

HEARTBEATS MAGAZINE

SPRING 2022



Care Courageously™





Elise Cutter, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

FORWARD MOMENTUM

As I take on the exciting role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to lead an organization with dedicated employees, exceptional Medical Staff and supportive community members. In reflecting on my last 20 years at Island Hospital and considering the challenges facing our organization and industry, I continually call to mind the commitment and courage I have seen from our employees and the support from our community. I'd like to thank all of our staff members and our Board of Commissioners for their continued collaboration and dedication, and I look forward to working with them in an expanded capacity as the CEO.

As we plan for 2022 and beyond, I am excited to move ahead with a refreshed name and brand. In recognition of our commitment to all the communities we care for and the wide range of services we provide, I am privileged to introduce: Island Health, where we Care Courageously™ for our patients every day. I am honored to work with such a dedicated group of people who have sacrificed so much these past few years. Their work has been nothing short of courageous.

*I am privileged to introduce:
Island Health, where we
Care Courageously™ for
our patients every day.*

– Elise Cutter

Over the next several months, you will see updates throughout the organization. From a new website to new signs, the transition to Island Health symbolizes the investments we'll be making to improve our facility and continue responding to the healthcare needs of our community.

OUR FOCUS FOR 2022:

STAFFING

Ensuring our team is valued and respected and has the equipment they need to continue to provide top-notch care to our community;

SPACE PLANNING

Reviewing our spaces to improve and expand access to specialty and primary care;

EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES UPGRADES

Investing in our infrastructure and making needed improvements in our facility as many of our spaces have become worn and dated;

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION

Working on ways to improve and enhance communication both internally and externally. There has never been a more important time to communicate clearly and often.

Many of the staff members have heard me say, *"I don't want to be stagnant."* I am committed to forward momentum, to addressing the needs of our staff and our community alike.

I appreciate collaboration, and I am always open to your comments, concerns and feedback. Feel free to contact me at 360.299.1327.

Elise Cutter, MBA
Chief Executive Officer



IN THIS ISSUE

ON THE COVER:

In our inaugural issue as Island Health, we are dedicating this Heartbeats Magazine to those whose courage has made a difference in and around the community. Our many faces of courage are represented in the small tiles. On the cover from left to right is Dr. Paul Hammer, Psychiatrist; Clarisa Shook, BSN, Registered Nurse; and Dr. Susanne Wilhelm, Family Physician. Read more about these courageous caregivers throughout this issue.

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From Left:
Commissioners Jan Iversen;
Chip Bogosian, MD;
Warren Tessler;
Paul M. Maughan, PhD;
Lynne M. Lang, PhD

POISED FOR THE FUTURE

A message from Commissioner Jan Iversen

The Board of Commissioners is pleased to usher in a new era for the organization, with Elise Cutter as the newly selected Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a refreshed brand to reflect our commitment to serving the healthcare needs of our community. The staff's courageous care and the organization's history have both inspired this new identity, and we are thrilled to welcome the changes this year.

The Commissioners appreciated the community support and confidence expressed by staff in our ability to choose the best CEO to lead Island Health into the future. Having risen through the ranks of the hospital and serving in various roles, Elise has the knowledge and expertise to address the issues our healthcare system and organization face. As a former Chief Financial Officer, Elise is an excellent steward of our resources. As the former Chief Operating Officer, she has the support of our hospital staff,

medical staff and community. Elise is open-minded, confident, consistent and inclusive. She possesses a high level of integrity and courage, all vital attributes in a leader.

We honor the dedicated team of professionals who have sacrificed so much to provide care for our patients. Their dedication is inspiring. Our goal as a Board is to foster leadership that embraces our vibrant community and continues to provide quality care to all. We are committed to expanding services and access to care based on our community's needs, and we will continue to work collaboratively with staff and the community to address these needs.

**Please join me in
welcoming the new era at
ISLAND HEALTH.**

Jan M. Iversen
Jan Iversen, President
Board of Commissioners

If you have questions or comments for any of the Commissioners, please email us at commissioners@islandhospital.org or call at 360.299.1327. We appreciate your input and ideas.



CLARISA SHOOK, BSN EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

As an Intensive Care Unit nurse, Clarisa Shook, BSN, tends to our most seriously ill or injured patients, and over the past two years, has been at the bedside of many COVID patients. Island Health recognized Shook's clinical excellence and extraordinary service during the pandemic and awarded her the distinction of being the Employee of the Year for 2020.

NOTE: The Employee of the Year for 2020 ceremony was delayed due to COVID, so although this announcement may seem unpunctual, we wanted to ensure Shook received the recognition she rightly deserves.

Island Health recognizes two employees for **46 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Luella Breckenridge, CRCST, and Nan Parnell both applied for work at Island Health back in 1975 and, today, they both continue to serve in the departments for which they were hired. Island Health would like to thank them for their long-time service and contributions. Congratulations on this anniversary!



LUELLA BRECKENRIDGE, CRCST
Sterile Processing Technician



NAN PARNELL
Environmental Service Technician

MEET OUR **NEWEST PROVIDERS**

AND SAY FAREWELL TO FAMILIAR FACES



RACHAEL CLEGHORN, PA-C

FAMILY MEDICINE

ISLAND PRIMARY CARE – ORCAS

Rachael Cleghorn, PA-C, received her Master of Clinical Medical Science degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Barry University in Florida. An accomplished physician assistant in both rural and urban settings, Cleghorn is also bilingual and has conducted clinical rotations and patient appointments fully in Spanish. She has a depth of experience with providing a full range of assessments, diagnoses, treatments and follow-ups. Cleghorn strives to practice integrative medicine that takes one's whole being into consideration, emphasizing how even small changes in habits can lead to improved health and well-being.



MARK DONOVAN, MD, FACS

GENERAL SURGEON

ISLAND SURGEONS

Dr. Mark Donovan earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from Albany Medical College in Albany, NY. An accomplished general surgeon for more than a decade—most recently at Centennial Medical Group in Roseburg, Oregon—he is also a former major in the US Army Medical Corps and served as staff surgeon in both Afghanistan and Northern Syria. Donovan decided to go into medicine when he realized it would allow him to continue solving problems but with a much more important human connection. Donovan is board certified and is a member of the Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons.



LISA MELODY, PA-C

WOMEN'S HEALTH

ISLAND PRIMARY CARE – 24TH ST.

Lisa Melody, PA-C, has a decade of experience as a physician assistant in a variety of settings. She earned her Master of Physician Assistant degree from Samuel Merritt University in Oakland, California. Melody has worked as a physician assistant in family practice, and most recently, obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN). Her extensive work in OB/GYN includes postpartum care with high risk obstetrical patients and diagnoses and management of acute gynecological conditions. Melody strives to collaborate with patients about their care and enjoys helping women understand and feel confident about their bodies throughout all stages of their lives.



ISLAND HEALTH BIDS FAREWELL TO DR. MULCAHY

From being a medical officer on the first flotilla in a Russian port to caring for the refinery explosion victims in Anacortes, Dr. Joseph Mulcahy has had a full career in his 38 years as a general surgeon.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Mulcahy earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from St. Louis University. His initial interest was in family medicine, however, a surgical rotation inspired Mulcahy to specialize in general surgery.

"Island Health has been fortunate to have Dr. Mulcahy as part of our family for the last 12 years. He has been a remarkable leader, an exceptional surgeon, a compassionate physician and a colleague of great integrity. We wish him all the best on his well-deserved retirement," noted Chief Medical Officer Dr. Jason Hogge.

COVID-19 has delayed some of his retirement travel plans, but Mulcahy will be busy enough dusting off his guitar and paintbrush, and returning to hobbies he hasn't had time for in years, like photography, gardening and the many volunteering opportunities in Anacortes.

**NEW CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
FOCUSED ON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

Jason Hogge, MD, was named Chief Medical Officer in July 2021. While he is still treating patients at Island Primary Care – M Avenue, he has also been hard at work developing quality improvement initiatives that aim to save lives and cut hospital costs. One of the biggest and most far-reaching improvement initiatives is reducing inpatient sepsis mortality.

Over the next few months, Island Health will develop a robust teaching program for nurses and physicians for sepsis training. This will enable expedited diagnosis and treatment of sepsis patients, improving both patient and quality outcomes.



**WILHELM RETIREMENT
LEAVES LASTING IMPACT**

Island Health bids a sincere farewell to Susanne Wilhelm, DO, who has been a provider at Island Primary Care – 24th Street (formerly Fidalgo Medical Associates) for 10 years. Wilhelm also serves as the Medical Director of the Center for Maternal & Infant Care, a specialty lactation clinic. The beauty of this position for Wilhelm was that she was able to treat both mom and baby. Although retiring from daily patient care, Wilhelm plans to stay on as the Medical Director at Island Maternal & Infant Care.

Feeling the personal call to serve others, Wilhelm came to the medical profession late in her career. After 25 years as a software engineer, she entered medical school at Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine and has never looked back.

In retirement, Wilhelm plans to volunteer in the community, cycle, hike and travel.

Director of Results Management Patty Codd says Wilhelm will be dearly missed, "Dr. Wilhelm is loved by her patients."



CLASSES & SCREENINGS

SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
REGISTER
ONLINE



OR VISIT
islandhealth.org/classes

CONTACT US
communityed@islandhospital.org
360.299.4204



DIABETES EDUCATION

Living Better with Diabetes

Today diabetes affects just over one in 10 adults in the U.S. To derail that trend more Americans must commit to lead healthier, more active lives. If you have or are at risk of developing diabetes, there are positive steps you can take to manage your health. Join Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist Amanda Lungren in a discussion on healthy eating, being active and reducing risks to help manage diabetes.

When: Thursday, May 19
10:30–11:30 a.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Amanda Lungren,
RDN, CDCES

MENTAL HEALTH

Healthy Coping Skills

Psychiatrist Paul Hammer, MD, will discuss the concept of resilience and developing a personal toolbox of healthy coping skills.

When: Thursday, March 24
12–1 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Paul S. Hammer, MD

Managing Your Mental Health:
Depression & Anxiety

Join Psychiatrist Paul Hammer, MD, for a discussion on the treatment of depression and anxiety with a focus on non-medication approaches to these conditions that often occur together.

When: Thursday, May 12
12–1 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Paul S. Hammer, MD

MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Addressing the Youth
Mental Health Crisis

Join Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health’s team of experts for an online presentation and discussion focusing on the mental health needs of youth in our community. Topics include signs your child may need help, responding to their need and promoting mental health. Panelists will share practical resources and the opportunity to ask questions will be available following the presentation.

When: Monday, April 18
6–7 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

MOM & BABY

Grand-Parenting 101

Are you an expecting grandparent? If so, this is the class for you. Whether your grandchild is being born at Island Hospital or elsewhere, you can learn what has stayed the same in childbirth, infant care and early development and what has changed over the years. This class describes ways grandparents can offer support and assistance to a new family, whether they live nearby or far away. Class will include detailed information on car seat safety presented by a Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician.

When: Thursday, March 31
12–1:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 16
12–1:30 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Teri Shilling, MS, LCCE,
CD (DONA), IBCLC

Panelists:

Paul Hammer, MD
Psychiatrist, Medical Director

Shad Ali, MD
Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

Stefani Castro, MSW, LICSW, CMHS
Social Worker; ASD Intervention

Cyndy Stevenson, MSW, LICSW,
Social Worker; ASD Intervention

Rachel Daly, BSN, RN
Clinic Manager

Introduction by:
Elise Cutter, MBA, CEO

Learn more about our
panelists on page 30.



Bone
density

Body Composition

MOM & BABY CONT.

Car & Booster Seat Clinic

Have your car and/or booster seats checked by nationally-trained car seat technicians from Safe Kids Northwest. They will check your seat for safety, make sure you are using it correctly and show you how to properly install the seat in your car. Face masks are required. Vehicles limited to four family members.

Appointments required:
CarSeatsNW@gmail.com

When: Thursday, April 14
3–5 p.m.

Thursday, June 9
3–5 p.m.

Where: Island Health’s 24th
Street parking lot

Cost: FREE

Childbirth Education Classes

This four-week class is designed to prepare parents-to-be for the arrival of their new baby. Participants will learn essential skills and develop confidence as they approach the end of pregnancy, labor, birth and early parenting. Prenatal health, stages of labor, coping techniques, pain relief options, breastfeeding, newborn care and more will be covered.

When: Tuesdays, May 3–24
6:30–9 p.m.

Tuesdays, July 5–26
6:30–9 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: \$95/per person + one
support person
(Covered by Apple Health)

Instructor: Teri Shilling, MS, LCCE,
CD (DONA), IBCLC

INTRODUCING:

HOLOGIC® DXA MACHINE

Whether you’re at risk for **osteoporosis** or looking to improve **athletic performance**, Island Health now offers the latest technology to measure bone density, body fat, lean mass and more. Call to schedule your appointment:

360.299.1315

Convenient appointments available.

Nutrition for a Healthy Pregnancy

Learn essential tips for ensuring proper nutrition during each stage of your pregnancy from conception to the first post-partum meal. Join a registered dietitian for this webinar that will cover topics including critical nutrients for each stage of fetal growth, strategies for managing morning sickness, and methods to build your milk supply. Nourish your body with a well-balanced diet to give your growing child a great start to life.

When: Tuesday, May 24
10–10:45 a.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Amber Phillips, MS, RD

HEALTHY LIVING

Living well with Chronic
Obstructive Pulmonary
Disease (COPD)

Join Respiratory Therapist Sarah Edwards for an informative conversation on COPD. This class will discuss how COPD affects the lungs, diagnoses of COPD and common treatments of COPD. Strategies to make living with COPD and daily tasks easier, including breathing techniques and proper use of medications will be included.

When: Tuesday, March 22
1–2 p.m.

Tuesday, June 14
1–2 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Sarah Edwards,
RRT, CPFT, BS, MPH

Spot the Signs of Stroke:
Learn to BE FAST

This class will teach you how to quickly identify signs of a stroke with the helpful BE FAST tool. Island Health’s specialized Stroke Coordinator is offering an in-depth look at what you really need to know about stroke, how to quickly identify a stroke, and when to call 911. This class will help you understand that time matters when dealing with a stroke and taking immediate action will give you and/or your loved one more options for care.

When: Wednesday, April 20
1–2 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Lisa Edwards, RN, TCRN

MEMORY

Improving Your Aging Memory

Is your memory not quite what it used to be? Join an Island Health speech-language pathologist to learn strategies and activities to improve your memory and keep your mind sharp.

When: Wednesday, May 18
10:30–11:15 a.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Libby Lewis, MA, MEd,
CCC-SLP



NUTRITION

Dietary Strategies for Managing High Cholesterol

Chronically elevated cholesterol levels increase risk for heart attack and stroke. Join Registered Dietitian Amber Phillips for an informative 30-minute talk on small changes you can make to your diet. Phillips will cover strategies that go beyond the standard advice to reduce saturated fat and cholesterol intake.

When: Wednesday, April 13 2:30–3 p.m.
Wednesday, June 8 2:30–3 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Amber Phillips, MS, RD

Healthy Digestion

The human body transforms food into fuel which sometimes leads to belching, heartburn, bloating, diarrhea or constipation. Take a journey into the digestive system with Registered Dietitian Amber Phillips. Learn common symptoms of digestive distress and nutrition strategies to improve gut health.

When: Tuesday, May 10 10–10:45 a.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Amber Phillips, MS, RD

Practical Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet has been shown to support healthier blood pressure, cholesterol and body weight. Join Registered Dietitian Amber Phillips for an overview of this exciting eating style and practical tips for making it work for you!

When: Thursday, April 28 10–11 a.m.
Thursday, June 23 10–11 a.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Amber Phillips, MS, RD

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Osteoporosis: Exercise & Nutrition

Learn what types of exercises are most beneficial for your bones and which foods will help keep your bones strong from an Island Health physical therapist and registered dietitian. Try some exercises with us during this online presentation.

When: Wednesday, April 27 11 a.m.–12 p.m.
Wednesday, June 1 11 a.m.–12 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Instructor: Amber Phillips, MS, RD and Allison Blackwell, PT, DPT

SCREENINGS

Balance Screening

Our physical therapists can help determine where your body is vulnerable and help you develop strategies to prevent falls. Appointments are required.

When: Tuesday, May 10 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Where: Island Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapy at 25th Street Building

Cost: FREE

Memory Screening

Do you have difficulty paying attention or keeping up in a conversation, staying on topic, or remembering information and names? Are finding words, expressing thoughts, or planning and following through with a schedule becoming more difficult? If so, our speech language pathologists can help identify the nature of your difficulty and determine if you have a cognitive communication deficit. They can also provide strategies to help you improve in these areas of difficulty in order to help you succeed. Appointments are required.

When: Tuesday, April 12 1:30–3:30 p.m.
Tuesday, June 21 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Where: Island Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapy at 25th Street Building

Cost: FREE

Swallow Screening

Concerned about your swallow? Do you cough or clear your throat frequently when eating or drinking, have wet sounding vocal quality, have congestion with repetitive colds or pneumonia, have difficulty with chewing and/or require multiple swallows with bites or sips? If you are experiencing one or more of these symptoms, meet with a speech-language pathologist to determine if you might have a swallowing disorder. Appointments are required.

When: Tuesday, April 19 1:30–3:30 p.m.
Tuesday, June 28 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Where: Island Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapy at 25th Street Building

Cost: FREE



Allison Blackwell, PT, DPT
Physical Therapy



Lisa Edwards, RN, TCRN
Stroke & Trauma Education



Sarah Edwards, RRT, CPFT, BS, MPH
Respiratory Therapy



Paul S. Hammer, MD
Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health



Libby Lewis MA, MEd, CCC-SLP
Speech Therapy



Amanda Lungren, RDN, CDCES
Diabetes Education



Amber Phillips, MS, RD
Nutrition Education



Teri Shilling, MS, LCCE, CD (DONA), IBCLC
Childbirth & Lactation Education

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CONTACT US
communityed@islandhospital.org
360.299.4204

GET INFORMED. GET SCREENED.



Breast Cancer – Mammogram

- WOMEN 40-49:**
- Women should have the choice to start screening for breast cancer.
- WOMEN 50-74:**
- Biennial mammogram screening is recommended.



Cervical Cancer – Pap Test

- WOMEN 21-29:**
- Every 3 years with a Pap test.
- WOMEN 30-65:**
- Every 3 years with a Pap test; or
 - Every 5 years with high-risk human papillomavirus (hrHPV) testing; or
 - Every 5 years with hrHPV testing in combination with a Pap test.



Prostate Cancer – PSA Testing

- MEN 55-69:**
- It's recommended men talk to their provider to determine what's best.



Colon Cancer

- ADULTS 45-75:**
- Screening for colorectal cancer is recommended. Several screening options are available. Talk to your provider.

Screening guidelines are based on the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF). Talk to your provider to determine when you should get screened.

COURAGEOUS CARE
INSPIRES NEW IDENTITY
ISLAND HEALTH Q&A



On January 26, 2022, Island Hospital announced a new name, logo and tagline that better encompasses all the services we provide: **Island Health**. From Anacortes to La Conner, the San Juan Islands and Whidbey Island, Island Health provides a wide range of healthcare services for our community.

NEW NAME. SAME COURAGEOUS CARE.

Our new name, Island Health, symbolizes our commitment to the health of our community, from the breadth of services we offer to the excellence in care we provide. We realize this is a big change, so we wanted to include a few questions and answers about our refreshed identity to better explain the what, how and why behind the new name.

Q. WHY DID ISLAND HOSPITAL CHANGE ITS NAME AND LOGO?

A. We’re a hospital and so much more. This refreshed name better explains who we are and what we offer. From behavioral health to diabetes education, physical therapy, primary care, sleep wellness, sports and spine, surgery, urology, and more, Island Health encompasses **all** of our services and locations, including our primary care clinic on Orcas Island.

Our brand has not been updated for nearly 20 years. Like furniture and equipment need to be replaced, our signage is worn and difficult to read, and our logo and identity were outdated. The refresh to our identity is one of many investments we are making in the organization in 2022. We paired the naming update with the signage project to be fiscally responsible.

Q. WHAT ELSE IS CHANGING?

A. Some of our clinic and building names are being updated to follow a consistent naming structure, with “Island” at the beginning of every name. We are making this update to make it easier for our patients and visitors to find us. Most significant are the updates to our primary care clinics in Anacortes.

Anacortes Family Medicine is now



Fidalgo Medical Associates is now



OUR BUILDINGS WILL BE RENAMED

We will rename our buildings to help with wayfinding and providing directions to our patients.

Please note: our phone numbers and providers are still the same.

FORMER BUILDING NAME NEW BUILDING NAME

Medical Office Building	M Avenue Building
Island Medical Center	24th Street Building
Medical Arts Pavilion	25th Street Building
Main & Emergency Entrances	Island Hospital (no change)

Q. IS “ISLAND HOSPITAL” STILL USED?

A. Yes. When patients come to the Emergency Department, have a baby or are admitted for care, they’ll still be at Island Hospital. Our new name, Island Health, is what we use when we refer to our entire system of services.

Q. WHERE DID THE IDEA OF “COURAGEOUS CARE” COME FROM?

A. Our staff, our patients and our community! When we interviewed patients and community members, we heard stories of our “small but mighty” care and learned about the courageous leaders who first opened the hospital in 1962. While we’re not the largest healthcare organization in the region, we are brave, bold and willing to go the extra mile for our patients and each other. Courageous Care celebrates our history and our staff, and reflects our continued commitment to serving our community.

Q. ARE TAX DOLLARS FUNDING THIS PROJECT?

A. No tax dollars have been used for this project. The signage update is a capital improvement project that has been budgeted for 2022. Island Health receives just over \$5,000,000 from taxpayers each year, which accounts for five percent of our total revenue. These funds are designated to pay for the debt associated with building the hospital in 2004, the purchase of two medical office buildings in 2019, and clinical equipment.



To see our refreshed brand in action, visit our new website at islandhealth.org. We look forward to unveiling our new signs later this year.

STORIES OF COURAGE

LEWIS ENJOYS HER SECOND CHANCE

It was a typical Memorial Day weekend. Mammography Technologist Shae Lewis, RT(R)(M), headed home after her shift to enjoy the weekend with her family when her eyes started shifting back and forth uncontrollably. Lewis knew the weird sensation was concerning enough to go straight to the Emergency Department. Because no typical stroke symptoms were present and her initial CT and MRI scans were mostly normal, Lewis was discharged after a couple of days of careful monitoring.

The following week, Lewis suffered similar symptoms with her vision and was taken back to the Emergency Department, this time in an ambulance. Again, a whole gamut of tests were ordered. In the meantime, Lewis lost all memory between the two visits and her family had to convince her it wasn't still Memorial Day weekend.

Finally a diagnosis came—occipital lobe stroke and right vertebral artery dissection, both extremely rare. For Lewis, who has worked at Island

Health for 21 years, this was a gut punch. She knew her body and knew something was wrong, but hearing the words was surreal. She is used to caring for patients, not being the patient.

"It was an epiphany. Being a patient is hard. It changes you," she said. Lewis had to grieve the diagnosis before she could even get close to accepting a new way of life.

"I miss my former life of laughing loudly and attending Seahawks games," she said. "But once I mourned that, I could move on. I'm happier now and truly enjoying my second chance."

In October, Lewis returned to her job part time and gradually worked back to full time. More than anything, she wants patients to pay attention to their bodies and learn to recognize the signs. Today, she still carries a notebook with copious notes and reminders. Her recovery includes puzzles and crosswords, and keeping her blood pressure down.



"Don't ignore yourself. You know what feels wrong."

– Shae Lewis

For Lewis, now even the simple things are new and wondrous.

That's the beauty of a second chance.

DESPITE FEAR, FATIGUE AND CANCER, HAMMONDS CONTINUES CARING FOR OTHERS

An avid hiker and backpacker, Respiratory Therapist Leslie Hammonds, RRT, knew something was wrong when the fatigue she had been experiencing progressively worsened. Months of inconclusive bloodwork and scans passed while Hammonds got weaker. Finally on March 12, 2020, Hammonds received the diagnoses she feared—she had chronic myeloid leukemia (CML). Then on March 13, all attention turned to COVID-19.

Hammonds' life changed overnight. She had been treating patients with COVID-like symptoms already and was told by her oncologist to take immediate leave. Too little was known about the virus at that time. She felt tremendous guilt for "abandoning" her work as a respiratory therapist at a time when the need was so great. In addition, she worried about telling her family she had cancer, mere months after her mother had passed away from the disease.

"It was surreal," she said. "It's very hard being on the other side, accepting help. I felt guilty taking up anyone's time and resources."

Hammonds received treatment for her cancer at Island Cancer Care and after nine months returned to work part time. The CDC had recently approved the COVID-19 vaccine. "I'll be fine," she thought. Then the Delta variant hit, and her anxiety only increased. She has a medically fragile son who has been diagnosed with failure to thrive and Dygge-Melchior-Clausen syndrome. Because of this, he also battles respiratory issues, so Hammonds' fears were not solely for her own health.

"The best part of my job is meeting people where they are and helping them get to where they need to be," Hammonds said. "It's been incredibly rewarding to be back at work and to be able to help COVID patients."

While the past year has been anxiety-inducing, Hammonds is also very grateful. She is quick to give a shout out to her supportive colleagues and the caregivers at Island Cancer Care.

Because her type of leukemia is a very treatable one, Hammonds now takes a chemo pill every day, which has some brutal side effects but is doing its job. In fact, she was able to hike 200 miles this past summer.



"I was raised by two great parents who taught me to be strong."

– Leslie Hammonds

Island Health's courageous caregiver, Leslie Hammonds, RRT, graduated from Valencia College in Orlando, FL. She is especially grateful for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) and bethematch.com, which helps match blood and bone marrow donors with patients in need of their life-saving stem cells.



STORIES OF COURAGE

COURAGE IS MULTI-FACETED IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

What makes working in the Emergency Department (ED) at Island Hospital rewarding is exactly what makes it challenging. Even before the pandemic, ED staff had to diagnose and treat a variety of medical issues in multiple patients simultaneously. COVID-19 added complicating layers to an already intense environment.

Justin Curran, DO, FACOEP, has worked in the ED since 2011 and loves the variety, intensity and pace of the job.

"The most rewarding part is helping people through a variety of situations," Curran said. "We can go from one room where someone is having a heart attack, to a patient with respiratory failure from COVID, to a broken hip, to a kidney infection with sepsis, to a child with a runny nose."

Knowing where each patient is in the course of their evaluation, bouncing from room to room (12 total with four hall carts and a triage room) and fielding calls from cardiologists, orthopedists, general surgeons, pediatricians and other specialists is all part of the job. Curran and his staff work hard to make sure expectations are met.

"Our goal is to rapidly and accurately assess, treat and stabilize everything that comes our way," he said.

"When COVID-19 hit, it was outrageously difficult," explained Curran. "In the beginning, staff were scared and stressed, afraid of transmitting the virus to their families. And while patient volumes dropped, those who did come in were much sicker. Now that the ED and hospital have standard

treatment algorithms, the biggest challenge is staff fatigue. We are spent. We are exhausted."

Twenty percent of the healthcare work force has either retired or left the profession for less risky work, and hospitals have been at or over capacity during several peaks of the pandemic. Despite the heavy lifting being asked of him, Curran expects to be here doing his work for a long time.

"I'm very proud to be a part of this team, and I consider it an honor to live and work in this community," remarked Curran.

Ashley Heath, LPN, and Access Tent Lead stands ready to test for COVID-19.

Island Health tested 3,948 patients through the Access Tent in 2021.

COVID-19 INFORMATION & RESOURCES

TESTING

Local Testing Sites

Skagit County Public Health
skagitcounty.net/coronavirus
TestDirectly
testdirectly.com

Free At-home COVID Tests

State Program
SayYesCovidHomeTest.org
Federal Program
CovidTests.gov

If you've purchased at-home COVID-19 tests, you may be eligible for reimbursement from your insurance company. Contact your health insurance company for details.

MEDICAL CARE

Island Primary Care

360.293.3101

Island Walk-In Clinic - M Avenue

Monday-Saturday,
7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Sunday,
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Walk-ins Welcome
360.293.3101

Island Hospital Emergency Department

Open 24/7

If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency department.

VACCINES

Find a Local Vaccine Provider

Skagit County Public Health Vaccine Hotline
360.416.1500
skagitcounty.net/coronavirus

Washington State Department of Health
vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov/

Need Proof of Your Vaccine?
Island Health Medical Records
360.299.1326

Washington State Resources
wa.myrir.net
waverify.doh.wa.gov

JUSTIN CURRAN, DO, FACOEP,

is a residency-trained emergency medicine physician. He graduated from Michigan State University Medical School in 2007 and completed his four year residency at POH Regional Medical Center (now McLaren Oakland), where he served as chief resident his final year. Just prior to coming to Anacortes in 2011, he was a flight physician for AeroMed.

Island Hospital
Emergency Department
islandhealth.org/ed
360.299.1300



IMPRESSIVE VOLUNTEERISM, HUSTON
CELEBRATES 13 YEARS WITH HOSPITAL

Ann Huston has spent exactly half of her years in Anacortes volunteering at Island Health. Huston and her family moved here from Tucson 26 years ago to “follow their boat.” For the last 13 years, in her red volunteer coat, she has greeted visitors and patients with her warmth and welcoming smile.

It all started at a routine doctor visit when Huston asked her doctor for advice on how to cure her boredom. Retired from a career as an IBM administrative assistant, she was looking for meaningful ways to fill her time. Next thing she knew, she was at the front desk with the registrar, welcoming people to the hospital.

“I learned quickly just how important it is to help people relax,” she said.

Her volunteer duties include answering questions, greeting patients and visitors, and escorting them to the various offices and departments throughout the hospital.

For Huston, volunteering has been a saving grace during the pandemic when she wanted desperately to help in some way.

“The best part about volunteering is just being useful,” she said. “Helping people feel even a little more comfortable is so rewarding. And when you smile, they smile.”

Huston’s courageous care was tested 10 years ago when she had her own health scare. She was leading a small church group in her home when she suddenly lost the ability to speak. Her speech returned shortly after, but she had no memory of the event. As a precaution, she scheduled an appointment with her doctor. The MRI results from that appointment showed a baseball-sized tumor on the top of her skull. Within two hours of seeing the images, her doctor had scheduled neurosurgery for her.

A woman of deep faith, Huston never feared, finding hope and encouragement in messages everyday between the time of diagnosis and the day of surgery. She took four months off to rest and

Ann Huston, long-term volunteer, lifts the spirits of staff and patients with her infectious smile and willingness to help.

then donned her red coat once again to return to the volunteer desk. “We love the days when Ann is here. She lights up our halls with her smile and kindness,” said Bo Gillentine, Registration Manager.

When Huston isn’t at the hospital, she is busy keeping up with the adventures and happenings of her five accomplished grandchildren, all of whom she is very proud. She encourages anyone looking for a way to give back to give volunteering at the hospital a try. “It’s really the most rewarding thing I can think of,” reflected Huston.



Volunteer Services
360.299.1397
islandhealth.org/volunteers

Interested in becoming a volunteer?
If you are looking for a way to give back to the community, develop new skills, build on existing experience, or, like Ann (see story), find a way to cure boredom, consider volunteering at Island Health. We’d love to have you. Our volunteers are the heart of our organization. Contact our Volunteer Services department to find out how you can help put your talents to work, making a difference for our patients and our staff.

**VOLUNTEER SERVICES RAMPS UP
DESPITE ONGOING PANDEMIC**

As we continue to work through the second year of the pandemic and adapt to new ways of working and serving our community, Island Health is ramping up volunteer services once again to help support our staff and patients. While the Volunteer Services department was shut down early in the pandemic, the need for help was still great, particularly as Island Health provided vaccines to our community. With the help of several volunteers, Island Health provided vaccine and booster clinics throughout 2021.

“We could not have offered our vaccine clinics without the support and commitment of our amazing volunteers,” said Elise Cutter, CEO.

After a year of closure to the department, Island Health welcomed Johnalee Otten as the new Volunteer Supervisor in October 2021. Formerly working in the Patient Accounts department, Johnalee’s strong background working with volunteers in Lihue, Hawaii at Wilcox Medical Center and with the American Cancer Society made her a natural fit for the position. Johnalee immediately jumped into the role by standing up booster vaccine clinics throughout the month of November, calling on several volunteer vaccinators to support the cause.

“We are grateful for our volunteers at Island Health and I feel privileged to be part of the volunteer team. I am excited to get the volunteer program fully up and running,” said Johnalee.

As the organization continues to address the changing needs of our community throughout the pandemic and beyond, volunteers have helped support various projects and positions, playing a vital role in delivering compassionate care to the community. From greeters at the self-screening kiosks to vaccinators in our clinics, volunteers have stepped up when we’ve most needed them and we are extremely grateful for their support and dedication.

If you’d like to learn more about the becoming a volunteer or would like to connect with our new Volunteer Supervisor, contact Johnalee Otten at 360.299.1397 or visit islandhealth.org/volunteers for more information.



Johnalee Otten
Volunteer Supervisor

DIABETES AWARENESS:

WHAT IS DIABETES DISTRESS?

Amanda Lungren, RDN, CDCE

Life can be overwhelming. With the daily list of endless “to-do’s”, managing a chronic disease like diabetes can be downright stressful.

Individuals with diabetes have a big responsibility, including watching their diet, exercising, taking medications, checking blood sugars and regularly seeing their healthcare team. These are all healthful habits to successfully manage diabetes, but can be overwhelming. When life is hectic, diabetes distress can set in.

WHAT IS DIABETES DISTRESS?

Diabetes Distress is when the juggling of life and diabetes becomes too much. It happens when the sadness, anger, fatigue or frustration one may feel about diabetes gets in the way of taking care of their health. Diabetes distress can lead to “burn out,” which can potentially lead to unmanaged diabetes, high blood sugars and unfortunate health complications.

HERE ARE FIVE STEPS TO HELP OVERCOME DIABETES DISTRESS:

1. Tell your healthcare team. They can brainstorm ways to manage the stress of diabetes.
2. Join a support group or talk to others with diabetes.
3. Be kind to yourself. Remember, no one gets diabetes 100% right.

THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS ARE SIGNS OF DIABETES DISTRESS:

“I don’t want to check my blood sugars because they are always high.”

“I stopped taking my medication. It doesn’t help anyway.”

“I am not going to see my doctor or dietitian because I know my blood sugars are bad.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in any 18 month period 33-50% of people with diabetes experience diabetes distress.

4. Make a plan to take a SAFE break from some of your diabetes “duties.” For example, reduce the number of blood sugar checks.

5. Set boundaries with others who may be trying to help you with lifestyle changes, but are unintentionally causing more stress.

Know that diabetes is manageable with help. Balancing the challenges of life can be tough, but working together with your provider and a diabetes educator can make it easier.

Amanda Lungren, RDN, CDCES, is a diabetes educator and clinical dietitian. Lungren’s keen interest in nutrition, science and culture led her to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition and Kinesiology at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada. Lungren is a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES) and holds training certificates in Diabetes Prevention, Childhood and Adolescent Weight Management, and Adult Weight Management.

Amber Phillips, MS, RD, has a Master’s degree in nutrition from Bastyr University in Kenmore, WA and a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, MN. Phillips has a keen interest in community education. “Nutrition advice can be confusing and sometimes conflicting,” says Phillips. “My role as a dietitian is to follow the latest research and make it easy to understand for my patients and the public.”

Island Health
DIABETES EDUCATION & NUTRITION
islandhealth.org/nutrition
360.299.4934

Sign up for free diabetes and nutrition classes! See pages 8-10 for more information.



Amber Phillips, MS, RD
Registered Dietitian

WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

- 15 oz can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 5 oz no-sodium added chunk tuna
- 10 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 10 Kalamata olives, sliced
- 1/4 red onion, sliced thinly
- 2 Tbs olive oil
- 1 Tbs red wine vinegar
- 4 cups arugula
- 1/4 cup shaved parmesan
- Fresh ground black pepper

Island Health’s featured healthy recipe

MEDITERRANEAN TUNA & WHITE BEAN SALAD

Yield: 2 large or 4 small salads

This colorful salad can be thrown together quickly for a week night dinner or weekend lunch. The beans and tuna make it high protein while the olives and parmesan cheese add a slightly salty component which nicely balances the red wine vinegar. Serve with toasted flatbread.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a large bowl gently combine beans, tuna, tomatoes, olives, onion, olive oil and vinegar.
2. Add the arugula and cheese to the mixture. Toss to coat.
3. Split evenly between 2-4 bowls and top each with fresh ground black pepper.

TIPS:

Choose chunk light or chunk albacore tuna for a more substantial and meaty texture. You could also use fresh cooked tuna steaks. Garbanzo beans can be substituted in place of cannellini beans as well as feta cheese for the parmesan!



SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
WATCH THIS
RECIPE’S
VIDEO ONLINE



LET'S TALK ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER: OPENNESS TO ENCOURAGE EARLY DETECTION

A year and a half ago, Matt Gill bumped into a friend he had not seen in a while. The friend confided that he had recently had prostate cancer and urged Gill to go in for a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test.

Having recently turned 51, Gill, an Anacortes resident, decided to ask for the blood test at his regular check-up. While his PSA level was not extremely high, it was high enough to merit a second test. The result of the second test was slightly higher than the first which triggered a urology referral from his primary physician Dr. Thom at Island Primary Care – 24th Street. Receiving the referral to Dr. Mansel Kewitch at Island Urology was the beginning of an unexpected, but ultimately successful journey into the stressful realm of cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Dr. Kewitch was quick to order a third PSA test to determine if the previous results indicated a trend; they did. A physical exam was quickly followed by an MRI to see if the prostate was enlarged or showed any lesions that might indicate cancer.

The first trip to the MRI machine did not go as planned. As the youngest of four brothers growing up in Alaska, Gill had developed some claustrophobia which brought forth some unexpected anxieties when entering the MRI machine. "The MRI staff at Island Health were super kind," Gill said. "I needed a larger machine with a little more space and a line of sight out the top to get my brain on board with the procedure and everyone involved was so helpful and patient."

"I don't want this to be a Matt Gill cancer story. The excellent care I received at Island Health is the true story."

*– Matt Gill,
prostate cancer survivor*

In the end, the MRI didn't show much that added to the diagnosis, but the rise in PSA levels combined with a family history of prostate cancer—Gill's father is a prostate cancer survivor and his brother was battling prostate cancer at the time, too—were enough to merit a biopsy. Unfortunately, the results showed cancer. At his follow-up appointment, Dr. Kewitch gave Gill several treatment options.

Should I get screened for prostate cancer?



Men (55-69) should have the choice to undergo PSA testing. It is recommended men talk to their provider to determine the best screening based on their individual circumstances.

Island Urology

360.299.4980
islandhealth.org/urology

Learn more about cancer screenings on page 11.

"Dr. Kewitch was amazing. He made it clear that this was my body, my cancer and my decision to make. He asked me about my goals and priorities," Gill reflected. "We had very thorough conversations. They were matter-of-fact, but I could feel his empathy, too."

Gill knew that surgery—radical prostatectomy—was his best option. His wife Sara was finishing nursing school in Alaska so Gill's oldest and newly retired brother came down from Alaska to help him after the surgery and with his two children, ages 15 and 13.

Gill says the care he received from the minute he walked through the doors the morning of the surgery to his post-surgery physical therapy was phenomenal.

"All of the nurses and support staff were awesome, especially Nurse Yossarian," Gill said. "When you see everything that's going on in the unit, all the patients needing care and answers, just everything the docs and nurses are dealing with, it's truly humbling."

After a successful surgery, Gill started physical therapy sessions at Island Physical Therapy (PT), scheduled by Kewitch's staff prior to surgery. Kewitch understood the importance of PT following the surgery and made sure Gill was able to get what he needed despite potential delays due to the ongoing pandemic.

"This was so important and super helpful," he said. Now, he's grateful to be cancer-free. When his latest PSA came back well within normal range, he felt relief and also gratitude for everyone that helped him in his cancer journey.

"I'll tell my story to anyone. Being open is the best way to get a conversation going and hopefully encourage men to get tested."

A CRUCIAL CAUSE: CRITICAL CARE

"All I could focus on was my next breath," recalls Anacortes resident, Sarah Shields. For Shields, 53, breathing usually came easy. She was active and often ventured out to local beaches with her partner, Kory, and their dog, Gemma, searching for agate. At the time, her home and office were decorated for the holidays as she anticipated the joy of the season. Then one early December day she began to feel extremely fatigued. She left work, then body aches and chills set in. "I felt like a freight train had hit me."

After six days in bed, Shields' symptoms were not getting better so she went to the Island Hospital Emergency Department where she was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) with pneumonia and COVID-19.

The ICU is where the most critically ill or injured go for life-saving care; where the caregiver devotes undivided attention to a single patient for hours on end; and where the complexities of one's condition must be matched by the technology in the room and the expertise of the medical team.

Unable to have loved ones by her side due to visitor safety policies, Shields' medical team became her family over her 11 day stay. "I was comforted by the fact that these are my people, my village. They are in my community. We shop and dine at the same places." Visits from her primary care provider added to Shields' sense of comfort in the absence of her family visiting. "If I had to go elsewhere, I would not have had that sense of community"—a sense of community that helped Shields stay positive as she fought for each breath.

The need for a highly functioning and well equipped ICU in Anacortes is growing. Rapidly. In addition to the rise of pandemic related admissions, Island Hospital's ICU has seen an increase in high-acuity patients suffering non-COVID, life-threatening illnesses. A steady increase in sicker patients also means a greater need for new, lifesaving equipment.

*Sarah Shields with her partner,
Kory enjoying the outdoors.*



In addition to the rise of pandemic related admissions, Island Hospital's ICU has seen an increase in high-acuity patients suffering non-COVID, life-threatening illnesses.

In August of 2021, with the help of the Island Hospital Foundation, Island Hospital launched a tele-ICU (eICU) program. "eICU came at the right time," said Island Health Chief Clinical Officer, Carol Northup, RN, BSN, MA, CENP. Through the use of innovative video and monitoring technology, ICU patients at Island Hospital now have access to the Intensivists (doctors who specialize in the complexities of ICU patients) they need without having to be transferred to hospitals outside of our region. Remaining close to home means family members can focus on their loved ones without having to worry about traveling a great distance, taking time off work or finding a hotel room in another town. Patients receive the highest level of care through collaboration between the medical team at Island Hospital and the Intensivists through the eICU. This program is improving care and saving lives.

You are the key to saving the lives of the most critically ill patients in your community. This April, the Island Hospital Foundation will be raising funds through the 19th Annual Gala of Hope in support of crucial equipment upgrades for the ICU. Funding leading-edge technology will lead to greater access to specialists and increase patient and provider safety. Upgrading equipment such as tilt beds, additional IV pumps, and wall mounted computers will enable Island Hospital to support families by keeping critically ill patients close to home.

In addition to supporting the ICU, proceeds from the Gala of Hope will also sustain funding for patient relief grants, mental health programs, community health initiatives, and so much more.

To choose your adventure or to learn about event safety, visit us online at www.myihf.org/gala-of-hope or contact the Island Hospital Foundation office at 360.299.4201.

Save the date, purchase your tickets, or become an event sponsor and help save lives in the ICU.

you are invited to
adVenTuRE wiTH Us



WONDERLAND

BELIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE

THE 19TH ANNUAL GALA OF HOPE

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2022

IN-PERSON AT THE TRANSIT SHED & LIVE SIMULCAST

BENEFITING THE ISLAND HOSPITAL FOUNDATION



YOU ARE THE KEY

TO SAVING THE LIVES OF THE MOST CRITICALLY SICK OR INJURED PATIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

YOUR HEARTSTRINGS DONATION WILL SUPPORT PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM LIFE-THREATING ILLNESS AND INJURY IN THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT AT ISLAND HOSPITAL.

- LEADING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY TO COMPLEMENT TELE-ICU ACCESS TO SPECIALISTS
- INCREASE PATIENT AND PROVIDER SAFETY THROUGH UPGRADING EQUIPMENT SUCH AS TILT BEDS, ADDITIONAL IV PUMPS, AND WALL MOUNTED COMPUTERS
- SUPPORT PATIENT FAMILIES BY KEEPING CRITICALLY ILL PATIENTS CLOSE TO HOME FOR CARE

PLEASE VISIT
WWW.MYIHF.ORG/GALA-OF-HOPE
FOR MORE INFORMATION

**ISLAND HOSPITAL
FOUNDATION**



ISLAND HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Vanessa Ryan

With a commitment to quality local healthcare, Island Hospital Foundation (IHF) works to engage the community and raise funds that improve the services at Island Health. Grants, donations and direct fundraising help support the innovative technology, cancer care, patient relief programs, mental health intervention programs, and so much more! IHF board members are passionate about preserving and growing local access to healthcare, and they bring a breadth of experience as they serve, providing fiscal oversight and stewardship, setting policies and goals, and participating in fundraising efforts.

Beginning in January of this year, the Island Hospital Foundation enthusiastically welcomed Vanessa Ryan and Daryl Hicks to the board, filling two open positions. Ryan joins our board bringing a background of senior development management from Microsoft Real Estate & Security. Her work experience brings robust project and space management in addition to her exemplary organizational skills to the IHF Board of Directors.

Ryan also brings a passionate desire to support Island Health and its courageous healthcare workers in response to the incredible care her and her extended family have received. "The challenges of this past year have inspired my interest in the efforts of the Foundation and how it champions our local hospital, supports its healthcare professionals and betters our community," said Ryan. We are proud to welcome Ryan to our Board of Directors and look forward to her expertise and passion for a healthier community.

In addition to Ryan, the Island Hospital Foundation is thankful to welcome Daryl Hicks, a retired nurse and healthcare management leader. Hicks brings a diverse 39+ years of nursing experience and healthcare leadership to the IHF Board of Directors. After graduating from Skagit Valley College with a nursing degree in 1983, she started as a surgical nurse in Anacortes and later transitioned to Dignity Health Healthcare System in Southern California. Throughout her career, Hicks continued her practice as a nurse and continuously elevated her role to higher levels of leadership including fiscal management, project management and quality compliance management.

In 2016 Hicks and her husband chose to retire in Anacortes, where her healthcare career began. Hicks' extensive healthcare background equally matches her passion for quality healthcare, close to home. In her own words, "The contrasts I have observed through my work experience, underscores how very fortunate we are to have such comprehensive healthcare resources right here in our wonderful community." We at IHF find ourselves equally fortunate to welcome her to our Board of Directors.



Daryl Hicks

The Island Hospital Foundation received gifts to remember and honor those listed here between March 28 and December 31, 2021.

In Memory of:

Norm Allan
Beulah B. Boots Anderson
Larry Azure
Beverly Blair
Zane Brown
Teresa "Teri" Caravan
Les Cooper
Tyler Dale
Bob Englund
Phyllis Gindhart
Dr. George Gjerset
Larry Gogg
B.J. Goolsby
Diane Groves
John A. Hancken
Dr. Frank Hansen
Wendela A. Headrick
Dennis J. Heggem
Michael Herbert
Linda Hunt
Richard Iversen
Jerrol R. Keller
Kimberly Kemp-Mason
Jim Kirk
James Mack
Tom Miller
Carolyn Moore
My Mother
Pamela S. Munson
Barry A. Newsom
James Parker
John J. Phillips
The Luna-Puentes Family
Marcia Rigel
James and Sharon Scott
Newell Sheffer
Daniel Stone
Paul Sund
Charles Sutton
Priscilla Valentine
Wallace Volz
Christine Walsh
Maria Wight
Charlotte Yablonsky
RSC
Carma
Barry

In Honor of:

Dr. James Abbey
Daniel R. Anderson
Austin and Leah
Margo Baker
Dr. Kimberly Bell
Deborah I. Berry
Sharon Brown, ARNP
Dr. Les Conway
Barbee Cromack
Doctors and Nurses
Emergency Department Staff
Bailey Erwin
Dr. Kathleen Garde
Healthcare Workers
Dr. Jason Hogge
Hospital Staff
Linda Hunt
ICU Staff
Island Hospital RNs and CNAs
Island Hospital Staff
Hershel Janz
Dr. Charles Kotal
Dr. Shawna Laursen
The Lunas
Dr. John Mathis
Dr. Kieran Melody
Dr. Brian Minow
Dr. David Mourning
Dr. Joseph Mulcahy
Dr. Bryan Murray
Dr. Lindsay Newlon
Barry A. Newsom
Paisley and Paxton Nye
Orcas Clinic Staff
Dr. Vidhu Paliwal
Dr. Jon Peterson
Nora Pylilo
Marilyn Merle Rigs Rice
Dr. Robert Rieger
Dr. Caroline Roeder
Audrey Sellers, RN
Dr. Stacia Smith
Robert Stickrod
Naomi Stone
Gina Stone, RN
Surgical Services Department
Barbara Turner
William Turpie
Shirley Vacanti
Tim Wittman
Helen Wold
Dr. Helen Young

To remember or honor someone with a donation, please visit myihf.org/donate.

RESPONDING TO THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

In February of 2020, the Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health team began seeing a spike in phone calls, patient concerns and requests for appointments as the news of COVID-19 began to spread across the nation. In March of 2020, clinics across the state reduced hours, limited services and began planning for the unknown. In just a few short weeks, the SARS-CoV2 was at our doors. Island Health acted quickly and introduced telemedicine in all service lines which provided the ability to safely treat patients. As the months carry on and COVID-19 continues to make its way through the community, the psychiatric clinic works diligently to care courageously for our patients and find ways to deliver care despite the impacts of the pandemic.

Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health
islandhealth.org/psychiatry
360.299.4297



Island Health continues to provide mental health services safely by providing:

- Telehealth appointments for medication management and therapy;
- Safe waiting rooms that include social distancing, routine cleaning and masking;
- Expansion of services for the Anacortes School District School Intervention Program (SIP); and
- Expansion of services for the Behavioral Health Integration Program (BHIP).

Recent research published by the Washington State Department of Health shows several behavioral health symptoms and diagnoses associated with COVID-19 including:

- Post-COVID-19 psychosis;
- Increased anxiety symptoms and diagnoses;
- Increased risk for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD);
- Increased depressive symptoms and diagnoses; and
- Increased risks associated with a decline in cognitive functioning with long COVID-19.

Additionally, the Island Hospital Emergency Department has seen an increase in psychiatric related emergencies including behavioral incidences, panic attacks, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. The pandemic has left its mark physically and mentally in our community.

WHERE TO START WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

As we continue to battle COVID-19 in 2022, Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health is focused on using evidence-based practices to increase and improve access to mental health care.

The collaboration between the Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health team and Island Health's primary care clinics continues to strengthen as we explore and implement new ways of working together. This year we are focused on strengthening the collaboration via referrals between primary care and psychiatric providers. Our goal is to focus on early intervention starting with the primary care provider. If you are not in crisis but are concerned about your mental health, please talk to your primary care provider about next steps.

If you or someone you love is in crisis, call 800.584.3578 to speak with a local crisis team.



SUICIDALITY AMONG THE YOUTH AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The United States has seen an increase in suicidality and suicide attempts over the last two years. Nationally, suicide is the third leading cause of death among ages 10–24. In the state of Washington, it is the second leading cause of death among the same age group. Firearms are the leading method. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health of our youth is declining. Children and teens may respond differently to disasters than adults, leaving them feeling isolated and voiceless. Understanding some of these responses is the first step to preventing self-harm and death by suicide.

Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health works closely with Anacortes School District in the School Intervention Program (SIP). If you would like to learn more about this program, please reach out to your student's academic counselor.

**You may start to see changes
in these areas that increase over time.**



PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

- New headaches
- New stomachaches
- Fatigue
- Decreased appetite

CHANGES IN MOOD

- New or worsening anxiety
- Feeling insecure, afraid, angry, sad and/or worried
- Mood changes interfering with daily activities

BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

- Acting out, violence
- Increased risk-taking behaviors (i.e. substance use)
- School performance
- Staying busy to avoid feelings

THOUGHT CONTENT

- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of trust in adults
- Loss of feeling safe and secure
- Loss of interest in regular activities
- Statements about self-harm, loss of hope for the future or seeing no point in the future

RELATIONSHIP CHANGES

- Social withdrawal
- Saying goodbye to friends, ending friendships
- Giving away personal or meaningful belongings

Mental Health

While these responses may occur without accompanying suicidality, it is important to talk to your child. Your conversation may save a life.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO GET STARTED:

Provide a safe judgment-free environment

- Avoid drawing conclusions about your child's behavior—help them reflect and draw their own conclusions;
- Listen and hear them all the way out before speaking;
- Avoid using judgmental language such as, "good," "bad," "right" and "wrong"; and
- **DO** use words and phrases such as, "interesting" and "tell me more".

Provide understanding and empathy

- Acknowledge and affirm that only the individual can completely understand themselves, but you are there to support them;
- Take time to listen and ask questions to gain a deeper understanding; and
- Acknowledge their feelings and actions as their reality, regardless of how you may respond in the same situation.

Provide acceptance

- Understand individuality and accept that they are having their own unique experience, which may be different than your own; and
- Invite them to discuss any challenges with you again in the future.

Be self-aware

The above conversations can be challenging; it is okay to ask yourself if you are in a place to hold space for them.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Island Primary Care – Orcas will be celebrating one year of providing care to Orcas Island residents in April. Over the past year the clinic has seen growth of staff, including three registered nurses as well as a licensed practical nurse, phlebotomist, appointment coordinator and provider. With additional staff, the clinic has been able to provide consistent COVID-19 testing, in-vit vaccinations, and courtesy labs and X-rays for outside providers.

Last fall, our clinic collaborated with the Orcas Island School District, the Orcas Resource Center, and the Department of Health on two Back-to-School events that provided needed physicals and vaccinations for school-aged children. We finished out 2021 by successfully completing the Rural Health Clinic (RHC) survey, an un-announced Medicare inspection, and received an exemplary award for outstanding healthcare delivery practices and compliance with accreditation quality standards. In January, we received the wonderful news that the Orcas Clinic was successfully grandfathered in to the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, ensuring appropriate reimbursement rates and a sustainable future for healthcare on Orcas Island.

In the year ahead, the team hopes to onboard three new permanent providers and expand women's health services. We look forward to continuing the partnership and collaboration with Orcas Island Fire and Rescue and other community partners.

Island Primary Care – Orcas is proud to serve your healthcare needs.

For more information, visit our website at islandhealth.org/orcas
You can reach us by calling 360.293.3101 or 360.376.2561.



COMMUNITY BRIEFING:
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

APRIL 18, 6–7 P.M. | FREE & ONLINE

Join Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health's team for an online presentation and discussion focusing on the mental health needs of youth in our community. Topics include signs your child may need help, responding to their need and promoting mental health. Panelists will share practical resources and the opportunity to ask questions will be available following the presentation. All parents, teens, and community members working with the youth are encouraged to attend.

Register online at islandhealth.org/classes

FEATURED PANELISTS INCLUDE:



Paul Hammer, MD
Psychiatrist,
Medical Director



Shad Ali, MD
Child & Adolescent
Psychiatrist



Rachel Daly, BSN, RN
Clinic Manager



Cyndy Stevenson,
MSW, LICSW, ACSW
Social Worker; ASD
Intervention Program
Therapist



Stefani Castro, MSW,
LICSW, CMHS
Social Worker; ASD
Intervention Program
Therapist



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

- **Skagit County/Island County/San Juan County Crisis Line:** Call 800.584.3578.
- **Washington Listens:** Call 833.681.0211. A specialist can help you cope with the stress of COVID-19.
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** Call 800.273.8255 (English) or 888.628.9454 (Español).
- **Crisis Connections:** Call 866.427.4747.
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741.
- **TeenLink:** Call or text 866.833.6546.
- **Washington Warm Line:** Call 877.500.9276.

Please visit our website at islandhealth.org/psychiatry for additional resources, toolkits and online resources.

Join us for our **Mental Health Classes & Community Briefing**

Classes

Healthy Coping Skills

Psychiatrist Paul Hammer, MD, will discuss the concept of resilience and developing a personal toolbox of healthy coping skills.

When: Thursday, March 24
12-1 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

Managing Your Mental Health: Depression & Anxiety

Join Psychiatrist Paul Hammer, MD, for a discussion on the treatment of depression and anxiety with a focus on non-medication approaches to these conditions that often occur together.

When: Thursday, May 12
12-1 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

See page 10 for a full listing of upcoming wellness classes and health screenings or visit islandhealth.org/classes.

Community Briefing

Addressing the Youth Mental Health Crisis

Join Island Psychiatry & Behavioral Health's team of experts for an online presentation and discussion focusing on the mental health needs of youth in our community. Topics include signs your child may need help, responding to their need and promoting mental health. Panelists will share practical resources and the opportunity to ask questions will be available following the presentation.

When: Monday, April 18
6-7 p.m.

Where: ONLINE

Cost: FREE

See Panelist details on page 30.