



Physician-PA Cardiovascular Surgery Team Delivers High Quality of Care

At UC Davis Medical Center in California, J. Nilas Young, M.D., chief of cardiovascular surgery, and Ed Ranzenbach, PA-C, work as a seamless team performing complicated procedures involving the esophagus, lungs, chest wall and heart.

UC Davis pioneers some of the latest techniques in the field and delivers consistently good outcomes. More than 96 percent of patients give a favorable rating to the quality of care they receive.

"We consider our PA colleagues to be an extremely important part of our practice," says Dr. Young. "We rely on them for their intelligence, their technical skills and their oversight of patients, as well as to be a liaison with patients' families and other team members in our practice."

Dr. Young has worked with Ranzenbach for more than three years, and expects him and other experienced PAs to be involved in the full gamut of patient care. "They are an integral part of our team: doing patient rounds, performing highly technical procedures and serving as first assist in surgery," he says.

"PAs also extend our workforce capabilities in the clinic, ICU and on the wards. They effectively manage many of the patients in those settings and free up the surgeons to do more complicated tasks."

Ranzenbach, who is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, has also earned the Certificate of Added Qualifications in Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery—a credential that documents his additional experience, education and skills in this specialty.

"Dr. Young trusts me to make sure that the clinical treatment plan is executed," says Ranzenbach. "We talk several times a day and I can reach him at a moment's notice. Our communication makes sure patients get maximum oversight."

The hours can be long, but Ranzenbach loves his work. "What we do here is dramatic. Patients come to us who are very ill and cannot live their lives due to heart failure," he says. "It is so gratifying to see them after surgery and witness their return to the quality of life they want to have."

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