Three LVHN Institutes Formed

This message is from Brian A. Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, LVHN President and Chief Executive Officer.

From offering the first trauma unit in the region to starting heart surgery and much more, LVHN has set the standard for care and innovation in the region for many years. We are announcing another significant commitment designed to advance our clinical services leadership, provide continuing medical education and pursue research that saves lives. We are increasing our commitment and fervor to combat heart disease, cancer and conditions that require surgical treatment through the development of the LVHN Heart Institute, LVHN Cancer Institute and LVHN Institute for Special Surgery.

The institutes will enable us to focus on conditions that impact many members of the community and will allow us to create better patient experiences and outcomes.

I’m excited to share with you how the formation of these institutes will help our community and why each of you, your family and friends should feel confident that the highest standards of care for these specialized services are available right here at LVHN.

WHAT IS AN INSTITUTE?

The word “institute” in successful health care organizations describes a location where clinicians of the highest caliber collaboratively conduct patient care, research and provider education at the highest level to better predict, prevent and combat disease. We are adopting the institute model because we have the necessary infrastructure, programs and partnerships in place to help our communities stay healthy and provide the most advanced treatment when needed. This includes our membership in the Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Alliance, which offers the nation’s highest standard of oncology care, access to key MSK clinical trials and integrated learning.

LVH–Cedar Crest will host the three institutes and serve as the hub where innovation, research and education originate. LVH–Muhlenberg, LVH–Hazleton, LVH–Schuylkill and LVH–Pocono will be members of each institute and provide patients with access to the institutes’ distinct services and expertise in their respective communities.

WHO WILL LEAD THE INSTITUTES?

Each institute will lead with a clinical and operational dyad reporting to the Executive Vice President level of Tom Whalen, MD, Chief Medical Officer, and Terry Capuano, Chief Operating Officer. The leadership teams are as follows:

- **LVHN Heart Institute**: Ronald Freudenberger, MD, Physician-in-Chief, LVHN Heart Institute, and Vincent Tallarico, Vice President, LVHN Heart Institute
- **LVHN Cancer Institute**: Suresh Nair, MD, Physician-in-Chief, LVHN Cancer Institute, and Keith Weinhold, Senior Vice President, LVHN Cancer Institute
- **LVHN Institute for Special Surgery**: Raymond Singer, MD, Physician-in-Chief, LVHN Institute for Special Surgery, Brian Leader, Vice President, LVHN Institute for Special Surgery, and Dan Quay, Director of Service Line Development.

HOW DOES AN INSTITUTE MODEL BENEFIT OUR PATIENTS?

- **Teamwork** – The best and brightest doctors and clinicians meet regularly to share their expertise with one another and work together to care for the patient as one team.
- **Advanced Treatment and Education** – LVHN doctors provide the most advanced technology and techniques in treating the patient’s condition. The team continues learning the most innovative approaches for care through ongoing formal training and medical education, and offers free programs and information about prevention, risk factors and screenings.
- **Research and Clinical Trials** – Doctors and clinicians consult the latest research to inform decisions based on the best and most current evidence available. Patients who qualify are able to participate in the latest clinical trials.
- **Access and Convenience** – Patients at all LVHN locations will have access to the services, resources and expertise from our institutes.

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WHY HEART, CANCER AND SPECIAL SURGERY?

We are focusing on cancer and heart disease because they are the top two causes of death in our region. LVHN leads the fight against these diseases, as well as other serious conditions that require surgery. Our focus is to provide the best access, service and outcomes to our patients by offering collaborative, innovative and specialized care.

People with heart conditions can take comfort knowing LVHN has the most experienced cardiologists and cardiac surgeons in the region, consistently ranking in the nation’s top 1 percent for heart attack survival. Consider LVHN was the region’s first to perform transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) and is recognized as a center for performing complex mitral valve repair surgery. We lead the region in the life-saving technology known as ECMO and have specialized programs in women’s heart health, sports cardiology, advanced heart failure technologies, peripheral vascular and venous care and rhythm disturbance care. Learn more about the breadth and depth of quality and expertise at the LVHN Heart Institute.

People with cancer can have confidence knowing they have access to hundreds of life-saving and breakthrough clinical trials through our MSK partnership and other clinical relationships, and can receive surgical precision and comprehensive expertise through our multidisciplinary clinics for skin and soft tissue, upper GI, breast, prostate, lung and esophageal, and soon head and neck cancers. Learn more about the breadth and depth of quality and expertise at the LVHN Cancer Institute.

People who have serious illnesses that require surgery can be assured our surgeons have the most experience in the region, specializing in robotic and minimally invasive surgery for chest, cancer, obesity, esophageal reflux, colon and rectal conditions, hernia surgery and more. Our emphasis on minimally invasive, leading-edge technologies, such as robotic surgery, allows our patients to return to their work and lives more quickly. Learn more about the breadth and depth of quality and expertise at the LVHN Institute for Special Surgery.

BRINGING VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

At the forefront of our everyday innovation is the overall expertise of the LVHN medical staff and nursing teams. Our institute physicians are top-notch. They have been published in the nation’s most prestigious journals and trained at the nation’s best academic institutions, including Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, Harvard Medical School, Cedars Sinai Medical Center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Memorial Sloan Kettering and Moffitt Cancer Center. Since 2002, our Lehigh Valley hospitals and nurses have held the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Magnet designation, the highest and most prestigious distinction a health care organization can achieve for nursing excellence and quality patient care. LVHN is the only Magnet-designated organization in the Lehigh Valley and surrounding region.

Our strong leadership and relentless pursuit of innovation coupled with the adoption of an institute structure deliver true clinical value to our community. We hope to instill confidence that LVHN has a sharp focus on our community’s greatest health needs and provides unparalleled and convenient care close to home in these specialties. I have so much faith in LVHN – and all of you – that I bring my family here for all their health care needs. And you should too.

It’s an honor for us to be able to validate our commitment to cancer, heart and surgical care in this manner. It’s also another way for us to share the incredible work all of our colleagues do every day. Thank you for all you do for LVHN.

A Gift of Faith

Volunteer Margaret “Peg” Tobias recently made a quiet, yet important donation to the spiritual care department at LVH–Schuylkill. She donated a tabernacle for use in our Interfaith Chapel at LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street. A tabernacle is a decorative, sacred box where consecrated hosts are stored prior to disbursement for Catholics who receive Holy Communion.

“We lost the use of our tabernacle quite a few years ago,” says Robert Voskhul, Director of Spiritual Care. “We are very appreciative of Peg’s gift and her efforts to bring a tabernacle back to the chapel.”

Voskhul, Sister Jo Louise Magdieniuski and spiritual care department colleagues received special clinical pastoral educational training to minister to people of any and all faiths. They also work with local clergy when members of their parishes, congregations, mosques or synagogues are hospitalized.

Tobias first met with Voskhul about the need for a tabernacle. “We kept the hosts in a locked cabinet in the spiritual care office,” Tobias says. “It was not ideal; it was not proper.” She then talked with a local clergyman who also is Dean of the Schuylkill Consistory who gave his blessing to proceed.

“I love my faith and I love my hospital,” Tobias says. “I’m very glad to have the opportunity to show both and to bring the tabernacle back.”
Sheldon and Shelden: They Share a Name and Passion for Volunteering

When rookie LVHN volunteer Sheldon Dubois, 17, was paired up with nine-year-veteran volunteer Shelden Radin, 80, for the summer of 2017, the shared name instantly bonded them.

“I’ve never met anyone else named Sheldon in my life,” says the younger Sheldon. He does not count his family, of which Dubois is a fifth-generation Sheldon, and often called “Five” by those close to him.

And of course, there’s the popular Sheldon Cooper from CBS’s “The Big Bang Theory.” That Sheldon is a physicist, just like Radin, a retired Lehigh University physics professor. “I’m more like Leonard (Big Bang’s other physicist) than Sheldon,” he says.

Radin and Dubois spent the summer together helping patients and visitors at a busy location inside LVH–Cedar Crest, the help desk outside the John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center atrium.

Both have servants’ hearts. Before joining LVHN, Radin volunteered at the Da Vinci Science Center, the Wildlands Conservancy and ArtsQuest. “I’ve always wanted to do something for the good of the community,” he says. Dubois, an avid hockey player, volunteers with the Special Hockey of the Lehigh Valley Polar Bears as an on-ice instructor. He was one of 90 teens to volunteer at LVHN this summer.

During each four-hour shift, they kindly direct visitors and patients who approach them with a slew of requests. They help people navigate their way to a doctor’s office or find the nearest elevator.

“Can we help you, sir?” and “Are you alright?” are questions frequently asked by the duo. Both are eager to help people, and they each have stories about how their work truly impacts others.

“Some patients share personal things with us,” Dubois says. He tells a story of a patient he helped push in a wheelchair to the pharmacy who had been through a hard time.

“I was able to share some of my experiences with her,” Dubois says. “I wasn’t a social person, but this job forced a lot of social contact. It broke me out of my shell.”

Each day, Radin and Dubois fill out a volunteer greeter log to track the number of times they help people. “The most I’ve helped is 74,” Radin says. On average, they help between 30 and 60 people each shift.

Throughout their summer together, Shelden and Sheldon became close over their shared love of learning. They discuss science, history (with fellow volunteers who are war veterans) and articles in “The Economist.” Radin brought in each issue for the pair to pour over. “I learned so much from him,” says the younger volunteer. “He even taught me about the electromagnetic spectrum.”

Physics lessons aside, together they spent the summer enriching the lives of those who visited their desk. Behind that desk is a taped paper border that says, “Today is a good day to have a good day.”

“Our job,” Radin says, “is making patients and their families feel better about being here.”

Know someone who wants to volunteer? Tell them to visit LVHN.org/schuylkill or call 570-621-4242.

Let’s Celebrate our Anniversary

At this time last year, we were wondering what it would be like to be part of LVHN. In the months that followed, we embraced change, grew professionally and personally, and transformed from a stand-alone community health system to become part of the premier health network in our region.

You’re invited to celebrate our first anniversary as part of LVHN on Monday, Sept. 18. Stop by our hospital cafeterias to enjoy a donut, piece of cake and cup of coffee with members of our leadership team.

**LVH–SCHUYLKILL FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

**Monday, Sept. 18, in both hospital cafeterias**

- 6:30–8:30 a.m., donuts and coffee for overnight colleagues
- 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m., cake and coffee
- 4:30–6 p.m., cake and coffee

If you work at a building or facility outside our hospitals, you’re team will receive cupcakes for a sweet celebration.

To spread the word, flyers will be distributed via email and posted on bulletin boards. You can help by telling colleagues on your team about the celebration.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Hip Replacement Surgery – Anterior Hip Free Community Lecture**
Tuesday, Sept. 17, 6 p.m.
LVHN Rehab Center–Schuylkill
300 Schuylkill Medical Plaza, Pottsville

**I Pink I Can Event**
Cardiac, breast and gynecologic health
Monday, Oct. 2, 5 p.m.
LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian St. Wall Auditorium

**LVH–Schuylkill Auxiliary Art for a Cause**
Featuring the artwork of Abdul Wahhab, MD
Benefits breast cancer awareness and support
Wednesday, Oct. 18
The Lodge at Sharp Mountain

**Car Seat Safety Check**
Medical Office Building
Schuylkill Medical Plaza
Saturday, Oct. 21, 9 a.m.–noon