

# Pulse

**Latest Updates**

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



Marshfield Clinic Health System

## Ladysmith hospital moves forward with land purchase

On January 29, our Health System took an exciting step forward by exercising on the option to purchase land with the City of Ladysmith for a new facility. The piece of land is located west of the current hospital facility on Port Arthur Road. The new medical campus will house the hospital and Ladysmith Center as one convenient location for patients to get their care in Rusk County.

“The Health System's investment in building a new medical campus in Rusk County demonstrates the System's long-term vision and commitment to ensuring access to high-quality health care close to home for our community,” said Jeff Euclide, Chief Administrative Officer of Marshfield Medical Center-Ladysmith.

In the upcoming months, conversations with the architectural design company who is assisting with the planning of the new medical facility will continue. The natural landscape and beauty of the river is planned to be utilized as a part of the design and to help support optimal healing ambiance.

Local staff are playing an integral part in the planning process. The goal is to begin construction in summer 2021.



*Marshfield Medical Center-Ladysmith's Chief Administrative Officer Jeff Euclide drops off the paperwork to the City of Ladysmith Administrator Alan Christianson and Mayor Calvin Vacho.*

# Employee benefits: Complete your WebMD online health assessment

With employee benefits enrollment set for Feb. 23, Security Administrative Services offers many resources to support you with your wellness goals. One of those resources is the health assessment – a fast, interactive assessment that asks questions about diet, exercise and lifestyle.

## Why take the health assessment?

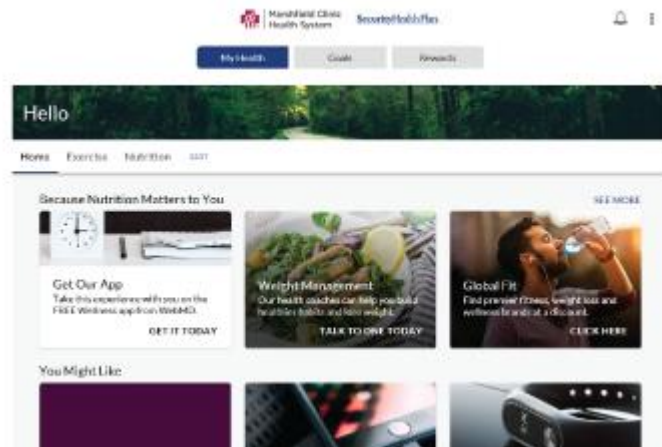
When you take the health assessment, you receive a personalized plan with necessary information to guide you in making healthy lifestyle changes.

For the most accurate results, participants should have their most recent biometric data including blood pressure, total cholesterol (LDL, HDL, and triglycerides) and fasting blood sugar.

Once the assessment is complete, participants will be able to access resources from Security Health Plan and WebMD to help manage their health. Some features include health coaching, My Health Assistant to set and track goals, mobile applications, healthy recipes, symptom checker and much more.

The information you provide is confidential and protected by law. Security Health Plan will not make claims or eligibility decisions based on your personal health profile or share your information with your employer. This confidential 10-minute assessment is available to Security members ages 18 and older. MCHS Wellness@Work receives a summary report to develop and implement services to best meet the needs of our most important resource – you.

It's no secret that health can help you enjoy more of the good things in life. Learn more about our free-to-members health coaching service by calling Customer Service at 1-800-472-2363.



# Health System acquires Beaver Dam Women's Health

Beaver Dam Women's Health is joining Marshfield Medical Center-Beaver Dam's employed physician group.

"I'm very excited to welcome Beaver Dam Women's Health to our team. Dr. Ken Ostermann has been an integral part of the medical staff here for 25 years and has been a tireless advocate for our region's health and wellness both inside the hospital and throughout the community," said Angelia Foster, Marshfield Medical Center-Beaver Dam Chief Administrative Officer. "His highly skilled staff have provided high-quality, specialized care for women in Dodge County and beyond for more than two decades, and this partnership represents a new phase of our ongoing commitment to transforming rural health care. I can't overstate how fortunate we are to have Dr. Ostermann and everyone with Beaver Dam Women's Health join us."



*This photo was taken before the COVID-19 pandemic. Pictured from left to right, are Beaver Dam Women's Health staff Natalie Ross, APNP; Cindy Stippich, CNM; Dr. Ken Ostermann; Elizabeth Nielsen, PA-C; and Brittany Froeming, APNP.*

Drs. Ken and Mary Ostermann founded Beaver Dam Women's Health in 1995 and Dr. Ken Ostermann currently practices with Certified Nurse Midwives Cindy Stippich and Brittany Froeming, Physician Assistant Elizabeth Nielsen, and Nurse Practitioner Natalie Ross. Located on the third floor of the Vita Park Medical Building adjacent to Marshfield Medical Center-Beaver Dam, they offer comprehensive women's health services, including obstetrics, gynecology and minimally invasive surgery. Dr. Ostermann also is board certified in urogynecology.

"Joining Marshfield Clinic Health System is an incredible opportunity for myself and our team at Beaver Dam Women's Health," said Dr. Ostermann. "A passion for taking the best possible care of our patients has always been at the core of our practice, and with Marshfield Clinic Health System, we're joining an organization that not only shares that passion, but has proven its commitment to the health and wellness of our region."

Although some regulatory and legal requirements are still to be completed, the organizations informed their respective staff of the move Feb. 1. As of this time, no official date for completion has been determined.

## Health System first in the region to offer specialized surgery for sleep apnea

Hypoglossal nerve stimulator is a surgical procedure that places an implant pulse generator and moves the tongue forward when you breathe in during sleep. The Health System is now the first in the region to offer this surgical procedure to sleep apnea patients.

This surgery is an additional option for patients with mild to moderate sleep apnea. Patients are required to have a failed Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) therapy test and be age 18 or older to receive the surgery.

“Patients are usually very highly motivated to pursue treatment when they cannot tolerate CPAP because they are suffering from untreated obstructive sleep apnea,” said Otolaryngologist Jamal Ahmed, M.D. “This can markedly reduce one's quality of life due to poor sleep.”



To be a candidate for the stimulator surgery, a patient needs to be diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea, which can be done by a sleep medicine provider. If CPAP therapy is not tolerated, then a referral is made to an ENT provider for evaluation of any obvious anatomic abnormalities that may be causing the obstructive sleep apnea.

Hypoglossal nerve stimulator surgery can completely cure sleep apnea without the need for a CPAP mask.

There are two main steps for this surgery. The first step is to find out if a patient with obstructive sleep apnea is a candidate for the surgery. This is evaluated while the patient is asleep and a scope is used to look at the anatomy of the throat. If the patient is a candidate for the implant, then the second step of surgery is planned and done on a separate day.

Once the patient is completely asleep under anesthesia, the nerve that moves the tongue is found on one side, and the branches that move the tongue forward are isolated. An electrode is placed around this branch. In a pacemaker-type pocket in the right chest, the implant is placed and connected to the electrode. Lastly, on the right side of the chest, the muscles of breathing are found and a sensor electrode is placed in the muscle.

Once the device is activated, the tongue will move forward when the patient inhales while sleeping, opening the throat and relieving the obstruction. One week later, the incisions are checked, and then the device is activated one month after the surgery.

This stimulator has external components including a patient sleep remote that allows patients to activate the generator or configure the generator settings.

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"We are excited for this option for patients because there are a lot of people who don't tolerate CPAPs and this will greatly improve their quality of life," Dr. Ahmed said.



## Security Health Plan invests in Central Fire EMS District via employee-driven corporate giving grant

"Lifting our patients into the ambulance can be difficult," said Lin Mueller, patient care support receptionist at Marshfield Clinic Health System.

Mueller also is an emergency medical technician (EMT) with over 25 years of service with the Central Fire Emergency Medical Service (EMS). The organization provides service to 210 square miles serving seven municipalities including the cities of Abbotsford and Colby, village of Dorchester and the outlying townships of Hull, Holton, Mayville and Colby. She said the median age of the EMS staff is going up, so lifting adult patients on the gurney into the ambulance can be difficult.

Security Health Plan of Wisconsin, Inc., will invest \$1,000 in Central Fire EMS District as part of its Employee-Driven Corporate Giving grant program to help the organization purchase lifts for their ambulances. Each month Security Health Plan awards a \$1,000 grant to a different charity or organization that is nominated by a Health System employee. Employees are encouraged to nominate organizations making a positive difference in the community.



*Central Fire District fire chief Joe Mueller of Colby demonstrates the ease of loading the gurney into an ambulance using a power lift. Security Health Plan of Wisconsin has provided a \$1,000 grant to the Central Fire EMS District to go toward the purchase of an additional power lift cot. The organization hopes to install the power lift in each of its four ambulances.*

"We run over 700 calls a year – that's a lot of lifting," Mueller said. "By installing these lifts, or power cots, into our ambulances we can decrease the risk for injury to our EMTs. In turn that will result in fewer workman's compensation claims and lower our workman's compensation premiums. That's a win-win for our organization and those we provide services to."

Mueller explained the EMS is self-funded, generating revenue through ambulance calls. She said when equipment upgrades are desired finding funds can be difficult.

"This \$1,000 can go a long way to help us purchase this equipment," she said. "We use our donations wisely and this grant will help ease the burden of raising funds for the lift, which is about \$32,000."

The Central Fire EMS District has four ambulances throughout the district. At this time they have installed power lift cots in two of them and are working to upgrade the other two vehicles with the power lift cots.

"The Central Fire EMS District enriches the lives of the residents in the area we serve by coming to their aid when they need us," Mueller said. "We have an excellent crew and have a unified department that shows a lot of teamwork. We're thankful for the donation from Security Health Plan."

Any Health System employee can nominate an organization for the Employee-Driven Corporate Giving grant. To nominate an organization go to the Employee-Driven Corporate Giving page on SharePoint.



## Virtual science conference: Connecting students, teachers with experts

High school science teachers and their students interested in learning more about sciences, health care and related careers are invited to a virtual celebration.

"Celebrating 35 Years of Health Care, Science, Research and Education" will be Saturday, Feb. 20, sponsored by Marshfield Clinic Health System and held virtually via WebEx. This annual Fritz Wenzel Science Conference is meant to encourage students to think about careers in these fields and how to seek council or advice as they choose their careers. Using technology also safely offers this program again to students and teachers who want to experience health care and science in a different way.

In appreciation for his dedication and service to the Health System, the conference was renamed in 1999 to the Fritz Wenzel Science Conference. Wenzel was executive director of the Health System from 1976-93 and was instrumental in the growth and success of the organization; and also was executive director of Marshfield Clinic Research Institute.



Topics and presenters are:

**Embracing Postgraduate Experiences to prepare for a STEM career** – Medical student Colin Korlesky, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health; and Alex Wenzel, Ph.D., bioinformatics candidate, Cancer Genomics, University of California. A STEM career can vary from developing computer technologies to medical treatments so taking advantage of postgraduate opportunities may lead to roles in industry, research and health care.

**What is Histology and Why Should We Care?** – Histotechnologists Wendy Wilson and Kelsey Springstroh, Marshfield Labs, Marshfield Clinic Health System. Once in the lab, what happens to a biopsy? Learn about embedding and staining tissues to slides; watch how to properly cut a tissue block; and take a virtual tour of the Histology lab.

**Morgue Tour** – Health System Pathologist Crystal Cordell, M.D. What types of deaths must be reported to Wisconsin coroners? Why do an autopsy and when are they least likely to provide useful information? Learn the history of autopsies, procedures and various findings, with a virtual tour of the Health System's morgue. This presentation will have graphic images and content.

**A Day in the Life of the Life Link III Helicopter Crew** – Flight Nurse Colleen Reid and Pilot Aaron Cordes. Learn about the crew, equipment and tools they use; and how to become a crew member.

**A Pandemic Presentation via a Virtual State of Mind!** – Health System Psychiatrist Justin Schoen, M.D. Technology is changing the way mental illness is viewed and treated and learn more about recently-developed means to relieve symptoms.

Thanks to support of the Wenzel family and Marshfield Clinic Health System, all registration fees have been waived. There is no minimum participation for this year's conference so all students and teachers are welcome to attend. Advanced registration is required. Attendees will receive confirmation within two weeks of registering and login details will be provided with handouts sent electronically prior to the conference.

To register, click this [link](#). Participant names and email addresses are required at registration. Login details will be provided with handouts sent electronically prior to the conference.

For more information, contact Tanya Esser, Continuing Medical Education, by [email](#) or call 715-389-3776 or 1-866-894-3622, ext. 9-3776.

## Chippewa Valley Technical College allows nurses to work as first responders

Cheryl Bergmann, a registered nurse for Marshfield Clinic Health System, knows there is a great need for help at the local ambulance service. As a medical professional herself, she wanted to help, but didn't have the training necessary and now she does.

Bergmann attended a class at Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) in Eau Claire that is providing the training she needs, and she's anxious to put it to work in her community.

"I heard that they didn't have a lot of coverage," Bergmann said. "Sometimes our ambulance can't even cover because they don't have the people to staff it. I thought as a nurse, I could help."

The idea to find a way to meet the needs of local ambulance services by enlisting the help of registered nurses came from Mark Schwartz, emergency service continuing education coordinator at CVTC and director of the ambulance service in Bloomer. He found a strong partner at Marshfield Clinic Health System. His wife, Lexi Schwartz, is the EMS coordinator for the Health System in Eau Claire. She advocated for her employer to support CVTC's efforts.



*Pictured here, left to right, are Marshfield Clinic Health System Registered Nurses Lucas Peterke, Elizabeth Szymanski, Emma Flury, Bobbi Martens, Maddy Kephart, Lexie Schwartz, who also is Marshfield Medical Center-Eau Claire Trauma and EMS coordinator, and Barb Santolin.*

"In Wisconsin, RN's are able to work in ambulances on their own licenses without EMS licenses," Schwartz said. "But state statute says they must be trained in the procedures and equipment of the particular service they want to work for."

Schwartz held a 16-hour class that as far as he knows is the first of its kind in Wisconsin. The initial group of nine students were scheduled to finish Feb. 3. Matthew Schneider, regional communications manager said the Health System saw the value in the class in helping local EMS meet staffing needs, but also in enriching the experiences of nurses.

"There are nurses out there that can become better nurses if they know more about what first responders are doing," Schneider said. "Our commitment was helping with resources to make this possible because there are benefits, and not just to our nurses."

Schneider added that Health System nurses were made aware of the opportunity, and were supported by the Health System if they chose to take part.

Schwartz said the next step will be to evaluate the class from the perspective of students and the EMS departments they work for. That will help instructors improve the

curriculum to ensure it meets everyone's needs. He added that CVTC hopes to offer the class at least once a year.

View the story on local Eau Claire media here:

- (WQOW-TV18) – “CVTC, Marshfield team up to offer EMT training to nurses” featuring Emma Flury - [LINK](#)
- (WEAU-TV13) – “New CVTC class may help ease EMT shortage” featuring Emma Flury - [LINK](#)

## Managing Worry and Anxiety: Free webinar on Feb. 10

Marshfield Clinic Health System's Wellness@Work program has coordinated another free webinar presented by our EAP, ComPsych – Managing Worry and Anxiety.



During the interactive webinar, you will learn to distinguish doubt from danger, identify new ways of relating to worry instead of fighting it, and become familiar with strategies to acknowledge, accept and work with anxiety. The session will be held Wednesday, Feb. 10 at noon. [Register here](#) or

contact [mchswellness@marshfieldclinic.org](mailto:mchswellness@marshfieldclinic.org) with questions. (To view the session recording, please register and then after Feb. 10, you can click the webinar link to view it at your convenience).

## Urogynecologist joins Marshfield Clinic Health System

Jason Cruff, D.O., joined Marshfield Medical Center in Marshfield as an urogynecologist. Cruff also will be providing outreach to Marshfield Medical Center-Eau Claire and Wausau Center.

Cruff enjoys urogynecology, saying it's a conversational type of medicine. By listening to the patient and her concerns, the diagnosis becomes easy to understand.

In terms of patient care, Cruff opts for a holistic approach. "I look at the patient as a whole. It's not just a disease or disorder," he said. "It's taking into consideration the patient's lifestyle, personal needs and other health conditions to help diagnose and treat."

Cruff received his medical degree from Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia. He completed his obstetrics and gynecology residency at WellSpan York Hospital in York, Pennsylvania.

Marshfield Clinic Health System was the perfect fit because he was drawn to the community-centered focus of the Health System and is someone who wants to expand its horizons and to capture patients who need help.

"It also really impresses me about the amount of research done," Cruff said. "I love teaching and I love education. I see Marshfield as a place I can have some longevity and contribute to their research goals."

Cruff and his wife, Samantha, enjoy the outdoors, stating it's a reason they were drawn to Wisconsin. Both love traveling, and were married in Greece. Cruff also enjoys cooking and photography.



## Owens joins pain management in Minocqua and Park Falls

Jaime Owens, a board-certified nurse practitioner, joins the pain management team in Marshfield Medical Center-Minocqua. She also sees patients in Park Falls.

Owens helps patients who have chronic pain. Her focus is treating arthritis in the spine, which includes neck or back and radiculopathy, or compressed nerves, in the neck or back that radiates to the arms or legs.



Owens works with patients who struggle with other health issues that chronic pain impacts such as functional limitations, reconditioning, obesity, diabetes, and mental health conditions like depression and anxiety.

She joined the medical field after watching her mother and grandmother in their work as

nurses. "I really admire my mom because she took the time, even when she was short staffed, to give great care and joy to her patients," Owens said.

She's adopted this practice when it comes to her patients. "My philosophy is to treat patients as you would want your family or yourself treated. I think it's very important to truly listen to the patient," Owens said.

Educating her patients so they can take an active role in their treatment plan is important to her. Owens' goal is to give them the tools to take control and not let the pain take control of their life, and to explore all the options available to improve their life and manage their pain.

"We really have and need a multidisciplinary treatment team to plan for our patients and to give them the best opportunity for best possible outcomes and improvement of their quality of life," she said.

Owens earned her masters of science in nursing from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and her bachelor of science in nursing from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

In her free time, Owens likes to spend time with her son and family. She likes bike riding, taking walks, reading, boating, fishing, camping, playing sports, cooking and baking.