InFlight

A Year of Celebration!
Reflecting on 30 Years of Life-Saving Service
On the Cover
Images from some of our 30 Year Anniversary events across the HealthNet Aeromedical Services system.

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Grant Memorial Hospital, Petersburg, WV
Nestled in the heart of the Potomac Highlands, Grant Memorial Hospital [GMH] is a regional health care facility that serves Grant, Hardy, Pendleton, Mineral and Hampshire Counties in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia. It is licensed for 45 beds and employs over 350 professionals, providing nurturing care to those needing hospital services.

Since its establishment in 1958, Grant Memorial Hospital has been providing compassionate, innovative, quality healthcare to the residents of the communities it serves.

A full array of inpatient, outpatient, emergency, ambulatory, skilled nursing, diagnostic and rehabilitative services are available. Many clinical service groups are also offered at Grant Memorial, including anesthesiology, emergency medicine, family practice, general surgery, gynecology, internal medicine, obstetrics, ophthalmology, orthopedic and pediatrics.

The Hospitalist Program at GMH offers the services of four local internal medicine physicians to provide 24-hour medical care of hospitalized patients. They are available to assist other primary care providers with admission of their patients to the Hospital and to cover after hours and weekend calls.

Grant Memorial has received gold honors from the WV State Hospital Association in the Commitment to Excellence Honors Program. This program recognizes hospitals that have established and maintained trust among providers, policymakers and the public through actions, sensitivity, professionalism and community-minded commitment to service.

Named a 2015 Commitment to Excellence Award winner by Press Ganey Associates, Inc., GMH has also been honored for demonstrating continuous improvement in clinical quality. This award reflects Grant Memorial’s unrelenting response to patient needs and demonstrates their commitment to improving care delivery.

For many years, Grant Memorial Hospital has been dedicated to continuing healthcare education by prioritizing training, volunteer and student internships. It takes pride in its longtime affiliation with West Virginia’s three medical schools, as well as other universities and colleges across the state to provide healthcare rotations for students in this rural community setting.

HealthNet Aeromedical Services is honored to partner with our friends at Grant Memorial Hospital for the transport of critically ill and injured patients.
In just a few weeks the HealthNet Aeromedical Services team will complete celebrations surrounding our thirtieth anniversary. It has been a great year of special activities and projects from one end of our vast system to the other. We have gotten reacquainted with team members who served alongside us in the past and shared the story of just how this system came to pass with those now entering service with us.

While celebrations are important, a higher priority for us is to simply give back. To pay it forward to the region that has given us such strong support for three decades. That is exactly what we have done. From volunteering to complete projects at local elementary schools to helping our neighbors after last summer’s tragic flooding to constructing and opening Little Free Libraries in each community where we are based, this has been a tremendous year of service. I thank each one of our team members who have given of their time and talents to make central Appalachia just a bit better.

This year has also been a time of reflection for us. A time to take stock of what this critical care transport system has meant to those whom we have served – over 75,000 of them safely transported by our program. The thoughts of so many were really summed up in a card we received last summer from a former patient. This gentleman was cared for and transported by a HealthNet Aeromedical Services team in June 1991. He was involved in a terrible automobile accident on a West Virginia interstate highway and required a tremendous amount of emergency care and support on the scene to simply reach the trauma center alive. Our team got him there in time and weeks later he walked out of the hospital with his family and the flight team by his side. A poignant moment for certain.

Fast forward twenty-five years later and, on this patient’s birthday, HealthNet Aeromedical Services received a card from him. He simply expressed thanks for the chance to have twenty-five more birthdays with his family. Through these years he has enjoyed priceless moments with them; high school and college graduations, giving a daughter away at a wedding, holding his first grandchild and the pride of seeing a son graduate medical school. He was given the chance to enjoy each of these family milestones because our team members were on the interstate with him that afternoon and gave him their all. I’m humbled to say that our teams safely do this work every day, giving every patient a fighting chance at life.

Thirty years ago a group of West Virginia healthcare leaders came together with a vision. A vision for a high quality, not-for-profit critical care transport program that would serve the citizens of their state and beyond. One that would connect rural communities with high-tech emergency care previously available only in more urban areas. Today their legacy endures. With the deep support of our member medical facilities; Cabell Huntington Hospital, Charleston Area Medical Center and West Virginia University Medicine three decades later this program continues to exist for one reason - to save lives. And it does just that.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and team members, thanks for your continued confidence in our program and mission. ☀️

Clinton V. Burley
HealthNet Aeromedical Services, Inc.
President/CEO
On November 17, 2016, HealthNet Aeromedical Services team members, as well as leadership from sponsoring hospitals and guests, gathered at Stonewall Resort for the annual Team Member Award Program.

The event acknowledged the individual and collective achievements of team members from across our system. The evening was also the culmination of 12 months of special recognition of HealthNet Aeromedical Service’s 30th anniversary. Graciously, we take pride in the vision that was born 30 years ago to provide safe, high quality critical care transport services to central Appalachia.
QUALITY CARE CONTINUES
Even After Patients Leave Hospital

Ronzel Laughlin, 82, has lived in Charleston for more than 60 years. About 10 years ago during a hospital stay at CAMC, he was diagnosed with congestive heart failure (CHF).

As with many chronic conditions, there is no cure for CHF. It is a condition that must be properly managed to avoid complications and prevent it from worsening. Controlling risk factors, like smoking, obesity and high blood pressure, and taking certain medications can be a lifelong endeavor for most heart failure patients.

After his discharge, Laughlin was referred to the CAMC Congestive Heart Failure Clinic, an outpatient program led by trained medical staff that specializes in CHF treatment.

“They did a great job of explaining what was going on and what I needed to do,” Laughlin said. “They taught us how to manage medications and make changes if necessary, and about changing our diet to limit salt and eat better. Having that guidance was really helpful.”

The CHF Clinic is just one example of the many programs and resources CAMC provides to its patients once they are discharged to continue their care.

“It’s our goal to ensure that once patients leave the hospital, they have the education and tools they need to manage their health,” said Diane Whelan, RN, who works in and helps manage CAMC’s CHF Clinic. “Follow-up care is very important with these types of conditions so we like to stay in regular contact with patients – like at the clinic and through phone calls – to monitor their treatment and progress.”

“We know hospital stays and health scares are stressful and confusing,” said Cheryl Hopkins, care transitions coach at CAMC. “We never want patients to leave with questions about what to do to continue getting the care they need.”

“Transition of care is something that we place as a very high priority with our patients,” Hopkins said. “Once patients leave, we don’t just send them on their way. Our goal is to continue to help them as they move along the continuum of care.”

Less severe patients may be directed to outpatient care clinics and facilities to help manage their symptoms. In addition to the CHF Clinic, CAMC also offers education and resources to help manage chronic diseases through the CAMC Family Medicine Center, Outpatient Diabetes Education Program, pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation programs and many more.

Patients with more complicated or severe cases may be assigned a home health agency or begin palliative or hospice care.

“For long-term care, we can connect patients to vendors who provide the services and resources they need – from medical supplies to hospice care,” Hopkins said. “We hold our vendors to a very high standard because we want our patients to continue to receive the highest level of care possible.”

“After patients are discharged from the hospital, we have an automated calling system that allows us to confirm discharge instructions, ensure prescriptions are filled and allow patients to request a call-back if they need additional help,” Hopkins said. “For patients seen by our hospitalists while in the hospital, we make follow-up appointments with their primary care providers,” said Lora Randolph, CAMC call center supervisor. “This helps ensure that the patient’s doctor knows what’s happening and can continue the care that was started in the hospital.”

The CAMC call center also has licensed practical nurses in-house to answer questions if patients have concerns once they have been discharged.

In addition, CAMC employs dozens of case coordinators, social workers and nurse navigators who work with patients and their caregivers to provide education about their conditions and guide them through the steps necessary for smooth transitions of care. Many regularly check in with their patients with phone calls to ensure there are no complications and can contact a physician if problems arise.

“To us, quality care extends well beyond the walls of our hospitals,” Hopkins said. “When our patients walk out the door, we want them to know that they’re not on their own. We’re still here to provide education, support and guidance.”

For more information, visit camc.org.

WHAT IS HOME HEALTH CARE?
Home health services can help patients who are chronically or terminally ill, disabled, recovering from an illness or undergoing treatment. There are many types of medical and social home health care services available including:

• Health care provider and/or nursing care
• Physical, occupational and/or speech therapy
• Medical social services
• Companionship
• Volunteer care
• Nutritional support
• Medical equipment and supplies
• Pharmaceutical services
• Transportation

Source: The StayWell Company, LLC
The WVU Medicine Jon Michael Moore Trauma Center recognized three trauma patients and representatives from each facet of their care during the Seventh Annual Night of Recognition, which was Thursday, October 13, 2016 at the Morgantown Event Center at Waterfront Place.

“We look forward to this celebration every year because it not only recognizes our patients and the insurmountable odds that they’ve overcome to survive and thrive, but it also recognizes the many people who participated in their care along the way,” Alison Wilson, M.D., director of the Jon Michael Moore Trauma Center, said. “There’s rarely a dry eye in the room by the time the program is over, and you can’t help but be inspired by the stories of our patients. It’s truly a remarkable event.”

This year’s patient honorees were Randy Ash of Sistersville, WV who was injured in a hunting accident; Luke Mertz of Kitzmiller, Md., who was injured in a dirt bike accident; and Bill Ross of Waynesburg, Pa., who was injured in a motorcycle accident.

At the event, each patient’s story was told, and those who participated in their care were presented with a Cornerstone of Recovery Award. Approximately 60 awards were presented, including one to Ron Dotson, HealthNet Aeromedical Services flight nurse, who played a role in Mertz’s care.

Patients recognized at previous Night of Recognition celebrations were also in attendance.

Through sponsorship and ticket sales, proceeds from the Night of Recognition provide crucial funds to the WVU School of Medicine’s Department of Surgery to help support the Trauma Center’s Injury Prevention Outreach Programs, which provide education to people of all ages.

The Jon Michael Moore Trauma Center, located at WVU Medicine’s J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital, was created in the 1980s with the assistance and support of the late U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd. It is named for Byrd’s grandson, who died as a result of an automobile crash. Each year, the Trauma Center treats more than 3,000 patients from all over West Virginia, as well as those from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.
For the sixth year in a row, for as long as this award has been available to the public, Cabell Huntington Hospital (CHH) has been recognized by Healthgrades as one of America’s 100 Best Hospitals for Joint Replacement.

Healthgrades, the leading online resource helping consumers make informed decisions to find the right doctor and the right hospital for the right care, evaluated nearly 4,500 hospitals nationwide for 34 of the most common inpatient procedures and conditions.* Healthgrades identified the 100 best-performing hospitals across all conditions or procedures evaluated within Orthopedics. Healthgrades compared Specialty Excellence Award Recipients as a group, to all other hospitals, and found, patients treated at hospitals receiving the America’s 100 Best Hospitals for Joint Replacement Award have, on average, had a 60.3% lower risk of experiencing a complication while in the hospital versus other hospitals, than if they were treated in hospitals that did not receive the award.

This achievement places CHH's Mary H. Hodges Joint Replacement Center among the top 100 hospitals out of nearly 4,500 evaluated. No other hospital in West Virginia, Kentucky or the tri-state region can make this claim. In addition, CHH is also celebrating nine consecutive years as a 5-star (out of five stars) designated facility for knee replacement surgery. The 2017 awards include:

- ONLY hospital in WV to be America's 100 Best for Joint Replacement 6 Years in a Row (2012-2017)
- ONLY hospital in WV and KY to be America's 100 Best for Joint Replacement in 2017
- ONLY hospital in WV to receive Joint Replacement Excellence Award* for 10 Years in a Row (2008-2017)
- ONLY hospital in WV to receive Healthgrades Joint Replacement Excellence Award & 5-Star for Total Knee Replacement for 10 Years in a Row (2008-2017)
- ONLY hospital in WV among the Top 5% in the Nation for Joint Replacement for 7 Years in a Row (2011-2017)
- ONLY hospital in WV Among the Top 10% in the Nation for Joint Replacement for 10 Years in a Row (2008-2017)

“We are pleased to share our ratings each year to help guide patients to the best care and best outcomes possible,” said Ali Oliashirazi, MD, Professor and Chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine and Surgical Director of the Mary H. Hodges Joint Replacement Center at Cabell Huntington Hospital. “The quality of orthopedic procedures and the physicians who perform them can be vastly different, which impact the results for patients. Healthgrades creates transparency by providing objective data to help patients choose the physician and hospital they can trust. That’s why patients travel to Cabell Huntington Hospital across the nation to receive care delivered by our experienced, nationally ranked joint replacement team,” stated Dr. Oliashirazi.

The complete Healthgrades 2017 Report to the Nation and detailed study methodology, can be found at www.healthgrades.com/quality.

“The Healthgrades 2017 Report to the Nation reveals striking disparities in the quality observed among the Nation’s hospitals, and underscores why it is vital for consumers to understand outcomes performance at specific hospitals for specific conditions and procedures,” said Evan Marks, Chief Strategy Officer for Healthgrades. “A given community may have many hospitals, but only a precious few may provide better-than-expected outcomes for the specific care a patient needs. Those hospitals that have achieved the Healthgrades 100 Best for Joint Replacement have demonstrated a commitment to exceptional quality of care.”

*For its analysis, Healthgrades evaluated approximately 45 million Medicare inpatient records for nearly 4,500 short-term acute care hospitals nationwide, assessing hospital performance relative to each of 32 common conditions and procedures, as well as an evaluation of comparative outcomes in appendectomy and bariatric surgery using all-payer data provided by 18 states. Healthgrades recognizes a hospital’s quality achievements for cohort-specific performance, specialty area performance, and overall clinical quality. Individual procedure or condition cohorts are designated as 5-star [statistically significantly better than expected], 3-star [not statistically different from expected] and 1-star [statistically significantly worse than expected] categories.
The Heart & Soul Award is a distinguished honor designed to recognize members of CAMC’s workforce whose contributions lead to compassionate, respectful, and skillful experiences for its patients and customers; whose actions exemplify its mission, vision, and core values; and whose work helps CAMC achieve excellence in employee satisfaction, physician satisfaction, patient safety, quality, or financial health.

This is Dr. Jeremy Powers from pathology and Patricia Williamson, Charlotte Rayhill and Heather Maxwell from lab transfusion services. This group was nominated for thinking outside of the four walls of the hospital.

The blood bank team developed a process which ensures the availability of two units of universal blood and one unit of plasma on each HealthNet Aeromedical Services aircraft assigned to CAMC in the event of urgent blood requirements.

Though the state has three major trauma centers, access can be limited by terrain and time. In addition, there is no guarantee that a smaller facility has the necessary resuscitative agents available.

Placing these units on board the helicopters extends the reach of CAMC trauma services to the scene or community hospital.

This process developed by the nominees allows the post-hemorrhage resuscitation process to begin well before a patient arrives in the CAMC trauma bay.

Time is critical in trauma situations and this will save time. Thank you for putting your Heart and Soul into this extra special care for patients throughout our region.

Charleston Area Medical Center
HEART AND SOUL AWARD

Heart & Soul