

HealthLINK

FALL 2021

YOUR CONNECTION TO HEALTH & WELLNESS

ValleyHealth | Warren Memorial Hospital

NEW WARREN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL OPENS

THE FUTURE OF PATIENT-CENTERED CARE IS HERE

INSIDE:

World-class orthopedic surgery, close to home. / The facts about mammograms. / Lifesaving trauma care. / Partnering to promote health and wellness for girls.

 **ValleyHealth**
Healthier, together.

WELCOME

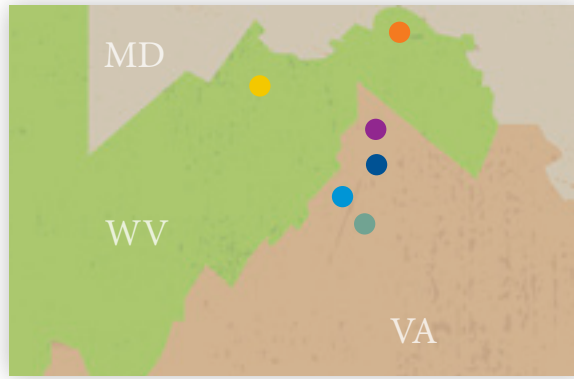
“IT’S ABOUT LIVES”

These three simple words, spoken by Dr. Robert Meltvedt during Warren Memorial Hospital’s grand opening celebration, sum up Valley Health’s purpose. Day in and day out, our team works to save lives, improve quality of lives, and care for those who lives are challenged by illness and injury.

In this issue, you’ll learn about the services at the new hospital facility and medical offices in Front Royal, and more on how Valley Health strives to improve lives— lives of those with orthopedic care needs, lives that are impacted by heart valve disease ... and even the lives of area youth, improved through VHS grant support of an organization that empowers girls.

Lives young and old and sick and healthy, lives of those who live in towns or down country roads ... we are here because to us it *is* about lives.

Want to ensure home delivery of every issue of HealthLINK? Call 540-536-5325 or sign up at valleyhealthlink.com/News.



Valley Health is a not-for-profit system of hospitals, services and providers. For more information about the many ways we serve the health and wellness needs of the community, visit valleyhealthlink.com.

Valley Health System includes:

- Winchester Medical Center (Winchester, VA)
- Hampshire Memorial Hospital (Romney, WV)
- Page Memorial Hospital (Luray, VA)
- Shenandoah Memorial Hospital (Woodstock, VA)
- War Memorial Hospital (Berkeley Springs, WV)
- Warren Memorial Hospital (Front Royal, VA)

Additional locations and services:

- Employer Health
- Outreach Lab Services
- Rehabilitation Services (Inpatient and Outpatient)
- Urgent Care and Urgent Care Express
- Valley Health Home Health | West Virginia
- Valley Health | Spring Mills
- Valley Health Surgery Center
- Valley Medical Transport
- Valley Pharmacy
- Valley Physician Enterprise
- Wellness & Fitness Centers

→ For more information, visit valleyhealthlink.com/locations.



Valley Health System

Serving Our Community by Improving Health

HealthLINK

The magazine of Valley Health System
Serving the northern Shenandoah Valley and surrounding areas in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland

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The information contained in *HealthLINK* is not a substitute for professional medical care or counsel. If you have medical concerns, consult a medical professional. A list of physicians, specialists and other care providers is found at valleyhealthlink.com/physicians.

HealthLINK magazine is published three times a year. Its purpose is to provide health and wellness information to the community and to connect area residents with healthcare experts within Valley Health System.

Contact marketingmail@valleyhealthlink.com or 540-536-5325 to be added to our mailing list; view *HealthLINK* online at valleyhealthlink.com/news.

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MAKE A PLAN TO GET VACCINATED!

Vaccination remains your best protection against COVID-19. Vaccines are available at numerous locations, though the type of vaccine available may vary site to site. Pfizer vaccines are available to those 12 and up (minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian or have parental/guardian consent through online appointment sign-up), and Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are available to anyone 18 and up. [Go to vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), search “vaccine finder” online, or call 800-232-0233 (TTY 888-720-7489) to find a vaccine clinic in your community.



SHARPER IMAGING, BETTER EXPERIENCE: 3T MRI AT WMC



The new 3T MRI is ideal for advanced imaging scans.

Valley Health Advanced MRI opened its doors on August 9 with the addition of a new wide-bore 3T MRI unit on the campus of Winchester Medical Center (WMC). 3T, a measure of magnetic field strength, produces sharper images in less time (up to 50% faster) than a standard 1.5T MRI, making it ideal for advanced imaging scans where minute details are critically important for an accurate diagnosis. The new MRI offers superior high-definition image quality, a roomy 70 cm opening (bore), and a calming audiovisual experience that guides patients through the exam and provides updates on scan progress. This “ambient experience” dramatically improves patient comfort, significantly reduces acoustic noise, and reduces the likelihood of rescans.

[Valley Health Advanced MRI is located adjacent to the Center for Advanced Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine and Parking Garage 2 on the WMC campus.](#)



Coello (right), with Michelle Stevens, WMH Patient Access specialist, has been named vice president, Operations and administrator for Warren Memorial Hospital.

NEW LEADERSHIP AT WARREN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Jennifer A. Coello, MHA, has joined the Valley Health team as vice president, Operations and administrator for Warren Memorial Hospital. She brings extensive healthcare experience, including work at a national health quality association, a regional health planning agency, and in hospital management. A graduate of the University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University, Coello is board certified in healthcare management by the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE).

“My focus at WMH is threefold,” Coello states. “Fully engage WMH staff in the success of the hospital, build strong relationships with every provider in our community, and finally, honor the Valley Health mission to serve our community by improving health by ensuring that the care provided at WMH is of high quality and patient-centric.”

VALLEY HEALTH CANCER CENTER MARKS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

After five years of planning, fundraising and construction, Valley Health opened a new regional cancer treatment facility at Winchester Medical Center in August 2016. Last month, the Valley Health Cancer Center celebrated five years of offering comprehensive services that combine advanced technology, collaborative treatment and support for our patients and their families. We honor the multidisciplinary team at the heart of Valley Health’s nationally accredited community cancer program, serving our patients from diagnosis to treatment to survivorship and follow-up care.

The Cancer Center houses nearly every outpatient service a patient might need, including chemotherapy and radiation therapy areas; physician practices for surgeons, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists; and support services such as oncology navigation, social work, nutrition counseling and genetic counseling.



THE FACTS ON PHYSICALS

The benefits of regular visits with your care provider

“The more we do to prevent health problems, the better,” says Justin Glassford, MD, physician at Valley Health Family Medicine | Hedgesville in West Virginia. In fact, preventing and catching problems early is one of the main reasons patients schedule appointments for routine care. Below are answers to questions about different types of care visits and how they benefit patients of all ages.

Q: IF I FEEL HEALTHY, WHY SHOULD I SEE A DOCTOR?

A: “During a routine checkup [often called an ‘annual physical’ for adult patients], we monitor medications, do blood work, check blood pressure, make sure vaccines are up to date, and have a conversation to review preventive steps and screenings patients should take,” continues Dr. Glassford. He adds that most private insurers cover a yearly appointment, so for many there is no co-pay or out-of-pocket expense.

An annual well-child visit for children and teens offers providers the chance to monitor growth and development and update immunizations, along with giving patients and their parents a chance to get accurate answers to health questions.

Q: WHAT IS AN ANNUAL WELLNESS VISIT AND HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM AN ANNUAL PHYSICAL?

A: An annual wellness visit (AWV) is a yearly medical assessment for patients on Medicare. As defined by Medicare, it does not include a provider physical examination. During this office visit, usually with a nurse or medical assistant, a patient answers questions about general health, including history of screenings, exercise and mobility, memory loss, hearing and vision, and other health factors. Based on the answers given, the assessor works with the patient to develop a care plan, which could include appointments for screenings, specialty care (cardiology, for example) or home health visits.

“Based on current evidence, Medicare beneficiaries who have an annual wellness visit appear less likely to be admitted to the hospital in the year following the AWV,” notes primary care physician David Switzer, MD, medical director, Population Health. “They are less likely to go to the ER and have a better completion rate for important tests and vaccinations.”



Q: WITH COVID-19 IN THE REGION, IS IT SAFE TO GO TO MY PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE?

A: Yes. Valley Health has adopted protocols and practices to sanitize hospitals and offices, and screens all caregivers daily for COVID. “It is more important than ever to get back to regular care,” Dr. Glassford reminds us. “Seniors, in particular, should make sure they’ve had COVID, pneumonia, flu, and shingles vaccines.”

Another benefit of routine medical care for both adults and children: Building a lifelong relationship with your provider means you have a trusted professional to guide you in making care decisions for lifelong good health.

→ Valley Health has 29 locations offering family and primary care. Visit valleyhealthlink.com/primarycare or call **833-VHS-DOCS** for more information.

LIFESAVING TRAUMA CARE

→ VALLEY HEALTH'S LEVEL II TRAUMA CENTER OFFERS WORLD-CLASS CARE FOR LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS, FALLS, INDUSTRIAL INJURIES, AND FIREARM WOUNDS ARE A FEW OF THE REASONS PATIENTS ARE BROUGHT BY AMBULANCE OR MEDICAL HELICOPTER TO THE WINCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER (WMC) EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT'S LEVEL II TRAUMA CENTER FOR LIFESAVING CARE.

1,672

NUMBER OF PATIENTS TREATED FOR TRAUMA CARE IN 2020

- **1,052 FALLS** (OF THOSE, 84% WERE IN PATIENTS 65+)
- **312 VEHICLE ACCIDENTS** (37% INVOLVED MOTORCYCLES AND ATVS)

WMC IS **1 OF ONLY 19** DESIGNATED TRAUMA CENTERS IN VIRGINIA

> EMERGENCY CARE AVAILABLE AT ALL VALLEY HEALTH HOSPITALS 24/7 <

ONE OTHER IMPORTANT TRAUMA CARE SERVICE: EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN INJURY PREVENTION, "STOP THE BLEED," HELMET SAFETY, AND MORE

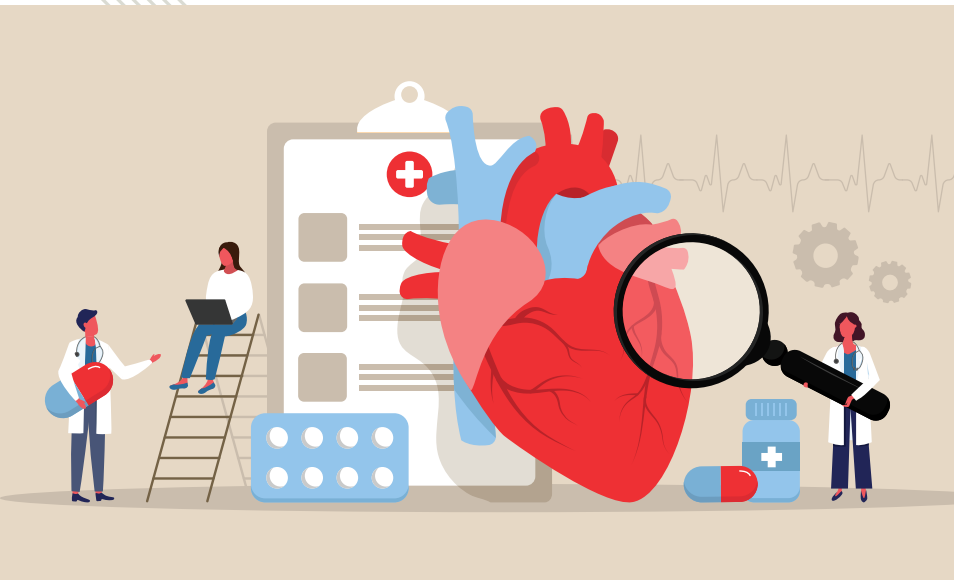


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NUMBER OF SURGEON SPECIALISTS ON CALL TO ASSIST WMC'S BOARD-CERTIFIED TRAUMA SURGEONS, INCLUDING SPECIALISTS IN GYNECOLOGIC AND OBSTETRICAL, MAXILLOFACIAL AND PLASTIC, OPHTHALMIC, ORTHOPEDIC, OTOLARYNGIC, THORACIC, AND UROLOGIC SURGERY

SPEEDY TIME TO CARE IS CRITICAL FOR THOSE WITH LIFE-THREATENING INJURIES: CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY!

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/emergencycare for more information.



HEALTHY HEARTBEATS

VALLEY HEALTH'S ADVANCED VALVE CENTER DELIVERS TOP-NOTCH CARDIAC CARE

The human heart beats about 100,000 times a day, its valves swinging like tiny doors to keep blood flowing in the right direction. Over time, heart valves can degenerate and stiffen—called stenosis. When valves cannot open properly, patients can become fatigued and short of breath, and the situation can become life threatening.

The good news: Valley Health's Advanced Valve Center employs a multidisciplinary team including cardiothoracic surgeons and cardiologists who specialize in structural heart problems, valve pathology, interventional therapies, and imaging, as well as a vascular surgeon and anesthesiologists. They collaborate to provide minimally invasive procedures, allowing patients to return to their normal activities relatively quickly.

A common diagnosis is severe aortic stenosis, in which the stiffened valve cannot open appropriately, forcing the heart to work harder. Medication may help, but a leaky aortic valve is ultimately a mechanical problem that may require valve replacement surgery.

Today, there are alternatives to open-heart surgery, such as the TAVR (transcatheter aortic valve replacement) procedure, in which a tiny cut is made near the patient's groin. A catheter carrying a prosthetic tissue valve is inserted, then travels through the blood vessels to the heart. "Once we determine that TAVR is an option," says Ernesto Jimenez, MD, Cardiovascular Surgery Program director and co-director of the Structural Heart

Program, "it's greater than 99.9 percent that TAVR is going to be successfully deployed." Most patients spend one day in the hospital and are up and moving within three days, compared to an eight-week recovery for open-heart surgery.

Another approach, the SAVR (surgical aortic valve replacement) procedure, involves replacing the aortic valve via a small incision in the chest, while using cardiopulmonary bypass. Patients stay in the hospital for about five days and avoid heavy exercise or lifting for about four weeks.

Strategy is key, so before surgery, the Valve Center's medical team meets to discuss each patient and map a plan. "We look at their history, the arteries where we need to deploy the valve, the heart, the calcium within the aorta, and the aortic valve itself."

Dr. Jimenez and his colleagues also use an innovative procedure called MAZE to treat atrial fibrillation, in which the heart's upper and lower chambers—the atria and ventricles—beat out of rhythm. In the procedure, the surgeon uses either radiofrequency ablation (electric current) or cryotherapy (freezing) to create a bit of scar tissue, helping reroute the heart's impulses. MAZE is used when nonsurgical procedures aren't sufficient, and for patients who also have either coronary disease or mitral valve disease, succeeding in 80 percent of patients.

The team also treats leaky mitral valves. As with the aortic valve, Dr. Jimenez and his colleagues can perform minimally invasive surgical valve repair through a small incision in the chest or can direct a guidewire through the femoral vein and up into the left atrium, where a mitral clip is placed to reduce leaking.

"The great thing is that these days we're able to do minimally invasive valve procedures," Dr. Jimenez says. "You don't have to have that big open incision and patients recover quicker and feel better sooner."

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/heart or call the Valley Health Advanced Valve Center (540-536-4000) to learn more.

NEW WARREN

With a state-of-the-art surgical suite and Emergency Department, private inpatient rooms, the convenience of an on-site pharmacy, imaging and lab services, and medical offices including a multi-specialty clinic, the new Warren Memorial Hospital (WMH) delivers advanced health care to Front Royal and Warren County that puts patients first in exciting new ways.

“You can stay local for truly great care,” says Floyd Heater, the soon-to-be-retired president of WMH. “This is more than a hospital; it’s a health destination for our community. It represents a huge leap forward in healthcare technology and services, in our ability to recruit the best healthcare talent, and in wellness opportunities for everyone.”



Patients are greeted by a team of skilled and caring nurses.

The 177,000-square-foot, \$100 million facility, which opened June 23, introduces impressive upgrades, amenities and new features indoors and out. These include a 36-bed inpatient unit with 12 Critical Care beds; an 18-bed Emergency Department with a new, five-bed Clinical Decision Unit; a Surgical Services department with three spacious operating rooms, two endoscopy rooms plus WMH’s advanced cardiac catheterization lab; and a 2.5-mile wellness and recreational trail amid the natural beauty of the hospital’s 150-acre campus, with paths to stunning mountain and valley overlooks for hikers of all abilities.

But numbers tell just part of the story. The hospital takes patient-centered care to new heights, says general surgeon Robert C. Meltvedt Jr., MD, vice president of Medical Affairs for WMH. “Everything is organized around the patient, allowing people to be nearer to the services they need and to benefit from exciting innovations and new technology in medicine,” he says.

COMFORTABLE, PRIVATE AND SMART PATIENT ROOMS

At the new WMH, all inpatient rooms are private with individual bathrooms that accommodate a wheelchair or walker and feature a no-step shower with built-in shower chair, and additional safety features and room for equipment and staff. Each room has space for visitors, with built-in seating where a loved one can stay overnight. Large windows let in plenty of natural light. “There’s not a room without a beautiful view of the mountains,” Heater says. “The aesthetics are amazing.”

Communication with your healthcare team has never been better. Patient rooms are arranged to be in sight of a nurses’ station, Dr. Meltvedt says. A new call bell system delivers requests directly

→ THE FUTURE OF PATIENT-CENTERED CARE IS HERE

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MEMORIAL

The new \$100 million facility advances patient care in exciting new ways.

ValleyHealth | Warren Memorial Hospital

Note about photography: To ensure the safety of patients and visitors, masks must be worn in Valley Health System hospitals, offices and other facilities. All photos of unmasked individuals were taken before Warren Memorial Hospital was open for patient care.

HOSPITAL OPENS

NEW WARREN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL OPENS

to nurses' cellphones. Meanwhile, the innovative MyChart Bedside system lets patients and their families use each room's smart tablet and smart TV to communicate with the healthcare team, view test results and vital signs, order meals, listen to music, and stream favorite TV shows. "This will result in better health care and a better experience," Dr. Meltvedt notes. And this online care continues after you go home, when you can continue using MyChart on your own smartphone, tablet or computer to help schedule follow-up appointments, see test results and get reminders about recommended health checks, Heater adds.

Every detail was carefully designed. Months before the new hospital opened, hospital staff simulated daily care in "mockups" of patient rooms and other facilities to make sure every piece of equipment—down to glove holders and waste baskets—is in the right place for optimal healthcare delivery, says Priscilla Phelps, the Valley Health senior facilitator who oversaw the transition from the former Warren Memorial Hospital to the new hospital. After extensive training, the hospital recruited volunteer "patients" to simulate real medical situations to help nurses and other staff further prepare for opening day. "We went through numerous mock simulations, including an operating room scenario, where we rep-

licated actions from the moment patients come through the front door through check-in, pre-surgery and into the operating rooms, to test out everything," Phelps says. "We were ready."

ADVANCED EMERGENCY SERVICES

On the front lines of medicine, the new WMH Emergency Department has been redesigned to better serve community needs. The trauma room is bigger, to accommodate staff and equipment, with better lighting and access to medical gases. There are dedicated rooms for behavioral health and bariatric patients, along with a new Clinical Decision Unit for people whose emergencies require extended monitoring, reducing the need for hospital admission when it's not needed. "This is a place to care for patients for 23 hours or less who need additional observation until a determination can be made for admission, discharge or a transfer," Heater says. "The unit gives the care team time to see test results, make medical evaluations and consult with specialists for the best care decisions."

New ergonomically designed stretchers in the ED are more comfortable and improve the safe transfer in and out of bed. The beds weigh patients automatically, crucial for dosing weight-based



A top-of-the-line CT scanner is among the new hospital's many high-tech offerings.



Physicians at the new Multispecialty Clinic include (from left) Neal Gaither, MD; Mesfin Shibeshi, DO; and Robert Meltvedt, MD.

FRONT ROYAL FAMILY PRACTICE AND MULTISPECIALTY CLINIC | VALLEY HEALTH

Convenient and centralized care on the WMH campus

Adjoining the hospital, WMH’s new medical building houses the offices of more than 40 healthcare providers offering family medicine and advanced care in cardiology, general surgery, orthopedics, pulmonology, urology, and vascular surgery.

Easily accessible through the main hospital entrance, the Multispecialty Clinic brings a variety of specialists together under one roof, while the new partnership with Front Royal Family Practice provides primary care for patients of all ages. “The clinic gives local residents access to great specialty care, close to home,” explains Benjamin D. Dolewski, director of practice operations for Valley Health’s southern region. “It brings together specialists who practiced in several locations around town, in a larger, state-of-the-art facility. That means more exam rooms, more advanced services, more availability. And having the expert primary care providers from Front Royal Family Practice in the building adds to the convenience factor for patients.”

“In Front Royal, Winchester Cardiology has assigned seven providers including general and interventional cardiologists and advanced practice clinicians,” says interventional cardiologist Neal Gaither, MD, who is also

medical director of the WMH Cardiac Catheterization Lab and director of Cardiovascular Care at WMH. “This staff gives us more presence in the hospital and the ability to see more people in the clinic.

“In the WMH Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, we have the capacity to perform most coronary interventions, including stents for blocked coronary arteries, and we perform work-ups for replacement and repair of heart valves.” Management of pacemakers and other implanted heart devices is also provided in the clinic. “The ability to perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures close to home improves access to specialized procedures otherwise only available at a distance,” Dr. Gaither adds.

Valley Health’s expert orthopedic surgeons in Front Royal have also relocated inside the Multispecialty Clinic, offering full-time care for conditions affecting bones, ligaments, tendons, and muscles, and include surgeons with advanced fellowship training in sports medicine, arthroscopy and complex joint reconstruction. “We provide all lines of orthopedic care, except spine care, for children through older adults,” explains fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon Mesfin Shibeshi, DO. Services offered include care for fractures, sports injuries, joint repair and replacement, as well as revision procedures for older replacement joints. “Replacement joints last 15 to 25 years, then need repair or replacement,” explains Dr. Shibeshi.

WMH’s new operating rooms, as well as larger clinic facilities, mean more types of orthopedic procedures can be performed in Front Royal, he continues. “We will provide the kind of care you’d get at an advanced center in a major city.”

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/FRFPMulti for more information or call **540-636-0600**.

A COMMUNITY EFFORT

Generous donors to the new Warren Memorial Hospital have made all the difference

Community support is an important factor that helped make the new hospital and its many amenities a reality. Indoors and out, many examples of community generosity are found on the new WMH campus. For those who enjoy a dose of fresh air and exercise with their health care, the Andreae Family Wellness and Recreational Trail offers staff and visitors alike a chance to enjoy the healing force of nature. Made possible through the philanthropy of Fred and Christine Andreae, the trail is already used by community members of all ages and abilities.

More than 150 local donors joined the Andreaes in giving to the WMH fundraising campaign, raising nearly \$2.5 million. “The outpouring of community and corporate support exceeded our expectations,” says Maj. Gen.

Henry ‘Mack’ Hobgood, co-chair of the WMH Foundation Capital Campaign.

“Every gift mattered ... and made a difference. Ergonomic beds for enhanced comfort and safety and the MyChart Bedside system are two of the many patient-friendly features the gifts funded.”

Meanwhile, a donation by Floyd Heater funded a hospital history wall telling the story of WMH from its origins more than 70 years ago through today. “It’s nice to be reminded of the journey,” Heater remarks. “A hospital doesn’t happen by accident. Front Royal is a strong, independent community with a sense of pride. It took collective work to be where we are today.”



medications. And there’s even a Federal Aviation Administration-approved helipad for landing medical-emergency helicopters.

STATE-OF-THE-ART SURGICAL SERVICES

Spacious new operating rooms allow for easy setup and use of sophisticated equipment—and were designed to be ready for new surgical technology, Heater says. “A modern, expanded operating room allows you to seamlessly put in all the tech you need and have it work together,” Dr. Meltvedt explains. “There’s less need to move equipment in and out of rooms between procedures, for less downtime.”

LABORATORY, MEDICAL IMAGING SERVICES AND DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

Equipped with a new-generation chemistry analyzer with increased capacity, the new WMH laboratory provides test results quickly, with less need to send specimens out to a larger lab. Medical Imaging, conveniently located just inside the new hospital’s main entrance and close to on-site medical specialty offices, features high-tech equipment including an upgraded CT scanner; a top-of-the-line MRI scanner; a nearby Nuclear Medicine stress lab; and Women’s Imaging services with two mammography units, dedicated breast ultrasound equipment, a larger

NEW WARREN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL OPENS



Third-generation Warren County farmer William C. Trenary, the first patient admitted to the new hospital, enjoys sweeping views from his room.

DEXA scan area for bone-density checks, and private, comfortable spaces for dressing and waiting. “As soon as you walk into the hospital, everything you need diagnostically is right there,” Heater continues.

VALLEY PHARMACY

This retail pharmacy, located just off the hospital main lobby, delivers needed medications to hospital patients before discharge through its innovative discharge prescription program, so patients’ medications are delivered to their room before they leave the hospital. The full-service pharmacy is open to the public and carries over-the-counter medications, too.

NEW PHYSICAL THERAPY AND SPORTS PERFORMANCE DEPARTMENT

With certified staff and specialized equipment, patients are able to build strength, mobility and balance after surgery or an injury—or if they simply want to improve their physical performance for sports, daily life, or a job in construction, firefighting, law enforcement, or the military.

HEALING ENVIRONMENT

Built into a slope, WMH overlooks the Shenandoah Valley, with spectacular views from the lobby, waiting rooms and patient rooms. Incorporating the region’s natural beauty into the new hospital was by design.

“I am honored to join the WMH leadership team when there are so many exciting innovations being rolled out so that patients receive expert diagnoses and treatments, and have a great experience while in our care,” notes new Vice President, Operations and Administrator Jennifer A. Coello. “The team, patients and visitors can’t help but draw new inspiration from the breathtaking views and the advanced features now available.”

“It is such a fresh and beautiful place,” adds Dr. Meltvedt. “I think we all feel better when closer to nature, with good natural light. This is one of the most beautiful hospitals I’ve ever seen. It’s a healing environment.”

→ To learn more about the hospital and physician services on its campus, visit valleyhealthlink.com/newWMH.

SPOTLIGHT

ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS SERVE FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Meet some of Valley Health's leading orthopedic specialists, who provide advanced care at several convenient locations in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley

Whether he's in the operating room, an exam room or on the sidelines during a game, patient well-being is a priority for Valley Health orthopedic surgeon Erik Mitchell, DO. And when he realizes that a young athlete's injury will take him or her out of play for the season, he knows it's time to sit his patient down for a compassionate conversation. "I have tissues, to get the cry out of the way," he says. "You let them know, 'I'm thinking about your knee for the next 70 years, not just for the next seven weeks.'"

Dr. Mitchell can empathize. As a former college football player, he's been there. But as a physician, he wants his patients to heal completely.

Fellowship trained in sports medicine and arthroscopy, Dr. Mitchell is a highly skilled orthopedic surgeon who worked in a large hospital in the Philadelphia area before bringing his specialized sports medicine expertise to the Front Royal region. "I frequently talk to the athletic trainers in the community, so they know where to find me," he says. He now works closely with five local school sports teams.

Dr. Mitchell treats everything from tendonitis to fractures and torn ligaments. With advanced training in arthroscopy, he offers minimally invasive shoulder and knee surgery. Post-surgery, he collaborates with physical therapists to help patients regain strength and motion.

He stays at the forefront of sports medicine, and it also helps that his brother—a head athletic trainer for a pro football team—has access to a database of rehabilitation literature shared by elite trainers.

Dr. Mitchell's practice recently moved to the medical office building at the new Warren Memorial Hospital in Front Royal, Virginia. Spacious operating rooms will increase choices for patients in the future. "My colleagues and I are looking at what new technology and treatments the new ORs can accommodate so we can provide even more care options. It's great for the community," he says of the new facility, "and we're all excited about it."

Meanwhile, in New Market, Suzanne Stevens, MD, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon, treats patients for everything from arthritis and carpal tunnel syndrome to injuries from monkey bars and lawnmowers.



Suzanne Stevens, MD, a New Market-based orthopedic surgeon, enjoys time on her Shenandoah Valley farm.



Like Dr. Mitchell, she always begins caring for each patient by having a thoughtful conversation with them, to determine their needs. “I talk with them about how long it’s been going on,” she says, “and I ask if they have tried physical therapy or over-the-counter medications.” She also shows them their X-rays so they can see the problem—whether bone spurs or a loss of joint cartilage—and better understand her treatment recommendation.

Having worked in the area for 20 years, she has helped active kids recover from fractures, performed numerous total hip and knee surgeries for adults with arthritis, and treated farmers who’ve been injured by farming equipment or even kicked by a cow.

Dr. Stevens, who has a 130-acre farm herself, appreciates that injured farmers need to get back on their feet. “You have a time frame when you need to plant the corn or harvest the hay,” she says. “Farmers are salt-of-the-earth people. They’re hard workers, and it’s great to work here and take care of my neighbors.”

Farther down the Valley in Luray, nurse practitioner Adam Chavez provides orthopedic care at Valley Health Page Memorial Hospital Family and Internal Medicine. He is available when a patient needs cortisone injections to reduce joint pain, aspiration to relieve a swollen joint, or any number of other treatments for troublesome orthopedic conditions.

For him, it’s rewarding to see the orthopedic clinic grow. “Now that I’ve been there for a couple of years, I get lots of patients who say, ‘You saw my neighbor and they feel much better now, so I decided to come,’” says Chavez. During his downtime, he enjoys spending time with his six sons, often going fishing or hunting. He has always been active in sports, so, like Dr. Mitchell, he understands the body as an athlete, although he treats patients of all ages and abilities.

When patients need surgery, Chavez refers them to an orthopedic surgeon such as Gregory Hardigree, MD, in Woodstock. “[I treat] everything

“Farmers are salt-of-the-earth people. They’re hard workers, and it’s great to work here and take care of my neighbors.”

—SUZANNE STEVENS, MD



Orthopedic surgeon Gregory Hardigree, MD, is an accomplished woodworker in his spare time.

techniques and types of tools are used in both orthopedics and in woodworking,” he says “Wood and bone are similar in many ways. Both are porous, imperfect materials, ranging from hard and strong to brittle or soft. Both have grain structure and may have defects I need to work around. For both wood and bone, I need to understand the physics of the internal stresses within the material, as well as the external forces acting against it. Orthopedics and woodworking complement each other beautifully.”

As he works with patients to develop a tailored treatment strategy, he always begins with the simplest, safest treatment that will work, but he is adept at complex surgery if needed. “We can take care of the vast majority of patients who walk through the door, but if someone needs extra special subspecialty care, we have contacts to get them to the right person,” he adds.

Valley Health’s network of orthopedic specialists and subspecialists is well connected and collaborative, ensuring that each patient receives the best treatment. Understanding their patients and their lives—whether they’re athletes, farmers, weekend warriors, or more sedentary—enhances the care they are able to provide.

These four specialists, along with the other orthopedic experts at Valley Health, are committed to offering dozens of treatment options to patients. “The most exciting part for me coming here was providing services in the community that weren’t offered before,” Dr. Mitchell says. “Now the local community can get excellent orthopedic care by fellowship-trained physicians, close to home.”

→ For more information on orthopedic care at Valley Health, visit valleyhealthlink.com/ortho.

from acute injuries and fractures to arthritis of the knees, shoulders and hips,” Dr. Hardigree says. He offers a full range of treatments, from medication to joint-replacement surgery.

Dr. Hardigree uses anatomical models to educate his patients. “The models help so much,” he says, “because we can point out what it looks like in three dimensions, and patients actually understand what’s going on.”

On his days off, Dr. Hardigree can often be found in his woodshop, using the lathe to turn a goblet or bowl, or making a piece of furniture. “A lot of

“Wood and bone are similar in many ways ... ranging from hard and strong to brittle or soft. Orthopedics and woodworking complement each other beautifully.” —GREGORY HARDIGREE, MD



MAMMOGRAMS: MYTH VS. FACT

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT MAMMOGRAMS ... AND SCHEDULE YOUR ANNUAL SCREENING TO SAFEGUARD YOUR HEALTH

“Having an annual mammogram is the most important step women can take to screen for breast cancer,” says Anita Minghini, MD, surgeon and medical director of Valley Health Breast Center. “By catching and treating cancer in its earliest stages, women have better health outcomes, with less aggressive treatments. In fact, mammograms save lives!”

MYTH: Mammograms don’t work.

FACT: Mammograms are the gold standard for finding breast cancer—sometimes three years before it appears as a lump you can feel. If there’s cancer in the breast, mammography is about 90 percent likely to find it. If needed, two supplemental tests are used in tandem with annual mammography: ultrasound to screen women with dense breast tissue, and for women at high risk, an MRI is used in addition to a mammogram.

MYTH: Getting a mammogram exposes you to unsafe radiation.

FACT: Mammograms do use radiation, but very little. The benefits of potentially detecting and treating breast cancer outweigh, by far, your very low chance of harm from radiation. To ensure high-quality care, get your mammogram at a facility accredited by the American College of Radiology and certified by the Food and Drug Administration; all Valley Health facilities meet these standards.

MYTH: A positive mammogram means cancer.

FACT: A positive mammogram means further evaluation is needed. Positive mammograms are common because all abnormalities, no matter how small, are “positive” and need follow-up. About one in 10 women who get a mammogram will have a finding that requires additional imaging, normally a 3D mammogram or ultrasound. An abnormality isn’t always cancer. Sometimes it’s a lump of normal breast tissue or a benign cyst. Of the women who do get called back for additional testing, only 8 to 10 percent of them will need a biopsy, and most biopsies turn out to be noncancerous.

MYTH: A thermogram is a good substitute for a mammogram.

FACT: There’s no scientific evidence that a thermogram—an imaging test that shows heat patterns on the breast—is good at finding breast cancer. Thermography is not advised by the American Society of Breast Surgeons or the American College of Radiology.

MYTH: All mammograms are the same.

FACT: Mammograms have come a long way. Film-based mammograms were upgraded to 2D digital mammography, and now 3D mammograms—called breast tomosynthesis—are even better at detecting breast cancer. All major insurance carriers now cover 3D screening mammograms. So ask for it when making your annual appointment.

“All women age 40 and above should discuss screening mammography with their provider yearly,” adds Christopher Nieman, MD, lead radiologist, Breast Imaging. “Women with risk factors such as family history of breast cancer should discuss mammograms, along with other screening tools, at any age. Early detection saves lives!”

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/mammo to learn more or call **855-724-3384** to schedule your mammogram.

PERSONAL BEST

Partnering to promote health and wellness for girls



Girls on the Run helps its young participants build confidence while engaging in fun activities.

Our team knows you are never too young to develop healthy habits! That’s why Valley Health supports Girls on the Run (GOTR), a national organization that advances physical, social and emotional wellness for girls in grades 3 to 5.

“I see a change in the girls during the season,” says Brianna Stock, program director and coach at a new site at Hampshire Wellness & Fitness in Romney, WV. “They become more confident and see themselves as runners by the end.”

During the weekly meetings, GOTR coaches offer interactive lessons on topics such as peer pressure, bullying and honoring each person’s uniqueness. The girls also learn about the importance of community and plan a community impact project to give back. Of course, the “serious stuff” is presented in an engaging manner, with physical fitness activities—including running—mixed in.

Each girl sets lap goals and at the end of each season participates in a celebratory 5K, running alongside an adult “buddy.” These fun, family-friendly regional gatherings offer every participant the chance to achieve a new “personal best” in ability, endurance ... and self-esteem.

Girls on the Run of the Shenandoah Valley receives support from Valley Health’s Community Impact Grant program, and we now serve as a community host for the Romney group. “Last spring, we saw firsthand how amazing this program was for the young ladies who were involved,” notes Trina Cox, director,

Hampshire Wellness & Fitness. “The girls on this team have been respectful and completely engaged. The program is about so much more than just running; it inspires girls to recognize their potential. The GOTR’s values and goals are aligned with those of Valley Health, and this collaboration creates the perfect partnership!”

Annoica Ingram, executive director, Girls on the Run of Shenandoah Valley, shares how critical grant funding is to the success of the program. “Fifty percent of the girls who participate get scholarships, so we never turn away any girl who wants to participate,” she says. “And funding ensures our coaches meet training standards set by the national organization,” including CPR certification. “Our local council has 16 sites, and thanks in part to Valley Health’s partnership, we empower girls to be confident, caring and healthy!”

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/communitycommitment for more on collaborations between Valley Health and impactful community organizations.

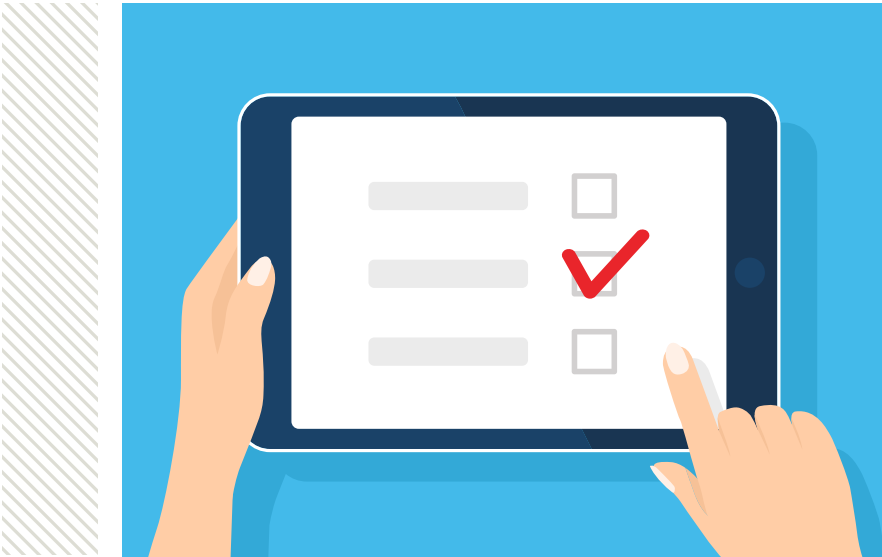


Giving back: The Romney GOTR team made toys for the dogs in the local shelter.

SURVEY SAYS...

Beginning November 1, Valley Health will open the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment survey, and we want to hear from you! Every three years, we join community partners to assess and better understand the health needs of area residents. Local health departments, education systems, social service agencies, and other organizations collaborate with VHS on this critical public health outreach, so take time to complete the survey before it closes on Jan. 31, 2022.

Visit valleyhealthlink.com/healthsurvey and raise your voice for community health and wellness.



PATIENT NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Valley Health complies with applicable federal and state civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Valley Health does not exclude patients or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

VALLEY HEALTH PROVIDES PATIENTS, FOR FREE AND WITHOUT CHARGE:

- Auxiliary aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Language assistance services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, tell your caregiver and they will help arrange for assistance. You may also contact Katy Pitcock, language access coordinator, at 540-323-0228.

If you believe that Valley Health has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance through the VHS Patient Grievance Process. You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax or email. If you need help filing a grievance, VHS will provide language assistance and auxiliary aids to help you. To file a grievance, inform your caregiver that you want to speak to a member of Risk Management.

Grievances and questions about this Notice may also be directed to the Valley Health Civil Rights Coordinator at:

VALLEY HEALTH COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT

220 Campus Blvd., Suite 420
Winchester, VA 22601
540-536-8993 Direct
540-536-8019 Fax
wsowers@valleyhealthlink.com

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically

through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)
Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

CONTACT FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

ATTENTION: If you require language assistance, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-540-323-0228.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-540-323-0228.

For assistance with other languages, please visit valleyhealthlink.com/non-discrimination.

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It's Not Over Yet.

COVID-19 is still a threat to our community. Help our healthcare workers so that they can help you. Keep them safe by getting your COVID-19 vaccine and following masking guidelines. We're all in this together.

For COVID-19 vaccine information, including a vaccine finder tool, please visit

valleyhealthlink.com/c19vaccinations



Thank you to our healthcare workers for your dedication and commitment to the people we serve.



Healthier, together.