

UC Health Opens Women's Center *Primary Care, Specialty Areas Under One Roof*

Dr. Lisa Larkin has spent more than a decade envisioning a comprehensive women's health center. The idea for a one-stop medical practice evolved as she treated women going through menopause, her specialty area.

"I saw a lot of 50-year-old menopausal women struggling with conflicting reports on hormone therapy," Dr. Larkin says. "They often had teenage daughters and they had 80-year-old parents. So I started taking care of multi-generational families. Patients liked the concept of seeing a primary care physician and a gynecologist in one location. I wanted to expand the concept from there."

Dr. Larkin realized she didn't have the resources in a private practice to attract the specialty physicians she needed. When she approached UC Health officials with the idea for a multi-integrated facility, she found they were thinking along the same lines.

Dr. Larkin sold her Madisonville practice in 2012 to UC Health, and was named director of the UC Health Women's Center, which opened this spring on the West Chester Hospital campus.

The 26,000 square-foot facility is the first of its kind in the region and features 50 exam rooms, 20 full-time physicians with another 30 visiting specialists. Dr. Larkin stresses this is far more than just an OB/GYN practice. It deals holistically with the breadth of women's health issues from adolescence to geriatrics.

"It is primary care-based. It is a patient-focused, evidence-based medical home," Dr. Larkin says. "My end game is to be recognized as a place in the community that is a home for women's healthcare with lecture series, educational resources and support services."

The facility is organized around five core programs: primary care, OB/GYN, mid-life health and menopause, breast health care, and surgical specialty care.

The integrated specialty services offered at the Center include oncology, sexual health, adolescent transitional care, neurology, osteoporosis and bone care, cosmetic surgery and skin care, orthopedics and sports

medicine, weight management, mental health, cardiovascular, diabetes, physical therapy, Women's Executive Physical Program and a female athlete program.

Dianne Dunkelman, a health advocate, educator, and philanthropist, has also been lobbying for a comprehensive approach to women's health issues for over a decade. Dunkelman, who will serve as chair of the Advisory Council for the Women's Center, founded Speaking of Women's Health in 1996. She has grown the advocacy group into a national foundation that sponsors more than 50 conferences in 40 cities across the country, spinning off numerous health education initiatives for minority women.

Dunkelman says UC Health Women's Center puts what she has long been advocating for under one roof. "It extrapolates Speaking of Women's health into a physical place," she says. "To see this come into an everyday fruition is thrilling for me. We want to make this a success for women in the community. When you walk into the environment, it will feel welcoming. There will be a confidence level and partnership with doctors and other women."

Dr. Larkin says there are only one or two comparable health centers in the country. "I have rarely seen anything close to this, with this many services under one roof—where the primary care, OB/GYN through menopause, and other services will be closely knit."

Dr. Larkin's partnership with UC Health will take many forms. For example, there will be ongoing research projects, which are still being formulated. And she is setting up a women's health residency with UC medical students doing a month-long rotation through the different focus areas.

Call the UC Health Women's Center at 513.475-UC4U or visit their website at UCHealth.com/women



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Dr. Lisa Larkin



Dianne Dunkelman