



Gifford Medical Center

2004 Health Care Quality Report



Gifford Medical Center

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Gifford Medical Center is a full-service hospital located in Randolph, Vermont with a 24-hour emergency department, a 25-bed inpatient unit, a world class birthing center and a hospital-based nursing home. Within the hospital are a comprehensive ambulatory surgery center, a fully equipped radiologic and diagnostic imaging department, a medical laboratory, a pharmacy, cardiopulmonary and rehabilitation services as well as a large variety of specialty medical and complementary medicine services.

Adjoining the hospital, Gifford's Philip Levesque Medical Office Building is home to our primary care practices in Randolph, encompassing 19 different medical specialties. Conveniently located health centers serve as "medical home" for our communities in Bethel, Chelsea, Rochester, Montpelier and Sharon (opening Fall 2005).

Trustee's Message

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Gifford Medical Center, I am pleased to present the second Health Care Quality Report. The good health of you and our community is the mission of Gifford Medical Center.

Health care has evolved into a partnership between patient and provider. As you review this report, you can see that Gifford plays a major role as our community's health care provider. You play an important role also. Gifford will be most successful in providing you with high quality health care when you make sure you learn as much as you can about your health and become actively involved in decision-making about health care both for yourself and the community.

Gifford's Health Care Quality Report will help you become more informed about the type and quality of care that Gifford Medical Center provides. An ongoing dialogue with our community is important to us in order to understand and meet your health care expectations. Therefore, please feel free to share your comments and suggestions with Gifford's Board of Trustees or staff.

Judith Irving, *Chair*
Board of Trustees

Introduction

Quality health care should be safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable. With our second annual Quality Report, our intent is to hold ourselves accountable to you, our stakeholders and community supporters, by sharing ongoing information about our performance as healthcare providers. Additionally, we continue to provide benchmarks for comparison with our fellow healthcare organizations in Vermont and New England.

In this report, we present a comparison with last year's quality measures. As we move beyond mandatory reporting, we explain some of our own initiatives to improve the care of important chronic conditions such as diabetes. For healthcare to be patient-centered, we must know your opinion of the services you receive; therefore, we continue to present year-to-year results of the patient satisfaction surveys which guide our improvement efforts.

We are moving closer to the day when a fully integrated health record will provide us with the means to manage improvements with increasing confidence and precision. As we look ahead, quality improvements at Gifford will occur by making greater use of electronic resources, best-practice guidelines and continued feedback from our patients. As always, our greatest resource for continued improvement in the quality of our care remains the relationship between our providers and you, our community. Thank you for your continued support.

Marcus Coxon, MD
Gifford Family Practice

Marilyn Sargeant, CMSC
Director of Quality/Risk Management and Medical Staff



Mission Statement

To improve the health of the people and communities we serve by providing and assuring access to affordable and high quality health care and by promoting the health and well-being of everyone in our service area.

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Inside the numbers: Press Ganey

Press Ganey works with each of its client organization to develop standardized survey tools that produce statistically valid data, compares survey results from similar organizations and reports its findings to organization management. At Gifford, we take these findings very seriously, and work hard to address any deficiencies as expeditiously as possible.

How we provide the best in patient-centered care depends in large part on patient surveys. We listen to what our patients have to say about their hospital experience and continuously strive to improve. You can help Gifford improve our patient care by filling out and returning any Gifford surveys you receive.

Patient-Centered Care

At Gifford Medical Center, it is important to us that we succeed in meeting each individual patient's needs with respect for their values and preferences. We survey our patients in the following clinical settings: Gifford Health Centers in Randolph, Chelsea, Rochester and Bethel, Gifford Medical Center's Emergency Department, Inpatient Unit, Birthing Center and Menig Extended Care Facility.

We survey our patients using questionnaires developed by Press Ganey Associates, Inc., a leading vendor of satisfaction and improvement services in the health care industry. We compare our performance to the satisfaction of patients at similar healthcare facilities in Vermont and New Hampshire. Through these surveys we can better understand our patients' expectations and make improvements.

Our goal is to exceed our patients' expectations for quality medical care. Our care encompasses not only physical care, but the comfort, safety and emotional needs of patients. As you review this report, you will notice that there are some areas of care that require attention. The purpose of presenting these results is to not only show you the best attributes of Gifford, but to point out areas where we are working to improve.

Visits to our Health Centers and Providers

The results of this survey show that Gifford provider practices, on the average, receive better ratings from patients than is typical of provider practices in the American Hospital Association's New England region and also shows we are improving.

FIGURE 1. Patient Satisfaction – Health Center's Office Visits

	Gifford 2003 447 Patients Responded	Gifford 2004 605 Patients Responded	Compare To: Practices in VT/NH- 2004
Overall satisfaction	90.6	91.8	91.3
Ease of scheduling appointments	91.3	92.1	91.2
Time spent with provider	90.7	92.1	91.5
Sensitivity to patient needs	89.7	90.9	90.3



Emergency Department

In general, results of this survey show that Gifford Emergency Room patients reported satisfaction scores consistent with or superior to other New England Emergency Departments with less than 20,000 yearly visits. One area marked for improvement is waiting time for treatment. A group of hospital employees is actively working to address this issue and implement potential solutions to unsatisfactory waiting times for emergency department patients.

FIGURE 2: Patient Satisfaction - Emergency Services

	Gifford 2003 246 Patients Responded	Gifford 2004 305 Patients Responded	Compare To: Average scores in other Emergency Rooms in 2004 with 20,000 or fewer visits
Overall satisfaction	85.8	88.4	85.2
Courtesy of the nurse	90.6	91.2	89.6
Courtesy of the doctor	88.5	90.2	87.4
Felt staff cared about me as a person	85.2	87.8	84.1
Waiting time to see doctor	79.5	83.7	76.9

Inpatient Care

In response to inpatient survey feedback, Gifford has worked to improve our patients' stay by recruiting a new Hospitality and Food Services Director with a background as a New England Culinary Institute Chef/Instructor. He brings to Gifford the expertise to develop a more patient-centered Food Service. Additionally, Gifford is upgrading the décor of patient rooms in response to patient feedback. We recognize while food and décor are important to a patient's stay, many of our efforts are focusing on the quality and safety of the healthcare provided. We want to ensure patients receive the best, clinically effective care. (See Effectiveness)

FIGURE 3: Patient Satisfaction - Inpatient Stay (All admissions)

	Gifford 2003 303 Patients Responded	Gifford 2004 285 Patients Responded	Compare To: Hospitals in VT and NH
Overall satisfaction	88.3	87.7	86.5
How well your pain was controlled	87.4	88.8	87.0
Included in making treatment decisions	89.8	90.9	86.2
Staff worked together to care for you	93.2	91.6	90.4
Time provider spent with patient	90.2	92.0	84.7



GMC Birthing Center
2004 birth distribution
by hometown

30+ BIRTHS
Montpelier 35
Randolph 38

20-29 BIRTHS
Barre 27
Bethel 23
Northfield 23

10-19 BIRTHS
Royalton 10
Waitsfield 10
Williamstown 10

4 - 9 BIRTHS
Berlin 4
Braintree 8
Brookfield 7
Burlington 6
Calais 4
Chelsea 6
Marshfield 4
Moretown 7
Plainfield 4
Rochester 5
Roxbury 4
Rutland 8
Stockbridge 4
Strafford 4
Warren 5
Waterbury 6
White River Jct 4

1 - 3 BIRTHS
Benson 1
Brandon 1
Cabot 2
Cambridge 1
Chittenden 3
Clarendon 1
Corinth 3
Essex Jct 1
Fayston 2

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Birthing Center

As a Center of Excellence, Gifford's Birthing Center cares for expectant families from from the Northeast Kingdom to Southern Vermont. In 2004, there were 340 births in the Birthing Center. We are pleased to report that our patients reported a higher satisfaction rate than the average scores reported at other small hospitals in Vermont and New Hampshire.

FIGURE 4: Patient Satisfaction – Inpatient Stay, Birthing Center

	Gifford 2003 129 Patients Responded	Gifford 2004 144 Patients Responded	Compare To: Hospitals in VT and NH
Overall cheerfulness of facility and staff	95.1	94.6	89.3
Patient pain controlled	90.7	90.0	87.0
Friendliness of Provider	97.3	98.0	91.3
Accommodations & comfort for visitors	91.6	89.9	84.3

Menig Extended Care Facility

Gifford surveys the residents and family members of the 20-bed Menig Extended Care Facility. Due to the stable population of Menig, the number of responses are small. Survey results show that Menig scored "excellent" on overall satisfaction of care and the physical environment. In addition, Menig nursing care scored above average in the following categories: "friendliness of nurses," "nurses explanation of care," and "nurses treated resident with dignity."

FIGURE 5. Patient/Resident Satisfaction – Menig Extended Care Facility

	Menig Extended Care Facility 2004 12 responses
Overall Rating	90.0
Friendliness of Nurses	95.8
Nurses Explanation of Care	97.9
Nurses Treated Resident with Dignity	95.8

Effective Care

Improved Health Outcomes

Providing quality care goes beyond ensuring patient satisfaction. Effective care means using the best scientific knowledge (evidence-based) available combined with the clinical expertise of the provider. The health care system should consistently provide all the care that can help the patient and avoid care that cannot. Effective care requires that health care systems continuously monitor the results of the care they provide and use that information to improve care for all patients.

Heart Attack and Heart Failure

Our results against commonly used clinical performance indicators for the treatment of both acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) and congestive heart failure are shown below. As the charts demonstrate, Gifford's performance for each of these treatments is consistently excellent. All patients with a diagnosis of AMI (acute myocardial infarction) received the American Medical Association's recommended treatment for heart attack (beta blocker and aspirin). Eligible patients also received ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitors which help lower blood pressure and prevent future heart problems. Another recommended standard of care for heart failure is an assessment of left ventricular function (LVF) of the heart which is an echocardiology service. We expanded the hours of echocardiology service to meet the needs of our patients with noted improvement in LVF assessment.

FIGURE 6: Clinical Performance Indicators for Heart Attack

	Gifford 2003 16 Patients	Gifford 2004 12 Patients	Compare To: Top 10% of JCAHO Accredited Hospitals
Aspirin given at arrival	100%	100%	100%
Aspirin prescribed at departure	100%	100%	100%
Beta blocker given at arrival	100%	100%	100%
Beta blocker prescribed at discharge	100%	100%	100%
ACE inhibitors prescribed for left ventricular dysfunction	100%	100%	93%

FIGURE 7: Clinical Performance Indicators for Heart Failure

	Gifford 2003 38 Patients	Gifford 2004 18 Patients	Compare To: Top 10% of JCAHO Accredited Hospitals
Assessment of LVF	79%	94%	98%
ACE inhibitors at discharge for LVSD	100%	100%	93%

GMC Birthing Center
2004 birth distribution
by hometown

CON'T

1 - 3 BIRTHS CON'T

Granville 1
Hancock 1
Hartland 2
Hinesburg 3
Huntington 1
Killington 1
Lincoln 1
Lyndonville 1
Middlebury 2
Middlesex 3
Middletown Springs 1
Norwich 1
Orange 1
Pawlet 1
Pittsfield 2
Pittsford 1
Poultney 1
Quechee 1
Ripton 2
Sharon 1
South Hero 1
Sudbury 1
Taftsville 1
Tunbridge 2
Underhill 1
Vergennes 1
Westford 1
Westminster 1
W Rutland 2
Williston 1
Windsor 1
Woodbury 1
Worcester 1

OUT OF STATE

Canaan NH 2
Charlestown NH 1
Cornish NH 1
Delmar NY 1
Lebanon NH 1
Lyme NH 2
W Lebanon NH 1

Pneumonia

Pneumonia is a serious condition that demands prompt and effective care. For the best medical outcome, patients diagnosed with pneumonia should receive antibiotics within four hours of arrival to the hospital. Ideally, patients receive pneumonia vaccine as part of their ongoing care with their provider. We have implemented systems to improve administration of antibiotics and pneumococcal vaccine to eligible patients.

FIGURE 8. Clinical Performance for Pneumonia

	Gifford 2003 38 Patients	Gifford 2004 27 Patients	Compare To: Top 10% of JCAHO Accredited Hospitals
Initial antibiotic received within 4 hours of arrival	82%	96%	87%
Pneumococcal vaccine administered by provider prior to admission or before discharge	36%	79%	77%



Managing your Health Care

Successful prevention of disease and the best medical outcomes are achievable with a partnership between a patient who is informed and participates actively in their healthcare and a prepared and informed practice team which includes providers and caregivers.

Our goal is to encourage our patients and our community to learn how to self-manage their healthcare. What is self-management? It involves a partnership between provider and patient to actively and successfully manage his or her health and lifestyle, particularly important to a person living with chronic disease. The patient needs information, skills and confidence to manage their health. Gifford strives to actively engage our patients in making healthy choices and support community wellness.

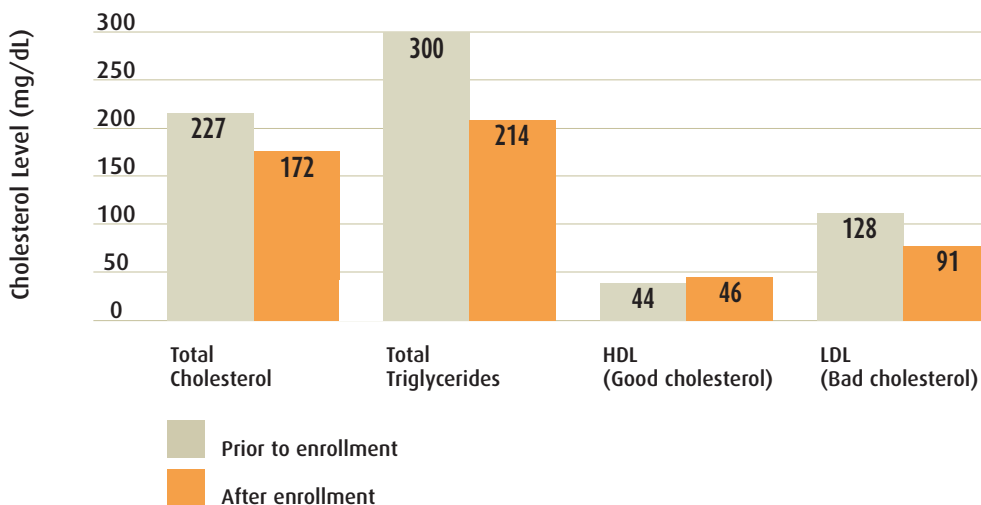
High Cholesterol

High cholesterol is an important risk factor for heart disease. For every 1% reduction of cholesterol, the risk of developing heart disease is reduced by 1%.

Using grants from the Vermont Association of Hospitals, Gifford has developed a state-of-the-art cholesterol clinic managed by a pharmacist certified in cholesterol management. Patients are referred to the clinic by their providers. A detailed history is taken, in-depth education and monitoring is begun and therapy is adjusted to the needs of each patient.

The results of our first year with this initiative are reported below. Patients, mostly classified as “high-risk,” accomplished a 22% reduction in total cholesterol. Sixty percent said they had also improved their diet.

FIGURE 9. High Cholesterol Management Lipid Clinic



Inside the numbers

Using benchmarks is a way for an organization to evaluate performance or quality against other similar organizations and to set goals for improvement.

In medicine, clinical performance standards provide a means of understanding if a healthcare provider or organization is providing the most appropriate and effective care. Two leading healthcare accreditation organizations in the United States, the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, use a number of clinical performance indicators in rating the performance of healthcare organizations and publishes its findings on their Web sites.

In order to compare ourselves with the best performing organizations nationwide, we benchmark (compare) the clinical performance of the top 10% of JCAHO organizations. Our goal is to meet or exceed the standards of these top-performing organizations to ensure that the care we provide is safe, appropriate and effective for our patients.

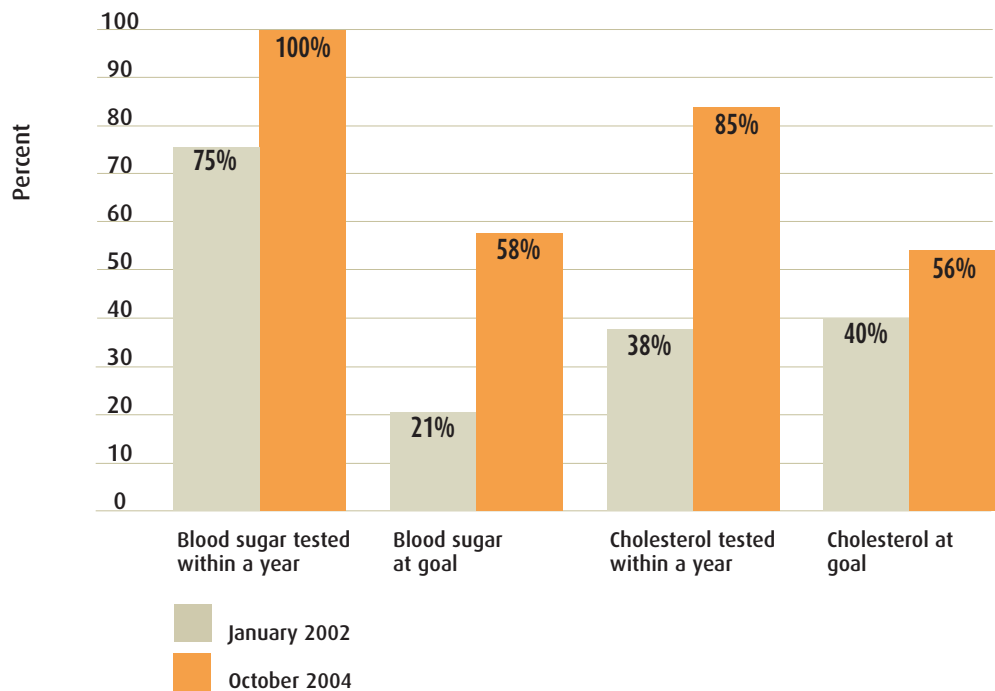


Diabetes

Diabetes is one of a number of important “chronic conditions”. In other words, lacking a cure, the goal of your health care provider is to help prevent the long-term illnesses caused by diabetes.

Using the American Diabetes Association Guidelines, and in conjunction with a Vermont initiative, Gifford has begun working with patients to set goals for testing and prevention measures. Already, in the initial trial groups, improvements are being seen which should lead to fewer long-term complications among Gifford’s patients.

FIGURE 10. Diabetes Management – Outpatient Diabetes Service



Safe Care

The health care environment should be safe for all patients. In other words, patients should not be harmed by the care that is intended to help them. Gifford Medical Center participates in nationwide and local safety initiatives that include reducing or eliminating medication errors, hospital-acquired infection and patient falls. To insure patient safety, Gifford currently tracks and addresses these safety issues and assigns hospital teams to determine cause and effect and implement improvements. In one such initiative to prevent medication errors, Gifford is implementing a computerized system that facilitates the ordering of patient medications. We are currently moving toward 100% computerized physician order entries.

Pediatrics

In conjunction with the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program, Gifford Medical Center adopted a Hospital Preventive Service initiative that focused on improving the care of newborns during their birth hospitalization and at the time of their hospital discharge. Gifford focused on the issue of infant car seat safety. The goals of the project were to assure a car safety seat fit for all newborn infants discharged from Gifford and to include mother/parent counseling on appropriate car seat safety at least 90% of the time. As part of the intervention, staff received car seat safety training and created a discharge policy addressing car seat safety. Staff provided car seat safety education prior to discharge as well as "hands on" training to parents. As a result of the focus, staff became more conscientious concerning car seat safety education for new parents and clearly increased safety counseling as shown below.

FIGURE 11. Infant Car Seat Fit and Safety Counseling 2004

	Pre-Intervention 40 Patients	Post-Intervention 40 Patients
Observed car safety seat fit	30%	63%
Counseling on appropriate car safety seat fit	13%	93%





Our patient feedback is very important to us. We read every survey returned and issues are addressed by our management team.

Menig Elder Care

Gifford's Menig Extended Care unit prides itself on the quality of care that is provided to the residents of our facility. Each quarter, the Quality Assurance Committee reviews aspects of quality including falls, medication errors, restraints, residents receiving 9 or more medications and residents with weight loss or decline in daily living skills. The Committee works together to review various aspects of residents' care and plans for continuous improvements.

In 2004, the Menig Extended Care Facility recognized several significant accomplishments:

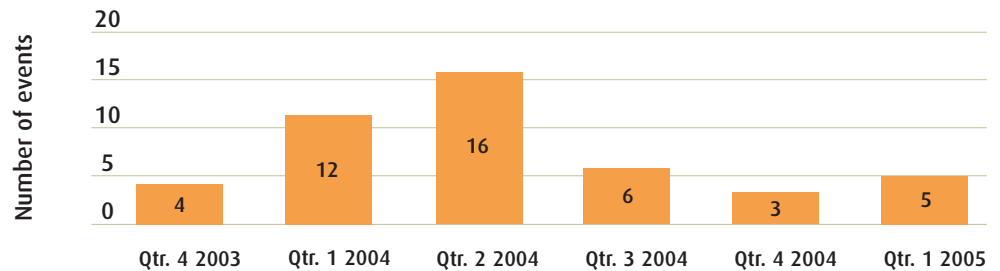
- Deficiency free state inspection
- Restraint free facility
- 100% influenza immunization of residents
- Minimal falls and no significant injuries
- Minimal medication events and no adverse events

FIGURE 12. Prevalence of Daily Physical Restraints

	Menig Extended Care Facility	State Statistics 2003 Compared to nursing home facilities in VT	Compared to: Nursing home facilities nationally
Prevalence of Daily Physical Restraints	0%	4.2%	8.2%

We track falls very closely, defining falls as any event in which a resident is found on the floor. Review by a multidisciplinary team and corrective measures follow each occurrence.

FIGURE 14. Resident Falls



Conclusion

A quality health care system not only helps the people it cares for but also understands its own strengths and weaknesses and strives for continual improvement. Its care is customized according to the values and needs of each patient. Patients move throughout the system with a minimal wait time, less anxiety and frustration and with the confidence that the best possible care is received. Patients are partners in their healthcare and participate in decision-making concerning their care, ultimately assuming responsibility for their health.

We at Gifford have made a serious commitment to continuously improve the quality of our health care services. We have opened ourselves to your feedback and through your responses, have learned how to make improvements to the services we provide you. This report represents our best efforts to date and our promise to improve as we progress. In this report and in future ones, you will have the means to evaluate us and follow our progress as we change and grow.

What you can do to help

What is important is our community's partnership with Gifford. We depend on our community to provide us with feedback on their care so we can address their needs and concerns. We also encourage self-responsibility in regards to health.

What you can do to maintain a healthy lifestyle

- Schedule routine health screenings with your provider
- Exercise (even a 20 minute walk three times a week is beneficial)
- Eat well (include plenty of fruits and vegetables in your diet)
- Don't smoke
- Let us know how well we are doing as your health care provider by responding to our patient satisfaction surveys.





Gifford Health Center Locations

Gifford Primary Care
44 S. Main Street
Randolph, VT 05060
802-728-2442

Bethel Health Center
1823 VT. Rt. 107
Bethel, VT 05032
802-234-9913

Chelsea Health Center
356 VT. Rt. 110
Chelsea, VT 05038
802-685-4400

Rochester Health Center
235 South Main Street
Rochester, VT 05767
802-767-3704

Sharon Health Center
(Fall 2005)
VT Rt. 14
Sharon, VT 05065
802-763-8000

Montpelier
Midwifery, Podiatry
61 Elm Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
Midwifery 802-728-2401
Podiatry 802-223-9966

Gifford Medical Center Patient Services

Adult Day Care

Ambulatory Care Center

- John P. Gifford Ambulatory Care Center includes same-day surgery
- Nancy May Fratkins Oncology Suite
- Anticoagulation Clinic
- Diabetes Clinic

Birthing Center

Cardiopulmonary Services

Clinical Laboratory

Complementary Medicine

- Massage Therapy

Chaplaincy

Emergency Department

The Garden Room

- A private suite on the hospital's medical-surgical unit reserved for terminally ill patients and their families

Health Connections

- A part of the Vermont Coalition for the Uninsured, Gifford's Health Connections assists people for health referrals and links them with needed services including help with state health insurance applications, accessing medications, emergency dental needs, Ladies First and Gifford's Woman to Woman programs. For more information concerning Health Connections, call 728-2323.

Howell Pavilion (Medical/Surgical Care)

Menig Extended Care Facility (Long term care)

Nursing

Nutrition and Food Services

Provider Practices

- Family Practice
- Pediatrics
- Internal Medicine
- Surgery
- Podiatry
- Cardiology
- Orthopedics
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Urology

Radiology

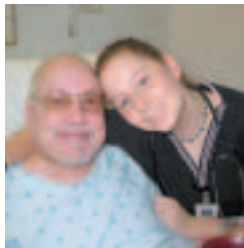
- Radiography
- Mammography
- Computerized Axial Tomography (CAT scans)
- Ultrasound
- Bone Density Imaging
- Echocardiography
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Nuclear Medicine

Rehabilitation Services

- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech and Language Pathology

Social Services

Transitional Care (Inpatient rehabilitation and nursing services or respite care)



“The task of medicine:
Cure sometimes, relieve often,
Care always.”

—Ambrose Pare (1517-1590)

Gifford Specialties

Anesthesiology
Cardiology
Family Medicine &
Obstetrics
Gastroenterology
Internal Medicine &
Pediatrics
Obstetrics &
Gynecology
Neurology
Nurse Midwifery
Oncology
Ophthalmology
Orthopedics
Otolaryngology
Pathology
Pediatric & Adolescent
Medicine
Podiatry
Psychiatry
Radiology
Surgery
Urology



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