At the beginning of 2014, another program offering cutting-edge therapy came to Northwestern Medicine: the Lung Transplant Program. Designed to provide survival extension in patients with lung disease, the program is led by Sangeeta Bhorade, MD, and Ankit Bharat, MD, two of a select group of experts in lung transplant in the U.S.

While lung transplant is not a cure, it has been shown to have an impressive record in prolonging life among patients with end-stage lung disease: 50 percent of patients live another five years, 20 percent another 10 years.

KEY END-STAGE DISEASE PROTOCOLS

Northwestern Medicine’s multidisciplinary team of lung transplant physicians are experienced in all manner of advanced lung disease, including:

- Adult cystic fibrosis
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Interstitial lung disease
- Primary and Secondary pulmonary hypertension
- Alpha 1 anti-trypsin deficiency
- Bronchiectasis
- Histiocytosis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Sarcoidosis

PIONEERING PULMONARY TREATMENTS AND ADVANCES

The pulmonary transplant program at Northwestern currently provides these services:

- **Lung volume reduction**, performed by a thoracic surgeon to improve quality of life in COPD patients

- **Interventional Bronchoscopy** with bronchial dilatations, stent placement, endobronchial laser procedures performed by an interventional pulmonologist

- **Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation** (ECMO), in which an innovative device is utilized as a “stopgap” for lengthening a candidate’s life until a transplant has been found. It provides direct oxygenation and allows the patient to move, eat and even gain strength. (By contrast, traditional ventilators can damage lungs by pushing air into them.)

Looking toward the future, other innovations are in development:

- **Ex Vivo Lung Perfusion**, an experimental option not yet approved by the FDA, may lead to better ways to keep lungs (the most fragile of organs) stable during transplant. Northwestern is ready to become one of the clinical trial centers.

- **Genomic studies and immunosuppression research** will ultimately provide more successful lung transplant outcomes.
DYNAMIC TEAM COORDINATION

Northwestern utilizes two methods for assembling professionals who can best guarantee successful pulmonary outcomes:

Employing experts specific to lung care:

- Renowned pulmonologists and lung surgeons already on staff
- Multidisciplinary approach with expert consultative services in pulmonary, cardiac, renal and liver diseases

Additional multidisciplinary team approach:

Northwestern is privileged to already have staff members throughout this facility who can easily supplement the lung transplant team, bringing a full range of expertise to pulmonary treatment decisions:

- Primary care physicians
- Pulmonologists
- Cardiologists
- Emergency medicine physicians
- Nurse practitioners
- Intensive care physicians
- Social workers
- Nutritionists
- Patient liaisons
- Pathologists

Overall, Northwestern Medicine has a basic philosophy that encourages continual and open communication with referring physicians so that they may remain involved in their patients’ care.

Ultimately, the Lung Transplant Program is one more example of Northwestern Medicine’s global approach to quality patient care. Adding these capabilities reinforces why U.S. News & World Report’s ranked Northwestern Memorial Hospital in 2012–13 as one of the leading medical centers in the country.