



Rady Children's - A comprehensive system focused solely on children.



PEOPLE

Dr. John J. Nigro joins Rady Children's to lead cardiac surgery program and Heart Institute



John J. Nigro, M.D., a cardiothoracic and heart transplant surgeon, has joined Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego as chief of cardiac surgery, director of cardiac transplantation and the mechanical assist program and director of the Heart Institute. Previously, he worked at Phoenix Children's Hospital Heart Center, where he held similar roles. Dr. Nigro has considerable experience and an interest in complex neonatal heart surgery and pediatric heart transplantation.

Under his leadership, Rady Children's Heart Institute will continue to focus on providing the highest quality comprehensive care to congenital heart patients. Care will be delivered to provide the best possible patient experience in a family-centered environment and to optimize long-term outcomes after heart surgery. The vision is to provide this care with an integrated multidisciplinary team and to help create a regional network to care for all patients with congenital heart disease.

Dr. Nigro received his medical degree from the University of Illinois School of Medicine at Chicago. He completed his internship and surgery residency at LAC + USC Medical Center, a cardiothoracic surgery residency at LAC + USC Medical Center and a pediatric cardiothoracic surgery and transplantation fellowship at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

A frequently invited lecturer, Dr. Nigro is widely published. His professional society memberships include the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, Western Thoracic Surgical Association and International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation.



PROGRAMS

Solid Tumor Program tailored to patient population

The [Peckham Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders](#) has launched a Solid Tumor Program to better meet the challenges and complex needs of this patient population.

Program director [Janet Yoon, M.D.](#), will lead an interdisciplinary team of physicians, a nurse practitioner (Nathalie LeFloch, R.N., M.S.N.,



innovation
belongs in every moment



Pediatric neurogeneticist

CPNP) and nurse case manager (Lynn Schubert, B.S.N., R.N.C., CPON). The physicians are [Hyunah Ahn M.D.](#), [Sun Choo M.D.](#), [Jennifer Elster M.D.](#), [Victor Wong, M.D.](#), and [Peter Zage M.D., Ph.D.](#) Dr. Choo has particular expertise in Ewing sarcoma; Dr. Elster specializes in both neuro-oncology and pediatric solid tumors; and Dr. Zage has particular expertise in neuroblastoma. About 100 children a month are expected to be treated. For various tumors, the team is increasingly utilizing the personalized medicine approach.

The team will work closely with the [Pediatric Surgery](#) program, specifically [Nicholas Saenz, M.D.](#), who attends the weekly Solid Tumor team meetings and twice a month tumor board conferences. Additionally, the team will work collaboratively with and rely on the expertise of the [Acute Pain Service](#) and the [Hematology/Oncology Supportive Care Program](#), specifically JoAnne Auger, R.N., CHPPN, supportive care nurse for the Peckham Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders, and [Kimberly Bower, M.D.](#), division chief of [Palliative Medicine](#), to assist with symptom management and provide multidisciplinary psychosocial support to patients and their families.

The program's research component will involve therapeutic clinical trials, many of which utilize novel agents, as well as quality improvement projects specifically targeting the solid tumor patient population.



Rady Children's exceeds goals for national healthcare initiative

In October 2015, Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego and Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC Children's) received a \$17.7 million, four-year Transforming Clinical Practices Initiative (TCPI) grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to help clinicians achieve large-scale transformation. Now in the grant's second year, the TCPI project in San Diego is reporting significant progress.

As part of the TCPI, grant recipients



implement evidence-based clinical practice guidelines to reduce variation in care and unnecessary utilization, and improve patient health outcomes. Clinical leadership from Rady Children's Health Network and CHOC identified six common pediatric conditions for employing these guidelines: acne, acute gastroenteritis, asthma, bronchiolitis, community-acquired pneumonia and headaches. These were selected based on existing utilization, referral and cost data to implement

wins national award for innovation

Joseph Gleeson, M.D., the director of neurodevelopmental genetics and endowed chair at [Rady Children's Institute for Genomic Medicine](#), is the first recipient of the Constance Lieber Prize for Innovation in Developmental Neuroscience.

The award recognizes transformative contributions in developmental neuroscience leading to new treatments by an investigator under 55 years of age. It was established by the Lieber Institute for Brain



Development (LIBD), an affiliate of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. The award includes a \$100,000 cash prize and will be presented to Dr. Gleeson this month at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

"Dr. Gleeson is a highly regarded and accomplished developmental neuroscientist," says LIBD director and CEO Daniel R. Weinberger, M.D. "His latest work to uncover the molecular origins of developmental behavior disorders made him a unanimous choice for the inaugural recipient of this prize."

At the Rady Children's Institute of Genomic Medicine, Dr. Gleeson is building a program in neurogenetics that seeks to understand the genetic basis of diseases such as epilepsy, autism and mental disability to develop new treatments. His pioneering work is supported by a \$2.5 million endowment for neuroscience provided by Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary.

"I am absolutely thrilled and humbled to receive the Constance Lieber Prize for Innovation in Developmental Neuroscience," Dr. Gleeson says. "My hope is that someday children and families with brain disorders can benefit from the work we're doing in what I call 'assembly neuroscience,' that is, how the human brain is assembled, and to which I feel honored to have contributed."

In addition to his leadership role at Rady Children's, Dr. Gleeson is also a professor of neuroscience and pediatrics at the UC San Diego School of Medicine, adjunct professor with The Rockefeller University and investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institution.

The Lieber Institute for Brain Development established the new prize to honor Connie Lieber, one of the institute's founders, for her leadership in the area of mental health research and her prescient insights about the central role of brain development in psychiatric illness. More information about the prize can be found at clprize.libd.org.

the guidelines and redesign the way services are delivered.

To date, the TCPi project in San Diego has exceeded the Year One utilization improvement commitments to the CMS in eight metrics and has exceeded Year Four goals in five metrics for five clinical conditions. This progress is due to the hard work of Rady Children's Hospital's partners: Rady Children's Specialists of San Diego, Children's Primary Care Medical Group (CPCMG), CPMG affiliates and federally qualified health centers in San Diego County.

Condition	Metric	Y1 Utilization Improvement	Y4 Improvement Target
Acne	• Specialist Referral	11.1%	50%
Bronchiolitis	• Medication Use	53.9%	20%
Community- Acquired Pneumonia	• Inpatient Admission	14.0%	5.0%
Acute Gastroenteritis	• ED Visits	9.8%	10%
Headache	• Specialist Referral	1.5%	30%
	• Neuroimaging	39.2%	30%
	• Inpatient Admission	43.4%	5.0%
	• ED Visits	27.1%	5.0%

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