

Healthcare

Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center has 'Isabel' diagnostic technology

BY ALLI LANKFORD

Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center is the first children's hospital in New York State to provide pediatric specialists with an additional resource in diagnosing complex conditions. The Isabel system is a massive web-based medical database. As a tool, it allows physicians to interact in real-time providing immediate reference materials based on a patient's symptoms and clinical issues.

According to Dr. Robert Weiss, Director of Pediatric Nephrology at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center, "As a major tertiary care academic medical center, our staff is regularly presented with complex diagnostic cases. The Isabel system complements the knowledge and experience of our physi-

cians to provide the most accurate and fastest diagnoses at the point of care. Also, as part of our mission to train new pediatricians, Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center is dedicated to using the most sophisticated tools to educate trainees.

For example:

A school age child presents to the emergency department with a complaint of:

- 1) abdominal pain,
- 2) swollen and painful ankles and knees
- 3) rash on the buttocks and backs of thighs.

With his or her clinical experience, a doctor would immediately recognize Henoch-Schoenlein Purpura (HSP). However, a medical student or inexperienced pediatric resident would need to look up the dozens of conditions that

could cause each of these findings, eventually, piecing together the diagnosis. Entering these three descriptions, via Isabel's "natural language," the diagnosis would be made within seconds, plus the trainee would be directed to websites that provide more detailed information about this condition, such as PubMed or UpToDate. The latter services are not focused on how to make the diagnosis, but provide extensive ical information, once you know the diagnosis.

The system is easy to access.

"One has to log on to the Westchester Medical Center portal, available at any of the several desktop computers in each nursing station, and then click 'Isabel,'" says Dr. Weiss. "The same process can occur from home, or anywhere else a physician has access to the Internet." This ease should eliminate most misdiagnosis as well as delayed diagnosis."

Isabel's medical knowledge library contains 11,000 potential diagnoses, 4,200 drug suggestions and 100,000 articles from medical journals. Isabel enables physicians to scan dozens of potential diagnoses and treatments with just a few clicks. Nearly two dozen published research studies have shown Isabel to be fast, easy to use and 95% accurate in suggesting diagnoses. In addition, the system has been validated by more than 35,000 healthcare providers worldwide in live

clinical settings.

With hundreds of clinical and surgical specialists in every medical field, Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center is dedicated to the health and well-being of children.

According to a hospital spokesman: "The Center treats more than 30,000 patients each year from pediatric trauma and intensive care, to cancer and heart disease and complex gastrointestinal disorders including liver transplantation, this clinical expertise is provided in a state-of-the-art building that was designed from the point of view of children and their families, not just from the perspective of doctors and nurses." Their concept of "family centered care" which means involving parents, siblings, and other family members in a child's treatment has become a cornerstone of their caring approach.

Actually the Isabel system was founded out of a family need. When Doctor Jason Maude's young daughter was seriously ill and nearly died because her physicians could not diagnosis her condition, out necessity both he and Dr. Joseph Britto, M.D. founded Isabel Healthcare Inc. a year laer. The company is named after Dr. Maude's daughter. Now the Isabel system is in use at the country's leading hospitals.

For more information, see www.worldclassmedicine.com/MFCH.

Hudson Valley Hospital Center's Emergency Department gets high marks in USA Today

Hudson Valley Hospital Center's no-wait emergency department, a revolutionary idea that has cut waiting time 60 percent, was cited this week in a USA Today article and the Wall Street Journal's Health Blog as being efficient while maintaining safety, a winning combination for any patient seeking medical attention.

HVHC's emergency department, the second busiest in this area, even looks different than most: The waiting room is small, the size of today's typical family room, because patients are whisked into triage minutes after entering the hospital. Since the no-wait concept was implemented two years ago, HVHC has increased its annual visits by 9,000, from 26,000 patients two years ago to 35,000 this year.

"The concept of a no-wait emergency department is really simple and just makes sense," says Dr. Ron Nutovits, Director of the ED. "It meant re-engineering the work flow in the emergency department, but once implemented, it has worked seamlessly."

Rankings consistently put HVHC's emergency department in the 90th percentile in patient satisfaction. Patient care begins when the patient comes through the front door of the ED, and over the past two years, the time it takes for a patient to see a doctor has decreased 60 percent.

Resolve to take responsibility for your health in '09

Americans might be paying less attention to protecting their health than in the past, given the economic uncertainties these days. But it's more important than ever to make efforts to improve and safeguard one's health and well-being during times of stress. To assist Americans in doing so, the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) presents

"We are the first and only no-wait emergency department in the area," Dr. Nutovits adds. "Other hospitals have tried it, but failed. We knew that the concept made sense, and worked out all the kinks to make our concept work. The attitude of the staff was that we had to make it work, and we have. And it is this attitude that has kept it so successful."



In April, a new entrance to the emergency department opened. In addition to the small reception room, the new area includes two private triage rooms, where a registered nurse examines a patient within moments of arrival. Important patient information is collected later on in the admitting process with portable computers at the

patient's bedside.

The new area is inviting, warmed by desert hues of sand, gold and orange on the walls and upholstery, and wood on the floor. The result is a calming, healing environment not usually found in emergency departments.

"As word spread about our no-wait emergency department, we decided it was time to remodel the whole unit, which will be finished when the hospital construction is completed in two years," Dr. Nutovits says. "With the volume increase we have experienced, we are doubling the number of treatment rooms, bringing the total to 33."

twelve health-related resolutions. ACSH, a consortium of over 300 physicians and scientists, urges Americans to, first of all, focus on things that matter—such as not smoking and maintaining a healthy body weight.

These are probably the most important resolutions for the new year. Although the

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Happy Holidays!
Wishing you all the best for the coming
New Year!



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