

Enhancing Access and Availability to Primary Care

Access to primary care in our community is growing with the introduction this week of LVPG Family Medicine–St. Clair. Ivor F. Lewis, MD, began practicing at the St. Clair site on Monday. LVPG – or Lehigh Valley Physicians Group – is the employed medical group of Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN).

“Things have been going really well,” Lewis says. “Our staff has done a great job accommodating both our patients and me. Our facility is beautiful, and most importantly, our patients seem to be very pleased.”

Lewis also serves as Assistant Medical Director for Family Medicine for LVPG–

Schuykill and Hazleton. He is board-certified in family medicine and completed a fellowship with the American Academy of Family Physicians. He also maintains board certification from the American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review Physicians, and is a fellow of the American Institute for Healthcare Quality.

The need for primary care in our community is very evident based on the response to the announcement of Lewis’ return to practice in our community. Hundreds of calls from people seeking appointments or inquiring about a new family physician have been received at the office. Our LVPG team continues to roll out



and ramp up our family medicine practice in St. Clair as agreements with insurance providers are being completed.

LVPG Family Medicine–St. Clair is accepting new patients by appointment at 570-621-4364.

Life's Lessons Teach All of Us

Life brings many lessons. LVH–Schuykill is taking that message to the residents of Schuykill County as part of a highly visible emergency room (ER) campaign.

In late November, the celebrated opening of our new ER at LVH–Schuykill E. Norwegian Street was a shining example of need, innovation and delivery on a project that has broad community impact. Since then, our operational teams have been looking at how we deliver care in the ER and what we can do to improve the experience for patients and families.

Physicians, nurses, support staff, administrators, managers and process specialists from the health network have been deliberately and steadily looking at:

- ▶ Patient flow
- ▶ Door-to-discharge/admission times
- ▶ Door-to-provider times
- ▶ Other tasks and metrics designed to enhance the patient experience

PRIDE behaviors and AIDET are continuously being reinforced, re-examined and where necessary, reintroduced.

We are now planning to share our story with the people of our community. Beginning in early June, you will notice an increased visibility in local media about our new ER. Print ads, billboards, radio announcement and even lifestyle type visibility in local pharmacies, supermarkets and gas

stations will highlight “Life’s Lessons” as it relates to the need for emergency services where people need them, right here close to home.

Consumer messages include:

- ▶ Fingers Don’t Bend That Way
- ▶ Senior Hips and Throw Rugs Aren’t Compatible
- ▶ The World Has Sharp, Rusty Edges

All of the ads take common themes that often bring people to the ER. They reinforce that LVHN is the region’s leader in emergency medicine and continuing to find new ways to improve care in Schuykill County. The ads share information about our new facilities and recognizes our dedicated, caring staff.

All pieces of the marketing campaign conclude with a unique, light-hearted way for the community to know where our new ER is located: At the top of the hill on East Norwegian Street.

FOR ALL LIFE'S LESSONS

Lehigh Valley Health Network

New ER. East Norwegian, top of the hill.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Star Celebration of Colleagues

Tuesday, May 24

5:30 p.m.

St. Nicholas Hall, Primrose

Memorial Day Observance

Wednesday, May 24

Noon–12:20 p.m.

Memorial Day Ceremony Broadcast

LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street Wall Auditorium

All colleagues are welcome.

Veteran colleagues are welcome to wear their uniform to work.

LVH–Schuylkill Golf League

9-hole league

Thursdays at Hidden Valley Golf Course

Details: 570-739-4455

Thank You for Attending Town Halls

Town Hall Forums concluded last week on both hospital campuses. We thank managers for accommodating schedules and encouraging participation, and colleagues for attending.

As part of our Communication Cascade, you can expect at least two Town Hall meetings each year, with additional sessions when appropriate or necessary. Our Communication Cascade is designed to share both health network and LVH–Schuylkill news and information to every level of the organization in a timely fashion. Town Hall meetings, LVHN Weekly–Schuylkill, LVHN News on our intranet and regular department meetings are all ways we keep you informed and engaged.



LEHIGH VALLEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PLAY AREA TAKES FLIGHT AT LVIA

Lehigh Valley Children's Hospital has partnered with Lehigh Valley International Airport (LVIA) to create a special place for young children and their families to pass the time while waiting for their planes to depart – the Lehigh Valley Children's Hospital Play Area at LVIA.

"There's a lot of fun here, and that's exactly why LVHN is proud to be part of this great play area," says LVHN Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Terry Capuano. "It really fits right in with our mission to heal, comfort and care for our community."

The play area replicates in miniature a lot of the features found at LVH–Cedar Crest's campus, as well as other area landmarks, all arranged so children can enjoy playing with them. In the play area, children can:

- Crawl under a small Lehigh Valley Children's Hospital
- Climb aboard an LVHN–MedEvac helicopter
- Jump on the back of an ambulance

For young children and their mothers, a Mamava lactation pod provides a

comfortable, private breast- and bottle-feeding option. Older children will enjoy the tech bar, where they can charge their mobile devices before they get on the plane.

Charles Everett, Executive Director of the Lehigh Northampton Airport Authority, said a recent report rating the top amenities likely to appear in North American airport terminals over the next three to five years includes nursing mothers' rooms and pods, and children's play areas. "Today, alongside a strong partner, Lehigh Valley International Airport has the opportunity to cross those two items off the list and continue giving our customers, especially children and mothers, a first-class experience."

Capuano said the "play date before the gate" should be a welcome site for children, as well as their parents and guardians. It's been designed to help children enjoy their experience at the airport more in a safe environment. "LVHN is proud to have another opportunity to help improve the quality of life in the region at one of the most important of our community resources, LVIA," Capuano says.



SIGNS, SIGNS, EVERYWHERE SIGNS

Re-branding to LVHN continues at LVH–Schuylkill. The most recent signage changeover includes the Health Center at Frackville and the medical office building in St. Clair, which houses our Counseling Center and now LVPG Family Medicine–St. Clair.

LVHN Celebrates 10,000th Robotic Surgical Procedure

In some ways, it feels like only yesterday when Martin Martino, MD, thinks about the first days of LVHN's minimally invasive robotic surgery program with just one robot and a handful of clinicians at LVH-17th Street.

Nine years later, the program has expanded to the point where it includes five robots and more than 40 surgeons across 10 service lines working in four hospitals: LVH-Cedar Crest, LVH-Muhlenberg, LVH-Pocono and LVH-Schuylkill. As of Thursday, May 11, the program had served a total of 10,000 patients.

"This milestone is a tribute to the value of amazing teamwork and our health network's commitment to caring for our community," says Martino, an obstetrics and gynecological oncology surgeon who leads the robotic surgery program. "We're so fortunate to have a highly skilled, multidisciplinary clinical team and a wonderful nursing staff that have allowed us to take on complicated cases resulting in outstanding outcomes."

The 10,000th patient was Ann Marie Colo, a 73-year-old cancer patient from Dunmore, Pa. She was treated at a hospital near her northeastern Pennsylvania home and asked to be transferred to LVHN. Martino's team performed a hysterectomy and a lymph node dissection robotically without complications. Colo went home to Dunmore the following day, and as a result of this minimally invasive approach was able to spend Mother's Day with her family.

"My husband Casper and I had heard so many great things about LVHN from people in our area, and we are so glad we chose LVHN," Colo says. "The nurses who helped me heard it was our 49th wedding anniversary and they bought us flowers. We feel very blessed."



Colo admits to being uncertain about robotic surgery. "I was a little skeptical at first, but Dr. Martino explained how everything worked, and I trusted him completely," Colo says. "I can't believe how far the medical field has come, and I would highly recommend this surgery. I don't even feel like I had surgery. I've had very little pain since the procedure."

Colo's surgical team included: Dennis Chyung, MD, Ashley Faden, MD, Sarah Wenrick, PA-C, Kendall Heyer, RN, Stephanie Nelson, RN, Tracy Weber, RN, Mike Wiesel, RN, and Soraya Fehnel, CRNA.

When LVHN's robotic program was launched in 2008, critics were unsure if robotic surgery would be safe and effective enough to be a useful surgical option. However, the outcomes from the team at LVHN have validated the robotic surgery is here to stay. A five-year validation trial published in 2014 demonstrated how a robotic approach offered improved quality outcomes when compared to non-robotic approaches. Some medical experts are predicting that with the influx of competition expected over the next five years, about one-third of all surgeries will be performed robotically.

"Future surgical care will continue to evolve, and LVHN will be at the forefront of new approaches," Martino says. "We've expanded our program dramatically and we look forward to continue offering our patients the most innovative surgical techniques to address many health conditions in the years to come. The potential of robotic procedures is continuing to change the ways physicians operate."