

Spirit of Halifax

The Community Newsletter of Halifax Regional



Transforming Our Space



Renovated Outpatient/Surgical registration area and lobby offers more natural light, comfort, and a greater sense of arrival.

Over the past year, we have undergone a wave of improvements to enhance and modernize our facility in terms of our appearance, increasing safety and privacy, maintaining high standards of cleanliness, as well as better accessibility.

On top of a major \$6.5 million expansion and renovation project of our Outpatient and Surgical areas, we also completed a four-week renovation of our main lobby.

The main lobby is now a brighter and more spacious entry point to the hospital for visitors. Durable-laminate wood flooring was installed along with a porcelain-tiled accent wall to beautify the space. Color improvements were made to standardize the look and bring it in sync with those colors used throughout the outpatient area. Our visitor entrance also includes new furniture offering more comfortable seating.

To increase accessibility, key way-finding and navigational improvements have been completed. Exterior signage near the entry points on Smith Church Road and Old Farm

Road have been updated along with the newly installed navigational signs near the Emergency and Outpatient access areas. Way-finding improvements on the first floor of the hospital now provide better guidance to patients and visitors.

Focused on improving the birthing experience for parents and their families, all the patient rooms in our Birthing Center received an upgrade including fresh paint in the rooms, and cleaning and re-glazing the bathroom tiles. Birthing Center rooms also received new privacy curtains, vanities, and new birthing beds. These improvements are already making a difference among our expectant families.

Still to come, the front parking lot will be repaved and select bathrooms will be renovated. Patients and their families are our first priority.

If you have suggestions for improvements you would like to see, please contact Bruce Robistow, Vice President, Clinical & Support Services, at 252-535-8159 or by email at brobistow@halifaxrhc.org.

In My View

What Does It Mean to be the Best?

The Dictionary defines “best” as “excelling all others” and “offering the greatest advantage or satisfaction.” Many healthcare providers find it difficult to promote their skills and expertise. They are too modest to speak about what a great job they do and their accomplishments.



When I learned that Halifax Regional ranked #1 for hip and knee replacement surgery in North Carolina, I could not be more proud and want to share this achievement of Dr. Rich Holm and our staff. Dr. Holm and the Joint Care Center’s dedicated team of nurses and clinical staff offer a combined 150 years experience. This designation reflects the commitment we have for the highest quality of service for our patients.

The ranking comes from Medicare who reviewed all U.S. hospital’s performance for total hip and knee arthroplasty (replacement surgery). In this review, Halifax Regional performed better than the national average among 3,497 hospitals across the U.S., placing our Joint Care Center in the top 2.9% in the country. When compared to all hospitals in the state, Halifax Regional performed #1 in North Carolina.

So join me in congratulating Dr. Holm and the entire Halifax Regional Joint Care Center team for being the best and continuing to achieve great results in getting patients moving again. This achievement is just one of many you’ll see in this issue.

If you’re looking for the best, it’s here in Halifax County.

Will Mahone, President
wmahone@halifaxrhc.org

Dawn Emerges with Top Honor as Nurse of the Year



Dawn Bennett, RN, BSN, CEN

Congratulations to Dawn Bennett, RN, BSN, CEN who serves as clinical supervisor and stroke care coordinator in the Emergency Department. Bennett was named Nurse of the Year by *Nursing 2012* Magazine. She received the honor for her consistent demonstration of nursing excellence, leadership ability, and commitment to stroke awareness and education for both patients and staff. Bennett is seen as dynamic, energetic, and innovative in her approach to nursing and patient education.

Bennett is actively involved in affiliations and committees. A charter member of a Stroke Protocol Committee, her work in this working group helped it grow into a multi-county stroke collaboration called North Carolina Stroke Collaboration. Her dedicated work on the committee helped implement a dynamic program to reduce stroke injury across the region when none previously existed.

"This is an enormous honor, not just for Dawn, but for all of Halifax Regional and especially our dedicated nursing team," said Karen Daniels, vice president, nursing. "Her Nurse of the Year award comes on top of being recognized as one of five Halifax Regional nurses named as Great 100 Nurses of North Carolina."

Bennett accepted the Nurse of the Year award on March 20th.

Halifax Regional Nursing Staff Receive Hallmarks of Healthy Workplaces Recognition

Halifax Regional Medical Center is the proud recipient of the November 2012 North Carolina Nurses Association (NCNA) Hallmarks of Healthy Workplaces recognition for creating positive working environments for nurses in North Carolina. 2012 recipients, including Halifax Regional, received a special hand-crafted award during the November 2 recognition ceremony in Greensboro, NC.

Hallmarks of Healthy Workplaces recognition is available for facilities in which three or more registered nurses work or volunteer and have met the criteria to receive statewide recognition. The application addresses Hallmarks guidelines, and provide staff recognition programs, use of best practices, and ways in which nurses

have taken charge in their working environment.

As a recognized facility Halifax Regional may use the official Hallmarks logo. The three colored surfaces represent support for professional development in the workplace, system support for staff to provide quality services, and integration of nursing into operations and governance of the facility.



Joint Commission Reaccreditation



Halifax Regional has once again earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for accreditation by demonstrating compliance with The Joint Commission's national standards for healthcare quality and safety in hospitals. The reaccreditation recognizes Halifax Regional's dedication to continuous compliance with The Joint Commission's state-of-the-art standards.

The Joint Commission's hospital standards

address important functions relating to the care of patients and the management of hospitals. The standards are developed in consultation with healthcare experts, providers, measurement experts and patients.

"In achieving Joint Commission accreditation, Halifax Regional Medical Center has demonstrated its commitment to the highest level of care for its patients," says Mark Pelletier, R.N., M.S., executive director, Hospital Programs, Accreditation and Certification Services, The Joint Commission. "Accreditation is a voluntary process and I commend Halifax Regional Medical Center for successfully undertaking this challenge to elevate its standard of care and instill confidence in the community it serves."

"With Joint Commission accreditation, we are making a significant investment in quality on a day-to-day basis in many areas. Joint Commission accreditation provides us with a framework to take our organization to the next level in making process improvements and helps create a culture of excellence," says Will Mahone, president, Halifax Regional.

Wound Care Center Is Here to Help

Chronic wounds are a growing problem in America. Considering that 25 million Americans – or 8.3% of the population – have diabetes and that 26.9% of people over the age of 65 have diabetes, it's no wonder that chronic wounds are becoming more frequent in our society. Add to this, the growing number of people with cardiac or venous disease, the growing rate of obesity, and our aging population and you have a problem that is only continuing to grow. These wounds may cause severe health risks and may result in life-threatening infections, possible amputation, and debilitating health problems.

While these numbers show the tremendous need for wound care, there is hope. Studies have shown that wound care treatment facilities have reduced amputation rates and shortened hospital stays. Halifax Regional has partnered with Healogics to provide state-of-the-art treatment for wounds at the Wound Care Center. Our comprehensive approach can heal wounds that have resisted other treatments, and help you avoid loss of limbs, reduce incidence of recurrence, and get your life back.

We have an excellent panel of physicians that have been specially trained in wound care to work with you and your primary care physician to heal your wound. Our panel of physicians consists of:

- ◆ Stuart Todd, M.D., F.A.C.S.,
Medical Director
- ◆ Douglas Boyette, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
- ◆ Frederick Kroncke, M.D.,
F.A.C.O.G.
- ◆ Greg Solovieff, M.D., F.A.C.E.P.
- ◆ Ken Moore, M.D.

If you have a wound that you think might benefit from the services offered at the Wound Care Center, please talk with your physician or contact us directly at 252-535-2350.

Images from top:
Private registration bays,
Patient Holding Area, PACU

Transforming Our Space

Improving the patient experience through greater accessibility, privacy, and better navigation.



Community Health Initiative Assesses the Impact of Child Obesity

The picture of health in Halifax County appears quite gloomy when looking at statistics for certain health outcomes and behaviors. For example, national adult and child obesity rates are 25% and 16.9% respectively, but those numbers jump to 39% (adult) and 21.7% (child) when looking at obesity rates for Halifax County.

As the Community Needs Assessment data was conducted and evaluated, Halifax Regional was simultaneously convening a group of community organizations to decide on and work collaboratively on a Community Health Initiative (CHI). Participating organizations in the CHI represent many segments of the community including education, healthcare, faith, civic, and others. These organizations work collaboratively with the goal of making significant and sustainable health improvements across the two counties.

Of issues pertaining to disease concerns in the Community Needs Assessment, the data that focused on obesity was shown to be modifiable factor that offered the largest community impact if moved in the right direction. Armed with data and motivated by

the severity of what is now an obesity epidemic, the CHI agreed to focus their efforts toward combating child obesity as it would reach individuals at a young age and, in turn, engage and impact the parents as well.

Data from the Community Needs Assessment helped shape goals of the CHI. The assessment was conducted from November 2011 through September 2012 by Halifax Regional using primary and secondary data for both Halifax and Northampton counties. Data revealed Halifax County has the third highest obesity rate in the state with Northampton County coming in twentieth at 34%. Adult obesity increased in Halifax County from 34% in 2010 to 39% in 2012 with childhood obesity increasing from 19.1% in 2007 to 21.7% in 2009.

The culmination of data revealed that implementation strategies to reduce obesity rates would help prevent many diseases such as heart disease, cancer, respiratory disease, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension and a host of other diseases. Implementing prevention strategies would help prevent many diseases and decrease healthcare costs across these

two counties.

The CHI has a number of projects underway. One such project is the development of a community resource guide that will give families access to important support networks, resources, and contacts. Another major project in the works is being supported by Brandy Bynum, director of Policy and Outreach, Action for Children North Carolina. She is creating a recreational resource map of spaces in the community suitable for physical activity. The map will highlight facilities, parks and other spaces where children can participate in physical activity.

This spring, the CHI will host a community-wide Family Expo on Saturday, May 4, 2013 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. The expo will be a family day filled with fun, education and helpful strategies to promote healthy eating and lifestyle changes.

To learn more about the Community Health Initiative or to get your organization involved in this collaboration, please contact, Karen Daniels at 252-535-8104 or kdaniels@halifaxrnc.org.

Don't Abandon Your New Year's Resolutions

It should be no surprise that many people develop New Year's resolutions around improving their physical well-being. It's likely you or someone you know created a New Year's resolution to eat healthy foods, lose weight, exercise, drink less alcohol, quit smoking, or eliminate a longstanding bad habit.

The real eye-opener...it's estimated that 88% of those who set New Year resolutions fail at maintaining their resolutions. This year, stop the cycle of resolving to make change and take proactive steps to take better care of you.

March was National Nutrition Month®, which was created to focus attention on the importance of making healthy food choices and increasing physical activity. Small, measurable changes can pay off big. Not sure where to begin? Try some of these tips:

- ◆ Eat with an eye for color: make half your plate fruit and vegetables. Aim for five servings a day.
- ◆ Choose more whole grains: Look for the words "whole grain/whole wheat" in the ingredient list and "fiber" on the nutrition facts label.
- ◆ Choose lean meats/protein: Choose loin, round, extra lean hamburger, and skinless poultry. Trim visible fat from meats.
- ◆ See how your food measures up: Use measuring cups to see how much a true serving size is according to the food label.
- ◆ Drink more water: Replace sodas and sugary drinks with water.
- ◆ Avoid fried foods: Saturated fat and trans fat in deep-fried foods can increase your risk for high cholesterol and heart disease. Bake, broil, sauté, grill, or steam food as a healthy alternative to frying.
- ◆ Get off the couch and get moving: Adults should have 2.5 hours of physical activity per week and children should be active for 1 hour each day. Start simple with a 10-minute walk or playing outside with your children.

Partnering with a registered dietitian is also a great way to stay focused on your health and fitness goals. A registered dietitian can help you develop and maintain a weight-loss plan, control diabetes, get high cholesterol in check, and help you develop sustainable, healthy eating habits.

To keep your New Year's resolution on track or to speak directly with a Registered Dietitian, call 252-535-8035 or email lcarroll@halifaxrnc.org.

100 Year Celebration Honors Past, Present, and Future



On October 24, 2012, Halifax Regional commemorated its 100th Anniversary with a celebration the entire community enjoyed. Over one hundred people joined the celebration, including business and civic leaders, and active and retired employees.

State Health Director, Dr. Laura Gerald gave an inspiring and thought-provoking keynote address and spoke about the important role that rural community hospitals play in meeting the care needs of the community.

The event was a celebratory culmination of Halifax Regional's history and vision for the future intermingled

with stories of the people who were significant in shaping what Halifax Regional has become. It also reaffirmed the organization as remaining fully anchored as the center of health in the Roanoke Valley.

Following the program, guests were led on a guided tour of the facility's recently renovated and expanded Outpatient and Surgical areas in addition to seeing the unveiled Walking Wall, which displays a chronological history of the hospital, an elaborate photo montage of employees past and present, and a special tribute area to the five prominent physicians instrumental in the hospital's formative years.



From top left: State Health Director, Dr. Laura Gerald; Anniversary event kicks-off with Outpatient ribbon-cutting ceremony; Guests explore 100 Year Walking Wall

Halifax Regional Joins North Carolina's Health Information Exchange

At the start of the year, Halifax Regional became the first hospital in the state to participate in North Carolina's health information exchange (NC HIE). This system helps caregivers provide you with better, more convenient, and safer care. The system is being utilized statewide and helps hospitals and clinics share a patient's important health information including drug allergies, prescriptions, medical conditions, and lab and test results in a single electronic patient health record. This new system is available through a partnership with NC HIE, an independent, NC-based nonprofit that operates the statewide health information exchange.

NC HIE's secure system links information

from separate healthcare sites to create a single electronic health record for individual patients. This record combines health information from Halifax Regional and all of a patient's other healthcare providers that participate in the exchange. Benefits to our patients include:

- ◆ Better coordination of care between health providers
- ◆ Better health outcomes
- ◆ Fewer repeat tests and procedures
- ◆ Less paperwork for you and your healthcare provider
- ◆ Fewer medical errors
- ◆ Improved patient safety

- ◆ Faster identification and reporting of public health threats
- ◆ Reduced healthcare costs

"We're very enthusiastic about this partnership," said Will Mahone, president, Halifax Regional. "Having access to the NC HIE system will help our clinicians get the information they need to make more informed decisions about our patients' care."

Health information exchanges like NC HIE are being built in states and regions across the country and are widely viewed as central to supporting lasting improvements in our nation's healthcare system.

To learn more about NC HIE and the benefits to your health and the health of your family, visit www.nchie.org.

How can I avoid
a heart attack?

Can snoring be a
sign of a more serious
health condition?

What's the best way
to treat depression?

How should I
care for a relative
with diabetes?

People always want the facts about these and other health-related issues...and we can help. Halifax Regional offers free seminars and presentations on a host of different medical- and health-related topics at absolutely no cost to your organization. We will also bring our own equipment, you simply provide electricity and space for a screen.

For a free Speakers Bureau brochure, to schedule a speaker, or give us suggestions for topic ideas, contact Cheryl Wheeler, Customer Service Coordinator at cwheeler@halifaxrhc.org or 252-535-8289.

Sign Up Today

Halifax Regional wants you to have more information about how to take care of your health. We are expanding our health education program and would like to send you information via email.

When you sign up for HealthEd, you'll receive emails with tips for a healthy lifestyle, information about special events at Halifax HealthLink, and news about the services at Halifax Regional.

To sign up, go to www.halifaxregional.org and click on the "Sign up for HealthEd" icon.



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Upcoming Events



**Halifax
Regional
Spring 5K**

**A Fun Run
for the
Whole Family**

Join us for the Halifax Regional Spring 5K and Family Fun Run on Saturday April 6, 2013, from 8:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m. on the main campus of Halifax Regional. Funds raised will support the Halifax Regional Foundation.

The event is open to everyone, including children. A play area with games, snacks, and a bounce house will be available after the run.

To register for the 5K or get more information, contact Josie Jones at jjones2@halifaxrhc.org.



Call for Volunteers

Share your time and your talents by joining the volunteers at Halifax Regional. If

you have a day or a few hours a week; we can use your help. For more information or an application, contact Kay Hines, Volunteer Coordinator, at 252-535-8687. Applications are also available at the Halifax Regional Information Desk and Gift Shop (front lobby).