

# TELLING THE **HOSPITAL** STORY



American Hospital  
Association™

*Advancing Health in America*

[www.aha.org/TellingtheHospitalStory](http://www.aha.org/TellingtheHospitalStory)

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# INTRODUCTION

Hospitals are cornerstones of the communities they serve — places of healing, hope and connection that touch lives every day in ways both seen and unseen. From delivering babies and responding to emergencies to advancing medical innovation and addressing community-wide challenges, hospitals are there when and where they are needed most. They care for patients regardless of circumstance, stand ready in times of crisis and anchor local economies as trusted employers and partners.

Telling the story of hospitals’ impact is powerful. It brings to light the dedication of caregivers, the strength of community partnerships and the essential role hospitals play in improving access to care, advancing health and supporting the well-being of all. These stories put faces to facts and context to care, helping policymakers, community leaders and the public understand what is at stake when hospitals are supported — and what is lost when they are not. By clearly and consistently sharing how hospitals serve their communities, we reaffirm their value not only as providers of care but as vital organizations committed to a healthier future for all.

These stories highlight how hospitals and health systems across the country bring this impact to life. Together, they demonstrate how hospitals work every day to ensure access to care, build healthier communities, innovate and improve quality, prevent disease and encourage wellness, and support a strong local workforce. These examples reflect the broad and deep commitment of hospitals to meeting community needs today while preparing for the challenges of tomorrow.

**Visit AHA’s Telling the Hospital Story webpage for more stories highlighting hospitals and health systems, and tools and resources to tell your hospital’s story in your community.**

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### ■ ARKANSAS

#### Arkansas Children's Hospital

### Telemedicine Brings Advanced Heart Imaging to Rural Children

Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock is strengthening access to specialized pediatric cardiac care by using telemedicine to support rural hospitals in performing complex MRI and CT scans close to home. Through a real-time remote-guidance model, pediatric cardiology experts in Little Rock virtually oversee imaging exams conducted at community hospitals, ensuring high-quality scans even when local facilities lack specialized teams. This approach reduces the need for families to travel long distances, improves diagnostic confidence for congenital heart conditions and reflects Arkansas Children's commitment to using digital health tools to eliminate geographic barriers and keep care centered in local communities.

### ■ IDAHO

#### St. Luke's Boise Medical Center



Courtesy of St. Luke's Boise Medical Center

### Hospital-at-home Program Provides Care Where Patients Heal Best

St. Luke's Boise Medical Center in Idaho is expanding access to hospital-level care through the state's first hospital-at-home program to meet growing demand for services. The program allows patients with conditions such as heart failure, pneumonia and infections requiring intravenous antibiotics to receive comprehensive care in their homes, supported by remote monitoring technology, daily paramedic visits and continuous virtual connection to physicians and nurses. By reducing pressure on emergency departments while offering outcomes comparable to traditional inpatient care, the initiative provides a cost-effective, patient-centered alternative that promotes comfort, family involvement and recovery — demonstrating how innovative care models can reshape health care delivery.

### ■ DELAWARE

#### Nemours Children's Health

### Virtual Care Reduces Transfers and Costs for Injured Kids

Nemours Children's Health is demonstrating how telemedicine can deliver faster, more cost-effective care for children with orthopedic injuries by reducing unnecessary hospital transfers. Research led by Nemours orthopedic surgeon Alfred Atanda, M.D., found that more than one-third of pediatric trauma transfers from urgent care centers could have been avoided through virtual consultations with pediatric specialists. By enabling real-time assessment, image sharing and physician-to-physician guidance, telemedicine helps determine whether a child can safely go home, needs a next-day specialist visit or truly requires emergency transport. The approach not only speeds care and reassures families but also significantly lowers costs. It's an example of how moving expertise and information, rather than patients, can improve quality and efficiency in pediatric care.

# ENSURING ACCESS TO CARE

## VIRTUAL CARE

### ■ MISSISSIPPI

#### University of Mississippi Medical Center

### Program Improves Diabetes Outcomes While Lowering Costs

The University of Mississippi Medical Center is improving access to care and lowering health care costs through its Diabetes Telehealth Network. The program uses remote patient monitoring and virtual clinician support to help patients manage Type 2 diabetes from home, particularly in the Mississippi Delta. Results showed significant improvements in health outcomes while also generating measurable savings. Building on its success, UMMC has expanded the model to manage other chronic conditions, demonstrating how telehealth can improve affordability, access and quality of care.

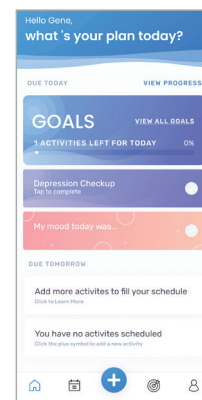
### ■ SOUTH CAROLINA

#### MUSC Health

### App Delivers Timely Support for Depression Care

Researchers at the MUSC Health in Charleston are widening access to depression care with Moodivate, a free, self-directed app designed to help patients manage symptoms without long waits for behavioral health appointments.

Developed by Jennifer Dahne, Ph.D., the app uses behavioral activation therapy to encourage users to set meaningful goals, track activities and monitor mood over time. Clinical trial results show patients using Moodivate were significantly more likely to experience improvement and remission, highlighting how digital tools can complement primary care, reduce barriers to treatment and provide immediate, evidence-based support for people with depression.



## COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

### ■ KANSAS

#### University of Kansas Health System

### Athletic Trainers Keep Kansas Students Safe on the Sidelines

The University of Kansas Health System is helping protect high school athletes across the region by embedding certified athletic trainers directly into local schools, ensuring immediate, expert care when injuries occur. Now serving 38 schools, the program integrates trainers into school communities where they build trusted relationships with students, coaches and families while preparing for emergencies ranging from heat illness to cardiac and mental health crises. Supported by sports medicine physicians, the trainers deliver early assessment, lifesaving intervention and safe return-to-play guidance — demonstrating how hospital-led partnerships strengthen youth safety, save lives and support healthy communities under the Friday night lights and beyond.



Courtesy of University of Kansas Health System

### ■ IOWA

#### MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center

### Free Doula Program Supports Families Through Birth

MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center is expanding compassionate, family-centered maternity care by offering free volunteer doula services to expectant parents across central Iowa. The program provides experienced, trained doulas who work alongside medical providers and family members to support mothers and partners through the birthing process with comfort measures, education and reassurance. Available by appointment to anyone in the community, the service helps translate medical information, ease anxiety and empower families, especially first-time parents.

# ENSURING ACCESS TO CARE

## COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

### ■ OKLAHOMA

#### Oklahoma State University Medical Center



Courtesy of Oklahoma State University Medical Center

### Veterans Day Milestone Advances Care and Education in Tulsa

Oklahoma State University Medical Center marked Veterans Day by celebrating the transfer of ownership of the new James Mountain Inhofe VA Medical Center, a major step in expanding access to care for veterans in eastern Oklahoma. Through a public-private partnership, OSU helped transition the newly constructed hospital to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, laying the foundation for the OSU Academic Medical District in downtown Tulsa. Located across from OSU Medical Center, the VA hospital will coordinate closely with academic clinicians and trainees, strengthening veteran care while advancing medical education and reinforcing a shared commitment to serve those who have served.

### ■ WEST VIRGINIA

#### West Virginia University Health System

### Medical Respite Care Bridges Health and Housing Gaps

WVU Medicine United Hospital Health Center in Morgantown, W.Va., is improving recovery and continuity of care by helping launch West Virginia's first medical respite care center for people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Through a partnership with the United Way of Harrison and Doddridge counties, the program provides a safe place for patients who are well enough to leave the hospital but too ill to recover on the streets or in shelters. By offering integrated medical care and support services, the initiative aims to reduce emergency department use and hospital readmissions while improving health outcomes and quality of life.

## MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

### ■ ARIZONA

#### Sage Memorial Hospital

### Culturally Rooted Mental Health Care for Navajo Nation

At Sage Memorial Hospital in Ganado, Ariz., Richard Laughter, M.D. — the only Navajo psychiatrist serving the vast Navajo Nation — is bridging cultural and access gaps in behavioral health care by blending Native traditions with Western medical practices. Drawing on shared cultural understanding and personal experience, Dr. Laughter provides care that feels relatable and reassuring for patients who face significant barriers to mental health services. His work incorporates traditional healing practices alongside clinical treatment and is complemented by community-driven initiatives, such as nutrition programs that promote traditional foods. Together, these efforts reflect a culturally responsive approach to addressing mental health disparities and strengthening well-being across Native communities.

# ENSURING ACCESS TO CARE

## MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

### ■ IDAHO

#### Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center



### New Program Fills Critical Gap in Teen Mental Health Care

Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls' new intensive outpatient program for adolescents bridges the gap between weekly therapy and inpatient care. Serving teens ages 12 to 17, the program offers multiple group therapy sessions each week for young people facing anxiety, depression, trauma and suicidal ideation. The program provides structured, peer-supported care focused on coping skills, emotional regulation, communication and self-esteem. Teens are supported in a timely and targeted way, and they can stay connected to their families, schools and communities.

### ■ MARYLAND

#### Luminis Health

### Leaders, Boards and Data Drive Safer Care

Luminis Health is strengthening patient safety, care quality and workforce well-being through a coordinated strategy that links governance, data and community investment. Guided by community health needs assessments, Luminis is making longterm investments to close gaps in behavioral health care by expanding services through new facilities and renovated spaces designed to deliver a full continuum of care. A centralized analytics team works alongside clinical leaders to identify disparities, improve outcomes and target resources where they are most needed. The system has prioritized workforce development through mentorship, leadership programs and administrative fellowships, reinforcing a culture where supported caregivers, datadriven decisions and communityfocused investments work together.

### ■ COLORADO

#### Denver Health

### Medical-dental Integration Expands Care for Vulnerable Patients

Denver Health is integrating basic dental services into primary care visits, providing needed oral health care for low-income, uninsured and underinsured patients. Pediatricians and other clinicians now provide screenings, education and preventive treatments such as fluoride varnish during routine medical appointments, helping address significant barriers to traditional dental care. More children are receiving preventive services, and patients are referred to dental providers as needed. By breaking down silos between medical and dental care, Denver Health is reaching more patients earlier and reducing preventable oral disease.

### ■ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

#### U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

### VA Expands Age-friendly Care for Older Veterans Nationwide

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is embedding the Age-Friendly Health Systems model across its national system to better meet the needs of older veterans, nearly half of whom are age 65 or older. By focusing on the "4Ms" — what matters, medication, mentation and mobility — and empowering staff at every level to lead change, the VA is promoting care that supports independence, aligns with veterans' goals and improves quality through consistent, person-centered practices.

## MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

### ■ NEW HAMPSHIRE

#### Dartmouth Health

### Advisory Council Improves Patient Understanding and Access

Dartmouth Health in Lebanon, N.H., partners with its Patient Education Advisory Council, a multidisciplinary group dedicated to creating clear and compassionate education materials, to improve health literacy and patient engagement. By bringing together patient volunteers, clinicians and staff, the council ensures materials meet clinical best practices and plain-language standards while remaining easy to access across digital platforms. Patient and family advisors play a central role in reviewing tone and readability to help ensure information is understandable and supportive. The materials empower patients and families to better manage their health and make informed decisions.

### ■ WEST VIRGINIA

#### Mon Health Medical Center

### Volunteers Ensure Compassionate Presence at Life's End

Mon Health Medical Center in Morgantown, W.Va., is honoring dignity and compassion at the end of life through the No One Dies Alone program, which provides trained volunteers to sit with patients in their final days when family or friends are unavailable. Volunteers offer a calm, human presence — holding a hand, listening or simply being there — so no one faces death alone. The program reflects Mon Health's commitment to whole-person care, recognizing that supporting peace, comfort and human connection is as vital as medical treatment during life's final moments.

### ■ UTAH

#### Intermountain Health Primary Children's Hospital – Miller Family Campus



Courtesy of Intermountain Health Primary Children's Hospital – Miller Family Campus

### New Autism Clinic Offers Early Support for Children and Families

The new Applied Behavior Analysis Clinic at Intermountain Primary Children's Hospital in Riverton, Utah, focuses on essential autism services including early intervention for children ages 2 to 6. Behavioral assessments, along with individual and group therapy, help young children build foundational skills during a critical developmental period. The clinic addresses longstanding gaps in autism care in Utah and surrounding states, reinforcing Intermountain's commitment to ensuring families can access timely, high-quality services that help children with autism thrive.

### ■ NORTH DAKOTA

#### Sanford Health



Courtesy of Sanford Health

### One Doctor's Journey from Ranch to Rural Healthcare

Elizabeth Brown, M.D., an OB/GYN at Sanford Health in Dickinson, N.D., balances her medical career with her life on a 650-acre ranch in Glendive, Mont. Her rural background helps her connect with patients who travel long distances for care. Despite the challenges of commuting and being away from her family, Dr. Brown finds fulfillment in both her professional and personal life, embodying the spirit of rural health care.

### ■ NEW MEXICO

#### Presbyterian Española Hospital

### Rural Hospital Expands Access to Mental Health and Addiction Care by Meeting Patients Where They Are

A small rural hospital in New Mexico is delivering mental health and addiction treatment through emergency departments, clinics and even first responders to overcome barriers like transportation gaps and high medication costs. By using long-acting medications, starting treatment immediately during patient touchpoints and pairing care with case management and peer support, the hospital is helping stabilize patients, improve continuity of care and address behavioral health needs that are often hardest to reach in rural communities.

### ■ MAINE

#### St. Mary's Regional Medical Center

### Meeting Community Mental Health Needs Across the Lifespan

St. Mary's Regional Medical Center is expanding access to behavioral health care through a comprehensive, patient-centered continuum of services for children, adolescents and adults. From dedicated behavioral emergency care to inpatient, outpatient and recovery programs, St. Mary's offers timely, compassionate treatment tailored to each patient's needs. These services support crisis stabilization, short-term and ongoing care, and seamless transitions to community-based support.



### ■ NEVADA

#### Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center

### New Heart Rhythm Technology Expands Arrhythmia Care

Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center introduced advanced technology to diagnose better and treat complex heart rhythm disorders, building on its use of pulse field ablation to address arrhythmia. Integrated with a sophisticated cardiac mapping system, the new approach allows physicians to more precisely target abnormal heart tissue, offering hope to patients with atrial fibrillation and reinforcing the hospital's commitment to innovative cardiac care.

### ■ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

#### Children's National

### Children's National Grows Mobile Clinic Program to Reach More Kids

Children's National Hospital has launched a second mobile medical unit to expand access to pediatric primary and mental health care for children in the District of Columbia. The new unit brings services such as well-child visits, immunizations, chronic disease management and pediatric mental health care directly to schools and community sites, helping families overcome barriers like transportation and limited appointment availability while meeting growing demand for behavioral health support.

# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## CARE CLOSE TO HOME



Courtesy of ChristianaCare Union Hospital

### ■ DELAWARE

#### ChristianaCare Union Hospital

### Peer Recovery Specialists Connect Patients to Treatment

ChristianaCare Union Hospital's peer recovery specialist program connects patients with lived-experience support at a critical moment in substance use disorder care. Partnering with Voices of Hope and the Cecil County Health Department, the program placed 10 trained peer specialists in the emergency department, where they assisted more than 600 patients in the first year, with 440 linked to long-term recovery services. Hospital leaders say the bedside model improves the likelihood that patients will enter treatment after discharge, while peer specialists' shared experiences help build trust, reduce stigma and create meaningful pathways to recovery for individuals and families.

### ■ NEW JERSEY

#### RWJBarnabas Health

### Cancer Hospital Delivers Advanced Care Close to Home

RWJBarnabas Health brought comprehensive, leading-edge cancer care to New Jersey with the opening of the Jack & Sheryl Morris Cancer Center — the state's first freestanding cancer hospital. Developed in collaboration with Rutgers Cancer Institute, the state-of-the-art facility offers advanced treatment for all cancer types, access to clinical trials and on-site research, reducing the need for patients to travel out of state for care. The center blends innovation with comfort through wellness amenities and thoughtfully designed spaces, including a child-friendly, Jersey Shore-themed pediatric area.

### ■ ILLINOIS

#### Rush University Medical Center

### Father-focused Prenatal Care Supports Healthier Families

A father-inclusive prenatal care program led by Rush University Medical Center is actively engaging fathers alongside mothers during pregnancy to improve maternal, infant and family outcomes. Integrated into prenatal care, the Preparing for Parenthood program supports couples with co-parenting and communication skills, father-focused parenting education, care coordination for social needs and workforce development resources, reinforcing the role of fathers as partners in health, stability and early child development.

# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## CARE CLOSE TO HOME

### ■ OKLAHOMA

#### INTEGRIS Health

### Mobile Health Clinic Drives Access to Care in Oklahoma County

INTEGRIS Health is improving access to preventive and chronic care services through its Mobile Health Clinic, which travels directly to underserved neighborhoods across Oklahoma County. Staffed by a multidisciplinary care team and supported by community partners, the clinic provides health screenings, case management, education and food access services, addressing medical needs alongside social drivers of health while reducing barriers such as transportation and limited appointment availability.

### ■ VIRGINIA

#### Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital

### Boutique Offers Comfort and Confidence During Hair Loss

Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital is supporting patients facing medical-related hair loss through its Unique Boutique, a warm, welcoming space that helps restore confidence during a difficult time. Staffed by volunteers with lived experience, the boutique offers private appointments and provides everything at no cost — including high-quality wigs, scarves, hats and handmade port pillows, many of which are donated. The Unique Boutique is open to anyone experiencing hair loss, not just Sentara patients.

## FOOD IS MEDICINE

### ■ ALASKA

#### Alaska Native Medical Center

### Traditional Foods Program Honors Culture and Healing

At the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage, hospital kitchen staff deepened their understanding of Indigenous foodways through a hands-on training session in traditional seal processing, reinforcing the role of culture in healing. Tlingit seal hunter Tim Ackerman led the workshop for chefs and nutritionists and provided insight into both the practical and cultural significance of preparing traditional foods. These are served to patients through the hospital's "Traditional Tuesdays" program in nutrient-rich, culturally familiar meals such as seal soup. The medical center supports not only patients' physical health, but also their emotional well-being and connection to heritage.

Courtesy of Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium



# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## FOOD IS MEDICINE

### ■ ILLINOIS

#### Advocate Condell Medical Center

### Mobile Pantry Program Feeds Families and Builds Community

Advocate Condell Medical Center in Libertyville, Ill., is addressing food insecurity and strengthening community connections through its Rx Mobile Food Pantry Program, which delivers fresh, nutritious food directly to neighborhoods in need. Since launching in 2019 and expanding to additional communities, the program has served thousands of families with monthly distributions of healthy staples while also offering nutrition education and recipes tailored to the provided food. The program's onsite resource hub connects participants with social services, financial assistance and health coverage support, as well.

### ■ MISSISSIPPI

#### North Mississippi Health Services



Courtesy of North Mississippi Health Services

### Farmers' Market Support Promotes Community Wellness

North Mississippi Health Services is extending its mission beyond hospital walls by supporting the local farmers' market, aimed at improving access to healthy foods and promoting wellness. Through a partnership with the Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association, NMHS is offering health screenings and educational programming throughout the summer, including breast health education, heat stroke awareness and lifestyle medicine. NMHS President and CEO Shane Spees said the initiative reflects the organization's commitment to patient- and family-centered care by encouraging healthier habits at home and strengthening connections within the communities it serves.

### ■ HAWAII

#### Kaiser Permanente Hawaii

### Island Initiatives Grow Nutrition and Food Security

Kaiser Permanente Hawaii is investing in healthier communities across the islands by supporting local nonprofits that help residents obtain nutritious, locally grown food. Through targeted grants, the health system assists seniors, families with children and Medicaid and SNAP participants in receiving fresh, culturally relevant produce while also supporting local farmers and reducing food waste. By funding initiatives such as produce prescriptions, food rescue and community distribution programs, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii is addressing food insecurity as a critical driver of health and advancing long-term well-being throughout the Aloha State.



# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## FOOD IS MEDICINE

### ■ OHIO

#### Cleveland Clinic

### Food as Medicine Nourishes Health Beyond the Hospital

Cleveland Clinic is advancing a “food as medicine” approach to improve long-term health by making nutritious food readily available and engaging communities beyond traditional clinical settings. The health system helped eliminate a local food desert by bringing a full-service grocery store to Cleveland’s Fairfax neighborhood, while also supporting patients and families through healthy hospital meals, community-based nutrition education and partnerships with local organizations. Targeted initiatives like Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies provide grocery support and sustained guidance for pregnant women, reinforcing the link between nutrition and healthier outcomes. Together, these efforts highlight how addressing food access as a core part of care can strengthen individual health and build healthier communities over time.

### ■ OREGON

#### OHSU Doernbecher Children’s Hospital

### Nutrition Support Continues After Hospitalization

OHSU Doernbecher Children’s Hospital in Portland, Ore., is addressing food insecurity among families with hospitalized children through its Nourish program, ensuring parents and caregivers have access to meals during inpatient stays. Expanded through the Food for Health Network, a partnership with local food pantries, the program helps families leaving the hospital access fresh, healthy food at home. Using a digital platform for grocery ordering and pickup or delivery, the initiative eases the transition from hospital to home, reduces stress for caregivers and reinforces OHSU’s commitment to supporting whole-family health beyond medical treatment.

## WOMEN’S HEALTH

### ■ LOUISIANA

#### Woman’s Hospital

### Bus Drives 3D Mammography to Women

Woman’s Hospital in Baton Rouge, La., is expanding access to lifesaving breast cancer screenings with a new state-of-the-art mobile mammography bus equipped with 3D imaging technology. Reaching women across Louisiana and parts of Mississippi, the mobile unit brings preventive care directly to schools, churches and community centers, eliminating barriers such as transportation and distance. Building on a program that delivered thousands of screenings across dozens of parishes last year, the new bus strengthens early detection efforts and underscores Woman’s Hospital’s commitment to improving women’s health outcomes through accessible, community-based care.



Courtesy of Woman's Hospital

### ■ WYOMING

#### Evanston Regional Hospital



### New Program Restores Prenatal Care Access in Southwestern Wyoming

Evanston Regional Hospital has launched a Maternal Health Connections program to address gaps in care left by the closure of local labor and delivery services. The program provides comprehensive prenatal and postpartum support — including virtual monitoring, mental health services, genetic counseling and substance use assistance — reducing the need for long-distance travel and ensuring expectant mothers in rural Wyoming can access essential care close to home.

### ■ ALABAMA

#### Baptist Health Princeton Hospital

### Princeton Hospital prioritizes maternal care

As maternal deaths rose nationwide, Baptist Health Princeton Hospital continues to deliver comprehensive, high-quality maternity care for mothers and babies in Birmingham, Ala. The hospital offers programs such as birth navigation, doula support, couplet care and breastfeeding education, contributing to low rates of C-sections and early elective deliveries while supporting women at every stage of pregnancy and childbirth.

### ■ NEBRASKA

#### Columbus Community Hospital

### Postpartum Alert Program Strengthens Maternal Safety

Columbus Community Hospital in Columbus, Neb., is improving maternal health outcomes through its new Postpartum Alert program, designed to reduce complications and save lives during the critical weeks after childbirth. Postpartum patients receive teal wristbands that signal they recently delivered a baby so that care teams can quickly recognize risk and respond to warning signs such as severe bleeding, chest pain or seizures. Paired with patient education and follow-up support, the initiative — led by the Nebraska Perinatal Quality Improvement Collaborative — helps mothers and providers identify symptoms and act quickly.

### ■ INDIANA

#### Beacon Health System

### Beacon Health partnership expands support for new and expectant mothers

A partnership led by Beacon Health System is strengthening support for new and expectant mothers by connecting families to home visiting, education and community-based resources that promote healthy pregnancies and early childhood development. Through collaboration with Healthy Families Elkhart County, the initiative helps address social and emotional needs alongside medical care, improving outcomes for mothers while reinforcing a coordinated, community-centered approach to maternal health.

# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

### ■ NEW JERSEY

#### Hackensack Meridian Health Hackensack University Medical Center

### 300th Transplant Marks Life-changing Milestone

Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, N.J., reached a major milestone by performing its 300th organ transplant of the year — a kidney transplant that gave a 37-year-old patient a new lease on life and a very timely gift. After just a month on the transplant waitlist, the patient received the unexpected call that a kidney was available, underscoring the medical center's high

transplant volume, expertise and shortened wait times compared with many regional programs. The medical center is part of a select group of U.S. hospitals performing kidney transplants at this scale and is a leader in organ preservation technology.



Courtesy of Hackensack Meridian Health Hackensack University Medical Center

### ■ ALASKA

#### Bartlett Regional Hospital

### ED Partnerships Reduce Repeat Visits and Strengthen Care

Bartlett Regional Hospital in Juneau is improving care for vulnerable patients by connecting the emergency department with community support agencies to address the root causes of frequent ED use. Through real-time information sharing and coordinated care planning, the hospital brings together health care providers, social service organizations and first responders to create consistent, patient-centered approaches that consider factors such as housing instability, behavioral health needs and access to services. Since launching the program, Bartlett has reduced repeat emergency department visits by 44%, while also improving patient quality of life and boosting staff morale — demonstrating how collaboration beyond hospital walls can deliver better outcomes for both patients and care teams.

### ■ COLORADO

#### CommonSpirit Mercy Hospital

### Real-time EMS Technology Speeds Heart Care in the Four Corners

CommonSpirit Mercy Hospital in Durango, Colo., is partnering with regional EMS agencies through a real-time communication system, Pulsara, that shares critical emergency cardiac patient care data while ambulances are en route. The technology securely transmits EKGs, vital signs and clinical notes directly from the field to hospital care teams so that cardiac specialists and emergency physicians can prepare and act faster when seconds matter most. By strengthening coordination between first responders and hospital teams, Mercy Hospital is accelerating diagnosis and treatment, improving outcomes and reinforcing its commitment to innovation and lifesaving collaboration for communities across the Four Corners region.

### ■ LOUISIANA

#### St. Tammany Health System

### Collaboration Brings Care to Louisiana's Northshore

St. Tammany Health System is making care more accessible and improving population health across rural and suburban communities through Healthier Northshore, a broad collaboration launched in 2020 with nearly 50 partners spanning health care, government, education and nonprofits. Using mobile clinics, community gardens, school-based programs and health education events, the initiative addresses preventive care, behavioral health, tobacco use, nutrition and physical inactivity. Already credited with increased cancer screenings, improved smoking cessation rates and expanded access to care for thousands of rural residents, Healthier Northshore demonstrates how cross-sector collaboration can deliver measurable, community-driven health improvements.

## BREAKTHROUGH MEDICINE

### ■ VERMONT

#### UVM Health



Courtesy of University of Vermont Health

### **Pediatric Neurosurgical Care Helps Vermont Teen Return to Ice Hockey**

Specialized pediatric neurosurgical care at the University of Vermont Health–UVM Medical Center helped a 14-year-old boy recover from a rare and high-risk brain condition and return to a normal, active life. After being diagnosed with a complex arteriovenous malformation near the brain’s motor center, the patient underwent a carefully staged treatment plan that included surgery, radiation and intensive rehabilitation, leading to a remarkable recovery and a return to competitive ice hockey within nine months.

### ■ CONNECTICUT

#### Yale New Haven Health

### **Novel Spine Surgery Safeguards Mother and Baby**

Facing debilitating pain from a herniated disc during pregnancy, an expectant mother received successful, innovative care at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, where a multidisciplinary team performed awake, minimally invasive spine surgery to protect both mother and child. Using local anesthesia and an endoscopic approach, surgeons relieved pressure on her spinal nerve while avoiding risks associated with traditional surgery, resulting in immediate pain relief and same-day discharge. Careful coordination among neurosurgery, obstetrics, anesthesiology and nursing teams ensured a safe outcome, and the patient later delivered a healthy baby boy.

### ■ MICHIGAN

#### Henry Ford Health

### **Innovative Chemotherapy Expands Options for Advanced Abdominal Cancers**

Henry Ford Health in Michigan implemented pressurized intraperitoneal aerosolized chemotherapy, a minimally invasive approach designed to better treat cancers that spread within the abdominal cavity. Delivered during laparoscopic surgery through small incisions, the therapy aerosolizes chemotherapy directly inside the abdomen, allowing drugs to more precisely target tumors while limiting systemic exposure. Building on its established expertise in intraperitoneal cancer treatments, Henry Ford Health invested in specialized training and technology to bring PIPAC to Henry Ford St. John Hospital, offering patients access to a promising therapy available at only a limited number of cancer centers nationwide.

### ■ MASSACHUSETTS

#### Massachusetts General Hospital

### **Breakthrough Transplant Offers Hope Amid Organ Shortage**

Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston reached a major milestone by performing its second successful transplant of a genetically edited pig kidney into a living patient, advancing efforts to address the nation’s critical organ shortage. The pioneering procedure allowed a patient who spent years on dialysis to leave the hospital within a week and begin recovery. Building on its world-first xenotransplant in 2024, the MGH team is demonstrating the transformative potential of cross-species transplantation and reinforcing a shared commitment to innovation that could one day ensure no one dies waiting for a lifesaving organ.

## BREAKTHROUGH MEDICINE

### ■ NORTH CAROLINA

#### Duke University Health System



### One Donation, Three Young Lives Saved

Duke University Health System has transformed pediatric heart transplantation through a groundbreaking procedure in which one donor heart saved three children's lives. Duke surgeons pioneered the world's first living mitral valve replacement — a form of partial heart transplant — to use healthy valves from an 11-year-old heart transplant recipient to treat two other children who needed valve replacements but not new hearts. Unlike mechanical or preserved tissue valves, the living valves can grow with pediatric patients, reducing the need for repeated surgeries.

Courtesy of Duke University Health System

### ■ TEXAS

#### Texas Children's Hospital

### Texas Children's Hospital Uses New Enzyme Therapy to Treat Rare Neurological Disorder

Texas Children's Hospital has successfully used a new enzyme replacement therapy to treat aromatic L-amino acid decarboxylase deficiency, a rare neurological disorder once considered untreatable. The first use of the therapy at the hospital involved a 3-year-old patient, marking a significant advance in care for genetic conditions that affect movement and brain function and offering new hope to families facing similar diagnoses.

### ■ WASHINGTON

#### MultiCare Health System

### Advanced Biopsy Enables Early Lung Cancer Diagnosis and Recovery

MultiCare Health System in Tacoma, Wash., used an innovative robotic biopsy technique to diagnose lung cancer early when standard testing wasn't possible, giving a patient the chance for swift treatment and recovery. Facing anatomical challenges that made traditional biopsy unsafe, the care team used robotic navigation bronchoscopy with real-time imaging to accurately sample a lung nodule and confirm stage 1 cancer. The early diagnosis allowed for successful surgery without the need for chemotherapy or radiation, and the patient quickly returned to normal life.

## ADVANCING CHILDREN'S HEALTH

### ■ CONNECTICUT

#### Stamford Health

### Pediatric Emergency Room Offers Child-Focused Care in Family-Friendly Setting

The pediatric emergency room at Stamford Health provides specialized, child-centered emergency care for families, offering treatment designed to meet children's unique medical and developmental needs. Staffed by specialty-trained, board-certified physicians, the department combines advanced pediatric expertise with a calming, kid-friendly environment that includes a separate waiting area for children and caregivers and nautically themed patient rooms to help reduce anxiety.



Courtesy of Children's Mercy Kansas City

### ■ MISSOURI

#### Children's Mercy Kansas City

### Children's Hospital Launches NASA-inspired Operations Center

Children's Mercy Kansas City has launched a first-of-its-kind Patient Progression Hub — a hospital operations center that uses artificial intelligence, predictive analytics and real-time information to optimize care progression and coordination from the time a patient's admission is requested until they are discharged. The 6,000-square-foot hub, inspired by NASA's mission control center, consists of a video wall with customized analytic apps to monitor and manage the flow of patients.

### ■ KENTUCKY

#### Norton Children's Hospital

### Specialized Unit Provides Focused Care for the Tiniest Newborns

Norton Children's Hospital in Louisville, Ky., is improving outcomes for extremely premature infants through its Tiny Baby Unit, a specialized section of the NICU dedicated to newborns weighing 2.75 pounds or less. The 15-bed unit offers an intimate, family-centered environment supported by a highly trained, consistent care team that closely monitors each baby's unique needs. By concentrating expertise, enhancing continuity of care and fostering stronger bonds between families and caregivers, the Tiny Baby Unit is helping the most fragile patients get the best possible start in life.

### ■ MASSACHUSETTS

#### UMass Memorial Medical Center – Children's Medical Center

### Creative Approaches Ease Stress for Pediatric Patients

UMass Memorial Medical Center – Children's Medical Center in Worcester, Mass., is helping children cope with hospital visits through innovative, child-centered programs that reduce anxiety and promote healing. An interactive robot plays games and offers comfort, while therapy dogs provide cuddles and music therapy and Child Life professionals celebrate daily wins. New tools, including Lego MRI sets that prepare children for scans, are making care less intimidating and reducing the need for anesthesia. Creativity, compassion and community support transform the pediatric hospital experience.



## INNOVATIVE MEDICINE

### ■ MAINE

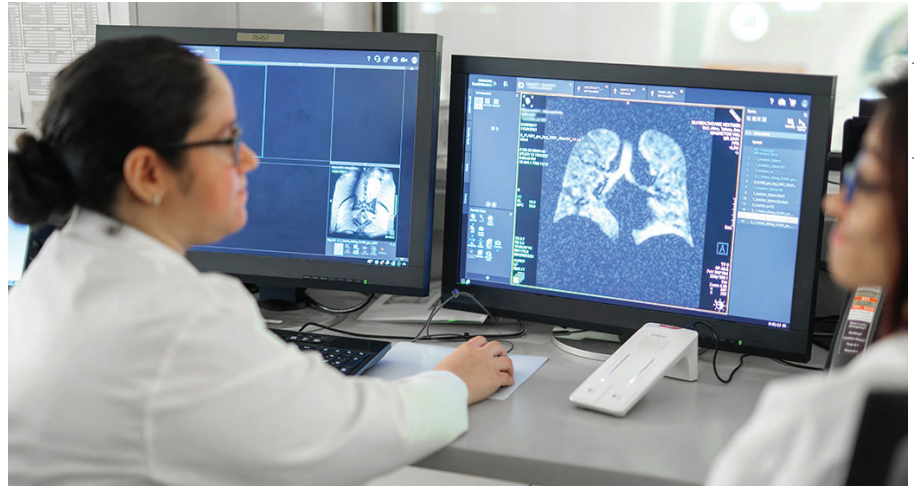
#### MaineHealth Pen Bay Hospital

### Innovation Hub Empowers Front-line Ideas

MaineHealth Pen Bay Hospital in Rockport, Maine, is strengthening patient care and daily operations by giving front-line staff a dedicated space to turn ideas into action. The hospital's Innovation Space encourages collaboration and problem-solving, leading to practical improvements such as streamlined emergency department workflows, better access to hearing aids and reading glasses, a mobile patient library and new ways to meet patients' basic needs. Designed and supported by clinicians and staff, the space reinforces a culture of trust, engagement and continuous improvement, showing how empowering those closest to care can spark innovation with real community impact.

### ■ MISSOURI

#### University of Missouri Health Care



Courtesy of University of Missouri Health Care

### Advanced MRI Technology Improves Lung Care

University of Missouri Health Care in Columbia, Mo., is advancing the diagnosis and treatment of lung disease by becoming just the second hospital in the nation to offer xenon MRI, a groundbreaking imaging technology that provides detailed, functional views of the lungs. By using inhaled, non-reactive xenon gas, the scan captures precise 3D images of ventilation and gas exchange that traditional MRI cannot achieve, helping clinicians better understand conditions such as asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis and lung cancer. Part of MU Health Care's NextGen Precision Health initiative, xenon MRI gives physicians a more complete diagnostic picture, supporting earlier, more personalized and more effective treatment for patients with complex lung disease.

### ■ VERMONT

#### North Country Hospital

### Ultrasound Innovation Expands Access in Rural Vermont

North Country Hospital in Newport, Vt., is improving timely, high-quality care in one of the state's most rural regions through a new point-of-care ultrasound initiative launched in 2024. By training physicians, advanced practice providers and nurses to use portable ultrasound devices at the bedside, the hospital is enabling faster diagnoses and more precise procedures — from trauma assessments and cardiac evaluations to IV placement. Led by emergency physician Jorge Otero, M.D., the program is already enhancing patient comfort and outcomes while reducing delays, demonstrating how innovative technology can be a game-changer for access to care in remote communities.

### ■ WYOMING

#### Cheyenne Regional Medical Center



### Rapid Blood Access Saves Lives in Emergency Care

Cheyenne Regional Medical Center in Cheyenne, Wyo., implemented a cutting-edge blood kiosk in its emergency department that provides immediate access to blood for transfusions. The new technology allows care teams to retrieve and begin administering blood in as little as 30 seconds — a dramatic reduction from the previous nine-minute process — helping clinicians respond faster when every moment matters. As the first hospital in Wyoming to implement this innovation, Cheyenne Regional is reinforcing its commitment to rapid, high-quality trauma care and improved outcomes for patients in critical emergencies.

### ■ HAWAII

#### Maui Memorial Medical Center

### Mini Heart Pump Delivers Lifesaving Care on Maui

Maui Memorial Medical Center, the island's only acute-care hospital, is saving lives with the use of the world's smallest temporary heart pump, allowing critically ill patients to receive advanced cardiac support close to home. The Impella device has helped more than a dozen patients survive severe heart failure by keeping blood flowing when the heart can't pump effectively on its own — a critical capability in an isolated island setting.

### ■ UTAH

#### University of Utah Health

### Intensive Primary Care Reduces Emergency Department Reliance

University of Utah Health's intensive outpatient clinic provides team-based primary care for patients with complex medical, behavioral health and social needs who frequently rely on emergency departments. By combining trauma-informed care, behavioral health support, care coordination and value-based payment partnerships, the program builds trust over time, addresses root causes of high utilization and helps patients move toward greater stability while reducing avoidable emergency and hospital visits.

### ■ TEXAS

#### Houston Methodist

### Study Links Gut Microbiome to Recovery After Traumatic Brain Injury

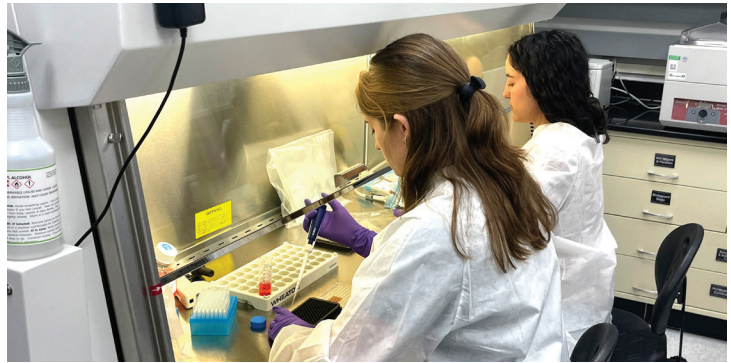
Houston Methodist researchers have found that short-term antibiotic treatment may aid recovery after traumatic brain injury by reducing neuroinflammation and neurodegeneration through changes in the gut microbiome, according to a new study. Led by Sonia Villapol, Ph.D., associate professor of neurosurgery at Houston Methodist, the research showed that antibiotics decreased harmful gut bacteria, reduced brain lesion size and limited cell death in animal models, while allowing beneficial bacteria to thrive. The findings support a gut-brain mechanism in which microbiome balance influences immune response and brain healing after injury, offering potential new pathways for developing neuroprotective therapies and reducing the long-term risk of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia.

### ■ NEW YORK

#### University of Rochester Medical Center

### Research Points to Earlier, More Precise Psychosis Diagnosis

Researchers at the University of Rochester Medical Center are exploring a promising new biomarker that could allow clinicians to identify psychosis before symptoms appear. Using MRI scans, scientists at the Del Monte Institute for Neuroscience identified distinct patterns of brain connectivity — particularly in sensory regions and the thalamus — that may predict the onset of psychosis. In a study of 159 participants, the biomarker showed potential to help diagnose and stratify patients for more personalized treatment, possibly with a single five-minute scan. If confirmed through further research, this discovery could transform how psychosis is detected and treated, enabling earlier, more targeted interventions and improved patient outcomes.



Courtesy of Cedars-Sinai

### ■ CALIFORNIA

#### Cedars-Sinai

### Space Research Pushes Boundaries of Health

Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles is advancing medical discovery with its Center for Space Medicine Research, which studies how spaceflight affects the human body to improve health both in orbit and on Earth. Building on the organization's expertise in regenerative medicine, the center explores how stem cells and other biological systems behave in microgravity, generating insights relevant to astronaut health and complex conditions closer to home. Paired with new educational offerings in space biomedicine, the work reflects CedarsSinai's commitment to innovation that could advance care in remote environments and address pressing health challenges worldwide.

### ■ RHODE ISLAND

#### Butler Hospital

### Advancing Alzheimer's Research and Community Awareness

Butler Hospital in Providence, R.I., is leading efforts to address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias through its comprehensive Memory and Aging Program, which combines research, clinical care, education and community outreach. With a focus on prevention, diagnosis and treatment, the program offers research studies and clinical trials for individuals with normal memory or early memory loss. By partnering with community organizations, increasing Spanish-language resources and improving translation access, Butler Hospital is working to ensure more people can benefit from early detection, cutting-edge research and responsive care for a growing and urgent public health challenge.

## PATIENT SAFETY



### ■ VIRGINIA

#### Carilion Clinic

### Hospital Leaders Emphasize Culture and Reporting to Improve Patient Safety

Health care leaders stress that building a strong culture of safety reporting, supported but not replaced by technology, is essential to improving patient safety and quality. Drawing on leadership experience at Carilion Clinic and Saint Luke's Health System, leaders highlight board-level accountability, open event reporting, staff resilience and values-driven leadership as key steps hospitals can take to reduce harm and keep patient safety at the center of every decision.

### ■ WISCONSIN

#### Western Wisconsin Health

### CEO's Firsthand Experience Impacts Hospital's Maternity Care

Western Wisconsin Health is refining its maternity care services after CEO Eilidh Pederson experienced prenatal care, labor and delivery firsthand as a patient at the hospital. Her experience validated many design and care decisions, including emergency preparedness, but also surfaced opportunities for improvement, such as reducing late-night room transfers when units are full. Those insights are now directly shaping operational changes and future expansion plans, reinforcing the hospital's commitment to patient-centered, high-quality maternal care for rural families.

### ■ NORTH CAROLINA

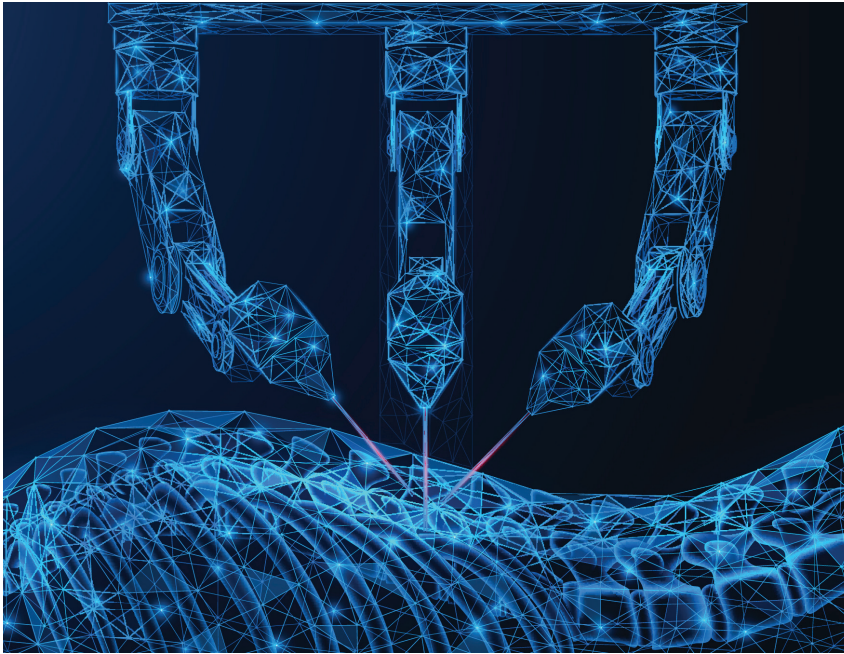
#### Advocate Health

### Simulation Advances Patient Safety and Workforce Readiness

Advocate Health and Laerdal Medical are using clinical simulation to strengthen patient safety, improve quality and prepare the health care workforce by allowing teams to practice high-risk scenarios in a safe, learning-focused environment. By embedding simulation into daily operations — from frontline units to systemwide safety initiatives — the partnership helps identify communication gaps, system vulnerabilities and workflow risks before they affect patients, while fostering psychological safety, leadership engagement and a culture of continuous improvement.

### ■ FLORIDA

#### Bethesda Hospital West



### Florida Hospital Performs State's First Augmented Reality Spine Surgery

Bethesda Hospital West has performed the first next-generation augmented reality spinal surgery in Florida, using advanced AR technology to enhance precision and reduce invasiveness. The procedure allows surgeons to overlay high-definition, three-dimensional imaging directly onto the patient's anatomy in real time, improving accuracy while shortening surgical time and recovery and reinforcing the hospital's commitment to leading-edge spine care.

### ■ CALIFORNIA

#### UC Davis Health

### AI Tool Reduces Burden of Type 1 Diabetes Management

UC Davis Health is advancing care for people with type 1 diabetes through BeaGL, an AI-powered "metabolic watchdog" designed to predict blood glucose changes and alert patients before intervention is needed. Developed by UC Davis researchers inspired by personal experience, the machine-learning tool aims to ease the constant mental burden of diabetes management by sending proactive alerts to devices like smartwatches. For children, adolescents and their families, BeaGL has the potential to improve safety, independence and quality of life.

### ■ SOUTH DAKOTA

#### Sanford Health

### Telehealth and AI Expands Rural Care

Sanford Health is using telehealth and artificial intelligence to bring specialty care closer to patients across rural and frontier communities, reducing the need for long-distance travel while maintaining high-quality treatment. Through virtual consults, hub-and-spoke care models and AI tools that support chronic disease management and reduce clinician documentation burden, the nation's largest rural health system is improving access for patients and restoring time and connection for providers.

### ■ WASHINGTON

#### UW Medicine

### 3D-printed Device Advances Human Tissue Research

UW Medicine researchers in Seattle have developed a novel 3D-printed device that significantly improves the ability to model complex human tissues in the lab. Known as STOMP, the fingertip-sized tool allows scientists to precisely arrange different cell types to better replicate how human tissues function and interact, such as heart muscle, bone and ligaments. By enabling more accurate, intact and customizable tissue models, the innovation strengthens research into disease mechanisms and treatment development, offering new possibilities for studying cell behavior and accelerating biomedical discovery.

Courtesy of University Hospitals, Cleveland



### ■ OHIO

#### University Hospitals

### Hospital-NASA Partnership Pushes the Future of Space Medicine

University Hospitals in Cleveland is collaborating with NASA's Glenn Research Center to advance space medicine by helping evaluate portable, handheld X-ray systems designed for use on future missions to the Moon and Mars. UH radiography experts are comparing the compact devices with hospital-grade imaging equipment to assess image quality, accuracy and ease of use in environments where traditional technology isn't feasible. The partnership supports NASA's goal of enabling astronauts to diagnose injuries far from Earth while also laying the groundwork for improving access to diagnostic imaging in remote and underserved communities here at home.

### ■ KANSAS

#### LMH Health

### Technology Supports Emergency Assessments at LMH Health

Artificial intelligence is at the forefront of emergency visits at LMH Health in Kansas, where a new program is being used to supplement the initial assessment of a patient's illness or injury after they're examined by a human triage nurse. LMH Health is the first hospital in Kansas and Missouri to use this new program.

### ■ PENNSYLVANIA

#### Jefferson Health

### AI Strategy Gives Clinicians More Time With Patients

Jefferson Health in Philadelphia is using artificial intelligence to reduce administrative burden and give clinicians more time to focus on patient care through an ambitious enterprise-wide AI strategy. Aiming to reclaim more than 10 million hours of clinician time by 2028, the health system is deploying tools such as ambient listening technology to automate documentation and streamline workflows for more than 23,000 clinicians. With nearly 120 AI solutions identified across clinical, operational and administrative areas, Jefferson's approach emphasizes responsible innovation that augments — not replaces — human care and advances safer, smarter and more patient-centered health care.

## PROMOTING WELL-BEING

### ■ IOWA

#### UnityPoint Health – Blank Children’s Hospital

### Parade and Truck Bring Joy to Pediatric Cancer Patients

UnityPoint Health – Blank Children’s Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, is lifting spirits for pediatric cancer patients through an annual parade that brings classic and customized cars right to the hospital campus. Leading the convoy is the Cancer Warrior Truck, a symbol of strength and hope created by cancer survivor Scott Erickson, who founded a nonprofit to support families of children facing cancer. More than a visual celebration, the event connects patients to a broader community of care by raising awareness and providing financial assistance for treatment-related needs — reminding young patients and their families that they are surrounded by support as they continue their fight.

### ■ WISCONSIN

#### Froedtert West Bend Hospital



### Milk Donation Depot Feeds Newborns Across the Region

Froedtert West Bend Hospital in West Bend, Wis., is making lifesaving nutrition for vulnerable infants more accessible by opening a breast milk donation depot. Through the hospital’s partnership with the Mothers’ Milk Bank of the Western Great Lakes, mothers can donate screened and pasteurized breast milk to help meet the needs of premature and medically fragile babies throughout the region. The new depot extends the hospital’s commitment to maternal and child health beyond its walls, providing critical support to families during some of their most delicate moments.

### ■ KENTUCKY

#### Kentucky Children’s Hospital

### Compassionate Care Helps Families Bring Children Home

Kentucky Children’s Hospital is offering families facing the loss of a child the option to spend final moments at home through its Pediatric Advanced Care Team, a specialized approach to end-of-life care rooted in dignity, compassion and family choice. By carefully coordinating with hospice providers, administrators and trained transport teams, the hospital enables some medically fragile children to return home using life-sustaining technology. This deeply personal option allows families to be surrounded by loved ones during an unimaginably difficult time while receiving ongoing support, bereavement services and sensitive care.

## PROMOTING WELL-BEING

### ■ TENNESSEE

#### Vanderbilt University Medical Center

### Integrated Care for Opioid-exposed Infants From Birth Through Early Childhood

Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville is expanding comprehensive, coordinated care for children exposed to opioids before birth through its SHINE program, building on the success of its earlier Firefly Program. Using a multidisciplinary, integrated model, SHINE provides neurodevelopmental monitoring and early intervention for infants and young children from birth to age 6, bringing together pediatric care, therapy services and behavioral health expertise. By streamlining care for both mother and child and focusing on early detection of developmental differences, Vanderbilt's approach helps improve outcomes for families affected by opioid exposure.



Courtesy of Vanderbilt University

### ■ NEW HAMPSHIRE

#### Cottage Hospital



### Specialized Care Supports Older Adults' Mental Health

Cottage Hospital in Woodsville, N.H., is addressing critical gaps in behavioral health care for older adults through its Ray of Hope unit, a short-stay, inpatient mental health program designed specifically for patients age 65 and older. The 10-bed unit offers patient-centered care that addresses the mental, physical and psychosocial needs associated with aging. With individualized treatment plans, close coordination with families and a calm, supportive environment, Ray of Hope helps older adults restore balance and improve quality of life.

### ■ MONTANA

#### Logan Health Medical Center

### Personalized Care Adds Comfort to the Birthing Experience

Logan Health Medical Center in Kalispell, Mont., is helping expectant mothers feel calmer, more supported and in control during labor through its "Labor of Love" cart, a thoughtful collection of tools designed to personalize the birthing environment. Created by the labor and delivery team, the cart offers soothing options such as adjustable lighting, birth affirmation cards, calming scents, music and a popular Northern Lights projector, along with information about physical labor supports like birthing balls and wireless monitors. The cart helps reduce stress and promote comfort, especially for patients with long inductions or past trauma.

### ■ PENNSYLVANIA

#### Penn State Health



Courtesy of Penn State Health

### Corner Stores Become Community Health Hubs

Penn State Health is improving access to care and advancing community well-being in Reading, Pa., by transforming neighborhood corner stores into trusted health hubs through its partnership with The Food Trust to create The Healthy Corner Store Initiative. A community health nurse conducts monthly health check-ins and blood pressure screenings, while store owners offer healthy food and a welcoming environment. The partnership helps address key social determinants of health such as chronic disease management, food security and mental well-being, and shows how community-based care and trusted relationships can drive meaningful, local health improvements.

### ■ INDIANA

#### IU Health Fishers

### Bringing Heart Health to a Trusted Community Space

Indiana University Health is bringing cardiovascular screening and prevention directly into neighborhood barbershops, longstanding hubs of trust and connection in communities. Through the initiative, IU Health Fishers clinicians provide free blood pressure checks along with cholesterol and diabetes screenings, focusing on neighborhoods with high rates of hypertension and heart disease. By pairing early detection and education with a culturally familiar setting, the program helps break down barriers to care, promotes prevention and addresses persistent disparities in cardiovascular outcomes.

### ■ FLORIDA

#### UCF Lake Nona Medical Center

### Library Patrons Check Out Lifesaving Health Resource

Through the Libraries with Heart program, UCF Healthcare and community partners are expanding access to heart health tools by equipping Central Florida libraries with blood pressure monitoring kits and automated external defibrillators. The partnership with the American Heart Association and Orange County Library System makes it possible for patrons to check out blood pressure kits for home use, learn how to monitor their health from trained library staff and benefit from CPR and AED readiness at every branch. The initiative transforms libraries into trusted community health hubs and strengthens prevention, awareness and emergency preparedness beyond traditional care settings.

### ■ RHODE ISLAND

#### Care New England Health System

### Bone Health Program Raises Awareness and Prevents Fractures

Care New England Health System in Providence, R.I., is addressing osteoporosis — a “silent” disease with few outward symptoms — through a comprehensive Bone Health Program focused on prevention, early detection and treatment. The program offers screenings, bone density scans, vitamin D testing, nutrition counseling, physical therapy and advanced therapies. By partnering closely with orthopedic specialists and educating patients about risk factors and healthy habits, Care New England is helping individuals protect bone strength, reduce fracture risk and maintain long-term mobility and independence.



### ■ ALABAMA

#### East Alabama Medical Center

### Building a Homegrown Nursing Workforce in Rural Alabama

East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika, Ala., is strengthening its rural health care workforce by investing in education, apprenticeships and career pathways for nurses. Through partnerships with community colleges and universities, the health system offers paid, work-based learning programs that allow employees to earn credentials while maintaining income and job security. Initiatives such as an on-site LPN school, sponsored nursing program slots and registered apprenticeships — with tuition, books and fees covered — are helping address severe nursing shortages while improving financial stability for workers. By cultivating talent from within, East Alabama Medical Center is building a skilled, committed workforce to sustain high-quality care in its rural community.

### ■ GEORGIA

#### Grady Health System

### Teen Internship Program Builds Future Workforce

Grady Health System is strengthening its health care workforce pipeline through its Teen Experience and Leadership Program, which offers paid, hands-on internships that expose local teenagers to both clinical and nonclinical hospital careers. The program allows students to shadow staff across more than 40 departments with flexible scheduling, removing cost and access barriers while helping participants explore career paths, build professional relationships and move directly into Grady's training programs after high school, creating a sustainable, community-based approach to addressing workforce shortages.

### ■ NEW YORK

#### NYC Health + Hospitals



Courtesy of NYC Health + Hospitals

### Public Health System Strengthens Workforce, Improves Care

NYC Health + Hospitals has achieved a significant turnaround in nurse retention, cutting staff nurse turnover from 46% in 2019 to just 7.3% in 2025 — far below the national average — and saving in turnover-related costs. By investing in permanent hiring, professional development and staff engagement programs such as nurse residencies, clinical ladders and shared governance, the nation's largest public health system is building a more stable, committed nursing workforce. These efforts have reduced reliance on temporary staff, strengthened continuity of care and reinforced NYC Health + Hospitals' commitment to supporting nurses as the backbone of high-quality, community-centered patient care.

### ■ MINNESOTA

#### M Health Fairview Lakes Medical Center

### Internship Program Opens Pathways to Employment

M Health Fairview is creating meaningful workforce opportunities for young adults with disabilities through Project SEARCH, an internship program at its Lakes Medical Center in Wyoming, Minn. The program offers participants three 10-week rotations across hospital departments such as security, environmental services and nutrition, helping interns build job skills, confidence and independence while identifying their strengths and interests. For the health system, Project SEARCH expands access to diverse talent and strengthens recruitment and retention for entry-level roles.

### ■ NORTH DAKOTA

#### Essentia Health – Fargo

### Apprenticeship Program Grows Surgical Workforce Locally

Last year, Essentia Health – Fargo in North Dakota celebrated the first graduate of its registered surgical technologist apprenticeship program. Designed to address a national shortage of operating room technicians, the 12-month program combines hands-on training, mentorship and classroom instruction while removing barriers to career advancement. By investing in existing employees and developing highly skilled professionals who live and work in the community, Essentia Health creates greater access to surgical care and reinforces its commitment to patients and the regional workforce.

### ■ MARYLAND

#### University of Maryland Medical Center



### Simulation Training Prepares Teams for the Rarest Emergencies

The University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore is strengthening patient safety and emergency readiness through its Critical Care and Trauma Simulation Center, one of the region's most advanced medical training facilities. Using high-fidelity mannequins that breathe, bleed and respond like real patients, physicians, nurses and care teams practice rare, high-stakes scenarios in environments that mirror real trauma bays, operating rooms and ICUs. Teams rehearse complex emergencies such as traumatic injuries and maternal cardiac arrest that they may encounter only once in a career. The center ensures providers are prepared, confident and ready to deliver lifesaving care when it matters most.

### ■ OREGON

#### St. Charles Health System

### Tuition-free Training Builds Medical Assistant Workforce

St. Charles Health System in Bend, Ore., is covering tuition and providing paid training for students pursuing certification as medical assistants — one of the system's most in-demand roles. Through a partnership with Central Oregon Community College, the initiative removes financial barriers by funding education and compensating students during an accelerated training program, in exchange for a two-year work commitment after graduation. By investing in medical assistants and creating accessible career pathways, St. Charles is cultivating a sustainable pipeline of skilled caregivers to meet the growing health care needs of central Oregon.

### ■ SOUTH DAKOTA

#### Avera Health

### Creating a Seamless Pathway to the Nursing Profession

Avera Health in Sioux Falls, S.D., is building a comprehensive education-to-employment pipeline that begins in high school and leads directly to hospital careers. Through partnerships with Mount Marty University and Bishop O’Gorman Catholic High School, Avera offers affordable, accelerated pathways into nursing that combine early college coursework, tuition support and paid clinical experience. Programs such as Avera Nursing Advantage and Nursing Degree in Three reduce financial barriers, shorten time to degree completion and provide hands-on training while students work part-time at Avera facilities. Together, these initiatives reflect Avera Health’s long-term investment in developing skilled nurses locally to support high-quality patient care across the region.

### ■ NEBRASKA

#### CHI Health St. Elizabeth



### Free CNA Program Builds Nursing Pipeline and Fills Staffing Gaps

CHI Health St. Elizabeth in Lincoln, Neb., is offering a free, fast-track training program that prepares individuals to become certified nursing assistants and guarantees employment upon completion. Launched in 2024, the CNA Advance Program provides no-cost training, testing and certifications — including CPR and basic life support — to help participants quickly enter the workforce and begin building long-term health care careers. By investing in hands-on education and career advancement opportunities, CHI Health is strengthening its care teams, expanding access to essential bedside support and creating a sustainable source of skilled caregivers for the community.

### ■ ARKANSAS

#### UAMS Medical Center

### New Nurse-midwifery Program Expands Access to Maternal Care

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock offers pre-accreditation for the state’s first nurse-midwifery program. The master’s-level program, offered largely through virtual coursework, prepares nurse-midwives to deliver comprehensive, evidence-based care and make training more accessible to students in rural communities. Designed to address provider shortages and support efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality, the new program reflects UAMS’ commitment to strengthening the health care workforce and improving outcomes for women and families across Arkansas.

### ■ MINNESOTA

#### Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital

### Rural Residency Program Forms Future Physician Pipeline

Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital in Grand Rapids, Minn., is addressing the growing rural physician shortage by launching a new family medicine residency program in partnership with the University of Minnesota Medical School and Fairview Health. Recently approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the program will train two new physicians each year through a blend of urban and immersive rural experiences, with residents spending two of three years fully integrated into the Grand Itasca community. By training doctors in the realities and rewards of rural primary care, the program represents a long-term investment in workforce stability and access to care for northern Minnesota communities.



### ■ MICHIGAN

#### Corewell Health

### Physician Fulfillment Reduces Burnout

Corewell Health is advancing a systemwide approach to physician and advanced practice provider well-being by addressing burnout at its source through organizational change, data-driven strategies and local engagement. By measuring well-being, reducing administrative burden, supporting mental health and embedding fulfillment as a shared responsibility across leadership and operations, the health system is fostering a culture where caring for clinicians is recognized as essential to improving patient care and community health.

### ■ NEVADA

#### Renown Health

### Northern Nevada's First OB/GYN Residency Program Addresses Critical Shortage

The University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine, in partnership with Renown Health, has received ACGME accreditation to launch Northern Nevada's first obstetrics and gynecology residency program, addressing a critical shortage in women's health care. Set to welcome three residents in July 2027, the program aims to improve access to maternal and reproductive care, particularly in rural and underserved communities, by training physicians locally and strengthening the region's long-term health care workforce.

# THANKFUL REFLECTIONS ON EXCELLENT CARE

## ■ NEW MEXICO

### Lovelace UNM Rehabilitation Hospital

#### Outpatient Rehabilitation Care Helps MS Patient Regain Strength and Stamina

A heartfelt letter from Lily Colmenero praised the outpatient rehabilitation staff at Lovelace UNM Rehabilitation Hospital for the compassionate, personalized care provided to her husband, Cesar, as he manages multiple sclerosis. She credited occupational and physical therapists, along with front office and technical staff, for supporting Cesar's safety, motivation and progress, noting improvements in his strength, stamina and quality of life and expressing hope that all patients receive the same level of care.

## ■ GEORGIA

### Children's Hospital of Georgia

#### Children's Hospital of Georgia provides lifesaving care across generations

Children's Hospital of Georgia delivered lifesaving, specialized care to both a father and son, supporting a family across decades of complex medical needs. After being treated at the hospital for a congenital heart defect since childhood, the father later returned as an adult patient, while his young son received epilepsy treatment and successful brain surgery that has left him seizure-free, reflecting the hospital's continuity of care and expertise in pediatric and lifelong treatment.

## ■ ARIZONA

### Banner – University Medical Center Phoenix



Courtesy of Banner – University Medical Center Phoenix

#### Specialty Care Supports Rare Quadruplet Birth in Phoenix

Care teams at Banner – University Medical Center Phoenix provided advanced, high-risk obstetric and neonatal care to support the safe delivery of four identical quadruplets, a one-in-40-million occurrence. Delivered at 30 weeks, the infants are receiving ongoing care in the NICU, reflecting the hospital's expertise in complex pregnancies and high-order multiples and helping the family move toward bringing the babies home healthy.

# THANKFUL REFLECTIONS ON EXCELLENT CARE

## ■ TENNESSEE

### University of Tennessee Medical Center



Courtesy of University of Tennessee Medical Center

### Nurses Support Family-centered Care with Bedside Wedding

Nurses at the University of Tennessee Medical Center delivered compassionate, family-centered care by helping a patient in hospice attend her daughter's wedding, organizing a small ceremony in the hospital chapel on short notice. The care team coordinated across departments to arrange a cake, music, chaplain and virtual participation for family members, ensuring the patient could be present for a meaningful life moment and underscoring how nursing care extends beyond clinical treatment to support dignity, comfort and emotional well-being.

## ■ SOUTH CAROLINA

### Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center

### Patient Finds Relief From Chronic Leg Pain

After years of living with painful varicose veins and chronic leg discomfort, 29-year-old Chase Faulkenberry is back to an active, mostly pain-free life following treatment at Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center. Faulkenberry underwent a series of minimally invasive procedures that removed damaged veins and restored healthy blood flow. Within weeks, his pain significantly improved, transforming his quality of life. Faulkenberry said the care he received — from front-desk staff to clinical teams — exceeded his expectations and inspired him to share his story to encourage others, especially younger patients, not to ignore symptoms or stigma and to seek care when something feels wrong.

## ■ MONTANA

### Intermountain Health St. Vincent Regional Hospital

### Trauma and NICU Teams Provide Lifesaving, Compassionate Care for Montana Family

Care teams at Intermountain St. Vincent Regional Hospital provided coordinated trauma, critical care and neonatal support after a workplace accident left a father critically injured while his premature newborn was admitted to the NICU. Alongside complex surgeries and intensive treatment, caregivers supported the family through profound loss, offering compassionate end-of-life care, meaningful keepsakes and opportunities for connection, underscoring a commitment to both clinical excellence and emotional support during the most difficult moments.

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