

Health



Valley Regional Hospital

MATTERS

Summer 09



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Clearing the Air!

On June 1, 2009, Valley Regional Hospital officially became a **smoke-free** campus. To learn more about this new initiative, visit www.VRH.org.

Right This Way!

Visitors to Valley Regional Hospital now have a new door to enter through. Due to the current renovation project, the old outpatient admitting entrance on the south side of the hospital is closed.

All patients and visitors should now park in front of the hospital and use the main entrance before checking in with the receptionist. We apologize for any inconvenience or confusion this might cause.

The renovation is scheduled for completion by September 2010, and will feature one central entry for easier access. In addition, the facility will offer all-private accommodations with baths, an environmentally friendly plant facility, and an emergency department that has doubled in size.

For an update on construction, visit www.VRH.org and select “Read more...” under the “Construction Update” heading.



Community members, patients, and visitors are asked to please use the front main entrance.

Award-Winning Healthcare
in a small community?



Absolutely.

2008 NH Business of the Year in Healthcare

 Valley Regional Hospital
143 Elm Street • Claremont, NH 03743 • (603) 342-7771 • vrh.org



2008 Press Ganey Compass Award for Patient Satisfaction



2007 Gold Seal of Approval by The Joint Commission



2007 Accreditation by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Award-Winning Care, Close to Home

Quality counts at Valley Regional Hospital, and we have the awards and recognition to prove it. Committed to offering a high level of clinical excellence in an inviting environment, VRH has been recognized by several organizations for outstanding dedication to our patients.

VRH's recognitions include:

- 2008 BusinessNH Business of the Year in Healthcare
- 2007 Gold Seal of Approval™ from The Joint Commission
- 2007 Accreditation by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- 2006 Winner of the Press Ganey Compass Award for Patient Satisfaction

As these awards suggest, VRH will always operate with our patients in mind and, in your time of need, we will be here for you.

For more information about the award-winning care offered at VRH, visit www.VRH.org.

We're Going Live

Ever wanted the inside track to information about the services offered at Valley Regional Hospital? You're in luck: VRH is proud to announce that our new Web site is now live.

On our new site, you can browse lists of our available services, keep track of construction and expansion projects, find a doctor, or sign up to volunteer at the hospital. The new site will highlight press releases and community events to ensure you are “in the know” when it comes to your local hospital. Our new Web site also links to local support groups and our fitness center to help keep our community healthy.

Check out the new Web site at www.VRH.org.



Enjoying the Day Out

For seniors, staying at home all the time can quickly become tedious. The Adult Medical Day Program can help—by offering adults who have special needs the opportunity to meet for therapeutic and social activities one to five days each week.



Going outside is a hallmark of independence. The Adult Medical Day Program preserves individual independence by giving adults with diminishing options for activities outside the home an opportunity to socialize in a safe and caring environment.

“We offer personal, skilled nursing care along with a variety of engaging daily activities,” says Carla Skinder, manager of the Adult Medical Day Program at Connecticut Valley Home Care. “This program also

provides respite for providers who may need a break from the intensity of caring for a loved one.”

Social Hours

The Day Program meets mental and physical needs in a safe but relaxed setting. Adults in the program receive breakfast, lunch, and a snack each day. Therapeutic activities include:

- arts and crafts
- exercise
- field trips
- gardening

- music, singing, and dancing
- quilting
- reminiscence therapy

Participants in the Adult Medical Day Program can be referred by case managers, family members, or friends, but admissions must be physician-approved. The cost is covered by some private insurance companies and major plans, including Medicaid.

For more information about the Adult Medical Day Program, call (603) 543-6895.

Willing and Able to Serve...Still

As Valley Regional Hospital expands to help better serve our growing community, Kane Oncology Center remains open to patients in the Upper Valley.



Kane Center for Cancer Care
Valley Regional Hospital



Donna Adams uses a warm blanket heated from a new blanket warmer purchased by the Ladies Union Aid Society as a donation for the Kane Oncology Unit.

The Kane Center is proud to provide quality cancer care that's convenient, accessible, and close to home. Skilled, experienced oncologists from Norris Cotton Cancer Center staff the Kane Center and strive to provide state-of-the-art treatment in a warm, healing environment.

Patients at the Kane Center receive cancer treatment that's individually tailored to cure and control their disease. Beyond providing clinical care, the multidisciplinary team at the Kane Center embraces the whole person. It's our goal to help you heal physically, spiritually, and psychosocially.

As part of our healing environment, we offer support, education, and compassion for both our patients and their families. If you know of a family member or friend who has recently been diagnosed with cancer, please

share with them our local hometown source for treatment and support.

We are conveniently located across the street from VRH and provide ample parking and easy access to registration and scheduling.

Norris Cotton Cancer Center

Norris Cotton Cancer Center was established in 1972, and now serves as one of the nation's premier facilities for cancer treatment and research. Through our affiliation, the Upper Valley has access to the latest innovations in the detection and treatment of cancer.

The Kane Center is located at 5 Dunning Street in Claremont.

For more information or to make an appointment, call (603) 542-8603.



Delivering Precious Moments

▲ Sue Chabot is passionate about the birthing care at Valley Regional Hospital. She was born at VRH, delivered both her children here, and has dedicated the last 28 years of her career to caring for moms and their babies in the Birthing Center at VRH.

Valley Regional Hospital knows that the birth of a child is one of the most important and memorable days of your life. Our caring team of professionals is dedicated to providing you with quality, personalized delivery options so you and your loved ones can enjoy your special day.



VRH offers a wide range of unique delivery options to best suit your individual needs. Our hydrotherapy tubs offer mothers the opportunity to take advantage of the soothing comfort of water during labor. VRH offers a Jacuzzi system as well as an AquaDoula® deep immersion tub for hydrotherapy in labor.

Immersion in water during labor provides a host of benefits for the mother, including:

- Immersion in water often helps lower a mother's blood pressure.
- Immersion alleviates stress-related hormones, allowing the mother to produce more pain-reducing endorphins.
- Immersion allows the perineum to become more relaxed, reducing the incidence and severity of tearing.
- The buoyancy of water allows mothers to easily reposition themselves during labor as the need arises. Buoyancy also promotes more efficient contractions and better circulation, causing less pain for the mother and providing more oxygen for the baby.
- The intimate setting of water

reduces a mother's anxiety about labor.

During labor, mothers also have the option of walking, sitting on a birthing ball, or rocking in a rocking chair, to help the progression of labor.

Meeting Your Medication Needs

VRH offers epidural anesthesia for mothers and our anesthetist is on-call day and night for your convenience. Epidural anesthesia, a regional anesthesia, is the most common means of pain relief for mothers. The anesthesia enters into the spinal column and provides pain relief from the upper abdomen down to the toes. Many mothers elect to have intravenous anesthesia in combination with hydrotherapy before undergoing an epidural. Epidural anesthesia allows mothers to:

- have relief from the discomfort of childbirth so that they can remain positive and alert
- overcome the exhaustion and fatigue associated with childbirth
- rest during prolonged labor

Privacy, Comfort

VRH believes that the birth of a child should be a private experience

enjoyed with loved ones. Each mother at VRH's Maternal Child Health Unit is provided with a private birthing suite. Walking into one of these private rooms, you may forget you're in a hospital. Each suite is furnished with a private bath, vanity, television, and pullout couch for the convenience of mother and family.

Family support is an integral part of VRH's childbirth philosophy, so much so that many of our labor support nurses choose VRH for the

“Most of the nurses who work in maternity have utilized the Birthing Center for their own delivery needs. I think that sends a message that women feel like they are part of a family here at Valley Regional Hospital. They feel safe, well cared for, and secure in knowing the quality of the providers who will care for them.”

—Felicia Robinson, nurse manager of the Maternal Child Health Unit at VRH

births of their own children. VRH is proud to provide a family-centered atmosphere where mothers can feel comfortable in their surroundings and secure in their care. Our philosophy resonates with mothers, as many continue to return to VRH to deliver their subsequent children, and some of our nurses have had the privilege of assisting mothers who were themselves born at VRH.

VRH is committed to the health and happiness of individual families and the community, and our Maternal Child Health Unit is proud to provide quality, personalized maternity care for mothers and their new additions to the family.

For more information on the Maternal Child Health Unit at VRH, call (603) 542-7771 or visit www.VRH.org and choose “Inpatient Care” and then “Maternal Child Health.”

Whether you desire a nurse midwife for care and support throughout your labor and delivery or the experience of a medical OB/GYN, the **Birthing Center at Valley Regional Hospital** and its team of medical providers can help you create a safe and nurturing environment to welcome your baby.

Education Is a Top Priority

VRH now offers birthing classes for the Claremont community. Instructor Tonia Bowman will be covering a variety of helpful birthing issues, including:

- anatomy of a pregnant body
- caring for a newborn
- nutrition during pregnancy
- pain medications and natural coping techniques
- postpartum depression

“If point A is the pregnancy and point B is having your baby, we really want to focus on what to expect during that journey,” Bowman says. “It’s a holistic but realistic approach.”

The classes will meet one evening a week for two hours and continue for four weeks. A six-hour weekend intensive class is also available.

Welcoming New Patients



Dr. Michael Ritondo
OB/GYN
(603) 543-6920



Dr. Ellen Joyce
OB/GYN
(603) 542-3800



Willow Moryan
Certified Nurse Midwife
(603) 542-3800

The Benefits of Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding offers advantages for children that no other form of feeding can duplicate. The benefits of breastfeeding last far beyond infancy, and many studies suggest the practice can yield lifelong health benefits.

“Breast milk contains a unique balance of nutrients that build the infant’s immune system and fight allergens and illness,” says Michael Ritondo, MD, board-certified OB/GYN on staff at Valley Regional Hospital. “Even more unique is that its nutritional composition changes over time to meet the needs of a growing infant.”

The United States Breastfeeding Committee, when comparing children who are formula-fed to those who are breastfed, finds that breastfed children have:

- fewer cavities and straighter teeth
- fewer occurrences of infectious illness

- higher scores on IQ and vision tests
- lower incidence of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- lower risk of childhood obesity
- reduced risk of juvenile-onset diabetes

Breastfeeding offers many health benefits for mothers as well. Mothers who breastfeed are:

- less likely to develop osteoporosis
- less likely to develop ovarian cancer
- more likely to return to their prepregnancy weight

The Birthing Center at VRH has three lactation consultants on staff, as well as Birthing Center nurses trained in breastfeeding support, so that you can begin taking advantage of the many benefits of breastfeeding from day one.

For more information on breastfeeding services at VRH, call (603) 542-1887.





Quality Care from A to Z



Connecticut Valley Child Care Center (CVCCC), a department of Valley Regional Hospital, provides a safe and nurturing environment for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years.

Quality early childcare programs are essential to promoting future academic and civic success in children. At CVCCC, our skilled staff provides infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and pre-kindergarteners with numerous creative opportunities to meet their individual potentials.

Philosophy and Purpose

Our mission at CVCCC is to give every child a sense of solid,

emotional security during times when they must be apart from parents and other loved ones. Equipped with the tools of curiosity and problem-solving skills, children will be well-suited to take the leap into kindergarten.

The Early Childhood Experience

Each classroom operates on a team-teaching basis with excellent teacher-to-student

ratios for optimal care and education. Children also receive an intergenerational experience through association with seniors in the Adult Medical Day Program.

For more information on CVCCC, please call (603) 543-6880, or to download an application to enroll your child, visit www.VRH.org and select "Connecticut Valley Child Care Center."



Bounce Back, Boomers

For some baby boomers, exercise is a way of life. However, too much of a good thing can have some major consequences.



Active baby boomers are now the second-largest group visiting the doctor's office, behind those with the common cold, according to *U.S. News and World Report*. Most boomer aches and pains can be attributed to a few common and easily avoidable injuries. Here are a few to look out for and ways to avoid injury.

Elbow tendonitis

Tendonitis, the inflammation or irritation of a tendon, occurs in activities that require repetitive motions, like tennis or racquetball. Make sure that your technique is correct, and you can avoid this sports-related injury.

Rotator cuff problems

Swimmers, tennis players, weight lifters, and baseball pitchers are all

prone to rotator cuff problems. To prevent this injury, make sure that your weight routine targets all rotator cuff muscles, not just specific ones.

Hip or knee arthritis

When cartilage in the hip or knee breaks down, it leaves nothing to cushion the bone. When the bones rub together, this results in a painful condition known as arthritis. While the exact cause is unknown, it is believed that prior injury, age, and genetics play a big part.

Need an orthopaedic specialist? Valley Regional Orthopaedics can be reached at (603) 542-7666.

Critical Equipment on the Way

Valley Regional Hospital recently secured a \$315,000 federal appropriation that will be used to improve several vital patient services.

The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 provided the funding for us to plan improvement of our medical imaging and laboratory departments. News of the funds was especially welcome given that budget constraints had previously necessitated the removal of equipment and renovation plans for the aforementioned departments from our overall construction plan.

“This is a tremendous help for VRH,” says President and CEO Claire Bowen. “Our medical imaging and laboratory departments take exceptional care of the equipment. Some of the pieces due to be replaced are over 20 years old. But the time comes when state-of-the-art technology is critical to providing superior patient care—and that’s where we find ourselves. This federal grant will allow these two departments to purchase much-needed equipment that will be used to care for patients on a daily basis.”



Laboratory Hours to Fit Your Schedule

No matter how busy your schedule is, Valley Regional Hospital offers accessible laboratory hours.

Our comprehensive lab services are available to detect and monitor disease using the latest technology. The lab is open Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Saturday, 7 to 9 a.m., except on holidays.

For access to the lab during weekday business hours, please enter through the hospital’s main entrance and proceed to the admitting office off the main lobby, where your information will be processed and you will be directed to the lab. On Saturdays, patients should enter through the emergency department.

After-hours lab tests are available on weekdays by entering through the emergency department admitting office, where you will be seen by a lab technician and registered as an outpatient for services.

To contact the lab staff, please call (603) 542-1824.

A Way to Pay

In today’s troubled economy, many are finding it more difficult to pay for medical care. If you find yourself in need, you aren’t alone. Help is available.

Valley Regional Hospital offers confidential financial assistance and referral services—including discounted and charity care to those who qualify—to make health care more affordable and accessible to Upper Valley residents.

If payment of your healthcare expenses could create a financial

hardship for you, our patient accounts staff will work with you to help you apply for financial assistance.

We also will assess your potential eligibility for health insurance coverage through federal or state programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, and Healthy Kids, and help you apply for this coverage if appropriate.

For more information about financial assistance for health care at VRH, call (603) 543-5694 or (603) 543-5693.





This is a
recyclable product.

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

Meeting Your Needs

At Valley Regional Hospital, we are committed to providing quality care and resources to the greater Sullivan County community. Here are a few ways VRH currently enriches the community:

- VRH produces “Health Matters,” a monthly cable access television show, which features information on a variety of topics, including diabetes, imaging, infant eye care, home exercise safety, Summercrest Assisted Living Facility, and new VRH physicians.
- VRH is an active partner in the Sullivan County Oral Health Collaborative, organized to launch Community Dental Care of Claremont—dedicated to providing services to low- and moderate-income residents and the uninsured. VRH also supports the Sullivan County Community Mobility Project, which focuses on improving transportation access for all area residents.
- In 2008, more than 2,500 community members received health screening information and care for blood sugar, blood pressure, foot care, cholesterol, eyesight, and flu vaccines.
- VRH served as a local American Heart Association training center, educating nearly 900 community members and healthcare providers on first aid techniques and life-saving skills in 2008.

Where We Stand

Valley Regional Hospital wants to provide some important information concerning the resources and services we gave back to the community in 2008. Here is a chart detailing this information.

2008 STATISTICS

Community Charity/ Free Care	\$5,871,784
Community Health Services	\$1,341,706
Health Professional Education	\$29,566
Subsidized Health Services	\$19,060
Cash Donations to Community Organizations/Events	\$32,431
Community Building Activities	\$33,097
Other	\$11,080
Total Given to Community 	\$7,338,724