

Insight

A publication of FHN

Volume 16, Issue 1

High-Tech Care with Heart

Meet FHN's
Orthopedics
Team

Foundation: The
Benefits of Giving

You Need a Primary
Care Provider



We're here, for you.

FHN



MARK GRIDLEY, PRESIDENT AND CEO

An Exciting Spring for Healthcare in Our Communities

Spring is the season of possibilities, and we're proud to be sharing some exciting possibilities with you in this issue of *Insight*.

We're welcoming a number of new providers, many of whom are expanding the capabilities of what we're able to offer our patients and communities. A new interventional cardiologist and dedicated cardiology nurse practitioner have joined our Heart team. They use advanced technology to diagnose and treat conditions of the heart and blood vessels, and their priority is putting patients first.

We're excited to add a new physician to our Orthopedics and Sports Medicine team, as well. Woodley Desir, MD specializes in shoulder surgery, hip replacement and preservation, and sports medicine. He has been part of the caring team for athletes ranging from Vanderbilt University athletics to the Nashville Predators.

Our Podiatry team, meanwhile, has been having great success with total ankle replacement surgery. You'll meet the team dedicated to helping patients get ready for and recover from this high-tech procedure not previously available in northwest Illinois.

FHN's Post-Birth Alert Orange Bracelet Program, one of the first of its kind in the nation, is making a difference for new moms. We'll share the story of one local mother who was glad to have her bracelet when a post-partum complication put her health in danger. Other health organizations across the country are taking note of this award-winning program.

You'll also get a chance to meet our first DAISY and BEE winners of 2025. We are so proud to celebrate these team members who have gone the extra mile to help make patients and their families' healthcare encounters positive.

We are glad to share the details on FHN Foundation events such as Striking Success for Children – *Lights, Camera, Bow!* in May.

Finally, we'll take a look at the importance of having a primary healthcare provider, an "old-fashioned" and proven concept that helps you take charge of your (and your family's) health.

All of us at FHN are pleased to be offering advanced new services – and upholding our standard of excellent care – for the people of northwest Illinois. It is our privilege to care for you and your loved ones, and we don't take that honor lightly. Thank you. ■

Some things that might seem "old-fashioned" are actually the best way to get things done.

For example, it could be considered old-fashioned to grow vegetables in a garden, but the produce you'll get is nutritious, delicious and costs very little.

To some, it might also seem kind of old-fashioned to have a family doctor. But these general healthcare providers are an important part of your and your family's healthcare team. You and your family doctor (we call them primary care providers) work together as a team to achieve and maintain your best possible health. Here's how that works.

ESTABLISHING CARE WITH A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

When you first establish yourself as a patient with your primary care provider, you'll talk about your own medical history and the medical history of your family. The topics you'll cover range from your past surgeries or illnesses to the health conditions of your parents and siblings.

Your provider isn't just making small talk when he or she asks questions about your family's health; many diseases, including high blood pressure, diabetes, and some types of cancer, tend to "run in the family." For example, if your father had diabetes, your provider may want to keep a close eye on your blood sugar levels.

Armed with knowledge about your personal and immediate family health history, your provider will work with you to maintain and improve your well-being. This may involve talking about your diet and exercise habits, prescribing medications to manage chronic health conditions, or simply scheduling a regular checkup if you're already in good health.

FHN is an award-winning regional healthcare system committed to the health and well-being of the people of northwest Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Organized in 1995, non-profit FHN is comprised of FHN Memorial Hospital, the Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital, and 15 healthcare centers in 5 counties spanning northwest Illinois offering primary and specialty medical care, and hospice. For more information about us please visit www.fhn.org.



CHOOSING A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

There is nothing more important than your health and the health of your family. When you choose a primary care provider, you want someone who is knowledgeable, approachable, and easy to talk to. You also want a provider whose office is conveniently located and who can refer you to a specialist if needed.

FHN's primary care providers care for patients at nine locations across northwest Illinois, from Pecatonica to Savanna, and from Forrester to Stockton.

Our primary care providers include 26 physicians and nurse practitioners specializing in Family Practice or Internal Medicine who can care for every member of your family, from infants to seniors.

Nurse practitioners complete a bachelor's degree in nursing, followed by graduate training and certification. They can diagnose and treat illnesses and injuries, order tests and prescribe medicine.

We also have a Pediatric physician, who specializes in caring for children from infancy through adolescence.

APPOINTMENTS WITH YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

Many adults see their primary care provider only for regular checkups and if they get injured or sick. If you have a chronic health issue, like high blood

pressure, you'll probably see your provider more often.

If you have small children, you're likely to be quite familiar with your child's primary care provider. Well-child visits are more than a checkup; they're a chance for parents to ask questions about their child's health and development.

FHN's healthcare providers also are available to help you and your child through the bumps and bruises, and coughs and colds of childhood. Your child's healthcare provider will talk to you about what to do if you have after-hours concerns or questions.

FINDING THE RIGHT PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

You can find information on all of FHN's primary care providers online at www.fhn.org.

If you'd like help finding the right provider for you, or are ready to make an appointment, call FHN's physician referral service at 815-599-7060. (This service is available Monday – Thursday 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Friday 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

KNOW WHERE TO GO

Think that sprained ankle is something more serious? Did your child wake up with a sore throat?

You can avoid a long wait by choosing the right place to go (or call). Check out our guide to help you decide!

RIGHT CARE. RIGHT TIME. RIGHT PLACE.



- Wellness
- Preventative care
- Cold, cough, flu, fever
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Minor injuries, sprains, cuts



- Healthcare services after FHN Primary Care office hours, nights, and weekends
- Work-related injuries, exams
- Drug/alcohol testing



- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Stroke symptoms
- Severe bleeding, burns, pain
- Broken bones

heart

[hahrt] noun

A hollow, pumplike organ of blood circulation, composed mainly of rhythmically contractile smooth muscle, located in the chest between the lungs and slightly to the left.

also

Capacity for sympathy; feeling; affection: *His heart moved him to help people in need.*

The vital or essential part; core: *the heart of the matter.*



▲ Their tools are high-tech, but FHN's Heart team is dedicated to working with patients to achieve their best health. Our team includes (L-R) Prasad Kilaru, MD, FSCAI, FACC; J. Steve Harweger, AGACNP-BC; Yaser Siraj, MD; Chelsea Smith, MSN, FNP-BC

When you talk about a person's heart, you likely aren't referring to the organ that circulates their blood. You're probably talking about their generosity, how they care for others, or even their importance to you.

When you're talking to your healthcare provider, you likely are referring to your physical heart. But you're also talking about your life and all you hold dear. You want your provider to know that – and value it – too.

FHN's Cardiology team takes pride in how they care for your heart – in both the literal and physical sense.

Specialists Prasad Kilaru, MD, FSCAI, FACC, Bhadresh Patel, MD, FACC, FACP and dedicated cardiology nurse practitioner J. Steve Harweger, AGACNP-BC have been caring for FHN patients for years, and we're proud to welcome new providers to our team!

Interventional Cardiologist Yaser Siraj, MD and dedicated cardiology nurse practitioner Chelsea Smith, MSN, FNP-BC have joined FHN's Cardiology team.

WHAT IS INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGY?

An interventional cardiologist uses non-surgical, catheter-based procedures and specialized imaging techniques to diagnose and treat conditions of the heart and blood vessels. Your provider might ask you to see Dr. Siraj for a number of reasons, including:

- Changes in your EKG indicating a possible coronary artery blockage
- You have a form of heart disease requiring special care, like unstable angina or heart valve disease
- You need advanced heart procedures like cardiac catheterization, heart valve repair, or angioplasty.

Dr. Siraj and Chelsea Smith work together to care for their patients, and they both prioritize making sure each patient (and his or her loved ones) understand every step of their treatment, from diagnosis through recovery and living life to its fullest.

To find out more about the FHN Cardiology team, visit fhn.org



meet
DR. SIRAJ

Yaser Siraj, MD earned his medical degree from AGA Khan University Medical College in Karachi, Pakistan. After completing his Internal Medicine residency at Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis, Dr. Siraj completed a fellowship in Cardiovascular Disease at Wright State University School of Medicine in Dayton, Ohio. He then pursued a fellowship in Interventional Cardiology at Hartford Hospital in Connecticut.

Dr. Siraj has cared for patients at Rochelle Community Hospital in Rochelle and at SwedishAmerican Hospital and OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center in Rockford.



meet
CHELSEA SMITH

Chelsea Smith, MSN, FNP-BC is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner who specializes in caring for cardiology patients.

She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing at Saint Anthony College of Nursing in Rockford, where she also earned her Family Nurse Practitioner credentials. She has been caring for patients as a Registered Nurse in Rockford since 2011, and as a Nurse Practitioner in Cardiology since 2018. She is a member of the American College of Cardiology.



▲ Dr. Siraj is board-certified and fellowship-trained in interventional cardiology and cardiovascular medicine and experienced in nuclear cardiology, as well. He has been caring for patients for more than 20 years, and prioritizes a thorough, thoughtful examination, answering patients' questions, and following up to help each patient achieve their best possible heart health.

Dr. Siraj's close collaboration with cardiology nurse practitioner Chelsea Smith caring for patients in Rockford led to her joining the FHN Heart team – a partnership built on trust and shared commitment to patient care.

Though Dr. Siraj and Chelsea Smith are not employees or agents of FHN, they provide care for FHN patients and are an integral part of our dedicated cardiology team.

Complete Orthopedic Care, Close to Home



Every step you take, every move you make – your bones and joints are working hard to keep you going. With 206 bones and between 300 – 350 joints in the human body, it's no surprise that occasional aches, pains, and even injuries can happen. When they do, you don't have to travel far for expert care – **FHN's Orthopedics and Sports Medicine team is here for you, right in northwest Illinois.**

MEET FHN'S ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE TEAM

Kevin Draxinger, MD has been at the heart of FHN's Ortho team since 2006. A former Olympic athlete (he represented Canada as a member and captain of the nation's swim team in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics), Dr. Draxinger has cared for all types of injuries and conditions. If you've broken a bone, hurt your shoulder or your knee, chances are he's been the captain of your care team.

With the addition of Michal Zlowodzki, MD early this year and Woodley Desir, MD this spring, FHN's orthopedic capabilities have grown to rival those of hospitals in larger cities. You can get expert orthopedic care right here, close to home!

Dr. Draxinger brings extensive expertise in orthopedic care,

specializing in a wide range of treatments, including:

- Rotator cuff repairs, minimally invasive shoulder surgery, and acromioplasty to treat shoulder issues
- Total knee replacement
- Knee arthroscopy and meniscus repair
- Anterior and posterior hip replacement
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Trigger finger, which causes a finger to get stuck in a bent position
- Fractures in children and adults
- Back issues

Joining the team in 2024, **Dr. Zlowodzki** has years of experience in treating knee and hip problems and conditions. He is board-certified and fellowship-trained in hip surgery and orthopedic trauma, and specializes in:

- Anterior total hip replacements
- Total knee replacement
- Fracture care for children (ages 3+) and adults

While Dr. Zlowodzki is not an employee or agent of FHN, he provides care for FHN patients and is an integral part of our dedicated healthcare team*.

Dr. Desir, who will join FHN in May, brings an impressive background in sports medicine. He has been caring for orthopedic patients since 2009, including high-performance athletes for the Nashville Predators hockey team and Vanderbilt University's football, women's lacrosse, and baseball teams. His specialties include:

- Sports medicine
- Shoulder surgery
- Hip preservation
- Regenerative medicine

With advanced treatments, experienced specialists, and compassionate care, you don't have to travel far for world-class orthopedic services. Stay strong, stay active – trust FHN to keep you moving.



Our friendly front-line team helps patients schedule appointments and our nurses and certified medical assistants begin every appointment with a check on your progress. Left to right, our team is Brittney Mordini, RN; Karen Desalvo, RN; Nicole Kass, CCNA; patient service representatives Jennifer Miller Wiggins and Shaniqua Jackson; and Mary Price, CMA.



Kevin Draxinger, MD



Michal Zlowodzki, MD*



Woodley Desir, MD



▲ Our orthopedic and sports medicine physicians (here, Dr. Draxinger and certified clinical medical assistant (CCMA) Nicole Kass) work closely with the Ortho team to design a care plan and follow-up care for each patient.

New patients may speak with their primary care provider for a referral or call our Orthopedics Department at 815-599-7730. Visit fhn.org/ortho for more information.



▲ The foot and ankle form a complex system with 28 bones, 33 joints, and 112 ligaments, all controlled by 34 muscles. Dr. Hassan works with his patients to understand the details of their condition and together, design a treatment plan tailored just for them.

Total Ankle Replacement Available in Freeport

Most of the **millions of Americans** who live with arthritis can't point to any specific cause for their pain – our joints take a lot of wear and tear over the years, resulting in osteoarthritis.

If you have arthritis in your ankle, however, you can likely trace it back to an old injury. Studies have shown that more than 80 percent of ankle arthritis cases are post-traumatic or caused by an injury.

“ While dislocations and fractures are the most common injuries that lead to post-traumatic ankle arthritis, **SMALLER, FREQUENT INJURIES** also can cause the cartilage to wear away over time. ”

The standard treatment for ankle arthritis is the same as for arthritis in other areas of the body – over-the-counter pain medications, physical therapy, and assistive devices like shoe inserts and foot braces, and steroid injections as symptoms worsen.

When faced with **debilitating ankle arthritis**, surgeons and their patients could opt for fusion surgery, which fuses the bones of the joint together completely.

It reduces pain but doesn't allow the ankle to move or bend.

During his foot and ankle surgery residency at OSF St. Anthony Medical Center in Rockford, Dr. Hassan trained extensively and focused on total ankle replacement surgery. This procedure involves placing an artificial implant that, once healed, restores pain-free range of motion to the ankle joint.

Now, **FHN is proud to offer this procedure to patients** across northwest Illinois.

"The surgery itself doesn't require an overnight hospital stay," says Total Ankle Replacement Coordinator Keri Wall, BSN, RN, CPAN. "Recovery times vary, but most patients begin walking again within three to six weeks after surgery."

Keri and Podiatry Nurse Navigator Lorrie Heeren, BS, RN, CPAN work closely with each patient to ensure a smooth process before and after surgery.

Just like for total hip or knee replacement patients, Keri says, ankle replacement patients can look forward to plenty of support before their surgery. "We have a Total Ankle Replacement Workbook for each patient, and we'll see them for a pre-operative physical therapy session to educate them on the exercises and protocols they'll need as they recover."

In the operating room, Dr. Hassan has a **precise surgical plan created specifically to each patient's ankle** and the type of surgery they are having.

"We use **custom 3D-printed guides** made specific to your anatomy to ensure accuracy and reduce your surgery time," Dr. Hassan says.

We continue to successfully allow patients to return to their daily activities pain free. Patients are welcome to speak with their primary care provider or **call our Podiatry Department at 815-599-7150**.



Orthopedic Nurse Navigators (L-R) Keri Wall, Laura Setterstrom, and Podiatry Nurse Navigator, Lorrie Heeren work extensively with patients before and after surgery.

While completing his DPM, Dr. Hassan served as the president of the student chapter of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS), organizing workshops and presentations for the ACFAS national conference.

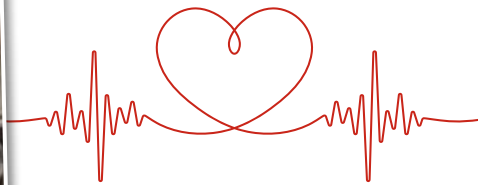




A Busy Spring

Al Evon, Foundation Director

Spring typically makes us think of renewal – green grass, buds on the trees, flowers blooming, etc. The **FHN Foundation** is constantly thinking about renewal – how can we upgrade facilities, equipment, and educational opportunities in order to help deliver healthcare excellence for our communities. More than that, we think about renewing the relationships with those who donate through the FHN Foundation and improve health and wellness for the patients served by local healthcare.



We truly appreciate your partnership, and we recognize that without you, the Foundation could not accomplish any of its work. Your gifts help save and change lives, and we cannot thank you enough for your kindness and generosity. One way we thank our donors is through our **quarterly donor luncheons**. We held the first luncheon in February 2025. Our featured speaker was **FHN Cardiologist Prasad Kilaru, MD, FSCAI, FACC**. Dr. Kilaru's presentation focused on Heart Health.

In the spring, the FHN Foundation is also busy renewing many of our special events.

The first special event of the year is our annual bowling event, **Striking Success**

for Children. The event will be held on May 1, 2025, and all funds raised through this event will benefit FHN Memorial Hospital pediatric therapy renovations. **These renovations are**

necessary because our total therapy visits increased by 125 percent in the last 6 months of 2024.

For more details on Striking Success, please visit www.fhn.org/strikingssuccess.



www.fhn.org/foundation • 815-599-6900

At the end of Spring, we will once again hold the **FHN Food Fight Against Cancer** to benefit the FHN Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital. The event will take place on June 13. Besides the wonderful food tasting, we plan to bring back **"UnMask the Singer."** We already have two volunteers from the community for the musical portion of the competition. If you'd like to volunteer to dress up in a costume and sing, please contact me by phone 815-599-7213, or email, aevon@fhn.org. Check the FHN website for more details about the event, starting in late April.



One of the other initiatives we are working on this spring is to **raise funds for two new anesthesia machines**. These new machines will make a difference for patients receiving surgical care. Thankfully, we have a matching gift to help us achieve this goal. To learn more, make a gift, and double your donation to improve healthcare, please visit www.fhn.org/donate-now or scan the QR code to the right.



Of course, spring is also known as a time for cleaning. Something you could do to make a difference for the charities and causes you care about is review and potentially 'clean up' some of your finances.

For example, if you have stocks, or other appreciated securities that have increased in value, rather than selling them, consider donating them to a charity. You may realize substantial tax benefits by donating securities that have appreciated in value since their acquisition.

By giving the security instead of selling it and donating the proceeds, you avoid payment of capital gains taxes. Therefore, if you own high-performing stocks you wish to sell, or you no longer need, and are looking for

a way to avoid owing capital gains tax, consider making a gift of your stock to help further our mission.

Plus, if you make a gift of stock rather than cash to us, you can use the cash you would have given to purchase more of the same stock. Then you will have made your gift, but you still own the same stock, only now with a higher basis.

You can find many other ideas to help you clean up your finances at www.fhn.org/foundation, and our gift planning portion of the site even has various gift calculators, videos and tutorials that you may find helpful.

Thank you again for partnering with us to deliver healthcare excellence for our communities.



FHN's Orange Bracelet Program Saves Lives by Identifying Postpartum Complications

When emergency healthcare personnel in our area “see orange,” they know just what to do – and why – thanks to an innovative program implemented at and expanded by FHN.

Orange is the color of post-birth alert bracelets given to new mothers to wear for six to 12 weeks after their babies are born, until their postpartum appointment with their provider. It is the central tenet of **FHN's Post-Birth Alert Orange Bracelet Program (PBAOB)** – one of the first of its kind in the nation.

FHN has enhanced this life-saving program with leadership in education and awareness, helping families recognize warning signs while ensuring EMTs, emergency staff, and providers follow best practices when treating postpartum patients.

New Moms Are at Risk

Studies show that women are at higher risk of dying from pregnancy and birth complications in the first six to 12 weeks after delivering a baby.

“This program, which serves as an important alert to potential medical complications, is designed to improve

the survival rate for postpartum women,” confirms FHN Memorial Hospital Perinatal Quality Nurse Danielle Wittig, BSN, RNC-ONQS and Post-Birth Alert Educator. “We have partnered with our community EMS providers and our own Emergency Department, and have also reached out to other emergency service providers to help them recognize complications that impact maternal mortality.”

The program is already making a difference locally. Linn Carter, MSN, APN, NEA-BC, Director of Women's and Med/Surg Services, saw the orange bracelet identification at work very quickly. “Within 10 weeks of implementing our program, we treated our first postpartum mom. She was experiencing severe high blood pressures, and was identified and treated within 22 minutes of arrival to the emergency department due to being identified by the orange bracelet.”

Post-Birth Alert Intervention: Tatyana's Story

Tatyana Vaughn, who delivered a beautiful baby boy at FHN's Birthing Center on January 5, experienced

◀ Of all the gifts a new baby receives, a healthy mom may be the most important. That's why FHN asks new mothers to wear an orange bracelet for several weeks after their baby is born, helping call attention to postpartum complications should they arise. Here, a first-time mom models her PBAOB “jewelry” while holding her infant son.

firsthand how the program benefits new moms. She had a healthy pregnancy with no complications, guided by FHN Ob/Gyn physician Lee Christine Sessler, MD, FACOG ... but she did face challenges a short time later.

Tatyana shares, “When I left the hospital to go home after giving birth, I was given the orange bracelet and instructed to keep it on in case of an emergency related to postpartum care. A week after giving birth, I began experiencing severe pain and I knew what to do.”

FHN's Emergency Department Sees Orange ... and Answers the Call

Concerned about her condition, Tatyana went to FHN's Emergency Department. Staff members saw her bracelet, immediately setting off the post-birth protocol. She explains, “I only waited about 5 to 10 minutes in the waiting room. After that, they quickly ran tests to determine what was wrong. An ultrasound revealed I had retained placental tissue in my uterus, which had given me a blood infection. I was admitted to the hospital and underwent surgery to remove the tissue, and started on antibiotics to clear the infection.”

Tatyana remained in the hospital for three days, but was anxious to get home to her little one. “I didn't want to be away from my baby, so the medical team allowed me to go home after my blood tests came back negative for infections,” she says. “I did return to the hospital for the next seven days to

receive IV antibiotics to ensure my blood returned to normal, and that all went as planned.”

After her emergency care, Tatyana is truly grateful. She says, “I’m doing really well and the baby is perfect! I believe the orange bracelet identified me quickly as a postpartum patient and I appreciated the prompt care I received. I was in a lot of pain and felt weak, but luckily, I was able to walk into the ER and verbalize the problems I was having. That bracelet would be even more important for someone who couldn’t do that.”

FHN Program Gains National Recognition

Now, FHN is positioned to broadly share this program that helped Tatyana and other mothers like her. As a provider of curriculum and ongoing education, FHN created Post-Birth Alert instruction materials that are now an integral part of Region One EMS’s on-boarding and annual competency training, ensuring that emergency personnel are equipped to identify and respond effectively to postpartum complications. Region One EMS covers Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, DeKalb, Ogle, Lee, Whiteside, and Carroll counties.

Other health organizations across the U.S. are taking notice of FHN’s program and are incorporating our curriculum and implementation strategies, which our team presented at the Synova Perinatal Leadership Forum in Florida and the ILPQC Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative, where the team was recognized with several awards.

“We are really proud of our Ob/Gyn team,” says Linn. “After the orange bracelet initiative was shared with us, we saw opportunities to enhance it even further. Our dedicated professionals developed a comprehensive program that is helping new moms throughout our region, and indeed, its impact is growing beyond Illinois. Our commitment to postpartum health is unwavering.”

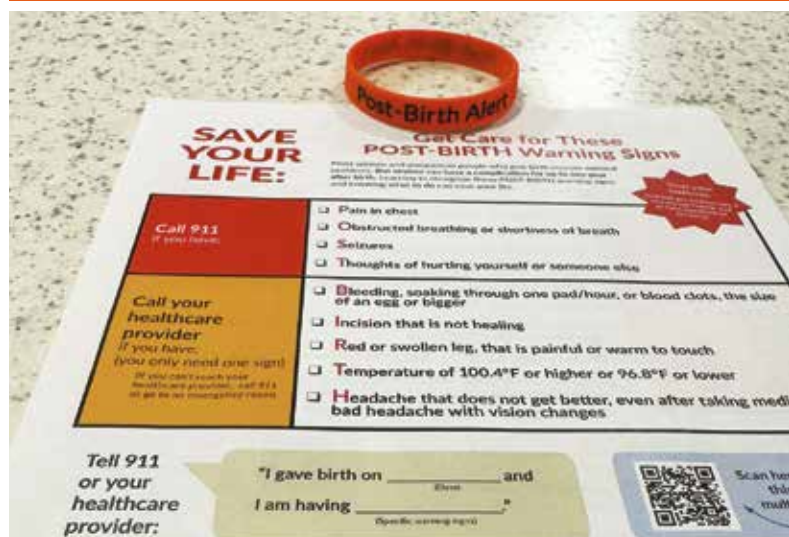


Postpartum Complications Call for Quick Action

Women in the six- to 12-week period after giving birth are at increased risk of a number of serious complications, including:

- Hypertensive disorder in pregnancy and after – preeclampsia or eclampsia
- Venous thromboembolism or blood clots
- Sepsis
- Cardiomyopathy, the thickening of the heart’s walls
- Perinatal depression
- Substance use disorder

FHN’s Post-Birth Alert Orange Bracelet Program (PBAOB) helps patients, families, and EMS personnel recognize these conditions and quickly respond, improving overall outcomes.



(Top) FHN has led regional efforts to educate and prepare new families, along with emergency personnel, to promptly identify postpartum complications. Our region covers Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, DeKalb, Ogle, Lee, Whiteside, and Carroll counties. ▶

(Bottom) “If a woman has a medical emergency and isn’t able to communicate, the orange bracelet will inform providers and emergency personnel of her postpartum status,” says FHN OB Service Line Perinatal Educator Keri Schubert, BSN, RNC-MNN, C-EFM, Post-Birth Alert EMS Liaison. “That fast identification can be crucial in saving that woman’s life.” Members of the PBAOB team (L-R): Keri Schubert, BSN, RNC-MNN, C-EFM, Post-Birth Alert EMS Liaison, OB Service Line Perinatal Educator; Asia Walker, RN; Baylee Noll, RN; Michelle Allen, RN; Marisa Upmann, RN; and Danielle Wittig, BSN, RNC-ONQS, Post-Birth Alert Educator, Perinatal Quality Nurse.





Celebrating Exceptional Caregivers



The DAISY Award

FOR EXTRAORDINARY NURSES

IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES

'Simply a Remarkable Nurse'

Congratulations to FHN's March DAISY Award winner, Nursing Supervisor, **Courtney Dodds, RN, BSN**, who, according to her nominator, "truly deserves the highest recognition FHN can bestow on its nurses."

"My father has been in and out of FHN hospital since Christmas, including time in the ICU. These last few weeks have been very scary times for my dad and so confusing for our family. During this time, we have encountered many FHN staff members, many of them amazing in their own ways.

Courtney has gone to extraordinary measures to make time for my Mom and I. She has carved out time from her busy schedule to sit one-on-one with us, explaining my father's care plan to us. Her bedside manner with my father is absolutely heart-warming. Her passion for her patients and her empathy for their family members is so genuine that it shows in everything she does – no matter how small the task.



◀ Left to right are Ambulatory Care Team Leader Brandy Quinn, President and CEO Mark Gridley, DAISY winner Courtney Dodds, Med/Surg Nursing Operations Leader Tabitha Graves, Nursing Operations Leader Med/Surg; and Vice President, COO/CNO Kathy Martinez.

... I am sure in all of this Courtney would say that she is simply doing her job. However, the impact she has made in my dad's care and the compassion she has had with his family is remarkable. We are so heartened to know FHN employs a nurse of this stature. *She is simply a remarkable nurse, clearly driven by her compassionate heart in all she does.*"

FHN is proud to participate in the DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) Award, an international recognition program that honors and celebrates the skillful, compassionate care nurses provide every day.

The DAISY Foundation was established by the family of J. Patrick Barnes after he died from complications of the autoimmune disease ITP (Idiopathic

Thrombocytopenic Purpura) in 1999. During his hospitalization, his family deeply appreciated the care and compassion shown to Patrick and his entire family. When he died, they felt compelled to say "thank you" to nurses in a very public way. ■



The BEE Award

FOR EXCEPTIONAL CAREGIVERS

'So Reassuring and So Kind'

"I feel Ruth deserves the BEE award because she goes above and beyond for her patients," says the nomination for Podiatry Scribe **Ruth Buisker, CMA**, for truly going out of her way to help.



JOIN OUR TEAM

fhn.org/careers



◀ Left to right are President and CEO Mark Gridley, Operations Leader Megan Kerchner, Ambulatory Care Team Leader Brandy Quinn, BEE winner Ruth Buisker, Assistant VP, Ambulatory Operations Kim Roepsch, and Vice President, COO/CNO Kathy Martinez.

"... It is always such relief to see Ruth's bright smile and cheerful attitude. Every time I've been in the doctors' office, you can always see her smiling and greeting patients. She steps out of her way to ask you how you truly are. She is always on top of your care and is so knowledgeable in what you are going through. She's so reassuring and so kind!

... I was having pain in my foot for a while and my husband was actually seeing Dr. Hassan for a surgical procedure. Ruth asked me if I was OK, because she noticed I was limping and in excruciating pain. She told me to follow up with a provider, and Dr. Hassan saw on my x-rays that I needed surgery.

Ruth saw how this news was devastating, and took the time to

explain in-depth all I needed to get my paperwork transferred to Dr. Hassan to complete the surgery.

After surgery, she was sure to ask me how I was doing post-op and listened to every question I had and ensured she communicated it all to Dr. Hassan. She helped ease my anxiety if I needed extra papers filled out or if I had questions to forward it to the doctor."

The BEE (Being Exceptional Everyday) Award honors patient care (non-nurse) staff who assist a nurse or a patient and his or her family in delivering excellent patient care. ■



Nominating an FHN nurse or team member is a beautiful way to say thank you. Learn more about the DAISY and BEE Awards, see some past winners, and nominate someone who has gone the extra mile for you or a family member at www.fhn.org/daisy-bee.



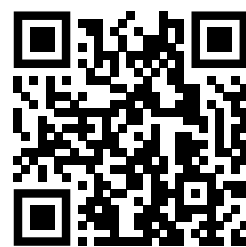
TO OUR TEAM OF TALENTED
STAFF COMMITTED TO
DELIVERING HEALTHCARE
EXCELLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY



Your healthcare information is just a click away!

MyFHN lets you get lab results, diagnostic test results, discharge instructions, check your appointment history, and see upcoming appointments. With just a few clicks, you can also request or cancel an appointment and send and receive secure messages with your providers.

Enroll online using one of two processes (depending on whether or not you have an email address on file with us and know your medical records number). If you need assistance, please ask the staff, call MyFHN Support at **815-599-6907**, or email MyFHN@fhn.org.





Welcome to FHN's Calendar of Events

We are proud to offer a wide variety of programs, classes, screenings, and support groups for people in our communities. Scan the QR code (or visit www.fhn.org/calendar) to check out the details on all of our upcoming events online.



STRIKING SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN

May 1, 2025

4 Seasons Bowling Center

Check-in begins at 5 p.m.

First ball thrown at 6 p.m.

Sign up individually or as a team!

Join the FHN Foundation for a fun-filled evening of bowling with friends at this year's *Lights, Camera, BOWL*. We invite participants to dress as characters from your team's chosen movie or genre. Have fun with it!

Choose your teammates and raise funds for FHN pediatric therapy renovations!

All proceeds raised will support FHN Memorial Hospital pediatric therapy renovations, including two private treatment rooms to allow for parent observation, storage areas, and new furniture and equipment.

Want to bowl, but don't have a team?

No problem! Sign up individually and we will match you with other individuals to make a six-person team.



REGISTER BY THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2025

\$300 per team: each player raises/donates a minimum of \$50

— Additional incentives available with higher donation amounts —

Late Registration (after April 17): \$330 per team, \$55 per player

To register, download a pledge form, make a donation, or for more information, visit www.fhn.org/strikinguccess or contact the FHN Foundation at 815-599-6900 or cseal@fhn.org.

If you are unable to attend the event, but would like to make a charitable contribution in support of the pediatric therapy renovations at FHN Memorial Hospital, please donate using the registration link above or stop by the FHN Foundation at FHN Memorial Hospital.

Insight



We're here, for you.

Insight is published by **FHN**

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