

REFLECTING ON A YEAR OF GROWTH AND ACCOMPLISHMENT

Mojtaba Olyaei, MD, director of the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Motility, frequently says it is not only an honor, but also a duty, to train the next generation of physicians. These will be the clinicians who care for him, his family and the next generation. This point was brought home when one of his former fellows performed his last colonoscopy.

He wouldn't have had it any other way.

"It's nice to see that as a result of their education, they've become very fine doctors, who you would trust with your own care and that of your loved ones," said Olyaei, who received the Norton J. Greenberger distinguished professorship in 2012.

For this reason, he prides himself on the quality of the division's fellowships, noting that third-year fellows perform more procedures and see more complicated patients compared to GI fellowships at most other academic medical centers.

In 2010, Olyaei created a fourth-year fellowship, enabling fellows to gain experience in complex procedures such as endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) and advanced procedures, including stenting for palliative cancer patients and endoscopic ultrasound and endoscopic mucosal resections.

KU's liver transplant program has expanded to become the largest in the region, and in 2012 doctors carried out the program's 1000th transplant.

The division's accomplishments also include a number 20 ranking by *U.S. News and World Report*; the scorecard gave the program the highest rating possible for advanced technologies and patient outcomes.

The division is one of few sites to perform endoscopic ultrasounds for staging of cancer. The volume of patients receiving the procedure has increased twofold to 1000 since it began in 2004, says Olyaei.

With a longitudinal commitment to providing outstanding care for patients with complex gastrointestinal and liver diseases, the division is highly committed to clinical and outcomes research.

Current research projects include investigating:

- Acute liver failure
- Therapeutic approaches for hepatitis C/alcohol induced liver disease and study of fatty liver disease
- A study that collects bile duct cells looking for cancer markers in blood, and bile
- Studies on the treatment of Barrett's Esophagus
- Trial of new medications for hepatitis C and B, and hepatic encephalopathy
- Investigation of RalA and RAS mesothelioma in GI malignancies
- A retrospective analysis of hydrogen breath test studies of bacterial overgrowth

The division has also expanded

operations, and is now offering services at The University of Kansas Hospital's Indian Creek Campus in Overland Park. Five faculty members from the GI Division provide care three days a week.

The growth and excellence exhibited by the division in patient care, research and fellowship education reflects Olyaei's passion for advancing his profession. It is Olyaei's strong belief that, "the opportunity to improve outcomes for current and future patients is the fuel that drives our faculty each and every day here in the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Motility."



Mojtaba Olyaei, MD