PARKLAND HAS LONG BEEN A PIONEER IN HEALTH CARE. From the internationally recognized Burn Center to the state’s first Level I Trauma Center, Parkland has paved the way for cutting-edge care. Now, through the Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation (PCCI), the next frontier has arrived, and it’s changing the future of health care as we know it.

(continued inside)
THE W. W. CARUTH, JR. FOUNDATION AT COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION OF TEXAS (CFT) awarded Parkland Foundation and Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation (PCCI) a grant of up to $12 million to build the Dallas Information Exchange Portal (IEP). The Dallas IEP is a revolutionary electronic platform that will transform the delivery of health care, drastically improve the health of the community and serve as a model for the state and the country.

The Dallas IEP’s profound impact on our community’s well-being is best illustrated by the very patient that inspired Dr. Ruben Amarasingham, president and chief executive officer of PCCI, to develop the electronic platform. In 2008, Dr. Amarasingham treated a patient who had been readmitted to the hospital six times over the course of one year. He realized that if the patient’s social service providers had access to relevant clinical information, they would have known that he only needed a pill that cost less than $1 a day to control his hypothyroidism. Helping him get his medication could have eliminated the patient’s costly cycle of readmission and significantly improved his quality of life.

To help break this cycle, Dr. Amarasingham and his team of software engineers and mathematicians have designed a seamless, secure network for sharing the most relevant patient data across sectors. Additionally, they are developing artificial intelligence features that interpret patient data, predict the risk of adverse events and recommend targeted interventions. The work of PCCI builds on nearly two decades of efforts nationwide to establish and maintain health information exchange systems and pushes the boundaries of health information technology.

“My team at PCCI and I believe that the Dallas IEP will connect care providers and empower patients in a way that has never been achieved before,” said Dr. Amarasingham. “Far too often, critical knowledge about patients’ clinical and social needs is lost as they move between care centers such as hospitals, clinics, homeless shelters and food aid organizations. The results can be devastating—early mortality, frequent hospital readmissions, low birth weight and chronic disease complications. With the Dallas IEP, we can help solve this problem.”

Following a successful 18-month feasibility study funded by the Caruth Foundation at CFT, PCCI developed a five-year blueprint to build the IEP in Dallas. The additional grant of up to $12 million will be used to launch the electronic platform between 2014 and 2019, connecting up to 12 local social service and health care organizations, starting with Parkland Health & Hospital System. Organizations participating in the Dallas IEP will be able to access the most relevant patient data, benefit from advanced analytics that identify a patient’s medical and social risks and help provide recommendations on how to best serve patients to improve their health outcomes.

“I know I speak for the entire Parkland family when I say we could not be more proud of the potential PCCI has unlocked with the Dallas IEP,” said Dr. David Krause, president and chief executive officer of Parkland Foundation. “The successful launch of the IEP will make Dallas the most advanced city in the nation with respect to information exchange, and we are truly blessed by the support of the Caruth Foundation at CFT to bring to life this incredible resource for our medical providers, partners and patients at Parkland.”

Parkland continues legacy in health care innovation

Community celebrates groundbreaking work of Dr. Amarasingham and PCCI
Parkland welcomes Dr. Frederick P. Cerise

We are a conflicted country when it comes to ensuring health care services for the entire population. Most Americans believe everyone should have access to quality health care but we don’t agree on how to implement that. While the conversation occurs, people go without care. We need to make sure we have strong performing systems to meet the needs of those without other options for care, while at the same time providing highly specialized services such as trauma and burn care for the entire population. Public systems that do this well will help set the standards of care for everyone.

Why is philanthropic support essential to Parkland’s success?

Parkland’s vision statement says, “By our actions, we will define the standards of excellence for public academic health systems.” At Parkland, we must demonstrate that we are good stewards of the public resources entrusted to us for the care of our population. Beyond that, we want to define standards of excellence. Generous philanthropic support from the community will allow us to not only ensure all of our residents have access to quality care, but to also position Parkland as a leader in the pursuit of higher performing health systems both from a financial and from the quality and patient experience perspectives.

About Dr. Cerise

Dr. Frederick P. Cerise has worked extensively in large public hospital systems that serve patient populations similar to Parkland. Most recently he was associate dean for clinical affairs at Louisiana State University. He also served as Secretary for the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. There he was responsible for the supervision of Louisiana Medicaid, Office of Public Health, Office of Mental Health, Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and the Office of Addictive Disorders.

Dr. Cerise has a track record of fixing and improving health care facilities. Following Hurricane Katrina that devastated portions of Louisiana including New Orleans’ Charity Hospital, Dr. Cerise directed the financial turnaround of the interim New Orleans Hospital. He also implemented system-wide operational benchmarking, which led to significant improvements in efficiency.

Dr. Cerise earned his medical degree from Louisiana State University, New Orleans. He did his residency in internal medicine at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. He earned a Master of Public Health from the Harvard University School of Public Health in Boston, and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, IN.

Parkland Health & Hospital System entered a new era on March 24 with the arrival of Dr. Frederick P. Cerise. For the first time in 30 years, Dallas County’s public health system welcomed a new president and chief executive officer. In the days before he started at Parkland, Dr. Cerise answered a few questions for Lifeline.

What is it about Parkland that attracted you to the CEO position?

Behind Miami-Dade, Dallas has the largest percentage of uninsured residents of any urban county in the nation. In its role as a safety net health care system, Parkland is uniquely positioned to make a direct, positive impact in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. In addition, the institution’s affiliation with UT Southwestern provides our patients with access to high quality professional staff dedicated to the mission of Parkland. Any health care executive who truly wants to make a difference in the lives of patients would be thrilled with this opportunity. And I am grateful to be a part of the Parkland family.

What motivates you to continue your career in public health?

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A few weeks ago, while stopped on the exit ramp to enter I-35 from SH 121, I was rear-ended by a driver at a high rate of speed. Because of my injuries, EMS transported me to Parkland Memorial Hospital for treatment. My car was like a closed accordion—the trunk was in the back seat and the hood was shaped like a “V.” I am most fortunate to have survived.

The trauma team at Parkland was extraordinary. Within an hour or so they had diagnosed my injuries and were discussing treatment options. It seemed to me and to my family that every person who was involved in my care worked as a part of a skillful team to provide superb medical care with compassion. They explained my multiple injuries, the preferred course of treatment, answered my and my family’s questions and eased our concerns.

In a three hour surgical procedure, which occurred shortly after my arrival at Parkland, Dr. Timothy Schacherer reconstructed my shattered lower arm and wrist but his care didn’t stop there. He took the time to ask questions, listen and thoroughly explain the procedure and the expected healing process.

After being moved to a room the quality of care continued to be excellent. Each of the more than 20 health care providers (physicians, nurses, techs, housekeepers) who served me were responsive, friendly and professional every time I encountered them. The care I received from every person was exceptional.

So if you ever wondered about our tax dollars for Parkland being well used, worry no more. It is an incredible asset in our community.

Fred also shared his story with the readers of The Dallas Morning News as a letter to the editor in the Feb. 10, 2014 issue.

Celebrating the Giants of Internal Medicine

More than 125 physicians gathered to honor the Giants of Internal Medicine—Dr. Daniel Foster and Dr. Donald Seldin—at a reception in the new Parkland hospital. The Giants of Internal Medicine Campaign was established to help raise funds for the new Parkland, honor the legacy of internal medicine at Parkland and recognize Drs. Foster and Seldin as two internal medicine legends who have touched the lives of many.

Learn more at: www.IStandforParkland.org/giantsofim
If you wish to learn more or make a gift, please contact Parkland Foundation at 214.266.2000 or go to www.IStandforParkland.org.
New Parkland chapel garden
A place of hope, support for twins

Dr. Kevin Johnson and his twin brother, Kelvin, could not be separated. They dressed alike until they entered high school. They created their own songs, singing their made-up melodies while walking down the street together. And although they went to different colleges, they both started as pre-med majors, later switching to nursing on the same day without any premonition the other was doing the exact same thing.

On Feb. 25, 2007, Kevin’s life changed in an instant with a phone call from his family. Kelvin had died suddenly of congestive heart failure. Kevin was completely lost at that moment without his brother by his side.

“Kelvin and I never thought we’d be apart,” said Kevin. “We came into the world together and we thought we’d leave together. He was the first person I ever met and was my best friend. Being a twin, you have a bond of unconditional love, unconditional acceptance of each other. I could not imagine my life without him.”

Soon after Kelvin’s death, Kevin was introduced to Twinless Twins Support Group, Intl. It was within this organization he found other people who knew exactly what he was going through. He could laugh, cry, share stories about Kelvin, and support others like him who had lost a twin. Today Kevin is a member of their Board of Directors.

Kevin started exploring ways to honor Kelvin’s memory while recognizing the special bond that exists between twins. As the Assistant Chief Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist with Parkland Health & Hospital System his journey led back to Parkland where he created an endowment, The Kevin and Kelvin Johnson Endowment Fund, in addition to an estate gift that will create the Kevin and Kelvin Johnson Twin Chapel Garden at the new Parkland hospital.

“It’s a garden of hope,” said Kevin, “Hope for those who lost their twin, hope for patients and families, hope that life can go on.”

You are invited to visit the Kevin and Kelvin Johnson Twin Chapel Garden when the hospital opens for patients in 2015. For information on how you can honor a loved one in the new Parkland, go to www.IStandforParkland.org/recognition

Parkland Foundation is pleased to offer specific areas within the new Parkland hospital which can be dedicated for individuals or families through your generous contribution to the I Stand for Parkland capital campaign. Spaces can be dedicated starting at $10,000 inside the new hospital and at $5,000 in the gardens located throughout the campus. Learn more at www.IStandforParkland.org/recognition