

Innovations in Cardiology & Heart Surgery



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



PEOPLE

Former research manager returns to team



Mark Abcede, M.B.A., CCRP, has re-joined the [Heart Institute](#) at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego as the director of the Heart Institute Data Analytics and Research Program. He will oversee all of the Institute's database and research initiatives.

Abcede brings to the position close to a decade of experience in all aspects of clinical research, data management and financial management and was most recently a clinical site manager of global research operations at PAREXEL. During his tenure at the Heart Institute from 2012 to 2016, he played a key role in the Heart Institute Research Committee, which he helped establish to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure existed to support the research endeavors of faculty, staff, external sponsors and donors. Additionally, he was instrumental in fostering collaborations between the Heart Institute and the UC San Diego Cardiac Mechanics Group, the Pediatric Heart Transplant Study, the Congenital Heart Surgeons' Society and the Pediatric Heart Network.

Abcede earned his Bachelor of Art in biology and chemistry at the University of San Diego and his Master's in Business Administration (with an emphasis in healthcare management) from the University of Phoenix. He is currently completing a professional certificate program through UC San Diego in clinical trials design and management.



PROGRAMS

Pulmonary hypertension program offers comprehensive, expert care

The Pulmonary Hypertension Program provides both inpatient and outpatient care for children ages 0-18 with pulmonary hypertension. The highly experienced care team includes [Rohit Rao, M.D., M.B.A.](#), board certified in pediatric cardiology and

critical care; [Aparna Rao, M.D.](#), a board-certified pediatric pulmonologist; and Shylah Haldeman, a nurse practitioner.



The program treats all types of pulmonary hypertension and provides the full spectrum of medical treatments, including parenteral therapies and multiple drug therapies. Screening echocardiograms and serial cardiac catheterizations are used to monitor the disease. Advanced imaging, such as CT scans of the heart with [3-D modeling](#) and

cardiac MRI, is available. Consultation for inpatient care is provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Outpatient clinics are held twice a week and include additional satellite clinics.

The program sees about 100 patients, with referrals from Rady Children's and community neonatal intensive care units as well as community cardiologists and pulmonologists. Rady Children's expert cardiac catheterization and surgical teams, along with a robust ECMO program, make the program a leading referral source in the region.



EVENTS

Division hosts regional pediatric cardiology conference

Rady Children's Division of Cardiology is hosting this year's Western Society of Pediatric Cardiology Conference, which will be held May 31-June 2 at the Loews Coronado Bay Resort in San Diego.

Between 150 and 200 pediatric cardiologists from throughout the western United States are expected to attend this three-day event. A comprehensive overview of current practices and controversies in pediatric cardiology will be provided

along with eight clinical sessions, a fellow's session with abstracts and a debate. All of the speakers are thought leaders in their field.

Farris Timimi, M.D., medical director for the Mayo Clinic Center for Social Media, is the keynote speaker; he will discuss using social media to enhance the cardiologist's practice.

Physicians who have recently started practicing or are completing their training will also have access to mentoring and advice about career development.

The conference's objectives are to:

- Improve knowledge of best practices for common office problems.
- Enhance care of patients with complex arrhythmias through screening and optimal referral to electrophysiology.
- Understand the current role of transcatheter valve therapy in patients with congenital heart disease.
- Improve knowledge of pulmonary and airway problems in children with congenital heart disease.



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innovation
belongs in every moment



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- Enhance care of patients with heart failure through optimal medical therapy and appropriate use of mechanical support and heart replacement.
- Improve knowledge of best practices in management of Fontan surgery patients.
- Understand how to improve outcomes beyond survival in patients with congenital heart disease (i.e. optimizing neurodevelopmental status).
- Enhance understanding of the uses and role of genetics in caring for patients with congenital heart disease.



[See event details and register.](#)



RESEARCH

Drs. Davis, Singh lead national, multicenter treatment studies

[Christopher Davis, M.D., Ph.D.](#), is Rady Children's principal investigator for two multicenter clinical trials: the Fontan Exercise Longitudinal Assessment (FUEL) and Open Label Extension (FUEL OLE). Both are evaluating whether a current medication can help Fontan surgery patients to exercise.



Patients who have had Fontan surgery find it difficult, over time, to exercise. Although there are no medications approved to address this issue, several small studies have shown that drugs such as Udenafil (a phosphodiesterase type 5 [PDE5] inhibitor) may improve exercise in children. Udenafil is used in these children to promote better blood flow through the heart and lungs.

The FUEL study will assess the drug's effects over six months of treatment. In the FUEL OLE trial, the same children will take Udenafil for an additional 12 months.

Up to 400 children in the United States, Canada and South Korea are participating in the trials. Patients ages 12 up to 19 who have had Fontan surgery may be eligible. Enrollment for FUEL will be complete on June 30. The studies are funded by Mezzion Pharma Co., Ltd. as well as the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute through the Pediatric Heart Network.

Udenafil has been approved in several countries to treat erectile dysfunction in adult men, but it is not approved by the Food and Drug Administration or Health Canada for use in North America. As a result, the drug can only be used in research studies. [Learn more about the studies.](#)

[Rakesh K. Singh, M.D., M.S.](#), is Rady Children's principal investigator for the multicenter PANORAMA-HF study, which is comparing a new drug called LCZ696 (sacubitril/valsartan, also known as ENTRESTO®) to the ACE inhibitor enalapril for treating children with heart failure. The drug is approved for treating heart failure in adults.

The study, sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals, is the largest prospective pediatric heart failure trial to date. A minimum of 360 patients with systemic left ventricular dysfunction 1 month to 17

years old will be enrolled in approximately 140 centers in the United States, Canada, South America, Europe, South Africa and Asia.

Part 1 of the trial will evaluate the way the body absorbs, distributes and removes LCZ696, which will help determine the proper dose of LCZ696 for the second part of the study. Part 2 will compare the effectiveness and safety of LCZ696 with enalapril in pediatric heart failure patients over 52 weeks of treatment. [Learn more about the trial.](#)

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