a new era in

Heart Care
In this issue of *Currents*, I am excited to announce the opening of new services that help fulfill our mission to continue to provide the best preventive and emergent medical care on Oregon’s coast.

In May the opening of our Cardiovascular Services department marked the first time residents of our region could receive life-saving help for serious heart problems without the need for travel. The new department is equipped with advanced technology and managed by an incredible team of skilled physicians, clinicians, and support staff.

We are pleased to welcome Seth Giri, MD, to the South Coast. Dr. Giri is an interventional cardiologist with a wealth of experience; he has joined the team at North Bend Medical Center and Bay Clinic, and will be overseeing our Cardiovascular Services department.

This program is the result of three years of careful planning and the tremendous support of the community. I want to thank North Bend Medical Center, Bay Clinic, PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, and especially the Bay Area Hospital Health District Board of Directors for their vision and commitment to making this department a reality.

Our Strong Heart program is making a difference in the lives of people who have experienced heart failure, giving them the tools and the information they need to prevent future cardiac problems. Now located near the hospital’s new main entrance, access to our updated Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center has never been easier.

This issue also highlights our expanded wound care program. Advanced wound therapy is critically important for anyone with acute or chronic wounds that might not heal properly.

In addition, I am delighted to share with you our decision to sponsor the Coos County Child Abuse Intervention Center. This important community program cares for the physical and mental welfare of children in difficult situations by involving medical support as soon as possible.

Finally, our renewed Gold Seal of Approval accreditation from The Joint Commission following its unannounced visit confirms what we already know—that Bay Area Hospital puts patient care first every single day.

It is humbling to work in a community that cares so much about taking care of one another. Together we’re ensuring that people who choose to call the South Coast home have access to the best healthcare possible.

Paul G. Janke, FACHE
President/CEO
MISSION
We improve the health of our community every day.

VISION
Bay Area Hospital will be the model for regional healthcare excellence.

VALUES
Kindness, Excellence, Teamwork, Ownership, Innovation

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On May 1, 2013, Bay Area Hospital opened the doors to its state-of-the-art cardiovascular facility, ushering in a new era in medical care on the South Coast. For the first time, residents have access to a full complement of cardiovascular diagnostic tools as well as emergent interventional procedures that until now were not available locally.

The new Cardiovascular Services department, which includes a cardiac catheterization laboratory, is the cornerstone of Bay Area Hospital’s $45 million expansion and part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce mortality and improve heart health in the region.

Paul Janke, president and chief executive officer of Bay Area Hospital, explains, “We were the last major region in the state to not have access to locally based cardiovascular services. We were determined to provide both basic and lifesaving services and to do it right—with a commitment to quality.” He adds, “These new services will improve the health of the community in a very tangible way.”
In conjunction with the expansion of advanced cardiovascular services at Bay Area Hospital, cardiologist Seth Giri, MD, MPH, RVT, FACC, FSCAI, recently started a cardiovascular practice at Bay Clinic and North Bend Medical Center.

With Dr. Giri’s arrival, people with heart problems can now seek the medical expertise of a local interventional cardiologist rather than travel long distances to receive specialty care.

Originally from Nepal, Dr. Giri is an extraordinarily accomplished interventional cardiologist, having first trained in London at the Royal College of Physicians, followed by Harvard Medical School fellowship training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, where he completed advanced training and board certification in cardiac catheterization and angiography, interventional cardiology, vascular medicine, and endovascular interventions.

After having started cardiovascular centers at two prestigious universities—Tufts in Massachusetts and the University of Chicago—Dr. Giri wanted another opportunity to develop a comprehensive cardiovascular program. At the same time, he was searching for the right place to live.

Dr. Giri and his wife, Amy, moved to the region in search of the perfect community in which to raise their two children. Dr. Giri explains, “We wanted an opportunity to meet our professional and personal goals and to put down roots on Oregon’s South Coast.”

Since his arrival in April, Dr. Giri has been working closely with the team at Bay Area Hospital’s Cardiovascular Services department to set up an advanced cardiac catheterization laboratory that will help diagnose and treat cardiac problems that previously could not be taken care of locally.

Dr. Giri says, “I believe in a holistic, patient-centered, and preventive approach to cardiovascular care. The heart is often an innocent bystander; and by keeping the whole body healthy, we can keep the heart healthy, too.”

Seth Giri, MD

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Seth Giri, MD
Currently, Coos and Curry Counties have the highest cardiovascular mortality rates in Oregon. Bay Area Hospital worked in collaboration with North Bend Medical Center, Bay Clinic, and Oregon Heart & Vascular Institute at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center in Springfield to recruit interventional cardiologist Seth Giri, MD, to the region.

Dr. Giri has extensive experience with putting together high-quality interventional cardiovascular programs and has already done so—at Tufts University western campus in Springfield, Massachusetts, and at the University of Chicago, where he was the director of a multidisciplinary heart and vascular interventional program.

Bay Area Hospital was able to offer diagnostic cardiology; but if a problem was identified, the patient had to travel to receive additional care, reducing the chances of a successful recovery. Doug Gauntz, director of Imaging Services, explains, “Now we have an interventional cardiologist whom we can support with a skilled team and the new cardiac catheterization lab. That means, in most cases, we can fix the problems we find right here.

“Our lab and equipment are brand-new, and we literally have the absolute best technology available,” adds Gauntz. “This really is as good as it gets when it comes to state-of-the-art cardiac care.”

Cardiac catheterization is a procedure that tests a patient’s heart and cardiovascular system. It can monitor blood flow in the coronary arteries as well as blood flow and blood pressure in the heart itself; it also checks for defects in the heart. During catheterization a coronary angiogram can be performed to test for disease in the coronary arteries or blood vessels.

If problems are found, Dr. Giri can perform either a PCI (percutaneous coronary intervention) to open the blocked artery with a stent or angioplasty to insert a small balloon into a blocked vessel and improve blood flow.
Providing advanced cardiac intervention within 90 minutes of a cardiac event helps save heart muscle from excessive damage. This means that more people will survive and their hearts will be much healthier over the long term.

Dr. Giri says, “What excites me is the ability to provide elective and emergent care to the people of our community. When someone has a heart attack, it’s a race against the clock to provide the needed care immediately. We now have the facilities and the expertise to do it at Bay Area Hospital.”

In the event that a patient does need surgical intervention, such as a bypass, Dr. Giri can insert a pump to help decrease the heart’s workload while the patient is transferred to Oregon Heart & Vascular Institute. After surgery the patient’s follow-up care can be transferred to Dr. Giri, eliminating the need to travel long distances for post-operative care.

The catheterization lab is also available for the insertion of pacemakers when someone is diagnosed with an irregular heart rhythm, or arrhythmia. Included in the expansion of cardiovascular care is a preoperative and recovery area with eight beds. In addition, the already established cardiac rehabilitation program has a new light-filled space for cardiac and pulmonary recovery programs.

As the Doors Opened…

On May 3, 2013, the Bjorkquist family found out firsthand how convenient it is to have advanced cardiac care at their local hospital.

After experiencing severe dizziness and chest pain, Joyce Bjorkquist, 83, and her husband drove to Bay Area Hospital, where Joyce became the first person to take advantage of the hospital’s state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization laboratory.

Cardiologist Seth Giri, MD, met Joyce at the hospital to run what are now routine diagnostic tests at Bay Area Hospital. The tests showed no obvious signs of heart failure or other cardiac conditions.

Joyce says, “Everyone was just wonderful, and it was a huge convenience to stay in Coos Bay for the testing.” Several years ago Joyce’s family had to travel to Eugene when her husband, Rudy, needed cardiac testing.

“When my husband had to go for his cardiac monitoring, we had to drive to Eugene, spend the night in a motel, and be away from family and friends. Now you can stay right here in Coos Bay.”

Joyce and Rudy’s son, Boyd Bjorkquist, says having his mom stay in town for monitoring made a big difference to all of them. “It was remarkable that my father could be with Mom at night, and the rest of us could be there for her during the day while still maintaining our normal life routine.”

After a few days of monitoring, Joyce went home, knowing that if she needs it, help is right around the corner.

*If you think you may be having a heart attack, call 9-1-1. Get help immediately.*
Although the technology advances in Bay Area Hospital’s cardiovascular care are in the spotlight, a dedicated effort to improve patient health through the Strong Heart program has already made a significant difference for people who have experienced heart failure.

According to the American Heart Association, more than 50 percent of all patients with heart failure are readmitted within six months of hospitalization. It is estimated that up to 75 percent of these readmissions are preventable through increased awareness and lifestyle changes.

Linda Mill, RN, the clinical service coordinator for heart failure at Bay Area Hospital, has worked with staff and doctors to lower the readmission rates of heart failure patients by spearheading the innovative Strong Heart program. Since the program’s inception, the hospital’s readmission rate for heart failure patients has dropped by 32 percent.

“Our goal was to give people the tools they need to monitor and manage their own heart health and take action as soon as they notice early warning signs,” Mill explains. “Heart failure is a chronic disease that can have a dramatic impact on someone’s lifestyle if not managed properly.”
Mill’s team, with the oversight of local physicians, created an entirely new set of up-to-date and evidence-based educational tools for patients. “We wanted to provide patients with exceptional care while they were still in the hospital, but we also wanted to provide support once they were discharged,” says Mill.

Patients are now discharged with a set of tools that provide daily reminders of the signs and the symptoms of heart problems. Patients are contacted by phone throughout the first month to ensure that they have made a smooth transition to self-monitoring.

“The idea is to make the heart’s job easier,” Mill continues, “by exercising, managing what you eat, reducing your blood pressure, taking necessary medications, and working with your primary care provider toward a heart-healthy lifestyle.”

After demonstrating that the program could lower readmission rates, the Strong Heart team began outreach and education with home health programs and skilled-nursing facilities. Within two months of partnering with skilled-nursing facilities to provide identical education about heart health, Bay Area Hospital saw a dramatic drop in readmissions from these facilities.

The Strong Heart program has also partnered with some of the area’s assisted-living facilities and provides heart-health education to residents and community members every three months. Mill hopes to facilitate other community partnerships that will support and sustain the improvements made.

The Strong Heart program is unique to Bay Area Hospital, but partnerships with facilities throughout the region are under way so that everyone can benefit from a collaborative (friends and family) approach to healthcare support. If you would like to learn more about the Strong Heart program, contact Linda Mill at (541) 269-8293.

AED Saves a Teacher’s Life

On December 11, 2012, longtime high school social studies teacher Blaine Deming collapsed on the floor of the gym at North Bend Middle School during wrestling practice. Bill Johnson, another wrestling coach, began CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on Deming while Vice Principal Jon Davison called 9-1-1 and grabbed the school’s AED (automated external defibrillator).

The portable AED automatically diagnoses life-threatening heart arrhythmias that cause a heart attack. The AED provided simple audio and visual commands to Davison so that without medical training he was able to apply electrical therapy to help Deming’s heart reestablish an effective rhythm. At the beginning of 2012, Bay Area Hospital Community Foundation provided every school in the region with an AED and the necessary training for school staff.

Deming was ultimately flown to PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center in Springfield for lifesaving interventional cardiology that is now available at Bay Area Hospital. Of Sacred Heart, Deming says, “They were nothing short of amazing. I had fantastic help.” He added, “It’s remarkable that Bay Area Hospital is now capable of performing the same heart treatments that I got in Springfield.”

Deming has fully recovered and returned to teaching. He says, “I’m amazed at the support of the community and my family, and I’m so thankful to Bay Area Hospital for providing every school with an AED. Their concern for the community is part of what makes this such a great place to live.”

Barbara Bauder of Bay Area Hospital Community Foundation says, “We knew that donating the AEDs to all of the regional schools was right in step with our mission to improve the health of our community. We are so glad that one of these devices was available, as it played an instrumental role in saving a life.”
Cardiac rehabilitation is an integral part of overall care for cardiac patients. In operation since 1995, Bay Area Hospital’s program is staffed by registered nurses who have specialized training in cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation. The recent expansion gave the rehab facility a beautiful new home.

Intentionally located at the hospital’s new main entrance for convenience, the Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center provides a comfortable space for recovering heart patients to develop a healthy exercise regimen.
The clinical manager of Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehab, Dustina Jacque, RN, notes that in addition to convenience, the prominent location serves another purpose: “We wanted heart patients and families on their way to the catheterization lab to see people who had gone through the process and are now succeeding in rehab.

“We work with the patient’s primary care physician and cardiologist to ensure that everyone has a program specific to their needs,” explains Jacque.

Most cardiac rehab patients will participate in the program three times a week for 12 weeks. During that time they’ll meet with a dietitian, receive heart-health education, and work with an experienced nurse to develop an appropriate exercise program.

“The goal of cardiac rehabilitation is secondary prevention. We are helping patients recover from their original heart problem through monitored exercise and diet, and in doing so we’re helping prevent future problems,” says Jacque.

Jacque adds, “Establishing regular exercise habits is one of the most important things you can do to reduce all risk factors for heart problems.”

Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehab provides important follow-up care for heart patients throughout the region. The next closest facility is in Florence. Patients come for rehab from Reedsport, Gold Beach, Bandon, Coquille, and many other towns on the South Coast.

“People who participate in the program really have a great attitude, which is such an important part of recovery,” says Jacque.

Sarge Olson, a 73-year-old rehab patient, exemplifies this attitude. While working out on specialized exercise equipment in the new rehab space, Olson says, “I’m getting my old bones working again! I’m using muscles that I don’t use otherwise, and I feel so much better. Coming here is really a joy for me.”

Her Patients’ Advocate

Julene Cox didn’t start out as a Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehab nurse, but it seems like a natural progression from her beginnings as a nurse in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit).

“I spent many years seeing the most ill patients—the sickest of the sick,” she explains. “Now I’m on the other end, seeing them get better.”

In 1996 Cox began her nursing career at Bay Area Hospital, where she spent most of her early years in the ICU. After a stint in Intermediate Care, two years ago she transferred to Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehab. Already certified in critical care nursing and progressive care nursing, Cox is now exploring certification in cardiology and pulmonary rehabilitation nursing.

“My passion is clients and client wellness,” says Cox, now the Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehab charge nurse. “I want to always be an advocate for clients.”
The new cardiovascular services offered at Bay Area Hospital are possible through a collaborative effort with North Bend Medical Center, Bay Clinic, and Oregon Heart & Vascular Institute at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center in Springfield, known as the Bay Area Cardiology Network.

People in North Bend and Coos Bay have always been able to see doctors at North Bend Medical Center, Bay Clinic, and Bay Area Hospital to diagnose underlying heart problems. Once a problem was identified, however, patients had to travel to Oregon Heart & Vascular Institute for additional testing and treatment.

This spring, Seth Giri, MD, started seeing cardiology patients at North Bend Medical Center and practicing interventional cardiology at Bay Area Hospital’s new Cardiovascular Services department.

Basil Pittenger, MD, at North Bend Medical Center says, “The addition of Dr. Giri to North Bend Medical Center and Bay Clinic along with expanded cardiology services at Bay Area Hospital is a game changer for regional healthcare. Prior to Dr. Giri’s arrival, the most common reason for patients to travel out of town was for cardiology procedures. Now we can keep most of our patients here, where they know their doctors, their families can visit, and they don’t have to drive at least four hours round trip.”

Several Eugene-based cardiologists will have privileges at Bay Area Hospital and will travel to Coos Bay to work with patients who need pacemakers. The collaboration also gives Bay Area Hospital patients streamlined access to higher-level services and resources at Sacred Heart Medical Center’s RiverBend campus. For example, if a cardiac patient needs open heart surgery, Bay Area Hospital can provide emergent interim care and efficiently transfer the patient to Sacred Heart. Post-operative services can be provided locally thanks to the partnership with North Bend Medical Center, Bay Clinic, and Dr. Giri.

“The addition of Dr. Giri to North Bend Medical Center and Bay Clinic along with expanded cardiology services at Bay Area Hospital is a game changer for regional healthcare.”

Basil Pittenger, MD
As a community-owned district hospital, Bay Area Hospital relies on sound fiscal oversight and smart management rather than tax levies to provide the type of advanced medical care not typically found in regional hospitals. The new expansion of services is being funded by the hospital’s reserves, a bank loan, and needed financial support from the community.

Visitors now step into a spacious, light-filled lobby thanks to the generous support of the Michael and Lindy Keiser Fund. Thirteen years ago Michael Keiser opened Bandon Dunes Golf Resort, which is now ranked number one in the country for destination golf resorts. As the resort has succeeded, the Keisers have contributed generously to the community.

The $500,000 gift to Bay Area Hospital Community Foundation is the largest single gift to date donated by the fund in support of community services.

General Manager and Vice President of Bandon Dunes Hank Hickox says, “The Keisers believe that as a larger business we owe it to our community and our own staff to help elevate the scope of medical expertise and technology available in our region.” The five golf courses, hotels, and restaurants that make up Bandon Dunes provide jobs for more than 500 employees and 300 independent caddies.

Michael Keiser explains, “We recognize that Bay Area Hospital is a facility that provides comprehensive care for the entire region. We believe in giving back to the community by making sure that the people who live here and our staff have access to the best medical care possible when they need it.”

“We’re grateful for the generous support of Michael and Lindy Keiser and Bandon Dunes,” says Bay Area Hospital Chief Development Officer Barbara Bauder.

Bauder continues, “We are looking forward to reaching out to the entire community. This visionary project provides an ongoing opportunity for everyone to invest in their community hospital, ensuring exceptional medical care for current and future generations.”
Oregon’s South Coast region has a high incidence of diabetes, which is directly correlated to slow wound healing. People with diabetes often have elevated blood glucose levels that can cause healing complications and infections. Surface wounds on the feet can develop into ulcers, and poor circulation through diseased arteries can also cause ulcers.

Bay Area Hospital offers advanced wound care for the treatment of complicated and slow-healing wounds. These services have already made a big difference in the life of at least one diabetic patient.

“We treated a patient who was suffering from a diabetic foot ulcer and had developed severe complications,” recalls Wound Care Clinic Charge Nurse Wendy Johnson, RN. “Thanks to our program, we were able to give him the most advanced care possible. We saved him from losing his foot.”

Since Bay Area Hospital implemented advanced wound care in the fall of 2012, patient visits have increased, but the need to hospitalize people has decreased.

“We had 363 visits in November. That’s up from 20 visits three years ago,” Johnson says. “Before, patients usually saw their primary care physician. Now they come to our outpatient clinic for treatment, and they usually don’t have to be hospitalized.”

As part of the expansion, the fully integrated Wound Care Clinic, opening in early 2014, will be enhanced with hyperbaric oxygen therapy. The new clinic will include five wound care rooms plus one room with two hyperbaric chambers that provide 10 to 20 times the oxygen level of air to facilitate healing.
On July 1, 2013, Bay Area Hospital became the program sponsor for the Coos County Child Abuse Intervention Center (CAIC). Bay Area Hospital management will not only increase the emergency response services for victims but also provide resources with an increased focus on prevention and education.

“While child abuse statistics for our country and the state of Oregon are alarmingly high, sadly many child abuse cases are never reported at all,” explains Kera Hood, program manager at Bay Area Hospital. “The number of reports and victims in the past 10 years has increased 85 percent, but we believe we are seeing just the tip of the iceberg.”

The Child Abuse Intervention Center was originally founded on the “prosecution model,” with the primary focus of obtaining the necessary information to hold the abuser responsible. But in other such centers across the country, an alternative model is being used with greater collaboration and success: the “medical model,” where the physical and emotional welfare of the child comes first and prosecution is second. To have a true medically based program, medical providers must be heavily involved.

“Bay Area Hospital stepped up from day one and continues to be unwaveringly supportive of the children and the families who have the unfortunate need to use these services,” says CAIC Medical Examiner Jenni DeLeon, MD, a North Bend Medical Center pediatrician.

The multidisciplinary team involved in the Child Abuse Intervention Center includes law enforcement, the district attorney’s office, the Department of Human Services, Bay Area Hospital, local physicians and clinics, and other area support services.

“Bay Area Hospital is excited to have this important community service become part of the full range of services we provide to South Coast residents,” says Hood. “It aligns with our mission: to improve the health of our community every day.”
With Flying Colors... 

Bay Area Hospital Passes Joint Commission Review

Bay Area Hospital participates in voluntary hospital accreditation with the nationally recognized Joint Commission. An independent, not-for-profit organization, The Joint Commission is the nation’s oldest and largest standard-setting and accrediting body in healthcare.

The accreditation process signifies Bay Area Hospital’s dedication to quality and patient safety, as the hospital staff continuously works to meet The Joint Commission’s more than 1,500 state-of-the-art standards. Bay Area Hospital has been accredited since it opened in 1974 and is surveyed by The Joint Commission every three years.

Bay Area Hospital underwent a rigorous, three-day unannounced Joint Commission on-site survey in April. A team of expert surveyors evaluated Bay Area Hospital to ensure compliance with standards of care specific to the needs of patients, including infection prevention and control, medication management, patient rights, provision of safe environment of care, and leadership.

The hospital’s quality performance improvement specialist, Linda Dufner, RN, explains that it is an ongoing team effort to make sure the hospital is continuously ready for a Joint Commission review: “One person or one division cannot do it alone. This is an organization-wide effort, and everyone—from the hospital’s leadership team to medical staff and line staff—plays a significant role in ensuring that we meet The Joint Commission’s standards and provide safe, high-quality care to each and every patient.”

Bay Area Hospital President and Chief Executive Officer Paul Janke says, “With Joint Commission accreditation, we are making a significant investment in quality on a day-to-day basis from the top down. Joint Commission accreditation provides us with a framework to take our organization to the next level and helps create a culture of excellence.”

Janke adds, “We really got the best feedback possible on all of our quality and safety initiatives. In fact, The Joint Commission has asked Bay Area Hospital to share some of the procedures we’ve developed with their “leading practices” library so that other hospitals and communities can benefit from our leadership in providing high-quality care.”