



# Progress Notes

A Publication of the Medical Staff of Valley Children's

AUGUST 2016

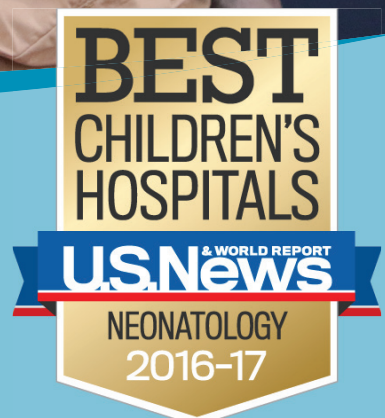


## Ranked

One of the Nation's

**Best Children's Hospitals**

in Neonatology



# Valley Children's Ranked One of the Nation's Best Children's Hospitals in Neonatology



The newest newborns. The tiniest patients. The biggest victories.

Our neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) see some of the sickest babies in California. We have provided Central California's highest level care for these vulnerable patients for decades. And our efforts are attracting national attention.

U.S. News & World Report has ranked Valley Children's as one of the best children's hospitals in the country in neonatology in its new 2016-17 Best Children's Hospitals rankings. The recognition is significant. Parents use these rankings to determine where to get the best care for their children.

"This prestigious first for Valley Children's reflects the innovative, compassionate, family-centered care we deliver in the NICU and across all of our pediatric subspecialties," Valley Children's President and CEO Todd Suntrapak said. Valley Children's offers the most comprehensive array of services critically ill and injured infants need. Families do not need to leave Central California to receive expert neonatal care.

"I thank the entire NICU team for bringing their best every day," Valley Children's Chief of Newborn Medicine Dr. Jeffrey Pietz said. "But this recognition isn't just about the NICU. Our babies are cared for by so many others throughout our network. Without everyone here, we would never achieve the great results we do."

## Highest level NICU

Valley Children's Hospital provides the region's only NICU certified by California as a Regional Neonatal Intensive Care Unit – the highest level possible. We are also the region's only Level IV NICU, meaning it meets the highest standards set by the Academy of Pediatrics.

Our NICU provides 24-hour coverage by board-certified neonatologists who have immediate access to the full range of pediatric medical and surgical subspecialists, nurses and other specially trained staff. Valley Children's is a Magnet-recognized® organization, demonstrating excellence in nursing practice and quality patient care.

Valley Children's also offers Intermediate and Community intensive care for newborns and infants at partner hospitals in Fresno, Merced and Hanford. These units allow families with critically ill babies to receive skilled treatment closer to home.

"Our NICU outcomes are phenomenal," Valley Children's Vice President, Quality and Patient Safety Dr. Karen Dahl said. "We have achieved some of the best survival and lowest complication rates in the nation. It takes diligence, experience and the right people and tools to achieve these amazing results."



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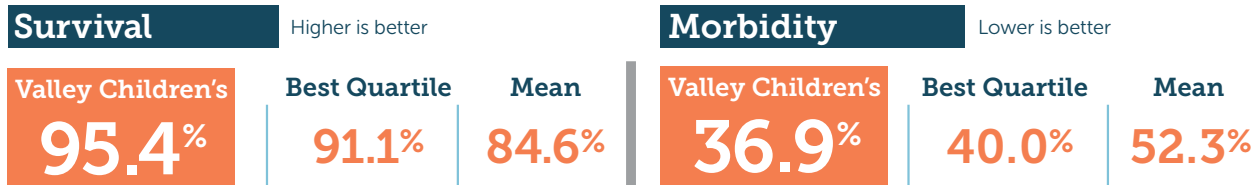
**Mimi Chao, MD**  
Secretary / Treasurer

# MOST RECENT VALLEY CHILDREN'S NICU OUTCOMES DATA\*

(for babies with birthweight of <1,500 grams):

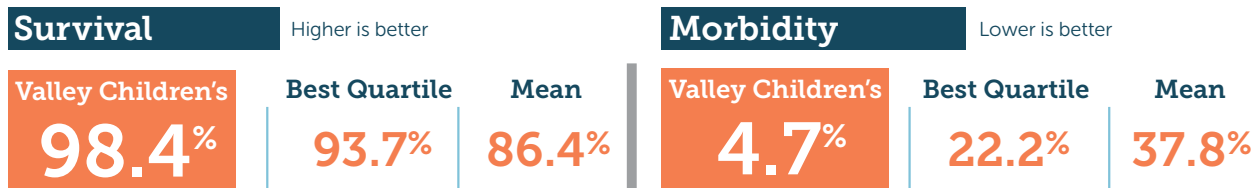
Valley Children's sees some of the sickest babies in California yet we achieve some of the best survival and lowest complication rates in the nation.

## Valley Children's Hospital Regional Level IV NICU



\*Comparative 2014 data from the Vermont Oxford Network (VON) for Level III C NICUs, the Network's highest level NICU. (Level III C NICU is equivalent to the Level IV recognized as the highest level NICU by the American Academy of Pediatrics.) VON is a non-profit collaboration of healthcare professionals dedicated to improving medical care for newborn infants and their families. Composed of more than 900 neonatal intensive care units worldwide, the Network maintains a database including information about the care and outcomes of high-risk newborn infants.

## Valley Children's Level II-III NICU at Saint Agnes Medical Center - Fresno, CA

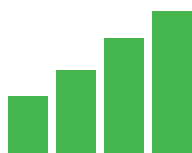


# THE LEAPFROG HOSPITAL SURVEY 2015 REPORT

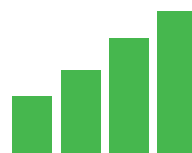
Valley Children's Hospital  
ANCC Magnet Hospital



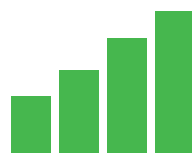
Doctors Order Medications Through A Computer



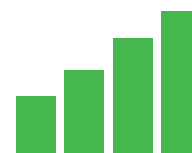
Specially Trained Doctors Care For ICU Patients



Steps To Avoid Harm



Managing Serious Errors



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# Beating the Odds



**Monica Prinzing**  
Marketing Content Specialist  
Valley Children's Healthcare

One of the tiniest babies born in the world, Tyson Perez was fortunate just to survive. Going home six months later with no major complications was extraordinary.

The Perez family joined us and other former patient families to celebrate U.S. News & World Report's ranking of Valley Children's as one of the best children's hospitals in the nation in neonatology.

"We're proud to be part of this event," Katie Phaphon, Tyson's mom, said. "Words cannot express our gratitude. Valley Children's helped us through a frightening time."



Born in 2011 at 24 weeks weighing only 12.7 ounces – less than an unopened soda can – Tyson is living proof that even those as vulnerable as he was have a winning chance.

## Maternal Fetal Center expertise

An ultrasound at 19 weeks showed Tyson developing incorrectly. His mom's preeclampsia compounded the situation. Medical experts warned Katie and Matt Perez of the possible dangers and outcomes.

Referred to the Maternal Fetal Center at Valley Children's, Katie had access to physicians specially trained in high-risk pregnancies. Valley Children's partners with Saint Agnes Medical Center to provide a unique array of services to help ensure a healthy delivery and life.

Katie was hospitalized at Saint Agnes while Dr. Adeniji, a maternal-fetal medicine specialist, focused on extending her pregnancy. When Katie experienced complications, the baby was delivered by cesarean section and immediately transferred to our Level IV NICU.

## Specialized NICU treatment

Valley Children's neonatal intensive care unit is certified by California as a Regional Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and is the region's only Level IV NICU. Our outcomes are some of the best in the country.

A baby with Tyson's characteristics stood only a 7 percent chance of survival without severe impairment, but advanced therapies reduce complications for babies admitted to our NICU within three days of birth.

"It's vital these preemies receive specialized care within that time frame," Valley Children's Chief of Newborn Medicine Dr. Jeffrey Pietz said.

Tyson beat the odds. He had some problems, but he continued to improve.

## A rare group

Weighing 9 pounds by March 2012, Tyson became part of a rare group by being able to go home. Pediatric specialists, including those at our Charlie Mitchell Children's Center, continue to monitor his progress.

His parents are thankful. "Everyone on our team at Valley Children's played a part that fit into the puzzle of saving our son," Katie said.



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# Rise in Congenital Syphilis Cases



**Nael Mhaisen, MD**  
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Specialist

Last year, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) published a report describing the concerning and unprecedented increase in syphilis cases among women and newborns in California over the past three years. Most of these cases were reported from the Central Valley and Los Angeles County. The number of reported early syphilis cases among women in California more than doubled from 248 cases in 2012 to 594 in 2014. During the same time period, the number of reported congenital syphilis cases more than tripled, from 30 cases to 100 cases.

To contain this critical public health threat, CDPH enhanced its collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health departments to address this outbreak and search for its causes.

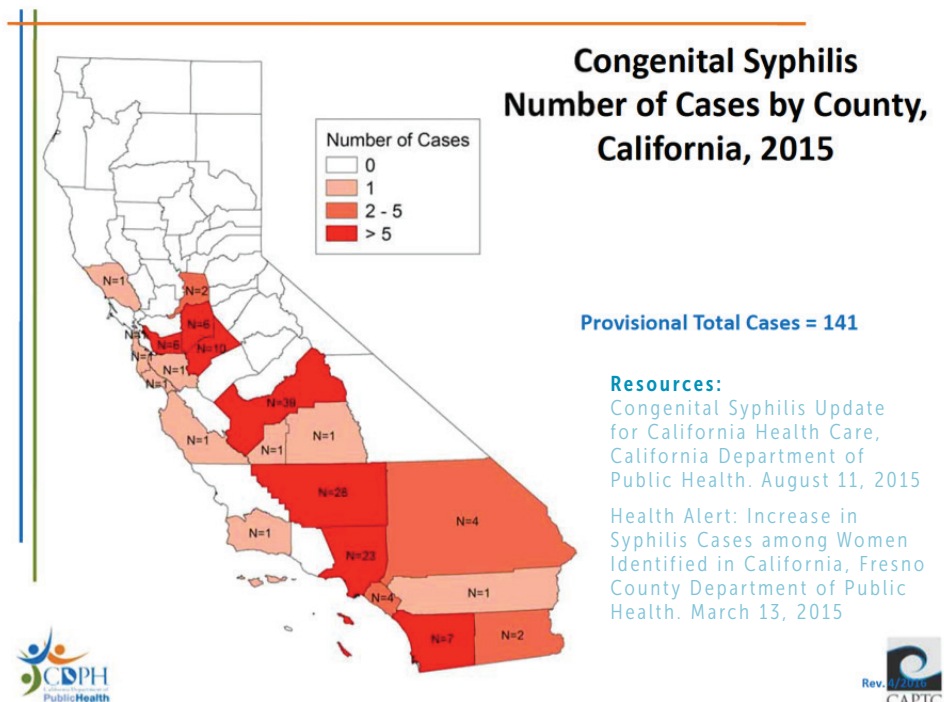
Despite that, congenital syphilis rates continue to rise across the state, particularly in the Central Valley. For example, the incidence of congenital syphilis in Fresno County exceeded every other county in California in 2015. It reached 39 cases, an increase from 18 cases in 2014, 14 cases in 2013 and only two cases in 2012.

The seriousness of this outbreak and its potentially dire consequences require immediate attention from all medical providers caring for women and children in the Central Valley. Infected patients need to be identified, and they and their partners need to be appropriately treated.

Congenital syphilis occurs when syphilis is transmitted from an infected mother to her fetus during pregnancy. It is a potentially devastating disease that can lead to stillbirth, prematurity, birth defects, blindness, hearing loss and infant death.

The disease and its tragic consequences can be prevented with early detection and treatment of syphilis in pregnant women. California law requires that pregnant women get tested for syphilis at their first prenatal visit. Testing should also be repeated early in the third trimester and again at delivery. Infants should not be discharged from the hospital unless the syphilis serologic status of the mother has been determined.

All syphilis cases should also be reported to the local health department where the patient resides within 24 hours of diagnosis as required by state law. Healthcare providers are encouraged to reach out to local health departments or infectious diseases experts for assistance in the diagnosis and management of syphilis infection. Valley Children's infectious diseases specialists continue to offer inpatient and outpatient care for children with suspected or known syphilis infection.



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# Who Takes Care of Your Patient?

Rhonda Keosheyan, MD, Medical Director, Hospitalist Program  
John Sanchez, MD, Pediatric Hospitalist  
Valley Children's Healthcare

Reflecting on the history of medicine in the United States, Hospitalist Medicine is a young and dynamic field. It stemmed from both a practical need and a recognition that rapid changes in technology and knowledge had complicated the process of caring for hospitalized patients.

It became increasingly difficult for general practitioners seeing children or adults to balance their ever-dwindling time between clinical practice and hospitalized patients. Physicians seeking a challenge helped fill the need by being willing to treat and diagnose more complex cases, work a less predictable schedule, and face obstacles common to any new endeavor.



## The Valley's First Hospitalist Program

In the Central Valley, Dr. J.D. Northway and Dr. Steve Stevenson envisioned a pediatric hospitalist program nearly 20 years ago when Valley Children's Hospital was at its original Fresno location. The Hospital hired its first hospitalists, Dr. John Sanchez and Dr. Donald Fields, in January 1998. Initially, their main role was to care for patients who had no primary care provider. The local primary care pediatricians and family practitioners continued to care for their own patients alongside them.

The two new hospitalists quickly gained the trust and admiration of their fellow physicians, many of whom began referring their hospitalized patients to them that first year. Valley Children's added three more hospitalists the next year, and five more the following year. Within three years of launching the program, more than 80 percent of the Central Valley's primary care providers allowed our hospitalists to care for their hospitalized patients.

## Providing Complex Pediatric Care

Valley Children's Hospitalist Program has greatly expanded in both size and breadth over the past 15 years. Our group cares for patients 24/7 with routine diagnoses such as pneumonia and asthma, as well as complex, technology-dependent patients with multiple, chronic healthcare problems. We are the attending physician for about half the patients admitted at Valley Children's Hospital.

While our pediatric emergency department refers the bulk of our patients, we also take direct admissions from providers' clinics and transfers from our own intensive care units. We partner with our pediatric subspecialists to care for our more complex patients, and coordinate care to make it easier for the patient family to navigate the medical system. We also lead our Hospital's Rapid Response Team, which evaluates and responds to deteriorating changes in a patient's condition before the child can go into respiratory failure and/or cardiac arrest, and the Code Blue Team, which acts swiftly when a child's heart or lungs stop working.



### Always Striving to be Better

Our hospitalist group has also been involved with resident teaching since its inception. We consider teaching a fundamental part of the practice of medicine and truly value the ability to impart our knowledge to the next generation of physicians. Many members of our group have also found fulfillment in joining medical staff committees and in administrative roles. As a result, our group contributes to activities that promote patient safety, efficiency and expansion. Evidence-based practice is fundamental to hospitalists – remaining up to date and providing the best care to patients is our top priority. The vitality and energy present in this still-emerging field of medicine help push us to constantly strive to be better.

Most hospitalists around the country embrace many of these same ideals. Sometimes, as groups grow and expand, the group mentality can fade. What makes our group special, and has allowed us to maintain our positive group outlook, is our genuine dedication to our patients and each other. We have long-standing hospitalists in our program, which is unique. That closeness allows us to put our best efforts forward in even the most difficult situations. We celebrate marriages, birthdays and new babies, and we mourn each other's losses. We sincerely care for one another and listen to all points of view in decisions that affect the group.

This backbone of family empowers us to come every day and care for the children of the Central Valley, and to fulfill the Hospital's mission: to provide high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services to children, regardless of their ability to pay, and to continuously improve the health and wellbeing of children. We live this mission and are proud to be a part of an organization that has been fulfilling it for over 60 years.

**New Pediatric Hospitalists who recently joined Valley Children's medical staff include:**

#### Pediatric Hospitalist

##### Salwa Chawich, MD

Dr. Chawich is a new member of Valley Children's Medical Group practicing at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital as a pediatric hospitalist.

Education & Training: Aleppo University

Residency: Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center

Dr. Chawich completed a fellowship in pediatrics at Nyack Hospital.

##### Anthony Thomas, MD

Dr. Thomas is a new member of Valley Children's Medical Group practicing at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital as a pediatric hospitalist.

Education & Training: University of Illinois College of Medicine

Residency: The John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County

To see more new practitioners, see page 11.



# Honoring A Legacy of Service



**Fred Laningham, MD**  
 Chief of Staff  
 Valley Children's Healthcare

All of our physicians are committed to providing the highest quality medical care and ensuring the best customer experience for patients and their families.

To recognize a medical staff physician who most exemplifies these attributes, Valley Children's medical staff leadership recently created an annual award. The award was established on behalf of Dr. Dowain Wright, a longtime pediatric rheumatologist who recently passed and left a legacy of amazing service. He modeled the way by consistently providing state-of-the-art medical therapy and a great hospital experience for our young patients and their families.

Dr. Kenneth Rouillard, a pediatric cardiologist, received the first "Dowain Wright Patient Satisfaction Award" during the Medical Staff Recognition Social held in April at the Copper River Country Club. While Dr. Rouillard was selected based on high praise submitted from patients and families, his colleagues feel the same. Noting that Dr. Rouillard is a soccer coach in his free time, Dr. James Prochazka, Valley Children's medical director, pediatric cardiology, said Dr. Rouillard brings his "A" game to work every day. "Dr. Rouillard is passionate about his patients," Dr. Prochazka said. "He applies his coaching skills by motivating and instilling confidence in his patients to succeed and get better."

The Recognition Social celebrates outstanding physicians joining our medical staff while acknowledging those who have served on staff for years. This year, we recognized 54 new physicians – the highest influx of doctors in one year in our medical staff's history. More than half of these physicians came from training programs outside California, bringing with them diverse training, techniques and ideas.

**It is always a pleasure to honor and thank our dedicated physicians who have diagnosed and treated Valley children for most of their careers, including the following:**

## 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Marina Alper, MD; Donald Carter, MD; Kenneth Cox, MD; Michael Danovsky, PhD; Frank Hanley, MD; Timothy Johnston, MD; Charlie Kano, MD; Sukhbir Kaur, MD; Judy Miramontes, MD; Girishchandra Patel, MD; James Rabago, MD; Tejinder Randhawa, MD; Theresa Shrill, MD

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Joseph Gerardi, DO; Randal Morton, MD; Guillermo Sandoval, MD; Ronald Sani, DDS; Newton Seiden, MD; Richard Spencer, DDS; Rajeev Verma, MD

## 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

A.M. Aminian, MD; Daniel Borgstadt, MD; William Hastrup, MD

## 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Virgil Airola, MD; Narinder Bala, MD; Grace Lim, MD; Gregory Watts, MD

## 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

Cynthia Curry, MD; Paramjit Fagoora, MD; Richard Moors, MD; Richard Witten, MD



# Recognizing Exceptional Caregivers

## The Halo Program



**Robert Saroyan**  
Chief Development Officer  
Valley Children's Healthcare

Although philanthropy is strategic, it is fundamentally personal. You can ask anyone for money, but minus a relationship or a connection, and the answer is probably "No." If the answer is "Yes," then the gift is invariably smaller than it otherwise would be. The power of philanthropy is rooted in relationships.

With that in mind, Valley Children's Healthcare Foundation is always seeking to build relationships with both our internal partners (physicians and employees) and our external partners (donors). We launched The Halo Program in December 2015 as a simple way for grateful patients, families and friends to acknowledge any exceptional staff member or volunteer who went above and beyond to make their experience at Valley Children's a little easier.

### The Halo Program is designed to:

- Engage physicians and employees as we continue to build an internal culture of philanthropy.
- Forge relationships with grateful families who may be interested in supporting Valley Children's.
- Identify patients and families who would be effective spokespersons for Valley Children's.

It has been an honor to recognize amazing caregivers through The Halo Program. Many people have shared with me that acknowledgement from the patients and families to whom clinicians dedicate their professional lives is perhaps the most meaningful recognition they can experience. It is a joy for me to see the impact of a simple "thank you."

For example, in February we had the privilege of honoring pediatric intensive care unit nurse Rae Ayala for outstanding care provided to Bryden Hall. Bryden underwent open-heart surgery at just 10 days old and continues to have regular checkups at our Valley Children's McHenry Specialty Care Center in Modesto.



Derek and Heather Carr made a special stop at Valley Children's in May to recognize Alden Washam, one of the nurses who took care of their son, Dallas, when he was in our neonatal intensive care unit in 2013.

In addition, grateful families acknowledged several of our pediatric subspecialists through The Halo Program for providing incredible patient care, including the following:

(from left to right) **Dr. Joseph Gerardi**, pediatric orthopaedic surgeon; **Dr. Robert Kezirian**, pediatric emergency medicine physician; **Dr. Malcolm MacDonald**, pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon; **Dr. Angela Martin**, pediatric otolaryngologist; **Dr. James Prochazka**, pediatric cardiologist; and **Dr. Angela Rodriguez**, pediatric plastic surgeon.



For information or how to recognize a caregiver, please contact the Foundation at 559-353-7100 or [foundation@valleychildrens.org](mailto:foundation@valleychildrens.org).

# Newsbytes



## Valley Children's Wins Emmy

A Valley Children's Healthcare advertising campaign won a Northern California Area Emmy Award at the awards' 45th annual gala at the San Francisco Jazz Center in June. Our "Futures Worth Fighting For" campaign won for Best Photographer-Program (cinematography). Valley Children's partnered with Daniel Brian Advertising to produce the campaign, which beat out nominees from Comcast SportsNet Bay Area/San Francisco Giants and the Lifestyle Network/ABS-CBN International.

## Inaugural Interprofessional Medical Education Day

Valley Children's held its inaugural Interprofessional Medical Education Development Day in May, featuring breakout sessions conducted by physicians from across the nation.

The event was part of our efforts to transform from a hospital that teaches to a teaching hospital, and focused on medical professionals learning from each other while providing family-centered care and engagement.

"Many of us that trained decades ago realized that we trained in silos, but the new way of thinking about this is we work in teams, so we really should be training in teams," Valley Children's Chief of Pediatrics and Director of Medical Education Dr. Jolie Limon said. "Interprofessional education is learning with, from and about one another."



Dr. Mike Weisgerber from the Medical College of Wisconsin was the keynote speaker. The conference had sessions focused on family-centered rounds, giving effective feedback and information and teaching on the fly, among other topics.



## National Social Worker of the Year

Pediatric oncology social worker Alistair Robertson was named the Association of Pediatric Oncology Social Workers (APOSW) 2016 Social Worker of the Year in April. In his 15th year at Valley Children's, Robertson is our network's first employee to earn the prestigious national award. "Alistair has a way of using his many years of experience as a clinician to illustrate and teach these young workers while instilling a sense of confidence in the abilities they already possess," APOSW President Anne Kosem stated in her recommendation letter.

# Medical Staff News

## New practitioners who recently joined Valley Children's medical staff include:

### Allergy

#### Angela Sabry, MD

Dr. Sabry is a new member of Baz Allergy Group, practicing as an allergist.

Education & Training: American University of the Caribbean

Residency: UCSF-Fresno

Dr. Sabry also completed a fellowship in allergy and immunology at University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine.

### Neonatology

#### Philip Cheng, MD

Dr. Cheng is a new member of Perinatal Medical Group practicing as a neonatologist.

Education & Training: Virginia Commonwealth University Medical College

Residency: UCSF-Fresno

Dr. Cheng completed a fellowship in neonatology at UCSD.

### Pediatrics

#### Geeta Jayaram, MD

Dr. Jayaram is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a pediatrician in Bakersfield at San Dimas Pediatrics.

Education & Training: Karnatak Medical College in India

Residency: Charleston Area Medical Center

#### Maria-Ximena Simunovic, MD

Dr. Simunovic is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a pediatrician in Fresno at Dakota Pediatrics.

Education & Training: University of Chile

Residency: Mayaguez Medical Center in Puerto Rico

### Pediatric Cardiology

#### Upinder Jodhka, MD

Dr. Jodhka is a new member of Pediatric Cardiology Medical Associates practicing as a pediatric cardiologist.

Education & Training: Albany Medical College

Residency: Loma Linda University Medical Center

Dr. Jodhka completed a fellowship in pediatric cardiology at University of Minnesota School of Medicine.

### Pediatric Gastroenterology

#### Karla Au Yeung, MD

Dr. Au Yeung is a new member of Valley Children's Medical Group practicing as a pediatric gastroenterologist, but primarily serves as program director for Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, Affiliated with Stanford University School of Medicine.

Education & Training: Indiana University School of Medicine

Residency: Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Dr. Au Yeung completed a fellowship in pediatric gastroenterology at Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital.

### Pediatric Infectious Diseases

#### Chokechai Rongkavilit, MD

Dr. Rongkavilit is a new member of Valley Children's Medical Group practicing as a pediatric infectious diseases specialist at Valley Children's.

Education & Training: Mahidol University in Thailand

Residency: St. Louis University School of Medicine

Dr. Rongkavilit completed a fellowship in pediatric infectious diseases at the University of Miami.

### Pediatric Interventional Radiology

#### Robert Andrews, MD

Dr. Andrews is a new member of the Wishon Radiological Group, practicing as an interventional radiologist.

Education & Training: UCSD School of Medicine

Residency: Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Dr. Andrews completed a fellowship in interventional radiology at Johns Hopkins University.

#### Stephen Ferrara, MD

Dr. Ferrara is a new member of Wishon Radiological Group practicing as an interventional radiologist.

Education & Training: Uniformed Services University

Residency: Naval Medical Center San Diego

Dr. Ferrara completed a fellowship in vascular and interventional radiology at UCSD.

### Pediatric Neurosurgery

#### Prithvi Narayan, MD

Dr. Narayan is a new member of Valley Children's Medical Group practicing as a pediatric neurosurgeon at Valley Children's.

Education & Training: Washington University School of Medicine

Residency: Emory University

Dr. Narayan completed a fellowship in pediatric neurosurgery at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

### Pediatric Otolaryngology

#### Rachelle Wareham, MD

Dr. Wareham is a new member of Valley Children's Medical Group practicing as a pediatric otolaryngologist at Valley Children's.

Education & Training: Loma Linda University School of Medicine

Residency: Loma Linda University School of Medicine

Dr. Wareham completed a fellowship in pediatric otolaryngology at Baylor College of Medicine.



Valley Children's Healthcare  
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