

GETTING BACK TO A HEALTHY LIFE EDITION

# LEADINGEDGE

 MOUNTAIN HEALTH NETWORK

SUMMER 2022

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*Eric Carter, DO, a gastroenterologist  
at HIMG Gastroenterology*



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## Message from Kevin Yingling, RPh, MD, FACP Mountain Health Network CEO

As I write this message, friends, family and colleagues in Eastern Kentucky are struggling to recover from devastating floods. We at Mountain Health, along with our academic health system partners, Marshall Health and the Joan. C. Edwards School of Medicine, have reached out to our Kentucky

counterparts to provide much-needed clinicians and resources, in addition to our heartfelt thoughts and prayers. Seeing neighbors pull together to help each other is a prime example of the resilience of our region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly tested that resilience, but as you'll see in the pages of this magazine, our team's commitment to providing high-quality health care to all we serve led to developing innovative solutions. For example, the Hoops Family Children's Hospital staff was recognized for providing children with specialized care close to home throughout the pandemic.

I am moved by the relationship between Dr. Eric Carter and his dear friend, Isaiah, who donated part of his liver so that Dr. Carter could still be with us. THIS is why we do what we do, every single day. Dr. Carter's journey, which you'll read about, is a touching story of faith, friendship, and community.

Dr. Carter's story also offers a reminder of the importance of a primary care provider relationship. As a primary care physician, I have had the privilege of helping patients resolve minor issues before they became major ones. I have also experienced the anguish of explaining to patients they waited too long to seek care. If you do not have a primary care provider, I urge you to make your appointment as soon as possible.

Another success story of health care close to home is the St. Mary's Medical Center Ironton Campus, which just celebrated its 10th anniversary. The Ironton community was without emergency medical services for nearly a decade before St. Mary's ER Ironton opened its doors. We are so appreciative of our community partners who helped make the Ironton campus a reality and look forward to celebrating many more milestones.

Mountain Health continues to fulfill its commitment of creating a regional health network that improves quality, access and affordability. We welcome the outstanding physicians and staff at Scott Orthopedic Center and look forward to welcoming Pleasant Valley Hospital to our regional health system in the near future.

Mountain Health was recently recognized with several awards for consistently providing highly reliable health care. Our staff and physicians feel a great deal of pride that their work for patients rises to national recognition. This edition also shares medical advances in radiation oncology and heart rhythm treatment, as well as the exciting expansion of the St. Mary's School of Nursing to grow the next generation of caregivers and health care leaders.

Thank you for choosing Mountain Health Network for your health care needs and for giving us the opportunity to share our progress with you.

**President & Chief Executive Officer**  
**Mountain Health Network**  
Kevin Yingling, MD

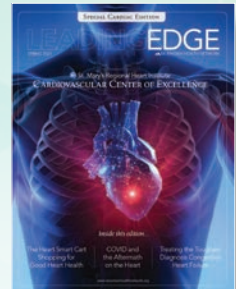
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*Dr. Gary Cremeans talking with patient.*

# PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS: Your partners for good health!

Primary care is the day-to-day health care given by a health care provider. This provider acts as the first contact and principal point of continuing care for patients, coordinating other specialist care the patient may need.

“Primary care is the gatekeeper of medicine, said Gary Cremeans, MD, Marshall Health primary care provider at the Cabell Huntington Hospital Family Medical Center at Merritt’s Creek and an associate professor of family medicine at the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine. “We make sure you don’t have different kinds of diseases, like diabetes, or high blood pressure. We also take care of those things.”

The importance of having a primary care provider (PCP) extends beyond their ability to cover a number of different health issues. PCPs can also personalize care, delivering specific needs for their patients instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.

Here are five more reasons you need a PCP:

## 1) To remain healthier

A PCP is not just for when you’re sick, they’re also there to help you stay well. Their knowledge and familiarity with their patients can help catch changes in a person’s day-to-day health more quickly and save valuable time explaining medical history. Studies have shown that adults with a PCP are healthier than those who do not have one as PCPs regularly check for serious, chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and high blood pressure and help schedule annual cancer screenings.

## 2) To manage chronic illnesses

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), six in 10 Americans have a chronic illness. By working with a PCP, you can lead a healthier life and keep these illnesses under control.

## 3) To establish a medical home base

Having a PCP gives you someone who can follow your health through the years, ensuring your health care treatment plans are working and on the right track. A PCP also gives you a place for all of your medical history.



## 4) To provide access to specialists

PCPs can provide easy access and referrals to a wide variety of specialists, such as neurologists and cardiologists. A PCP can work with these specialists to ensure they have all of your current medical information.

## 5) Lower out of pocket costs

Seeing a PCP on a regular basis can reduce your health care costs since you are more likely to stop serious illnesses from developing. Studies also show that people who keep up their PCP appointments are hospitalized less and have fewer visits to the ER.

“When you establish a relationship with a PCP, you become more comfortable with the person,” Dr. Cremeans said. “You might think of something you really hadn’t thought about before that’s going on with you that may actually be a serious problem. Your PCP can take care of that by either fixing it or getting you referred to the appropriate place.”

*If you are in need of a PCP, you can find one near you by visiting [www.mountainhealthnetwork.org/healthylife](http://www.mountainhealthnetwork.org/healthylife).*

# Physician's own medical journey provides new understanding of his patients

Physicians are always telling their patients to pay attention to their bodies and to share anything that doesn't seem quite right.

When Eric Carter, DO, a gastroenterologist at HIMG Gastroenterology, was forced to follow his own advice, it led him on a journey that ended in a medical miracle for him and his family and a new understanding of his patients' needs.

In August 2020, Dr. Carter was driving home from work when he began feeling unwell. His eyes were turning yellow, so he knew he needed medical care as soon as possible. On Aug. 8, he was diagnosed with primary sclerosing cholangitis, a rare liver disorder that causes scarring of the bile ducts. The scarring transformed into cholangiocarcinoma, an aggressive form of cancer. Dr. Carter was only 36 years old at the time of his diagnosis.

A liver transplant was Dr. Carter's only chance for a complete cure, but because the cancer had spread out of the bile ducts and into the liver tissue, the doctors at the Mayo Clinic deemed him ineligible for a deceased donor liver transplant.

"It was a huge blow," Dr. Carter said. "I had a beautiful wife and three kids who I was not ready to leave."

Dr. Carter was sent home for chemotherapy at the Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center and given two years to live. After nearly eight months of treatment, Dr. Carter was referred to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center to investigate whether a transplant could now be an option. Since the cancer had not spread any further, he was told he was a candidate for a live donor transplant.

After being placed on the transplant list, his wife started a Facebook page, "A Liver for Eric." The response was overwhelming.

"Within 24 hours, I already had three potential donors, with others on a waiting list," Dr. Carter said. "It was people I knew and people I didn't know. The page gave us a platform to tell our



story and for people to offer prayer and support. It was a Godsend."

Within a month, a close friend of Dr. Carter's, Isaiah Haynie, was determined to be a match and a surgery was scheduled. On Dec. 9, 2021, a year to the day that he was rejected for a deceased donor transplant, Dr. Carter and his friend underwent surgery.

The surgery was a success, but there was still a long recovery. Finally, on April 11, 2022, Dr. Carter returned to work at HIMG.

"My first day was something," he said. "My patients have shared in my

happiness. I had a little bit of nervousness at first doing procedures, but it's like riding a bike."

After everything Dr. Carter experienced during his medical journey, he now has more empathy for his patients. "I'm more cognizant of the tests I order for them," he said. "I realize things that once seemed simple to me can cause anxiety for others,"

While Dr. Carter's disease is extremely rare, he says it still offers a good example of the importance of a primary care provider (PCP).

"Sometimes our bodies won't tell us something is going on, or the signs will be subtle, and you need a PCP to catch those signs and help you stay up to date on your screenings. It can pay off in the end."

While Dr. Carter still has things to look for due to the risk of reoccurrence of the cancer, he is incredibly grateful and eager to pay it forward to the community who supported him during his journey.

"I have gotten my life back," he said. "I owe it to the community to give back. Using my skills as a physician is my way to give back."

*To schedule an appointment with Dr. Carter, call HIMG Gastroenterology at 304.528.4660. To learn more about becoming a registered donor, visit [donatelife.net](http://donatelife.net).*

*Dr. Eric Carter with his friend, Isaiah Haynie, who donated part of his liver.*



# St. Mary's Medical Center Campus Ironton celebrates 10 years of serving the community

St. Mary's Medical Center Campus Ironton (SMMC) reached a milestone in July as it celebrated its 10-year anniversary.

"We are pleased to celebrate our first 10 years of our campus dedicated to meeting the health care needs of the Ironton community," said Angie Swearingen, COO, SMMC. "It has truly been a privilege to serve the wonderful people of this area and we look forward to continuing to provide high-quality emergency services, primary care and specialty care in Ironton."

The St. Mary's Medical Campus Ironton, which is a partnership between St. Mary's Medical Center and the Ironton-Lawrence County Community Action Organization (ILCAO), houses St. Mary's ER Ironton, Family Medical Centers – Ironton Healthcare Campus, St. Mary's Family Care - Ironton and St. Mary's Specialty Physicians, had its official ribbon cutting Sunday, July 8, 2012, and opened its doors to the public the following day.

Family Medical Centers (FMC), which is the health care extension of the ILCAO, offers primary care, pediatrics, dentistry and behavioral health services at the Ironton Campus.

"Opening the Ironton medical campus was a landmark day for Lawrence County," said D.R. Gossett, executive director, ILCAO. "We are proud to be able to offer the highest quality health care services to our community right here in their back yard."

The Ironton community had been without a hospital for more than 10 years when the SMMC Ironton Campus opened. Since the facility opened its doors, 54 patients who came to the ER were diagnosed with having a stroke and were transferred to Huntington for additional care. "With a stroke, time is critical and those patients may have had very different outcomes if the facility had not been open," Swearingen said.

In the campus' first 12 months, the ER saw 15,868 patients. From June 2021 - June 2022, the ER saw 20,682.

For more information about St. Mary's ER Ironton and St. Mary's Family Care - Ironton, visit [www.st-marys.org](http://www.st-marys.org). For more information about Family Medical Centers, visit [www.familymedicalcenters.org](http://www.familymedicalcenters.org).





# St. Mary's Medical Campus Ironton Timeline



Rich Blankenship, former mayor of Ironton; Les Boggs, former Lawrence County Commissioner; DR Gossett, executive director, ILCAO; Michael Sellards, former CEO, SMMC; Sister Mary Grace Barile, vice president of mission integration, SMMC

## January 31, 2001

River Valley Health System in Ironton closes, leaving Lawrence County as the largest county in Ohio without a hospital.

## November 15, 2007

An announcement is made that St. Mary's Medical Center, along with the Ironton-Lawrence County Community Action Organization and a group of local physicians, are forming Lawrence County Health Care Futures, LLC, a limited liability corporation to look into the health care needs of Lawrence County.

## September 17, 2008

Lawrence County Health Care Futures, LLC, announces a site has been chosen for a \$20 million medical complex. The site is located at the intersection of U.S. 52 and State Route 141.

## April 1, 2011

Construction begins on the two-story, 46,000 square foot facility.

## July 8, 2012

St. Mary's Medical Center Campus Ironton hosts a ribbon cutting for the community. Hundreds attend the ceremony and tour the new facility.

## July 9, 2012

The campus officially opens to the public. The facility houses St. Mary's ER Ironton, Family Medical Centers - Ironton Healthcare Campus and St. Mary's Specialty Physicians.

## May 19, 2020

St. Mary's Family Care-Ironton opens on the campus as Maggie Lawentmann, DO, family medicine physician, begins seeing patients.





# Using the latest technology for the best treatment of cancer

For more than a century, radiation therapy has been used as a treatment to eliminate cancer cells. Now, with advancements in technology, our Mountain Health Network radiation oncologists are able to provide these treatments more efficiently and more safely than ever before.

“It’s incredible to see the level of care and infrastructure available to cancer patients right here in Huntington, West Virginia,” said Paul Adedoyin, MD, radiation oncologist, Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center (ECCC). “Mountain Health Network has a team of oncologists dedicated to learning the latest technology to administer the best treatment option for each patient, no matter the diagnosis.”

## CyberKnife®

For more than 15 years, the CyberKnife® Center at St. Mary’s Medical Center (SMMC) has delivered doses of radiation with extreme accuracy through CyberKnife technology. As the first and only fully robotic therapy device, CyberKnife set the standard for delivery precision, treating the full range of tumor types. This approach provides non-invasive, precision radiation therapy in

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“It’s incredible to see the level of care and infrastructure available to cancer patients right here in Huntington, West Virginia.”

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– Paul Adedoyin, MD  
radiation oncologist

five or fewer treatments, compared to 40 treatments with traditional radiation therapy.

“Patients who have lesions or tumors previously diagnosed as inoperable or untreatable may benefit from CyberKnife,” said Sanjeev Sharma, MD, radiation oncologist, SMMC. “CyberKnife can treat tumors anywhere in the body, but the top three areas I treat are the prostate, the brain and those with early stage lung cancer.”

Next year, SMMC will install the latest CyberKnife® system, which will allow for enhanced radiation delivery by expanding the possible positions from which radiation beams can be delivered.

“If we can approach the tumor and see it from all angles, the better we will be able to maximize the radiation dose delivered to the tumor and minimize the dose to surrounding healthy tissues. Our goal will always be to provide treatments that are fast, effective and preserve the healthy tissues,” Dr. Sharma said.

## MEET OUR RADIATION ONCOLOGISTS



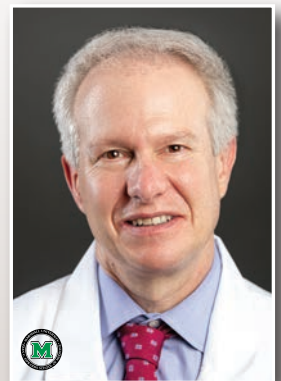
**Paul Adedoyin, MD**  
Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Assistant professor, oncology



**Grace Dixon, MD**  
Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Assistant professor, oncology



**Sanjeev Sharma, MD**  
St. Mary's Medical Center



**John Varlotto, MD**  
Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Professor, oncology



#### **Brainlab and ExacTrac®**

Brainlab technology is in use in more than 5,000 hospitals worldwide, and these software-based innovations in surgery and radiation planning lend ease and efficiency to even the most complicated procedures, including neurosurgery.

“Brainlab’s planning software and ExacTrac imaging system allows precise treatment of malignant and benign brain tumors and trigeminal neuralgia with pinpoint accuracy as well as very quick treatment times,” said John Varlotto, MD, radiation oncologist, ECCC. “Through this software and our TrueBeam technology, we provide more efficient, less invasive and less expensive treatments for patients undergoing cranial and spinal radiation.”

The Brainlab technology available at ECCC comes with ExacTrac®, which is an in-room X-ray-based monitoring system that provides highly accurate patient positioning during treatment. This means that it will alert the physician if there's been even a slight shift during intrafraction tumor motion monitoring.

“It’s an added tool that allows us to provide intracranial and spine tumor treatments with high precision and safety assurance. Of course, this complements our existing image-guidance radiotherapy capabilities,” Dr. Adedoyin said.

#### **TrueBeam™ and Elekta Infinity™ Linear Accelerators**

Both ECCC and SMMC are home to linear accelerator technology, which combines imaging, beam delivery and

sophisticated motion management to accurately and precisely target tumors with speed.

“Using the Elekta Infinity technology, we can shape the radiation beam around structures. We have imaging that allows us to take diagnostic X-rays on these machines, and get a better picture of what we’re looking at,” Dr. Sharma said.

Considered a breakthrough tool for radiation oncology teams, the linear accelerator allows for the treatment of more challenging cancers, such as pancreas, paraspinal, lung, liver, breast and prostate. With fewer treatments and less time on the table, this machine will allow for increased precision to minimize the damage to surrounding healthy tissue.

“Therapy available on our TrueBeam linear accelerator allows for the most accurate and quick radiosurgical treatments for lung, liver, spine, bone and abdominal tumors with five or fewer treatments,” said Dr. Varlotto.

Dr. Sharma said plans are in the works for the new generation of Elekta Infinity linear accelerator that will offer adaptive radiation therapy.

“This means during a course of therapy, we can continuously shape our radiation around the tumors as they shrink, and better personalize the radiation therapy each patient needs,” he said.



# Pleasant Valley Hospital joining Mountain Health Network

Cabell Huntington Hospital (CHH) and Pleasant Valley Hospital (PVH) signed a Letter of Intent, effective May 31, 2022, to solidify and expand their relationship from their 2013 Management Services Agreement by joining CHH and becoming a part of Mountain Health Network.

“Our goal is to ensure access to advanced medicine and compassionate care for all residents of Mason, Jackson, Gallia and Meigs counties,” said Mountain Health Network CEO Kevin Yingling, RPh, MD, FACP. “Key to the acquisition is maintaining Pleasant Valley Hospital as an acute care hospital with emergency services. Thanks to the commitment of our academic health system partner, increased access to medical specialties will be supported through Marshall Health and graduate medical education programs will be provided by the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine. Additionally, we plan to enhance telehealth services and connect PVH to our electronic health platform.”

The agreement calls for the investment of \$25 million in

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“Our goal is to ensure access to advanced medicine and compassionate care for all residents of Mason, Jackson, Gallia and Meigs counties.”

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– Kevin Yingling, MD

Mason County by CHH, which will include upgrades to PVH’s information technology platform, renovations to the PVH emergency department, an investment in physician residency training programs in partnership with the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine and Marshall Health, additional physician recruitment, and other needed PVH facility renovations. In addition, PVH and its Board of Trustees plan to contribute an estimated \$14 million to be used by CHH toward capital improvement projects at PVH. A total of upwards of \$39 million will be invested in PVH over the next five years.

“The PVH Board members have not made this decision lightly,” stated Peter Allinder, chair of the PVH Board of Trustees. “We recognize our responsibility to our community. With so many positive

changes in Mason County and the surrounding area, the timing is right for Pleasant Valley Hospital to take the next step with Mountain Health Network to advance our future in caring for our community.”

PVH will join CHH and St. Mary’s Medical Center as a member of Mountain Health Network Oct. 1.





WOAH!

# Hoops Earns 2022 Service to Children Award from Team for West Virginia Children

During the past two years of the pandemic, frontline health care workers were faced with unprecedented scenarios that no hospital could anticipate. One of those scenarios was the major impact COVID had on pediatric patients. Though difficult, the team at Hoops Family Children's Hospital (HFCH) rose to the challenge of caring for the youngest COVID patients. Recently, their work was recognized by an organization dedicated to children's health.

TEAM for West Virginia Children, a non-profit organization whose mission is to work with communities and families to advance the well-being of children, presented HFCH with the 2022 Service to Children Award to recognize their efforts to care for pediatric COVID patients. Honored along with the entire HFCH team were Michele McMaster, BSN, RN, Pediatrics and Pediatric ICU nurse manager; Susan Flesher, MD, professor/chair, Department of Pediatrics, and director, Pediatric Hospital Medicine Fellowship, Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine; and Mariana Lanata, MD, FAAP, medical director, Antimicrobial Stewardship and Infection Prevention, HFCH, and assistant professor of Pediatrics, Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine.

First introduced in 2007, the Service to Children Award is presented annually to a person or persons who exemplify TEAM's belief that we all play a role in creating happy childhoods for children.

"The decision to recognize the health care professionals at Hoops Family Children's Hospital was an easy one," said Laurie McKeown, Executive Director, TEAM for West Virginia Children. "Throughout the last two years, the pandemic has brought great challenges for many; however, the team at Hoops Family Children's Hospital focused on providing the very best care for the many children from our region who were hospitalized with COVID-19. It was important to us to recognize all of those who contributed to this effort, from physicians and nurses, to patient care assistants, to unit clerks, to housekeeping and lab personnel, to respiratory therapists and many others. These individuals truly are health care superheroes."

Melanie Akers, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, director, HFCH, who accepted Dr. Flesher's award on her behalf, said the hospital and TEAM share the understanding that safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments are critical to the success of all our children and families.

"We know COVID-19 created significant challenges for our staff and patients, but our Hoops team met each of those challenges and continued to provide quality care for the children of our region through innovation and teamwork," Akers said. "One example of this is when we began providing pediatric monoclonal antibody infusions to treat COVID patients. With our highly skilled staff working collaboratively, Hoops became the first facility in West Virginia to provide pediatric infusions in a dedicated pediatric space. That is just one of the many examples of our Hoops teams going above and beyond in what has been one of the most unpredictable and demanding situations we have experienced in health care. We are honored to receive this award, and it is truly well-deserved."

The award presentation was part of the Children's Health Care Super Healers Virtual Celebration, an event presented by TEAM to honor health care heroes who worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic.

Akers said her favorite part of the virtual ceremony was hosting the watch party where HFCH staff members joined together in the Pediatric Playroom to celebrate their achievements with food, fellowship and a superhero photo booth.

While grateful for this important community recognition, the HFCH continues to look ahead.

"As we look toward the future and the lasting impact of the pandemic, we will continue to meet the needs of our youngest patients while working to expand services and specialties," Akers said. "We want to ensure our community receives the pediatric care they need and deserve."





# WATCHMAN™ offers alternative to blood thinners for AFib patients

**A**trial fibrillation, commonly known as AFib, is the most common type of irregular heartbeat, affecting more than five million adults in the United States.

“AFib patients experience chaotic, irregular wave fronts that collide into each other with no period of rest, instead of a regular electric wave that travels the atria of the heart with periods of rest,” said Esam Baryun, MD, an electrophysiologist at St. Mary’s Electrophysiology (SMMC). “The result is an irregular heartbeat that often results in a rapid heart rate and poor blood flow as the heart’s upper chambers beat out of coordination with the lower chambers.”

Symptoms of AFib include an irregular pulse, fluttering in the chest, shortness of breath and fatigue. AFib is diagnosed by an electrocardiogram (EKG). If untreated, it can raise the risk for heart failure and stroke. In fact, 20% of strokes are caused by AFib.

“There is fear from AFib because of risk of stroke and heart failure,” said Dr. Baryun. “When the atria quiver and don’t contract efficiently, blood stagnates, which increases the risk of blood clots. Blood clots can break loose and cause a stroke if they land in the brain.”

Oral anticoagulants, or blood thinners, are an effective way to lower the risk of stroke in people with AFib. But because

blood thinners help prevent clots by thinning the blood, they also increase the risk of bleeding. That risk can grow over time as the medication continues to be taken, often for a patient’s lifetime.

The WATCHMAN™ implant is a one-time, minimally invasive procedure for people with non-valvular AFib who need an alternative to blood thinners. Electrophysiologists at SMMC have been performing the procedure since 2017.

In people with AFib, more than 90% of stroke-causing clots that come from the heart are formed in the left atrial appendage (LAA). The WATCHMAN implant fits into the LAA to permanently close it off to prevent clots from escaping. The WATCHMAN device is implanted via catheter through the right groin.

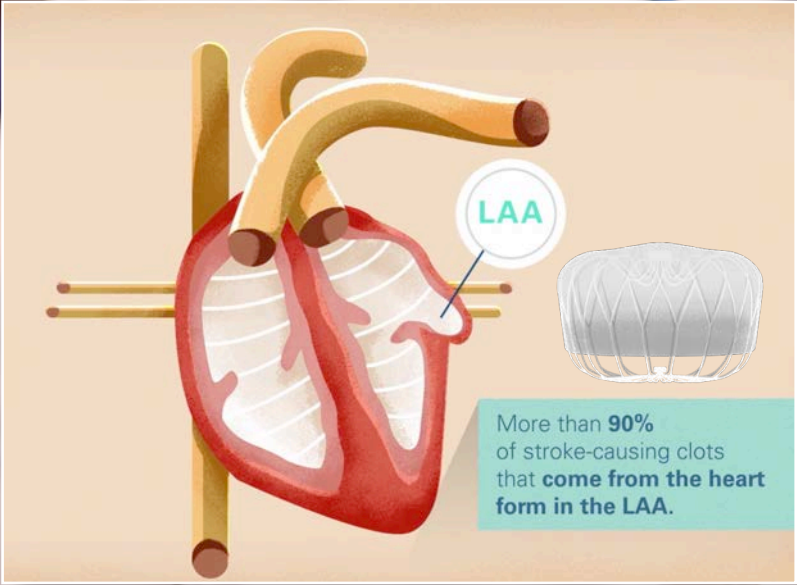
Nationwide, 90% of patients who have received the implant were able to eliminate blood thinners just 45 days after the treatment.

Dr. Baryun cautions that the implant is not appropriate for all patients. “The patient benefits from the procedure if they are at high risk of major bleeds or have already bled and can’t be on the oral anticoagulant safely,” he said.

*For more information about St. Mary’s Electrophysiology and WATCHMAN, visit [www.st-marys.org/watchman](http://www.st-marys.org/watchman).*



**Esam Baryun, MD**  
Electrophysiologist at  
St. Mary's Electrophysiology





# Expansion to allow more students to achieve their dreams

One way to combat the nursing crisis facing hospitals across the country is to increase enrollment at nursing schools. St. Mary's School of Nursing (SON), founded in 1926, is renovating and expanding its current space in the St. Mary's Center for Education to allow for more students

"St. Mary's School of Nursing has a tremendous legacy of training nurses for more than 96 years," said Joey Trader, EdD, MSN, RN, CNE, vice president, Schools of Nursing and Health Professions at St. Mary's Medical Center and director, St. Mary's School of



Nursing. "Expanding our school will allow more students to achieve their dreams of becoming a nurse to provide high-quality, compassionate care to the people of our region and beyond."

The SON plans to renovate its space to create larger classes and provide additional academic support rooms. The school will also upgrade equipment and classrooms. The renovation and expansion is expected to support



*“Our organization recognizes the need for well-trained medical professionals in our state and the outstanding work done by St. Mary’s School of Nursing to help fill that need.”*

– Todd White, CEO, Aetna Better Health of West Virginia

The changes to the facility have been made possible through donations and grant awards. Aetna Better Health of West Virginia made a \$1.5 million gift to the St. Mary’s Medical Center Foundation for the school with \$1.4 million going toward the renovation efforts. The remaining \$100,000 will be used to fund an endowed SON scholarship.

“Aetna Better Health of West Virginia is pleased to have the opportunity to make this gift to the St. Mary’s Medical Center Foundation,” said Todd White, CEO, Aetna Better Health of West Virginia. “Our organization recognizes the need for well-trained medical professionals in our state and the outstanding work done by St. Mary’s School of Nursing to help fill that need. The \$1.5 million scholarship grant we are providing is part of a two-phase state investment program by Aetna Better Health of West Virginia to strengthen the services most needed to address the medical conditions plaguing our population. This includes substance use disorder, neonatal abstinence syndrome, diabetes, serious emotional disorders, and renal failure.”

The school has also been awarded \$508,663.82 through West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice’s Nursing Workforce Expansion Program. The program is designed to address the state’s nursing shortage through a multifaceted approach to attract, train and retain nurses in the Mountain State. The award program was established to fund nursing program expansion projects at colleges, universities, schools of nursing and career technical education centers across West Virginia.

*For more information about St. Mary’s School of Nursing, visit [www.st-marys.org/nursing-school](http://www.st-marys.org/nursing-school).*



*Aetna Better Health of West Virginia presents a check representing its \$1.5 million donation to the St. Mary’s Medical Center Foundation for the St. Mary’s School of Nursing. (L-R) Joey Trader, EdD, MSN, RN, CNE, vice president, Schools of Nursing and Health Professions at St. Mary’s Medical Center and director, St. Mary’s School of Nursing; Angie Swearingen, COO, St. Mary’s Medical Center; Dr. Kevin Yingling, CEO, Mountain Health Network; Todd White, CEO, Aetna Better Health of West Virginia; Jim Smallridge, RN, lead director of community development, Aetna Better Health of West Virginia*



# St. Mary's Medical Center acquires



Member of MOUNTAIN HEALTH NETWORK

Scott Orthopedic Center (SOC) has joined St. Mary's Medical Center (SMMC), a member of Mountain Health Network (MHN).

"We are pleased to welcome Scott Orthopedic Center and its outstanding team of physicians to Mountain Health Network," said Dr. Kevin Yingling, CEO, MHN. "From the time Dr. Francis Scott first began his practice in Huntington in 1929 through today, Scott Orthopedic Center has been a leader in providing for the orthopedic health needs of the Tri-State. We look forward to continuing that outstanding care through this important partnership."

SOC has maintained its name and SOC physicians continue to provide services at their current location on the fourth floor of the Highlawn Medical Building at 2828 First Ave., Huntington.

"Scott Orthopedic Center and St. Mary's Medical Center have had a positive relationship for many years as we have worked together to provide quality orthopedic care to the patients of the Tri-State," said Angie Swearingen, chief operating officer, SMMC. "We look forward to working with the entire SOC team."

"Our founders helped establish outstanding orthopedic care in the Huntington community," said Dr. Luis Bolano, president of Scott Orthopedic Group. "We have had the privilege to partner with all Mountain Health institutions and physicians over the past 93 years of our existence and we will continue to serve the Tri-State region with pride and commitment through this partnership. We are excited about this formal affiliation with St. Mary's and Mountain Health."

SOC specializes in orthopedic care for seniors, hand and upper extremity care, sports medicine, orthopedic trauma and foot and ankle conditions. For local high schools, SOC offers ImpACT, an outreach and screening program for high school students to identify conditions, and provides many schools with fulltime certified athletic trainers. For more information, visit [www.scottorthopedic.com](http://www.scottorthopedic.com).

# U.S. News & World Report recognizes Mountain Health hospitals in annual rankings



St. Mary's Medical Center (SMMC) and Cabell Huntington Hospital (CHH), members of Mountain Health Network (MHN), have been recognized in the annual Best Hospitals rankings and ratings for 2022-23 by *U.S. News & World Report*.

SMMC has been recognized among the elite 12% that won Best honors as a Best Hospital in the Metro Valley. SMMC was also recognized as a High Performing Hospital for heart bypass surgery, heart failure, heart attack, colon cancer surgery, COPD, kidney failure, pneumonia, hip replacement and knee replacement. CHH has been recognized as a High Performing Hospital for heart failure, kidney failure, stroke, COPD, hip replacement and knee replacement.

The annual Best Hospitals rankings and ratings, now in their 33<sup>rd</sup> year, are designed to assist patients and their doctors in making informed decisions about where to receive quality care for challenging health conditions or elective procedures.

“We are truly appreciative and honored to once again be recognized in these prestigious rankings,” said Hoyt Burdick, MD, chief medical officer, MHN. “We are committed to providing advanced medicine and compassionate care to our patients as we continue our work to

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— Hoyt Burdick, MD  
chief medical officer, MHN

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improve the health and well-being of all we serve.”

For the 2022-2023 rankings and ratings, U.S. News evaluated more than 4,500 hospitals across 15 specialties and 20 procedures and conditions. In the 15 specialties, 164 hospitals were ranked in at least one specialty. State and metro area rankings reflect the highest performing hospitals in the area across multiple areas of care.

“The hospitals recognized excel across numerous specialties and service lines,” said Ben Harder, chief of health analysis and managing editor at U.S. News. “When patients and their medical professionals are considering their options for care, the rankings are designed to help them identify hospitals that are superior in the kind of care they may need.”

U.S. News evaluated each hospital's performance using a variety of measures, such as survival rates, complication rates, patient experience and level of nursing care. The Best Hospitals methodology factors in data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services,

American Hospital Association, professional organizations and medical specialists.

# Mountain Health Network recognized by leading health care quality organizations

Mountain Health Network and its hospitals have been recognized by a number of leading health care quality organizations for demonstrating exceptional patient care.



“Mountain Health Network is dedicated to providing highly reliable care to our patients on a daily basis,” said Hoyt Burdick, MD, chief medical officer, MHN. “These awards confirm that dedication and we are grateful and proud to be recognized.”

For the sixth consecutive year, St. Mary’s Medical Center (SMMC) received the American College of Cardiology’s NCDR Chest Pain – MI Registry Platinum Performance Achievement Award for 2022. SMMC is one of only 240 hospitals nationwide to receive the honor for 2022.

The award recognizes SMMC’s commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients and signifies that SMMC has reached an aggressive goal of treating these patients to the higher standard levels of care as outlined by the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association clinical guidelines and recommendations.

SMMC and Cabell Huntington Hospital (CHH) again received a number of American Heart Association Achievement Awards in recognition of providing high-quality stroke and heart failure care.

*SMMC, home of the MHN Cardiovascular Center of Excellence, received the following American Heart Association quality achievement awards:*

- Gold Plus Get With the Guidelines® – Stroke (12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year)
- Target: Stroke<sup>SM</sup> Honor Roll Advanced Therapy
- Gold Plus Get With the Guidelines® – Heart Failure (9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year)
- Target: Heart Failure Honor Roll
- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll
- Gold Get With the Guidelines – Resuscitation Award (9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year)

*CHH received the following American Heart Association stroke care quality achievement awards:*

- Gold Plus Get With the Guidelines® – Stroke (9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year)
- Target: Stroke<sup>SM</sup> Honor Roll Elite
- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll

Get With The Guidelines puts the expertise of the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association to work for hospitals nationwide, helping ensure patient care is aligned with the latest evidence- and research-based guidelines. As a participant in the Get With The Guidelines programs, SMMC and CHH qualified for the awards by demonstrating how their organization has committed to improving quality care.





St. Mary's Wound and Hyperbaric Center (SMMC) and the Center for Wound Healing at Cabell Huntington Hospital (CHH), received quality and patient satisfaction awards in wound care from RestorixHealth, a leading wound care management company, as part of its Clinical Distinction Program.

SMMC is the recipient of the Wound Center of Excellence Award, RestorixHealth's highest achievement. This award distinguishes centers that have demonstrated exceptional success by meeting or exceeding clinical and operational benchmarks in different categories, including healing outcomes, assessment and care processes and patient safety, along with a patient satisfaction rate of 96% or higher.

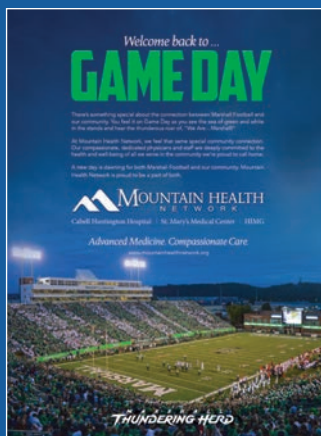
CHH is the recipient of RestorixHealth's Clinical Distinction Award. Recipients of this award meet or exceed national quality benchmarks over a set period of time.

*For a full list of quality achievement awards, visit [mountainhealthnetwork.org/about](http://mountainhealthnetwork.org/about).*



The Mountain Health Network (MHN) Strategic Marketing Team received four gold awards in the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Healthcare Advertising Awards. The Healthcare Advertising Awards is the oldest, most widely respected and largest health care advertising awards competition, as well as one of the ten largest of all advertising awards.

In addition to the Gold Awards, the MHN team received four Silver Awards and one Bronze Award.



Two of the Gold Award winners were campaigns designed to provide education about important services being offered by MHN. *Arm Yourself: Get the COVID-19 Vaccination*, a series of ads educating the public of the importance of getting the COVID-19 vaccine, received a Gold Award for Vaccination Program, while *The World Has Changed*, a series of ads encouraging people to get important life-saving health screenings, received a Gold Award for Health Promotion

Program. The remaining two Gold Awards focused on the special relationship MHN has with the Marshall University community. *Welcome Back to Gameday*, a Marshall Football Yearbook ad, received a Gold Award for Magazine Advertising-Single, while *We Will Never Forget*, a newspaper ad remembering those lost in the Marshall plane crash, received a Gold Award for Newspaper Advertising-Single.

MHN received Silver Awards for Annual Report for the Leading Edge Magazine Annual Report, which detailed MHN's services and accomplishments of the past two years; Magazine Advertising-Single for *Go Herd!*, a Marshall Basketball Yearbook ad; Newspaper Advertising-Single for *Celebrating National Nurses Week*, which saluted MHN's dedicated and compassionate nurses; and Logo/Letterhead Design for the logo for the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce Festival of Trees and Christmas Market. *Join Our Team!*, an ad showcasing MHN to potential employees in the Advantage Valley won a bronze award for Direct Mail.



More than 4,300 entries were received for this year's competition. A national panel of judges were engaged in reviewing all entries based on creativity, quality, message effectiveness, consumer appeal, graphic design and overall impact. Gold awards were given to 512 entries, silver awards to 360 entries and bronze awards to 249 entries.



# Compassionate care close to home

**Paul Finch, MD**

*Pediatric oncologist/hematologist*  
Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center  
at Cabell Huntington Hospital  
Assistant Professor, Chief of Pediatric Oncology,  
Marshall University  
Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine

**Joshua Hess, MD**

*Pediatric oncologist/hematologist*  
Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center  
at Cabell Huntington Hospital  
Assistant Professor, Marshall University  
Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine

We live in a world both big and small. Big in the sense that, when it comes to the treatment of cancer, we're more connected than ever as we share knowledge and breakthrough treatments with our counterparts from around the nation.

And small because all that expertise is right where you want it – close by, at Edwards Comprehensive Cancer Center.

You could call it the best of both worlds. We call it cancer treatment the way it should be.



The Cancer Centers of  
**MOUNTAIN HEALTH NETWORK**

