

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Gail Besner, MD, Awarded the Medallion for Scientific Achievement



The American Surgical Association has awarded **Gail Besner, MD**, chief of Pediatric Surgery at Nationwide Children's, the Medallion for Scientific Achievement, the highest honor bestowed by the association. This award is given only when a worthy recipient is nominated. Dr. Besner is the 35th recipient, the third pediatric surgeon and the second woman ever to receive this award. This award recognizes Dr. Besner for making significant scientific strides in the field of pediatric surgery, specifically regarding her research contributions for neonatal necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC).

Dr. Besner's research focuses on eliminating NEC, a debilitating and deadly condition affecting infants born prematurely. In NEC cases, intestinal tissues become inflamed, and in severe cases, there is ischemia and death of the involved intestines. Treatment often involves surgery to remove the diseased intestines, and in its severe forms, the mortality approaches 50%.

"I am incredibly humbled to join the distinguished surgeons who have previously received this honor," says Dr. Besner. "A treatment for NEC is desperately needed to save these babies, and I remain dedicated to the vital work needed to discover a cure for this devastating disease."

### Maitreya Coffey, MD, Named as Chief Quality Officer

**Maitreya Coffey, MD**, was recently named Nationwide Children's inaugural chief quality officer (CQO). As part of this role, Dr. Coffey will oversee the [Center for Clinical Excellence](#). In addition to her role of CQO, Dr. Coffey will provide clinical care as a pediatric hospitalist and will be a professor of Pediatrics at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. Prior to joining Nationwide Children's, Dr. Coffey served as the associate chief medical officer for quality and medical affairs at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) in Toronto, Ontario, as well as a hospitalist in the Division of Pediatric Medicine.

### Heart Center Faculty Appointed in New Leadership Roles

**Curt Daniels, MD**, has been appointed medical director of the Richard M. Ross Heart Hospital at The Ohio State University, effective May 1, 2025. With more than 23 years as faculty at both Nationwide Children's and The Ohio State University, Dr. Daniels has established a reputation for his groundbreaking work in creating nationally recognized transition programs for patients with congenital heart disease.

Dr. Daniels has held significant leadership positions at the American College of Cardiology, the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Heart Association. He developed Adult Congenital Heart Disease (ACHD) as a subspecialty board certification, creating ACGME fellowship training for ACHD and developing national accreditation for ACHD programs. He's led efforts to improve workforce issues and care models for patients with ACHD by engaging with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and patient advocacy organizations and worked with members of the U.S. Congress to pass relevant legislation.

At Nationwide Children's, Dr. Daniels has established and built an expansive ACHD program and has led the training of significant leaders in this field worldwide. His leadership has been



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fundamental to the success of our collaborative work with The Ohio State University.

**Rob Gajarski, MD**, has been appointed medical director for the Center of Clinic Excellence (CCE), effective May 1, 2025. Dr. Gajarski has built a successful clinical career as section chief of Cardiology focusing on cardiac critical care, transplant and pulmonary hypertension. He also serves as an associate chief quality officer in charge of patient safety. In this position, along with the CCE team, he has been leading efforts to reduce hospital-acquired conditions. Over the last few years, he has successfully reduced rates of patient harm events, including unplanned extubations, CLABSI and nephrotoxic drug-associated kidney injuries in conjunction with ongoing work to reduce race-based health care disparities. Given his quality improvement expertise, Dr. Gajarski has also been one of the faculty mentors for Nationwide Children's quality improvement course (QLA) and the QI writing course (QIPP), which mentors participants through the preparation and submission of QI manuscripts.

Nationally, Dr. Gajarski has been part of the Solutions for Patient Safety collaborative and the Children's Hospital Association, collaborating with others to further improve patient safety in pediatric hospitals. He also helps lead the QI committees of Advanced Cardiac Therapies Improving Outcomes Network and the international Pediatric Heart Transplant Society. Dr. Gajarski will continue his present leadership and clinical roles as section chief of Cardiology and professor of Pediatrics.

**Stephen Hart, MD**, has been selected as the next co-director for the Pediatric Acute Care Cardiology Collaborative (PAC3), effective this summer. PAC3 is an international collaborative of inpatient pediatric cardiology with a mission to improve cardiac acute care outcomes and experiences for patients, families and hospital systems through collaborative quality improvement and a dedicated clinical registry. With over 50 member centers across the United States and Canada, PAC3 continues to grow and make strides in advancing pediatric cardiac care.

Dr. Hart has been a key leader within PAC3 for the past five years, serving as the co-chair of the database committee. In this role, he has played a pivotal part in guiding the organization through two major registry updates. He has also been instrumental in developing PAC3's virtual audit process, ensuring the registry remains robust and clinically validated and has played an essential role developing risk-adjusted metrics for the organization. Dr. Hart will continue his present roles of associate section chief for the Division of Cardiology.

## Partners For Kids® Announces New Chief Medical Officer

**Gavin Baumgardner, DO, MHA**, joins Partners For Kids as the new chief medical officer (CMO). Dr. Baumgardner previously served as the vice president and national medical director for palliative care at Amedisys, a leading provider of health care in the home. Prior to that, he spent 20 years at OhioHealth, serving in a succession of leadership positions.

In his new role as CMO, Dr. Baumgardner will join the executive leadership team at Partners For Kids, where he will use his experience, passion and clinical expertise to support the mission of delivering best outcomes for children throughout Ohio. Learn more at [PartnersForKids.org/news-updates](https://PartnersForKids.org/news-updates).

### FEATURED PHYSICIAN



**Praveen Goday, MD**, is a pediatric gastroenterologist at Nationwide Children's. He is the director of the Nutrition and Feeding Programs, which provide nutrition care throughout the hospital system and care to children with feeding problems. He is a clinical professor of Pediatrics at The Ohio State University.

Dr. Goday is a graduate of Madras Medical College in India and is board certified in Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition. He is active at the national level in promoting pediatric nutrition and is currently serving as the vice president of the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN). He has been recognized by several societies for his work in pediatric nutrition, receiving the Distinguished Nutrition Support Physician Service Award from ASPEN (2018), the Master Educator Award for sustained educational scholarship from the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (2021) and honorary membership of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for distinguished contributions to the field of nutrition (2022). Dr. Goday's research interests include multiple efforts to improve feeding, nutrition and growth in children with diverse diseases.

In 2019, Dr. Goday was the lead author of the paper that defined Pediatric Feeding Disorder, which has served to unify this common but understudied condition. This has been followed by several papers that have helped further characterize it. He has also co-authored important publications, such as the original paper that identified the key concepts of pediatric malnutrition and the guidelines for nutrition provision to critically ill children. He has also edited two books: *Pediatric Critical Care Nutrition* and *Pediatric Nutrition for Dietitians*.

## Comments From Patients and Families

Medical staff leadership would like to acknowledge physicians for recently receiving positive comments from patients and families. These comments are only a brief sample of the many compliments our physicians receive regularly.

### Jennifer Aldrink, MD, General Pediatric Surgery

*"The surgeon took the time to learn and explain everything she was going to do, and then again while completing the process. She comforted my daughter all the way through and made her feel more confident about her injury. Everyone has been so kind and helpful. Most importantly, they take the time to listen to our concerns, answer our questions, and work together with me and my daughter on her treatment plan and what will work best for her. Everyone has gone out of their way to make us feel comfortable."*

### Brian Becknell, MD, PhD, Pediatrics

*"Dr. Becknell was amazing! He explained every step and process, as well as our various lab results. We left feeling very well equipped with what to do and how to handle questions that we might have in the future."*

### Stefanie Bester, MD, Pediatrics

*"Dr. Bester is absolutely amazing! She has been my girl's doctor for many years. She truly is great at what she does. She listens and has been so helpful over the years. She truly is such a blessing!"*

### David Danesh, DMD, MPH, MS, Dentistry

*"Dr. Danesh is a huge asset to the pediatric dental profession. Not only was he amazing with my daughter, but he also had an excellent bedside manner and rapport with me. We both loved him! He is kind, compassionate, skilled and professional."*

### Ashley Ebersole, MD, Pediatrics

*"Each encounter we've had has been exceptional. Dr. Ebersole is fantastic at creating a trusting and friendly environment to discuss concerns and solutions. She's thorough, informed, calm and reassuring. She definitely master's her medical profession."*

### Jonathan Gisser, MD, Pediatrics

*"Dr. Gisser makes my son feel like he's his only patient. He never makes us feel rushed, and always takes the time to truly listen. His comment at our most recent visit was that he 'doesn't treat labs, he treats patients.' That meant a lot to my son, who is still not feeling well despite having great lab results."*

### Melissa Holtzlander, MD, Pediatrics

*"We appreciate all Dr. H. has done for us in our 15 years, the time, emails, calls and after care every time we needed her. She is the kindest."*

### Amit Lahoti, MD, Pediatrics

*"My child was admitted with a new diagnosis of Type 1 Diabetes. We were completely blindsided, and the endocrinology team was fantastic at understanding our emotional state, giving us small bits of information to process at a time, and making sure we had everything in writing due to the amount of information we were taking in. They made terrible circumstances so much more bearable."*

### Prashant S. Malhotra, MD, FAAP, Otolaryngology

*"The doctor was amazing! Quality of care was impeccable! Very informative and patient. Everyone was just wonderful! Going above and beyond every step of the way to be sure we were comfortable. Great communication from everyone, and the hospital is absolutely beautiful! Very caring and sincere. Cannot thank everyone enough!"*

### Ethan Mezoﬀ, MD, Pediatrics

*"We love Dr. Mezoﬀ. He is so easy to talk to and has a great sense of humor. He doesn't rush through the appointment and makes you feel very comfortable talking about personal issues."*

## COMMUNITY PROVIDER CORNER

### In-office Ear Tube Placement

The Department of Pediatric Otolaryngology has initiated a program performing ear tube insertion without the need for general anesthesia. The procedure is performed in the office setting, typically during the first consultation, allowing for expedited care.

The program is targeted for children 16 months and younger who are deemed appropriate candidates by the evaluating provider. The in-office setting obviates the risk of general anesthesia, the need for fasting prior to a procedure and allows the child to return to normal activities with minimal downtime. In addition to eliminating risk of general anesthesia, the in-office setting reduces the overall cost of the surgery.

The ENT team has performed over 500 in office ear tubes since 2023 and has received very positive feedback from parent survey. Over 99% of parents responded favorably.

If you have a patient who may need further consultation for recurrent ear infections or ear tube placement, ENT can provide self-scheduling options or referral intake at [NationwideChildrens.org/ENT](https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/ENT).

# Measles: Provider Resources

Nationwide Children's has recently updated detailed measles resources for community providers as cases continue to be confirmed throughout the nation. Measles testing should be considered for patients presenting with compatible signs and symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis and disseminated rash), especially those with an epidemiological risk factor (e.g., known or suspected measles exposure, international travel, travel to an area with ongoing measles outbreak and/or unvaccinated against measles).

Current documents can be found by visiting the Measles Resources webpage at [NationwideChildrens.org/for-medical-professionals](https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/for-medical-professionals). These include resources for the testing referral process, a measles toolkit, a frequently asked questions for clinicians and resources to share with patient families.

Access the Ask A Specialist Live event recording with Nationwide Children's infectious diseases and epidemiology teams with an update on the current state of measles and an open forum by [clicking here](#) (passcode: MpGs792K).

## Wellstone Center Muscular Dystrophy Conference

July 19, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This educational program is designed for parents, caregivers and individuals living with muscular dystrophy. Learn about the latest advances in research, clinical trials and how these developments are shaping future therapies and treatments. There is no charge to attend, but registration is required.

[Community Education Program | Nationwide Children's Hospital](#).

## Diabetes Management Education

August 18 and September 17, 1 to 4 p.m.

This engaging, three-hour accredited course is designed for health care professionals, families and caregivers who support children with diabetes. Build the knowledge and confidence needed to provide safe, effective diabetes care in school, day care and home environments.

Topics include:

- Using glucose meters, continuous glucose monitors (CGMs) and insulin pumps
- Responding to hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, including ketone management
- Understanding the role of nutrition, exercise and medication in diabetes management

Cost: \$10 per person (includes all materials and instruction)

Accreditation: 2.75 ANCC contact hours for qualified attendees

Register at [NationwideChildrens.cloud-cme.com](https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/cloud-cme). For questions, call Community Education at (614) 355- 0589 or email [Sheri.Brock@NationwideChildrens.org](mailto:Sheri.Brock@NationwideChildrens.org).

## Heart Center Family Conference

Your patient families are invited to attend the Heart Center Family Conference: Healthy Hearts, Healthy Habits on Saturday, September 27, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Education Center. This free event is designed to support individuals impacted by congenital heart disease, as well as their caregivers. Attendees will explore topics like lifelong heart care, nutrition, exercise, mental wellness and more. Childcare is provided for ages 3-12. For more information, contact Melissa Ferruso at [Melissa.Ferruso@NationwideChildrens.org](mailto:Melissa.Ferruso@NationwideChildrens.org).

### HEMECARE UPDATE

## Providing Asthma Management and Reducing ED Visits

Homecare's Asthma Express program continues to expand to meet the needs of children diagnosed with asthma throughout central Ohio and beyond. Intermittent Skilled Nurses are trained in evaluating the needs of asthma patients and their families. Based on the severity level of a child's asthma diagnosis (intermittent, mild-moderate or severe), providers may refer the patient for one, two or three home visits.

During an Asthma Express home visit, the nurse evaluates the child and reviews the Asthma Action Plan. Following the provider's referral, the nurse ensures that the patient and family understand when and how to take prescribed medications and that medications are stored safely and accessibly. The nurse also offers guidance on minimizing environmental triggers such as cigarette smoke, dust mites and animal dander. The child's family receive a pillow cover and, if needed, a bed or mattress cover to create an allergy-free barrier, helping the child rest more comfortably.

Patients referred to the Asthma Express program are tracked based on whether they accept or decline the referral. This information is used to evaluate the program's impact by comparing Emergency Department (ED) visit rates within 90 days of referral. Quality Improvement (QI) data consistently show that patients who accept and receive Asthma Express care experience significantly lower ED return rates compared to those who decline participation, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in supporting asthma management at home.

In 2024, Asthma Express patients diagnosed with severe asthma had a 0.0% return rate to the ED within 90 days of their diagnosis. Overall, Asthma Express provides best outcomes for



children diagnosed with asthma - keeping them in school, at home and out of the hospital.

Visit [NationwideChildrens.org/Homecare](https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/homecare) for more information.

INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Sickle Cell Trait and Disease in 2025: Primer for the Primary Care Provider

July 11

This symposium aims to educate primary care providers (PCPs) regarding the diagnosis and management of sickle cell trait and sickle cell disease. A solid knowledge and understanding of sickle cell disease are essential for PCPs to diagnose sickle-related conditions, counsel patients appropriately, and know when to refer to the academic center for evaluation and treatment. Good communication between the academic center and the primary care providers and appreciation of each other’s roles is essential to ensure the patients receive optimal care. Register at [Nationwidechildrens.cloud-cme.com/SCD25](https://nationwidechildrens.cloud-cme.com/SCD25).

3rd Annual Robotic Surgery for Pediatric Surgeons: Program Development and Beyond

August 20-22

Nationwide Children’s Center for Robotic Surgery is hosting a two-day conference focused on robotic surgery program development, common clinical application presentations and case discussions. The conference will also include a clinical wet lab experience designed to introduce robotic surgery to practicing pediatric surgeons. Register at [NationwideChildrens.cloud-cme.com/ROBOTICS25](https://nationwidechildrens.cloud-cme.com/ROBOTICS25).

Additional Conferences

- August 25-29, Myology Course
- September 18-19, 2025 IMPAACT Summit
- September 26, 2025 Dermatology Conference
- October 3-4, 2025 PULC Course
- October 17, School Health Conference
- October 28-29, Neonatal Simulation Conference
- November 7, Virtual Reality Conference (XR)

- November 21-22, Sports Medicine Conference

For information on event and conference planning support, email [IPEoffice@NationwideChildrens.org](mailto:IPEoffice@NationwideChildrens.org).

GRAND ROUNDS

Pediatric Grand Rounds

Pediatric Grand Rounds takes place every Thursday from 8 to 9 a.m. A schedule of upcoming and prior recorded sessions is on the Nationwide Children’s Physician Connect app and the ANCHOR calendar.

Upcoming sessions include:

Date	Topic	Speaker and Institution/ Department
6/19	Antibiotic Stewardship	Jason Newland, MD, MEd  Nationwide Children’s Hospital
7/10	Brilli Visiting Professorship in Pediatric Quality and Safety	Stephen Muething, MD  Cincinnati Children’s Hospital
7/17	Type 1 Diabetes: From Standards of Care to Standards of Practice	Osagie Ebekozen, MD, MPH  American Diabetes Association
7/24	Update to Scoliosis: Both Idiopathic and Neuromuscular	Reid Chambers, DO, MS, FAAOS, and Heather Richard, PsyD  Nationwide Children’s Hospital
7/31	TBD	Stephanie Davis, MD UNC Chapel Hill

## MOC Part 4 Credit

Do you have an MOC cycle ending this year? Be sure to claim your credit in time. It's easy and free. If you actively participated in a Nationwide Children's approved MOC Part 4 QI project, submit your [credit claim](#) no later than November 30, 2025.

If you need to get your QI project approved for MOC Part 4 credit, submit [application materials](#) no later than October 17, 2025.

For more information or questions, visit the [ANCHOR MOC](#) page or email [MOC@NationwideChildrens.org](mailto:MOC@NationwideChildrens.org).

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

### Pam and Jack Beeler Psychiatry and Behavioral Health Grand Rounds

Make plans to join the upcoming session from noon to 1 p.m. Find the events on the Zoom links listed below or attend in person in Allen Auditorium at Nationwide Children's Conference Center. Lunch will be provided for these in-person sessions:

#### **Tuesday, June 17**

Benjamin Goldstein, MD, PhD

#### **Heart-Brain Connections in Relation to Youth Bipolar Disorder: Is it Time to Take Clinical Action?**

Hybrid: <https://zoom.us/j/91262487552>

#### **Tuesday, July 8**

Jill Sheridan, MEd (EdL)

#### **Advancing Whole Child Success With Ohio's Educational Regional Collaboration, Legal Frameworks and Integration of Systems of Support in Schools**

Hybrid: <https://zoom.us/j/97281843677>



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Medical staff can sign up to receive MedStat eAlerts once a month at [NationwideChildrens.org/MedStat-Preferences-Form](https://NationwideChildrens.org/MedStat-Preferences-Form).

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