

# Pulse

**Latest Updates**

<https://www.marshfieldclinic.org/covid-19-employee-information#goodnews>



Marshfield Clinic Health System

# Take care of yourself: Influenza season 2020-21

This year's influenza season will be different as the world is in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. It's more important than ever for everyone to keep their immune system strong and get the flu shot.

Marketing and Communications, in collaboration with the Institute for Quality, Innovation and Patient Safety (IQIPS) and Employee Health, have developed an influenza campaign, encouraging everyone to contact Marshfield Clinic Health System to schedule a flu vaccine.

As of Sept. 24, the Health System pharmacy is in the process of distributing our flu vaccine supply. Depending on mail delivery in your region, flu leads should expect their supply soon.

## Safety is our priority

To limit the amount of people within our facility, many primary care locations are asking patients to schedule a flu vaccine appointment. Some locations are still offering walk-ins, but overall, it's important that no person is turned away from getting their flu vaccine.

New this year, we also are offering self-scheduling flu vaccines through the MyMarshfield Clinic portal. We continue to have convenient flu clinics, some with drive-up and mobile options for the public. [Share with your friends and family the flu clinic calendar available on marshfieldclinic.org/flu.](#)

*Note: Health System employees must receive their flu vaccine with Employee Health or someone who has access and training in ReadySet in order to record their immunization in ReadySet. If you received your vaccine elsewhere, [upload your proof of immunization to ReadySet](#) or email a copy to [Employee Health \(Shared\)](#).*

## Flu resources all in one spot

To help support this system-wide effort to "get your flu shot," an Influenza Information intranet page within the IQIPS immunization page, hosts resources for flu vaccine promotion and information for employees. To find the site from the Health System intranet homepage, click on Clinical section>IQIPS>IQIPS Sharepoint Site>Immunizations>Influenza Information (located on the left side bar).

On the Influenza Information site, you can view all available influenza promotional materials. Once you know what your location needs, order the material through myPrint Services catalog, using the name and project number.

If you have specific regional questions about marketing materials, contact your local primary care manager or the Marketing/Communications representative in your region:



- Eau Claire - [Matt Schneider](#), 715-858-4427
- Ladysmith - [Becca Baader](#), 715-532-5561 ext. 41284
- Marshfield - [Amanda Elsen](#), 715-459-8369; [Kayla Miller](#), 715-905-0015
- Minocqua - [Amber Weldon](#) 715-892-6197
- Neillsville - [Candy Marg](#), 715-743-8423
- Rice Lake - [Christy Moravitz](#), 715-236-6409
- Wausau/Weston - [Lisa Dmytro](#) 715-650-3205
- Beaver Dam - [Dan Baulch](#), 920-887-4152
- Flambeau - [Suzy Ocker](#), 715-762-7312 ext. 37312; [Jane Eaton-Nyman](#), 715-762-7495 ext. 37495

### **Employees need flu vaccines, too**

Employee Health resources are available on the [Influenza Information](#) page to help ensure we all get our flu shot. You can find specific flu lead information and where to get the flu shot on this page. Please continue to check the employee flu clinic calendar for updates on new locations as several department and building specific sites are available in an effort for safe and convenient vaccination season.

All Health System employees are required to get the flu shot by **Nov. 13** unless they are exempt for medical or religious reasons. Religious exemptions must be provided to Human Resources and medical exemptions must be completed through ReadySet. Both exemption should be completed by **Oct. 15**. Furloughed employees have five business days upon their return to get the flu vaccine after the Nov. 13 deadline. Managers work with your returning employees to review ReadySet and make sure all requirements have been fulfilled.

Don't forget to take your ReadySet influenza survey prior to immunization. To log into ReadySet, click on the ReadySet icon on your desktop. To find surveys, click on Health Surveys on the left. Your Seasonal Flu Immunization should say status "completed." For more information, contact [Employee Health](#) at 715-387-7081.

If you get your flu vaccination from a source other than Employee Health, such as your primary care provider or a local external business, please [upload supporting documentation through your myHealth file on ReadySet](#).

## It's coming along: Neillsville hospital construction update

Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville celebrated their groundbreaking construction ceremony Aug. 19, 2019. With help from community support, Marshfield Clinic Health System's Neillsville hospital is coming to life more than a year later.

The building project is on schedule to be completed in February 2021 for the 100,000 square-foot hospital with 16 beds. The facility will offer primary, specialty and walk-in care, and general and orthopedic surgery. It also will feature a 24/7 emergency department as part of the state-designated trauma program, and two operating rooms, a rehabilitation and occupational health center, an infusion center and a secure landing zone for a medical helicopter.

Within this beautiful lot, three organizations will lease space including Sniteman Pharmacy, which has been part of the community for over 100 years, and an optometry location and a YMCA.

"Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville continues to expand their service offerings to the community with this one-of-kind facility," said Ryan Neville, Chief Administrative Officer. "With access to outreach services and telehealth, we have access to world-class health care right here in Neillsville. In many cases, patients can avoid the drive to Marshfield or Eau Claire for care."

View photos of the progress with our [Neillsville hospital on their Facebook page](#).



## Special enrollment period available for health insurance during COVID-19

Security Health Plan is urging Wisconsin residents who have lost their health insurance in 2020 to see if they qualify for the recently-announced national emergency special enrollment period.

This special enrollment period, which is effective now, is available to any Wisconsin resident who qualified in 2020, but missed the deadline because they were impacted by COVID-19.

Typically, a special enrollment period is only available for 60 days after a qualifying life event, such as getting married or divorced, having a baby or a death in the family; moving to a different ZIP code or county. However, individuals may have missed the special enrollment period because they were impacted by COVID-19, including if the individual or a family member was sick with the virus.



"The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced how critical access to quality health care is for everyone," said Marty Anderson, Security Health Plan Chief Growth Officer. "We want to ensure everyone in Wisconsin has health insurance coverage and is able to get the health care they need when they need it."

The special enrollment period qualifies anyone who lost their health insurance coverage through their employer due to a layoff or job loss to obtain coverage from the Federally-facilitated Exchange (FFE), also known as the Marketplace or HealthCare.gov. This coverage may be more affordable than the health insurance extension they may currently have from their employer under the federal COBRA provision. In addition, some may be eligible for free or low-cost coverage through BadgerCare or qualify for financial assistance.

Security Health Plan staff is available to help answer any questions people may have about obtaining coverage through the FFE. Contact Security Health Plan at 1-844-679-9733.

If you or someone you know is eligible for the special enrollment period but missed due to COVID-19, contact the Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596.

## Family Health Center of Marshfield, Inc. receives grant funds for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome project

Family Health Center of Marshfield, Inc. (FHC) on behalf of the HOPE Consortium in northern Wisconsin received grant funding from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for their project, "*Rural Communities Opioid Response Program – Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome*" (RCORP – NAS).

The three-year grant starts Sept. 30 with \$500,000 in funding over three years.

"We were one of 30 applications selected in the nation and the only one in Wisconsin," said Danielle Luther, project manager, FHC. [View the full list of grant winners here.](#)

Funds will support initiatives to improve integrated care and care coordination for pregnant women, mothers and women of childbearing age who have a history of or who are at risk for, substance use disorder and their children, families and caregivers. The funding is available for families who live in Forest, Iron, Price, Oneida or Vilas Counties or the Forest County Potawatomi, Lac du Flambeau Chippewa, or Sokaogon Chippewa Tribal Nations.

The initiative will include implementation of the following strategies across the continuum of care:

- Prevention: (1) Increase access to family-planning services; (2) Coordinate delivery of evidence-based prevention services/education programs
- Treatment: (1) Increase access to service using models unique to population needs; (2) Improve access to treatment by increasing number of service providers
- Recovery: (1) Improve community understanding/support for different recovery pathways; (2) Enhance discharge coordination for linkage to home/community-based services

Luther is lead on the project, while Rachel Stankowski, project manager, FHC, will serve as data coordinator. The two will be supported by a clinical team from the FHC Alcohol & Drug Recovery Center under the guidance of Sheila Weix, FHC Director of Substance Abuse Services.



## August DAISY award recipient for Marshfield Medical Center

Registered Nurse Kelsey Marshall was the August 2020 DAISY recipient at Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield. Marshall has a bachelor's degree in nursing that she recently received from Capella College in June 2020. She also got married to her husband in the same month, and together they have one "fur baby" named Max. Marshall has been employed with Marshfield Clinic Health System since February 2018, and currently is working on 8 North.

Here is what the thankful family shared:

Marshall was the primary nurse for a serious and complex patient on the nominator's service. The patient had an extraordinary amount of complex medical issues, access problems, combativeness due to acute encephalopathy, and respiratory issues as well as hypoglycemia to a severe level.

The patient needed extra support of the charge nurse on duty that shift as well, and Marshall worked extremely well in a cooperative effort with the charge nurse.

"Without their extraordinary effort and care that rose well above expectation, I am convinced the patient would not have survived," the nominator said. "This patient was managed by them throughout the day and eventually had to be transferred to the intensive care unit for further management. As of today, the patient is doing much better. She is getting closer to her baseline and is just about ready to come out of the intensive care unit."

The nominator said that the outcome could have been very different if the nursing team, including Marshall, had not rose up to the level they did.

"Their timely reporting, interventions and care needs to be recognized," the nominator said. "I have only felt this strong about an award twice in 20 years. I want to wish the team a 'very fine job well done.' It was a pleasure being able to work with them on the care of this patient."

## September DAISY award recipient for Marshfield Medical Center

Registered Nurse Stacey Rashid is the September 2020 DAISY recipient at Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield. Rashid has a bachelor's degree in nursing that she received in 2013 from the UW-Oshkosh accelerated nursing program. She also has recently started her MSN/FNP program to continue caring for patients in a different capacity.



Rashid previously worked in Brookfield in a medical, pulmonary, cardiac unit until 2017, and she joined the SICU team at Marshfield Medical Center in 2017. Rashid is married, and together she and her husband have five wonderful children and a dog.



Here is what the thankful family shared:

The nominator's son was in a motorcycle accident on July 24, 2020. He was flown from the scene to Marshfield Hospital, and ultimately ended up in the SICU on life support for organ donation.

"While the entire staff was outstanding, Stacey R. really stood out and made a lifelong impression on myself and all of my son's family," said the nominator. "I am a nurse myself at St. Michael's Hospital in Point. Rashid knew when to explain things to me as a nurse and when to talk to me as a mom."

The mother shared that Rashid allowed her to share information and show pictures of her son so she could know him as a person a little bit and not just as "another patient."

"She laughed and she cried with us," the nominator said. "My son's dad and I are divorced and both remarried so my son had a large immediate family. Stacey always made sure that my son's dad and I both had all the information that we needed."

She also facilitated for both families, including all of the patient's siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. to be able to see him and say goodbye.

"I was so thankful that she was my son's nurse during all four days that he was there," the nominator said. "As hard as it was to leave his bedside, I felt confident that he was in good hands with Stacey. I could go on for a long time about all the little things that she did that made such a difference."



## Cattails Cottage on Marshfield campus now open

Patients with cancer who travel long distances to Marshfield face a complex path of seeing specialists, undergoing treatments and dealing with the general fears that need to be calmed during their cancer journey. [Cattails Cottage, our Health System's replacement to what was the Hope Lodge](#), provides the needed respite place to end long days for the journey when patients are in Marshfield.

On Sept. 23, Cattails Cottage opened its doors to patients. It's a place where adult patients and their caregivers can find supportive accommodations when traveling for cancer care. Patients must live more than 40 miles from Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield and have a referral from their provider.

The first steps into Cattails Cottage give cancer patients and their caregivers a chance to relax, unwind and process after a busy day at Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield.

"We understand that a cancer journey brings a lot of challenges and stress for our patients who have to travel; we're really pleased to be able to offer them safe housing," said Teri Wilczek, Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation Chief Philanthropy Officer. "Our goal was to make this a cozy, comfortable space for patients where they could feel like this was their home away from home."



Cattails Cottage features 11 private rooms and shared community areas, two fully-equipped kitchens with family dining room, on-site laundry, handicap accessible areas with elevator, internet access, library nook and on-site staff and volunteers to help answer questions. The home has easy access to the hospital and clinic and its treatment and support services.

To learn more about Cattails Cottage, visit [www.marshfieldclinic.org/CattailsCottage](http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/CattailsCottage). Cattails Cottage was created entirely through philanthropic support. The website also includes how you can donate and support Cattails Cottage. To refer to Cattails Cottage, [please use the attached form](#). Once completed, please send the form to [oncpatlodge@marshfieldclinic.org](mailto:oncpatlodge@marshfieldclinic.org).

Questions about Cattails Cottage can be directed to [Sherri Kaiser](#) or you can call Cattails Cottage directly at 715-389-3825. If you are interested in supporting Cattails Cottage, please contact [Teri Wilczek](#).

## Online conferences continues Parkinson's disease education and outreach

In-person meetings and conferences are not possible due to the COVID-19 risks, so Wisconsin Parkinson Association moved their annual conference online. Two Marshfield Clinic Health System providers, Dr. Kate Spangler and Kelly Brandt, ACNP were a part of the program streamed online for a virtual audience last Friday.

According to the Wisconsin Parkinson Association, more than 1 million people in the U.S. have Parkinson disease with 60,000 new cases diagnosed every year. Educational opportunities like this conference give patients and their support team resources and builds a network of people going through similar experiences.



Participating in opportunities like this helps patients better understand their condition and how to manage symptoms. Dr. Spangler spoke on symptom management and took questions from attendees. "I hope that the attendees learn about additional symptoms of Parkinson Disease and better yet, learn tools to help them understand and cope with some of their symptoms," she said.

Brandt presented "The Role of a Neurology Nurse Practitioner Parkinson Disease" and "Medications for Motor Symptoms." This highlighted the extensive training of nurse practitioners undergo to help patients understand the role of advanced practice providers in their care team. In her lecture on medications, "I hope to have patients understand the complexity of management, but also have solace in that there are currently numerous options and others becoming available to help manage the symptoms of their disease well," Brandt said.

If your patient is exhibiting the early signs of Parkinson disease or has concerns, Spangler and Brandt encourage providers to connect with the neurology team. "We have an expert team at Marshfield Clinic Health System," Spangler said. "We are devoted to provide the most up to date care for Parkinson symptoms and to help improve quality of life."

## **Rehabilitation serves key role in patients' recovery**

Providers and staff who offer rehabilitation services across Marshfield Clinic Health System play a key role in patient care. National Rehabilitation Week is Sept. 20-26, and the week gives us the opportunity to thank all these professionals in acute, outpatient and inpatient serving our patients.

**Highest-level care provided by adult and pediatric inpatient rehabilitation units**

Inpatient rehabilitation units at Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield and Marshfield Children's Hospital provide the highest level of available rehabilitation to treat physical or cognitive impairment after illness or injury. The rehabilitation units treat people who have medically complex diagnoses that decrease physical or cognitive abilities and need at least two therapies—physical, occupational therapy and/or speech and language pathology.



Adult inpatient rehabilitation team pictured here, left to right, front, are Cheryl Holm, Jackie Wirkus, Dr. Summerlin-Mueller, Donna Meier, Darlene Fabian, Renee Wesolowski; in back, are Dr. Chu, Lisa McHugh, Megan Viergutz, Rachel C. Melby, Peyton Stork, Christine Lawyer, Janet Rupert-Timm, Renee Scheel, Jonathan Zellmer and Lynn Duewel.

These pediatric and adult patients are recovering after multiple trauma injuries, stroke, spinal cord and brain injuries, orthopedic conditions and other neurological conditions. Adult, children and adolescent and stroke programs are CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accredited. The pediatric program is the only program providing the highest level of care in our region with a board-certified pediatric rehabilitation medicine physician, a Child Life and Expressive Therapies program, including music therapy. Care includes a state-of-the-art pediatric therapy gym, which was made possible through donations to the Children's Miracle Network.

Inpatient rehabilitation is classified as "intensive", but not because the physical strain is too great for most patients. This designation is related to the amount of therapy and individual attention given to each patient. The expert staff assess the patient's conditions and abilities so they can begin to address the barriers that are preventing a patient from going home. The units use a team approach for patient care that consists of a wide variety of specialists who work together to help patients return home at a higher rate than national average. This provides comprehensive work from multiple specialties to focus on recovery and long-term quality of life.



Members of the Marshfield Children's rehabilitation team work with a patient.

"We are a small facility with the ability to have a very personal connection with patients. Our rehab team works closely with patients and families to create personalized plans of care and address individual needs with attention to details," said Dr. Trisha Summerlin-Mueller, medical director of the adult rehabilitation unit.

Dr. Summerlin Mueller and Dr. Jill Meilahn, medical director of the pediatric unit encourage referring providers to connect with their team for consults on any hospital-based patients who are not safe to discharge home.

### **Extensive services and reach by outpatient therapy services**

Outpatient rehabilitation providers and staff work with thousands of patients to help them reach their goals. Physical, occupational and speech therapy are offered at more than 20 locations across our service area. These therapists cover an extensive breadth of services to help patients regain function, strength and endurance to improve performance of daily activities and in some cases decrease the need for surgery.

These specialists address recovery from injury, illness and surgery; coping with a life-long disability and acute and chronic care. The team also works with patients who have cognitive and neurological conditions such as after stroke or managing symptoms or Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis.

Health System therapy staff includes experts who have the training and expertise needed to work with younger patients. The pediatric physical, occupational and speech therapists are dedicated to helping each child eliminate or limit the effects of injury, illness or surgery in their life.

## **Social media spotlight: Surgical technician week**

*Editor's note: This section will highlight one of our weekly social media posts from Marshfield Clinic Health System. Follow Marshfield Clinic Health System on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#) for more posts and information.*

Our [Marshfield Clinic Health System Facebook page](#) is featuring our Marshfield Medical Center-Weston surgical technologist team this week in honor of National Surgical Technologists Week. The week runs from Sept. 20-26 to recognize our colleagues and this profession.

The post message thanks our dedicated team of surgical technologists for everything they do to help keep our operating rooms running smoothly.



## In memoriam: Renee Wittlinger

Renee L. Wittlinger, age 48, of Colby, passed away surrounded by her loving family on Wednesday, Sept. 16, at Marshfield Medical Center. Wittlinger was the operations manager for OB/GYN Women's Health and Urology at Marshfield Clinic Health System.

A Celebration Gathering will be held from 2 until 6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church parking lot in Milan. A graveside service will be held at 6 p.m. at Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery in Milan. The Rev. G. Berninghaus will officiate.

Renee was born on March 7, 1972, the daughter of Vern and Darlene (Matson) Wittlinger in Marshfield. She graduated from Abbotsford High School in 1990. Renee received her Bachelor's and Master's degree in business from Upper Iowa University. She worked as operations manager for several departments at Marshfield Medical Center for many years.



[In her obituary](#), Renee's family shared she loved gardening, home decorating, shopping and was very creative. She was self-less, put others needs before her own, was strong, feisty, sassy, talented, unique, courageous, stubborn, and very brave.

Renee will be truly missed by everyone. Renee is survived by her two sons: Bradley (Brittany) Knetter of Tomahawk and Michael (Danielle) Knetter of Eau Claire; her grandson who was her pride and joy, Easton; her mother, Darlene of Colby; two sisters: Nicole (Brian) Quarne of Marshfield and Michelle (Lucas) Passehl of Arcadia. She is further survived by five nieces and nephews: Nolan, Sydney, Luke, Autumn and Olivia; aunts, uncles, other relatives and friends. She was also a godmother to many.

She was preceded in death by her father, Vern and her grandparents.

Memorials in memory of Renee, can be sent to Maurina-Schilling Funeral Home, 203 N. 4th Street, Abbotsford, WI 54405. Family and friends may express condolences online at [www.maurinaschilling.com](http://www.maurinaschilling.com).

## Memorial services are Oct. 3 for Dr. Hans Vanderspek

Retired Neurosurgeon Hans Gerard Vanderspek, M.D., 87, of Marshfield passed away Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019, at Marshfield Medical Center.

His Celebration of Life is set for 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 3. Due to remodeling at North Ridge Church, where he was a member, his memorial service will be in the former J.C. Penney store, Northway Mall, Marshfield. Visitation will be from noon until time of



service. Life Tributes Funeral Home, Spencer, is in charge of arrangements. For Dr. Vanderspek's full obituary, click on this [link](#).

Johannes Gerardus van der Spek was born June 14, 1932, in Nijmegen, The Netherlands. As the son of a career Marine officer, he traveled extensively in his youth, attending 22 schools before obtaining his high school diploma in 1952. He then spent three years as a Green Beret officer in the Dutch Army.

He graduated from medical school at Vrije University of Amsterdam in 1963 and with his first wife, JosMarie, immigrated to the United States that year. He also changed his name at that time to Hans Gerard Vanderspek. He proudly became a U.S. citizen in 1968.

Dr. Vanderspek interned at Swedish-American Hospital in Rockford, Illinois, and completed a neurosurgery residency at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota. He was certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery in 1975 and returned to Rockford where he had a private practice. In 1979, he joined Marshfield Clinic Health System and provided patient care until retiring in 2002.

In Dr. Vanderspek's retirement story published in Pulse in 2002, he noted that despite technology, good rapport with the patient was still key to an outstanding medical practice. "We sometimes forget we are working for the patients. We should be humbled and honored they seek us out. I have always explained things at levels my patients could understand."

Dr. Vanderspek enjoyed his practice and many other interests, including long-distance swimming and high diving, sailing, biking, walking, reading and working around the house. He traveled extensively with his second wife, Marlene, whom he married in 1990. His most meaningful trip was in 1998 to Israel.

He is survived by his wife; his children, Tamara Ehret and Paul Vanderspek; three grandchildren; stepchildren Erik Schlagenhaft and Stacey Schlagenhaft; and two step-grandchildren. [For additional information, view his obituary.](#)

The family extends appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to the staff and care providers at Marshfield Medical Center Emergency Department and 4 North; Three Oaks Care Center; and Atrium Post-Acute Care, Marshfield.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Dr. Vanderspek's name to Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation to benefit Music Therapy; North Ridge Church; and R.A.I.N. Ministries <https://rainministries.org/>.

## **Buchanan to serve as director of the Office of Research Support Services**

Elizabeth A. Buchanan, Ph.D., has joined Marshfield Clinic Research Institute as the director of the Office of Research Support Services and staff senior research scientist. She will oversee grants, contracts, research compliance and other support services important to the Research Institute.

She earned a doctor of philosophy (ethics and information transfer) from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and was most recently the endowed chair in ethics and director for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

"Coming from 22 years in higher education, I am excited to jump in and find my way through this amazing organization," Dr. Buchanan said. "When I've told friends about my move, I continually hear about family members that have worked for Marshfield for many years and have loved it."



Dr. Buchanan's scholarship focuses on the intersections of ethics, regulations, and research. She has written numerous articles and has presented her work on research ethics boards and internet research, social media, and big data, across a wide range of journals and venues.

Dr. Buchanan's own research has been supported by such sponsors as the National Science Foundation, Fulbright, Wellcome Trust, and many institutional and UW system awards.

Dr. Buchanan's recent scholarship includes co-editing a special issue of Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics on ethical issues in social media research; a chapter in IRB Management and Function; commentary in PLOSONE; a paper from her current grant work on humanitarian service learning projects and community ethics in the International Journal for Service Learning in Engineering; and commentary in a forthcoming collection on hashtag research.

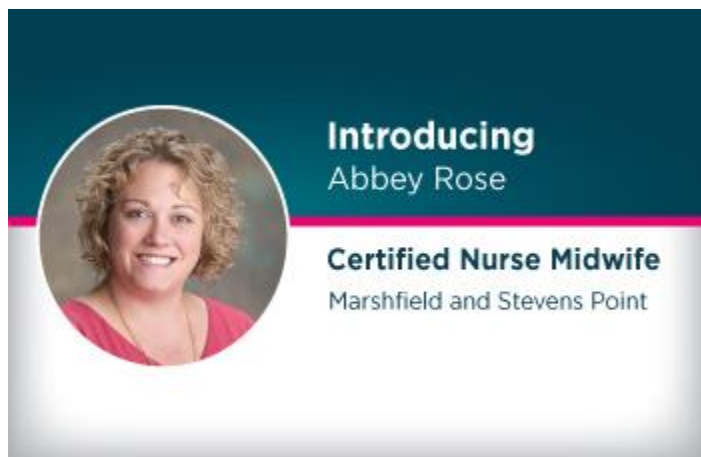
"We are very fortunate to have someone of her caliber and experience on our team," said Amit Acharya, B.D.S., M.S., Ph.D., executive director of the Research Institute. "She will be playing an integral role as a key member of the Research Institute administrative leadership team to support the strategic and tactical operations of the Research Institute."

## **Certified Nurse Midwife joins OB/GYN team in Marshfield and Stevens Point**

*Editor's note: The provider introduction articles below are welcoming new providers who started earlier this year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Certified Nurse Midwife Abbey Rose started her career as a medical-surgical nurse. She never thought she would transfer to labor and delivery, but said she just had a calling." After working in obstetrics as a nurse for nine years, Abbey wanted to do more.

"I wanted to be more involved with my patient's care," she said. "I wanted to give women a different option of care, and that's why I pursued my master's in midwifery."



As a certified nurse midwife, Abbey empowers her patients to make their own health care decisions. She sees her visits with patients like a conversation between two friends.

"I love getting to know my patients," she said. "I like to share with them different options and allow them to take ownership of their care."

With her experience, Abbey enjoys labor and delivery the most. She will try different positions with patients to help them be comfortable and think outside of the box. In addition, she is certified as an International Board of Lactation Consultant, and can help with any breastfeeding needs.

Abbey and her husband have three daughters, which takes up most of their time. She enjoys spending time with her family, and is active in her church.

## **New occupational therapist in Woodruff and Minocqua area**

Occupational Therapist Samantha Ross joined Marshfield Clinic Health System in early this year.

"I chose Marshfield Clinic Health System because it has an excellent reputation as a health care system and my position included both inpatient and outpatient care," she said. "I have always had a passion for inpatient care and also enjoy the variety that outpatient care provides. I am happy to be able to grow with the hospital and learn more about the community as I meet new patients."





Ross has a special professional interest in lymphedema and is completing training to become certified in lymphedema treatment.

She received her master of science in Occupational Therapy degree from the University of Wisconsin in La Crosse after earning her bachelor's degree from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa.

"My husband and I both grew up in Iowa and wanted to stay in the Midwest area," Ross said. "We are glad to have now made the Northwoods our home."

## **Marshfield Medical Center-Minocqua welcomes new physical therapist**

Physical Therapist Bret Carroll joined Marshfield Medical Center-Minocqua and Marshfield Clinic Woodruff Center in late March 2020.

Raised on a small farm in North Dakota, Carroll appreciates the slower nature of a rural setting. He previously provided physical therapy services in Marshfield Clinic Wausau and Marshfield locations, but relocated his practice to the Northwoods. He specializes in evidence-based rehabilitative services.



"I have always had an appreciation for the natural world and purchased a cottage in Boulder Junction 10 years ago," Carroll said. "I began exploring opportunities that would allow me to transition to lake living and continue to work as a physical therapist. The opportunity to work for an outstanding health system and enjoy the Northwoods became available so I worked toward making that happen."

Carroll has 28 years of experience working in long-term care settings with a large outpatient caseload in a rural setting.

"I have worked alongside outstanding inpatient therapists at Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield," he said. "There I became accustomed to the acute care setting. My goal is to assist patients in returning to an active lifestyle after a medical event."

Carroll received his bachelor of science in Physical Therapy from the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks.

"In my free time I mainly enjoy the quietness of nature so I gravitate toward silent sports such as kayaking, paddle boarding, cross country skiing, hiking and biking," he said. "I look forward to working in the Minocqua area and getting to know the community."

## Rhineland Dental Center welcomes new oral surgeon

Aarathi Rao, DDS, recently joined Rhineland Dental Center.

Dr. Rao completed her doctorate and residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at the University of Minnesota, School of Dentistry in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She also achieved her Masters in oral and maxillofacial surgery in India. She is trained in full scope of oral and maxillofacial surgery, which includes dental extractions, dental implants, facial corrective surgery and facial trauma.

Her philosophy for care involves listening to the patient and being an advocate for best patient care.

"I have a passion for providing care to improve health of the patients especially in the underserved communities," she said.

In her free time, she enjoys kayaking, traveling and understanding global culture.

