

# thrive

Pender Community Hospital | Winter 2020



THE HEALTH COACH  
**CONNECTION**  
PG.4

---

# From the CEO

---



Dear Readers,

It's hard to believe another year is in the rear-view mirror. The time between Halloween and New Year's Day goes by in more of a glorious blur each year, and here we are already well into the new year—a new decade in fact. As we wrap up February and look forward to the months ahead, I am filled with the same optimism and anticipation I find myself in each year as I hang up a new calendar. I'm not sure exactly what's going to happen, but working in this organization for the years in which I have, I can say with confidence it's going to be a year in which amazing things are bound to occur.

This year's first issue of Thrive highlights what I am most proud of at Pender Community Hospital and Clinics: the people who live our mission to provide exceptional care. From the vital personal relationships that our primary care providers and health coaches foster with patients to ensure everyone receives the highest quality care, to the commitment of our dedicated ER staff that earned state-wide recognition and elevated our ER to a Level 4 Trauma Center status, to the kindness of staffers which has nothing to do with healthcare but everything to do with heart, the compassion of this organization never ceases to amaze me.

Enjoy the first Thrive of 2020; hopefully, you'll learn more about the resources here for you at Pender Community Hospital and Clinics that are created with your health in mind. I hope your new decade is off to a happy start, and you are, as I am, looking forward to making this year one of the best—and healthiest—ones yet.

Yours in good health,

**MELISSA KELLY**

CEO



## Nebraska State Board elevates Pender Community Hospital to Certified **Level 4 Trauma Center**



DR. MATTHEW FELBER



KRISTIN SALMON

“We have always done our best to provide great care for our trauma patients,” said PCH Trauma Coordinator, **Kristin Salmon, MSN, RN.**

Now that the hospital is a certified Level 4 Trauma Center, its heightened status elevates the level of care that the PCH emergency room team can provide. “A lot of work goes into obtaining this certification, but the requirements are things that make us better as a team and better prepared to care for any trauma patient that comes through our door,” Salmon continued.

The Nebraska Statewide Trauma System standardizes trauma care throughout the state. A Level 4 distinction means that PCH is certified to treat minor traumas and stabilize major traumas prior to transferring patients to a higher level of care. PCH had to meet strict criteria in performance improvement, nurse and provider education, and community outreach education.

### **A RIGID PROCESS**

The greater status is no easy task. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services reviews each application and returns pages of requirements that must be met. The certification process includes a consultation visit by state representatives from the Nebraska Statewide Trauma System which included a nurse, a trauma surgeon and an Emergency Medical Service representative who review facility policy, clinical capabilities, qualifications, facility and resource capabilities, radiology and laboratory services, performance improvement, and prevention strategies.

Pender Community Hospital Trauma Director **Dr. Matthew Felber** emphasized that providing the



best in patient care is the impetus for pursuing the certification. “The ER staff is constantly striving for any way that we can improve upon the already great care given here,” Felber said. He credits the hard work and collaboration of the ER staff and the entire PCH team who executed everything expertly.

### **A TRUE TEAM EFFORT**

Kristin Salmon echoes Dr. Felber and applauds the dedication of the team for achieving the new classification. “There are requirements for providers, nurses, and every clinical department: lab, radiology, respiratory, anesthesia, surgery, etc.” she shared. “Our local EMS squads also must meet certain requirements and have been great about working with us to achieve those. Our providers and inpatient nursing staff have been great at keeping up with their education hours, and we have great support from our administration.”

### **GREATER COMMUNITY CARE**

Not only will the community benefit from elevated emergency care, but PCH providers are also supported with ongoing education. “Being recognized as a basic trauma center gives us more educational opportunities for our staff,” said Salmon, “and helps us keep up with the latest in trauma care best practices. It also provides us with guidelines for performance improvement which is necessary to provide the best care possible for our patients.”



*Health Coaches L to R: Julie Stewart, Rebecca Miller, Lisa Schuetze, Stacie Peterson, Jennifer Conroy*

# It's More than Healthcare, It's Whole Care

---

## PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS + HEALTH COACHES + YOU = A WINNING COMBINATION

Your primary care physician is the most important partner you have to provide you with the best healthcare, health education, and referrals. He or she prescribes medications, orders tests, and is your first point-of-contact to help with any health concerns. Most importantly, the relationship that you and your provider form over the years creates trust, builds an increased understanding so your provider can customize care to you, and your history together helps your provider better diagnose and treat you.

### **PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS = YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM CAPTAIN**

In many ways, your primary care provider is the quarterback, or team captain, of your healthcare needs, calling the shots to ensure that your best health is the winning outcome. But as the amount of testing, screening, referrals and prescriptions increases, it's often difficult for a provider to do everything alone. And, as with any good team, one player, no matter how talented they are, isn't enough.

## HEALTH COACHES = GAME CHANGERS

At Pender Community Hospital and Clinics, health coaches are real difference makers. Pender's health coaches are nurses who are specifically trained to give patients additional support, encouragement, and assistance. They provide extra nursing services to patients who have been recently discharged from the hospital, help those managing chronic diseases, touch base with patients between appointments as needed, and give extra help, guidance, and education to any patient who needs it. Health coaches also communicate patient information to physicians to provide all-around support for doctors as they manage and coordinate patient care.

### PROVIDING A PERSONAL TOUCH = PRICELESS

"We identify patients both individually and by population, such as patients with diabetes who are not in good control, having complications, or are newly diagnosed," **Health Coach Lisa Schuetze** shared. "We reach out to them individually to offer assistance. Some of our patients are those with complex health conditions, but some are patients who just need a little extra time and support from what a regular visit can provide."

Health coaches also bring a personalized approach to care. According to Schuetze, "There are so many stories to tell; we enjoy impacting patients so very much." She goes on to tell a story of a patient who she recently contacted whose first words were "Thank you so much for calling. It's great to talk to someone and know someone cares how we are."

### COMMUNICATION = CONNECTED CARE

In addition to working closely with patients, health coaches create a circle of communication with physicians as well. They provide doctors with updates learned in patient conversations, may offer personal observations about certain cases, ensure all immunizations are updated, and follow up with referring specialists so the primary care provider has the necessary screening results and information prior to a patient's next appointment. In general, they make sure that the flow of information back and forth between providers and specialists is complete and timely.



**"COMMUNICATION IS SO IMPORTANT AND HEALTH COACHES DO A GREAT JOB HELPING US CLOSE ANY LOOPHOLES WITH OUR PATIENTS."**

— DR. MATTHEW TIMM

Even after appointments, primary care providers may seek additional assistance from health coaches to develop care plans for patients. "We work hand in hand," **Dr. Matthew Timm**, medical director and primary care physician for Pender Medical Clinic confided. "It's hard for me to imagine not having health coaches now because basically I feel comfortable going to them with any challenging issue. I can work through a plan of care with them. They get to know the patients' tendencies so we take a team approach to best care for them."

### HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS = HEALTHY PATIENTS

The physician and health coach team approach is changing how healthcare works for both doctors and patients. Dr. Timm explains "Part of being a primary care provider is that you always have relationships. That hasn't changed with health coaches, but what has changed is that our health coaches help us take better overall care...they really help us track and make sure nothing is missed, especially with screenings. There is an extra level of prevention, assistance, and education."

## All About Pender Health Coaches

- The Pender Community Hospital and Clinics health coach team has specific training for every patient including infants, seniors and Medicare patients, diabetic and other chronic disease patients, and obstetrics patients.
- Pender has five fully-trained health coaches—more than any other surrounding health system.
- Pender health coaches do medical wellness visits, particularly with senior patients, to screen for depression, falls, and address other health concerns that arise as people age.

---

Your primary care provider can connect you to a health coach, but self-referral is an option. Call today to learn more: Pender Medical Clinic **402-385-3033**.

---



# HEALTH SCREENINGS TO TAKE TO HEART

---

February is American Heart Month, but it's important to be diligent about matters of the heart all year long. No matter what the calendar says, talk to your primary care provider about ways to detect or prevent cardiovascular disease.

Two screenings at Pender Community Hospital — a **sleep study** and a **calcium scoring** — can detect potential heart issues. The good news? If the tests indicate a problem, there are often easy corrective measures to improve your heart health — and even save your life.

## **SLEEP STUDIES: BETTER SLEEP, HEALTHY HEART**

A lack of quality sleep can lead to high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and heart problems. Logene Bach, RPSGT, CRT, sleep services coordinator at PCH, says her job is her passion. She screens for all sleep disorders, but one that directly affects heart health is obstructed sleep apnea (OSA). OSA is a disorder where the airway gets blocked repeatedly during sleep, causing people to stop breathing, and creates dips in oxygen levels. It disrupts sleep and has led to cardiac arrest and death.

Signs of OSA include loud snoring, frequent urination, gasping or choking sounds, morning headaches, weight gain, and daytime sleepiness. “It’s not just that you sleep; it’s what’s happening when you’re sleeping,” Logene shared. Cardiac rehab manager Caroline Norton added, “Your body is trying to wake itself up because it’s not getting the oxygen it needs.” Both Bach and Norton said patients get referred to the lab for many reasons such as problems regulating high blood pressure, or if daytime sleepiness affects a patient’s driving or work life. Logene laughed, “You wouldn’t believe the number of men who say their wives made them come in,” as their excessive snoring affects her rest as well.

The physician reads test results to diagnose and create care plans for patients with OSA. And after getting the help, and the sleep they desperately needed, Logene said, “There’s nothing better. I’ve even had people hug me,” recalling patients happy to regain their quality of life.

If you, or someone you know, may have OSA, Logene summed it perfectly, “The only way you’re ever going to really know is when you come in for a sleep study.”

## **CALCIUM SCORING GETS TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER**

Heart disease is the silent killer. But what if you could know if you are at risk before symptoms arise? Calcium scoring is a simple CAT scan to detect plaque levels in the heart. With a quick 15-minute test, your physician can see potential problems, even if you have no symptoms at all.

The build-up of calcium and fat causes calcified plaque, which narrows arteries, closes off blood flow to the heart, and causes heart attacks. According to Dr. Matthew Timm, medical director and primary care physician at Pender Medical Clinic, “Calcium scoring measures the amount of calcium in the blood vessels of your heart, so if people get one and it is very low, their risk of heart disease is less.” Patients with higher scores meet with their physicians to discuss the best course of action. Providers may prescribe medication, advanced testing, or refer patients to a cardiologist.

Even those who are physically active, at a healthy weight, and have no other risk factors may get a calcium scoring as much of heart health hinges on hereditary. While heart disease is common, early detection is key.

---

For more information about these heart-healthy screenings, talk to your primary care provider. Call Pender Medical Clinic at **402-385-3033** or message your provider via your patient portal.

---



L to R: Glenda Gatzemeyer, Cindi Conroy, Keith Odom, Diane Lamp, Beckie Gutzmann

## RING LEADERS

### CLINIC STAFFERS GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO RETURN LOST RING TO ITS RIGHTFUL OWNER



It's common for the staff at Pender Community Hospital and Clinics to provide exceptional patient care, but a recent discovery that turned four clinic staffers into detectives proved that incredible service from Pender isn't only restricted to matters of health and wellness.

#### AN UNLIKELY DISCOVERY

While unpacking after moving to Emerson's new clinic, Glenda Gatzemeyer, Diane Lamp, and Beckie Gutzmann found something unusual in a box. "We had discovered a class ring," said Glenda. But nobody knew whose it was or where it was from. The three knew just who to contact for help, nurse Cyndi Conroy. "Cyndi loves class rings," Glenda said. "She really put in the time and effort to locate the owner."

#### THE RINGMASTER

Cyndi, a Pender clinic nurse, collects class rings to learn about their past; it's a hobby she's enjoyed for years. She even buys them at estate sales and has small magnifying glasses used by jewelers to see intricate details. "I like them because they always have a story about some really important years in someone's life," Cyndi shared. "They're individualized. I just think they're neat."

Cyndi saw the ring was from South Sioux High School and found initials and a number 56 football jersey on it (the same number her son wore in school). She soon determined it was Keith Odom's, a 2003 grad from South Sioux High

School. After telling the others, Keith was called to go to the Emerson clinic. It was right before Christmas but little did he know of the surprise waiting for him.

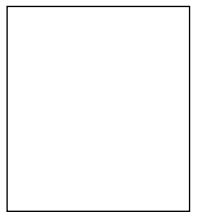
#### BIG SURPRISES COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

Cyndi polished the ring and put it in a ring box so it would look its best when it was returned to Keith. She even bought a Christmas card that all four women signed.

"I didn't know what to think," Keith admitted. "I had never been to that location... I had my wife come with me," he laughed. He was confused when the women gave him a gift box and card and had to be urged to open it. When he did, he was shocked. "I never thought I'd see the ring again. I had given up looking for it." Keith said it was a big surprise, "And a good one, too."

"He was over-the-moon happy," Glenda said. "He even went back home and brought his football jersey in so we could see how much his football days had meant to him."

With his ring back, Keith wears it when he can, but keeps it safe and sound in the box that Cyndi gave to him when he's not wearing it. And as for the early Christmas gift, Keith has nothing but kind words to say of the clinic staff who cared enough to return his ring. "I'm just glad to have it back. I'm appreciative of the ladies who found it for me and did the research and took the time to actually track me down."



## Coming Soon!

# New Patient Portal: MyCareCorner

**On March 11, 2020**, Pender Community Hospital and Medical Clinics will transition to a NEW patient portal called MyCareCorner. This new portal is an upgraded platform so we can better meet your needs.

Here's how to register for your new MyCareCorner Portal:

- Watch for an email from **patientportal@pchne.org** on March 11 to complete registration for MyCareCorner.
- Your registration email will include a link and a key code to let you activate your new MyCareCorner account.

For more information about how to transition your portal account to MyCareCorner, or to view an informational video with detailed steps helping you activate your MyCareCorner portal, please visit **[www.pendercommunityhospital.com/patientportal](http://www.pendercommunityhospital.com/patientportal)**