

NEWS

RRH Surgeon Teams Up With CPH Thoracic Surgery Team

[The Canton-Potsdam Hospital thoracic surgical team and a Rochester Regional Hospital surgeon gathered after performing surgery using the da Vinci Xi robot for the first robotic-assisted large hiatal hernia repair at CPH. (Front) CPH General Surgeon Apostolos Kandilis, MD; RGH Cardiothoracic Surgeon Shuyin Liang, MD; (back) Surgical Assistant Leah Worden, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist Randy McDonald, and Surgical Technician Von Jackson.]

POTSDAM, NY - The Canton-Potsdam Hospital (CPH) thoracic surgical team and their counterparts with Rochester General Hospital (RGH) have been diligently working together over the past year to bring this specialty line of surgery to Potsdam.

CPH General, Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary, and Thoracic Surgeon Apostolos Kandilis, MD, noted members of the Canton-Potsdam team from several departments, including the Critical Care Unit and Operating Room staff, have traveled to Rochester General where they received additional training, which he pointed out has been crucial for the development of the program locally.

“While we develop the thoracic service, the surgeries we are performing here are mainly for benign conditions, and all the cases are being discussed with RGH Cardiothoracic surgeons Dr. Shuyin Liang and Dr. Neal Chuang preoperatively to confirm the procedures can be performed safely at CPH,” Dr. Kandilis said. “Dr. Liang has also taken the time to travel to CPH to be present for our initial thoracic cases and oversee this new surgical service provided through St. Lawrence Health.”

Dr. Kandilis continues to travel to RGH twice per month, where he works alongside Dr. Liang and Dr. Chuang on the full range of thoracic cases, as well as with the surgical oncology team for hepatopancreatobiliary (benign and malignant diseases of the liver, pancreas, gallbladder, and bile ducts) cases.

“I am proud of the collaboration between the physicians and team members at Rochester General Hospital and Canton-Potsdam Hospital. This partnership within our Rochester Regional Health system, is not just for professional growth, but a shared journey towards excellence in patient care,” Dr. Liang commented.



“Through this ongoing relationship, we expand our knowledge, refine our skills, and ultimately improve outcomes for those entrusting us with their health. It is only the beginning of this collective work that I look forward to be able to continue,” she added.

Dr. Kandilis noted there are many reasons why it is important to offer this high level of specialized care to regional community members.

“I have encountered many patients who are unable to travel to receive the optimal treatment for their conditions who, therefore, may unfortunately delay or even decline these treatments. We live in an underserved area and many patients do not have the means or support to travel long distances in order to receive their care,” Dr. Kandilis said. “An additional benefit is our patients now have the ability to receive their post-op follow-up appointments locally without the need to travel in order to meet with their surgeon.

“I am immensely grateful to be able to work for St. Lawrence Health within Rochester Regional Health, and to have the opportunity to perform a wide range of complex surgical procedures with the collaboration of our Thoracic and Surgical Oncology teams. Many people have put in time and effort to develop these programs,” he continued. “Our local hospital is growing fast and it is my hope that we will be able to perform more complex thoracic and hepatopancreatobiliary surgeries locally, so even less people will have to travel long distances to receive their care as we continue to expand.”

Thoracic procedures currently being performed at CPH include: video-assisted thoracoscopy (VATS) for wedge lung resections for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, blebectomy and pleurodesis for patients with spontaneous pneumothorax, pleural biopsies, pleurx catheter placement for management of recurrent pleural effusions, and decortication for patients with empyemas.

Additional thoracic surgeries Dr. Kandilis is involved with at RGH include robotic lung resection, thymectomy, giant hiatal hernia repairs, and esophagectomy.

To learn more about Dr. Kandilis, visit <https://www.rochesterregional.org/physician-directory/k/kandilis-apostolos>, and for surgical procedures available through St. Lawrence Health, visit <https://www.stlawrencehealthsystem.org/Services/General-Surgery>.