Neurology is a Mind-Changer

Celebrating 10 Years as MedStar Health

Patients, Not Profits
How Philanthropy Makes a Difference

NURSE NAVIGATORS
Compass in a Storm
Dear Friends,

Fall is upon us once again. After a stifling summer, I believe many of us are looking forward to the relief that autumn often brings. I hope you will have the opportunity to spend time with loved ones and enjoy cooler weather in the coming months.

In this edition of Healthy Living, we are featuring one of many impactful roles we have at MedStar St. Mary’s: the nurse navigator. On page 14, meet two nurses dedicated to guiding patients through the cancer journey. With their compassion and knowledge, Christine Taylor and Cathy Fenwick provide comfort and assistance not just to patients with cancer, but their families as well.

Hospice House in Callaway is celebrating 10 years of caring for our community this year. We are excited about the upcoming events that have become such holiday staples: Jingle & Mingle and the Festival of Trees, both benefiting Hospice of St. Mary’s. Learn more about how you can sponsor a tree or participate with your family in December on page 7.

Should you need us this fall, MedStar St. Mary’s is ready. And wherever life takes you, may it be accompanied by good health!

Construction continues around the hospital with our attention now turned to the renovation of postpartum rooms in the Women’s Health & Family Birthing Center. New families deserve a modern, restful setting for their life-changing moments, and we hope these new spaces will provide a more comfortable experience for parents and babies.

Should you need us this fall, MedStar St. Mary’s is ready. And wherever life takes you, may it be accompanied by good health!

Kindest Regards,

Christine R. Wray

Christine R. Wray, FACHE
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Senior Vice President, MedStar Health

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Neurologist Yongxing, Zhou, MD, PhD, helps patients untangle neurological mysteries

Justin Quade and Dana Fields have probably never met, but they share two things in common – within the past year they both developed serious and sudden medical conditions and they both found answers with the help of neurologist Yongxing Zhou, MD, PhD, pronounced “Joe.”

For Justin, 20, of Mechanicsville, his quest for answers started in October 2018 when he experienced his first seizure.

“I have never had a seizure before in my life,” said Justin. He was taken to the Emergency Department and diagnosed with sleep apnea and prescribed a CPAP machine, which helps regulate a person’s breathing while sleeping. “I wasn’t sleeping well, and I did sleep better with the CPAP.”

In January, however, Justin had another seizure while sleeping and wearing the CPAP.

“I don’t really remember too much about it,” he said. “I went to work on Tuesday and woke up Thursday in the hospital.”

While he was a patient at MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital, Justin was evaluated by Dr. Zhou. After talking with Justin and his family and running

Continued on Page 4
a few tests, Dr. Zhou determined that a medication Justin had been taking was most likely the cause of the seizures.

“I have been taking depression medication since middle school and cycled through a few different kinds,” Justin said. “My doctor up dosed me in September and I had my first seizure in October.”

“Dr. Zhou was like us – he wanted to find out why,” said Justin’s mom, Deborah Quade. “We had expressed our feelings about not putting Justin on more medication – Dr. Zhou just totally agreed with us.”

Justin remained in the hospital for about a week after he stopped taking the medication to ensure he did not have any other symptoms or seizures.

“We are pretty sure that he had small seizures before, but we just didn’t realize what was going on,” Deborah said. “Dr. Zhou had two other male patients taking this medication who had seizures that had caused medical problems. Justin was lucky the seizures didn’t cause other problems.”

“It’s kind of strange,” said Justin, “I don’t really remember October up until March – it is all still kind of foggy; I guess it messed with my head a little bit. Now, I am back where I was before, almost like nothing happened.”

Justin has followed up with Dr. Zhou in his office, and is no longer taking any medication, except a daily multivitamin.

“I am so glad Dr. Zhou walked into Justin’s room that day,” said Deborah. “The medication Justin was taking changed his mood and his emotions.

Now that he has stopped taking it he is a completely different person. Dr. Zhou gave me my son back.”

Just like Justin, Dana Fields, 56, pictured left, also of Mechanicsville found herself in the Emergency Department in May seeking answers.

It was a normal day at work for Dana. An esthetician at a popular local hair salon in downtown Leonardtown, she was working with a client when suddenly she fell out of her chair and fainted.

“When I fainted, it raised my blood pressure,” said Dana, “and everyone thought I had a stroke or a seizure.”

Dana was taken to the Emergency Department where she was examined, released, and advised to follow up with her regular physician. Her physician referred her to Dr. Zhou.

“I was afraid to leave the house,” Dana said. “I was afraid to walk up and take communion at church – I was afraid I was going to fall.”

Dana quickly made an appointment with the neurologist.

“Dr. Zhou spent at least an hour with me doing all types of tests and he diagnosed me with Meniere’s Disease, and he explained it all to me,” she said. “I was so relieved after meeting him.”

Meniere’s Disease is a condition that affects the inner ear and can cause symptoms such as hearing loss, dizziness, tinnitus, ear pressure, vertigo, and “drop” attacks during which a person may fall to the ground with no warning.

“I am so glad Dr. Zhou walked into Justin’s room that day ... Dr. Zhou gave me my son back.”

Deborah Quade
“He prescribed me several medications and told me he wanted me to call him on Monday,” said Dana. “I have never had a doctor tell me to call him before because he wanted to speak to me — especially a specialist.”

Dana said she had been experiencing dizziness prior to the incident that sent her to the Emergency Department, and she was also having difficulty hearing, but she didn’t realize it because it was only affecting one ear.

“I had been noticing my clients were talking softly,” she said. “During one of the tests, Dr. Zhou held a metal instrument up to one of my ears and I could not hear out of that ear. I had no idea that I even had a hearing issue.”

Dr. Zhou also helped Dana learn a new exercise called the Epley Maneuver that she could do at home to help with her vertigo and dizziness.

“He even pulled up a video on his own cell phone,” said Dana. “He is awesome; I felt so comfortable with him.”

What conditions does a neurologist treat?
What symptoms might someone be experiencing?

There are several conditions that could bring a patient to see a neurologist. To name a few, epilepsy (seizures), stroke, dementia, memory loss, headaches, vertigo, tremors, and other nervous system disorders. Symptoms vary based on the patient’s experience, however, generally symptoms pertaining to the central nervous system and neuro pain.

What can someone do to protect and preserve their neurological health?

Follow their neurologist’s recommendations. Control their blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes. Eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly. Do not smoke, use drugs, or alcohol.

Your subspecialty is epilepsy. What should someone with epilepsy be doing to manage their condition?

Take prescribed medication properly, manage stress, get enough sleep, and be aware of potential drug interactions. Certain medications can lower seizure thresholds. Avoid vigorous activities.

What should someone expect during their first appointment?

A detailed history which would include allergies, and surgeries, and a physical, as well as medication reconciliation and diagnosis-driven radiology testing and lab work. Depending on a patient’s history and diagnosis, testing is determined by the course of care that is followed.

What diagnostic testing may be required?

Ambulatory EEG, MRI of the brain, MRI spinal cord, electromyography (EMG) lumbar puncture, and lab work.

Do patients typically need a referral, and how long does it take to get an appointment?

A patient’s insurance requirements would determine the need for a referral. The office can schedule patients within two to three days of calling for an appointment.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH DR. ZHOU TODAY!

Dr. Zhou’s office is located on the second floor of the Outpatient Pavilion at MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital. Referral may be required.

25500 Point Lookout Road
Leonardtown, Maryland
240-434-7929

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/Neuro to make an appointment or for more information.
Meet Our New Medical Professionals

MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital is pleased to introduce the newest members of our medical staff. We strive to bring high-quality physicians and specialists to Southern Maryland to meet our community’s needs close to home. For a full list of local MedStar provider resources, visit MedStarStMarys.org/Community or MedStarStMarys.org/FindADoc for individual doctor profiles.

Bharadwaj Nivarthy, MD
Hospitalist

Bharadwaj Nivarthy, MD, earned his bachelor’s in medicine and bachelor’s in surgery from SVS Medical College at Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences in India, followed by the completion of his residency in internal medicine at Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Dr. Nivarthy is a member of the American College of Physicians and American Medical Association.

Christopher Hessick, DO
Emergency Medicine
Employed by: U.S. Acute Care Solutions
Medical School: New York College of Osteopathic Medicine

Ariel Bowman, MD
Emergency Medicine
Employed by: U.S. Acute Care Solutions
Medical School: University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine

Megan Griffiths, MD
Pediatric Hospitalist
Employed by: MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital
Medical School: University of Colorado School of Medicine

Michael Parsons, MD
Pediatric Hospitalist
Employed by: MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital
Medical School: University of Virginia

Beant Gill, MD
Radiation Oncology
Employed by: Associates in Radiation Medicine
Medical School: The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences

Experiencing PAD Symptoms? We Can Help

When you have significant leg pain or intermittent claudication due to Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD), going for a long walk may be the last thing on your mind. The right walking program, however, may be just what the doctor ordered to help alleviate the symptoms of the disease and prevent it from progressing.

“Research shows supervised exercise therapy can help patients with symptomatic PAD double or triple the distance they can walk before developing pain,” said James Farrar, MS, EPC, CES, clinical lead of the MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital Grace Anne Dorney Pulmonary & Cardiac Rehabilitation Center.

When participating in the program, patients walk to the point of developing moderate pain, then rest briefly, and repeat the process while under the watchful eye of trained exercise physiologists.

“Supervised exercise therapy in a safe clinical setting is our primary goal for patients with other conditions such as diabetes or heart disease,” said James. “Our specialists help you find the right pace and technique that is best suited to you. If you suffer from PAD and find walking painful, we can help.”

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/SET-PAD for more information about the program or call 240-434-7143.
Justine Reimer, BSN, RNFA, CNOR, was recently honored as the 2019 Peabody Award of Excellence recipient at the hospital’s Associate Awards Banquet in May. Justine was chosen from the selection of exemplary associates who won a SPIRIT Award or were named a Patient Safety Hero in 2018.

Justine, a nurse in Perioperative Services, is often described by colleagues as a “hardworking team player” and “friend to all.” She is noted by many as being a welcoming resource across departments in any time of need.

In the operating room, fellow associates say she is a role model for patient advocacy who embodies our patient-first values. Justine has the ability to calm patients with her presence, reminding them that while they are in the operating room asleep, she will be their “eyes and ears” to keep them safe.

Justine was presented with the Peabody Award by Ernestine Pence, vice president of the hospital Auxiliary, and Christine R. Wray, hospital president. The honor is named for the late Elinor Peabody, beloved hospital Auxilian and volunteer, and presented annually at the banquet.

Pictured above: Ernestine Pence, left, presents Justine Reimer with a plaque at the May ceremony. The pair are joined by Christine Wray, pictured right.
‘I’m Really Excited About My New Life’

Cugini Bond doesn’t get excited about the scale; the 58-year-old weighs in only at the doctor’s office. Still, she has plenty to be happy about: after undergoing bariatric surgery earlier this year, Cugini has dropped sizes and gained miles of confidence.

After learning that bariatrics is offered at MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital by Nicholas Tapazoglou, MD, board-certified general surgeon and fellowship-trained bariatric surgeon, Cugini signed up to meet with his team. She had faced years of health struggles — taking a variety of medications, struggling with sleep, and walking with a cane.

Cugini was following up on a shoulder injury in the hospital’s Outpatient Pavilion when she saw a poster about weight loss surgery. “I said: that’s my sign,” she recalled. “I was ready.”

While simultaneously recovering from a shoulder procedure, Cugini pushed herself to change her thinking and began the months-long process of preparing for weight loss surgery. The Waldorf resident started attending the monthly Bariatric Support Group and found inspiration in others’ experiences.

After clearing several obstacles, Dr. Tapazoglou performed Cugini’s sleeve gastrectomy in May. This technique involves removing the outer margin of the stomach so only a “sleeve” — roughly the size and shape of a banana — remains.

“My mind was ready. I walked through this process with my eyes wide open. It does something psychologically to you. It did something to me,” shared Cugini. “And Dr. T and his team – they encourage you. They’re there to help you. The only way you’re going to fail is if you don’t listen.”

Three months after surgery, Cugini was able to stop several medications. With her dramatically smaller stomach, she now focuses on getting enough water and eats tiny portions three to four times a day: foods like salad, tuna, shaved deli meat, and fresh fruit without the skin.

“My body is so prone to know when to stop eating, it does it automatically,” said Cugini. “Just two spoonfuls and I’m done. Whatever it is, I’ll save it for later.”

Her clothes are much looser; friends and acquaintances are noticing. That feels good, she said, but isn’t what matters.

“This is about health,” Cugini stressed. “I don’t want to go back to those habits. I can go to the store, look at all that unhealthy stuff and just keep on going. Your whole view on life is different. I’m so conscious of what I’m eating and doing so much better.

“If I had to do it all over again, I would do it again,” she continued. “I’m really excited about my new life.”

NEW! Online Seminar

Ready to take the first step? Learn about bariatric surgery at MedStar St. Mary’s anytime, anywhere with the new online seminar. If you prefer to come in person, information sessions are also held monthly at the Outpatient Pavilion.

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/WeightLoss to get started.
Sweet on Sweets

Every Sweetener is NOT Created Equal

Craving cookies? Dying for dessert? Constantly sipping soda? The sugar and calories in all these tasty treats add up, especially around your waistline. And although they are a great diet aid, some low-cal and artificial sweeteners can also have health risks. Use this quick guide to help you make healthier choices while still satisfying your sweet tooth.

Natural Sugars

Found in dairy products and fruits, natural sugars have important nutrients that can help keep the body healthy. Eating foods with natural sugars - such as milk, which has protein, and fruit, which has fiber - can help keep you feeling fuller longer. **TIP:** Instead of adding sugar in recipes, use extracts like almond, vanilla, orange, or lemon.

Refined Sugars

Refined white or brown sugar is from sugar cane or sugar beets, and high fructose corn syrup comes from corn starch. These sugars have little nutrient value and are often added to low-fat food to enhance flavors. The body breaks down refined sugars quickly, so you typically don't feel full after eating them. **TIP:** Try cutting the usual amount of sugar you add by half and wean down from there.

Zero- or Low-Calorie Sweeteners

Non-nutritive sweeteners may help many lose pounds thus lowering your risk of heart disease and diabetes, but they are not the perfect solution. Because they are super sweet, prolonged use may change your perception of sweetness in other foods and leave you craving sugary foods. Plus, researchers aren’t yet certain what affect these chemicals may have on the body after many years. **TIP:** Swap diet sodas for flavored seltzers or infused water.

The American Heart Association recommends limiting added sugar to no more than 100 calories a day (six teaspoons) for most women and no more than 150 calories (nine teaspoons) for most men.

Are You Ready to Make Healthy Choices?

MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital’s **Simple Changes** program teaches you how to reduce your risk of developing conditions such as prediabetes by making easy, simple changes to your life. This free, year-long program includes body composition screenings, handouts, giveaways, and lifestyle coaching support between sessions. This one-year program is a combination of weekly and monthly sessions.

The next session begins Sept. 18. Call 301-475-6019 to register.
Reasons We Are Proud to Be MedStar Health

In October 2009, St. Mary’s Hospital merged with MedStar Health, the largest not-for-profit healthcare system in the Mid-Atlantic region, which today cares for millions of patients each year. As the only hospital in St. Mary’s County and its largest private employer, we joined MedStar Health to help ensure we could meet the needs of our rapidly-expanding community.

This fall, we mark our 10th anniversary as MedStar Health – and we have a lot to celebrate!

1. MEDICAL PROVIDERS
We’ve brought new medical providers to our area and opened new primary care offices. We have added surgeons in orthopaedics and sports medicine, vascular, bariatrics, and breast cancer, and specialists in pediatrics and neurology, among others.

2. SYSTEM STRENGTH
Through the power of our system, MedStar St. Mary’s is able to connect patients with centers of excellence and clinical expertise like the specialists at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and MedStar Washington Hospital Center. The option of MedStar Family Choice insurance also opens more affordable doors for care across MedStar Health. And when it comes to renovations, the backing of our system creates opportunities to expand and grow our facilities.

3. CONVENIENT CARE OPTIONS
Whether it is in person or online, MedStar offers patients convenient care including MedStar PromptCare, and for the tech-savvy, MedStar eVisit is available 24/7. A retail MedStar Pharmacy was also opened inside the hospital to serve patients, the community, and associates.
A HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATION CREATING A CULTURE OF QUALITY & SAFETY
MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital received a second “A” Grade through The Leapfrog Group, a national leader and advocate in hospital transparency. MedStar Health develops and implements system-wide safety initiatives and offers staff high-tech training through state-of-the-art simulation to help ensure quality and safety standards continue to be met.

DEVELOPING A NETWORK OF CARE
Our system of resources allows patients to access expertise close to where we work and live. Whether you are seeking primary care through MedStar Medical Group, accessing primary care or specialists at MedStar Shah Medical Group, undergoing physical therapy through the MedStar National Rehabilitation Network, or other resources, the care you need is close to home.

INVESTING IN OUR WORKFORCE
MedStar St. Mary’s associates expand their expertise through hands-on training via the Simulation Training & Education Lab (SiTEL). The MedStar Institute for Innovation creates a vibrant ecosystem for transforming care and advancing health that welcomes submissions from our own associates. Scholarships are also open to those seeking career growth.

INNOVATION
Being part of a system gives MedStar St. Mary’s access to innovative, cutting-edge technology such as the Surfacide UV-C Light System, which helps protect patients and visitors from potentially deadly infectious organisms and reduces the risk of life-threatening sepsis.

TECHNOLOGY
MedStar Health has been working to bring its entire system of hospitals, doctors’ offices, and ambulatory centers together on one unified electronic health record system: MedConnect. MedStar St. Mary’s has begun the process of transitioning to MedConnect, planned for 2020. This platform allows all MedStar facilities to share important patient information easily and efficiently.

Visit MedStarStMarys.org to learn more about our hospital.

MEDSTAR TRANSPORT
Transport times to life-saving care have been greatly reduced thanks to MedStar Transport. Cardiac patients can be at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center in 8 minutes via helicopter, or MedStar Washington Hospital Center in 11 minutes. Critical patients, including newborns, can be transported to MedStar Georgetown in 20 minutes.

NURSING
Nurses provide valuable input and direction at both the local and systemwide level, helping to develop new safety protocols as well as creating and refining policies and procedures. Nurses new to MedStar St. Mary’s receive support and guidance through the nurse residency program, mentorships, and role modeling provided by nursing preceptors.
In Memory

Hospital Mourns the Loss of Three Dedicated Individuals

Carrie Jennison
Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, MedStar St. Mary’s and MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center

Carrie Jennison joined MedStar Health in June 2018. Carrie had 25 years of experience in fully-integrated health plan and delivery system organizations and a comprehensive background in finance and strategy as well as a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm for non-profit health care.

A native of Seattle, Wash., Carrie has previously served as CFO and vice president, strategy for Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Georgia and senior vice president of strategic and financial planning for Amerigroup Corporation, among other positions.

“Even if it was only for a short time, we were privileged to have Carrie at both of our hospitals,” said Christine Wray, president of MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital and MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. “Her expertise in strategy and understanding of analytical tools gave us a different perspective on our industry both locally and at a system level. Her zest for life showed in everything she did, including her work. She will be greatly missed.”

Richard Martin, MD
Hospital Administrator, Auxiliary Member

Richard Martin, MD, served as a member of the Auxiliary since 1980. Dr. Martin held a position as an administrator of MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital for seven years beginning in 1972 after his retirement from the Navy following 30 years of service. In 1970, he was appointed Commanding Officer of the Naval Hospital – Patuxent River, Maryland. In 2016, he spoke to Healthy Living about why he remained involved with the hospital as a member of the Auxiliary.

“I joined the Auxiliary because it had been very helpful to me when I was the hospital administrator. Not everything the hospital needs to do to take care of patients is covered by insurance. The Auxiliary helps raise extra money to purchase nicer equipment for patients. It is important for the hospital to have the support of people who are willing to help raise funds. I really enjoy being around the people and seeing what is happening with the hospital and how it is changing with the times.”

Dr. Martin continued to volunteer for the Auxiliary until 2017.

Rick Tepel
MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital Board of Directors, Philanthropy Committee Member, Chair, Scholarship Committee

Rick Tepel, chief executive officer of Raley, Watts & O’Neill in California, Maryland, and Regional Leader of the Mid-Atlantic for The Hilb Group, was tragically killed in a plane crash while vacationing in Honduras in May. At the time of his death, Rick was the chair of MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital’s Scholarship Committee. He also served on the Board’s Philanthropy Committee and was a personal supporter of the hospital. He spoke about his commitment to the hospital and the scholarship program in 2016.

“We actually get to talk to smart, interesting kids. They are a diverse group of high achievers. It is a touching experience - different than sitting in a board meeting because we are able to make a real connection with these people. I donate financially to the hospital because my family has always had great experiences with the hospital. It just feels natural for me to support something that is such a tremendous asset to our community.”
QUILT RAFFLE & QUARTER AUCTION

Now through Dec. 20, the MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital Auxiliary is hosting a raffle to take home a beautiful quilt generously donated by Teresa Andrasik. Chances are $1 each, or six for $5, and may be purchased in the hospital’s Gift Shop.

Save the date! The Auxiliary will also host a quarter auction on Sunday, Nov. 3, at the St. Mary’s Fairgrounds in Leonardtown. Doors open at noon.

Proceeds benefit our nonprofit hospital. Call 301-475-6153 to learn more, and thank you for your support!

MARKETING TEAM WINS NATIONAL ACCOLADES

The MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital Marketing, Public Relations & Philanthropy Department was recently honored with seven awards in nationwide competitions honoring excellence in medical marketing, including silver for the 2018 series of Healthy Living in the newsletter category from the Healthcare Advertising Awards. Team members are, pictured from left, Sandy Ondrejcak, Deborah Gross, Jeni Irwin, Jennifer Davis, Megan Johnson, Holly Meyer, and Ruby Hawks.

HOSPITAL EARNS SILVER-PLUS RECOGNITION FOR STROKE CARE

The American Heart Association and American Stroke Association recently recognized MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital with their Get with the Guidelines-Stroke Silver Plus Achievement Award with Honor Roll Elite recognition for applying the most up-to-date, evidence-based treatment guidelines to improve patient outcomes.

MEDSTAR + APPLE = A HEALTHIER YOU
NOW EASIER ACCESS TO YOUR HEALTH RECORDS

MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital patients now have a whole new way to monitor their health, thanks to a recent collaboration with Apple Inc.

Users of iPhones running iOS 11.3 or later can now easily access and visualize their MedStar St. Mary’s records through the Health App, which is already on your phone. The app’s dashboard features your health and fitness data and can now sync directly with your MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital record.

Participants must already have or must sign up for an account on the MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital MyCare patient portal prior to using this new feature.

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/iPhoneApp for more information.
If a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, Cathy Fenwick, BSN, RN, OCN, and Christine Taylor, RN, CN-BN, hope their guidance will make that trip a little easier.

As nurse navigators, Cathy and Christine are resources for those facing a cancer diagnosis. Cathy addresses a variety of medical and social needs through her work in MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital’s Cancer Care & Infusion Services (CCIS). Christine, a certified breast navigator, assists patients specifically grappling with abnormal scans of the breast – only about 15 percent of whom are ultimately diagnosed with cancer. Christine then guides them along their breast cancer journey.

A navigator’s day may include a healthy dose of both practical and emotional support. Christine could set up a range of appointments for a newly-diagnosed patient while Cathy contacts drug companies about reduced-cost medications for individuals in need. Insurance paperwork is filed. Phone calls are fielded. Tests are ordered.

“Early detection is key, and we strive to see patients very quickly,” said Christine, who draws upon her own experience with breast health issues to help others.

“Because navigators are involved right from the start, we can use our connections to help create an individualized care plan for every patient.”

The network at MedStar St. Mary’s includes oncologist Amir Khan, MD; radiologist Adele Fields, MD; pathologist Yahia Tagouri, MD; and Patricia Wehner, MD, FACS, board-certified breast surgeon and an attending physician in the MedStar Breast Health Program through MedStar Washington Hospital Center, who sees patients in Leonardtown. The regional oncology network also includes radiational oncology as well as partnerships with surgeon Kelly Fritz, MD; hematologist/oncologist Minal Shah, MD; hematologist/oncologist Gurdeep Chhabra, MD, among other specialists.

While helping patients through a vulnerable time, the navigators emphasized the bonds formed between clinicians, patients, and their loved ones. Caregiver support is available, too.

“We’re always learning and growing in our roles,” said Christine. “And it’s not just about treatment – it’s about
survivorship. We stay connected to patients and coordinate care even five years later.”

“The highlight of my job is getting to work with patients and their families – whether it’s by saying we’re going to attack cancer, or by offering support when or if they want to stop treatment,” Cathy said.

“So much of cancer care is about quality of life. Every patient deserves to have a voice and make their wishes known.”

**Nondiscrimination Statement**

MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATTENTION: if you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-301-475-8981.

MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo. ATTENTION: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llámenos al 1-301-475-8981.

**SUPPORT GROUPS MEET MONTHLY**

MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital hosts a monthly Cancer Support Group and Breast Cancer Support Group for patients, their family members and friends. For upcoming dates, see Calendar, pages 18-19.

**NEW STEREOTACTIC PROJECT UNDERWAY**

Construction will soon begin on the installation of our new stereotactic breast prone biopsy table and equipment. This system will allow providers to use a special mammography machine to help locate a breast abnormality and remove a tissue sample for further examination. Less invasive than a surgical biopsy, this process helps determine if a suspicious area is benign or cancerous with minimal scarring. The new stereotactic equipment will be housed in the Imaging, Cardiology & Neurology department of the main hospital.

**SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM TODAY!**

Have you planned for your annual mammogram? Appointments for first-time visits and yearly exams are available at MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital. Come in for a scheduled appointment beginning in October and receive a free journal and pen, available while supplies last.

Call 301-475-6399 to schedule your mammogram appointment.
Patients, Not Profits

How Donations Make a Difference at MedStar St. Mary’s

Nonprofit hospital: the term might seem confusing. How can a healthcare facility that treats thousands each year – and receives the corresponding revenue – be considered not-for-profit?

“With the costs of medical care, there is a perception that hospitals in general are bringing in lots of money. Why would we need donations?” asked Holly Meyer, MA, director of Marketing, Public Relations & Philanthropy for MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital. “The answer is not simple but, in Maryland, the reimbursement landscape has changed dramatically in recent years. This impacts how we are paid as an organization, and what we can in turn pay for at the hospital.”

The State of Maryland established the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) to lead its efforts to improve patient care and reduce growth in health care spending. Maryland operates under a unique all-payer rate-setting system for hospital services. Ours is the only state in the nation to hold an agreement with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid that requires all payers – insurance companies, Medicare, uninsured individuals, and others – to pay the same rate for the same service at the same hospital, as explained by the Maryland Hospital Association.

Called the Total Cost of Care Model, all payers reimburse state hospitals according to rates set by the HSCRC – including MedStar St. Mary’s. Regardless of whether actual expenses surpass the set rate, the hospital receives a set reimbursement.

As part of MedStar Health, a not-for-profit health system, MedStar St. Mary’s reinvests its surplus at year end into improving patient care rather than satisfying shareholders for private gains. After expenses, all income is used to improve community health care. The facility operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Emergency Department alone saw nearly 50,000 visits last year, and the hospital provided more than $9.2 million in uncompensated services to the community in fiscal year 2018.

While there are many innovative projects that could benefit our patients, funds are not often available – and this is where philanthropy steps in.

“The support of our community – funding everything from advanced medical equipment to new rocking chairs in birthing suites to start-up programs – has a direct impact on our patients’ lives and experiences. These dollars matter,” said Meyer.

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/WaysToGive to learn more about the impact your donation can make.

FUNDING THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE

Eight local students were named recipients of the 2019 MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital Scholarship earlier this year. Funded by the Philanthropy Committee of the Board of Directors, the scholarship – awarded to 157 students and counting – provides nearly $100,000 in funds to these students pursuing healthcare fields that will benefit our patients.

This year’s awardees, pictured left to right, are Samantha Wilt, Sarah Rannacher, Amber Gontarek, Madeleine Bridgewater, Brooke Gatton, Samantha Tercedo, and Kaitlin Zelonis. Not pictured: Kylee Wickline.
Volunteer groups like the Hospital Auxiliary and Philanthropy Committee, part of the Board of Directors, raise funds for many initiatives. Donations from individuals and attendees of the hospital’s annual Gala help lead change. MedStar St. Mary’s associates, leaders, and physicians also give back to the hospital through the annual Power to Heal campaign.

“We are deeply appreciative of these donations, knowing the direct impact they have on our patients,” said Meyer. “We take being a non-profit hospital very seriously and want to be responsible stewards of the funds we receive, investing them in ways that make a real difference for those we serve.”

GALA 2019 ... A DATE IN DUBLIN. The hospital’s annual black-tie gala will be held Friday, Nov. 22, in Hollywood. An Irish-inspired evening will be capped off with dancing until midnight. Funds raised beyond the established cost of the event will benefit the renovation of postpartum suites to improve the experience of new families in the Women’s Health & Family Birthing Center.

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/Dublin to learn more and become a sponsor!
**Support Groups**

**Bariatric Support Group**  
Second Saturday of each month,  
Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9,  
10 a.m. to noon, Health Connections

**Breastfeeding**  
Weekly on Wednesdays,  
10 a.m. to noon, Health Connections

**Breast Cancer**  
Last Monday of each month,  
Sept. 30, Oct. 28, Nov. 25, 6 to 7 p.m.,  
Health Connections

Second Wednesday of each month,  
Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13,  
5:30 to 6:30 p.m., East Run Center

**NEW! Epilepsy**  
Last Wednesday of every other month,  
Oct. 30, 6 to 7:30 p.m.,  
The Blue Heron Café, Patuxent Room  
Call 240-434-7929 for more information.

**Ostomy Care**  
Second Sunday of every other month,  
Oct. 13, 2:30 to 4 p.m.,  
Chesapeake Potomac Home Health Agency, Hughesville  
Call 1-800-656-4343 to learn more or register.

**Parkinson’s**  
Second Tuesday of each month,  
Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, 6 p.m.,  
Health Connections

**Stroke Survivors**  
Third Tuesday of each month,  
Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, 12:30 p.m.,  
Health Connections

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**Senior Wellness & Events**

**Senior Gold Card Luncheon**  
First Thursday of each month,  
Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, 12:30 p.m.,  
Health Connections, Outpatient Pavilion  
Free educational programs and lunch.  
Call 301-475-6019 to register.

**Cancer Care**

**Cancer Support Group**  
First and third Wednesdays of each month,  
7 to 8:30 p.m.,  
Cancer Care & Infusion Services  
Call 240-434-7247.

**Diabetes Education**

**Take Control of Diabetes with Education**  
MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital offers American Diabetes Association (ADA)-recognized programs to individuals and groups. Services are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and most private insurance plans. Call 301-475-6019.

**Simple Changes (Pre-diabetes)**  
Sept. 18, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.,  
Health Connections  
Participate in our free year-long class designed to eliminate possible diabetes risk factors by making simple, healthier changes in your life. Program includes free body composition screenings, handouts, giveaways, and support between sessions. This one-year program is a combination of weekly and monthly sessions. No charge.

**Living Well with Diabetes**  
Sept. 24, 6 p.m., Health Connections  
This seven-week workshop can help individuals with diabetes manage this condition, carry out normal activities, add healthy activities to their lives, and manage emotional changes. Call 301-475-6019 to register.

**Exercise, Nutrition & Weight Management**

**FREE Bariatric Information Sessions**  
Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, Dec. 5,  
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.,  
Health Connections, Outpatient Pavilion  
Learn more about weight loss surgeries offered with surgeon Nicholas Tapazoglou, MD. Required for those pursuing surgery. **NEW online seminar also available.** Visit [MedStarStMarys.org/WeightLoss](http://MedStarStMarys.org/WeightLoss) or call 240-434-4088.

**Body Composition Analysis**  
By appointment only, Health Connections  
Screening includes an in-depth look at body composition. Cost is $15.  
Call 301-475-6019.

**MedFit Program**  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:15 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30 to 5 p.m., open gym at the Grace Anne Dorney Center  
Medically supervised exercise program to assist with sedentary lifestyle changes and disease management, including hypertension, diabetes, cholesterol, obesity, and COPD. Cost is $30 per month, or $75 for three months.  
Call 240-434-7143.

**Yoga**  
Thursdays starting Oct. 24, 4 p.m., Health Connections, $80  
This 10-week class is taught by instructor Bhasker Jhaveri, MD. Start at your own ability and experience the relaxing benefits of gentle movement.  
To register, call 301-475-6019.
Childbirth & Family Education
Classes are held in the Outpatient Pavilion. Courses fill quickly; call 301-475-6019.

Parents-To-Be
MedStar St. Mary’s Health Connections offers the following in-depth series of classes on becoming a parent.

Please note: some classes require a minimum number of participants to hold the course. If the need arises to cancel a class, we will make every effort to accommodate you on an alternate date.

• Baby Care and Beyond*  
  Oct. 7, Nov. 4, 6 p.m., $15/couple, $25/web-based*.  
  Teaches practical skills like bathing and diapering, combined with ways to enhance your baby’s brain development.

• Breastfeeding Basics – Oct. 14, Nov. 11, $15/couple.

• Childbirth* – Oct. 19, Nov. 16, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., $55/couple.

*Web-based options are available as a refresher course or for those who cannot attend traditional classes. Only select classes may apply.

Infant CPR
Oct. 28, Nov. 25, 6 p.m., Education and Simulation Center, $20/person.

Safe Sitter
Oct. 26, 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m., Health Connections, $65
Adolescents 12-14 learn babysitting tips, basic first aid, and CPR.

American Heart Association Classes
Held in the Education and Simulation Center, 41550 Doctors Crossing Way, Leonardtown. Register at sitelms.org with registration codes (below).
For information, call 202-643-1841 or email aha@email.sitel.org. Certification cards are emailed upon course completion.

Heartsaver CPR/AED (CS-018659)
Sept. 17, Oct. 22, Nov. 21, 5 to 9 p.m.;  
Sept. 7, Oct. 5, 8 a.m. to noon, $75
Learn CPR, how to use an AED, and foreign object airway obstruction removal for adults, children, and infants.  
Open to those with limited or no medical training who need a Course Completion Card in First Aid to meet job, regulatory, or other requirements.

Heartsaver First Aid (LI-016094)
Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Dec. 7, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., $40
Video-based, instructor-led course that teaches critical skills to respond to and manage an emergency in the first minutes until Emergency Medical Services arrives.

Pulmonary
Better Breathers Club
Oct. 17, noon to 1 p.m., Health Connections
Individuals with pulmonary disease, such as COPD, learn breathing techniques, home health care and exercise in this free program offered in partnership with the American Lung Association. Call 240-434-7143.

Smoking Cessation Classes
In this eight-week program, you will gain knowledge about your smoking habit along with behavioral modifications, stress management, and cease-smoking techniques. All classes are free of charge with medication to help you quit. Visit SMCHD.org/Tobacco or call 301-475-4330.

Overdose Response Program
The St. Mary’s County Health Department offers a free Overdose Response Program to train individuals on how to administer Naloxone and care for someone until emergency help arrives. Visit SMCHD.org/Overdose for a list of upcoming class dates and locations. For information, call 301-475-4297.

NEW!
One-Day Parents-to-Be Workshop
Sept. 21, Dec. 7, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Health Connections, $100/couple
Combines four traditional parenting classes into a one-day overview. Topics include childbirth, breastfeeding, infant CPR, and practical baby care skills like bathing and diapering.

Visit MedStarStMarys.org/Calendar to learn more about community and support groups.
Dental Care Now at East Run

In collaboration with Health Partners Inc., a Charles County-based health clinic, dental services are coming soon to East Run Center in Lexington Park.

“We are very excited about this opportunity to bring needed dental care to our community, joining the primary care services currently offered by MedStar Medical Group at East Run,” said Lori Werrell, MPH, MCHES, regional director of Population & Community Health for MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital and MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. “We hope it will become a valuable resource and look forward to welcoming patients to this new space.”

Beginning in September, dentistry appointments will be available for patients as young as age one. Medicaid, Medicare, CareFirst, and UnitedHealthcare insurance plans are accepted, as are patients without insurance using an income-based fee.

Call 301-645-3556 to make an appointment or to learn more about Dental Care at East Run.