

Dear Neighbor,

It's hard to believe we are in year three of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we've seen another slight uptick in COVID-19 cases recently, St. Peter's and society in general has largely acclimated to a "new normal." We must continue to be diligent with basic infection prevention measures like getting vaccinated, hand washing and staying home when ill or symptomatic. It's up to all of us to protect the health of our community.



At St. Peter's, we have begun to focus on what some experts fear could be our next pandemic: the mental health fallout from the trauma of the pandemic. We're seeing the aftereffects of the fear, loss and near shutdown of our society in our team members and patients. People are grieving. Children are confused. Many people on the frontlines, like health care workers and first responders, are just now processing the emotions of this whole experience.

Mental health in our community was a serious concern before the pandemic, but we're increasing our focus on normalizing this aspect of our health and well-being and boosting support to our team members and patients. Earlier this year, we launched the Clinician Experience Project and Nursing Experience Project, programs developed by clinicians to help their peers combat burnout and build resiliency at a pace they can realistically sustain given the demands on their time. Through a partnership with the Montana Hospital Association, St. Peter's is also participating in One Mind at Work, a consortium of health care leaders and organizations dedicated to establishing a gold standard for workplace mental health and well-being.

I'm so proud of our physician leaders and all our team members for their willingness to embrace this with courage, grace and vulnerability as they continue to accomplish great things for our community. Throughout the pandemic, we moved many important priorities forward. For example, St. Peter's welcomed 18 new providers, including 13 specialists, this past year while maintaining a 95% provider retention rate. You can learn more about our new providers inside this update.

The future is bright and we're in a good place today because we have people at St. Peter's who care deeply for this community. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wade C. Johnson". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Wade C. Johnson, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer



HIGHLY-TRAINED TRIO BRINGS EXPERTISE, ENTHUSIASM TO HELENA

Medical Oncologist and Hematologist **Dr. Elizabeth Bigger**, Pediatric Hospitalist **Dr. Meaghan Lafferty** and Gastroenterologist **Dr. Lauren Shea** joined St. Peter's in 2022.



What drew you to the community and St. Peter's?

DR. BIGGER: My husband Pete is a snowboarder, and I'm a skier. We fell in love with the area during a recent trip to Wyoming—wide open space, the mountains, Yellowstone National Park and the great snow! We felt a strong pull to come west. After meeting the incredible, inspiring folks at St. Peter's, we knew that Helena was the right place for us to call home.

DR. LAFFERTY: I've been coming to Montana for vacations since I was a kid and my parents recently retired here. My goal for the past couple of years has been to move my family here so my husband and I can raise our two boys in the great outdoors. When I became aware that St. Peter's wanted to hire a pediatric hospitalist, I jumped at the chance. I could not be more thrilled to be here!

DR. SHEA: I was excited to serve this community and impressed by the quality of the team at St. Peter's. I was also attracted by the quality of life that Helena offers.

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HIGHLY-TRAINED TRIO BRINGS EXPERTISE, ENTHUSIASM TO HELENA

What made you want to specialize in your area of medicine?

DR. BIGGER: I chose cancer care because of the unique, intimate relationships I develop with patients and their families. There can be emotional ups and downs, but ultimately this is a rewarding journey that we experience together. I can't imagine doing anything else.

DR. LAFFERTY: Becoming a pediatrician was a natural choice for me as I have always loved being around kids. During my pediatric residency, I felt a pull to work inside a hospital. I like the variety and being able to see a patient through a serious illness from beginning to end. I can give each patient and family as much time as they need, whether that is 10 minutes or two hours.

DR. SHEA: I was attracted by the challenge and broad scope of care required in my field ranging from colon cancer prevention to developing treatment for those with long-term gastrointestinal conditions. I also saw a need to meet women's specific health issues in a field where fewer than 25% of gastroenterologists are female. Effectively treating gastroenterological issues can make a tremendous difference in everyday lives and I sincerely enjoy the connections with my patients.

What is one thing that you'd like people to know about your practice?

DR. BIGGER: My number one priority is to provide high quality, individualized care. Our patients trust us with their lives, and we must honor that trust by making sure their therapy is delivered in the safest way possible, based on scientific evidence, and only offered when they can benefit from it. I also feel strongly that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for cancer patients. We must listen to their needs, and adapt our care to their lifestyle.

DR. LAFFERTY: First, I always try to ensure that parents of my patients have a full understanding of what is wrong with their child and the treatment plan, including various treatment options. Second, my overarching goal for each patient is to keep them in the hospital for exactly as long as necessary. I want to get each patient through the height of their illness, then I work closely with their pediatrician to transition their care once they are safely discharged.

DR. SHEA: My practice is just as much about providing medical care as it is about providing peace of mind. I advocate for evidence-based care, but I use a shared decision making approach to meet the individual needs of each patient.

GET TO KNOW...

DR. KYLE MOORE AND MEGAN ZAWACKI, PA ADDICTION MEDICINE

Dr. Kyle Moore and Megan Zawacki, PA work together to offer crucial Addiction Medicine services and treatment to the Helena community.



Describe Addiction Medicine in just a few words.

Addiction Medicine is a recognized medical specialty focused on diagnosing and treating addictions (and associated conditions) that impair a person's health and wellness.

What's the number one thing you want people in our community to know about addiction?

Addiction is a medical condition, not a moral failing, personal weakness or lack of motivation. It can be treated with comprehensive care plans, including medications.

Why did you choose to practice Addiction Medicine?

Addiction is affecting individuals and families at alarming rates. It is largely misunderstood and undertreated. We believe that our knowledge, experience and attitude can help reduce the devastating emotional, physical and economic costs associated with addiction.

What's the most rewarding part of your work?

There are few things more rewarding or inspiring than seeing individuals overcome significant challenges associated with addiction. Seeing their health improve, personal relationships strengthen and confidence emerge are priceless.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SUMMER 2022

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY FORUM

CEO Wade Johnson will host an online forum to share the latest from your local health system.

TUESDAY • JUNE 28 • 12-1 PM

Join our email list today to receive forum dates and information: sphealth.org/virtualforum

Community Education

PREPARED PARENTING

sphealth.org/preparedparenting

From Childbirth Education and Breastfeeding Basics to Postpartum Recovery, St. Peter's offers classes taught by specialists and caregivers to prepare new parents for having a baby. All classes are free and open to the public.

Education and support go a long way toward helping people achieve their health and wellness goals. For a complete list of St. Peter's free and low-cost education classes, visit sphealth.org/CommunityEducation.

EVERY BITE MATTERS FOOD RX FAST FACT

"Added sweeteners" refer to various natural and synthetic sweeteners that are added to many processed and packaged foods. One of the easiest ways to reduce added sweeteners in your diet is to use fruit as a snack. This can help satisfy a sweet tooth while preventing nutrient deficiencies, lowering cholesterol, aiding in weight loss and reducing inflammation.



Please Help Us Welcome These New St. Peter's Health Providers:

FAMILY MEDICINE



Amanda Evans, NP
North Clinic

PEDIATRIC HOSPITALIST



Meaghan Lafferty, MD
Regional Medical
Center

PULMONOLOGY



Mollie Lane, MD
Broadway Clinic

URGENT CARE



Angela Axmann
Grabinger, NP
North Clinic &
Regional Medical Center

Coming Soon

EAR, NOSE AND THROAT

Matthew Miller, MD
Broadway Clinic

GENERAL SURGERY

Matthew Goldes, MD
Maria Dean

INTERNAL MEDICINE

Mark Ziats, MD
North Clinic

FAMILY MEDICINE

Alison Amy, NP
North Clinic

Airica Rishavy, NP
North Clinic

HOSPITALIST

Kathryn Hurlbut, DO
Regional Medical Center

Laurel Kittrell, MD
Regional Medical Center

Andrew Koopman, PA
Regional Medical Center

ORTHOPAEDIC SPINE

Edward (Patrick) Curry, MD
Broadway Clinic

RHEUMATOLOGY

Kent Blakely, MD
Broadway Clinic

ST. PETER'S IS A GREAT PLACE TO BE!

95% provider retention rate
the past five years

13 new specialists hired
in the past year

The Gala returns in October

The St. Peter's Health Foundation will hold "The Gala: Life's A Party!" fundraiser on Friday, Oct. 14, at the Helena Civic Center.

The event will recognize more than 100 years of service provided by Gala Icon, the St. Peter's Hospital Association volunteers and donors, as well as the great works of Honorary Chairs Margaret and Dick Anderson. Proceeds benefit the families of babies born at St. Peter's and NICU families served through our partnership with Bozeman Health. Visit sphealth.org/foundation or contact Bennett MacIntyre, Philanthropic Project Manager, at bmacintyre@sphealth.org for more information.

THE
GALA
Life's a Party!

BUILDING GOLD STANDARD CANCER CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

GROWING OUR LOCAL CANCER CARE TEAM

In February, St. Peter's Cancer Care welcomed Medical Oncologist and Hematologist Dr. Elizabeth Bigger. Dr. Bigger is a triple board-certified medical oncologist and hematologist who joined our permanent, employed medical staff. St. Peter's continues to actively recruit additional medical oncologists.

“ We couldn't be happier to welcome Dr. Bigger to our team. She immediately brought her expertise to bear and has already established great relationships with many of her patients. Having a strong and reputable physician like Dr. Bigger is an important milestone as we continue building a gold standard cancer and hematology care program in our community. ”

— *Dr. Todd Wampler*
St. Peter's Health Medical Group President

UPGRADING OUR FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

In 2022, the St. Peter's Health Foundation's Gold Standard for Cancer Care initiative funded more than \$2.1 million in upgrades for St. Peter's Cancer Care. This includes a remodeled medical oncology waiting area and new endowed scholarship for employees engaged in cancer care, as well as a Patient Healing Room featuring a gas fireplace, coffee bar and massage chair. The healing room provides a calm and peaceful space for contemplation and renewal, and is open to patients, family and staff. The initiative also funded several new pieces of equipment, including an MRI Fusion Biopsy (UroNav).

LOCAL ACCESS TO WORLD-CLASS CANCER CARE

In April, St. Peter's celebrated the one-year anniversary of its affiliation with Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) at the University of Utah. In May, HCI announced its commitment to expand cancer research in the Mountain West to include a much larger geographic area, including Montana. This expansion will increase



Urologist Dr. Kevin Brown will use the new UroNav. This equipment combines high resolution, 3D images from an MRI and real-time imaging from ultrasound to perform highly targeted prostate biopsies that help detect cancerous tumors sooner.

the opportunity for patients of affiliate hospitals in markets like Helena to access experimental treatments and medications, emerging research, and national clinical trials. St. Peter's providers and caregivers may also take advantage of this connection through ongoing training and opportunities to participate in cutting-edge cancer research.

THE ST. PETER'S FOUNDATION IS GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROSITY OF OUR GOLD STANDARD FOR CANCER CARE DONORS

The Sunderland Foundation
M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust
Jane Hibbard Hospice Endowment
William E. Allen, Jr. & Pauline K. Allen Cancer Care Endowment
Pamela and Eric Schindler in Memory of Maxine Reese
Opportunity Bank of Montana
The Treacy Foundation

Marilyn Hudson in Honor of Timothy Maxwell Daem (grandson) and Robert Maxwell (grandfather)
Stockman Bank
Alden P. Howell Trust
Capital High Volleyball Program
Browning, Kaleczyc Berry & Hoven, P.C. in Honor of Tammy Bauer
Dee and Mike Trombetta
C.R. Anderson Middle School

Clancy School Activity Fund
Cleo Moran Endowment
Fund of the Montana Community Foundation
J. Daniel Hoven
Michael and Andrea Groom
Sharon and Dr. George R. Bell
St. Peter's Health Continental Cafe & Coffee Shop
Anonymous (6)

And many more generous donors to our Cancer Care Fund June 1, 2019 – Dec. 31, 2021

BACK AGAIN IN-PERSON!



Fun Run and Activity Fair

featured sponsor:



**Saturday, August 13
8:30 am - Noon**

**Centennial Park and
Great Northern Town Center:**

One-mile fun run starts 9 am
Health & wellness fair

also sponsored by:



STEAK COMPANY
HELENA, MT



CAPITAL CITY HEALTH CLUB

All youth **registered by August 1**
receive a FREE T-shirt that gets them
complimentary admission to the Great
Northern Carousel and ExplorationWorks!

**Register by August 1 at
sphealth.org/FamilyFunFest**

