

**Photo caption:** Oaklawn da Vinci surgeons (l-r): Louis Remyse, M.D.(urological), Tammy Gleeson, M.D.(thoracic), Lars Langschwager, M.D.(GYN), Kathryn Young, M.D.(GYN).

### **Oaklawn remains a leader in da Vinci Robotic Surgery**

The da Vinci Surgical System incorporates robotics to facilitate complex surgery using a minimally invasive approach. Minimally invasive surgery differs from invasive or open surgery in that it makes use of much smaller incisions, causing less trauma, scarring, and bleeding, and that usually leads to shorter recovery times, less discomfort, and fewer complications. The system is controlled by a surgeon who sits at a console a few yards from the operating table. From the console the surgeon remotely controls operating instruments and a miniature camera that are attached to robotic arms and inserted into the patient through the small incisions.

While seated the surgeon peers into the console where he views a highly magnified 3D image of the surgical area and the instruments that he controls via two pedals and two hand controllers. The da Vinci System translates the surgeon's hand movements into more precise micro-movements of the instruments working inside the patient's body. The instruments' joint-wristed design exceeds the natural range of motion of the human hand, allowing for greater dexterity, steadiness, and precision.

The first da Vinci's were developed in the late 1990s, but relatively few hospitals across the country purchased the million-dollar robots until the last couple of years. In December of 2004, Oaklawn Hospital became only the third hospital in Michigan to own a da Vinci System and had over two years of operating experience before any other area hospitals purchased one. In 2010, Oaklawn upgraded to the latest da Vinci model, the S HD Surgical System, and is now performing multiple da Vinci surgeries each week that include urological, gynecological, and thoracic procedures.

Dr. Louis Remyse of Urology Associates (269.788.6888) in Battle Creek, is one of the leading da Vinci prostate surgeons in the Midwest, while Dr.s Lars Langschwager and Kathryn Young, both of Mansion Street OB/GYN (269.781.1183) in Marshall, perform Oaklawn's gynecological da Vinci procedures. Dr. Tammy Gleeson of Thoracic Surgery Institute of Southwest Michigan (269.441.0444) also performs weekly robotic surgeries at Oaklawn.

While it's the surgeon who is responsible for the successful manipulation of the robotic instrumentation, the quality of the surgical team is critical to the success of each operation, and Todd Mulvaine, Oaklawn's Surgical Director, believes he has one of the finest surgical teams in the state. "Most of the members of our da Vinci team have worked together now for over five years," said Mulvaine. "They each perform their role in an efficient and skillful manner, and I know our doctors love working with them. More than a couple visiting surgeons have told me they'd like to take our da Vinci team home with them."