

ON THE CUTTING EDGE



The Power of Difference

Gender Confirmation Surgery at OHSU | **PAGE 8**

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The Power of Difference

Gender Confirmation Surgery at OHSU



JUST UNDER A YEAR AGO, in July 2016, **Jens Berli, M.D.**, joined the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery as its first dedicated gender surgeon. He and **Juliana Hansen, M.D.**, whose expertise in breast reconstruction at OHSU is well-known, are now able to offer transgender patients a number of surgical options to aid in their transition, including chest masculinization and feminization, phalloplasty and facial gender confirmation procedures.

When it comes to the surgical care of his patients Dr. Berli is an idealist, and in this relatively new field of surgery there is still much room for improvement

in terms of technique and approach. Dr. Berli and OHSU urologist **Daniel Dugi, M.D.**, have a particular interest in outcomes improvement after phalloplasty procedures and are proud to say that OHSU is the first center in the United States to routinely offer the multistage phalloplasty approach as successfully developed at the St. Peter's Andrology Centre in London. The approach is quickly catching on; in April of this year Dr. Berli spent a week as a visiting professor at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, sharing the advantages and benefits of the multistage approach with their team of gender surgeons.

Another expanding surgical field is facial gender confirmation surgery and the OHSU plastic and gender surgeons are excited to have established a close working relationship with Spain's renowned FacialTeam specialists, both clinically and within research. Looking forward, Drs. Berli and Hansen and the multidisciplinary gender affirming surgery team at OHSU aim to provide continuous and comprehensive care to transitioning individuals, offering them the surgical, mental and emotional support needed throughout their transformation.

In 2014, the US Department of Health and Human Services decided that its 1981 exclusion of transsexual surgical treatments from Medicare coverage was based on outdated, incomplete, and biased science and did not reflect current evidence or standards of care, and the exclusion was therefore lifted. As a direct result of this decision, surgeons nationwide are seeing an increase in consultations for surgical therapy to help transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals.

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Did you know?

Nearly 1.4 million Americans are transgender. The prevalence of gender confirmation surgery in the U.S. is at least 1 per 100,000 people and is expected to increase following the lift of the 33-year exclusion on coverage for transitional care which occurred in 2014.

IN THE NAVY

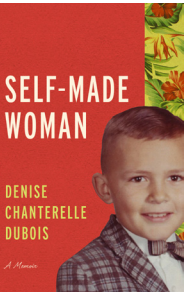
Plastic Surgery hosts navy surgeons and transgender program directors


IN JANUARY, the Naval Medical Center in San Diego sent urologist **Dr. Jack Zuckerman** and plastic surgeon **Dr. Eamon O'Reilly** to learn more about gender affirming genital surgery. They spent a week with OHSU's **Dr. Daniel Dugi** from Urology and **Dr. Jens Berli**. The Navy hopes to soon offer these procedures for their personnel.

In addition to the Navy, this past year the gender team of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery had the pleasure to host **Mario Cherubino, M.D.**, from the University of Insubria, **Devin Coon, M.D.**, Medical Director of the Transgender Program at Johns Hopkins University, and **Zil Goldstein, N.P.**, Program Director of the Center for Transgender Medicine and Surgery at Mount Sinai Hospital.

We continue to enjoy an ongoing close collaboration with plastic surgeon **Rachel Bluebond-Langner, M.D.**, from NYU Langone Medical Center.

Dr. Jens Berli caught up with his breast augmentation patient **Denise Dubois** earlier this spring. Denise was born as a boy into a working-class Polish American Milwaukee family in the 1950's. Despite daunting hurdles, she was able to embrace her identity as a woman. Her memoir, "Self-Made Woman," will be published in August.





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Questions or comments? Email *On the Cutting Edge* Editor Sara Szymanski at szymanss@ohsu.edu – we'd love to hear from you.

Oregon Health & Science University is a nationally prominent research university and Oregon's only public academic health center. It educates health professionals and scientists and provides leading-edge patient care, community service and biomedical research.

Change can't happen if we see things just one way. That's why diversity is so important to OHSU.