

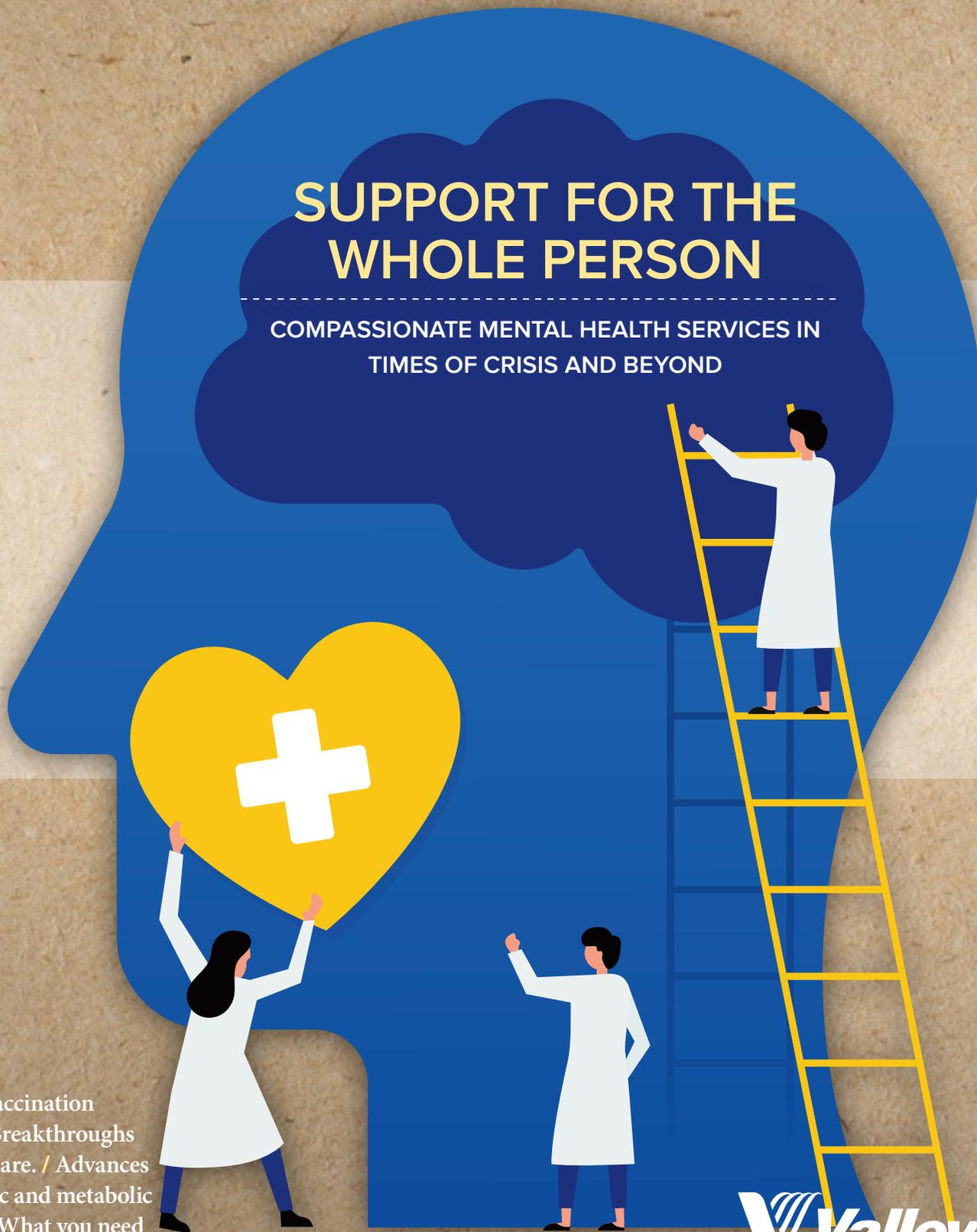
HealthLINK

WINTER 2021

YOUR CONNECTION TO HEALTH & WELLNESS

SUPPORT FOR THE WHOLE PERSON

COMPASSIONATE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN
TIMES OF CRISIS AND BEYOND



INSIDE:

COVID vaccination begins. / Breakthroughs in stroke care. / Advances in bariatric and metabolic surgery. / What you need to know about hypothermia and frostbite.

 **ValleyHealth**

Healthier, together.

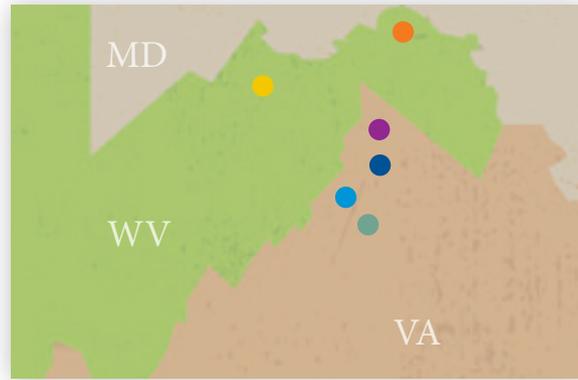
WELCOME

CARE FOR THE WHOLE PERSON

It is well known that, since last spring, Valley Health's expert caregivers have treated thousands of patients with the physical symptoms of COVID: respiratory problems, cough, loss of taste and smell, fever, achiness, and more. What's less recognized is the compassionate care provided by professionals on our Behavioral Health team. These physicians, nurses, counselors, and social workers sought new ways to serve those challenged by pandemic-related depression, anxiety and other conditions, and they continue to innovate to reach patients where they are.

Learn about how we care for the whole person, along with information on treatment for stroke, staying safe in the cold of winter, and other topics, on the following pages. Thanks for reading!

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



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

Valley Health System includes:

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

Additional locations and facilities:

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

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



Valley Health System

Serving Our Community by Improving Health

HealthLINK

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

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

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

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COVID-19 VACCINATION BEGINS

CAREGIVERS AGREE THE INOCULATION IS #WORTHIT

Wearing a mask. Watching your distance. Washing your hands. These actions are important to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In fact, Valley Health's media campaign reminds us that families, neighbors, healthcare workers, schools, and businesses—and our community at large—are #WorthIt.

And now we have added getting a COVID vaccination to the list of “worth it” preventive actions!

After the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, Valley Health received its first batch on December 15. Within hours of delivery, the vaccines were given to front-line caregivers, including Frank Lewis, MD, the first to receive it at Winchester Medical Center. “It’s like an early Christmas gift,” he enthused while local news outlets covered the historic event.



Page Memorial Hospital's Vaccine Team signs “V” for vaccination.



Radiologic technologist Maureen McKenna is vaccinated by nurse Dee Scott at Warren Memorial Hospital.

Under the guidance of Valley Health's COVID-19 Vaccine Committee and using guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local agencies in Virginia and West Virginia, Valley Health developed an implementation plan that addressed storage and delivery, logistics, inoculation, community-wide communication, and more, all on a relatively brief timeline.

“We are incredibly excited to see the beginning of the end of this pandemic,” said Valley Health Vice President of Population Health Jeffrey Feit, MD. “None of this happens by accident, and the work our team has done is nothing short of spectacular.”

Physicians, nurses and other staff in patient care received the first doses, which are followed by a required second dose. It was an emotional experience for many. Some whooped with joy, while others cried tears of relief.

Greg Byrd, MD, vice president of medical affairs for Valley Health Southern Region hospitals, said he was “putting his arm where his mouth is” when he rolled up his sleeve on the first day of the inoculations. Dr. Byrd was joined by caregivers at Shenandoah Memorial Hospital, including Barbie Oates, medical technologist, who said getting the shot was worth it because she has four grandchildren, and she “wants to be healthy and safe for them.”

Like vaccines for polio, chickenpox and measles, the COVID vaccine holds the promise of protecting millions of people from the deadly virus. As our country hit another grim milestone in December, surpassing 300,000 deaths from COVID, we have entered a new phase in the fight as vaccination becomes more widely available in our community.

And thanks to the vaccines, we hope that we will celebrate the next new year in a more traditional fashion, welcoming 2022 surrounded by friends and family, face to face. It will be #WorthIt!

Visit valleyhealthlink.com/COVID for information on vaccines and other resources in the fight against COVID-19.



SHENANDOAH MEMORIAL HOSPITAL RECEIVES CHEST PAIN CENTER ACCREDITATION

The American College of Cardiology has recognized Shenandoah Memorial Hospital (SMH) for its demonstrated expertise and commitment in treating patients with chest pain, awarding the hospital Chest Pain Center Accreditation in November. The accreditation recognizes the team's proven exceptional competency in treating patients with heart attack symptoms.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 730,000 Americans suffer a heart attack each year.

The most common symptom of a heart attack for both men and women is chest pain or discomfort. SMH works closely with local EMS partners and Valley Health's Heart & Vascular Center at Winchester Medical Center to facilitate fast and effective early treatment and provide coordinated care.

FOR THE LATEST HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWS, VISIT THE HEALTHLINK BLOG AT [VALLEYHEALTHLINK.COM/NEWS](http://valleyhealthlink.com/news).

VALLEY HEALTH VIRTUAL HEALTH FAIR

Because of limitations on in-person gatherings due to COVID, our team will hold a regionwide Valley Health Virtual Health Fair in lieu of community events. Taking place March 20-27, this forum will provide an opportunity to safely focus on health and wellness from the comfort of your own home. Although the event will primarily be virtual, screenings and other health-related activities will be offered at locations across the Valley Health service area.

Visit www.valleyhealthlink.com/healthfair to learn more.



NEW SERVICES

Valley Health Lab Services has opened in Hancock, Maryland. This new location offers blood analysis, drug monitoring, routine testing, and more, and is located next to Valley Health War Memorial Hospital Family Medicine on North Pennsylvania Avenue.

Valley Pain Consultants | Valley Health now offers pain management services at Shenandoah Memorial Hospital Multispecialty Clinic. **Board-certified in pain management, Michael Poss, MD, treats spinal and musculoskeletal conditions, including back and joint pain, muscular pain, and pain caused by other medical conditions such as cancer, improving quality of life and functionality for patients.** Call **540-459-1383** for more information.

HOT TOPIC

COVID vs. FLU: FAST FACTS ON QUICK DIAGNOSES

Valley Health implements point of care testing for symptomatic patients

In the past, symptoms like a fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, headache, and body ache meant the onset of seasonal flu, a severe cold or perhaps strep throat. But with COVID-19 in our community, they might signal the beginning of a life-threatening battle with the coronavirus as a worst case—or at least two weeks of self-quarantine to prevent the spread of the disease to family, friends, co-workers, and others.

Wouldn't it be great if you could get a quick diagnosis so you'd know what steps to take for your safety, along with the well-being of your loved ones, when you had symptoms? Now you can! Here are five facts about Valley



Help us prevent the spread of COVID this winter. Practice the “3 Ws”!

#MaskForOthers



- Wear your mask.
- Wash your hands.
- Watch your distance.

Health's new point of care rapid testing service for COVID-19 and the flu:

- Testing is available for those with flu-like or respiratory illness symptoms.
- The rapid test is available at all Valley Health Urgent Care locations. Patients can check in online to avoid the waiting room or to arrange a telehealth virtual visit; make a timed reservation online at vhurgentcare.com.
- The test consists of a single nasal swab that analyzes for influenza and COVID. (Note this test will not determine past exposure and/or possible immunity to the coronavirus.)
- Patients should receive same-day test results.
- If you have symptoms of respiratory illness and are unsure what steps to take, call the Valley Health Respiratory Care Phone Line at 540-536-0380 (Monday-Friday, 8 AM-5 PM; and Saturday, 9 AM-1 PM) to speak with a Valley Health team member about your symptoms.

Several Valley Health Family and Internal Medicine practices will offer this testing and other services to their patients. If you don't have a personal or family care provider, this is a great time to make an appointment and establish a medical relationship with one of our expert caregivers. That way when you need care, your provider is only a call away!

→ To learn more, call **540-833-DOCS**.

MATERNITY AND NEWBORN CARE

→ WINCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER OFFERS EXPERT CARE FOR NEW PARENTS AND THEIR GROWING FAMILIES

9+

TYPES OF CAREGIVERS ON OUR WOMEN & CHILDREN'S TEAM INCLUDING:

- OBSTETRICIANS AND PEDIATRICIANS
- BIRTH REGISTRAR
- CERTIFIED NURSE MIDWIVES
- INTERPRETERS
- REGISTERED NURSES
- SOCIAL WORKERS AND CASE MANAGERS
- LACTATION CONSULTANTS
- SUPPORT STAFF

AND ACCESS TO AN EXPERT MATERNAL FETAL MEDICINE TEAM AND WMC'S LEVEL III NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU)



2,567

AVERAGE NUMBER OF BIRTHS ANNUALLY

17%
C-SECTION RATE

77%
SUCCESS RATE FOR
VBAC (VAGINAL BIRTH
AFTER CESAREAN)

10 NUMBER OF BIRTHING SUITES AT WINCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER



170+

NUMBER OF CLASSES AND SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS ANNUALLY FOR PARENTS ON TOPICS SUCH AS:

- Childbirth education
- Newborn care
- Infant CPR
- Breastfeeding
- New moms support group

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/childbirth for more information.

ADVANCED STROKE CARE

Interventional neurology offers expanded options for the treatment of stroke and other conditions affecting the brain

Habibullah Ziayee, MD, a fellowship-trained interventional neurologist with expertise in the minimally invasive treatment of acute ischemic stroke and brain aneurysm, recently joined the staff of Winchester Neurological Consultants | Valley Health and provides care at Winchester Medical Center. Below he answers questions about his lifesaving medical specialty.

Q: WHAT IS AN INTERVENTIONAL NEUROLOGIST?

A: Interventional neurologists use minimally invasive techniques to treat abnormalities of blood vessels in the brain, neck and spine. We work inside blood vessels instead of performing open surgical procedures. This allows us to reach areas of the brain that can't be treated easily or at all with conventional brain surgery or where open surgery would severely disrupt brain tissue.

Q: WHAT COMMON CONDITIONS DO INTERVENTIONAL NEUROLOGISTS TREAT?

A: The most frequent condition we treat is stroke. This includes ischemic stroke, the most common type, caused by a blood clot in an artery in the brain, and hemorrhagic stroke, caused by bleeding due to a tear in a blood vessel in the brain. Interventional neurology allows us to remove the clot causing an ischemic stroke in many cases. This procedure, called thrombectomy, restores blood flow and can save brain tissue.

Another condition I treat is aneurysm—a weakening and out-pouching of a blood vessel in the brain. Treating an aneurysm by using interventional neurology techniques can prevent a rupture and dangerous or even deadly bleeding in the brain.

Q: WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES FOR PATIENTS IN OUR REGION?

A: Interventional neurology offers possibilities that weren't available in the past. Twenty or 30 years ago, there wasn't much that doctors could do to stop a stroke. Now we can intervene. The procedures we do work directly on the problem without disturbing other tissues of the brain or body.



Q: WHAT IS THE TIME WINDOW FOLLOWING A STROKE WHEN A THROMBECTOMY CAN BE PERFORMED AND STILL BENEFIT THE PATIENT?

A: Until recently, the time window was six hours or less. But studies show that thrombectomy can be beneficial up to 24 hours after stroke symptoms begin. **Nevertheless, the sooner a person recognizes and gets help for stroke, the better the outcome. The key is to call 911 immediately.** But the expanded window means better stroke care for more people.

STROKE? BE FAST.

Use the letters in BE FAST to recognize stroke symptoms and get help immediately:

- B:** Balance. Sudden loss of balance.
- E:** Eyes. Blurred, double vision or loss of vision in one or both eyes.
- F:** Face drooping or numbness on one side.
- A:** Arm weakness or numbness on one side.
- S:** Speech that is slurred, hard to understand or the inability to speak.
- T:** Time. Call 911 immediately for any of these symptoms, even if they go away.

Mary Rhodes, MD, and
Louis Nardelli, DO.



CARING FOR

THE WHOLE

PERSON

➔ VALLEY HEALTH ADAPTS TO OFFER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DURING THE PANDEMIC

The dawn of the 2021 new year has been unlike any other. The presence of COVID-19 in our community not only affected how we gathered and celebrated the winter holidays but also has been a constant factor in our daily routines for almost a year. Concerns about the infection and hospitalization of friends and loved ones, new routines for work and school, limits on travel and family visits, and the requirements of masking and social distancing have had an impact on all of us. These same stressors have increased the severity of the anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and other behavioral health disorders of those patients who come to Valley Health System (VHS) facilities for treatment. That's the bad news.

The good news? Valley Health offers numerous resources that can help members of our community cope and even thrive during the prolonged pandemic.

“The country has been on the verge of a mental health crisis for a number of years, and the pandemic has resulted in a higher level of angst—and none of us are immune,” says Louis Nardelli, DO, medical director, VHS Behavioral Health Services. “And the pandemic has caused some to delay seeking care, so when they do come to us, their medical condition has been neglected and may be worse.”



Dr. Nardelli observes one of Dr. Rhodes' online counseling sessions.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Fortunately, Valley Health offers both inpatient and outpatient care for adults, along with a program specially tailored to seniors (55+). Physicians with psychiatric training, along with specialized therapists, nurse practitioners, nurses, and social workers, are employed to treat those with both chronic and situational mental health diagnoses. And although some patients get care because of a physician referral, now more than ever, patients are taking the healthy step to contact us and engage with our exceptional Behavioral Health team.

COVID, as expected, has contributed to the increased demand for behavioral health services. For some, the pandemic has disrupted the natural rhythm of the day. People may stay up later, then sleep in, which becomes a vicious cycle. “Fifteen to 20 percent of Americans experienced insomnia pre-COVID, and now it’s worse,” continues Dr. Nardelli. This results in chronic fatigue, an inability to concentrate and irritability, as well as other medical conditions such as high blood pressure.

Depression is also a problem. “We’ve seen an increase in depression, especially with seniors, that might have improved

without treatment in our pre-COVID environment,” adds Mary Rhodes, MD, a board-certified psychiatrist at Outpatient Services in Winchester. “Because of the losses associated with social distancing, not having meals with others, and not seeing children and grandchildren, it may take longer to improve.”

INNOVATIONS ENHANCE PATIENT CARE

The pandemic has forced Valley Health’s Behavioral Health team to get creative as it has looked to find new ways to “see” patients and expand access to care.

ONLINE GROUP THERAPY: Because of the shutdown last spring, Dr. Rhodes and others on the outpatient team began offering therapy via telehealth, which has continued and been beneficial for many. “All of our groups have transitioned to online ‘Zoom therapy,’ which was an adjustment at first, but now we are getting a whole new group of people who couldn’t participate face to face—those who didn’t have transportation or are home with kids. Zoom has allowed greater access to care,” Dr. Rhodes continues. Patients have really embraced the virtual format, and Valley Health has heard positive feedback from



WMC's Behavioral Health Services medical leadership (from left): Tina Myer, PMHNP; Mary Rhodes, MD; Andrew Meyer, DO; Kyle Pulse, DO; Bishnu Subedi, MD; and Louis Nardelli, DO.



ANNA'S JOURNEY

Returning to wellness after her spouse's death

Anna's struggles began when her husband of over 50 years was battling a chronic and fatal illness. Following his death, she became acutely depressed and was often in emotional distress. "She had stopped eating and taking her medications," says her daughter Janet. "She had a difficult time accepting dad's death, and it became apparent she was going to need more care than our family could give her."

The healing began when Janet called Valley Health's Inpatient Behavioral Health program. "Our family was distraught, and the kindest person answered my call," she remarks.

Anna was admitted to the inpatient

facility and was welcomed and reassured by nurses with specialized training in mental health care. Her treatment began with a complete medical assessment and continued with counseling, medication and other therapies. "Mom really improved under Dr. Nardelli's care, and now that she's home, she has continued outpatient counseling with Dr. Rhodes."

Janet continues, "It was a difficult time, and mom still gets treatment from Valley Health's staff, but with the wrap-around support provided, mom has made great improvement."

TIPS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Partner with the care team.

"Getting to know the staff has been so helpful," Janet says.

"If we see symptoms of depression begin, we encourage mom by saying, 'make sure you tell Dr. Rhodes how you feel.'"

Educate yourself and learn the signs and symptoms. Keep your eyes on the patient—literally—so you can check visual clues that might indicate a relapse. "We learned that face-to-face visits are ideal," Janet adds, "but even a Zoom or iPad visit gives us the chance to see mom's color, speech and mental focus." This is even more important during the pandemic, when many are isolated or quarantined at home.

Caregivers need to get the support they need too. Resources can be found at the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(nami.org\)](https://www.nami.org) and [National Alliance for Caregiving \(caregiving.org\)](https://www.caregiving.org) websites.

those who are grateful for this new way to interact with providers and others in their therapy groups.

SBIRT: REMOVING BARRIERS TO CARE: Even before the pandemic, Valley Health had begun pairing mental health outreach efforts with primary, family and even emergency services. The Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program, which is part of a statewide collaboration in Virginia, was launched at Winchester Medical Center (WMC) in 2017. The program has fostered interaction with numerous adults who seek care in Valley Health Emergency Departments (EDs) and may have behavioral health needs. SBIRT

clinicians ask patients simple questions about tobacco and alcohol use, anxiety, and other mental health challenges during their ED visit and intervene when necessary by connecting patients with the appropriate behavioral health resource for their needs.

Offered in partnership with George Mason University, the SBIRT program has screened more than 60,000 patients across Virginia for substance use and depression. A recent survey indicates that 100 percent of those screened at WMC's Emergency Department felt they were treated with respect by the SBIRT clinicians, and over 70 percent said the interaction



Valley Health's SBIRT team (clockwise from back left): Bevin Culver, LCSW; Megan Hines, PhD; Lauren Hepler, LCSW; Summer Jeirles, LPC, CAADC, manager, Behavioral Health Integration; Michelle Kling, RN, CARN; Amanda Hawkins, LCSW-C; and Maggi Wark, CSAC.

made them think differently about their substance use, causing them to plan to make changes in their use of alcohol and/or drugs.

Staff on the SBIRT team (social workers, counselors and nurses with specialized mental health training) take time to listen to the challenges faced by patients. “The person I spoke with was empathetic and compassionate and listened and understood me,” commented one ED patient following an SBIRT screening. Others have noted that SBIRT counselors “helped me come up with a plan and ways to deal and cope effectively” and “made it clear that they were there for me, giving me a medical perspective on how my drinking makes my blood pressure and diabetes worse.” A willingness to listen and the offer of support often gives patients the boost they need to make positive changes.

INTEGRATED CARE: Karen Dorr, executive director of Behavioral Health Services at WMC, says that evidence indicates “integrated care” or complementing primary or emergency care with behavioral care outreach makes more sense as a way to reach patients and results in better outcomes. If you have had a checkup recently, you may have already experienced practice-based integrated care. Did your care provider ask “have you felt depressed lately?” or “do you use drugs to relieve stress?” If so, you have seen how seamless and natural these discussions can be during a routine physical.

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

- Valley Health Outpatient Behavioral Health | Winchester offers group therapy for adults looking to learn healthy coping strategies. Groups now meet online each week for one hour. Patients are individually assessed; no referral is necessary. *Call 540-536-4881 for information.*
- Valley Health Senior Outpatient Behavioral Health, offered at Shenandoah Memorial Hospital in Woodstock, focuses on seniors experiencing psychiatric issues. With an intensive group therapy format for those 55+, program goals include fostering quality relationships, self-confidence and self-reliance. *Call 540-459-1505 to learn more.*
- Valley Health WMC Inpatient Behavioral Health offers a safe place to address mental health conditions with the help of an experienced and compassionate team. Patients benefit from an intensive treatment program tailored to their needs. *Call 540-536-8152 if someone you know might benefit from inpatient care.*

In case of a mental health crisis:

- Dial 911.
- Go to your nearest hospital Emergency Department.
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **800-273-8255**.

TIPS FOR COPING WITH COVID

As the pandemic continues into year two, it will be more important than ever to stay positive; maintain a healthy attitude; and proactively care for our physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Try the tips below, including a few from staff on the Valley Health Behavioral Health Services team.

Get moving. Maintain your exercise routine since research shows that physical activity improves mental health. Don't get a regular workout? Walking 20 minutes every day or taking an online yoga or stretching class are great options.

Eat well. Including plenty of fruits, veggies and whole grains in your diet improves overall health and helps your body fight infection.

Connect with friends and family. Reach out to someone who makes you laugh or who's a good listener if you're having a rough day. Don't forget to check in with those who live alone.

"Thanks to technology, we don't have to be socially isolated. My friends and family chat online and schedule time to play trivia via Zoom. Those things are guaranteed to improve my mood!"

—Bevin Culver, LCSW, SBIRT clinician

Get outside. You can go for a "Sunday drive" almost any time of year. Head to Skyline Drive or one of the other local scenic byways for a pick-me-up, compliments of Mother Nature.

Unplug. The endless barrage of social media can be a huge stressor, so take time to disconnect.

"Try to connect face to face with people in your circle, and focus on the things in your immediate environment instead of everything in the news."

—Amanda Hawkins, LCSW-C, Behavioral Health clinician

Do what you love. Enjoy cooking, jigsaw puzzles, a good mystery, or old movies? Make time for activities that make you feel good ... or try a new hobby that engages your brain.

"Do something every day that brings you joy, no matter how small it may seem."

—Lauren Hepler, LCSW, Behavioral Health Integration clinician

"It's often difficult for someone to make a call asking for help, but if your doctor says, 'Come meet our staff counselor, maybe you'd find it helpful to talk with her,' there's less stigma and the care is more accessible," Dorr notes. "It's really all about prevention. If you reach someone in a primary care setting and intervene, you may prevent a more serious crisis in the future."

To further facilitate the integration of behavioral care and primary care, Valley Health has received grant funding to launch a program that expands screening, early intervention and referral services and trains nursing and social work students at three Valley Health primary care clinics in Berkeley County, West Virginia. This collaboration with Shepherd University and the University of Baltimore ensures that our team better serves patients, prepares the next-generation care providers, and increases the number of Valley Health practices that have in-person mental health staff on-site.

PREVENTING SUICIDE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

With funding from another grant, the WMC team will strengthen suicide and domestic violence prevention services offered through the Emergency Department. "Over the last six months, COVID-19 has caused profound economic and social disruption worldwide, with significant mental health repercussions, especially among those already at risk for behavioral health issues and domestic violence," Dorr comments. "This support improves follow-up care for those who are in crisis."

And the new program improves Valley Health's ability to care for those at low or moderate risk. "Patients don't need to be in crisis to find benefit in working with a mental health professional," says Dorr. "What is most important is that all patients leave our hospitals with the resources they need to be successful and thrive, whether that support is an appointment with a counselor or a referral to inpatient treatment or other types of care."

"We are always looking at how we can do things better, and integrating mental health care into other fields and services makes more sense now than ever," adds Dr. Nardelli. "As we deal with the challenges presented by COVID, we need to remember this is a marathon, not a sprint."

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/behavioralhealth for more information.

SPOTLIGHT

NEW OPTIONS IN BARIATRIC AND METABOLIC SURGERY

With highly skilled physicians and state-of-the-art surgical techniques, Valley Health delivers superior care for weight loss, hernias and other common conditions

With two new, fellowship-trained surgeons and exciting new bariatric and metabolic procedures, Valley Health offers the region's widest range of options for weight loss, abdominal hernia repair and chronic heartburn relief. The benefits? Care that's more personalized than ever. New choices in minimally invasive robotic and incision-free endoscopic surgery. Short recovery times and outpatient procedures in some cases. And as always, a commitment to your total well-being.

"When I see patients six months or a year after a bariatric procedure, they're excited about losing excess weight and improving or even resolving chronic health conditions associated with obesity such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and joint pain," says Christopher Reed, MD, who recently joined the medical staff of Valley Health's Metabolic and Bariatric Program after a fellowship in advanced gastrointestinal and minimally invasive surgery at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. "Often, they're even more excited that they feel so energetic. They can chase their kids around in the backyard, go for walks with their spouse, do the things they used to do before obesity made it difficult or too stressful."

For Salaam Sadi, MD, who joined the program after completing a fellowship in minimally invasive robotic bariatric and advanced gastrointestinal surgery at Albany Medical Center in New York, a passion for bariatric

surgery comes from "helping obese and morbidly obese people get the good care and respect they deserve." Often, Dr. Sadi notes, people with obesity spend decades dieting and exercising, only to gain more weight and develop chronic health problems. "Obesity is a disease," he says. "It's not a personal failing. At a certain point, diet and exercise alone don't work. That's when bariatric and metabolic surgery can be the tool you need for weight loss and better health."

Now, the region's most comprehensive bariatric and metabolic program is adding new and advanced options:

- **100% robotic, minimally invasive procedures.** All minimally invasive bariatric surgical procedures—including gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, duodenal switch, and bariatric revision surgeries—will be performed using Winchester Medical Center's state-of-the-art da Vinci® Xi™ Surgical System. Robotic surgery allows the surgeons to perform more precise, fine-scale movements than conventional, minimally invasive techniques. This means smaller incisions, less pain and shorter hospital stays.
- **Endoscopic bariatrics—weight-loss surgery with no incisions.** Endoscopic procedures are performed by sending a thin, flexible tube equipped with light, a camera and surgical tools into the body through a patient's mouth. Surgeons work from within the digestive system for bariatric procedures that include

“Obesity is a disease. It's not a personal failing. At a certain point, diet and exercise alone don't work. That's when bariatric and metabolic surgery can be the tool you need for weight loss and better health.” —SALAAM SADI, MD



Bariatric and metabolic surgeons Salaam Sadi, MD (above) and Christopher Reed, MD (below).



the placement and later removal of a temporary weight-loss tool called the intragastric balloon. “This is a newer procedure that’s offered at some major medical centers in the U.S., and now here at Winchester Medical Center,” Dr. Reed says. Endobariatric procedures are typically incision-free, outpatient procedures offering patients the opportunity to go home the same day.

- **Endoscopic revision procedures.** If a bariatric surgery performed in the past needs repairs, such as for an ulcer, or if the connection between the stomach and small intestines becomes stretched, leading to pain, nausea, low blood sugar, hunger, and weight regain, you may need revision surgery. “In the past, we’d redo the whole procedure for a revision. But with endoscopic surgery, we can simply tighten the opening or repair other problems as an outpatient procedure,” Dr. Sadi says.
- **Single anastomosis duodeno-ileostomy with sleeve gastrectomy (SADI-S).** Approved in 2020 by the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, this new robotic bariatric procedure provides weight-loss results similar to a duodenal switch, but with just one surgically created new connection in the digestive system compared to two for the duodenal switch, thus reducing the risk of complications.
- **Endoscopic transoral incisionless fundoplication (TIF) for chronic heartburn.** For severe heartburn, fundoplication—wrapping part of the stomach around the valve that prevents acid backwash into the esophagus—can spell relief for many people suffering from GERD or heartburn.
- **Robotic extended totally extraperitoneal repair (eTEP) for abdominal hernias.** The usual way to repair hernias in the abdominal wall is with open surgery. Robotic repairs happen outside the abdominal wall, Dr. Reed says. “This reduces risk for bowel injuries and adhesions and lets us do very strong, effective repairs,” Dr. Sadi adds. “Another advantage is that we can offer this to people at a higher body mass index for whom conventional surgery may have been too risky. The risk for complications and recurrence of the hernia is very low.”

→ Learn more at valleyhealthlink.com/bariatrics.

ALL ABOUT HYPOTHERMIA AND FROSTBITE

Know how to recognize, manage and prevent two cold-weather health emergencies

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia occurs when your body temperature drops dangerously low. Wind, exposure to cold water or the cold ground, and losing heat through bare or poorly protected skin are the causes. The danger: Hypothermia interferes with the normal functioning of your heart, lungs and other organs ... and can even be deadly.

Symptoms: Shivering, slurred speech, feeling very tired, confusion, memory loss, weak pulse, shallow breathing, clumsiness, and, in babies, skin that's cold and bright red. It's important to know that people with hypothermia may not think clearly or understand that they're in danger.

What to do: Call 911 immediately for symptoms or if the person's body temperature is below 95°F. If possible, move them to a warmer place; take off wet clothes; and wrap them in warm, dry blankets or coats. You can try warming their torso, neck and head with an electric blanket or skin-to-skin contact under blankets. If they are conscious, a warm drink (not alcoholic, caffeinated or hot) can help. If they are unconscious, move them gently to avoid triggering irregular heartbeats. Perform CPR if



necessary until emergency help arrives.

Prevention: Wear plenty of layers of warm clothes, including a hat, gloves and boots, when outdoors on cold days. Come inside if you start feeling chilly—or just stay in when the weather is extremely frigid. If you do have to go out, don't drink alcohol beforehand. Hypothermia can also happen indoors if your home is not well heated. Older adults are at higher risk because their bodies don't control temperature as efficiently and they may not notice the cold. Young children need extra attention, too; they lose body heat faster than adults.

FROSTBITE

Frostbite freezes skin and can permanently damage toes, fingers, chins, cheeks, ears, or noses. In serious cases, amputation may be required.

Symptoms: Skin that is numb, white or grayish and that may feel extra-firm. Important to know: A person with frostbite may also have hypothermia. If they do, call 911 right away.

What to do: Move indoors to a warm room right away. Don't rub or massage affected areas and don't use hot water, a heating pad or chemical warmers or get close to a heater, stove or fireplace to warm up the frostbite area. These could damage or burn the skin. Instead, use lukewarm water to gently warm up areas with frostbite. Go to the Emergency Department or a Valley Health Urgent Care if the area stays numb, blisters or is still painful after it warms up.

Prevention: Dress warmly, including mittens and a scarf. If you notice your skin is turning red or feels painful, cover it and warm up right away. People with circulation problems are especially vulnerable to frostbite risk.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mayo Clinic, National Institutes of Health, National Safety Council

HEALING TRAILS

GENEROUS DONORS FUND THE CREATION OF A BEAUTIFUL TRAIL SYSTEM ON THE GROUNDS OF THE NEW WARREN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

“Connection to nature is a healing force,” says Christine Andrae, explaining why she and her husband, Fred, donated funds to create a recreational trail system on the grounds of the new Warren Memorial Hospital in Front Royal, Virginia.

When completed, The Andrae Family Wellness and Recreational Trails on the scenic hospital campus will offer more than 2 miles of paths winding through a forest of oak, hickory and maple trees, with rest areas and overlooks for peaceful reflection and enjoyment. Sections of different lengths and abilities will be freely accessible to patients, visitors, staff, and community members. The trail system takes advantage of the hospital’s spectacular scenery and panoramic views of the Shenandoah Valley while supporting its larger initiative to promote community wellness, says Jenny Grooms, executive director of Valley Health Foundations.

“Valley Health is committed to making Warren Memorial Hospital a comprehensive wellness campus,” Jenny says. “The trails project meshes perfectly with the broader



Christine and Fred Andrae

initiative to promote overall well-being, fitness and disease prevention. It’s going to be an incredible asset to our entire community.”

The Andraes have long advocated for the preservation and public enjoyment of the Shenandoah Valley’s natural landscapes. Fred, an architect, and Christine, an author and painter, designed and built their home on the outskirts of Shenandoah National Park. They have been involved in several local initiatives to protect the area’s natural habitat. In addition, Christine served on the board of Warren Memorial Hospital and now serves as the chair of the Warren Memorial Hospital Foundation board of trustees.

The trails project connects the couple’s passions for nature conservation, health care and philanthropy. The Andraes first experienced a hospital-based recreational trail system while waiting for the conclusion of a family member’s surgery at a New Hampshire hospital. “Instead of sitting in the waiting room, we were able to get outside and walk the hospital’s woodland trail,” Christine continues. “It brought great relief during a stressful time and was the inspiration for this project. We feel fortunate to be able to create a similar healing path in our own community.”

BE A PART OF OUR NEW HOSPITAL!

Your gift to the Warren Memorial Hospital Foundation will support efforts to expand and enhance healthcare services in Front Royal and the greater Shenandoah Valley through this state-of-the-art facility, which will feature 36 private patient rooms, 18 Emergency Department beds, three operating rooms, a cardiac catheterization lab, and a separate building for medical offices and outpatient services.

Visit valleyhealthlink.com/WMHgiving or call **540-536-2387** to learn more about the building campaign or supporting this community endeavor.



HEALTHIER

TOMORROWS

INVESTED IN YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Advocating for access. Promoting healthy habits. Caring for the whole person. Stewarding our natural resources. Advancing inclusion and diversity. These are a few of the ways the Valley Health team collaborates with regional partners to serve area residents. We value the humanity of each person who comes to us for care and treatment, honor the diversity of our communities and workforce, and implement practices that protect the natural resources of the Shenandoah Valley. Visit valleyhealthlink.com/communitycommitment to learn more about our investments in your health and well-being.

2020 COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

As a nonprofit health system, Valley Health exists to care for the community's health needs. In addition to providing health care, we study and identify healthcare gaps in the region and develop plans to address those needs. The many ways our organization works—both independently and in collaboration with local partners—are summarized in Valley Health's annual *Healthier Tomorrows: Community Benefit Report*.

Both nonprofit and for-profit healthcare providers operate like all businesses: ensuring expenses don't exceed revenue; managing resources to meet core business needs; focusing on providing safe, high-quality care and service; being an employer that maintains a highly skilled workforce with benefits and competitive pay; and meeting state and federal regulations. But that is where the similarities between nonprofit and for-profit organizations end. For-profit

healthcare providers distribute earnings to their shareholders. Valley Health, like other nonprofit healthcare providers, directs earnings to address unmet health needs in the community.

Our caregivers impact the lives of thousands of individuals every year through our community commitments. Valley Health staff hold health screenings, wellness festivals and safety fairs, and our experts teach classes for new parents and mentor new healthcare professionals. We partner with schools, nonprofits, government agencies, and others to promote wellness, and we provide grants to local partners who combat substance abuse, mental illness, hunger, homelessness, domestic and child abuse, and more.

We are your family, friends and neighbors ... and we're committed to creating healthier tomorrows!

BY THE NUMBERS

\$735 million+

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION DOLLARS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS (2015-2019)

\$151 million+

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION DOLLARS IN 2019

\$53 million+

FOR CHARITY AND UNREIMBURSED CARE

\$19 million+

FOR COMMUNITY PROGRAMS, HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER SUPPORT

\$16 million+

FOR SHORTFALL OF GOVERNMENT PAYMENTS SUCH AS MEDICAID

\$62 million+

FOR UNPAID CHARGES THAT ARE WRITTEN OFF

GRANTS HELP OUR PARTNERS MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS

Valley Health provides funding and other in-kind support to non-profit organizations that address the health, wellness and welfare needs of area residents. The organizations that receive our largest grants through our Community Health Impact Grants program are listed below. We thank them for their collaboration!

\$3.2 MILLION FOR THE FUNDING CYCLE 2020-2022 HAS BEEN ALLOCATED TO THE FOLLOWING LOCAL NONPROFITS:

AIDS Response Effort / Child Safe Center-CAC / Concern Hotline / Dental Clinic of Northern Shenandoah Valley / Edgehill Recovery Center / Faith in Action / Girls on the Run / Good Samaritan Free Clinic / Healthy Families Northern Shenandoah Valley / Healthy Families Shenandoah County / The Laurel Center / Morgan County Partnership / NAMI Northern Shenandoah Valley / NSV Substance Abuse Coalition / Our Health / Page Alliance for Community Action / Page Free Clinic / RAPP Center for Education / Shenandoah Community Health Clinic / Shenandoah Dental Clinic / Sinclair Health Clinic



“Many people don’t realize that in addition to providing a billion dollars in health care each year to those with the ability to pay, Valley Health provides over \$1 million each week in free or reduced cost care to community members unable to afford their care.”

—MARK NANTZ, PRESIDENT AND CEO



Healthier, together.

Valley Health System
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Winchester, VA 22604

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Because our community is worth it.

Protecting healthcare workers, keeping schools open and businesses going. These are just a few reasons why following safety measures like wearing a mask and keeping your distance are **worth it**. Help keep our community going strong.

Join in at valleyhealthlink.com/worthit.



Healthier, together.