

Primary Angioplasty Has Arrived! Latest Step in Offering Full Cardiac Services

Good Samaritan Hospital has received formal approval and notification from the New York State Department of Health to begin primary (emergency) angioplasty as part of the national C-PORT program. The service officially began at 7 am on Tuesday, November 4th.

“It took a tremendous amount of work and effort on the part of everyone to make this a reality. Our new Heart Stat Team worked long and hard to help prepare us to offer this life-saving service to our patients and the community,” said Michael Schnieders, EVP/ Hospital Administrator. “We are also appreciative of our interventional cardiologists, Dr. Arvind Agarwal, Dr. David Brogno, Dr. Michael Innerfield, Dr. Lance Kovar and Dr. Andrew Shih who rotate the on-call schedule.”

Now anyone entering the ED with chest pain or anyone already registered as a patient who experiences chest pain will be assessed and screened for participation in the program. Good Samaritan Hospital’s effort to bring comprehensive cardiac care to residents of the lower Hudson Valley continues to move forward.

For years, lower Hudson Valley residents had to travel to New Jersey or Manhattan for this procedure simply because it was not available here in Rockland County. In fact, there were no comprehensive interventional cardiac programs on the West Side of the Hudson River between the New Jersey State line and Albany, a distance of approximately 130 miles.

In the past, patients experiencing chest pains and entering the Emergency Department with a heart attack were stabilized and treated with drug therapy and if angioplasty was required they were transferred



Dr. Tom Aversano meets with members of the “Heart Stat Team” giving them a thumbs up to begin the lifesaving procedure at Good Samaritan Hospital

to an out-of-area hospital. The elimination of a transfer to another hospital will help save dozens of lives, according to Schnieders.

Primary or emergency angioplasty is a life-saving procedure designed to open clogged arteries. Angioplasty is sometimes referred to as a PTCA – percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty or balloon angioplasty. Angioplasty is commonly performed with stenting, in which a balloon is used to expand a metal sleeve inside the artery. With or without stenting, the arteries are opened to restore blood flow. The procedure will be performed in our cardiac catheterization laboratory.

“The provision of primary angioplasty to the community will not only be a landmark in clinical capability for the service area, it will also represent a new level of care to be provided by Good Samaritan Hospital,” said Schnieders.

With primary angioplasty services now a reality, Good Samaritan Hospital is optimistic about the next level of care it wants to provide. As has been reported previously, Good Samaritan has applied to the State Department of Health for approval to offer a full suite of advanced cardiac surgery and services. There are several steps still necessary for the approval process but approval could come within the next 90 days. ■

Aversano Oversees Life-Saving Procedure

Dr. Thomas Aversano, one of the country’s leading specialists in angioplasty, is overseeing Good Samaritan Hospital’s participation in a national primary angioplasty study.

Dr. Aversano, an interventional cardiologist at the renowned Johns Hopkins Hospital and Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center in Baltimore, is the Medical Director for a second Atlantic Cardiovascular-Patient Outcomes Research Team (C-PORT) study, in which the effectiveness of primary angioplasty will be measured. The first C-PORT study indicated that survival rates increase significantly for patients who were treated with angioplasty when presenting with myocardial infarction in the emergency room.

“We’re extremely pleased to be working closely with Dr. Aversano, who is renowned nationally for his angioplasty expertise,” said Michael Schnieders, Executive Vice President and Administrator. “We have experienced interventional cardiologists and other medical staff who have prepared extensively for this new service by learning the protocols associated with the study. We believe the C-PORT program will further emphasize the importance of primary angioplasty over other treatments for patients suffering heart attacks.” ■

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**GOOD
 SAMARITAN
 HOSPITAL**
 Bon Secours Charity
 Health System

A Word from our Administrator

More than 100 people attended our Open Forum Meetings this fall. These meetings provided me a great opportunity to talk with a number of our employees and physicians to present the goals of the hospital for the new fiscal year. It also gave me an opportunity to hear about the things we need to address as we continue to set a course of excellence for the hospital.

For those unable to attend, let me give you a brief overview of the meetings. Communicate, communicate, communicate. It was apparent going into the meetings that we need to communicate more. The Open Forums are a beginning. We will host them twice a year and hopefully the attendance will grow for our spring session. We have revamped our Employee Suggestion Box and ask that all employees take part in giving us recommendations. We will read the suggestions routinely and make appropriate changes where needed.

This newsletter, The Good Samaritan Voice, is another step in our goal to communicate better. It is my desire that we publish them more frequently and on a more consistent basis. At the present time we will be publishing them on a quarterly basis and soon on a monthly basis. Once you receive a newsletter, make certain that your co-workers receive a copy, too. We will distribute them to each department supervisor and extra copies will be available in the cafeteria, lobby, and Human Resources.

Another very important initiative is Customer Satisfaction. Customer satisfaction has three aspects: First our patient as customer. Our patients and their families should feel well cared for, comfortable and appreciated while in our care. I know it is often difficult to be gracious to someone when perhaps they are less than receptive. But that is part of our gift of healing.... That we give of ourselves to others. Sometimes you may be surprised at the astounding affect you have on someone's life by your own personable attitude.

Then there is our employee as customer.... In other words, you. Without you, we cannot be a success in anything we do. That's why it is important that we hear from you on how we can enhance the work environment, how we can give you the recognition you so richly deserve and how we can work hand in hand to the betterment of us all.

And the third aspect of Customer Satisfaction is our physician as customer. It is equally important that our physicians are welcomed to our facility and treated with the utmost respect. We are working diligently to recruit more physicians as we move into new areas of clinical capability and as we make certain that the needs of our communities are met.

In our next newsletter I will share more about this initiative and go into greater detail about the financial responsibilities and growth opportunities for the year. ■

~Michael Schnieders

Help the GSH Foundation, Help the Entire Community

Sally Ann Donnelly, a home care employee of Good Samaritan Hospital for the last 30 years, and a life-long Rockland resident, volunteers at fundraising events held by the Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation. "I enjoy the social aspect of working on Foundation events," said Donnelly. "I have been doing it 'since I was a kid'."

But, more importantly, Donnelly understands that non-profit hospitals are reliant on community support and she wants to be a part of making sure that Good Samaritan Hospital remains a first-rate hospital to serve the community. "The outcomes are beneficial to so many," said Donnelly. "I know I am not just helping the hospital, I am helping the entire community."

"The work that's done through the Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation is really rewarding," said Amanda Moskowitz, Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation Development Associate. "These events and fundraising campaigns enhance Good Samaritan's ability to offer state-of-the-art health care to the community."

The Spring Ball, in fact, raised \$470,000 used to purchase the hardware and software necessary to provide Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) for cancer patients. With this cutting-edge IMRT technology Good Samaritan's Radiation-Oncology Department will have the capability to apply highly targeted radiation therapy to tumors.

And the recent Fall Golf Classic was the most successful the foundation has ever hosted, raising more than \$200,000. Volunteers abounded in time, effort and financial support. The proceeds will be used to help with equipment purchases for our new Primary angioplasty service.

Kathy McDonough, Good Samaritan's Information Technology Site Manager, another Foundation volunteer and a 25-year employee of the hospital says she too enjoys the social aspect of volunteering, although she's been doing it only a few years. "As my children got older, I began to have more time," said McDonough. "I started volunteering with the Foundation a few years ago. It's really a lot of fun." But, McDonough sees other benefits, too. "It is important for my kids to see me doing this. I want them to know that giving back and getting involved is really important."

Kathy McDonough's children have learned that getting involved is important. Recently, her daughter volunteered in the foundation office and her son got up at 5:30 a.m. to help out at this year's annual Sneakers Walk/Run.

Whatever the reason is to get involved, employees are encouraged to get involved any way they can. "The Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation holds an annual fund drive, and three major annual fundraising events a year including the Spring Ball, the Sneakers Walk/Run and, the upcoming Fall Golf Classic," Christine Maraia, Executive Vice President of the Foundation. "There are so many different ways to contribute. We've got something for everyone. And this year for the first time, we are offering a Payroll Deduction fund drive to make employee giving even easier."

For more information about participating in this or any other Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation program, please call Christine Maraia, or any member of the Foundation Staff, at extension 5151 or stop by to see them on 2 West. ■

First Impressions: Betty Cogburn Puts GSH's Best Foot Forward

Information Desk Representative Betty Cogburn and the information desk volunteers, are the first people patients and visitors meet when they enter Good Samaritan Hospital.

"Good Samaritan is a very busy hospital," said Jean McCarthy Frisino, Director of Volunteer Services and Information Desk Services. "Betty Cogburn, and her team of highly professional volunteers, is our front-line, our ambassadors."

"This is a very strategic position," said Cogburn. "We have the opportunity to set a positive tone and make a good first impression."

Everyday, they meet scores of people. Some desperately want to be with a hospitalized loved one before visiting hours; some are family members who have questions or concerns about a patient's care; some are patients who come to Good Samaritan for testing or another procedure but need guidance, some are dealing with a language barrier—but they are all looking to Good Samaritan for compassionate care. Whatever the situation, no matter how distressed the person walking in the door, Betty Cogburn puts them at ease.

"She will find an interpreter to help her determine the needs of a person who is non-English speaking," said Jean McCarthy Frisino. "She takes notice that an incoming patient looks weak and gets them a wheelchair. I've even seen her help incoming elderly patients who may be confused or overwhelmed—taking them off to the side to find out why they are here, and bringing them directly to the appropriate department."

According to Betty Cogburn, the insight she gained

about hospital protocol through the other positions she's held at Good Samaritan, enables her to troubleshoot issues and resolve client's problems. But, it is her desire to help people and the dedication of her excellent volunteer team that enable them to positively represent Good Samaritan.

"Sometimes, you just need to come out of the booth and listen to the details of what a person is trying to tell you," said Cogburn. "Knowing that someone is willing to help them usually puts people at ease in what is often a very difficult time in their lives."

Simply put, Betty Cogburn delivers her own special brand of compassionate care to each and every person that walks into Good Samaritan Hospital. She truly embodies Good Samaritan's vision of unparalleled customer satisfaction. ■

Charity System News

St. Anthony's Community Hospital received a five star rating in overall patient satisfaction and was once again voted best hospital in the region by the readers of Straus Publications. Mt. Alverno Center recently initiated a monthly newsletter to keep family and friends up to date on news.

Bon Secours Community Hospital opened its newly redesigned ED with 13 new emergency bays. Each one is equipped to handle a wealth of emergency situations. A bedside cardiac monitoring system, networked to the nurse's station, a special women's bay to provide gynecological and obstetrical patients with special features and a private bathroom are just a few of the features. ■



Maria Marino designed and painted these two whimsical murals for the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). They not only brighten the suite, they are especially a delight to our youngest patients!

Emergency Preparedness: Responding with Focus and Direction

As health care professionals, we all work toward being prepared for emergencies and disaster situations," said Eileen Engelbracht, Director of Infection Control and the chair of the Good Samaritan Hospital Emergency Management Steering Committee. "But, today's world demands that we look at 'preparedness' in a whole new light."

Although Good Samaritan has had emergency response plans in place for many years, a steering committee was formed after September 11, 2001 to reevaluate all aspects of the hospital's emergency preparedness. This committee — made up of management and executive representatives from infection control, facility operations, pharmacy, nursing, the laboratory, the emergency room, public relations and information technology— has been developing, testing and revising the policies and procedures Good Samaritan uses during emergency situations.

"We intend to equip Good Samaritan Hospital with the highest possible level of readiness for every conceivable event," said Engelbracht. "We are preparing our staff to respond quickly with focus and direction."

The Hospital Emergency Incident Command System (HEICS) is the emergency response protocol that helps to enable Good Samaritan's team to act quickly and succinctly when disaster hits. This system, developed in California and modeled after the system used in the coordination of resources for wildfire response, outlines specific response procedures that fit within Good Samaritan's emergency preparedness plan.

Under the HEICS system, Good Samaritan has developed on-site incident command center, with a highly trained incident commander. In the event of an emergency, a computer room equipped with the necessary extra telephone, fax and Internet capabilities becomes Good Samaritan's command center. Executive Vice President Michael Schnieders is the Incident Commander.

When fully operational the command center is staffed by the incident commander, the director of public relations, the safety officer, a hospital liaison and operations, logistics, planning and finance chiefs.

"The command center is separate from the emergency room," said Michael Schnieders, Executive Vice President/Administrator and member of the Emergency Management Steering Committee. "It's dedicated to the collection and dissemination of information and to directing response activities. The structure enables us to provide a quick, well-coordinated response while allowing the emergency room to focus on emergency patient care."

Good Samaritan has also become part of the Hospital Emergency Response Data System (HERDS). HERDS manages a statewide database of emergency resources and a health alert network that provides Good Samaritan with real-time emergency alerts and information from situations occurring across the region.

To test the hospital's ability to respond to HERDS alerts, Good Samaritan conducts "table top drills." When Good Samaritan receives a practice alert the incident command center is immediately activated. The command team practices responding to alerts, providing information about resources Good Samaritan can offer in response.

As the situation progresses the team provides specific details about how each aspect of the situation would be handled in-house. The command team audits the hospital's ability to provide accurate data in an efficient manner. The steering committee identifies where performance could be

enhanced and works to develop procedures to improve the hospital's response.

In emergency situations, Good Samaritan does not operate in a vacuum. The hospital regularly participates in full scale, hands on drills with local, state and federal emergency response agencies to ensure that all responders deliver a succinct, well-coordinated response.

On May 14, 2003 Good Samaritan played a key role in a drill involving the mock release of radiation from the Indian Point nuclear power plant. Based on the situation, one patient and the ambulance were exposed. The drill required emergency response from EMS, Rockland County Fire Training Center resources and Good Samaritan Hospital. The Office of Emergency Management, the New York State Office of Emergency Management, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission observed the drill and provided positive feedback on the coordinated response effort.

"Good Samaritan is critical to our ability to handle a mass emergency," said Dr. Joan Facelle, Rockland County Commissioner of Health. "The resources they provide and the response they deliver are integrated into the overall emergency response plans of the County. The County is very pleased with the relationship that has been established with Good Samaritan. No matter what you have down on paper for policy and procedure—it is the people, the relationships that make this effective."

"Disaster preparedness will be a continual process," said Schnieders. "But, with the adoption of HEICS and HERDS Good Samaritan has standardized the process and created the opportunity for us to focus on broadening our level of preparedness."

"We are thrilled with the level of readiness we've been able to achieve," said Engelbracht. "The work really shows. Our Emergency Department assessed six patients with possible SARS exposure and had the most up-to-the-minute information available from every agency, ranging from the Rockland County Health Department to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Our procedures and treatment protocols were at our fingertips and the bottom line was our patients, our staff and our environment were protected." ■

Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings at GSH

An newly renovated and furnished Surgical Waiting Room located on the first floor, opened last month in Memory of Dr. Jerome Meisel. The room's pleasant furnishings, pictures and plants offer a soothing oasis to family and friends at a time when they may need it most.

A special ribbon cutting ceremony officially opened our new Patient and Family Education Resource Center, located on the fourth floor just to the left of the public elevators. The center provides a quiet spot for patients and their families to do research on all types of medical conditions and issues. We have information on computer, videos, books, journals, brochures and more. It's a great place to read, browse and learn more about health.

The Resource Center will also be used for special seminars. December 4th at 2pm will feature Holiday Parties and Diabetes Management. ■



Good Samaritan Hospital Receives 97% Satisfaction Rating

Good Samaritan Hospital Home Care has received an overall Patient Satisfaction Score of 97% from its most recent Patient Satisfaction Survey.

"Our scores continue to be in the high 90's which spurs us on to even greater aspirations in quality care and patient satisfaction", said Toni Clark, Executive Vice President of Good Samaritan Hospital Home Care. "We monitor and report these results to the Quality Council of the Board and Home Care Administration as they become available. It is an important element of our multi-disciplinary team approach to performance improvement."

Good Samaritan Hospital Home Care uses a variety of independent measurements for improving the quality of services to patients.

A recent tool that has been introduced by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is a comparative report to measure and provide information on home care quality.

While the CMS report can be confusing to consumers, it is another piece in the data matrix necessary for agencies to continuously emphasize quality performance.

"Our commitment to quality care is evidenced by our high satisfaction scores and by our continued willingness to bring in new data, seek proper interpretation of that data, and then implement improvements when and where they may be needed." Clark said. "We continue to be proud and confident of the skills, talents and dedication of our staff and of the care they provide to a wide range of patients with extremely varied medical needs."

Good Samaritan Hospital Home Care is one of the largest home care agencies in the state of New York and serves over 6000 patients a year in a service area that covers Rockland and Orange Counties in New York and Pike County in Pennsylvania. ■

Caring In Deed... Our Commitment to Excellence!

Did you know Good Samaritan Hospital has a Customer Satisfaction Committee? It is comprised of a multi-disciplinary team of volunteers. Exciting initiatives are underway to enhance our patients experience at Good Samaritan Hospital as well as our employees.

Each quarter Good Samaritan Hospital receives Patient Satisfaction Survey Scores and Ratings from an independent service. Departments are recognized for their greatest accomplishments and improvements.

Congratulations to this quarter's award recipients:

Most Improved – 3 North

Special Recognition – Inpatient Registration

Highest Overall Score – Same Day Surgery

Dedicated Service Award Recipients for 2003



Matt McGuire, Director of Engineering, is recipient of this year's Bon Secours Dedicated Service Award and Beverly Grapkowski, R.N. is recipient of the award for Good Samaritan Hospital Home Care.

This prestigious honor is bestowed on one hospital employee and one home care employee in each of Bon Secours facilities each year. Eligibility criteria include a demonstrated commitment to the Core Values of Bon Secours: Justice, Integrity, Quality, Compassion, Innovation, Stewardship, and Growth. Award recipients must also demonstrate a commitment to improving work methods and procedures, be committed to helping develop their peers and to develop themselves; and must be involved in the community beyond work obligations.

"Matt has one of the best work ethics around," said Michael Schnieders, EVP and Administrator of Good Samaritan Hospital. "He is a leader on several committees such as Occupational Health and Safety Committee and is the hospital's Safety Officer, Disaster Coordinator. He is always looking for suggestions to improve the quality of service we provide our staff and patients."



This year's Home Care recipient was recognized by Toni Clark, Executive Vice President of Good Samaritan Hospital Home Care. She said, "Beverly's care and compassion for patients and families is apparent in the calls and letters I have received singing her praises and dedication to nursing. She has been a shining example of what Community Health Nursing should be. She exemplifies Bon Secours' mission in all she does."

Both McGuire and Grapkowski will be honored at a special reception in Baltimore, Maryland and awarded \$500.

Hospital nominees for this year's award were: Teresa Mills, Laura Giordano, Emily Javaheri, Jacqueline Audige, Alice Casella, Eileen Hamilton, Phyllis Shorey, Ellen Smith, Renee Baddish, Anna Autiero, Kathleen Chin, Carin Campbell and Maryann Conti.

Home Care nominees were: Victoria Gonzalez, Donna Weber, Mary Halstead, Connie Edlund, Mary Sussman, Janie Krieger, Luvenia Meekins, and Sharon Hughes. ■

Michael Lippe, MD Named Physician of the Year

Dr. Michael Lippe, MD was recently named "Physician of the Year" by Bikur Cholim and was honored during their 22nd Anniversary Celebration of providing services to the community.

"Dr. Lippe ensures that the best possible care is given to each patient with a devotion that emanates from a caring heart," said Rabbi Simon Lauber, Founder and CEO of Bikur Cholim. "His attention to each individual goes beyond the medical and extends to the psychological needs of each person entrusted to his care".

We extend our own congratulations to Dr. Lippe for this honor. ■

Web Site Is Great Resource for Community and GSH Employees

In August 2001, as part of a Bon Secours Charity Health Systems Web site development project, Good Samaritan Hospital and the Bon Secours Charity Health Systems launched a comprehensive, award-winning Web site.

"The clear and focused purpose of this site is to enable Good Samaritan and the Bon Secours Charity Health System to better serve clients and the community as their resource for health information and health services," said Karen Stoohs. "By harnessing the power of the Internet we can provide these things to the community in a friendly, easy to use, interactive environment."

Since the launch of the site, the marketing team has continually improved upon the initial offerings — refining the content, providing additional services and information, and offering a monthly Cardiac eNewsletter.

The Web site includes information about all of Good Samaritan's services; it provides access to current hospital news and extensive health information; and details the dates, times and registration information for free seminars and special events. The site also enables prospective employees to review job postings and electronically submit their qualifications to human resources. A new feature enables people to send electronic get-well cards to Good Samaritan patients from anywhere in the world.

The site is chock full. But, according to Karen Stoohs, the site is only a great resource when people log on and use it.

"We study the Web trends to evaluate how effective the site is," said Stoohs. "We look at the overall number of visitors. But, more specifically, we look at the number of new visitors

versus the number of repeat visitors. We want to know which sections are most commonly accessed and which pages people use as entry-points—which may indicate they have them 'bookmarked'."

By analyzing these statistics the communications team can identify what information visitors deem most pertinent. It enables them to gauge whether the site is meeting visitors' needs and if the site is effective in generating awareness about new programs and initiatives.

A recent trend report showed more than 280,000 visitors accessed the Good Samaritan Web site in a one month period, and the site averages 500 user sessions per day. The studies indicate that online physician referral and online career postings are the most popular features. Other sections, like the health information feature, are underutilized.

"The section includes extensive and very helpful information about symptoms, common illnesses and medication," said Stoohs. "Our challenge is making people aware that they don't need to go to any other website for pertinent medical information."

Recently, an online medical library designed for employees and physicians to conduct online data searches, look for books and research illnesses and medications, was added. And, as part of the hospital's ongoing effort to raise awareness about cardiac health, the site now offers an interactive heart health trivia quiz that enables quiz-takers to enter drawings for gift certificates to local merchants. Visit the website at www.GoodSamHosp.org ■

Get Ready! JCAHO and YOU

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) will be at Good Samaritan Hospital early in 2004 (probably at this printing, late January). The Joint Commission accredits more than 19,000 healthcare organizations in the United States and other countries. Its goals are to promote patient safety and quality health care.

All hospitals must be accredited by JCAHO to receive payments from Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance companies.

Surveyors actually come to the hospital, tour the facility, look at medical charts, check for such things as cleanliness, compliance to regulations, etc. They will even stop and ask staff members questions.

If you are asked a question, be as clear as possible. If you do not understand the question, ask the surveyor to repeat it. If you still don't know, explain that you are not certain of the answer and that you would refer to the Hospital's policies and procedure manuals or ask your manager or another staff member.

Most of all, relax. This is material we are all familiar with and you can answer to the best of your ability. Here are some possible questions and suggested answers:

Whose responsibility is patient safety?

It is every employee's responsibility to assure patient safety. Patient safety is maintained by a constant focus of all staff and physicians on following standards or "rules" for care. This includes our "First Things First" program to make certain we check ID Bands throughout the continuum of care provided to each patient.

Patient safety also includes keeping the physical environment safe – free of clutter, floors dry, doors not "choked" open, making certain there are no trip hazards, etc. Any event – an injury, risk of injury or near miss should be reported to the Risk Management Department.

What is Performance Improvement?

PI is how we focus on the quality of Good Samaritan Hospital's service. It is a process for how we continually improve the way we provide care and service to our patients. You may have seen some of our slogans "Caring In Deed... Our Commitment to Excellence!" which we use in many of our messages about Performance Improvement.

What kind of information is confidential?

All records and information about a patient are confidential. A patient's condition, care, treatment or personal data (for example, address) are confidential and can only be discussed with those directly responsible for the patient's care and treatment.

What is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infection?

Hand washing for 10 to 15 seconds before and after patient contact, after contact with blood or body fluids, after handling patient care equipment and after removing a pair of gloves.

If you have any questions or concerns about your role during the Joint Commission visit, please speak to your supervisor or one of the hospital directors. ■