



CPL Michael J. Crescenz Veterans Affairs Medical Center Update



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Dr. Esterhai retired.

In last year's edition of the UPOJ, Dr. John Esterhai provided an eloquent and thorough "Health System Update", reviewing our scope and strengths¹. Dr. Esterhai, a former U.S. Air Force flight surgeon, is the previous and, long-serving, Chief of the service and GME site director who built our strong foundation of patient care and orthopaedic education. I will focus on several transitions since

Award. We are developing a clinical research initiative, to be integrated with the university's clinical research program lead by Dr. Samir Mehta. Dr. Annamarie Horan will be joining us as a research volunteer.

Patient Care

During the 2016 annual year, the orthopaedic general service saw 4957 patients in clinic and the spine service 290. We had 381 cases in the main operating room, of which 15 were spine cases. The loss of main operating room staff and surgeons did impact our caseload. One hundred and fifty-five patients were admitted.

Improving care is critical to our mission; we have targeted several areas for the coming months. At the close of 2016, we had initiated policies for tranexamic acid, opioids, and pre-operative education for total joints. The new Hospitalist-Surgical Co-Management Team has enhanced our ward care. Many of our total joint patients transfer to the facility's Rehabilitation Medicine Service who also work closely with us.

While the current conflict is the longest in our nation's history, our largest patient demographic is from the Vietnam Conflict. With this in mind, I direct you to the Medal of Honor Citation for our facility's namesake, CPL Michael J. Crescenz, U.S. Army, who was only 19 years old when he single handedly overtook three bunkers under direct and unrelenting fire in Hiep Duc Valley, Vietnam on Nov. 20, 1968². The Corporal was attempting to take the fourth bunker when shielded his company's medic and the wounded. This selfless act resulted in his death but saved his squad. CPL Crescenz grew up in West Oak Lane, enjoyed Sea Isle City in the summers, and graduated from Cardinal Dougherty High School. He is the only person from Pennsylvania bestowed The Medal of Honor.

References:

1. Esterhai, J. Health System Update: Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center Update. *UPOJ*, Volume 26, June 2016, 184-185.
2. <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/mjccrescenz.htm>

Staff

Until June 2016, Dr. Joseph Bernstein was the Acting Chief. I then succeeded Dr. Esterhai and became the first full time service chief with a university appointment. Also in June, we saw the departure of Drs. Daniel Farber, Neil Sheth, and Milton Zgonis. Our active surgical staff includes Drs. Jaimo Ahn, Joseph Bernstein, Malcolm Ecker, Ernest Gentchos, Eric Hume, John Kelly, Andrew Kuntz, Harvey Smith, and David Steinberg. All surgeons provide the general and specialty orthopaedic care critical to our patient needs, ranging from uncomplicated (some) to complex (most). Dr. L. Scott Levin continues to volunteer his time. For each resident rotation, he now attends case-based teaching rounds at the VA. Each of the four residents presents a case that is then discussed in detail. All staff are dedicated to resident education and directly supervise in clinic and the operating room. Our diligent and knowledgeable physician's assistants, Mitchell "Chip" Staska and John Wheeler, provide daily consistent care to our patients. We are looking forward to Dr. Katherine O'Connor joining us soon.

Research

Drs. Bernstein, Kuntz, Smith, and Steinberg continue with their VA funded and approved grants. Dr. Smith earned a Merit Grant and will be able to continue his Career Development