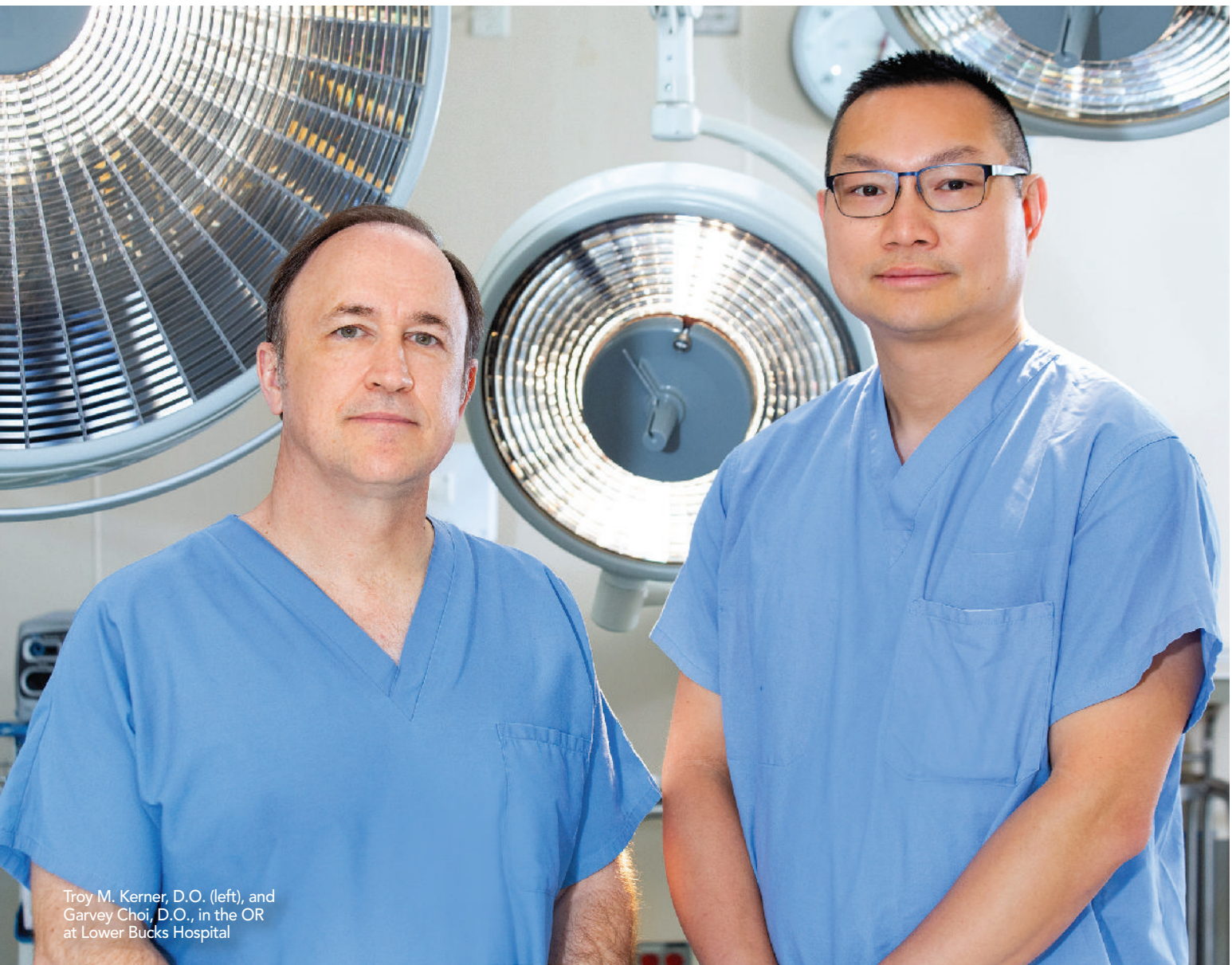


suburban life

As general surgeons with **Lower Bucks Hospital**, Drs. Garvey Choi and Troy M. Kerner employ advanced training, minimally invasive techniques, and cutting-edge technology to help patients heal.

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Troy M. Kerner, D.O. (left), and Garvey Choi, D.O., in the OR at Lower Bucks Hospital

A Cut Above

As general surgeons with **Lower Bucks Hospital**, **Drs. Garvey Choi** and **Troy M. Kerner** employ advanced training, minimally invasive techniques, and cutting-edge technology to help patients heal.

In order to truly thrive, a community hospital should behave like a living, breathing organism—devoted to changing, growing, and adapting to the needs of the surrounding community.

Case in point: Lower Bucks Hospital. As the area between Philadelphia and Trenton, New Jersey, has evolved over the years, Lower Bucks Hospital has followed suit. The Bristol-based hospital's surgical capabilities are a fine example. Not only has Lower Bucks Hospital kept pace with demand, but it has also become well positioned to accommodate future needs.

In March 2020, board-certified general surgeons Garvey Choi, D.O., and Troy M. Kerner, D.O., joined Lower Bucks Hospital's BMC Medical Group. Their additions enhanced the hospital's ability to provide a wide range of surgical services. So-called "bread and butter" surgeries include everything from laparoscopic cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal) and appendectomy, to hernia repair and enterectomy (bowel resection), to the excision of skin lesions, cysts, and tumors.

"I feel like Dr. Choi and I are two of the most experienced general surgeons in the area," Dr. Kerner says. "My main focus is performing laparoscopic or minimally invasive surgeries, though I can perform surgeries either laparoscopically or open, if needed; some challenging hernia operations might benefit from an open approach. Laparoscopic surgery tends to be better for recovery, but it's good to have the older knowledge paired with the most current technology and ability."

Drs. Choi and Kerner, who have been partners in their own practice since 2006, have a great deal in common. Besides their shared interest in minimally invasive and laparoscopic surgery, both received their medical degrees from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), are members of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons, and were board certification through the American Osteopathic Board of Surgery. Dr. Kerner first became affiliated with Lower Bucks Hospital in 2016, with Dr. Choi following two years later.

Both surgeons appreciate the personalized feel of Lower Bucks Hospital. Dr. Kerner describes the OR as having "a sense of family."

"Here at Lower Bucks, we get to know each other on a personal level, and it also provides a lot of consistency from one day to the next," he adds. "I feel the hospital itself is representative of the region, and it's steadily adding more services for patients in the community."

Dr. Choi has advanced training in areas such as robotic laparoscopic surgery using the da Vinci® Surgical System. Robot-assisted surgery utilizes tiny incisions to perform highly precise surgeries, thereby resulting in patient benefits such as less pain, shorter hospital stays, and expedited recover times. Such training may become invaluable as next-generation technology becomes increasingly prevalent in the OR.

"As the da Vinci robotic platform becomes less and less expensive, there will be more indications for robotic surgery," Dr. Choi says. "I believe its initial indication was for prostatectomy, and its indications have since grown to include

hernias, bowel resection, bariatric, cardiac, and maybe even breast surgery. Our sister hospital, Suburban Community Hospital [in East Norriton], already has the latest da Vinci system, and Lower Bucks Hospital is in the early talks in regard to having a robotic system of its own.

"A lot of surgery is innovation, so you have to be willing to adapt," he continues. "To succeed as a surgeon, you have to be open to new ideas, not dwell on the past, and have a big 'bag of tricks.' Think of it like being a chef. You might not always have the exact ingredients to work with, so you might need to compromise, but you still have to find a way to get the same desired outcome. You have a problem, and you need to have 10 different ways to solve the problem."

It's not just robotic technology that has rev-

olutionized surgery. Dr. Choi cites advances such as fluorescence imaging, which has the ability to illuminate nerves, blood vessels, and other anatomical features for more precise movements during surgery. In addition, he is excited for the addition of 4K ultra-high-definition laparoscopy towers, which will further enhance visualization during surgery.

"The great thing about this hospital is that it's always evaluating its situation to see how and where it can expand or improve patient care," Dr. Choi adds. "For example, they just hired an interventional radiologist, and I know they are in the process of working with a local gastroenterology group for some endoscopy and GI procedures. In general, it's constantly reevaluating the needs of the community and growing as those needs change." ■



About the Surgeons

When Dr. Garvey Choi was a young boy, his interest in medicine was shaped by his grandfather's fight with lung cancer. Initially, he thought he would pursue a career in internal medicine or oncology, though the surgical rotation of his internship convinced him otherwise.

Dr. Choi went on to earn his medical degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). He then completed his internal medicine residency at Frankford Hospital in Philadelphia and his general surgery residency at Mercy Suburban Hospital in Norristown. He also enjoyed his fellowship in laparoendoscopic surgery at Danbury Hospital in Connecticut.

Dr. Troy Kerner knew he wanted to be a surgeon by the time he was in sixth grade, influenced largely by the primetime comedy-drama *M*A*S*H*. Like Dr. Choi, Dr. Kerner earned his medical degree from PCOM, where he also com-

pleted his internship and general surgery residency.

Both doctors received board certification in general surgery from the American Osteopathic Board of Surgery. Dr. Kerner believes board certification is an important distinction.

"Board certification helps establish [to a patient] that a surgeon is competent," he says. "It means that the individual has shown the ability to perform in a way that is acceptable on a national level, rather than someone who is just finishing up a residency and the program says they're fine. Board certification allows the patient to know a surgeon is experienced and capable."

Lower Bucks Hospital

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