

CULTIVATING *health*

Garfield County Hospital District | Spring 2024



Garfield County
Hospital District
Caring for Generations

Dear Reader,

As we welcome the beauty of spring, I'm delighted to share with you this latest issue of Cultivating Health, Garfield County Hospital District's seasonal health magazine.

Spring is a time of transformation, and at GCHD, we are embracing this sense of renewal and new beginnings with the recent addition of inpatient nephrology (kidney) services and state-of-the-art dialysis care. These services are currently available to both inpatients and transitional-care patients at GCHD. I'm so proud of this expansion of services and so glad we will be able to help care for so many more patients in the Pomeroy area and beyond. Make sure to read on to learn more about these services and how they'll help us better support the community.

In this issue, we also highlight the GCHD laboratory, which provides a wide range of services to patients. Many community members don't realize this lab exists and that it offers valuable services like blood tests, urine cultures, infusions, and so much more.

In honor of Stroke Awareness Month (May), we also acknowledge the more than 795,000 people in the U.S. who have had a stroke. We take a look at the risk factors and the best ways to prevent strokes, including established preventative care with a primary care provider.

While it's Stroke Awareness Month, the second week of the month (May 12-18) is also Healthcare Awareness Week. Recognizing the importance of our entire staff at GCHD - and this chance to share my thanks with them - I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of these team members. GCHD truly could not accomplish all that we do without the commitment of our staff, along with the never-ending support of the community.

Together, let's continue embarking on a journey toward enhanced healthcare and a brighter, healthier future.

Yours in good health,

Jayd Keener, CNO
Co-Chief Executive Officer



Precision IN PRACTICE

Shining a Spotlight on GCHD's Laboratory Services

Community well-being takes center stage at Garfield County Hospital District (GCHD). A crucial part of GCHD's overall plan for community health and well-being is the Laboratory, located at the main hospital.

The GCHD Lab isn't just a diagnostic facility - it's a vital and onsite resource for both inpatients and outpatients, supporting patients in Pomeroy and the surrounding region.

A TRIPLE PROMISE: SPEED, QUALITY, CONVENIENCE

The GCHD Lab provides exceptional service, close to home, which means high-quality results with extra convenience for patients. And with the ability to turn around diagnostic results quickly, the Lab also ensures a swift response for both patients and providers.

"Having a lab onsite at the hospital allows tests to be run immediately, helping providers make real-time decisions on how to best treat patients," said Lisa Roberts, Laboratory Supervisor, Phlebotomist, and Lab Tech at the GCHD Lab. "Faster answers lead to faster treatment options. This can mean the difference between life and death in the world of healthcare."

Operating around the clock, the Lab stands ready to respond to emergencies promptly.

"We are a 24-hour department, which means we're able to respond to emergencies quickly. My staff is always willing to jump into any role and ensure patients' needs are met."

— **LISA ROBERTS**
GCHD Laboratory Supervisor, Phlebotomist, and Lab Tech



COMPREHENSIVE DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

A full-service facility, the GCHD Lab offers a plethora of diagnostic tests in-house. This includes blood tests, stool tests, urine tests, and various types of cultures.

When it comes to blood work, the Lab can support patients with everything from a comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP) or basic metabolic panel (BMP), to a lipid panel or tests for thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH), phosphorus, magnesium, alcohol level, complete blood count (CBC), and much more.

For any tests not available in-house, the GCHD Lab partners with Incyte Laboratories, ensuring patients have access to an extensive range of diagnostic services.

ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

The GCHD Lab is a resource for the entire community. Outpatient services are available from Monday to Thursday, 7 am to 5 pm, and on Fridays from 8 am to 4 pm. To learn more, call 509-843-1591.

“All of us at GCHD are excited to be able to offer inpatient nephrology and dialysis services to Pomeroy and the surrounding communities,”

— JAYD KEENER, CNO
Co-CEO of GCHD



ELEVATING KIDNEY CARE:

INPATIENT KIDNEY AND DIALYSIS SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE
Community means caring for every season of life.

Garfield County Hospital District (GCHD) takes this commitment of care seriously. It's at the heart of GCHD's recent move to revolutionize rural healthcare through the launch of nephrology (kidney) services and state-of-the-art dialysis care.

Introduced in April 2024, this expansion of services positions GCHD as a comprehensive healthcare provider and ensures inpatients and transitional-care patients have access to this kidney care when they need it most.

IMPROVING PATIENT OUTCOMES

Keener explained how GCHD hopes this move will ultimately lead to improved health trajectories for patients in the immediate area.

“We feel that, by being able to provide this care to patients right here in our facility where they are completing their rehabilitation, health outcomes will improve and the focus can turn to patients' specific health goals,” said Keener.

REMOVING THE NEED FOR REFERRALS AND COMMUTING

This recent launch of services has simplified the patient care journey by eliminating the need for referrals to other healthcare facilities just to receive nephrology or dialysis care. Stephanie Hughes, LPN Quality Assurance, Transitional Care Coordinator at GCHD, explained the convenience and quality of care that this expansion ensures for so many patients – particularly with the elimination of referrals to other healthcare facilities for kidney care.

“Now that GCHD offers these services to inpatients, this means less commuting for locals,” Hughes said. “Patients can just come here, and we'll be able to meet all their needs once they're admitted.”

By offering these additional services to both inpatients and transitional-care patients, GCHD has allowed for more patient convenience, reducing transportation and commute requirements and presenting a more efficient, patient-centered approach. Beyond being a better healthcare reality for patients, this change has also streamlined the logistical processes for GCHD's staff.

ADDRESSING A WIDE RANGE OF CONDITIONS

There is a diverse spectrum of kidney conditions that patients may face, and GCHD is committed to providing top-tier care, regardless of the specific health challenge. With the launch of these services for inpatients and transitional-care patients, GCHD can now deliver personalized kidney care to each unique patient, for each unique case.

The comprehensive approach to nephrology and dialysis ensures GCHD can treat or oversee a wide range of kidney conditions. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Kidney failure**
- **Kidney disease**
- **Lupus nephritis (type of kidney disease caused by lupus)**
- **Electrolyte disorders**
- **Diabetic kidney disorder**
- **Amyloidosis (disease caused by a protein buildup in kidneys or other organs)**
- **Polycystic kidney disorder**
- **Renal insufficiency**
- **Nephrotic syndrome (disorder that causes the body to excrete too much protein in the urine)**
- **Kidney stones**
- **Kidney infections**
- **Acute kidney injuries**
- **Glomerulonephritis (inflammation of the glomeruli that filter blood in the kidneys)**

EXPLORING KIDNEY AND DIALYSIS SERVICES AT GCHD

GCHD is dedicated to providing exceptional, compassionate care – ensuring patients receive the support they need and deserve. This compassionate care certainly extends to inpatients receiving nephrology services or dialysis, now that these services are available.

To learn more about GCHD's newly launched kidney services, currently available to inpatients and transitional-care patients, visit: garfieldcountyhospital.com/kidney-services-and-dialysis or call **(509) 843-1591 ext 104**.



CHARTING the Path TO MORE STROKE

Preventive Care Plays a Major Role in Reducing Stroke Likelihood

As National Stroke Awareness Month, May is the ideal time to spotlight preventive healthcare in the community, as well as emphasize the importance of preventive care when it comes to strokes.

Cardiovascular issues and strokes can impact many different communities – and that certainly includes the Pomeroy, Wash., area and surrounding communities. Garfield County Hospital District (GCHD) is committed to advocating for proactive measures, regular screenings, and follow-up care to help mitigate the risk of strokes among community members.

An important part of this advocacy includes communicating risk factors, so people are aware of what lifestyle choices or inherent qualities may lead to a stronger likelihood of strokes.

How Diet and Lifestyle Make a Difference

“Diet plays a significant role in the prevention of cardiovascular issues,” explained Marybella Dodson, ARNP-C and primary care provider at GCHD. “The overconsumption of too many fats, carbs, or excess

calories can contribute to too much inflammation in the body. More inflammation increases the risk of both strokes and heart attacks.”

Dietary modifications like limiting salt and carb intake, limiting red meat consumption, and taking advantage of healthy foods like whole grains, lean meats, fruits, and vegetables can all help reduce inflammation and prevent the risk of a stroke.

“The Mediterranean diet, in particular, is really great for reducing inflammation and ensuring good cardiovascular health,” shared Dodson. “This diet includes lots of vegetables and fruits, beans, lentils, and nuts. It also includes plenty of whole grains, like whole-wheat bread and brown rice, and extra virgin olive oil [EVOO] as a source of healthy fat. Fish is also common as a source of omega-3 fatty acids.”

Other lifestyle changes can also play a crucial role. Limiting alcohol intake, quitting smoking or any potential drug use, exercising, and finding ways to reduce stress are all important steps.

There are also certain people who are inherently more at risk for strokes. This includes people with specific genetic risk factors (such as a family history of strokes) and diabetics.

The Role of Primary Care in Stroke Prevention

Primary care providers, like Dodson, play a pivotal role in stroke prevention by fostering relationships with community members and communicating proper steps for stroke prevention and identification. Regular check-ups, monitoring family history, and addressing risk factors can all contribute to a more comprehensive approach to stroke prevention.

“Preventive health is key. We encourage screenings through blood work, blood pressure checks and annual wellness visits, where we can go over things like family history or lifestyle changes,” said Dodson.

Dodson also pointed out the usefulness of Medicare’s Annual Wellness Visits (AWVs), which offer comprehensive preventive care and cover services like CT scans, if they become necessary.

“Low-dose CT scans are important in identifying lung-cancer risks in smokers, but they can also help contribute to stroke prevention or identification,” explained Dodson. “If a stroke has occurred, the CT scan can help us identify what type of stroke has occurred – one induced by a blood clot or a hemorrhagic blood clot, for example. This plays a big role in what type of treatment we provide.”




“All of GCHD’s clinics can assist in providing screenings to detect risk factors for diabetes, weight management and A1C levels.”

— MARYBELLA DODSON, ARNP-C
GCHD Primary care provider

While GCHD does not provide CT scans, providers can refer patients to larger hospitals, about 30 minutes away from Pomeroy, where these services are available.

Don’t Forget: BE FAST

To help identify potential signs of a stroke, there is an acronym used by both patients and healthcare professionals: BE FAST. It can be useful to apply this acronym in your daily life to help spot signs of a stroke.

					
Balance: You’ve lost your balance, have lost coordination, or have overall weakness.	Eyes: You have blurred vision in one or both eyes.	Face: Your face is drooping in one area or multiple areas.	Arms: You have weakness in one or both arms.	Speech: You have slurred speech, you’re unable to speak correctly, or your speech is hard to understand.	Time: It’s time to get help! If you notice any of these signs, it is time to reach out to your provider.

If you’ve noticed that you or a loved one have any of these potential stroke symptoms, **please go to an emergency department (ER) or contact your healthcare provider immediately.** GCHD’s ER, located at our main hospital facility in Pomeroy, is open 24/7.



Garfield County
Hospital District
Caring for Generations

66 N. Sixth Street
Pomeroy, WA 99347



A GIANT *Thanks* TO OUR STAFF!

In honor of National Hospital Week 2024, GCHD wants to recognize our amazing team members.

Thank you for all that you do.