

NEWS

from LEHIGH VALLEY

HOSPITAL
AND HEALTH NETWORK



Emergency medicine physician Richard MacKenzie, M.D., uses LVHVN's all-digital radiology storage and retrieval system for faster, more convenient access to patients' X-ray, MRI, CT scan, ultrasound and nuclear medicine images.

LVHVN Ranks in Top 10 Among Nation's 100 Most Integrated Health Networks

Highest Ranked in Pennsylvania and the Northeast

Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network (LVHVN) ranks in the top 10 on the 2005 Verispan IHN 100, an annual assessment of the 100 most highly integrated health care networks (IHNs). This is the first time LVHVN is ranked in the top 10, but its fourth straight year on the premier rating list compiled by Yardley, Pa.-based Verispan, a health-care information company (www.verispan.com).

Verispan evaluates the nation's 566 non-specialty, local and regional health networks on their ability to operate as a unified organization in each of eight categories: integration, integrated technology, contractual capabilities, outpatient utilization, financial stability, services and access, hospital utilization, and physicians.

LVHVN received perfect scores for integration and outpatient utilization among the eight categories surveyed, and scored above the IHN 100 average in four additional categories: integrated technology, hospital utilization, financial stability, and services and access.

"This assessment is based on performance and degree of integration, which for our patients means a high degree of consistency in quality and effective communication among caregivers across all of our services and facilities," says Elliot J. Sussman, M.D., LVHVN's president and CEO.

In addition to consistently being ranked among the most highly integrated health networks by Verispan, LVHVN was listed among the 100 Most Wired Hospitals and Health Systems for the third time in 2004 and among the 25 Most Wireless Hospitals and Health Systems by *Hospitals & Health Networks* (H&HN) magazine.

Pain Management Team Helps Patients Regain Quality of Life



Bruce Nicholson, M.D., LVHVN pain management specialist

When patients aren't getting pain relief from medication, and diagnostic tests don't reveal an underlying condition, pain management specialists can help. At Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network's (LVHVN) Center for Pain Management, a team of four anesthesiologists and two nurse practitioners use a multidisciplinary, whole-person treatment approach to personalize each patient's care.

"Pain is a highly personal experience in the brain," says LVHVN pain management specialist Bruce Nicholson, M.D. "Everyone will experience it differently, and the answers are not necessarily at the end of an MRI."

Chronic pain can develop as the result of traumatic injury, surgery or an illness such as cancer, but it also can develop independent of other conditions.

Specialists at the Center for Pain Management work alongside primary care physicians to individualize a combination of medications or injection therapies, psychological approaches, physical and occupational therapies and complementary and alternative medicine.

"Talking with patients about the impact of the pain on their lives plays a significant role in how we treat them," says Nicholson, an anesthesiologist with a subspecialty in pain medicine through the American Board of Anesthesiology.

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Nicholson says pain is a disease that should be viewed in the same model as diabetes, hypertension or coronary artery disease. "We don't cure it," he says. "We modify the consequences of the disease process."

Every patient responds to a different combination of approaches, including medications such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory or anti-seizure drugs, antidepressants, analgesics or opiates. Diagnostic and therapeutic injections are used when appropriate. Complementary techniques such as acupuncture, acupressure, massage, meditation and yoga are some of the latest approaches. For patients who have not benefited from medication, the center offers sophisticated treatments such as spinal morphine infusion therapies.

The only pain program in the region involved in clinical research, the Center for Pain Management stays on the cutting edge of treatment with the latest studies, techniques and medications. "Pain affects a person's whole level of function," says Nicholson. "With our individualized approach, we can help patients understand how to live with a certain amount of pain and improve their quality of life."

ADVANCES IN STROKE CARE



Join the stroke experts at Lehigh Valley Hospital—a JCAHO-designated Primary Stroke Center—for a full-day symposium on advances in stroke care, and earn CME credits.

**Thursday, May 12: 7:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
Lehigh Valley Hospital—Cedar Crest Auditorium**

To register, or for more information, please call Sharon Bartz at 610-402-9008

■ **Carotid Stenting: What Does the Future Hold?**
Bryan Kluck, D.O., cardiologist

■ **Carotid Artery Surgery—Where Do We Stand?**
Eric Wilson, M.D., chief of vascular surgery

■ **Balancing the Numbers in Acute Stroke**
*John Castaldo, M.D., chief of neurology
Clarranne Mathiesen, R.N., neurosciences nurse*

■ **Update on the Management of Subarachnoid Hemorrhage**
Mark Li, M.D., chief of neurosurgery

■ **Emergency Room Resuscitation—Barriers and Ways Around Them**

Arthur Pancioli, M.D., vice chair, department of emergency medicine, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

■ **Advances in Interventional Approaches to Acute Stroke**

James Jaffe, M.D., neurointerventional radiologist

Physician-to-Physician **1-800-584-2040** www.lvh.org

Call the Transfer Center Referring physicians can call **610-402-6100** or **1-800-280-5524** for emergency transfer of patients with any condition to Lehigh Valley Hospital.