The MUSC Pediatric Echocardiography Lab: Total eClips of the Heart

By: Carolyn Taylor, MD, FASE and Tammy Churchill, RDCS, FASE

October is Medical Ultrasound Awareness Month and we are excited to highlight the Pediatric Echo Lab at MUSC. We are a state of the art echocardiography lab accredited by the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) in transthoracic, transesophageal and fetal echocardiography. We perform nearly 9,000 echos per year. Our lab is staffed with 9 pediatric registered sonographers, 2 of whom also have their fetal registry, and 6 echocardiography physicians.

Clinical Mission: Each year our clinical services grow in both volume and location, and we are now covering off-campus clinics 5 days per week. Off-campus sites now covered in conjunction with pediatric cardiology clinics include Murrell’s Inlet, Beaufort, North Charleston and Mt Pleasant locations. In addition, our lab performs fetal echos for the MUSC Advanced Fetal Care Center (AFCC) and we participate in the multi-disciplinary coordinated care and maternal-fetal treatment for pregnant women with a suspected or confirmed fetal congenital anomaly.

Research mission: The research mission of the echo lab is led by Yar Chowdhury, MD. In addition to multiple research awards from the AHA, ASE and Mend a Heart Foundation, Dr. Chowdhury was recently awarded a $1 million K23 to study mechanisms of heart failure in the single ventricle population. The MUSC Pediatric Echo Lab actively participates in multiple additional research studies including Pediatric Heart Network projects such as the Residual Lesion Study, Echo z-score, and Single Ventricle Reconstruction-III studies. Additionally, we participate in projects for the Fetal Heart Society studying prenatal predictors of outcomes and socioeconomic factors in prenatal diagnosis of congenital heart disease.

Educational mission: Our lab trains pediatric cardiology fellows to perform and interpret transthoracic, TEE and fetal echos. We developed a 2-day echo boot camp for incoming pediatric cardiology fellows. We also have 4th year imaging fellows who wish to enhance their echo skills; this year Dr. David Steflik is our 4th year fellow.


