

Healthy Halifax



Fall 2016

YOUR RESOURCE FOR BETTER LIVING

High-Tech, *High-Touch*

EARLY DETECTION HELPS TO PREVENT, TREAT BREAST CANCER

In medicine, it's called the "continuum of care." The term refers to a standard of continuous monitoring of a patient's health over his or her lifetime and is a major factor in early breast cancer detection.

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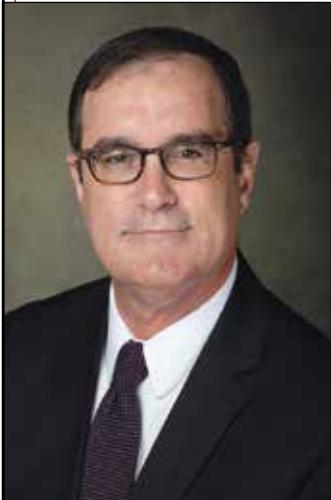
- + Great 100 Nurses at Halifax
- + Fight the Flu
- + Improving Heart Health



IN MY VIEW

FROM PATIENT EXPERIENCE TO SAFETY AND THE QUALITY OF CARE SYSTEM, nurses are the key components of the culture of any hospital. They aren't just compassionate and kind, they have all the medical smarts of doctors as well. They are the smiles of encouragement and the eyes of understanding, and they often go unsung.

Today's nurses face increasing responsibilities, compounded by a number of challenges including new technology and complex systems, creating ongoing education needs. A shortage of both practicing nurses and those entering the profession calls for nurses to be engaged on many levels. A shift from a focus on healing to disease prevention and well-being takes a more proactive approach, and our nurses are up for the challenge.



Our nurses are important partners with physicians and staff in the delivery of patient

care, and they often act as advocates for both their patients and staff members.

I was recently reading an article outlining the top 10 qualities of great nurses and was proud to be able to identify these same qualities in our nursing staff here at Halifax Regional. The list included characteristics such as:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Communication skills | 6. Interpersonal skills |
| 2. Emotional stability | 7. Physical endurance |
| 3. Empathy | 8. Problem-solving skills |
| 4. Flexibility | 9. Quick response |
| 5. Attention to detail | 10. Respect |

Recently, three of our nurses joined the ranks of those being recognized for professional distinction by the Great 100 Nurses of North Carolina Inc. This year's Halifax Regional honorees were Jennifer Qualls, RN; Judy Williams, ECC, RN; and Virgie Clay, RN.

I'm extremely proud of all our nurses and appreciative of the many contributions they make, both professionally and personally, to Halifax Regional and the Roanoke Valley community.

WILL MAHONE, PRESIDENT
wmahone@halifaxrmc.org 

24/7 Care

Halifax Regional is now partnering with Specialists On Call (SOC), the nation's most experienced

provider of physician consultations via telemedicine, to deliver 24/7 TeleNeurology, TelePsychiatry and TeleIntensivist coverage to our patients.



Halifax Regional is now one of more than 350 hospitals nationwide that partners with the SOC system through managed service solutions.

Halifax Regional understands that technology is changing the way emergency medicine is practiced, and alongside this industry-leading platform, we can continue to offer a commitment to unparalleled service.

Whether it's our highly qualified in-house physicians or our equally capable SOC physicians, patients can always be assured consistent service and clinical excellence — no matter when you need them.

Dog Days

A common question heard in the hallways of Halifax Regional is, "When is Elle coming back?" Patients and staff can't seem to get enough of Elle, the nationally recognized, award-winning, pitbull patient therapy dog. Each month, Elle and her handler, Leah Brewer, visit patients at Halifax Regional, spreading unconditional love to those in need.

Halifax Regional, Brewer and Elle took care in creating a unique pet therapy program with both patient comfort and safety in mind. Studies have shown pet visits have been linked to many positive therapeutic outcomes including lowered blood pressure, improved cardiovascular health and less pain medication needed for patients following a pet therapy visit. Additional benefits include lowered anxiety, brightened emotional outlook, increased mental stimulation, and maintained or increased motor skills.

Elle is certified through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs and has been trained and tested in a variety of scenarios such as how to move alongside a wheelchair, how to negotiate an elevator, and how to behave when faced with loud noises or screaming children.

Brewer has also had special training. "Part of my training has been to recognize when people are uncomfortable," she says. "We have encountered people who upon first glance were uncomfortable around Elle, and for those people we don't force Elle upon them. But we've learned that after a few minutes of witnessing how loving and well-mannered Elle is, they become the first in line to pet her and give her a high five."

A busy canine, Elle recently returned from Hollywood, California, where she attended the 2016 Hero Dog Awards and walked the red carpet in support of this year's contestants.

Elle brings comfort to many Halifax Regional patients.



Fending Off THE FLU



As the flu season is now underway, you may be wondering about the safety and effectiveness of the flu shot.

Here's the bottom line: Getting a flu shot is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself and the people around you from getting the flu. It is especially essential for those with chronic health conditions, pregnant women, older adults and young children. Vaccinations for all who come into contact with infants younger than 6 months old is critical, as babies are very susceptible to the flu but are too young to receive the vaccine.

SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

There are many misconceptions about flu vaccines.

Here are the facts:

- The vaccine does not cause flu or flu-like illnesses.
- Vomiting, diarrhea and stomachaches are rarely the main symptoms of flu.
- Protection declines over time, so vaccination is needed once a year.
- Mild reactions at the injection site are common, and may include soreness, redness or swelling. Serious reactions are rare and can be treated.
- You can benefit from getting a flu shot as long as flu viruses are present.

The flu is believed to be spread by droplets made when people cough, sneeze or talk.

Besides the flu vaccine, here are other ways to help prevent the flu:



Wash hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.



Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth unless you have just washed your hands.



Eat well, drink plenty of water and get enough rest.

FIGHT IT

The flu can put you at risk for serious complications, so don't wait to be vaccinated. Flu shots are offered at HRMC's Roanoke Clinic, and are covered by most health plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. Call **252-537-9176** for information.



The new crop of Great 100 Nurses from Halifax Regional: (from left) Jennifer Qualls, RN; Judy Williams, ECC, RN; and Virgie Clay, RN.

►► Nursing Pride

Halifax Regional nurses Jennifer Qualls, RN; Judy Williams, ECC, RN; and Virgie Clay, RN, were recently recognized as three of this year's Great 100 Nurses of North Carolina.

Just 100 nurses are selected from a pool of more than 86,000 registered nurses currently working across the state of North Carolina. Since its inception in 1989, 26 Halifax Regional nurses have been recognized among the Great 100 Nurses in North Carolina for their outstanding professional ability and their contributions to improving community health. This distinctive achievement is designed to promote nursing excellence.

"We are very fortunate here at Halifax Regional to have some of the finest nurses in the state," Karen Daniels, vice president, nursing, Halifax Regional, says. "It is particularly gratifying that our nurses are recognized by their peers for demonstrating excellence in practice and commitment in their profession."

The three nurses recently took part in a gala event hosted in tribute to all the 2016 Great 100 Nurse honorees. This year marks the 27th Anniversary of the Great 100; it is always special to have Halifax Regional nurses among those honored.



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For Terry Mason, RT, mammography supervisor of the Radiology Department at Halifax Regional Medical Center, and her staff, care is the watchword for every patient, every day.

“We want and try to give every patient the special feeling that we understand, that we are with you in this and really do care about you,” Mason says. “We cry and laugh with our patients, and hug and pray for them. We are truly neighbors taking care of neighbors.”

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States, and rates tend to be higher in the counties of Halifax and Northampton compared to the North Carolina average. While

“You have to be a special person to work in mammography, because you really get attached to and care about your patients.”

—Bill Navarro, BBA, RT

October is designated National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Halifax Regional is dedicated to breast cancer detection and treatment year-round.

THE TECHNOLOGY OF COMPASSION

Cutting-edge medicine plays a major role in early diagnosis at Halifax Regional, which is committed to acquiring new technologies that benefit patients, says Bill Navarro, BBA, RT, director of the Radiology Department.

“The last five years really demonstrate that commitment,” he says. “We’ve purchased fully digital mammography equipment with computer-aided detection (CAD) software, brought in a digital ultrasound machine with software that

can help distinguish between tumors and fluid-filled masses, and moved to performing sentinel node biopsies. That’s a track record of being on the edge of technology, ensuring we provide the best care possible.”

CAD software gives radiologists a second look at breast imaging and alerts them to areas that may be of concern. Sentinel node biopsies may eliminate the need to remove all lymph nodes under the arm to check for cancer spread.

Beyond the technology, Halifax Regional mammographers and X-ray technologists continue the close relationships that characterize the Mammography Center’s commitment to personal care. “You have to be a special person to work in mammography, because you really get attached to and care about your patients,” Navarro says. “You know the patients you see are the same people you’re going to see at the grocery store and your kids’ baseball games.”



The Supersonic Aixplorer system offers advanced ultrasound imaging.

The Mammography Center is accredited by the American College of Radiology, the Food and Drug Administration and the state of North Carolina. Meeting the strenuous requirements of these agencies means equipment is tested year-round, diagnostic results and policies are frequently audited, and education for all staff members is ongoing.

BREAKING BARRIERS

Mason and her staff are concerned for local women who do not undergo mammograms or follow up on them for financial reasons. While Medicare, Medicaid and many insurance companies pay for the mammogram itself, patients sometimes lack the funds for high insurance premiums, deductibles or needed follow-up. Halifax Regional is addressing this problem through grants from the Susan G. Komen North Carolina Triangle to the Coast Affiliate and donations from local groups, aimed at covering both mammograms and any necessary follow-up.

With the strong resources available in Halifax and Northampton counties, there is no reason for any woman to miss out on this critical health protection.

Two-time breast cancer survivor Judith Barrett, whose cancers were caught early by mammography, affirms this idea: “I think we have an absolutely fantastic mammography and cancer treatment center here in Roanoke Rapids. Friends who have gone out of town for treatment have been told by their doctors there, ‘You do know you can get the same benefit in your own community and not have to travel.’”

START EARLY

Early detection really is your best protection against breast cancer. Call Halifax Regional Mammography at **252-535-3417** to learn more.



SUPPORT GROUPS

Heart Failure Support Group

Encouragement and helpful information in a group setting.

Second Wednesday of the month (Nov. 9, Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8), 4 p.m.

Halifax Regional
250 Smith Church Road
Roanoke Rapids
Annex Building, #1 Classroom
Information: Contact Ellen Glover, MPH, RN, outpatient case manager, at 252-535-8716 or eglover@halifaxrhc.org.

Diabetes Education & Support Group

Meetings are FREE and open to anyone with diabetes or interested in diabetes education.

Nov. 1, 11 a.m.

Littleton Senior Center
Information: Contact Kim McDermott, Roanoke Valley Diabetes Resource Center, at 252-535-8478 or kmcdermott@halifaxrhc.org.

Nov. 14, 6:30 p.m.

Halifax Regional
250 Smith Church Road
Roanoke Rapids
Annex Building, #1 Classroom
Information: Contact Carrie L. Davis, RN/BSN/CDE, patient education coordinator, at 252-535-8276 or cdavis@halifaxrhc.org.

Nov. 15, 11 a.m.

Jo Story Senior Center
Information: Contact Kim McDermott, Roanoke Valley Diabetes Resource Center, at 252-535-8478 or kmcdermott@halifaxrhc.org.

HEALTH OBSERVANCES

October

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

November

American Diabetes Month

December

World AIDS Day (Dec. 1)

January

National Blood Donor Month

February

American Heart Month



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Second Saturday Hike at the Roanoke Canal Trail

All hikes are scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. (so hikers should arrive early). The hikes still happen if there is rain or snow; however, they are cancelled in the event of a storm. Admission to the museum is FREE following the hike for anyone who participates in the hike.

Nov. 12 and Dec. 10, 9 a.m.

Roanoke Canal Museum and Trail
Roanoke Rapids

Information: Call 252-537-2769.

Roanoke Valley Farmers Market

Now accepting EBT/SNAP.

Wednesdays and Fridays, 8 a.m.–6 p.m., Saturdays, 8 a.m.–2 p.m.

(May–November)

378 NC Highway 158
Roanoke Rapids

Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative

Monthly Play Days are FREE recreational events for the whole family hosted by Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative (RVCHI).

Nov. 15, 3–5 p.m.

4-H Rural Life Center

Dec. 20, 3–5 p.m.

Ledgerwood Park
Roanoke Rapids

Jan. 17, 3–5 p.m.

John 3:16 Center
Littleton

Feb. 21, 3–5 p.m.

Aurelian Springs Elementary

Information: Visit GetFitStayFitRV.com.

A Million HEARTS

HALIFAX REGIONAL HAS BEEN SELECTED BY THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS)



as one of 516 awardees in 47 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia to help reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes among

millions of Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries. The Million Hearts® Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction Model will work to decrease cardiovascular disease risk by assessing an individual patient's risk for heart attack or stroke and applying prevention interventions.

“Halifax Regional has been a leading partner in improving the heart health of our local community members for more than 100 years, so we're honored to have been chosen as an intervention group for the Million Hearts Model,” says Will Mahone, Halifax Regional president and CEO. “We're looking forward to the improved health outcomes and healthcare cost savings this program will help provide.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), heart disease is the leading cause of death and a major contributor to disability in the United States. Practitioners participating in the Million Hearts Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction Model will use a widely accepted, data-driven predictive modeling approach to generate personalized risk scores and develop specific plans in partnership with patients to reduce the risk of having heart attack or stroke.

Halifax Regional is participating in the intervention group and will work with Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries to determine their 10-year individual risk for heart attack or stroke.

This model is part of Million Hearts, a broad national initiative co-led by CMS and CDC to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. Million Hearts brings together communities, health systems, nonprofit organizations, federal agencies and private-sector partners from across the country to fight heart disease and stroke.



PUT YOUR HEART IN IT

For more information on the Million Hearts initiative, visit millionhearts.hhs.gov.

HEALTHY EATING

Sweet Potato and Pumpkin Soup

Yields: 5 servings

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3 tsp canola oil | ¼ tsp ginger |
| ½ quart chicken broth | ¼ tsp allspice |
| ½ cup diced yellow onion | ¼ tsp cinnamon |
| ¼ cup diced celery | 8 oz canned pumpkin |
| ½ cup diced carrots | ½ cup heavy whipping cream |
| 1 lb fresh sweet potato, diced | ½ tsp kosher salt |
| ¼ tsp nutmeg | 1½ tbsp sherry wine (optional) |

1. In heavy bottom pot, 3 quarts or larger, heat canola oil over medium heat. Add onions and celery, and cook for 2–3 minutes over low heat or until onions are tender.
2. Add carrots and cook for 2–3 additional minutes. Then add sweet potatoes and spices, stir to combine and cook for an additional 3–5 minutes.
3. Add sherry wine to deglaze pan. Turn heat to simmer, add chicken broth, and cook for 15 minutes or until sweet potatoes are tender.
6. Add pumpkin and cream to soup, blend and simmer for 2–3 minutes.
7. Transfer in batches to food processor and puree until smooth.



Sweet Potato Shepherd's Pie

Yields: 8 servings

- 1½ pints beef broth
- 2 lbs fresh sweet potato (yam)
- 2 oz canola oil
- 1 lb ground turkey
- 1 lb ground beef
- ½ lb mushrooms, sliced
- ½ lb carrots, diced
- ½ lb celery, diced
- ¼ cup onion, diced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- ½ cup orange juice
- 1 tsp Worcestershire
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp cider vinegar
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon



1. Boil sweet potatoes until soft, drain and place in a large bowl with brown sugar and cinnamon.

2. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat, add ground beef and ground turkey, and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add mushrooms, carrots, celery and onions to ground meat and cook for another 5 minutes.

4. Add orange juice, beef broth, Worcestershire, salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar to ground meat. Mix gently to combine. Simmer an additional 20 minutes or until meat and vegetables are fully cooked.

5. Place meat and vegetable mixture in large casserole dish and spread mashed sweet potatoes over mixture.
6. Bake in preheated 375 F oven for approximately 10 minutes.

HALIFAX HEALTHLINK

View and manage your personal hospital health record 24/7 with the Halifax HealthLink patient portal at **halifaxhealthlink.halifaxregional.org**.
Questions? Contact **252-535-8098** or email **portallogin@halifaxrhc.org**.

FIND A PHYSICIAN

Looking for a primary care provider or specialist close to home? Visit **physicians.halifaxregional.org** to find doctors, office locations and more.

VOLUNTEER

Share your time and talents with Halifax Regional! For more information, contact Kay Hines, volunteer coordinator, at **252-535-8687**.

THIRTY-SECOND EDITION

Healthy Halifax is the quarterly newsletter of Halifax Regional. Please contact Jerrica Edmonds with questions or comments at **252-535-8743** or **jedmonds@halifaxrhc.org**. © 2016, Halifax Regional Medical Center.

ONLINE BILL PAY

Halifax Regional now offers Online Bill Pay. If you've been to Halifax Regional for services recently, you may have received a statement from Patientco in the mail. Your new financial statement will provide you with a variety of payment options. To pay online, visit **gopatientco.com**.