New Year is here and the HTC is ready to embark on some new changes for our clinical program.

Many of you have given constructive feedback to our program and we have listened to you. It seems that our atmosphere of close-knit family and multigenerational continuity was rocked as we transitioned to a new physical space, a new clinic alliance with Children’s Hospital Colorado and a massive expansion in staff. Too many of you came expecting a circle of friends and were disconcerted to experience a sea of strangers. Both clinical and administrative procedures were all different. No wonder nothing seemed the same!

I have been with the HTC for 35 years and Director for 24 years. For all of those decades our structure has been essentially unchanged, but we now have the patient needs, the space, new faculty and staff and the resources to explore a new model.

A number of changes are being implemented to improve our services to you, our patient family. Inside this newsletter you will find important articles outlining our clinic expansion and our new clinic teams, a patient advisory board, our newsletter and communications program, and a return of certain services that will be provided and funded by the HTC program rather than through the Children’s Hospital clinic structure. In addition, we’ve included personalized information on all of our clinical staff to help you get to know us. This staff directory will also be available in the clinic to help you become familiar with all the new folks.

Are we finished with changes? I don’t think so. I am still disappointed that our phone system is not providing the service you need and the time for return calls is excessive in the urgent situation. We are working on this and will have further information with the next newsletter.

I am excited about starting the New Year with a new plan for better patient care in a better care delivery system. Please join with us as we embark on a new journey to deliver exceptional care, and become a partner in our program development and evaluation.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Marilyn Manco-Johnson
By Judy Primeaux

Our program has grown significantly over the last decade. With so many new patients, we thought it might be helpful to highlight aspects of our history to understand where we came from and how the program has evolved.

The roots of the Hemophilia and Thrombosis Center (HTC) in Denver date back to the early 1970’s. A private contribution of $9,800 was designated to start a Hemophilia Evaluation Clinic. During that same time, several community activists were lobbying the state of Colorado legislature to establish and fund a system of treatment for persons with hemophilia. Honor and gratitude are due to these families for their pioneering work in establishing both the Hemophilia Treatment Center and the Hemophilia Society of Colorado. Their efforts resulted in a Colorado statute that permanently established the HTC at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, in order to “foster the health, welfare, and safety of the people of this state and to facilitate the research and treatment of hemophilia and related diseases.” The initial state funding of $55,000 began in 1973. Funding was used for a pediatric physician fellow and blood transfusion costs. The program began treating 60 patients with hemophilia.

Similar lobbying efforts in Congress were occurring at the national level. A 1973 study showed that care delivered by a specialized team resulted in improved health as well as a decrease in hospitalizations, absenteeism from school and work, and the unemployment rate of persons with hemophilia. Those national lobbying efforts resulted in congressional funding to establish and fund a national network of HTCs through the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HRSA). Most centers were established at university teaching hospitals in order to stimulate research in the field of hemophilia as well as provide clinical care. In 1977, under the leadership of Dr. William Hathaway, the University of Colorado HTC was a recipient of the original federal grant for $86,118 to fund hemophilia care in Colorado and Utah, thereby becoming a federally qualified HTC. Although the original state funding focused on care for Colorado residents, the federal grant later expanded the treatment geography to include patients in Montana and Wyoming.

In 1990, the federal grant structure changed. Instead of funding 140 individual HTCs nationwide, a regional network system was established to oversee and fund all HTCs in a specific geographic area. The Denver HTC became a core regional center and assumed the responsibility of oversight and funding for HTCs in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. Denver’s role in the regional network continued for over 20 years with Dr. Marilyn Manco-Johnson serving as the Regional Medical Director.

In 2012, the federal granting agency further consolidated regions. The University of Oregon was selected as the new regional core center and Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington were added to the region. However, Brenda Riske continues to provide leadership to the regional network in her role as Regional Coordinator through a shared responsibility arrangement with University of Oregon.

“A 1973 study showed that care delivered by a specialized team resulted in improved health as well as a decrease in hospitalizations, absenteeism from school and work, and the unemployment rate of persons with hemophilia.”

continued page 9
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN LAUNCH

We’ve heard you!
By Judy Primeaux, Umit Kaya, Brenda Riske and Merilee Ashton

Communication with our patient family has been less than ideal. We hope to do better in 2014!

This first newsletter is the beginning of an overall communications plan for the HTC. By necessity, this first newsletter is l-o-o-o-o-n-g! There is a lot of information to share and there is not a brief way to do that. Future communications will be shorter! Sit comfortably, sip some tea and try to read the entire document as it contains important news. The following may answer some of your questions. Happy reading!

Question: What is the Communications Plan?

The first step is this newsletter, The Clotting Connection. The newsletter title was a majority choice by the staff because it captured something common to all of our patients, the clot. Some patients have too many clots, some don’t have enough. We want our communications to bridge across all of our patient family—hemophilia, von Willebrand, thrombosis, pediatric stroke—and that title seemed to fit.

This newsletter will be the only paper newsletter published and sent by snail mail through the US Postal Service. All future communications will be sent electronically through email and details will be available on our website. This first newsletter is being mailed to almost 2000 patients with either a bleeding, clotting or stroke disorder that have had an encounter with the HTC over the previous two years. Producing a paper newsletter for this many individuals is neither timely nor cost effective. Coming into the electronic email communication era is the only smart solution to being able to communicate with you rapidly and efficiently.

Question: When will the email newsletter system begin?

Our Technology Department is in the process of selecting and purchasing specific cloud-based software that will accomplish our goal. Data entry and configuration is expected to take approximately two months. The first newsletter to be published through this system is planned for late February or early March. If there is a need to send out information prior to system readiness, we will send out another paper mailing or will communicate from our internal email address, HTC.Newsletter@ucdenver.edu.

Question: What are the benefits of this system?

First, the email newsletter system addresses any concerns regarding HIPPA and privacy rules. The system will be used to communicate public HTC news information only. It will not be used to send any PHI (Protected Health Information) to any individuals. Email addresses or other information will not be shared with anyone. You will be able to unsubscribe from the system at any time.

Second, the system will provide us the ability to target news and information relevant for specific segments of the population. For example, when a new Factor IX product comes on the market, we can notify only all Factor IX patients immediately, or separate bleeding disorder patients from clotting disorder patients.

Third, the system will allow multiple family emails addresses to be linked to one patient. For example, both parents, each with a home and work email address, may subscribe on behalf of their child. Grandparents involved in a child’s care may subscribe. A spouse may subscribe on behalf of the adult patient. Each subscription enrollee will identify their name and relationship to the patient along with their email address. Once the newsletters are published, they will be archived on the HTC website for you to view at your convenience.

Question: Why should I sign up to receive electronic newsletters?

The newsletter will provide information about new products and new treatments available as they come on the market so that you can ask questions during your clinic visits. You will receive information from our

continued page 4
physicians regarding research studies and outcomes data. There may be articles that will evaluate the pros and cons of certain treatment options. You will be notified about medication recalls as quickly as we are. Information will be provided to keep you informed about support and educational programs that you can attend. Staff changes and clinic procedures will be communicated in a timely manner. So the question is: why wouldn’t you sign up?

**Question: How do I sign up?**

The first step is to go to this location online: www.surveymonkey.com/s/HTCNewsletter

Here you can include all the email addresses that you would like to receive news and information from the HTC. Information from this process will be entered into a database as an interim step until the software is fully configured and ready to launch. You will be notified as to what to do next from our HTC.Newsletter@ucdenver.edu email address. We know many of you already have a lot of things in your inbox. Be assured we will be careful to only send you this newsletter and information pertinent to you.

“We will continue to print and mail newsletters to any patient who does not have internet access but you must contact us to ask for a paper copy to be mailed to you.”

**Question: Who is going to manage this plan?**
**Who can I contact about the newsletter?**

Merilee Ashton is our interim Communications Coordinator and is working to launch and propel this plan forward. Please contact Merilee directly with questions as well as suggestions for future newsletter topics.

Merilee Ashton
HTC.Newsletter@ucdenver.edu
303-724-2309

**Question: What happens if I don’t have internet access?**

We will continue to print and mail newsletters to any patient who does not have internet access but you must contact us to ask for a paper copy to be mailed to you. If you do not have internet access, call Merilee and let her know that you will still need to receive paper copies. Please leave your name and address on her voicemail if she is out of the office. We ask that if you do have access to the internet, to please subscribe to receive our newsletter digitally via email to help us keep our resources working for you in the most productive way.

**Question: What are other steps to the plan?**

The HTC website will come down for several weeks in January to be updated with current information. We will be investigating the use of social media and how it can help us communicate with you. The software utilized for newsletter publication will be able to be used for conducting surveys. That will allow us to access your opinions more rapidly on certain issues. Stay tuned! There is more to come and thank you for your patience!

**To Get Newsletters via Email you must sign up! Go here:**

www.surveymonkey.com/s/HTCNewsletter

To use our resources wisely, we will not be sending paper newsletters in the mail—they will only be available via email and on our website. Please sign up today and stay informed!

For those without internet access, please contact Merilee Ashton at 303-724-2309.
THE CLINICAL TEAM—MISSION, VISION, VALUES
By Dr. Michael Wang

Mission:
The Clinical Team of the Hemophilia & Thrombosis Center of the University of Colorado in collaboration with Children’s Hospital Colorado strives to provide unparalleled access to the highest quality care for patients with bleeding and clotting disorders in the mountain states region through teamwork, partnership with patients and families, and focus on continuous improvement.

Vision:
The HTC will be a national leader in defining best clinical outcomes for patients, while integrating changes in the health care system, and forwarding research and education.

Values:
With the conviction to fulfill our Mission and determination to reach our Vision, the Clinical Team embodies the following core values in our pursuit of excellence: teamwork, respect, integrity, resilience and innovation, to create a clinical environment where together we will all make a difference.

A New Way of Operating
In a continuously changing healthcare environment, the clinical program at the HTC has been weathering a storm. Significant changes in the clinical space, clinical staff, electronic documentation, institutional collaboration, and expanding breadth and demand of services has led us to examine our clinical practice in order to refocus our efforts. Written above are a Mission, Vision and Values that we as a Team have developed, and are to be held accountable for. Where we are proud of past accomplishments, and especially the relationships with our patients and families, we must now look into the future, and seize new opportunities. We believe that there is always room for improvement, and potentially innovation, when we make concerted, deliberate change. Please partner with us in our efforts! I invite you to contact any of the clinical team members if you have questions on the changes described below.

Question: How will the new teams work?
There will be four teams, each with a physician, an advanced practice provider (APP), two nurses, a social worker, a physical therapist and a pharmacist. What is unique will be that each Team’s members will remain the same for any given day of the week, and see patients both in the morning and afternoon. The goal is for consistency and greatly expanded access to care.

Question: What will the new teams look like on a weekly basis?
On Monday, I will have an all-day clinic with both Comprehensive and Acute visits, for both bleeding and clotting disorder patients. Dr. Jorge DiPaola’s Team will see patients on Wednesday, Dr. Brian Branchford’s on Thursday, and Dr. Marilyn Manco-Johnson’s on Friday. Dr. Manco-Johnson and I will do our best to help each other cover each other’s clinics as Mondays and Fridays are often busy, and are also days that bridge travel. All days will have similar scheduling, and the care across Teams will be consistent. We will continue to meet as an entire Clinical Team every Tuesday as we have for years, to discuss patients and patient care, and to continuously examine and measure the outcomes of this change. Drs. Bernard and Armstrong-Wells will hold Stroke Clinic on Tuesday afternoon. Dr. Stabler will maintain her monthly 3rd Wednesday morning adult

continued page 6

We will reorganize all of the clinical providers into Teams. The clinic program will expand from our Wednesday morning clinic to all day, four days a week. Team-based clinics are the result of carefully considering mutual patient and provider calls for improvement in the delivery of care.
By Dr. Marilyn Manco-Johnson

As many of you know, the traditional insurance system does not reimburse for many services that are considered core to comprehensive hemophilia care including nursing, social work, genetics, and physical therapy. For this reason, these services were considered vital for the designation of a hemophilia comprehensive care center and the federal government allowed us participation in the 340B Pharmacy program in part to be able to fund these otherwise unfunded services. Although we experimented with the standard insurance model in our new clinic, we have re-evaluated the short and long-term advantages and disadvantages of such a system. Based on our experience of the past year and a half, we are returning physical therapy services to the umbrella of the HTC Program and will fund them from our program income. That means you will be able to access physical therapy services as needed, without concern regarding insurance coverage. You will not be billed for these services and you will not require separate insurance approval to schedule these visits. Most services are available as needed for emergencies, but non-emergent visits should be scheduled in advance with the front desk. Social work services, which have always been funded by the program, will continue as they have been and may also be accessed at any time. The next newsletter will clarify the various nursing services provided under the program. See the article on page 8 for a description of the physical therapy and social worker services that are available to you.
### THE CLINICAL TEAM SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEAM MEMBER</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICIAN</td>
<td>Dr. Michael Wang</td>
<td>Drs. Tim Bernard and Jennifer Armstrong-</td>
<td>Dr. Jorge DiPaola</td>
<td>Dr. Brian Branchford</td>
<td>Dr. Marilyn Manco-Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wells (alternate stroke clinic)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drs. Wang and Manco-Johnson (alternate</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physician of the Day for urgent care)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDER—NP/PA</td>
<td>Shari Kabat</td>
<td>Elizabeth Gibson (morning)</td>
<td>Phylise Seldin</td>
<td>Elizabeth Gibson</td>
<td>Shari Kabat</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shari Kabat (afternoon)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRIMARY CLINIC NURSE</td>
<td>Beth Lambe and Kim Hurdstrom (alternating)</td>
<td>All Nurses Rotate</td>
<td>Kim Hurdstrom</td>
<td>Beth Lambe</td>
<td>Nancy Spomer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL THERAPIST</td>
<td>Sharon Funk</td>
<td>Sharon Funk</td>
<td>Laura Fox</td>
<td>Sharon Funk</td>
<td>Laura Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL WORKER</td>
<td>Erin Stang</td>
<td>Audra LeBlanc and Erin Stang</td>
<td>Erin Stang</td>
<td>Audra LeBlanc</td>
<td>Audra LeBlanc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHARMACIST</td>
<td>Alison Schomerus</td>
<td>Alison Schomerus and Tim Schardt (afternoon)</td>
<td>Alison Schomerus and Paul Limberis</td>
<td>Alison Schomerus and Paul Limberis</td>
<td>Alison Schomerus and Paul Limberis</td>
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**ADDITIONAL CLINIC NOTES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Morning—Clinical Team Conference to review patient care</th>
<th>Afternoon—Stroke Clinic</th>
<th>Dr. Sally Stabler—Adult Hemophilia Comprehensive Clinic-3rd Wed. of every month</th>
<th>Women’s Bleeding Disorder Clinic-4th Friday morning of every month</th>
</tr>
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</table>

### ADULT HEMOPHILIA CLINIC

*By Dr. Marilyn Manco-Johnson*

Dr. Sally Stabler will continue to hold her adult hemophilia clinic on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Adults are still able to schedule their appointments on other days. Dr. Wang, Dr. DiPaola and Dr. Manco-Johnson are comfortable seeing adult patients on their days in clinic on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays, respectively. The HTC is in the process of recruiting an additional adult hematologist for the University. When we have a second adult hemophilia physician, we will try to schedule that person on a day other than Wednesday to give adults another choice of calendar day to see an adult internist hematologist.
CHANGES IN PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES AT HTC

By Sharon Funk and Laura Fox

We are happy to announce that the Physical Therapy services have been re-structured to better serve our patients. We have returned the physical therapy program to the same structure that was in place when we were located in Building 500. Physical therapy services will now be provided and fully funded by the 340B Program funds and will be available to patients five days a week. This will allow you to access physical therapy services when you need them, without concerns as to whether you have insurance coverage. The physical therapy program is here to assist you with the following services:

♦ Assessment and management of acute musculoskeletal bleeding episodes
♦ Post-bleed rehabilitation and return to function
♦ Regularly scheduled outpatient physical therapy visits related to hemophilia musculoskeletal issues
♦ Pre and post-operative assessment and teaching in preparation for orthopedic surgical procedures
♦ Annual comprehensive clinic assessments
♦ Assistance with ordering assistive devices, orthotics and bracing and durable medical equipment
♦ On-site fabrication of splints for joint immobilization
♦ Community outreach and education to therapists in outlying areas

You may schedule physical therapy appointments through the front desk.

SOCIAL WORKERS SPECIALIZE IN SUPPORT

By Erin Stang and Audra Leblanc

The goal of the social workers at the Hemophilia and Thrombosis Center is to promote the well-being of patients and families living with chronic or acute bleeding and clotting disorders. We meet with all the patients and families served by the HTC and attend all outreach clinics. Our team provides the following services:

♦ Education
♦ Advocacy
♦ Crisis intervention
♦ Counseling
♦ Support groups
♦ Insurance information
♦ Referrals to a variety of public and private resources

We also serve as liaisons to the Colorado and Montana/Wyoming Chapters of the National Hemophilia Foundation, assisting with family camp, summer camp and education days. With an understanding of the psychosocial needs of each patient and family, we are able to present a fuller, more complete picture to the clinical team when discussing treatment options and interventions. Please contact us with any needs or questions.
The HTC relocation to the UPI Building, just north of the CU Anschutz Medical campus on Montview Blvd., allowed us to hire much needed additional clinical staff.

The physicians at the HTC are all faculty of the CU School of Medicine. When you visit you will also see our physician fellows, advanced practice providers (nurse practitioners and physician assistants), nurses, pharmacists, physical therapists, social workers and other support staff. It sounds like a lot, but each plays a part in quality patient care.

Let us re-introduce ourselves to you.

Bios and pictures follow on pages 10-19.

Then and Now (continued from page 2)

By the beginning of the current decade, the University of Colorado HTC had earned a national and international reputation in the treatment of individuals with bleeding and clotting disorders. The program’s pillars were clinical care (diagnosis and treatment), outreach clinics and programs, a specialized pharmacy, research, patient support programs, community advocacy, and regional and national program leadership. Additionally, services were expanded to include pediatric thrombosis and stroke programs.

For over 35 years, the HTC provided Comprehensive Hemophilia Clinics from a variety of locations throughout the University of Colorado campus. Our locations ranged from closet-sized plots to a more spacious setting in Building 500. These public health community clinics were quaint and intimate. Many patients said, “The clinic had the feel of coming to grandma’s living room and visiting with all the relatives.” But many forces converged to require both a change in location and in clinic operations. The university could no longer provide space for our program. A program that began with one employee, treating 60 patients on a budget of $55,000, had ballooned to a staff of over 20, treating almost 700 patients with bleeding disorders and an even larger number with clotting disorders, with an expense budget of several million dollars. Finally, the onslaught of new health care regulations required the transition to a clinic structure that was compliant with the many regulations. Change was unavoidable!

In April 2011 the HTC moved to space leased in the University Physicians, Inc. (UPI) building, and began hiring additional staff to accommodate the growth. In April 2012, the HTC entered into a contractual relationship with Children’s Hospital Colorado and its Center for Cancer and Bleeding Disorders (CCBD) to manage the clinic portion of the HTC program. The Children’s Hospital CCBD brings expertise in hospital outpatient clinic operations, provides an electronic medical record system to the HTC, and ensures compliance with healthcare regulations. Under the terms of this contract, the HTC subsidizes the cost of operating the clinic if the costs are not covered by insurance billings.

The many changes over the last two years have created predictable growing pains. In the confusion of these many changes, some have asked if there are now two separate HTCs. The answer is no; there is only one federally qualified HTC, the University of Colorado Hemophilia & Thrombosis Center. Children’s Hospital Colorado and the CCBD contractually manage the Hemophilia and Thrombosis Clinic for the HTC. All other programs and services remain under the University of Colorado HTC umbrella.

With the Children’s Hospital clinic partnership, we believe that the HTC is positioned for 2014 and forward to deliver one of the best clinical care programs in the country with an expanded focus on quality improvement and outcomes analysis. Dr. Michael Wang is leading this initiative for the HTC. For more details see Dr. Wang’s article (page 5) on improved changes in the clinic program.
**CENTER DIRECTOR**

Marilyn Manco-Johnson, MD

- M.D., Thomas Jefferson University, 1974
- B.S., Science, Pennsylvania State University, 1972

**Research Specialties and Interests:** Diagnostic global trials for bleeding and clotting disorders; Long term joint outcome for hemophilia patients; Preventative treatments for children and teens; New factor concentrates; Neonatal and pediatric thrombosis disorders; Fibrinogen and protein C deficiencies

**Personal Interests:** Michael and I enjoy spending time with our children and other family who live in various parts of the world, especially the nipote maschile e femminile (grandchildren, for non-Italians)—Henry, Myles, Bonnie, Alice, Gianna, Roy, Lucia and Margo. Music has been a passion from an early age, and I often relax by connecting my hands to the piano ivories. I have one healthy addiction—the Colorado outdoors, especially if it involves mountaineering and Fourteeners.

*Did you know that Marilyn had to make a career choice between being a concert pianist or a physician? We are all glad she chose the second one!*

"I am most proud of the progress we have made in managing bleeding and clotting disorders, which have been possible because of the great clinical and research collaborations between HTC staff and patients. For me, the HTC is a great cross between a first-class research team and a family."

- Dr. Manco-Johnson

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**JENNIFER ARMSTRONG-WELLS, MD, MPH**

- M.D., University of California, San Francisco, 2002
- M.P.H., University of California, Berkeley, 2001
- B.A., Biological Anthropology and Archaeology, University of California, San Diego, 1996

**Research Specialties and Interests:**

- Child neurology
- Perinatal/neonatal hemorrhagic stroke
- Stroke in all ages

**Personal Interests:** I like to hike and camp with my family, but maybe not as much as I like shopping, especially for shoes. Shoes, lots of shoes! I love my GIANT dog Amy. My husband and I are bracing ourselves for our daughter’s entry into becoming a teenager, soon!

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**TIM BERNARD, MD**

- M.D., University of Rochester, 2001
- B.A., Biology, Middlebury College, 1994

**Research Specialties and Interests:**

- Children with ischemic stroke
- Biomarkers of hypercoagulability
- Pediatric neurology

**Personal Interests:** I enjoy spending time with my family. We have twins—lots of work and joy! I stay active by participating in things that move fast (biking and skiing) and golf. The Superman poster on my office door is who I really want to be when I grow up. I am known in the HTC as the one with the knack for destroying laptops.
BRIAN BRANCHFORD, MD  INSTRUCTOR

• M.D., University of Wisconsin, 2005
• B.A., Biology, Lawrence University, 2001

Research Specialties and Interests:
Clinical investigation of pediatric VTE risk factors; Prophylaxis strategies and basic/translational research with investigation of the Gas6/TAM pathway of platelet activation using novel inhibitors; laboratory-based activity trials; Murine models of arterial and venous thrombosis

Personal Interests: I enjoy hiking, camping, snowboarding, sea kayaking, cheering for the Packers, and domestic/international travel (all preferably with my family). Also, eating gummies (preferably alone, so I don’t have to share).

JORGE DIPAOLA, MD  ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

• M.D., University of Buenos Aires, 1990

Research Specialties and Interests
Pediatrics; Pediatric hematology; Inherited/genetic disorders; Bleeding/clotting disorders

Personal Interests: In my free time, I like to spend time in the mountains with my family hiking, climbing and skiing/snowboarding. I cheer for the Broncos and Argentine soccer. I met my wife climbing the highest mountain in Argentina. We have four children and are feeling the pain of saving up for college tuition costs.

SALLY STABLER, MD  PROFESSOR

• M.D., Baylor College of Medicine, 1978
• B.S., Biology, Earlham College, 1975

Research Specialties and Interests
Anemia; Cytopenias; Chronic leukemias; Myeloproliferative diseases; Hemotology; Internal medicine; Medical oncology

Personal Interests: I enjoy hiking, wild flower viewing, skate skiing, sewing and reading.

Did you know that Sally has used her sewing skills to customize and create beautiful suits?

MICHAEL WANG, MD  ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

• M.D., University of Rochester 1996
• B.A., Biology, Colorado College, 1989

Research Specialties and Interests
Pediatric Hemostasis and Thrombosis; Pediatric Oncology; Immunology; Inhibitors

Personal Interests: I enjoy a variety of music and occasionally still bang the sticks from my former life as a professional drummer. I love spending time with friends and family in Colorado outdoor activities.
What exactly is a fellow?
Dr. Branchford describes our fellows on page 13
Elizabeth Gibson, MS, PA—Physician Assistant

Elizabeth obtained a degree in biology from University of Colorado Boulder and then went on to complete graduate work in the Child Health Associate/Physician Assistant Program at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. She has experience as a physical therapy technician. Elizabeth has been employed at Children’s Hospital Colorado since 2003. Her primary experience and focus is the thrombosis patient population. She enjoys running, skiing and biking. She and her husband are the parents of one child and are excitedly waiting for another one to make an entrance in 2014. She enjoys working at the HTC because, “I like helping patients improve their quality of life.”

Shari Kabat, MSN, CRNP—Nurse Practitioner

Shari obtained a nursing degree from Temple University in Philadelphia and then went on to earn a master’s in nursing as a family nurse practitioner from Widener University in Pennsylvania. She has worked as nurse practitioner for both pediatrics and adults in a wide variety of settings, including oncology/hematology and family medicine experiences. She relishes her family time (two boys), enjoys time with friends, likes to exercise and watch movies. Shari and her husband can quote the entire dialogue from the movie A Few Good Men. When asked what motivates her to get up every day and come to work at the HTC she said, “I like working with patients with a chronic lifetime condition. I like getting to know you! And I like being able to be a part of the team that is striving to give you the best future and quality of life possible.”

Phylise Seldin, MSN, PNP-BC—Nurse Practitioner

Phylise (aka Phyli) earned a degree from the University of Colorado Boulder in speech, language and hearing sciences. She then went on to Yale University School of Nursing and obtained a master’s degree in nursing with a nurse practitioner specialty. She has experience in pediatric hematology/oncology from Duke Children’s Hospital and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and has been at Children’s Hospital Colorado since 2012. Phyli enjoys spending time in the outdoors hiking, camping and skiing, and also loves to cook and travel to new and exciting places.

WHAT IS A PHYSICIAN FELLOW?

By Dr. Brian Branchford

The goal of the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Fellowship Program is to train fellows in the scientific and clinical aspects of the discipline, preparing them for a career in academic medicine. The Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education-accredited fellowship is designed as a three-year training program, with a clinical emphasis during the first year and a research emphasis in the latter two years. All of the fellows have completed training for General Pediatrics and have decided to pursue further specialization in the treatment of cancer, blood clots, and bleeding disorders. Fellows can practice general pediatrics independently, but are supervised by our faculty members while rotating through our various subspecialty clinics providing care for hematology and oncology patients. You may see them rotating through the HTC during their first year. Fellows are also the physicians who answer your phone calls with medical questions at night and on weekends. Rest assured that the fellows consult with either a pediatric or adult attending hematologist on-call when questions arise.
Karen Walton, MS, RN—Clinical Nurse Manager

Karen is the nursing manager for the clinic and is responsible for guiding and assisting our nursing staff to bring quality care to all our patients. Karen earned her bachelor of nursing degree from Brigham Young University and her master’s in nursing from Regis University. She has over 25 years of experience in pediatric nursing, including experience as a nurse educator and pediatric home infusion care. She gained experience at Primary Children’s Hospital in Utah before joining Children’s Hospital Colorado in 2004 where she has held a variety of nursing positions. She currently oversees nursing for all of CCBD at the main hospital, the HTC, and the Littleton and Colorado Springs clinics. In her spare time, Karen enjoys road biking and traveling with her husband and spending time with their five grandchildren.

Eleanor Brammer, RN—Nurse

Eleanor is a float nurse who assists the HTC nursing team when needed. Eleanor moved to Colorado from Baton Rouge, LA to pursue her education and decided to make Colorado her home. She received her nursing degree from Denver School of Nursing after earning a degree from Colorado State University in nutrition and dietetics. Eleanor is currently pursuing graduate work in nursing at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. She has worked extensively with pediatric and adult hematology/oncology patients and is passionate about providing quality care with kindness. She enjoys skiing, hiking, running and cooking and loves to spend time with friends and family and her 120 pound dog named Pig.

Kimberly Hurdstrom, RN—Nurse

Kim is the newest nurse to join the nursing team. She received her nursing degree from Walden University after completing an associate’s degree at the College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas. Kim has experience caring for pediatric patients in the pediatric ICU and most recently at Children’s Hospital Colorado in the gastroenterology department. She also has experience caring for adult patients a variety of different settings. Kim dedicates her skills to our patients by assisting in phone triage, clinical care and helping manage medical care for bleeding disorders. She is devoted to our patients and is pleased to work with families over a lifetime. She is inspired daily “by the resilience of our patients and their families.” Kim enjoys photography, reading, watching movies and spending time with her husband and two young boys.

Beth Lambe, RN—Nurse

Beth received her nursing degree from the Metropolitan State College of Denver and has specialized in pediatric care. She regularly manages patients and their care through triage, patient visits, lab draws and infusions, medical counseling and surgical treatment planning. As a nurse, she has spent additional time serving in a variety of camps to assist young people with their bleeding disorders. Beth says, “I am inspired by our patients’ ability to take charge of their condition and treatment and overcome their health challenges to achieve goals and better the world around them.” Beth enjoys skiing and is learning to guide disabled skiers at Winter Park. She also enjoys backpacking, hiking and singing and is a member of the Cherry Creek Chorale.

WHAT IS A NURSE PRACTITIONER?

By Dr. Brian Branchford

Nurse practitioners have completed their full nursing training and have also completed extra training to allow them to provide evaluation, management, and medication prescription independently. They have a more collaborative relationship with the physicians, compared to the fellows who are directly supervised by the faculty. You may see them in clinic or occasionally if you or your family member is hospitalized. They often take the lead on organizing follow-up appointments and are often the ones that call you with lab results or to answer your questions during the day.
Tessa Shettler—Medical Assistant

Tessa is a Colorado native and grew up in the Denver area, attending high school in Lakewood. She earned her Medical Assistant certification at Pima Medical Institute. Her first job was working at the medical practice that delivered her son. Tessa enjoys reading, especially mysteries. Her son is the light of her life and she enjoys going to the park and swimming with him. She takes great pleasure in working at the HTC because, “of the relationships with patients and staff. It is personal here.”

Julie Sweeney, RN—Nurse

Julie is a float nurse who assists the HTC nursing team when needed. She received her nursing degree from University of Colorado and has over 20 years of pediatric nursing experience, including Children’s Hospital in San Diego and Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital in Palo Alto, CA. Julie joined Children’s Hospital Colorado in 2005, and she floats to all of the CCBD sites. She loves being active and is certified to teach aerobics, cycling, yoga and Pilates. Julie enjoys singing in her church choir, baking and sewing and volunteering in a theater program called ‘Caught in the Act’. What she likes most about working at the HTC is, “the staff, patients and families. I am a people-person and really enjoy interacting with everyone. The HTC has an amazing patient population and a terrific care team!” Julie también habla Español.

Nancy Spomer, RN—Nurse

Nancy joined the HTC nursing team in 2009. Her first degree is in music from Michigan State University and her first career was as an elementary school music teacher for ten years before transitioning into the field of nursing. She earned her nursing degree from the University of Colorado. Her experience ranges from nursing management in a skilled nursing facility, a clinical nursing instructor, and orthopedic and neuroscience nursing at University of Colorado Hospital. She continues to use her teaching skills at the HTC with both patients and staff. She likes working at the HTC because, “I enjoy providing education about bleeding disorders to patients and the regional community, teaching skills that enable our patients and families to independently manage their daily life, and working with a highly skilled team. Teaching provides professional and personal satisfaction for me.” She enjoys traveling, walking and hiking with her family and golden retriever Arbie, and listening to all kinds of music. We’re hoping to coax her into a piano concert some day!

WHAT IS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT?

By Dr. Brian Branchford

In our system at the HTC, the physician assistants function very much like the nurse practitioners and any difference (primarily in their initial training and specific degrees) is not likely to be noticed consistently by patients. They also are licensed to practice independently, but will often do so in collaboration with one of our faculty physicians.
Judy Primeaux, MA, RPh—Pharmacy Director

Judy is both the Director of Finance/Administration for the HTC as well as the 340B PHS Pharmacy Program Director. She graduated from the Northeast Louisiana University School of Pharmacy, now University of Louisiana at Monroe. After completing a pharmacy residency at St. Luke’s Episcopal/Texas Children’s Hospitals in Houston, she became the first research pharmacist at M. D. Anderson Cancer Institute. She has managed both inpatient and outpatient hospital pharmacy units. Judy also worked in the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry where she gained experience in corporate pharmacy business operations, product management, marketing, sales, regulatory affairs and home infusion pharmacy. A brief detour from healthcare allowed her to attend seminary and obtain a degree in counseling. She joined the HTC in 1995 to open and manage the 340B PHS Pharmacy. She enjoys cooking authentic Cajun food (c’est bonne!), theater and symphony, researching her family’s genealogy and traveling with friends.

“It is truly a privilege to serve you, our patients and families, and to try to make one part of your load less heavy. You are my gladiators! You show us how to live with courage and strength every day. I wouldn’t want to be doing anything else!”

Paul Limberis, RPh—Pharmacy Manager

Paul joins the pharmacy team in January as our new Pharmacy Manager. He earned his degree from the University of Colorado Boulder School of Pharmacy. He has decades of experience in a breadth of pharmacy settings, including home infusion, long term care, community and hospital pharmacy. He has held significant positions at both Children’s Hospital Colorado and Denver Health Medical Center. He has served on the Colorado Board of Pharmacy as well as local, regional and national pharmacy organizations. Paul has two grown children and his wife is a permanent substitute teacher. His personal interests include running and biking, gardening and playing with his German Shepherd dog.

“One of the reasons that I came to work at the HTC Pharmacy is that I want to do what I can to help improve the quality of care for our patients with chronic conditions.”

Desiree Hill, PharmD, RPh—Clinical Pharmacist

Desi has worked part-time for the HTC Pharmacy since 2010 and has over ten years of experience as a pharmacist. She attended Rick’s College in Idaho and then went on to earn her Doctor of Pharmacy from the University of Wyoming. Desi enjoys spending time with her friends and family, crafting and baking. We rely on her to be our coupon deal finder. She and her husband stay busy keeping up with two very active young boys. She loves working at the HTC because, “After working in several different pharmacy settings, I think the most unique aspect of the HTC pharmacy is that it is a non-profit pharmacy. I am proud to be a part of a pharmacy where the main goal is not profit, but rather, to support the hemophilia community and sustain the HTC. I enjoy getting to know patients and their families, and I try to give every patient the same attention and care that I would want for my own family.”

Timothy Schardt, PharmD, RPh—Clinical Pharmacist

Tim received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from North Dakota State University. (Brr!) He completed a pediatric pharmacy residency at Children’s Hospital Colorado and is board certified in pharmacotherapy. He is a pediatric clinical pharmacist, and his primary focus at the HTC is coagulation management for patients on Coumadin. His responsibilities at Children’s Hospital Colorado include the investigational drug program. Tim interprets coagulation lab results and assists the physicians in managing dose adjustments. Tim is passionate about the care he is able to provide to patients with clotting disorders. He enjoys working at the HTC “because of the dedicated and encouraging team there. I am inspired by how the whole team works together to achieve positive outcomes for our patients.” He enjoys skiing, mountain biking, golf, and soccer to pass the time, and is a crazy and fervent blue and orange fan. Go Broncos!
Alison Schomerus, PharmD, RPh—Clinical Pharmacist

Alison (aka Ali) earned a degree from the University of Colorado Boulder in kinesiology and biology and then obtained her doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Colorado Denver School of Pharmacy. She is passionate about serving in our pharmacy as a means to provide quality care to both patients and their families and assist them in overcoming obstacles in dealing with blood disorders. Ali enjoys the many opportunities Colorado offers to hike, ski, and camp but she also loves to cook, travel, explore new things and spend time with friends. She stays fit by running and participating in fitness bootcamps. She is inspired to work here because of “the ability to connect on a personal level to patients and their families and create positive relationships to better their lives.”

Candice Murchison—Insurance Specialist

Candice was born in Louisiana and lays claim to being a Cajun. She attended CSU in Fort Collins and received a degree in Exercise and Sport Science. She joined the pharmacy team in 2003 after working six years for a health insurance company. She assists patients with the many aspects of health insurance and manages billing and collections for the services provided by the pharmacy. Candice was a competitive swimmer in her “younger years” and now she enjoys helping her two young daughters fulfill their own dreams of a spot on a future Olympic Swim Team. She also loves camping, photography, shopping (especially purses), music, hanging out with her family (husband and two girls) and two Beagle puppies, and getting together with friends. “When I started looking for a career change, I wanted to find a job with a purpose. I found that purpose at the HTC Pharmacy. Each day brings a new challenge of weaving through the maze of what I call the medical insurance industry. I welcome the daily battle with insurance companies on behalf of all of our patients. It is a tedious job, but one that is very rewarding in the end.”

Kara Taylor, CPhT—Pharmacy Technician

Kara has been with the HTC pharmacy since 2008. She obtained her Associates Degree from Longview Community College in Missouri and a Pharmacy Technician Certification from Heritage College in Denver. Prior to serving in our pharmacy, Kara worked supporting a real estate office and the retail sales industry. She enjoys hiking, skiing, tubing and spending time with her large extended family. When asked why she wants to work at the HTC instead of other pharmacies, she replied, “I was sold on the concept of patients come first. We are here to make a lifelong challenge a little bit easier for those who are living through it.”

Patricia Tucker—Pharmacy Assistant

The nicely packaged supplies that you receive in your factor shipments are the result of the hands of “Trish”. Trish first volunteered at the HTC and then became a part-time pharmacy assistant stocking and organizing medical supplies a few hours weekly. Trish cares a great deal about the quality of her work because she understands what patients encounter with home infusions and she desires to make that as easy as possible. She enjoys making pottery, spending time with family (including the feline kind) and connecting with other women who have bleeding disorders. “I like working at the HTC because everyone is working together towards a goal that matters: taking care of patients. Everyone is dedicated and cares about how they do their job. I feel like I am doing something meaningful when I come to work.”
Sharon Funk, PT, DPT—Physical Therapist

Sharon is the physical therapy coordinator at the HTC. She earned her first degree in physical therapy from the University of Colorado Boulder and her Doctor of Physical Therapy from the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Sharon has provided PT services for persons with bleeding disorders for over 35 years. In that time she has been heavily involved with a variety of research studies. Sharon has been an international leader in the development and testing of the Hemophilia Joint Health Score (HJHS), an impairment measure for evaluating joint disease in hemophilia. She feels it is a privilege to work with our patients and their families throughout their lifespan. Sharon enjoys hiking, skiing, figure skating, gardening, traveling and spending time with her husband and her three children. Sharon también habla Español.

Laura Fox, PT, DPT—Physical Therapist

Laura received a degree in psychology from Clemson University-Calhoun Honor College in South Carolina and earned her Doctor of Physical Therapy from Regis University in Denver. She brings clinical experience with a wide variety of conditions to assist our patients improve health and function when managing the unique challenges of bleeding disorders. "Working at the HTC was an unexpected step in my career, and one that I feel so fortunate to have made. Working with the patients, their families, and my colleagues in this setting is such a privilege.” Laura enjoys dancing, music, hiking, skiing, cooking, attending movies and the theater, art, science and spending time with her husband and young son.

Erin Stang, LCSW—Social Worker

Erin is the social work team coordinator. She received her bachelor’s degree at the University of Washington and earned her master’s degree in social work at the University of Denver. She is licensed as a clinical social worker in both Colorado and Montana and has been working exclusively in our center for over a decade. Erin works with both children and adults to help navigate their options and specializes in assisting patients and families with bleeding and clotting disorders. As a social worker, Erin is a skilled advocate to educate and assist families as they overcome challenges that may be associated with their condition. She enjoys spending time with her two sons and two standard poodles. She loves to read and travel and also enjoys walking her dogs, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, mountain biking, hiking and boating.

Audra Leblanc, LCSW—Social Worker

Audra earned a bachelor’s degree at the University of Vermont and her master’s degree in social work at the University of Maryland. She has studied international work in Bali, Indonesia. She has been a licensed clinical social worker since 2006, joined the HTC in 2012, and is licensed as a clinical social worker in both Colorado and Montana. Audra works with all our patients to guide them to the resources and support systems they may need to work toward balance and independence in dealing with their condition. She has worked on local and national levels to create programs to provide resources to patients in and used her skills to assist both children and adults with bleeding and clotting disorders. Audra enjoys hiking with her husband and dog, knitting, biking and traveling.
Jacob Green—CCBD Operations Manager

Jacob has a variety of business responsibilities in the management of the HTC clinic with the Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders (CCBD). He is the go-to person to ensure a seamless process for patients during their clinic experience. Jacob obtained a degree in Health Management and Policy from Oregon State University and a master’s degree from the University of Colorado Denver. He has held various healthcare management roles at Children’s Hospital Colorado since 2008. In addition, Jacob proudly wore the uniform for his country as a member of the Marine Corps for six years.

Pat Casias—Program Assistant

Pat needs no introduction to many of you; she is already part of your family! She retired in 2004 after giving 30 plus years of dedicated service to patients and the HTC Program. She missed it so much that she came back and now works part-time as a Program Assistant, supporting the administrative needs of the clinical care team 2 days a week. Outreach clinics could not happen without her! Pat loves being with her family and finds much joy in the active role that she and her husband play in the lives of their three beautiful grandchildren. She also enjoys reading and visiting with friends and family. When asked why she continues to be involved with the HTC she said, “I have been around to see the clinic grow and change. I have met and worked with many wonderful staff. But my greatest joy is interacting with the patients and families. I have witnessed our patients grow up. It is a pleasure to assist our families any way that I can.”

Beverly Aron—Patient Services Coordinator

Beverly is originally from Arkansas and works in the clinic as a Patient Services Coordinator. She obtained her Medical Terminology Certificate from the University of Arkansas and is currently attending the Community College of Aurora. Beverly has over 30 years of experience in the healthcare field which includes medical office support, laboratory technician, patient registration, insurance verification, scheduling and coordinating staff. Beverly finds working at the HTC to be a pleasure because of the opportunity to form personal relationships with patients. She enjoys spending time working in her church, helping young people, and decorating.

Kathleen Jarman—Patient Services Coordinator

Kathleen one of the first faces you will see as you enter the clinic. She earned a degree in biology from University of Dayton in Ohio. She has worked in medical office administration for over three years. Her previous experience included owning a specialty food distributorship, pharmaceutical product sales and being a full-time mom. Kathleen enjoys music, singing, comedy, skiing, watching her son play football and lacrosse, travel, and spending time with family and friends. She values her work at the HTC “because of the dedicated people I work with and the kind and grateful patients.”
**COMING IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS**

- Report on the 340B Program and its support for the HTC
- Update on new drugs and other products
- Comparison of factor products
- Nursing services
- Hematology Heroes—Highlighting patient accomplishments
- Changes in our telephone system

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