This year, Mount Sinai Queens Department of Nursing Education, Research and Improvements is planning to conduct the third annual Ambassadors of Caring Student Nurse Internship Program. The program runs for four weeks through the summer and is built on a core belief in learning through experience. It consists of structured and unstructured learning.

"Effective communication is the foundation for providing excellent patient-centered care," says Elizabeth Rolston, RN, MEd, Director of Nursing Education, Research and Improvements. "The program provides participating student nurse interns (who volunteer their time) with an opportunity to advance their communication skills, especially while interacting with patients.

Joint Commission Preparation: Two Important Initiatives

We're due for a Joint Commission survey, with a best-guess date of spring 2012. "Because Joint Commission comes unannounced, we should be in a perpetual state of readiness," says Judy Trilivas, Chief Operating Officer. "In order to be ready for Joint Commission—and for our patients—we have undertaken two important readiness initiatives," continues Trilivas.

The two new readiness initiatives are Environment of Care Readiness Rounds and Clinical Tracers.

The Environment of Care Readiness Rounds is a computer software program that tracks findings gathered from multidisciplinary team rounds on patient units and departments. The team evaluates engineering, housekeeping, safety, security and biomedical standards. "Multidisciplinary rounding gives us a list of what we have to focus on," says Stephen Biscotti, Director of Safety and Security and Co-Chair of the Readiness Rounds Committee.
Joining the Medical Staff: **Paul S. Lajos, MD**

Paul S. Lajos, MD, joined the staff of Mount Sinai Queens in November 2011 as Associate Chief of Vascular Surgery. “There is a real need in our community for easy access to a comprehensive and broad range of vascular and endovascular surgery options, as well as the state-of-the-art diagnostic abilities of a vascular lab. I am very excited to be building a strong program that offers these aspects,” says Dr. Lajos.

His clinical expertise is in endovascular techniques in the treatment of all aspects of vascular diseases especially percutaneous angioplasty and stenting for brachiocephalic occlusive lesions, carotid artery stenosis, lower extremity ischemia and renovascular hypertension, as well as endovascular treatments for thoracic and abdominal aortic aneurysms, dialysis access and venous laser therapies.

Prior to being recruited to Mount Sinai Queens, Dr. Lajos was the Chief of Vascular Surgery at the Brooklyn Veterans Administration Medical Center and Assistant Professor of Surgery at State University of New York Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn. He was in practice in the Midwest prior to coming to the New York area.

Dr. Lajos earned his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans. He completed a residency in general surgery at the University of Pennsylvania/MCP/Hahnemann University in Philadelphia and a fellowship in vascular and endovascular surgery at St. Louis University, Missouri.

He also completed a cardiovascu lar research fellowship at the Hôpital Broussais Clinique René Leriche in Paris, France, as well as a fellowship in cardiothoracic surgery at the University of Maryland in Baltimore with additional cardiac fellowships at the Cleveland Clinic and Carolinas Medical Center. He is board certified in general surgery, thoracic and cardiovascular surgery, and vascular and endovascular surgery.

Dr. Lajos lives with his wife, also a physician, in Manhattan.

Welcome, Dr. Paul Lajos!

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**Joint Commission Preparation** (continued from page 1)

The responsibility is shared with Vivian Leonard, Assistant Director of Pharmacy. Biscotti reports that we have already gotten good readiness feedback. We know the following:

- **Clean up the clutter.** Extra awareness is needed to make sure hallways and work areas are clear.
- **Expiration counts.** Supplies must be properly rotated so that everything is used within the supply’s printed date.
- **Facility awareness is important.** Needed repairs should be reported immediately. Small deficiencies—a loose ceiling tile, a door that won’t latch properly—all negatively add up on the survey.
- **Take ownership.** “If you see something, say something, to borrow a New York City advertising phrase. Even if it’s not in your area, you should alert your supervisor who can call the correct department to address the issue,” says Biscotti. Anyone who submits a work order to Engineering will be notified of acceptance and completion of the order via email.

The second readiness initiative is Clinical Tracers, which follow a patient through their hospital experience. For example, it may follow a patient from the Emergency Department to Radiology to ICU, to a step-down unit, then to a regular nursing unit, and finally to discharge. The Joint Commission surveyors are looking for team collaboration, good documentation and strong communication.

Since December, we have had our own Clinical Tracer Team visit designated areas and conduct mock tracers. Things we’ve learned from the initial clinical tracer rounds that need attention are:

- **Good handwriting and dating and timing the record are important.** When the record is reviewed it must be legible and accurate. Slow down and write clearly.
- **Records must be reconciled.** When the surveyors read the record, they want to understand the plan of care and actions taken based on the initial diagnosis or diagnoses. For example, a patient’s heart disease, depression and diabetes were identified in the Emergency Department. Later, evaluators on the patient’s nursing unit ruled out depression, but no one documented that in the patient’s medical record. The record must clearly show this change in diagnosis.
- **Medications must be reconciled.** The Hospital history of medication must constantly be updated and reconciled as the patient moves through the continuum of care where his or her medications may change.
- **Staff members must be able to explain forms.** Clinicians must understand what the medical record and forms say and be able to clarify the information the documents present.

These new tools have been useful in providing us with information on our strengths and weaknesses. However, they are only effective if we act on the findings. If we do, their use will continue even after the surveyors have gone. “Everyone is eager to continue preparedness readiness here at Mount Sinai Queens!” says Trilivas.

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**Updating Find-a-Doctor on Hospital Website**

The Marketing and Communications Department is working to promote all doctors and can assist physicians interested in increasing their practices. The department is updating its “Find-a-Doctor” referral tool on the website (http://www.msqq.org/find-a-doctor). Users can access our directory of physicians in several ways—via name, specialty, insurance, gender or office hours. Doctors, if you are interested in updating your profile or have any marketing questions, please contact Shelly Felder, Senior Director of Marketing and Communications, at 718-267-4323 or shellyfelder@mountsinai.org, or Chloe May, Marketing Associate, at 718-267-4324 or chloe.may@mountsinai.org.
Detecting and Preventing Cervical Cancer

January is National Cervical Cancer Awareness month. Cervical cancer starts as a precancerous condition, which can be detected by a Pap test and is almost always treatable. In the United States, about 12,000 cases are diagnosed each year with about 4,200 deaths reported annually. Due to widespread Pap test screening, there are now fewer deaths compared to several decades ago. Experts believe we can virtually eliminate the number of women getting cervical cancer in the near future. Here is what you need to know about the two main ways to prevent and detect cervical cancer.

1. Get vaccinated (or have your children vaccinated). The most common cause of cervical cancer is the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV). Now there is a vaccine that prevents infection of the HPV types that cause 70 percent of cervical cancer. The vaccine also prevents other health problems such as genital warts, as well as other cancers such as that of the vulva or anus. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the vaccines (which are given as shots in three doses) are safe and effective.

Currently, the CDC recommends that all girls ages 11 and 12 be vaccinated, as well as women up through 26 years of age who are not yet sexually active. Furthermore, some experts recommend that boys and young men consider the vaccine as they can spread HPV through sexual contact. Talk to your doctor about the best options for you and your children.

2. Get a Pap test. According to the American Cancer Society, all women should begin cervical cancer screening about three years after they become sexually active, but no later than 21 years old. Screening should be done every year with a regular Pap test or every two years using the newer liquid-based Pap test. Beginning at age 30, women who have had three normal Pap test results in a row or continued negative results on an HPV test may get screened every two to three years with either the conventional or liquid-based Pap test. Women 70 years of age or older who have had three or more normal Pap tests in a row and no abnormal Pap test results in the last 10 years may choose to stop having Pap tests.

Even if a woman has received the HPV vaccine, she should continue to get Pap tests to detect possible incidences of cancer that may result from some strains of HPV that the vaccine does not target. Again, speak with your doctor about the right course of action for you.

Mount Sinai Queens now offers free Pap tests as part of the its Women’s Health Program done in partnership with the New York State Department of Health Cancer Services Program. The program is for women 40 years of age and older who are either uninsured or underinsured, and includes free breast screening mammograms and other services, too.

Women with insurance who want to be screened can contact one of our gynecologists or call our physician referral service at 1-800-YOUR-MDS (1-800-968-7637).

Patient Point of View

We, the family of our beloved JH, want to let you know about the excellent job that was done for our father. With the many times that he went to the emergency room because of his sickness, the staff always tended to him with kindness and compassion. Thank you to the great ICU staff, who were a bunch of angels. The doctors, nurses and all who cared for JH were remarkable. The nurses in the telemetry unit are also to be commended, as is Dr. Hakima Aouchiche. We will always be grateful for everyone’s kindness and compassion.

— The family of JH

Focus On: Student Nurse Intern Program (continued from page 1)

from culturally diverse backgrounds and of different ages.”

Those who participate in the program must either be enrolled at or graduated from a nursing program at an accredited college or university, and have successfully completed coursework in the fundamentals of nursing practice. Candidates must also submit an essay that explains their interest in improving patient care through effective communication.

The program, consisting of lectures, discussions and role modeling, is assigned to specific clinical areas. Under supervision, students conduct patient rounding, and learn how that practice creates an environment of excellence where patients feel a direct connection to the people who are taking care of them.

For the past two years, student nurse interns benefited from direct interactions with expert nursing colleagues in the acute-care setting. Central to the foundations of this program are the qualities of empathy, respect and unconditional positive regard for our patients. Participants receive geriatric sensitivity training from Nurse Researcher Sharon Wexler, PhD, RN, a specialist in the care of older adults.

“Last summer, we had 11 student nurse interns. Two of the eleven were registered nurses; one from Baruch College and the other from LaGuardia Community College. The remaining participants in the program were completing their nursing education,” says Rolston. “We were so impressed with the two RNs, that we hired them at the program’s completion,” she adds. Now that’s a great endorsement!
## Events

### CLASSES: Yoga for the Fabulous 50s and Beyond!
Practice gentle yoga for beginners and stretching for relaxation and rejuvenation. Register for a single class or multiple classes. Space is limited. Registration required. call 718-267-4333.

Marisa Bonfanti, Certified Yoga Instructor
Tuesdays, January 10 through March 27
Session 1: 10:30 am/Session 2: 11:45 am
Crescent Tower Fitness Room
23-22 30th Road
Astoria, 11102

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### DIABETES CLASS: Balancing Your Blood Sugar
Learn how to control blood sugar levels and feel your best. Registration suggested: call 718-267-4333.

James Melis, MD, Family Medicine
Tuesday, January 17
10:30 am
JVL-Dimitos-Vallone Senior Center
27-40 Hoyt Avenue South
Astoria, 11102

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### LECTURE: Tame the Pain
Chronic, persistent pain can be debilitating. Learn more about pain management.
Registration suggested: 718-267-4333.

Dianne Cavanaugh, NP, Pain Management Specialist
Tuesday, January 24
10:45 am
Steinway Senior Center
20-43 Steinway Street
Astoria, 11105

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### LECTURE: Better Brrr-eathing—A Respiratory Guide for Winter
If you have asthma or bronchoconstriction, find out how you can prevent potentially life-threatening respiratory conditions during winter. Registration suggested: call 718-267-4333.

Julius Cernansky, CRT, Director of Respiratory Care
Thursday, January 26
10:30 am
JVL-Dimitos-Vallone Senior Center
27-40 Hoyt Avenue South
Astoria, 11102

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### LECTURE: CPR for Everyone
This class is designed for the general public and teaches core skills of CPR. Registration required: call 718-267-4333.

Presented in partnership with the New York City Fire Department
Tuesday, January 31
6 pm
Mount Sinai Queens
Physician Associates
27-15 30th Avenue
Astoria, 11102

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For a full listing of events, visit www.mshq.org/events.

## Medical News from Mount Sinai

### Gene Variants that Cause Stent Thrombosis in People with Coronary Artery Disease:
In a first-of-its-kind study, researchers from Mount Sinai School of Medicine have discovered several gene variants contributing to early stent thrombosis, a devastating and often deadly complication after coronary stent implantation in people with coronary artery disease. The findings are published in the October 26 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

### Fetal Cells from Placenta May Help Maternal Heart Recover from Injury:
Researchers from Mount Sinai School of Medicine have discovered the therapeutic benefit of fetal stem cells in helping the maternal heart recover after heart attack or other injury. The research, which marks a significant advancement in cardiac regenerative medicine, was presented on November 14, at the American Heart Association’s (AHA) Scientific Sessions 2011 in Orlando, Florida, and was also published in the November issue of Circulation Research, a journal of the AHA.

### Clues to Developing More Effective Antipsychotic Drugs:
Researchers from Mount Sinai School of Medicine have identified the pattern of cell signaling induced by antipsychotic drugs in a complex composed of two brain receptors linked to schizophrenia. The discovery should allow researchers to predict the effectiveness of novel compounds for the treatment of schizophrenia and other serious mental disorders and may accelerate the development of better antipsychotic drugs. The findings are published in the November 23 issue of Cell.

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## Patient Satisfaction Fair

Dawn Poveromo, Patient Representative, conducted a Patient Satisfaction Fair for employees on November 17. Tables were set up and employees were invited to play games and win prizes based on their accurate answers to various patient satisfaction initiative questions. Everyone who participated got a fun refresher and reminder on some core patient satisfaction practices.

Shown at right are (from left to right): Giovana Gavilano, Pedro Rivera, Charles Newton and Joe Crispin.

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## Idona Lespinasse-Guerrier

**November Employee of the Month**

Human Resources is proud to announce November Employee of the Month, Idona Lespinasse-Guerrier, Housekeeping Aide.

Ms. Lespinasse-Guerrier has been with Mount Sinai Queens since 1994. The staff of Patient Financial Services nominated her for the great work that she does all the time, but especially during a recent upgrade to the air conditioning-heating system, which required her extra effort. “Idona is terrific!” says Marissa Janneire, Director of Environmental and Linen Services “Her drive, outgoing personality and dependability make her a pleasure to work with every day.”

Employee of the Month winners receive a prize, and their names and photos are placed on a poster that is displayed in the lobby. Winners celebrate with colleagues around pizza served on their unit or in their department.

Congratulations, Idona Lespinasse-Guerrier!