliminated. Instead, the assistant vice chancellor for faculty affairs will lead the newly established Office of Faculty Affairs and oversee the activities of Faculty Development, Interprofessional Academy of Educators, Interprofessional Education and the Office of Equity, as well as work closely with the Faculty Mentoring program. Dr. Davies also noted this reorganization is occurring within the current allocated budget of the units involved.

"Faculty are one of our most valuable resources for impacting the success of students and residents and advancing UNMC's mission. As such, we need to ensure they have an inclusive environment that supports their ongoing development, personal well-being and professional effectiveness," Dr. Simonsen said.

Her vision is to create an office that serves as a central access point for UNMC faculty by providing the guidance, resources and training they need to achieve teaching, research and scholarship success.

"I look forward to this opportunity to create synergy across programs, as well as support avenues for the advancement of junior faculty, women and faculty from underrepresented groups," Dr. Simonsen said.
Faculty Accomplishments

On January 11th, Dr. Cynthia Ellis, Professor of Pediatrics, Division of Developmental Medicine, received the 2018 Impact in Education Interprofessional Education Scholar Award. This award recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions to interprofessional education locally, regionally, or nationally.

On April 12th, Dr. Gary Beck Dallaghan, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Assistant Dean for Medical Education, received the 2018 Research and Scholarship Award from the Council on Medical Student Education in Pediatrics at the annual meeting in Denver, Colorado. The COMSEP Research and Scholarship Award is given to an individual who has contributed substantially to advancing the field of pediatric medical student education through their research and scholarly work.

Save the Date! Pediatric Research Forum

Thursday, May 10th
4:30-5:30 PM
Shelby Kutty, M.D., Ph.D., M.H.C.M
Assistant Dean for Research and Development
Vice Chair, Faculty Development, Pediatrics
University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Medicine
Director of Cardiac Imaging, Children's Hospital & Medical Center
Professor of Pediatrics (Cardiology), Internal Medicine and Physiology

5:30-6:30 PM
Poster Session with refreshments and light hors d’oeuvres provided

Friday, May 11th
7:30-9:30 AM
Poster Session with light breakfast provided

8:00-8:30 AM
Pediatric Grand Round - Dr. Jenna Allison, HO-III
"From Resident to Fellow: Navigating the Academic World"
2018 Residency Match Results

Pediatrics

- Lydia Daniels - Ruth and Bruce Rappaport Faculty of Medicine, Technion Israel Institute of Technology
- Amanda Dave - Creighton University School of Medicine
- Caitlin Gillespie - Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Shannon Haines - University of Nebraska College of Medicine
- Megan Lehmkuhl - Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Dilhan Marasinghe - University of North Dakota School of Medicine
- Rachel Marlow - University of Iowa Roy J. and Lucille A. Carter College of Medicine
- Grace Murray - University of Iowa Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine
- Mary Elizabeth Null - Creighton University School of Medicine
- Noah Reynolds - Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Julie Risinger - Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Rachel Schlueter - University of Nebraska College of Medicine
- Simone Warrack - A.T. Still University of Health Sciences - Kirksville College of Medicine
- Eric West - Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine-Medicine of Midwestern University

Medicine/Pediatrics

- Karl Enroth-University of Cincinnati College of Medicine
- Joseph Pachunka - University of Nebraska College of Medicine
- Abby Riese - University of Nebraska College of Medicine
- Evan Symons - AT Still University Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine

Registry to Aid Newborns

Eric Peeples, M.D., wants to better understand how to identify and treat newborns at risk for neonatal brain injury.

To do that, he and Ann Anderson Berry, M.D., Ph.D., neonatal medical director of the Nebraska Perinatal Quality Improvement Collaborative (NPQIC), are working with Peggy Brown, D.N.P., a quality expert in the collaborative, to develop the Neonatal Encephalopathy Registry.

The goal of the registry is to gather data to unlock clues that could lead to improved detection and treatment of infants with neonatal encephalopathy -- a type of brain injury occurring at or around the time of birth.

Drs. Peeples and Anderson Berry are faculty members at the UNMC Division of Newborn Medicine and neonologists at Children's Hospital &
"We want a global perspective," Dr. Peeples said. "If we can improve the outcomes of these babies, we could potentially better help families, improve quality of life and decrease the burden on health care systems." In Nebraska, he said, neonatal encephalopathy may impact up to 200 babies each year.

The lack of oxygen and blood flow to the brain that causes neonatal encephalopathy may occur from blood loss around the time of delivery, umbilical cord compression, or decreased blood flow from the placenta, Dr. Peeples said, and can result in cerebral palsy, or a range of moderate to severe disabilities. "Unfortunately, in the majority of these cases we never identify a cause," he said.

Clinicians know that cooling the brain within six hours after birth can decrease the risk of moderate to severe developmental delay from 80-90 percent without treatment to approximately 50 percent with cooling therapy. "There is a lot of room for improvement on this," Dr. Peeples said.

At cooling treatment centers, of which there are several throughout Omaha and Lincoln, health providers place the newborn on a cooling blanket to keep their temperature at 33.5 degrees Celsius, or 92.3 degrees Fahrenheit, for 72 hours.

"During the cooling, the brain is allowed to rest," Dr. Peeples said. After a slow rewarming period, an MRI is done to help to predict recovery, but "it's only a piece of the puzzle," he said. "We can't really know the developmental impact until several months to years of life."

Said Dr. Anderson Berry: "We are excited to partner with NPQIC, COPIC Insurance and delivery hospitals across Nebraska to work to improve delivery of perinatal care and neonatal outcomes. This is why we started NPQIC and I am pleased to launch this important registry."

Adapted from an article published in UNMC Today, 02/26/2018 by Karen Burbach, UNMC public relations.

Neonatal-Pediatrics Genome Sequencing Project

Children's Hospital & Medical Center and UNMC will take part in one of the nation's first large-scale trials of clinical whole-genome sequencing (cWGS) in the neonatal and pediatric intensive care unit (NICU and PICU) environments.

The primary aim of the study is to evaluate whether the clinical management of acutely ill newborns suspected for having a genetic condition is altered with cWGS. Whole-genome sequencing is the most comprehensive method for analyzing the genome, which has been instrumental in identifying inherited disorders, characterizing the mutations that drive cancer progression, and tracking disease outbreaks.

Clinical WGS is a relatively new technology and still not widely available; it allows the interpretation of the complete genetic information of an individual within one to two weeks instead of the usual three months that
is currently required for these test results to be returned, according to Luca Brunelli, M.D., Ph.D., neonatologist at Children's Hospital & Medical Center and an associate professor of pediatrics-neonatology and genetics, cell biology and anatomy in the UNMC College of Medicine.

"Genetics is changing the paradigm for the treatment of newborns," Dr. Brunelli said. "In the next 10 years, we will see a dramatic shift in the implementation of precision neonatal medicine, coupled with improvements in areas such as ventilation, nutrition and pharmacogenomics."

Children's is home to a Level IV Regional NICU, the most advanced level of neonatal care available. The NICU and PICU teams at Children's also are recipients of the Gold Beacon Award from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses, an honor recognizing excellent patient outcomes and superior care.

"We are the only site in the Midwest for this exciting trial," Dr. Brunelli said. "I am confident this will make a difference and allow us to improve health care for newborns here in Omaha and the region."

The department of genetic medicine at the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), the PICU at Children's, and the bioinformatics and systems biology core facility in the UNMC Department of Genetics, Cell Biology and Anatomy also will be involved in this study.

*Adapted from an article published in UNMC Today, 03/13/2018.*