

Fall 2019

HealthMatters

A Journal of Wellness and Good Health Care



Expanding access

from state-of-the-art **technology** to **prevention**.

In this issue...

Excellence at Work leads to



**Best Places to
Work in ME**

From left to right: Christina Netten, DNP, FNP-C; Brooke Erwin, MA;
Kenneth Wells, MD

MaineGeneral Health

HealthMatters

HealthMatters is published as a service for the people of the Kennebec Valley region. Information is written by MaineGeneral's Marketing and Communications staff.

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Message from the CEO

You want access to the highest-quality care and you want it close to home.

You want the latest technology and qualified, compassionate staff who work with you for the care you need.

You also want information and tools to stay healthy.

We're with you.

Our staff work tirelessly to continually improve the quality of care you receive and give you the best patient experience possible. And we work to make sure the services you need the most are convenient for you.

You see this commitment come to life at our new Gardiner location, which houses six high-quality services under one roof. Soon, you will have access to Save My Spot at all three MaineGeneral Express Care locations where you can view current wait times and reserve your spot before you go to be seen.

In Waterville, we have expanded our partnership with the Alford Youth & Community Center to house prevention and sports medicine services under the Peter G. Alford Pathway to Wellness.



Our skilled, compassionate surgical staff have been expanding the range of minimally invasive services offered to patients.

This focus on expanding services where you want them – right here in the Kennebec Valley, close to home – means you don't have to travel far for the high-quality health care you and your family deserve.

Finally, we're proud to be one of the 2019 Best Places to Work in Maine. Excellence at Work is what we deliver every day – to you, our patients, and to our own family of dedicated staff.

Chuck Hays
President & CEO
MaineGeneral Health

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MaineGeneral's newest location now open in Gardiner.

Dr. Abigail Hoke, right, Gardiner Family Medicine

MaineGeneral Medical Center offers a variety of high-quality health care services at its new Gardiner facility, which opened Monday, Oct. 7. The facility, with convenient access right off of I-295, includes Gardiner Family Medicine; MaineGeneral Express Care; MaineGeneral Orthopaedics; Workplace Health; Imaging; and Lab. Having all of these services in one place will result in better, more coordinated care close to home, and help patients get the right care at the right time at the right place.

Continued on next page

Coming soon,
MaineGeneral will
launch Save My Spot

**SAVE MY
SPOT**

at its new Express Care location in Gardiner, as well as its other Express Care locations in Augusta and Waterville. With Save My Spot, you can go online, choose your location and time, fill out a basic form and wait from the comfort of your home. You can check wait times online as well. Once you arrive and check in at MaineGeneral Express Care, you should be seen promptly by a member of our medical staff.

With Save My Spot, you can spend less time waiting for care when you don't feel well. Walk-ins are always welcome, too.

Go to www.mainegeneral.org/expresscare to learn more.

More About Our Services in Gardiner

Gardiner Family Medicine

Gardiner Family Medicine provides high-quality, comprehensive and compassionate care at every stage of a person's life. We are accepting new patients.

Hours: Monday – Friday,
7:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Phone: **582-6608**

MaineGeneral Express Care

We are proud to bring Express Care services to Gardiner. Other locations are in Augusta and Waterville. MaineGeneral Express Care helps people access timely care when their primary care provider is not available and they have non-life-threatening symptoms.

Hours: Monday – Friday,
8 a.m. – 7:30 p.m., Saturday and
Sunday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Phone: **582-6608**

MaineGeneral Orthopaedics

MaineGeneral Orthopaedics provides outstanding, high-quality and personalized orthopaedic care in a technically advanced setting. Our specialized care includes sports

medicine, hand surgery, spine surgery, joint replacement of the hip, knee, shoulder and ankle, treatment of complex fractures, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and a variety of surgical and nonsurgical podiatry care. Our offices are located in Augusta, Gardiner, Oakland and Winthrop.

Phone: **621-8700**

Workplace Health

Workplace Health is MaineGeneral's occupational health and wellness practice partnering with employers to provide services ranging from drug testing to preplacement medical evaluations to work injury treatment. Gardiner is a new location for Workplace Health; other service locations include Augusta and Waterville.

Hours: Wednesday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Phone: **621-7550**

Imaging

MaineGeneral offers appointments and walk-in mammography and X-rays in Gardiner. Weekend/evening hours are available for Express Care patients with X-ray needs. We have

state-of-the-art 3D mammography technology in Gardiner, as well as our MaineGeneral sites in Augusta, Waterville and Winthrop. Also at Imaging are DEXA (measures bone density) and a new digital X-ray system.

Hours: Monday – Friday,
8 a.m. – 7:30 p.m., Saturday and
Sunday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Phone: **588-3580**

Lab

We are pleased to bring extended-hours phlebotomy services in Gardiner to serve area patients and community members who have lab testing needs.

Hours: Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. –
7:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday,
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Phone: **588-3590**

We look forward to caring for you in our new Gardiner facility.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a life-threatening illness or injury, call 911 or proceed to the nearest emergency room.

Ashley Veilleux, MaineGeneral Lab Services





The Alfond Youth & Community Center in Waterville

Partnering in the Community – Alfond Youth & Community Center

Peter Alfond had a vision for the place he called home: meet people where they are in their health care journey, making “health” not only a state of being, but also a culture. While Peter passed away two years ago, his vision remains a focus of MaineGeneral’s approach to the health of the community.

Now through the Peter Alfond Foundation, more Kennebec Valley families have access to health and wellness programs – right in their community at the Alfond Youth & Community Center (AYCC).

The Peter G. Alfond Pathway to Wellness includes MaineGeneral services provided by the Peter Alfond Prevention & Healthy Living Center of MaineGeneral Medical Center and MaineGeneral Sports Medicine.

“We’re pleased to offer more services to keep our community healthy and do so with a valued partner like the Alfond Youth & Community Center,” says Chuck Hays, MaineGeneral Health CEO.

MaineGeneral will offer evidence-based programs at the AYCC for adults at risk for, or who have, chronic disease. In addition, any active individual can access free athletic training services at the AYCC.

“One of the most exciting aspects of transforming into the Alfond Youth & Community Center is expanding the already strong partnership

with MaineGeneral by adding their physical presence to our renovated facility,” says Ken Walsh, AYCC CEO. “Joint programs include supporting MaineGeneral’s evidence-based programs for adults with, or at-risk for, developing chronic disease, like the Diabetes Prevention Program, by providing participants with free four-month memberships. A true win-win-win for MaineGeneral, the AYCC, and all our community members!”

MaineGeneral Sports Medicine

The community-based sports medicine program at the AYCC serves active community members of all ages with the same professional athletic training services MaineGeneral has provided to area middle school, high school and college athletes for more than 30 years.

Injury assessments and recommendations from professional athletic trainers are free to community members. One of MaineGeneral’s nationally certified and state-licensed athletic trainers will perform the evaluation and make recommendations for initial treatment and rehabilitation. They can provide follow-up care and assist with referrals.

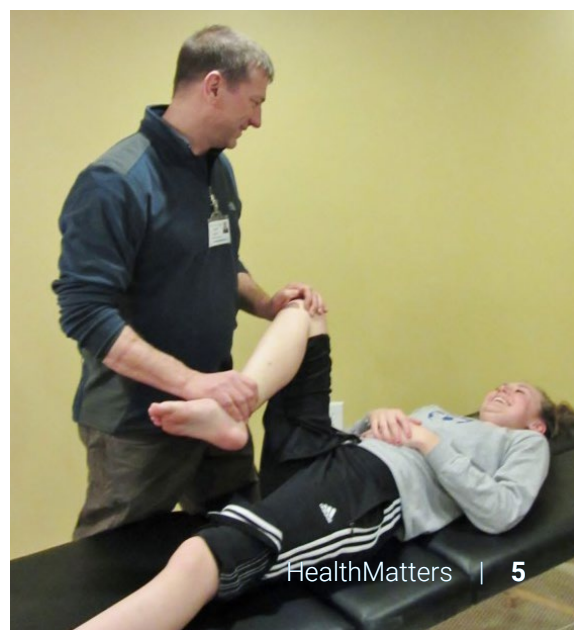
MaineGeneral Sports Medicine services available at the AYCC:

- Assessment of athletic- and activity-related injuries;
- Concussion assessment;

- Gait assessment and guidance choosing appropriate athletic/ running shoes to meet your needs;
- Independent rehabilitation exercise programs;
- Initial treatment and care;
- Injury prevention programs;
- Recommendations for athletic braces and sports medicine equipment;
- Referral assistance to health care medical staff;
- Rehabilitation assistance; and
- First aid classes for coaches

“I can’t think of any better way to serve the community than by helping people address their health care needs so they can achieve their wellness goals and maintain an active lifestyle,” says Richard B. Garini, ATC of MaineGeneral Sports Medicine.

Certified athletic trainer Rich Garini and patient





Inspiration for Life

Cancer Survivors Day

Cancer Survivors Day: Seasons of Hope

Cancer Survivors Day 2019 was truly inspiring, with nearly 1,000 attendees. The opening ceremony celebrated seasons of hope, and cancer survivors and their families were celebrated in many ways throughout the day. Thank you to all who came! Here are some pictures of this heartwarming event!



Peter Alfond Prevention & Healthy Living Center

The Peter Alfond Prevention & Healthy Living Center of MaineGeneral has been offering community members classes in the areas of healthy cooking and eating; healthy mind and body; and physical movement. Classes are at the medical centers and at locations in the community. Being onsite in the renovated space at the AYCC is exciting for LeeAnna Lavoie, MPH, CHES, director of Prevention Services at MaineGeneral.

“This supports our collective goals of being able to increase access to prevention services in greater Waterville,” says Lavoie. “Having a dynamic community location for them to do that is thrilling. Our team can bring expertise around the teaching kitchen and mind-body work, not only for adults, but for children and families as well. Between our teams, we can provide these wellness services in a bigger way and see long-term positive health outcomes in the Waterville area.”

Healthy cooking class at the Alfond Center for Health.

To learn more about prevention classes, visit www.maine-general.org/classes-events.

To make an appointment for sports medicine services at the AYCC, please call or text: **207-242-6207**, or email: mgs.m.aycc@maine-general.org.

Join us at the AYCC for our FREE Quarterly Event

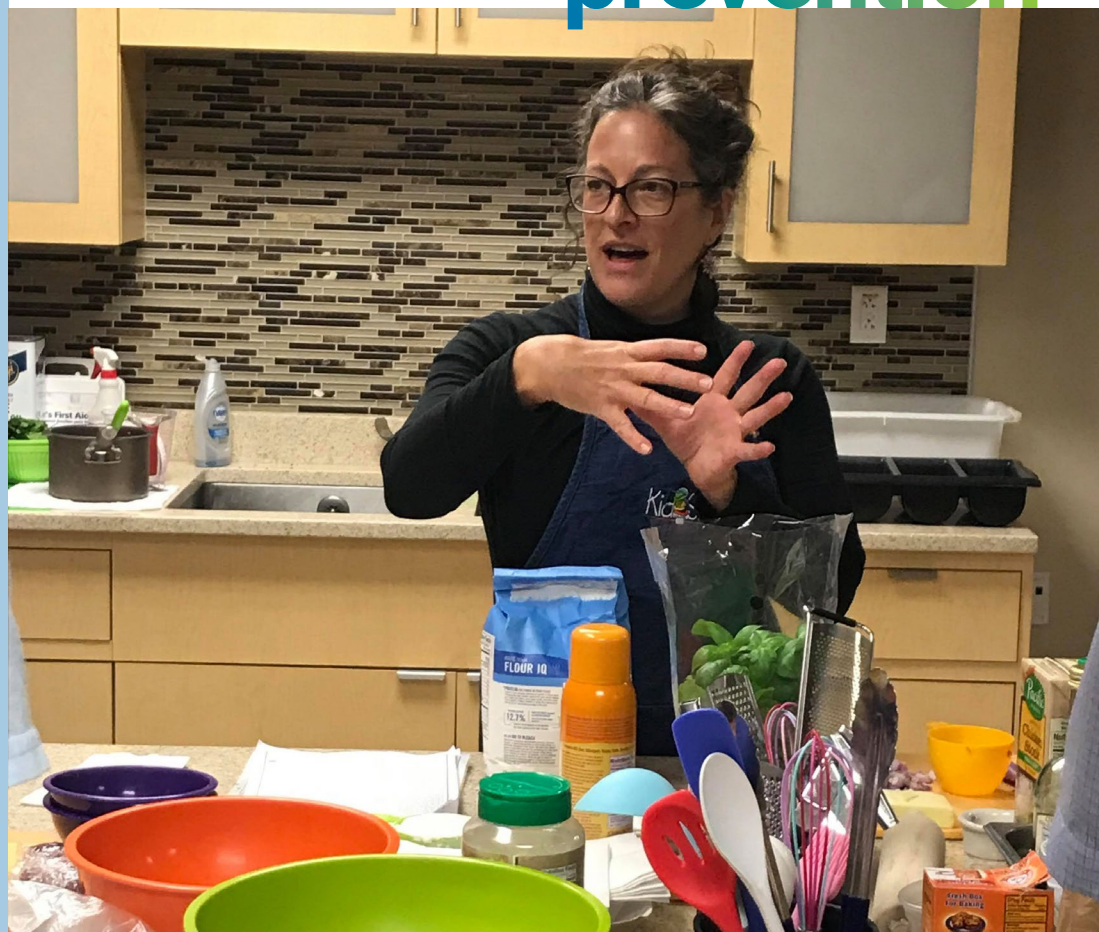
Celebrate Movement

Join us for an evening of low-impact, gentle-movement practices and breathwork to honor and celebrate our bodies. Learn movements to increase strength and flexibility and create a stronger connection with your inner self.

Location: Alfond Youth & Community Center, Waterville

Date: Monday, Dec. 9, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

prevention



Investing in the Latest Surgical Robot Technology

MaineGeneral Medical Center (MGMC) continues to invest in state-of-the-art equipment to expand access to minimally invasive surgeries in the Kennebec Valley.

This summer, the medical center upgraded its surgical robot in Augusta to a model that advances robotic surgery techniques. MaineGeneral has also installed a surgical robot at the Thayer Center for Health in Waterville, where day (outpatient) surgeries are performed.

“Patients find that surgeries performed with the robot require less pain medication and fewer complications, and they are able to return home sooner,” says Dr. Ian Reight, head of MGMC’s robotic surgery team.

“The surgical robot gives us the ability to perform surgeries that we used to have to send patients elsewhere for,” he adds. “With the increase in our commitment to robotic surgery, this trend only increases, and more patients can stay near home for more complex procedures, like abdominal wall reconstruction for hernia repair and complex urologic procedures.”

MaineGeneral is currently the only medical center in the state that uses the surgical robot for emergency procedures, meaning the robot and medical staff trained in robotic surgery are available 24/7.

The new surgical robot enhances access throughout the abdomen and chest, and is primarily used for surgeries in the areas of bariatric, colorectal, gynecology, urology, thoracic and general surgery.

Right: Ian Reight, MD, demonstrates robotic surgery at a community event in Waterville.



Robot Surgery Fast Facts

14 surgeons actively using the surgical robot

539 surgeries using the surgical robot in past fiscal year (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019)

MGMC is the only hospital in Maine using the robot for emergency surgeries (available 24/7)

Examples of surgeries include:

- Anti-reflux procedure
- Bladder (cystectomy)
- Colorectal
- Gallbladder
- Gastric bypass (for weight loss)
- Hernia
- Kidney
- Ovaries
- Prostate
- Rectum
- Spleen
- Stomach
- Uterus (hysterectomy)

At Thayer, the surgeries we perform with the robot are day surgeries:

- Hernia
- Gallbladder
- Benign hysterectomies

Benefits of robotic surgery over open and laparoscopic surgery include*

- Lower complication rates
- Less recurrence
- Shorter length of stay
- Less pain

*every case is different and individual results may vary

Instant Heartburn Relief – From a Quarter-sized Device

Chronic acid reflux and heartburn caused by a large hiatal hernia made Debra Fuller's life miserable for years.

She often felt bloated and uncomfortable and simple acts like bending over caused her reflux to act up.

"I just dealt with it for a long time," the 57-year-old South Gardiner woman says. "I had a lot of heartburn and probably was taking seven or eight antacids at a time to deal with the symptoms. And that never really helped."

Fortunately for Fuller, relief finally came in late July – with the LINX® procedure, a new form of antireflux surgery now available to patients thanks to Dr. Ian Reight and his colleagues at MaineGeneral Surgery.

"I had to stay in the hospital overnight after my procedure and when they brought me a regular breakfast the next morning, I was able to eat it and it wasn't painful. I'm now three months out and I don't have any problems with reflux. My experience with Dr. Reight and his staff was wonderful!"

– Debra Fuller

What is the LINX® procedure?

LINX® offers immediate relief for patients whose chronic gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) can't be controlled medically, including through the daily use of medications such as proton pump inhibitors. Unlike other standard surgical treatments, it uses a tiny bracelet of magnetic titanium beads connected by a thin wire – about the size of a quarter – to surround and compress the lower esophageal sphincter, which normally prevents stomach fluids from backing up into the esophagus.



LINX® device

The device's magnetic beads prevent gastric pressure from opening the muscle but are flexible enough that the force of swallowing allows them to expand as needed to allow normal passage of food into the stomach.

Reight, who has done several cases in recent months, says the procedure takes about 30 minutes to complete. All of the cases were done using MaineGeneral's surgical robot technology.



A selfie of very satisfied LINX® procedure patient Debra Fuller and her husband Jon during a recent weekend trip to Beddington in their motor home. "No acid reflux and no heartburn. I'm one happy girl!"

"Reflux affects a large number of people. These people have suffered and, until you fix it, they hadn't realized just how much," he says. "They tell me, 'I can sleep all night and I don't wake up choking and gasping.' 'I can eat things I enjoy and I can bend over and pick up my kids without everything coming up my esophagus.'"

"When we can give that back to somebody so they're no longer miserable – without having to go somewhere else for their care – we can make their lives so much better," he adds. "I really enjoy seeing the difference it makes in their lives. It's incredible!"

MaineGeneral Offers a Less-invasive Option for Total Hip Replacement with a Quicker Recovery

Osteoarthritis can be a life-limiting condition, with stiff and swollen joints causing pain during movement or even at rest.

It can keep people from participating in activities they enjoy. Cheryl Perkins knows this all too well.

Perkins, 53, of Dexter, had no cartilage in her right hip – the delicate gliding surface of the joint – which resulted in extremely painful bone-on-bone contact made worse by bone spurs. She couldn't walk for long periods of time without paying the price during pain-filled sleepless nights.

Thanks to SuperPath®, a new minimally invasive total hip replacement procedure offered exclusively by MaineGeneral Orthopaedics' surgeon David Wexler, MD, FRCS, Perkins has reclaimed her quality of life – with gusto!

Wexler began offering this technique 14 months ago and has performed it on 80 patients to date. He is assisted by Jenee Wechsler, ACNP, who provides treatment and long-term care for patients including those with arthritis of the hip and other musculoskeletal issues. An integral part of the MaineGeneral Orthopaedics team, she works closely with Wexler and other orthopaedic surgeons to provide pre- and post-operative care and operating room assistance.

"She's become so proficient with her surgical assistant role that she's now one of the educators for the SuperPath® technique," Wexler says.



Cheryl Perkins (seated) and family

"Since my surgery, I don't have any pain. I get excited saying that six weeks after my surgery, I was walking around Quincy Market in Boston, on uneven cobblestones, with no trouble – and wearing sandals!"

– Cheryl Perkins

What is SuperPath®?

SuperPath® is a tissue-sparing approach where no muscles or tendons are cut. Unlike more traditional total hip replacement surgery, it does not require surgical dislocation of the hip. Because of this, there is little trauma to the surrounding muscles and tendons.

Benefits of this minimally invasive approach for patients include:

- A smaller incision and a technique that spares critical muscles and tendons surrounding the hip;
- A faster hospital recovery; and
- A quicker return to work and activities of daily living with no typical restrictions.

Because of the less-invasive nature of the procedure, Wexler notes that the initial recovery time for patients is faster than it is for those who have traditional hip replacement surgery.

"In the first six weeks, patients who have undergone the approach seem to do much better, much quicker," he says.

Total hip replacement surgery is offered by referral only. If you think you could benefit from this procedure to address your chronic hip pain, please speak with your health care provider to determine if a referral to MaineGeneral Orthopaedics is appropriate.



David Wexler, MD
and Jenee Wechsler, ACNP-BC

Welcome New Medical Staff

More than 50 medical staff have joined MaineGeneral in 2019. This helps keep quality health care services in our community. We're with you!

Cardiology

Adam Caldwell, MD
Jorge Escobar Valle, MD
MaineHealth Cardiology

Emergency Medicine

Daniel Cabral, MD
Giles Gifford, DO (Fellow)
Yrene Holmes, DO
Milan Satcher, MD (Fellow)
Raymond Wong, DO (Fellow)
Alfond Center for Health (ACH) and Thayer Center for Health (TCH)

Family Medicine

Kari Koch, MD
Christina Lincoln, DO
Scott Lowman, MD
Family Medicine Institute

Joanna Rulf, DO
Gardiner Family Medicine

Parviz Shavandy, MD
Thayer Internal Medicine

Gastroenterology

Joan Kheder, MD
MaineGeneral Gastroenterology

Geriatrics

Carlen Smith, MD (Fellow)
Maine Dartmouth Geriatric Medicine

Hospitalists

Jason Blake, DO
Stephanie Corriveau, DO
Joe Maalouf, MD
James Zafiris, MD
Adult Hospitalist Service

Medical Oncology

Lindsey Hathaway, MD
Sneha Purvey, MD
Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care (HACCC)

Neuromuscular Medicine

John Diefenderfer, DO (Fellow)
William McDougall, DO (Fellow)
Maine Dartmouth Collaborative Care Center

Obstetrics/Gynecology

Shannon Carr, MD
MaineGeneral Obstetrics & Gynecology

Orthopaedics

Michael Rodger, MD
MaineGeneral Orthopaedics

Pediatrics

Musa Bolkent, MD
Kennebec Pediatrics

Sports Medicine

Stefanie Lewis, DO (Fellow)
Angela Rufo, DO (Fellow)
Maine Dartmouth Sports Medicine Fellowship Program

Surgery

Mark Grant, MD
MaineGeneral Surgery (general surgery and trauma/critical care)

Michael Neilson, MD
MaineGeneral Surgery (vascular)

Anh Pham, MD
MaineGeneral Surgery (vascular)

Professional Services Staff Appointments

Amanda Behnke, PMHNP
Augusta Family Medicine

Katie Bessey, FNP
Infectious Disease

Angela Coton, PA-C
MaineGeneral Ear, Nose & Throat

Andaria Crespi, PMHNP
Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

Michelle Dawiczuk, PA-C
Waterville Family Practice

Danielle Doyon, PA-C
Waterville Family Practice

Sarah Havener, FNP
Augusta Family Medicine

Robert Keith, PA-C
Lovejoy Health Center

Kristen Knopp, FNP
MaineGeneral Psychiatry

Taylor LeBorgne, PA-C
Family Medicine Institute

Julie Lundman, CNM
MaineGeneral Midwifery Services

Janice Oliveira, CRNA
Kennebec Anesthesia Associates

Rebecca Panassow, PA-C
Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

Jane Pelletier, PA-C
MaineGeneral Wound Healing & Hyperbaric Medicine

Olena Pylypendo, CRNA
Kennebec Anesthesia Associates

Danielle Rice, FNP
Critical Care Unit

Alicia Sanborn, PA-C
Workplace Health

Adam Soucy, PA-C
Workplace Health

Deborah Stewart, PMHNP
Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

Margo Taylor, FNP
MaineGeneral Urology

Kimberly Vaughn, CRNA
Kennebec Anesthesia Associates

Rachel Zaccaria, CNM
MaineGeneral Midwifery Services

New Medical Staff Spotlight: Joan Kheder, MD, MPH



Dr. Joan Kheder joined MaineGeneral Gastroenterology's skilled, compassionate staff at the end of the summer. He graduated from the University of Aleppo in Syria and completed his gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

MaineGeneral Gastroenterology offers high-quality, comprehensive care for patients with gastrointestinal diseases – in both Augusta and Waterville. With state-of-the-art procedures and equipment, our team works with you to diagnose and treat digestive system problems.

MaineGeneral Gastroenterology offers a full range of diagnostic and therapeutic services including:

- Colonoscopy and upper endoscopy, with expertise in advanced technologies such as esophageal manometry and impedance/Ph probe testing
- Capsule endoscopy
- Endoscopic ultrasound
- Barrett's esophagus with Radiofrequency ablation (RFA)
- ERCP (endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography)
- FibroScan® of the liver
- PEG (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy tubes)

To learn more about these and other MaineGeneral services, visit www.mainegeneral.org.

Patient Testimonials

"I just can't even imagine what I would have done without MaineGeneral Orthopaedics when I dislocated my shoulder. Everyone was so responsive. Absolutely amazing care and kindness! I am so grateful!"



– *George Bourque, Randolph*

"I recently had outpatient vascular surgery with Dr. Carson and his team. Assisting were nurse Amy Bryant and vascular technologist Rachael Carrier. Both impressed me with their personal touch, professionalism, humanity and good humor. They made me feel relaxed and like I was among friends. Dr. Carson respected their professional knowledge. I felt comforted that all of them had my best interests at heart. This experience gives me continued confidence in the staff and care at MaineGeneral."



– *Ron Lovaglio, Augusta*

"I had a very positive experience from the moment I walked through the main entrance to the time I went home after my surgery. I was greeted by smiling faces every step of the way.

The nurses answered every question I had and treated me with respect. The CNAs were outstanding and made my stay as comfortable as possible. Everyone I encountered exemplified what it means to give your best."

– *Tara Ranks, Waterville*

"I spent 11 days in the hospital and my care was totally amazing. My journey started in the Emergency Department at Thayer where I received great care from Dr. Boots. She knew how serious my condition was and cared for me for 11 hours until an inpatient bed was available. Dr. Edwards (who I would give 5 stars, plus a gold star, plus a hug) figured out the cause of my being ill for so for many years, was always there for me - he was fabulous. Dr. Ferrara (Cardiology) and Dr. Ranganath (Pulmonary) were professional and caring. The staff on 2 West went above and beyond, were extremely professional and had wonderful smiles. Everyone looked at me as a person on the inside and appreciated and supported my independent spirit. I can't say enough about my patient experience with MaineGeneral!"

– *Patti Becklund, Waterville*

Gerard Austin – Patient, Employee

Gerard Austin is no stranger to MaineGeneral. Employed by the organization in many roles since 1980 including adult and pediatric critical care, he has spent the past 15 years at MaineGeneral’s Sleep Diagnostics Center in Waterville.

But until late March, he rarely experienced the health care world from a patient’s perspective. That changed quickly and dramatically when an injury during a home project led to a catastrophic series of events that nearly cost him his life.

Thanks to the expert medical care and support he received, the Solon resident was able to return to work in mid-May with a much deeper appreciation for the high-quality services MaineGeneral provides to its patients and their families.

“From start to finish, I got excellent care and, equally important, so did my family. MaineGeneral saved my life.”



MaineGeneral has been named one of the 2019 Best Places to Work in Maine. This awards program of the Society for Human Resource Management - Maine State Council (MESHRM) and Best Companies Group identifies and recognizes the best places of employment in Maine, benefiting the state’s economy, its workforce and businesses.

MaineGeneral Health is filled with dedicated, compassionate and highly skilled clinical and support staff who display “excellence at work” in their interactions with patients, family members and visitors.

Each member of our team strives daily to provide the best care and services possible to patients, families, coworkers and our community.

Excellence at Work is not a tagline. It’s a way of life at MaineGeneral Health!

We’re hiring! Join our team!
Learn more at www.mainegeneral.org/careers.

Gerard’s experience as a patient reminded him what is special about the culture of MaineGeneral, and the dedication of all its employees.

“I’ve never been as proud of being part of such a quality organization as I am now.”

“One may think because I’ve been here for so long that it influenced the care we received but that couldn’t be further from the truth because most of the folks who took care of us didn’t know me. It was simply the high-quality care they provide. They were all so amazing and I’m so grateful and feel so blessed.”

Annual campaign donors

List recognizes gifts made between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019



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- Harold Alford Foundation
- Peter Alford Foundation
- Anonymous Donor
- ☉ Charlie's Motor Mall, Inc.
- MaineGeneral Medical Center
Auxiliary
- United Way of Kennebec Valley

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DVM
- United Way of Mid-Maine

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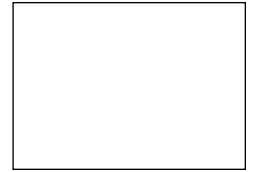
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