



Certified Nurse Anesthetist Francis Field, CRNA, and UPMC Passavant Anesthesiologist Charles Lin, MD, MSc, are leading groundbreaking workshops to help health care providers prepare for unanticipated complications in patient care.

Passavant Hospital Foundation supports innovative new workshop developed by UPMC anesthesiologist

Creating something out of nothing has always been a vital part of who Charles Lin, MD, MSc, is.

As an undergrad at Columbia University, he launched a nursing volunteer program on campus, providing new opportunities for students to volunteer in local nursing homes. In 2022, he developed a monitor to improve operating room safety.

His latest creation is a simulator-based workshop that allows health care professionals to hone their skill of

effectively establishing emergency airways in high-risk patients while in a disruptive environment, such as a busy operating room. Although the procedure may be rare, it can mean the difference between life and death for a patient.

“Patients stop breathing when under anesthesia, so doctors only have a couple of minutes to insert a breathing tube through the nose or mouth. The vast majority of time, the procedure is routine and everything goes smoothly,” Dr. Lin explained.

In rare instances, however, complications can arise in which the breathing tube cannot be properly established. In times past, a surgeon would have to be summoned in these circumstances to make a tiny incision into the trachea so the breathing tube could be inserted through the throat. Dr. Lin’s workshop is an opportunity for anesthesiologists to refresh, practice and hone their surgical skill so they can successfully perform a similar procedure themselves, saving

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critical time and thus, quite possibly, a patient's life.

"Everyone learns the technique during their medical training, but because these situations are uncommon, the skill requires some refreshing and practice from time to time," Dr. Lin said.

The workshop serves as that refresher, allowing doctors to remain confident of their abilities when and if the need for it arises unexpectedly.

The workshop, titled "Scalpel-Bougie Front of Neck Access Workshop," is a 15-minute-long session. Participants watch a short video of the procedure, in which the incision is made in a membrane in the trachea, between the thyroid cartilage and cricoid cartilage of the larynx. Participants then step up to a simulator, where an instructor demonstrates the technique on a specialized manikin, followed by participants performing the task themselves, under the instructor's supervision.

Dr. Lin, an anesthesiologist, partnered with John O'Donnell, DrPH, CRNA, director of the nurse anesthesia program at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, to develop the workshop. They recommend that participants repeat the workshop yearly in order to retain their skills and confidence level.



Dr. Charles Lin observes a nurse anesthetist student as he performs a scalpel-bougie surgical airway procedure on a simulated patient at one of Dr. Lin's workshops at UPMC Passavant.



"As Director of Quality Improvement for the Department of Anesthesiology at UPMC Passavant, I'm focused on patient safety," Dr. Lin said. "These workshops fall in line with that. They elevate patient safety."

Though primarily developed by anesthesia providers for other anesthesia providers, the workshop has found popularity and value among students and physicians from other medical disciplines, as well.

Michael Barton, MD, chief of emergency services at UPMC Passavant, attended the workshop in January. "(It) provided hands-on learning of a simple and effective method of performing a cricothyroidotomy so an emergency medicine physician will be able to perform this life-saving procedure without hesitation," he said.

Following two years of planning, development, and pilot programs, Dr. Lin conducted his first workshop in March 2023. His latest workshops were held at UPMC Passavant during the first two months of 2025. This spring, a "Train the Trainers" session will be conducted to teach clinicians from other UPMC hospitals how to conduct the workshop at their affiliated facilities, including UPMC Magee-Womens, UPMC Shadyside, UPMC Mercy, UPMC Presbyterian, and more. Dr. Lin is confident he will reach more than 400 anesthesia providers, plus additional doctors from across other medical departments and disciplines throughout the UPMC system.

The workshops may also spread beyond the UPMC system as Dr. Lin is currently collaborating with a colleague at WVU Medicine who is eager to bring the workshops to her state.

Passavant Hospital Foundation was one of the first to support Dr. Lin's efforts through a Foundation grant.

"We are always thrilled to help fund new, innovative ideas that help patients achieve the best possible health outcomes," said Passavant Hospital Foundation President Anthony R. Savannah. "Simply put, Dr. Lin's workshops will save lives." ■

Dr. Lin's team of clinicians helping to lead the workshops at UPMC Passavant include Carl Daltner, MD, and Daniel Mandell, MD (far left), Francis Feld, CRNA, and Wende Goncz, DO (near right). Charles Lin, MD, MSc, is pictured in the middle.



Passavant Hospital Auxiliary supports local doctors, patients

Over the past 60 years, the Passavant Hospital Auxiliary has raised and donated more than \$4 million to help make UPMC Passavant the world-class hospital it is today. The Auxiliary works in partnership with Passavant Hospital Foundation to help fund projects that benefit patients, their families, and those who care for them.



Passavant Hospital Auxiliary officers, pictured left to right: Carol Koontz, President; Rita Jastrebski, Vice President; Janese Abbott, Secretary; and Debbie Marziano, Treasurer

In 2024, the auxiliary provided nearly \$60,000 for seven different department grants at UPMC Passavant. One of those grants helped the Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine obtain a Glidescope Video Laryngoscope, the most comprehensive airway visualization system for laryngoscopy, bronchoscopy and dual-view

airway procedures. Another grant helped the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at UPMC Passavant acquire Photobiomodulation (PBM) Laser Therapy, a non-invasive treatment to stimulate cells and promote healing. ■



Bridge to Hope support group welcomes new members

One of the country's most innovative models for a support group is Bridge to Hope, a free, weekly educational and support program that is peer-led and



consists of members who have one specific experience in common: they all have a loved one struggling with a substance abuse disorder. The group focuses on its members' shared ideas, experiences, hopes, and successes.

As a Passavant Hospital Foundation outreach initiative, the program has served more than 5,000 local families since it began in 1999. Meetings are held online at 7 p.m. during the first three Wednesdays of the month for the convenience and ability to serve people living outside the immediate area; the

last Wednesday of each month is held in person at the Passavant Hospital Foundation Conference Center at Cumberland Woods Village and features experts who address topics relevant to substance abuse disorders and the importance of each family member's self care.

Another free, Foundation-sponsored support group, Beyond Bridge to Hope, addresses the needs of family members who have experienced the death of a loved one due to drug or alcohol abuse. This group is led by a certified grief counselor and meets in person on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Passavant Hospital Foundation Conference Center.

For details, call 412-748-6640 or go to passavanthospitalfoundation.org/Bridge-to-Hope. ■



◀ Scan this code to learn more about Passavant Hospital Foundation!



Passavant Hospital Foundation awarded several grants in 2024

Passavant Hospital Foundation continues to align itself with initiatives in McCandless and Cranberry Townships supporting the patients of UPMC Passavant, patients' families, hospital staff, and the community. In 2024, the Foundation supported multiple Community Initiative Grants totaling \$39,996, which were awarded to:

- Anchorpoint Counseling Ministries to support their bereavement and mental health groups
- Elfinwild Volunteer Fire Company for the need of three Stop-The-Bleed kits
- Kearns Spirituality Center to support their Comfort & Hospitality Program
- MHY Family Services (formerly the Mars Home for Youth) to help build stronger families through their MST-Psych Family Support Program
- North Hills Community Outreach to help provide food for low-income families and older adults
- Orchardview Stables to assist with their therapeutic sessions for veterans and first responder
- Ross/West View EMS to support the need of an IV Medication pump
- Variety the Children's Charity to support the need of two strollers for local families who have children with disability needs
- Butler County Family YMCA to support their automated external defibrillator (AED) needs

Sign up for a free health seminar!



Passavant Hospital Foundation partners with UPMC Passavant to provide a variety of health and wellness education programs that are free and open to all. Each interactive class is led by an expert in the field who provides up-to-date medical information in terms people of all ages can understand. Registration is required at PassavantHospitalFoundation.org or 412-748-6641.

Liver Lesions Benign and Malignant: A Multi-disciplinary Approach to Care

Tues., Mar. 18 • 6:00 – 7:30 PM • Assembly Hall at UPMC Passavant
William P. Hogle, MSN, RN, OCN, will discuss common liver lesions and explain treatment options and care.

Jaw Pain – Common Causes and Treatments

Thurs., Mar. 27 • 6:00 – 7:00 PM • Northland Public Library
Jaw pain, common causes and pathology will be discussed, along with other symptoms that can often be associated with jaw pain. Physical therapy interventions will also be reviewed. Natalie Novak, PT, DPT, OCS, of UPMC Rehabilitation Institute, will lead this seminar.

What If I'm Not Ready for Surgery? Exploring Conservative Options to Treat Hip and Knee Pain

Tues., Apr. 15 • 6:00 – 7:30 PM • Assembly Hall at UPMC Passavant
With more than 40 years of experience as an orthopedic surgeon, William D. Abraham, MD, offers diagnosis and development of non-surgical treatment plans for patients at Tri Rivers Conservative Care Clinic. If you're experiencing chronic hip or knee pain but are not ready to undergo joint surgery, come learn about alternatives that may align with your goals.

Everything You Need to Know About Fasting

Thurs., Apr. 24 • 6:00 – 7:00 PM • Northland Public Library
Jennifer Sotirake, RD, LDN, CDCES, Dietitian Advanced Practitioner/ Diabetes Care and Education Specialist at UPMC Passavant will discuss the growing popularity of intermittent fasting as a tool for weight management and health benefits. Come learn if intermittent fasting is right for you.

Management of Thyroid Nodules

Tues., May 20 • 6:00 – 7:30 PM • Assembly Hall at UPMC Passavant
Mark Kubik, MD, will discuss the impact of newly evolving molecular diagnostics and new minimally invasive approaches in thyroid pathology.

Gardening Thyme: Avoid Aches and Pains While Gardening

Thurs., May 22 • 6:00 – 7:00 PM • Northland Public Library
Join our physical therapist to discuss how to continue enjoying gardening with less stress and pain to your body. Learn what best tools to use and proper lifting techniques. This class is led by Taylor Docherty, PT, DPT, OCS, CSCS, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute.

SAVE THE DATES

hit our goal of raising \$8,000 to support our Cancer Care Fund, which helps qualified UPMC Passavant oncology patients afford medicine, food, shelter, and transportation during their treatment. Contact Passavant Hospital Foundation Development Coordinator Amanda French at 412-748-6641 or posaaa@upmc.edu.

8 at the **North Park Pool Loop**. The third annual Family 5K Wellness Run/Walk and Kids' Fun Run will be held on Saturday, August 9 at **UPMC Passavant Sportsplex at Graham Park in Cranberry Township**.

MAR 30 **National Doctor's Day**
Honor your favorite doctor by sending a note or making a contribution in his or her name to Passavant Hospital Foundation.

JUNE 2 **Annual Golf Outing**
Enjoy a day on the links at **Treesdale Golf and Country Club** while helping Passavant Hospital Foundation raise money for its mission.

SEPT 18 **Legacy of Caring Gala**
Celebrate a Legacy of Caring on Thursday, September 18 at the **DoubleTree by Hilton, Pittsburgh-Cranberry**.

MAY 3-4 **Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon**
Join the Passavant Hospital Foundation Fundraising Team and help us

AUG 8, 9 **4K and 8K Run/Walk Events**
Passavant Hospital Foundation's annual 4K and 8K Run/Walk will take place on Friday evening, August

OCT 24 **Annual Purse & Tool Bash**
Join us virtually on Facebook Live and Microsoft Teams on Friday, October 24 to bid on a vast array of power tools and designer purses, handbags and backpacks!

For details on all our upcoming events, go to PassavantHospitalFoundation.org/Events



PASSAVANT HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

9100 BABCOCK BLVD, PITTSBURGH, PA 15237
412-748-6640 • PASSAVANTHOSPITALFOUNDATION.ORG

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