PROSTHETIC HEART VALVE CONSULT CLINIC

Facts for Referring Providers

What sets the UW Medicine Prosthetic Heart Valve Program apart from other programs?
The UW Medicine Prosthetic Heart Valve Program is the only clinic in the Pacific Northwest and one of very few programs in the world dedicated to comprehensive assessment of patients with previously implanted artificial valves and rings.

Previously implanted heart valves, after cardiac surgery or transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), may have limited durability and are prone for degeneration. Optimal assessment of these valves by various imaging modalities and defining the optimal timing and mode of treatment of these valves when failed, requires a specialized team in the field of prosthetic heart valves management.

Referring providers have direct access to Danny Dvir, M.D., (ddvir@uw.edu, 425-628-7765) to discuss a specific patient prior to referral. Dr. Dvir is an internationally-recognized leader in the evaluation and treatment of failed surgically inserted valves (valve-in-valve) and is the chairman of the global valve in valve registry.

Why should I refer to the Prosthetic Heart Valve Consult Clinic?
Patients with implanted heart valves are clinically challenging. Conditions such as increase in valve gradients or regurgitation, and considerations of thrombosis or prosthetic-patient-mismatch are relatively common. The Prosthetic Heart Valve Consult Clinic brings together clinicians from many disciplines to provide the best care to patients, promoting the excellence that UW Medicine is known for. Our physician team includes interventional cardiologists and cardiac surgeons, who are experts in the treatment of failed prosthetic valves and are world leaders in echocardiographic assessment of artificial heart valves.

We have large multidisciplinary discussions on patients included in this clinic. In cases where we believe the implanted valve is failing, we offer state-of-the-art safe and effective treatments. UWMC is one of the busiest centers in the region in minimally-invasive treatment of aortic valves (TAVR), valve-in-valve therapy of failed surgically-inserted prosthetic valve, and perivalvular leakage closure.

We provide the most comprehensive care and partner closely with the patient and referring providers to achieve the treatment goals. We encourage starting the discussion about treatment options for patients with degenerated prosthetic heart valves early in the disease process. Based on the patient’s current condition and history, many treatment options and strategies may be offered, from medical to catheter-based therapies, as well as possible referral for surgical treatment.

Prosthetic valve facts
- Patients with implanted valves are at risk for degeneration, thrombotic complications and paravalvular leakage.
- Many tissue valves fail within 10-20 years after implantation.
- Many patients with failed implanted tissue valves can be safely treated effectively with minimally-invasive transcatheter valve-in-valve implantation or perivalvular leakage closure.

Prosthetic valve facts (over)
When should I refer my patients to the Prosthetic Heart Valve Consult Clinic?

We evaluate all types of prosthetic heart valves (mechanical or bioprosthetic) in our clinic; Surgically or transcatheter implanted (TAVR); All cardiac locations (aortic, mitral, tricuspid, pulmonic). We recommend referral to our clinic for any of the below conditions:

• Symptomatic prosthetic valve failure
• Increase in valve gradients
• Increase in valve regurgitation (intra or perivalvular)
• Prosthetic-patient-mismatch
• Valve thrombosis

What should patients expect to experience at the visit?

The evaluation will consist of testing and workup depending on what has already been completed. Certain diagnostic tests can be completed through the primary care or general cardiology physician, while more complex tests will be done by our providers. If patients already have a cardiologist who is seeking advanced or a complex care consultation, such as valve-in-valve therapy, then the initial visit will be with Dr. Danny Dvir.

What decisions or treatment plans should the patient and referring provider expect to receive at the clinic appointment?

Service level can be limited to a one-time consultation or it can extend to subsequent treatment, as needed, for care management assistance or procedure. It is very important to us that patients maintain a close relationship with you, the referring provider, and we will reaffirm this at every encounter. No matter what the level of service being sought, we will work closely with you on a treatment plan that is acceptable to both you and your patients.

Are patients enrolled in or offered participation in research studies?

All patients will receive clinical evaluations first. In addition, patients will be offered a discussion of research studies that may be appropriate. Choosing to participate or to decline research will not affect patients’ clinical care and treatment.

How do I refer my patient?

To refer a patient or speak with any of the Prosthetic Heart Valve Consult Clinic physicians, call 206-598-VALV (8258) or fax to 206-598-3037. If you have any other questions or need further information, you may also contact the Physician Liaison, Laura Matheson, at mathla@u.washington.edu or 206.598.3473.