



Healthwise

FALL 2017

A Breath of Fresh Air

LIFE CHANGING CARE AT THE CENTER FOR WOUND HEALING

• • • Plus • • •

Flipping the Switch

MAJOR UPDATES FOR BMH

Mind Matters

EXPANDING TELEHEALTH

and much more!





President's Corner

Greetings!

Autumn is a time of transition and change, and this autumn has stirred up more than just the usual leaf piles at BMH. Drs. Tortolani and Sczesny closed their practice in June 2017 and Dr. Bresnahan will be retiring at the end of December 2017. This directly caused a significant increase in the number of patients seeking primary care clinicians within the BMH Medical Group.

At this time, we are trying to accommodate patients' requests through the establishment of our Interim Care Clinic as well as recruitment of additional primary care clinicians. We have been successful in recruiting two new nurse practitioners who recently started at Maplewood Family Practice and Putney Family Healthcare as well as a primary care provider who will start at Brattleboro Internal Medicine later this fall. Unfortunately, these additional clinicians do not meet the demand and we are working diligently to recruit additional primary care providers.

Prior to the practice closures, Brattleboro was identified, by our local chapter of the Area Health Education Center, as being in need of eight additional primary care clinicians to meet the needs of our community. Brattleboro Memorial Hospital's situation is a microcosm of a nationwide shortage. In a report released in March 2017, the Association of American Medical Colleges projected a national shortfall of almost 104,000 primary care physicians by 2030. The shrinking pool of primary care providers coupled with the growing health needs of our aging community strains our existing primary care resources.

The root cause of this shortage is two-pronged — convincing medical students to enter into primary care and subsequently persuading those students to join a primary care practice in a rural area. Most students attend medical schools and serve residencies in urban locales and become accustomed to the attractions of a city lifestyle and larger medical institutions. This results in the newly-minted providers remaining in a metro setting and overlooking the possibility of a rural lifestyle. A recent survey performed by Merritt Hawkins, one of the biggest physician recruiting firms in the country, stated that only 3 percent of medical residents prefer to practice in communities of 25,000 people or less.

For students who do select to practice primary care in rural areas, competition to recruit them is fierce. To exacerbate the issue, over 25 percent of physicians in the United States are foreign born, many of whom seek to practice in rural areas, and with federal immigration policies changing, access to these providers will become more difficult.

We continue to appreciate the community's support during this transition period and are committed to finding clinicians who are dedicated to delivering exceptional care for our neighbors and becoming active members of our community.

Best Regards,

Steven R. Gordon

President and CEO
Brattleboro Memorial Hospital



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Classes & Events

For additional events, location details, or contact info, visit www.bmhvt.org/events

CHAIR YOGA

Focuses on range of motion, strength building, and balance, **free**. Wednesdays, 4-4:45pm

BONEBUILDERS

Osteoporosis prevention exercises, **free**. Mon/Fri, 10-11am, Tues/Thurs, 3:30-4:30pm

TAI CHI FOR HEALTH

Meditative martial arts using slow movements and deep breathing, **free**. Tuesdays, 9:15-10am

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS)

Develop a healthier lifestyle; improve your eating and exercise habits, **free**. Tuesdays, 5:15-6pm

WOMEN'S NETWORK OF STRENGTH

Encouragement and support for women with cancer, **free**. 3rd Wednesday of the month, 12-1pm



Brattleboro Memorial Hospital
EXCEPTIONAL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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FIND US ON



Mind Matters

What if a friend or family member experiences a mental health emergency? Wouldn't you want them to be evaluated by an experienced and capable provider right away? Now they can be.

When a patient experiencing a mental health crisis presents to the BMH Emergency Department, it is now possible for them to have prompt access to a board-certified psychiatrist.

Through BMH's partnership with Dartmouth-Hitchcock (D-H) Center for Connected Care, the BMH Emergency Department is now equipped with TelePsychiatry services. In a crisis, D-H TelePsychiatry will provide immediate support to BMH's local care team by putting a board-certified psychiatrist at a patient's bedside via live, two-way, secure video on high-definition monitors.

The psychiatrist can talk with the patient and others, while using the camera to observe important physical features such as pupil dilation, facial tics, flushing, and overall body movements. The psychiatrist, who has access to the patient's medical information, can then provide a consult to the emergency room staff and make diagnoses and treatment, services not previously available without a psychiatrist physically present.



Kathleen McGraw MD, BMH Chief Medical Officer, explains the significance of this new service, "By leveraging technology, existing psychiatric prescribers and specialists are able to extend our hospital's resources and provide new access for psychiatric patient care."

She continues, "This system provides previously unavailable access to psychiatry with effective use of innovative technology in strategic healthcare partnerships in areas where we have the most critical needs." 🌿

Flipping the Switch

Over the summer, BMH embarked on the largest internal project in the hospital's history: completing a major upgrade to the information technology system to effectively link all hospital departments, BMH Medical Group practices, and other computer systems. To patients and visitors, the mechanics of the upgrade were largely invisible; however, the benefits have been immediate and will continue to be long-lasting.

Before the upgrade, BMH used multiple computer platforms to manage patient data, communicate between staff and departments, document clinical work, schedule surgeries, and accomplish many other tasks of providing care to patients. While information was available to users across multiple systems, important details in a patient's full medical record were not always easily accessible.

Patients will now have access to many parts of their medical record through a new Patient Portal. This will make it easier to forward relevant pieces of their record to physicians outside of the area. In addition, critical details, including medications, emergency contacts, and advanced directives will all be available in one record.

When a patient checks in at any BMH practice or department, the care team will know, 'This is Mary Smith. She has an allergy to penicillin, and she was seen a week ago in the ED for a sprained ankle.'

Staff can pull up digital images of her recent x-ray, see the results of her lab work, and read the notes from the ED physician to better understand her discharge instructions and any referrals. Timely access to a patient's comprehensive medical record eliminates the need for duplicative testing or procedures, and can reduce errors in transcription.

Steven Cummings, BMH Vice President for Information and Support Services, notes, "We'd like to thank our patients for their understanding during the rollout, which caused delays and longer wait times in registration. It's been a huge undertaking, with many moving parts, but every day we are finding new ways we can better serve the needs of our patients and continue to provide exceptional care for our community." 🌿

Provider's Perspective

George Terwilliger, MD, BMH Emergency Department physician, is appreciative of the new information system, "Instead of juggling seven different technology systems between departments, we are now able to interface across one unified system.

My staff and I are able to input medical notations in real time and appreciate our new portable dictation software - utilizing this handheld device is a gamechanger - as every minute counts in urgent care.

Learning a new system is oftentimes fraught with frustrations; however, the benefits of this system are a huge advance for patient care."



A Breath of Fresh Air

Every day at BMH, patients make their way down the hospital corridor to the Center for Wound Healing. The staff greet most of them by name; they know them well as regular participants in an intensive program to regain mobility and independence from chronic wounds.

These types of wounds are associated with a number of underlying causes including diabetes, poor circulation, infections, or damage to tissue from radiation therapy. What all these patients have in common is that their wounds have not healed within a predictable pattern or time frame – over 30 days or longer.

“What makes our program special is that we focus on the patient as a whole person, not just their wound, and we draw on the experience of a team of clinicians with expertise in many areas – general surgery, vascular surgery, internal medicine, emergency medicine, dermatology, and plastic surgery.

But what also sets our program apart is the level of commitment we ask of our patients. Patients typically need to come here many times in a week, over the course of many weeks, and they need to pay very close attention to the underlying medical issues that have contributed to their non-healing wound,” notes **Gregory Gadowski, MD, Medical Director for the Center for Wound Healing.**

As the only comprehensive wound clinic with hyperbaric chambers in Vermont, the Center is able to heal lingering wounds that have been unresponsive to other forms of care. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy is a simple but effective treatment in which a patient breathes pure oxygen inside a pressurized chamber. The therapy quickly and safely delivers high concentrations of oxygen to their bloodstream, increasing the body’s own natural wound-healing abilities.



Dr. Gadowski adds, “We’re healing people at a much faster rate, and returning them to a more mobile and healthy lifestyle. I am encouraged to see patients returning to their favorite pastimes and regaining mobility. Chronic wounds can really limit your lifestyle, so when I see our patients being able to take a walk, or drive themselves to the supermarket – especially since I know what an extraordinary commitment they have made to their healing – that’s very gratifying.” 🌿

Are you or a loved one suffering from a chronic or non-healing wound?

**Contact the Center for Wound Healing for an initial consultation.
Call (802) 275-3674 or visit www.bmhvt.org/wound for more information.**



Joseph Munn (center) smiles alongside his care team from the Center for Wound Healing. Left to right: Margaret Andrews, Administrative Support; Jessi Grover, RN; Melody Lively, RN; and Jeanne Lauziere, RN. Munn credits his healing to the Center’s intensive Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (chamber in rear).

Patient's Perspective

For Joseph Munn, the Center for Wound Healing staff are more than care providers; they are his family. After an untreated lesion on Munn’s ankle became infected, he was treated at another health-care facility, initially undergoing unsuccessful skin graft treatments.

Clinical staff were skeptical regarding his recovery, and advised Munn that amputation would be inevitable. Munn was referred to the Wound Center in May 2016 for a second opinion. “I was very anxious going into my first appointment, but the staff encouraged me and helped me relax,” he says.

After his initial appointment, Munn was placed on an intensive schedule – two hours daily for 30 days in the HBO (Hyperbaric Oxygen) Therapy Chamber. After another similar round of treatment, Munn’s wound showed significant healing. “I am so happy with the progress of my healing,” he affirms. “I am able to get around much easier.”

Now a graduate of the Wound Center, Munn frequently returns to visit staff, noting, “I came here so many times, they have become my family. I am so grateful for their care.” 🌿

Ways to Give

Planned Gifts are a meaningful way to give back – to leave a philanthropic legacy to your community and to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

Retirement Plan – Through your IRA, 401 (k), or other qualified retirement plan, you may designate a percentage of your plan to BMH as a beneficiary.

Bequest – Through your will, you may make a planned gift of your choosing to BMH.

Life Insurance – Through your life insurance policy, you may name BMH as a beneficiary of your plan.

Charitable Gift Annuity – This enables you to place cash, securities, or real estate into a trust that pays lifetime income to you and/or other beneficiaries with the principal eventually passing to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

Charitable Remainder Trust – This allows you to make a gift of cash or appreciated securities to BMH which guarantees a quarterly payment of a specific amount to you and/or a beneficiary for life.

The 1904 Legacy Society

Unlike other types of philanthropy, these are gifts that are designated now but benefit BMH at some further date. The planned gifts of the past have created our strength today and your gift of tomorrow will do the same for future generations. Those who make a legacy gift are recognized for their generosity by membership in The 1904 Legacy Society.

Interested in learning more about giving opportunities? Contact Gina Pattison, BMH Director of Development and Marketing, by calling (802) 257-8314 or emailing gpattison@bmhvt.org.



Ask the Doctor



WITH BMH RADIOLOGIST, EDWARD ELLIOTT, MD

Q: WHAT IS 3D MAMMOGRAPHY?

3D mammography is a new FDA-approved imaging technology designed for early breast cancer detection, and is performed along with a conventional exam. During the 3D part of the exam, the X-ray arm sweeps in a slight arc over your breast, taking multiple images, providing enhanced visibility for the radiologist to see the inside of your breast with greater detail.

Q: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A 3D MAMMOGRAM?

With conventional mammography, a radiologist is viewing all the complexities of your breast tissue in one flat image. Sometimes, breast tissue can overlap, giving the illusion of normal breast tissue looking like an abnormal area. By looking at the breast tissue in slices, the radiologist can provide a more confident assessment. In this way, 3D mammography enables radiologists to see cancers sometimes missed with the conventional exam and reduces the number of call-backs.

Q: WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT DURING A 3D MAMMOGRAM?

A 3D mammogram complements conventional mammography and is performed at the same time with the same system. No additional compression is required, and it only takes several seconds longer for each view.

Q: DO I NEED A REFERRAL FROM MY PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER?

No additional provider referral is needed for the 3D portion of your exam, if you are getting a conventional mammogram and have a referral from your health care provider. 🌿

In The Kitchen

Butternut Squash with Pumpkin Seeds & Cranberries

WITH BMH REGISTERED DIETICIAN PEG CANAL, MS, RD, CD, CDE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. butternut squash, diced into 1/2 inch cubes
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbs. pomegranate OR orange juice
- 1/8 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/3 cup pumpkin seeds, toasted
- 3 tbs. dried cranberries

DIRECTIONS

1. Steam squash until tender, 3-5 minutes. Drain water.
2. In a large bowl, whisk mustard, vinegar, juice, salt, and oil. Toss squash in bowl with dressing.
3. Sprinkle with pumpkin seeds and cranberries.



Adapted from Nutrition Action Healthletter.

BMHVT.ORG 9

Tuning In

Are the nurses texting? Yes! In an effort to reduce unit noise and to speed provider response and communication, BMH now provides nursing staff with iPod touch devices. These devices will be used for staff to communicate with each other via secure messages – saving steps and improving efficiency by reducing the amount of noise involved in overhead pages. The devices do not connect to the wireless network outside the hospital and never leave the facility.

Research has proven the effectiveness of this innovation. In its pilot program for iPod communication, Sarasota Memorial Hospital (FL) reduced the number of overhead pages in eight hours from 172 to 38. In fact, the iPods received over 4,000 messages per day. Nursing staff appreciated the ability to create a faster channel of communication between peers.

Stacy Wissman, BSN, RN, BMH Director of Inpatient Services, explains, “This will not only increase employee satisfaction and communication, but will also greatly improve patient experience and will reduce unit noise, allowing our patients to have a restful and speedy recovery.” 🌿



Next Steps

Certificate of Need Approved for BMH Modernization Project

The Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) recently approved BMH's Certificate of Need (CON) application for new construction of the Ronald Read Pavilion. Plans for the new 20,000 square foot, four-story building include three new replacement operating rooms, new enlarged spaces for the Central Sterile Processing and Cardiopulmonary departments, and two floors for medical offices. Additionally, the plans provide for significant renovations within the hospital's existing perioperative area, and new boilers for the power plant.

“This major project is the culmination of a planning process started in 2009 and addresses our hospital's current facility needs,” notes **BMH President and CEO Steven R. Gordon.**

Approval from the GMCB is the first step in the process for the hospital's Modernization Project. BMH staff will now reengage to finalize the architectural plans, prepare for the construction bid process, as well as initiate both local and Act 250 approval processes. Gordon adds, “This is a significant investment in our future and an exciting time not only for staff, but our community as a whole.” 🌿

Community Health Team News

New Respite Bed Provides Comfort to Patients in Need

In 2016, after analyzing its annual Community Health Needs Assessment, BMH's Community Health Team hired an RN Vulnerable Populations Care Coordinator to be on site at the Groundworks Collaborative Drop In Center assisting clients experiencing homelessness with access to healthcare services. As the year progressed, a subsequent need was identified. Patients experiencing homelessness did not have a safe place to prepare for or recover from procedures and acute hospitalizations, such as wound care or colonoscopies. Working in partnership with Groundworks Collaborative, they created a respite bed at the shelter for clients in need.

Jodi Dodge, RN, BMH Director of Community Initiatives, explained the significance of the addition, “A respite bed is a stable, safe, supportive environment where individuals who have health care needs can stay to rest and recuperate, specifically when their health condition does not require a hospital admission. Having a respite bed exclusively for BMH-referred patients will allow our Care Management team to move them through the care system and enhance the ability for follow-up and coordination of care.”

Specific services provided through participation in the respite bed program include: access to the RN Vulnerable Population Care Coordinator services, including education, follow-up assistance, and advocacy; a secure, private room with proximity to the bathroom and fully equipped kitchen; a food package upon hospital discharge and ongoing food shelf support as needed; transportation from the hospital to the shelter and ongoing transportation coordination; comprehensive case management for housing and other services; and secure medication storage and dispensation. 🌿



BMH Partners with Vermont Foodbank

Vermont Foodbank recently partnered with the hospital to deliver healthy fruits and vegetables via the VeggieVanGo, a mobile food pantry program. The partnership extends the resources delivered through the hospital's Community Health Team (CHT), a department comprised of experts in nutrition, behavioral health, diabetes, and social work. The team provides care coordination, prevention, and management of chronic health conditions for community members.

“We are excited to partner with the Vermont Foodbank,” said **Jodi Dodge, RN, BMH Director of Community Initiatives.** “We are committed to helping our community members access the resources they need. In addition to handing out the fresh produce, our team is available for support and education about healthy food.”

Both families and individuals are invited to pick up free, fresh produce and other healthy groceries from 12pm – 1pm at the BMH Loading Dock on Maple Street in Brattleboro. The mobile food pantry will be available the 3rd Monday of each month. 🌿



**Brattleboro
Memorial Hospital**

EXCEPTIONAL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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This magazine is not intended as specific medical advice and is not a substitute for professional medical treatment or diagnosis. Consult your physician with any questions about your health.

Seasonal Highlights



Just a Reminder

Cold and flu season is around the corner. The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones? Get a flu shot!

Contact your health provider for the vaccine.



Check Us Out

Jumpstart your career and join our team at BMH! We are currently hiring RNs/LPNs, Medical Assistants, and Environmental Service Aides, among many other positions.

Visit us online to learn more, www.bmhvt.org/careers



Did You Know?

We now offer 3D Mammography! This exam allows your doctor to better evaluate your breast tissue layer by layer.

Learn more from Dr. Edward Elliott, BMH radiologist, on page 9.



Connect with Us

Manage your health online by signing up for the Patient Portal. You will be able to pay bills, review test results, request appointments, and more!

Sign up at your next office visit or call (800) 621-8014 for 24/7 support. Learn more about the new technology on page 5.