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Atlantic General Hospital & Atlantic General Health System

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From the President

As we emerge from this pandemic year, we have had the opportunity to look around us and reconnect. Our transition back to “normal” provides us with a fresh vision of our community and the people who live here and visit here. It is a great time for Atlantic General Hospital and Health System to have reevaluated its Vision, Mission and Values, and to create a new strategic vision for health and health care in our community.

During the past few years, hospital leadership spent considerable time evaluating the current state and future of AGH. Together, we have evolved the Mission Statement to reflect how we have been successfully collaborating with our community “to provide a coordinated care delivery system...,” according to the Atlantic General 2020 Vision strategic plan.

We re-imagined our Values to be more aligned with our organization’s Vision, with a renewed focus on becoming “the leader in caring for people...” through values of CARE: Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and being Error-free. Together we determined that AGH needed to make a service commitment to each person we interact with in our community, creating a WOW experience (Welcoming, Outstanding, Warm).

This past winter, the AGH Board of Trustees, the Senior Leadership team, and Medical Staff leadership focused our time together on what the COVID-19 pandemic revealed to us about how health and health care is distributed in our community. Specifically, in regards to our values of compassion, accountability and respect: how do we learn from the lessons of the pandemic to envision a better future for health care delivery in our rural, geographically dispersed, and ethnically and socioeconomically diverse community? Reimagining our future required defining two necessary principles associated with that future – health equity and empathy.

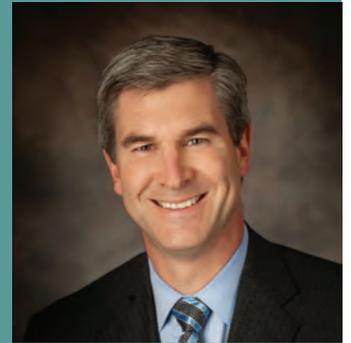
The World Health Organization (WHO) Constitution states that, “... health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” and that “the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.” In 2016, the United Nations convened an international group to create a “UN Platform on Social Determinants of Health,” which included the following statement regarding health equity: “... a healthier population improves the overall level of productivity in the economy, increases

employment and thus helps to reduce poverty, and improves school attendance of children. Healthy workers are fundamental for the productivity of businesses and livelihoods. Thus, health is a contributor to as well as an indicator of development.”

These statements provided guidance to AGH in defining what health equity means in our community; this will, in turn, guide our future strategic plan. The Board of Trustees has adopted the following definition of health equity: collaborative resources are devoted to optimizing individual health for all who live in or visit our community.

Similarly, we deliberated on a definition of empathy. As stated in one of the sources we reviewed, “Developing empathy is crucial for establishing relationships and behaving compassionately.” How can we live our value of compassion, without empathy? The Board of Trustees adopted the following definition for empathy for AGH: understanding the feelings and perspectives of others, and using that relationship to guide our actions.

Atlantic General’s Vision, Mission and Values statements and the definitions for the principles of health equity and empathy collectively create the foundation for our 2021-2025 strategic plan, Optimizing Health for All. The primary focus of this plan is creating a “Connected, Caring



Community” that embraces these principles, along with engaging our residents, visitors, businesses and agencies to embrace health and health care as part of growing and improving our community. This will drive us to advocate for improved infrastructure to accommodate technology to support connectedness. This will also drive us to be more thoughtful about how to meet the needs of vulnerable and at-risk communities; lessons learned from the COVID-19 experience. Ultimately, our strategic plan will embrace the diverse needs within our community, and compel us to develop systems of care that make optimal health more achievable throughout our community.

Consider this while reading about the new services, new providers, and how AGH served the community over the past year. We are looking forward in our continuing journey to be the leaders in caring for this wonderful community in which we live.

Michael Franklin, FACHE
President & CEO
Atlantic General Hospital

Delaying Routine Medical Care During the Pandemic is Very Common, and Very Concerning

Healthcare professionals urge individuals to resume care as patients' health worsens during isolation.

If you've put off or skipped needed medical care during the COVID-19 pandemic, you've got plenty of company.

More than a third of U.S. adults say they have delayed or gone without care either because they fear exposure to the virus or because health care services are harder to come by, according to two recent surveys funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The same reasons led nearly as many parents to avoid care for their kids.

The surveys, conducted in September, revealed that the delays came with a cost.

A third of adults who said they had delayed or gone without care reported that one or more of their health problems had worsened as a result, or that their ability to work or do other daily activities had been limited.

Black adults were more likely than white or Hispanic adults to delay or forgo care (39.7% versus 34.3% and 35.5%, respectively).

Among adults with one or more chronic health conditions, 40.7% said they delayed or went without care, the survey found. More than half (56.3%) of adults with both a physical and mental health condition



had also put off care.

Dental care was the most common casualty. One in five adults delayed or went without a visit to a general doctor or specialist, and 15.5% delayed or went without preventive care.

Among parents with kids under age 19, more than a quarter said they had postponed or missed one or more types of health care appointments for their kids; 15.6% said they had delayed or skipped multiple types of care for their children.

This was more likely among lower-income parents (19.6%) than among those with higher incomes (11.4%).

The findings are from the Urban Institute's Coronavirus Tracking Survey, a nationally representative survey of 18- to 64-year-olds and parents with kids under age 19.

According to the Urban Institute, the pandemic has caused kids, especially those in low-income families, to miss out on a range of health needs.

"Extended delays in seeking care, whether it's for routine preventive

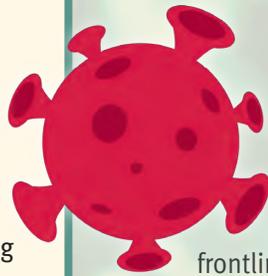
screenings or for management of a chronic disease, can contribute to severe illness or hospitalization that could potentially have been avoided," said Sally Dowling, MD, Vice President of Medical Affairs for Atlantic General Hospital and Health System. ***"It's very important that you resume getting that care now."***

As the pandemic eases its grip, we want to assure you that we continue to follow best practices in infection prevention, according to CDC guidelines, to keep you safe. We also offer video-based visits for primary care and a number of specialty services. For more information, please contact your AGHS health care provider.

If you have put off needed care due to financial concerns, Atlantic General Hospital and Health System offers financial assistance to low-income patients who cannot afford their healthcare bills. For more information, visit www.agh.care/FAP.

Top 10 REASONS to get the COVID-19 Vaccine*

- 1. It's the quickest way to get back to normal.** Think about it: No more masks! No more social distancing! Hugs for Grandma! Parties! Sporting events!
- 2. It's the RIGHT thing to do.**
- 3. The shot DOES NOT GIVE YOU COVID!** It does not – because it CANNOT. It's not possible. The vaccine does not include a live COVID virus, therefore it is impossible for the vaccine to give you COVID-19.
- 4. No more worries about losing income.** Getting the vaccine stops you from getting COVID-19. No missing work and losing money as a result.
- 5. Protect yourself.** Although many people who get COVID-19 don't get very sick, you have NO WAY of knowing how COVID-19 will affect YOU. Some people die, and others have terrible long-term effects to their health. And, *death rates among people of color are much higher* than the national average.
- 6. Protect those around you.** Being vaccinated helps prevent you from getting COVID-19, so you are less likely to spread the disease to others.
- 7. Even if you do get COVID-19 after being vaccinated, the vaccine protects you from getting seriously ill.** It's the joy of gaining immunity without the risk of getting really sick – a win!



Taking a Look Back While COVID-19 Response Effo

For more than 14 months, Atlantic General Hospital and Health System and our frontline staff have been at the forefront of COVID-19 efforts to mitigate the effects of this devastating pandemic on communities of the Eastern Shore.

We rallied quickly to give patients fighting severe COVID-19 early access to the latest treatments and therapeutics not yet being offered by larger hospitals and major academic medical centers. That same flexibility and forward thinking brought treatment for more moderate coronavirus infections to Worcester County as well as the Lower Eastern Shore's first of many community vaccination clinics.

In April of 2020, just five weeks after the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed in Worcester County, Atlantic General began treating inpatients with convalescent plasma as part of a Mayo Clinic study, in partnership with the Blood Bank of Delmarva.

The trial, which included more than 35,000 patients at hospitals across the country, ultimately led to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's emergency use authorization of a refined treatment regimen of high-antibody-level convalescent plasma for hospitalized patients early in the course of their COVID-19 disease.

The infusion treatment uses the antibody-rich plasma of now healthy coronavirus survivors to help

patients fight the virus. Additional trials are still underway in the U.S. and internationally to learn more about the benefits of convalescent plasma.

We also began providing another therapy to qualified COVID-19 patients, an antiviral called remdesivir, in early May 2020. The medication was originally developed to treat hepatitis C and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and is used to treat a wide range of viruses. Remdesivir received FDA emergency use authorization to treat COVID-19 in April 2020.

Despite the ongoing strain on supply chains for a variety of supplies and pharmaceuticals at the time, Atlantic General was able to maintain stock of the drug, which has since proven to shorten recovery time for patients hospitalized for COVID-19 and likely prevents a worsening or progression of the disease.

In early December 2020, we announced that Atlantic General Hospital would be one of the first six treatment sites in the state of Maryland to offer the monoclonal antibody therapeutic bamlanivimab to high risk patients with mild to moderate COVID-19 infection.

The therapeutic mimics immune system antibodies that block viruses. It was granted emergency use authorization by the FDA for treatment of individuals with COVID-19 before severe symptoms occur, to reduce the chances of the infection worsening and requiring

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e Moving Forward with rts

hospitalization.

More recent research has shown that combining bamlanivimab with etesevimab, another monoclonal antibody therapeutic, offers significant improvement in patient outcomes. To date, we have provided the infusion therapy to more than 165 outpatients to prevent a worsening of their disease.

On January 16, 2021, we held our first COVID-19 community vaccination clinic in an effort to utilize doses of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine remaining after staff vaccination. The event, for 735 individuals ages 75 and older, was the first community clinic in Maryland, coming just ahead of the state's formal transition to Phase 1B.

AGH has been holding weekly clinics since that time, in addition to vaccine administration through the state of Delaware at our Atlantic General Health System (AGHS) physician practices located in Sussex County. In May, we were able to start offering COVID-19 vaccines at our Maryland physician offices as well.

In mid June, we reached the 10,000-doses-administered mark in the campaign to vaccinate residents against COVID-19. As of June 21, more than 51% of the population of Worcester County has been fully vaccinated through combined efforts of Atlantic General Hospital, the Worcester

County Health Department and local retail pharmacies. With these collaborative efforts, the percentage of Worcester County residents vaccinated has consistently been one of the top three jurisdictions in the state.

Atlantic General's approach to community vaccination continues to evolve as we make plans to specifically target underserved areas to reach individuals who are unable to schedule an appointment at a traditional vaccine clinic, due to disability, technological barriers or lack of transportation.

"Our staff has worked tirelessly over the past year to combat surges in COVID-19 community infection rates and keep patients, family members and each other safe, while never losing sight of the individual – the patient who is scared and suffering and alone or the one who is tired but so thankful to finally be able to go home, or the distraught family member who cannot visit their sick loved one," said Michael Franklin, president and CEO of Atlantic General Hospital. "It takes a lot of empathy and emotional energy, in addition to their expertise. They have quickly pivoted to respond to the changing face of this pandemic, and I cannot thank them enough.

"We still have a ways to go, and I'm proud we're able to offer this kind of high quality, compassionate care to our community."

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8. It's safe! Even though the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are new, the science behind them, which uses mRNA, has been around for **20 YEARS!** By the way, all mRNA does is tell your body's cells to make proteins – in this case, antibodies to the spikey parts of the Coronavirus. mRNA DOES NOT affect your cell's DNA or your chromosomes/genes. In fact, it never even goes into the nucleus of the cell, where all your DNA lives!

Johnson & Johnson's single-dose Janssen vaccine uses a more traditional technology. When considering recent news about this particular vaccine, remember that life-threatening blood clots are 10 times more likely to result from COVID-19 illness than the J&J vaccine.

Studies have been done with the COVID-19 vaccines with tens of thousands of patients, and many millions of people have already received them with very few problems.

9. It's highly effective! The two-dose vaccines in use in the United States, made by Moderna and Pfizer, are around 95% effective. The single-dose vaccine from Johnson & Johnson is around 66% effective. Way more effective than the flu vaccine (around 40%)!

10. It's FREE! That's right, the COVID-19 vaccine is 100% free. No co-pay, no nothing.

Schedule your vaccination at marylandvax.org.

**Adapted from a communication from KidsPeace, kidspeace.org*

Now is the Time for your Voice to Be Heard

Every three years, we invite members of the community to provide honest, thoughtful feedback about what they find to be the greatest health and wellness concerns in our region as well as the gaps they see in health care delivery for all. This is part of a multi-pronged effort to collect data and insights for our Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) report.

With the information provided in the report, hospital leaders and our community partners develop plans to address community health priorities and build upon the capacity, resources and partnerships

of existing programs. **Efforts include expansion of medical services as well as addressing non-medical, or social, determinants of health.**

Atlantic General Hospital participates closely with Worcester County Health Department, Wicomico County Health Department, Somerset County Health Department, and Tidal Health Peninsula Regional to provide CHNA data, surveys and programs.

You can find action plans and updates to our previous CHNA efforts on our website. Visit agh.care and click the Community Health & Wellness tab.

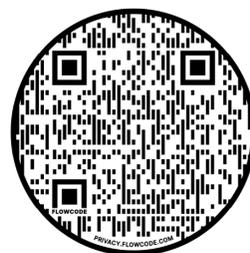
CHNA 2021

We hope that you will participate in this year's survey. To begin:

Go to: agh.care/CHNA21

Or

Scan the QR code below:



Thank you in advance for your participation!





Introducing Online Appointment Scheduling ... and More!

Current Features for Inpatients

- Welcome text message, with a link to an overview of hospital amenities, parking, visitation policies, and other helpful information related to your stay.
- Post-discharge texts with links to patient education/discharge instructions and care summaries.
- Periodic check-in texts, with links to questionnaires customized by disease state, to track patients' progress after hospitalization.

Current Features for Outpatients

- Online appointment scheduling for current patients, with an option to join a waiting list for a closer appointment time.
- Appointment reminders via text, with ability to confirm or request to reschedule.
- Texted links with care summaries and patient education after each office visit.

Atlantic General Hospital and Health System continues to make significant investments in technologies that bring greater ease of use to our patients and families who want to engage with us in the digital environment.

Just this spring, we launched the second phase of our mobile patient experience program, which now allows individuals to communicate, via text, any post-discharge issues to their hospital care team and to schedule appointments online with their Atlantic General Health System providers. But, that's not all.

The program, which was introduced last fall, features a number of text-based tools that allow for appointment confirmations and reschedule requests, the sharing of self-care instructions post discharge, as well as the ability to provide feedback related to patient care.

In the final phase, which is scheduled for completion this summer, individuals will be able to complete new patient paperwork electronically as well as check in for their appointments and pay co-pays with their mobile device. For more information, visit www.agh.care. ●

MD, DO, PA, FNP, CRNP...huh?

Deciphering the alphabet soup of medical credentials

By Sally Dowling, MD
Vice President of Medical Affairs
Atlantic General Hospital and
Health System

Going in for a checkup or other medical visit doesn't always mean seeing a doctor. You might see a nurse practitioner (NP) or physician assistant (PA) instead. Or you may notice your doctor has the letters DO behind their name, instead of MD. It is important to know what each credential means so that you can make informed decisions regarding your healthcare team.



● Medical Doctors

There are two different types of medical doctor degrees:

MD – this is a doctor of medicine degree, also referred to as an allopathic doctor

DO – this is a doctor of osteopathic medicine degree, also referred to as an osteopathic doctor

Training for MDs generally focuses on treating specific conditions with medication and other treatments. They are also trained in health maintenance and the prevention and early detection of disease.

DO training focuses more on the skeletal system and the interactions of the body with disease. Although not all DOs offer it to their patients, they also learn how to use osteopathic manipulation therapy (OMT), which is literally hands-on care, moving muscles, connective tissues and joints to treat injuries and manage or relieve a variety of symptoms.

Both degrees require four years of medical school after earning a bachelor's degree, and usually require the completion a residency program.

● MDs, DOs & APPs

They all focus on disease prevention and can manage your overall care.

They can examine, diagnose and treat illness and injury.

They can order tests and imaging and interpret the results.

They can write prescriptions and help you manage your medications.

● Advanced Practice Providers (APPs)

There are two different types of advanced practice providers (APPs). They both undergo extensive training.

Nurse Practitioners (NP, CRNP, FNP) – obtain a bachelor's degree in nursing, followed by a two- to four-year program that includes hands-on clinical rotations.

Physician Assistants (PA-C) – obtain a bachelor's degree, followed by a two-year program that includes clinical rotations.

In Maryland and Delaware, nurse practitioners can practice independently. Physician assistants require the supervision of a physician in these states.

Always feel free to ask your health care provider about their degree and education. They will be happy to further explain their training and answer any questions that you may have to help you make educated decisions regarding your healthcare team!

Video Visits are an Effective Way to Provide Wound Care

By Patricia Winward, BSN, RN, Clinical Coordinator
Atlantic General Wound Care Center

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been forced to make tough choices for safety and peace of mind. This is especially true when it comes to healthcare. While most all medical offices are now open to physically see patients and perform in-person examinations, some patients may still be hesitant to go to those offices if they fear exposure.

We know that patients with wounds may also have underlying health conditions that increase their chances of becoming sick if exposed to COVID-19, so our Wound Care Center offers the option of telehealth, also referred to as telemedicine or video visits.

Dr. Diane Ceruzzi has performed many telehealth appointments for patients at the wound center through our FollowMyHealth patient portal. During these video visits, she can prescribe treatment for serious and hard-to-heal wounds as well as keep tabs on the progress of her patients' wounds

and adjust the treatment therapy, if needed. Using the camera function of a computer or mobile device allows Dr. Ceruzzi to provide visual assessment of the wound and its characteristics: is it more reddened, larger or smaller in size, deeper into the skin? Is there drainage, any signs or symptoms of worsening, or infection?

These are the things that Dr. Ceruzzi assesses by telehealth, which helps her to determine the mode of treatment of the wound while the patient is unable to get to her clinic in person. The patient's verbal information is just as important as the visualization of the wound. Describing pain or discomfort, itching, or other symptoms helps Dr. Ceruzzi to diagnose and treat the needs of the patient. Video appointments can be handled easily through the FollowMyHealth portal. The main difference is that the patient or family member will need to perform the wound care that is ordered. We can

also assist with setting up home health care to provide the skilled wound care needed if it is not physically possible for the patient or family to provide wound care treatments.

If you are interested in scheduling an appointment with Dr. Ceruzzi and her staff, please call the Atlantic General Wound Care Center at 410-629-6863. Whether telemedicine is the option you feel is best, or you prefer an in-person examination, we are here for you. Let us help heal your wounds.

Atlantic General Hospital and Health System offers video visits for a wide variety of outpatient health care needs. If you are concerned about COVID-19 or have difficulty finding transportation to your appointments, speak with your care team to find out if telehealth is an option for you. ●

Partnership Formed to Address Gaps in Behavioral Health Care

It has often been said that *it takes a village* to solve some of the greatest challenges facing a community. When it comes to behavioral health, the responsibility of managing and closing existing gaps in care for individuals in crisis on Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore belongs to the TRIBE.

TRIBE is the **Tri-County Behavioral Health Engagement** regional partnership between TidalHealth Peninsula Regional, Atlantic General Hospital and nine behavioral health community partner agencies. The immediate goal is to design behavioral health crisis stabilization centers, or behavioral health urgent care centers.

TRIBE's primary function is a three-county centralized response to reduce emergency department utilization, hospital admissions and readmissions for individuals

experiencing behavioral health issues. In addition, the partnership will increase collaboration with community behavioral health and crisis agencies, including law enforcement; eliminate duplication of services; and increase opportunities to help patients experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

Here on the Lower Shore, these behavioral health crisis centers are desperately needed. Currently, individuals who need emergent behavioral health care must either wait for an appointment with a community agency provider or go to their hospital's local emergency room; neither of these scenarios is ideal.

"When opened later this year, individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis will be able to have their needs met

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New Faces & Places



Chaplain Wendy Mindte

has joined Atlantic General Hospital and Health System to provide supportive care to patients, families, and healthcare providers. For more than 28 years, Wendy has been ministering to people in communities both stateside and abroad. Her ministry experience is a cross cultural celebration of diversity. She has compassionately served rural, urban and suburban communities in our nation, as well as in Haiti, Egypt, Israel, Brazil, Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela. Wendy has served as the director in multiple church capacities and as a regional resourcing and outreach consultant to pastors, church staff, volunteer teams and community representatives across the Mid-Atlantic region. Through her experience and bachelor's degree in Missiology/World Religions and Biblical Studies, Wendy now looks forward to serving the community at Atlantic General Hospital. To learn more about Supportive Care services please visit the hospital chapel, or go to www.agh.care/SCS.



Mary Mullins, RN, BA, BSN, MSN,

has accepted the role of **Director of Cancer Services** for the John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center at Atlantic General Hospital, where she had been serving as interim director. Prior to working in the cancer center, Mary was the clinical manager for the Wound Care Center at Atlantic General. Mary held a bachelor's degree in communications from Salisbury University before she attained her associates

degree in nursing from Wor-Wic Community College as an AGH nursing scholarship student. She received her BSN from Western Governors University with support from AGH, and most recently completed her master's in nursing leadership and management from Western Governors University. Mary started her nursing career on the Medical Surgical Unit at Atlantic General Hospital.



Chaplain Eric Olson, BA, joined Supportive Care and Pastoral Care Services at Atlantic General Hospital in

December 2020. Eric began his career in mental health services after earning a bachelor's degree in psychology from Towson University in 2000. He worked at Sheppard Pratt psychiatric hospital before moving to Ocean City. Eric also works as a firefighter/paramedic for the Ocean City Fire Department, where he runs the Peer Support team, and is currently enrolled in the social work master's degree program at Salisbury University. Eric's passion is working with addictions. He serves as the Worcester County Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) coordinator. Eric is humbled to join the AGH family and hopes to add to the already strong spiritual and supportive presence at Atlantic General. To contact Eric, please call 410-629-6848 or email eolson@atlanticgeneral.org.



Bonnie Shope, MSN, RN, CPAN, joined Atlantic General Hospital in December 2020 as

Director of Surgery. Bonnie has an extensive perioperative background, most recently serving as a Nurse Manager in Surgical Services at Mission Hospital in Asheville, North Carolina, and has held leadership roles at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland. She was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Notre Dame University of Maryland and a master's in nursing from Stevenson University in Owings Mills, Maryland. Bonnie holds national board certification as a Certified Post Anesthesia Nurse (CPAN) and maintains membership in ASPAN, ANA and ANPD. She was recognized with a Nursing Spectrum Excellence in Nursing Leadership Award in 2009 and received the Maryland Nurses Association Best in Conference Poster Award in 2015. She has held adjunct faculty positions at both Notre Dame and Stevenson Universities. Bonnie has presented extensively at regional and national conferences on perioperative practices.



Laura Sturla, BSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, accepted the role of **Emergency Department Nurse**

Manager in December. Laura has been an Emergency Room nurse, with more than 20 years' experience working in urgent and high patient volume settings. She has a diverse background in pediatrics, emergency medicine and trauma. Laura has worked in our Emergency Department for 12 years and has served as a charge nurse for the last 8 years. Laura was awarded a BSN from Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. She holds national certification in both emergency nursing and pediatric emergency nursing. Laura is a two-time nominee for Atlantic General's Nurse of the Year, in 2013 and 2020.



Shane Schaffer, RN, BSN, was recently promoted to **Manager of Information Services** for Atlantic General Hospital and

Health System. Shane has 22 years of clinical experience in med-surg and emergency nursing. In 2005, he completed his Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Salisbury University, with the financial support of the hospital's nursing scholarship program. Shane transitioned to a clinical analyst role in the IT department in 2011 after being part of the team to select and build the emergency department's first electronic medical record.

Jeremy Sweeney recently accepted the position of **Information Technology Manager.** Jeremy has been a member of



the IT Department at Atlantic General Hospital since 2016 and brings 17 years of information technology experience to the position. Before joining Atlantic General

Hospital, he was the Director of Information Technology at South Moon Under, a systems administrator for Safilo USA, and an implementation specialist for Epicor. Jeremy holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies from the State University of New York at Cortland.

Awards & Recognition



Pictured from left: Matt Morris, Vice President of Patient Care Services; Dave Morris, Nicole's husband; Nicole Morris, DAISY recipient; Kelly Fox, chair of DAISY Selection Committee; and Brody Morris, Nicole's son.

DAISY Nurse Leader Award

Nicole Morris, RN, was recently recognized with a DAISY Nurse Leader Award for the role she has played during the coronavirus pandemic. As

the manager of infection prevention and employee health for Atlantic General Hospital and Health System, she has efficiently and expertly guided policy and practice change related to COVID-19 response while providing ongoing education and reassurance to staff during a very stressful time. As stated in her nomination, Niki “invests the time and energy not only to advance her practice but to freely share information with others.” She has spent countless hours reviewing research, collaborating with federal, state and local agencies, and implementing current best practices for the organization to keep our patients, staff and community safe, and continues to do so.

Atlantic General Bariatric Center Receives Quality Designation

Atlantic General Hospital has been recognized, once again, by CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst) with a Blue Distinction® Centers+ for Bariatric Surgery designation, as part of the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program. Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated healthcare facilities that show a commitment to delivering high quality patient safety and better health outcomes, based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical community and leading accreditation and quality organizations. To receive a Blue Distinction Centers+ for Bariatric Surgery designation, a healthcare facility must demonstrate success in meeting patient safety measures as well as bariatric-specific quality measures, including complication and readmission rate for



laparoscopic procedures in sleeve gastrectomy, gastric bypass, and adjustable gastric band. For more information about the program and its quality and cost metrics, visit www.bcbs.com/bluedistinction.



2020 AHA Workplace Health Achievement Award

Atlantic General Hospital received Workplace Health Achievement Gold Level recognition for 2020 from the American Heart Association (AHA) late last year.

The recognition, which is bestowed annually to qualifying U.S. employers who have taken significant steps to build a culture of health in the workplace, is based on AHA's assessment of organizations' workplace health programs and aggregate employee health data. In 2019, Atlantic General achieved Silver Level recognition.

Imaging Services Granted Reccreditation

Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Laboratory

has been granted an additional three-year term of accreditation by the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) in Echocardiography in the area of Adult Transthoracic. This latest accreditation awarded to Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Laboratory demonstrates the facility's ongoing commitment to providing quality patient care in echocardiography. Accreditation by the IAC means that Atlantic General Hospital Vascular Laboratory has undergone an intensive application and review process and is found to be in compliance with the published Standards, thus demonstrating a commitment to quality patient care in echocardiography.



The **Eunice Q Sorin Women's Diagnostic Center** recently received **reccreditation for Breast MRI and Ultrasound** through the American College of Radiology (ACR). ACR Accreditation is recognized as the gold standard in medical imaging. ●

Upcoming Events

Virtual Walk with a Doc – educate, exercise, empower

3rd Saturday of every month • 9 a.m.
[facebook.com/AtlanticGeneralHospital](https://www.facebook.com/AtlanticGeneralHospital)

Join us for our virtual Walk with a Doc the third Saturday morning of every month on the Atlantic General Hospital Facebook page, where there is a short presentation by a member of our medical or clinical staff on a current health topic. Then, walk wherever you like for the remainder of the hour. Share your post-walk selfies on social media with the hashtag #walkedwithagh.

Diabetes Support Group

Meetings for the St. Paul's and Ocean Pines groups will resume this fall.

For more information, contact the Atlantic General Diabetes & Endocrinology Center at **410-208-9761**.

Parkinson's Support Group

Second Tuesday of every month • 3:15 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Stansell House at Coastal Hospice, Ocean Pines

For individuals suffering from Parkinson's, as well as their caregivers. Group provides discussions and mutual support, as well as education on exercise, nutrition, coping techniques, medications, and developments in treatment. For more information or to register, contact Kay Kinnikin at **410-641-4765** or kkinnikin@atlantic-general.org. Limit 10 people.

CPAP Mask Fitting – appointment necessary

1st and 3rd Thursday of each month
Atlantic General Hospital Sleep Disorders Diagnostic Center, Berlin, MD

Atlantic General Hospital's Sleep Disorders Diagnostic Center hosts a mask fitting clinic for patients who are having trouble adjusting to their CPAP equipment. This is a completely FREE service, but requires the patient to call ahead to set up an appointment. To schedule, contact Robin Rohlfing at **410-641-9726**.

We're happy to announce that in-person support group meetings and educational seminars have resumed! Visit www.agh.care/calendar for other upcoming events and dates.

T.O.P.S. of Berlin – Group #169

Every Monday • 5 – 6:30 p.m.
Conference Room 1 and via conference call

Take Off Pounds Sensibly is a weekly support and educational group promoting weight loss and healthy lifestyle. Meetings currently being held in person and via conference call. To reserve an in-person spot, call Rose Campion at **410-641-0157**. For virtual attendance, dial 605-472-5789, wait for the voice command, then press 944874.

Grief Support Group

Fourth Wednesday of every month • 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Conference Room 1

Our goal is to instill hope for the future and give you skills to help you find your way, by providing a supportive place where members can share stories confidentially and spend time with others who understand. Reservation is required. Please contact Gail Mansell at **410-641-9725** or gmansell@atlanticgeneral.org.

ATLANTIC GENERAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION PRESENTS
The 2021 Robert E. Warfield Memorial Tournament



LUNCH PROVIDED BY OCEAN 13 | DINNER PROVIDED BY BOXCAR40

THRILLING CHALLENGES WITH SPECTACULAR PRIZES!
1ST-2ND-3RD PLACE TEAMS | CLOSEST TO THE PIN | LONGEST DRIVE
HOLE-IN-ONE | PUTTING CONTEST | FLOATING GREEN | HIRE A PRO
MOVE UP A TEE | CASH RAFFLES | PRIZE DRAWINGS & MORE!

SAVE THE DATE!
AGH'S 28TH ANNUAL
FALL GOLF CLASSIC
September 23, 2021
10:00AM CHECK-IN & LUNCH
12:00PM SHOTGUN START
**Ocean City Golf Club
Berlin, Maryland**
NEWPORT BAY & SEASIDE
COURSES

EVENT PLANS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
AS NEEDED DUE TO COVID-19 CONDITIONS



THANK YOU TO OUR
LEGACY SPONSOR FOR
22 CONSECUTIVE YEARS
AS TITLE SPONSOR

THANK YOU TO OUR
TOURNAMENT CO-CHAIRS
STEVEN SWEIGERT
& DANIEL BUNTING



VISION

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

MISSION

To provide a coordinated care system with access to quality care, personalized service and education to create a healthy community.

VALUES

We become the leaders in caring through these values:

- Compassion
- Accountability
- Respect
- Error-Free

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.

SAFETY

We are committed to Zero Harm for our patients, providers, care givers, and associates.

PATIENT EXPERIENCE

- Welcoming
- Outstanding
- Warm

We communicate with and treat our patients as loved ones.

ETHICAL COMMITMENT

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

Thank you for helping us carry out our vision, mission, and values.

We like feedback!



We value the opinions of our patients and their families. If you have a positive experience, we would love to share kudos with our associates, volunteers and medical staff. On the other hand, if your experience with us is less than excellent, please share it with us too, so we can improve how we provide care.

We strive every day to bring you the best care possible. There are several ways you can share your opinions with us to help us in our mission:

Fill out and return surveys you receive in the mail.

An agency conducts surveys on our behalf to collect important information about our patients' experiences. All survey responses are confidential, so please share your honest observations.

Fill out a comment card.

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

Send us an email.

Drop us a line at pr@atlanticgeneral.org. We'll 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 Relations Representatives at **410-629-1500.**

Consider giving to our *Grateful Patient Program*.

If you've had a particularly positive experience at AGH, this is a wonderful way to honor a caregiver while sustaining quality healthcare for our communities. More information and details about this program can be found at www.agh.care/honoracaregiver. ●



9733 Healthway Drive
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

Michael Franklin, *President & CEO*
mfranklin@atlanticgeneral.org

Jonathan Bauer, *Vice President of Information Services*
jbauer@atlanticgeneral.org

Ann Bergey, *Vice President of Quality/Medical Staff Services*
aerbergey@atlanticgeneral.org

Sally Dowling, M.D., *Vice President of Medical Affairs*
sdowling@atlanticgeneral.org

Kim Justice, *Vice President of Planning/Operations*
kjustice@atlanticgeneral.org

Toni Keiser, *Vice President of Public Relations*
tkeiser@atlanticgeneral.org

Cheryl Nottingham, *Vice President of Finance/CFO*
cnottingham@atlanticgeneral.org

Matthew Morris, *Vice President of Patient Care Services*
mcmorris@atlanticgeneral.org

Tim Whetstine, *Vice President of Practice Administration*
twhetstine@atlanticgeneral.org

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