



# Healthwise

SPECIAL EDITION • A YEAR IN REVIEW 2019



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How BMH is stepping beyond workforce development to workforce solutions

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**Meet our new clinicians**

## ONLINE RESOURCES

For the latest information and news, support groups, events, patient stories, and perspectives from our clinicians, visit our online resources:



[www.bmhvt.org](http://www.bmhvt.org)



[Facebook.com/BMHVT](https://www.facebook.com/BMHVT)



[YouTube.com/user/BMHospital](https://www.youtube.com/user/BMHospital)



[Pinterest.com/BMHVT](https://www.pinterest.com/BMHVT)

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# President's Corner

With the holiday season upon us, I look forward to take a moment to reflect on all that has been undertaken and accomplished here at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital. Looking back on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for the spirit of collaboration not just inside our facilities but within our entire community.

In addition to the staff, volunteers, and medical providers who work together to create an environment where patients, families, and community members feel valued and cared for, we also have a range of dedicated local partners who collaborate with us to make our hospital responsive to our community's needs.

Over the past year, we have worked with a range of organizations to carry out our mission of providing exceptional care for our community. It is truly a testament to the can-do spirit of our region that even in trying times, we have been able to accomplish so much in so many areas of healthcare, including:

### Dental Health

Recognizing the need for accessible, affordable dental care for local patients, BMH has collaborated with the United Way of Windham County to establish a dental center for patients on Medicaid or patients without insurance.

### Vulnerable Population Nursing

BMH provides a Vulnerable Population RN embedded at Groundworks Collaborative to provide both health care and case management for homeless and near-homeless individuals in our community.

### LGBTQ+ Initiatives

The LGBTQ+ Leadership Council was created with the mission to develop a welcoming, affirming, and clinically excellent environment for all employees, patients, families, and friends. We are working with The Fenway Institute/Boston to provide education and guidance with this mission.

### Embedded Mental Health Therapists in Primary Care

Several BMH primary care practices partner with Brattleboro Retreat and Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) to provide behavior health therapy and follow-up services.

### Opioid Reduction Initiatives

BMH is an active member of multiple groups addressing this important issue including the Prescription Abuse Prevention group.

For 115 years, BMH has proudly served this region with high quality, compassionate care. We look forward to continuing to serve as a resource for our community for many years to come!

Best Regards,  
**Steven R. Gordon**  
President and CEO  
Brattleboro Memorial Hospital



# Our Year in Review 2019

For more than a century, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital has provided for the healthcare needs of our neighbors. A licensed, 61-bed, not-for-profit community hospital, we serve a rural population of about 55,000 people in 22 towns across Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Our medical staff includes 132 board-certified clinicians, 660 employees, and over 100 active volunteers.



## Board of Directors

**BMH Board of Directors (L to R):** Rhonda Calhoun, Valerie Rooney, MD, Michael Mandracchia, Tony Blofson, MD, Stephen Phillips, Donna McElligott, William Daley, John V.P. Meyer, Elizabeth McLarney, MD, George Idelkope, MD, and Patty O'Donnell (Board Chair).

## Senior Leadership

**BMH Senior Leadership (L to R):** Steven R. Gordon, President & CEO; Jodi Stack, MSN, RN, BBA, Chief Nursing Officer/VP Patient Care Services; Kathleen McGraw, MD, FHM, CPE, Chief Medical Officer and Chief Information Officer; Michael Rogers, Treasurer; Eilidh Pederson, VP Medical Group Management and Population Health; and William Norwood, VP Human Resources.



# IN HOUSE

How BMH is stepping beyond workforce development to workforce solutions.



It's been 20 years since Y2K and for the first time, there are five generations in the workplace. In the next decade, BMH's workforce will witness an unprecedented change as Baby Boomers leave and Gen X-ers, Millennials, and Gen Z-ers will comprise nearly 70% of the employee population. How will the hospital prepare for such a generational shift?

According to a report by the Vermont Rural Health Services Task Force, over **4,000 vacancies for nursing and clinical support positions** will be posted across the state by next spring, leaving care units throughout hospitals short-staffed. While the promise of new positions is appealing to new nursing graduates, the expectations to meet patient demands can be overwhelming.

To connect the dots, the hospital established a **Nurse Residency Program**, providing a transitional support program for recent nursing graduates for the first six months at the hospital.

Jodi Stack, MSN, BBA, RN, BMH's Chief Nursing Officer, explained, "The program is designed to provide a positive first work experience in nursing by combining clinical experiences with a mixture of presentations, computer-based training, case scenarios, and peer group meetings. We want our new nurses

to transition successfully from student to professional nurses, and we are committed to providing an environment that supports them as they master core nursing competencies and develop clinical judgment and decision making skills."

Recent graduate and nurse resident in the hospital's Progressive Care Unit, Serena Vassar, RN found the program invaluable. "I completed one of my clinical rotations with BMH. As soon as I heard they were offering a residency program, it was a no-brainer to apply. BMH has such a home-town feel, I knew I'd be supported through my first full-time nursing job."

Across campus, the hospital's medical group developed an accelerated **College to Career Medical Assisting Program** with the Community College of Vermont (CCV), allowing for students to become Certified Medical Assistants within 15 weeks, offering scholarships and full-time employment within BMH Medical Group practices for students, contingent upon completion of the certification program.

For Sandy Sherman, CMA, a medical assistant in Brattleboro Internal Medicine, the program was the perfect stepping stone to enter the medical field. "I was at a point in my life where I wouldn't have been able to do it on my own. This program provided me

with the guidance, education, and support I needed to succeed."

The hospital also extended its partnership model with CCV to non-clinical roles. Working with the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL), the hospital created a **Support Services Training Program** to help community members who have been unemployed or underemployed transition back to meaningful work.

The program focused on housekeeping needs within a hospital setting, specifically infection control and OSHA-related requirements. In addition to environmental services training, the participants collaborated with Brattleboro-based VDOL staff for career counseling sessions, including resume-building, communication, and computer skills.

For Solasia Graves-Trotman, the program offered her the opportunity to learn about healthcare from the ground up.

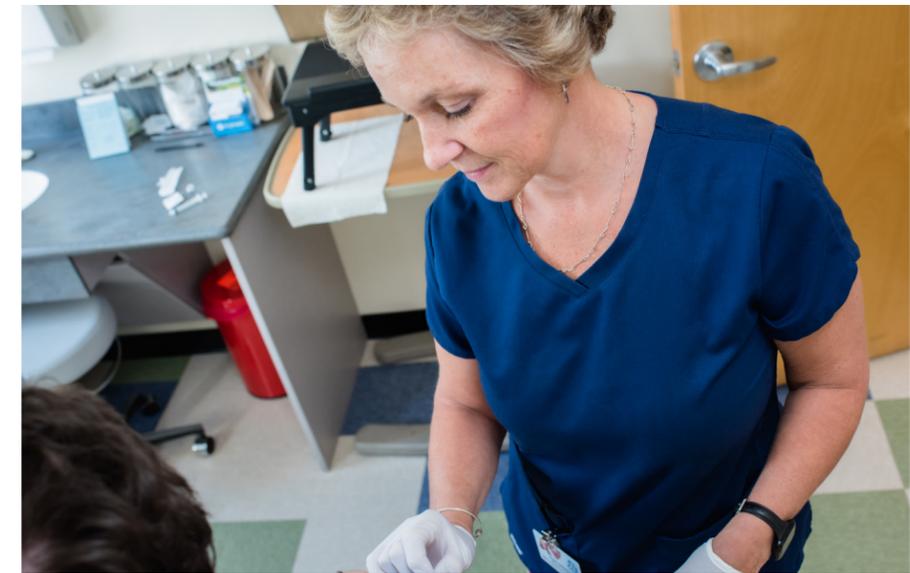
"Before the program, I had no idea how important our role is in the hospital to keep patients and employees healthy and safe."

Upon completing the program, Solasia continued her studies with CCV, working towards an Associates in Accounting with hopes to transition to the hospital's Finance and Billing department.

And for employees looking to grow within their roles at BMH, the hospital established a **LPN Scholarship Program** in partnership with Vermont Technical College. The year-long program combines classroom lectures and demonstrations with technical practice in both a nursing skills lab and healthcare practice settings.

Tim Haineswood, medical assistant in Brattleboro Internal Medicine, was looking to advance in his position at the practice.

"I've been here for six years as a medical assistant. This program would allow me to professionally and clinically advance my skills and allow me to provide more support for my patients and colleagues." 🌸



Left: Serena Vassar; Sandy Sherman and Tim Haineswood; Solasia Graves-Trotman.

# FARM FRESH

How BMH works with regional agriculture partners to offer farm-to-table meals



Local. Fresh. Made from scratch. Sound like an appetizing ad for a restaurant? Think again. While hospital cuisine has been formerly cast as drab and dull, the staff in the BMH Nutrition Services department have embarked on a mission to dispel the longstanding myth.

Jamie Baribeau, Director of Food and Nutrition Services, believes that “food is medicine,” and works diligently with nutritionists, clinical staff, nutrition associates, and chefs to develop menus tailored for staff and patients’ specific dietary needs.

He noted, “Healthcare begins with nutrition and we believe that good food really is part of treatment.”

Through its partnership with Food Connects, a local

nonprofit food delivery service, the hospital receives fresh food directly from farms across Vermont and New Hampshire, including ground beef, speciality pork, cheeses, yogurt, granola, and breads; fish are freshly sourced from Boston seaports.

While the staff remains busy creating breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus daily, they also participate in annual culinary skills training courses, attend farm, food, and distribution tours, as well as engage in purchasing and data tracking reports for the state of Vermont.

Caring through cooking. Serving over **30,000 patient meals a year**, the hospital is well on its way towards that mission. 🌱

Above: Chef Tom Mimitz prepares a local vegetable medley.

# BEHIND THE SCENES

Discover the departments that keep the heart of our hospital ticking.



## INFORMATION SERVICES

The Information Services department is responsible for managing both our clinical and administrative software systems and internet and security infrastructures.

They managed over **40 multi-department projects**, answered over **4,400 help-desk requests**, and provided support for **760 laptops and computers**, and **135 servers** across the hospital system.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Focused on infection prevention and sanitation, the Environmental Services department works 24/7 to maintain high standards of cleanliness for the hospital not only in patient rooms, but all areas of the hospital and medical practices.

Our team of aides also manage the trash and recycling program as well as the laundry facilities; last year they processed over **147,000 pounds of recyclables** and washed almost **698,000 pounds of laundry**.



## PLANT SERVICES

From carpentry, plumbing and electrical to painting, heating, and cooling, the Plant Services department cares for the daily operations, repair, and maintenance of the hospital.

While a typical Vermont home uses 6,828 kilowatts annually, last year, the hospital used over **4 million kilowatts of electricity**, **40%** of which was **generated by a solar field**.



## PURCHASING

The Purchasing department handles inventory for the entire hospital system - in fact, they have over **1,100 types of items** in stock.

From **35 types of gloves** and **31 kinds of needles**, the purchasing department delivers orders to each department and practice daily to make sure employees can provide the best care to patients.

In the past year, they filled over **32,700 requests** for items. The top five were:

1. Adult Monitoring Electrodes (*Measures heart activity*)
2. IV Start Kits
3. IV Solution Sets
4. Adult Slippers
5. Syringes

# NEW FACES

Meet new clinicians who joined our medical staff in 2019.

In 2019, BMH welcomed **twelve new clinicians** to our medical staff who provided health services through our hospital and multispecialty practices.

Our medical group includes **seven primary care practices**, whose staff completed **42,000 patient visits** this year. Brattleboro Family Medicine, Brattleboro Internal Medicine, Just So Pediatrics, Maplewood

Family Practice, Post-Acute Care Services, Putney Family Healthcare, and Windham Family Practice.

Additionally, we offer **five specialty care practices**, whose staff completed **38,000 patient visits** this year. BMH Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine, BMH Urology, the Center for Cardiovascular Health, Brattleboro General Surgery, and Brattleboro OB/GYN. 🌸



## INGRID BRINKMAN, MD

Dr. Brinkman joined BMH as a hospitalist. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard College and received her medical degree from and completed her residency with Baylor College of Medicine.



## JOHN COPE, MD, FACS

Dr. Cope joined Brattleboro General Surgery as a surgeon. He received his Bachelor of Science from Boston College, his medical degree from SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and completed his residency with Baystate Medical Center.



## RE GORHAM, WHNP-BC, ANP

Ann Marie "Re" joined Brattleboro OB/GYN as a women's health nurse practitioner. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Barnard College and received her Master of Science in Nursing from Yale University School of Nursing.



## GILBERT GREEN, DO

Dr. Green joined Brattleboro Internal Medicine as neurologist. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Trinity College, his medical degree from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, and completed his residency with Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center.



## EMILY GROSE, MN, CNM

Emily joined Brattleboro OB/GYN as a certified nurse midwife. She received her Bachelor of Arts from University of Connecticut and her Master of Nursing from Oregon Health & Science University.



## BRIANA GWALTNEY, MSN, FNP-BC

Briana joined BMH Urology as a nurse practitioner. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Adventist University of Health Sciences and her Master of Science in Nursing with high honors from South University.



## ANGELA MILLER, DNP

Angela joined BMH as a nurse practitioner for the Comprehensive Care Clinic for HIV/AIDS. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Purdue University and her Doctorate of Nursing Practice from University of Massachusetts, Amherst.



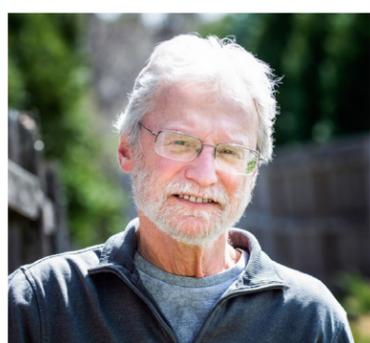
## ALAN OPSAHL, MD

Dr. Opsahl joined BMH as a cardiologist. He received his medical degree from the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, completed his residency with Indiana University School of Medicine, and his fellowship in cardiology with Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center.



## RACHEL SCHNEIDER, CNM, WHNP-BC

Rachel joined Brattleboro OB/GYN as a certified nurse midwife and women's health nurse practitioner. She received both her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in nursing from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing.



## ROBERT SCHWARTZ, MD

Dr. Schwartz joined Brattleboro Family Medicine as a family practice physician. He received his medical degree from the University of Vermont College of Medicine and completed his residency with the University of Massachusetts Family Practice Residency program.



## CARL SZOT, JR., MD

Dr. Szot joined BMH as a cardiologist. He received his Bachelor of Science from St. Bonaventure University, received his medical degree from and completed his residency with the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and completed his fellowship in cardiology with SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.



## MICHAEL WACK, MD

Dr. Wack joined BMH Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine as an orthopaedic surgeon. He received his Bachelor of Science from the University of Illinois, Urbana. He received his medical degree from and completed his residency with the University of Illinois, Chicago.

## DOWN THE HALL

Discover the departments with the busiest patient visits.



### Oncology & Comprehensive Care

Our Oncology and Comprehensive Care teams completed over **7,500 patient visits**, caring for patients with a wide variety of cancer, hematologic, and HIV/AIDS diagnoses.



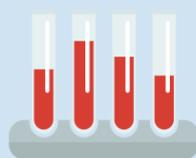
### Mammography

Our mammography technologists provided **3-D mammograms** for **4,615 patients**. 3-D mammography is 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, taking multiple images, providing enhanced visibility for the radiologist to see the inside of the breast with greater detail.



### Radiology

Our radiologic technologists performed over **47,200 tests**, including x-ray exams, CT scans, MRI screenings, nuclear medicine studies, and other specialized tests.



### Laboratory

Our phlebotomists performed over **33,000 blood draws** for patients and our laboratory staff ran over **200,000 tests** in the hospital. The most common blood test conducted at BMH studies a patient's CBC (Complete Blood Count). These tests are often part of your routine medical exam to monitor your general health or are run to monitor a medical condition. In 2019, we ran over **9,500 CBC tests**.



### Perioperative Services

Our Surgical Services staff performed over **3,800 cases** - this includes orthopaedic surgeries, colonoscopies, appendectomies, endoscopies, Cesarean sections, biopsies, and many other surgical procedures. In fact, Central Sterile, the department tasked with sterilizing and organizing the equipment and tools used in each surgery, processed over **8,500 trays of tools** and surgical materials in 2019.

# A HELPING HAND

How BMH offers financial and resource assistance for vulnerable patients



In 2019, BMH processed over **69,600 patient registrations**. From basic blood draws and prenatal care to knee-replacement surgeries, emergency needs, and cancer treatment, staff in the hospital's registration department assist patients in their most vulnerable and often nerve-racking moments.

And for many of these patients, the cost of such care is equally stressful. As the hospital's Community Resource Liaison, Autumn Kendall, CAC, helps patients navigate the cost and billing process.

For patients who are under- or un-insured or on Medicaid, Autumn works with **VT Health Connect**, the state's health insurance hub, to register patients and select plans to fit their needs and budget.

Additionally, she coordinates the hospital's **Financial Aid Program** to aid patients in determining a sliding-scale qualification for cost reduction. Meeting with patients, she connects them to various community partners and resources, from affordable childcare or dental care options to resources for healthy food or fuel access, among other vital social services.

"When patients come to see me, they're struggling with financial and health woes. It's really rewarding to be able to relieve some of that burden of a looming bill and be a part of their recovery to get back to their healthier selves." 🌸

**Learn More:** For more information about patient financial assistance, call Autumn: (802) 257-8814.

# TAKING THE TIME

Learn how the team of volunteers and Auxiliary members donate their gifts of service to the hospital.



As patients walk through the front entrance of the main hospital or the Richards Building, they are greeted by a friendly face and offer of assistance. These warm greeters are part of a team of **108 volunteers** who have given more than **12,200 hours of service** to the hospital in 2019.

In those thousands of hours, our volunteers have greeted hundreds of visitors, taken over **15,600 wheelchair transport trips**, assisted staff in Oncology and the Ambulatory Care Unit, and supported dozens of special projects.

Additionally, the volunteers are responsible for the **Patient Care Cart**, a new initiative funded by the BMH Auxiliary. Often, patients are unexpectedly hospitalized and miss small comfort amenities. In 2019, our volunteers made over **260 trips** to the Progressive Care Unit with the cart, offering complimentary items to patients to brighten their day, including deodorants, hand sanitizers, crossword puzzles, denture cleaners, reading glasses, and more.

In addition to the Care Cart, in 2019 the Auxiliary generously donated almost **\$14,000 for hospital needs**. They've supplied over 600 books for Just So Pediatrics' Reach Out & Read Program, 300 bags for new moms in the Birthing Center, 48 teddy bears for pediatric surgical patients, pool exercise memberships for Community Health Team patients, air purifying respirators for the Progressive Care Unit, 3 scholarships for local high school graduates, and so much more. 🌸



L to R: Michelle Kilduff, Russell Stephens, Piet van Loon, and Cindy MacDonald.

**Did You Know?** Russell Stephens is BMH's longest serving volunteer - giving more than 12,000 hours since retiring from Vermont National Bank in 1993.

# OUT & ABOUT

Learn how our departments and practices engaged with our community partners.



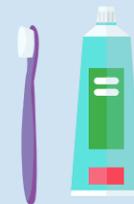
## Emergency Department

Our Emergency Department staff cared for over **14,000 patients** in 2019. Additionally, the hospital created a new partnership with the **Brattleboro Retreat** and **Turning Point of Windham County** to offer Rapid Access to Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT). The program provides fast, low-barrier access for patients seeking treatment for substance-use disorders through recovery coach support, medication, and next-day referral to the Retreat's suboxone treatment services.



## Community Health Team

Our Community Health Team received over **1,200 patient referrals** in 2019 and hosted **26 self-management workshops**, including tobacco cessation and diabetes management, for **120 registrants**. Additionally, they continued their partnership with the Vermont Foodbank, hosting monthly stops for the Veggie Van Go truck at the hospital, **feeding over 200 families** each month.



## Windham County Dental Center

The Windham County Dental Center, a partnership of BMH and the **United Way of Windham County**, opened May 21 and has since provided dental care for **607 patients** and over **727 visits**.



## LGBTQ+ Initiatives

A team of employees from across the hospital and medical group practices formed the LGBTQ+ Leadership Council to discuss and implement diversity and inclusion initiatives. The Council contracted with the **Fenway Institute**, a national provider and educator for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health, to better understand needs and opportunities for inclusive and appropriate patient care.



## Marketing & Development

Our website received over **204,500 visitors** and our Facebook page garnered more than **3,200 likes**. Our fundraising events, **Touch a Truck** and **Brattlewood: A Concert on the Course**, gathered more than **1,800 attendees**, raising over \$120,000 for the hospital.

# HEART & SOUL

Discover the departments that healed our neighbors and helped them get back to doing what they love.



The Center for Cardiovascular Health treats hundreds of patients each year, totalling over **3,400 patient visits**. Staff provided care for a range of conditions, from heart attacks and heart failure to congenital heart or vascular diseases, as well as provided treatment and resources for those at risk of developing another condition.

The management of heart conditions can be complex and the medication used to prevent blood clots and strokes requires careful monitoring.

Since early 2014, the Center has offered a Coumadin Clinic for patients prescribed “blood thinning” medications. Patients meet with medical assistant Tonya Smith and nurse practitioner Phaedra McDonough, APRN to receive regular check-ups on their blood pressure and coumadin levels. In 2019, the Coumadin Clinic cared for over **100 patients**.

Staff in the Center also utilize a variety of machines and tests to monitor heart health. Our electrocardiogram machine (commonly known as an EKG) measures a patient’s heartbeat activity. As a person’s heart beats, an electric “wave” travels through the heart, causing blood to be pumped and squeezed through the muscle and into the rest of the body.

Shown above (right), an EKG test searches for signs of heart disease through the use of small electrode

patches attached to a patient’s chest, arms, and legs. These tests are painless and short, taking only a few minutes to complete, checking your heart rhythm, blood flow, heart muscle thickness, and detecting various abnormalities, such as high potassium or low calcium levels. This past year, staff performed over **5,400 tests**, including EKG, stress, and Holter monitors.

While the EKG measures the rhythms of the heart, an echocardiogram uses soundwaves to produce an image of the heart, allowing staff to view moving pictures and more detailed information on the structure and function of a patient’s heart. The procedure is non-invasive and does not use radiation.

In 2019, to support the growing volume of patients requiring echocardiogram tests, the Center acquired a **new echocardiography machine**, shown above (left). It creates 3D imaging of the heart, illuminating heart tissue and depth perception of the heart’s construction with greater clarity and sharpness.

The machine also improved efficiency for staff, helping employees move quickly between the Center’s echo lab and the Progressive Care Unit or Emergency Department. This past year, Echo Technologist Danny Ryan performed over **1,400 echocardiogram tests**. 🌸

**L to R:** Echo Technologist Danny Ryan operates the new echocardiography machine. Nurse Kerry Emich demonstrates an EKG monitor.

## Cardiac & Pulmonary Rehab

Last year, our Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation team cared for **over 200 patients** which equals more than **3,100 patient visits** for medical care, exercise, and education.

## Center for Wound Healing

Staff members in the Center for Wound Healing cared for over **760 patients**, totalling **2,100 visits**, including **208 hyperbaric oxygen chambers sessions**. In fact, BMH has the only comprehensive wound clinic in the state of Vermont.

## Rehabilitation Services

Our Rehabilitation Services team cared for hundreds of patients in 2019, totalling over **25,300 physical therapy visits**, **4,200 occupational therapy visits**, and **230 speech therapy sessions**.

## Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine

Staff in our BMH Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine practice treated hundreds of patients, equalling more than **9,500 office visits**, more than **530 cast applications**, over **350 in-office procedures**, and more than **140 MAKO Robotic-Arm Assisted surgeries**.



## Neurology

Since joining Brattleboro Internal Medicine in early 2019, neurologist Dr. Gilbert Green cared for dozens of patients with a variety of nerve disorders. He performed over **100 EMG procedures** (electromyograms) to treat carpal and cubital tunnel syndrome among many other procedures.

## Obstetrics & Gynecology

Brattleboro OB/GYN cared for hundreds of women in 2019, totalling more than **8,900 visits** in our Brattleboro office and over **100 visits** in our new Springfield location, which opened in June. Additionally, we held nine Centering Pregnancy sessions with over **60 participants**.

**L to R:** Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Coordinator Jeff Harr, and Brattleboro OB/GYN patient Stephanie Globus-Hoenich.



## Brattleboro Memorial Hospital

EXCEPTIONAL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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# JOIN OUR TEAM

Did you know that Brattleboro Memorial Hospital is open 365 days a year? That means we've provided 8,760 hours of care in 2019.

We're proud of our dedicated team of **660 staff members** who provide exceptional care each and every day to our family members, friends, and neighbors across Windham County and beyond.

If you're considering switching careers or looking for new opportunities, join our team! We have a variety of clinical, support, and administrative positions open.

### Interested in nursing opportunities?

At Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, we value our nurses and are committed to providing a safe, supportive work environment with opportunities for ongoing learning and professional development.

We recently updated our nurses' pay scale, offering very generous base pay and above-market differentials.

**Check out our cover story on page 4** to learn about our innovative nurse residency program and other workforce development initiatives to support our team- jump into the new year and start a new and exciting career here at BMH.



### Are you interested in working in the medical field, but are concerned about the cost and educational time commitment?

Consider applying for our College to Career Medical Assisting Program - a partnership with Community College of Vermont.

This **one-semester program** prepares students to become Medical Assistants, teaching both clinical and administrative skills.

**Eight full-program scholarships** are available and recipients receive job placement within BMH Medical Group practices upon completion of the program and certification exam.

**Classes begin in September 2020.** Learn more and apply online, visit:

<https://ccv.edu/explore-ccv-programs/>



**VIEW OPEN POSITIONS AND APPLY TODAY**  
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