Howard University Hospital now has an online patient portal

From your laptop or desktop computer, log into www.huhealthcareconnect.com. If you have an existing account, log in using your username and password. If you do not have an existing account, log in using the username and password as defined below.

Username: Your first name first initial + your last name + birth year
Example: For John Rocket born on 03/04/1982
Username would be: jrocket1982

Password: Your first 4 letters of your last name + your date of birth + @
Example: For John Rocket born on 03/04/1982
Password would be: rock03041982@

Online help is available via the Contact Us menu in the Patient Portal. In addition, you may contact us directly at huhppsignup@huhosp.org or 202-768-1210, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. We will respond to you by the end of the next business day.
**New Partnership for the Hospital**

Howard University signed a Management Service Agreement (MSA) with Paladin Healthcare, a firm with a proven track record of successfully reengineering operations at urban hospitals to produce value-added outcomes. A team of highly experienced senior executives and other hospital managers assumed responsibility, effective Oct. 6, for day-to-day operations of the Hospital under the oversight of a joint Howard University and Paladin Healthcare Management Committee. The new leadership includes Sandra Austin, CEO; Doug Womer, CFO; and Kathleen Milgard, CNO/COO. Under the MSA, Howard University will continue to be the licensed operator of HUH.

Paladin Healthcare has extensive experience in the areas of hospital operations, ambulatory care operations, payor relations, information technology and finance. In addition to its in-house team, Paladin will appoint key personnel to serve in senior executive roles for HUH.

An explicit goal of the collaboration between Howard and Paladin is to advance the University’s vision for establishing a comprehensive and integrated community health, ambulatory care and in-patient delivery system.

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**In Memoriam**

Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps, a longtime member of the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, died Sept. 30, 2014. Epps was a key advocate for preventive health, promoting child health programs and mental health services targeting underserved populations. Her innovative public programs and leadership in numerous professional organizations left an indelible mark in the field of pediatrics, both nationally and internationally.

A Howard alumna, she was the first woman and first African-American president of the D.C. Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. In 2004, an anonymous donor endowed the Roselyn Payne Epps, M.D. lecture through a generous posthumous gift. This annual lecture highlights the extraordinary career and contributions of this remarkable woman.

Epps will be missed. However, her legacy will continue to shape and define future physicians, educators and professionals in the field of pediatrics and child health.
A Medical Home for Families
The health and safety of youth in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area is the number one priority for Howard University Hospital’s Department of Pediatrics and Child Health. The department provides a number of vital services, including neonatal and nursery care, child development, immunizations, emergency care and community-based adolescent health programs. Now, under the direction of its newly appointed chair, Dr. Joseph L. Wright, the department is increasing its collaboration with HUH physicians and extending its reach within the local community.

Providing Additional Access
Wright is taking deliberate steps to meet the community where they work and live. He intends to meet with community members face-to-face to understand what challenges parents face. His goal is to transform the department into an even more accessible and time-efficient establishment as well as a primary care medical home for the families it serves.

“We want to promote access to care that is convenient and timely,” he says. “One of the opportunities that we have in our department is an open access service model, which allows parents to see our pediatricians on their schedule.”

Additional outreach includes bringing care and expertise into the District of Columbia (D.C.) public schools, including Coolidge and Dunbar senior high schools, where the department is already providing services.

“D.C. is one of the most insured places in the country for youth. But insurance coverage does not equate to access,” Wright says. “Parents may not have the ability to leave work to attend to the medical needs of their children during the daytime hours. Therefore, we have to be flexible and meet the community where they are.”

Taking a Holistic Approach
The department works collaboratively with several HUH departments, and Wright expects that these partnerships will continue to flourish. For example, his department and the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology hold safety huddles twice a day in the neonatal unit, and members of both departments review cases and share education conferences.

“I have known Dr. Wright for 30 years and we embrace this opportunity to provide the best possible care for our patients,” says Dr. Oscar Mims, chief of the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine. “Our lifelong dream is to provide a safe medical home for many families in D.C. Ultimately, we want a healthy mother and child and that’s why these collaborations are vital.”

Having most recently served as the senior vice president for community affairs for the Children’s National Medical Center, Wright intends to increase advocacy for the overall well-being of children in the community. Members of the department are involved at the national level with various health issues such as breastfeeding and injury prevention, including concussions, while participating in leading research on sickle cell disease and health disparities.

“For me, the most exciting part of this job is keeping kids well.”

By Marquis D. Gibson

For appointment, call 202-865-7677.
promoting children’s well-being,” Wright says. “I look forward to the opportunity to reframe how we make ourselves a part of the surrounding community.”

Wright’s leadership, rooted in his background as a pediatric emergency specialist and health policy professional, is leading the department into a new model of offering health services. But ultimately, he says, “For me, the most exciting part of this job is keeping kids well.”

For more information or to schedule an appointment with the Department of Pediatrics, please call 202-865-7677.
Enjoying the holiday season while being conscious of potential hazards is a necessity, particularly when it comes to protecting children. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 12,000 people find themselves in emergency rooms each year because of holiday-related injuries. Children are especially vulnerable, says Dr. Babafemi Adenuga, chair of the Department of Community and Family Medicine.

“The holidays are a time when families come together to celebrate the season and one another,” he says. “But because accidents and injuries can be more common during the holidays, parents should take extra precautions and safety measures.”

Adenuga says that some of those precautions include ensuring appropriate use of seat belts and age-appropriate car seats during road travel; being aware that holiday plants, such as mistletoe, are poisonous; checking decorative lights for exposed or faulty wires; and being vigilant about keeping hard candy and small ornaments away from children to prevent choking.

Dr. Joseph L. Wright, chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, offers a few more tips below for keeping kids safe during this holiday season.

❖ Exercise heightened supervision and vigilance, especially of toddlers who like to explore. Many families travel during the holiday season and young children may find themselves in unfamiliar surroundings that may not be age-appropriately child-proofed. Kitchens and food preparation areas can be particularly dangerous areas.

❖ Dispose of all leftover drinks. Kids are very prone to drinking half-empty glasses of holiday beverages and could potentially expose themselves to alcohol poisoning.

❖ Outdoor play, especially in the snow, can be fun but also hazardous. Prolonged exposure can lead to cold-related injuries such as frostbite and hypothermia. Children should not spend more than 30 minutes outdoors in sub-freezing temperatures without coming indoors to warm up and change out of wet clothing.

❖ Take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable and keep trimmings with small removable parts out of children’s reach to prevent ingestion or inhalation risk.

❖ Use particular care with “fire salts,” which are used to produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. These salts contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation or vomiting if ingested. Keep these away from children or avoid their use altogether.

Being aware of these and other hazards will make for a safe, enjoyable holiday season!
Ten years ago, a young girl, age 6, walked through the busy corridor of the Howard University Hospital (HUH) alongside her mother. It was her first time visiting HUH and she was uncertain as to why she was there. Her mother held her hand tightly as they made their way to the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, where Dr. Esther Forrester awaited them. That introduction marked the beginning of what has become a 10-year patient history for the young girl. Madison Summers and her mother, Ianta Summers, have visited no other doctor since their initial visit with Dr. Forrester.

Now 16 years old, Madison is completing her final year of high school, and she continues to see Forrester for standard procedures, checkups and consultations. Their collaboration over several years—called continuity of care—allows them to work together to manage Madison’s health with high-quality care specific to her medical needs. This also encompasses the psychosocial care that she may need for her holistic health and well-being.

“It means much more than routine annual visits, the occasional sick visit or writing prescriptions,” Forrester says. “You really have to go beyond the scope of general pediatricians or general medicine.”

Continuity of care becomes increasingly important as children become teenagers. Teenagers are at a higher risk of engaging in activities that can lead to injuries, violence, physical inactivity or poor dietary habits. They are also at a higher risk for engaging in sexual behaviors and tobacco, alcohol and drug use. Forrester stresses the importance of having an open line of communication between herself, parents and patients.

“I’m a single mom and Dr. Forrester has always been available for Madison just to talk to her about what her concerns are. Whether it be about boys or whether it be about school, Dr. Forrester is always available to Madison. She’s always available to us,” Ianta Summers says.

“As a patient, Howard University has really helped me. I can go there whenever, even if is outside of my health concerns,” Madison Summers says. “Every time I see Dr. Forrester she makes me want to do better.”

Continuity of care involves time, dedication and communication between doctors, patients and parents on a more personal level, which is why it is extremely important to find a physician that best serves the needs of the patient.

“For other mothers who want the best care in Washington, D.C., they should bring their kids to Howard University Hospital. Dr. Forrester has a long history of excellent patient care and interaction with her patients. She really cares about everyone who comes to her,” Ianta Summers says.
The importance of vaccines cannot be understated. Vaccines can aid in providing immunity from various infectious diseases that can be fatal for children, teenagers and adults. While this is true, for some, doubts remain as to the benefits and risks of getting vaccinated.

“Immunizations are probably one of the greatest advances in medicine that we’ve had within the last 100 years,” says Dr. Saumil Doshi, of the Division of Infectious Diseases at Howard University Hospital (HUH). “Not only does it help the person who is getting the immunizations but it can also help the people around that person as well.”

According to Dr. Nikki Stewart in the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health at HUH, immunizations for children are particularly important. Stewart recommends that parents follow the American Academy of Pediatrics’ schedule for childhood and teenage immunizations. This scheduled list of vaccines is also endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). If for any reason a child has missed any of the vaccines listed on this immunization schedule, parents should consult

with a physician before vaccinating that child. Some vaccines are only administered at a certain time in a child’s development. Depending on the child’s age, he or she may no longer be susceptible to certain viruses covered by vaccines; therefore the vaccine may no longer be deemed necessary.

“Immunization starts right at birth. It is recommended that all infants get their first Hepatitis B shot during those first few days of life, before they are even discharged from the nursery. Then, there is a schedule for vaccines throughout the remaining infant years through the teenage years,” Stewart says.

Some parents may be slightly apprehensive about vaccinating their children. A reoccurring concern that Stewart has witnessed is the belief that vaccines may be directly linked to the development of autism. According to the CDC’s Autism Developmental Disabilities Monitoring network and the Institute of Medicine, there is no evidence that supports a link between thimerosol (a drug used in the preservation of recommended vaccines for children) and autism. As it pertains to common misconceptions about the safety and efficacy of vaccines, both Doshi and Stewart stress the importance of talking with trusted health care providers to get the facts on what is and is not true for each individual vaccine.

The doctors add that when travelling out of the country, getting vaccinated to protect against various viruses common to the foreign country is extremely important. Doshi notes the need to get vaccinated even if the country being visited was at one point considered home or if family and friends live there. Individuals returning to the United States from another country without receiving proper vaccinations upon initial departure, pose a potential health risk not just to themselves but also to those around them.

“Our immunity to certain illnesses can wane, so it is important to talk to your health care provider and get all of your appropriate vaccinations for the specific country where you are about to spend any amount of time,” Doshi says.

For more information on recommended immunizations for children, teens and adults as well as frequently asked questions about vaccines, visit www.cdc.gov or www.aap.org.

Flu season runs from October through May. It is recommended that individuals 6 months of age and older receive the flu vaccine annually. In addition, individuals who are in close contact with children less than 6 months old should also be vaccinated to prevent the possible spread of the virus to infants who are too young to be vaccinated. Parents should consult their child’s pediatrician about the vaccine if that child has a severe egg allergy or had a severe allergic reaction to a previous vaccine.

HUH’s Department of Pediatrics, located in Suite 3300 of the Towers building, is open Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. and every other Saturday, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Call 202-865-7677 to schedule an appointment.

For an appointment, call 202-865-7677.
Ask a Doctor

Dr. Elena Reece, Howard University Hospital
Allergy/Immunology Clinic

How can parents tell if their children have an allergy rather than the common cold?

Common colds tend to be self-limited, lasting 3–5 days. If it’s more persistent than that, it may be an allergy. Family history also plays a major role in children’s allergies. If there is a history of allergy in the family or if a parent has an allergy, chances are the child will carry the same allergy. Parents should pay close attention to the symptoms and the duration of the symptoms in order to evaluate the gravity of the situation.

According to the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, approximately one in 13 kids under age 18 have at least one food allergy. How do you test for food allergies?

There are two ways to test for food allergies. The first method is a skin prick or scratch test, a method that involves taking a sample of the food and applying it to the skin to test for a reaction. The second method is a blood test where patients are injected with a sample of several allergens. The blood tests can help reveal the triggers for allergy symptoms, which can help doctors choose the best course of action. It’s important to note that there is no treatment for food allergies.

Are there any factors that influence who will and will not develop an allergy?

The population of the United States that has the lowest level of allergies are the Amish, who live in close contact with animals and nature. Our ultra clean environment and reduced contact with animals and dirt is actually what predisposes us to develop more allergies.

Parents should let children live and explore their surroundings a bit more in order to build their natural defenses. People have grown overprotective and obsessive over cleanliness when it comes to children, but those extra precautions might be the genesis of some of the allergies we encounter today.

Howard University Hospital
2014 Holiday Activity Calendar

Nov. 1–Dec. 17
Holiday Food Drive
For information, contact the Department of Community Services at 202-865-1375.

Nov. 10–Dec. 17
Holiday Toy Drive (Donations Only)
For information, call the Department of Community Services at 202-865-1375.

Nov. 11–Dec. 15
HUH CARES Hope Tree
Infant to Age 10 (Hope Tree will be located on 2nd Floor)
For information, call HUH CARES at 202-865-4564.

Dec. 11 HUH
Auxiliary Poinsettia Sale 8 a.m.–3 p.m.
Freedmen’s Hall, 1st Floor–Main Lobby

Dec. 11–12
HUH CARES/Boarder Babies Program BAZAAR
For information, call 202-865-4564.

Dec. 20
HUH Auxiliary In-Patient Holiday Gift Distribution

Dec. 22
Santa Visits HUH 12 p.m.–3 p.m.
Pictures with Santa and more

For an appointment, call 202-865-7677.
We Caught You Caring!

HUH Employees of the Month Demonstrate a Commitment to Caring

Their skill set, dedication, flexibility and ability to work well with others are exemplary. Howard University Hospital is happy to have valuable employees with such strong work ethics and positive attitudes.

APRIL 2014
Alice Mahan, deputy executive officer

MAY 2014
Regina Erbe, patient transporter

JULY 2014
Aida Bagasao, clinical nurse

AUGUST 2014
Patricia Geng, patient navigator

SEPTEMBER 2014
Jeanrico Luxams, social worker

Be Aware, Stay Informed

November is American Diabetes Month

American Diabetes Month is a reminder of the need for greater vigilance regarding the prevention and maintenance of a disease that affects one in 12 Americans. If left unchecked, diabetes can cause nerve damage, blindness, kidney disease and other health problems. In order to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes, keep these things in mind:

- **Exercise regularly and eat healthy meals and snacks.** Take the stairs instead of elevators or walk/bike to work instead of driving. Choose healthy and wholesome foods to consume (fruits, vegetables, etc.). These minor changes in physical activity and diet can provide the body with the additional workout it needs while also maintaining a healthy weight.

- **Know the risk factors for developing diabetes.** Risk factors include being obese or overweight; having a close relative who has been diagnosed with diabetes; being physically inactive (exercising fewer than three times per week); having abnormal cholesterol with a triglyceride level of 250 or higher; and being of African American, American Indian, Asian American, Pacific Islander or Hispanic American/Latino heritage.

- **Know when to be tested for diabetes.** Adults over the age of 45 should consider being tested for diabetes, especially if they are overweight. Individuals under the age of 45 who are overweight and display some of the risk factors associated with diabetes should also be tested.

- **Understand the signs and symptoms of diabetes.** Signs and symptoms can include unquenchable thirst, frequent urination, constant hunger, weight loss without dieting, slow healing sores, dry/itchy skin, feelings of “pins and needles” in the feet when walking, loss of feeling in the feet and blurry eyesight. All or none of these symptoms may occur. However, to accurately diagnose diabetes it is imperative to speak with a physician.

For more information on diabetes and diabetes prevention, visit www.diabetes.org (American Diabetes Association).
Screenings, Services and Group Support

Bariatric Surgery & Medical Weight Loss Information Session
Monthly, Third Thursday
6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.
HUH, Freedmen's Hall
Call 202-865-1286

Bariatric Support Group
Monthly, Third Thursday
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
HUH, Towers Bldg., Suite 4100-B
Call 202-865-1286

Cancer Support Group
Monthly, Fourth Tuesday
10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
HUH Cancer Center, Room 209
5th and V Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C.
Call 202-865-4655

Crohns and Colitis Foundation
Monthly, Third Saturday
1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
HUH, 2038-B
Call 301-260-7591

Diabetes Support Group
Monthly, Fourth Tuesday
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
HUH, Towers Auditorium
Call 202-865-3350

Free Memory Screening
Daily, Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
HUH, Division of Geriatrics
Tower Building, Suite 2309
Call 202-865-3776

Grief and Loss
Monthly, First Thursday
5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.
HUH Chapel, First Floor
Call 202-865-1587

HIV Screening and Support Group
Monday–Friday
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Monday–Thursday
2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.
HUH, Room 1124
Call 202-865-4942

HUH WIC Family Center and Beautiful Beginnings Club
Monthly, Second Wednesday
1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
HUH, Room 3J14
Call 202-865-4564

Prostate Cancer Screening
Monthly, Third Wednesday
1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
HU Cancer Center, Radiation Oncology Room
5th and V Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C.
Call 202-806-5539

Smoking Cessation
Monthly, Third Wednesday
5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.
HUH Chapel, First Floor
Call 202-865-1587

Survivors of Homicide, Inc. Peer Support Group
Weekly, Thursday
7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.
HU Mental Health Clinic
530 College Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.
Call 202-258-2564

Survivors of Suicide Survivors Circle Support Group
Monthly, Last Tuesday
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
HUH, Room 5J17
Call 202-806-7706

Sickle Cell Screenings
Weekly, Wednesday
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
HUH, Main Lobby
Call 202-865-4443

Transplant Group
Weekly, Thursday
9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.
HUH, Room 5J17
Call 202-865-1443