MVHS ANNOUNCES
SITE PLAN FOR NEW REGIONAL
HEALTHCARE CAMPUS

By Caitlin McCann | Page 4
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Pictured on cover: East-facing view along Lafayette Street as part of the site plan for the new regional healthcare campus.
NEWS IN BRIEF

Join MVHS at America’s Greatest Heart Run & Walk

The Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) encourages employees, medical staff and volunteers to register for and participate in America’s Greatest Heart Run and Walk on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Payroll deduction will be available at the in-person registration events. Registration will take place from **11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** in the cafeterias at the main campuses on the dates below or you can register online at uticaheartrunwalk.org at any time.

**REGISTRATION EVENTS:**
- **FAXTON CAMPUS**
  Tuesday, February 13
- **ST. ELIZABETH CAMPUS**
  Wednesday, February 14
- **ST. LUKE’S CAMPUS**
  Thursday, February 15

Senior Transportation Van Gifted by Volunteers

The Faxton St. Luke’s Volunteer Association recently gifted funds to purchase a new patient transport van for Senior Network Health (SNH). The van is used for complimentary transportation to and from medical appointments for individuals in the community who are supported by SNH services. SNH is a managed long-term healthcare plan for individuals who need assistance with day-to-day health maintenance and support activities.

IR Suite Expands

Today, many conditions that once required surgery can be treated nonsurgically by interventional radiologists and interventional neurologists. Interventional treatments offer less risk, pain and recovery time compared to open surgery.

MVHS has expanded its interventional radiology suite at the St. Luke’s Campus to include two rooms dedicated to interventional radiology procedures and a third room dedicated to neuro endovascular interventional radiology. The expanded area also includes a multi-use holding and treatment room. This expansion serves to create optimal space for updated interventional radiology equipment and technology and the addition of a neuro endovascular interventional radiology program.

Board members of the Faxton St. Luke’s Volunteer Association with new van. MVHS uses the van to provide complimentary shuttle services to sites that include the Cancer Center, Senior Network Health and Adult Day Health Care.
MVHS ANNOUNCES SITE PLAN FOR NEW REGIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

BY CAITLIN MCCANN

Aerial view of the MVHS site plan for the new, regional healthcare campus.
In November 2017, MVHS announced the site plan and outline of its new, regional healthcare campus. The result of the many months of planning is an integrated healthcare campus with a 373-bed, 672,000-square-foot facility and 1,550-car parking structure on 25 acres in downtown Utica.

In collaboration with the MVHS outreach team, architects – including the urban planner from NBBJ, the architectural firm designing the project – have been working since May of last year to advance the site plan and design for the new campus. Together, the group engaged more than 2,000 individuals throughout the community to obtain feedback and guidance regarding the design of the new hospital and its integration with the surrounding downtown area. The team has also been meeting with workgroups from different departments within the healthcare system to ensure the needs of the staff are properly met as they care for patients.

“We were excited to be able to share the site plan and outline of the new hospital and how it fits in the community,” said Scott H. Perra, FACHE, president/CEO of MVHS. “We know that many members of our internal and external communities were looking forward to the day when they could begin to have a vision of what the campus will look like. New design for healthcare is a complex process; we are designing from the inside out, first looking at the processes to care for the patients and then designing the space to provide the care. We reviewed multiple scenarios for how the hospital footprint, parking garage and parking areas would fit into the final site plan. We are working with a number of different teams including the New York State Department of Transportation, O’Brien & Gere engineering, Emergency Medical Services and many more. This plan needs to be right for multiple constituents, with the most important being our patients and their families.”

MVHS submitted the Certificate of Need (CON) application for the new hospital to the New York State Department of Health in early November. The CON required that 30 percent of the hospital design be complete. The design process will be ongoing into 2019.

Officials from the law firm hired to acquire the downtown properties, Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC, have started meet-

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ing with the downtown property owners to begin the acquisition process for the land. “We still have many more steps in this process including the environmental impact study for the proposed area,” commented Perra. “The continued design and the approval of the CON are more of the milestones we are working toward in this multi-year initiative.”

The construction manager for the project is the Turner Construction Company. NBBJ and Turner have extensive experience working with one another. Together they have completed more than $2.6 billion in projects, many of which have focused on healthcare. They are also working with the engineering firms IPD Engineering and Smith, Seckman, Reid, Inc. (SSR) under the direction of the Hammes Company – the project management company hired by MVHS to facilitate the new hospital project.

**Project Timeline**

**NOVEMBER 2014**: MVHS announces it is exploring opportunities to possibly fund and build a new, single hospital for the community.

**JANUARY 2015**: Governor Andrew Cuomo cites the new hospital project in the State of the State address. As part of his proposed $700 million to support Upstate New York hospitals, he noted that $300 million would help to “create an integrated healthcare delivery system in Oneida County.”

**APRIL 2015**: The NYS Budget approves and includes the $300 million for the new MVHS hospital. MVHS continues to work with NYS to receive the application for the funding.

**SEPTEMBER 2015**: MVHS announces downtown Utica as the location for the new hospital.

**MARCH 2016**: NYS Legislature approves the $300 million for the 2016 budget.

**NOVEMBER 2016**: MVHS receives Request for Application (RFA) from NYS for the $300 million Transformation Grant and has until the end of January 2017 to submit it.

**JANUARY 2017**: MVHS submits RFA; holds community forums; announces the selection of the architectural and construction firms; announces Memorandum of Understanding with Masonic Medical Research Laboratory.

**APRIL 2017**: The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) announces that MVHS is the recipient of the $300 million Health Care Facility Transformation grant.

**MAY 2017**: Architects, including the urban planner from NBBJ, in collaboration with the MVHS outreach team, begin conducting meetings to gather input and advance the site plan and design for the new regional healthcare campus.

**JUNE 2017**: MVHS and design team conduct over 90 user meetings and 100 community meetings to develop the design of the new hospital.

**NOVEMBER 2017**: MVHS submits Certificate of Need application. MVHS officials reveal the campus site plan and outline. This represents 30 percent of the total design. Future work will include aesthetic details.

**DECEMBER 2017**: Members of the public are invited to attend community forums to learn more about the site plan.

**2018**: The MVHS team will begin the permitting process with the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) to identify and mitigate project impacts; the MVHS design team will continue to develop the site plan along with the character of the campus landscape; as well as develop the interior and exterior character of the project.

**2019**: MVHS Integrated Health Campus ground breaking.
VHS Aspiring Leaders Program is designed to identify and groom future leaders of MVHS. The program provides participants with a comprehensive overview of various key components involved in managing and leading in a healthcare environment.

The 2017 Aspiring Leaders graduating class had 20 participants representing different departments or units within MVHS. A major goal of the program is to develop a comprehensive overview of key business and financial drivers within a healthcare setting. In addition, the class was given the task to choose an organizational project to work on in small groups designed to provide hands-on leadership experience and explore potential changes or opportunities for the system.

“MVHS strives to engage our employees with our mission, vision and values,” said Colette Wilk, MS, RN, codirector of Aspiring Leaders. “The Aspiring Leaders Program helps to align future leaders with our strategic plan by providing skills and tools needed for their growth and development.”

The groups developed impressive projects and one by Matthew Young, Kathryn Hebert, Lindsay Gymburch and Stephanie Carissimo was implemented by the end of the classes. Their project, RX-Prescription Discount Assistance Tool, is a web-based listing of prescription financial assistance programs. A user of the tool can visit the MVHS website and search by drug, manufacturer or indications to find a list of programs that might help cover the costs of the prescribed medications.

“As a team, we all wanted to make an impact on the health and wellness of our community as a whole,” said Matthew Young, Patient Access manager at MVHS. “The non-compliance rate of our patients on prescription medication affects not only the health of our patients, but the re-admission rate system wide. We wanted to provide that bridge to patients who need some financial assistance in order to afford their medication.”

To use the tool, visit mvhealthsystem.org/rx-discount.

Other notable projects from prior classes include the 2015 NEDOCS scoring system project that helped with overcrowding in the FSLH Emergency Department and the 2016 Patient Navigation for Radiation Oncology and Education for Breast Radiation project that created an educational video for breast cancer patients.

“I think it speaks highly of our organization that we see the value in investing in employees and preparing them to be future leaders and their project work can actually be implemented to make positive changes for our system,” said Paul Rubsamen, BA, MSOD, codirector of Aspiring Leaders.

For more information on the program, contact Paul Rubsamen, BA, MSOD, at 315-624-5728 or Colette Wilk, MS, RN, at 315-624-6517.

Aspiring Leaders’ Projects
Improve MVHS

BY MILLIE CONDON
MICROSCOPIC, CANCER-FIGHTING Y-90 MICROSPHERES YIELD BIG RESULTS

BY AJ WISWELL

Thanks to a cutting-edge procedure offered at MVHS, Andrea Brown, a petite woman with bright brown eyes and an infectious smile, who talks enthusiastically about her passion for her family and her career at Hamilton College, has been winning her fight against cancer since 2015.

When she was first diagnosed, she underwent several rounds of chemotherapy treatment, but at her checkup in June of 2016, her oncologist found more evidence of cancer in her liver. The oncologist recommended that Brown see Kenneth Murphy, MD, an interventional radiologist with Radiology Associates of New Hartford about the Yttrium90 (Y-90) microsphere treatment that he had recently begun performing at the St. Luke’s Campus of MVHS.

Y-90 microsphere treatment, also known as Selective Internal Radiation Treatment (SIRT), is a therapy to directly target tumors in the liver. Y-90 resin microspheres are microscopic, radioactive spheres that are delivered by the millions directly to the tumor site through a tiny catheter advanced...
to the liver through the hepatic artery. Y-90 microspheres are used to treat metastatic liver cancer, which is one of the deadliest forms of cancer. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, and the liver is the most common site for the colon cancer to metastasize, or spread.

Y-90 microspheres specifically target the liver and the procedure is often used in combination with chemotherapy. The targeted nature of Y-90 microspheres therapy enables doctors to deliver up to 40 times more radiation to the liver tumors than would be possible using conventional radiotherapy, while sparing the surrounding healthy tissue.

“At first, I didn’t know I had access to something as high tech and specialized as the Y-90 treatment in Utica, so close to home,” Brown says. “I thought I would need to go to a bigger city for that.” Brown lives with her husband, Tim, in Oneida, New York, and has two grown children that live nearby.

Brown decided to do some research about the procedure, and spoke with doctors and staff at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York. The staff at Roswell Park assured her that she could be confident in the procedure offered at MVHS. All providers and staff that administer the Y-90 treatment are required to undergo specialized training and certification in using Y-90 microsphere technology before they are authorized to perform the procedure.

In addition to investing in specialized training and certification for the Interventional Radiology staff, MVHS has expanded its Interventional Radiology suite at the St. Luke’s Campus to include two rooms dedicated entirely to Interventional Radiology patients. This expansion serves to create optimal spaces for updated technology, including the Y-90 procedure.

“From the moment I met Dr. Murphy, there wasn’t a doubt in my mind that I was in great hands,” Brown says. “He was so confident and obviously comfortable with treating my illness with the Y-90 treatment technology. Every time I see him, he is focused on doing the best he can for me. I always feel like I’m the only patient in the world when I’m receiving treatment from Dr. Murphy and the staff at MVHS.”

Dr. Murphy has been practicing Interventional Radiology in the Mohawk Valley since 2004 and is the first in the area to offer the Y-90 treatment. Since then, the program has expanded to include Aaron Himchak, MD, another interventional radiologist with Radiology Associates of New Hartford, who has helped to expand this groundbreaking program in the Mohawk Valley region.

“Y-90 resin microspheres are a powerful weapon against one of the deadliest forms of cancer. The power of the outpatient treatment we are offering is supported by compelling data,” says Dr. Murphy. “The procedure has been proven to extend patients’ lives, and the sooner we are able to treat tumors in the liver, the better our results. This minimally invasive procedure also offers patients a better quality of life following their treatments. Andrea is an example of the Y-90 treatment’s success; she is a wonderful person and we are delighted to participate in her care.”

Feeling as good as she can is important to Brown, who recently celebrated her daughter’s wedding. “I’m definitely on the side of living,” she says. “I have cancer, but I’m not sitting around saying, ‘Why me?’ Even when I was having my toughest chemo, I got up every morning, got dressed and put on my makeup just like it was a regular day. I’m living my life like I’m going to be around for a long time.”

Brown comes from a close-knit family and credits her support system with her success in battling cancer. Her husband, her daughter, Rachel, and her son, Todd, along with her mother, sisters, brother and niece have made sure that she has never been to a doctor appointment or treatment alone. If she needed to travel out of town for treatment, that level of family support might not have been possible.

In addition to the support of her family, Brown is grateful to the Medical Imaging (Radiology) team that performed her Y-90 treatments. Seated in the Medical Imaging waiting room, Brown greets several staff members who pass by. Many don’t realize who she is at first, and are thrilled to see how well she looks now.

“I barely even recognize you,” exclaims one staff member as she reaches out to hug Brown. “You look wonderful!”

“The team at MVHS is amazing,” Brown says. “They know exactly what they’re doing, and they really take the time to get to know you as a person, not just as a patient. They got my sense of humor and helped me stay optimistic through my treatments. One of the nurses would always start my treatments by saying, ‘Ok Andrea, we’re gonna kill some cancer today!’”

For more information about the Y-90 procedure and our full range of Cancer and Medical Imaging services, please visit mvhealthsystem.org.

“I always feel like I’m the only patient in the world when I’m receiving treatment from Dr. Murphy and the staff at MVHS.”

- Andrea Brown, Y-90 Patient
If you get nervous at the idea of making a public presentation, there is help in the form of confidence building right at the St. Luke’s Campus. A group called The Caring Communicators Club gets together the second and fourth Thursday each month for educational programs on leadership skills and public speaking.

“We meet for an hour and not only practice giving short speeches, but learn how to conduct a meeting,” said Tom Norton, MSHCA, current president who is also director of Cardiac and Cardiothoracic Services at MVHS. “It has helped me a lot with public speaking.”

The group meets at noon in the Second Floor Conference Room and participants may bring lunch. Open to the public, not just to MVHS employees, it is part of Toastmasters International and employees who complete designated Toastmaster competency levels receive I-CARE points.

“I found it helps me with confidence and to feel more in control,” said Wendy Eden, who is the group’s treasurer and self-employed as owner of Harmonizing Your Home, which provides professional organizing and senior move management. “The practice can be instrumental to people in their careers; it can help you with impromptu speaking, for instance. And by coming to these meetings, you practice continually.”

Information on membership and cost of dues are provided in a welcome package when newcomers attend their first meeting. Those who would like to visit without commitment may go as guests as often as they like. Toastmasters International is a nonprofit, educational organization that operates clubs worldwide to help people improve their communication, public speaking and leadership skills. With headquarters in the US, it has more than 16,000 clubs and emphasizes leadership through communication. “The Caring Communicators Club does that well,” says Nicole Kneedham, its sergeant at arms.

“By giving speeches regularly and hearing feedback in a supportive atmosphere, we all reach our goals more quickly and have fun in the process,” she said.

For more information on the groups, visit toastmasters.org, caringcommunicators.org or The Caring Communicators Club Facebook page, or contact President Tom Norton at 315-801-3330 or tnorton@mvhealthsystem.org.
St. Elizabeth Medical Center (SEMC), an affiliate of MVHS, celebrated its 151st anniversary Tuesday, December 12, 2017, by honoring an employee and a recipient of its community award. Following a noon Founder’s Day service in the Saint Marianne Cope Chapel, Alicia Dicks, president/CEO of The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, Inc., received the Founder’s Day Community Award and John Cusworth received the Mother Bernardina Award, which is named after SEMC’s founder and is presented to an employee. The winner of the latter is chosen by SEMC employees for significant contributions to the organization, exemplifying its mission, vision and philosophy and for always going the extra mile.

Founded as The Utica Foundation in 1952, The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties functioned for decades as a traditional grant-maker, striving to address community needs and donors’ philanthropic goals. The Community Foundation’s recent history has seen a continuing transition from traditional grant-maker to an organization with a greater focus on social impact investment. As a community leader, in partnership with nonprofit organizations, local governments, business leaders, entrepreneurs and other collaborators, The Community Foundation works to improve the lives of Oneida and Herkimer county residents. It is located at 2608 Genesee Street in Utica.

“The Community Foundation plays a vital role in our community,” said Scott H. Perra, FACHE, president/CEO of MVHS. “Through its vision, which is supported by its Board of Directors and leadership team, it is able to help improve the lives of thousands of people in our region. We are grateful to have them as a partner and a friend in the Mohawk Valley.”

John Cusworth of Oriskany has been employed at SEMC for 15 years. He currently works as manager of the SEMC Mail and Courier Services, a position he has held for nine years. Prior to that role, he worked for several years each in the Central Sterile Department and in the Medical Records Department. In 2008, the year he moved to Mail and Courier Services, he was named SEMC Employee of the Year. He is a native of Utica and attended Utica Free Academy.

Cusworth was recognized for his strong commitment to his job, as he regularly goes out of his way to accommodate patients and employees. When needed, he makes deliveries to patients’ homes and assists fellow employees with numerous needs, extending to extra drives to Little Falls and Old Forge. His many efforts include assisting coworkers with community fund-raising events such as the annual Relay for Life. Cusworth loves bowling and his daughter, Kaitlyn Raine Cusworth, is a student at the St. Elizabeth College of Nursing.
The average person may think that once patients are discharged from a hospital, they recuperate gradually at home until healed. Sometimes that is the case. Other times, patients need assistance finding a specialist or primary care provider to prevent being readmitted to a hospital. Finding those providers and coordinating a multitude of needs are what Care Transition is about.

The role of Care Transition expanded in the fall of 2016 at MVHS with the addition of case manager, Anthony Burnett, RN, BSN. On any work day, Burnett helps numerous patients by arranging for their medical transportation, physical therapy, occupational therapy and assisting as they manage their medication. The Care Transition Program provides a seamless transition of the patient from hospital to home through improving communication among patients, providers and caregivers. It is part of the MVHS emphasis on supporting people’s overall health, identifying and managing high-risk patients and helping them stay well.

“Theoretically, this sounds rather easy while it actually can get complicated fast,” Burnett says. He may get multiple calls at the same time, and patients may have to wait. He has worked with homeless people and landlords, making arrangements that work for everyone. “So many times, you treat the entire family, not just the patient,” he says.

Burnett is in a unique situation, having worked for 14 years at the area’s hospitals before being diagnosed with cancer. After treatment, he worked at the Visiting Nurse Association of Utica and Oneida County, the Oneida Nation Health Department and as a nursing home supervisor. As a result of this long history with MVHS affiliates, he has a good relationship with many area physicians.

“When you’ve been a patient before, you know what some of the hardships are,” Burnett says. “And for some people, two dollars is not just two dollars for meds. They have to pay for their rent and there may not be enough money for all that you need for care.”

With an increasing number of MVHS patients needing help, Candy Salvati, RN, BS, MGH, joined Burnett as Care Transition coordinator last September. Trained in Denver, Colorado, by Eric Coleman, MD, MPH, founder of the Coleman Care Transition Model, and his team, Salvati started a similar program at another hospital.

The MVHS program follows identified patients for 30 days post discharge from an inpatient stay. During this 30-day period,
The new name better reflects the services MVHS provides.

St. Luke’s Home is Now
MVHS Rehabilitation and Nursing Center

BY MILLIE CONDON

In support of a more unified identity within MVHS, St. Luke’s Home has changed its name to MVHS Rehabilitation and Nursing Center (RNC). Officials received approval of the name change from the New York State Department of Health Bureau of Nursing Home Licensure and Certification in fall of 2017.

“The continuum of care at RNC is designed to promote independence and health as well as to be a desired living place for those who require more assistance,” said Mike McCoy, executive director of MVHS RNC. “The new name better reflects the services provided. We want to more readily be identified as an affiliate of MVHS. This name change also reflects our strengths as senior healthcare changes.”

MVHS RNC is a 202-bed facility with a 40-bed subacute rehabilitation unit. The team at RNC is dedicated to meeting patients’ goals of becoming stronger and more functional. The services include coordinated inpatient sub-acute rehabilitation and long-term access to continuing care services in the community.

Additionally, St. Luke’s Home Adult Day Healthcare will now be called MVHS Adult Day Healthcare (ADHC). MVHS ADHC offers comprehensive healthcare with therapeutic social, educational and recreational activities. It is a medical model program, operated under the supervision of a registered nurse.

“The new names bring better cohesiveness and name recognition to the organization and better reflect what the Center does extremely well – rehabilitation,” said Scott Perra, FACHE, president/CEO of MVHS. “Those coming to MVHS Rehabilitation and Nursing Center receive quality, rehabilitation services and return home once their health improves. We also continue our commitment to those who need long-term care services in a home-like setting.”

MVHS RNC opened its doors 21 years ago under the name of St. Luke’s Home. In 2013, an addition to the Home was completed and the renovated building opened as the Center for Rehabilitation and Continuing Care Services (CRCCS). The renovations/addition was possible due to a $31.3 million grant from New York State.

CRCCS houses an Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit (IRU) which features 10 private rooms and seven semi-private rooms, a state-of-the-art transitional living center, a new dining room and a rehabilitation gym. The IRU is a more specialized and intensive rehabilitation service. The Visiting Nurse Association of Utica and Oneida County (VNA) and Senior Network Health (SNH) are also located at CRCCS.

“I did my own research and talked to friends and family and decided this was the place I wanted to go after my knee replacement,” said Randy Fleming, a patient at MVHS RNC. “I called about one month before my surgery and was told that I was welcome to come here. It was very reassuring to know I had a place lined up that had staff members who are knowledgeable and nice to talk to. My rehab program went really well and the entire staff was pleasant, courteous and caring. It feels as if there are family members taking care of you.”

For more information call 315-624-8601.

Care Transition Staff
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Burnett and Salvati assist patients with skill development and each patient achieving specific goals.

“We are here to provide patients with the skills they need to self-manage their care,” Salvati says. “We can educate, encourage and support but we can’t do everything for the patient. We may need to approach the same patient during many different readmissions and try different tactics to help the patient meet his or her level of success.”

“I love seeing the changes in a patient over time,” Salvati says. “With each baby step, it leads to bigger and bigger successes.”

Burnett agrees and also gives supervisors Kimberly Witchley, MSHA, and Rebecca Delahunt, BSN, RN, credit for allowing him to think outside the box. “If it’s got to do with the hospital, they make it work,” Burnett says. “We work together so well at both campuses. When you hear that patient’s ‘thank you’, it’s everything.”
ANTIBIOTIC STEWARDSHIP IS MVHS FOCUS

BY KELLY SPERLING

Antibiotics, also known as antimicrobial medications, are used for treating infections caused by bacteria and have saved countless lives. However, the misuse and overuse of these medications have contributed to a phenomenon known as antibiotic resistance. This develops when potentially harmful bacteria change in a way that reduces or eliminates the effectiveness of antibiotics.

Antibiotic resistance is a growing public health concern worldwide. When a person is infected with an antibiotic-resistant bacteria, not only is treatment of that patient more difficult, but the antibiotic-resistant bacteria may spread to other people.

When antibiotics don’t work, the result can be longer and more complicated illnesses, more doctor visits, the use of stronger and more expensive medications and more deaths caused by bacterial infections. Examples of the types of bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics include the distinct organisms that cause skin infections, meningitis, sexually transmitted diseases and respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia.

Antibiotics are meant to be used to fight bacterial infections. Although antibiotics kill bacteria, they are not effective against viruses. Therefore, they will not be effective against viral infections such as colds, most coughs, many types of sore throat and influenza (flu). Using antibiotics against viral infections will not cure the infection, will not keep other individuals from catching the virus, may cause unnecessary, harmful side effects and may contribute to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Patients and healthcare professionals play an important role in combating antibiotic resistance. Patients should not demand antibiotics when a healthcare professional says the medications are not needed. Healthcare professionals should prescribe antibiotics only for infections they believe to be caused by bacteria. As a patient, the best approach is to ask a healthcare professional whether an antibiotic is likely to be effective for the condition. Also, ask what else can be done to relieve the symptoms.

When a patient is prescribed an antibiotic to treat a bacterial infection, it’s important that he or she take the medication exactly as directed. Always completing the full course of the medication is vital, even if the patient begins to feel better. If treatment stops too soon, the medication may not kill all the bacteria. The patient becomes sick again and the remaining bacteria may become resistant to the antibiotic that has been taken. Antibiotics are most effective when they are taken as prescribed.

At MVHS, the Antibiotic Stewardship Committee was formed to improve the use of antibiotics within the health system in order to optimize patient outcomes and decrease antibiotic resistance. The recommendations being made within MVHS to advance therapy can be based on developed clinical guidelines and antibiotic resistance patterns within the health system or laboratory results specific to the patient. Based on cultures and sensitivity, the Antibiotic Stewardship program recommends changing to oral therapy by following the standard IV to PO Pharmacy Protocol if medication is on the automatic interchange list and sending a Pharmacy Antibiotic review recommendation to the provider if the medication is not on the interchange list.

Single Agent Therapy is preferred when the culture and sensitivity results are available. For example, azithromycin treatment as a secondary agent can often be discontinued if Legionella cultures are negative; however, combination therapy would be appropriate for more advanced infections such as meningitis, severe Clostridium Difficile (C. Diff) or a prosthetic device infection. This will help providers narrow the therapeutic medication based on culture results and reduce the risk of overuse by targeting the root cause of the infection.

“In order to combat the overuse and over-prescribing of antibiotics for our patients, MVHS is focusing on provider education and quality improvement,” said Waleed Albert, MD, FACP, president of the Medical Staff at FSLH and chairman of the Antibiotic Stewardship Committee for MVHS. “Using microbiology results obtained through testing and cultures, antibiotic de-escalation will convert patients from one antibiotic (broad spectrum), which covers several different types of bacteria, to a different antibiotic (narrow spectrum) that is targeted specifically to the infecting organism. Pharmacists have developed a list of recommendations for providers to follow in order to ensure that all patients are receiving exceptional care and are avoiding overuse of antibiotics.”

Both the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee (P&T), and the Medical Executive

Continued on next page
I-CARE Story
Sharing a Story of Excellence

I-CARE Stories are about caregivers, protectors, companions and champions. They acknowledge special, and sometimes life-changing, moments that make a difference for our patients, residents, their families and our coworkers. The following stories are about those individuals and teams who inspire us to always do our best.

MVHS Family
Submitted by Jerry Plows, Human Resources.

Shortly before Christmas, I rounded all of the MVHS campuses as Santa Claus. When I went to Pediatrics at the St. Luke’s Campus, I met a six-year-old girl who told me that all she wanted for Christmas was a Barbie Dream House. As she said this, her mom looked at me and her eyes widened. Then the little girl told me that she was also hoping for a car that works for her mom. Needless to say, my heart went out to this family and I wanted to do something for them.

After I finished my rounds, I spoke with the child life specialist in Pediatrics and asked her to find out if the Barbie Dream House was going to be given to the girl. We soon learned that the mom was working hard as a certified nursing assistant, but just making ends meet for her, her daughter and her seven-year-old son.

I reached out to members of Team Bravo and others in the organization who had expressed an interest in donating to a family in need during the holiday season. I hoped that if everyone was able to pitch in whatever they were able to, we could purchase the Barbie Dream House and something for her brother.

Everyone I contacted donated, and many shared the story with their coworkers who also donated. Members of the MVHS Foundations received a generous donation from the Lindsey Foundation, which covered the cost of the Barbie Dream House and a Batman play set for the girl’s brother. All of the cash that was donated – which came to $500 – was given to the family to help make its holiday a happy one.

As I presented the gifts, the mother and I (dressed as Santa) embraced and I could feel the immense burden that had been lifted off of her and her family. Once again, the MVHS family came together and made a difference in a BIG way!

Antibiotic Stewardship
Continued from page 14

Committee approved the recommendation of the Antibiotic Stewardship Committee that all patients who require more than five days of broad spectrum antibiotic therapy be evaluated by Infectious Disease staff. If a narrow spectrum antibiotic is appropriate for the patient, the clinical pharmacist will send a recommendation to Infectious Disease. Assessing and monitoring patients’ clinical responses and underlying co-morbidities is essential in determining alternate therapies, dosage changes and when it is appropriate to cease antibiotics altogether.

Preventing the spread of antibiotic resistance is extremely important for the entire community and these recommendations need to be followed thoroughly. The key to avoiding misuse and overuse for outpatients is ensuring that the community is educated on the positive and negative effects of antibiotics with an understanding that following proper instructions is crucial. MVHS is committed to combating the antibiotic resistance movement and the Antibiotic Stewardship Committee is paving the way and refining the distribution process in order to decrease the antibiotic overuse epidemic.

For any additional questions or concerns, please contact Christopher Houle, PharmD, FSLH Department of Pharmacy, at 315-624-6608 or David Jones, PharmD, SEMC Department of Pharmacy, at 315-801-3423.
Upcoming Events

FRIDAY, MARCH 2
America’s Greatest Heart Run and Walk
“Healthy for Good” Expo

SATURDAY, MARCH 3
America’s Greatest Heart Run and Walk

FRIDAY, MARCH 16
Dr. Michelle E. Haddad Memorial Dental Seminar

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21
Stomp Out Cancer Telethon

FRIDAY, MARCH 30
Doctors’ Day

FRIDAY, APRIL 13
MVHS Foundations Prohibition Party

Please visit the intranet or mvhealthsystem.org for a complete list of upcoming events.

Staff Announcements

October 2017 to January 2018

VICE PRESIDENT
Sharon Palmer, Vice President of Support Services

MANAGERS AND DIRECTORS

Kristin Brown
Human Resource Operations/Compliance Manager

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