Emergency room ready to serve community

Physicians man St. Joseph's emergency room around the clock, providing top-notch care for trauma, cardiac and other emergency patients, Bernard C. Rudegeair, the medical center's president and chief executive officer, said.

The Level II emergency room was formerly St. Joseph's Ambulatory Care Unit. Several changes have taken place since the Pennsylvania Department of Health granted the medical center its emergency room license earlier this year.

Susquehanna Physicians Associates, a Wilkes-Barre-based group of emergency room physicians, staffs the emergency room. In addition, on-call specialists from Saint Joseph's medical staff are available to assist as needed, Rudegeair said.

One of the biggest changes is that patients who had been using Ambulatory Care as their primary health provider are now being referred to local family physicians for that care.

Another is billing for services. Because of contractual agreements with the physician's group, (Continued on Page 3)

St. Joe's offers lecture series for women

A year-long series of lectures covering a variety of women's issues ranging from sexual assault awareness to stress management to tips on dealing with premenstrual syndrome is being offered by Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center.

Complete details of the series, along with other women-related stories and information, is contained in the premier issue of WomanKind, a newsletter produced by the medical center.

About 10,000 copies of the newsletter were recently mailed, Sandra J. Shaker, director of medical imaging and women's care at St. Joseph's, said.


Seniors program launched

If you're 62 or older, "Senior Choice" is for you.

Senior Choice was designed by the staff of Hazleton Saint-Joseph Medical Center to meet the specific needs of today's senior citizens. Why? Because at St. Joes we're concerned with your health and the health of all senior citizens.

The program offers many benefits, services and programs. And best of all, there's no charge.

First, a quarterly newsletter aimed at senior health care will arrive in your mailbox four times a year. Updates about the program will be announced here.

Other benefits include:

- Free annual blood sugar, cholesterol and hearing screenings.
- Quarterly breakfast educational programs.
- Rapid registration at Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center.
- Free blood pressure testing throughout the year.
- Discount membership rates at the Saint Joseph Fitness Center.
- Saint Joe's exclusive "Insurance Hotline."

To receive your copy of the current issue of Senior Choice and learn more about registering for this valuable program, contact the medical center and we will gladly send it to you.

(Continued on Page 2)
Reforming America's health system

By Dr. James S. Todd

More than 35 million Americans have no health insurance. That is a national tragedy.

The American Medical Association wants to change that by reforming the U.S. health care system.

There are several considerations in reviewing various reform proposals:

- Beware of the quick fix. Repairing the system will be difficult. There is no magic fix, only thoughtful solutions.
- Patients must be free to choose their own physicians. A good patient-physician relationship results in better care.
- Build on what works well. The United States leads the world in medical education, research and technology. Reforming the system should not damage this proven infrastructure.
- The cure should not be worse than the disease. Misguided reforms would only compound existing problems. Reforms must allow everyone access to high quality medical care in the most cost-effective manner.

The AMA has developed "Health Access America," a proposal to ensure complete access and provide quality care to all Americans. Details of the proposal can be obtained by writing "Health Access America," American Medical Association, 515 N. State St., Dept. NU, Chicago, IL 60610.

James S. Todd, M.D., is a general surgeon and executive vice president of the American Medical Association.

Husband-wife physicians join Saint Joe's Satellites

Doctors Emilia and Adrian Secheresiu, former Freeland residents, will join the Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center Satellite system on March 1, it was announced by Jeffrey N. Sackrison, Vice President of Patient Care Services.

The husband and wife physicians are specialists in internal medicine and are returning to the region from Huber Heights, Ohio, where they were both affiliated with the Shiloh Physician Center, a division of Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton.

Dr. Adrian Secheresiu will become medical director of the Saint Joseph Freeland Satellite, while Dr. Emilia Secheresiu will assume the same responsibility at the Saint Joseph Weatherly Satellite.

Both Secheresius completed their internal medicine residencies at McKeep Hospital, where Dr. Adrian was chief resident. Dr. Emila also worked in the Fiberoptic Endoscopy Department of Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center, while Dr. Adrian was affiliated with the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Saint Joe's.

"We are delighted to welcome the Secheresius back to the Saint Joseph family," said Sackrison. "And they are looking forward to returning to this area to serve the communities of Freeland and Weatherly."

"We are fortunate to be able to bring these two excellent physicians back to our area, and both have expressed the desire to become active members of the communities they serve, " the Medical Center executive indicated.

Both are graduates of the Institute of Medicine and Pharmacy Faculty of General Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The Secheresius are both board eligible in internal medicine.

Residents of Romania, the Secheresius have been married since 1984. They are the parents of a 5-year-old son, Paul-Tudor.

The Saint Joseph Freeland Satellite is located on the Freeland-Drums Highway, while the Weatherly Satellite is located in the Weatherly Plaza.

*Women's (Continued from cover)

domestic violence and sexual assault awareness. Karen is education director of the Victims Resource Center in Wilkes-Barre.

In February, Linda Cobert and Joyce Stevens from First Concern Counseling Services led a lecture entitled "Family Relations and a Woman's Guide to Self Care."

On March 11, Dr. Phillip Domin, a specialist in the field of self-hypnosis, will present "Women Under Stress -- The Use of Hypnosis and Self-Relaxation." This lecture will explain how women can use self-hypnosis to deal with the stress they encounter in their daily lives.

For more information about the lecture series, or to register to attend a session, contact Paula Triano, R.N., at 459-4422. There are no charges to attend and refreshments will be served after each presentation.
Smoke car seats often to ensure safety

Don't take the safety of your child's car seat for granted. That seat, when properly used, could mean the difference between life and death for your child.

If you suspect any kind of problem with a safety seat, such as a loose buckle or parts, have it checked out, says the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

And call NHTSA's Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

NHTSA is responsible for reviewing all reports of safety problems in motor vehicles and items of equipment, including child safety seats.

By calling the hotline, you can help NHTSA determine if there are safety seats that should be recalled, and you can find out if there have been problems with a particular brand of seat.

Child safety seats are required by law for young passengers in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

St. Joe's gives a new infant car seat free to families of each child born at the medical center.

The Auto Safety Hotline, which is answered by trained operators Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., or by an automated message service 24-hours a day, provides a check on safety recalls of the seats.

NHTSA says the hotline is the best way for motorists to report possible defects in equipment that could cause serious problems for others.

NHTSA also urges consumers to register car seats with manufacturers. Complete and mail the registration form provided with the seat when it is purchased new.

Surgeons using lasers for head-neck surgery

Just a few years ago, most people considered lasers to be the stuff of science fiction writers. Today, they are used for all kinds of medical purposes.

That doesn't mean lasers are useful for every medical problem. Sometimes they have distinct advantages, while in other cases they only mean additional time and expense.

L-A-S-E-R is an acronym for Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. An electronic process creates a concentrated beam of light that is all one wavelength (one color of the spectrum) and has special properties.

Head and neck surgery (otolaryngology) uses carbon dioxide, neodymium YAG, tunable dye, KTP and argon lasers.

Surgeons use lasers because the finely focused beam of light improves precision and reduces bleeding by coagulating blood vessels as they cut tissue. Lasers can be aimed down narrow passages or sent down fiber-optic channels in endoscopes to reach areas that are otherwise inaccessible.

They also can reduce pain, cut recovery times and allow many procedures to be done on an outpatient basis.

Different surgical procedures call for the use of different types of lasers. For instance, a surgeon might use yellow laser light, which is absorbed by the red blood cells of a birthmark called a "portwine stain," to selectively destroy the birthmark without affecting surrounding skin cells.

Otolaryngologists use laser systems to excise skin tumors, cancers, birthmarks and other disorders of the head and neck. Problems of the voice box, throat, mouth, nose and ear may be amenable to laser treatment.

A knowledgeable physician should be able to advise whether use of a laser may offer an advantage in the treatment of a specific problem.

St. Joseph's was recently honored by the Hazleton Community Ambulance Association with one of its annual service awards.

Medical Center President Bernard C. Rudegeair, right, accepts the award from Association Secretary Raymond Whitenight.

**New ICU visiting hours announced**

New visiting hours for families of patients in the Intensive Care Unit of Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center took effect Dec. 1.

Visiting is permitted for up to 30 minutes from 1 to 3 p.m., 4 to 6 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.

The change was made to allow sufficient time for families to visit and allow for a better continuity of nursing care.

**Saint Joe's adds new equipment to stress lab**

Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center has added sophisticated new echo equipment to its Cardiac Stress Lab, which will greatly aid physicians in diagnosing an individual's potential heart problems. Saint Joseph is the only hospital in the Hazleton area to make use of this new technology in its cardiac care program.

The addition of the computerized stress echo equipment allows doctors to obtain a high resolution digital picture of ultrasound imaging obtained during treadmill, bicycle and pharmacologic stress testing. A high-technology imaging device is used throughout the process. The images can also be transferred to videotape or computer diskette.

The images allow greater flexibility for integration and comparison, enhanced communication of the diagnostic information to referring physicians, and better communication from the stress lab to other locations in the hospital and physicians office. It also allows for the generation of full reports, based on the test results.

"In today's cost-conscious medical environment, it is important to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions," said Mary T. Alimecco,R.N., cardiac evaluation supervisor at the medical center. "Substantial savings can be realized by identifying patients who can be treated safely as outpatients," said Cardiologists Doctors Francisco Gazek, Chandra Mohan and Myung Yoon noted the new equipment greatly improves the images needed to make accurate diagnosis. "Echocardiography can be used as a non-invasive test in the emergency room to confirm or rule out suspected heart attacks," Dr. Gazek said.

The addition of the equipment demonstrates Saint Joseph's commitment to providing the latest in cardiac care technology to the Hazleton area.

In addition to this new diagnostic equipment, Saint Joseph also provides area residents the services of the only cardiac rehabilitation program in Greater Hazleton, which is offered through its Rehabilitation and Fitness Center.