



CONNECT NEWS



Creating viable, long-term health care solutions for children and mothers worldwide has always been a part of Texas Children's mission. To further that charge, a new division has been created within the Department of Surgery – the Division of Global Surgery. The division will be led by **Dr. Jed Nuchtern**, who has been Texas Children's chief of Pediatric Surgery since 2012.

“This is a wonderful new opportunity for Texas Children's Hospital, the Department of Surgery and Dr. Nuchtern, said Surgeon-in-Chief **Dr. Larry Hollier**. “Providing surgical expertise in underserved areas has been a great passion for Dr. Nuchtern, and he has traveled extensively bringing surgical care to children around the world. I would like to thank him for his continued commitment to patient care and surgical excellence.”

Through Global Health programs, Texas Children's collaborates with international governments and health organizations to share its expertise and best practices, with a strong focus on sustainability. This collaboration includes providing surgical training and direct care and treatment in many underserved nations, such as Argentina, Haiti, Malawi, Mexico, Pakistan, Tanzania and Uganda. Due to lack of resources, facilities, education and support, surgical interventions thought of as routine here in the United States, such as repairing a broken bone or simply suturing a wound, are difficult to perform and thus much less common in these countries. A more complicated procedure like a C-section becomes altogether life-threatening.

The creation of the new Division of Global Surgery will help Texas Children's forge new partnerships, offer providers opportunities for exposure, and facilitate care and capacity building to improve the lives of children and women across the globe, beginning in sub-Saharan Africa.

Leveraging resources, infrastructure and successful global medical programs already in place in the region – including Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI) Network, Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Centers' Global HOPE (Hematology Oncology Pediatric Excellence), and existing efforts by the Department of

OB/GYN – Nuchtern and his team will first focus on surgical care for pediatric cancer patients, 50 percent of which require some form of surgical intervention, to increase surgical capacity. Ultimately, the approach will have the combined effect of improving care of children with cancer as well as those suffering from other pediatric surgical diseases.

“While the initial focus is on cancer surgery, our approach is to help build capacity in children’s surgery overall,” Nuchtern said. “Our goal is to marshal all of the talent and energy of Texas Children’s department of surgery toward the goal of serving children throughout the world.”

Preliminary objectives include identifying individuals interested in participating, working with partners to develop the infrastructure necessary to provide quality care, and organizing a special group tasked with developing training opportunities, a central focus of this initiative. Building on successes and lessons learned, and through continued collaboration with Global HOPE, the long-term vision includes a surgical facility for women and children in Lilongwe, Malawi, expansion of care capacity in Central America, and, ultimately, recognition for Texas Children’s as a leader in global surgical outreach.

“We’re one family, and this is a team effort that requires substantial perioperative support from nursing, anesthesia, pediatrics, radiology and pathology,” Hollier said. “Dr. Nuchtern and the new Division of Global Surgery will coordinate with all hospital services to ensure that Texas Children’s is well-represented when going abroad and that these children and women receive the best possible care.”

Nuchtern will retain his duties as chief of Pediatric Surgery until a successor is found. A national search is currently underway. Pediatric Surgery at Texas Children’s has grown to include outstanding programs in surgical oncology, surgical critical care, colorectal and pelvic health, and basic science research. The GI Surgery program has consistently been recognized as one of the top five children’s hospital programs for GI & GI Surgery in *U.S. News & World Report*. Under Nuchtern’s leadership, the division also has received national and international acclaim for the separation of conjoined twins’ cases and many cutting-edge fetal surgeries. Additionally, the Trauma program was re-designated as a Level I trauma center and has expanded educational offerings to the state and region.