

## From the Chair of Pediatrics

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The Ochsner Health System has identified Pediatrics as one of its Destination Centers of Excellence as part of a larger strategy to expand Ochsner's role as a destination center for all complex medical and surgical care in the region. To support that goal, we have embarked on an aggressive growth program in Pediatrics that involves significant investments in people, facilities, and programs.

The physicians and other healthcare professionals who care for children are collectively referred to as Ochsner for Children. More than 80 physicians practice in all areas of Pediatrics, ranging from primary pediatric care provided in multiple sites throughout the region to care for patients with the most complex cases. Our pediatric specialists cover the full range of medical and surgical conditions, including bone marrow transplant, heart and liver transplants, and even in utero surgery for spinal cord defects.

Our pediatric medical and surgical subspecialty group has expanded significantly during the last 3 years, and we expect to increase that growth during the next 12 months to allow us to provide access to specialists in multiple sites throughout the region. We are already seeing many pediatric specialty patients in Slidell, Raceland, and Cov-

ington. We will soon expand access in Covington and expect to provide access in more sites throughout the state as the Ochsner Health Network grows and matures.

In terms of facilities growth, the next 6-18 months will see the expansion of primary care Pediatrics with new clinic sites throughout the metropolitan New Orleans area. The Ochsner Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) is the only PICU in the region with in-house staff coverage 24 hours per day. An expansion of the PICU will be completed in early 2016 that will almost double the size of our current PICU. We will also soon open two bone marrow transplant rooms for our bone marrow transplant patients. Another expansion will more than double our current Pediatrics Emergency Department capacity.

Programwise, we are in the early stages of developing a Comprehensive Child Development Center and a Pediatric Rehabilitation Unit that will be run by trained pediatric physical medicine and rehabilitation physicians. And finally, we plan to build a regional referral center for the most complex pediatric medical and surgical patients.

Our goals are high, but we are well on our way to making Ochsner a destination center for pediatric patients.