

Welcome New PSA Employees

Meet Dr. Thurman!



Becky Blevins, Papermill



Sarah Cantrell, New Life



Annette Collins,
New Life



Whitney Copeland,
Fort Sanders



Isa Dauti,
Prosthetic Center



Grace Durda,
Papermill



Amber Justes, New Life



Mary Ann Miller,
Tennova North



Sophia Seever,
Parkwest

Premier Surgical is proud to welcome general surgeon **Joseph B. Thurman, M.D.**, to our Fort Sanders Regional office.

At Fort Sanders Dr. Thurman is focusing on acute care cases and laparoscopic surgery. He earned his medical degree



from the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine in Oklahoma City. Dr. Thurman completed his General Surgery residency at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, where he received extensive experience in emergency general surgery and advanced laparoscopy.

Service Excellence 3rd Quarter Sessions

- Sept. 8 @ 12:00pm
- Sept. 12 @ 3:00pm
- Sept. 21 @ 7:30am
- Sept. 27 @ 7:30am
- Sept. 29 @ 3:00pm

Register now on psateamnet!

Measuring Quality to Ensure the Best Surgical Care

For several years American hospitals have been required to gather and submit data to the federal government that measures the quality of their patient care and services. The process of collecting and analyzing patient information is a time-consuming, cumbersome, and expensive undertaking that entails many man hours. That's why few private physician practices attempt to individually tackle the task. Instead, data about their specific physicians' quality is often part of the data that is folded into the large umbrella of quality data generated by the hospitals in which they practice.

As early as 2012 it became apparent that the industry was moving quickly toward a value-based approach to care. As CMS and other payers began to develop their approach to value based care, Premier's physicians immediately recognized that we would need to be able to prove our quality, not just assume our quality. As a result, in strategic planning retreats that followed, the group decided to develop our own physician specific quality measurement and improvement program. What was born of that idea is the Premier Quality Assurance Program (PQAP). With the full support of all of our physicians, the management team undertook the search for a data partner with software that could appropriately risk adjust surgical patient data. The program has now developed to include multiple facets of measurement and review including among other things, peer-review, specific vascular case review, risk management, quality related documentation, outcomes tracking, program certification and accreditation, department and service level quality measurement, programs to address Physician burnout, review of evidence-based medicine guidelines, evaluation of opioid prescriptions patterns and tracking/100% data review of "the big 8" surgeries discussed below.



Premier Surgical Associates, the largest private General and Vascular Surgery practice in the Knoxville, Tennessee, region, has taken the uncommon step of voluntarily developing its own quality initiative. The Premier Quality Assurance Program (PQAP) is headed up by Premier Medical Director and General Surgeon Dr. Stone Mitchell.

"When people are looking for a surgeon, they want to know how good their surgeon is. The quality of a specific surgeon and a hospital are two separate things," explains Dr. Mitchell. "Premier has a robust quality program in which we measure procedure-specific quality. This allows us to know that our surgeons are doing good work and having good outcomes."

The unique effort involves a dedicated Registered Nurse, Mary Frances McDonnell, who pours over the computer medical records of patients. Information such as patients' length of stay, infections, re-admission rates, mortalities, pain improvement, and surgical outcomes is carefully gathered. The data is presented every other month to Premier's Quality Committee, made up of the Medical Director and five Premier physicians. The group analyzes the information and looks for trends and areas that need improvement.

When Premier started the program in 2015, the team initially examined and analyzed 1,500 surgeries, 25 cases for each of the practice's 28 physicians. Now that effort has grown to include every patient who undergoes one of the "big eight" procedures.

"We're looking at every gallbladder removal, hernia repair, appendectomy, thyroid surgery, colon surgery, peripheral arterial disease procedure, carotid endarterectomy and bariatric surgery," says Dr. Mitchell. It's a huge undertaking.

"Premier's physicians performed almost 16,000 surgeries last year," explains Dr. Mitchell. "Looking at big numbers allows you to form a more accurate picture when it comes to data crunching."

Dr. Mitchell is proud that Premier Surgical is ahead of the curve when it comes to measuring quality. "As we move into more of a value-based payment system, most healthcare providers will eventually have to show that they measure up. Premier is already doing that. We're continuously watching and reviewing our quality and we're pleased that our numbers are much better than the national averages. We don't just say we're better, we show it," states Dr. Mitchell.

PSA News

Recognizing Years of Service



Ultrasound Tech **Renee Delong** is congratulated by **Ultrasound Director Josh Lee** for achieving 15 years of service at PSA.



Papermill Medical Assistant, **Krystina Tham** and **Vascular Manager Steve Ross** celebrate her 5 years of service at PSA.

Lee Receives Award

PSA **Vascular Ultrasound Director Josh Lee** has received an *Excellence in Oral Clinical Presentation Award* for the talk he gave at the national Society for Vascular Ultrasound (SVU) Conference in Orlando. Josh's presentation, "A Comprehensive Career Path for the Novice and Professional Sonographer" was selected from 17 other final applicants, submitted from across the country.



Josh has also been chosen to be a member of the SVU Board of Directors. His term will run from 2018 – 2020. SVU has more than 5,300 members nationwide.

New Arrivals



New Life Manager Jama Stinnett is rejoicing at the birth of first grand baby **Avery Fay Stinnett**. She was born on August 16, weighing 8 lbs., 3 oz. Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Papermill Vascular Manager Steve Ross** on the birth of his 5th grandchild. **Tobias James Carter** was born on August 7th, weighing 8lb, 13oz.



Papermill Vascular Supervisor Donna Bruce is celebrating the arrival of her 1st grandchild, **Rylee Grace Bruce**. She was born on June 26, weighing 8lbs, 5.6oz. Congratulations, Granny Donna!

Celestial Sweet Spot

Premier staff joined thousands in TN and 13 other states viewing the **Total Solar Eclipse** on August 21. Knoxville was in the path of 95% totality.



Get Fit with Go365!



2017 Premier Surgical Go365 Champs

Go365® is Premier Surgical's new web-based Healthy Living program. Members can earn points to spend in the Go365 Mall for completing healthy activities! Engage and track your wellness journey online. Our first Go365 Challenge will be announced soon!

The Hope Award: Honoring Employee Excellence

Nominations for the 2017 Hope Awards will be accepted during the month of September. The annual honor recognizes outstanding non-managerial, non-physician Premier Surgical employees. The Hope Awards are named in memory of 2015 winner, **Anna Michelle Hope, RN**. Nominations may be submitted by any employee, manager or physician from any office. The application form will be posted on PSA TeamNet and emailed to all employees and MDs.



The staff & physicians of PSA North Knoxville celebrated longtime employee **Dreama Nesbitt's** retirement with a luncheon. Dreama was part of Premier Surgical family for more than 18 years.

Compliance Notes

Protection from Malicious Software

It seems every day brings a new report of a network being ravaged by ransomware. Because of the threat malware poses to information systems, HIPAA's Security Rule has requirements to train staff on their role in protecting their computer, and the network from malware intrusion. The remainder of this article will serve to remind workforce members about ways to prevent malicious software from infiltrating and affecting systems.

Emails

Email attachments commonly introduce malware into computer systems. You should not open email attachments that come from an unknown sender. Even if an email comes from someone you know, if you were not expecting an attachment, you should contact the sender first before opening it. Hackers often take over a person's email account and send out malware from the address. If you click an email attachment and then realize it may have contained malicious software, report the issue IMMEDIATELY to your Security Officer.

Web Sites

Caution must also be used when visiting web sites, because a seemingly innocuous site can download malware or adware in the background. Some workplaces install web filtering software to limit the sites that can be visited, in order to limit the risk for this type of malware. Be aware that your workplace may have a policy that allows you to visit only web sites necessary for the performance of your duties. Even if you are permitted to visit personal web sites during break times, you should still utilize caution in the sites you visit and links you click.

Outside Media

You may not bring in any outside media from home without approval by your Security Officer. This includes flash drives, removable hard drives, CDs, etc., because such items can harbor malware and introduce it to your practice's network. Such devices, if allowed at all, will be scanned prior to connecting to your computer/network. Never connect a device from home (including a cell phone) to your computer/network without prior approval and scanning.

Prompt Reporting

If your computer begins to act strangely, slowly, or displays any unusual messages, errors or warnings, shut it down, disconnect it from the network, and report immediately to your Security Officer for investigation. This action can help to prevent the spread of malware if it has infected your workstation.

Updates

Although your IT department may handle security patches/software updates, you should contact your IT department or Security Officer if your computer notifies you that an update is available. Security patches and updates can help to prevent malware attacks.



Subway Race Against Cancer

Premier Surgical is proud to be a sponsor of the 2017 Subway Race Against Cancer, to be held on November 12th at World's Fair Park! **PSA Surgical Oncologist Dr. Troy Kimsey** spoke at the race kickoff. The effort raises funds for cancer outreach services at Thompson Cancer Survival Center. Look for a chance to register for the Premier Surgical race team soon. (Participants will help a good cause *and* earn points for our Go365 Wellness program!)

Premier is More than "Just Pink"!

Be on the lookout in September for Premier Surgical staff and physicians appearing on billboards around Knoxville promoting the Komen Race for the Cure! Premier is a sponsor of the **October 21st** race. Premier Surgical Team registration details will be



Premier Surgical is proud to be a sponsor of the **Komen Knoxville Race for the Cure**. Premier's **Dr. Lytle Brown, Dr. Greg Midis** and crew recently cooked up a tasty feast for the annual Komen Boob-B

