Increasingly, medical education is a life-long learning process. No longer can physicians expect that what they learned 10 years earlier – even two or three years ago – is applicable today.

Creighton’s Continuing Medical Education (CME) Division is committed to helping physicians navigate and keep abreast of the latest in education, patient care, and research to allow them to continue to develop professionally and provide the best in patient care.

CME has just completed an 18-month internal review of its programs; the audit included input from more than 200 people familiar with the division. Throughout this painstaking process, meeting the educational needs of program participants remained a top priority.

Overall, the feedback was very good. A number of respondents cited CME’s commitment to covering a wide range of health topics and its interdisciplinary approach, which often results in programming that reaches a wider health care audience than only physicians, as positive results.

This internal review has been submitted to the
Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the main accreditation body for continuing medical education courses. An accreditation team will visit campus in February to conduct its own review.

Dr. Sally O’Neill, CME associate dean, and her staff are to be commended for their vision and dedication to Creighton University School of Medicine’s mission of serving the entire medical community, in addition to its own faculty, alumni and students.

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**Continuing Medical Education**

The CME staff, from left: Karen Wise, executive administrative assistant; Lee Taylor, administrative assistant; Sally C. O’Neill, Ph.D., associate dean for Continuing Medical Education; Marilyn Stockdale, administrator; Beth Schreiber, program coordinator; Joann Dorner, staff assistant. Not pictured: Lin Adkins, administrative assistant.

**CME Outreach Continues to Grow**

*By Sally C. O’Neill, Ph.D.*

*Associate Dean for Continuing Medical Education*

The Continuing Medical Education Division continues to focus its energies on offering quality programs on timely health topics that impact Creighton University and our regional health care community. We work closely with School of Medicine faculty to assure that our activities meet ACCME and American Medical Association requirements and focus on a team approach to health care.
In 2005-06, CME offered 55 courses and 29 regularly scheduled conferences (RSC). Conference attendance totaled 5,496, and RSC attendance reached 20,920.

Increasingly, we are extending outreach and sharing Creighton’s expertise in other areas of the country and even the world. This outreach led CME to host a 2005 conference titled “Wuhan First International Symposium: Pathophysiology, Diagnosis and Therapy of Malignant Lymphoma and Breast Carcinoma” in China and a 2006 workshop on hereditary cancer in Hawaii. While these particular locations appear exotic, they also are important to expanding Creighton’s reputation nationally and globally as a world-class leader in medical research, patient care and health ethics.

We have just completed an 18-month internal review in which CME identified six initiatives for a new strategic plan to help us continue to grow and improve. These initiatives include using technology to deliver more CME activities electronically and developing more external partnerships to increase programs and extend geographical reach.

CME is grateful to Dr. Enarson for his continued support or our activities. For the sixth year, the dean’s office has provided financial support for a distinguished lecture series, which allows us to bring six renowned experts to campus annually to speak on a variety of interdisciplinary topics. I encourage you to attend the two remaining lectures during this academic year. Each lecture runs from noon to 1 p.m. with the locations to be announced.

• Feb. 21. Eduardo Salas, Ph.D., trustee chair and professor, Department of Psychology, University of Central Florida, on “Promoting Teamwork When the Lives of Others Depend On It - What Does It Take?”


**CMA to Update Strategic Plan**
*By Stephen Lanspa, M.D.*
Creighton Medical Associates
(CMA) will update its Clinical Strategic Plan in early 2007. Faculty input, through a web-based survey, will play a critical role in guiding the plan in identifying major strategic initiatives that support CMA’s clinical growth over the next three to five years. Faculty have until the end of January to respond.

During the 2005-06 fiscal year, which ended June 30, patient-care revenue grew by 7 percent. Cash flow continues to be good, and the practice plan operates in the black. New payer agreements, which increase physician reimbursements, have been negotiated with TriCare and Tenet MyChoice PPO. CMA is completing installation of a new practice-management system (ProjectOne) and nearing a decision for an electronic medical record system.

CMA continues to evolve into a more cohesive and uniform practice plan. It has established policies for interpretive services, patient rights and responsibilities, mandatory training for physicians, protected health information, physician consultation, immunization of health care workers, and workplace violence.

During the past year, CMA also completed a feasibility study of new facilities that includes development of an on-campus ambulatory care center, expansion of the Old Market and Dundee clinics, and development of a new west Omaha clinic.

Other CMA activities during 2006 included:

• Coordination of the LARA system to provide hospital patient data to clinicians’ PDAs

• Auditing of clinic labs that perform CLIA-waved testing, in conjunction with the Department of Pathology

• Participation in a city-wide disaster preparedness drill in October. The Cardiac Center and Family Health Care’s Twin Creek and Florence clinics were identified as alternative care facilities in the event of a disaster.
Appointments

Gerard Named Development Director
Matt Gerard has been named director of development for the Creighton University School of Medicine. He is responsible for coordinating and directing the school’s fundraising efforts.

Gerard, who joined Creighton University in 2004, previously served as the School of Medicine’s associate director of development and most recently as assistant director of principal gifts.

Prior to Creighton, Gerard worked as a public relations writer at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, from 2001 to 2004, and at the University of Iowa’s College of Medicine, Iowa City, from 1993 to 1996. He also served as head cross-country coach and assistant track-and-field coach at both Western Michigan and Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y.

An Omaha native, Gerard completed his undergraduate degree in journalism at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, and his graduate degree in education at the University of Oregon, Eugene.

In the News
Dec. 16, 2006

Kallol Saha looked like any other happy graduate when he received his medical degree during Creighton University’s December 2006 commencement ceremony. But the 28-year-old was anything but a typical graduate and his journey to a degree nothing less than extraordinary.

In September 2001, Saha’s goal to become a physician was derailed when he was diagnosed with medulloblastoma, a type of brain cancer that strikes about one in 50,000 people. The second-year medical student underwent surgery to remove the tumor.

While the operation and subsequent chemotherapy were successful, Saha struggled physically and mentally. He underwent a rigorous course of physical and occupational therapy. He also spent long hours laboring over books and notes from his first year of medical school and began reading ahead in preparation for a return to the classroom.

Saha re-entered Creighton in September 2002, but he and faculty quickly realized that he had come back to the classroom too soon. His mental quickness was gone, and he performed poorly on timed tests.

He tried again in fall 2003 as a second-year medical student and a member of the class of 2006. This time, Saha was ready.

The *Omaha-World Herald* recently chronicled Saha’s...
remarkable road to graduation – two and one-half years behind his first-year classmates. Saha is now cancer-free, but his illness may have a lifelong impact on his future. He hopes to get a residency in radiation oncology on Match Day this spring.

Osteoporosis Study Takes Patients to New York
When Bellevue resident Martha Todd recently boarded a plane for a free trip to New York City, including a one-night hotel stay, sightseeing was the furthest thing from her mind.

Todd is a participant in a joint research project involving Creighton University’s Osteoporosis Research Center and Columbia University’s Metabolic Bone Disease Program in New York City.

As part of the three-year study, more than 20 Creighton participants will be flown to New York City to undergo a bone examination using Columbia’s new high-resolution, computed tomography scanner – one of only a handful of such scanners in the United States.

The scanner and the NIH-funded study were featured on NBC's Today Show in November.

Creighton and Columbia researchers hope the noninvasive scans will provide the kind of detailed information previously possible only by surgically removing a piece of bone from the patient through a procedure known as percutaneous bone biopsy.

“Currently, it is very difficult to identify women at risk of bone fractures before they actually experience fractures,” said Robert Recker, M.D., director of the Creighton Osteoporosis Research Center and principal investigator for the Creighton portion of the study (pictured at right).

“Our goal is to find possible causes for women with low-bone mass,” he noted. “Such a discovery could eventually lead to a treatment that would help young women improve their bone health.”
Osteoporosis, or low bone mass, typically affects postmenopausal women and places them at increased risk for fractures. However, the disease may also affect premenopausal women (and some men). For many young women, the causes of their low-bone density, which can lead to fractures, are unknown.

The Creighton study includes premenopausal women, ages 20-48, with regular menstrual periods. The study is still accepting participants who suffer from osteoporosis or are experiencing nontraumatic fractures. For information about the study, contact the research center at 402.280.4839.

In addition to the scans, participants will undergo other tests to measure their bone health. Researchers have recently determined that bone density is not the only measurement of bone strength. The quality of bone – defined as the sum of all that allows bone to withstand ordinary loads without fracturing – is garnering increased attention from the scientific community.

**Haddad Contributes to Award-Winning Poetry Book**

Amy Haddad, Ph.D., M.S.N., director of the Center for Health Policy and Ethics at Creighton University Medical Center, is one of contributors to “The Poetry of Nursing,” the 2006 winner of the American Journal of Nursing’s Book of the Year Award in the category of public interest and creative works.

The award was announced in the journal’s January issue, in which the book was referred to as an “unusually rich poetry anthology (that) gives life to varying experiences of patients and nurses.”

The 206-page book includes the work of 14 major nurse poets from around the United States and England who use prose and poetry to share, dissect and analyze the life-and-death experiences and ethical dilemmas working nurses face.

In one of her poems, entitled “Asking for Direction,”
Haddad talks about how one woman’s world is turned upside down when her husband collapses and possibly faces permanent brain damage. Health care professionals ask the bewildered wife, whose husband was always the decision-maker, whether they should resuscitate him if his heart stops beating.

“As an ethics consultant at several local hospitals, I listened to many cases like the one in the poem,” Haddad writes in the book. “I was struck by the number of family members, particularly women, who never made a serious decision in their lives without asking first for permission. Then, after a tragic accident or sudden illness of a loved one, they are asked to make life-and-death decisions for someone else.”

The Poetry of Nursing was edited by Judy Schaefer and published by The Kent State University Press.

Lynch Featured in National Advice Column

A letter from Dr. Henry Lynch, M.D., director of the Creighton University Hereditary Cancer Center, was featured in an October column of Annie’s Mailbag as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The syndicated column runs in newspapers worldwide.

In his letter, Dr. Lynch noted that an estimated 212,920 American women would get the dreaded news in 2006 that they had invasive breast cancer. Five to 10 percent or more of those cases will be the result of hereditary causes.

He added that the average age of onset for hereditary breast cancer is 44 years – more than 20 years earlier than breast cancer in the general population. Women who are at genetic risk need to be more closely monitored and have annual mammograms beginning at the age of 25, biannual clinical exams and genetic counseling, he said. For other women, mammograms should begin at age 40.
Briefly Noted

Dr. Bob Cusick operates on a Dominican child.

Hernia Team Treats 80
More than 80 Dominican Republic residents received needed hernia repair in November, thanks to a Creighton service trip headed by Charles Filipi, M.D., professor of surgery. The team, comprised of 56 physicians, medical students, nurses and others, saw patients ranging in age from 1 to 84.

"We make the trip yearly because there is such a significant need," Filipi said. "The patients cannot afford the care and cannot access the hospital system. They are very poor and the medical care system is understaffed and poorly equipped."

The surgeries were performed at Creighton’s Institute of Latin American Concerns (ILAC) in Santiago. This is the fourth such mission trip.

"The gratitude of the patients is overwhelming and the feel-good sensation the team members have is also overwhelming," said James L. Manion, M.D., The Sheila and James J. Shea Family Endowed Chair, one of the participants. Manion found this trip particularly memorable since daughter Kathleen, a fourth-year Creighton medical student, accompanied him.

MOTAC Honors Mohiuddin
Syed Mohiuddin, M.D., chief of
Creighton University School of Medicine’s Division of Cardiology, has been named 2006 Medical Professional for the Cause by the Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC). The award was presented to Mohiuddin at MOTAC’s Annual Community Recognition Luncheon in December.

“Dr. Mohiuddin is one of the tobacco-control movement’s greatest allies. He believes in the mission of MOTAC and is deeply committed to reducing the cardiovascular disease risk factors associated with tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. ...Dr. Mohiuddin has been in the lead in making The Cardiac Center a tobacco-free property as well as for Creighton University Medical Center to do the same,” MOTAC President Athena Ramos said.

Peak Receives MLK Award
Frank Peak, administrator for Community Outreach Services for the Creighton University Medical Center Partnership in Health, has received the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award from the State of Nebraska MLK Planning Committee.

The committee chose Peak because of his long history of community activism and leadership in health and human services. Peak is co-founder and president/chief operating officer of Nebraska Ethnics Together on Reaching Kids, Inc., a nonprofit prevention organization that addresses high-risk behaviors among youth and, in particular, youth from communities of color. He also is considered a champion in the area of health care and reaching underserved and economically challenged populations, the committee noted.

The award was presented Jan. 12 during a celebration...
honing King at the Capitol Rotunda, in Lincoln.

**Melanoma and Skin Cancer Program in Top 10**
Creighton University Medical Center’s Melanoma and Skin Cancer Program has been recognized as one of 10 Melanoma Centers of Excellence by the Melanoma Hope Network (MHN).

CUMC is being recognized for providing exceptional and comprehensive care with knowledge and compassion to their patients, according to the Melanoma Hope Network. Melanoma is the most threatening form of skin cancer.

To receive the designation of a center of excellence, Creighton’s Melanoma and Skin Cancer Program had to meet a variety of requirements, including the ability to treat all stages of melanoma and a multidisciplinary approach to providing seamless care in dermatology, surgery (general or surgical oncology), medical oncology, and radiation oncology.

**Doctor’s Research Highlighted in JAMA**
The research of Henry Lynch, M.D., director of the Creighton University Hereditary Cancer Center, was the focus of an editorial and three separate studies reported in the Sept. 27 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA).

The editorial and studies are linked to Lynch’s groundbreaking work in the field of hereditary cancers and his discovery of the Lynch syndrome, a rare disorder named after him and also known as hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer syndrome.

[Back to Contents]
Gallagher Receives Grant to Study Vitamin D

Creighton University Medical Center has received a $1.96 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to study vitamin D supplementation in women.

While most people are aware of the critical role that calcium plays in bone health and osteoporosis prevention, fewer appreciate vitamin D’s role in the absorption of that calcium by our bones, said J. Christopher Gallagher, M.D., professor of medicine in Creighton’s Department of Endocrinology and the study’s principal investigator.

The Creighton study will help determine optimum levels of vitamin D supplementation for women, the most frequent victims of osteoporosis. According to the NIH, people with an insufficient intake of vitamin D absorb less than 10 percent of the calcium they eat or drink.

Gallagher is the 2006 recipient of an award for Career Contributions to Vitamin D Research from the International Vitamin D Society. Co-investigators on the five-year grant include Prema Rapuri, Ph.D., Creighton assistant professor of medicine.

Women, ages 25-85, interested in participating in the study, should call 280-4164 or 1-888-254-7357.

Faculty News

Arrivals

- Javed Akhtar, M.B.B.S., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
- Shashank Dravid, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pharmacology
- Muhammad Khan, M.B.B.S., Instructor of
Neurology
- Lisa Tyler, M.D., Assistant Professor of Pathology
- Yetunde Ogunleye, M.B.C.h.B., Instructor of Psychiatry

Awards (presented at Fall Faculty Meeting)

- Young Investigator Award to Yaping Tu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pharmacology
- Master Clinician Award to Stephen Lanspa, M.D., Professor of Medicine