

thrive

Pender Community Hospital and Medical Clinics

PCH WELCOMES
FAMILY MEDICINE
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
KATE MUELLER

PG. 5



From our interim CEO



Greetings from PCHD!

Thank you for picking up our latest edition of Thrive, our Pender Community Hospital District magazine! Here's what you have to look forward to in this issue:

First off, we introduce and welcome PCHD's new CEO Laura Gamble, a native to northeast Nebraska with 30 years of experience in rural healthcare – make sure you take a few minutes to read this story and get to know her better.

We're also showcasing PCH's Sleep Services program; we all know that sleep is essential to operating at our best, but surprisingly few people realize that there's help out there for a variety of sleep disorders. Take a look at this story and see if there's something here for you – or someone you know.

Our cardiopulmonary rehabilitation story features two area residents who made use of our programs – and found them extremely beneficial! Don't miss this feature, including a Q&A with our former pulmonary patient!

Family Medicine Physician Assistant Kate Mueller recently joined the PCHD team – she'll be seeing patients at PCH's ER, as well as both the Pender and Emerson Medical Clinics. Read more about her inside this issue.

Be sure to take a look at our back cover for this year's scholarship winners!

Please enjoy this edition of Thrive and thank you for trusting us to be your healthcare partner. It has been a pleasure serving our district and I am looking forward to working with Laura to lead us into the future.

Yours in good health,

SHANE SCHUSTER

Interim Chief Executive Officer



LAURA GAMBLE

Joins PCHD as New CEO



“I have a passion for rural healthcare and serving in rural communities. Being afforded these opportunities, I have been able to meet and learn from many people with my same passion.”

— LAURA GAMBLE, RN

NEBRASKA NATIVE HAS DEEP ROOTS IN RURAL HEALTHCARE

Pender Community Hospital District recently announced that Laura Gamble, RN has been hired as its new CEO. With more than 30 years of experience in rural healthcare in the surrounding area, Gamble has a myriad of administrative and nursing experience in critical access hospitals. She was most recently employed at Twelve Clans Unity Hospital in Winnebago, and prior to that was Chief Executive Officer/Director of Nursing at MercyOne Oakland Hospital.

A native of northeast Nebraska, Gamble is originally from Wayne. After graduating from Wayne High School, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Lincoln, as well as a certification in Healthcare Management from the Bryan School of Health Sciences in Lincoln.

Gamble has served rural healthcare in many capacities throughout the state, including working closely with the Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA), where she currently serves on the organization’s Services Board.

“I have a passion for rural healthcare and serving in rural communities,” Gamble said. “Being afforded these opportunities, I have been able to meet and learn from many people with my same passion.”

Gamble currently lives in Wayne with her husband of 32 years, Randy; the couple plans to move to Pender in the near future. They have three adult daughters who reside in the Omaha area: Hannah, a nurse; Kendall, a physical therapy assistant; and Jamie, a special education teacher.

In her spare time, Gamble enjoys boating, golfing, and spending time with friends and family. She is also involved in many community projects such as Wayne Community Schools Foundation and coaching youth sports.

“I have always admired the town of Pender and the pride they take in and the support they give to their hospital,” said Gamble. “The compassionate and top-notch care given there is impressive. I am very fortunate to be able to stay in Northeast Nebraska and care for the people in this area.”

LOGENE BACH, RPSGT, CRT
AND CAROLINE NORTON, RRT



“THE LONGER THAT APNEA GOES UNTREATED, THE MORE SEVERE THE EFFECTS CAN BE. WHO WANTS TO GO THROUGH THEIR LIFE FEELING TIRED ALL THE TIME?”

— LOGENE BACH, RPSGT, CRT

SLEEP SERVICES HELPS PATIENTS *Get More ZZZZs*

According to current research, 10 to 15% of middle-aged people experience obstructive sleep apnea, but only a small percentage of that group realizes that there’s more to be concerned about than just not sleeping as well as they used to.

Pender Community Hospital’s Sleep Services Coordinator Logene Bach, RPSGT, CRT advises that there isn’t a “one size fits all” answer when it comes to sleeping well.

“I have a saying on my office wall: ‘Sleep Apnea Can Affect Anyone.’ It can and does affect people of all ages, from infants to people in their 90s,” explained Bach. “Very early in my

career, I had a patient who was severely obese, in their 20s, who slept on their back all night and only had a few apneas. The next night my patient was in their 70s, did not even weigh one hundred pounds and was one of the worst for apnea I have ever had.”

PCH’s Cardiopulmonary Manager Caroline Norton, RRT, who works closely with Bach in the Sleep Services department, added that it’s important for patients to have a sleep study done if they have symptoms, such as snoring, daytime sleepiness, restless sleep, morning headaches or drowsiness, and these symptoms can no longer be ignored by you – or those close to you.

“The longer that apnea goes untreated, the more severe the effects can be,” adds Bach. “Who wants to go through their life feeling tired all of the time?”

“I have been doing sleep studies for more than 20 years and wow, how the world of sleep has changed: The equipment and the understanding of sleep apnea by our physicians has made testing for apnea and being treated for it very easy.”

For more information about PCH’s Sleep Services, visit pchne.org/services/sleep-services



DID YOU KNOW?

When the muscles at the back of the throat relax too much to allow for normal breathing, patients are diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea. Although found in all age groups, obstructive sleep apnea is more frequently diagnosed among older and overweight patients.

PCH Welcomes Family Medicine Physician Assistant



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
KATE MUELLER PICTURED
WITH PATIENT

EMERSON RESIDENT JOINS STAFF

Physician Assistant Kate Mueller joined the Pender Community Hospital team in late August and will see patients at PCH's ER, as well as at both the Pender and Emerson Medical Clinics. Mueller is currently a resident of Emerson, and earned her undergraduate degree at Wayne State College after growing up in nearby Clearwater.

"I'm thankful for the opportunity to work with such a great team and look forward to getting to know everyone at the hospital and clinic," said Mueller. "I am also very eager to meet and to care for families in and around the community." Prior to joining PCH, Mueller was employed at NuWest Medical Clinic in Norfolk; before that, she worked at Memorial Health Clinic in Aurora for nearly six years. As a physician assistant, Mueller has experience helping patients of all ages manage their acute and chronic illnesses, as well as providing both routine and preventative healthcare. Mueller has also worked in ER and inpatient settings.

Mueller earned a master's degree in physician assistant studies from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. In addition, Mueller she has been certified in the following areas: Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS); Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS); Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS); Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP); Basic Life Support (BLS); and National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners. She is also a member of several

professional organizations, including both the American and Nebraska Academies of Physician Assistants.

Mueller married husband Jordan in August of 2021; she enjoys spending time on their farm, as well as with friends and family. Her hobbies include boating, riding horses, and traveling.



"I AM EAGER TO MEET AND TO CARE FOR FAMILIES IN AND AROUND THE COMMUNITY."

— KATE MUELLER

Family medicine providers at PCH offer a full scope of comprehensive care for patients of all ages; family medicine includes a variety of services, from chronic care management to pediatric care.

For more information, visit
pchne.org/services/primary-care.

CARDIAC REHAB PATIENT
LARRY ROGERS PICTURED WITH
CAROLINE NORTON, RRT



PCH Cardiac Rehab Helps Get Your **HEART** *IN THE RIGHT PLACE*

Research indicates that cardiac rehab reduces participants' death rate by as much as 30% when compared to non-participants – and that the biggest factor in determining rehab participation is the strength of the recommendation made by the patient's physician.

Larry Rogers is glad he took his doctor's suggestions seriously to participate in Pender Community Hospital's cardiac rehab program.

"I had some heart issues; I had a vessel that was 95% blocked, so they put a stent in and that's when my doctor told me about Pender's cardiac rehab program," Rogers, 62, explained.

Cardiac rehabilitation has been proven to lower the risk of death and health complications for patients who have experienced a cardiac procedure or event, and also increases the likelihood of returning to an active lifestyle. Another key factor as to why heart health providers advocate for cardiac rehab: It significantly reduces hospital readmission for cardiac patients.

Rogers said that he especially appreciated PCH’s flexibility; Rogers, who is a farmer in Lyons, experienced his cardiac event in the spring of 2021 – right as he was getting ready to plant.

“Pender was very good to work with me; I needed to plant, and their flexibility was awesome,” said Rogers, who commended the cardiac rehab team on working around his schedule.

CARDIAC REHAB CAN HELP PATIENTS EXPERIENCING:

- angina
- coronary artery disease
- heart attack or other cardiac events
- heart surgery and procedures
- cardiovascular disease



“Everything was great, the nutrition and the exercise program,” said Rogers. “They work with you on everything; it’s a very good program. Everyone was fantastic to work with, and they really keep your spirits up. And they’re very good at telling you where you need to be and how to get there.”

Rogers says that after rehab, he pays much closer attention to his diet, which has helped him lose weight, and keep it off. “If you listen to what they say, you’re going to be okay,” said Rogers.

To learn more about PCH’s expert cardiopulmonary rehab services, talk to your primary care provider or visit pchne.org/services/cardiopulmonary-services



BREATHE EASIER AT PCH: PULMONARY REHAB Q&A

We recently caught up with Bancroft resident Sondra Bennett, 62, who successfully completed the pulmonary rehab program a few years ago at Pender Community Hospital. Here’s what she had to say about the benefits of PCH’s pulmonary rehab program:

Why did you choose pulmonary rehab at PCH?

It’s closest to where I live and it sure beat going to Norfolk. I had had good results at Pender before, and I’m glad I went. For one thing, I really like the therapists over there – they made you feel really comfortable. I never felt pressured and they taught me a lot of different ways to handle my shortness of breath. They’re very positive, very compassionate.

Can you describe a typical session at PCH’s pulmonary rehab program?

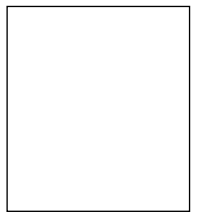
It was usually an hour – they did my vitals, then my exercises, including breathing ones. They let me work at my own pace: If I needed to stop midway, they were okay with that. They even did [the exercises] with me – I really enjoyed our time together and I still use all those things today that they taught me because it does make a difference.

Would you recommend the program to others?

Oh, yes – go for it! What do you have to lose? You’ll come out of there feeling better about yourself. I learned new techniques – for me, I was so short of breath, but learned how to control that – and that this was not the end of the world.

How has your life improved after pulmonary rehab?

I learned different ways to control my breathing and I learned to accept this as my new normal; I am thankful every day when I wake up.



Congratulations PCH Scholarship Winners!

Pender Community Hospital District recently awarded \$6500 in scholarships to four area students who are pursuing health-related fields of study at the college level.



Audra Nolting
Justin J. Slama
Scholarship (\$1,000)

Attending school:
Wayne State College

Program:
Pre-health science



Kamryn Kautman
Trisha Kinnaman Memorial
Scholarship (\$1,000)

Attending school:
College of Saint Mary

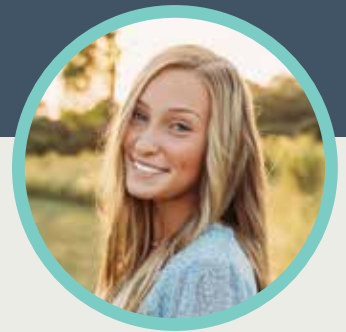
Program:
Therapy



Kinlee Bacon
Gloria Vollers Nursing
Scholarship (\$2,000)

Attending school:
Bryan College of Health Sciences

Program:
Nursing



Kailey Johnson
Merlin Brondum
Scholarship (\$2,500)

Attending school:
Nebraska Methodist College of Nursing

Program:
Medical

In addition to pursuing a career in rural healthcare, recipients are required to demonstrate strong academic skills and community involvement, as well as financial need. The application deadline for all scholarships is May 15 of each calendar year.

For more information about the scholarships, visit pchne.org/about-us/scholarships.