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SOL LUCAS

Busy person gets job done

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Comprehensive Cancer Center

They say if you want a job done, ask a busy person to do it. Sol Lucas is a busy person.

He is teacher, advisor, researcher, writer, reviewer, clinician, interested and sympathetic listener — all of these wrapped up in the job title of clinical pharmacist. That's Sol Lucas.

At 8 in the morning, you might find him at his desk digesting some new drug information or writing a fact sheet on a drug for doctors and nurses. Poke around the blue zone about 9 a.m. on Wednesday and you'll likely find him there working with the people who come to the head and neck clinic.

After lunch, he might be giving anticancer drugs to a patient with colon cancer. Or he might be in his lab studying and researching things most laymen prefer to leave to the scientists. At 4 in the afternoon he could be on the phone with a nurse who's worried about her patient's reaction to his drugs — yes, he'll be right there.

Expert in drug therapy

A clinical pharmacist is much more than a prescription filler. He is an expert in drug therapy who works with physicians and nurses directly in helping care for their patients.

"What I've done," Lucas said, "is taken the basic knowledge of drugs learned in pharmacy school and applied it to anticancer agents exclusively."

When he came to work for the center three years ago, he said, he was told "You're supposed to know everything

there is to know about cancer chemotherapy agents" — a formidable task for even the most brilliant.

Since that time he has become a resident expert at the cancer center on the whole range of drug treatments which might be used on a cancer patient including anticancer agents, antibiotics and pain relievers.

Making information usable

Armed with all that knowledge, Lucas consults with cancer center physicians on the best treatment for their patients. He keeps them up to date on such things as in what type of patient a drug works best, the best way to administer it, adverse reactions that might be expected, the correct dosage — the list goes on.

Much of Lucas' time is spent pouring over detailed, technical information about drugs and dissecting it into a more concise and usable form for health care personnel. And, of course, he stores a good bit of it away in his head for handy future reference.

Three protocols

Clinical research is another very important part of Lucas' work in which he combines his extensive knowledge of drugs with his concern for his patients. In the relatively short time he has been at the center, he has helped develop three different treatment protocols.

A protocol, he explained, is a formalized treatment plan that spells out everything the researchers are looking for. His are designed to test the effectiveness of different combinations of anticancer drugs. Each of the protocols is directed at a special cancer. All three are aimed at

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Humboldt award goes to Reedy

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Bonn, West Germany, has selected a Duke physician to receive one of its annual awards for senior United States scientists.

The award will enable Dr. Michael K. Reedy, associate professor of anatomy, to spend a year in Heidelberg conducting research at the Max Planck Institute for Medical Research and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory.

Reedy, whose scientific work is aimed at explaining how muscles contract, will be studying the arrangement and behavior of certain tiny muscle structures known as myosin crossbridges.

The ratchet-like movements of myosin crossbridges are believed to develop the force necessary for muscle contractions, Reedy said.

Reedy said he and Dr. Kenneth Holmes, an English molecular biologist, will be applying the latest synchrotron X-ray diffraction and scanning electron

microscopy techniques to their work. The particular concentration of instruments they need is available only in Heidelberg and should allow them to conduct, in just a few minutes, experiments that would take several days in this country.

CELEBRATING THE FOURTH—Pediatrics patients, family members and medical center staff enjoy a Fourth of July celebration, made possible through the combined efforts of dietary services, pediatric recreation therapy, pediatric chairman Dr. Samuel L. Katz and members of the B'nai B'rith, including Dr. Shelby Josephs of pediatrics, Denise Altman of psychiatry, Neil Altman, Dr. Robert Rosenstein, Alan Levy, Jerry Rothenberg, Gary Berman and Howard Margolis, who served as organizer. For more photos, see page four.

