

# care.together

Atlantic General Hospital & Atlantic General Health System

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## From the President

Atlantic General Hospital's "2020 Vision" compels us to invest our resources in our community to create the Right Care, with the Right People, in the Right Place, engaging the Right Partners, while building and sustaining the Right Hospital to lead the way toward a healthy and vibrant community.

In our previous issues of care, together, I discussed how our focus on the principle of Right Care will affect our future, and how recruiting, training and retaining the Right People makes the Right Care possible.

Where care is delivered – and where it is received – often has a significant impact on the quality of the results of that care. Delivering care in the Right Place means that it is convenient and accessible to the people who are receiving the care. The Right Place also means that the needed care providers are distributed conveniently throughout the community.

As we are learning, the Right Place isn't necessarily where we typically think of care being delivered. For example, the Emergency

Room is not necessarily the right place to receive care for a sinus infection or your child's ear ache.

The ER is much more costly, it is often less convenient, and patients – particularly children – are less familiar with the surroundings, so it can be scary. But, if it's a Saturday evening, your physician's office is not open to allow you to receive care in the right place. What do you do? This is an important issue for us to address for our community.

What are we doing about this at Atlantic General? We have changed the structure of our Atlantic Health Center on the hospital's campus. This location now includes Atlantic ImmediCare to address walk-in care needs for adults and kids. We have expanded the hours to stay open later during the week, and we are open on Saturdays and Sundays.

Additionally, we have changed how the providers deliver care, so patients to Atlantic ImmediCare at the Atlantic Health Center will no longer receive a separate bill for a physician visit and a clinic charge for walk-in care services. This makes care more convenient, and more cost-effective.

As you read this issue of care.together, you'll see the continuing expansion of physician specialists we are recruiting to practice here in our community. We are expanding our capabilities in women's health, chronic pain management, dermatology, and other needed specialties.

You'll read about the expanded service offering within these practices, particularly in dermatology. We are now able to accommodate nearly all



dermatology procedures here in our community. This is a huge improvement. We have also expanded cancer care services on our campus, moving them to a more convenient location in the James G. Barrett medical office building so patient treatment and physician visits occur all in the same location.

Telemedicine technology has been a great addition to the care delivery system at AGH, making the Right Place for specialty care more convenient. We are providing behavioral health services to children and adolescents from the Kennedy Krieger Institute via telemedicine in our Atlantic Health Center. We are also providing adult mental health/behavioral health services in the Atlantic Health Center in collaboration with the Worcester County Health Department, and through telemedicine in partnership with Sheppard Pratt Health System in Baltimore.

The Right Place may be in your own home. Atlantic General has obtained grants to continue to expand our telemedicine

*Pres, continued on p11*



# Back in the Swing of Things

Frank and Dee Creamer pick up where they left off after knee replacement surgeries



Joint surgery is a decision not to be taken lightly, and when you are faced with the need for it, you require the support of friends and family.

We all know, even when we're healthy, it is most comfortable to be in your element – in your own community, surrounded by those you know and see regularly, and loved ones of course.

So when Frank and Dee

Creamer of Ocean Pines both came to the realization that it was time for a knee replacement, they did their research and opted to stay local, choosing the Center for Joint Surgery at Atlantic General Hospital. This allowed them to recover and do the post-op rehab in their hometown.

## Facing the pain

Frank and Dee lead an active life, so when the pain began

to set in and progressively got worse, they both made the tough but wise decision to turn to the Center for Joint Surgery. For Frank, pain in his knee began just over a decade ago. As it became harder to do the activities he's so used to doing – participating in racquet sports for one – he said he was surely not ready to switch to a sedentary lifestyle and made the choice to discuss options with his orthopedic provider. For Dee, the pain was attributed to severe arthritis in the knee, and she needed some attention to get back to the activities she loves.

## Feeling limited

Frank, a self-professed “racquet junky” who plays tennis, platform tennis, ping-pong and pickleball, said the limitations from knee pain became unacceptable. He was not able to move freely and comfortably on the courts, and walking even became very difficult. Dee, active in Zumba and aerobics, was finding those beloved activities hard to bear.

“I began to decline when friends invited me to go

*KNEE, continued on p8*



## Healthy Outcomes & Population Education

Transforming Communities with Education and Wellness Programs

by Donna Nordstrom, RN, BSN, MS  
Population Health Manager

Spring is a season of hope! April has brought blooming flowers, warmer weather and – near and dear to healthcare providers everywhere – community health awareness efforts.

During National Public Health Week and on World Health Day in early April, organizations across the nation took time to formally recognize the importance of community wellness, health promotion, and education.

However, at Atlantic General Hospital, we recognize the importance of community health and education every single day.

Population health is a focus on the health and wellness of an entire population across the life span, for all ages, not just individual medical needs at a specific point

in time.

Efforts involve:

- Promoting health literacy, wellness, and preventative care for an entire community
- Improving health care efficiency and cost effectiveness
- Improving access to quality and safe care
- Developing a coordinated care system and connecting community resources
- Improving patient and caregiver engagement

Population health is transforming how we practice healthcare; it's community care. At Atlantic General Hospital, we are excited to offer innovative services to support our growing

community.

Our Population Health Department contributes significantly to Atlantic

*Did you know?? According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, personal behaviors account for 40 percent of the total factors that drive our health.*

General's mission "to create a coordinated care delivery system that will provide access to quality care, personalized service, and education to improve individual and community health."

The department consists of the Healthy Happenings Community Education Program and the Integrated Health Literacy Program, which strive to meet the health needs of the community by promoting health

and wellness through education.

Healthy Happenings works continuously to bring a variety of educational resources to civic and community organizations. We offer evidence-based workshops including fall prevention and chronic disease self-management classes. We connect audiences with guest speakers, as part of our Speaker's Bureau, who present a variety of health and safety-related topics. We also schedule health fairs and wellness events throughout the community.

The Integrated Health Literacy Program (IHLP), a grassroots initiative, is the only program of its kind in the nation.

Atlantic General Hospital, in partnership with Worcester County Public Schools and the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy at the University of Maryland

College Park School of Public Health, brings health literacy skills to school age children.

The program has expanded greatly since the initial pilot study in early 2014, now serving more than 2,400 students throughout the school district. Health literacy concepts have been integrated into existing core classes (math, reading, science) for all grades 1 – 5 and in a

grade 6 pilot program.

The 6th grade pilot offers lessons on topics such as nutrition and media, internet safety, injury prevention and substance abuse.

Although education is only one tool to improve population health, it has a tremendous impact. Factors that influence health not only include traditional medical care but also education,

socioeconomics, genetics, and personal behaviors.

Did you know, according to the Journal of the American Medical Association, personal behaviors account for 40 percent of the total factors that drive our health?

Did you know only 12 percent of adults in the United States have proficient health literacy skills?

Health literacy and personal behaviors are factors we can affect in regards to healthy population outcomes. This can be life-changing!

Health care is surpassing the boundaries of clinical hospital-based care and bringing into focus the incredible benefits of community-based health education initiatives. Population health brings H.O.P.E.!

## From AGH Healthy Happenings

If you or someone you love is living with a chronic disease, it is important to understand how to manage and successfully cope with this condition.

Education is key. We are committed to providing care and education to patients with complex health issues and their families to help them effectively manage their conditions so they can achieve good quality of life.

### Chronic Disease Self-Management

Learn ways to control your disease and to make sure you are not doing anything to cause your condition to worsen. Learn how to manage your daily routine and increase your confidence during your treatment. This workshop also teaches you how to effectively discuss your condition with family, friends, and healthcare providers

### Chronic Pain Self-Management

Whatever condition you have, you can

learn how to live a healthy, productive life. You can join in on classes with individuals just like you and learn lessons proven to help improve confidence. Learn exercises to help manage pain, control your medication use, and techniques to help you relax.

### Diabetes Self-Management

A free 6-week workshop with self-management techniques to help you plan healthier menus and prevent low blood sugar levels. You will learn the various exercise and fitness routines to help you manage your diabetes. You can come together with others who have diabetes in a non-threatening and supportive environment that helps provide you with solutions to your problems.

### Living Well: Cancer Thriving and Surviving

This workshop teaches individuals in recovery, those dealing with cancer treatment, and caregivers

the various ways to live and thrive. You'll learn how to manage your sleep and fatigue, enhance the mind-body connection, deal with your various emotions, regain fitness levels during and after the treatment, manage pain and healthy eating, and improve decision-making.

### Stepping On: Falls Prevention

A workshop designed to help you step outside of your home with confidence. You can enter a comfortable setting with other individuals your own age, learning the various fall hazards and the best way to reduce the risk of falls. You work closely with the various specialists and share which methods have worked for you.

These ongoing workshops are free to the public. To learn more about these workshops or other Healthy Happenings programs, call 410-641-9268 or visit [www.atlanticgeneral.org](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org).



# SHIFTING PARADIGMS

## Atlantic General Hospital receives patient safety innovation award for our work in reducing hospitalizations

by Charles Gizara, MS, BSN, RN, CCM  
Director Clinical Integration

Over the past ten years, healthcare providers and organizations throughout the Mid-Atlantic region have submitted their innovative quality improvement programs to the Maryland Patient Safety Center.

For the third year in a row, Atlantic General Hospital has been recognized as one of the top ten, from nearly 80 submissions.

This year, Atlantic General was recognized for pioneering programs that have improved patient outcomes, thereby drastically reducing preventable hospital readmissions. We are currently ranked No. 4 in the state of Maryland for readmission prevention, with a rate of 9.93 percent (the state average is 12.85 percent). A readmission is usually defined as a patient's being hospitalized again within 30 days of an initial hospital stay.

The profound success of our accomplishments can only be attributed to the commitment and collaboration of our associates and medical staff within the hospital and community settings.

Our efforts began in 2014

with the establishment of the Potentially Avoidable Utilization (PAU) team, which focuses on integrated care coordination to prevent avoidable hospital readmissions while improving patient outcomes across the continuum of care.

The PAU team meets each month to review our performance compared to state of Maryland outcomes data and evaluate opportunities to improve the health of our community through collaboration with health care professionals outside the traditional hospital setting.

Members include internal AGH clinical staff and physicians as well as community members from the Worcester County Health Department and local home health agencies and skilled nursing facilities.

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Examples of innovative programs that have contributed to our success include:

**Condition R – The early identification of a potential readmission.** This program provides immediate intervention by a registered nurse case manager for any patient in the Emergency Room who has had a previous

admission within the last 30 days.

The case manager meets with the patient and family to develop a personalized plan of care to treat underlying chronic conditions that may have led to the ER visit and get them on the path to better health.

**Telehealth Collaboration with Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.** A telemedicine program allows physician consultations to be performed for patients who have transferred from AGH to Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center if there is a change in their medical condition.

An AGH provider will perform an exam by video with assistance from the facility's clinical staff in the privacy of the patient's room and recommend interventions to prevent readmission when possible.

Since the program's implementation, readmissions of patients previously discharged to the rehabilitation center have been reduced by 70 percent.

**AGHRx RediScripts Pharmacy Concierge Program.** The RediScripts Concierge Program

provides ongoing review of a patient's medications throughout an inpatient stay, bedside delivery and personalized education of medications prior to discharge, and follow-up phone calls to answer any medication questions. More than 80 percent of inpatients opt in to take advantage of the RediScripts Concierge Program.

**Transitions in Care Program – A dedicated registered nurse care coordinator works with patients during their transition from inpatient to community setting (home, rehabilitation, etc.).** The care coordinator works with the patient, primary care provider and community liaisons for a period of 31 days and serves as the patient advocate.

If services are required beyond this time, the patient may be referred to our Patient Centered Medical Home. Less than eight percent of Transition in Care patients are readmitted to the hospital setting.

It is through innovative leadership and commitment to improving the health of our community that Atlantic General Hospital has been able to succeed in reducing avoidable readmissions.

## Additional Efforts

More recent efforts to reduce preventable hospital stays include the expansion of outpatient services to support community members with chronic healthcare conditions.

These programs are all available at the Atlantic Health Center, located on Atlantic General's campus.

### Outpatient Pulmonary Clinic

- Chronic pulmonary disease and respiratory medication education
- Treatment planning with patient and specialists
- Diagnostic screening

### Dietary Clinic

Medical nutrition therapy to address:

- Obesity
- Malnutrition
- Gastrointestinal/digestive disorders
- Cardiovascular disease

### Diabetes Outpatient Education Program

- Diabetes self-management education
- Meal planning
- Care plans

### Atlantic General Pain Center

- Advanced neuromodulation, using electrical impulses at key points in the neck and spine to treat pain.
- Spinal cord stimulators
- Pain pumps for intra-spinal drug delivery

Patients or healthcare providers may call (410) 641-3340 to learn more or provide a referral for an appointment.

### Future Effort: Chronic Care Management Program

Medicare recipients with two or more chronic conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure, will be eligible to receive the services of a dedicated registered nurse case manager who will assist patients in managing their chronic conditions to improve their overall quality of life. This program will be available to patients of Atlantic General Health System. More information regarding this program will be coming very soon!

*KNEE, continued from p3*

walk the boardwalk or around the lake,” added Dee. Then, eventually, trips to the grocery and shopping were painful and difficult.

### **Taking Action**

Frank and Dee both shared that their past positive experiences with Atlantic General Hospital and Health System are what ultimately led them to have their knee surgeries performed there as well. Both have had routine healthcare through the hospital for several years, and always felt confident in the staff and well cared for. Frank added that his surgeon, Dr. Philip Spinuzza, first helped him try alternative solutions, “which were only Band-Aids to a more serious problem.”

“I asked two questions that made me realize Dr. Spinuzza was the surgeon for me,” Frank said. “First, I asked, ‘is it time to have this joint replacement surgery?’ His answer, ‘you will come to me and tell me it’s time.’ Second, I asked if I should get another opinion on the right course of treatment. Dr. Spinuzza answered that he wouldn’t let his ego get in the way of him doing what was best for the patient.”

Dee felt just as strongly as Frank that her surgeon for a partial knee replacement, Dr. Eric Bontempo, who practices with Dr. Spinuzza, was the right choice. The support and guidance of their physicians at Atlantic

Orthopaedics sealed the deal, and the Center for Joint Surgery was the right place for them at the right time.

### **Being cared for by the AGH care.givers**

Frank has nothing but positive things to say about his surgery experience back in February 2014, from the pre-surgery class to post-surgery and recovery; he felt well cared for and well informed about the whole process. The class gave insight into how the procedure would go and answered all of Frank’s questions about it, leaving him feeling well informed and at ease.

On the day of surgery, the clinical staff were ready and willing to help in any way necessary. The process from start to finish went smoothly and left Frank and Dee feeling confident in their choice.

Frank had his surgery first, and then Dee had hers in November 2015, after Frank had healed and returned to his active lifestyle. Dee also shared that the nurses on the night shift were so attentive and kind, always checking in to be sure their patients were cared for.

### **Back on the court & dance floor**

Frank says it best: “My quality of life has drastically improved! I now have been able to resume my previous lifestyle and more. I wish I had made the decision to have the surgery sooner, and would not even blink an eye to have the other knee done by Atlantic Orthopaedics if the time

came to do so.”

As for Dee, she is getting the spring back in her step as well. With her surgery being a bit more recent, she is now experiencing pain free walks and is looking forward to aerobics in spring.

### **Receiving the gift of activity again**

Prior to surgery, pain drastically reduced Frank’s ability to participate in his normal sports activities.

Completely healed, he has now resumed his beloved racquet sports, playing at a level he once thought might never be possible again. This year he played pickleball in the "National Senior Games" in Minnesota, finishing 9th in the country! On top of that he has signed up for the "Beach to Bay" bicycle ride in April with his bike club, and he can now play golf and walk the course if the mood strikes.

Not only is Dee back to walking pain free, but she’s also taking line dancing classes. The Creamers are an active couple living fully, with the help of a positive outlook, hard work and determination, and the Center for Joint Surgery at Atlantic General Hospital.

For more information about the Center for Joint Surgery at Atlantic General Hospital, call 410-641-9189 or visit [atlanticgeneral.org/joint](http://atlanticgeneral.org/joint).



# Calendar of Events

## Hypertension Clinics

*First Monday of every month*  
Apple Discount Drugs, Berlin  
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Walgreens, Ocean Pines  
1 – 3 p.m.

*First Tuesday of every month*  
Rite-Aid, Selbyville  
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Walgreens, Clarksville  
1 – 3 p.m.

*First Wednesday of every month*  
Rite Aid, Berlin  
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Rite Aid, Ocean Pines  
1 – 3 p.m.

*Third Wednesday of every month*  
Walgreens, Bethany Beach  
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Walgreens, Selbyville  
1 – 3 p.m.

## Stroke Support Group

*Last Thursday of each month* • 2 – 3 p.m.  
Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1  
For more information, contact Dawn Denton at  
410-641-9268 or [ddenton@atlanticgeneral.org](mailto:ddenton@atlanticgeneral.org).

## Diabetes Support Group

Ocean Pines  
*First Wednesday of every month*  
7 – 8 p.m.  
Ocean Pines Library

Berlin  
*First Monday of every month*  
6 – 7 p.m.  
St. Paul's Methodist Church  
For more information, contact the Diabetes  
Outpatient Education Program at 410-641-9703.

## NAMI Lower Shore Family Support Group

*Second Tuesday of each month* • 6:30 – 8 p.m.  
Atlantic Health Center Conference Room, Berlin  
Offering shared wisdom and problem solving  
for family members of individuals with mental  
illness. Provided by the Lower Shore affiliate of the  
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). For more  
information, contact Carole Spurrier, NAMI Lower  
Shore Representative, at 410-208-4003 or  
[carolespurrier@msn.com](mailto:carolespurrier@msn.com).

## Parkinson's Disease Support Group

*Second Tuesday of each month* • 2:30 – 4 p.m.  
Ocean Pines Library  
For more information, contact Ron and Mary Leidner  
at 410-208-0525.

Want more information about upcoming events or health news that comes directly to your inbox? Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter at [www.atlanticgeneral.org](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org).

# SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY, MAY 19TH  
6:30-10:00PM

Atlantic General Hospital's  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary  
Celebration**

Hosted by CHARLES "BUDDY" & LAURA JENKINS  
"NEWPORT FARMS"

10851 Hayes Landing Road, Berlin, MD

On Thursday, May 19, 2016 the Atlantic General Hospital Foundation invites you to join us for its **23rd Anniversary Celebration** at the beautiful, waterfront property of Charles "Buddy" and Laura Jenkins from 6:30-10 p.m. at Newport Farms.

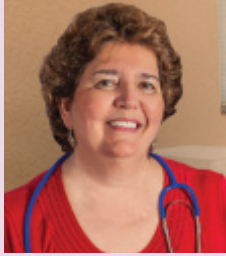
The theme for this year's event combines vintage ambiance with the excitement and allure of the Roaring Twenties era. Enjoy era-sensitive catering by LA on Location, live entertainment, "Post Prohibition" cocktails, and memorable times with other members of our giving community.

Event sponsorships are encouraged and many levels include complimentary admissions and reserved seating.

To submit a sponsorship or purchase admissions, contact Alli Justice Hudson, Event Coordinator, at the AGH Foundation Office at (410) 641-9671 or email [ajustice@atlanticgeneral.org](mailto:ajustice@atlanticgeneral.org). You may also purchase admissions online at [www.atlanticgeneral.org/tickets](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org/tickets).

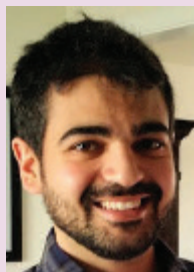
All proceeds from the event benefit the Atlantic General Hospital Foundation. AGH is a 501(c)(3) organization and all gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law.

# New Faces & Places



**Nicki Akstinas, CRNP**, recently relocated her Delaware practice to Selbyville to join Brandi Musselman, MD, at Atlantic General Women's Health. Nicki completed her nurse practitioner

studies through Harbor/UCLA Medical Center in Torrance CA, in 2005, and she brings more than 35 years of GYN nursing experience to her patients. She specializes in family planning and cervical colposcopy and biopsy. Nicki has her nurse practitioner certification through the National Certification Corporation. Fluent in Spanish, she also holds a certification from the state of California for bilingual medical terminology. Nicki continues to maintain her primary practice at Atlantic General Primary Care and Women's Health in Ocean Pines. She is now accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment at the Selbyville office, please call 302-524-5007. To schedule an appointment at the Ocean Pines office, please call 410-208-9761.



**Daniel Hakeem, PA-C**, recently joined Atlantic General Surgical Associates, located in Berlin, Maryland, to provide pre- and post-surgery consultations with surgeon Alae Zarif, MD. Daniel graduated from Johns

Hopkins University with a bachelor of arts in natural sciences before pursuing his masters of medical science at University of Maryland Eastern Shore to become a physician assistant. Prior to entering medicine, Daniel was a clinical customer service coordinator for Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he focused on improving patient satisfaction and customer service efforts. He also taught mathematics and science to middle and high school students in Maitland, Florida. To schedule an appointment with

Atlantic General Surgical Associates, please call 410-641-9568.



**Brandi Musselman, MD**, joined Atlantic General Health System in 2015 after serving as an instructor in obstetrics and gynecology and completing a fellowship in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic

Surgery at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. She obtained her medical degree at Drexel and completed her residency at Hahnemann University Hospital. Dr. Musselman is a member of the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists and American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She specializes in treating women with pelvic pain, menstrual disorders, post-menopausal bleeding and pelvic masses such as fibroids, and offers the option of office-based procedures for some treatments. Dr. Musselman is accepting new patients. Appointments can be made by calling 302-524-5007.



**Donna Nordstrom, RN, BSN, MS**, recently joined Atlantic General Hospital as Population Health Manager. A lifelong resident of the Eastern Shore, she began her nursing career

eighteen years ago with the mission to serve her community. Donna has an Associate's Degree in Nursing from Wor-Wic Community College in Salisbury, MD. In 2009, she went on to graduate Cum Laude with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Nursing. After the completion of her Bachelor's Degree, she continued her education by achieving a Master's of Science Degree in Health Service Leadership and Management from the University of Maryland

Baltimore in 2013. Her experiences in the healthcare field include long term care, medical/surgical nursing, nursing management, and education. Donna also currently holds a Maryland Secondary Education Teacher Certification, with more than five years of CNA/GNA instructor experience within Maryland's Public Schools. As Population Health Manager, she oversees the department's Integrated Health Literacy Program as well as the Healthy Happenings Community Education Program.

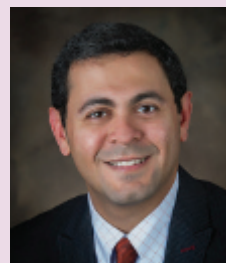


**Sherry Whitt, RN, BSN, MSHA,** joined Atlantic General Hospital in January to fill the role of Director of Medical Surgical Services. With more than 20 years of nursing and leadership experience, Sherry has an in-depth knowledge of Magnet

standards for clinical best practice and achieving excellence in hospital operations. In her new role, she oversees Atlantic General's Wound Care Center and Center for Joint Surgery as well as nutritional services, observation and inpatient medical/surgical care. Sherry attained her bachelors of science in nursing from Winston-Salem State University and her masters of science in healthcare administration from the Medical College of Virginia.



**Sonjia L. Tucker, CRNP,** recently joined Atlantic General Pain Center to provide pain intervention services alongside pain management expert Wadid Zaky, MD. Sonjia Tucker has more than a decade of experience in the nursing field. Prior to joining the staff at Atlantic General, Tucker was employed by Peninsula Regional Medical Center where she provided acute and close monitoring of heart surgery patients and patients suffering from chronic conditions. She has also supported the Worcester County Health Department in patient case management.



**Wadid Zaky, MD** Dual-certified in pain management and anesthesiology by the American Board of Anesthesiology, Dr. Wadid Zaki brings a wealth of experience to his role as head of Atlantic General Pain Center. His prior

appointments include serving as assistant professor of anesthesiology and pain medicine at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine in Roanoke, VA. He completed a fellowship in neuromodulation at King's College, London, as well as a fellowship in pain management at University of Pittsburgh. His anesthesiology residency was with Brookdale University Medical Center. For an appointment, please call 410-641-3340.

### *Pres, continued from p2*

networking capabilities, to allow "house calls" by physicians to patient homes via telemedicine. We are in the process of buying the technology to accommodate this way of receiving care from your physician. This will allow better follow-up care to those who are unable to safely travel to visit their physician, or to ensure ongoing care to those who are frail or elderly.

In addition to telemedicine home visits, the Right Place could mean improving communication with your provider from

wherever you are. Our PERKS patient portal technology, available to all patients of Atlantic General Health System physicians and inpatients of Atlantic General Hospital, allows the patient to access his or her information privately online. This is a much more convenient way for patients to inform their physician that they need a refill prescription sent to their pharmacy or to review test results.

When designing healthcare services delivery for a community, choosing the Right Place for services is a primary consideration for coordinated, patient-centered care. You should be able to

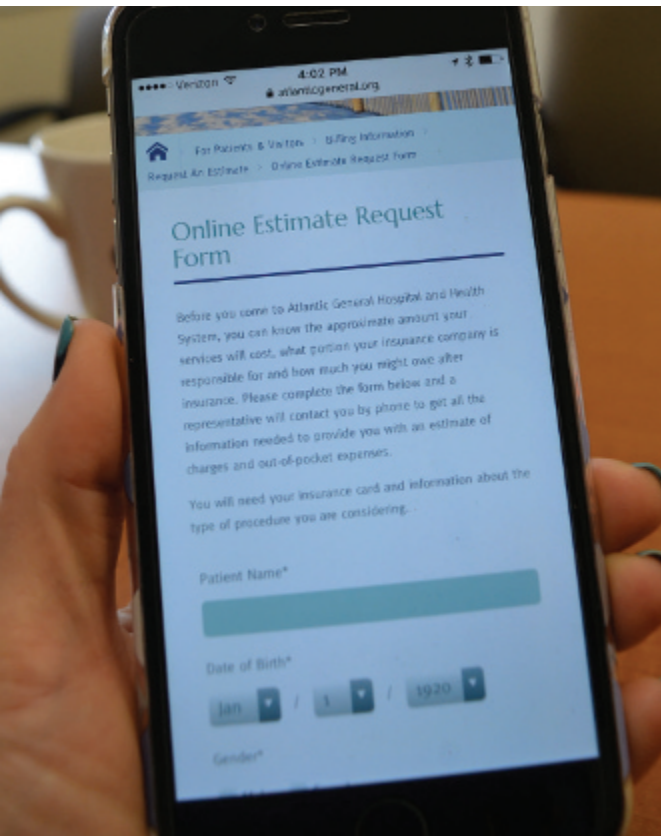
access the care you need in a convenient, safe location, even if that means the care should come to your home. People often forego receiving needed care because getting to the care provider is inconvenient, putting the patient at risk.

As our strategic plan demonstrates, the Right Place is a key to creating a quality, patient-centered care delivery system in our community. It makes it easier for us to care.together.

*Next Issue: Right Partners*



# Price transparency improves: AGH Provides Up-front Estimates for Health Care Services



our patients. The calculation takes into account the average cost for the test or procedure in question, the individual's co-pay and co-insurance responsibilities under his or her health plan and how much of the deductible has already been met.

This service is offered to patients when they schedule a procedure or diagnostic testing or when they check in for their care. Estimate requests can also be made online or via phone by individuals who are considering Atlantic General Hospital and Health System for the care their doctor has recommended.

will owe. Our new service can reduce the steps in the journey to that estimate.

We have contracted with a third party, Experian Health, for a secure electronic solution that compares patients' current insurance information with the hospital's fee structure to arrive at an estimated out-of-pocket cost.

While the estimator tool eliminates a great deal of uncertainty related to cost for patients, we want to explain that it is still an estimate, not a hard figure guaranteed to appear on the bill.

The base cost for a service is an average, and it can fluctuate somewhat based on the complexity of the patient's condition being treated.

One example is the estimate for a routine colonoscopy. While the gastroenterologist is performing the procedure, he may discover and remove suspicious tissue for testing in one patient while another patient is free of such growths and requires no further measures. The cost to the patient will be different. But, the total will come as much less of a surprise.

## by Pattie Stamm Director of Patient Financial Services

As health plan deductibles rise and the portion of the hospital bill patients are responsible for only continues to increase, the value of price transparency to individuals considering their healthcare options is also rising.

Gone are the days when most insured individuals could expect to pay – and therefore plan for – a flat co-pay for a lab test or an ER visit. Preparing financially for an elective procedure, such as a hip replacement or gall bladder surgery, can be even more difficult.

That's a key reason Atlantic General Hospital and Health System has launched a price estimator tool for

We're very excited to offer this service to our community. Being able to provide these estimates helps our patients better plan financially for the care they need. We are the first on the Eastern Shore to provide this level of price transparency to our patients and the community.

Atlantic General has published estimated pricing for the most common blood tests, imaging tests and surgeries on our website since 2011. While helpful, these pricing charts don't factor in patients' individual insurance coverage to help them determine what their actual out-of-pocket cost will be.

Healthcare consumers can find themselves bouncing back and forth between their insurance company and the healthcare provider to narrow down the range of what they

### Getting an Estimate:

Our Patient Financial Services representatives are available 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 410-629-6448 to assist with estimates. Requests can be submitted online at [atlanticgeneral.org/estimate](http://atlanticgeneral.org/estimate).



## President, National Cancer Registrars Association

Linda Corrigan, the cancer registrar for Atlantic General Hospital, has been named President of the National Cancer

Registrars Association for 2016-2017. Cancer registrars are data information specialists that capture a complete history, diagnosis, treatment, and health status for every cancer patient in the U.S. Linda joined Atlantic General Hospital in November 2013 to begin working on the cancer registry for local patients. She has led two other hospital cancer programs through their initial American College of Surgeons, Commission on Cancer accreditation process—always achieving commendation level.



## DAISY Winners, Quarter 1 & 2

One Atlantic General Hospital and Health System nurse who goes above and beyond is honored each quarter with a DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. The

award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the super-human efforts nurses perform every day.



**Katie Zidanic, RN**, first quarter's winner, received two nominations for the care she provides in the medical/surgical department; one came from a patient and another from a family member, who recognized Katie for getting her mother to smile, something

she had not seen her mother do in a long time.



**Mariya Zimenkova, RN**, from the medical/surgical department, was the quarter 2 DAISY Award winner. The family who nominated Mariya said, "She checked on my son, Taylor, several times and made sure I was ok! AGH is lucky to have such a great team player!! She

went Above & Beyond!"

## Integrated Health Literacy Program Presents at ACHI National Conference



Atlantic General's Integrated Health Literacy Program (IHLP) was invited to present its innovative

approach to population health improvement at the Association for Community Health Improvement's National Conference in March. More than 650 community health and population health professionals from across the country gathered to exchange ideas in this forum. The IHLP currently serves more than 2,400 students in Worcester County Public Schools, and its innovative model is currently being considered by other school districts in the state of Maryland. Chelsea Leonard, Health Literacy Liaison for Atlantic General Hospital (right) stands with Tamara Mills, Coordinator of Instruction for Worcester County Public Schools.

## Dedication to Excellence Award



Atlantic General's Board of Trustees recently presented the Dedication to Excellence Award to the Imaging, Pulmonology and Cancer Care departments at Atlantic General for the new Lung Cancer Screening Program. Of the more than 50 high-risk patients screened since September 2014, two received an early diagnosis of lung cancer and another is being closely monitored. The program has made great strides in early detection of lung cancer in our communities. From left, Hugh T. Cropper, member of the AGH Board Quality Committee; Maria Phillips, Director of Imaging; Peter Costantini, DO, Pulmonologist; Linda Corrigan, Cancer Registrar for the Regional Cancer Care Center; and Lou Taylor, Chair of the AGH Board of Trustees.

Do you have feedback about the care you received from Atlantic General Hospital and Health System?

## Please, tell us!

We value the opinions of our patients and families. If you have a less than satisfactory experience, please share it with us so we can improve how we provide care. If you have a positive experience we would love to share kudos with our associates, volunteers and medical staff. We strive every day to bring you the best care possible.

There are several ways you can share your opinions with us: **Fill out and return surveys you receive in the mail from NRC Picker.** This agency conducts surveys on our behalf to collect valuable information about our patients' experiences. Survey responses are confidential.

**Fill out a comment card.** These are available in every hospital department and physician office of Atlantic General Health System. Just hand the completed survey to any associate.

**Consider giving to our Grateful Patient Program.** This is a wonderful way to honor a caregiver while sustaining quality healthcare for our communities. More information can be found at [www.atlanticgeneral.org/honoracaregiver](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org/honoracaregiver).

### Send us an email.

Drop us a line at [pr@atlanticgeneral.org](mailto:pr@atlanticgeneral.org) and we will respond to your comment or question within 72 hours.

### Write or call.

Letters can be sent to:  
Atlantic General Hospital  
Patient and Family Relations  
9733 Healthway Drive  
Berlin, MD 21811  
Or, call our Patient and Family  
Services Representative at  
410-629-1500.



### VISION

To be the leader in caring for people and advancing health for the residents of and visitors to our community.

### MISSION

To create a coordinated care delivery system that will provide access to quality care, personalized service and education to improve individual and community health.

### VALUES

*(Keeping "PATIENTS" at the Center of our Values)*

- P** Patient safety first
- A** Accountability for financial resources
- T** Trust, respect & kindness
- I** Integrity, honesty & dignity
- E** Education – continued learning & improvement
- N** Needs of our community – Participation & community commitment
- T** Teamwork, partnership & communication
- S** Service & personalized attention

These values are honored in all we do for our patients, visitors, medical staff, associates, partners and volunteers.

### ETHICAL COMMITMENT

To conduct ourselves in an ethical manner that emphasizes community service and justifies the public trust.

### QUALITY STATEMENT

We deliver care that is accessible, safe, appropriate, coordinated, effective, and centered on the needs of individuals within a system that demonstrates continual improvement.

# Our Leadership

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# AGH Centers of Care ... that Care



*Our medical specialists and clinical staff are with you every step of the way.*

## **Atlantic General Hospital**

### **Atlantic General Endoscopy Center**

... Board certified gastroenterologists perform colonoscopies, upper endoscopies and other procedures to diagnose colorectal cancer, GERD and inflammatory bowel diseases. The center has performed more than 20,000 procedures since 2008.

### **Atlantic General Bariatric Center**

... The only hospital-based bariatric program on Maryland's Eastern Shore, with both nonsurgical and surgical weight loss options including sleeve gastrectomy. The comprehensive bariatric program offers pre-operative counseling and dietary and fitness consultations as well as post-op support group activities and weight loss monitoring.

### **Behavioral Health Services**

... Provides outpatient behavioral health and substance abuse services, including psychiatric evaluation, medication evaluation and monitoring, plus individual, family and group counseling/therapy.

### **Wound Care Center**

... A hospital-based outpatient program that works in conjunction with primary care physicians to provide specialized treatment for problem wounds.

### **Sleep Disorders Diagnostic Center**

... Diagnosis and treatment for sleep apnea and other conditions that can impair the ability to sleep well, providing hospital-based and home sleep studies. Diagnostics are available for insomnia with sleep apnea, upper airway resistance,

hypersomnia, nocturnal seizures, REM behavior disorders, narcolepsy and more.

### **Developmental Health Telemedicine**

... Provides comprehensive outpatient developmental health telemedicine services in conjunction with Kennedy Krieger Institute for children with autism, ADD/ADHD, and cognitive disorders.

### **Diabetes Education Program**

... American Diabetes Association-recognized program offers comprehensive group and individual educational sessions for diabetes patients and their families, led by certified diabetes educators. Providing customized diabetes management plans, information about glucose monitoring, diabetes medications, exercise and meal plans, and more.

### **Atlantic General Pain Center**

... Offering advanced pain therapies including neuromodulation, spinal cord stimulator implants, pain pumps for intraspinal drug delivery, and more.

### **Center for Joint Surgery**

... The Center's orthopedists offer the latest surgical options for patients undergoing joint replacement or fracture repair surgery, including Verilast total knee replacement and the Birmingham Hip Resurfacing procedures.

### **Designated Stroke Center**

... Specially trained physicians and nursing staff maintain integrated stroke protocols in the AGH Emergency Department, along with diagnostic and inpatient clinical services to streamline the treatment of stroke patients and improve outcomes.

## **Eunice Q. Sorin Women's Diagnostic Center**

... Digital mammography services, bone density exams, and non-invasive alternatives for some breast surgeries, with same-day mammogram appointments available.

## **Atlantic General Health System**

... Atlantic General Hospital's network of more than 15 primary care provider and specialist offices and specialty centers in Worcester County, Maryland, and Sussex County, Delaware. For a complete list of providers and locations, visit [www.atlanticgeneral.org/aghs](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org/aghs).


## **Atlantic General Dermatology**

... Offering a comprehensive approach to skin care through the latest medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatology services.

## **Atlantic General Urology**

... Treats conditions affecting the urinary tract systems of women and men, including procedures such as cystoscopy and endoscopic treatments for bladder conditions, biopsies and cancer treatments, non-surgical kidney stone treatment, laser treatment for enlarged prostate, and erectile dysfunction treatment.

## **Regional Cancer Care Center**

... Performs chemotherapy and hydration treatments for cancer patients, as well as patient navigation and financial counseling services to ensure individuals receive the most effective and supportive care to achieve the best possible outcomes. 



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Berlin, MD 21811

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*Friends and Neighbors of Atlantic General Hospital*

## care.together

*care.together is the community magazine published by Atlantic General Hospital and Health System.*

### General Information

(410) 641-1100

### Physician Referral Line

(410) 629-1500  
(877) 641-4244

### Patient & Family Relations

(410) 641-9654

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## Atlantic General Dermatology

### Enhancing Your Natural Beauty...

Looking and feeling your best can lead to a healthier life – including greater self-confidence and a better self-image. To enhance your natural beauty, we are pleased to announce that we now offer the following treatments:

**Botox<sup>®</sup>, Dysport<sup>®</sup>, Xeomin<sup>®</sup>** – These neuromodulators help improve skin appearance by minimizing wrinkles. They can be used to reduce crow's feet, frown lines, and other wrinkles around the face and neck.

**Juvederm<sup>®</sup>, Restylane<sup>®</sup>, Belotero<sup>®</sup>, Radiesse<sup>®</sup>** – These fillers can help improve the appearance of your

skin by reducing wrinkles. They also provide additional volume to the face that has been lost in the aging process.

**Chemical Peels** – This procedure is used to smooth out the texture of your skin by removing unhealthy damaged layers. It can help improve sun spots, fine lines and skin tone, too.

**Kybella<sup>®</sup>** – This new treatment is designed to eliminate a double chin. As a non-surgical injectable, it works by reducing fat around the upper neck.

**To schedule an appointment with Dr. Curtis Asbury or Dr. Sara Moghaddam, board certified dermatologists, call 302.564.0001.**

**Atlantic General Dermatology**

38394 DuPont Highway, Suite F • Selbyville, DE 19975

[www.atlanticgeneral.org/dermatology](http://www.atlanticgeneral.org/dermatology)