



Here are the latest encouraging stories, health tips and news items.

**COVID-19 stories highlighted in blue*

JUST FOR COLLEAGUES



CEO UPDATE: DO YOUR PART

CEO Update Video: Do Your Part

Dr. Nester shares what we must do to stop the spread.

NEW PENNSYLVANIA COVID-19 RULES

EFFECTIVE FRIDAY NOV. 20

New Pennsylvania Travel Mandates and Exceptions for Health Care

Get answers as you seek care at LVHN.



Show How You Do Your Part; Earn a Reward

Help us spread the word about safe behaviors.

COMMIT TO SAFETY AND PPE REQUIREMENTS

Commit to Safety and PPE Requirements

Complete the TLC module by Nov. 30 and do your part.

TRAVEL GUIDELINES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Travel Guidelines for the Holidays

Help keep our colleagues, patients and community safe.

UPDATED VISITATION POLICY

EFFECTIVE NOV. 17

Updated Visitation Policy

No visitors are permitted at LVHN except under special circumstances.

CARING FOR PATIENTS FROM NEW JERSEY

Caring for Patients From New Jersey

Two-week quarantine is not needed for these patients.



Nicole Spess is Partner of the Month – Video

She worked hard to help a patient get at-home treatment.



School of Nursing Partners With Alvernia University

Learn about our dual-enrollment nursing program.

STORIES



Get a Sneak Peek at the New Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest ER

Watch a video to see inside the new facility.

HEALTH TIPS



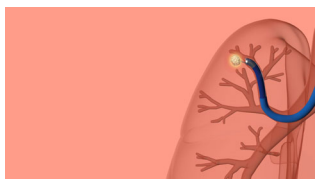
COVID-19 Vaccines: The Clinical Trials and What We Know Right Now

Learn about the clinical trial process and FDA Emergency Use Authorization



Medications and Treatments for COVID-19

Alex Benjamin, MD, answers common questions.



Lehigh Valley Health Network First in Region Using ‘Game-Changing’ Robotic Technology for Lung Cancer Diagnosis

Read how it works and who should receive a lung cancer screening.

NEWS



LVHN Technology Achieves Highest Level Recognition in Most Wired Survey

LVHN is one of just eight health care organizations to achieve this honor.

IN THE NEWS

WYLN NEWS FOR WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 18 2020

November 18, 2020 | [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

Rolling up their sleeves: When coronavirus vaccine reaches the Lehigh Valley, health networks are ready to get to work.

November 12, 2020 | [mcall.com](https://www.mcall.com)

Share your story at [LVHN.org/stories](https://www.lvhn.org/stories).



CEO UPDATE: DO YOUR PART

CEO Update Video – Do Your Part

November 18, 2020

BY BRIAN NESTER, DO, MBA, FACOEP

As COVID-19 cases rise, LVHN President and CEO Brian Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, begins a new series of videos to keep you informed. In this edition, you are asked to “Do Your Part” to help stop the spread and keep our colleagues, patients and community safe. Watch the video or read the transcript below.

Home

Share this release

CEO Update Video – Do Your Part



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.

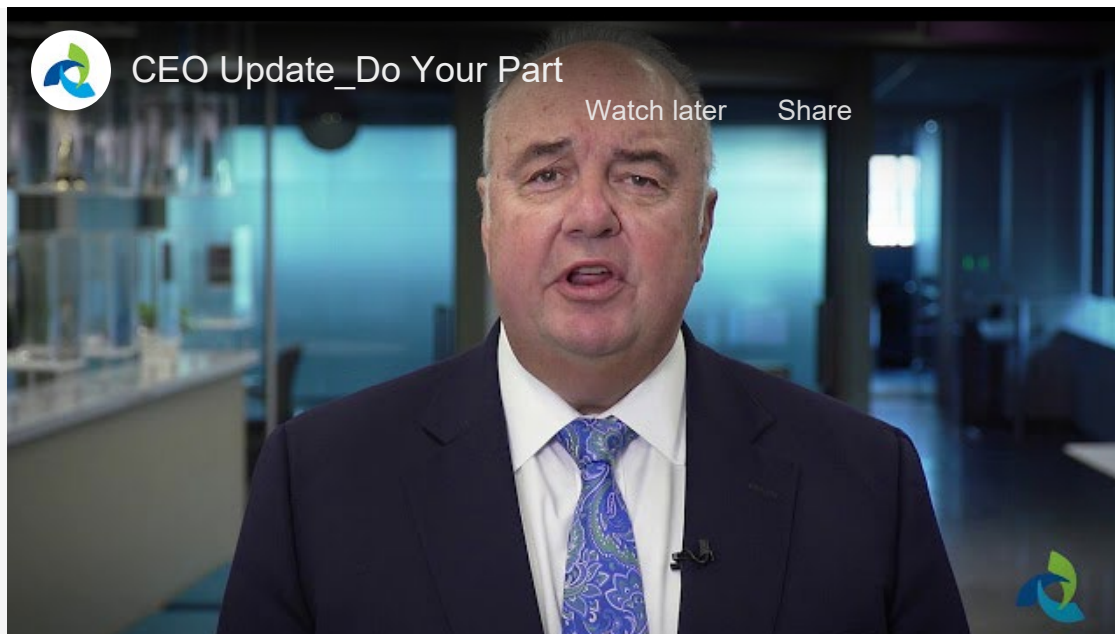


Embed

[View on Twitter](#)

Connect





We knew our fight against COVID-19 would be long. Now we are in the middle rounds of the fight. I know you are tired and stressed. But to win, we must fight the fatigue.

Earlier this week, we re-implemented visitation restrictions because we are seeing an increase in the number of COVID patients in our hospitals and communities.

On average, we are testing three times as many patients each day than we did at the start of the pandemic. About 14 percent of the people tested are COVID-positive. That positivity rate is as high as it has ever been, and we currently have more than 140 COVID patients in our hospitals.

With numbers like this, we must double down on our efforts. Each of us has a personal responsibility to help stop the spread. **Do your part.**

- Continue to use PPE properly.
- Complete the TLC module.
- Pledge to following our requirements and do your part.
- When every colleague makes the pledge, we are showing our community that the

LVHN family is unified in our commitment to keep people safe.

How else can you do your part?

- Maintain distance while eating in break rooms and cafeterias.
- Stay 6 feet apart in elevators and common areas.
- Wear a mask in public – at work and after work.
- Wash your hands for 30 seconds in bathrooms, and use hand sanitizer frequently.
- And stay home if you're sick.

If you are sick, have an E-visit with your provider, schedule an ExpressCARE video visit on the MyLVHN app, or call the MyLVHN Nurse Hotline for help.

So, do your part and be a role model for how everyone in our community should act.

As we take action during this latest wave, I will keep you informed. I will again share videos and emails containing the latest COVID news, as well as the steps we are taking to provide testing and care, to keep patients and colleagues safe, and to administer a vaccine once one is approved and distributed, which will take time.

We have been dealing with this crisis for nine long months. Through it all, your dedication, commitment and effort continues to be heroic. Our community recognizes your heroism, and they need you more than ever. So let's motivate and remind one another to do your part, so that everyone can stay safe and stay healthy.

Thank you for all you do.

NEW PENNSYLVANIA COVID-19 RULES

EFFECTIVE FRIDAY NOV. 20

New Pennsylvania Travel Mandates and Exceptions for Health Care

Answers as you seek care at LVHN

November 19, 2020

New public health mandates related to COVID-19 were announced Nov. 17 by [Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Rachel Levine, MD](#), with the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Many of the rules are easily understood – Everyone in an indoor public space must wear a mask; if you are outdoors, you must wear a mask if you can't

Home

Share this release

New Pennsylvania Travel Mandates and
Exceptions for Health Care



Tweets by [@LVHN](#)



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.



Embed

[View on Twitter](#)

Connect

maintain 6 feet of distance from others who are not part of your household. However, other new rules related to travel may raise questions, especially if you are seeking medical care in Pennsylvania and you live in another state or have visited another state.

“LVHN will never deny care to anyone,” says Timothy Friel, MD, Chair, Department of Medicine, with Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN). “While COVID-19 patients are encouraged to postpone face-to-face, non-urgent care until they have recovered, they ALWAYS have options for virtual care through the many platforms that LVHN offers.”

Even during periods of isolation, patients with active COVID-19 infection and those under quarantine following significant exposures are always permitted to leave their homes to receive urgent or emergent care. These patients are encouraged to alert their health care providers about their current condition and utilize best practices like masking, hand washing and social distancing during travel to healthcare facilities.

Q&A concerning Pennsylvania Department of Health travel mandates (Nov. 17) and health care

1. **Do I need to have a negative COVID-19 test to receive care at an LVHN hospital or outpatient location, or to provide comfort and support to a patient, if I am coming from out of state?**

No. The mandate exempts people from COVID-19 testing if they are traveling from another state to seek medical care or providing comfort and support to a patient. LVHN will provide care for those who are sick, however, we ask that a visitor/support person is healthy, not experiencing a fever or have other signs of illness, and must wear a face mask at all times.

2. **What if I am traveling home from vacation from another state or happen to work in New Jersey – will I need a negative COVID-19 test to receive care at an LVHN hospital or outpatient location in Pennsylvania?**

No. Since you are seeking care at an LVHN facility (or providing comfort and support to a patient), you will not need to have a negative COVID-19 test 72 hours before.

Don't delay care



For all people, continuing regular medical care is encouraged. Since the pandemic started, people have delayed necessary health care, including wellness care, preventive screenings and even emergency care. Delaying care can lead to more serious problems later. At LVHN, we are taking all steps to ensure you receive care in a safe manner, including temperature checks for patients and employees, requiring face masks for all people, frequent hand-washing and cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

As an alternative to an in-person visit, remember you can schedule a video visit through MyLVHN, the patient portal, or access other types of virtual care. Your health care partners are available to help you get well and stay well.

Visit [LVHN.org/virtualcare](https://www.lvhn.org/virtualcare) for more information.



Show Us How You Do Your Part; Earn a Reward

November 19, 2020

By making the [commitment to be accountable for patient safety](#) in TLC, you pledge to follow PPE requirements and do everything possible to stay safe in the fight against COVID-19.

Now, show us how you do your part. The first 100 colleagues to share their stories can earn tickets to a classic holiday tradition: [Lights in the Parkway](#).

Show us how you do your part, submit a “selfie”

Home

Share this release

Show Us How You Do Your Part; Earn a Reward



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.



Embed

[View on Twitter](#)

Connect

LVHN colleagues are heroes. You are AMAZING, every day! As you make the pledge, think about how you can inspire others to do the same. In your moment of inspiration, snap a photo and you could be featured on LVHN Daily or social media as we share stories of our amazing colleagues who are doing their part to model the behaviors that keep us safe. Here's how:

Visit [LVHN.org/stories](https://www.lvhn.org/stories) to submit a “selfie” style photo of yourself wearing PPE at work or wearing your [LVHN mask](#) in public. In the “Story Description” box, include your response to these questions:



1. Who are you? (name and credentials)
2. What is your role? (job title and primary work location)
3. Why do you commit to patient safety and pledge to do your part to stop the spread of COVID-19? Why is it important for our community to do the same?

Your reward: An opportunity to enjoy this socially distanced holiday attraction

The first 100 colleagues who participate in the “Do Your Part” campaign will get tickets to Lights in the Parkway, a drive-through display of lights and holiday scenes along more than a mile of Lehigh Parkway in Allentown. As you enjoy this socially distanced holiday activity, you are doing your part by celebrating safely. Other prize opportunities may also become available.

Be a social ambassador, spread the word on social media

Your dedication to providing exceptional care during the start of this pandemic has been heroic, and that should make you feel #LVHNProud. The fight against COVID-19 is not



over yet, and we cannot lose focus. To safely navigate this latest surge, we're urging our community to stay focused and vigilant, and asking them to join us in our pledge to stay safe. Who better to spread that message than you?

With nearly 100,000 followers on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), LVHN has an incredible opportunity to shape the conversation happening on social media.

You'll soon see posts shared on LVHN social media as part of our "Do Your Part" campaign, and you can participate by sharing a photo of yourself on social media wearing your [LVHN mask](#). Use #LVHNProud to join the movement.

When participating on social media, it's important to model LVHN's core values: compassion, integrity, collaboration and excellence. Remember these [social media tips](#) when you post. When you identify yourself publicly as an LVHN colleague, we trust you to use social media for the good of our health network.

Thank you for doing your part

To uphold our responsibility to provide exceptional, compassionate care to our community as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations increase, we have to do everything possible to stay safe.

It's our responsibility as health care partners to model the behaviors we know will protect us and our community. Remember to:

- Wear a mask
- Follow [PPE requirements](#)
- Stay 6 feet apart
- Wash your hands
- Complete your [pre-shift Conversa screening](#) (click [here](#) or text Lehigh to 83973)
- Stay home from work if you are sick

Thank you for your dedication to safety and for continuing to deliver the quality, safe and compassionate care our community needs, expects and deserves.

COMMIT TO SAFETY AND PPE REQUIREMENTS

Commit to Safety and PPE Requirements

November 10, 2020

This message is from Terry Capuano, MSN, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, and Thomas Whalen, MD, Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer.

Since the start of this pandemic, your dedication to keeping our colleagues and community safe has been nothing short of heroic. Now is the time to double down on our commitment to our community and one another. We must stay focused and vigilant. It's our responsibility as health care professionals and health care partners to do

[Home](#)
[Share this release](#)

Commit to Safety and PPE Requirements



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.


[Embed](#)
[View on Twitter](#)
[Connect](#)


everything we can to keep one another safe and to model the behaviors we know will protect us and our community.

Whether you work at the bedside, in an office or remotely, you are accountable for patient safety. You will be asked to complete a TLC module to acknowledge your understanding and commitment to following PPE and infection control requirements. You will receive a notification to view the module on Monday, Nov. 16, and must acknowledge this commitment in TLC by Monday, Nov. 30.

If you are a patient care services colleague in the Lehigh Valley, you will not be assigned this TLC module as you have already completed education on these requirements.

It starts with you. It takes only one person to spread the virus to others. That is why making this commitment to safety is the right thing to do. You play a very important role in preventing the spread of the virus inside our health network, especially as cases begin to rise in Pennsylvania and at LVHN hospitals. Thank you for dedication to our patients and to one another.



UPDATED VISITATION POLICY

EFFECTIVE NOV. 17

Updated Visitation Policy, Effective Nov. 17

November 16, 2020

This message is from Brian Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, President and Chief Executive Office, Terry Capuano, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Office, Thomas Whalen, MD, Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, and Thomas Marchozzi, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

At LVHN, we have a responsibility to our community to provide exceptional care. We also have a responsibility to keep our patients, their loved ones and our colleagues safe, and to deliver care with the utmost compassion.

Home

Share this release

Updated Visitation Policy, Effective Nov. 17



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.



Embed

[View on Twitter](#)

Connect



To uphold our responsibility as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations increase, **LVHN, LVPG and Coordinated Health are re-implementing the “No Visitation, No Access Policy” for all hospitals and outpatient facilities. The policy takes effect Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 7 a.m.** The policy was first implemented during the early weeks of the pandemic and later eased as cases began to decline.

We are committed to doing everything possible to ensure designated family members of gravely ill patients – including those with COVID-19 – can visit their loved one in a safe manner. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided to these visitors to help ensure the safest possible visit. Cellphones and iPads will be given to patients who are not critically ill to allow them to stay connected with loved ones virtually.

Policy details

In our hospitals, inpatient and outpatient facilities, no visitors are permitted except under these special circumstances:

- Visitation of a gravely ill patient in the ICU, including those with COVID-19
- Parent visitation of a child in a pediatric ICU or neonatal ICU
- One coach or partner per patient on labor and delivery unit
- One visitor at a time for patients in inpatient hospice unit
- One parent/guardian at a time for pediatric patients
- One visitor to accompany patients for hospital discharge
- One visitor for patients undergoing same-day surgeries and procedures
- One visitor per patient in the emergency department
- No child under age 12 is permitted to visit in the hospital.
- Reasonable accommodations for pediatric visits will be made, provided any sibling visitors are in good health.



- For all outpatient appointments, one visitor is permitted to accompany a patient for an outpatient appointment, procedure, same-day surgery or LVPG office visit.
- The person accompanying a patient must be in good health and is subject to a health screening, if necessary.

Print and post signs

Download and print signs in your department that explain our inpatient and outpatient visitation policy:

- [Inpatient visitation policy - English](#)
- [Inpatient visitation policy - Spanish](#)
- [Outpatient visitation policy - English](#)
- [Outpatient visitation policy - Spanish](#)

Compassion is one of our values

While this policy is necessary for the safety of our community, we must remember that it will be difficult for families who are already dealing with the stress of a sick loved one. Let's treat these families with the empathy and compassion they deserve, and help them understand that this policy is in place for the safety of every member of our community.

How to handle unique circumstances

When we implemented this policy the first time, we learned that there will be times when we must make accommodations for select patients with unique medical, mental or social circumstances. When these situations arise, front-line caregivers should notify their department leader. The department leader should then relay the circumstances to hospital campus leaders who will decide if visitation should or should not be granted.

We will win this fight together

A united effort in following this policy can help us safely navigate this latest surge and hopefully assist our plans to return to normalized visitation practices as quickly as possible. The safety of our patients, visitors and staff is our No. 1 priority. Remember to:

- Wear a mask
- Stay 6 feet apart
- Wash your hands
- Stay home from work if you are sick.

We still have a long way to go in our fight against COVID-19, and we will prevail. We will get through this together. Thank you for your continued heroism and for delivering the quality, safe and compassionate care our community needs, expects and deserves.

CARING FOR PATIENTS FROM NEW JERSEY

Two-week Quarantine Not Needed for Patients Coming From New Jersey

November 13, 2020

This message is from Timothy Friel, MD, Chair, Department of Medicine, and Jennifer Stephens, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Lehigh Valley Physician Group.

New Jersey was recently added to the states on the [Pennsylvania Department of Health \(PADOH\) quarantine list](#). However, this will not impact how we care for patients from New Jersey.

Home

Share this release

Two-week Quarantine Not Needed for Patients Coming From New Jersey



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.



Embed

[View on Twitter](#)

Connect

Patients coming from New Jersey to receive care at LVHN or LVPG will not be required to quarantine for two weeks prior to their appointment.

Here are the reasons why:

- Given the interconnected nature of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and the ease in which people can travel between these states, requiring a quarantine for patients from New Jersey would not be practical.
- We have numerous physician practices in New Jersey, and many patients in these communities rely on our health network for care.

Quarantine also is not required for colleagues who travel to New Jersey. [Learn more about personal travel](#) to New Jersey and other states and countries.

Thank you for all you do to care for our patients and to keep one another safe as our fight against COVID-19 continues.





Partner of the Month Award – November 2020

November 19, 2020

Nicole Spess, RN, Payor Based Care Coordination, LVHN–One City Center

A patient recently left the hospital in a rush against medical advice with her tunneled catheter still in place. Nicole Spess, RN, contacted the patient a day later to find out what happened. The patient said she had no one to watch her children and needed to get home. Spess urged the patient to go to the emergency department right away to have the catheter removed. The patient agreed. However, she still needed 10 more days of IV antibiotic treatment for her condition. Spess contacted the patient's physician

Home

Share this release

Partner of the Month Award – November 2020



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.



Embed

[View on Twitter](#)

Connect

and advocated for a new treatment plan that would allow the patient to stay at home with her children. The patient also had history of substance abuse, recently experiencing a relapse. Spess talked with the patient about entering a drug treatment program, which she agreed to start just days later. “This was a wonderful outcome. What a success story! And it’s all because Nicole went the extra mile to make sure a patient received the care she deserved and needed,” says nominator Melissa Kubic. “Nicole is one of the most caring and empathetic nurses I have known in my 28-year career.”

[Watch the award presentation.](#)

Next Steps

Nominate a colleague for a Proud Partner Award on Partner Points, which is accessible on your SSO toolbar.

Congratulate these Proud Partners Award recipients.

Team of Colleagues, LVPG Pediatrics–Fogelsville

Using four different thermometers, colleagues were unable to get a temperature reading from a 13-day-old infant. Finally, a nurse got an accurate reading of 90.7. Promptly, triage nurses gathered around the baby and called 911. Another nurse checked vital signs and stayed in touch with the frantic parents. The baby was successfully transported to the Children’s ER.

Lisa Lacy, Care Manager, and Christie Moser-Higgins, BSN, Population Health, LVHN–One City Center

While on a call with a COVID-19 patient, Moser-Higgins recognized that the patient’s wife was ill too, even though she had tested negative for the virus. Moser-Higgins contacted Lacy to convey the situation. Lacy called the patient back right away and spoke to his wife, encouraging her to seek medical care. The wife agreed and was admitted to the hospital.

Janet Wittenmyer, RN, and Angel Burns, RN, Triage Healthcare Navigation, LVHN–Mack Boulevard



Wittenmyer received a call late one night from a parent concerned about her college-aged child who was struggling with COVID-19. Quarantined locally on campus, the student's symptoms were getting worse. Wittenmyer told the mother that her daughter should go to the closest ED. Both refused EMS. Instead, the daughter asked a fellow student for a ride. Wittenmyer then contacted Burns, who immediately called campus police. They dispatched EMS to the student's location. Their teamwork and quick actions led to the best possible outcome and helped prevent further spread of the virus.

Debra Stern, RN, Program Nurse, Transitional Living Center, LVH–Muhlenberg

When a resident found his roommate lying on the balcony unresponsive, he called the staff office, who then relayed the message to Stern. Stern rushed to the apartment. At that moment, she recognized a potential overdose case. Stern sprang into action, administering Narcan to the patient. By the time police arrived, the resident was responsive. Police noted that Stern's prompt response saved this patient's life.

Team of Colleagues, Comprehensive Health Services and Breast Health Services, LVH–17th Street

A transwoman came to LVH–17th Street for a mammogram. Social Worker Evett Key offered to accompany the patient to her appointment. The courteous teamwork and professionalism in putting this patient's needs first, from the moment she entered the hospital to the moment she completed her exam, made a lasting impression. The patient said, "This was truly a milestone and validation of my journey toward womanhood. Evett and the team at 17th Street were so kind and they warmed my heart."



Joseph F. McCloskey School of Nursing at LVHN Introduces Partnership With Alvernia University

November 18, 2020

Joseph F. McCloskey School of Nursing at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) and Alvernia University introduce a dual-enrollment nursing program for local students.

Home

Share this release

Joseph F. McCloskey School of Nursing at LVHN Introduces Partnership With Alvernia University



Tweets by @LVHN



Better days are ahead, thanks to this historical moment at Lehigh Valley Health Network. If you missed our [#LVHNLive](#) COVID-19 vaccination and Q&A this afternoon, here are some highlights: bddy.me/3p0vWnQ. Search [#LVHNLive](#) on Facebook for the full live coverage.

Embed

View on Twitter

With dual-enrollment admission, students will be simultaneously enrolled in School of Nursing and Alvernia's University's Associate of Science program by taking classes at the university's [Schuylkill Center](#).

"This partnership combines one of Alvernia's flagship academic offerings, a longstanding and prestigious nursing program and a leading health system," says Provost and Senior Vice President Glynis Fitzgerald. "Students entering this new dual-enrollment program will have a unique educational experience that combines the experiential learning opportunities within LVHN and the on-ground and online resources of a leading regional university."

The dual enrollment is structured to provide a seamless career mobility pathway while providing graduates with the credentials to sit for the professional nursing licensure exam, NCLEX, upon successful completion. The partnership also allows for a single admissions and financial aid process for students. Students enrolled in the program also will be eligible to complete Alvernia University's RN-BSN program by enrolling in an additional 34 credits that can be completed entirely online or through an online, blended model at the Schuylkill Center. The partnership begins with the incoming class in 2021.

The Joseph F. McCloskey School of Nursing at LVHN is rooted in the tradition of educating some of the finest nurses anywhere," says Robert Barraco, MD, LVHN Chief Academic Officer. "We look forward to our next chapter with the relationship with Alvernia."

Established in 1895, the Joseph F. McCloskey School of Nursing at LVHN has graduated more than 2,500 nurses and has been the leading educator of registered nurses for Schuylkill County.



Get a Sneak Peek at the New Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest ER

November 13, 2020

BY KATIE CAVENDER

If you've driven past [Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest](#) in the last year, you've probably seen construction and wanted to peek inside. Here's your chance.

The completed facility will comprise almost 160,000 square feet – it's the largest and most advanced of its kind in Pennsylvania. The emergency room (ER) increases the number of private adult rooms from 42 to 97, and private children's rooms from 12 to 27.

If you think the building looks too big to be just an ER, you're right. "This is more than an ER – the emergency room is just one component," says [David Burnmeister, DO, Chair, Department of Emergency and Hospital Medicine, Lehigh Valley Health Network \(LVHN\), with LVPG Emergency Medicine](#). "We're really building a comprehensive acute care complex that's like nothing I'm aware of anywhere else in the country."

Home

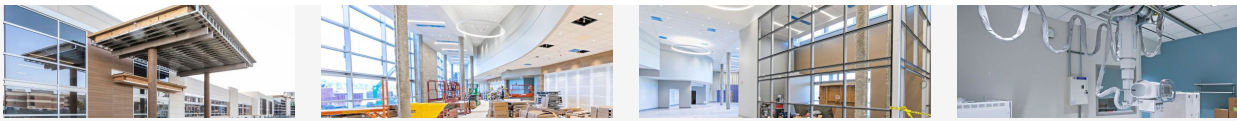
Share

Get a Sneak Peek at the New Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest ER



Connect





Flexible, modular design

The flow of people coming to the ER ebbs and flows. With this in mind, the building has been built with a modular design. A new three-bay trauma center lies at the center. A 59-bed observation unit for patients who need additional care but not an inpatient hospital stay is also close by. “Having a directly adjacent observation unit in the same building is something we’ve wanted for 20 years,” Burmeister says.

Many beds can be used flexibly for either ER or observation purposes. “If we get 20 or 30 ER patients at once – and that has happened – we can draw on adjacent observation flex beds,” Burmeister says. “Likewise, some of the ER can be used for observation.” Multiple 12-bed modules can easily be opened or closed as needs fluctuate.

The emergency room includes radiology with MRI, CT scan and X-ray capabilities; two helipads for air transport; physical therapy facilities; a laboratory; a trauma center with its own operating room; and an area for psychiatric and behavioral health care.

“Putting this facility together required collaboration across specialties like I’ve never seen before, which speaks to how LVHN can coordinate care for our community,” Burmeister says.

“LVHN already provides optimal care for the sickest patients in the Lehigh Valley, and this project takes us to another level,” Burmeister says. “It’s one of multiple ways that LVHN on the whole – and our leadership deserves an incredible amount of credit for this – has shown the dedication we have to this community.”

To learn more about the new ER at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest, visit [LVHN.org/more](https://www.lvhn.org/more).



COVID-19 Vaccines: The Clinical Trials and What We Know Right Now

November 16, 2020

BY KATIE CAVENDER

Updated Nov. 19, 2020

With our world upended because of the pandemic, everyone has their sights set on a vaccine. While we watch the news for updates, scientists, physicians, [Federal Food and](#)

Home

Share

COVID-19 Vaccines: The Clinical Trials and What We Know Right Now



Connect



[Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) and everyday people are working to make that goal a reality. Several vaccines are already in clinical trial. On Monday, Nov. 16, [Moderna announced that its vaccine is 94.5% effective](#) in preventing COVID-19 in participants without evidence of prior SARS-CoV-2 infection and on Wednesday, Nov. 18, [Pfizer announced that data shows its vaccine is 95 percent effective](#). So, what does that mean for our community? Here's a breakdown.

Science can't be rushed

In order for any drug to be approved, it must go through the same 3-4-phases of clinical trials and a COVID-19 vaccine is no different. What is different is that the administrative aspects of the trial, production of the vaccine and distribution will all be expedited. Typically, the phases of a trial occur sequentially, but with COVID-19 treatments and vaccinations researchers are able to begin planning the next phase of the trial before their current phase has concluded.

"The science will take as much time as the science needs," says [Joseph Yozviak, DO, Chief Medical Officer of Valley Health Partners Community Health Center](#). "The only things eliminated from the trial were unnecessary delays." The standard clinical trial process includes:

- **Phase 1** – During this phase clinical trials enroll healthy volunteers. In this phase, various doses of a vaccine and various versions of a vaccine are given to different volunteers. The vaccine is evaluated to see if any participants develop antibodies and to see which versions perform the best. It also is examined for safety. Once the vaccine shows indications of effectiveness and safety, the vaccine is moved to phase 2.
- **Phase 2** – During this phase a larger number of volunteers are enrolled, and the type of vaccine and dosage is narrowed down even more to learn the best version. Once that information is gathered, the best version will be used to move forward with a single dose of a single vaccine in phase 3.
- **Phase 3** – During phase 3, trials enroll even more participants. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination has been in this phase since late July and Pfizer has enrolled more than 43,538 people. Moderna enrolled more than 30,000 worldwide. This phase

further verifies the efficacy of the vaccine and gathers additional safety information.

Both [Pfizer](#) and [Moderna](#) hope to submit for an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) with the FDA in the coming weeks. During the review, the FDA will determine if there is enough information to prove that the vaccine is working and that it's safe – just like any other vaccine. Most side effects of a vaccination are seen in the first two months after it is received, however this clinical trial will continue to monitor participants for two years.

- **Next steps** – When the phases are complete, the FDA can consider it for approval for general use. With non-COVID-19-related drugs, it is not uncommon for it to take a year or so after phase 3 has completed before the FDA is able to make a decision about approval. Avoiding delays in reviewing trial data is one of the administrative processes that has been sped up especially for COVID-19 treatments.

Typically, manufacturing begins after FDA approval is received, however many of the manufacturers of a COVID-19 vaccine have already started production in hopes of approval in order to start distribution quickly.

- **Phase 4** – After a vaccine is approved for general use, it may enter phase 4. This phase consists of ongoing surveillance to observe how the vaccine performs in everyday scenarios.

“It's OK to have questions. It's OK to be uncertain,” says Yozviak. “None of the vaccines have been approved by the FDA yet, but I can assure you that the FDA will not issue an Emergency Use Authorization or approve the vaccine without data proving that this vaccine is safe and effective.”

A vaccine like no other

The Pfizer vaccine and the Moderna vaccine are just two of several COVID-19 vaccinations being evaluated through clinical trials. But there's something very unique about both of these shots – they are made with RNA.

The vaccines we're used to either contain a weak version of the virus (like for measles or mumps) or a killed virus (like for the flu). The vaccination injects the dead or

weakened virus into your body to stimulate your immune response.

Pfizer and Moderna are the only two companies that have produced a SARS-CoV-2 RNA vaccine for clinical evaluation thus far. If approved, they would be the first vaccines to use this simple technology. “The RNA in these vaccines are the same as part of the genetic material from the virus. It’s basically instructions that your body’s cells will use to build the virus’s spike protein, not the whole virus,” says Yozviak. “Our immune system will still respond to the spike protein as foreign and produce antibodies.”

One other important thing to note: “This RNA does not become a part of us. It does not integrate into our DNA.”

To learn more about COVID-19 treatments, testing and clinical trials, visit the LVHN COVID-19 Help Center at [LVHN.org/COVID19](https://www.lvhn.org/covid19).



Medications and Treatments for COVID-19

November 12, 2020

BY KATIE CAVENDER

Remdesivir is officially the first antiviral medication to be approved for treatment of COVID-19. The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) approved the drug at the end of October. And with this news, there have been a lot of questions about COVID-19 prevention and treatment – what works and what doesn't. We sat down with [Alex Benjamin, MD](#), with [LVPG Infectious Diseases and Chief Infection Control and Prevention Officer at Lehigh Valley Health Network \(LVHN\)](#), to talk about some

Home

Share

Medications and Treatments for COVID-19



Connect



common questions.

How does the approval of remdesivir impact patients?

LVHN hospitals participated in the clinical trial for remdesivir, so not much will change for our patients. While the drug was in the clinical trial, we had to ask the manufacturer ([Gilead](#)) for approval to administer the treatment before offering it to any patient. Now, all hospitals have the ability to determine who should receive the treatment without seeking approval from the manufacturer.

Can over-the-counter supplements help prevent or treat COVID-19?

No over-the-counter supplement has been clinically evaluated and determined to be protective or able to decrease the chance of complications from COVID-19. However, having good health before coming in contact with the virus is important. Vitamin D is known to decrease inflammation, and zinc can help your immune system fight viruses. These supplements could be beneficial, but we don't have clinical evidence of that yet. It's important to not miss your annual physical exams with a primary care provider. Your provider will be able to give you guidance based on your health needs.

Also, remember to keep up the COVID-19 safety measures you already know: Wash your hands often, wear a mask, social distance and stay home if you feel sick.

Will aspirin prevent COVID-19-related blood clots?

I do not believe there is enough data at this point to say that aspirin would prevent COVID-19-related thrombosis (clotting).

What medications should I take if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

If you are feeling ill, start with a virtual care option such as an [LVHN Video Visit](#) or [E-Visit](#) accessed through the patient portal, [MyLVHN](#). [COVID-19 symptoms](#) can appear to be flu symptoms or even allergy symptoms, so we recommend that people start with a virtual visit. Not only is it convenient, virtual care helps reduce the chance of spreading viruses to others. A provider will let you know if a COVID-19 test is required and next steps.

If you receive a positive COVID-19 test, over-the-counter medications may help you

treat your symptoms – including sore throat, upset stomach, headache and chest tightness.

What treatments are used in the hospital, and who is eligible to receive them?

In addition to remdesivir, patients can receive treatments through LVHN participation in clinical studies. These trials allow patients to access treatments that they might not otherwise have access to. Although these treatments are still being evaluated, they are available to anyone who needs them through what's known as 'compassionate use.' Compassionate use allows people who have a life-threatening disease or condition to gain access to an investigational medical treatment.

- **Dexamethasone** – Dexamethasone is a steroid or an anti-inflammatory drug that can be given intravenously or orally. It helps to minimize the impact of the coronavirus on the lungs and the body. Dexamethasone has been clinically shown to reduce mortality from COVID-19.
- **Convalescent plasma** – When people contract a virus like COVID-19, their immune system creates antibodies to fight the virus. Those who have completely recovered from COVID-19 may have immune-boosting antibodies in their plasma – called '[convalescent plasma](#)' – that could be used to treat critically ill COVID-19 patients. This provides a boost to the immune system of the sick patient and may help speed the recovery process.
- **Selinexor** – [Selinexor](#) is currently approved at higher doses by the FDA as a treatment for patients with relapsed or refractory multiple myeloma (cancer of white blood cells). Selinexor is what's known as a selective inhibitor of nuclear transport, or SINE, in cells. It's been shown that COVID-19's ability to replicate is impaired when nuclear transport is blocked. Animal models suggest some significant reduction in viral replication.

If you are experiencing symptoms that may be contagious, call the LVHN Nurse Hotline at 888-402-LVHN



Call: 888-402-LVHN

for next steps.



Lehigh Valley Health Network First in Region Using ‘Game- Changing’ Robotic Technology for Lung Cancer Diagnosis

November 17, 2020
BY LIZ BARTOLAI

Lung cancer at its early stage often has no symptoms, meaning people find out they have it when it's harder to treat and more deadly.

Home

Share

Lehigh Valley Health Network First in Region Using ‘Game-Changing’ Robotic Technology for Lung Cancer Diagnosis



Share

Connect



“That’s been the problem with lung cancer. At early stage, the vast majority of our patients do not have symptoms. Then it just grows and spreads. By the time you do have symptoms, it’s not early stage any longer,” says pulmonologist [Robert Kruklytis, MD, PhD, with LVPG Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine and Vice President of Transformation at Lehigh Valley Health Network \(LVHN\)](#).

“It’s fair to say we’ve made tremendous advances with chemotherapy in terms of treating more advanced lung cancer. We still have a much better chance of curing an early-stage lung cancer,” Kruklytis says.

LVHN uses new robotic bronchoscopy technology for early detection

New technology, [Auris Health’s Monarch™ Platform](#), exclusively available in this region at LVHN, is used to diagnose lung cancer sooner.

[Richard Chang, MD, Chief, Section of Thoracic Surgery, with LVH Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery](#), says LVHN acquired this technology for the comprehensive lung program.

“It’s the only one in the region for sure, only one of a few units in Pennsylvania,” Chang says.

Superior accuracy

The Monarch Platform offers a handheld controller that a health care provider uses to navigate a flexible robotic endoscope. Using live video and computer-assisted navigation based on a 3D model of the person’s lung anatomy, the health care specialist gets continuous bronchoscope vision during the entire procedure. It allows for obtaining tissue samples to biopsy from anywhere in the lung, including small nodules in hard-to-reach areas, something earlier tools can’t do.

“The robotic platform is the next generation. Instead of using our hands, where we navigate using gross movements, the robotic technology allows the tip to be navigated using a joystick, and then this tip can be navigated direct to any point in any target in the lung,” Chang says. “The accuracy is far superior.”

Lung cancer screening

Kruklitis says people who are ages 55 to 77 who currently smoke or who used to smoke should discuss lung cancer screening with their primary health care provider.

“We don’t want anyone to have a lung cancer, but if you have it, we want to find it early. If we find it early, we can cure the lung cancer,” Kruklitis says.

Lung nodules, which may or may not be cancerous, are found during lung cancer screening or incidentally because a person underwent a diagnostic test like a computed tomography (CT) scan or X-ray for another reason, such as the person fell on ice or was involved in a car accident, he says.

“For whatever reason you get your CT scan, we find many lung nodules accidentally. If a patient is found to have a lung nodule, the question is always the same: Is it possible that it’s a lung cancer? It’s always possible,” Kruklitis says.

“Some nodules, when we look at them, we’re really concerned, and some nodules, we’re less concerned. But in many cases, we’d like to know for sure. That’s where biopsy comes in,” he says.

Prior to this innovation, it wasn’t possible to reach some lung nodules, Kruklitis says.

“Up until now, there have been some lung nodules that I don’t feel we’ve been able to successfully biopsy.”

So, people waited months before undergoing more tests to see if the nodules got larger, all that time not knowing if they have lung cancer or not.

Monarch Platform reaches small nodules deep in the lung

“This technology will allow us to, in many cases, get a successful biopsy of a lung nodule,” Kruklitis says of nodules in hard-to-reach areas.

Richard Chang, MD, Chief of LVHN's Section of Thoracic Surgery, calls the technology a 'game changer' and allows for tissue sampling while being minimally invasive.

"Ultimately, by having this available, it will not just be better to make early diagnosis of cases we think are cancer but to make a diagnosis of cases we’re not sure are cancer. Instead of waiting three to four months and redo the CT scan, we can do a biopsy and

get the diagnosis. If it's cancer, then we go straight to therapy."

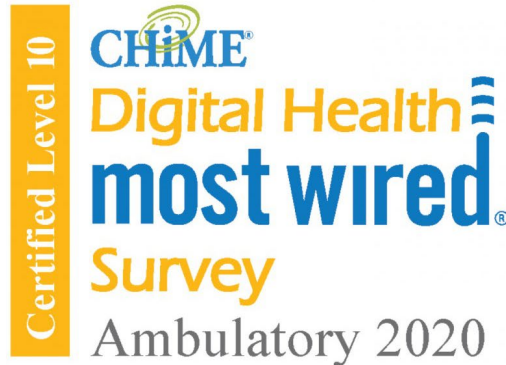
Krukltis reminds people that it's best to prevent lung cancer by never smoking or to quit smoking if you're a current smoker.

"That's better than me finding an early cancer. We prefer that nobody have a cancer," he says.

People with lung cancer have a better chance of survival if it's discovered early, Krukltis says.

Robotic bronchoscopy, Auris Health's Monarch Platform, finds those early lung cancers. Learn more at LVHN.org/lungtreatment.

You may be eligible for a low-dose CT screening. Take a free online assessment at LVHN.org/lungscreening.



LVHN Technology Achieves Highest Level Recognition in Most Wired Survey

Lehigh Valley, Pa., November 16, 2020

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) is one of just eight health care organizations across the U.S. to achieve a Level 10 designation in the College of Healthcare Information Management Executive's (CHIME) 2020 Healthcare's Most Wired survey, which assesses how effectively health care organizations apply technology to support clinicians and patients.

Home

Contact



Brian Downs
Public Information Officer
Brian.Downs@lvhn.org
484-884-0819

Share

LVHN Technology Achieves Highest Level Recognition in Most Wired Survey



Connect



Based on the 2020 detailed survey and review, hospitals/health systems earned a level from 1 to 10 for acute, ambulatory and long-term care. LVHN was awarded a Level 10 designation for acute and ambulatory care. CHIME defines Level 10 organizations as leaders in health care technology who actively push the industry forward, often leveraging these technologies in innovative ways and encouraging deep adoption across their organization.

A total of 63 other health care organizations achieved Level 9 Most Wired recognition. More than 30,000 health care organizations worldwide participated in the 2020 survey.

“I have never been prouder of the LVHN Technology team,” says [Michael Minear, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer at LVHN](#). “This challenging health care technology benchmark awarded by such a respected health care organization validates what we strive for every day: using technology to support patients and clinicians at the highest level.”

Some of the technological accomplishments that earned LVHN its Level 10 recognition include:

- **MyLVHN Bedside** – iPads for patients to access their clinical records, to communicate with LVHN clinicians, and to videoconference with family and friends are supported in every patient room.
- **Remote patient monitoring** – More than 1,000 patients have been given a package of testing devices and communication technology to use at home with interfaces to the LVHN electronic health records (EHR). This direct connection enables patients to share clinical data and communicate with LVHN care teams, providing a new type of ongoing chronic care.
- **Nursing communication tools** – iPhones were deployed to inpatient nurses, giving them mobile access to the EHR and specialized communication tools.
- **LVHN Patient TV** – Sophisticated patient television technology interfaces with the LVHN EHR to deliver educational videos to patients as well as many options for them to optimize their stay in the hospital.

Digital/mobile infrastructure – The use of mobile versions of Epic EHR software applications has increased 300 percent via iPad and 100 percent via iPhone since the pandemic began.

- **COVID-19 response** – LVHN Technology colleagues worked seven days a week, 14 hours a day during the pandemic surge in the spring of 2020 to create advanced analytic tools, deploy thousands of mobile devices and support a dramatic increase in digital encounters between clinicians and patients.

In addition to LVHN, the seven other health care organizations that achieved Level 10 Most Wired eligibility include:

- [Avera Health](#) (Sioux Falls, S.D.)
- [Cedars-Sinai Medical Center](#) (Los Angeles)
- [Geisinger Health System](#) (Danville, Pa.)
- [Jackson Health System](#) (Miami)
- University of Colorado Health (Aurora, Colo.)
- [UPMC](#) (Pittsburgh)
- [Parkview Health](#) (Fort Wayne, Ind.)

“This has been an incredibly challenging year for health care organizations around the world, and these digital health leaders should be proud of the support their teams provide in the toughest of conditions,” says [CHIME President and CEO Russell P. Branzell](#). “The pandemic forced them to quickly pivot to services like telehealth, with their entire organization working 24/7 to help keep patients and providers safe. It is testament to their commitment to quality care that they participated in our survey – for many, for the very first time.”

LVHN includes eight hospital campuses, three in Allentown, one in Bethlehem, one in East Stroudsburg, one in Hazleton and two in Pottsville, Pa.; [Coordinated Health](#), which includes two hospital campuses, nearly two dozen multispecialty locations including ambulatory surgery centers and orthopedic injury centers in northeastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey; 26 health centers; numerous primary and specialty care physician practices; 20 [ExpressCARE](#) locations including the area's only [Children's ExpressCARE](#); pharmacy, imaging, home health, rehabilitation and lab services; and preferred provider services through Valley Preferred. Specialty care includes: trauma care for adults and children, burn care at the Regional Burn Center; kidney and pancreas transplants; perinatal/neonatal, cardiac, cancer, orthopedics, neurology, complex neurosurgery capabilities including national certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center, and robotic surgery in 10 specialties. [Lehigh Valley Cancer Institute](#), [Lehigh Valley Heart Institute](#) and [Lehigh Valley Institute for Surgical Excellence](#) physicians provide the most advanced treatments. Lehigh Valley Cancer Institute is a member of the [Memorial Sloan Kettering \(MSK\) Cancer Alliance](#), an initiative that helps community providers improve the quality of cancer care and offers access to MSK clinical trials. [Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital](#), the community's only children's hospital, provides care in more than 30 specialties and general pediatrics. [Lehigh Valley Hospital—Cedar Crest](#) is ranked as the region's No.1 hospital for seven straight years and has been recognized among Pennsylvania's top six hospitals for seven consecutive years by [U.S. News & World Report](#). Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)—Cedar Crest, [LVH—17th Street](#) and [LVH—Muhlenberg](#) are the region's only [Magnet®](#) hospitals for nursing excellence. Additional information is available by visiting [LVHN.org](#) or following us on [Facebook](#) , [Twitter](#) , [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).