General Update

Arizona Cancer Center at Phoenix receives a $2 million gift from the Del E. Webb Foundation of Prescott to support recruiting and hiring faculty and staff members. The Cancer Center’s clinical operations are scheduled to open on the St. Joseph’s Hospital campus in central Phoenix in mid-2011. Plans call for four medical oncologists and two radiation oncologists to be recruited within the first year to treat Cancer Center patients. By 2013, the Arizona Cancer Center will have constructed a multi-story, 250,000-square-foot outpatient facility on the Phoenix Biomedical Campus in downtown Phoenix.

New Name and Logo - We are pleased to let you know that the UA Healthcare Board of Directors has approved our new corporate names and our new logo. Thanks for your patience as we work through the many details involved in the transition to our new identity. You can expect to have more details soon.

Pediatric interventional cardiologists Ricardo Samson, MD, G. Michael Nichols, MD, and the UMC catheterization lab team performed Arizona’s first Melody Transcatheter Pulmonary Valve (TPV) Therapy last week. Two additional patients will undergo the same procedure in the new few days. The Medtronic Melody (TPV) Therapy was approved by the FDA in 2010 as the first replacement pulmonary valve that can be implanted without open-heart surgery. The Melody TPV Therapy treats narrowed or leaking pulmonary valve conduits. A conduit is a surgically-implanted tissue valve placed between the right ventricle and pulmonary artery to establish blood flow between the heart and the lungs. The pulmonary valve directs blood flow from the right ventricle into the pulmonary artery, which splits into two arteries so that the blood from the body can get to both lungs.

University Medical Center (UMC) recently was visited by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to review several matters including compliance with the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA) regulations. The survey team spent three weeks at UMC. There were no significant concerns noted, however there were a few areas related to documentation and hand hygiene that will require a work plan. At the same time, UMC underwent a biennial recertification survey of its Disease Specific Stroke Management Program by the Joint Commission. The surveyors spoke with high regard for the program and its growth and focus on continuous improvement. Several areas were identified as requiring improvement and will be addressed by the Stroke Management Team. On March 14 and 15, the Department of Pathology underwent its biennial accreditation survey by the College of American Pathologists. The surveyors praised the department for the quality of its services. Minor areas of concern were identified as opportunities for improvement.

EMTALA Education Scheduled - Julie Nelson, from Coppersmith, Gordon, Schermer, Owens & Nelson in Phoenix, will be presenting EMTALA education to all staff (attendings, residents, nurses, students, Transition Management personnel and others) in Duval Auditorium on April 19 from 10:30 am -12:00 noon. There will be a question and answer period following the presentation – so bring your questions.

The University of Arizona Department of Immunobiology and the Arizona Center on Aging have won a five-year, $11.8 million contract from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health, to study declining immunity among the aging. “This is a large and complex project,” said UA researcher Janko Nikolich-Zugich, MD, PhD, principal investigator of the five-year Protective Immunity in Special Populations study. “Our main goal is to understand why older adults seem to be susceptible to certain infections and conditions, and to see what can be done to correct that.” “This award brings us much closer to achieving our goal of building a healthy, robust community of older adults by greatly reducing deaths and illness from infections, a common and serious problem among seniors. It provides a key building block to grow the Center on Aging, one of the UA Centers of Excellence designated by the Arizona Board of Regents, into an international power in research, education and clinical care of older adults,” said Mindy Fain, MD, chief of Geriatrics, General Medicine and Palliative Medicine at the UA College of Medicine, and co-director of the Arizona Center on Aging.