

# CENTRAL CALIFORNIA PEDIATRICS

SPECIALTY INFORMATION FOR PHYSICIANS  
WHO TREAT CHILDREN AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS  
SUMMER 2009

Children's  
Hospital  
Central California   
Amazing People. Incredible Care.

## All those NICUs What is the difference?

This may get confusing at first, but that's why we chose to write about it. So stay with us, and please pardon the italics we'll use to help make our point. Children's Hospital Central California's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is a Level III *Regional* NICU. No other hospital in our service area has a Level III *Regional* NICU. Other hospitals in the region have NICUs of varying levels, including Level II *Intermediate* units and Level III *Community* units. The distinctions can seem razor thin, but they're not.

The American Academy of Pediatrics determines the criteria for the various NICU levels, but the distinction between *Intermediate*, *Community* and *Regional* NICUs is regulated by California Children's Services (CCS).

**The primary difference is that a *Regional* NICU exists within a Tertiary hospital that has 24-hour onsite access to CCS paneled pediatric subspecialists with neonatal expertise (in addition to neonatologists).** Simply put, these pediatric subspecialists work at the hospital, always available. This is true at Children's Hospital Central California.

Moreover, a *Regional* NICU like ours must have CCS-paneled surgeons including general pediatric surgeons, pediatric neurosurgeons, pediatric orthopaedic surgeons, pediatric otolaryngologists, pediatric urologists, pediatric cardiovascular surgeons, and pediatric plastic surgeons, pediatric anesthesiologists and pediatric

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Parents can bond with their baby in private NICU rooms.



**ALL THOSE NICUs  
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radiologists who are on staff and available in-hospital on a 24-hour basis. CCS paneling ensures that the subspecialists providing care have the experience and training needed to care for this specialty population.

A *Regional* NICU requires the support of a pediatric cardiologist to respond within an hour of identified need, 24 hours per day. Other pediatric subspecialties that must be available 24 hours to provide **in-house consultation** for *Regional* NICUs (but on-call for *Community* NICUs) include pediatric neurologist and geneticist/dysmorphologist. Additional specialists needed to support the critical care needs of this specialty population include pediatric gastroenterologists, pediatric endocrinologists, pediatric nephrologists, pediatric neurologists, pediatric pulmonologists, pediatric hematologists/oncologists, pediatric infectious disease specialists, and pediatric immunologists.

It is obvious that all of these subspecialties are readily available at a children's hospital while very few practice on-site at general hospitals, where most *Community* NICUs are located.

**Community Level III NICUs**

But don't knock the value of a *Community* Level III NICU. In places without immediate access to a *Regional* unit, these NICUs are life-saving care providers. They have skilled neonatologists who can determine exactly which patients require the higher level of a *Regional* unit and provide many of the non-surgical treatments neonates need. They all have contractual agreements with a *Regional* NICU and obtain consultation from the *Regional* unit when necessary. The community hospitals in Children's service area that contain a Level III *Community* NICU are Doctors Medical Center in Modesto, Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, Kern Medical Center in Bakersfield and Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center in San Luis Obispo. These facilities are on the far ends of Children's service area and provide essential services to their communities. (Community Medical Center in Fresno has been seeking Level III *Community* status, but as of the printing of this article had not achieved it.)

**Level II Intermediate NICUs**

Finally, there are Level II *Intermediate* NICUs. These units care for lower-acuity and lower risk patients. Children's Hospital Central California operates a Level II unit in Saint Agnes Medical Center in Fresno. Lower acuity units in adult hospitals in the region include Community Medical Center in Fresno and Kaweah Delta in Visalia. The growth of all these units has greatly increased the

number of neonate beds in the region, possibly leaving you with some interesting questions, like "where does my patient belong?"

**Making Decisions**

Here's our take: send your neonate to the NICU that best meets their clinical needs – period. If you are in the far ends of the region, Doctors Modesto, Bakersfield Memorial, Kern Medical Center and Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center are the right choices unless your neonate requires subspecialty surgical intervention. The neonatologists in these hospitals will know when and where to transfer your patient if the need arises. Closer to the Fresno metropolitan area, we believe that we are the solution for all but the lowest acuity neonates.

Here's why. We've been treating preemies for a very long time. For neonates, it's all about long-term development and quality of life, and we know, based on our outcomes, that they have a greater chance with the type of care offered at Children's. The multiple complications neonates experience require the specialized expertise mentioned previously. The relationships between our NICU team and our subspecialty teams allow them to work as one, providing seamless care. At Children's, a newborn that requires surgery is cared for by the same subspecialty physician team both pre and post surgery. After surgery she is returned to her isolette on the same campus and in the same building that her subspecialist surgeon practices. The surgeon, the neonatologist and the support staff all continue to provide care together throughout the baby's stay. These physicians have been practicing as a team for years.

The availability of subspecialists is not the only difference between Children's and our community partners. A high percentage of Children's NICU nurses have achieved



national certification in neonatal intensive care in addition to their in-house – and quite rigorous – training. In fact, our NICU nurses were just named “Nursing Team of the Year” in a cover story in “ADVANCE for Nurses” magazine. Children’s is also a Magnet Nursing facility, one of a few hospitals across the nation with this highly accredited and quality-based designation. We have a multidisciplinary team with specific expertise in neonatal care including neonatal-trained respiratory care practitioners, serving as an adjunct to our neonatologists in the airway management of newborns. Children’s is also the only NICU in Central California (or our region) that offers private rooms, allowing parents to be beside their baby 24 hours a day – a critical bonding experience for these infants who are in the NICU an average of 21 days.

Because we are the only *Regional* Level III NICU in the Central Valley, we benchmark our outcomes through participation in a multitude of state and national collaboratives including the Vermont-Oxford Group (includes 600 NICUs), Child Health Corporation of America PHIS (43 children’s hospitals), and California Perinatal Quality Care Collaborative (CPQCC). Participation in these collaboratives allows us to deliver the highest level of care and measure our outcomes against NICUs across the nation.

We also offer High-Risk Infant Follow Up services to provide necessary care after a family goes home. At Children’s, we are here for the life of the child, not just the delivery. We provide services from the prenatal period through adolescence, a complete package with a team of specialists that knows the family and child.

Children’s also offers one of the top neonatal transport teams in the country, based on both volume and patient outcomes. We use air and ground teams in specially-built units to safely transport newborns from their birth hospital. Finally, you should be aware that compared to other children’s hospitals we are ranked among the best in the nation.

That’s a lot to soak up in a few hundred words, but it’s important if you’re treating an expectant mother who requires prenatal or neonatal services. If you have any questions, feel free to call our Physician Relations Department and we will either answer them for you or put you in touch with someone who can. Our Physician Liaison’s number is (559) 353-7229.



## Physicians React to the Children’s Access Center

Children’s Access Center opened in January and referring physicians throughout Central California have given us quick, positive feedback. The changes were made after listening to doctors’ suggestions, and they have told us they appreciate modifications that allow them to contact a pediatric subspecialist quickly and easily. The center provides a single point of contact to all physicians at Children’s Hospital Central California through a toll-free number, 866-353 KIDS (5437). The center is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week and staffed by people specially trained to assist referring physicians and their staff. Its primary objective is to enhance the “shared care” of referred patients by facilitating timely communication between Children’s Hospital’s pediatric subspecialists and community physicians.

“I have used the Access Center very often to get in contact with specialists in Pulmonology, Cardiology, and Otolaryngology,” said Dr. Sima Asadi of University Pediatric Center in Merced. “It’s great for immediate access to a pediatric specialist.”

Dr. Margarita Nocse of Sutter Gould Medical Foundation in Stockton added that, “... this Access Center is very beneficial to me, especially when I need to be in contact with a specialist at anytime. This is a great tool to add to my practice.”

Referring physicians most often use Children’s Access Center to consult with a specialist. They also use it to arrange for patient admitting and to request information like test results.

## New Team Members - The Past Year

One of the most important ways we enhance service is to bring new and talented pediatric subspecialists to our region. Throughout the past year we have recruited several doctors onto our team, and we thought you would appreciate a recap of the physicians we have made available to you and your patients.

**Dr. David Pugatch** brings 18 years of experience to Children's, assuming the role of Medical Director of Infectious Disease. Dr. Pugatch joined the Hospital from Brown University/Hasbro Children's Hospital, where he served as the Director for the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Fellowship Program. He is widely published, serves in an editorial capacity for several journals, and is an author of the chapter on Immunizations for the upcoming sixth edition of the Feigin and Cherry Textbook of Pediatric Infectious Diseases.

**Dr. Fred Laningham** returned to Central California to join Wishon Radiology Medical Group and Children's Hospital. Born and raised in Bakersfield, Dr. Laningham's expertise is in Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Oncology, and Neuroimaging. His research has appeared in oncology-related journals including "Pediatric Blood Cancer," "Annals of Oncology" and "Cancer." He comes to Children's from St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. **Dr. Jennifer Crocker** is the Medical Director of Children's Rehabilitation Center. She is board certified in physical medicine by the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

**Dr. Virginia Meade** is board certified in neonatal-perinatal medicine and pediatrics. Prior to joining Children's, Dr. Meade was a neonatologist at Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics in Kansas City. Her work has been published in journals including "Biology of the Neonate," the "Journal of Pediatrics" and the "Journal of Perinatology." **Dr. Ruetima Titapiwatanakun** is board certified in hematology/oncology. She has been published in journals including "Neonatal Intensive Care and Pediatric Neurology." **Dr. Garine Lepejian** joined the Charlie Mitchell Children's Center to provide complex primary care. Her work on the medical treatment of patients with infantile spasms

and thyroid screening has been published in the "Journal of Medical Screening and Clinical Neuropharmacology." She has won research awards both in the United States and abroad for her research on silent celiac disease in patients with endocrine disorders. **Dr. Jairo Torres** is an expert in otolaryngology providing care in the Hospital's ENT practice. Dr. Torres has more than 20 years of experience in otolaryngology and has served as Director at Clinica de Otorrinolaringología de Occidente and as a Pediatric Otolaryngologist at Hospital Infantil Club Noel in Colombia. **Dr. Mimi Chao Mills** was a Clinical Instructor in Surgery in the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center prior to joining Children's Hospital Central California. Her work has been published in the "Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Journal" and "Journal of Craniofacial Surgery." **Dr. Matthew Gollub** is board certified in pediatric critical care medicine and pediatrics by the American Board of Pediatrics. He joined Children's Hospital from the University of Arizona Health Science/Steele Children's Research Center in Tucson. **Dr. Wendy Tcheng** joined Children's from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Medicine, where she was Assistant Professor. She is board certified in pediatric hematology/oncology. Dr. Tcheng has been published in peer-reviewed journals including "Pediatric Blood and Cancer and Haemophilia." **Dr. Paul Bryan** is board certified in Pediatric Emergency Medicine and joined Children's from Harbor-University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Medical Center, where he was Assistant Professor. Born in Fresno, he has returned to provide care to the Valley's pediatric population. **Dr. Robert Chilcote** is board certified in pediatrics. Dr. Chilcote provides hospitalist services at Children's as well as Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock. Dr. Chilcote brings over 20 years of experience to Children's Hospital. He is an author of more than 50 publications in peer-reviewed journals including The New England Journal of Medicine and also has an MBA from the University of California, Irvine.

# Helping You Prevent Child Abuse

Child abuse is on the rise in the Valley. With stress from the economy and housing crises affecting behavior, it is anticipated to get worse. The need for intervention has been great for some time. More than 3 million American children are reported abused or neglected every year. That is why Children's Hospital Central California is continuing its commitment to preventing child abuse.

In 2007 Children's received a \$1 million pledge from the Hospital's Guilds to establish the Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Endowment. This supports the Child Advocacy Program, Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Team and community outreach efforts to prevent child abuse.

## We are here to help you

The Child Advocacy Department, in conjunction with the Hospital's Injury Prevention team, is available to provide education and outreach to your clinical staff. We provide clinical and social partners with education revolving around child abuse topics such as Shaken Baby Syndrome, Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, Child Maltreatment and Pediatric Trauma.

The SCAN Team provides a coordinated interdisciplinary approach to diagnosis, treatment, consultation, identification and prevention of child abuse. Our community agency partners in this endeavor include Child Welfare, Law Enforcement, Public Health Nurses and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners.

## It's mandated because it's the right thing to do

California Penal Code Section 11165.7 outlines the responsibility of mandated reporters of abuse. As a licensed physician, you are mandated to report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Common "red flags" for suspicion of child abuse that you may be familiar with are:

- Unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones or black eyes
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention
- Lack of adult supervision
- Consistently dirty
- Child shrinks at the approach of adults
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Frequent, unexplained school absences or
- Child reports any type of abuse (physical, sexual, neglect or emotional maltreatment)

If you suspect abuse, contact your local Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement.

Seventeen children from throughout the Central Valley died at Children's Hospital Central California in 2008 from injuries related to suspected child abuse. Reading the newspaper or watching the news remind us that the assault on our most vulnerable population continues. Report child abuse and be an advocate for those who can't speak for themselves.



Detective Danielle Isaac, Fresno County Sheriff's Department (left), uses the Shaken Baby Syndrome Simulator during a presentation by Children's Child Advocacy Coordinator Leanne Kozub (right).

## Where to go for help

If you or your staff would like to find out more about child abuse, please visit the websites listed below. Many of them have free downloadable materials.

**Prevent Child Abuse America**  
[www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)

**Child Help**  
[www.childhelp.org](http://www.childhelp.org)

**Office of Child Abuse Prevention**  
[www.dss.cahwnet.gov](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov)

In your own community, you can contact the Department of Children and Family Services or your local Child Abuse Prevention Council ([www.capcsac.org/ca-councils](http://www.capcsac.org/ca-councils)).

The Child Advocacy Physicians, Dr. John Kinnison, Interim Medical Director, and Dr. Kala Parker, are available for inpatient consultations and to provide feedback to physicians. These physicians can be reached at the Child Advocacy Department at (559) 353-6022 or call the Children's Access Center at (559) 353-5437.

For questions, contact the Child Advocacy Department at (559) 353-6022.

# Children's Sedation Team

Here's something we all know – pain is bad, and it can often be avoided by taking the right measures. Children's multidisciplinary sedation team strives to meet the needs of children undergoing medical procedures throughout the Hospital by offering safe, effective, evidence-based procedural sedation. The team develops individualized plans of care to help minimize patients' physical and emotional discomfort during procedures. They are available throughout the inpatient and outpatient environments at the Hospital at the request of any physician or nurse involved in a procedure.

This procedural sedation team is a partnership between Sedation Services, Emergency Physician Medical Group and Children's Anesthesiology Department.

Team members implement the use of guided imagery, age appropriate communication and pharmacological agents to address physical and emotional pain. Addressing both the physical and emotional aspects of pain management fosters an atmosphere conducive to successful completion of procedures and is in line with Children's goal of being a pain-free environment.

The team's mission is to promote customer satisfaction, organizational efficiency and compassionate care by providing responsive evidence-based sedation and analgesia emphasizing patient safety, quality outcomes, and human caring.

Community physicians and families can rely on Children's to provide quality medical services, technologically advanced procedures and compassionate care. Once again, by seeking out opportunities to meet the needs of children, leaders and staff at Children's have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to improving healthcare for children of the Central Valley.

## Like father, like son

For many 7 year-old boys, visiting your father's workplace holds a certain appeal. When your father is the medical director of a children's hospital emergency department, though, the visit may be more than inspiring. Young Paul Bryan - son of Dr. Sylvester Bryan - remembers the sutures his dad gave him to repair damage from an overly enthusiastic cousin with a golf club. The visit was for treatment, but the resulting inspiration sparked Paul's interest in medicine.

Thirty years later *Doctor* Paul Bryan is back in the ED with his father, this time as a colleague and fellow physician.

"It's great to be working where I grew up," the younger Dr. Bryan says.

"My father has certainly been a big influence and inspiration in my life, a true role model, not only in medicine, but also in my family and as a parent," Paul added, as his father interjected, "When you're older than dirt, you have a lot of experience to share."

The extra bonus of having Paul Bryan, MD now work at Children's Hospital is the addition of his wife,



Dr. Sylvester Bryan and son Dr. Paul Bryan.

Wendy Tcheng, MD who works at the Hospital as a hematologist/oncologist. Paul met Wendy during his residency at Harbour UCLA in Torrance and she is now a wonderful addition to the medical staff.

"She's a wonderful daughter-in-law," says Sylvester, "... and a very good doctor."

We don't know if Paul's children have begun their medical careers yet, but we hope to update this article in a couple of decades with more good news.

# Children's Pulmonology Center

Specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of complex respiratory conditions and disorders, the Pulmonology Center at Children's Hospital provides 24/7 service in the inpatient, outpatient and emergency care settings. We work closely with services like the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, but almost 90 percent of our patients are treated on an outpatient basis.

The team participates in clinical research involving conditions like Cystic Fibrosis (CF) and Asthma. We currently have 105 CF patients participating in research projects. We are a multidisciplinary California Children's Services (CCS) recognized Cystic Fibrosis Center.

What distinguishes our Pulmonology Center is our expertise in services offered under one roof, including Asthma with outpatient treatment, managing patients with Cystic Fibrosis with our bi-weekly Cystic Fibrosis clinics, and Sleep Apnea monitored in our on-site pediatric sleep lab. We also offer specialized diagnostic services such as a CCS approved Home Ventilator Clinic that manages patients on home ventilators, a full-function Pulmonary Function Testing (PFT) lab, a Bronchoscopy Lab and a Sleep Lab.

We collaborate with Children's Immunology and Rheumatology Practice to treat primary immunodeficiency patients and patients with eczema/atopic dermatitis and we work with the ENT practice to manage patients with breathing problems. We team closely with Gastroenterology for esophageal pH monitoring and our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and The Willson Heart Center in providing inhaled nitric oxide therapy. We also work with cardiologists at The Willson Heart Center in treating pulmonary hypertension.



**Dr. Reddivalam Sudhakar,  
Medical Director**

After graduating from Guntur Medical College in Guntur, India, Dr. Reddivalam Sudhakar completed an internship at the Government General Hospital in Guntur, India. He completed pediatric residencies at Guntur Medical College and Rutgers Medical School in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Dr. Sudhakar completed a fellowship in pulmonary

medicine at Children's Hospital National Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Dr. Sudhakar is board certified in Pediatric Pulmonology by the American Board of Pediatrics. He is a member of the American Thoracic Society and the Central Valley Respiratory Society.



**Dr. Lauro Roberto**

Dr. Roberto is board certified in Pediatric Pulmonology by the American Board of Pediatrics. He is a member of several professional organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the California Thoracic Society,

the Los Angeles Pediatric Society and the American Thoracic Society.



**Dr. Mary Ann Tablizo**

Dr. Tablizo earned her medical degree from the University of the East in Manila, Philippines. She completed an internship at the Philippine General Hospital in Manila and her residency at Overlook Hospital in Summit,

New Jersey. Dr. Tablizo completed a fellowship at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles.





## Referring a Patient

For urgent referrals, or to transfer a patient, call the Children's Access Center toll free at **866.353.KIDS (5437)**. Or go online to **childrenscentralcal.org** for a complete list of physician office numbers and information.

**Direct link:**  
[www.childrenscentralcal.org/services/medicaloffice/refer](http://www.childrenscentralcal.org/services/medicaloffice/refer)

Outreach Centers:

**Merced Subspecialty Pediatric Center**  
209.726.0199

**Modesto Subspecialty Pediatric Center**  
209.572.3880

**For a copy of Children's Quick Reference Telephone Guide, call 559.353.6621.**

## CME Calendar

### CHILDREN'S PEDIATRIC CLINICAL SYMPOSIUM SERIES

Free half-day CME symposiums for pediatricians, family practice physicians and allied health professionals. Focuses on advances in diagnosis and treatment of commonly encountered issues in pediatrics. Interactive lunchtime sessions provide attendees with an opportunity to discuss clinical cases and questions with faculty. Free registration includes all symposium materials, continental breakfast, plenary session and lunch with our featured presenters.

### San Luis Obispo Symposium - Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center

Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>

7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Topics (subject to change): Pulmonology, Endocrinology, Emergency Medicine, Cardiology.

#### « Every Tuesday & Thursday:

Pediatric Consulting & Subspecialty Lectures

12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

June Series: Gastrointestinal      September Series: Endocrinology      December Series: Adolescent Medicine

July Series: General Pediatrics      October Series: Infectious Disease

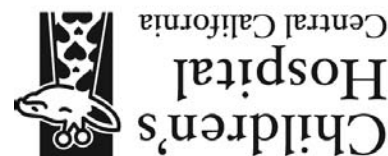
August Series: Genetics      November Series: Neurology

For a complete list of monthly CME topics visit [www.childrenscentralcal.org](http://www.childrenscentralcal.org).

Children's Hospital is accredited by the Institute for Medical Quality/California Medical Association (IMQ/CMA) to provide continuing medical education for physicians. For questions about our CME program, contact Norma Barajas, PhD, at 559.353.7230 or email [nbarajas@childrenscentralcal.org](mailto:nbarajas@childrenscentralcal.org).

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Madera, CA 93636-8762



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