

Spirit of Halifax

The Community Newsletter of Halifax Regional Medical Center



Nancy Bryant, Tony Walker, and Marcella Durham.

Quality Validated: Halifax Regional Receives Gold Seal of Approval

Last year, the Joint Commission evaluated Halifax Regional Medical Center to make sure we met its high performance standards. The result? We received the nationally recognized Gold Seal of Approval as an independent validation of our ongoing commitment to excellence.

In its Quality Report of National Patient Safety Goals and National Quality Improvement Goals, the Joint Commission noted several areas of particular strength. We met state and national averages in all areas and exceeded them in care for heart failure.

"We are proud of our hospital and feel that the Joint Commission has recognized the effort that we make in giving good care to our patients," said Fred Wier, MD, Chief of the Medical Staff at Halifax Regional. "Halifax Regional and the medical staff who work there are a tremendous asset to the community by providing quality healthcare to the people of the region."

Receiving the Gold Seal of Approval requires ongoing

compliance with the Joint Commission standards. We not only complied with all 250 hospital standards, we remain focused on continuous improvement since accreditation is a continuing process.

Beyond the Gold Seal of Approval, Halifax Regional's commitment to quality is borne out by other measurements as well. For example, the hospital acquired infection rate is less than one percent, significantly below the national benchmark of five percent. In addition, 85 percent of our active medical staff is board-certified, some even holding teaching positions at the UNC School of Medicine.

Halifax Regional Vice President Diane Barlow sees the hospital from within and doesn't hesitate to recommend it to her family – and for herself. "My family and I have had surgery here," she said. "I know the standards of quality are high, and I appreciate the wonderful care all patients receive. Our entire medical staff stays up to date by

participating in continuing medical education, and they focus on process improvements to help ensure quality outcomes."

In its annual report on American hospitals, US News & World Report concluded that much of the outstanding patient care in the country is done outside of the major cities and medical centers. "There are some spectacular community hospitals," concluded Mory Ziegler, MD. The magazine reminds us that many complex procedures once available only at elite hospitals are routinely performed at the community level.

For more information, or to receive our free medical staff directory, call (252) 535-8585.

Find out what
the Joint
Commission
says about any
hospital.

We invite you to read the Joint Commission's remarks about Halifax Regional. Then take a moment, if you're curious, to see its comments about any other hospital that interests you. Simply visit www.JointCommission.org, then click "Quality Check" on the right side of the page. You'll be able to enter a name, or search by zip code, or state. Another tool available for learning about a hospital's performance is www.nchospitalquality.org.

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His and Her Joint Replacements: Have We Started A Trend?



Dave and Linda Edwards now can walk together.

David Edwards had a bad hip. Linda Edwards had a painful knee. Fortunately for them both, we have an outstanding Joint Replacement Center.

David, a teacher and coach at Gates County High, knew he couldn't go on with the serious pain he was experiencing. Although he could have selected

any number of hospitals, David chose Halifax Regional, more than an hour from his home.

"I'd heard good things about the Joint Replacement Center, so I came to see Dr. Richard Holm," David said. "Linda came along to hear what was involved. Dr. Holm was easy to talk to, and he and his entire staff showed us that they genuinely care about their patients."

"Naturally, Linda talked with Dr. Holm about her bad left knee. While we were there he examined it and recommended a joint replacement for her as well."

David had his surgery first. It went well, and he was up doing physical therapy the next morning. "The surgery is done on Monday, and there's a friendly competition to see which of the week's patients can walk farthest before they go home. I was number one in my group, walking 8,300 feet in four days."

After David was home and doing well in his recovery, it was Linda's turn to have her knee replaced. She had been suffering since she was eleven years old and had endured three previous surgeries. She also

did well and led her recovery "class" by walking 4,000 feet.

"We were both treated exceptionally well by the friendly staff," Linda said. "Neither of us would ever consider going anywhere but Halifax Regional."

David and Linda, also a teacher, are doing well and David has returned to work. "No pain in my hip or knee," he said, "and no limp. You'd never know I had a problem. We have nothing but praise for the hospital. And it's so nice to finally live without pain."

For more information about the Joint Replacement Center, call (252) 535-8646.



At a recent reunion, these Halifax Regional Medical Center joint replacement patients enjoyed an opportunity to share their new mobility and freedom from pain.

Our Newest Family Physician Can Be Your Family's Doctor



Dr. Chaparro has a special interest in children's health.

Are you looking for a family doctor who will encourage your family toward a healthy lifestyle? Then meet Abraham Chaparro, MD, the newest board-certified member of our family practice team.

Dr. Chaparro's emphasis is prevention – helping families adopt healthful habits that will help them enjoy life to the fullest. "I think of myself and my patients as a team," he said. "We have one goal, and that's to stay healthy. Annual visits for adults and children are important. I encourage families to work together and support each other as they make positive changes."

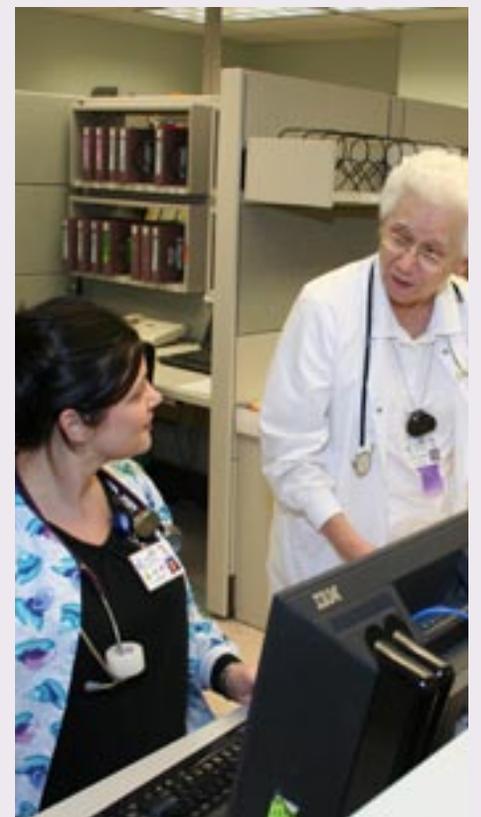
Dr. Chaparro and his family moved to the area in November. He loves the mild local weather. "We can play outside, even in winter," he said. His children, ages one and three, already enjoy the outdoors. So does Dr. Chaparro, who likes to hike, swim and play soccer. Other hobbies

include reading and listening to classical music.

In his practice, Dr. Chaparro helps his patients develop a sense of responsibility for their own health. "I advise them what they need to do and what will be good for them," he said. "I encourage them, but I can't make them change. That's up to them."

Dr. Chaparro and the excellent nurses at the Roanoke Clinic have created a friendly environment that puts patients first. They take care of the entire family, from newborns to grandparents.

Dr. Chaparro is now accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, call (252) 537-9176.



Nurses Gina Casper, left, and Sydney Stephens enjoy the enhanced working environment.

Fifth floor. Sixth floor. First Class.

All of us enjoy working in an environment that's new, fresh and well designed. No wonder our nurses on the 5th and 6th floors are so thrilled about the improvements recently completed to their nursing station and reception area.

The nursing staff is pleased about the improved lighting and increased privacy for those working on patient charts. But perhaps the biggest improvement is the new nurse call system, replacing a model that had been in operation for many years.

"The nursing area is open, bright and clean," said Denisha Stanfield, Nursing Clinical Supervisor. "We're able to have more security to maintain patient records, our physicians have more space to dictate their notes, and patients appreciate the reduced noise levels that allow them to rest more comfortably."

This is just the first step in a continuing effort to remodel our interiors. Other areas of the hospital will follow.

For Her, First Baby. For Him, First Diaper. For Them, First-Class Experience in our Birthing Center.



Jamie and Jami Elliott get down on Cadence's level.

What brings a woman who teaches school in Emporia, Virginia to Halifax Regional to have her first child? The excellent reputation of our Birthing Center. And now Jami Elliott and her husband, Jamie, can

give their own first-hand testimony of the wonderful patient care we're known for.

"It was nice to stay in one room for labor, delivery and recovery," Jami said. "The room was big enough for family to enjoy when they came to visit, and the nursing staff was always there whenever my daughter, Cadence, or I needed anything. It was a great experience."

Like many new dads, Jamie was a little bit nervous at

first. "The nurses were very patient with me," he said, "and they showed me things to help me feel comfortable. They even guided me as I was the first to change

Cadence's diaper."

Unfortunately, Cadence developed jaundice shortly after going home and had to be readmitted. "I was not going to leave her," Jami said. "The nurses completely understood. 'We have a room you can stay in right down the hall,' they told me. 'You're more than welcome to stay. Come see her anytime.'"

The Elliotts are happy to recommend the Birthing Center to their friends.

"The little things meant a lot," Jamie said. "There was a refrigerator in the room, which was nice, and the food was better than we expected. We even had a steak dinner, which was really good."

"They catered to me," Jami said. "They were concerned about me and met all my needs. The little extra drive was more than worth it. All in all, it was a great experience."

For more information about our Birthing Center or to schedule a tour, call (252) 535-8702.

THESE OB-GYNS SERVE THE HALIFAX REGION.

If you are planning an addition to your family, Halifax Regional has a number of well-qualified physicians to assist you.

Thomas J. McDonald, MD
(252) 535-1414

Richard Minielly, MD
(252) 535-4343

Lawrence Singer, MD
(252) 535-1414

CLASSES OFFERED AT THE BIRTHING CENTER:

- Pain Management During Labor
- Breast-Feeding Support
- Siblings (Ages 2 – 5)
- Infant CPR for New Parents
- Prepared Childbirth
- New Grandparents
- Infant Care
- Nursing Mothers of the Roanoke Valley (this group welcomes anyone interested in breast-feeding)

For information about our Birthing Center or to schedule a tour, please call (252) 535-8702.

Christopher Columbus. Neil Armstrong. Teresa Yarbrough.

Put yourself in Teresa Yarbrough's shoes. You're growing up, but you're still only 14 years old. Now you're experiencing pain in your back, and your doctor wants to find out why. So she sends you to have an MRI.

When Teresa arrived, she found that she was going to be the first person to be scanned in Halifax Regional's brand new MRI Center. That wasn't a problem because the MRI team made the process easy to understand. They explained every step to Teresa so she'd know what to expect. They showed her the monitor they watched during the procedure.

"Our unit was manufactured by Siemens Medical Solutions," said William Navarro, Imaging

Manager at Halifax Regional. "It's an ultra high-speed machine that provides excellent image quality and allows us to serve patients of almost all sizes – even a 14-year-old like Teresa."

Teresa, who lives in Conway in Northampton County, said the whole procedure was easier than she expected. "It only took 30 minutes," she said. "The technicians talked to me through a headset, and I had a ball to squeeze if I needed them, but I didn't have to use it."

Since Teresa led the way in late January, the MRI Center has remained busy, averaging between 50 and 55 procedures per week. Patients appreciate the convenience of being able to park at the door or,



Tim Grant, MRI Technologist, assists Teresa Yarbrough.

if inpatients, of being transported about 200 yards by ambulance.

The MRI represents a \$1.7 million investment in advanced

healthcare for the health of our region. If your doctor says you need an MRI, ask him to schedule you at Halifax Regional.



Halifax HealthLink

WEEKLY EVENTS

Healthy BINGO

Mondays – 9 a.m.

All welcome. Prizes donated by Wal-Mart and Halifax Regional.

HealthLink Plus Fitness Center

Mondays through Thursdays -

7 a.m. – 7 p.m. and

Fridays - 7 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Call 535-2163 for more information.

Gentle Fitness (Free)

Mondays, Wednesdays and

Fridays – 4 p.m.

Join us for low-impact walking aerobics.

Yoga on Tape (Free)

Mondays, Tuesdays and

Thursdays – 6 p.m.

Bring a towel, blanket or yoga mat to participate.

Want to learn yoga from a local instructor? Call Crystal at 535-4334.

If enough people show interest, we may be able to form a weekly yoga session (free).

Better Breathers Support Group

4th Mondays – 7 p.m.

Call Laura Wilder at 537-6912 for more information.

Diabetes Support Group

2nd Mondays – 7 p.m.

Call Carrie Davis at 535-8276 for more information.

Families of Victims of Violent Crimes

Call 308-2847 for more information.

HIV / AIDS Support Group

Call Misty at 535-8173 for more information.

NAMI Mental Health Support Group

1st & 3rd Tuesdays – 7 p.m.

Call 537-0320 for more information.

MONTHLY EVENTS

Cholesterol Screening

Have your cholesterol checked the 1st Tuesday and Wednesday of the month from 9 a.m. – noon.

Call 535-4334 for an appointment. \$12 fee.

Seminar information will be available a month in advance. Please contact Crystal Keener at (252) 535-4334 for more information on upcoming events and regular support group meetings at Halifax HealthLink.

Is It A Heart Attack? Advanced Lab Technology Tells Us Quickly



Ida Conwell, a patient care tech, tests patient at the bedside.

A simple finger stick at a patient's bedside has become a key to increasing the speed of treatment. It's called "Point of Care," and it helps doctors get quick results so they can begin care faster.

Consider patients who enter the ER with chest pain. We need to know right away if they're having a heart attack. With one tube of blood, we can perform tests and get results back in just 15 minutes – which can literally be a life saver.

Wanda Catt, Lab Manager, said Halifax Regional has been using Point

of Care in patient rooms for some time. "Nurses can quickly determine if treatment needs to begin," she said. "Now with our new technology, we've extended this care to the ER, and we're the only hospital in eastern North Carolina using it."

According to Wanda, patient outcomes have already been improved. "We've been able to reduce the length of stay for patients with chest pain because of this technology. It's like taking the lab to patients, instead of bringing them to us."

Second Edition. *Spirit of Halifax* is the newsletter of Halifax Regional, published quarterly to inform residents of the Roanoke Valley about the advancements at the Medical Center. Val Short, Vice President, is the editor. If you have questions or comments, please contact Henry Robertson at (252) 535-8585 or hrobertson@halifaxrmc.org. © 2007, Halifax Regional Medical Center

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