



# overview

## Women's Health Overview

## Work-Life Resiliency

In the last two years out of complete necessity, I have studied Professional Burnout.

After experiencing clinical burnout myself and nearly quitting the practice of medicine, I knew I needed to get a handle on my professional and work-life integration. I don't use the term "work-life balance" anymore; I recognized that the 10-year quest for "balance" left me empty, defeated and more stressed than ever.

So this is what I did: I stopped trying to be a "doctor" at work and a "mother" at home. I am both. All the time. And they are integrated. I stopped worrying that if I talked to my son about his homework over the phone at work, and someone heard me, they wouldn't think I was serious about my job because I am a woman "momming" at work. I stopped trying to hide in my bedroom to answer a consult at home or help someone who needed me at the hospital on the sidelines of the

soccer field. I just embraced that I was both of those things, and people who respected me would have to as well.

I can tell you that burnout, in any profession, will steal your empathy and your innovation and, well, YOU. You will feel less engaged, less motivated, physically and emotionally exhausted, and start to withdraw. It is a dangerous path and can lead to very costly problems for individuals, institutions, and families. Over 50% of physicians report burnout; and the suicide rate is 1.5-2.3 times higher in male and female physicians than the general population. This is a real problem, and one I try and address in my little area of the world.

It is important to leave work and be a sister, a friend, a dad. It is important to shut down devices and decompress and connect with your loved ones. I'm not promoting a 24/7 work life. I am promoting

see resiliency pg 4

## What is Burnout?

Burnout is a state of chronic stress over a long period of time that leads to:

- physical and emotional exhaustion
- cynicism and detachment
- feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment

Each of the three areas described above is characterized by certain signs and symptoms. The earlier you recognize the signs, the better able you will be to avoid burnout. Here are just a few: insomnia, anxiety, increased illness, forgetfulness, pessimism, isolation, hopelessness, and so on. For a complete list and for helpful resources, visit [www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com).

Content by Sherrie Bourg Carter, PsyD



# From the chairman

In this current issue of our newsletter there are two items that I wish to highlight. Both emphasize the importance of individuals who work tirelessly to improve the health of our patients. First, I take this opportunity to celebrate the work-life of a long-time member of our Olson Center family, Linda Lemon. Linda began working in our department over 40 years ago and provided social work services to our patients. She dealt professionally with a myriad of needs. These ranged from assistance in obtaining Medicaid coverage for patients in our Maternal Care Program to identifying community resources for those who desperately needed them. Long before it was highlighted in medical and public health literature she recognized that all the high-technology care in the world could not compete with the social determinants of health outcomes. Health care disparities exist today but people like Linda work diligently to close these gaps. She kept us honest about our programs and how they would be perceived by the community. The number of lives she has touched is measured in the thousands. We should all strive to make similar impacts. Linda you will be missed and we hope you enjoy your retirement.

Second, each year the Olson Center is a sponsor for the Omaha Women's Health and Wellness Conference. One of the keynote speakers, Sasha Shillcutt, MD is a superb Cardiac Anesthesiologist. She speaks of resiliency and has a national following for her work with physician burnout. Patients and health care workers alike are bombarded with more information and external stimuli than we can hope to process. Achieving appropriate work-life balance is becoming more difficult. Technology has improved our ability to remain connected with the human colony of which we are a part. Some of these enrich our lives and others are noxious stimuli that drain us of energy. We hope that the conference in general and Dr. Shillcutt's talk in particular energize those who attend.

**Carl V. Smith, MD, FACOG**  
Chairman  
Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology  
College of Medicine  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

## overview

### Women's Health Overview

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# research news

## Challenging Thoughts on the Making of the Reproductive Tract

How the physical differences between the sexes develop is a fascinating process. Every embryo, regardless of its sex, contains both male (XY) and female (XX) primitive reproductive tracts prior to developing into the male or female fetus. In order for mammals to end up with the reproductive tract of one sex after birth, the other tract has to disintegrate. The first important stage in sex determination occurs during fetal life, when the male-determining Y chromosome expresses a gene called sex determining region Y (SRY), which acts on the primitive reproductive tract to initiate the formation of the testis (instead of ovary). Research studies performed over 60 years ago provide evidence that the development of male-specific structures is stimulated by factors produced from the emerging testis, namely androgens and anti-Müllerian hormone (AMH). The general idea is that androgens produced by embryonic testes, promote the survival of the male reproductive tract and AMH causes the regression of Müllerian ducts in the male embryo that

would otherwise form the uterus and fallopian tubes of the female reproductive tract. Mutations in the SRY gene give rise to XY females and mutations in the AMH genes result in persistent Müllerian duct syndrome in males.

Very recent research challenges the long-standing belief that formation of female embryos occurs by a default scenario in which the absence of androgens, or male hormones, in female embryos results in the breakdown of the male reproductive tract. Humphrey Yao, PhD of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences has demonstrated that female embryos actively promote the elimination of the male tract through the action of a protein called COUP-TFII. This research published August 18, 2017 in the journal *Science* challenges the “female by default” theory. Using mice, researchers found that female mouse embryos without this factor retained male reproductive tracts, independently of androgen action and displayed both male and female ducts. The study suggests that

COUP-TFII has to be present to block the growth of male reproductive tracts. Without this factor, the mice are born intersex, or having both male and female reproductive tracts. This research has important implications for understanding the potential causes of birth defects of the reproductive system that lead to disorders of sexual development.

We are socially conditioned to view sex as male or female, but determination of biological sex is amazingly complex as shown by these recent findings. Sex determination involves not only anatomy but an intricate sequence of events controlled by genetic and chemical factors. An article in the September 2017 issue of the journal *Scientific American* by Amanda Montañez provides an overview of several possibilities when sexual development follows an atypical trajectory. Research opens the pathway for a more complete understanding of sexual development.

**Contributed by John S. Davis, PhD**  
UNMC Department of Ob/Gyn

resiliency [continued from pg 1](#)

embracing the fact you are ONE. One person who is many things. And it is okay to be all of yourself, at all times. My patients and my work colleagues deserve my BEST self; that person is a mom, a wife, and a friend.

When I stopped trying to separate everything, it took a huge amount of pressure off of me professionally. I don't apologize when I am at work and my child needs me. I also don't apologize when I am at home and a patient does. And what I have found is that I have developed resilience and respect from my colleagues by being fully ME.

I now speak professionally on burnout and overcoming professional failure. I help others develop skills and learn how to navigate integration of their work and personal life. Let's stop judging people; rather let's encourage them to be their whole selves. Not half and half, but whole."

It is where freedom lives.

*To learn more about work-life resiliency and to hear Dr. Shillcutt speak, please plan on attending the 20th annual Omaha Women's Health & Wellness Conference on Oct 6. Registration information is on page 5.*

**Contributed by Sasha Shillcutt, MD**

*UNMC Department of Anesthesiology*

## Olson Center High-Risk Obstetrics Team says Farewell and Hello

The Olson Center Maternal-Fetal Medicine division continues to be a leader in high-risk obstetrics for the greater Nebraska and Western Iowa region. With that in mind, the division announces the addition of Dr. Heather Said. Along with her background, experience, and passion for high-risk obstetrics, Dr. Said is a great addition to the Olson Center and to our community's pregnancy care! Welcome back Dr. Said!

Dr. Paul Tomich retires from the division in September after caring for women for over 40 years. Dr. Tomich offered more than great care and expertise, he offered an infectious smile, positive attitude and a sense of comfort and personal attention toward his patients and their families. We wish him and his family all the best and offer our thanks for his devotion and investment.



**Paul Tomich, MD**



**Heather Said, DO**

Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Medical Degree - Des Moines University  
College of Osteopathic Medicine, Des Moines, IA

Residency - Obstetrics & Gynecology,  
University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, NE

Fellowship - Maternal Fetal Medicine,  
Saint Louis University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO

**Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Olson Center for Women's Health is to provide a national comprehensive health science center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Based in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the center enables UNMC to make distinctive strides in education, research, and service through innovative approaches to women's health issues.

**Want More Information?**

Visit our website: [OlsonCenter.com](http://OlsonCenter.com)

Learn more about our healthcare providers, services, and programs available at the Olson Center for Women's Health. Our website also offers women's health information. Here are a few topics:

- Breastfeeding
- Breast Health & Disease
- Cardiovascular Health
- Gastrointestinal Health
- Gynecologic Health
- Reproductive Endocrinology/Infertility
- Pregnancy
- Wellness
- Incontinence

**Newsletter Committee**

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20<sup>th</sup>  
**Omaha Women's**  
**Health & Wellness Conference**

Friday, October 6, 2017  
 La Vista Conference Center



**2017 Conference Agenda**

- 8:00 AM Registration, Health Fair & Screenings
- 8:50 AM Welcome & Opening Session
- 9:00 AM Breakfast Keynote: Sasha Shillcutt, MD  
 "In Between Failure: Overcoming Adversities to Achieve Success"
- 10:30 AM Refreshment Break, Health Fair, Sponsor Exhibits & Screenings
- 11:00 AM General Session: Julie Masters, PhD - Who Knew it was a Mrs. Smith's Pie? The Value of Communication Amongst Family Members as Parents Age"
- 12:00 PM Lunch and Sponsor Exhibits
- 12:30 PM Luncheon Keynote: JoAnn Eickhoff-Shemek, PhD  
 "Advancing Women's Health the Next 20 Years: Shifting the Emphasis to Wellness"
- 1:30 PM Breakout Session (choose 1, 2, or 3)
  - 1. Selecting a Personal Fitness Trainer or Wellness Coach: Important Factors to Consider - JoAnn Eickhoff-Shemek, PhD
  - 2. Addiction: Help is on the Horizon - Alëna Balasanova, MD
  - 3. Self-Care is NOT Selfish: Creative Tools for Transforming Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma - Kay Glidden, MD & Beth Reynolds, BS
- 2:30 PM Refreshment Break and Sponsor Exhibits
- 3:00 PM Breakout Session (choose 4, 5, or 6)
  - 4. Keep Calm and Carry On: Dealing with Difficult Patients and Families Susan Needham, RN, BSN
  - 5. Emotional Eating: How to Make Peace with Food & Feelings - Kimberly Vacek, PhD
  - 6. Family Caregivers: Who We Are and How We Can Take Care of Ourselves While Caring for Others - Rachele Sledge, MSW
- 4:10 PM Closing Session: Cheryl Harriman - "Mother of Resilience"  
 Evaluations & Door Prizes
- 4:30 PM Adjourn

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_ RN/LPN License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**First Breakout Session** (choose one) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_    **Second Breakout Session** (choose one) 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_

Registration is \$59. (Olson Wellness Exchange (OWE) members may receive a \$5 discount off the general registration fee). Fee includes breakfast, lunch, lectures and exhibits. **No refunds after Sept. 29.** For more information about the conference or to become an OWE member, please contact the Olson Center for Women's Health at (402) 559-6345. Nursing credit is an additional \$30.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing Continuing Nursing Education is accredited with distinction as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. This activity is provided for 5.25 contact hours.  
 Course ID: 17OL039

Make check or money order to: **University of Nebraska Medical Center**

Mail check and registration form to:  
 Omaha Women's Health & Wellness Conference  
 Olson Center for Women's Health  
 989450 Nebraska Medical Center  
 Omaha, NE 68198-9450

Registration Fee	\$59
OWE Member	- \$5
Nursing Credit	+ \$30
TSH	+ \$7
Lipid, Glucose, CBC	+ \$17
Flu Vaccine	+ \$20
Total =	_____

**You may register online with a credit card.** Go to [OmahaWomensHealthandWellness.com](http://OmahaWomensHealthandWellness.com). Please note, there is a 2.75% service fee if you pay with a credit card.

**Note:** The health screenings listed below require preregistration. Place an "X" by the health screenings that you would like to participate in. You will receive a letter in the mail confirming your registration and indicating your appointment time for these screenings.

Lipid, Glucose, CBC \$17 \_\_\_ (includes lipid panel, glucose, complete blood count)    TSH for thyroid \$7 \_\_\_

Quadrivalent Fluarix Flu Vaccine \$20 \_\_\_ (What is quadrivalent Fluarix flu vaccine? The quadrivalent flu vaccine is designed to protect against four different flu viruses; two influenza A viruses and two influenza B viruses.)

Date of birth (please provide if having blood work performed) \_\_\_\_\_



## OLSON CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

[olsoncenter.com](http://olsoncenter.com)

### *in the news*

#### **Farewell to Linda Lemon**

In July, Linda Lemon retired after 40+ years as a social worker at the Olson Center. Linda touched so many lives and made a positive and lasting difference to so many. She will be missed greatly. Thank you Linda!

#### **Olson Center Celebrates 10 Years!**

October 17, 2007 marked the official grand opening of what is now today the Olson Center. And what better way to celebrate than to do some updates and a few renovations to our clinic in the coming year. We would like

to thank our benefactors the Olson family for their continued support and to our staff and providers for their loyalty and dedication. Thank you!

#### **Register today for the Omaha Women's Health & Wellness Conference!**

This year's theme is 'Extinguishing the Flames of Burnout and Stress to Achieve Life's Balance.' Invite a friend, sister or mom and make it a girl's day. Sponsor exhibit spaces are available.

[www.OmahaWomensHealthandWellness.com](http://www.OmahaWomensHealthandWellness.com)  
402.559.6345

### *in this issue*

#### **page 1** Work-Life Resiliency

Healthy professional work-life integration.

#### **page 3** Research News

Thoughts on the reproductive tract.

#### **page 5** Omaha Women's Health & Wellness Conference

Registration information for you!

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