Profiles in Women’s Health

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Dear Colleagues:

In this edition of Profiles in Women’s Health, we present studies that have increased our medical knowledge and understanding about important women’s health issues. We also take a closer look at how social media impacts healthcare consumers and the potential for physicians and patients to interact using this platform. Last, we highlight programs that are improving healthcare for women throughout the communities we serve.

Our four research studies:

• Safety Culture in the Gynecology Robotics Operating Room examines the effects of a Robotic Operating Room Computerized Surgical Checklist (RORCC). This study measured the effects of implementing a robotic checklist, specifically designed for gynecologic surgery on patient outcomes and team cohesiveness.

• Quality Clinical Outcomes for Hysterectomy: Readmission Rates by Route evaluates readmission rates using minimally invasive robotic assisted surgery, laparoscopic assisted vaginal hysterectomy and open hysterectomy.

• Survivors of Uterine Cancer Empowered by Exercise and Healthy Diets (SUCEED) evaluates a comprehensive intervention initiative that promotes weight loss and a healthy lifestyle for endometrial cancer patients as the majority of these patients are obese and this places them at an increased risk for premature death.

• Does a History of “Fast” Labor Predispose a Woman to a Rapid Elective Induction of Labor? This study defines “fast” labor and provides insights for physicians to better counsel women for labor outcomes when electively induced for a history of fast labor.

Summa’s center for women’s health research, department of obstetrics and gynecology, is funded by the government, foundations (particularly Summa Foundation) and the generosity of our donors who believe in – and support – our objective to make Summa Health System the premier center for women’s health in Ohio.

With this relentless commitment and support, we are well on our way to achieving this ambitious goal.

Sincerely,

Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D.

System Medical Director for Women’s Health
Chair, Obstetrics and Gynecology
Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals
Summa Foundation Endowed Chair in Women’s Health
Professor, NEOMED

Susan Sorboro, MSN, RN

System Director, Women’s Health Services
Nicole was running out of time. She needed to see a specialist for her unresolved pelvic pain before losing her medical insurance within a month. She searched the Internet for help and found Summa Flourish™, (SummaFlourish.org), a women’s health blog.

She clicked on a new blog post about ovarian cancer awareness. The post, written by Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., department chair of obstetrics and gynecology for Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals and medical director of women’s health services for Summa Health System, highlighted new research that revealed women with ovarian cancer usually do not have just one symptom but several, such as bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly and/or urinary symptoms.

After reading the post, Nicole responded with a message to Dr. von Gruenigen, explaining her urgent circumstances. The next day, Dr. von Gruenigen offered to help her schedule a timely appointment.

This exchange and many others on Summa Flourish™ show how social media and technology are profoundly changing the healthcare landscape for hospitals and physicians.

Pew Research shows 80% of Internet users, or 59% of U.S. adults, search the Web for health information and 66% look for information about a specific disease or medical problem, while 56% search for certain medical treatments or procedures. Forty-four percent of adult online users look for physicians.1

What’s more, an estimated 75 million consumers have used their mobile phones to access health or medical information this year, which has increased from 61 million in 2011. In addition, 29 million consumers used their tablets to get health information, which is up from 15 million consumers in 2011.1

Since Summa Health System launched its comprehensive social media initiative (which includes Facebook, Twitter YouTube, web chats, etc.) more than three years ago, it has seen a strong and steady growth of engaged health consumers who are looking for reliable, accurate and timely information from a trusted healthcare source.

Summa Flourish™, for example, has seen its number of unique visitors grow to nearly 11,000 in September 2012, a growth rate of 239% from 3,240 unique visitors on September 2010. The number of visitors who access the blog from a mobile device has exploded 758% to more than 3,900 visitors in September 2012 from 458 visitors in September 2011.

Although Dr. von Gruenigen is the lead blogger who frequently posts on a wide range of healthcare matters, Summa Flourish™ also hosts a cadre of guest bloggers from throughout Summa Health System, including physicians, nurses, and patients who share their insights and perspectives on nearly 50 healthcare topics.

Summa Flourish™ also has attracted a strong and rising number of 600 subscribers who have opted to receive email updates when new blogs are posted.

The Facebook page (facebook.com/summahealth) has attracted nearly 3,400 fans. Beyond those fans, however, Summa’s Facebook page also reaches thousands of healthcare consumers. For example, in one recent month nearly 40,000 consumers, primarily from Northeast Ohio, visited the site to view its eclectic mix of health information, news and education, videos, photos and links. In that same month, approximately 15,000 visitors from New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Las Vegas, San Diego, Houston and Georgia viewed Summa’s Facebook page.

In the Twitter sphere of micro blogging, Summa Health System has more than 1,530 followers and its site is on more than 70 lists, which means other Twitter users have added @SummaHealth to lists of followed groups, which are also followed by others on Twitter. Additional Summa handles are @DoctorViv, @SummaWomensRsch, and @SummaGlobalCare.

Summa’s YouTube page (youtube.com/summahealthsystem) has had about 40,000 video views. Additionally, Summa’s web chat site, (summahealth.org/web chats) launched last year, has attracted nearly 3,000 unique visitors.

2 Quanta MD-Care Continuum Alliance: Mary Mostahi, Chief Communications Officer, QuantaMD; Lesa Tampsett, Research Director, QuantaMD; Tracey Moonhead, President and Chief Executive Officer, Care Continuum Alliance; “Patients, Doctors and Social Media” http://www.quantamd.com/q-md/DoctorsPatientSocialMedia.pdf

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and more than 270 registered users who have participated in 30 health web chats.

What is significant about Summa’s social media strategy, however, is that it has been successful in targeting an important demographic: women. Research shows women make approximately 80% of healthcare decisions for their families. They also are more likely to be caregivers and use healthcare services more often than men.

For example, nearly 80% of Summa’s Facebook fans are women and 20% are men. On Summa’s YouTube page, 53% are women, 49% are men.

Among U.S. physicians, most have adopted social media but not for professional reasons. A survey by online physician learning collaborative QuantiaMD reveals 87% of physicians make personal use of social media. The survey questioned 4,032 physicians.

An estimated 67% of physicians use social media for professional reasons - primarily for physician-to-physician communication. Twenty-eight percent of physicians engage with physician communities and 17% use LinkedIn. Fifteen percent of physicians use Facebook and 8% percent use YouTube. Only 8% and 3% of physicians use blogs and Twitter, respectively.

However, research also shows physicians are leveraging their smart phones to research drug and treatment reference materials, learn about new treatments and clinical research, help choose treatment paths for patients and provide patient education.

Nevertheless, there is very little research on how much difference – positive or negative – the use of social media and mobile devices make in the physician-patient relationship. Summa currently is surveying its physicians to examine how social media and mobile devices are affecting the physician-patient relationship and how physicians may integrate technology and social media to enhance their patients’ plan of care.

### Literature Cited

3 Quantia MD-Care Continuum Alliance: Mary Modahl, Chief Communications Officer, QuantiaMD; Lea Tompsett, Research Director, QuantiaMD; Tracey Moorhead, President and Chief Executive Officer, Care Continuum Alliance; “Patients, Doctors and Social Media” http://www.quantiamd.com/qqapp/DoctorsPatientSocialMedia.pdf

Research and Quality (AHRQ) has cited outcomes. With operating room culture and patient and communication also are associated outcomes. Surgical team interaction checklist alone does not result in optimal in the operating room; however, the WHO checklist improves patient safety to decrease surgical complications. To answer this question, Summa Akron City Hospital’s department of obstetrics and gynecology collaborated with Kent State University School of Public Health to conduct a research study, Safety Culture in the Gynecology Robotics Operating Room, to develop what is believed to be the first computerized safety checklist specific to robotic-assisted surgery. The purpose of this research was to measure the safety culture of the robotic surgical staff and patient outcomes before and after implementing a newly developed Robotic Operating Room Computerized Checklist (RORCC).

Funded by Intuitive Surgical, Inc., the study’s overall objective was to develop, validate, implement, and assess the effects of a da Vinci® RORCC into Summa’s minimally invasive robotic-assisted gynecologic surgical program.

Purpose:
1. To develop a da Vinci® Robotic Operating Room computerized checklist (RORCC). Standard methods of instrument development were used to develop the RORCC, measure face and content validity, and finalize the instrument after which the computerized version was developed.
2. To implement the RORCC to reductions in complications from minimally invasive robotic-assisted surgery.
3. To evaluate team cohesiveness and satisfaction using the Safe Attitudes Questionnaire.
   • Teamwork
   • Safety
   • Job satisfaction
   • Stress recognition
   • Perceptions of management
   • Working conditions
A final draft of the RORCC specific items were developed and content experts across the country were asked whether the robotic specific checklist items adequately represent the steps that should be conducted in each area. Using the method by Wynd, Schmidt, and Schaefer, experts were asked to rate whether steps in the RORCC were not relevant, somewhat relevant, quite relevant, or very relevant to the area. Based on review and input by the content experts, a paper document was finalized to examine face validity with field testing. Results of the robotic-assisted surgical team cohesiveness and satisfaction include staff age as 47, mostly female, and full-time. Pre-RORCC implementation, the highest quality of communication and collaboration (QCC) between staff were reported by surgeons and surgical technicians.

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) reported only adequate levels of QCC with other positions. The majority of staff reported positive responses for teamwork safety working conditions, stress recognition, and perceptions of management. Most of the respondents agreed the briefing before a surgical procedure and improving patient safety are a critical duties of the OR staff.

Despite the good psychometric properties and a limited sample size, this study was unable to find significant improvements in team cohesiveness even though there were significant improvements in patient outcomes. Results of the surgical complications and patient outcomes due to the RORCC intervention are currently being analyzed. Preliminary results to date show favorable patient outcomes when compared to the retrospective analysis of the prior 6-months before RORCC implementation.

This study provides evidence that more research is needed on the safety culture in the OR, especially robotic-assisted surgical procedures, due to the complex equipment preparation to reduce error.
Even though the majority of hysterectomies are performed laparoscopically or by traditional open surgery, technological advances have made minimally invasive robotic-assisted hysterectomy an increasingly popular approach among surgeons.

It is widely known minimally invasive robotic assisted surgery leads to shortened length of hospital stay; however, it has become challenging for hospitals to justify the purchase of expensive robotic surgical devices, particularly when medical research has not definitively determined advanced surgical technologies lead to improved patient quality outcomes.

The National Cancer Institute estimated the cost of a robotic device ranges from $1.2 million to $1.7 million.

In the U.S., there are approximately 600,000 hysterectomies performed every year. After cesarean section, hysterectomy is the second most frequently performed major surgical procedure for women of reproductive age, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An estimated 20 million U.S. women have had a hysterectomy.

As part of Dr. Roulette’s fellowship, he is working on a research project to develop a formal, comprehensive curriculum that would be available as an adjunct program for hospitals to adopt for their physicians, residents, and medical students to gain experience in robotic-assisted surgical skills.

Currently, surgeons must complete extensive training and educational requirements to receive their certification in order to perform robotic-assisted surgeries on the da Vinci® (Robotic) Surgical System manufactured by Intuitive Surgical Inc. This process is regularly used by Summa surgeons who perform a wide range of surgeries at Summa Akron City Hospital.

In addition to these requirements, Dr. Roulette is working to develop a validated curriculum that would define the time-dose response for basic skill acquisition and retention in robotic-assisted surgery. 1 “At this time, there is no such validated certification being offered by any hospital in the U.S.,” according to Dr. Roulette.

Summa’s newly acquired da Vinci’s® Skills Simulator is expected to play a key role in the curriculum’s program and the certification process. The simulator creates a fully immersive 3-D environment, which recreates certain aspects of real surgical procedures. The objective of the simulator, also manufactured by Intuitive Surgical Inc., is to enable surgeons, including residents and fellows, to hone their robotic surgical skills faster and enable them to continuously enhance, retain and stay current with the latest surgical techniques and methods.

Physicians who want more information about Summa’s da Vinci’s® Skills Simulator should contact Dr. Roulette (330) 375-7022, roulettag@summahealth.org.
Carcinoma of the endometrium is the most common gynecologic malignancy which is strongly linked to obesity.

Overweight and obese women have two to four times the risk of developing this disease than women who are at normal weight, regardless of menopausal status. Hypertension and diabetes mellitus also are associated with the development of this malignancy.

Additionally, numerous research studies show the risk of endometrial cancer increases with weight gain in adulthood, including women who never have used menopause hormone therapy.

The majority of women present with stage I disease. The most common presenting symptom is postmenopausal bleeding. Up to 90 percent of patients with stage I disease can be treated successfully by total abdominal hysterectomy, bilateral...
salpingo-oophorectomy. In many cases, postoperative radiation therapy is necessary.

Despite these successful clinical outcomes, endometrial cancer mortality rates are on the rise. In 2003, approximately 6,800 women died of endometrial cancer. In 2008, that number climbed to 7,675. By the end of 2012, the disease will have claimed the lives of more than 8,000 women, according to estimates from the American Cancer Society; however, more are expected to die of cardiovascular disease.

Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., department chair of obstetrics and gynecology for Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals and medical director of women’s health services for Summa Health System, has researched endometrial cancer extensively. She is an internationally renowned medical expert for her efforts regarding endometrial cancer survivorship. Her recent studies examined modifiable risk factors and the ways in which health outcomes and quality of life for endometrial cancer survivors may be optimized.

The article entitled, Lifestyle Challenges in Endometrial Cancer Survivors, published in the January 2011 edition of Obstetrics & Gynecology, investigated lifestyle behaviors that may contribute to endometrial cancer survivor’s morbidity and identity associations with quality of life. A total of 120 participants were enrolled. Of those, 43% had hypertension, 35% osteoarthritis, 33% metabolic syndrome, 21% type 2 diabetes mellitus, and 93% abdominal obesity. Only 12% of participants met physical activity guidelines.

Fifteen percent reported five or more servings of fruit and vegetables per day; mean intake was 2.6 servings per day. Only 1% of participants met all three American Cancer Society guidelines; 22% met none of the recommendations.

In addition, quality of life was compromised in those who do not meet the guidelines. The study concluded endometrial cancer survivors have unhealthy lifestyles that put them at risk for morbidity. Survivors should be offered multi-behavioral lifestyle interventions after diagnosis.

The follow up study was Survivors of Uterine Cancer Empowered by Exercise and Healthy Diet.

The results, published in the June 2012 edition of Gynecologic Oncology, evaluated an intervention of endometrial cancer survivors to promote weight loss and a healthy lifestyle. A significant amount of women lost weight, exercised and improved their nutrition quality.

The study concluded behavior change and weight loss are achievable in overweight and obese endometrial cancer survivors. Nevertheless, the clinical implications of these modifications still are unknown and require a larger trial with longer follow-up.

Summa is examining another possible option to advance the long-term treatment of overweight and obese endometrial cancer survivors by leveraging novel technology-based interventions that use patient feedback to achieve patient-centered outcomes.

Labor inductions for elective reasons are under scrutiny at hospitals because of increased risks of morbidity and higher costs. Elective inductions have been a focus of quality metrics by the American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecologists (ACOG) Voluntary Review committee, the Joint Commission, the Leapfrog Group, the March of Dimes, the Ohio Perinatal Quality Safety Initiative and other organizations. Institutions have implemented a “hard stop” at the point of scheduling an elective induction less than 39 weeks gestation or with an unfavorable cervix to improve the quality of care and costs. Moreover, the healthcare reform act is expected to render elective procedures, such as induction of labor, financially unsustainable.  

Currently, however, ACOG supports elective induction of labor – with proper counseling of the risks and confirmation of gestational age – for psychosocial and logistical reasons, including the risk of rapid labor and distance from a birthing hospital. There is no definition of risk of “fast” or “rapid” labor. It is generally assumed “fast” or “rapid” labor duration is longer than precipitous labor, which is the expulsion of the infant within less than three hours of labor onset. The risk of rapid labor, or history of fast labor in a previous pregnancy, is ill defined and may not be an accurate assessment of future delivery duration. To date, there have been no studies measuring or defining rapid or fast labor.

The objective of a Summa study - Induction of Labor in Women with a History of Fast Labor - was to define “fast” labor and provide information to better counsel women for the labor outcomes when electively induced for a history of fast labor. The research was conducted by Tiffany H. Kenny, MSN, RN, Erica L. Melrose, D.O., Bradford W. Fenton, M.D., Ph.D and Vivian E. von Gruenigen, M.D.  

The retrospective case-control cohort study hypothesized that women induced for a history of fast labor do not have faster previous labors compared to women electively induced for psychosocial indications. The study also hypothesized that women induced for a history of fast labor do not have shorter induction times in subsequent deliveries than women electively induced for psychosocial indications.

A total of 479 inductions with 821 previous deliveries were evaluated, which included 150 with a history of fast labor and 651 control deliveries. The fast group had a median previous total labor length of 5.5 hours, which was significantly shorter than the control group with median of 10 hours. Subsequent delivery time from start to expulsion was significantly shorter in the fast group at 6.8 hours vs. the control group at 9.1 hours. Additionally, the fast group had a shorter time from start to induction to labor onset with a median of 3.5 hours compared with the control group median of 6.8 hours.

Fast labor (the total length of labor) with patients at Summa Akron City Hospital is 5.5 hours. To clinicians, a fast labor is on average 5.5 hours, which is five hours faster than those not induced for previous fast labor.

Although fast labor is not the same as precipitous labor, it may be a valid indication for elective induction if the patient lives six hours or more from a hospital. However, 88% of women live within a 30-minute drive to a birthing hospital, which means women with a history of fast labor should be able to arrive at the hospital in time prior to delivery. As a result, elective induction for history of fast labor or distance from hospital should be reserved for a very select number of patients.

Bundling Safety Outcomes and Prestigious Awards

Summa Akron City Hospital has received the prestigious 2012 Ohio Patient Safety Institute Best Practice Award for improving the safety of labor augmentation and induction. It is the only hospital in the state to win this award for obstetrics care.

At most healthcare systems, more than half of all births are the result of induced or augmented labor. Mother-infant dyads undergoing labor induction and augmentation are at increased risk of exposure of perinatal harm due to one or more of the following:

- Inappropriate use of Oxytocin
- Uterine tachysystole
- Non-reassuring fetal heart rate patterns
- Failure to perform cesarean section in a timely fashion
- Inadequate resuscitation of an infant

Summa Akron City Hospital implemented healthcare quality bundling, a metric of effective and safe care that generally includes evidence-based practices. When bundled together, these best practices significantly improve outcomes of procedures with increased risks.

Within six months, elective inductions in full compliance with quality bundle criteria reached >95% per month. After 12 months, augmentation in full compliance with bundle criteria reached >95 percent per month. Moreover, Summa Akron City Hospital is the only Premier Perinatal Safety Initiative Hospital meeting the reliability criterion for both bundles. The hospital also has maintained zero incidences of birth trauma and injury to neonates.

Finally, the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses recognized Jennifer L. Doyle, MSN, RN, for her article titled, “Performance Improvement Process to Tackle Tachysystole.” Doyle won the association’s Best Writing Award for the article that was published in the Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, & Neonatal Nursing.

Summa Akron City Hospital and Medical Director of Women’s Health Services for Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals, win Prestigious Awards for Advancing Women’s Health Services.

Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., chair of obstetrics and gynecology for Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals and medical director of women’s health services, is the first recipient of the Richard Ireland Award for Excellence and Innovation. This prestigious award recognized Dr. von Gruenigen for advancing the business of women’s health services.

Mother Baby Unit Renovation Nears Completion

The Summa Akron City Hospital mother baby unit will feature 18 newly renovated private rooms. Each has been designed to create a comfortable and healing environment for mothers, their babies and families and is fitted with new furniture and equipment. Each also has a full bathroom with ceramic-tiled shower stalls.

The mother baby unit also has a newborn nursery, as well as a redesigned nurses station and physician workstations that allow for greater functionality and efficiency. An extra lounge area is available for guests.

The mother baby unit renovation project is expected to be completed by January, 2013.

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Breast Health and Lactation Consultation at Summa Health System

Whether it’s providing free breast cancer screenings for the uninsured, teaching stay-at-home or working mothers about the benefits of breastfeeding their babies, or giving patients time to learn how to readjust to life after surviving cancer, Summa Health System’s women’s health services continues to advance its mission to provide the highest quality, compassionate care to our patients and members and contribute to a healthier community.

Summa Screens delivers early detection of breast cancer for uninsured or underinsured women and Summa’s Best Fed Beginnings project provides breastfeeding educational services for mothers to improve the health of their newborns. Summa also provides the “A Time to Heal” initiative that helps survivors learn how to acclimate to their lives following treatment for breast cancer.

Summa Screens:

Earlier this year, Summa received a $50,000 grant from the Northeast Ohio affiliate of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure organization to support the Summa Screens program which provides free screening mammograms and diagnostic mammograms for uninsured and underinsured women and men. This is the first time Summa was awarded the grant.

Summa Barberton Hospital Posts Lowest C-section Rate for Low-risk Mothers Having Their First Babies in the Greater Akron Region

Among all hospitals in Summit, Portage and Medina counties, Summa Barberton Hospital has the lowest C-section rate for low-risk mothers having their first baby, according to the Ohio Department of Health.

Ohio’s C-section rate is 26.1%, a national, risk-adjusted metric that measures the C-section rate for low-risk mothers having their first baby. Summa Barberton Hospital’s rate is 21.4%, nearly five points below the state’s average.

Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals’ C-section rate is 24.6%, which also is below the statewide rate.
The growth of the program created a need to hire a new facilitator. The Komen grant enabled Summa to hire a mammography facilitator, Christina Thompson, and pay for 110 mammogram screenings.

Thompson is responsible for qualifying patients and determining what type of services they require. She also schedules appointments. If the mammogram reveals any abnormalities, the patients are referred to Summa’s breast care navigators who are responsible for assisting patients as they “navigate” through the hospital system for appointments and treatments.

Since the program was founded, 447 mammogram screens and 218 diagnostic services have been delivered. Four men have received diagnostic mammograms. The program has detected positive findings of breast cancers in eight women.

Summa Screens is planning to extend its program to detect colorectal and lung cancers.

Best Fed Beginnings:
Summa Health System is one of only 90 hospitals in the United States that has been selected to participate in the Best Fed Beginnings project and earn a Baby-Friendly Hospital designation. Only six hospitals in Ohio, (Summa is the only hospital in Summit County) were selected to participate in this collaborative initiative.

Attaining the Baby-Friendly Hospital designation means Summa Health System uses evidence-based care processes that most effectively support all mothers to be able to carry out their own infant feeding intentions and decisions. This project is coordinated by Dr. Sara Gradisar, Summa Physicians Inc. – Obstetrics/Gynecology and Jennifer Foster, BSN, RN, IBCLC, a lactation consultant for Summa’s women’s health services.

The National Initiative for Children’s Healthcare Quality (NICHD), with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is leading this nationwide effort in close partnership with Baby-Friendly USA.

Medical research has shown breastfeeding is one of the most effective preventive health measures for mothers and infants. Specifically for infants, breastfeeding decreases the incidents and severity of many infectious diseases, reduces infant mortality and optimally supports neurodevelopment. Breastfeeding also decreases an infant’s risk of becoming obese during his or her childhood years.

Moreover, short- and long-term benefits to mothers who breastfeed are: decreased risks of breast and ovarian cancers, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and cardiovascular diseases, according to medical research literature.

Summa Health System has worked to increase the number of mothers who breastfed their babies. About 10 years ago, about 60% of mothers breastfed. Today, more than 70% of mothers do so.

In order to receive its Baby-Friendly Hospital designation, Summa Health System is required to complete 10 steps, including organizing a multidisciplinary committee made up of physicians, nurses, mothers, administrators and lactation consultants that help revise policies and practices designed to improve and promote the development of breastfeeding care delivery for mothers and babies.

Summa also is required to provide training for nurses to help mothers with breastfeeding issues or concerns and educate physicians on how to initiate conversations about breastfeeding with mothers early in their pregnancy.


5. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


11. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Endometrial Cancer Survivorship. What does obesity have to do with it?” Summa Department of Medicine, Grand Rapids, May, 2012.


17. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. Ohio Hospital Association award for maternity care (the only award in the state given for maternity care)

18. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “30 for the Future Award” – Dr. Michele L. McCarroll, presented by the Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce


22. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


25. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


27. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


29. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


31. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


33. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


35. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


37. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


39. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


41. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


43. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


45. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


47. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.


49. Vivian E. von Gruenigen, MD. “Before we light the fire—community engagement” In Arlington, VA.

Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., FACOG

Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., FACOG, Summa Physicians Inc. – Gynecology/Oncology, is a recognized expert in gynecologic oncology. She serves as system medical director, women’s health services, Summa Health System and chair of the department of obstetrics and gynecology, Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals. Prior to her position at Summa Health System, Dr. von Gruenigen was director of robotic surgery at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio and associate professor, department of reproductive biology at the Case School of Medicine.

Dr. von Gruenigen has been named one of the “Best Doctors in America” by the Consumer’s Research Council of America as well as one of “America’s Top Oncologists” by Cleveland Magazine. She was named honorary chair of Athena International Leadership and is the author of more than 100 journal articles and abstracts. Dr. von Gruenigen is an editorial board member at Gynecologic Oncology and a board member with the following organizations: Gynecologic Cancer Foundation, American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology’s Excellence Foundation and Summa Health System’s accountable care organization, NewHealth Collaborative. She is a board examiner for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She also is the Principal Investigator (PI) for two active NCI-funded gynecologic oncology group clinical trials. Her research has been funded by the government, Lance Armstrong Foundation, American Cancer Society and Summa Foundation.

In 2012, Dr. von Gruenigen received the 1st Annual Richard Ireland Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Business of Women’s Health. She was a finalist for Akron Cleveland Athena International Leadership and received the outstanding alumni award from Wright State University’s Boonshoft School of Medicine. She also was appointed a board member for Summa Health System.

Dr. von Gruenigen is an assistant clinical professor at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) and a member of the Society for Gynecologic Oncology, of which she is a fellow, the National Board of Examiners and the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists. Dr. Andrews also served on a number of committees throughout his career, including Summa Health System’s robotic committee. In addition, he is a clinical associate professor at NEOMED.

Dr. Andrews was named one of the Top Doctors in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology by U.S. News – Fall, 2012. “Aromatase inhibitors increase the sensitivity of human tumor cells to monoclonal antibody-mediated cellular cytotoxicity,” published by The American Journal of Surgery.

Dr. Andrews is a prolific lecturer and frequent presenter at national events. He is a member of several professional societies including the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, of which he is a fellow, the National Board of Examiners and the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists. Dr. Andrews also served on a number of committees throughout his career, including Summa Health System’s robotic committee. In addition, he is a clinical associate professor at NEOMED.

Stephen Andrews, M.D., FACOG, Summa Physicians Inc. – Gynecology/Oncology, came to Summa Health System by way of private practice in the Columbus, Ohio region and is a veteran of the U.S. Army where he served as a major in the medical corps.

Prior to his position at Summa Health System, Dr. Andrews was associate professor, department of obstetrics and gynecology, division of gynecologic oncology at the University of Toledo and won the outstanding faculty and outstanding clinical faculty awards during his tenure there. He has continued his commitment to medical education at Summa Health System and was honored with the Teacher of the Year award in 2010.

With a definitive interest in ovarian cancer, he has authorized dozens of journal articles and abstracts, including “Topotecan weekly bolus chemotherapy for relapsed platinum-sensitive ovarian and peritoneal cancers,” published by Gynecologic Oncology, and "Armour inhibitors increase the sensitivity of human tumor cells to monoclonal antibody-mediated cellular cytotoxicity" published by The American Journal of Surgery. He also is a contributing author of Handbook of Cancer Chemotherapy, 7ed.

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Dr. Silber is an assistant clinical faculty professor at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) a member of American College of Obstetricians: Gynecologists (ACOG), member of Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) and serves on two committees at Summa Health System: Surgical Services Committee and Surgical Services Technology Committee. In addition, he is a guest blogger for Summa Flourish™.

Dr. Silber was fellowship trained in maternal fetal medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a member of the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine.

Angela C. Silber, M.D., FACOG, is a physician at Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals specializing in maternal fetal medicine. She completed her residency at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Silber was fellowship trained in maternal fetal medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a member of the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine.

Steve M. Gorsuch, M.D., FACOG, obtained his medical degree through the joint Bachelor of Science/Doctor of Medicine (B.S./M.D.) program at Kent State University and Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED). He completed his residency at Summa Health System and is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology.

Dr. Gorsuch operates a private practice and has special interests in adolescent care, menstrual problems, infertility, perimenopause and osteoporosis, as well as minimally invasive surgical techniques.

Dr. Gorsuch is an assistant clinical faculty professor at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) a member of American College of Obstetricians: Gynecologists (ACOG), member of Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) and serves on two committees at Summa Health System: Surgical Services Committee and Surgical Services Technology Committee. In addition, he is a guest blogger for Summa Flourish™.

Dr. Gorsuch was named one of the Top Doctors in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology by U.S. News – Fall, 2012.

Dr. Gorsuch is a prolific lecturer and frequent presenter at national events. He is a member of several professional societies including the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, of which he is a fellow, the National Board of Examiners and the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists. Dr. Andrews also served on a number of committees throughout his career, including Summa Health System’s robotic committee. In addition, he is a clinical associate professor at NEOMED.

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John N. Hutzler, Jr., M.D., FACOG, obtained his medical degree from West Virginia University School of Medicine and completed his residency at Summa Akron City Hospital. He has special interests in endometriosis, high-risk obstetrics and infertility, gynecologic laser and endoscopic surgeries and menopause management. Dr. Hutzler also operates a private practice and estimates he has performed more than 10,000 deliveries since entering practice.

He holds an academic appointment as a clinical associate professor of obstetrics/gynecology at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED). He is a member of the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the Ohio State Medical Association.

Dr. Hutzler, Jr. was named one of the Top Doctors in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology by U.S. News – Fall, 2012.

In addition to his clinical duties, Dr. Ahmann holds academic appointments at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) as assistant professor of clinical pediatrics. He has been chief of pediatrics, Summa Akron City Hospital, since 2010.

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Christopher M. Rooney, M.D., FACOG, is chief of urogynecology at Summa Akron City Hospital. He received his undergraduate degree from Miami University and his medical degree from Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED). He was a resident at both Aultman Hospital and NEOMED and was a fellow in urogynecology and pelvic reconstruction at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. At Summa Health System, he serves as division director, female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery. Dr. Rooney has extensive experience in medical research with more than half a dozen research projects to his name. He is also a prolific writer, having submitted articles for approximately one dozen publications, 2 book chapters, and 9 presentations. He is the 2006 and 2010 recipient of the CREOG National Faculty Award, the APGO Award for Medical Student Teacher of the Year, the 2010 Attending of the Year and the 2010 recipient of the Elite Patient Service Award.

Primary Care or Specialty Care

Bradford Fenton, M.D., Ph.D., FACOG, Summa Physicians, Inc. – Obstetrics/Gynecology, graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, then attended Boston University for his M.D. and Ph.D. degrees. He completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Georgetown University, then spent several years in private practice before joining Summa Physicians Inc. In 2002, he was appointed Clinical Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Northeast Ohio Medical University. In 2011, he was appointed Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Northeast Ohio Medical University. Since then, he has collaborated with Harvard University, the University of North Carolina, Kent State University, and the University of Toledo. He currently holds an academic appointment as a clinical associate professor of obstetrics/gynecology at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED). He is a member of the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Society for Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, the Ohio State Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Society for Reproductive Endocrinology, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. He is also a fellow in urogynecology and pelvic reconstruction at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. At Summa Health System, he serves as division director, female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery. Dr. Rooney has extensive experience in medical research with more than half a dozen research projects to his name. He is also a prolific writer, having submitted articles for approximately one dozen publications, 2 book chapters, and 9 presentations. He is the 2006 and 2010 recipient of the CREOG National Faculty Award, the APGO Award for Medical Student Teacher of the Year, the 2010 Attending of the Year and the 2010 recipient of the Elite Patient Service Award.

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Cheryl J. Johnson, M.D., FACOG, obtained her medical degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Public Health and is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology. Dr. Johnson completed her residency at Summa Health System and now serves as the medical education clerkship director for Summa Akron City Hospital’s department of obstetrics and gynecology.

Dr. Johnson holds academic appointments as assistant professor at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) and clinical associate professor at Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine and as adjunct assistant professor at Tauro University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Johnson completed a fellowship in academic medicine at NEOMED and most recently graduated from the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO) Academic Scholars and Leaders program. Her commitment to OB/GYN medical education earned her the APGO medical student teaching award in 2012 and featured faculty at NEOMED.

She has served on several Summa Health System committees including the medical education steering committee and the women’s health steering committee.

Dr. Johnson is a member of several professional societies including: the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, of which she is a fellow, the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics, and the Ohio State Medical Association.

She has been recognized with awards and honors such as Kaleidoscope Magazine’s, “The Doctor is In” and is an invited speaker on women’s health topics to numerous community organizations including the Haven of Rest and Laurel School, an independent school for girls.

Dr. Johnson is the author of several abstracts and articles, including: “Comparison of Teenaged Video Gamers vs. PGY-1 Residents in Obstetrics and Gynecology on Laparoscopic Simulator” published by the Journal of Minimally Invasive Gynecology. Most recently, her presentation entitled, “Implementation of a Night Float System in Obstetrics Clerkship to Promote Continuity of Care and Medical Student Satisfaction: A Pilot Study”, was presented at the 2012 APGO/OEGO National Conference.

Edward M. Ferris, M.D., FACOG, obtained his medical degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine and is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology. He completed his residency at Summa Health System where he was recognized as Intern of the Year and received the Louis M. Walker, M.D. Award for resident achievement in obstetrics and gynecology.

Dr. Ferris is the residency program director for Summa Health System’s department of obstetrics and gynecology and is assistant professor, department of obstetrics and gynecology at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED). His demonstrated commitment to OB/GYN medical education earned him two Excellence in Teaching Awards from the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics. Dr. Ferris has a definitive interest in robotic surgery and led a presentation on the topic entitled “A Novel Setup to Performing Robotic Assisted Gynecologic Surgery” at national and international conferences.

Linda L. Upp, M.D., FACOG, Summa Physicians Inc. – Obstetrics/Gynecology, obtained her medical degree from Wright State University and completed her residency at the University of Toledo Medical Center, formerly known as the Medical College of Ohio.

She is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology and is a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Currently, she serves on the community benefit committee and the committee for improving healthcare for patients with limited English proficiency.

Current research interest includes a project with Community Legal Aid championing a medical legal partnership with Summa.

Michael L. McCarroll, Ph.D., FAACVPR, is the women’s health research director for Summa Health System. Under Dr. McCarroll’s leadership, Summa’s Center for Women’s Health Research (SCWR) involves a diverse team of internal and external partnerships of physicians, healthcare providers and academic researchers to accomplish the task of advancing clinical research at Summa.

Dr. McCarroll currently holds an academic appointment as part-time faculty in the department of biology at the University of Akron. She is an American College of Sports Medicine certified clinical exercise specialist, a fellow of the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation and a frequent presenter at local and national conferences.

With an interest in patient-centered outcomes by improving patient-provider communication, Dr. McCarroll has published dozens of abstracts and publications as well as received funding for her research interests.

Dr. McCarroll recently played a key role in supporting research efforts led by Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., an social media and health and the implementation of a Robotic Operating Room Computerized Checkpoint (RORCC) to improve patient safety sponsored by Intuitive Surgical, Inc. and Cardinal Health Foundation.

Linda L. Upp, M.D., FACOG, obtained her medical degree from Wright State University and completed her residency at the University of Toledo Medical Center, formerly known as the Medical College of Ohio.

He recently contributed to several articles as a subject matter expert on robotic surgery, including: “Devices help doctors learn” published by the Akron Beacon Journal and “Driving MIO” published by Surgical Products Magazine.

Dr. Ferris also serves on a number of Summa Health System committees, including the minimally invasive research committee and the graduate medical education committee. He is a member of several professional associations, including the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL) and the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO).

Dr. Ferris was named one of the Top Doctors in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology by U.S. News – Fall, 2012.

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Lara Burrows, M.D., M.Sc., FACOG, Summa Physicians Inc. – Gynecology, is an expert in the evaluation and treatment of vulvar disease, female sexual pain and interstitial cystitis. A graduate of Dartmouth School of Medicine, she completed her OB/GYN residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital and continued her postgraduate training at NYU and the University of Pittsburgh where she completed a fellowship in female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery. She also obtained a master’s degree in clinical research design and statistical analysis from the University of Pittsburgh and has been an investigator in numerous NIH- and industry-sponsored clinical trials, assisting in research for national organizations such as The Urinary Incontinence Treatment Network and the Pelvic Floor Disorders Network. She is an elected fellow of the International Society for the Study of Vulvovaginal Disorders as well as the associate director of The Vulvovaginal Disorders Center in Washington, D.C.


In addition to her role as the surgical techniques editor for the Journal of Sexual Medicine, Dr. Burrows is a medical writer and long time member of the American Medical Writer’s Association. She also is a member of several professional organizations, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, of which she is a junior fellow; and the American Urogynecologic Society.

Dr. Burrows is one of six clinicians in the country chosen to participate in the treatment registry for the National Vulvodynia Association.

Susan Sorboro, MSN, RN, is the system service line director for Summa Health System’s women’s health services. She obtained her bachelor’s in nursing from The Ohio State University and her master’s in nursing administration from Independence University in Salt Lake City, Utah.

As system service line director, Sorboro oversees the clinical operations of the women’s health services department at Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals and provides system service line oversight for women’s health services in the region.

Sorboro began her career at Summa Health System as a staff nurse in the general surgery unit at Summa St. Thomas Hospital and later served as clinical nursing supervisor in the nursery/postpartum and mother-baby units, as well as director and clinical director of the women’s health services department at Summa Akron City Hospital.

With more than 30 years of nursing management experience in women’s health, Sorboro directs the strategic, clinical and quality goals of the department and has participated in several women’s health initiatives, including the Premier Perinatal Safety Initiative and the Vermont Oxford Perinatal Collaborative in partnership with Akron Children’s Hospital. She is a member of the OHA maternal task force and offers input on legislative changes proposed by the Ohio Department of Health.

Sorboro is certified in neonatal resuscitation by the American Academy of Pediatrics and is a member of the Association of Women’s Health, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nurses. She has presented at a number of national and Summa Health System entity forums, including “Development of a Women’s Service Line”, a presentation given at Snowmass National Conference.

Jacqueline Trainor, BA, CAP, is the business manager for Summa Health System’s women’s health services and is responsible for the daily operations and activities of the department. Prior to this position, Trainor was the administrative assistant for Summa’s nursing administration department.

Though her career has focused on healthcare administration, Trainor began on the clinical side of healthcare services, obtaining an associate degree in recreational therapy and later, a bachelor degree in sports medicine from Malone College in Canton, Ohio. As her administrative roles progressed at Summa, Trainor also pursued national certification at the University of Akron as a Certified Administrative Professional and is a member of the International Association of Administrative Professionals.

Working closely with the women’s health services department and physicians, Trainer assists in data collection, trend monitoring and compliance reporting for the service line.

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Summa Health System serves more than one million patients each year in comprehensive emergency, acute, critical outpatient and long-term home-care settings and represents more than 2,000 licensed, inpatient beds on the campuses of Summa Akron City Hospital, Summa Barberton Hospital, Summa St. Thomas Hospital, Summa Wadsworth-Rittman Hospital, Summa Western Reserve Hospital, Summa affiliate, Robinson Memorial Hospital, Summa Rehab Hospital, a partnership with Vibra, and Crystal Clinic Orthopaedic Center, a joint partnership with Summa Health System. In addition, outpatient care is extended throughout a five county region in more than 20 community health centers. For more information, visit our website: summahealth.org.