Hello and thank you for all of the well wishes and congratulations. It has been said that working in the trenches of the emergency department prepares you for anything. I hope they are right!

I am humbled by this great opportunity to serve as your Vice President of Medical Affairs, and I can only hope to match the level of commitment and expertise of my predecessor. Dr. Mitch Rubinstein achieved the goal that we all set when embarking on a new challenge. He has left The Valley Hospital a better place then when he began. During his 8 years as our VPMA, Mitch had been instrumental in many initiatives at Valley, but maybe no one more important than his commitment to patient safety and quality of care. Mitch has brought the discussion surrounding quality of care and patient safety to the forefront and has encouraged us to frame our thinking to include answering the question, “What is best for our patients?”

As physicians, we are entering an “interesting” time in health care. Many of us were fortunate to hear the lecture recently by Jamie Orlikof, a noted and well-respected health care consultant, who lectured on the changes that are occurring in health care and the dire consequences that we will face if we do not adapt. He stressed the importance of understanding what the data are telling us about our profession, and that we must take action in order to stay “relevant.” As the world around us is changing, so is how and where health care is being delivered. Patients have more choices than ever before and we must continue to give them reason to seek care at Valley. He mentioned that successful organizations and practices share the common themes of standardizing care and decreasing clinical variation. We are no longer immune to the changes that are happening and we must understand these changes and adjust accordingly.

I am confident that we will face these challenges head on and be successful. My optimism stems from the fact that I know the type of physicians we have on our medical staff and the level of commitment that you all give to your patients. Many of our fellow physicians have been kind enough to meet with me and discuss the challenges facing us, and more importantly, propose solutions for consideration. I encourage you to engage me in conversation when you see me and feel free to come by my office. I know that you all have great insight into our profession and I will be better able to help if you share your thoughts with me.

I would like to use this bulletin to communicate important and timely topics that arise so as to keep you all informed. As such, this memo will be more practical in the future as I write about the challenges we will face and what we must do to succeed. I will also continue to correspond via email, so please update our medical staff office with your current email address.

I am very excited to be working with all of you and tackling these challenges together.

Sincerely,
Joseph Yallowitz, M.D.
Editor
HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO OUR ACTIVE STAFF PHYSICIANS!
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR MILESTONE!
FEBRUARY CELEBRANTS:

### 5 Years
Kanchana Balasubramanian, MD, Department of Medicine,
Nalini Bethala, MD, Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Niya H. Wanich, MD, Department of Medicine

### 15 Years
Dolores M. Buli, MD, Department of Pediatrics, Wayne DeTorres, MD, Department of Urology,
Rena E. Levykh-Chase, MD, Department of Medicine, Ali Nasser, MD, Department of Obstetrics/Gynecology

### 20 Years
Steven I. Waxenbaum, MD, Department of Surgery

### 25 Years
Claude Ligenza, MD, Department of Pediatrics

### 30 Years
Robert Galorenzo, DPM, Department of Podiatry

### 35 Years
Donald O. Quest, MD, Department of Neurosurgery

### 45 Years
James J. Monks, MD, Department of Surgery

---

NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE MEDICAL STAFF

**Name:** Ziyad Al-Ola, M.D.

**Privileges:** Department of Family Practice

**Medical School:** University of Damascus, Fac. Of Medicine, Syria

**Residency:** Al-Mouasat Hospital, Syria

**Practice:** SUNY Downstate Medical Center, NY

**Office:** Valley Medical Group

**Address:** 140 Franklin Turnpike, Waldwick NJ

---

**Name:** John T. Andronaco, M.D.

**Privileges:** Department of Orthopedic Surgery

**Medical School:** University of Guadalajara, Mexico

**Residency:** University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey

**Practice:** Michael C. Distefano, M.D.

**Office:** 140 Route 17 North, Suite 225, Paramus NJ

---

**Name:** Maryellen P. Brucato, DPM

**Privileges:** Department of Orthopedic Surgery

**Medical School:** Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine, PA

**Residency:** Morristown Memorial Hospital, NJ

**Practice:** New Jersey Foot & Ankle Center

**Office:** 550 Kinderkamack Road, Suite 202, Oradell NJ
NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE MEDICAL STAFF

Name: Jacalyn J. Cytryn, M.D.
Privileges: Department of Anesthesiology
Medical School: State University of New York Health and Science Center
Residency: Hospital of University of Pennsylvania, PA
Fellowship: Strong Memorial Hospital, NY
Practice: Bergen Anesthesia Group
Office: 500 West Main Street, Suite 16, Wyckoff NJ

Name: Sanchita Gupta, M.D.
Privileges: Department of Medicine
Medical School: Kasturba Medical College, India
Residency: Baptist Medical Center, AL
Practice: Bergen Gastroenterology, P.C.
Office: 466 Old Hook Road, Suite 1, Emerson NJ

Name: Wenchi K. Tsai, M.D.
Privileges: Department of Medicine
Medical School: University of Maryland School of Medicine, MD
Residency: University of Virginia Medical Center, VA
Fellowship: University of Chicago Medical Center, IL
Mount Sinai Medical Center, NY
Practice: Bergen Gastroenterology, P.C.
Office: 466 Old Hook Road, Suite 1, Emerson NJ

Name: Marie-Fabienne Vassallo, A.P.N.
Privileges: Department of Medicine
Medical School: University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, NJ
Rutgers University, NJ
Practice: Cardiac Associates of North Jersey
Office: 43 Yawpo Avenue, Oakland NJ

Name: James J. Verardi, P.A.
Privileges: Department of Orthopedic Surgery
Medical School: University of Miami, FL
Rutgers University, NJ
Practice: Kayal Orthopedic Center, P.C.
Office: 43 Yawpo Avenue, Oakland NJ
D’Ambrosio A, AANS/CNS section on tumors: 30th anniversary special issue  


(continued of following page)

Shapiro M, Korst RJ. Surgical Approaches for Stage IVA Thymic Epithelial Tumors. Front Oncol 2014;3:332.


(continued of following page)


---

**About Our Staff**

Marc Dreier MD, from the Emergency Department and the Medical Director of the Valley Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) was recently honored by the Community Resource Council at a dinner held at Season’s. Dr. Dreier was awarded the Dr. Harry Brandeis Memorial Community Service Award. Dr. Dreier has also been a member of the NJ Department of Health MICU Medical Advisory Committee. He is also involved in EMS education and implementation of the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), the Epi-Pen and recently the Naloxone Rescue Kit for Basic Life Support (BLS) agencies. He is also the Medical Director for the Bergen County Prosecutor’s Office and provides direction and oversight for the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) and Bergen County Naloxone for Law Enforcement programs.
Clinical Documentations: DNR Patients

With terminally ill patients, we need to properly document the course of events leading to the patient’s end of life. The accurate reflection of severity of illness and intensity of service will only be known by physician’s documentation. Our records should reflect the patient’s clinical status, the highest score 4/4 of the severity of illness (SOI) and risk of mortality (ROM). Often the physician will document IV hydration, family counseling, and palliative or comfort care, missing the opportunity to accurately capture the severity of illness and risk of mortality of the terminally ill patient.

Here are some examples of clinical situations, common diagnosis or patient symptoms where documentation is required:

- If patient is tachypneic or dyspneic and requires O2 supplement such as bipap, O2 100% non-rebreather or O2 opti-flow, is the patient in respiratory failure? Oxygen saturation monitoring is often routine and low oxygen saturation is further indicator of respiratory failure. Cheyne Stokes, apnea and hypoxia may also be present in these patients.

- If unresponsive, is the patient comatose? Diagnostic findings from CT scan showed mass effect, midline shift- can be interpreted as cerebral edema, compression or herniation. These are codeable diagnosis while midline shift and mass effect are not.

- Abnormal lab values can be noted such as acidosis may occur when patient is actively dying. Electrolyte imbalance that was treated and monitored can be stated instead of using symbols with arrows, e.g. hyperkalemia, hyponatremia, etc.

- Other diagnosis: metabolic encephalopathy (type of), malnutrition (severity), organ failure e.g. kidney (acute or chronic, stage of CKD ), CHF (specify acute or chronic, systolic/diastolic), liver failure, cancer (specify metastatic sites ).

Although aggressive medical treatment is not being pursued, resource consumption and length of stay had been affected one way or another on this admission. Consistent and complete documentation in our medical records can reflect high SOI/ROM and can assist accurate coding. With everyone’s collaborative effort, we can achieve best practice in all our clinical documentation in line with Valley Hospital’s excellent medical care and recognized achievements.
Timely responses to queries are critical for accurate and thorough documentation which influences physician and hospital quality outcomes, patients’ severity of illness, reimbursement, etc. Responding to queries also helps educate us about how to document appropriately, the importance of which will become greatly magnified with the transition to ICD-10 coding on October 1, 2015.

Not responding to the queries causes unnecessary delays. As such, the Medical Board has approved this Query Compliance Plan designed to improve compliance. The queries that will be included on this plan are:

**HIM (Health Information Management) Coding Query delinquency definition:**
An HIM Coding Query delinquency is defined as a failure of the physician to respond to the HIM Coding Query within 7 days.

The HIM Coding Query is an important communication tool between a coder and physician.

**EHR (Executive Health Resources) Query delinquency definition:**
An EHR query delinquency is defined as a failure of the physician to respond to the EHR query prior to discharge.

If the attending physician does not answer EHR’s query prior to discharge of the patient, the ability to select the correct status, i.e. Inpatient vs. Observation, is severely compromised. Incorrect status has serious financial and quality impacts on the hospital and patient. For the hospital, reimbursement for OBS patients is considerably lower than IP, and these charts are subject to frequent RAC and MAC reviews for recoupment of funds. For the patient, incorrect status puts the patient and family at risk for unforeseen and delayed charges.

**CDI (Clinical Documentation Improvement) Query delinquency definition:**
A CDI query delinquency is defined as a failure of the physician to respond to the CDI query prior to discharge.

Failure to respond to a CDI query leads to poor documentation and adversely affects HIM’s ability to correctly code a chart. Correct coding, as in the HIM query explanation, is necessary for the correct reflection of the patient’s severity of illness and the quality of care provided by both the physician and the hospital. If the queries placed by the CDI nurse are not answered, the interpretation of the documentation is left to the coders. The coders are not clinicians and must follow strict coding guidelines. Accurate and complete documentation is an important component of the quality outcomes for the physician and hospital, most of which are publicly reported and publicly available.

►Failure to respond to the queries will initiate the Query Compliance Plan (on the following page) for subsequent actions that have been approved by the Medical Board.

Thank you,

Joseph Yallowitz, MD
Vice President, Medical Affairs
The Valley Hospital
Query Compliance Plan

Educational Letter

- Any physician whose name appears for the first time on the monthly Delinquent Queries Report will receive an educational letter from the VPMA.

Constructive Counseling Letter

- Any physician whose name appears for the second time on the monthly Delinquent Queries Report will receive a letter from the VPMA.
- A certificate of completion will be required.

Mandatory Education

- Any physician whose name appears for the third time on the monthly Delinquent Queries Report will receive a letter from the VPMA requiring completion of a mandatory education module.

Appearance at OC

- Any physician whose name appears for the fourth time on the monthly Delinquent Queries Report will receive a letter from the President of the Medical Staff.
- A letter requiring appearance at Officer’s Council will include the date and time of the next meeting for the physician’s explanation of non-compliance.

Suspension of Medical Staff Privileges

- Any physician whose name appears for the fifth time on the monthly Delinquent Queries Report will receive a letter from the President of the Medical Staff notifying the physician of the loss of:
  - Admitting privileges
  - Inactivation from Meditech
  - Removal from all ED call
  - Surgical/ procedural and consultation performance
- The suspension will be in effect for 1 month.

*Based on a rolling 12 month period through the Medical Staff Office credential tracking system. Copies of letters will be retained in the physician’s credential file with copies to DOAJC members and Department Director. 12/6/24
A Family Affair: $2M donation honors a wife, a hospital and a community

The Marron name was already synonymous with The Valley Hospital in Ridgewood. For the better part of three generations, the Bergen County family has supported the hospital's endeavors. Some of perhaps the most noticeable support came from the late Dorothy Marron, who established endowments for pastoral and neonatal care, and for whom the hospital’s fourth-floor Critical Care Unit is named.

The latest gift comes by way of Dorothy’s nephew, Ed, who recently donated $2 million to establish the Darlene L. Marron Chair for Children’s Services at Valley, in honor of his late wife. “It’s wonderful to see how powerful philanthropy can be and what kind of difference it can make in the community,” says Anastasios Kozaitis, president of The Valley Hospital Foundation. Marron’s gift will be perpetual, with annual earned income going toward funding and expanding children’s programs and services. “Doing this achieves many things for me,” says Marron, a resident of Ho-Ho-Kus. “First, it’s a wonderful way to remember my wife. Second, it’s been a family tradition to support Valley. And third, the donation is a way to touch everyone in the community. That’s important to us.”

‘An exceptional woman’

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School, Marron recalls how he met his wife, Darlene, at the Wharton Club in New York during one of the alumni organization’s monthly meetings. Beautiful and bright, Darlene, a native of Auburn NY, held an MBA from New York University and at the time worked as a senior financial analyst at American Airlines. “A friend from college brought her and introduced her to me. My friend knew we would hit it off, and he was right,” says Marron, who spent his career in property finance in New York City. “My wife was an exceptional woman.”

The couple was married for more than 42 years before Darlene’s death on Sept. 6, 2014, from cholangiocarcinoma, a rare form of cancer. She had been diagnosed less than two years prior at Valley and had appeared to have the cancer beat following surgery and chemotherapy, when she took a turn for the worse.

From a husband’s perspective, “It’s hard to articulate when you go through something like this, how important it is to have people like those at Valley who gave me the emotional support and insight, in layman’s terms, into what we were dealing with,” Marron says. “That level of support was astounding.” It made the decision to make a donation in memory of his wife that much easier, he says, and only solidified why his family has always been big Valley supporters.

A commitment to the community

Like the Marrons, Frank Manginello, M.D., has long-established ties to Valley. He’s been practicing there for nearly 30 years, serving as director of neonatology for 25 years before being named Director of Children’s Services for Valley Medical Group almost two years ago. He serves on the Foundation board, alongside Marron’s brother, Peter, and is their brother-in-law.

In perhaps the kind of plot twist only fate can provide, Dr. Manginello has also been named the first Darlene L. Marron Chair for Children’s Services, meaning Marron’s gift will go toward the very programs his brother-in-law innovates. Though they had no children of their own, Ed and Darlene Marron shared a passion for supporting Valley’s services for the pediatric community. (Con’t next page)
“I’m always tuned into the needs of the pediatric and women’s communities, and my vision for this is very broad-based,” Dr. Manginello says. He sees the donation helping a wide range of ambulatory programs, including gastrointestinal (GI), endocrine, pulmonary, sleep and child development services. It will also support new endeavors, such as the child wellness and nutrition program starting up this spring, as well as those Valley staples that already see a lot of foot traffic, such as the Kireker Center for Child Development, which logs about 20,000 patient visits annually. In addition, the donation will benefit efforts that are still in the works, including a child and adolescent psychiatry and psychology program.

“This was really a perfect match for what we’re all trying to achieve, and I’m honored,” says Dr. Manginello of the appointment.

Marron says he and his wife had planned to make a sizeable donation to Valley even before they knew her cancer was terminal. “They’ve been there for us, for people we know, and we just cherish it,” he says of the hospital.

---

**New Partners in Care Welcome Policy Going Live March 16**

As part of our efforts to connect the healthcare team with patients and their families, The Valley Hospital is implementing a new Partners in Care Welcome Policy on March 16, 2015, in which Partners in Care and others identified by the patient will be welcome at the patient's bedside 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Partners in Care – formerly referred to as visitors – are respected as essential members of the patient's healthcare team in sharing information and providing support and comfort. An essential part of this policy will be working with patients and their designated Partners in Care to ensure specific presence needs are accommodated as requested.

Valley has taken several steps over the past few years to prepare for this new Welcome Policy, including security initiatives to make our environment safer and more secure. With the issuance of badges to all guests upon arrival, everyone in the hospital can easily be identified, and physicians and staff can feel more comfortable with increased guest presence in their areas.

Valley's Partners in Care Welcome Policy does not simply mean that we will have open visitation 24/7. There may be times when the presence of Partners in Care will need to be limited to ensure quality of care, safety and/or confidentiality, including:

- If a patient is in a semi-private room;
- If the patient's care providers feel the patient's condition, care, or treatment precludes the presence of Partners in Care;
- If the patient has a court order limiting or restraining contact; and
- If the guest's behavior is a direct threat or causes discomfort to patients, families, staff, or others, or may interrupt the functioning of the care unit, department, or facility.

Please see the Welcome Policy tile on the homepage of the Valley intranet for more information, including how research data shows that family presence improves clinical outcomes and reduces social isolation. On the tile, we encourage you to view our “Better Together” video series, in which Valley employees and Patient and Family Advisors give personal stories on the importance of being present with their family members during their hospital stay.
Go Live for MEDITECH 6.1 is Approaching!

As we begin to approach the Go Live date for the new MEDITECH 6.1 system, we are planning to roll out the first step of physician training. Navin, Haffty & Associates, our partner in this project, has provided Valley Hospital with 6 Computer Based Trainings (CBT’s) that are built with MEDITECH’s best practices and concepts. Each CBT is five to ten minutes in length. The CBT’s will prepare you for the first in person training.

The topics covered in the CBT’s are:

- Accessing Patients
- Desktop Navigation
- Order Sets
- Discharge Process
- Physician Documentation (Pdoc) with Dragon voice recognition
- Manage Transfer/Medication Reconciliation
- ED Tracker (for ED Providers)

The CBT’s will be available on the Valley Physician Website and/or on the Intranet Sharepoint site on the physician training page beginning early April. You will be able to access these CBT’s on your personal computers, or handheld devices so to be able to complete when convenient to you. *Note that on certain Android devices some features of the ‘play bar’ are not compatible (ie, fast forward feature). Also, we encourage feedback using a link that will be provided at the completion of the CBT.

The Physician Advisory Committee has decided that training is necessary to establish competency in using MEDITECH 6.1. The CBT’s are the first step in the training process. We are excited to roll out this phase of the project and we very much look forward to introducing the medical staff to the new MEDITECH 6.1. Be on the look out for more information coming soon on how, when and where you will access the CBT modules.

______________________________

New Jersey Monthly’s 2015 Top Doctors Survey: Recognize Your Valley Colleagues!

If you have been licensed at least five years in New Jersey, you have received a ballot in the mail encouraging you to vote in the annual “Top Doctors in New Jersey” survey presented by New Jersey Monthly. The ballot (or your online submission) must be received by March 1.

To vote online go to: http://topdoctors.point2survey.com. You will need to provide your medical license number. The results will appear in an upcoming issue of the magazine. Please call Medical Staff Administration at 201-447-8020 if you have any questions.
Valley Medical Group is Well-Represented on Latest NY Metro Area “Top Doctor’s” List

Valley Medical Group congratulates its 23 affiliated physicians who are included in the recently released 18th edition of Top Doctors: New York Metro Area, which is published annually by Castle Connolly Medical Ltd, a New York City research and information company.

The guide includes more than 5,900 top primary care and specialty care physicians in a 20-county area spanning three states - New York, New Jersey and Connecticut - who represent the top 10 percent of doctors in the area.

“I am very proud to congratulate the outstanding members of our Medical Staff on this prestigious recognition,” said Marc Goldstein, President of Valley Medical Group.

Valley Medical Group physicians who were listed in the 18th edition of Top Doctors: New York Metro Area are:

- Thomas Ahlborn, M.D., Surgery; Assia Bromberg, M.D., Pulmonary Disease; Roger Coven, M.D., Obstetrics & Gynecology; Omid Dardashti, M.D., Cardiovascular Disease; Michael Faust, M.D., Obstetrics & Gynecology; Barry Fernbach, M.D., Hematology; Noah Goldman, M.D., Gynecologic Oncology; Howard Goldschmidt, M.D., Cardiovascular Disease; Joseph Grizzanti, D.O., Pulmonary Disease; Steven Kanengiser, M.D., Pediatric Pulmonology; Louise Ligresti, M.D., Medical Oncology; Frank Manginello, M.D., Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine; Suneet Mittal, M.D., Cardiac Electrophysiology; Mark Preminger, M.D., Cardiac Electrophysiology; Thomas Rakowski, M.D., Medical Oncology; Dennis Reison, M.D., Cardiovascular Disease; Ruth Schulze, M.D., Obstetrics & Gynecology; Maria Scibetta, M.D., Internal Medicine; Gerald Sotsky, M.D., Cardiovascular Disease; Jonathan Steinberg, M.D., Cardiac Electrophysiology; Anusak Yiengpruksawan, M.D., Surgery; Alex Zapolanski, M.D., Thoracic & Cardiac Surgery; and Carolyn Zelop, M.D., Obstetrics & Gynecology

Looking for a doctor? Click on “Find a Physician” www.valleymedicalgroup.com. Online appointments are also available with select Valley Medical Group doctors through Zoc Doc. To use this free service, visit http://www.ValleyMedicalGroup.com and click on the “Book an Appointment” button.

Valley Trustee Vincent Forlenza Recognized with Trustee of the Year Award

The Valley Hospital is pleased to announce that Trustee Vincent Forlenza has been selected as a recipient of the NJHA Hospital and Healthcare System Trustee of the Year award. Mr. Forlenza has been a member of the Board of Trustees of The Valley Hospital since 2002, and served as its chairman from 2006 through 2013.

As a trustee and leader, Forlenza is known for his strategic planning, business operations, management skills and his dedication for giving back to the community. Mr. Forlenza currently serves as Chairman, CEO and President of BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), a leading global medical technology company. BD, which was founded in 1897 and is headquartered in Franklin Lakes, develops, manufactures and sells medical devices, instrument systems and reagents. As president, Mr. Forlenza oversees BD’s three business segments – BD Medical, BD Diagnostics and BD Biosciences, as well as the company’s International and Quality functions. Prior to his appointment as BD’s president, Vince’s career at the company, which began in 1980, spanned strategic planning, marketing, management and executive leadership.

(Continued on next page)
A graduate of Lehigh University and the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School, Mr. Forlenza is an active community volunteer. He is a member of The Valley Hospital’s Board of Trustees and served as its Chairman for the last seven years. During his tenure as Chairman, Valley established a new Heart and Vascular Institute, launched a comprehensive translational research program and opened the first northern New Jersey Gamma Knife Center. During this time, Valley also developed far-reaching strategic plans for its facilities and created Valley Medical Group, a multispecialty group practice comprising more than 185 doctors and advanced practice professionals representing more than 30 medical and surgical specialties. Valley Medical Group joins The Valley Hospital and Valley Home Care as the three entities that form Valley Health System.

“Vince is an outstanding trustee who has contributed years of service and leadership to this hospital and health system and to the community,” said Audrey Meyers, President and CEO of The Valley Hospital and Valley Health System. “Valley has benefited enormously from John’s 12 years of exemplary leadership.”

Mr. Forlenza serves on Lehigh University’s Board of Trustees and is a member of the Advisory Board for Lehigh’s P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. He also is chairman of AdvaMedDx and serves on its board. AdvaMedDx is a division of the Advanced Medical Technology Association (AdvaMed), which focuses solely on in-vitro diagnostic technologies.

As a business leader in the healthcare industry, Mr. Forlenza recently was a keynote speaker for the annual Wharton Health Care Business Conference, a leading healthcare business forum for industry professionals, academics and students.

In 2013, The Project HOPE, a global health education and humanitarian assistance organization, awarded Mr. Forlenza The Global Health Leadership Award, which recognizes an individual who has championed health issues globally. He was awarded this honor for his support of Project HOPE’s global health initiatives and disaster relief work, which has helped strengthen underserved communities and health systems across the developing world.

In addition, Mr. Forlenza has been recognized as an honoree by Autism Speaks, the world’s leading autism science and advocacy organization, dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

Mr. Forlenza’s award was presented during NJHA’s 96th Annual Meeting at the Hyatt Regency Princeton. The program included the presentation of the Healthcare Leader awards, which recognize the distinguished service of healthcare executives, trustees and clinicians, along with the Excellence in Quality Improvement Awards. The New Jersey Hospital Association, the state’s oldest and largest healthcare trade association, holds its annual awards program to honor several individuals and organizations for their commitment to the state’s healthcare system and the patients and communities they serve.
Curb Overuse of Antibiotics to Reduce Drug-Resistant Superbug
The Valley Hospital Leading the Way with Aggressive Antibiotic Stewardship Program

An aggressive campaign to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics has helped cut the rate of infection with a dangerous drug-resistant bacteria at The Valley Hospital by nearly 40 percent.

Clostridium difficile, or C.diff, is a bacterium that can cause symptoms ranging from diarrhea to life-threatening inflammation of the colon. This week the New England Journal of Medicine released an article “Burden of Clostridium difficile Infection in the United States” that asserts “C. difficile was responsible for almost half a million infections and was associated with approximately 29,000 deaths in 2011.”

The article looked at C. diff infections in health care settings and in the communities of 10 geographic areas. According to the study, “A total of 15,461 cases of C. difficile infection were identified in the 10 geographic areas; 65.8 percent were health care–associated, but only 24.2 percent had onset during hospitalization.” The study found that of the 293,300 health care–associated cases, roughly 107,600 originated in the hospital, 104,400 originated in a nursing home and 81,300 had a community onset that was associated with having received outpatient care at a health care facility.

Reducing the spread of C. diff will depend on strict adherence to recognized infection control strategies, including hand washing, sterilization of surfaces and equipment, and isolation when appropriate. But C. diff is also becoming more prevalent because of the widespread of overuse of antibiotics. While the choice of whether an antibiotic is needed and which one should be used is ultimately a decision to be made by the doctor and patient, it is clear that hospitals have an important role to play in helping doctors and patients make wise choices.

“The overuse of antibiotics predisposes people to infection with C.diff and other antibiotic-resistant organisms,” said Neil Gaffin, M.D., an infectious disease specialist at Valley.

To address the link between the overuse of antibiotics and the rate of C.diff infections, in the spring of 2013 The Valley Hospital launched an aggressive antibiotic stewardship program to supplement the hospital’s comprehensive environmental disinfection program. Dr. Gaffin’s write-up of Valley’s antibiotic stewardship program will be published in a forthcoming issue of Clinical Infectious Diseases, a leading journal in the field of infectious disease.

“The over-arching goal is to increase patient safety by reducing the use of unnecessary antibiotics,” Dr. Gaffin said. “Overuse of antimicrobials causes patient harm mainly by predisposing patients to C.diff infection and contributing significantly to the emergence of drug-resistant bacteria, which can be harder to treat.

“Our antibiotic stewardship programs works in synchrony with our environmental disinfection program by reducing the amount of drug-resistant organisms — the bio burden, if you will — in the hospital,” he said.

“At Valley we are very aggressive about limiting antibiotics, restricting their use as much as possible to those patients who really need them,” Dr. Gaffin said. “As a result, we’ve significantly reduced the indiscriminate use of IV antibiotics and our rate of C.diff has declined.”

To date, thanks to the antibiotic stewardship program coupled with comprehensive environmental cleaning and disinfection, C.diff rates at Valley have dropped by nearly 40 percent in 2014, compared to 2013, according to Dr. Gaffin.

“I’m very proud of our program,” Dr. Gaffin said. “No one is monitoring antibiotic use more aggressively than we are here at The Valley Hospital.”
Valley Health System Partners with Rosie Pope to Promote Pregnancy Heath & Wellness

Valley Health System is pleased to announce a new partnership with parenting and maternity expert Rosie Pope for a campaign to promote pregnancy health and wellness for the Valley Health System community.

As part of this partnership, Rosie, who lives in Ridgewood, NJ, with her husband and four children, will serve as featured speaker at Valley Health System events, including the popular and well-attended annual “Girls Night Out”, the signature fall event of Valley’s free membership program for women: Thrive!

Rosie will also provide educational information and personal posts on Valley’s social media sites, including Facebook pages for Valley’s Fertility Center and Center for Childbirth.

“We are absolutely thrilled to be working with Rosie,” said Claire Grande, Assistant Vice President of Women’s and Children’s Services at Valley. “I read her book, ‘Mommy IQ: The Complete Guide to Pregnancy’ from cover-to-cover and found that much of her advice aligns perfectly with Valley’s holistic and family-centered approach to pregnancy and childbirth.”

Valley’s Center for Childbirth offers a family-centered approach to the childbirth experience and a holistic philosophy to make each birth a unique experience. In 2014, more families chose Valley to welcome their babies than ever before in the hospital’s 60-year history.

Perhaps best known for her starring role in Bravo’s “Pregnant in Heels”, London-born Rosie Pope is a celebrated designer, educator, and author. She is the creative force behind Rosie Pope Maternity and Rosie Pope Baby, her maternity and baby clothing and accessories line, with stores in Santa Monica, California, and New York’s Upper East Side and Tribeca neighborhoods, and MomPrep, her prenatal, postpartum and parenting education studios.

“I am beyond thrilled to be partnering with Valley Health System to help bring knowledge, confidence and community to women who are in the midst of a new life experience,” says Rosie Pope. “Health is always important, but becoming a mother brings it to the forefront, making it a priority.”

“Rosie is a dynamic personality, and as a mother of four children who struggled with infertility, Rosie is the natural choice to provide education, advice and support for women who are trying to conceive, those who are pregnant, and those raising young children,” Grande said.

Look for Rosie at upcoming events offered through Thrive!, Valley’s free membership program for women. Not a Thrive! member yet? Join today to be sure you don’t miss out on the fun! www.ValleyHealth.com/Thrive.

About Rosie Pope

London-born entrepreneur Rosie Pope is the creative force behind Rosie Pope Maternity and Rosie Pope Baby, her maternity and baby clothing and accessories line, with stores in Santa Monica, California, and New York’s Upper East Side and Tribeca neighborhoods, and MomPrep, her prenatal, postpartum and parenting education studios.

Rosie’s days are filled with being a mom, wife, designer, educator, TV personality and all-around guide to women during their pregnancies and beyond. Her goal is to bring together the highest quality products, information and expert services to help each woman figure out her best journey through pregnancy and motherhood. For more information, please visit www.RosiePope.com
Valley Medical Group Launches the Center for Asthma and Immune Lung Diseases

Valley Medical Group is proud to announce the opening of the Center for Asthma and Immune Lung Diseases, specializing in the evaluation and treatment of asthma, sarcoidosis, pulmonary fibrosis and immune deficiency disorders.

“Our goal at the Center for Asthma and Immune Lung Diseases is simple: to better understand the causes of inflammation and the types of inflammation resulting in allergic and immune-related respiratory diseases, and to treat them appropriately,” said pulmonologist Joseph Grizzanti, D.O., FCCP, Medical Director of the center.

The center features a staff with more than 25 years of experience in evaluating the respiratory tract from an allergic, pulmonary and immunological perspective. “Our purpose is to view the immune system and respiratory system in its totality,” said Dr. Grizzanti. The clinical team employs a host of modalities to determine the type of inflammation driving a patient’s symptoms, including sputum microscopy, serum biomarkers, exhaled nitric oxide, complete pulmonary function tests, and allergy testing and evaluation.

Board certified in pulmonary medicine as well as allergy and clinical immunology, Dr. Grizzanti brings more than 30 years of experience to his role at the Center for Asthma and Immune Lung Diseases. In addition to being a senior partner at Valley Medical Group’s Respiratory Health and Critical Care Medicine practice, Dr. Grizzanti serves as a Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, where he teaches in both the pulmonary and allergy divisions.

The Center for Asthma and Immune Lung Diseases is located at 297 Lafayette Ave. in Hawthorne. For more information, please call 973-790-4111.

______________________________

Landmark Study Asks the Question: Are All Defibrillators Created Equal?

First U.S. Patients Enrolled in International Trial to Evaluate Implantable Defibrillator that Offers Protection with Less Risk to the Heart

The Valley Hospital has been selected as the United States Coordinating Center for the PRAETORIAN trial, an international trial designed to compare for the first time the traditional implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) with a newer model that may reduce the risk of complications associated with these otherwise life saving devices.

Although ICDs have been used for decades to safeguard patients deemed at high risk for sudden death due to a heart rhythm disorder (arrhythmia), the traditional model relies on a transvenous electrode or lead placed in the heart. A major drawback of these ICDs has been the lead, which can break, become infected, or injure the heart and surrounding blood vessels. The alternative is a newer form of ICD, called a subcutaneous or S-ICD that is implanted entirely under the skin without entering the heart or blood vessels. Valley was one of the first hospitals in New Jersey and one of only three hospitals in the tri-state area to have early experience with the S-ICD.

“Both types of ICDs have been shown to reduce the risk of sudden death,” says Suneet Mittal, M.D., Direct of Electrophysiology and the Principal Investigator at Valley for the Praetorian Trial. “The S-ICD, because it does not involve a lead within the heart, may significantly reduce the likelihood of lead-related complications. This trial is the first attempt to compare the two types of ICDs in a randomized trial.”

In the PRAETORIAN trial, which originated at the Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, patients are randomly selected to receive either a traditional ICD or an S-ICD. Mark W. Preminger, M.D., Director, Implantable Arrhythmia Devices at Valley, enrolled the first patients in the United States into the study earlier this month.

“The S-ICD® is the world’s only subcutaneous ICD, and it represents a major step forward in the evolution of defibrillator technology,” Dr. Mittal says. “We are delighted to offer this advanced breakthrough in arrhythmia treatment to our Valley Hospital patients, and proud to be a leading participant in this important international trial.”

For more information please visit www.clinicaltrials.gov.
Mindfulness in Medicine and Healthcare Leadership

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment on purpose, non-judgmentally with openness and curiosity. The literature shows it can have profound effects in the clinical setting. Mindfulness practice has also made its way into leadership in government, the military and the corporate world.

Join Valley Medical Group physician Jodie Katz, M.D. for this innovative conference on mindfulness. Hear from the leading experts, and learn how mindfulness can be practiced in the healthcare setting to help preserve the well being of both patients and healthcare professionals.

Saturday, May 2, 2015
The Valley Hospital Conference Center

*Breakfast and Registration: 7:00 a.m.
Program: 7:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.*

This event is **FREE**, and open to all Valley employees and physicians.
To register, contact Kathy Newberg at x6090 or knewber@valleyhealth.com
Registration by Friday, April 10 is required.

**Conference Speakers:**

- Roberto Benzo, M.D.
  Mayo Clinic
- Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN
  University of Virginia
- Janice Marturano
  Founder, The Institute for Mindful Leadership
- Mick Krasner, M.D., FACP
  University of Rochester

Physician Contact Hours: The Valley Hospital is accredited by the Medical Society of New Jersey to provide continuing education for physicians. The Valley Hospital designates this live activity for a maximum of 4 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™

The Valley Hospital is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by New Jersey State Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Centers Commission on Accreditation.