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## IN THIS ISSUE

**PAGE 3**  
A Note From The CEO

**PAGE 4**  
Brand New Emergency  
Department Opens

**PAGE 5**  
New Physicians  
Start at CMH

## Community Memorial Begins Robotic Surgery Program

A slippery day in January sent Cindy Eaton down, landing on her forearm, resulting in a bad break of her right arm, between the shoulder and elbow. After visiting a large ER in a neighboring city, a temporary cast was applied but terrible swelling and pain occurred, and Cindy was asked to wait a week to see an orthopedic specialist. She then decided to utilize the relationship between Community Memorial Hospital (CMH) and Hamilton Orthopaedics Spine and Sports Medicine. Already a primary care patient of CMH, Cindy was aware of the reputation and skill between the two organizations. Offered an immediate appointment, Cindy met the new physician with the group, Dr. Richelle Takemoto, and was scheduled for prompt outpatient surgery the next day at CMH.

"I go out of my way to come to CMH," states Cindy, a resident of Richfield Springs. "From the moment I walked into the hospital, I was treated with respect and compassion. It was a very traumatic time for me as I was in a lot of pain upon arrival, but the entire team at CMH was wonderful throughout the entire process."

The stellar reputation of Hamilton Orthopaedics Spine and Sports Medicine and CMH extends across New York, and Cindy was delighted to capitalize on the care and skill provided by both. Recently, the bar has been raised again as CMH has successfully launched its new Robotic Surgery Program through this partnership with the orthopedic group. With the VELYS™ Robotic-Assisted Solution, Dr. Takemoto performed the first robotic joint surgery with the CMH Surgical Team in mid-February.

*continued on page 2*



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[CommunityMemorial.Org](https://www.CommunityMemorial.Org)

continued

## Community Memorial Begins Robotic Surgery Program

### Learn more about the VELYS™ Robotic-Assisted Solution

The VELYS Robotic-Assisted Solution assists the surgeon to perform a knee replacement surgery, and is designed for digital precision. It uses a variety of advanced technologies to ensure the surgeon has the information and tools they need to perform a highly accurate and precise knee replacement. It works exclusively with the ATTUNE® Knee System, an innovative implant system.

#### Benefits of Robotic-Assisted Technology

- Technology is controlled by the surgeon
- You may experience less pain and a faster recovery
- There are generally more consistent outcomes (inconsistencies can affect recovery)

#### With robotic-assisted technology, your surgeon will be able to:

- Perform a custom-tailored knee replacement
- Provide advanced precision and accuracy
- Gather details and data related to your knee for the best possible implant fit

After extensive training and certification from DePuy on the VELYS™ Robotic Solution, the innovative equipment arrived, ready to become an extension to the already-superior orthopedic care offered in Hamilton. Community Memorial is the second hospital in New York State to implement this new advanced technology. "The Robotic Surgery Program brings advanced technology into our operating room, providing patients with advanced technology and our same five-star caring service," states Jeff Coakley, President and CEO. "We are proud to partner with Hamilton Orthopaedics for the Robotic Surgery Program. With thousands of successful knee replacements provided by our skilled surgeons this gives patients one more reason to have their surgery at Community Memorial."

Dr. Takemoto is excited to expand the program at Community Memorial. As the first female surgeon to use this innovative technology, she understands the benefits of robotics technology to patients. "The robotic technology provides me with greater precision on a cut. I can determine a measurement down the millimeter," commented Takemoto. "This means increased stability and reduction in pain for patients, providing them with a better range of motion and preventing the unstable feeling some patients experience during everyday activities, such as bending and walking up and down stairs."

Every knee is different, as is every patient that requires a knee replacement procedure. The VELYS™ Robotic-Assisted Solution works in tandem with the ATTUNE® Knee System, an innovative knee implant that works more closely with an individual patient's anatomy. With these systems together, there is now an option for patients seeking the latest technology designed to provide digital precision in knee replacement.

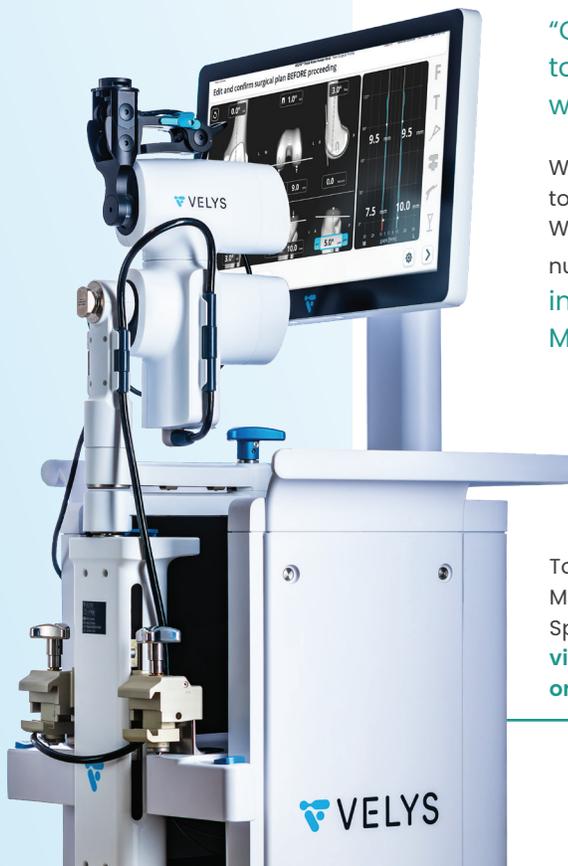
The entire surgical process is improved, from start to finish. This equipment simplifies joint replacement surgery, and the true winner is the patient; optimal results, faster recovery times and fewer complications. With dozens of robotic surgeries performed to date, CMH leads the region in innovative knee surgery, with a goal of expanding the robotics surgery program even further, offering hip and spine services as well.

Consistently recognized by Healthgrades with the Joint Replacement Excellence Award, most recently in 2021 for superior clinical outcomes in knee and hip replacements, Community Memorial strives to be the area's leading organization for orthopedic surgery. "Robotics is transforming the way physicians perform surgery," adds Coakley.

**"Community Memorial is bringing joint replacement surgery to the next level, offering patients our superior 5-star care with first-rate technology."**

When her primary care provider transitioned to CMH, Cindy didn't hesitate to follow. "Marla Smith offers me impeccable routine healthcare in the Waterville office, and now I've also experienced the surgery department, nursing staff and more," remarked Cindy. **"Dr. Takemoto was an impeccable surgeon and I recommend Community Memorial to anyone looking for the best in care."**

To learn more about the Robotic Surgery Program at Community Memorial and the partnership with Hamilton Orthopaedics Spine and Sports Medicine, or to inquire about an appointment, **visit CMH online at [communitymemorial.org/services/orthopedics/](https://www.communitymemorial.org/services/orthopedics/) or call the Hamilton Orthopaedics office at 315.824.1250.**



# CEO Update



Community Memorial has been providing high quality healthcare for the past 70 years and we continue to invest in our medical staff, clinicians, technology and facility to lead us to an even more successful future.

New medical providers have been welcomed to our team, along with a VP of Nursing. Dr. Kareem Hamad and Dr. Matthew McKay are both Hospitalists and come to CMH from larger facilities with years of experience providing patient care. Eric Engelbrecht and Michael Kiger are both Physician Assistants working in our Emergency Department, and a new Nurse Practitioner, Rebecca Dorn, joined the Cardiology Department. Heather Bernard DNP, RN, CIC, FAPIC has joined our CMH family to oversee nursing and clinical services. I look forward to working together with these new team members.

Our new Med/Surg Unit opened January 2021 and the ER in December 2021, to open and close the year with successful project completions. These updates to our facility also initiated the renovations to the exterior of the building. The dedicated Emergency Department entrance allows walk-in patients to enter the department without using the main entrance. Patients arriving by ambulance with the support of our EMS partners also have state-of-the-art entry to increase access to immediate care.

The Hospital's Board of Directors and Administration are proud of our Surgical Department's recent advancement, offering the most innovative program in joint replacement surgeries; robotic technology. The team collaborated with our partners at Hamilton Orthopaedics to bring this to our operating rooms. As the second hospital in New York State to offer patients the VELYS Robotic-Assisted technology, our Director of Robotic Surgery, Richelle Takemoto, MD, is the first female surgeon in the United States to use the VELYS robot.

Lastly, I would like to thank our employee team for their support and dedication to patient care and our community. The quality of care provided at CMH has again earned us a five-star rating in patient satisfaction by CMS, and the only facility in the state to do so. The CMH difference is our commitment to the community, our patients, and each other. I am proud of this team and our accomplishments.

As the calendar turns into the upcoming summer months, I invite you to stay connected with us via social media for progress on our capital project, along with organization updates. Thank you for choosing Community Memorial.

## SYRACUSE GASTROENTEROLOGICAL ASSOCIATES, P.C.

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# Brand New Emergency Department Opens



Community Memorial (CMH) is proud to announce that the renovation the Emergency Department has been completed and opened for patient care in late December 2021. The new Emergency Department (ED) at CMH in Hamilton has an expanded waiting room, private treatment spaces for patients, and enhanced safety features.

Patients needing emergent care can come to the new ED, located in the front of the hospital campus, through its own entrance. The expansion includes three additional rooms, increasing patient privacy and safety. The ED also has an added ambulance bay, and updated technology, including a centralized telemetry system to monitor patient cardiac status and security features that restrict entrance to the ED to those with permitted access.

As the pandemic continues to impact our community, access to safe, quality healthcare matters most. “The opening of the Emergency Department comes at an important time as we continue to serve the needs of residents in our community during the pandemic,” stated Jeffery Coakley, President and CEO of Community Memorial.

The continuous change in COVID, influenza and RSV cases are driving an increase in patient visits, and this expanded space allows for the care of patients more effectively and provides EMS and staff with the space and tools they need to deliver quality care to patients. With substantially lower wait times, prompt access to specialty services and seamless transition to tertiary facilities, the new ER at Community Memorial is the go-to for the community when emergent care is necessary.

“Providing vital care in personal, confidential rooms with increased space allows us to align our outstanding care with our facility,” stated Bernadette Casscles, RN, Director of Nursing Emergency Services. “The enhancements made to our Emergency Department reflect the 5-star awarded care we work to provide to our community every day.”

CMH has added a decontamination room with private access through the outdoor showers. This will allow patients, EMS personnel and staff to rinse off any potentially hazardous chemicals before entering the building. The decontamination room has an ante room to give staff the space they need to safely don and doff personal protective equipment and minimize the transfer of any hazardous waste or airborne diseases with an enhanced HVAC system.

The opening of the Emergency Department wraps up Phase II of Community Memorial’s capital project, the largest transformational project since its inception in 1952. The \$31m project will enhance the outdated facility, promoting patient access and navigation. Community Memorial opened a newly renovated Med/Surg Inpatient wing in January 2021, completing Phase I of the project.

To learn more about the Emergency Department and more, please visit [communitymemorial.org/services/emergency-services](https://communitymemorial.org/services/emergency-services).



## Welcome to the Team

Heather Bernard, DPN, RN, CIC, FAPIC, joined the Community Memorial Senior Leadership Team in February as the Vice President of Nursing and Clinical Services, filling the role of Diane Chase, RN, who entered retirement after 33 years at Community Memorial. Providing mentorship and guidance to nursing leaders and assigned patient care departments, Bernard is responsible for enhancing clinical outcomes, patient satisfaction and improving quality and patient safety.

Previously serving as a Regional Infection Control Specialist in New York State with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation, Bernard is a long-time Hamilton resident and actually started her career in nursing at CMH 25 years ago. “I am proud to be back at CMH, where my journey began and continue its outstanding reputation for patient care,” Bernard commented. “My career journey and experiences have shaped my transformational leadership style. I look forward to supporting the provision of high-quality, evidence-based healthcare to our community.”

# New Physicians

The Community Memorial healthcare system is excited to welcome Kareem Hamad, MD, and Matthew McKay, MD, who both joined the organization's Hospitalist Team.

Expanding the current team of CMH hospitalists compiled of Nathan Keever, DO; April Lamunion FNP; and Lynette Champagne, NP; Dr. Hamad and Dr. McKay will round out the group of inpatient physicians and nurse practitioners who work exclusively inside the hospital. These providers care for patients admitted to the organization, collaborating amongst other departments during patient admissions, post-surgical care and swing bed patients.



Hamad studied medicine at the Alexandria University Faculty of Medicine in Alexandria, Egypt, where he received his Bachelors of Internal Medicine and General Surgery, before studying General Surgery and Etymology at Trafford Hospital in Manchester, United Kingdom. He received his Boards in Family

Medicine in 2013 and Fellowship of Anti-Aging and Regenerative Medicine in 2016.

Dr. Hamad has been providing care to patients in Central New York since 2010. He brings experience in inpatient management, integrative medicine, wound care, minor surgeries and rapid response/code management. His experience adds to the high quality of care patients expect from CMH's healthcare system.



McKay comes to Community Memorial after an extensive career as a local physician. Graduating from St. George's University School of Medicine and completing his family medicine residency at Mountainside Hospital, McKay was a private practice primary care provider, and has served as a hospitalist

in a neighboring facility since 2018 as well. An Oneida native, McKay served as the President and Vice President of a medical staff group and the Chairperson of the Department of Internal Medicine.

"Dr. McKay and Dr. Hamad bring experience a wealth of knowledge from larger health systems that will benefit patients in Hamilton without having to travel to other hospitals," noted Jeff Coakley, President and CEO. "We're excited for the expansion of skill that these providers bring to our Hospitalist Team."

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[CommunityMemorial.Org](http://CommunityMemorial.Org)



## Grateful Patient HONOR ROLL

Launched in November 2019, Community Memorial's Grateful Patient Program has provided a seamless flow for patient stories and compliments received, recognizing employees for their commendable work. Patients and their families share the moments that had a remarkable impact on them during their time at Community Memorial and its five Family Health Centers. Employees are also eligible to recognize fellow peers for outstanding work.

**Community Memorial is excited to share the newest members of the Grateful Patient 'Honor Roll':**

**Surgical Team**

**Dr. Ramanathan**

**ER Team**

**Hamilton FHC Staff**

**Patient Access Team**

# Grateful

— PATIENT —

*Congratulations,*  
and job well done!  
Keep up the great work!

*"I knew that when I started feeling ill, it required medical attention – many other have to travel a far distance for care, and I'm so thankful to have the Emergency Department of CMH right here in town. Almost every job in the world has some component of customer service, and everyone I encountered at Community Memorial truly understood that, offering me compassionate care when I needed it most."*

– BRITTANY, HAMILTON, NY