

Meet the spina bifida team

Our Surgeons

Neurosurgeons

A neurosurgeon is involved in treatment during the prenatal period and continues with the family through the postnatal period.



Robert J. Bollo, MD



Douglas L. Brockmeyer, MD



Rajiv R. Iyer, MD



Samuel H. Cheshier, MD



John R. W. Kestle, MD



Urology

Provides consultation for infants, children and adolescents using the guidelines developed and agreed upon by the urology team.



Patrick C. Cartwright, MD



Debbroah Jacobson, MD



Glen Lau, MD



Anthony J. Schaeffer, MD



M. Chad Wallis, MD



Orthopedist

In clinic, orthopedist help address hip dysplasia, clubfeet, and general orthopedic issues during infancy and childhood.



Alan K. Stotts, MD



Joshua Klatt, MD



James Huntly, MD

Med Peds-Transition

Med-peds providers fill the role of transition consultants in the adolescent young adult transition clinic. These providers are board certified in both internal medicine and pediatrics and are instrumental in assisting the team in developing a transition/transfer policy, identifying adult issues, and raising awareness regarding the differences in approach to care between child and adults.



Kira Watson, MD



Katie Irby, MD



Camille Reay, Transition Guide



Multidisciplinary team members:



Shane C. Dangerfield, MD- Medical director

Our medical director oversees medical care provided through the clinic and program. They also provide consultations for development and rehabilitation. The medical director also collaborates with neurosurgery service in assessment and management of hydrocephalus.



Abigayle R Cieslak, Nurse Practitioner and Program Coordinator

Abigayle graduated from South University as a family nurse practitioner. Prior to graduating as a nurse practitioner, she worked as a NICU nurse at Primary Children's Hospital. She worked with several medically complex newborns. She loves taking care of children and is passionate about helping them live the healthiest life possible. As a nurse practitioner in the spina bifida clinic, she is the program manager/coordinator as well. She is here to help coordinate the clinics, do fetal counseling, and help address any needs our patients encounter.





Paula Peterson, research specialist.



Michael J. Workman, Physical Therapist

The physical therapist works closely with the orthopedist in the Spina Bifida Clinic but is also independent in identifying various types of durable medical equipment needed to maximize function and mobility. The physical therapist is the lead among therapist in working with families to acquire such equipment.

The skills of the physical therapist are used in a multidisciplinary training clinic (ISTP) to assist nurses and other therapists in working with families to assist their children in reaching the highest level of independence in bowel and bladder management.

Developmental assessments are focused on gross motor skills and a manual muscle test is completed when appropriate. Additional assessments may be requested by various providers to aid in diagnosing and monitoring neurological and or/orthopedic concerns.



Jackie Swan, Occupational therapist

The occupational therapist monitors upper extremity function and fine motor skills in all patients and focuses on independence at each developmental stage including the ability of fine motor skills needed for independence in performing activities of daily living. This includes collaborating with nursing in developing formal bowel and bladder programs, providing adolescents with information on driving and recommending age-appropriate assessments. The occupational therapist is also skilled in monitoring feeding issues and works with community therapists and the clinic's dietitian.



Melinda Vranes, RN



Sadie Knowlton, RN

Clinic nurses are registered nurses who are licensed in the state of Utah. They triage patient phone calls, meet with patients in clinic, and help coordinate continence supplies. While in the clinic, they meet with patients to help with bowel and bladder programs. Under the supervision of the NP during the ISTP clinic, the nursing staff educate parents and patients regarding their bowel and bladder program.



Tori Smedley, Dietitian

The staff dietitian is a licensed practitioner registered in the state of Utah. Dietary counseling is provided to prevent secondary conditions including poor growth, obesity, osteoporosis and constipation. calcium, vitamin D, multivitamins fiber, and fluid. The dietitian is available to provide feeding assessments and often collaborates with the occupational therapist in developing a feeding program.





John B. Fulton, PhD- Psychology

The Psychologist is a licensed practitioner in the state of Utah. They focus on education and behavior of children with spina bifida. Assessments are performed outside of clinic at 3 years old. The psychologist determines the feasibility of the five-year-old child and older for neuropsychometric testing. It is generally recommended that testing be considered at 5-7 years, 10-12 years, and 14-16 years. The psychologist also performs other assessments as indicated and assures that transition plan is in place for movement into kindergarten, primary and secondary school programs. Information is provided regarding common learning problems seen in children with spina bifida, the need for 504 plans and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and strategies for helping children begin and continue in formal education. The psychologist is available to assess and recommend intervention for behavioral concerns.



Kasey Souder Social Work

A social worker helps provide emotional support, coping with stress, addressing grief and loss issues, managing family conflict, and connecting you with hospital and community resources. They can also help direct you to the appropriate personnel for financial aid/eligibility questions and applying for benefits.

Some resources that are available-

- Intermountain Spina Bifida Support Group
- Spina Bifida Association
- Utah Parent Center- [Homepage - Utah Parent Center](#)
- Ronald McDonald Charity (assistance with housing)
- County recreation programs

The social worker assists in guiding and counseling families regarding these resources for funding:

- Private insurance
- Medicaid
- SSI
- DSPD
- Utah Department of Health/ Children with Special Health Care Needs

The social worker meets with adolescents and parents in the transition clinic to provide information regarding guardianship and funding resources for transfer to adult care providers, both primary care and specialty care related to spina bifida.

Medical Assistants

Wanda Held, MA and office assistant

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