

Premier Pulse

News for Premier Health Physicians

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One Step Closer

By Roberto Colon, MD, chief medical officer and vice president of operations, Miami Valley Hospital



Well, 2020 has finally come to an end! But what is different as the year turned? COVID is still here, social challenges remain in our country, and our health care

systems remain stressed. Yet we all feel change coming. While the disease is still here, the trends are finally heading in the right way; a vaccine, not even discussed one year ago, threatens to extinguish the burden of this pandemic. While social challenges remain, discussions and plans for changes are out in the open; in Premier Health, changes are already evident. While our nation's health systems remain busy, we are seeing the first signs of some easing of the strains. None of these developments are

complete; none were the direct effect of one change or one person.

And we are not done! This year will continue to challenge us as we, hopefully, see our daily lives return to normalcy. But drawing from the challenges we have faced, we will continue using the energy and passion that arose from the fight on COVID to remain the leaders in health care in our region. We will continue to strive to take the quality of our care to ever higher levels through innovation. You will be seeing new initiatives, new programs – and also new opportunities to get involved. And this is one of my requests as we begin this new year: GET INVOLVED! Whether you are an appointed leader or not, please be a part of continuous improvement. Great ideas and innovation are generated by everyone in our organization, and we want everyone to have a voice. If you are not

sure how to get involved, please reach out your chief medical officers or department chairs to learn about the many opportunities available.

It is too early to call a victory on this pandemic, as thousands continue to die each day. But every day, we are a step closer. It is very likely that all of us have been touched by this disease in some way, and I know that its impact on our lives will likely remain with us for a very long time. While many of these memories are tragic, it is also important to recall just how much was accomplished which once seemed impossible. It took all of us to do that. It will take all of us to continue moving forward ... in health care, in extinguishing racism, in being better.

Clinical Respiratory Connection for the COVID Patient Receiving In-Home Care



When Fidelity Health Care receives a home care referral for a COVID-19 patient, we not only provide exceptional nursing care to your patient, but we also support the patients with a clinical respiratory assessment by one of our respiratory therapists. Our services also include direct delivery of home oxygen and supplies if needed.

This is a unique service option typically not covered by health insurance. However, it is an important part of the COVID-19 patient's recovery at home, and the right thing to do for the patient. We have provided a similar service for COPD patients and found those receiving this service were less likely to readmit than those who did not receive the clinical respiratory assessment.

Here is an assessment tool we use for our COVID-19 patients:

Is Patient on Supplemental Oxygen?

YES	NO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide patient with COVID-19 kit (BP Cuff, pulse oximetry, thermometer, mask, gloves) Liter Flow 1-4 5 Liter Concentrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide or ensure patient has thermometer (gloves and mask)

Provide patient education on appropriate oxygen saturation and when to seek medical attention.

Review signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses and when to contact Fidelity Health Care and physician.

Monitor symptoms for:

- Increased shortness of breath
- Increased blood pressure or heart rate
- Decreased oxygen saturation
- Dry cough with difficulty breathing
- Review breathing techniques; pursed lips and tripodging
- Fever of >100.4 degrees

Encourage patient to monitor vitals BID and with symptom changes

Is Patient Prescribed Respiratory Medication?

YES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review all respiratory medications with patient.• MDI with Spacer is Recommended If Intolerant to MDI or Unable to Use:• Must use one-way filter with nebulizer and must be in isolated room with closed door (particles can linger in air for approximately two hours) <p>*Please consider if patient has comorbidities, i.e. COPD, CHF, ESRD or Patients</p>



My Why

As the COVID-19 vaccine is being distributed to Premier Health employees, here are the reasons that our providers cite for receiving the vaccination:

Andre Harris, MD, vice president of operations and chief medical officer, Atrium Medical Center

“The vaccine rolled out quicker than we’ve ever seen, but a lot of that had to do with timing and where we were in this time in history. The actual methodology



is about 15 years old, from the research side of it. We don’t want people who we love to be the next to die from COVID-19. The more people who can get their immunization, the better off we’re going to be. If I can get myself covered, then I’m one more person who can do something for the next person that comes along.”

Thomas Fritz, MD, anesthesiologist

“I think this is an important step in getting this pandemic under control. I don’t see any other way out of it, other than widespread vaccination. Getting the



vaccine beats the alternative. I would rather have a tested vaccine than an unknown virus.”

Kruti Jambula, MD, neonatologist

“It’s a good first step. Medicine is based on science. I trust in the process. You just have a little faith in the science. I have young kids and older parents. I take care of



babies whose immunities are almost nonexistent. I’m getting the vaccine for myself, my family, my coworkers, my patients, and the community.”

New Antibody Therapy for COVID-19 Patients

Premier Health is offering a new antibody therapy for those who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are at high risk for severe illness but who currently are experiencing mild to moderate symptoms.

Bamlanivimab received emergency use authorization from the Food & Drug Administration in December. While the investigational therapy’s safety and effectiveness continue to be evaluated, the therapy has been shown in clinical trials to reduce COVID-19 related hospitalizations or emergency room visits in patients at high risk for disease progression within 28 days of treatment, according to its manufacturer, Eli Lilly.

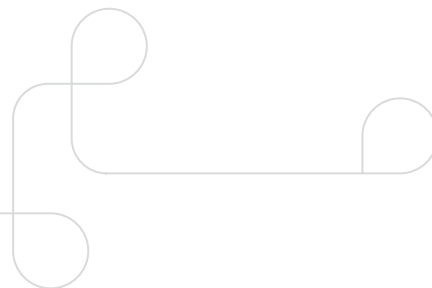
Premier Health has begun offering the therapy at select ambulatory locations. This medication is not available for hospitalized patients, and its availability will be limited initially. A provider referral is required.

Patients must meet at least one of the following criteria to receive the Bamlanivimab infusion:

- Greater than or equal to 65 years of age
- Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than or equal to 35
- Chronic Kidney Disease (Stage IV or greater)
- Diabetes with A1C \geq 8 or random blood sugar $>$ 300 mg/dL
- Immunosuppressive Condition (solid organ transplant, ESRD or ESLD, advanced HIV, active chemotherapy, chronic high dose steroids ($>$ 30mg prednisone for $>$ 30 days), use of biologic agents for treatment of underlying diseases (i.e. TNF alpha inhibitor for RA or Crohn’s)

Are greater than or equal to 55 years of age with one or more of the following:

- Cardiovascular disease other than hypertension
- Currently receiving treatment with medication for hypertension
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Interstitial Lung Disease, Cystic Fibrosis, or Pulmonary Fibrosis



Premier Health, Otterbein SeniorLife to Partner On Health Center at Union Village



Premier Health and Otterbein SeniorLife jointly announced plans for the establishment of a Premier Health Center at the new Union Village development on State Route 741, outside of Lebanon. The center will occupy the Dilgard Building, previously home to the Otterbein SeniorLife home offices, which have since moved to the Center Building in Union Village, the linchpin for the town center in Union Village.

The new Premier Health Center at Union Village will offer primary care, orthopedic, and cardiology services through Premier Physician Network providers; imaging services; CompuNet lab services; a Premier Health Urgent Care; and an occupational health services center. In the near term, the building – originally constructed in 1989 – will undergo renovations to prepare for the new Premier Health Center, which also can



help connect residents to additional services at Premier Health's Atrium Medical Center in nearby Middletown.

The new Premier Health Center at Union Village is scheduled to open in the summer of 2021.

The **Premier Health Cancer Institute** program continues to grow and evolve to better serve patients and their loved ones. To keep you up-to-date, we're excited to share our report on the 2020 oncology year in review.

You'll learn about the top services offered by our cancer program.

The full report is online at **PremierHealth.com/CancerAR**. You can print a PDF or read it on the Premier Health website.



2020 Oncology Year-in-Review

PremierHealth.com/CancerAR

Heparin Infusions and Anti-Xa Monitoring

By Zachary Robinson, Pharm. D, CACP, Anticoagulation Specialist



Premier Health currently utilizes the aPTT for heparin monitoring. The Medical Executive Committees and the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee have approved use of anti-Xa for the monitoring of heparin. Implementation began January 6, 2021.

Note: patients already utilizing aPTT will continue to be monitored with aPTT.

Available education for anti-Xa monitoring:

- “Exploring Epic: Heparin Infusion” e-learning in HealthStream
- “Heparin Guide” available on the Inpatient Learning Home
- Tip sheets available on the Inpatient Learning Home
- Presentation: available
<https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/348e85e9-8124-4cf3-9553-259ae8d49959>

What is the difference?

The aPTT therapeutic ratio of 1.5 to 2.5 times that of the control was established in a retrospective study done in the 1970s and correlated with a heparin level (anti-Xa) of 0.3 to 0.7.

	Anti-Xa	aPTT
What it does	Measures the functional activity of heparin	Global clotting assay that reflects the function of the intrinsic and common pathways of the clotting cascade
Advantages	<p>Lower doses of heparin needed to achieve therapeutic range. Fewer monitoring tests. Fewer dose changes. More time in therapeutic range.</p> <p>Unaffected by lupus, liver disease, or consumptive coagulopathy. Patients are often under dosed when utilizing the aPTT. NOTE: Premier Health heparin protocol has no carve outs for these patient populations. They are treated the same as all other patients.</p> <p>Recommended in patients with heparin resistance.</p> <p>Reagents necessary to perform the antifactor Xa are stable on the analyzer for up to seven days versus 24 hours for the aPTT reagents.</p> <p>Reagent changes do not affect the therapeutic range.</p>	<p>Can be used with hyperbilirubinemia and hypertriglyceridemia.</p> <p>Direct Thrombin Inhibitors need to be monitored with aPTT.</p> <p>The aPTT is not as affected by Xa inhibitor medications such as apixaban, rivaroxaban, etc.</p>

Neurointerventional Surgeon Loves Traveling, Family Time



Bryan Ludwig, MD

What is your clinical specialty?

Neurointerventional Surgery (NIS)/Stroke/Neurology

Where did you go to school?

The Ohio State University for undergraduate University of Cincinnati College of Medicine Vanderbilt Medical Center for residency/chief University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for NIS/stroke fellowship

What brought you to Premier Health?

I was brought to Premier Health because it was great job opportunity and gave me a chance to create a neurointerventional program and Neuroscience Institute. Also, by complete serendipity, my wife and I grew up in the area and still had family here. It was a family friend, as well as Diane Pleiman and Mary Boosalis, who helped recruit me back to Dayton.

Why did you choose medicine as a career?

I had a series of encounters with the medical field growing up and, as a patient, was always amazed with the profession. As I entered into college, I had multiple family members and friends who had difficult situations revolving around brain aneurysms and strokes which guided me to focus on the neurosciences.



Who are the people who influenced and/or mentored you?

First and foremost, my wife, Elisabeth, who has supported me and my career choices throughout the entire journey. My parents and older sister certainly influenced me to pursue medicine as a career. I try to learn something from everyone I encounter and as the Clinical Neuroscience Institute has grown, I have had many opportunities to learn from numerous talented and hard-working individuals here at Premier Health.

As for influencing and mentoring my medical career, I have to mention a few key people. Prof. John Wenzel at Ohio State who I worked with for two years doing genetic research and helped me complete my honors dissertation – his advice and friendship were life-changing. Drs. Brett Kissela and Joe Broderick at University of Cincinnati College of Medicine Neurology Department for recognizing my potential and encouraging me to go into stroke care. John B. Terry, MD, for helping me survive a grueling three-year fellowship and being a terrific partner for the past 10 years. Esteban Cheng-Ching, MD, for his knowledge and calm during a busy six years in NIS. Last, but certainly not least, Diane Pleiman for her administrative/operational expertise and the countless business concepts she has taught me as we were building the Clinical Neuroscience Institute.

What is one thing most people don't know about you?

I used to be pretty good at dunking a basketball. I still enjoy unique sports and the outdoors.

Where is your hometown?

Beavercreek, Ohio

What, if any, sports team(s) do you cheer for?

If you have been in my office, you wouldn't have to ask. Go Buckeyes!

What is the last book you read?

I tend to read what my son is reading for high school, but the last book I was reading by my choice was "The Second World War – A Complete History" by Martin Gilbert

What is your favorite song in your playlist?

Very tough question... I tend to change my playlist frequently and love newer music.

If nailed down, probably "Reptilia" by the Strokes or more recently "My Own Soul's Warning" by the Killers.

What is your favorite food?

Soft pretzel knots

What is your favorite hobby?

Hiking outdoors

What is your favorite animal, and why?

Dog – no explanation needed.

Where is your favorite vacation spot, and why?

Our family loves traveling. My partner, Dr. Cheng-Ching will want me to say Costa Rica (which is amazing), but I love hiking and colder weather – so for me, it is Iceland.

Describe something (a thing, person, place, experience, etc.) for which you are especially thankful:

My wife, she is my best friend and has been for 26 years. My kids, who are truly amazing and certainly more talented and mature than I was at their ages. I am thankful for the opportunity to practice the type of endovascular surgery we offer to our patients.

Pick a side

iPhone or Android

Blackberry (kidding...I was a late adopter as many know). iPhone is my answer

Early bird or night owl

Early Bird – or night owl if I am on call for emergencies...

Beach bum or mountain hiker?

Love a good beach, but mountain hiking is my favorite.

Dress shoes or tennis shoes?

Dress shoes are for work. Tennis shoes all the way.

Paperback or e-reader?

Old school, paperback.

Coffee or tea?

Either, thank you.

Cooking or baking?

Cooking. Not into sugar as much.

Sweet or salty?

Salty – as in on top of a good pretzel knot.



Provider Praise

Premier Health patients submit thousands of comments each year acknowledging physicians across our health system for providing excellent care. Here is a random sampling of appreciation received in recent months:

Dr. Heckman is always responsive to our needs.

Dr. Denen is an excellent diagnostician. He answers all of my questions in a way that is easily understandable.

I continue to have the utmost trust and respect for **Dr. Harju**. I feel very fortunate to be under his care.

I have been to many facilities and have seen many doctors in my lifetime. **Dr. Khatri** surpasses them in every area! He treats patients like human beings, is patient, kind, real, and down-to-earth.

I felt heard and appreciated as well as I truly just enjoyed the demeanor **Dr. Edwards** showed toward me. I haven't

had a doctor treat me so well and acknowledge me and my thoughts.

Dr. Cheng-Ching gives my family so much peace of mind and is so helpful. We are very grateful for his professionalism and kindness.

Dr. Adam really helped my family. I felt like he listened and genuinely cared about my problem. Atrium is very lucky to have him.

Dr. Surowiec is the best physician I've ever had. He's kind, caring, knowledgeable, and a credit to the medical profession.

Emergency Medicine Physician Group Expands Coverage for Premier Health

By Candy Skidmore, RN, CHEP, system vice president for service integration – emergency, trauma, and CareFlight, Premier Health



All seven Premier Health emergency centers in early December began using one provider group, Miami Valley Emergency Specialists. MVES already provided emergency physicians for five of the seven emergency centers, and now Upper Valley Medical Center and Atrium Medical Center will be staffed by MVES. Miami Valley Emergency Specialists has been an

invaluable partner for many years, staffing the area's most experienced Level I trauma center at Miami Valley Hospital. Strategically, it was the right time and made a lot of sense to consolidate emergency medicine services under one group.

The physicians and advanced practitioners of Miami Valley Emergency Specialists have provided emergency care in the Dayton area for more than 35 years. The practice strives to recruit and retain the highest quality physicians to continue a long-standing tradition of excellence. Healthgrades has awarded MVES among the top 5 percent of providers in emergency medicine.

Functioning from one source will ensure a consistent patient experience at every emergency touchpoint within our system. Additionally, we are better able to leverage the expertise and experience of Miami Valley Hospital's Level I trauma center and extend it to our northern and southern patients.

With this transition, some medical director appointments have changed. The following are the medical directors for each Emergency Center location:

Atrium Medical Center: Jill Aston, MD

Miami Valley Hospital: Joseph Mauro, MD

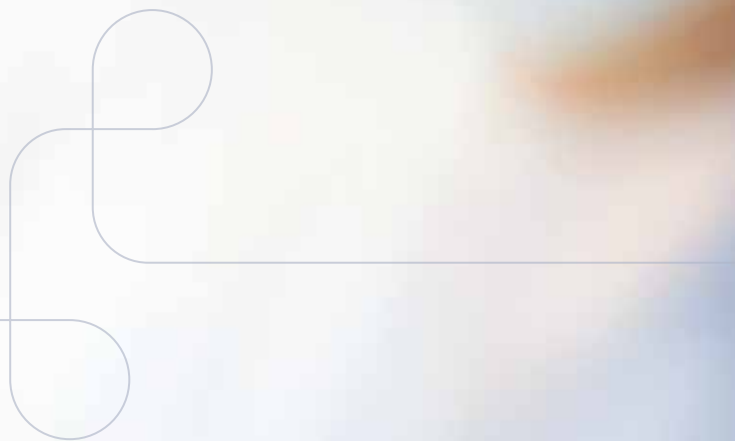
Miami Valley Hospital North: Jeremy Moore, MD

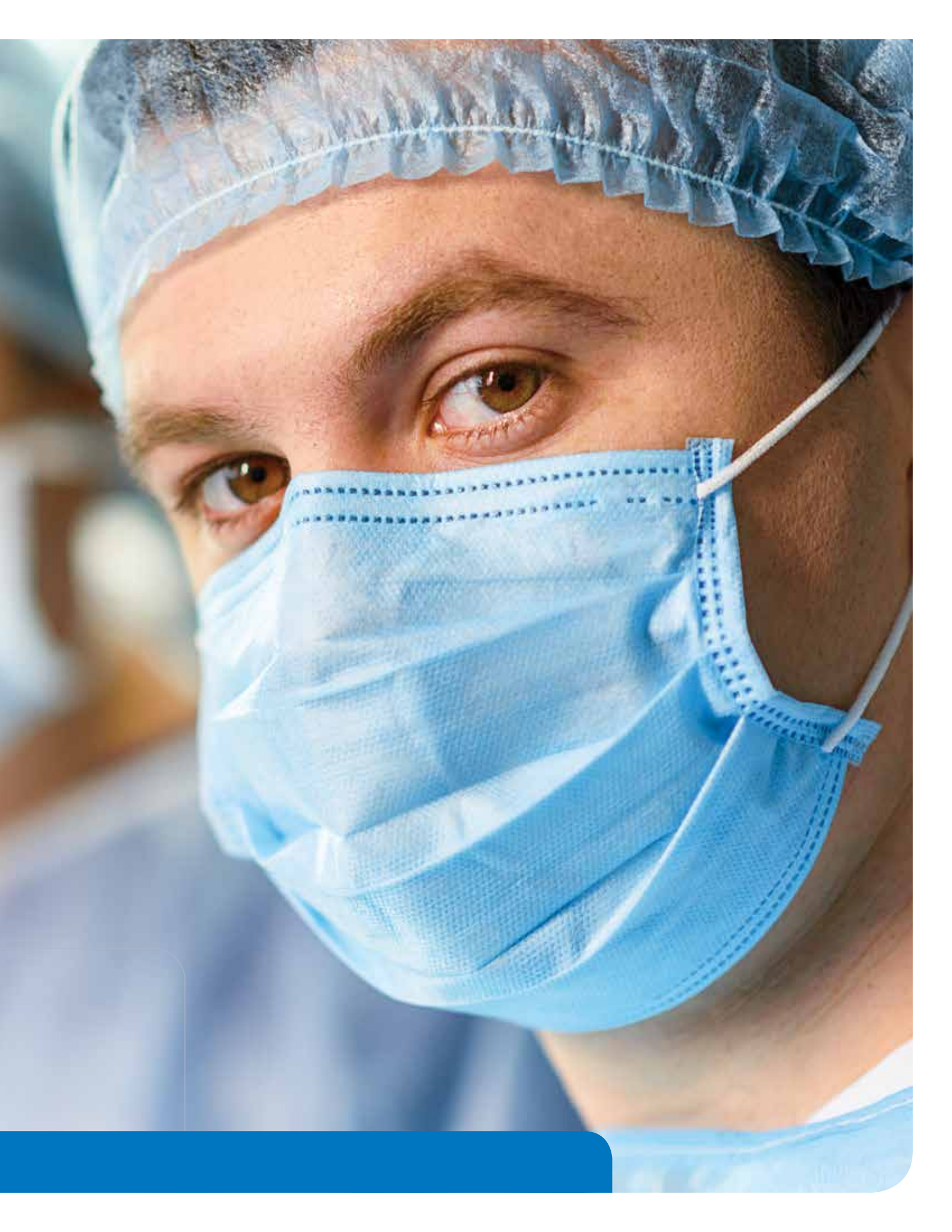
Miami Valley Hospital South: Laura Gottron, MD

Miami Valley Hospital Jamestown Emergency Center: Darin Pangalangan, MD

Miami Valley Hospital Austin Landing: Kim Wascak, MD

Upper Valley Medical Center: April Anderson, MD





Blue Star Families' Donations, COVID-19 Respite Rooms, and Vaccine Arrival



Atrium Medical Center

More than 230 children were remembered Dec. 3 during the 22nd Annual HEAL (Help Endure A Loss) Memory Tree Lighting event. The virtual event included messages from Atrium Medical Center's spiritual care staff and HEAL coordinator before the reading of names and placing of ornaments on the HEAL Memory Tree. The event remained online throughout the month of December. Atrium received a donation of 44 Facebook Portal devices from Blue Star Families of Dayton. The video conferencing devices will help patients and their loved ones communicate during a time of restricted visitor access.

During an unimaginable time of loss, Caring Cradle offers parents in the hospital additional time to grieve and process the very traumatic experience of a newborn child's death. This past summer, an area couple experienced a stillborn birth. Because of the Caring Cradle at Miami Valley Hospital South, the family was able to spend extra time with their son. In appreciation, the family created a donation fund for a Caring Cradle to be given to Atrium in honor of their son. On Dec. 20, a dedication ceremony was held with the family and several caregivers from Atrium's Family Birth Center in attendance.



The Community Blood Center and Atrium have partnered to host a series of COVID-19 convalescent plasma drives. All appointment slots were filled for the inaugural drive in December along with another in January. Additional COVID-19 convalescent plasma drives are planned for Feb. 19 and every Friday in March at Atrium.

Farbod Rastegar, MD, has joined the Premier Orthopedic Spine Center at Atrium Medical Center. Dr. Rastegar attended the University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Medicine. He completed his orthopedic residency at Oregon Health and Science University.



Dr. Rastegar completed a combined neurologic and orthopedic spine surgery fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic. He is board-certified in orthopedic surgery. Dr. Rastegar is accepting new patients, and video visits are available. Appointments can be scheduled by calling **(513) 420-3773**.



Chauncy Eakins, MD, has joined the Pain Center at Atrium Medical Center. Dr. Eakins attended Ross University and completed his residency at Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center. He completed his fellowship at Michigan Sports and Spine. He is board-certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. The Pain Center at Atrium is accepting new patients. Appointments can be scheduled by calling **(513) 974-5165**.

Miami Valley Hospital Campuses

The first respite room for hospital staff opened on an ICU on Dec. 9 at Miami Valley Hospital. Respite rooms have been identified and are being outfitted on seven floors. The respite rooms allow staff to get away from the long hours spent on care units for brief breaks. Thanks to community contributions, the rooms are being furnished with amenities like food and drinks and recliners. This initiative was led by the Miami Valley Hospital Foundation. Throughout December, Good Samaritan Foundation-Dayton raised funds to outfit and stock a respite room for Emergency Department staff at the Miami Valley Hospital North campus. In addition to these efforts, several in-kind donations were received from community businesses, including Divine Catering, Chick Fil-A, and WROU-FM/The Steve Harvey Morning Show, which donated gift cards to ED staff to purchase holiday turkeys.

To raise donor support for programs benefitting hospital employees, new television commercials and outdoor digital billboards saluting Premier Health's Health Care Heroes were created. The 30-second and 60-second commercials include a text-to-give number and a specific website address for donations. Similar to the commercials, the message of support for employees also appeared on several billboards on the Key-Ads outdoor digital network.

During the December meeting of the Miami Valley Hospital Foundation board, the trustees voted to accept the recommendations of the Funding Priorities Committee for 2021. Funded by undesignated donor contributions, a brief rundown of the funded programs include:

- a Remote Patient Monitor Program to keep patients better connected with their physicians;
- upgraded disinfection equipment in endoscopy;
- replacement of police vehicles;
- CT software and contrast injection improvements;
- continued funding for weekend palliative care services.

In addition, four of the funded programs are part of system-wide services:

- a Mobile Clinic through Premier Community Health for rural and underserved areas;
- a respiratory protection program connecting several respiratory preparedness programs;
- a cancer prevention navigator to work with oncology patients;
- the continuation of funding for a system director for pastoral care.

continued on back





SYSTEM NEWS

(continued)

The Good Samaritan Foundation-Dayton was the recipient of several grants. The Mothers Empowered program received a \$12,000 grant from the Wallace Foundation and a \$5,000 grant from Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The Breast Cancer Patient Assistance Fund received \$2,000 from the Breast Cancer Fund of Ohio. The foundation also received a \$10,000 donation from Salem Church of God for the Health Care Heroes campaign to purchase meals from local businesses and caterers to support both the community and hospital staff.

Upper Valley Medical Center

Upper Valley Medical Center was the first hospital in the region to receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, which arrived Dec. 21. A news conference was conducted that morning with coverage by Dayton and Miami County broadcast and print media outlets. Media coverage continued later in the day via Zoom interviews with vaccine recipients who participated in the initial rollout of the vaccine to staff.

UVMC Patient Flow Project renovation continued in the main hospital lobby, former gift shop, and cardiac rehabilitation space. The former medical imaging waiting room is under construction for the new CompuNet Clinical Lab Patient Service Center. Other renovation work is underway in the ICU patient rooms, corridors, nursing station, and an office suite on the first floor of the Support Services building.



Internal/external communications were launched in December for new OB/GYN **Terence Young, MD**, who has joined Premier Women's Center, with locations in Piqua, Troy, and Sidney.

UVMC/Premier Health was a presenting sponsor for the 2020 Edison State Community College Annual Holiday Evening held in December via Zoom. UVMC's sponsorship of this high-profile event, which is a major fundraiser for the Edison Foundation, is part of the hospital's long-standing partnership with the college. In other community partnership activity, UVMC was a sponsor for the Tipp City Chamber Annual Holiday Gala celebrated virtually in December.

Launch, a new program focused on developing job skills for individuals with disabilities, was introduced at UVMC and in the local media. The one-year high school transition program takes the place of Project SEARCH, which was active at the hospital for 10 years.

Premier Physician Network



Every year Dayton Magazine readers vote for their Best of Dayton selections. In December, voters named **Melinda Ruff, MD**, the Best Physician in Dayton! Dr. Ruff was up against some tough competition; Aaron Block, MD, and C. Joe Northup, MD, were the other two Premier Physician Network physicians nominated. "As a

family physician, I have the unique opportunity to form a more personal relationship with my patients over a long term and I'm able to see how their outside lives affect their health," said Dr. Ruff. "I also get the pleasure to meet my patients' families. I'm honored to be chosen for this award."

Miami Valley Hospital also won as Best Medical Facility, Fidelity Health Care won Best Pharmacy, and Premier Health won the Best Medical Spa category.

Editorial Board: Dr. Marc Belcastro, Dr. Roberto Colon, Dr. Andre Harris, Dr. Scott Kanagy, Dr. Matthew Reeves • **Chief Marketing and Communications Officer:** Kathy Harper
Director, System Communications: Ben Sutherly; **Editor:** Tim Carrico

