Investing in the Future

As New Jersey’s most comprehensive academic health system, RWJBarnabas Health serves more than 3 million patients each year. You depend on us for the highest quality of care, and you count on us to keep pace with your evolving needs. That’s why, as indicated by our many national awards, we never stop moving forward, as you’ll see in this issue.

For example, in New Brunswick, we recently broke ground on the state’s first freestanding cancer hospital, which will feature a comprehensive range of patient services as well as advanced research laboratories. Earlier this year, we debuted Braven Advantage, a new Medicare Advantage plan that offers unprecedented choice for New Jersey residents.

And, in keeping with our robust commitment to improve the health of our communities, we’re supporting the creation of soccer fields in urban settings. These fields are transforming neighborhoods and lives as they provide new opportunities for children and adults alike to be healthy and active.

At Clara Maass Medical Center, our commitment to quality healthcare will continue with a new program that is designed to assist individuals who are impacted by lasting effects of COVID-19. By bringing together a multidisciplinary team across a broad range of specialties to create the Post-COVID CARE Program, we will be able to offer patients a seamless pathway to ensure that they receive comprehensive, coordinated care on the road to recovery.

Whatever the future brings for New Jersey, you can count on RWJBarnabas Health to be there for your healthcare needs, both inside and outside the hospital walls.

Yours in good health,

MARY ELLEN CLYNE, PhD
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CLARA MAASS MEDICAL CENTER

BARRY H. OSTROWSKY
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
RWJBARNABAS HEALTH
healthy together
contents FALL 2021

2. WELCOME LETTER. A community update from our CEOs.

4. VISIT THE ED FROM ANYWHERE. A new way to access emergency care.

5. HOW TO ‘LOSE’ DIABETES. Lower your weight and your glucose levels, too.

6. HOW WE TREAT CANCER. A team approach and the latest treatments.

8. GIVING LOCAL. Community spirit inspires a generous donation.

9. WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT CHOLESTEROL. Manage it now for a big payoff later in life.

10. HELPING SENIORS STAY HEALTHY. How the annual wellness visit can lead to improved health all year long.

12. GAME ON! RWJBarnabas Health helps bring soccer fields to urban neighborhoods.

14. BUILDING THE FUTURE OF CANCER CARE. A new cancer hub in New Brunswick will be a model for multidisciplinary care.

16. CHRONIC DISEASE: A TEEN TAKES CONTROL. A team of experts provides the tools needed to manage Type 2 diabetes.

18. WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT ROBOTIC SURGERY. The inside story on advanced techniques.

20. THREE CHEERS FOR A HEALTHCARE HERO. A longtime volunteer helps Clara Maass Medical Center deliver compassionate care.

21. HEART-HEALTHY EATING. Cut down on sodium without sacrificing flavor.

22. SOLVING SERIOUS SLEEP PROBLEMS. A sleep center offers answers.

23. DIRECTORY OF KEY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.
To connect with the Telehealth Emergency Department from your tablet, smartphone or computer, scan the code at right or visit RWJBH.doxy.me/cmmced.

When do you need to go to the Emergency Department (ED)? For many people, the answer is far from clear.

That’s why Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) has created the Telehealth Emergency Department, a service that allows patients to be seen virtually by a board-certified emergency care provider through a scan of a QR code or a click on a link.

Just as in a real-life visit to the ED, a telehealth patient will be greeted, assessed and swiftly connected with a healthcare provider.

“This isn’t a phone call,” emphasizes John Fontanetta, MD, Chair of Emergency Medicine at CMMC. “It’s a full telehealth service with video. The provider gets to look at somebody’s laceration or injured wrist, look into the patient’s eyes and make an informed recommendation.”

The program, which is being piloted for the entire RWJBarnabas Health system, was created based on the staff’s assessment of community needs.

“This is a way for our community to have easy access to the ED,” says Donna Maria DeVita, BSN, RN, Director of the ED.

“If they do need to come in, often they’re going to be able to see the same provider they first connected with,” she explains. “Being able to do that is very important to many people.”

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VISIT THE ED FROM ANYWHERE

TELEHEALTH PROVIDES A BRAND-NEW WAY TO ACCESS EMERGENCY CARE.

A SAFETY NET

Though open to anyone in the CMMC service area, the Telehealth Emergency Department is particularly useful for people in specific situations, including:

Patients who use the ED frequently: This group includes people with a chronic illness, or those who use medical devices and have questions about them. “At Clara Maass, we have a great relationship with community members, and we’ve built a lot of trust,” DeVita says. “When these patients come in, we know them, and know their history and what they need.”

Patients who question whether they need to go to the ED: “Sometimes people are a little embarrassed, or wondering if they’re wasting people’s time, and having this service reassures them,” says Dr. Fontanetta. “We may validate their need to come to the ED, and if they do, we will have all their information in the computer and be ready for them. However, it’s not uncommon for us to be able to solve a patient’s problem via a telehealth assessment without their coming in.”

Emergency Medical Services personnel: The new Telehealth Emergency Department may be a literal lifesaver if a patient on an emergency call needs further care but is resistant to going to the hospital, or has questions the emergency technicians can’t answer.

“The ED is a safety net for the community,” Dr. Fontanetta says. “People don’t only get sick during weekdays from nine to five. We’re here 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide services, and now we can offer those services in a way that patients can access from anywhere.”
I f you’ve been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, it’s time to scale down. “You don’t have to lose all your excess weight,” says Naveen Ballem, MD, Director of Bariatric Surgery at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC). “Even 10 to 20 percent will help improve Type 2 diabetes.”

At first, the disease doesn’t show symptoms, leaving few clues until organ and other damage is advanced. More than one in 10 Americans—34.2 million—have been diagnosed with the obesity-linked disease. “Diabetes affects every organ in your body—eyes, kidneys, heart—and all the small blood vessels that supply those organs,” Dr. Ballem says.

**HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF**

“No single thing fixes diabetes,” Dr. Ballem says. “Many things help.”

Stop impulsive between-meal handfuls of chips, cookies and candy, he recommends, and trim your intake of rice, pasta, bread and sugary sodas. “Limiting those alone will help your blood sugars stay more stable,” Dr. Ballem says.

Exercise is key to health. “Strength and cardiovascular exercise burn calories and improve oxygenation of your heart and lungs,” he says. “Working out also builds muscle mass, which increases your metabolism and releases feel-good, energy-boosting endorphins.”

**WHEN YOU NEED MORE**

People who have not been able to lose weight, or keep it off, through exercise and diet may consider weight loss (bariatric) surgery. Most insurance companies and Medicare cover bariatric surgery for those with a body mass index (BMI)—a measure of height-to-weight ratio—of 35 or more if they have Type 2 diabetes.

There are several common types of weight loss surgery. The most common is the sleeve gastrectomy, which removes approximately 70 percent of the stomach. It limits eating in two ways: Because the stomach is smaller (about the size of a banana), you feel full faster. The procedure also alters hunger hormones by curbing appetite-boosting ghrelin, a hormone released by the stomach, and raising appetite-satiating leptin, a hormone made by fat cells.

“After the surgery, you crave less and eat less, which helps you lose and maintain weight loss,” Dr. Ballem says. People lose 65 to 70 percent of excess weight, resulting in the resolution of Type 2 diabetes in 90 percent of patients, he says.

To keep the weight off, CMMC offers a multidisciplinary approach. Dietitians and support groups can help with portion and carbohydrate control via education, tasty and healthy recipes and tactics to harness emotional eating.

“How these surgeries are tools, not magic wands,” Dr. Ballem says. “Used effectively, they tremendously improve your weight and health.”

**VIRTUAL SUPPORT**

The bariatrics team at Clara Maass Medical Center offers virtual groups for patients and prospective patients:

**VIRTUAL BARIATRIC SURGERY INFORMATION SEMINARS, 6 to 7 p.m., Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 7**

**VIRTUAL WEIGHT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP MEETING, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 1**

To register, visit [www.rwjbh.org/claramaass](http://www.rwjbh.org/claramaass).

**HOW DIABETES STEALS YOUR HEALTH**

The pancreas, a pear-shaped organ in the belly, performs two vital functions: pumping out enzymes that break down sugars, starches and fat, and secreting the crucial blood-sugar-controlling hormones insulin and glucagon.

Excess weight and carbohydrate intake hinder functioning of the pancreas. Glucose floods your bloodstream, damaging the body’s organs and blood vessels. Though the effects take time to be felt, the disease can lead to kidney problems, cardiovascular issues, vision trouble and even the amputation of toes, feet and lower limbs.

To learn more about weight loss surgery at Clara Maass Medical Center, call 973.450.2393 or visit [www.rwjbh.org/weightloss](http://www.rwjbh.org/weightloss).
Talk to the physicians who treat cancer at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) and you’ll hear certain words echo across conversations. Innovative. Advanced. Multidisciplinary. Teamwork.

“Some patients think they have to travel to a big center for the most innovative treatments, but we offer them right here at Clara Maass—right at your front door,” says James Orsini Sr., MD, Director of Oncology at CMMC.

CMMC offers a full range of cancer treatments, including complex robotic surgical techniques, highly advanced medical and radiation oncology, and precision medicine.

In addition, because of RWJBarnabas Health’s partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—patients at CMMC have access to the latest treatments in the field, including clinical trials. Treatments are tailored to fit each patient by a multidisciplinary team of surgeons, oncologists and radiologists that meets regularly to discuss patients and decide care. To help patients through the treatment, recovery and survivorship journey, an oncology nurse navigator is available to every patient.

“The care we offer is truly comprehensive,” says Dr. Orsini. “We can do everything right here.”

**PRECISION RADIATION**

Some of the most innovative treatments across all specialties are in radiation oncology, where technology allows targeting of the tumor without sending radiation to surrounding tissues and organs.

“Radiation oncology has changed treatment for early-stage cancer, especially in prostate, brain and lung patients. High-dose radiation is targeted to the cancer. This way, it doesn’t damage healthy surrounding tissues and organs,” say Dolly Razdan, MD, Radiation Oncologist at CMMC and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

Called stereotactic body radio therapy (SBRT), the treatment is administered through CMMC’s linear accelerator, a machine that generates ionizing radiation, drastically cutting the number of treatments.

In early-stage prostate and lung cancer, for example, a patient will experience five treatments over two weeks, rather than multiple treatments over several weeks, as other methods require. The treatment is especially valuable in early-stage brain cancer, where often just one treatment is administered. With the high-dose radiation directed only into the tumor, cognitive function can be spared.

“SBRT can be an alternative to surgery with excellent outcomes,” says Dr. Razdan.

**ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY**

The da Vinci robotic Xi used by surgeons at CMMC delivers cutting-edge cancer...
treatment. The surgeon is in the room with the patient, controlling the surgery from a console. The da Vinci’s vision system delivers high-definition, magnified views of the surgical area, and the surgeon uses a “joystick” to manipulate the instruments.

“Almost all of our early-stage surgeries are done robotically because it’s minimally invasive—requiring smaller incisions—and there’s less pain,” explains Joanna Sesti, MD, a thoracic surgeon at CMMC and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

For patients in need of lung biopsies, navigational bronchoscopy, which uses a special bronchoscope to investigate and treat hard-to-reach areas of the lung, offers significant benefits.

Just as important as the technology at CMMC, says Dr. Sesti, is the expertise with which it is utilized. “In procedures such as a standard lung resection [partial removal], our average hospital stay of two to three days is better than the average hospitalization in centers across the country,” she says.

**ACTING EARLY AND WISELY**

CMMC offers a full spectrum of treatments for many types of cancer, including gynecologic cancers.

As for breast cancer, today’s early-stage treatments emphasize breast conservation therapy. This makes lumpectomy and radiation therapy, instead of mastectomy, increasingly prevalent, says surgical oncologist Maria Kowzun, MD, Interim Medical Director of the Breast Center at CMMC, who also practices at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

“One of the newer treatments we use is the implantation of a bioabsorbable device at the time of a lumpectomy. It helps the radiation oncologist to better target the lumpectomy site for radiation after surgery while minimizing the volume defect,” says Dr. Kowzun. “It’s just one way we provide a good oncological outcome along with a good cosmetic outcome.”

When surgery isn’t an option, cancer surgeons at CMMC may treat with cryoablation, in which a gas is utilized to lower the temperature of a probe that is inserted in the cancerous tumor, freezing the tissue in which cancer cells reside.

“Cryoablation is a unique treatment in kidney cancers,” says Salvatore Lombardo, MD, a urologic surgeon at CMMC and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. “In the right patient, one who has poor renal function, it can be critical. We freeze the tumor, leaving the organ intact and avoiding a lifetime of kidney dialysis.”

With the addition of Essex Hudson Urology, CMMC’s services expanded to cover treatment for the kidneys, bladder and urinary tract and for male reproduction. Specializing in laparoscopic and robotic surgeries, the group provides an array of advanced treatments.

“In the case of prostate cancer, it’s just as important to know when a prostate does not need treatment,” he says. “In active surveillance, we can observe slow-growing tumors and might spare a gentleman surgery and extend his good quality of life indefinitely.”

To schedule a cancer screening at Clara Maass Medical Center, call 844.CANCERNJ or visit www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer.
When Dan and Maria Geltrude made a significant donation to the new MRI suite at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC), they were inspired by the matching funds that were being offered by The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey. “We felt this was a unique opportunity to really help the hospital, because whatever our donation was would be doubled,” says Dan Geltrude, Managing Partner of Geltrude & Company, the accounting and financial advisory firm he cofounded with Maria in 1995.

But there was more to their motivation than that. “We’re from Nutley, our business is in Nutley, and Clara Maass is right in our backyard. It’s part of our community,” Dan says. “And we want to help make sure the community has a state-of-the-art medical facility that can provide all the care they need.”

“We know people who have been treated at Clara Maass, and we ourselves are grateful former patients,” says Maria. “We believe that giving should start at home base and extend out from there.”

“People say ‘think globally and act locally,’ and that’s very true,” Dan says. “You want to make a difference, but it’s overwhelming to think, ‘How can I change the world?’ You don’t have to change the world. You just have to help one person at a time, and that’s what we try to do.”

“We’re grateful for the long friendship we’ve enjoyed with the Geltrudes, and for their unwavering support for our mission to provide the most compassionate, safe and personalized care every day,” says Mary Ellen Clyne, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer at CMMC. “They are true ambassadors for the foundation, having also facilitated a number of major gifts from others in support of the new MRI suite.”

“I feel comfortable asking people to be charitable within their means to the extent they can,” Dan says. “I say, ‘Give till it hurts, because it feels so good.”

**FAMILY FEELING**

Work and philanthropy are dual passions for Dan and Maria. In addition to being a member of the Clara Maass Medical Center Foundation Board of Trustees, Dan raises money for melanoma research and education through the Mike Geltrude Foundation, named after his father. A business analyst who frequently appears on TV, Dan is known as “America’s Accountant.”

In addition to her work as a CPA at Geltrude & Company, Maria is the founder of Vastu Environments, consulting in homes and offices to create balanced and harmonious spaces.

In fact, the environment at CMMC is one of the reasons she supports the hospital. “When either Dan or I have had occasion to be at Clara Maass, we’ve been struck by the comfort we got from everyone we dealt with,” Maria says. “They give you the feeling that, ‘We’ve got you.’ A hospital could be a very cold and indifferent place, but at Clara Maass we got a calm and peaceful feeling.”

Dan speculates that the hospital’s caring culture may have originated with nurse Clara Louise Maass herself, who worked there in its earliest days as the Newark German Hospital and died as a result of volunteering to test a vaccine for yellow fever during the Spanish-American War.

“That’s the sense of commitment I feel at Clara Maass Medical Center, and that’s also part of the reason I’ve never left Nutley,” Dan says. “There’s a family-like feeling, and Clara Maass is our community hospital. We are all taking care of each other. When you give to Clara Maass, you are literally helping your neighbor.”

To learn more about giving to Clara Maass Medical Center, call 973.450.2277 or visit www.claragiving.org.

A flair for philanthropy: donors Dan and Maria Geltrude at their Nutley home.
You probably know that cholesterol is a fat-like substance in the blood that can cling to the walls of arteries, leading to cardiovascular disease or stroke. And you know that controlling cholesterol involves eating right, exercising and taking medication as prescribed.

But because it takes years before a person really feels the effects of high cholesterol, you may not realize just how big an impact it will have on your future.

“Managing cholesterol is a way of investing in your health decades from now,” says David Feldman, MD, Section Chief of Advanced Heart Failure and Transplantation at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. “In my field, we take care of patients who have had acute heart attacks, or are in cardiogenic shock, or who need a heart transplant. But many serious heart problems can be prevented through decades of maintaining healthy cholesterol levels.”

Here, Dr. Feldman clears up some common misunderstandings:

• **We need cholesterol.** “It’s the basic building block for all the male and female hormones in the body and helps enhance brain function,” he says. “That’s why the cholesterol levels in pregnant women shoot up; they need it to help create another life.”

• **It’s not all about the numbers.** We’re used to hearing that an overall cholesterol level above 200 is outside the healthy range, but Dr. Feldman says the thinking on that has evolved. “There are many variables—how much medication you can tolerate, what your genetic predisposition is, what level you’re starting from,” says Dr. Feldman. “In some cases, reducing cholesterol too far can be dangerous.” Your doctor can customize a target to best suit your individual situation.

• **Some foods are more equal than others when it comes to combating cholesterol.** “A niacin, or vitamin B3, supplement is especially helpful in lowering ‘bad’ LDL [low-density lipoprotein] levels, as are fish, flaxseed oil and foods with lots of fiber,” says Dr. Feldman. Consult your physician before adding any supplements to your diet.

• **A moderate amount of alcohol may help keep cholesterol low.** “Moderate’ means one drink a day for women, two for men. That’s defined as one beer, 1.5 ounces of liquor or 4 ounces of wine,” Dr. Feldman explains. “Also, you can’t skip Wednesday and Thursday and then have triple the amount on Friday—that’s not a healthy approach.”

• **Any amount of activity helps reduce cholesterol.** “It may not be realistic for you to run a few miles every day and lift weights every other day,” says Dr. Feldman. “You just have to work on yourself. If you’ve been sedentary and you get off the couch and go for a walk for 30 minutes every day, or even a few times per week, you’ll improve your life, keep your cholesterol and blood sugar down, feel better and have the potential to live longer.”

What does pumpkin have to do with reducing your risk of cardiovascular disease? More than you may think. “Pumpkin’s high in vitamins A, C and E, and as a consequence is related to decreasing inflammation in the body’s immune system. That means decreasing risk for heart disease and cancer,” says cardiologist David Feldman, MD. “Pumpkin has twice as much fiber, which helps lower cholesterol, as kale. And unlike many canned foods, canned pumpkin retains its nutritional value.”

**PUMPKIN POWER**

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Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you. To connect with one of New Jersey’s top cardiac specialists, call 888.724.7123 or visit www.rwjbh.org/heart.

**DAVID FELDMAN, MD**

**MANAGE THESE MOLECULES NOW FOR A BIG PAYOFF LATER IN LIFE.**

**WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT CHOLESTEROL**
If you or a loved one has Medicare, one of its most important benefits is the annual wellness visit. This no-copay visit is not the same as an annual physical. Instead, it’s a chance for you and your provider to create a personalized preventative plan to help you stay well and get any help you may need.

“The annual visit is my favorite visit to have with patients because I really get a chance to talk to them and to hear about how they live every single day,” says Jessica Israel, MD, Senior Vice President, Geriatrics and Palliative Care, for RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

“We touch on areas of the patient’s life that might not come up otherwise.”

The range of subjects covered is broad. “I ask about whether they have access to healthy foods and whether their teeth hurt when they chew,” Dr. Israel says. “I ask about throw rugs in their home that might be a tripping hazard, and whether they need safety bars in the shower. I ask if they have someone to call if they need help.”

Patients shouldn’t feel intimidated by these questions, but should welcome and even demand them. “You can never put too much value on what comes out of an honest conversation,” Dr. Israel says.

THE RIGHT QUESTIONS
Dr. Israel’s philosophy is shared by providers of geriatric care throughout the RWJBH system and RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. RWJBH is a member of the Age-Friendly Health System.
System action community, an initiative spearheaded by the John A. Hartford Foundation, the American Hospital Association and the Catholic Health Association of the United States.

Being an Age-Friendly Health System means applying four evidence-based elements of high-quality care, known as the 4M Framework, to all older adults. "We apply the 4Ms—medications, mobility, mentation and what matters—to elder healthcare in all our hospitals as well as outpatient settings, including in the annual wellness visit," Dr. Israel says.

“For example, elderly people are often taking multiple medications because they have more than one health condition. We’ll ask about all of them to be sure there are no negative interactions or side effects,” she explains. “We’ll ask about mobility—how much and how well they’re moving around and whether physical therapy or equipment is needed. We’ll talk about areas related to mentation, or the mind—are there any issues with anxiety or depression, or perhaps forgetfulness?”

Equally important, she says, is the “what matters” aspect of the conversation, which covers patients’ goals for their healthcare and what they don’t want, as well as the importance of having an advance directive. “The ‘what matters’ talk will vary from patient to patient,” Dr. Israel says. “We have a saying in geriatrics: ‘If you’ve seen one 80-year-old, you’ve seen one 80-year-old.’ Each patient is different, and the art of medicine is getting to know your patients.”

Annual wellness visits are inevitably revealing, says Dr. Israel. “Each time, something comes up that I didn’t know about the patient,” she says. “Then, we can have the next discussion: ‘How can we make this better?’”

A MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLAN FOR NEW JERSEY

Braven Health, a new Medicare Advantage offering, was created with New Jersey senior citizens in mind. A partnership between three New Jersey healthcare leaders—RWJ Barnabas Health, Hackensack Meridian Health and Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey—Braven Health offers access to 51,000 in-network healthcare professionals and 82 in-network hospitals and healthcare facilities.

“Having a partnership between our medical system and Horizon together means that patients have a lot of choices in their network,” explains Jessica Israel, MD, a Braven Health Provider Council Member and Senior Vice President, Geriatrics and Palliative Care, for RWJ Barnabas Health. “In addition, procedures and prescriptions get approved more quickly because we’re all working together with the goal of eliminating the hassle that can come with healthcare plans.”

Braven Health also helps patients focus on wellness by offering flexible benefits for a range of wellness activities, such as joining a gym, getting a mammogram, taking a fitness class and getting bars installed in the shower for safety.

Launched in January 2021, the plan is available for residents of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Passaic and Union counties. (The program is not available in Somerset and Mercer counties.) As of May 31 this year, Braven had a higher enrollment than any other Medicare Advantage plan in the eight counties it serves.

To learn about Medicare and Medicare Advantage programs, including Braven Health, visit www.rwjbh.org/braven.

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STAY HEALTHY
HELPING
SENIORS
STAY
HEALTHY

To learn more about senior healthcare and geriatric medicine at RWJBarnabas Health, visit www.rwjbh.org/seniorhealth.
Soccer is the most popular sport in the world—but for many kids in urban communities, there's no good local place to play it.

Now there is for kids in Newark, New Brunswick and Hamilton. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Somerset-based Players Development Academy (PDA) created its Urban Initiative to bring soccer facilities and coaching to underserved communities across the nation. Thanks to strong partnerships with RWJ Barnabas Health (RWJBH) and local communities, the initiative is up and running in New Jersey.

In May, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Community Field opened at Kossuth Park in New Brunswick. In July, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center Community Field opened at the Marquis “Bo” Porter Sports Complex in Newark. Also in July, the RWJUH Hamilton Community Field opened at the Bromley Sports Complex in Hamilton Township. More fields will open across the state in the RWJBH service area this year and in 2022.

The fields are part of RWJBH’s commitment to enhance well-being in the communities it serves. “Our mission, improving the health and lives of the people in our communities, is an audacious goal,” says Barry Ostrowsky, President and CEO of RWJBH. “In order to do that effectively, you have to have a team of people dedicated to big ideas, and you have to have similarly minded partners.”

In addition to providing funding to build the fields, RWJBH will provide off-the-field education in nutrition, wellness and sports performance. The PDA will run soccer clinics and other training sessions, and local recreation departments will manage the fields. Often, the fields serve as...
an anchor for further revitalization of a neighborhood or expansion of community sports facilities.

A SOCCER OASIS
Each field is approximately 40' by 70', allowing for a scaled-down version of the game known as futsal. These relatively small areas make the most sense for urban settings and allow players to have more time on the ball. The fields are made of artificial turf, allowing for nearly year-round play.

“PDA has been an incredible partner as we create a home for soccer programs as well as community-member pickup games in underserved urban areas,” says Justin Edelman, Senior Vice President, Corporate Partnerships, at RWJBH. “The reaction has been overwhelmingly positive. You see such a wide range of people—friends, family, all ages—using the facilities.”

“This type of field is important for the community because it’s an oasis for the game,” says Gerry McKeown, Boys Coaching Director, PDA. “The benefit of putting fields in these locations is that children can walk to them right in their neighborhood, and play or compete or just have fun, and fall in love with the game any way they would like. We’re bringing the best of the beautiful game to boys and girls that need our support. We hope this initiative sparks greater interest in the game, leading to more opportunities for kids from diverse backgrounds.”

To learn more about the Urban Initiative, visit www.urbaninitiativepda.org. To learn more about RWJBarnabas Health social impact initiatives, visit www.rwjbh.org/socialimpact.
It will soar 12 stories and cover 510,000 square feet. It will cost an estimated $750 million and will be completed in 2024.

Most important, the Jack & Sheryl Morris Cancer Center, which broke ground in June, will transform cancer research and care throughout New Jersey and beyond. The state’s first and only freestanding cancer hospital is a joint venture of RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) and Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, in partnership with the New Brunswick Development Corporation.

“The Jack & Sheryl Morris Cancer Center will be a model for cancer care delivery, bringing together the three mission areas of academic medicine—
research, education and patient care—under one roof,” says Barry Ostrowsky, President and Chief Executive Officer, RWJBH.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES
“The new cancer center brings together all the facets of research, prevention and clinical care that we drive and deliver into one location,” says Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey Director Steven K. Libutti, MD, who is also the Senior Vice President of Oncology Services at RWJBH.

The facility will have 10 state-of-the-art laboratories where teams of scientists will study cancer as a disease and develop new treatments. Many of the discoveries from these laboratories will be translated directly to the clinical setting at Rutgers Cancer Institute and across the RWJBH system.

“We will be bringing science from the bench to the patient’s bedside and back again,” says Dr. Libutti. “That means we’ll be able to further tailor patient treatments and collect important research data more rapidly and directly.”

Patients will be able to receive a wide range of both inpatient and outpatient cancer care in the new cancer center, including advanced imaging services as well as radiation and chemotherapy treatments.

The facility will have 96 inpatient beds, including an entire floor dedicated to surgical services.

Exam rooms have been designed so that a multidisciplinary team of specialists can see a patient in one location, rather than having the patient travel from doctor office to doctor office. Specially trained oncology nurse navigators will guide patients on their journey from diagnosis through survivorship.

Wellness, prevention and education resources, including a wellness garden, will be available for the community, patients, caregivers and families.

A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP
RWJBH and Rutgers Cancer Institute, the state’s only National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, have partnered to provide close-to-home access to the most advanced cancer care.

Cancer specialists throughout RWJBH collaborate with experts at Rutgers Cancer Institute to devise the best treatment plan for each patient, including clinical trials, immunotherapy and precision medicine. That means that a patient being treated for cancer at any RWJBH hospital will have access to the treatment options and clinical expertise anywhere in the hospital system, as well as at Rutgers Cancer Institute.

“The new cancer center will be integrated into our multidisciplinary care paradigm, which is across the entire RWJBarnabas Health system,” says Dr. Libutti.

“We believe it is critically important that we have sites and facilities all across the state to bring cancer care as close to home as possible,” he says. “We also believe that we need one hub that allows us to bring the highest level of extremely specialized, multidisciplinary cancer care in the setting of groundbreaking research.”

The center is named in recognition of the philanthropic leadership of Jack Morris, who has been a longtime supporter and pillar in New Brunswick development, and his wife, Sheryl.

“People shouldn’t have to go all over the country to get great care,” says Jack Morris. “We’re doing it right here. It has been our vision, our hope and our dream to have the top cancer center in the nation here in New Brunswick. Sheryl and I are so proud that we can play a role in helping to make this dream a reality.”

To learn more about the Jack & Sheryl Morris Cancer Center, visit www.cinj.org/jackandsherylmorriscancercenter.
At Children’s Specialized Hospital, we provide world-class care for children and young adults who face special health challenges across the state of New Jersey and beyond. We treat everything from chronic illnesses and complex physical disabilities, like brain and spinal cord injuries, to a full scope of developmental, behavioral and mental health concerns. We have convenient locations throughout the state: Bayonne, Clifton, East Brunswick, Egg Harbor Township, Hamilton, Jersey City, Mountainside, New Brunswick, Newark, Somerset, Toms River, Warren and West Orange.

A TEAM OF EXPERTS PROVIDES THE TOOLS NEEDED TO MANAGE TYPE 2 DIABETES.

“I was so nervous when I first stepped into the hospital,” says Ariely Garcia. “I was so far away from home.”

Ariely was just 16 when she got a diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes, a chronic condition marked by high blood glucose levels that can result in major health complications. Often referred to as adult-onset diabetes, Type 2 can also develop during childhood as a result of improper nutrition and lack of exercise.

Although Type 2 diabetes can’t be cured, it can be managed with healthy eating, medication and lifestyle changes. On her doctor’s recommendation, Ariely had come to the Chronic Illness Management Program (CIMP) at Children’s Specialized Hospital in New Brunswick to learn how to do just that.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Ariely worked with a variety of CIMP specialists in areas including recreational therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, nutrition education and psychology.

After four weeks in the program, Ariely felt confident that she could manage her diabetes. Her greatest fear: that she would “fall off the wagon” when she got back to her familiar home and school environment. And in fact, by the fall of that year, Ariely had stopped taking the medication she needed to help manage diabetes.

Recognizing that she needed help, she asked if she could go back to Children’s Specialized Hospital. “I knew the program had everything I needed to take control of my diabetes again, and I knew that this time, I was ready,” she says.

At the beginning of 2021, Ariely re-entered CIMP. “This time, I was less nervous and was ready to get back on track,” she says. “I was on board with the hard work I needed to do.”

Her team was prepared with a plan that was customized to provide resources for her home environment. During her stay, Ariely strategized with the physical therapist on ways to stay active while at home, including the use of free smartphone apps and exercises that don’t require equipment. She learned to grill chicken, make a kale salad and prepare a breakfast smoothie. She met with the psychology team to talk about stressors and learn to better communicate and cope with challenges. A certified diabetes educator talked with Ariely about the condition, with lessons culminating in “Jeopardy”-style games at the end of each week.

Ariely went home the day after her 18th birthday. “Now I really understand the effects diabetes has on me,” she says, “and I don’t need to rely on anyone to do what I need to do to control it.”

For more information about Children’s Specialized Hospital, call 888.244.5373 or visit www.rwjbh.org/childrensspecialized.
Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you.

Prevention and care for every heart in every community.

Clara Maass Medical Center has a passion for heart health. We’ve established ourselves as a leader in patient safety and quality. Our industry-leading catheterization techniques for emergent and elective angioplasty include wrist access (when appropriate) to reduce recovery time. Leading cardiac specialists provide expert care for oncology and maternal care patients. And our nationally recognized program includes certifications in acute coronary syndrome, heart failure and cardiac rehabilitation. In partnership with Rutgers Health, it’s all part of our dedication to every heart in our community.

Learn more at rwjbh.org/heart
Robot-assisted surgery has many advantages for both patients and doctors. Surgeons at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) use it to perform hysterectomies, prostate cancer surgeries, weight loss surgeries and many other procedures. What’s the attraction for surgeons? Although the name implies that a robot is in charge of the procedure, that couldn’t be further from the truth. During the procedure, a surgeon sits at a console and uses tiny instruments that mimic the movement of the human hand. “The instruments articulate and change angles, giving surgeons greater precision and flexibility,” explains Frank Dos Santos, DO, MPH, Chief Medical Officer at CMMC.

In addition, the technology allows a surgeon to “see” better. “Robotic surgery uses binocular 3D imagery to view small structures like the ureter, uterine vessels, arteries and veins in more detail than if you were standing over the body doing traditional surgery,” explains Dr. Dos Santos. All robot-assisted surgeries are minimally invasive, which means doctors need to make only a few small incisions. That helps patients recover faster and experience less pain compared to open surgery in most cases.
OB/GYN
WHAT IT’S USED FOR: The majority of hysterectomies (uterus removal) and myomectomies (fibroid removal) are performed with robotics today. Robot-assisted surgery may also be used to treat endometriosis through excision or ablation, to remove ovarian cysts or to remove one or more of the ovaries or fallopian tubes.

WHY ROBOTICS MAKES A DIFFERENCE: Many women who need a hysterectomy or myomectomy already suffer anemia or other problems associated with blood loss. Using the robot reduces the amount of blood loss during surgery.

Robotics also reduces the length of stay for hysterectomy patients to 24 hours, as opposed to three days for open hysterectomies. Women who used to be out of work and on disability for two months with open hysterectomies can now return to work in two to four weeks after robotic surgery. “The da Vinci system also helps improve outcomes for patients who are obese by giving us better visualization and mobilization during surgery,” says Dr. Dos Santos.

UROLOGY
WHAT IT’S USED FOR: Nearly 100 percent of all radical prostatectomies (removal of the prostate gland) at CMMC are performed robotically. Urologic surgeons also use the da Vinci to perform total or partial nephrectomy (kidney removal).

WHY ROBOTICS MAKES A DIFFERENCE: The location of the prostate in the body makes it difficult to access, even during an open surgery. “Using the da Vinci gives us more precision and 10x magnification, allowing us to enhance nerve-sparing techniques that can help men retain their sexual function after prostate removal,” says Dr. Dos Santos. Studies show that patients may experience a faster return of erectile function and urinary continence with robotic-assisted prostatectomy vs. open surgery.

Almost anyone who is a candidate for radical prostatectomy is a candidate for robot-assisted surgery, Dr. Dos Santos says.

WEIGHT LOSS (BARIATRIC) SURGERY
WHAT IT’S USED FOR: Sleeve gastrectomy and Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery are the two most common weight loss procedures performed with the da Vinci. Duodenal switches can also be performed robotically.

WHY ROBOTICS MAKES A DIFFERENCE: One of the important ingredients for success in weight loss surgery is the way surgeons create a patient’s new, smaller stomach with staples. “With the da Vinci, a robotic stapler eliminates any tremors and optimizes the staple line, which reduces a patient’s risk for developing leaks after surgery,” Dr. Dos Santos explains.

Potential benefits from robotic-assisted weight loss surgery include less postoperative pain, a shorter hospital length of stay and a faster return to presurgery activities such as work. “In general, any candidate for a laparoscopic weight loss procedure is a candidate for robot-assisted surgery,” Dr. Dos Santos says.

To learn more about robotic surgery at Clara Maass Medical Center, call 973.450.2000 or visit www.rwjbh.org/claramaass.
Angela Cuozzo-Zarro, President of the CMMC Auxiliary and 2021 Healthcare Heroes Volunteer of the Year

THREE CHEERS FOR A HEALTHCARE HERO

A LONGTIME VOLUNTEER HELPS CLARA MAASS MEDICAL CENTER DELIVER COMPASSIONATE CARE.

Angela Cuozzo-Zarro, President of the Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) Auxiliary, has been named 2021 Volunteer of the Year by NJBIZ magazine as part of its recognition of New Jersey’s 2021 Healthcare Heroes. Angela was lauded for her 10 years of service as CMMC’s Auxiliary President and her work as a member of CMMC’s Foundation Board of Trustees. Under her leadership, the Auxiliary has raised substantial funds for the medical center, providing support for innovative programs, state-of-the-art equipment and capital projects.

Angela’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic further demonstrated her commitment to CMMC as, despite the significantly challenging times, she found creative solutions to fuel continued fundraising success and help for those in need in the community. Her efforts included the coordination of a Drive-Thru Baby Shower to collect gifts for newborns, collecting treats and candy from Auxiliary members to recognize CMMC patient care areas and assisting in coordinating the annual Holiday Giving fundraising event.

Angela also coordinates the Auxiliary Annual Scholarship, presented to three local high school students pursuing studies in healthcare services, and assists with CMMC’s annual holiday tree lighting, along with other fundraising activities.

A HISTORY OF HELPING
The CMMC Auxiliary began 74 years ago as a self-governing volunteer membership organization whose members work together to assist CMMC in promoting the health and welfare of the community. The organization hosts activities throughout the year to raise money for the hospital and patients. Over the years, the Auxiliary has raised a total of $1 million.

“I am truly honored to be recognized by NJBIZ as a Healthcare Hero Volunteer of the Year and am so proud to be part of the Auxiliary,” Angela says. “I have been a member of the Belleville community my entire life and remember when they put the first shovel in the ground where Clara Maass Medical Center now stands. I decided to become part of the Auxiliary after hearing about all the great work they did to help people in my community. It has been a privilege to continue to give back to the hospital over the years and to support the dedicated staff who worked endlessly to help people throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“We are delighted and privileged to call Angela a Healthcare Hero for all of her hard work and dedication to Clara Maass Medical Center,” says Mary Ellen Clyne, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer of CMMC. “Despite numerous challenges caused by the pandemic, Angela remained motivated and dedicated to our commitment to improve the quality of care CMMC provides to the people of this community, and her actions helped maintain many time-honored traditions at our medical center.”

To become a member or learn more about the CMMC Auxiliary, call 973.450.2000 or visit www.rwjbh.org/claramaass.
DIRECTIONS:
• Preheat oven to 400°F.
• Prepare quinoa according to recipe.
• Cut tops off peppers and rough-chop them; set aside.
• Remove seeds from peppers. Wash peppers and set aside in a baking dish sprayed with vegetable oil spray.
• In a pot over medium heat, add oil, garlic, onions and chopped peppers. Sauté for 2–3 minutes.
• Add ground turkey, Worcestershire sauce and black pepper. Cook until meat is browned and internal temperature is at least 165°F.
• Add diced tomatoes and tomato paste. Stir to combine. Cook for 5 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed.
• Add quinoa to the meat mixture. Stir thoroughly.
• Fill each pepper with mixture.
• Cover dish and bake for 30 minutes.
• Uncover dish. Top each pepper with 1 tablespoon mozzarella cheese. Return to oven to melt cheese.

LOW-SODIUM RECIPE:
TURKEY QUINOA STUFFED PEPPER
SERVES 7

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day for adults. For entrees, registered dietitians recommend keeping sodium below 700 milligrams. This recipe has 329 milligrams of sodium per one-pepper serving.

INGREDIENTS:
• 8 ounces tri-color quinoa
• 7 fresh whole peppers—variety of green and red
• 3 teaspoons canola oil
• ¼ ounce minced garlic
• 2½ ounces chopped yellow onion
• 1 pound ground turkey
• 2 ounces Worcestershire sauce
• ½ teaspoon black ground pepper
• 1 can (13½ ounces) diced tomatoes, no salt added
• 1 can (6¾ ounces) tomato paste
• 7 tablespoons shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

DIRECTIONS:
• Preheat oven to 400°F.
• Prepare quinoa according to recipe.
• Cut tops off peppers and rough-chop them; set aside.
• Remove seeds from peppers. Wash peppers and set aside in a baking dish sprayed with vegetable oil spray.
• In a pot over medium heat, add oil, garlic, onions and chopped peppers. Sauté for 2–3 minutes.
• Add ground turkey, Worcestershire sauce and black pepper. Cook until meat is browned and internal temperature is at least 165°F.
• Add diced tomatoes and tomato paste. Stir to combine. Cook for 5 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed.
• Add quinoa to the meat mixture. Stir thoroughly.
• Fill each pepper with mixture.
• Cover dish and bake for 30 minutes.
• Uncover dish. Top each pepper with 1 tablespoon mozzarella cheese. Return to oven to melt cheese.
“Many of our patients come to us with the same symptoms,” says Pooja Raju, MD, Medical Director of the Center for Sleep Disorders at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. “They have excessive daytime sleepiness. They wake up with headaches. They can’t function during the day because of tiredness. And in most cases, they’ve suffered for years before coming to be treated.”

Most adults need seven or more hours of sleep per night for health and well-being, but more than a third don’t get that much, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. Lack of sleep can be a contributing cause to serious health conditions, Dr. Raju says.

“Many conditions have sleep disorders as an underlying contributing factor, including pulmonary diseases, congestive heart failure, heart attacks and strokes,” she explains.

**INTERrupted BREATHING**

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is the most prevalent disorder treated at the Center for Sleep Disorders, Dr. Raju says. In OSA, the muscles of the airway relax and obstruct air flow during sleep. Symptoms include loud snoring and periods of breathing cessation and multiple awakenings. Because OSA causes sudden drops in blood oxygen, it can strain the cardiovascular system and increase the risk of heart disease.

OSA is commonly associated with excess weight and high blood pressure, but it is also linked to chronic nasal congestion, naturally narrow airways or asthma.

Other common disorders include insomnia, which prevents sleep; narcolepsy, which causes sudden sleep attacks during the day; restless leg syndrome, which is characterized by a powerful urge to move the legs when sitting or lying down; and sleepwalking.

**LIFE-CHANGING TREATMENT**

Patients who come to the Center for Sleep Disorders are given a comprehensive sleep and health history. If a disorder is suspected, sleep tests are ordered. For some disorders, such as OSA, a sleep monitor is sent home with the patient and is returned for interpretation the next day. Tests for other conditions, such as narcolepsy and behavioral disorders in sleep, may be performed in the lab, where brain waves, sudden sleep episodes and body movements are monitored.

Treatments for sleep problems are as varied as the disorders. For OSA, patients are prescribed a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) device to keep passages open. In other cases, patients may be referred to a sleep psychologist, who may employ cognitive behavioral therapy, which addresses misconceptions about sleep as well as behaviors related to it.

Dental devices that readjust jaw position to help open air passages may be prescribed, and in rare cases, surgery may be performed.

“Treatment makes a big difference in a patient’s life. After years of suffering, they can get a good night’s sleep. They don’t fall asleep in meetings during the day and are able to spend more time with their loved ones,” says Dr. Raju.

The Center for Sleep Disorders at CMMC is accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.
Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) is a 472-bed acute care facility that is located in Belleville and primarily serves northern New Jersey residents. CMMC offers an extensive array of medical services and provides patients with the highest quality of care, close to home.

OUR KEY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

BARIATRIC CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
- Inpatient Care
- Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services (PESS)

CANCER CENTER
- Center for Breast Health and Disease Management
- Clinical Trials
- Electromagnetic Navigation Bronchoscopy (ENB)
- Genetic Counseling
- Gynecologic Oncology
- Infusion Center
- Inpatient Oncology Unit
- Medical Oncology
- Oncology Nurse Navigation Program
- Radiation Oncology
- Urologic Oncology

CARDIAC SERVICES (ADULT)
- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Diagnostic Cardiac Testing
- Echocardiogram
- Elective and Emergent Angioplasty
- Noninvasive Cardiology
- Stress Testing
- Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE)

CARE TRANSITIONS INTERVENTION PROGRAM

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR LATINO HEALTH

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- Speakers Bureau
- Clara Cares Senior Wellness Program
- Wellness Assessment Van for Elders (WAVE)

COMPREHENSIVE BALANCE CENTER

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT
- Education Program
- Certified AADE Program

ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY (ECT)

EMERGENCY SERVICES
- Adult and Pediatric Observation Units
- Pediatric Emergency Department
- Primary Stroke Center
- Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services (PESS)
- Telehealth

ENDOSCOPY AND BRONCHOSCOPY CENTER

EYE SURGERY CENTER
- Adult Ophthalmology Services
- Pediatric Ophthalmology Services

HOSPITAL ELDER LIFE PROGRAM (HELP)

INTENSIVE CARE

JOINT & SPINE INSTITUTE
- Inpatient Rehabilitation
- Occupational Therapy
- Orthopedics
- Physical Therapy
- Pre-Op Program
- Sports Medicine

LABORATORY SERVICES

MATERNAL SERVICES
- Angel Eye Web Camera
- Labor and Delivery
- Level II Special Care Nursery
- Childbirth, Parent and Sibling Education Programs
- Breastfeeding Education and Support Program/Warm Line
- Postpartum Unit

NEUROLOGY
- Inpatient Stroke Unit
- Swallowing Evaluation
- Adult and Pediatric Video EEG

NUTRITION COUNSELING

PAIN MANAGEMENT CENTER

PEDIATRICS DEPARTMENT
- Inpatient Services
- Pediatric Observation Unit

PHYSICIAN REFERRAL SERVICE

POST-ACUTE REHABILITATION
- Transitional Care Unit

RADIOLOGY
- Nuclear Medicine
- Mammography
- MRI
- Interventional Radiology
- Ultrasound

REHABILITATION SERVICES
- Inpatient and Outpatient Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Vestibular Program

RESPIRATORY SERVICES
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Pulmonary Function Testing (outpatient)
- Bronchoscopy

ROBOTIC SURGERY

SAME-DAY SURGERY

SLEEP CENTER

TELEMETRY UNIT

VASCULAR SURGERY

VEIN CENTER

WOUND CENTER
- Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

To schedule an appointment or learn more about programs and services at Clara Maass Medical Center, call 973.450.2000 or visit www.rwjbh.org/claramaass.
Although every hip surgery is different, a world-class surgeon is always the right choice.

Do it right. Here.

When you need relief from joint pain, you want nothing less than the highest level of orthopedic care. At Clara Maass Medical Center, we offer a personalized, comprehensive approach for joint surgeries such as total hip and knee replacement. Our surgeons use leading-edge technology and minimally invasive techniques, including quad-sparing procedures, to get you back on your feet, often on the same day you come in. And a nurse navigator guides you along every step, from your first day to outpatient therapy.

Visit rwjbh.org/ortho to learn more.

Clara Maass Medical Center

Let’s be healthy together.