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Why Are So Many Patients Turning To The Emergency Department For Primary Care?

Today our society desires immediate access to almost everything and medical care is no exception. The steadily increasing demand for instant care as well as the overall increase in the number of individuals requiring medical attention have resulted in emergency department overcrowding in hospitals nationwide.

Like hospitals across the country, Heritage Valley has seen unprecedented increases in its emergency department volume. From less than 30,000 patient visits three decades ago, the emergency departments at our Beaver and Sewickley campuses now see more than 90,000 visits annually, and that number is expected to continue to climb over the next decade. At the same time, as more patients are using the emergency department as their healthcare safety net, the acuity of their needs has increased and privacy has become an understandable expectation.

A recent industry study found that up to 40 percent of patients who go to an emergency department for medical care could have been cared for in a doctor's office. However, walk-in convenience and 24-hour access of emergency departments, as well as the growth of services provided, such as digital x-ray, lab work and other diagnostic tools, make the

emergency department an attractive option for medical care, especially in cases of minor injuries at home or the workplace as well as sports injuries.

In addition to increased volume, there are in fact more individuals in our communities that require medical attention. Dr. Thomas Pangburn, medical director of emergency medicine at Heritage Valley Health System, observes that "patients in our area are living longer with medical problems that require more diagnostic studies today than they did in the past. Because hospital stays are shorter now, patients often want more follow-up attention, sometimes shifting care to the intermediary (such as the emergency department). In some cases, the emergency department has become a 'short stay diagnostic and therapeutic unit' rather than a triage point in the health system."

To serve the dramatic increase in the volume of patients seen in our emergency department, Heritage Valley has worked diligently to effectively manage patient care and patient flow while investing in our future by expanding and renovating our emergency departments at both the Beaver and Sewickley campuses (see construction updates on page 3).

"If patients have a situation or condition that requires prompt medical attention but is not life-threatening, I would encourage them to schedule a same-day appointment with one of our many primary care physicians where most illnesses and injuries can be treated just as effectively and in fact more economically," said Dr. Oliver Hayes, Heritage Valley's Chief Medical Officer. "However, recognizing the overwhelming increase in emergency room usage, Heritage Valley has committed to expanding its departments at both the Beaver and Sewickley campuses as well as continued to explore ways we can meet the immediate needs of patients with non-life threatening conditions, such as through our new Convenient Care Center" (see article on page 2).



Talking With CEO Norm Mistry



Welcome to the winter edition of *Heritage Valley Community Connection*. This issue focuses on emergency medicine and how it has become one of the largest services we provide. Between our

emergency departments at Heritage Valley Beaver and Heritage Valley Sewickley, we see over 90,000 patients annually.

Inside this issue, we also provide an update on the progress of our \$35M construction projects. Phase One of the Heritage Valley Sewickley emergency department renovations is complete and at the Beaver campus, the dramatic progress on the building addition is evident with the steel structure in place.

Finally, as a way to increase our services to the Beaver area and ease emergency department volume, we are proud to announce the opening of our new Convenient Care Center. With extended hours of operation, this facility will accommodate patients with minor medical conditions or injuries when an appointment is not immediately available at their primary care physician office.

Whatever your healthcare needs may be this winter, we thank you for choosing Heritage Valley Health System. We are proud to continue our unique connection to the communities we serve.

Norman F. Mistry
President/CEO
Heritage Valley Health System

Community Health Needs Assessment Being Conducted

Heritage Valley Health System is conducting a Community Health Needs Assessment survey this winter. This online survey will be open to the public and provide information on access to healthcare, health status, health behaviors and the extent of certain health conditions in our communities. We hope you will take a few minutes to complete the confidential survey. Please visit our website, www.heritagevalley.org and look for a link to the survey at the top of the "Heritage Valley News" section.

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Heritage Valley Convenient Care Center - Beaver

Beginning in February 2009, Heritage Valley Health System will offer medical services at the Heritage Valley Convenient Care Center - Beaver. This facility has been developed to increase the options for the care of minor illnesses and injury for area residents. The center is owned and operated by Tri-State Medical Group (a subsidiary of Heritage Valley) and is staffed by certified registered nurse practitioners and physician assistants supervised by physicians. It is not a substitute for care by your primary care physician, but rather another integrated alternative for care of minor illness and injury.

This distinctive Heritage Valley model leverages our strong electronic health record, electronic prescription program, and automatic medical record delivery to Heritage Valley associated physicians. The combination of these factors provides an unprecedented continuity of care for patients choosing this convenient, efficient, cost-effective site for the management of minor illness and injury.

The facility is open to all patients and will accept most medical insurances. For most insurers, the "specialist" copay will apply and be collected at the time of service. Care for uninsured individuals will be offered at posted rates. The site is located at 247 3rd Street, Beaver, Pennsylvania (at the corner of 3rd Street and Lincoln Avenue). For more information, please visit our website at www.heritagevalley.org or call 1-877-771-HVHS (4847).



COMMUNITY LABORATORY FACILITIES

Heritage Valley Health Center - Moon
Moon Twp., PA
(412) 262-4161

Heritage Valley Laboratory Draw Site - Hopewell
Hopewell, PA
(724) 378-7351

Heritage Valley Laboratory Draw Site - Edgeworth Square
Edgeworth, PA
(412) 749-8312

Heritage Valley Laboratory Draw Site - Baden
Baden, PA
(724) 869-1517

Heritage Valley Laboratory Draw Site - Chippewa
Chippewa, PA
(724) 847-2335

Heritage Valley Family Practice Center
Beaver Falls, PA
(724) 843-6000

Heritage Valley Women's Health Center
Center Twp., PA
(724) 378-7000

Sewickley Valley Medical Group Laboratory

Ambridge, PA • (724) 266-1261
Leetsdale, PA • (412) 741-3367
Robinson Twp., PA • (412) 788-0901

Tri-State Medical Group Laboratory

Beaver, PA • (724) 774-5030
Calcutta, OH • (330) 386-8855
Cranberry, PA • (724) 778-9303
Ellwood City, PA • (724) 758-2723

HOSPITALS

Heritage Valley Beaver
Beaver, PA
(724) 728-7000

Heritage Valley Sewickley
Sewickley, PA
(412) 741-6600

OUTPATIENT SURGICAL CENTERS

Heritage Valley Surgery Center
Moon Twp., PA
(412) 264-7721

Surgery Center at Edgeworth Commons
Edgeworth, PA
(412) 741-1170

OUTPATIENT REHAB CENTERS

Signature Rehab - Beaver
Beaver, PA
(724) 770-0172

Signature Rehab - Hopewell
Hopewell, PA
(724) 857-4000

Signature Rehab - Chippewa
Chippewa, PA
(724) 891-4000

Signature Rehab - New Brighton YMCA
New Brighton, PA
(724) 847-2791

Signature Rehab - Sewickley
Edgeworth, PA
(412) 749-7178

Signature Rehab - Thorn Run
Moon Twp., PA
(412) 264-8917

Signature Rehab - West Allegheny
Imperial, PA
(724) 695-8302

COMMUNITY SATELLITE FACILITIES

Heritage Valley Diagnostic Imaging Center - Thorn Run
Moon Twp., PA
(412) 262-6464

Construction Update At Heritage Valley Sewickley

Phase One of the emergency department construction project at Heritage Valley Sewickley is now complete. The space was approved for occupancy in early January and opened on January 12th with 11 new exam rooms, a nurse's station and part of the new waiting room. Designed with input from nurses, physicians and patients, each new exam room is private and includes the latest technology in patient care. Also, the behavioral health area of the emergency department opened with three new seclusion rooms and a family waiting room.

Work on the new front entrance and staircase continues and is expected to be completed by the end of February. Phase Two will consist of constructing ten new exam rooms and two trauma rooms in the remainder of the old emergency department as well as a new ambulance canopy and outside walkway. Once Phase Two is completed in mid-August, there will be one more phase of construction, with the entire project expected to be completed by February 2010.



Construction Update At Heritage Valley Beaver

The construction at Heritage Valley Beaver reached a significant milestone in late January with the completion of the steel frame for the new addition to the facility. Masonry work for the elevator shaft and stairwell as well as insulation and enclosure of the steel skeleton will begin soon. This will allow internal work to continue through the winter. The project is on time and on budget and will include the opening of the new main entrance and GI lab in October 2009 and the new emergency department in the fall of 2009.

Other recent construction at the Beaver campus includes the opening of a new stairwell inside the current Temporary A entrance, which leads to the Outpatient Test Center, the Gift Shop and the Coffee Shop. Free valet parking at the Temporary A entrance continues to be popular with our patients and visitors and will be available for the duration of the project. Finally, bus service is available for pick-up and drop-off at Entrance D.



BusinessCare - Hopewell

Hopewell, PA
(724) 857-4004

BusinessCare - Chippewa

Chippewa, PA
(724) 847-4417

Heritage Valley Open MRI

Robinson Twp., PA
(412) 788-0901

LIFE Beaver County

Center Twp., PA
(724) 378-5400

Heritage Valley Rheumatology

Aliquippa, PA
(724) 857-0591

Staunton Clinic - Edgeworth Square

Edgeworth, PA
(412) 749-7330

Staunton Clinic - Bellevue

Bellevue, PA
(412) 734-5507

Staunton Clinic - Rochester

Rochester, PA
(724) 775-5208 or 1-800-400-6180

Staunton Clinic - West Allegheny

Imperial, PA
(724) 695-2411

Staunton Clinic - Wexford

Wexford, PA
(724) 935-5177

Heritage Valley Diagnostic Center - Calcutta

Calcutta, OH
(330) 386-8855

Heritage Valley Diagnostic Center - Cranberry

Cranberry Twp., PA
(724) 778-9303

Heritage Valley Diagnostic Center - Ellwood

Ellwood City, PA
(724) 758-2723

Heritage Valley Convenient Care Center - Beaver

Beaver, PA
1-877-771-HVHS (4847)

UPMC/HERITAGE VALLEY CANCER CENTERS

Heritage Valley Beaver

Beaver, PA
(724) 773-7616

UPMC West Building

Moon Twp., PA
(412) 604-2020

AFFILIATED PHYSICIAN GROUPS

Sewickley Valley Medical Group

44 physicians • 19 office locations
Specialties include internal medicine, family practice, cardiology, gastroenterology and pulmonary

Tri-State Medical Group

60 physicians • 27 office locations
Specialties include internal medicine, family practice, occupational medicine, cardiology, geriatrics, rheumatology, general surgery and cardiovascular and thoracic surgery

Tri-State Pediatrics

13 physicians • 7 office locations

Tri-State Obstetrics and Gynecology

6 physicians • 5 office locations
Specialties include obstetrics, gynecological care, infertility, laser surgery, urogynecology, LEEP, laparoscopic surgery, water cystometrics, female incontinence, and minimally invasive gynecological surgery

For more information on our locations or to find a physician near you, visit www.heritagevalley.org or call 1-877-771-HVHS (4847).

Physician Profile

Thomas L. Pangburn, MD



Dr. Thomas Pangburn is a lifelong resident of Sewickley. He attended Gettysburg College where he graduated Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and attended the emergency medicine residency there as well.

Dr. Pangburn was an attending emergency department physician at Heritage Valley Sewickley for the past 12 years, the last five of which he also served as the emergency department Medical Director. He was recently appointed as the emergency department Medical Director for the entire health system.

He is the proud husband of Laura and father of Martha, Thomas and Mary. In his spare time you will find him renovating his 1860s farmhouse, shooting skeet, or fly fishing.

Foundations Corner

The Center Civic Women's Club added \$17,690 to the CCWC Cancer Fund at the The Medical Center Foundation. The Fund assists female patients from Beaver County who are receiving treatment for cancer.



Pictured are (left to right) Martha Gropp, President, Center Civic Women's Club; Cliff Glovier, Director of Development; Fran Miller, Past-President; and Darlene Reichenbach, Event Director.

To support our Foundations, please call 412-749-7121 or make a gift online at www.heritagevalley.org.



Announcements

Heritage Valley Health System Announces New Board Members

The board of directors of Heritage Valley Health System recently announced three new board members and one returning member. New members include **Scott Elste**, **Gwen Manto**, and **Allen Wolfert, MD**. Returning to the board is **Garry Hogan**.



Scott Elste
General Manager,
Keystone Manufacturing and Chairman,
Sewickley Valley Hospital Foundation



Garry Hogan
Vice President & Branch Manager of
Parker/Hunter, a division of Janney
Montgomery Scott



Gwen Manto
Executive Vice President & Chief
Merchandizing Officer,
Dick's Sporting Goods



Allen Wolfert, MD
Teredesai McCann and Associates,
and President, Heritage Valley
Sewickley Medical Staff

Sewickley Valley Hospital Foundation Board Announces New Members

The Sewickley Valley Hospital Foundation recently welcomed four new members to its board of directors. They are **Charles Driscoll**, **Sean Henderson**, **Shelly McQuone, MD** and **Lynn Vescio, RN, BSN, MS**.



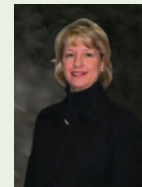
Charles Driscoll
Vice President & Financial Advisor,
First National Bank Wealth Management



Sean Henderson
District Manager, Kelly Services
(Pittsburgh) & Chairman,
Airport Area Chamber of Commerce



Shelly McQuone, MD
Partner, Straka and McQuone, MD



Lynn Vescio, RN, BSN, MS
Director of Performance Improvement,
VHA Pennsylvania

Linda Homyk Promoted To Vice President



Heritage Valley Health System promoted Linda Homyk to the position of Vice President of Patient Care Services at Heritage Valley Sewickley. Homyk began her long-standing career at Heritage Valley Sewickley in 1980 as a registered nurse for the Oncology and Telemetry units. She became manager of the Telemetry Unit in January 1992, where she served until she was promoted to Director of Critical/Emergency Services in 2001. She received a B.S. in Nursing from LaRoche College in 2001 and has maintained a Critical Care Certification since 1992. Homyk recently completed her Master's Degree in Nursing from Carlow University. In her role as vice president, Homyk will be responsible for the quality of nursing and patient care at Heritage Valley Sewickley and the efficient and effective delivery of these services.