



# CHARTING PROGRESS

SAN ANTONIO MEDICAL FOUNDATION • *Founders and Directors of the South Texas Medical Center*

## Nancy Snyderman Speaks at Annual Education Meeting Renowned Surgeon Looks at the Future of Healthcare

Always an optimist, Nancy Snyderman, M.D., focuses on the important role of people in making the healthcare system work. Using the stethoscope as a prop, she described the 200 year old icon of medicine as an instrument that provides information—heartbeat and breath—that is meaningful only when given to a person to interpret and use the information.

Snyderman spoke at the April 4 annual education meeting hosted by the San Antonio Medical Foundation as a service to the community. A renowned surgeon, Stanford University professor, author and network television medical editor, Snyderman spent 25 years as a board-certified, practicing otolaryngologist and head and neck surgeon at UC San Francisco and the University of Pennsylvania.

She began her corporate career in 2003 at Johnson & Johnson where she created online medical curricula that the company marketed to the public. Since 2006, Snyderman has served on the board of General Electric's Healthymagination, which applies technology solutions to the world's biggest health challenges.

Also a best-selling author, Snyderman spent more than 30 years as a medical journalist at ABC News and NBC News.

As she described the importance of human touch for all people, she also emphasized the differences between people as they need medical care. These differences and similarities can be put to use in discovering and using new technologies, such as genomes and large data.

In the age of analyzing genomes and collecting data to find healthcare solutions, patients and healthcare professionals will face issues of privacy. Snyderman believes patients have a right to privacy but recognizes that privacy means different things to different people, citing the example of a woman who posted the results of her gynecological test on Facebook.

Because of its potential for curing diseases, she believes in the "democratization of DNA." She said, "We'll have raw data to figure out glitches and can look for diseases that may have similarities."

She says the days of not getting our medical records are over. "Patients can harvest important data from their records," said Snyderman. Data about their health can then be used to make individual medical decisions.

Data are also important at the level of society as a whole, she said. A study of patient outcomes based on data resulted in the conclusion that patients over age 55 need longer doctors' visits than younger patients for good results. Longer doctors' visits resulted in fewer drug interaction problems, relapses and readmissions.

Reflecting on the most serious health issues today, Snyderman lists the obesity epidemic, climate change and water problems and the greatest potential for the future of healthcare as genomic research.

As she looks to the future, Snyderman has great confidence in science. "Science always wins," she said. "But in the meantime, we're still our brother's keeper." That means taking care of each other by vaccinating and sharing our information. "We have to take care of each other."



Dr. Nancy Snyderman, center, met with students from the Health Careers High School following her presentation at the San Antonio Medical Foundation luncheon.

## Clarity Child Guidance Center Grows But Sees More Needs



As the organization helps those who have come for treatment, Clarity Child Guidance Center takes on the additional mission of educating people in an attempt to overcome the stigma of mental health problems as a medical issue so more will seek treatment.

"We took into consideration the stigma when changing the name,"

The Clarity Child Guidance Center has doubled the number of outpatients served each year, thanks to new facilities such as the outpatient building.

said Fred Hines, CEO of Clarity. "Having mental health in the name scared people away. We want to say 'don't let anything keep you from getting help.'"

Clarity also created the One in Five Minds campaign to raise awareness about mental illness, break down the stigma and increase access to treatment for children regardless of ability to pay. The campaign collaborates with other community partners to host educational events at schools and other locations.

Though the organization has nearly doubled the number of children and adolescents ages 3-17 who are treated, the needs continue to grow.

With the completion of nearly 50,000 sq. ft. of program space and a new administration building during the last 10 years, Clarity has approximately doubled the number of outpatients served each year to 8,000 for a total of 30,000 visits and has doubled the number of inpatients through its

expansion to 66 beds.

Of the children treated, about 80 percent have experienced some form of trauma, either being abused themselves or seeing abuse of family members. A study by Kaiser Permanente shows that experiencing trauma in childhood leads to serious chronic disease later in life, such as heart disease. "Early life trauma has a significant effect on people later," said Hines, in explaining another reason that mental health treatment is so important, not only for the individual but also for society as a whole.

The Clarity philosophy is that "kids will do well when they can," so the question mental health professionals ask is what triggers an individual's problems. When the trigger is found, the problems can then be dealt with.

Clarity's mental health services are provided by nine physicians. Despite a shortage of psychiatrists in the country as a whole, Clarity benefits from its relationship with UT Health San Antonio, because it serves as a training center for child and adolescent fellows.

Treatment programs include inpatient care for children in immediate crisis and/or children with long-term complex problems, day treatment and outpatient treatment for children who benefit from treatment without hospitalization.

Among the important additions to the Clarity campus are the crisis center where children can be referred to avoid emergency room treatment or hospital readmission and the pharmacy where patients can fill prescriptions. Studies indicate that patients who go home with their medications rather than a written prescription are much more likely to take the medicine.



## Foundation's Research Project Website Continues to Grow

The San Antonio Medical Foundation's website dedicated to cataloguing bioscience research projects in San Antonio now includes approximately 1,200 projects being pursued by 13 participating organizations.

Launched in September 2016, the San Antonio Bioscience Research Database, on the web at [www.sabioscience.org](http://www.sabioscience.org), began with about 595 bioscience research projects underway at public, private and military organizations in the city. Projects are organized according to the type of research, such as basic research, drug discovery and medical devices. Projects are then further divided into 12 focus areas, such as aging, cancer or trauma, and finally by research organization.

The website allows local scientists and researchers to connect and collaborate with other San Antonio research groups and for scientists around the country and world to seek collaborative opportunities.

## Kidney Expert Moves Research Forward

Kumar Sharma, M.D., FAHA, chief of nephrology and founding director of the Center for Renal Precision Medicine at UT Health San Antonio, was senior co-author of a study that showed dozens of small molecules are altered in chronic kidney disease. The study identified that a group of molecules called tri-carboxylic acid (TCA) cycle metabolites are significantly affected in the disease.

Researchers hope that a new breakthrough therapy could

arise from these insights. Sharma has submitted an invention disclosure based on the research to the Office of Technology Commercialization at UT Health San Antonio.

Sharma, an internationally renowned expert in kidney disease, recently established the Center for Renal Precision Medicine that will serve as a major resource for national and international research communities. The goal of the center's research is to facilitate the identification of targets for new therapeutics, which will reduce the progression of kidney diseases and the need for dialysis treatment and kidney transplants.

## New Shingles Shot Recommended

Even patients who have had the shingles vaccine, Zostavax, should upgrade their protection from shingles. A new vaccine, Shingrix, is reportedly more than 90 percent effective at preventing shingles compared with 51 percent effectiveness for Zostavax.

The new vaccine includes a substance called an adjuvant that makes the immune system produce more antibodies than the older vaccine. "Shingrix is clearly a superior vaccine," said William Schaffner, M.D., an infectious diseases specialist at Vanderbilt University. The CDC says the Shingrix vaccine is more effective and the protection lasts longer.

Shingrix requires two doses to get long-term protection. Potential side effects include soreness, redness and swelling at the injection site.

Patients should check with their doctors, since not everyone should get the Shingrix vaccine.

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