



Photograph by Tim O'Brien

Left: Performing robotic-assisted surgery is one of the many skills Catrina Crisp MD has acquired during her urogynecology fellowship training.

ELITE PROGRAM TRAINS NEXT GENERATION OF EXPERTS IN FEMALE PELVIC PROBLEMS

DEFYING Gravity



Blame it on gravity. Or maybe on eight pregnancies. At age 68, Mary Jo Roe figures that both contributed to the gradual failure of a bladder repair performed years ago.



The thought of spending her retirement years preoccupied with urinary incontinence and related bowel dysfunction was making her increasingly uncomfortable.

“My husband and I are very active people,” Roe comments. “Thinking of wearing a diaper or being embarrassed in public was not a happy thing.”



A procedure in 2010 to fix the problem had not been successful. When a friend recommended that she see Urogynecologist Steve Kleeman MD (left), she made an appointment.

Roe anticipated Dr. Kleeman’s expertise in treating conditions of the female pelvic and reproductive organs. What she didn’t expect was the care of an entire team of experts, including Dr. Kleeman’s partner Rachel Pauls MD, plus three “fellows.” The fellows are medical doctors who have completed a four-year obstetrics/gynecology residency and are pursuing a three-year fellowship to gain a higher level of expertise in treating urogynecologic conditions such as:

- ☞ urinary incontinence
- ☞ pelvic support problems
- ☞ female sexual disorders
- ☞ bladder pain
- ☞ pelvic pain
- ☞ bladder emptying disorders

Left: Since her successful surgery to cure urinary incontinence and related bowel dysfunction, Mary Jo Roe has made the most of opportunities to be active, including regular Pilates workouts.

Catrina Crisp MD, who is in her third year of the urogynecology fellowship, says, “I’ve known I wanted to do this since I was first exposed to it as a third-year medical student.

“I really try to have a connection with every patient. They are opening up and discussing medical issues that are very personal. I want all of my patients to feel comfortable talking with me about these issues,” she explains.

“I help them understand how common their condition is and that many women suffer from similar issues. I also want them to know that the majority of the time, we can make them better. We can make their life ‘normal’ again.”

Roe expresses her satisfaction not only with Dr. Kleeman, but with the fellows who assisted him before, during and after her surgery. “In the office, they were so knowledgeable, and postoperatively they answered every question I had,” Roe explains. “It’s not that Dr. Kleeman didn’t take the time to explain things – I never felt rushed. I looked at having the fellows there as getting extra care.”

Dr. Kleeman, program director of the fellowship, says having fellows train at Good Samaritan provides numerous benefits to patients. “The fellows are an extension of me, giving me an extra set of eyes and ears to evaluate patients. They bring knowledge and expertise from other institutions. In addition, any research we do is enhanced by having an active fellowship program. The fellows are the ones who design and implement research projects that affect care in our hospital, around the country and around the world.”

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Urogynecology Fellow Catrina Crisp MD spends time with patient Mary Jo Roe to review instructions for recovery at home following surgery for bladder and pelvic repair.

Photograph by Tim O'Brien

During their third year, fellows see their own patients in the Good Samaritan Faculty Medical Center under the direction of Drs. Kleeman and Pauls. The Center provides affordable care for those with little or no insurance.

Dr. Crisp applied to Good Samaritan's program because "it has a reputation for being one of the most elite programs in the country," she says. "There's a high surgery volume with a good research program. And the doctors are passionate about what they do."

Roe's surgery to repair her fallen bladder was performed with robotic-assisted technology by Dr. Kleeman and his team of fellows. "They repaired my whole pelvic area through five small incisions in my abdomen," Roe marvels.

"It's been life-changing," she continues. "I'm not up going to the bathroom two to three times a night." Roe is thrilled to be walking, golfing and going to Pilates class without interruption.

"I'm as close to being new as I can imagine for my age," Roe says. "I'm feeling very good about it."



ADVANCED MEDICAL TRAINING FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

Women coming to Good Samaritan for treatment benefit from the knowledge-seeking environment created by residents and fellows who are mastering their women's health specialties.

Fellowship in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery

Established in 1993

PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Steve Kleeman MD, urogynecologist

CLINICAL RESEARCH DIRECTOR:

Rachel Pauls MD, urogynecologist

- One of about 40 urogynecology programs in the U.S.
- Three-year program fully funded by Good Samaritan Graduate Medical Education
- One fellow selected per year
- In the past year, the department has made 12 research presentations internationally, from Lisbon, Portugal, to Toronto, Ontario, and nationally, from Texas to Washington D.C. to California. Four of these won top awards

Residency in Obstetrics/Gynecology

Established in 1959; combined with Bethesda North Hospital's program in 2004

MEDICAL DIRECTOR:

Steven Johnson MD, obstetrician/gynecologist

- Four-year program
- Eight residents selected per year for a four-year program
- Hundreds of local obstetrician/gynecologists have been trained in the program
- Funded by government programs as well as TriHealth Graduate Medical Education