



SPEARE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

# PREPARED.

2020 ANNUAL REPORT







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# *A Message from the CEO & Board Chair*



**More than 120 years ago**, area residents seeking local healthcare built the foundation of what would become Speare Memorial Hospital. We remain dedicated to providing the healthcare services our community needs locally. And that takes preparation.

**We are prepared to provide exceptional emergency healthcare services to our residents and visitors.** On page 12, Rick Coco shares his story about how Speare's emergency department saved his life twice.

We stand prepared to treat chronic illnesses and provide excellent diagnostic services to complement our pediatric, OB/GYN, ophthalmologic, surgical, orthopedic, and primary care services. We are proud to be one of the few remaining critical access hospitals delivering babies in New Hampshire. We offer a broad array of services so that you can get the healthcare you need right here, at Speare.

We have prepared for your future orthopedic needs by recently forming a partnership between Concord Orthopaedics and Plymouth Orthopedics & Sports Medicine. This makes subspecialty orthopedic care, which can be difficult to access in rural locations, available at Speare.

Preparation has positioned us well in our fight against COVID-19. We have successfully established telehealth technology allowing patients to meet with medical providers online. As a community testing site, we quickly identify those with COVID-19 to help decrease its further spread. You can read more on page 8 about how Speare prepared for COVID-19 last spring and the steps we have taken to protect our patients, staff, and community.

We are proud of our staff for the resilience and commitment they have demonstrated this past year. Under rigorous conditions, they rose to overcome significant professional and personal challenges to provide safe healthcare to those we serve. The stories in this annual report are their success stories.

We thank you for putting your faith and trust in us as your healthcare choice. It has been quite a year, with many challenges - but we have persevered and are fully prepared to provide you with the safe, local healthcare you need for another 120 years.

**Thank you,**

MICHELLE MCEWEN, FACHE, CPA  
President & CEO

PATRICK MILLER, MPH  
Chair





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Our board of directors' edict to be prepared for you is carried out through our hospital quality council.

Every year the medical staff works with hospital administration to consider what services are needed in the greater Plymouth community and how we can best prepare to meet those needs.

JOSEPH EBNER, MD





# Chief Medical Officer's Report

## Prepared for your optimal health

**A**s I look out my window this fall, I note squirrels scampering about and collecting and storing acorns for winter. I see my son stacking wood in preparation for the cold evenings to come. Most individuals (and creatures) spend at least some of their present time in preparation for a future time. Did you know much of what we do in healthcare involves being prepared as well?

At the very least, when you access healthcare, you expect to be safe from medical errors and surgical harm – and even safe from food poisoning and fire. In addition, you expect to have the latest technology and medical advances available to you.

**Our board of directors' edict to be prepared for you is carried out through our hospital quality council.** This council includes members from our board, the senior management team, medical providers, various directors, and front line staff. Our quality department staffs the monthly meetings and collects reports from Speare departments for review. The council hears first-hand from departments about their quality improvement initiatives and offers support to advance the patient care experience.

Every three years, Speare Memorial Hospital is subject to an unannounced state inspection, as part of our accreditation. We never know when the inspectors will arrive. They show up and have access to departments, records, policies, rosters, logs, charts, etc. They test our fire doors, inspect our medications, and review the temperature of our refrigerators in the kitchen. They check to ensure our policies and processes in patient care are safe. Knowing they could arrive at any time motivates us toward a constant state of readiness.

Speare has nearly a dozen committees made up of medical providers, pharmacists, and support

staff that meet monthly to review various aspects of the care provided to our patients. For example, the medication safety committee prepares us for safe medication administration, and our medical staff peer review committee evaluates medical decision making and seeks to educate providers when needed. There is a committee that uses computer technology to design safe care, and we practice fire drills so that we are prepared in the event of an emergency.

Every year the medical staff works with hospital administration to consider what services are needed in the greater Plymouth community and how we can best prepare to meet those needs. This is why we opened the Weight Loss Surgery Center last year and the Acid Reflux & Heartburn Center this year.

Perhaps the area we are most prepared for is critical care. All of our nursing staff maintains basic life support training, and critical care clinicians also maintain advanced cardiac life support training. Our pediatric and obstetrical providers remain ready to rescue newborns by maintaining neonatal resuscitation program certification. These efforts, as well as conducting drills, maintain our skills and knowledge so we can better meet patient needs in critical situations.

**So as you prepare for the winter months to come, please know that Speare is also preparing for you!**



JOSEPH EBNER, MD  
Chief Medical Officer





# Chief Nursing Officer's Report

## Prepared for safe surgery

**P**reparing patients for surgery is vital to patient safety and a key role in nursing. Speare nurses make safe surgery a priority, carefully preparing in advance to minimize your anxiety on the day of surgery.

Safe surgery starts with a team from surgical services, anesthesia, surgeons' offices, and other supporting departments working together before your surgery date to verify that everything is in place to provide you with an excellent experience.

**Working closely with you and your family, Speare nurses provide care before, during, and after your procedure.** Once our nurses review your tests and other documentation, they call you to discuss your health history, medications, and any medical conditions. They explain your upcoming procedure and answer your questions. Speare nurses strive to educate you about your procedure so that you are at ease on the day you arrive.

On the day of your surgery, a Speare nurse makes sure that you are healthy and understand the operation you are about to have. When you arrive in our surgical suite, our entire staff is prepared and focused on providing you individualized care while following evidence-based guidelines and checklists to ensure safety.

After your surgery, our nurses make sure that you understand your discharge instructions, have the opportunity to ask questions, and are prepared for a safe recovery at home.

  
KRIS HERING, MSN, RN, NE-BC, FACHE  
Chief Nursing Officer



### Prepared with Certified Nurses, Paramedics, and Health Unit Coordinators

As healthcare becomes more complex, it is critical for nurses to have the skillsets necessary to care for patients. Speare Memorial Hospital encourages and financially supports our nurses, paramedics, and health unit coordinators to achieve specialty certification.

Certifications through the *National Commission for Certifying Agencies* are a mark of excellence and validation of

the clinician's expert knowledge and skill. Candidates seeking certification must demonstrate active clinical practice, the achievement of ongoing continuing education, and successful completion of a rigorous national examination.

There are 40 certified nurses, health unit coordinators, and paramedics at Speare. Debra Thompson, nurse director of critical care and oncology, was recently recognized for 35 years as a certified emergency nurse. Speare's surgical services department has earned the prestigious "CNOR Strong" designation for its number of certified perioperative nurses – a mark of distinction that demonstrates a commitment to upholding the highest standards in patient safety. ♦





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Spokane nurses strive to educate you about your procedure so that you are at ease on the day you arrive.

**When you arrive in our surgical suite, our entire staff is prepared and focused on providing you individualized care while following evidence-based guidelines and checklists to ensure safety.**

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KRIS HERING, MSN,  
RN, NE-BC, FACHE

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# Prepared to deliver babies...even when you aren't

## The Ashley Burdick story

**Ashley Burdick had seven more weeks before her due date when she and her family embarked on a weekend camping trip nearly two hours from home.** She was confident that her previous pregnancy with her son Owen had prepared her for what to expect in her final trimester. And so, she was unconcerned when she began feeling familiar Braxton Hicks contractions, known as false labor pains.

"I didn't think anything of it. I went back to the camper, drank water, and tried to lay down," says Ashley. "But nothing helped. So, I cooked dinner, cleaned up after dinner, bathed Owen, and put him to bed. I figured the Braxton Hicks would go away." Meanwhile, Ashley's husband, Jereme, was growing increasingly alarmed.

"He was convinced I was in labor," says Ashley. "I thought I would know if I was truly in labor because I had a baby before! I didn't want to go to the hospital if I wasn't in labor-- I would have been embarrassed." After four hours, the contractions started getting closer. Jereme was finally able to persuade Ashley into calling her Dartmouth doctor.

"My doctor told me to get to the nearest hospital ASAP," says Ashley. Speare Memorial Hospital was 45 minutes away.

Speare has a strong OB and pediatric team. With decades of experience, the team remains prepared for every situation, from uncomplicated births to newborns needing to be resuscitated and stabilized.

Dr. Lauren Blue, of Plymouth OB/GYN, was on call when she was alerted that Ashley would be arriving. Dr. Blue immediately contacted Maternal-Fetal Medicine (MFM) at Dartmouth-Hitchcock to get information about Ashley's prenatal care and details about her previous delivery.

Dr. Blue then notified Ashley Francis, APRN, who was on call from Plymouth Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine. Unlike many hospitals, Speare has a pediatric medical provider present when a baby may face difficulties at birth, such as being premature.







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**"Our highly coordinated OB-pediatric team is seamless," says Dr. Blue.**

Upon arrival, Ashley Francis consulted with Dartmouth's neonatologists to best prepare for once the baby was born. Speare works closely with Dartmouth's MFM and neonatologists, benefiting from the experience of a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) while in a rural hospital setting.

Ashley and Jereme arrived at Speare at 9 pm. Her contractions were now every two minutes.

"The nurses and doctors at Speare just took over. They realized I was in shock and couldn't process that I was in labor or understand the issues my baby might be facing," says Ashley.

Ashley Francis discussed the risks and anticipated needs of their preterm baby. "Premature babies are at risk for respiratory distress, hypoglycemia, unstable blood sugars, infection, and temperature instability," she says.

The team prepared equipment they might need to help the baby breathe by adjusting it to accommodate a preterm baby's smaller size.

**Dr. Blue and Ashley Francis spent the night at the hospital to make sure they were there in case of future complications. At 5:30 am, Ellie Burdick was born.**

"It was a wonderfully uncomplicated birth," says Dr. Blue. "The thing to realize about obstetrics is that everything is uncomplicated and low risk until the moment it is not, and that's why we must always be prepared."

After confirming that Ellie had no immediate health issues, she and her mom spent an hour sharing skin-to-skin contact. Ellie was then brought to the nursery, where her fluids and blood sugars were monitored, and she was tested for any problems. Having found none, Ellie was able to return to the room with her mom and dad.

"Ashley Francis answered all of my questions, and she explained everything that would happen to Ellie before it happened," says Ellie's mom. "She was AMAZING."

The next day the Burdick family was discharged.

"Today, Ellie is doing well," says her mom. "She is very small for her age, but she eats well and sleeps well. We are so fortunate. She also loves her big brother!" ♦





# Acid Reflux & Heartburn Center

## Prepared to offer treatment

**W**hen John Govoni met with Dr. Joseph Casey, he had already lost his father and a brother to esophageal cancer. Now he needed Dr. Casey to help save his life.

"I didn't have any signs of Barrett's esophagus," says John. "But it runs in my family, and I know it can lead to esophageal cancer. I wanted to be proactive."

Dr. Casey agreed with John and performed an upper endoscopy and biopsy, discovering that John did indeed have Barrett's esophagus, a condition where the lining of the esophagus is damaged by exposure to acid from the stomach. Barrett's esoph-

agus and chronic gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) are the main risk factors for esophageal cancer.

John returned to Speare so that Dr. Casey could remove the damaged tissue in a high-tech procedure called radiofrequency ablation, where a catheter is used to apply controlled heat energy to eliminate the Barrett's tissue while leaving the healthy tissues behind.

**"I am Barrett's free today," says John.**

Speare opened the Acid Reflux & Heartburn Center earlier this year in response to the rise in acid reflux and esophageal cancer. The Center evaluates, diagnoses, and treats the many disorders related to the digestive tract including peptic ulcers, celiac disease, and conditions that damage the esophagus.

"The first step is proper screening," says Dr. Casey. "Esophageal cancer can easily be prevented with screening and control of acid reflux."

The Center screens for esophageal cancer and Barrett's esophagus in patients with a higher risk due to family history or symptoms.

**"My father was old school. He never took a single medication in his life, and he ignored it when he started to have trouble swallowing," says John. "I am sure that he could have lived another ten years if he had this done. And that's unfortunate."**

The team at Speare's Acid Reflux & Heartburn Center understands the impact of acid reflux and heartburn on people.

"We are committed to altering the future of reflux and esophageal cancer in our community," says Dr. Casey. "We are ready to help you today." ♦



PHOTO: John Govoni  
at his local farm.





# PREPARED FOR COVID-19

**Jack Olmstead**

Safety and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

**Erica Tuttle**

Infection Prevention Coordinator

**T**HE WORLD HAS NEVER SEEN a pandemic like COVID-19, but Speare Memorial Hospital was as prepared as possible at the onset of the virus. Following the Ebola outbreak, hospitals across the country received federal grant money to develop plans aimed at safely and successfully responding to highly infectious diseases in the future. Speare completed a detailed "High Threat Infectious Disease" (HTID) plan one year ago.

Though the hope was that we would never need to implement the plan, hospital staff began training at the start of the year.

**Then March hit.** A new disease was spreading across the globe, making a major impact on everything we did, from grocery shopping to the economy. And of course – healthcare.

Once the COVID-19 outbreak turned into a pandemic, Speare activated the HTID plan and our incident command system. A group comprised of hospital medical staff and leadership members assumed key roles in forming an incident management team to review the ever-changing landscape and assess the resources needed to protect our

patients, staff, and community. Additionally, an infection prevention task force kept us updated on the most recent recommendations from DHHS, the CDC, and WHO, and an operations task force helped build additional space for patients in the hospital and at our alternate care site.

As the State closed nonessential businesses and put a "stay at home" order in place, Speare was busy making rapid-fire decisions on how to help those who might become infected and how to prevent the further spread of the virus.

We postponed all non-emergent surgeries and procedures, restricted visitors, and implemented mandatory masking, screening, and social distancing protocols for anyone entering our buildings.

We converted space and added beds in preparation for a sudden influx of patients. We created "negative pressure" rooms, which prevent cross-contamination, and we altered the flow of how patients enter our facilities and how they get around once inside.

Speare maintains an adequate cache of the hospital's

most important safeguards in fighting against an infectious disease – gowns, masks, gloves, face shields, and hand hygiene supplies – the PPE equipment needed to protect our staff and patients. As our supply was depleting, the community stepped in, making masks, creating face shields, providing donation drop-off locations, and much more.

We worked with the National Guard, Plymouth State University (PSU), and our public health region to establish a 96-bed, alternate care site at the PSU ice arena should there be no beds available at Speare. We are fortunate that we did not need to use this site, but we are prepared to open another if the number of COVID-19 cases rises in our community.

Speare takes infectious diseases seriously, and our team prepares throughout the year for any possibility. As we move forward, hospital operations will change and adapt as we work to ensure a safe experience for all who enter our facilities, allowing us to continue providing the full scope of health care services our community needs. ♦







**W**hen Plymouth police officer, Michael Clark, looks in the mirror these days, he notices things he hasn't seen in a while – like his collar and rib bones. "I assume they've always been there," Mike laughs, "but who knew?"

Mike has battled with his weight for most of his life. There were times he was winning, but in the end, the weight overcame him. "Weight loss for me was never permanent," he says.

**His doctor had suggested weight loss surgery several years ago, but at that time, the closest facility to his home was Dartmouth-Hitchcock, and he didn't want to make that drive regularly.** He made progress on his own, losing 50 pounds with diet and lifestyle changes. However, he was still significantly overweight.

When Speare opened the Weight Loss Surgery Center (WLSC), Mike signed up for the next available info session. He had already done a considerable amount of research on weight loss surgery and

**"This  
is a big  
change  
in your  
life"**

was impressed with how much more he learned from the WLSC.

"That told me the program at Speare is solid. I had little doubt that I would be successful," says Mike. "When my primary care physician said that she was absolutely on board, it was a simple decision."

Mike weighed 313 pounds when he began at the WLSC. Following his gastric by-pass surgery a few months ago – where his stomach size was reduced – he is down to 247 pounds. But his transformation has gone beyond the numbers on the scale.

"We call them non-scale victories, other things that show progress is being made regardless of the scale," says Mike. "Now I can comfortably cross my legs and buy jeans off the shelf. I feel less self-conscious." And most importantly, his blood pressure now runs consistently normal, and he no longer needs to take blood pressure, cholesterol, or gastroesophageal reflux disease medications.

The WLSC has been a good fit for Mike. He likes the personal attention a



small hospital offers. "It's more intimate than going to a larger facility," he says. "I know when I go to the WLSC for an appointment, everyone there knows who I am. They know what I have been through, and they are so positive, friendly, and professional. I could not ask for a better experience."

When asked what he would say to others considering weight loss surgery, Mike has sage advice: "You need to know this is a big change in your life. It's not the easy way out. It's a decision that will impact you for life, and HOW it impacts you is totally up to you. You need to commit to this 100% – listen and ask questions. If you follow the program and are truly ready to change your life and greatly improve your health, this is a wonderful option."

## Michelle Fistek:

**Michelle Fistek has the marks to prove that she was a plump baby. "You can see lines where I once had little rolls on my arms," she says. "This means weight has been a problem for me for at least 63 years!"**

Michelle remembers being put on diet pills at the age of 11 and all the failed attempts to lose weight in the decades that followed. But that came to an end a year ago when she received a postcard in the mail announcing the opening of Speare's Weight Loss Surgery Center (WLSC). She had thought about weight loss surgery in the past, especially since her insurance covered it, so she took the first step and signed up for an info session.

"I wondered if this might be the help I needed," says Michelle. "I really liked everyone on the team that I met at the session. Dr. Koren gained my trust immediately, and I felt very comfortable talking to Janette Gaumer, the dietician. I wanted to get healthy and have more energy, but I needed to keep the weight off this time, so I decided to take action."

**Michelle weighed 283 pounds when she attended that info session. Earlier this year she had gastric sleeve surgery to remove most of her stomach. Today she weighs 174 pounds.**

"I have enjoyed every single step of my journey," says Michelle. "The year has flown by, my weight has dropped more than I ever anticipated, and I feel great! I feel so blessed to have the WLSC team as a resource and support. I love them all!"

Michelle's health has improved dramatically – she is no longer taking medication for high cholesterol, she takes half of what she used to for high blood pressure, and her energy levels have improved tremendously.

"I am surprised how my attitude has changed and how much joy I feel," says Michelle. "I am proud of myself. Everything in my life has changed over the past few years—I am able to handle it and actually revel in all the new experiences I am having." ♦

**"This was the support team I wanted to work with"**





# Prepared to Save Lives

## A twist of fate delivers Rick Coco to Speare's door

**O**n day one of his vacation, Rick Coco started to complain about pain in his jaw. His cousin noted he "seemed agitated, and his blood pressure was quite high." Rick was concerned he might be having a heart attack and chose to drive himself to the local emergency room at Speare Memorial Hospital. He doesn't remember the car ride, walking into the emergency department (ED), or collapsing on the floor. Rick's heart had stopped, and he was dying.

**"The Speare staff on duty deserves all of the credit for saving my life," says Rick.**

[Read More »](#)

**PHOTO (L-R):** Rick Coco, a Speare Emergency Department patient, and his wife Sharlene.



It was a turn of events that brought Rick and his wife Sharlene to Speare's door in that critical moment. From Michigan, they were driving to Northern New Hampshire for vacation when they felt compelled to take a detour to a cousin's B&B in Groton. They were ready to relax. That detour may have saved Rick's life, altering his fate.

Dr. Andrew Seefeld, medical director of Speare's ED, Deb Mallett, RN, Jackie Ciampi, respiratory therapist, Jim Gagne, RN, and Elaine Kirouac, paramedic, were all on duty when Rick arrived.

As clinical leader that day, Deb remembers Rick's arrival well.

"He was speaking in full sentences, and then he suddenly dropped," she says.

**Without immediate care, cardiac arrest can lead to death within minutes.**

"That's what scares me," says Sharlene, "if we had been at home, he would have been working in his garage, and I would have never known. Or if we had kept driving north today...." her voice trails off.

The ED team brought Rick into the trauma bay and immediately began to resuscitate him. Dr. Seefeld retells the story succinctly:

"He had no pulse and was in cardiac arrest. We defibrillated

him (gave him an electric shock) and got his heartbeat back. He went back into cardiac arrest. We defibrillated him again and once again restored his heartbeat. We inserted a breathing tube, administered medications, and placed him on a ventilator. He was then flown via helicopter to Catholic Medical Center. Seven days later, he came back to thank us."

## One of Dr. Seefeld's favorite adages is *"chance favors the prepared mind."*

As a rural, critical access hospital, people with life-threatening conditions frequently come through the ED doors, and our ED team must be prepared.

"In situations like this, emergency medicine is resuscitative medicine," says Dr. Seefeld. "A person comes in and collapses with no pulse, and it is our job to bring him back." Twice, in this case.

One of Dr. Seefeld's favorite adages is "chance favors the prepared mind."

"If we are prepared, the patient will have the best outcome,"

he says. "We are in a profession of excellence, and we continually strive to be more prepared every day."

**The ED team credits Dr. Seefeld for his ongoing education and training to keep them prepared for what might come next.**

"He uses every moment available to train us on something that we can put to use," says Deb. Dr. Seefeld comes in on his days off to educate his team.

And for that, Rick is thankful. He also feels that Dr. Seefeld goes above and beyond in caring for his patients.

"Dr. Seefeld kept in touch with my wife while I was at Catholic Medical Center. He contacted the cardiologist there to check on me every day and reported information back to her. Who does that?" asks Rick. "Obviously, someone who cares for his patients, that's who."

Dr. Seefeld is quick to say that emergency medicine is teamwork.

"I am only as good as the team that supports me, and we have a great team," he says. "We came together for the benefit of Rick Coco that day because that's what we are prepared to do."

Now back at home in Michigan, Rick reports, "I am doing absolutely great!" ♦



**"I am eternally grateful for the emergency department team at Speare. They saved my life," says Rick Coco.**

**PHOTO (L-R):** Elaine Kirouac, NRP; Deb Mallett, RN; Rick Coco; Sharlene Coco; Andrew Seefeld, MD; Jackie Ciampi, respiratory therapist; and Jim Gagne, RN.







## Trust the X-ray Experts:

### SPEARE MEDICAL IMAGING CENTER *At Boulder Point*

Speare introduced the Speare Medical Imaging Center to provide our community with a technologically advanced full-field digital suite where all residents and visitors can conveniently receive general diagnostic and orthopedic X-rays. This includes chest, abdomen, back, and extremities (legs and arms). **General walk-ins are welcome.**

The Center is staffed with the same highly-skilled experts you will find in the radiology department at Speare. Scans are read by the fellowship-trained, board-certified radiologists at *Southern NH Radiology Consultants (SNHRC)*, who rapidly communicate the results to your physician.

**603.536.3700**

TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

## New Healthcare Providers



**Dr. Robert Chastanet, MD** has joined Plymouth General Surgery. Dr. Chastanet received his MD from the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. He completed his residency at the Naval Medical Center (San Diego) and fellowship in minimally invasive surgery at Houston Northwest Hospital. He is a diplomate of the ABS and an ACS fellow.



**Dr. Theodore Capron, MD** has joined Speare Primary Care. Dr. Capron graduated from the University of Virginia with a BA and received his MD from George Washington University. He completed his residency at Anderson Memorial Hospital and is board-certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.



**Dr. Savan Patel, MD** has joined Speare Memorial as a hospitalist. Dr. Patel graduated from the University of Texas with a BS and received his MD from Ross University. He completed his residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital and is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.



## VOLUNTEERING

# Prepared to comfort and assist

**VOLUNTEERING** is an extremely rewarding opportunity for people to give of their time, talents, and energy to serve others. Speare Memorial Hospital volunteers support the efforts of our staff to help you navigate your healthcare experience. They greet you at the door, escort you to your destination, and help with wheelchairs. Our gift shop volunteers are here to assist you with a purchase or just be a listening ear. Our

inpatient volunteers will check on you or your loved one, deliver a flower and newspaper, and provide a social visit as we assess needs in your room. They can even provide reading glasses or a puzzle book. Our therapy dog teams come prepared to cheer you up and help you feel better. Volunteers help behind the scenes throughout the hospital by preparing needed items for your stay.

This year has been challenging for our volunteer program as all in-person volunteering was suspended in March. Several of our volunteers began sewing masks from home and writing notes of encouragement to patients and even staff members. The *Patient Family Advisory Council*

volunteers have remained active by remotely serving on various hospital committees and continuing to recruit new members. Our dedicated group of volunteers are prepared to return as soon as we call them back. They are committed to our Speare team and the community we serve.

Speare volunteers contributed over 3600 hours from July, 2019 through April, 2020 by serving in the following areas: Health Information Management, Inpatient Units, Reception Desk, Oncology, Gift Shop, Patient Flower Program, Dental Program, Environmental Services, Business/Accounting Offices, Spiritual Care, Pharmacy, Pet Therapy, Patient Family Advisory Council and special projects and events. ♦



### Volunteers

→ Patricia Abjornson, Kathryn Barrie, Oleg Belshev, Joan Bergstrom, Ann Blair, Mary Ellen Bourque, Ann Burghardt, Linda Campbell, Pat Corbin, Marcia Covell, Brenda Davidson, Irene Deutsch, Richard Flanagan, Lee Fortier, Lilly Friedman, John Gray, Julie & "Spike" Grippo, Katelyn Heath, Dee Hopper, Peggy Horton, Joyce Jardin, Barbara Jenkinson,

Glory Kidger, Jamalyn Knight, Nancy Kolb, Louise Laposta, Vincent Laposta, Carol Mabin, Annie Martin, John & "Jersey Girl" McRae, Carolyn Piantedosi, Joan Poitras, Ralph, Minnie & "Holly" Ripley, Janet Ruckles, Rodney Ruckles, Nancy Sawyer, Jean Scalese, Elaine Shaunessy, Judy Siegel, Jeff Smith, Stephanie Sywenkyj, Bill Taffe, Bethany Ward, Amy Tomasello, Ed Weber

### Clergy

→ Deacon Mike Guy, Rev. Leo LeBlanc, Rev. Eileen Torrey

### Patient Family Advisory Council

→ Linda Campbell, Judy Gutry, Katelyn Heath, Dee Hopper, Sandra Lehner, Carol Mabin, Carolyn Piantedosi, Dolly Riess





“All activity flowed very smoothly and quickly.

– *Emergency department patient*

“Doctors always called and notified my wife. Nurses would talk with my wife on FaceTime.

– *Inpatient*

“From health screen at the door to the end of our visit, we saw no other patients and I was impressed with how safe we felt.

– *Physician office patient*

“The staff was in full compliance with all the mandatory pandemic precautions.

– *Surgical outpatient*

“I went to Speare to have a back X-ray. The staff took every precaution to protect me and the personnel were warm & friendly.

– *Outpatient*

“Prompt service, COVID-19 guidelines met, felt comfortable as a patient.

– *Urgent care patient*

# PREPARED FOR SAFETY

**Melissa M. Howard, MHA, BS, RN, CPHQ**

Director of Quality, Infection Prevention & Service Excellence

**W**hen it comes to quality, Speare has prevention and safety efforts in place to ensure that patients, families, and caregivers have a safe visit every time they enter one of our facilities.

Our quality, infection prevention, and service excellence department is always on duty. Charged with monitoring patient care, this team assures that patients receive a positive experience that is safe, timely, and evidenced-based. They confirm that patients receive the appropriate care for their diagnosis, are on the right antibiotics, have precautions in place to avoid infection, and receive proper follow-up for tests, treatments, and appointments.

Providing quality health care to our community does not stop





when you leave our doors. Our team ensures that all the elements for a successful discharge are in place, like medication reviews and care instructions so that you feel confident about your health care moving forward.

Speare has established goals and outcomes we strive to meet. We find that feedback gives us the greatest opportunity to measure our success and improve. Employees are encouraged to contribute ideas to improve processes for a better patient and staff experience. We respond

promptly to patient comments, acknowledging, and learning from this valuable, firsthand insight. We then use this feedback to evaluate if we have met hospital goals and outcomes and identify opportunities to improve.

**Perhaps our biggest challenge this year was preparing a safe environment for patients and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.** Speare followed strict CDC recommendations and government guidelines to keep patients and staff safe. We are fortunate that our community

was patient and understanding as we implemented state crisis standards limiting visitors and services.

Working shoulder to shoulder, our clinical, administrative, support, and front-line staff lead us through uncharted waters to adopt best practices. This collaborative approach led to an orchestrated preparedness effort for our community that remains in place today, making it safe for people to resume their health care in any of our facilities. ♦





# Chief Financial Officer's Report

## Prepared for the future

**S**peare Memorial Hospital has experienced consistent volumes in recent fiscal years, highlighting the ongoing community needs for the services and desire for patients to stay local for high-quality, personalized care. As a long-standing, local community hospital, Speare has a broad range of specialty services not typically seen in a small hospital, such as orthopedic and sports medicine, sleep lab, weight loss surgery, and obstetrics, among others. With this continued success,

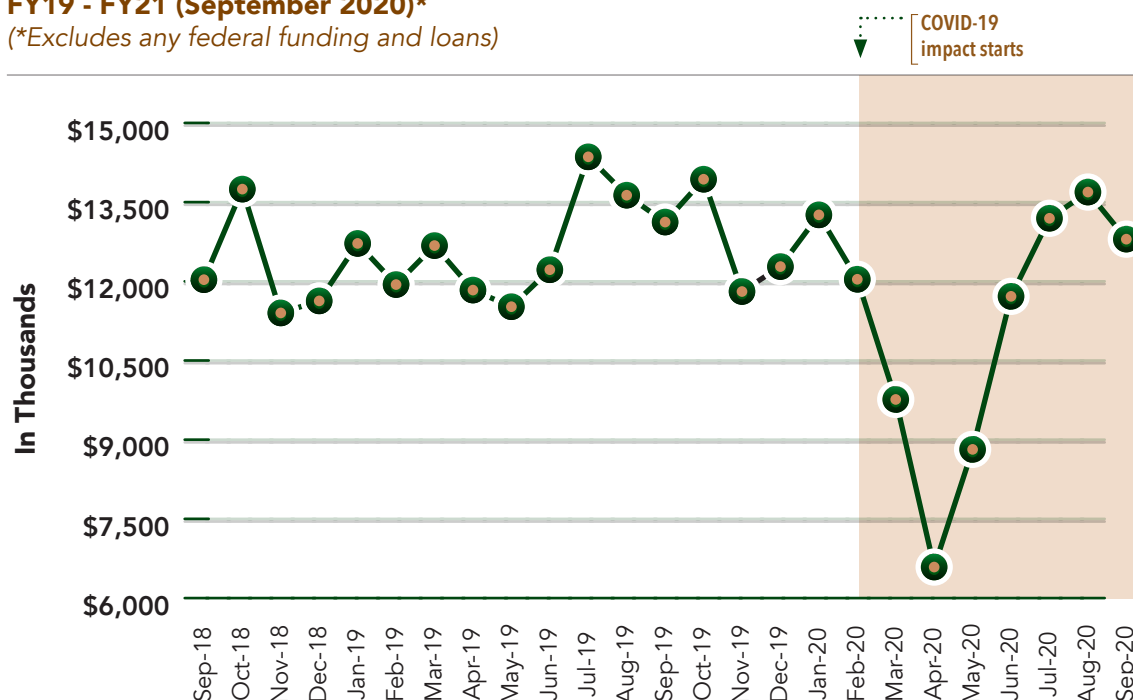
it took a pandemic to break our stride, *but only temporarily.*

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, a stay-at-home order was issued, and all non-essential businesses closed from late March into June. Before these orders, our patients were beginning to cancel procedures, testing, and visits. Following the Centers for Disease Control recommendations, Speare canceled all non-urgent surgeries to reduce the virus's spread. Patient volumes declined, and expenses increased

### Total Gross Patient Service Revenue

FY19 - FY21 (September 2020)\*

(\*Excludes any federal funding and loans)





## Summary of Operating Statistics

For the fiscal year ending June 30

(COVID-19 impacted services: March - June)

	2019	2020
<b>Totals:</b>		
Emergency Room Visits	13,435	11,751
MedCheck Urgent Care	9,527	7,327
Surgical Patients	2,022	1,788
Physical & Occupational Therapy Treatments	30,079	24,813
Laboratory Tests	134,408	135,727
Radiology Exams	26,202	23,896
Oncology Procedures	2,690	3,114
Total Observation Days	1,194	1,216
Total Inpatient Days	4,872	4,341
Physician Practice Visits	36,719	34,643
	<b>36,719</b>	<b>34,643</b>

as Speare prepared for the pandemic. As the months passed, our expenses remained high, which significantly impacted our fiscal year 2020 operations. The data in the **Total Gross Patient Service Revenue** graph shows how we are just now starting to recover.

To address the financial hardship hospitals were beginning to face in April, the federal government issued Provider Relief Funds. In addition to these funds, Speare received a loan from the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP). Together, this funding provides much relief to the losses as a result of COVID-19. Without this funding, Speare would have seen losses of over \$7 million in fiscal year 2020, but instead, we were able to cover most of these losses.

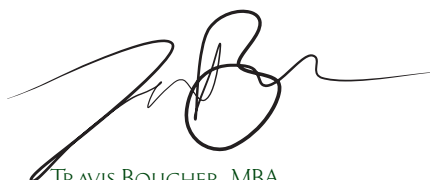
Speare ended fiscal year 2020 with a loss to operations of \$551,910. Guidance continues to change on how the Provider Relief Funds can be used and there is always the risk Speare may have to return this funding, even though we still experienced a loss in fiscal year 2020. Speare also continues to experience a decrease in volumes, but ongoing expenses due to the pandemic.

As seen in the **Operating Statistics Table**, most of our service lines saw a decrease in volume due to COVID-19, although laboratory and oncology experienced an increase in patient visits from the

prior year. This was due to a local hospital closing its oncology unit and Speare adding COVID-19 community testing. It was only natural for Speare to take on these services for the community, and the Speare team worked tirelessly to implement and design workflows to ensure that adequate access was available for both of these important services.

One of the most exciting changes that we saw at Speare in fiscal year 2020 was the increase in Telemedicine. COVID-19 pushed the country, and our organization, to adapt and implement telehealth on an unprecedented scale; in fiscal year 2020, our practices quickly implemented a workflow and engaged in over 1,000 telehealth visits.

The nimbleness of Speare allows us to continually adapt to ensure that we provide high-quality personalized care for years to come.



TRAVIS BOUCHER, MBA  
Chief Financial Officer







SPEARE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**PREPARED.**

## Generous Donors

*The list on the following pages represents donations received  
in Fiscal Year 2020*

*(July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020)*





# SPECIAL RECOGNITION

**Y**our generous financial donations helped cover the added COVID-19 expenses, your gifts of homemade masks and personal protective equipment helped to keep our patients and staff safe, and the donated food and drinks rejuvenated our hardworking medical team and employees.  
**For this, we THANK YOU!**

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   *Shirley G. Splaine*  
 Leo Steiman  
   *Anonymous*  
 Barbara R. Stevens  
   *Frank and Liz Stevens*  
 Herta Sutton  
   *Ms. Nancy C. Beaudin*  
 Jack Weigel  
   *John B. and Gail V. Glennon*  
 Raymond B. Weigel  
   *John B. and Gail V. Glennon*

### In Honor of

Ralph P. Broadwater  
   *Ms. Celeste Hynes*  
 Gary D. Diederich  
   *Anne Milender*  
 Meredith Houseman  
   *Ms. Christine R. Louis*  
 Douglas S. McVicar  
   *Tom Korson and Mary Mullarkey*  
 Paul S. Musco  
   *Anne Milender*  
 Speare Memorial Surgery Staff  
   *Cynthia Schofield and Holly Knowles*  
 Speare Workers Fighting COVID-19  
   *Ms. Lisa Stokoe Barrett*  
 Bruce and Sue Wiggett  
   *Keyle and Carol Mabin*







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