What’s in a Name?

The newly designated Herma Heart Institute continues a tradition of innovation

In the fall of 2017, Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin recognized the achievements of its world-renowned Herma Heart program by designating it the Herma Heart Institute, the first such clinical institute at the hospital. In order to receive the institute designation, service lines must meet nationally accepted benchmarks in clinical outcomes, patient care quality, education and outreach, philanthropy, and research and innovation.

INNOVATIVE BEGINNING

The pediatric cardiology program at Children’s was innovative from the beginning. In the 1980s, S. Bert Litwin, MD, the first cardiac surgeon at Children’s, was dogged in his pursuit of a successful procedure to repair hypoplastic left heart syndrome (HLHS), a congenital condition that essentially leaves a baby with half a working heart. At the time, only 5 percent of babies born with the condition survived beyond their first month of life. Dr. Litwin and his team pioneered procedures and monitoring protocols that eventually pushed survival rates over 95 percent.

One family whose infant daughter was born with HLHS was so impressed by Dr. Litwin and the cardiology team at Children’s that they gave their name to the program. In 2003, the Herma Heart Center was created through the support of John and Susan Herma. Their continued support allowed the recent transformation to the Herma Heart Institute.

RENOVATED PRESENT

The Herma Heart Institute is one of the largest pediatric heart programs in the country, performing an average of 650 heart procedures a year with some of the best outcomes in the world. But for the Herma Heart team, driving excellent clinical outcomes is not enough. In the early 2000s, they broadened their focus to improving quality of life post-discharge.

Doctors, caregivers and researchers at the Institute have led improvements in fetal and
This surgery by Dr. Hraska was broadcast live in 3-D during the Heart Summit.

Watch highlights and learn about the upcoming Heart Summit at chw.org/theheartsummit.

Learn more about the Herma Heart Institute at chw.org/heart.

Adult Congenital Heart Disease Program by the numbers

**ONE IN 100** babies born in the United States has a heart defect.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's Adult Congenital Heart Disease (ACHD) Program is now the first and only accredited ACHD Comprehensive Care Center in Wisconsin. This designation recognizes the quality of care that the program delivers for this growing yet often underserved patient population.

**12** accredited ACHD centers exist in the United States.

**11** Children’s clinic locations in Wisconsin have ACHD specialists.
A Better Partnership
When referring providers give us their feedback, we work to meet their needs

“Referring providers have choices in terms of where to send their pediatric patients,” says Carey A. Ehlert, MD, a neonatologist at Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, director of provider experience for Children’s Specialty Group and associate professor of Neonatology at the Medical College of Wisconsin. To learn how referring providers make those choices—and how Children’s can be an even better partner to our referring providers—Dr. Ehlert and a team of physicians and administrators surveyed almost 2,000 providers in 2017.

What we learned from the survey results was both heartening and instructive.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE
More than 90 percent of referring providers who responded to the survey have an excellent or very good overall impression of Children’s. “We have a very positive reputation out there, and we’re really proud of those results,” Dr. Ehlert says. But at the same time, she knows there is room for improvement.

The team identified three key factors that drive referring providers’ impressions of Children’s:

1. Courtesy and respect shown to providers
2. Patient satisfaction with specialists
3. Returning patients for follow-up care

These are areas where we have already been working to make improvements. For example, Children’s specialists are trained on guiding principles of working with referring providers, including recognizing providers’ expertise on their patients and responding in a timely manner.

The survey results show we are doing a better job of meeting your needs. “We heard loud and clear that our referring providers have noticed a difference,” Dr. Ehlert says. “They have noticed that we are treating them with courtesy and respect, and we are including them as valued members of our care team. These will continue to be the areas of focus, because we know they are what matter most to our referring providers.”

COMMUNICATION AND ACCESS
In addition to improving partnerships with referring providers, Children’s is taking on real-world challenges of communication and access.

“We’re really trying to improve our central scheduling process, and we’re doing a lot of work internally on the physician referral and consultation line,” Dr. Ehlert says.

In addition, we launched the CHW Refer app, which gives providers access to appointment availability for new patients, medical care guidelines, CME offerings and a physician directory from the convenience of their smartphone.

All these efforts stem directly from referring providers’ feedback, and Dr. Ehlert hopes providers can see that their opinions matter. “It is a privilege to be able to partner with referring providers,” she says. “And we appreciate that they choose to send their kids to us.”

KEY FACTORS: What drives referring providers’ impressions

1. Courtesy and respect shown to providers
2. Patient satisfaction with specialists
3. Returning patients for follow-up care

How Children’s Hospital ranks in these categories

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Courtesy and respect shown to providers</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Patient satisfaction with specialists</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Returning patients for follow-up care</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
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Download the CHW Refer app to search for Children’s specialists, check appointment availability for new patients, review medical care guidelines and much more. Find the app at chw.org/medical-professionals/make-a-referral/referring-provider-app.