



# UPDATE

the latest news from your community medical home

Spring 2016

## Federal Award Supports Increased Substance Abuse Services

Gifford was one of four Vermont Health centers to receive Affordable Care Act funding in March for programs that will help address an escalating national heroin epidemic. The Department of Health and Human Services award will be used to expand substance abuse services, especially those for people addicted to opioids.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Martin Johns said Gifford is collaborating with the Clara Martin Center to support a SBIRT (screening, brief intervention, referral to treatment) model of care. The award will primarily fund additional staff for the program (a primary care provider with training in substance abuse treatment, a social worker, and supporting staff).

“We are thrilled to have this opportunity to expand services for alcohol and drug dependence and misuse in our community,” said Johns. “These funds will allow us to increase patient access and to collaborate with other community organizations to provide seamless, all-encompassing treatment for those seeking help.”

Nationwide \$94 million in Affordable Care Act funding was awarded to 271 health centers in 45 states. The other three organizations in Vermont that received funding were the Community Health Centers of Burlington, Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region, and Northern Counties Health Care in St. Johnsbury.

## Rochester Health Center Welcomes New Provider

Dr. Erwin Lange, who has been seeing patients in Rochester since November, is settling in as this community’s primary care provider.

Office Manager Dawn Beriau and Registered Nurse Gail Proctor, who have worked at the clinic for more than 30 years, have spent the last few months introducing him to local families—many who have been receiving care at the Health Center for generations.

Lange is filling the position that opened up when Dr. Mark



Dr. Erwin Lange (right) with Rochester Health Center Office Manager Dawn Beriau (left) and Registered Nurse Gail Proctor.

... continued on page 5

## New Offices, Staff Increase Access for Berlin Primary Care Patients

In late April patients at the Gifford Health Center at Berlin began seeing primary care providers in a new facility, just up the hill from the existing health center offices.

New providers Dr. Kasra Djalayer, nurse practitioner Elizabeth Saxton, and providers from Gifford’s Behavioral Health Team have joined nurse practitioner Jeff Lourie in the new Primary Care building, making it easier



The new Primary Care clinic is located in the second building on the right at Eastview Place.

for area patients to build a relationship with a local provider. Ob/Gyn services are now available in Berlin, and our team of certified nurse-midwives will provide well-woman and prenatal care from offices in this new location.

The existing Health Center building, which opened in 2007, is now dedicated to specialty practices, including Orthopedics, Physical Therapy, Podiatry,

... continued on page 5

# Garden Views, Upgrades, Central Location: New Birthing Center to Open in June



Our Birthing Center nurses provide personalized, 24-hour support for moms and newborns. Many have welcomed multiple siblings in a single family. (l to r) Bonnie Hervieux-Woodbury, Ronda Flaherty, Karin Olson, Kim Summers, Mary Borie, Bonnie Solley, and Jennifer Davis.

Nearly forty years ago Gifford was the first hospital in Vermont to offer an alternative to traditional delivery-room births. Women from all over Vermont (and beyond!) came to have their babies in a supportive environment where individual preferences and needs were accommodated and childbirth could unfold naturally. In 1999, we created a Birthing Center, a separate space dedicated to family-centered care. Now, that 17-year-old unit has had an upgrade. In June a new Birthing Center will open, in new space created when 25 new private inpatient rooms were constructed last year.

## Personalized support, ongoing family relationships

Women still travel to have their babies at Gifford, attracted by our professional and compassionate staff and for personalized choices that range from low-intervention, midwife-assisted births to options like hydrotherapy, epidurals, or the expertise of 24/7 Ob/Gyn physicians. Often families return for subsequent births, and establish ongoing relationships with the Birthing Center nurses, midwives, and Ob/Gyn providers.

Four of Crystal Rediker's five children were born at Gifford, and she recently brought them all along when she donated five beautiful handmade baby quilts to the center. Several of the nurses who had helped with her deliveries gathered to visit with the children they had helped welcome into the world. "The whole staff

at the Birthing Center quickly understood our views and made our family feel completely welcome," Rediker said. "They went above and beyond during this time in our lives, and I truly do have only good things to say!"

## The best beginnings for today's families

In June, the Birthing Center will move into a new area, with refreshed décor and upgrades to make those first memorable moments special and comfortable for today's family. Our long-established philosophy that birth is a natural process continues, but the new central location provides faster access to special medication, supplies, and equipment when they are needed.

The new center is 1,330 sq. feet larger than the existing unit. Four private rooms look out onto a beautiful courtyard garden, and this tranquil atmosphere has been brought into the building with soft earth-tone colors and dimmable lighting. A blue-and-green tiled tub room creates a relaxing, spa-inspired environment for mothers choosing hydrotherapy or waterbirths.

Each room still has hand-made quilts, glider rockers, and additional sleeping areas for 24-hour family support, but specially lit infant exam spaces have been added, so newborns can be examined right in same room as mom. The new center also includes a nursery, and a new dedicated lactation room for nursing mothers and private consultations.

## Vision for the Future Campaign Entering Final Stretch



**Construction of the NEW Menig Nursing Home** the anchor for Morgan Orchards Senior Living Community



**Creation of 25 brand new private inpatient rooms** including the addition of a second Garden Room



**Arriving in Spring 2016 a brand new Birthing Center**

**Help us through our final stretch. Donate today! Call 728-2380 or visit [www.giffordmed.org](http://www.giffordmed.org)**



"This is our second birth at Gifford, and the nurses are the most incredible and compassionate health care providers I have ever met—you can just sense that they love their work and they love working together."  
Erin Hurley, Noah Derman, and their newborn son

## New “Team Approach” Improves Patient Access to Primary Care



Dr. Milt Fowler and Physician Assistant Leslie Osterman work together as a team to provide patients with continuity of care.

Recent healthcare reform initiatives support an approach that family doctors have been following for years: the best way to get well, and stay well, is to adopt healthy habits and to regularly check in with a provider who knows your issues and health history.

Ironically this new focus on primary care comes just as a generation of long-time physicians retire and fewer new providers choose to specialize in this area.

Nationwide rural community hospitals are looking for new ways to increase patient access to primary care. This year Gifford began to implement a new provider model, where physicians collaborate with nurse practitioners or physician assistants and work as a healthcare team. This makes it easier for patients to get appointments while continuing to see providers who know their health history. Physician assistants and nurse practitioners are credentialed healthcare professionals who are trained to diagnose and treat a variety of conditions, prescribe medication, order and interpret tests, counsel, and manage patient care (*see sidebar at right.*)

Dr. Milt Fowler, who has been seeing Gifford patients for 40 years, now works closely with Physician Assistant-Certified, Leslie Osterman.

“There are not enough MD/DO’s to care for everybody—we have to find new models,” said Fowler. “Leslie and I work really well together. She’s taken over much of the acute care and the preventive and health maintenance visits like annual physicals and cancer screenings.”

Osterman and Fowler both regularly see a group of patients, sharing information on their health needs and working together to plan ongoing care.

“Milt introduces me to his long-time patients and they see us working together. If their next appointment is with me, I won’t be some random person they haven’t seen before,” said Osterman. “Continuity of care is really important to people.”

It may be strange at first to not see the same provider each time you visit, but everyone seems to appreciate waiting less time for an appointment—and having quality time with a provider to discuss issues and preventative care.

## PA-C, APRN: What do all those letters mean?

Physician assistants (PA-C) and nurse practitioners (NP) partner with medical doctors to help patients get the care they need. Specially trained to provide primary care, these health professionals also help patients learn how to make the lifestyle changes that will help them stay healthy.

### Physician Assistants Certified (PA-C)

Physician assistants, under the supervision of a physician, are primary health care professionals who are trained to diagnose and treat acute illness and injury, assist in surgery, and manage chronic disease. Following a medical model, they use preventive medicine to promote healthy lifestyles and provide a broad range of healthcare services. **Education:** Physician assistants graduate from a Master of Physician Assistant Studies program. **Certification:** Physician assistants are certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants and, like physicians, licensed by the state Board of Medical Practice.

### Nurse Practitioners (NP)

are also known as Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRN). Nurse practitioners train to specialize in primary care or a specific medical area (i.e. midwifery). The core philosophy of the nurse practitioner field is individualized care, preventing illness, promoting wellness, and patient education. **Education:** Nurse practitioners are registered nurses who have completed a minimum of a master’s degree and received training in the diagnosis and management of common medical conditions, including chronic illnesses. **Certification:** Nurse practitioners are certified through the American Nurses Credentialing Center or American Academy of Nurse Practitioners in specialized areas and are licensed by the state and overseen by the Vermont State Board of Nursing.

See page 5 to meet of our newest primary care providers.

# Gifford Specialists Bring Quality Care Close to Home

Gifford specialists are supported by the most current advanced diagnostic technology and offer a range of specialty services—all conveniently located right in your community, with easy access and parking. Specialty services include:

- cardiology
- general surgery
- neurology
- oncology
- ophthalmology
- orthopedics
- podiatry
- sports medicine
- urology
- rehabilitative services that include physical, occupational, and speech therapies

## New Providers on the Specialty Services Team

### General Surgeon Dr. Mario Potvin

Born and raised in Quebec City, Dr. Potvin brings nineteen years of experience in general surgery, advanced laparoscopy surgery skills, and extensive knowledge of endoscopy and GERD investigation. He practiced in Canada for six years before accepting a position with the Mayo Health Systems in 1997. He



has lived and practiced in Minnesota since then, but wanted to move closer to family in Quebec.

### Oncologist Dr. Eswar Tipirneni

Board certified in both internal medicine and hematology/oncology, Dr. Tipirneni is now seeing oncology patients one day a week in Randolph. He is also a provider in the UVM Health Network, and so brings the resources of an academic cancer research center to his patients at Gifford, including participation in multidisciplinary tumor boards and current clinical trials.



### Anesthesiologist Dr. Anthony Fazzone

has worked in several area hospitals, including the University of Vermont Health Care System, Springfield Hospital, and the Catholic Medical Center in Manchester, NH. He has a special interest in regional anesthesia, which uses nerve blocks, spinal taps, or epidurals to help patients avoid high doses of medication and provide pain relief for patients after surgery.



Richard Polarek (left) and Bob Perry Sr. (right) visit during a session in Gifford's Cardiopulmonary Services Department.

## Cardiopulmonary Services Help Rebuild Strength, Improve Quality of Life

After Richard Polarek had a heart valve replacement at the VA hospital in Boston last summer, his doctor coordinated with Gifford for his follow-up care so he could be closer to his home in Randolph Center.

For nearly two months he left his treatment sessions at Gifford's Cardiopulmonary Services Department feeling discouraged. "Even though I challenged myself a little more each time, I didn't feel any change," he said. "Then, in the last month, I began to experience the benefits—not huffing, being able to walk longer and faster, but most of all not making excuses for not doing something. Now I'm hooked!"

During his multiple weekly visits he became friends with Bob Perry Sr., a pulmonary rehab patient who exercised on the bio stair machine and bicycle to treat his COPD. "I love this!" said Perry. "I can walk further and I don't breathe as hard. When I come in now I can walk up the entrance ramp."

Cardiac rehabilitation helps patients build strength and endurance after a heart attack, heart surgery, and other heart illness. The program includes exercise with specially-trained nurses, education, and nutrition advice. The goal is to

... continued on page 5



**Is it time for your well-woman visit and clinical breast exam?**

**Call us today** to schedule your next appointment or mammogram.

Family Medicine ..... 728-2445  
 Internal Medicine ..... 728-2428  
 Ob/Gyn & Midwifery.. 728-2401  
 Radiology ..... 728-2214

Rochester Health Center continued from front

Jewett retired last spring, after nearly 40 years at the Health Center. Lange says he has really appreciated how the community has welcomed him.

“Rochester really is an amazing community. Sometimes people have stopped in just to introduce themselves and visit, and that has been great!”

Board-certified in family medicine, he brings years of experience in rural primary and emergency care. He received a BA from Dartmouth College, a MD from the Brown Alpert Medical School in Providence RI, and completed a three-year residency in family practice at the St. Joseph Hospital Health Center in Syracuse, NY.

Lange began his career as a family practitioner in a small, rural community

in New York State, but then moved into practice as an emergency physician in several NH and Vermont hospitals. When he decided to return to family medicine he was looking for a community like Rochester, where he could care for a variety of conditions but also establish ongoing relationships with patients and their families.

Dr. Lange sees patients at the center from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and Physician Assistant Tammy Gerdes sees patients on Fridays. Services include: annual physicals, blood work, sick visits, EKGs, chronic disease management, care coordination, and emergency procedures. To schedule an appointment call 767-3704.

Cardiopulmonary continued from page 4

return patients to good physical, mental, and social health and to help people better understand and adapt to their disease. The Pulmonary rehabilitation program combines monitored exercise and education to help people with lung disease, such as COPD, to decrease

symptoms and hospitalizations, increase exercise tolerance, and improve quality of life. To learn more about these programs and testing, call the Cardiopulmonary Department at Gifford at 728-2222 or ask your health care provider for a referral.

Berlin Primary Care continued from front

Neurology, and Urology. The vacated primary care space has been renovated for physical therapy services on site. Also provided in the specialty clinic are enhanced lab, X-ray, and diagnostic technology services, which include MRI's

from a visiting mobile unit.

Both buildings are conveniently located off Airport Road, with plenty of open parking spaces. Call today: 224-3200 (Primary Care) or 229-2325 (Radiology& Specialty Clinic).

New Providers Increase Primary Care Access

Four new providers make it easier to schedule appointments in Primary Care:

**Dr. Kasra Djalayer (“Dr. DJ)** sees

patients in Randolph and at Gifford Health Center at Berlin and area nursing homes. He has won the Patients Choice Award for five consecutive years (2010-2014), and his clinical interests include dementia-related behavioral disorders, geriatric medicine, and rheumatology.



**Dr. Erwin Lang** (see article page 1)

brings years of experience in rural primary and emergency care to the Rochester Health Center. His clinical interests include primary and acute care and continuity of care.

**Elizabeth Saxton, APRN-AGNP** sees

patients at the Gifford Health Center at Berlin and at area nursing homes. Her clinical interests include eldercare, mood disorders, LGBTQ support, and addiction treatment. Preventative health is a special focus of her work.



**Ellen Bando PA-C** joined

Gifford Pediatrics in Randolph last fall. An NCCPA-certified physician assistant, she brings 15 years of experience with a wide spectrum of primary care services to children and their families. Her clinical interests include pediatric obesity, adolescent health, and cross-cultural medicine.



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OR CALL (802) 728-2726

# Upcoming Events

## Infant and Child CPR

Saturday, May 14, 1-4 p.m.  
Gifford Conference Center

*This non-certification course teaches new parents, families and friends infant and child CPR. Free. Seating is limited. Call 728-2274 to register.*

## Childbirth classes

Tuesdays, May 24-Jun. 28, 6-8 p.m.  
& Tuesdays, Jul. 5-Aug. 9, 6-8 p.m.  
Carriage House, Gifford Medical Center

*These six-week classes help mothers-to-be and families prepare for birth. There is a fee to attend. Medicaid and other insurances are accepted. Call 728-2274 to sign-up. Classes are held regularly.*

## Quitting Smoking Program

Tuesdays, Jul. 5-26, 5:30-6:30 p.m.  
Gifford Conference Center

*This four-week tobacco cessation program focus on helping people quit smoking. Free patches, gum or lozenges shipped directly to participants' homes. For more information or to register, please call 728-7714.*

## Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

Thursdays, Jul. 21-Aug. 25  
9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Gifford Conference Center

*Led by trained facilitators, this FREE workshop is offered to anyone living with a chronic disease (and their caregivers). This 6-week program helps you learn how to make choices to live healthier with chronic disease and lower your risk of related health problems. Topics include: problem*

*solving and action planning, nutrition, exercise, medication use, emotions, and talking with doctors. For more information or to register, please call 728-7714.*

## Chronic Conditions Support Group

Second Tuesday of each month,  
10:30-11:30 a.m.  
Gifford Conference Center

*This discussion and educational group is open to anyone with a chronic illness or condition. Free. No registration required. Call 728-2390 to learn more.*

## New Parents Group

Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to noon  
Gifford Pediatrics

*Learn about growth and development, nutrition, infant massage and much more at this free weekly group for new parents and their infants. Call 728-2274 to learn more.*

## Weight Loss Support Group

Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m.  
Gifford Conference Center

*Get help and support on your weight loss journey. Free and open to anyone, anywhere in a weight loss journey and looking for help losing and maintaining weight. No registration required. Call Cindy Legacy at 728-4408 to learn more.*

## Bike helmets

*Get a low-cost bicycle helmet for your child through your doctor's office. Call the pediatric office at 728-2420 to learn more and schedule a fitting.*

# Gifford in a community near you

## Advance Physical Therapy

331 Olcott Drive U2, Wilder, VT 05001  
**295-7333**

## Bethel Health Center

1823 Route 107, Bethel, VT 05032  
**234-9913**

## Chelsea Health Center

356 Route 110, Chelsea, VT 05038  
**685-4400**

## Gifford Adult Day

1823 Route 107, Bethel, VT 05032  
**234-2165**

## Gifford Health Center at Berlin

82 East View Lane - Berlin, Barre, VT 05641  
Radiology Services &  
Specialty Clinic..... **229-2325**

2418 Airport Road - Berlin, Barre, VT 05641  
Primary Care..... **224-3200**

## Gifford Medical Center

44 S. Main St., Randolph, VT 05060  
Main Line..... **728-7000**  
Specialty Clinics..... **728-2430**

## Gifford Primary Care

44 S. Main St., Randolph, VT 05060

Behavioral Health..... **728-2790**  
Family Practice..... **728-2445**  
Internal Medicine..... **728-2428**  
Ob/Gyn and Midwifery..... **728-2401**  
Pediatrics..... **728-2420**

## Kingwood Health Center

1422 Route 66, Randolph, VT 05060  
**728-7100**

## Project Independence

81 N. Main St., Suite 1, Barre, VT 05641  
**476-3630**

## Rochester Health Center

235 S. Main St., Rochester, VT 05767  
**767-3704**

## Sharon Health Center

12 Shippee Lane, Sharon, VT 05065  
**763-8000**

## Twin River Health Center

108 N. Main St., White River Jct., VT 05001  
**296-7370**



For a complete list of our upcoming events and services please visit:

[www.giffordhealthcare.org](http://www.giffordhealthcare.org)

