Celebrating World Health 2021!
Former POTUS Healthcare Team Member Joins Whidbeyhealth
Occupational Therapy – What Matters To You?
New: Commissioners Corner
Innovation – Mobile Cardiac Monitors
Why It’s Called ‘Primary Care’
Is It Really Bootcamp?
Evolving to meet the needs

Our community’s 1900’s collection of old-time home hospitals has grown to become an island-wide healthcare system.

Today’s sophisticated medical center offers an accredited Cancer Care Center, an emergency department with Level 3 Trauma certification, and a Surgical Center delivering highly customized joint replacement.

Twelve clinics provide primary and specialty care services close to home. WhidbeyHealth cares for more than 20,000 patients every year – nearly a third of the resident population of the island.

Growth in demand for state of the art medicine comes with costs far out of sync with insurance coverage. That gap has widened, posing a major hardship for healthcare providers everywhere. Like many hospitals, we have learned the importance of improving fiscal resiliency.

We are fortunate to have the support of our Foundation and donors across the community. Every dollar raised helps deliver the exceptional medical care our community receives every day.

This month, our fundraising efforts align with the GiveBig campaign, helping to tell our story to Washingtonians everywhere. We hope you can help. No donation is too small, and gifts can be made online from the WhidbeyHealth Foundation web page.

We are all grateful for your support.

Ron Wallin,
District 3 Commissioner and President
WhidbeyHealth Board of Commissioners

Committed Now More Than Ever

As we enter the fifteen month of the coronavirus pandemic, the fight to protect our community with testing and vaccinations continues.

Volunteers in the vaccination clinic have demonstrated the very best that is the character of our community. Every day vaccine is available, twenty or more work side-by-side with staff to get patients vaccinated as effortlessly as possible. As I write this, we have recorded 15,662 shots given - all at no cost to patients or their insurance.

There is another exceptional undercurrent in our day-to-day operation: a deep desire to continuously improve every facet of a patient’s experience at WhidbeyHealth. We know there is much more to our relationship with patients than the outstanding treatment from our providers.

As a patient’s first phone call, to ease of parking, to help with insurance claims – we have begun examining every small step in what we call ‘the patient journey.’ We want every patient to feel welcome and know they are where people are not just taking care of them but also caring about them.

Debbie DeCorde, Chief HR Officer and Jon Scall, Chief Quality Officer are co-chairs a system-wide initiative involving our entire workforce. It is our goal to deliver an exceptional end-to-end patient experience. As the initiative unfolds, we will be regularly reporting our progress.

It is important to remember that the pandemic still rages. Hospitals in Washington have escalated, primarily affecting younger people in their 30’s and 40’s. We know for sure that wearing masks, watching our distance and getting vaccinated can crush this disease. Please take precautions and if you haven’t gotten vaccinated, please do.

Very best,
Ron Telles, CEO

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COMMITTED NOW MORE THAN EVER

WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY HEALTHY?

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

As always, I hope this letter finds you healthy and well. As the days get longer, it feels great to be outside and to see people enjoying all that Whidbey has to offer. Spirits are lifting as we step into activities and outings with caution and joy. It is great to see all the smiling eyes above the mask!

Islanders are gifted with more than just fresh air and natural beauty. Our greatest gift is a community of people working together to help each other.

We are all inspired by the support of more than 150 volunteers who staff the Vaccine Clinic, helping to inoculate thousands of patients.

Yet, COVID-19’s financial impact on healthcare systems is a major challenge, especially in small communities like ours. COVID is relentless, but our supporters are even stronger. Islanders continue to donate funds to purchase critically needed equipment.

We have made the sad and cautionary decision to cancel the Annual Gala, our largest fundraiser. As an alternative, we are joining the GiveBIG campaign to offset the cancellation of the Gala. GiveBig will help us extend our reach to individuals, groups and businesses throughout Washington.

Thanks to GiveBIG, Washington donors anywhere can find causes they care about, including our hospital and WhidbeyHealth Foundation.

From state-of-the-art surgical equipment to wheelchairs are used day-in and day-out, your support makes ‘taking care’ a reality every day.

Please give what you can by making a convenient donation online, mailing your gift to The WhidbeyHealth Foundation, P.O. Box 641, Coupeville, WA 98239, or calling us at 360.678.7656, ext. 6501 to make arrangements.

No amount is too small, and everyone’s help makes a difference in somebody’s life every day. Supporting WhidbeyHealth is truly an investment in sustaining healthcare for our whole community.

Whatever 2021 brings, we know that strengthening healthcare strengthens us all!

Give Big

Helen Taylor
Executive Director

The Pulse
Accelerating Recovery After Joint Replacement

Surgical replacement of hips, knees and shoulders damaged by arthritis can make an enormous change for patients who are enjoying less of their favorite activities because of the pain involved. Not too long ago, patients who had joints replaced suffered prolonged months of discomfort afterward. Advances in pain management drastically reduce discomfort and allow patients to begin physical therapy in their room immediately following their procedure.

“At WhidbeyHealth, most patients are able to return home the day after surgery – in some cases even the same day.”

Dr. Dale Adishian, Orthopedic Surgeon

The surgical team at WhidbeyHealth has introduced a new process to accelerate recovery from joint replacement surgery: Enhanced Recovery After Surgery, or ERAS. This is a protocol which begins with putting the patient at the center of a hand-picked team focused on planning for the entire patient experience before surgery, during hospitalization, and through the recovery process.

This team-based, patient-centric process helps patients return to their favorite activities, stronger and pain-free. Dr. Adishian reports “Joint replacement surgery is one of the most popular surgeries in the United States because the outcomes make such a huge difference in people’s lives.”

Want to know more about total joint replacement?

Call us to schedule an informal phone consultation 360.240.4013. You can also learn more about the procedure and meet some of our team on our website.

Occupational Therapy – What Matters to You?

Patients work with occupational therapists to confidently participate in everyday activities. Therapy is specifically planned for the needs of the individual patient and are more comprehensive than vocational ability. For example, children with varying abilities benefit by participating in school and social situations. Patients recovering from an injury can regain skills related to activities of daily living. Occupational therapy supports older adults experiencing physical and cognitive changes of aging.

Planning for a program of Occupational Therapy includes jointly setting goals with the patient and patient’s family, evaluating a patient’s home, school or work environments, and recommending adaptive equipment. Often, a combination of customized therapy and introduction of adaptive equipment can help the patient achieve their goals quickly and sustainably.

Patients in Occupational Therapy are always at the center of planning and goal-setting. In addition, including family and caregivers creates a surrounding support team to reinforce and encourage patients as they gain new skills gained during therapy sessions. Our occupational therapy practitioners take a holistic perspective, where the focus is on adapting the environment to fit the patient’s individual situation.

Our team was honored to be acknowledged by our community with the “Best of Whidbey 2020” award. If you are in need of help getting back to your best self – WhidbeyHealth Rehabilitation Care is here to help!

Contact us at 360.678.7656, ext. 4308.

Innovative ways to reduce the impact of diabetes on your life.

Whether you are living with diabetes, you’ve been newly diagnosed, with type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes, or are helping a loved one, the WhidbeyHealth Diabetes Care and Management team is here to help. We have a variety of educational programs, resources, health tips, and food ideas to help you live your best life.

Although your doctor prescribes diabetes medications and monitors blood glucose control with lab work, your success with managing diabetes relies heavily on the choices you make each day. WhidbeyHealth offers support and education that can help you effectively manage your diabetes with its many challenges.

Helping you stay on track.

Our Diabetes Care program is accredited by the Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists for its comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of individuals living with diabetes.

Our Certified Diabetes Educators (CDE) work with each patient and their healthcare providers, creating a customized plan for managing their diabetes and reducing the risks for complications.

To learn more about the breadth of services, resources and support visit: https://whidbeyhealth.org/ourpatient/diabetes-care-and-management

To get started, ask your doctor for a referral for diabetes education at WhidbeyHealth.

Is it really bootcamp?

“Bootcamp” conjures up visions of U.S. Marines conquering obstacle courses with feats of strength and agility. While all WhidbeyHealth patients having a knee or hip or shoulder replaced attend a ‘bootcamp’ – the whole idea is to get them on track to greater strength and agility. There’s no mud involved!

“We make sure patients are well prepared to go home with any adaptive equipment necessary.”

- Kelly Osborn, Physical Therapy Tech

Our Total Joint Replacement patients are required to attend a class for two reasons. First, we want you to know everything you can about the process and the surgery and have every one of your questions answered. Second, we will work with you on preparing for surgery, including exercise to improve your strength and circulation, adopting good eating and hydration habits, and other steps which are important to fast-tracking your return to a pain-free lifestyle.

WhidbeyHealth
Update on the COVID-19 Pandemic

Important April Updates

Coronavirus is a disease which responds to our behavior. When we are careful, fewer people are infected or hospitalized, and fewer lives are lost. Over the last few weeks, Washington State has experienced an alarming increase in the rate of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. The data trends show we are entering a fourth wave of infections.

In the last week of April, more than 600 patients infected with COVID-19 were hospitalized. This is more than twice the number of friends and neighbors and family members in the prior weeks.

Younger people are affected

Case rates are increasing across all ages, except people 70 and older. Data as of April 8 show particularly sharp increases and the highest case counts in people ages 10-49, with shallower increases in children ages 0-9 and adults ages 50-69. Children ages 0-9 consistently had the lowest case rates until mid-March, but now have higher rates than people 70 and older.

It is clear that nobody is immune from coronavirus because of their age.

Ref: WADOH News Release 4/22/21

COVID-19 Vaccines and Testing

WhidbeyHealth continues to offer swab testing and vaccinations at the Medical Center in Coupeville.

Advance registration is required. Please call our Advance Registration to schedule your testing appointment. 360.240.4055

WhidbeyHealth’s Vaccine Clinics continue to administer COVID-19 vaccine for anyone older than 16. Appointments are required and made available based on the vaccine inventory we receive weekly.

We spoke with Dr. Cammermyer and asked about the role of a Commissioner. She explained that the role of a Commissioner goes far beyond the monthly Board meetings which are now held online.

Each of the commissioners work on multiple committees and each have a simultaneous role in addressing short-term and more long-term opportunities to expand WhidbeyHealth’s presence for today and the future. There is a synchronicity between the Board of Commissioners and the current WhidbeyHealth Medical Center Administration that is unique, fostering trust, mutual respect and delight as we envision moving forward beyond the Pandemic.

‘Really,’ she continued ‘the role of the Board is to support WhidbeyHealth for the good of the community. Part of the job is to act as a liaison between the hospital and the community, to make sure that questions and concerns by residents are heard. It is also important to convey factual information to help everyone understand the complex challenges.”

Exciting times are ahead as we move forward to expand our capacity, services, and consolidate resources to be the best stewards we can be.”

Commission meetings are open to the public and held online on the second Wednesday of each month. Readers can learn more about Dr. Cammermyer and how to attend meetings on the WhidbeyHealth website.

PLEASE NOTE: all vaccinations require an appointment which can be made on our website. Please remember to do your part in keeping yourself and others in the community safe. Wear a mask, social distance, and wash your hands frequently and often.

Commissioners Corner

WhidbeyHealth is the operating arm of the Whidbey Island Hospital District, founded at our opening in 1951. This means that WhidbeyHealth is owned by our community. Oversight of WhidbeyHealth is the responsibility of five publicly elected Commissioners much like other special districts on our island such as the Port of South Whidbey. This edition of the PULSE includes new spotlight on the Board of Commissioners, beginning with Dr. Grethe Cammermyer, RN, PhD.
HERO SPOTLIGHT

**Dr. Leah Oman**
(Physician, Surgical Care)

When I think of a WhidbeyHealth Hero, I automatically think of this compassionate, kind and respectful individual. Dr. Oman is a general surgeon with a special interest in the care and treatment of individuals dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis.

Patients flock to her because she provides excellent care to every patient she sees.

She emphasizes the need to help patients feel comfortable and secure in their care and choices. She is very open to and interested in the integration of allopathic and naturopathic treatment.

Patients walk away feeling like they have been cared for, listened to, and knowing they have been provided with all the information they need to make an informed decision on their care.

**Patient Care Philosophy**

- Help patients feel comfortable and secure with both their physician and treatment plan
- Support and encourage patients’ choices
- Provide information and advice while supporting a patient’s decisions
- Treat each patient as family

This hero believes it takes a “TEAM” to provide the patient with an excellent experience.

She is always thanking and letting the team know how much they are valued and they are as much a key component to assure all patients are treated with compassion and respect and leave feeling comfortable and confident.

**What is a WhidbeyHealth HERO?**

A WhidbeyHealth Hero is someone who helps to shape and define the patient and employee experience at WhidbeyHealth.

**Have you seen a hero in action?**

Have you had a great experience with a team member at the Medical Center, Primary Care, Walk-In Clinic or our EMS teams, treating you with exceptional care and compassion? Is there someone you know who works tirelessly to keep the hospital running, caring for patients, or managing operations? We’d love to hear about them!

Click here to add your nomination for the next WhidbeyHealth Hero.
The Pulse

World Health Day marks the anniversary of the World Health Organization (WHO) with its founding on April 7, 1948. Each year they create an informational campaign designed to raise global awareness of a specific health theme to highlight a priority designed to raise global health. This year, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO is focusing on building a Fairer, Healthier World.

While our community has been impacted by COVID-19, the same applies across the globe. WhidbeyHealth supports the World Health Day 2021.

Celebrating World Health 2021!
As COVID-19 has shown us all, living a healthy life and having readily available access to healthcare services is critical for everyone. April is the annual celebration of the importance of our health.

Walk-In Clinic Provider Spotlight
Get to know our Providers – L. David Carnes, PA-C

What was the reason you decided to move to Oak Harbor? What are some of the highlights of that career?
Everyone is always interested in my time at the White House while part of the military medical team caring for POTUS, VPOTUS, and their families. I was very proud of my time in Iraq and the Bronze Star I was awarded for time there. I once performed a military ceremony on the wing of a downed WWII Japanese plane 30’ underwater while in uniform in the Pacific Ocean. My most notable or rewarding job I think was teaching and mentoring Physician Assistant (PA) students.

Working in the White House sounds exciting. can you tell me how that compares to the medicine you practice at Whidbey Health?
Certainly, I always think it is funny that people have this notion that the President receives a better standard of care of medicine than an average American. It simply isn’t true. The POTUS gets the same standard of medical care that you or I get. They get me or someone just like me. A qualified clinician that treats patients based on current medical evidence. Now the difference of caring for the President is not the quality of care they receive but access to it. I understand I am not available to you in your garage 24/7 waiting for the off chance you have an emergency.

Learn more about L. David Carnes, PA-C, here.

Walk-In Clinic

What is WhidbeyHealth’s Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Care programs?
Both our cardiac and pulmonary rehab focus on helping restore and maintain optimal health. People of all ages who have heart conditions can benefit from a cardiac rehab program. Whether you have had a heart attack, heart conditions or a heart procedure we’re here to help! Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Care is designed with the patient in mind. We combine this with our state of the art, portable electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) monitors to continually monitor our patient’s in a multifaceted approach to healing.

What were some of the challenges of working within the White House?
The hours required to maintain their pace of travel is extreme. The POTUS and VPOTUS travel more than I ever realized before getting there. There is pressure knowing at any second if an emergency happens you will be on the world stage knowing you better always be prepared to deliver your “A game.”

One of the proud things I share about working there is the fact I have practiced medicine in 17 countries and 28 states.

What was one of the most unique things you had to do at the White House?
There were many, touch Abraham Lincoln’s bed while reading a hand written copy of the Gettysburg address, hover in a helicopter between the Washington monument and Lincoln memorial, flown in Air Force One and Two, visit Camp David, touched the chair Abraham Lincoln used to sign the emancipation proclamation to name a handful.

Do you miss serving in the USAF and how have you filled that void?
I do miss many parts of the USAF especially the camaraderie you find. I have found that volunteering with NWFR Marine SAR team has been fulfilling to work with dedicated volunteer professionals that also fulfill a sense of camaraderie I missed from the USAF.

What’s the most rewarding part of working at the Walk in Clinic in your short time here?
Seeing people I know from the community and having strangers from the community thank us for being there when they needed care. Being in this rural hospital system I feel our patients truly appreciate having access to care without needing to drive over the bridge or catch a ferry.

Visit WhidbeyHealth.org to learn more about cardiac and pulmonory rehab programs, make an appointment, or contact us for more information.

Innovation - Mobile Cardiac Monitors
Heart health is one of the most important aspects of someone’s health care. Every session in our Life Center, takes the military-tested approach to reaching our patients’ goals. A large piece of that is having accurate echocardiogram readings to ensure you are receiving the right amount of exercise following a cardiovascular event.

This is where our mobile cardiac monitors come in. They are a wearable and portable ECG device that allows us to monitor your cardiac levels throughout your rehab session - to ensure you are receiving the right amount of strengthening to be beneficial to your rehab. Our exercise physiologists drive our Life Center and Cardiac Rehabilitation Care which combined with the latest in technology sets our patients up for success in reaching their goals.

WhidbeyHealth Life Center: A Path to a Healthier You

“Our Cardiac & Pulmonary Rehab Care at the WhidbeyHealth Life Center helps our patients regain their sense of self and independence, providing the confidence needed to return to life after an event.”

– Mary Waters, Exercise Physiologist

WhidbeyHealth’s Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Care programs have been tailored to fit the needs of our Whidbey Island population. Like our other rehabilitation services Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Care is designed with the patient in mind. We combine this with our state of the art, portable electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) monitors to continually monitor our patient’s in a multifaceted approach to healing.

Both our cardiac and pulmonary rehab focus on helping restore and maintain optimal health. People of all ages who have heart conditions can benefit from a cardiac rehab program. Whether you have had a heart attack, heart conditions or a heart procedure we’re here to help! Cardiac Rehabilitation Care at WhidbeyHealth is a medically supervised program to help alleviate the fears and anxieties that follow an event, all close to home.

If you are having trouble breathing, the WhidbeyHealth Pulmonary Rehabilitation Care team can help you manage your respiratory symptoms. increase activity, decrease anxiety and minimize shortness of breath. Whether it is due to any number of chronic lung conditions, we take an evidence-based, multidisciplinary rehabilitation approach to help you rebuild strength and enjoy a healthier, active lifestyle.

If you or a loved one are interested in learning more about our Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Care programs at WhidbeyHealth, you can do so by visiting our website: https://whidbeyhealth.org/outpatient/rehab.
This is why it's called ‘Primary Care’

To put it simply:

Primary Care providers represent the first step toward improved health or to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They are the first person we look to when a problem arises and often the first physician to diagnose a problem which may be otherwise unnoticed.

The first (primary role of Primary Care is preventive medicine. From newborns to aging patients, a family practice team focuses on preventing problems with regular check-ups, routine lab tests and annual exams.

Primary Care Providers (PCPs) are also a patient’s advocate when specialty care is needed such as a hip or knee replacement, physical therapy, or general surgery.

Having a regular PCP can help make living with a chronic illness like diabetes or asthma easier. Having a chronic condition doesn’t mean life has to be stop. Working with your PCP can help you manage your chronic disease and live life to the fullest.

To learn more about our certified, family-centered primary care teams in Clinton and Oak Harbor visit: [https://whidbeyhealth.org/primary-care](https://whidbeyhealth.org/primary-care)
Helping you stay healthy and active is our top priority. Here are a few ways we can help.

DON'T WAIT
Many routine things in life have been put on hold, but your health shouldn’t wait. Putting off treatment may worsen your condition. If you feel unwell, contact your provider or WhidbeyHealth clinic near you.

WHIDBEYHEALTH REHAB
Rehabilitation is a key component of recovery after an injury or procedure. We specialize in general, cardiac, pulmonary, physical, occupational, and speech therapies.

CANCER CENTER
If you or a loved one are facing a cancer diagnosis, knowing what to expect can help you cope.

TO YOUR HEALTH
Helping you stay healthy and active is our priority #1.

COVID-19 VACCINE
WhidbeyHealth is pleased to be serving our community as an ‘open’ vaccine provider for Island County. Our community is eager to receive the COVID-19 vaccination and vaccination is a key step in ending the coronavirus pandemic.

WOMEN'S CARE
From routine health and wellness to specialty services that address the needs of women of all ages, we’re with you throughout your life’s journey.

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR HOSPITAL
We’re continually evolving to meet the needs of your diverse community. Check out this short video to learn more about the breadth of services available right here at WhidbeyHealth.

PRIMARY CARE CLINICS
From infants to grandparents and all points in-between, our primary care clinics provide wellness exams, laboratory tests, and treat illness and injuries, including minor surgical procedures—all close to home.

FIND LOCATIONS
LEARN MORE
VISIT TO YOUR HEALTH
LEARN MORE
LEARN MORE
GET THE DETAILS
WATCH THE VIDEO

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