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PORTRAIT OF NEW WEST LAWRENCE



LMH Health
West Campus



Empowering Women

by Autumn Bishop, LMH Health
photos courtesy LMH Health

The LMH Health Women's Center encourages self-care and offers a collaborative approach to treatment, as well as flexibility and accessibility, to all women in need of health care.

With a revolutionary focus on accessible, compassionate, collaborative care, LMH Health Women's Center helps Lawrence-area women prioritize their health. Michele Bennett, M.D., FACOG, an OB-GYN at LMH Health, sees it in her patients—and in herself.

"As women, we can be really good at taking care of other people, but sometimes we can have a hard time taking care of ourselves," she says.

Addressing this issue is the LMH Health Women's Center, a state-of-the-art, multidisciplinary facility focused solely on women's wide-ranging health care needs. The center, located on the second level of the LMH Health West Campus, opened its doors in September of 2020 and offers a wide range of services, including breast health and mammography, ultrasounds, MRIs, gynecology, pelvic health, plastic surgery and general women's health. But it's the center's extraordinary flexibility, accessibility and collaborative spirit that sets it apart.

Convenience Is Key

"From its inception, this health center was designed to make it easy for women to seek health care," says Jennifer Hawasli, M.D., a fellowship-trained breast surgeon with Lawrence Breast Specialists. "At our facility, everything related to breast health is in the same area. If a woman has a concerning mammogram or ultrasound, most likely I can fit her into my schedule for a consultation the same day."

This approach, Hawasli adds, eliminates the fear women may feel while waiting for an appointment to address their concerns. Likewise, the health center's patients benefit from its providers' collaborative approach.

"Today, breast cancer can be treatable, but it requires multidisciplinary care by multiple physicians. Having all the members of the breast cancer team under one roof and communicating with each other helps decrease stressors in our patients," she adds.

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Jennifer Hawasli, M.D.

“We are located on a bus line,” says Bennett, a further illustration of the center’s push to streamline women’s health care. “Even if our patients have transportation hurdles, they can easily get to our center from almost anywhere in the greater Lawrence area and check off many of their annual screenings in just an hour or two. We even offer walk-in mammograms.”

Private donors and foundations played an important role in supporting the center. A generous gift from Jeff and Mary Weinberg, of the Jedel Family Foundation, supported the purchase of 3D mammography machines.

“Places like LMH Health provide so much to the people who live in the Lawrence area, and we are pleased to support these efforts in any way that we can,” Jeff Weinberg says.

Dr. Richard Orchard, an LMH Health ophthalmologist for 33 years, and his wife, Georgia, also made a gift to support the Women’s Center. The couple felt compelled to donate in gratitude for Georgia’s breast cancer treatment in 2014.

“Georgia received excellent care from Dr. Sherri Soule and the surgeons, radiologists, nurses and even the volunteers—they all just did a great job taking care of her,” Orchard says. “We’re lucky to have a top-notch community hospital in Lawrence.”

The center itself, Bennett notes, boasts a calming atmosphere with beautiful views of the Kansas prairies. As a Commission on Cancer-accredited institution, LMH Health Women’s Center provides the capabilities of a larger hospital or academic center close to home—an asset for women walking through a new breast cancer diagnosis. Additionally, the LMH Health Women’s Center works hand in hand with LMH Health Imaging and the LMH Health Cancer Center to offer patients a state-of-the-art breast cancer risk assessment. The results can be lifesaving.

“We focus on the full continuum of cancer care,” Hawasli explains. “We are proud and privileged to offer the best and latest treatments available anywhere right here in our community.”



Michele Bennett, M.D.

Providing High-Risk Pregnancy Care

In December 2021, LMH Health welcomed the Advanced Maternal and Fetal Care Clinic to the LMH Health Women’s Center. Having such a specialized clinic close to home has been made possible because of the newly founded strategic clinical relationship with The University of Kansas Health System.

“Since its implementation, the clinic has provided more than 400 patient appointments, almost all for Douglas County residents,” says Sheryle D’Amico, senior VP for strategy integration. “Patients are receiving collaborative care close to home, and they feel well taken care of.”

The advanced maternal and fetal care team offers leading-edge care for women and babies prior to, during and shortly after pregnancy. As the largest, most comprehensive team in Kansas and the region, their expertise, resources and outreach improve patient outcomes and comprehensive care.

“Everyone at this center has an innate dedication to making it easy for women to access extraordinary health care,” Bennett adds. “At the end of the day, we are people taking care of people.”

For more information about the LMH Health Women’s Center, visit lmh.org/healthy-woman. ▲



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