

## Memory Center Combines Care & Research for Seniors & Families

Soon, elderly people with Alzheimer's disease and other memory disorders will benefit from a complete range of medical services at the new University of Chicago Center for Comprehensive Care and Research on Memory Disorders (opening summer 1999). Housed primarily at the Windermere Senior Health Center (near the main campus), the center also will provide services at all U of C Hospitals-related geriatric medicine sites, including Louis A. Weiss Memorial Hospital.

"One main goal is to give patients a very complete diagnosis," says Jim Mastrianni, MD, PhD, a U of C neurologist and co-director of the center. "We also want to create a single, ongoing source for medical care throughout the duration of the person's needs."

"Developing the memory disorders center is a true cross-departmental undertaking," adds Greg Sachs, MD, co-director of the center and a U of C geriatrician. "We're building on our large, established geriatric program and including specialists in neurology, psychiatry, neuropsychology, psychology, nursing, social work and other areas. It's a real team-oriented approach to care."

Central to the center's philosophy is its unique focus on comprehensive care for the patient as well as the family. "Often, a patient is diagnosed and then left to his or her own devices," says Dr. Mastrianni. "In contrast, our joint effort in care is an ideal situation for both the patient and family." The entire family will have access to counseling, support groups and referral to community resources.

The center also will pursue research on Alzheimer's and other dementias, so patients and families can benefit from cutting-edge studies. Physicians and scientists will team up to study genetic causes, medical ethics and "prion" diseases (rare memory diseases that may be misdiagnosed).



Annick Gaye, MD, a U of C pediatric allergist/immunologist, teaches patient Ashley Morgan and her mother, Hermeyne Grampton, how to take her asthma medicine. Ashley is among the many patients who benefit from the new Asthma Center.

## New Center to Fight Asthma

Asthma is on the rise in the United States. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a 61 percent increase in the asthma rate between 1982 and 1994. More than 15 percent of Chicago's school-age children have asthma — three times the national average.

In response to this growing public health problem, physicians and researchers here have formed the University of Chicago Asthma Center. The Asthma Center combines advanced research with focused patient care and community outreach, forming a synergistic approach to treating asthma in adults, children and infants.

U of C physicians have access to the newest investigational therapies which are not yet widely available at other hospitals. Physicians here also educate patients about how to prevent symptoms and control the disease.

Providing specialized asthma care for infants and children is an important part of the asthma-fighting effort. The University of Chicago Children's Hospital is the only medical center in

Chicago with sophisticated pulmonary function testing equipment for infants. "This equipment helps us fine-tune asthma treatment for infants," says Marc Hershenson, MD, head of pediatric pulmonology and the Asthma Center's associate director.

The Asthma Center builds on the University of Chicago Medical Center's strong tradition in asthma research. Scientists here conduct basic research into asthma, looking for clues to the causes of the disease. Also underway are lab-to-bedside studies designed to better understand how asthma manifests itself in patients. In addition, the U of C Medical Center is among just a few medical centers in the U.S. — and the only one in Illinois — to receive the National Institutes of Health's prestigious Specialized Centers of Research (SCOR) grant for asthma research.

"By bringing all these elements together, we hope to enhance asthma care in our community and beyond," says Julian Solway, MD, a U of C pulmonologist and director of the Asthma Center.

## Perinatal Network Celebrates Over 20 Years for Babies

The University of Chicago Hospitals Perinatal Network — one of 10 designated regional perinatal centers in Illinois — celebrates its 20th annual meeting in May. The network serves 10 hospitals, with the U of C Hospitals (main campus) as its perinatal center. Louis A. Weiss Memorial Hospital is in the network, too.

By linking community hospitals with larger medical centers, perinatal networks give all newborns and their mothers access to state-of-the-art medical care for special needs. The U of C Hospitals Perinatal Center is a level III hospital with advanced maternal-fetal medicine and neonatal services. Through obstetrical and neonatal hotlines, U of C physicians offer consultation support for network physicians. Obstetric and neonatal patients are referred to our main campus hospital if a case becomes complicated.

The U of C Hospitals Perinatal Network is the only regional network in Illinois with a centralized computer system to track the number of deliveries and quality of outcomes. "We have done perinatal reviews on every newborn that died at network hospitals for nearly 20 years," says Atef Moawad, MD, U of C section chief of maternal-fetal medicine and co-director of the perinatal center. Reviewing the unsuccessful outcomes is helpful for developing strategies to increase future successful deliveries.

The network's 20th annual meeting brings together physicians and specialists. "We will compare the network's trend of morbidity (the rate at which an illness or abnormality occurs) and mortality with state and national rates," says Kwang-sun Lee, MD, U of C director and section chief of neonatology, and co-director of the perinatal center. "The University of Chicago Hospitals help many women in high-risk situations deliver babies successfully," says Dr. Lee.