

# Health Beat

Spring 2014 | The Newsletter of Speare Memorial Hospital



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# Supporting Innovation in Healthcare

By: Michelle McEwen, FACHE, President & CEO

Typically when we talk about healthcare reform the focus has been on increasing access to healthcare services by increasing coverage to those that don't have access or cannot afford it. While this is certainly a very important initiative, a lesser known component of healthcare reform that is equally transformative is how care is delivered and paid for.

Historically, healthcare has been paid on a fee-for-service basis. Each time physicians saw a patient, they got paid. Each time a hospital did an imaging study or a surgery, they got paid. The more healthcare providers did, the more they got paid. Not only does a system such as this entice over-utilization, it does not encourage quality, efficient or effective care across the continuum. The Healthcare Reform Act is trying to change this practice by moving towards a value-based system.

Value-based purchasing means payment amounts are based on how well a hospital performs on certain quality and patient satisfaction indicators, and can be adjusted up or down depending on those outcomes. The federal government has also introduced a number of pilot and demonstration projects that test different delivery models, encouraging providers to collaborate more on individual patient care outcomes and better manage a community's health overall.

Speare is well on its way in preparing for this new paradigm. One such example is the Transition Care Program. We are partnering with other community providers, adopting best practices for patients transitioning from the hospital back to their home, and reducing hospital readmissions within 30 days of discharge. Patients are better educated about their illness and how to take care of themselves, and we've also created a support system around the patient to ensure that they get the right care, at the right time and place.

For continued success, it will take more of this type of partnering and collaboration—more innovative ways in delivering care. Unfortunately, some provider arrangements necessary to create better outcomes and lower healthcare costs may trigger federal regulations about how providers can work together.

SB-308, *Relative to the Innovation in the Delivery of Health Care*, has been introduced by Senator Odell from Lempster, and co-sponsored by our own Senator Jeanie Forrester. The purpose of the bill is to support these collaborative efforts and remove barriers so care providers can combine their strengths, infrastructure, and resources to positively impact the health of the greatest number of people in our communities.

This bill creates a way for the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office to review partnership and collaboration arrangements between healthcare providers rather than undergo a federal review; a very expensive and timely process. Decisions will be based on New Hampshire's specific identified care needs, its healthcare providers, and whether a proposed arrangement is in the best interest of the communities served. The proposed regulatory framework also includes ongoing monitoring and oversight of approved partnerships to ensure they continue to be in the best interest of all.

We commend these Senators in their efforts to remove barriers to achieving a more integrated and collaborative healthcare delivery system for New Hampshire. Doing so enables all of us at Speare to stay true to our mission to provide excellent healthcare to our community *every day*.



# Speare Primary Care Welcomes Vanessa Hahn, APRN

Vanessa Hahn, APRN, has always taken a holistic approach to healthcare. For many years she was a massage therapist and owned her own business. Through massage she worked collaboratively with a chiropractor and a naturopathic provider to address her patients' needs.

It is that same collaborative approach she hopes to have with her patients at Speare Primary Care in the new era of medicine that is more patient-centered and less doctor directive. "It is about balance," says Hahn, "and you have to meet patients where they are so they feel comfortable sharing what is going on in their lives, so we can work together to make a difference in their health."

Hahn says she wants to learn about her patients—conditions, concerns, stressors, accomplishments, goals—so she can determine how much time they can and are willing to invest in themselves through diet and exercise. She explains, "Increasing exercise



and watching what they eat can help patients reduce the amount and number of medications they need. But, life happens, and it is a huge challenge and commitment to make these changes. A patient has to be ready and I'm excited to be here and help them take care of themselves."

Originally from Maine, Hahn says she loves the outdoors. It was central New Hampshire's natural environment that

## SPEARE PRIMARY CARE

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furthered her interest in the position at Speare Primary Care. Having lived in Gilford, previously worked with Ann Thatcher, APRN, and completed a rotation with Plymouth Family Practice, also contributed to her interest. Hahn is certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. She earned her bachelor's in nursing from Chamberlain College of Nursing in Naperville, IL and holds a master's from Massachusetts's College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences University.

Speare Primary Care is accepting new patients. Please call the office, located on the second floor of Speare Memorial at Boulder Point, at (603) 536-6355.

## Tee Up For a Lifetime of Smiles

*By: Julie DeGalan, Director of Development*

Planning is underway for our 16th Annual Golf Classic benefiting our Dental Health Program. The Golf Classic is taking place on Thursday, June 12 at Owl's Nest Resort & Golf Club in Campton. Support of this event has an enormous impact on the dental health of children in our region.

Our Dental Health Program goes into the schools in central New Hampshire to provide:

- Dental screenings
- Dental cleanings
- Fluoride varnishes
- Chair-side oral health education
- Sealants
- Referrals for emergency restorative dental care for students with infection and acute dental pain

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We also provide screenings, cleanings, and/or fluoride varnishes to preschool-age children and high-risk pregnant women. In doing so, we hope to prevent disease long before school age. Last year, we served nearly 2,000 children and mothers.

For information on being a sponsor and/or donor of this year's Golf Classic, please visit [www.spearehospital.com](http://www.spearehospital.com) to download our brochure and registration information. If you have any questions or if we can provide any other information, please do not hesitate to call (603) 238-2211.



# New Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine Center Opens

Katie Wood Hedberg, APRN, is the Program Director and Clinical Coordinator for the new Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine Center at Speare Memorial Hospital that opened February 19. Located just inside the Emergency Department entrance off Avery Street, the new Wound Care Center will be addressing a growing healthcare need in our communities.

“Due to the changing health of our population, chronic non-healing wounds are becoming more and more of a problem,” explains Hedberg. “We have an aging population presenting with multiple chronic conditions: diabetes, obesity, and vascular issues. These co-morbidities make non-healing wounds more common in this patient population.”

Hedberg says, as an APRN who previously worked in family practice, she can attest to the growing need for specialized wound care. She notes, “What might simply be a stubbed toe or bruise in the average person, can develop into something much more when a patient is older, has diabetes, and is less mobile due to excess weight. And as we learned with cardiac rehabilitation, patients are much more likely to follow-up with specialized care when it is in their own backyard.”

## About Healogics, Inc.

Healogics is the nation's largest provider of advanced wound care services. Healogics and its affiliated companies manage more than 500 Wound Care Centers® in the nation and see nearly 200,000 patients per year through a connected network of centers, partner hospitals, academic medical centers, patients, and families. Leveraging its scale and experience, Healogics utilizes an evidence-based systematic approach to chronic wound healing in treating an underserved and growing patient population. For more information, please visit [www.healogics.com](http://www.healogics.com).

## WOUND CARE & HYPERBARIC MEDICINE CENTER

*A department of Speare Memorial Hospital*



Partnering with Healogics, Speare's Wound Care Center will offer patients access to state-of-the-art outpatient clinical wound care. A patient with a wound that has not begun to heal in two weeks, or not completely healed in six weeks, may benefit from proven, best-practice methodologies. Among the types of wounds expected to be treated in the Wound Care Center are: diabetic ulcers, neuropathic ulcers, pressure ulcers, ischemic ulcers, venous insufficiency, traumatic wounds, surgical wounds, vasculitis, burns, peristomal skin irritations, and other chronic, non-healing wounds.

According to Hedberg, about 10 percent of these patients may be prescribed Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT). While enclosed in a chamber, HBOT is oxygen under pressure saturating a patient's blood plasma at 15 to 20 times the normal amount, which aids the body's natural healing properties and regenerates new tissue.

As the program director and clinical coordinator, Hedberg will oversee both the overall management of the Wound Care Center and day-to-day clinical care. She is joined by the Center's medical director Matthew Burrell, DPM, podiatrist; physicians Dr. Jim Koren and Dr. John Bentwood; Jeff Reitkerk, RN; and HBOT technician and safety director Deanna Brodie, LPN.

Patients can call Speare's Wound Care Center directly or be referred by their primary care physician. For more information, call (603) 481-8780 or email [woundcare@spearehospital.com](mailto:woundcare@spearehospital.com).



# Speare Names New CFO

After graduating from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with his bachelor's, Thomas Lenkowski considered four career options: the Peace Corps, the Navy, healthcare, or a pickle factory. He chose healthcare, and since 1975 has worked in the hospital field.

Today, Lenkowski is the new chief financial officer at Speare Memorial Hospital. He describes the evolution of healthcare as "confusing, complicated, and tumultuous." The Accountable Care Act, Accountable Care Organizations, and "Obamacare" are once again changing the face of healthcare.

"I've seen a lot of changes in healthcare," notes Lenkowski, "but that is what has kept it challenging and exciting as we continually adapt to, and work with change." He explains the goal of the current shift in healthcare is to change the practice patterns of both patients and physicians. The aim is to reduce costs with an overall focus on prevention, but when care is needed, that the "whole" patient is treated.

Lenkowski continues by saying this is where technology needs to play a bigger role in healthcare. Patients' health information needs to be able to move and be accessible to all their care providers so we can improve delivery of care individually, but also collectively in terms of better meeting community health needs.

His career has taken him from a health system in Bennington, VT, to Martha's Vineyard Hospital, and several community hospitals—Cottage, Memorial, and Littleton Regional. While he may be new to Speare, Lenkowski is not unfamiliar with New Hampshire.



He says, "The keyword is community. I like to live where I work, and with a community hospital I am able to wear more than one hat which adds variety." In addition to finding the opportunity to be Speare's CFO, Lenkowski says he was also drawn to what the Plymouth region offers outside of work—the natural

environment, outdoor activities, and the cultural programs associated with Plymouth State University.

Currently Lenkowski resides in Thornton. He and his wife Sharry have three grown children and two grandchildren. He holds a Master of Business Administration from Southern New Hampshire University and has been active in Rotary. Lenkowski is the past president of the NH/VT Healthcare Financial Management Association and has also served on the organization's national board. Additionally, he has been a board member of his church and at the Oldcastle Theater Company in Bennington, VT.

## Rx for Healthy Aging: Exercise

By: Jean Baker, RD, LD, CDE

Some good news for adults who hibernated all winter . . .

A newly-published study from the British Journal of Sports Medicine reports that regular exercise—even if not started until later in life—can help delay impairments that commonly come with aging.

The study followed more than 3,000 older adults over a span of eight years, checking in every few years to assess their activity levels and how often they reported age-related problems like chronic illness, forgetfulness, depression, and impaired walking.

As might be expected, those who exercised at a moderate rate even once a week were much less likely than sedentary individuals to be slowed by

illnesses and other impairments as they got older. More encouraging, these benefits were seen even in those who didn't start to exercise until they were in their 60's.

The authors of the study say that regular exercise is one of the keys to 'successful aging' and, according to these latest findings, it's never too late to start.

Need help getting started? Check out our StepUP video on Weight Bearing Exercise at home on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/ORMxLOJDj6I> or view on our website at [www.spearehospital.com](http://www.spearehospital.com).

*British Journal of Sports Medicine 2014; 18:239. Taking up physical activity in later life and healthy aging: The English Longitudinal Study of Aging.*



# Giving Matters

By: Julie DeGalan, Director of Development

Many charities receive most of their donations at the end of the calendar year and Speare is no exception. We rely on these year-end donations to help us accomplish our mission of providing excellent healthcare for our community *every day*. Contributors to healthcare organizations cite many reasons for making a gift, including their connection to the organization, its effectiveness, financial health, and accountability and transparency. Donors are also motivated by the appeal letter they receive, tax benefits associated with making a gift, and an altruistic spirit associated with the holiday season.

It is with sincere appreciation that the Board of Directors and Staff of Speare Memorial Hospital recognize gifts made in October, November, and December totaling \$352,680 from the following individuals, families, businesses, and foundations. Each and every gift contributes to Speare's ability to provide excellent healthcare when you, your family, friends, and neighbors need us. Thank you for including Speare in your end-of-year giving in 2013!

If you would like to share your reasons for contributing to Speare, I hope you will call me at (603) 238-2211 or email [jdegalan@spearehospital.com](mailto:jdegalan@spearehospital.com).

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