

HealthMatters

A Journal of Wellness and Good Health Care



Care
Tailored
to Your
Needs

HealthMatters

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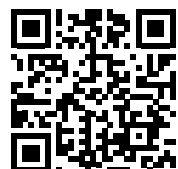
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In This Issue

- Using Advanced Technology to Detect and Treat Lung Cancer Early 4**
- We're With You Through Your Journey..... 6**
- Improved Treatment for Acid Reflux..... 8**
- Caring for Seniors in the Comfort of Their Homes.....10**
- Hospital Medicine Training, Very Close to Home.....12**
- Returning to the Activities They Love.....14**
- Want to Make a Difference?16**
- What Our Patients are Saying.....16**
- Welcome, New Medical Staff.....17**
- Proud of Our Staff.....18**

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Message from the CEO

It goes without saying that health care is personal. No one is like you and no one has the same needs as you.

That's why the connections you have to your caregivers are so important.

At MaineGeneral, we see you as the individual you are, and we strive to give you the most personal, compassionate and skilled care available.

In this issue of *HealthMatters*, you'll read about new technology that adds to the options available to you.

You'll also read about the way we work with you along your health care journey. Our team is centered around you.

And finally, you'll hear about our amazing staff, some of whom have worked here for decades. We even have generations of families here dedicated to serving you.

Everything we do at MaineGeneral is about giving you the best care and service. No matter your health needs, now and into the future, we're with you.

Chuck Hays
President & CEO
MaineGeneral Health



We offer great opportunities to make a difference. Join our team!
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Using Advanced Technology

To Detect and Treat Lung Cancer Early



Thankful patient Holly Humphrey, right, and her daughter Hayley Bickford.

Holly Humphrey may joke about always wanting to “be on the cover of a magazine,” but she never expected her moment of fame would come as one of the first Central Maine patients to have her lung cancer biopsied through a robotic bronchoscopy procedure.

As a self-employed hair dresser for the past 48 years, the 65-year-old Burnham resident says she “ingested a lot of things in my lungs over the years” through her occupation and also was a sometimes heavy smoker in the past. She eventually was diagnosed with emphysema, a lung condition in which the air sacs in the lungs are damaged, causing shortness of breath.

During a routine appointment last October, Toby Ostrov, PA-C, her primary care clinician at Four Seasons Family Practice, referred Humphrey for a Low-Dose CT (LDCT) scan for lung cancer. That screening detected a small mass in the upper part of her lung, which led to an appointment with Dr. Arun Ranganath, who she had previously seen for her emphysema, to discuss obtaining a tissue sample to biopsy for cancer.

Dr. Ranganath, medical director for MaineGeneral Pulmonary and Critical Care, asked Humphrey if she would like to have her bronchoscopy done robotically, given the uniqueness of her medical condition and the availability of the technology.

“I asked him if it would be difficult to get to the mass because of my emphysema and he told me he would be able to navigate so much easier with the robot and that it would allow him to get to places he otherwise could not get to,” Humphrey says. “He was so confident that I just said ‘Let’s roll.’”

“When Dr. Ranganath told us that MaineGeneral had just gotten the robot and asked if we’d consent to have her procedure done robotically, I felt it was divine intervention, that God was saying ‘this is here for you today,’” adds her daughter

Hayley Bickford, who accompanied Humphrey to all of her appointments throughout the treatment process.

Humphrey had the procedure at the Alfond Center for Health (ACH) in early November.

“Dr. Ranganath told us afterward that her procedure went well and that he was able to get a good specimen,” Bickford says. “He didn’t believe he could have done it without the robot.”

The biopsy confirmed that Humphrey had stage one lung cancer, which was treated through eight sessions of radiation therapy at the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care (HACCC).

What is robotic bronchoscopy?

Robotic bronchoscopy is the latest technology to detect lung cancer in patients at earlier, more treatable stages.

MaineGeneral is the first health system in Maine to use this diagnostic tool, which provides great stability and precision in obtaining tissue samples. Combined with low-dose CT, robotic bronchoscopy is a powerful tool in diagnosing lung cancer early.

Thankful for technology and expert care

Bickford offered high praise for MaineGeneral’s investment in the technology and those who use it.

She also recognized all those involved in her mother’s care, from her primary care appointments, to her diagnostic testing, her robotic bronchoscopy and her radiation therapy at the HACCC.

“On top of the quality of care she received, which was incredible, the staff also addressed the emotional piece,” she says. “Every department we went to or specialty we interacted with had such compassion. If they saw that she was upset, they would take a moment to talk with her about it.”



The procedure going well and having that technology as a tool is incredible, but the hands, brain and compassion behind it are also so important.

Hayley Bickford, daughter

“We met with the social worker at the cancer center several times and she was sweet, and the cancer center chaplain met with her while she was in the waiting room before one of her treatments. MaineGeneral really took good care of my mom!”

“Everyone who was involved in my care was fantastic and Dr. Ranganath is a great guy,” Humphrey adds. “I feel extremely privileged, honored and fortunate to be one of Dr. Ranganath’s first patients to have the robotic bronchoscopy procedure.”

She also was moved by the response she received from the cancer center staff when she completed her radiation therapy.

“The last two treatments I had, I didn’t have my oxygen and I didn’t use a wheelchair to go into the center because I could breathe,” she says. “That was huge and the staff was so excited for me and made it a big deal.”

MaineGeneral is proud to provide patients with access to a complete set of services for state-of-the-art care, including diagnostic testing and treatment with specialists in thoracic surgery, medical and radiation oncology and interventional pulmonology, all on one campus.

To learn more about robotic bronchoscopy or MaineGeneral’s lung cancer services, visit www.mainegeneral.org/lung-cancer.

From left to right: Lauren Sherman, Marissa Bickford, Michelle Stonier and Heather Goodwin



We're With You

Through Your Journey

MaineGeneral's Breast Care Program

Down a hallway at the Alfond Center for Health is a dedication wall recognizing breast cancer patients, survivors and the staff who support them. This area of the hospital houses a collaborative team centered around the care for women: the MaineGeneral Breast Care Program.

The team includes technologists, radiologists, surgeons and navigators who help guide a woman through her care. If breast cancer is detected, then another group of skilled support and medical staff from the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care (HACCC) are brought in.

Mammography and Ultrasound Technologists

Many women gain familiarity with their mammographers from routine mammograms. The technologists guide the patient to get accurate readings of the breast tissue, which a radiologist then compares to past images to see if anything new and concerning appears.

"We are the first person a woman sees, so it's important to put our patients at ease," says Michelle Stonier, who's worked as a mammography technologist at MaineGeneral for 24 years. Michelle understands firsthand the importance of screening, as she's lost family members to breast cancer. She's often sought by medical staff to help patients who are worried or confused.

"I'm happy to do that," Michelle says.

If something of concern shows up on the mammogram image, the patient is called back for mammography and/or ultrasound special views.

"I'll do the scan and talk to the radiologist," says Heather Goodwin, ultrasound technologist who has been at MaineGeneral for three years. "If we don't know the results by the time a patient leaves, I want to make sure the patient leaves with clear expectations."

Breast Care Navigators

At any point, a breast care navigator, or coordinator, can help a patient through the process from special views, to biopsy and beyond.

"Our role is to be there for the patient, answer questions and provide information and support along the way," says Donna Davis-Rankin, RN, nurse navigator and breast cancer survivor. "We can be a conduit to other medical staff and help a patient navigate the system of people and procedures."

If a biopsy is needed, the patient will receive a call from the navigator, who will explain the procedure. A navigator is always at the biopsy to help assure the patient, as are the mammo or sonography tech and radiologist.



From left to right: Erica Lombardi, RN and Donna Davis-Rankin, RN

The navigator also calls the patient when biopsy results are known so they can explain the results and talk through next steps. The navigator is a bridge between all the different services offered like radiology, the cancer center, and surgical services.

"We'll see you through your journey," Donna says. "We're able to advocate for you, get you information you need and be your contact to other parts of the health care system."

"Patients have our direct lines and can reach out to us at any time," adds peer Erica Lombardi, RN.

Surgery

Biopsies and surgical treatment are done by MaineGeneral Surgery's general surgeons. MaineGeneral Plastic Surgery can then provide reconstructive surgery. Surgeons meet with patients and their families to help determine the next steps in their treatment journey.



From left to right: Connie Lutkevich, MD, Alex Mayer, MD, and Zara Wahla, MD.

Connie Lutkevich, MD, medical director, general surgery at MaineGeneral Surgery, says she and her team are dedicated to improving the health and well-being of patients.

"I take great pride in working at the MaineGeneral Breast Care Program," Dr. Lutkevich says. "I have had the privilege of being part of many women's journeys through one of the most challenging times in their lives. It is an honor to be able to provide expert care and support to help them navigate this experience and come out stronger on the other side. I am grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in their lives and to continue to advance the field of breast surgery."

Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care

After a surgical consult, MaineGeneral breast navigators connect the patient to Sacha Genest, RN, point-of-entry nurse navigator for oncology, who arranges the medical and radiation consults the patient needs at the cancer center.

"I gather any additional records needed for our physicians, request consults and call the patient to give them their appointments. I also assess any barriers to care



Sacha Genest, RN

they may have and discuss support services available at the HACCC such as transportation, financial, social/emotional support, smoking cessation and dietitian access," Sacha says. "Then I place referrals for these services as needed.

"We have a fantastic system and great communication. We work hard so our patients can feel as comfortable as possible as they move through their cancer journey."

Your Team

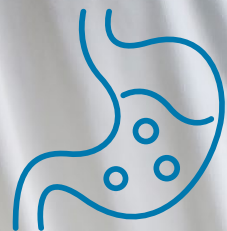
Everyone involved with the Breast Care Program understands the anxiety and need for individual attention each patient deserves. That's why they work so hard to ensure that every patient feels they have the most compassionate and skilled team in their corner.

"We work well with our colleagues across the system and that helps the patients be assured they're getting great care," Donna says. "We're here for the patient and their family, for whatever they need."



Improved Treatment

For Acid Reflux



Joan Kheder, MD, MPH and Tiffany Gray, Endoscopy Lead Tech

MaineGeneral Endoscopy Lead Tech Tiffany Gray has seen many patients who suffer from acid reflux, also known as GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease). But at first, she didn't realize that her chronic dry cough was caused by GERD.

"I was diagnosed with acid reflux and I was put on an acid reducer. Within two days, my cough disappeared," Gray says.

While relieved at first, her symptoms reappeared and then progressed to include bloating, heartburn and hoarseness.

"I needed more medication, and when that didn't work, my doctor put me on different medications. But eventually,

those stopped being effective, too."

Eventually, even drinking water gave her heartburn. "If I left for work without my medication, I knew it was going to be a bad day."

That's when Gray's doctor ordered an outpatient endoscopic diagnostic exam. The results came back that she had a Grade 2 hiatal hernia, which was the cause of her acid reflux.

After 18 years of having symptoms, Gray was scheduled for a C-TIF, a new procedure MaineGeneral began offering patients with GERD more than a year ago.

A C-TIF is a two-step process which entails surgery to repair the

hernia. Surgery is typically done robotically with six small incisions. Immediately after the surgery, the Gastroenterology (GI) team performs a minimally invasive endoscopic procedure called TIF (Transoral Incisionless Fundoplication), which recreates the anti-reflux valve that was damaged by acid reflux.

The doctor performing Gray's endoscopic procedure was Joan Kheder, MD, MPH, who Gray regularly works beside.

"I'm involved in nearly every TIF procedure. I knew I was in great hands, and I had seen patients who had gone through it and how they were helped by it," she says.

Dr. Kheder was the first doctor at MaineGeneral to provide TIF procedures.

"TIF treats heartburn at its source. We reconstruct the valve that prevents acid to flow back from the stomach into the esophagus. The process restores your body's natural protection against acid reflux," Dr. Kheder says.

According to Dr. Kheder, benefits of TIF include:

- Faster recovery
- No increased gas or bloating
- More than 80 percent of patients can stop medication for reflux in one year

Today, Gray is no longer on medications.

"I feel wonderful. I didn't realize how bad I felt until the treatment."

She recognizes that, as a patient, she's uniquely qualified to talk to patients who have concerns or questions about the C-TIF.



I tell people: 'If you've been living with this discomfort, ask whether this is a good option for you.' And to my colleagues, I tell them don't hesitate to have a patient reach out to me if they have questions.

Tiffany Gray

Dr. Kheder works closely with colleagues at GI and Surgery through the MaineGeneral Heartburn Center. TIF is one of a number of treatment options for patients with chronic heartburn. Talk to your doctor about getting a referral to the MaineGeneral Heartburn Center to see what treatment is best for you.

Learn more about TIF, including a video by Dr. Kheder, at www.mainegeneral.org/gerd.

Advanced Wound Care, Close to Home



When individuals have wounds that are difficult or take a long time to heal, MaineGeneral Wound Healing & Hyperbaric Medicine is here to care for them.

Some examples are:

- Small burns
- Chronic osteomyelitis
- Ulcers (venous, pressure, vascular, neuropathic, diabetic)
- Wounds (traumatic, surgical, cancerous)

We offer a full range of the latest wound treatment methods, including hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), if indicated, to enhance the body's natural healing process. With HBOT, patients inhale 100-percent oxygen in a total-body chamber where atmospheric pressure is increased and controlled. This extra oxygen helps fight bacteria and promote healing.

We welcome referrals for our comprehensive wound care services. We also work closely with MaineGeneral HomeCare and other home health programs to help care for patients at home. To learn more or make a referral, please call MaineGeneral Wound Healing & Hyperbaric Medicine at 207-623-6510.





Caring for Seniors in the Comfort of Their Homes

Terry McCabe spent much of the past year in and out of the hospital as he dealt with prostate and kidney issues and two episodes of sepsis (a potentially life-threatening infection), one of which kept him in MaineGeneral's Alford Center for Health for a month. He also was hospitalized last summer after a heart attack.

The 86-year-old Farmingdale resident finds navigating stairs and uneven surfaces difficult, which makes getting to doctor appointments a significant challenge.

Thankfully, he can receive ongoing medical care in the comfort of his home because of Maine Dartmouth Geriatric Medicine's home-based primary care program.

Once a month, geriatric specialist Dr. Carlen Smith visits him to do an exam, review his medications, discuss his medical conditions and answer any questions he and his wife Lorraine may have. These visits have helped to manage Terry's overall health and wellness and prevent additional hospitalizations.

"Dr. Smith has a good bedside manner and takes very good care

of me," Terry says. "She makes recommendations and is a good listener. I'm very happy to have her."

"It's a Godsend because he can sit in the privacy of our home and have a nice one-on-one conversation with the doctor. That's a rarity in medicine," Lorraine notes. "In geriatric care, it's critically important because patients are older and get confused more readily."

"People can't believe it when I tell them she comes to the house because that's old-school doctoring," she adds. "It's remarkable what they're doing with that program."

Terry McCabe discusses his medications during a recent visit by Dr. Carlen Smith of Maine Dartmouth Geriatric Medicine.



Providing a unique service

The home-based program grew out of Maine-Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency's Geriatric Medicine Fellowship, which Smith completed in 2020.

Fellows are required to make home visits with Maine Dartmouth Geriatric Medicine patients as part of their education and Smith was passionate about that aspect of the program.

"Home visits were one of my favorite things to do, even beyond what we were required to do through the fellowship," Smith says. "The medical director at the time allowed me to expand and formalize the program, which is what we've spent the last two years doing. We have grown it into a really robust home-based primary care program."

Smith and colleagues Olivia Simpson, MD, and Isaiah Meyer, AGNP, collectively visit with patients in their homes five days per week, caring for patients throughout the Kennebec Valley region. They are supported by an RN triage team, medical assistants and patient services staff who schedule the visits and do all of the necessary work before and after each one.

"We have a combined panel of 140 patients to visit," Smith says. "Essentially these are homebound patients who have difficulty getting out."

Visits are much longer than a typical office appointment, about an hour by comparison, and involve just the clinician and the patient and their caregiver. In addition to their primary reason for being there – the medical appointment – the visits also allow them to assess other issues.

"People often will offer to have us walk around their house, which allows us to do a visual assessment of trip hazards and fall risks," she says. "We also may see that there's not a lot of food in their cupboards or fridge, or other things we wouldn't know without visiting them at home."

Meeting a growing need

Smith and her peers recognize the importance of their program, which continues to expand in response to a growing need.



We know Maine's older population is going to explode and there aren't enough nursing homes, assisted living facilities and dementia care facilities to handle all of it. So we're really asking people to age in place at home. If we can keep them there and avoid unnecessary emergency department visits, hospitalizations and transitions of care, that should be our goal.

Carlen Smith, MD

Smith says the community response to the program has been extremely positive. She and her peers are equally pleased.

"It's a privilege to go into people's homes to do a visit," she says. "It's incredibly rewarding, especially when we have an outcome that the patient is really satisfied with."

To learn more about the program, please call Maine Dartmouth Geriatric Medicine at [207-626-7400](tel:207-626-7400). ↘

Hearing Aid Update

In October 2021, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released proposed guidelines for over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids. OTC hearing aids may be appropriate for adults with mild to moderate hearing loss, but they are not appropriate for those with more severe hearing loss and certain issues, such as tinnitus and vertigo.

Since perception of hearing loss can be subjective, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) recommends that people considering OTC hearing aids get tested by a licensed audiologist before making an OTC hearing aid purchase.

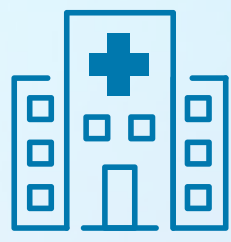
"Our goal is to make sure individuals with hearing loss have a hearing aid that's personalized for their needs," says Mary Anne Booth, director of MaineGeneral Audiology & Hearing Aid Services. "A comprehensive hearing evaluation will show the degree of hearing loss, as well as the type of hearing loss – sensorineural or conductive. This information is important for deciding whether an OTC hearing aid will meet a person's needs or if a prescription hearing aid is a better choice."

MaineGeneral's team of audiologists tests for hearing problems and provides personalized treatment for hearing loss. They are trained in the latest technology in hearing aids and other devices that assist in better hearing. MaineGeneral Audiology & Hearing Aid Services has offices in Augusta and Waterville.

In addition to providing hearing testing and hearing aid prescription services, the MaineGeneral Audiology & Hearing Aid Services team offers six complimentary visits within the first year after purchasing most prescription hearing aids to help patients use their abilities to the fullest. They also offer a three-year warranty and 35-day return policy, as well as maintenance, repair and monitoring of prescription hearing aids and assistive listening devices.

If you have any questions about OTC hearing aids, please call MaineGeneral Audiology & Hearing Aid Services at [622-8680](tel:622-8680) or [872-4383](tel:872-4383).

Hospital Medicine Training, Very Close



Alexander Wharton, PA-C

to Home



Stephanie Podolski, PA-C



Thomas Vatisstas, AGACNP

Building a fellowship program

The hospitalist fellowship is unique: there are none like it in the Northeast and very few in the country. In helping develop it, Podolski had to be creative.

"I modeled the training off Johns Hopkins' accredited APP critical care fellowship that's been around for a while," she says.

In addition to clinical work, MaineGeneral's fellows must complete a 40-hour "hospital medicine boot camp," do weekly readings from texts specific to hospitalist medicine, listen to lectures and go to Grand Rounds. Since January, they've also trained on various procedures. This spring, they will complete an eight-hour point-of-care ultrasound course. Lastly are the one- and two-week specialty learning opportunities to look at specific disease processes and organ systems.

A favorable response

Podolski says response to the program and its fellows has been positive.

"Having two really vibrant folks around, and seeing their excitement to take care of people, has been motivating," she says. "We're all excited to see how well they're doing."

The fellows also have high praise for the program.

Vatisstas, who lives locally in Readfield, worked as a registered nurse at MaineGeneral in critical care and endoscopy prior to entering advanced practice. He was interested in a post-graduate fellowship opportunity, but such programs were few and far between. Soon after he passed his certification exam, the fellowship was created and it was a perfect fit.

"My whole career has been in the acute care hospital setting, so I was interested in hospitalist medicine because it's both broad and challenging," he says. "Colleagues ahead of me who became NPs said their first year of practice was stressful with a steep learning curve. As a new graduate, this fellowship has been a bridge into advanced practice that I wish was available to all new NPs."

Wharton, of Augusta, is a former paramedic for Delta Ambulance who still does some work with them. When he finished PA school, he was offered other jobs in Maine but was committed to additional training to prepare him to best provide acute care in the hospital setting.

"This was a good opportunity to develop my skills so I can practice at the same level as the other APPs on the team," he says. "Hospitalist medicine is a very broad specialty, so you have to know a little bit about everything. It's been a fantastic program and a very supportive environment of people who really want to see you succeed."

To learn more about the fellowship, visit www.mainegeneral.org/hospitalist-fellowship.

Three Generations of Dedication



MaineGeneral feels like family for many of the 4,600-plus employees who work here. For Gloria Jean Christie, Laura Tracy and Sarah Havener, that feeling has extra meaning because they truly are family.

"I love that they are here and I get to see them," says Laura, who has been with MaineGeneral for 37 years, starting in the Lab and now serving as director of Primary Care. Her mother, Gloria Jean, works as a patient access representative and has been with MaineGeneral for 10 years. Daughter Sarah is a nurse practitioner at Augusta Family Medicine. Son Scott also worked in Security for a few years.

Both Gloria Jean and Sarah credit Laura for bringing them into the MaineGeneral fold.

"I worked for the hospital back in the 1970s at the Seton Unit and have always worked," says Gloria Jean, who is 80 years young. "It's good for me. My motto is to keep moving. Working keeps my mind going, too. When I was looking for something to keep me busy in retirement, Laura said there were lots of opportunities at MaineGeneral and urged me to apply, so here I am, three days a week. I love it."

When Laura joined MaineGeneral in 1986 as a lab tech on the night shift, she was pregnant with daughter Sarah. Laura's husband Mike would bring Sarah and her brother Scott to have dinner with Laura. That's where Sarah's passion for health care bloomed.

"I have fond memories of those dinners," Sarah says. "I loved the

excitement, even the smells in the Lab. I loved coming to work with my mom on Take Your Daughter to Work Day. Everything was really cool, probably because I always knew I wanted to work in health care."

In 2019, Sarah and her husband were living and working in Massachusetts. They had two young children and realized it was time to come home to Maine. Both sets of parents were here and they wanted to raise their kids here. **"And I knew I wanted to work for MaineGeneral. Mom and Meme were here,** and I was meant to be here. I love Augusta Family Medicine. It's a big practice with a diverse group of clinicians to work with and learn from."

Gloria Jean, Laura and Sarah have seen MaineGeneral from both sides – as employees and as family members of loved ones receiving care. "We have seen staff members just bend over backwards to take care of loved ones, and they didn't know who we were, which tells me that's how they treat all their patients, and it's made me really proud to work here," Laura says.

"We're all proud of working for MaineGeneral," Gloria Jean adds. "It's home. We can't imagine working anywhere else."

Will there be a fourth generation of Christie/Tracy/Havener women coming to work at MaineGeneral? Maybe! Sarah's daughter Hazel, who turns 7 on May 2, wants to be a nurse practitioner like her mom – or a hair dresser. Chances are pretty good that we'll see Hazel making her mark at MaineGeneral in the years to come. 🐦



Returning to the Activities They Love

MaineGeneral's Josh Barlow, DPT, assists Colby College student EJ Brister during his physical therapy session.

Colby College junior linebacker EJ Brister faced a long, challenging road after he tore his patellar tendon and dislocated his kneecap during a football game in November.

After surgery to repair the damage, he was scheduled for sessions with MaineGeneral physical therapists Josh Barlow, DPT and Rachel Ratke, DPT in the convenience of Colby's athletic training center. He knew he would receive expert care.

"I had trust in them because I'd seen them working my teammates after ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) and other surgeries to get them back in shape," he says. "I knew I was in good hands."

Brister was among several Colby students working with Barlow and Ratke on a frigid early February morning. First-year student Courtney Schumacher, an ice hockey player who has dealt with back issues, was doing exercises to strengthen the muscles in her back. Junior basketball player Bray Hunter, who

first received physical therapy (PT) two years ago after multiple stress fractures, was focusing on exercises for shoulder stability issues. Next to her was junior swimmer Ellie Bailey, who was working to address a shoulder injury.

"I'm nearing the end of swim season so we're in management mode, which has been really helpful," Bailey says. "Even though I'm receiving PT, I can still compete, which I'm really happy for."

A Unique Partnership for Therapy Services

Before 2016, Colby students needing physical therapy had to go to MaineGeneral Outpatient Rehabilitation Services in Oakland. While a reasonable drive from Colby, it often was problematic for students to get to appointments on time and in between their academic commitments, particularly for those without vehicles.

When the college decided to offer those services on campus, originally at its health center, they knew who to speak with – Barlow. He had a working relationship with Colby's Director of Sports Medicine Tim Weston and the college's athletic trainers and could dedicate time on campus to see patients in addition to his work at the Oakland practice.

Demand for PT services has grown each year. By his fourth year at Colby, Barlow was working with students three days per week.

Ratke became a member of MaineGeneral's therapy team in 2019 when her husband Pat was hired as the Colby assistant athletic director in charge of the 350,000-square-foot Harold Alfond Athletics and Recreation Center that was nearing the end of construction. She joined Barlow at Colby in 2020 while also providing therapy in Oakland.

"Josh needed more help and I have an athletic training background, so I also started treating Colby students,"

she says. "The two clinical areas I like most are sports medicine and pediatrics. I get the pediatric piece when I treat kids in Oakland and the sports medicine piece at Colby. It keeps everything different and exciting."

When the new athletic and recreation center opened in 2020, the therapists began treating students in the new athletic training suite, which allowed them to provide services to an ever-increasing number of students on varsity and club sport teams and those from the general student body. Brian Mathieu, DPT, who works with students on a more limited basis when he's not seeing patients at MaineGeneral Outpatient Rehabilitation Services in Augusta, joined them in 2022.

Treating More Students as Part of a Larger Team

The four students interviewed in early February are among about 200 who receive PT services currently. That compares to 55 students treated during Barlow's first year.

The therapists' work is aided by the new 4,000-square-foot athletic training facility which offers a larger treatment space with excellent equipment and access to the weight rooms, field house, swimming pool, ice rink, spin bike room and rowing room for their treatment plans.

They, along with MaineGeneral sports medicine team physicians Elizabeth Rothe, MD and Thomas Hoke, MD, are part of Colby's Peak Performance Team, which offers a comprehensive approach for student athletes that combines sports medicine, strength and conditioning, sports psychology, nutrition and sports science. As the team physicians for Colby, Rothe and Hoke serve as the primary referral source for students who need physical therapy.



Rachel Ratke, DPT, treats Colby student Bray Hunter during her therapy appointment.

Barlow describes the MaineGeneral-Colby relationship a "win-win."

"While this arrangement provides students with easy access to therapy care, we and our therapy colleagues also have a home base in one of MaineGeneral's four outpatient therapy practices to provide the same expert care to patients from throughout the Kennebec Valley during their recovery from an injury, accident or illness."

"Our relationship with Colby also gives us sports medicine experience so we can better treat more sports-related injuries," Barlow adds. "We now have different skill sets to use with our general patient population."

Regardless of where they're providing therapy – on the Colby campus or in the Augusta, Oakland, Manchester and Winthrop offices –

MaineGeneral's therapists provide expert, compassionate care to help individuals of all ages return to the activities they love.

And EJ Brister and his fellow students are extremely thankful for that.

"They took it really slow and were very encouraging," Brister says. "Now I'm walking without a brace where just a month ago I was trying to get full range of motion. I've made a lot of progress." 🙌

“ Dr. Liegner takes the time to talk with me. He never makes me feel rushed. The visits are focused on me and my concerns.”

“ We need more doctors like Dr. Ranganath. He has so much input, patience and sincere concern for his patients and is very knowledgeable.”

What Our Patients are Saying

“ I went to the orthopaedic walk-in clinic and was able to be seen quickly. Mark Wright and the staff there were very attentive to my issue and provided diagnostic and therapeutic care appropriate for getting me back to normal. I thank them for their professional attention.”

“ Brea Swihart is a knowledgeable, caring and thoughtful health provider. I have been with her for years and can always get a call-back if I have an issue. You are most fortunate to have her on your staff.”



Want to Make a Difference?

Family members and former patients make wonderful volunteers because they know firsthand about the care we provide and difference we make in people's lives.

“I have been hospitalized a few times with dire circumstances and I am fortunate, so volunteering is my way of giving thanks, paying it forward, to all those who have helped me,” says Paul Krizinauskas, who volunteers at the Alford Center for Health, Gray Birch and the Alzheimer's Care Center. “I am also compelled

to visit the sick and to treat others as I hope to be treated in similar circumstances. I care about people and, being retired, I have the time to act.”

Our health care system offers many areas where volunteers greatly enhance the services we provide for patients and families, both in our facilities and at home making dolls, blankets and prayer shawls for our community. Volunteers gave more than 17, 433 hours of service to MaineGeneral in 2022. Volgistics,

a volunteer management software company, estimates the value of volunteer work in the United States to be \$29.95 per hour. That means our volunteers provided service valued at \$522,118.35 in 2022. What a gift!

We thank all of our volunteers for their dedication, service and compassion. To learn more about our volunteer opportunities and to complete an online application, give us a call at [207-626-1244](tel:207-626-1244) or visit www.mainegeneral.org/volunteer. ↗

Welcome, New Medical Staff



Forty-nine full- and part-time medical staff have joined MaineGeneral in the past year, and we are pleased to welcome them to our team and community. Their knowledge, skills and experience add to the depth and breadth of care and service we are proud to provide.

Addiction Medicine

Alisa Cleary, DO
MaineGeneral Addiction Medicine

Anesthesiology

Amy Gallagher, CRNA
Justin Poltak, MD
Heather Turcotte, DO
Kennebec Anesthesia Associates

Behavioral Health

Fidelis Pe Benito, PMHNP-C
Behavioral Health

Cancer Care

Catherine Smith, FNP-C
Harold Alford Center for Cancer Care

Express Care

Alexandria Lucas, PA-C
Katherine Pelotte, FNP-C
Emily Schatz, FNP-C
MaineGeneral Express Care

Family Medicine

Rachel Thomas, MD, MPH
Augusta Family Medicine/Addiction Medicine

Marya Goettsche Spurling, MD (faculty)
Maine-Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency (MDFMR)

Tristan Reynolds, DO (faculty)
MDFMR

Briann Andrews, FNP-C
Elmwood Primary Care

Hope Blais, PMHNP-BC
Oakland Family Medicine

Drew Bois, PA-C
Augusta Family Medicine

Vinh Dam, PA-C

Oakland Family Medicine

Sadianne D'Andreti, PA-C
Family Medicine Institute

Sarah Flynn, PA-C
Augusta Family Medicine

Jazmine Levesque, FNP
Oakland Family Medicine

Benjamin Mason, FNP-BC (faculty),
MDFMR

Antonina Planson, FNP-C
Winthrop Family Medicine

Kenneth Sawyer, PA-C
(faculty), MDFMR

Whitney Tranchemontagne, FNP-BC
Thayer Internal Medicine

General Surgery

Travis Bouchard, DO
MaineGeneral Surgery

Hospitalists

Rose Knudsen, MD
Adult Hospitalist Service

Karyn Parsons, MD
Pediatric Hospitalist Service

Kidney Care

Kira Pushard, NP-C
Emily Snow, FNP-BC
MaineGeneral Kidney Care

Midwifery Services

Susan Lufkin-Curtis, FNP-C, CNM
Leah Mawhinney, CNM, WHNP-BC
MaineGeneral Midwifery Services

Neurology

Hunter Sweet, DO
MaineGeneral Neurology

Nuclear Medicine & Cardiology

Mandy Massey, AGACNP-BC
Nuclear Medicine & Cardiology

Obstetrics & Gynecology

Leah Michaud, DNP, FNP-C
MaineGeneral Obstetrics & Gynecology

Orthopaedics

Michael Kipp, DPM
Douglas O'Heir, DPM
Daniel Shubert, MD
MaineGeneral Orthopaedics

Pediatrics

Carrie Frost, MD, MPH
Kennebec Pediatrics

Plastic Surgery

Alexander Mayer, MD
MaineGeneral Surgery

Joanna Manum, PA-C
MaineGeneral Surgery (Plastics)

Psychiatry

Cecelia Rhodus, MD
Edmund N. Ervin Pediatric Center

Psychology

Rachel Clegg, PhD
Kathleen Doyle, PhD
Lindsey North, PhD
Edmund N. Ervin Pediatric Center

Radiation Oncology

J. Fletcher Drogos, MD
Radiation Oncology Associates

Sleep Disorders Clinic

Robin Fuller, AGNP
MaineGeneral Sleep Disorders Clinic

Vascular Surgery

Laurianne Murphy, PA-C
MaineGeneral Surgery (Vascular)

Urology

Cheryl Smith, AGACNP
MaineGeneral Urology

Workplace Health

Katie Smart, FNP-C
Workplace Health

Wound Healing/Hyperbarics

Andrew Smith, DPM
MaineGeneral Wound Healing & Hyperbaric Medicine

MaineGeneral Offers Comprehensive Plastic Surgery

Dr. Alexander Mayer and his team will work with you to create your individualized treatment plan.

Services in Augusta and Waterville include:

Cancer — Breast reconstruction • Skin cancer treatment and reconstruction

Cosmetic — Cosmetic breast and body surgery • Facial rejuvenation • Non-surgical procedures including BOTOX® and fillers (no referral needed)

Injuries and Accidents — Burn reconstruction • Scar revisions

Weight Loss — Body contouring after weight loss • Liposuction and fat grafting

You're in excellent hands — Dr. Mayer is highly rated by his patients — 4.8 stars out of 5!

For more information, visit www.mainegeneral.org/plastics.

Proud of Our Staff



MaineGeneral is proud of its many employees throughout the Kennebec Valley region who strive each day to provide exceptional, patient-centered care for you and your loved ones.

To us, "Excellence at Work" isn't a tagline for a brochure or website. This phrase serves as a constant reminder of the type of care and service we aspire to provide to every patient, every time.

MaineGeneral has a robust awards program to recognize employees for their excellent care and service. Here are some of our recent recipients and their stories.

Amanda Sproul, behavioral health assistant, always goes above and beyond for patients on MaineGeneral's inpatient behavioral health unit. She treats each and every one of them with the utmost respect, taking the extra time to make them feel important.

Amanda never complains. She does every and anything without being asked twice. She jumps into most situations others would avoid — this is where Amanda shines. Her bubbly personality is contagious and can brighten any room she is

in. She does such a beautiful job keeping patients clean and cared for even when they cannot verbalize or care for themselves. She supports staff without a thought to herself — all with a lovely smile and can-do attitude.

Several co-workers nominated Amanda for MaineGeneral's Pink Rose Award for outstanding nursing and behavioral health assistants. "If my loved one was in the hospital, I would want Amanda to take care of them," writes one colleague. "She is a team player, very genuine, and is always going the extra mile. This unit is truly grateful we have her. There aren't many people like Amanda. She is amazing!"



Amanda Sproul, behavioral health assistant

Tiffany McKay, RN, is an exceptional member of the MaineGeneral team. In her role as an Emergency Department (ED) nurse, she is well respected by her peers and patients. Tiffany is known as a resource for both clinical and organizational questions, and she is always willing to jump in and help when needed.



Tiffany McKay, RN

A patient recently nominated Tiffany for a DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses in recognition of Tiffany's skills and, most of all, her kindness.

"Just a quick note of thanks to let you know how much you are appreciated though we do not really know one another. I met you for the first time when I came to the Emergency Department severely dehydrated from pregnancy nausea. My nurse could not get an IV after several tries and went to get you. You came in with a smile I could see behind your mask, pleasant and chatty, putting me at ease. You said 'don't worry, we'll get it' and then you did. I got the medicine I needed and felt better, leaving for home remarking to my husband that you were 'really nice.'

"I did not know how much that five-minute interaction meant until I met you again. Several weeks later, I returned to the ED after passing out at work. I had hit my head and was quite stunned. The department was busy, noisy, and people were rushing to take care of me. I stared at the ceiling waiting for what was coming next, scared and unable to move. You bent down next to my ear and said, 'My name is Tiffany and I'm going to start your IV.' In all the chaos, I cannot tell you how thankful I was not to worry about that one piece, because I recognized your voice and name along with your kindness. These past two years have hardened health care in ways we do not even know, but not you. And I want you to know I am thankful and will never forget your kindness."

Qusay Al Saleem, lead patient transport technician, is the perfect example of Excellence at Work. He never hesitates to help a patient or his team. He is willing to work extra at the drop of the hat to make sure we provide the best service possible to our patients. He is 100 percent patient focused and fully believes we need to give every patient good service, every time.

A nurse on 3 West nominated Qusay for MaineGeneral's Excellence at Work Award. She writes, "A patient who spoke Arabic was being admitted and was having a difficult time with the interpreter iPad. Qusay took time from his already busy job to help me and the patient so the language barrier would not disrupt the patient's care or trust in our organization's ability to care for him. Thank you so much!"

Anh Pham, MD, RPVI, recently received MaineGeneral's Award-Winning Exemplary Scholar of Medical Excellence (AWESOME) Award for the excellent patient care she provides. Dr. Pham is a vascular surgeon who is appreciated by her colleagues as energetic, spunky, approachable and easy to work with — a wonderful mentor who's one of a kind.



Anh Pham, MD, RPVI

"Dr. Pham is one of the kindest people I have ever met," one of her colleagues says. "She genuinely cares so much about her patients and it shows in her patient care."

Here's what one family member says about Dr. Pham: Our father was brought into the Emergency Department for a circulation problem in his left foot. Given his condition, he was facing emergency surgery and possible amputation. All staff at MaineGeneral were extremely helpful and moved quickly to get him treated. We then found out that all OR rooms were full and they might need to transfer him. Dr. Pham stepped in and arranged to get our father to surgery very quickly and performed a successful procedure to restore blood flow to the leg/foot. We are extremely thankful for her efforts to make him a priority. Great job!"

Congratulations and thank you to these four individuals for their dedication to our patients! We are very fortunate to have them — and all of our employees — working in our community, making a difference, one patient at a time. We couldn't be more proud of their hard work and commitment!

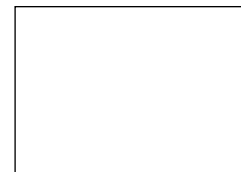
If you have received great care at MaineGeneral and want to nominate a caregiver or team for an award, please visit www.mainegeneral.org/about-us/awards-and-recognition.



Join our team!

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





Expert Orthopaedic Care Close to Home

MaineGeneral Orthopaedics offers surgical and non-surgical orthopaedic care. We use the latest technology and minimally invasive techniques to give you options that fit your lifestyle and help you enjoy an active, pain-free life.

Among our expert team are our two orthopaedic sports medicine surgeons:



Ian Patten, MD



Dan Shubert, MD

Services include:

- ACL reconstruction
- Bone Health Program, including osteoporosis prevention and treatment
- Carpal tunnel release
- Fracture repair, including trauma fractures
- Hand, wrist and elbow reconstruction
- Knee and shoulder arthroscopy
- Podiatry
- Rotator cuff repair
- Spine and neck surgery
- Sports medicine
- Total hip, knee and shoulder replacement
- Ultrasound-guided injections

For information about all
MaineGeneral Orthopaedics services, go to
www.mainegeneral.org/ortho or call 621-8700 or 873-8100.

