

24 Private Telemetry Rooms Open • Single-Site Robotic Surgery Debuts • Orthopedic Unit Coming Soon

synapse

THE CHESTER COUNTY HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SYSTEM MAGAZINE

dawn of a new day



CALENDAR

▼ ONGOING

Screenings

BLOOD PRESSURE

CANCER RISK EVALUATION –
610.423.4556

CANCER SCREENINGS –
BREAST AND LUNG

CARDIAC CALCIUM SCORING –
610.431.5131

HEART TRACKS™ CARDIO-
VASCULAR RISK ASSESSMENT

FALLS RISK – 610.431.1852

PERIPHERAL VASCULAR
DISEASE (PVD) –
610.738.2771

STROKE

URGENT MAMMOGRAMS –
610.738.2611

Support Groups

CANCER

CARDIAC DISEASE

CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE

CROHNS AND COLITIS

ICD (DEFIBRILLATOR)

DIABETES

MACULAR DEGENERATION

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Education

CARDIOVASCULAR PROGRAMS

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT

NUTRITION AND WEIGHT
MANAGEMENT

ORTHOPEDIC EDUCATION

SENIOR OUTREACH

SMOKING CESSATION

TRAVEL MEDICINE

WOMEN'S HEALTH

HOSPITAL PROGRAMS & SUPPORT : The Chester County Hospital and Health System offers various types of programs, courses, support groups and fundraising events. Here are a few of the many opportunities that will be taking place in the upcoming months.

Wellness Events & Fundraisers

Gordon Bowker Golf Tournament* – September 16

Heart + Sole 5K Race* – September 21

Living with Type 2 Diabetes – September 23

Preventing Falls, One Step at a Time – September 26

FORE Health Invitational* – October 1

Miracles & Memories Dinner* – October 1

Man Down! What Would You Do?

Responding to a Cardiac Arrest – October 3

Chester County Day House Tour* – October 5

Weight Matters (free introductory class) – October 9

**Tea for Two: Celebrating Breast Cancer
Awareness Month** – October 9

Dilworthtown Inn Wine Festival* –
October 13

Weight Matters (eight week series) –
October 16

Reversing Pre-Diabetes – October 21

SHINE Gala* – November 2

Heart Tracks: Know Your Numbers.

Know Your Risk – November 6

Reversing Pre-Diabetes – November 12

**Diabetes Day: Heart-to-Heart Conversations
for Healthy Living** – November 16

* For fundraiser info, call 610.431.5329.

Registration

Register online or call **610.738.2300**, except where noted.

Please note: Some programs have a fee. Pre-registration is required for these programs. Because enrollment is ongoing, these events could potentially be filled. *Dates are subject to change.*

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**HANDS-ONLY
CPR TRAINING**
October 21, 23, 28, 29

Contents

▼ DEAR NEIGHBORS



As we plan each new edition of *Synapse*, we always aim to publish stories about big news, unique health programs or advanced patient

care technology. We are lucky to have a wealth of article ideas from which to choose for each issue. It's a sign of good times for our Health System.

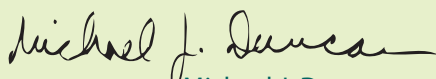
This past July, we proudly opened the first 24 private rooms of our expansion project. Our patients, families and employees are thrilled with the new space. It is modern, spacious and beautifully appointed. Our lead story (p. 3) explores the thoughtful planning that went into the Patient Tower to create welcoming patient care spaces that best foster the healing process.

We are now anxiously anticipating the opening of our next 24 rooms, which will be devoted to the post-surgical recovery of our orthopedic patients (p. 8). In addition to private rooms, the unit will feature an inpatient gym for physical therapy.

Switching gears from our physical expansion, our flourishing Robotic Surgery Program is experiencing growth of its own. Over the past few months, we have been performing Single-Site robotic gallbladder surgery for our patients. Single-Site surgery reduces the number of incision points to just one in the navel, which discreetly disguises the small scar afterward.

As always, we appreciate your support and interest. Stay tuned, in the next few weeks and months, we will have more big news to share!

Warm regards,


Michael J. Duncan
President and CEO

cover story

3.... NEW PATIENT TOWER: DESIGNED FOR COMFORT AND HEALING

The top floor of the Hospital's new Tower is now open with 24 private Telemetry rooms. The unit is modern, bright and welcoming – all of which were important design principles for creating a healing space. Great consideration for patient comfort and care was incorporated into the building's design and décor.

features

7.... DEDICATED TO ORTHOPEDICS: GETTING YOU BACK TO YOUR ACTIVE LIFE

By the beginning of 2014, the Hospital will cut the ribbon on the third floor of the Tower. This space will be the home of our new Orthopedic Unit and 24 beautiful, private patient rooms. Adding a dedicated inpatient unit will enhance the comprehensive orthopedic care for hip, knee and other joint-repair patients.

10... UNDER ONE LITTLE SCAR: SINGLE-SITE ROBOTICS OPENS SURGICAL POSSIBILITIES

Here's yet another reason to love your bellybutton – it has the potential to disguise a surgical scar. Taking the idea of 'minimally invasive' to a whole new level, physicians are now able to robotically remove gallbladders through a single incision in your navel.

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Visitors are now welcome around the clock.

Cover Photo: Don Pearse Photographers



SYNAPSE MAGAZINE SINCE 1981

Synapse is the award-winning publication produced by The Chester County Hospital and Health System's Corporate Marketing Department. The articles provided in this magazine are solely for informational purposes. It should not be relied on or used in placement of a physician's medical advice or assessment. Always consult a physician in matters of your personal health.

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Feedback Welcome

Email synapse@cchosp.com to let us know what you think, to make suggestions about future topics or to change your mailing information.



Mission: Lifeline Bronze Quality Achievement Award

The Hospital received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline® Bronze Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes The Chester County Hospital's commitment and success in implementing a high standard of care for heart attack patients.

Ralph G. Smith, IV, RN, the Hospital's Chest Pain Center Coordinator, says, "The Chester County Hospital is dedicated to making our cardiac care among the best in the country, and the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program is helping us accomplish that by making it easier for our professionals to improve the outcomes of our cardiac patients. This award is truly system-wide recognition, which starts with the patient's first medical contact with EMTs and Paramedics (the pre-Hospital providers), through the Emergency Department team to the Cardiac Cath Lab, to monitored units and to discharge planning. Not forgetting to mention all the providers in between - physicians, nurses and other allied health care professionals."

Exemplifying Progress through Innovation

The Chester County Hospital has been named to the 2013 Most Wired list by making great strides in establishing robust clinical information systems. This progress is aimed at improving patient care by adopting technologies to enhance patient documentation. In addition, these technologies advance clinical decision support and evidence-based protocols, reduce the likelihood of medication errors and rapidly restore access to data in the case of a disaster or outage.

"We have been getting steadily closer to the 'Most Wired' mark, and this is the first time we've made the list," notes **Ray Hess, Vice President of Information Management** at The Chester County Hospital. "The implementation of Soarian Financials moved us ahead, as did starting our Health Information Exchange work with Mobile MD."

Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan

Building upon the Health System's longstanding mission to improve the health of the community, the Health System co-chaired **RoadMAPP to Health: A Comprehensive Health Needs Assessment for Chester County**. Between 2011 and 2013, 36 organizations representing hospitals, health centers, social service agencies, safety-net providers, faith-based organizations and funding agencies met monthly to complete a broad health assessment for Chester County. The Committee adopted the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process to guide the assessment.

Based on the health assessment findings and consistent with the Health System's Mission, a detailed Implementation Plan was developed that identifies the specific steps that the Health System will take and the level of resources committed to maintain and improve the health of the community. Chester County is already the healthiest community among Pennsylvania's 67 counties, and many initiatives have been designed to maintain this status while addressing new and emerging health needs in the Health System's service area.

To learn more, visit the "About" section of ChesterCountyHospital.org

RoadMAPP to Health Vision:

To become a community where partners assure conditions in which individuals can be healthy and where individuals are empowered to manage their own health.

36
ORGANIZATIONS

18
MONTHS
OF COLLABORATION

5
STRATEGIC
QUESTIONS

7
PRIORITY
AREAS

1
Unified Community



designed for comfort & healing

The New Patient Tower Welcomes Its First Patients and Families

"LOVE THE PRIVATE ROOMS." "IT FEELS MORE LIKE A HOTEL THAN A HOSPITAL." "THE COLORS, DÉCOR, AND FURNITURE ARE BEAUTIFUL." "THERE'S SO MUCH LIGHT!"

These are just some of the comments we have heard since The Chester County Hospital's new patient Tower opened in July. Working closely with the architecture and design team at Ballinger, a trusted Hospital partner for nearly two decades, we have created a fourth-floor Telemetry Unit and ground-floor radiation therapy suite that embody the very best of patient-centered design, with spaces configured to promote comfort, healing and personal attention. Over the next year or so, as construction managers L.F. Driscoll Company, LLC, build out the remaining two floors, the new areas will embody this same commitment to the patient experience.

Telemetry Unit: *Creating an Upscale Hotel-like Setting*

Anyone who enters the Tower's fourth-floor Telemetry Unit can't help but notice how bright it is, thanks to large windows that bring natural light and outdoor views into the entry waiting area, the all-private patient rooms,

interior family lounge, staff lounge, and conference room. Many rooms feature views of the surrounding countryside, while the entry waiting area overlooks a green roof constructed on top of a lower roof. The green roof helps to

The end result is a well-planned, well-thought-out unit that ensures the very best for patients and families.

obscure the loading dock, over which the Patient Tower was built, drawing visitors' eyes to either the vegetation below or the sky above (*pictured p. 6*). Even the patient bathrooms have frosted windows that let in light while ensuring privacy—an unusual added touch for a health care facility.

"Studies show that patients who get more natural light feel better and actually heal faster," notes Lou Meilink, the Ballinger principal in charge of the project. His colleagues on the team included project architect Cristina Wuenschel; project manager Tom Parr; design partner Eric Swanson; and senior interior designer Gena Weckel.

Ample large windows were just one of many features incorporated to make the space feel "more like a hotel" and "less like a hospital," says Meilink. He points to the warm woods used in the trims and furniture, the ceilings above the nurses' stations, and the floors in patient rooms. Green and tan earth tones throughout the unit are neutral yet soothing and nature-inspired. And the acoustics were carefully designed to cut down on the noise that so often plagues patients who are trying to rest. "Sleep is linked to healing," Meilink observes. "The finishes and the ceilings are designed to control sound levels, and we spent a lot of time on insulation and wall construction between the corridors and the rooms."

continued >

Designed for healing and comfort... *continued*



Beyond thinking about sound and light, the Ballinger team worked closely with Hospital staff and administrators to figure out how each room, as well as the unit as a whole, could be arranged to best serve the needs of patients and families. They decided to approach the room design as a series of three “zones” to give everyone the space they needed.

ZONE 1, immediately as you enter, is for the nurses or other caregivers, with a sink and ample countertop workspace, medical supply cabinets, and computer within easy reach. The goal is to keep all medical equipment and supplies in this zone as much as possible and out from underfoot for patients and family members.

ZONE 2 is designated for the patient, with the bed facing a footwall that by intention is clean and uncluttered, Meilink emphasizes, featuring only a TV, a clock, a whiteboard for important care notes and a ledge for flowers and cards. In addition to controls for the bed and TV, patients can adjust

the window shade system to filter out some light or block it completely from a wall-mounted remote control. Just a short diagonal walk from the bed's bottom edge is a bathroom that meets the standards of the Americans with

We wanted to give the family a place to be and participate as part of the caregiving team.

Disabilities Act, with safety features that reduce fall risk. For example, there is a showerhead in the corner over a drain, but no walls or partitions that could cause a patient to trip or make it difficult for nurses or family members to give assistance. There are also grab bars outside the door and inside the bathroom.

Last but not least is **ZONE 3**, right by the window, which gives family members and friends a place of their own as they visit the patient or even stay overnight.

ZONE 1

ZONE 2

ZONE 3

"We wanted to give the family a place to be and participate as part of the caregiving team, even when the nurse or other staff member is in the room," Meilink notes. "And if they do want to leave the room to decompress, they don't have to go far, as we also placed an interior family lounge right inside the unit."

WAITING ROOM

Interior designer Tracey Martel of Martel Interiors, who chose the furnishings for the unit, emphasizes that the furniture also contributes to visitors' sense of comfort. Zone 3 features a convertible seating system that can function as a couch, a recliner, two chairs and a table (which pops up from the center), or even a bed when it is closed and flipped over. For the entry waiting area and family lounge, Martel chose furniture with what she calls a "living room" look: comfortable and inviting, with attractive yet durable fabrics and wood trim. Tables invite visitors to get some work done or pull out a laptop.

We spent so much time and energy in advance to make sure we got it right.

you're in a bus station," Martel says. "We've created a lounge-like feel in our choices and by arranging the furniture in groups, rather than a more typical waiting room configuration."

Yet another important strategy to promote patient and family comfort

"Sometimes you can walk into a hospital waiting room and feel like

was keeping hallway supply closets and utility rooms "off stage," says Lou Meilink, away from the main corridors.

"We wanted to minimize any visual clutter and not have patients and family members interacting with these support areas. We were trying to achieve a clean line of vision in the spaces where they'll be."

Meilink adds that the design team sought ways to configure the unit so that nurses could "spend less time fetching things" and more time at the bedside. Instead of having one central nurses' station for the 24 private rooms, there are two stations that serve 12 rooms each, positioned so that nurses have a line of sight to each room. In addition, the team placed a small workstation with a computer between each pair of rooms (*pictured p. 3*), so that nurses and doctors can update a medical record or look up information without disturbing the patient. From there they can slide a frosted glass pane to check in on the patient, too, but passersby are not able to see in. These hallway stations, along with bedside computers in every room, make it easier for nurses and caregivers to remain out on the unit with patients.

continued >

NURSES STATION



Designed for healing and comfort... *continued*

"We spent so much time and energy in advance to make sure we got it right," Meilink says. "We had dozens of meetings with user groups made up of a cross section of nurses and staff and administrators, and they were involved in all of the planning with us in a very collaborative way. We built a mockup patient room and caregiving station. We did several iterations at each stage of design to figure out every detail, from lighting to door placement to window size."

The end result is a well-planned, well-thought-out unit that ensures the very best and privacy for patients and families.

TrueBeam™ Linear Accelerator Suite: *Putting Patients at Ease*

Now open on the ground floor is the new Varian TrueBeam™ Linear Accelerator treatment suite, where patients with certain types of cancer can receive more powerful, more precise and more accurate radiation treatment than previously available. For this space, it



was important to anticipate the anxiety patients are likely to feel as they walk down a long corridor and into a room with a rather large and potentially intimidating piece of medical equipment.

To ease that anxiety, the Hospital team and designer Tracey Martel decided to grace the corridor with three beautiful, backlit nature scenes made by the company Sky Factory. Above the linear accelerator are two more backlit

scenes featuring a blue sky, clouds and trees, which give patients a peaceful view to focus on while having the treatment, instead of just a blank ceiling (*inset*). In turn, these nature scenes helped guide the overall décor.

"The finish palette really works off those nature scenes," Martel says. "The palette is neutral, and the trim and floors add the look of warm wood. The cabinetry has resin panels with the outlines of birch trees on them, which again creates an organic feel while keeping medical supplies hidden away."

"Everything is geared toward helping the patient feel more at ease," she adds.

THE CHESTER COUNTY HOSPITAL is proud to be able to offer our community a new facility that embodies our commitment to placing patients and their families at the center of everything we do. Making lives better every day is not just about healing bodies or curing diseases, but about helping people have the best possible experience during their stay with us.

*By Kristine M. Conner
Photos by Rick Davis*



▶▶ LEARN MORE AT
www.chestercountyhospital.org/synapse



DEDICATED ORTHOPEDIC UNIT WITH PRIVATE ROOMS WILL MEET THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS



getting **you** back

{ to your active life }

STRONG HEALTHY BONES AND JOINTS ARE WHAT KEEP OUR BODIES MOVING THROUGH LIFE, WHETHER AT WORK OR AT PLAY. When they are damaged either by injury or by the wear-and-tear of aging, the painful result can make it difficult to continue routine parts of life like walking, exercising, gardening, or even lifting a child.

No matter what your age, you want to stay as active and fully engaged in life as possible. When bone or joint-related issues get in the way of everyday activities, having access to top-notch orthopedic care may mean the difference between functioning at your highest ability or having to settle for a more sedentary lifestyle.

At The Chester County Hospital and Health System, you have local access to a comprehensive orthopedic program dedicated to treating the many bone and joint-related problems that can interfere with an active life. Its program offers the expertise and advanced technologies necessary to treat all types of orthopedic conditions, from sports injuries and fractures to joints that need replacing. And the program continues to evolve to stay current with new developments in the field and to keep up with the increasing number of patients in the community who will benefit from the latest orthopedic procedures.



As part of the Health System's commitment to expanding an already sophisticated orthopedics program, the Hospital included a new, high-tech orthopedic surgical unit in plans for the Hospital's soon-to-be realized third floor of its new Tower. Set to open for patients in January 2014, the new unit will house 24 new private rooms dedicated exclusively to the post-operative care of patients who have undergone orthopedic surgeries. It will offer the very latest in specialized inpatient services, including the most current technologies and patient amenities. The new space has been carefully designed to make the first hours and days of recovery following surgery as productive and comfortable as possible.

"We've always provided great care for our orthopedic patients *continued >*



PATIENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Pre-Surgery Joint Replacement Education

Our team of experts provide a thoughtful educational program to teach what to expect before and after hip or knee replacement surgery. This course is designed to increase a patient's comfort level with the procedure.

Start Strong, Stay Strong – For Total Joint Replacement

For those who like to take a proactive approach to life, this program works to physically prepare patients for total joint replacement prior to the operation and enables a more aggressive and rapid rehabilitation after surgery.

Aquatic Therapy

Aquatic Therapy is the great way to begin to gain strength, endurance and coordination. It decreases weight bearing on joints, facilitates mobility, enhances muscle strengthening, and increases circulation in the arms, legs and trunk.

*For information about these programs and others, call **610.738.2300** or visit **ChesterCountyHospital.org/Synapse**.*

getting you back... *continued*

of all ages. But the demographics in our community are such that the number of orthopedic patients in the area will be growing exponentially over the next 10 years as the population matures. Combine aging with a generation that is more active than those before them will lead to a lot of worn out joints and a significant increase in the need for orthopedic care," says Chet Simmons, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon.

"We keep growing our orthopedic program so we can continue to provide local access to the level of care our community needs and deserves. We are bringing in new

FULL CONTINUUM OF CARE



Photos by Rick Davis



doctors and expanding our capabilities. And the new unit will allow us to offer the highest level of care and patient comfort for a rapid recovery and rehabilitation. This is an exciting time for us here at Chester County and for our community."

The orthopedic program at The Chester County Hospital offers a full range of orthopedic services that supports each patient from diagnosis through recovery. The program's team of orthopedic surgeons represents a wide variety of expertise – with sub-specialties in spine, shoulder, hip, knee, foot and ankle surgeries – including the latest minimally-invasive and least traumatic surgical techniques that allow faster healing and recovery.

"We want our patients to feel confident they are getting the latest and greatest care available, especially those looking into joint replacement surgery," says Dr. Simmons. "It's important for people to know we are using state-of-the-art techniques and tools to replace joints, with minimal trauma and disruption to soft tissue. For example, we now perform what is called 'quadriceps sparing knee replacement,' where the quadriceps muscle is not cut during the operation, sparing muscles and tendons that historically have been cut during standard total knee replacement surgery."

The full continuum of care for joint replacement patients also includes extensive patient education. "We have written materials and all our joint replacement patients attend an educational class taught by physical therapists, nurses and discharge planners," explains John Gose, Director of Physical Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine. "Patients learn about all facets of their recovery before surgery so they feel a lot more comfortable about the unknowns. Their questions are answered, and they know upfront what the process is going to be from the time they have surgery until they are discharged and afterward."

Patients on the new unit will experience firsthand the focused attention and care The Chester County Hospital has put into making sure every base is covered for patients and staff. According to Cathy Weidman, RN, BSN, MPA, CNML, Director of Medical/Surgical Services, plans for the unit incorporated input from staff to create an efficient, comforting



space where advanced orthopedic care is combined with an environment that has the community feel and caring atmosphere patients have come to expect from the Hospital.



"The whole floor is designed with patient and staff needs in mind. Patient rooms are larger, comfortable and very functional," Weidman says. "There's plenty of extra space for the equipment that may be necessary... like walkers, wheelchairs and so forth... with more room for our nurses and physical therapists to do their jobs in and around the

room as they care for patients. All rooms and

bathrooms are private, and accommodations have been included for visitors and family members who want to support the patient in recovering."

Rehabilitation is a crucial aspect of recovery for orthopedic surgery patients and begins as soon as possible following surgery. On the new unit, most physical therapy will take place in the specially equipped patient rooms. However, the unit will include a modern rehabilitation gym that features additional tools like a car simulator to help patients return to full function faster. Outpatient rehabilitation is also part of the journey and available through the orthopedic program at several locations in the community.

Pain management is another key element of recovery for orthopedic surgery patients. Fear of pain can sometimes keep people from considering surgeries that could greatly enhance their life. "One of the biggest advances in orthopedic surgeries over the last few years is how we manage pain," Dr. Simmons explains. "We have new medication regimens that attack pain from different angles and help to control it more effectively, which makes it possible for patients to rehab faster."



There are few things in life that can interfere with everyday activities quite as markedly as painful bone and joint-related issues. And there are few things that can improve quality of life as significantly for people suffering with such conditions as the services offered by a top-notch orthopedic program, which begins with pre-surgical education and continues through surgical and then post-operative care and physical rehabilitation.

By Beth Eburn

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New Robotics Technology Could Open a World of Possibilities in Minimally Invasive Surgery

Most advances in surgery are evolutions, not revolutions. They occur as small changes and refinements in how operations are performed rather than dramatic transformations that leave the old way behind.

In the field of general surgery, the introduction of laparoscopy was a revolution. The first operations using this novel “keyhole” technique sparked an explosion of innovations that shaped the current era of minimally invasive abdominal surgery. Compared with traditional “open” operations, laparoscopic surgery offers patients the benefits of less pain and scarring and a shorter hospitalization and recovery period.

Surgeons continue to seek ways to further minimize the impact of surgery without compromising safety or effectiveness, but inherent limitations of conventional laparoscopy have thwarted major leaps forward. Robotic surgery technology is helping overcome the constraints of traditional laparoscopy while opening the door to new innovations.

Introducing...

Single-Incision Robotic Surgery

The latest advancement in minimally invasive abdominal surgery is robotic-assisted surgery through a one-inch incision in the navel. In standard robotic surgery, three to five small (less than a half inch) incisions are made, where “ports” are inserted to accommodate a tiny camera and surgical instruments. In single-incision robotic surgery, the camera and instruments all enter the body through a single port ... in the bellybutton.

The specialized equipment for single-incision robotic surgery is called da Vinci Single-Site™ and is designed for use with the da Vinci Si Surgical System. Single-Site currently is FDA-approved for gallbladder removal (cholecystectomy) and for hysterectomy. This new robotic technology is now available at The Chester County Hospital for gallbladder removal, with the promise of much more to come.

no scar is
the best scar

Expanding Treatment Options and Expertise in Robotic Surgery

From its inception, the Robotic Surgery Program at The Chester County Hospital has aimed high, with a mission to stay at the front of technology while building proficiency and expertise. Offering the latest advancements in robotic surgery is a logical step in the program's growth.

"Building a strong robotics program is a top priority for the Hospital," says Mary Kehner, RN, BSN, MS, CNOR, Surgical Services Director. "We are committed to a surgery program that keeps pace with advancing technology. Robotics is the next wave in minimally invasive surgery, and we have fully embraced it."

Kehner and colleague Jim Kozub, PA-C, Robotics Program Coordinator, emphasize the Hospital's equal commitment to patient safety and the skill of its robotic surgery teams. "Our credentialing and quality control process is robust," says Kozub. "It meets or exceeds all available best-practice recommendations."



Robotics-credentialed urologic and gynecologic surgeons have been performing multiport robotic surgeries on the Hospital's da Vinci Si Surgical System since September 2011. At the time of publication, more than 600 surgeries have been performed. In early 2013, the robotics program expanded into general surgery. To prepare for the growth, two experienced general surgeons on staff at the Hospital—Steven Fukuchi, MD, Chairman of the Department of Surgery, and Pamela Demnicki, MD (pictured above)—were credentialed to perform standard robotic procedures. Drs. Fukuchi and Demnicki then trained in the use of Single-Site technology and began performing single-incision robotic gallbladder removals. Plans are in place for gynecologic surgeons and teams to train, then perform single-incision robotics-assisted hysterectomies.



robotics program highlights

- > 14 robotics-credentialed surgeons
[7 Gynecologists, 5 Urologists, 2 General Surgeons]
- > 621 total cases*
- > 34 single-site cholecystectomy cases**

* September 2011 through July 2013 • ** May through July 2013

Benefits for Patients

Single-incision robotic surgery offers benefits to patients, and since cholecystectomy is a common operation, the new Single-Site option has the potential to impact many people. In 2012, 406 laparoscopic cholecystectomies were performed at The Chester County Hospital.

"For patients who need their gallbladder removed, the big news is that the entire operation can be done through a one-inch incision that is hidden in the folds of the bellybutton," says Dr. Fukuchi. "In most cases, it's hard to spot the scar afterward."

"With only one incision, there also is the potential for less pain, less blood loss, and an easier recovery," adds Dr. Demnicki. She says that the bellybutton is a great access point because it is an area where there is no muscle and few blood vessels and nerves.

Most gallbladder surgery is done on an elective basis, meaning that patients are not acutely ill or in the hospital when the decision is made to have surgery. *continued >*

no scar is the best scar. . . *continued*

According to Drs. Demnicki and Fukuchi, any patient who is a candidate for elective laparoscopic gallbladder removal is considered a candidate for a robotic procedure.

Since the two surgeons began doing robotic procedures earlier this year, they are increasingly doing gallbladder removals robotically—most recently using the single-incision approach. The procedure usually takes about an hour to complete, no longer than a standard laparoscopic cholecystectomy, after which patients stay overnight in the Hospital for discharge the next day. A week later, patients are seen in the office for follow up. The surgeon checks the incision and makes sure there are no problems.

“Basically that’s it—one post-op office visit is usually all patients need,” says Dr. Demnicki.

Return to normal activities varies, but a week after the operation most people can go back to work and resume light exercise.

“We have a lot of healthy people in Chester County who want to get back to the gym and their Zumba classes,” says Dr. Demnicki. She usually advises eager exercisers to wait 4 to 6 weeks before doing any vigorous abdominal work.

“Going home with one little Band-Aid can sometimes fool patients. I have to remind them their body is still recovering from major surgery, and that they can go back to their Zumba classes soon—just not yet.”

Ingrid Shears

of Unionville was living with upper abdominal pain and discomfort for months. The ongoing ache overshadowed so many enjoyable aspects of her active lifestyle – golf, exercise, dinner with friends. A CT scan re-

vealed that her gallbladder was the source of her discomfort. After research and friendly recommendations, Ingrid met general surgeon Dr. Pamela Demnicki, who offered a much-needed solution. Through a single-incision in the bellybutton using advanced da Vinci Si Surgical System technology, Dr. Demnicki removed Ingrid’s gallbladder. Today, the single small scar from her May surgery has all but disappeared, but more importantly Ingrid is enjoying life free from pain once again. To read Ingrid’s full story and to see her video testimonial, go to www.chestercountyhospital.org/synapse.



TESTIMONIAL

Advantages for Surgeons

For surgeons who specialize in laparoscopic procedures and wish to offer the least invasive option, the technology and equipment designed for single-incision robotic surgery overcame many of the challenges of a standard laparoscopic approach.

“With conventional laparoscopic surgery, all movements are counterintuitive,” says Dr. Demnicki. “So, to move an instrument left, I move my hand right. To move an instrument up, I move my hand down.”

Single-incision procedures add a layer of complexity. One problem is that conventional instruments are rigid and straight, and when they are inserted at the navel, they cross each other inside the body.

"In non-robotic single-incision laparoscopic procedures, not only were the movements counterintuitive—up is down, left is right—but visually the instrument the surgeon sees on the left in the monitor is actually the instrument in the surgeon's right hand," explains Dr. Demnicki. "These challenges prevented single-incision laparoscopic procedures from being widely used in the past." The robot eliminates this problem and restores normal eye-hand control for the surgeon.



Credentialing and Quality Control

Pillars of a Strong Robotic Surgery Program

Credentialing refers to the process used to qualify surgeons to perform robotic surgery. Only experienced laparoscopic surgeons are considered for robotics credentialing at The Chester County Hospital. The process involves offsite visits to observe experienced robotic surgeons, simulator drills to hone skills, training in a specialized lab, and proctored cases.

The Hospital also requires surgeon and team training in all new robotic technology, such as Single-Site. As a further preparatory step, robotics teams do a dry run together before going live. To keep surprises to a minimum, the entire team meets in the operating room the day before a real case to review all the instruments and steps in a new procedure.

For quality control, extensive data is collected for each robotic surgery case and then reviewed at monthly meetings of the Hospital's Robotics Quality Committee. The committee tracks such data as the time to complete a case and any unusual events or complications.

The single-incision robotic instruments also are designed to avoid colliding with one another outside the body—another problem that occurs with standard laparoscopic instruments. From his experience using the new technology, Dr. Fukuchi believes the improved maneuverability of the robotic instruments combined with the magnified, high-definition 3D view of the surgical area will allow for greater precision and safety in performing intra-abdominal procedures.

"To be worthwhile, new technology needs to be better for the patient than what we're currently using," says Dr. Fukuchi. "With the robotic system, I can see details of the anatomy I've never seen before. The view and the control I have with the surgical instruments are far superior to what I can see and accomplish with standard laparoscopy."

Breakthrough Technology

Single-incision traditional laparoscopic surgery is not new. It can be done using conventional methods, but the technique is challenging and not widely practiced. Robotics technology solves many technical difficulties and opens up the possibility of offering less invasive treatment to more patients who are facing abdominal surgery.

"Single-incision robotic surgery may not be a giant leap forward in gallbladder surgery, but it represents a major evolutionary step in the surgical treatment of disease of abdominal organs," says Jim Kozub, who is a physician assistant with a long history in the field of laparoscopic surgery.

"I was around when the idea of using a laparoscope to take out a gallbladder was considered crazy," says Kozub. "But because surgeons began doing that simple operation, instruments and techniques evolved that now allow us to do virtually anything laparoscopically, including taking out sections of diseased colon, spleens, kidneys and everything else. We fully expect this to happen with single-incision robotic surgery, and we plan to be ready as the technology and procedures evolve."

*By Debra Dreger
Photos By Rick Davis*

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www.chestercountyhospital.org/synapse

ACTIVE STAFF

Amy Akins, MD

Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Akins graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and completed an internship and residency at Rhode Island Hospital. Dr. Akins is Board Certified in Pediatrics and has joined CHOP Care Network West Chester.



Gary Freedman, MD

Department of Radiology, Section of Radiation Oncology. Dr. Freedman graduated from Temple University School of Medicine, completed an internship at Abington Memorial Hospital and a residency at Fox Chase Cancer Center. Dr. Freedman is Board Certified in Radiation Oncology and is part of the Penn Radiation Oncology service at The Chester County Hospital.

Pankaj Garg, MD

Department of Surgery, Section of Anesthesiology (Pain Management). Dr. Garg graduated from Dayanand Medical College and Hospital in India. He completed an internship at Jersey Shore Medical Center and a residency and fellowship at Shore Memorial Hospital in New York. Dr. Garg is Board Certified in Pain Medicine and has an office in West Chester.



Cristan Arena, MD

Department of Surgery, Section of Ophthalmology. Dr. Arena graduated from the University of Maryland School of Medicine, completed an internship at Reading Hospital and Medical Center, a residency at Temple University Hospital and a fellowship at the University of South Florida. Dr. Arena is Board Certified in Ophthalmology and has joined Chester County Eye Care Associates.



Ashish Chawla, MD

Department of Medicine, Section of Gastroenterology. Dr. Chawla graduated from the University of Kansas Medical School, completed an internship and residency at Massachusetts General Hospital and a fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Chawla is Board Certified in Gastroenterology and has joined West Chester Gastrointestinal Group.



Timothy Chen, DPM

Department of Surgery, Section of Podiatry. Dr. Chen graduated from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine and completed a residency at Frankford Hospital. Dr. Chen is Board Certified in Podiatric Surgery and his practice, Center for Foot and Ankle Surgery, has offices in Exton and West Grove.



Elizabeth Barak, MD

Department of Radiology. Dr. Barak graduated from Jefferson Medical College, completed an internship at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, a residency at Tufts Medical Center in Massachusetts and a fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Barak is Board Certified in Radiology and is part of the Penn Radiology service at The Chester County Hospital.

Jamie Bastek, MD

Department of OB/GYN, Section of Maternal Fetal Medicine. Dr. Bastek graduated from Georgetown University School of Medicine, and completed an internship, residency and fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Bastek has joined Maternal Fetal Medicine Services of the University of Pennsylvania.

Allison Britt Kimmins, MD

Department of Medicine, Section of Dermatology. Dr. Britt Kimmins graduated from Jefferson Medical College, completed an internship at Lankenau Hospital and a residency at Thomas Jefferson University. Dr. Britt Kimmins is Board Certified in Dermatology and has a practice named Chadds Ford Dermatology.

Gang Cheng, MD

Department of Radiology. Dr. Cheng graduated from Shanghai Medical University in China, completed an internship at North Shore Medical Center and a residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Cheng is Board Certified in Nuclear Medicine and is part of the Penn Radiology service at The Chester County Hospital.

Amy Little, DO

Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Little graduated from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed an internship and residency at A. I. DuPont Hospital for Children. Dr. Little is Board Certified in Pediatrics and has joined Advocate Broomall Pediatric Associates.



Arthur Martella, MD

Department of Surgery, Section of Cardiac Surgery. Dr. Martella graduated from Jefferson Medical College, completed an internship and residency at Montefiore Medical Center/Einstein College of Medicine in New York and a fellowship at Rochester General Hospital. Dr. Martella is Board Certified in Thoracic and Cardiac Surgery.

Rajalla Prewitt, MD

Department of Medicine, Section of Telepsychiatry. Dr. Prewitt graduated from Ohio State University College of Medicine and completed a residency and fellowship at the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Prewitt is Board Certified in Psychiatry and is in practice with Center for Family Guidance, PC.

AFFILIATE STAFF



Paul Eberts, MD

Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Eberts graduated from Jefferson Medical College and completed a residency at Thomas Jefferson University. Dr. Eberts is Board Certified in Family Medicine and has joined Lincoln Medical Associates in West Chester, which is a practice affiliated with The Chester County Hospital and Health System.



Catherine Plzak, MD

Department of Surgery, Section of General Surgery. Dr. Plzak graduated from Jefferson Medical College, completed an internship at Bryn Mawr Hospital and a residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Dr. Plzak is Board Certified in General Surgery and has joined the Women's Specialty Center, which is a practice affiliated with The Chester County Hospital and Health System.

Christopher Richards, MD

Department of Medicine, Section of Telepsychiatry. Dr. Richards graduated from Windsor University in the West Indies and completed a residency and fellowship at Harlem Hospital Center. Dr. Richards is Board Certified in Psychiatry and is in practice with Center for Family Guidance, PC.

Christine Ferrell, DDS

Department of Surgery, Section of Dentistry. Dr. Ferrell graduated from the University of Maryland Dental School where she also completed her residency. Dr. Ferrell has joined Glenn A. Burkland, DMD in his West Chester orthodontics practice.

Michael Johnson, MD

Department of Surgery, Section of General Surgery. Dr. Johnson graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School and completed an internship and residency at Graduate Hospital. Dr. Johnson has an office in Delaware.

Charles Simone, MD

Department of Radiology, Section of Radiation Oncology. Dr. Simone graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, completed an internship at Graduate Hospital and a residency at the National Cancer Institute in Washington, DC. Dr. Simone is Board Certified in Radiation Oncology and is part of the Penn Radiation Oncology service at The Chester County Hospital.

Michael Stefan, MD

Department of Surgery, Section of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Dr. Stefan graduated from the Medical College of Pennsylvania, completed a residency at Pennsylvania Hospital and a fellowship at the University of Florida College of Medicine and Georgetown University Medical Center. Dr. Stefan is Board Certified in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and has an office in Exton.

Joan McFadden, MD

Department of Family Medicine. Dr. McFadden graduated from University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and completed a residency at the University of Washington School of Medicine. Dr. McFadden is Board Certified in Family Medicine and has joined Christine Meyer, MD in her Exton practice.

Madeline Wood, MD

Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Wood graduated from Jefferson Medical College and completed an internship and residency at Wilmington Hospital. Dr. Wood is Board Certified in Family Medicine and has joined Myers, Squire and Limpert Family Practice in West Chester.



Marissa Stridiron, MD

Department of Medicine, Section of Telepsychiatry. Dr. Stridiron graduated from Albert Einstein College of Medicine and completed a residency at Montefiore Medical Center in New York. Dr. Stridiron is Board Certified in Psychiatry and is in practice with Center for Family Guidance, PC.

▶▶ TO FIND A DOCTOR, CALL
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These physicians hold Medical Staff privileges at The Chester County Hospital but they are not necessarily employees of The Chester County Hospital and Health System.

PREVENTION *is* FREE

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L. Peter Soraruf, MD
Michael Welsh, DO
Lindsay Calio, PA-C

610.444.2002

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Stacey Kuhns, MD
Lisa Parviskhan, DO
Rashna Staid, MD

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Lincoln Internal Medicine



Andrew Sitkoff, DO
Paul Eberts, MD
Tina Mc Groarty, CRNP

610.241.3050

839 Lincoln Avenue
Suite A
West Chester, PA

LincolnMed.com

Kennett Primary Care



Both physicians and staff are fluent in Spanish.

Pedro Solanet, MD
Sandra Mancilla, MD

610.444.8084

830 W. Cypress Street
Kennett Square, PA

KennettPrimaryCare.com

Southern Chester County Family Practice Associates



John Dagher, MD
Richard Haug, MD
James Knox, MD
David Rooney, MD
Judith Gawlikowski, CRNP

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OPEN VISITATION

The Chester County Hospital embraces the concept of family-centered care by encouraging family support and visitation in an environment of health and safety. Our patients' wellbeing is our primary concern, and we recognize the significant impact rest has on the healing process.

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE NOW HAVE OPEN VISITATION.

This means visitors are welcome **24 hours a day** providing patients, their families and loved ones with the ability to develop flexible visitation plans. We ask that you review these guidelines to ensure the best possible care for our patients during their stay. Together, we will continue to provide the compassionate and quality care each patient deserves.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- The number of visitors is dependent on the needs and comfort of the patient as well as the needs and comfort of the second patient in a semi-private room. Please respect the request of the unit nursing staff if they occasionally ask you to limit the numbers of visitors or times of visitation to allow patients to rest and recuperate.
- Children under the age of 14 are welcome to visit when accompanied by and under the supervision of an adult at all times.
- We will recognize special circumstances on a case-by-case basis, and these should be discussed with the patient's Nurse, Clinical Manager or Nursing Supervisor.
- Patients may choose one visitor, who is 18 years or older, to stay overnight. In semi-private rooms, the privacy of the second patient will be considered. Overnight visitors must be modestly attired with their Hospital visitor badge displayed in plain sight at all times. Visitors must bring their own personal care items and will have access to the patient's bathroom in private rooms only.
- All doors into the building are secured at 8:00 PM. After this time, please enter and exit through the main entrance only. A Hospital-issued visitor badge may be obtained by a Hospital Security Officer.
- Visitors with cold symptoms or gastrointestinal flu symptoms are encouraged to stay home.
- Visitors are reminded to wash their hands before and after patient contact, using the restroom, and handling food.
- Specialty areas may have more restrictive visiting hours.
- Nursing staff have the ability to restrict visitation if necessary for the clinical care or adequate rest of the patient.



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