



Rhode Island Hospital
A Lifespan Partner

Advancing Medicine. Touching Lives.

Touchpoints

Spring 2014

Kidney Transplants at Rhode Island Hospital Help Save and Unite Lives

Just after her fourth wedding anniversary in September 2013, Lisa Nieforth faced a crucial decision. Her husband, Lloyd Nieforth, who has polycystic kidney disease, needed a kidney transplant to save him from a lifetime of dialysis treatments. *"When I got tested and found out I was a match, I was happy,"* Lisa says, *"but I was also anxious and didn't really know what to expect."* The Cranston couple found the answers and the expert care they needed at Rhode Island Hospital's Kidney & Pancreas Transplant Center, part of the Division of Organ Transplantation. *"I can't sing the Center's praises highly enough,"* says Lisa, who was able to continue working in Providence throughout the experience. *"They gave us a binder filled with resources, and this invaluable tool told us exactly what to expect from testing, surgery and recovery to medications and nutrition. Everything we needed to know was right at our fingertips."*

Both Lisa and Lloyd came through the transplant process with no complications, and Lloyd will receive lifelong follow-up care by Rhode Island Hospital's transplant team.

"The staff was always so compassionate and helpful, it immediately put us both at ease," Lloyd says. *"We are especially grateful for the amazing care from Dr. Paul Morrissey, Dr. Reginald Gohh and Michelle Braga, RN, BSN."*

Lisa adds, *"It means the world to me to know that I was able to dramatically improve my husband's quality of life."*

Founded in 1997, the Kidney & Pancreas Transplant Center at Rhode Island Hospital offers one of New England's largest kidney transplant programs. The Center is nearing the milestone of 1,000 patients liberated from dialysis and restored to renewed health and a better quality of life.

"Our team of transplant surgeons, nephrologists and other specialists emphasizes close cooperation with our patients' referring physicians as they progress through the evaluation and transplantation process," says Dr. Paul Morrissey, transplant surgeon and program director. *"We have a robust living donor program, including one of the first and largest altruistic or Good Samaritan donor programs in the nation, where individuals choose to donate a kidney to a stranger in need of a transplant. We also participate in clinical research that improves transplant success, reduces the likelihood of rejection and enhances quality of life."*



Lisa and Lloyd Nieforth

"I can't sing the Transplant Center's praises highly enough... Everything we needed to know was right at our fingertips... It means the world to me to know that I was able to dramatically improve my husband's quality of life."

— Lisa Nieforth, kidney donor

IN GRATITUDE

When I was 19 years old my mother passed away in her sleep at 44 years old. At this time my father's health diminished as my mother, who was a nurse, took exceptional care of him. Once we were told his kidneys were shutting down, I knew I wanted to be tested to see if I was a match. I remember the day perfectly when I received a call from the transplant coordinator giving me the news that I was a match. I sat on the floor and began to cry. There were two sides of me battling: the side that was grateful and the side that was terrified of the surgery. As I sat and thought about it, I realized that I was one of the luckiest people alive because I was given the opportunity to help save my dad's life. I challenge everyone looking to make a difference in someone's life to consider organ donation. It is an experience I will never forget and will cherish forever!

—Lindsey Jamiel, kidney donor

GIVING PROFILE: PATRICIA MONTI



Rhode Island Hospital is in Patricia Monti's blood. Her father was the hospital's head of radiology for decades, and her mother was a head nurse for nine years. When Patricia studied at University of Rhode Island to become a nurse, she did her main clinical training here.

So it was with little trepidation that, in 1997, she entrusted her husband, who suffered from kidney failure, and her youngest son, who donated a kidney to his father, to the renal transplant team of Rhode Island Hospital's Kidney & Pancreas Transplant Center, then in its first year.

"You have to have faith in a program when you have two of your very dearest family members undergoing surgery by the same team at essentially the same time," Patricia says. "Fortunately for us, although the transplant program was in its infancy, the team was already very experienced and took excellent care of my husband and son."

After her husband passed away in 2004, Patricia decided to make a gift in his memory to Rhode Island Hospital's transplant team: ***"This is a way of paying the team back for taking such great care of my family and for giving my husband six years of a much more comfortable life than he would have had if he had stayed on dialysis."***

Patricia, who divides her time between Florida and Rhode Island, marvels at the changes in medicine that have happened over the past 50 years. ***"So many people are alive today because of evolving medicines and techniques. I support the transplant program at Rhode Island Hospital to help patients and their families take advantage of the program's knowledge and resources. Hopefully, this will enable these patients to achieve a speedier recovery and ensure them a better quality of life long-term."***

Women's Cardiac Care Has Distinguished Local Champions



Marilyn Weigner, MD

Hearth disease remains the number one killer of women, and rates of disease are declining more quickly for men than for women. While the reasons are not yet clear, clinicians and researchers at the Cardiovascular Institute (CVI) are making great progress in saving lives and improving women's cardiovascular health.

"The women we care for run the gamut from caregivers and primary breadwinners to high-powered professionals. They all want to take care of their health so they can keep doing what they love doing," says Dr. Marilyn Weigner, cardiologist and physician director at CVI and one of *Rhode Island Monthly's* Top Docs in 2013.

In the research realm, Dr. Barry Sharaf, director of Rhode Island Hospital's catheterization laboratory, and his team are conducting a prominent research study—WISE, the Women's Ischemia Syndrome Evaluation—to better understand women's symptoms and the biology of women's cardiac disease. In addition, Dr. Athena Poppas, cardiologist and director of imaging at CVI, has a national reputation in women's cardiology with expertise in heart problems during pregnancy.



Barry Sharaf, MD



Athena Poppas, MD



"I felt nothing but confidence in the team at Rhode Island Hospital. From the moment I met Dr. Weigner, we just really hit it off. She knows me and my history. It's great to have such a center of excellence here for us. I couldn't imagine going anywhere else."

— Rosemary McBride, patient of Dr. Marilyn Weigner

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The President's Circle celebrates donors who have made an annual commitment of \$500 or more to support Rhode Island Hospital's lifesaving work while investing in the future of medicine, research and medical education in southeastern New England. With your generosity, we can continue to provide the most advanced and superb care right here in Rhode Island.

To learn more about the benefits of joining the President's Circle, visit giving.lifespan.org/Presidents-Circle

SAVE THE DATE
NOVEMBER 18, 2014



PRESIDENT'S PURSUIT
of EXCELLENCE

**Tuesday,
November 18, 2014
6 p.m.**

The Omni Providence Hotel
Providence, Rhode Island

Timothy J. Babineau, MD
President, Rhode Island Hospital
and President and CEO, Lifespan

Cordially invites you to

**The 2014 President's Pursuit
of Excellence Dinner**

If you have questions about giving to Rhode Island Hospital or any of its programs,
please contact 401-444-6758 or RIHgiving@lifespan.org.

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