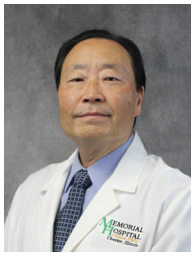
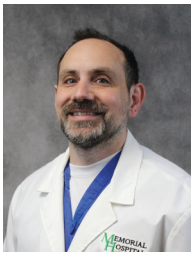
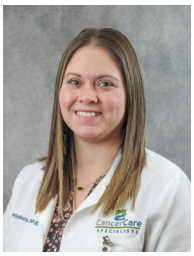
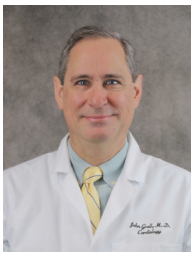
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL'S
The LAMP
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
Vol. 7, Issue 4 - October 2026

We Have a Specialist for That

EXPERT CARE, FAMILIAR FACES

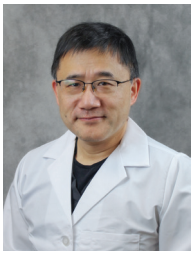
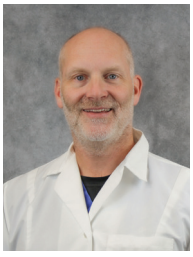












When people think about specialty medical care, they often imagine long drives, crowded waiting rooms, and appointments far from home. At Memorial Hospital, we believe exceptional specialty care should feel different.

Here, patients are more than a chart number or appointment slot. They're neighbors, friends, family members, and familiar faces we know by name.

That's why Memorial Hospital has made it a priority to bring a growing network of specialty physicians and providers directly to our community, ensuring patients have access to expert care while receiving the personal attention they deserve.

As a rural critical access hospital, we understand that healthcare is about more than treating an illness or injury. It's about building relationships, earning trust, and providing compassionate care close to the people and places that matter most. Our specialists work alongside our primary care providers, nurses, therapists, and support teams to create a seamless experience focused on each patient's individual needs.

Whether you're recovering from an injury, managing a chronic condition, seeking answers to a new health concern, or simply taking steps to improve your overall wellness, Memorial Hospital offers access to a wide range of specialty services without sacrificing the comfort and familiarity of receiving care close to home.

(Continued on Page 11)

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Since 1962
RURAL HEALTH CLINICS

FAMILY HEALTH CARE

Newborn Through Geriatrics
Immunizations – VFC Provider
Injection Therapy
Family Planning
DOT Physicals
Minor In Office Procedures
Same Day Appointments
School & Sports Physicals

CHESTER CLINIC
1900 State Street - Chester, IL 62233
618-826-2388

STEELEVILLE FAMILY PRACTICE
602 W. Shawneetown Trail - Steeleville, IL 62288
618-965-3382



Dr. James Kirkpatrick, M.D.
Dr. Lisa Lowry-Rohlfing, M.D. • Dr. Monica Lukose, M.D.
Dr. Joseph Molnar, D.O. • Dr. Zachary Orme, D.O.
Angela Albertini, PA-C • Valerie Blechle, APRN, FNP-BC
Mindy Dudenbostel, APRN, FNP-C



Emalie Chausse, Kelly Rhoades, and Jennifer Donjon

Convenient Finger-Stick Lead Testing Now Available at Chester Clinic & Memorial Hospital

Memorial Hospital has purchased two new LeadCare II Blood Lead Analyzers to make lead testing easier and more convenient. One device is located in the Memorial Hospital Laboratory, and the second is available through the Chester Clinic Lab.

The new equipment allows Chester Clinic and Memorial Hospital to offer lead testing with a simple finger stick instead of a traditional blood draw from a vein. This smaller sample collection is less invasive and may help make testing a more comfortable experience for young children and their families. Results are available on the same day, allowing healthcare providers to quickly share the results and discuss any recommended follow-up.

New Illinois Lead Testing Requirement

This service is especially important following the Illinois testing requirement that took effect on July 1, 2026. Under the new statewide requirement, all children must receive a blood lead test at 12 months and again at 24 months of age, regardless of where they live or whether they are considered at higher risk. Children ages 6 and younger must also be evaluated for possible lead exposure using a questionnaire completed by a healthcare provider.

"Making same-day lead testing available close to home helps families complete this important screening with fewer barriers," said Jennifer Donjon, Lead Lab Rural Health Clinic Phlebotomist. "This new equipment supports Memorial Hospital's commitment to providing timely, convenient care while helping protect the health of our community."

By offering a simpler, less invasive finger-stick test with same-day results, Memorial Hospital is making it easier for families to complete this important screening.

Lead exposure is especially concerning for young children because their brains and bodies are still developing. It can affect learning, behavior, growth, and development. Many children with elevated blood lead levels do not appear sick, making testing the only way to know whether exposure has occurred. The Illinois Department of Public Health emphasizes that there is no safe level of lead in the blood.

Lead can be found in many places, including dust, soil, older paint, drinking

water, imported products, some toys, pottery, spices, and traditional remedies. Young children can be exposed when lead-contaminated dust or soil gets onto their hands and then into their mouths. Families can help reduce risk by washing children's hands and toys frequently, using safe practices during home repairs, keeping children away from peeling or damaged paint, and speaking with a healthcare provider about possible sources of exposure.

Convenient Testing, Stronger Follow-Up

A quick test can lead to quicker action. If a child has an elevated lead level, the healthcare provider can discuss next steps and coordinate with public health officials when needed. Follow-up may include identifying the likely source of lead and providing education and support to prevent additional exposure

By offering a simpler, less invasive finger-stick test with same-day results, Memorial Hospital is making it easier for families to complete this important screening. Parents and caregivers can feel confident knowing that this small step can provide valuable information about their child's health and help identify lead exposure as early as possible.

Sources

1Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), "All Children Across Illinois to Receive Blood Lead Testing," June 25, 2026. https://dph.illinois.gov/resource-center/news/2026/june/release-20260625.html

Medical Office Building Receives Statewide Pinnacle Award for Community Outreach Excellence

Memorial Hospital has been recognized by the Illinois Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations (ISHMPR) with an Award of Merit in the Community Outreach category for its Strategic Medical Office Building Transition, a comprehensive community engagement and communication campaign surrounding the transition of healthcare services to the hospital's new Medical Office Building.

The award was presented during the ISHMPR Annual Conference and Pinnacle Awards, held October 6-8 in Rockford. The Pinnacle Awards recognize excellence and achievement in healthcare marketing, communications, and public relations across Illinois, honoring projects that demonstrate effective planning, implementation, and measurable results. Memorial Hospital's award-winning submission was led by Brett Bollmann, CEO; Torrie Davitz, Rural Health Clinic Director; and Mariah Bargman, Marketing and Community Relations Manager.

The recognized project focused on helping patients and community members smoothly navigate the relocation of Chester Clinic and Convenient Care services into Memorial Hospital's new Medical Office Building. The outreach effort supported a larger strategic initiative aimed at improving access to healthcare services across the region. Findings from Memorial Hospital's 2023 Community Health Needs Assessment identified access to local healthcare services, including urgent and primary care, as a top community priority.

"The Medical Office Building was designed with our community's needs in mind," said Brett Bollmann, CEO of Memorial Hospital. "This recognition reflects our commitment to ensuring patients not only have access to high-quality healthcare services close to home, but also understand how to access those services. Every communication effort was focused on making the transition seamless and improving the overall patient experience."

Through a coordinated outreach campaign that included direct mail, social media, newspaper and radio advertising, website communications, community signage, and internal staff education, Memorial Hospital successfully guided patients through the transition while increasing awareness of expanded healthcare services available within the new facility. The Medical Office Building now provides centralized access to primary care and urgent care, with ancillary hospital services like diagnostic imaging, outpatient lab, and pharmacy resources at the same location.



L-R Back Row: Brett Bollmann, CEO; Kaylie Klausing, Medical Assistant; Emily Colvis, LPN; Leah Freytag, LPN Convenient Care Lead; Laurie Pecaut, LPN; Dr. Zachary Orme. L-R Front Row: Martha Wingerter, Director of Professional Services; Tabatha Pinkley, RHC Office Suppervisor; Dr. Lisa Lowry; Torrie Davtiz, Director of RHC; Cynthia Snider, Convenient Care NP; Amanda Johnson, LPN Nurse Manager RHC; and Susan Diddlebock, COO.

The centralized model has improved convenience for patients, strengthened care coordination, enhanced access to providers, and increased utilization of pharmacy and diagnostic services. Patient feedback has highlighted improved accessibility, privacy, comfort, and overall care experience.

The award also recognizes Memorial Hospital's broader investment in rural healthcare access. As part of the Medical Office Building initiative, the organization expanded its primary care workforce with the addition of two family physicians and four advanced practice providers, helping address healthcare workforce shortages while improving access to care for residents throughout the region.

"This project demonstrates the impact that thoughtful planning, strong communication, and community-focused healthcare can have on patient outcomes," said Bollmann. "We're proud of the team members who made this project successful and grateful to the community for placing their trust in Memorial Hospital."

MEMORIAL
– COMMUNITY PHARMACY –

PHARMACY HOURS
MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:00AM-5:30PM
SATURDAY 9:00AM-1:00PM

4 WAYS TO PICK-UP MEDICATONS

1 24/7 LOCKER PICK-UP



Available in ER Lobby at Memorial Hospital 24/7

2 COUNTER SERVICE



Located inside Memorial Hospital.

3 CURBSIDE PICK-UP



Look for Reserved Parking sign near pharmacy entrance.

4 DRIVE THRU



Use arced drive by pharmacy entrance to pull up to the service window.

618-826-6134
Memorial Hospital
1900 State Street - Chester, IL
mhchester.com/pharmacy

Memorial Hospital Receives Statewide Recognition for Pharmacy and RHC "Get Your Shot" Vaccination Campaign



L-R Back Row: Amanda Johnson, LPN Nurse Manager RHC; Torrie Davitz, Director of RHC, Dr. Lisa Lowry, Anna Mueller, Pharmacist; and Susan Diddlebock, COO. L-R Front Row: Amy Kloos, Pharmacy Director and Mariah Bargman, Marketing and Community Relations Manager.

Memorial Hospital has been recognized by the Illinois Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations (ISHMPR) with an Honorable Mention in the Integrated Marketing Campaign category for its innovative vaccination awareness initiative, "Get Your Shot." The recognition was presented during the ISHMPR Annual Conference and Pinnacle Awards, which honors outstanding achievements in healthcare marketing, communications, and public relations across Illinois.

The award-winning campaign was developed to increase awareness, accessibility, and utilization of vaccines available through Memorial Community Pharmacy and Memorial Hospital's Rural Health Clinics (RHC) in Chester and Steeleville. The initiative directly supported priorities identified through Memorial Hospital's Community Health Needs Assessment, which highlighted opportunities to improve vaccination rates and preventative healthcare utilization throughout the region.

Research revealed that vaccination rates among adults in the area lagged behind desired levels, while vaccine hesitancy and lower participation in preventive health services remained barriers for many residents. In response, Memorial Hospital launched the "Get Your Shot" campaign to educate the community, reduce obstacles to care, and encourage individuals and families to take an active role in protecting their health.

"The purpose of this campaign was simple: make it easier for people to understand the importance of vaccinations and connect them with convenient, local access to those services," said Mariah Bargman, Marketing and Community Relations Manager at Memorial Hospital. "Preventive care plays a critical role in keeping our communities healthy, and we are proud of the positive impact this effort has had across Randolph County."

Launched during the 2025 flu season and running again this season, the campaign utilizes a comprehensive, multi-channel communication strategy to reach individuals where they live, work, receive healthcare, and consume information. Outreach efforts include social media advertising, radio and newspaper advertisements, educational brochures, email newsletters, website content, digital signage, and point-of-care messaging throughout clinics and pharmacy locations.



Centered on the empowering message "Get Your Shot," the campaign featured positive, approachable imagery designed to build confidence in vaccination and normalize preventive healthcare. Messaging highlighted the availability of flu, RSV, pneumonia, shingles, HPV, and other vaccines while emphasizing easy scheduling, walk-in convenience, and affordable access to care. Special attention was also given to promoting the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, which provides free or reduced-cost vaccines for eligible children and families.

The campaign delivered measurable results throughout the community. Vaccine-related website traffic increased by 69 percent, while overall vaccinations administered through Memorial Hospital's Rural Health Clinics and Pharmacy increased year-over-year. Significant growth was seen in several key immunizations, including HPV, Chickenpox, Polio, DTP, and Rotavirus vaccines. Additionally, more than 540 vaccines were administered through the VFC program, helping reduce financial barriers and improve access to essential preventive healthcare services.

Beyond the measurable results, the campaign reinforced Memorial Hospital's commitment to improving community health through education, prevention, and access to care.

"Receiving this recognition from our peers across Illinois is an honor," said Bargman. "More importantly, it highlights the value of investing in preventive healthcare and ensuring community members have the information and resources they need to make informed decisions about their health. When more people receive recommended vaccinations, our entire community benefits."

The recognition reflects Memorial Hospital's ongoing mission to enhance the health and well-being of the communities it serves through innovative outreach, accessible healthcare services, and evidence-based prevention initiatives.

Dr. Kirkpatrick's 3D-Printed Solution Improves Organization & Patient Safety

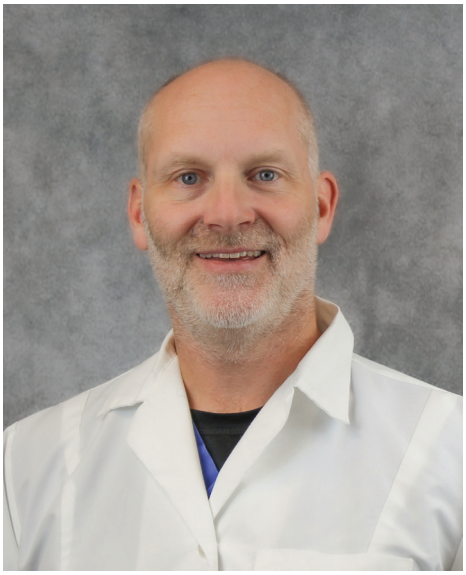
A recent upgrade to the Memorial Community Pharmacy crash cart is making a big impact, thanks to the creativity and expertise of Dr. Kirkpatrick. Using his 3D-printing skills, he designed and created custom medication trays that have transformed how medications are organized and stored. Replacing the cut-up Styrofoam inserts previously in use, the new trays provide a cleaner, more professional solution with designated spaces for medications and labels while allowing the crash cart lid to close properly.

Beyond improving organization, these custom trays help support efficiency and patient safety by making medications easier to identify and access when every second counts. We are incredibly grateful for Dr. Kirkpatrick's innovation, attention to detail, and willingness to go above and beyond to improve our processes. His ability to think outside the box, or in this case, print one, is making a real difference for our team and the patients we serve.





Welcome Back Gastroenterologist Dr. Matthew Gaeta to the Specialty Clinic



Dr. Matthew Gaeta, M.D.

Memorial Hospital is pleased to announce the return of Matthew Gaeta, MD, a board-certified gastroenterologist, to Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic beginning this fall. Dr. Gaeta is expected to begin seeing patients in October and will provide specialty gastroenterology services every other Thursday.

The return of gastroenterology services marks an important enhancement to specialty care available locally and reinforces Memorial Hospital's commitment to providing high-quality healthcare close to home. "We are excited to welcome Dr. Gaeta back to Memorial Hospital and to once again offer gastroenterology services within our community," said Brett Bollmann, CEO. "Access to specialty care is especially important in rural healthcare settings. Having gastroenterology services available locally means our patients can receive expert evaluation, treatment, and preventive screenings without the burden of traveling long distances."

Dr. Gaeta specializes in Gastroenterology and Internal Medicine, bringing extensive training and expertise in diagnosing and treating conditions affecting the digestive system. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences from Washington University in St. Louis, followed by his medical degree from the University of Missouri School of Medicine in Columbia, Missouri. He completed residency training in Internal Medicine at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver before returning to Columbia, where he completed additional Internal Medicine residency training and a Fellowship in Gastroenterology. Dr. Gaeta is board certified in Gastroenterology.

Gastroenterology focuses on conditions involving the digestive tract, including the esophagus, stomach, intestines, pancreas, and biliary system. Many gastrointestinal conditions can significantly impact quality of life, yet are highly treatable with the right care and management. Dr. Gaeta will provide evaluation and treatment for a wide range of digestive health concerns, including: heartburn and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), difficulty swallowing, abdominal pain, diarrhea and constipation, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), and biliary disease.

"Many of the patients I see are experiencing symptoms such as heartburn, bloating, cramping, constipation, or other digestive issues that can have a major effect on their daily lives," said Dr. Gaeta. "My goal is to help identify the underlying cause of those symptoms and develop a treatment plan that helps patients feel better and improve their overall health."

In addition to office consultations, Dr. Gaeta performs important gastrointestinal procedures, including colonoscopies and upper endoscopies (EGDs). These procedures play a vital role in diagnosing and treating digestive disorders and supporting preventive care.

The return of gastroenterology services also expands access to colorectal cancer screening, one of the most effective tools for detecting and preventing colorectal cancer. Colonoscopy remains a key preventive screening that can identify abnormalities before they become cancerous, helping patients take a proactive approach to their health.

For rural communities, access to specialty care can often mean the difference between delaying treatment and receiving timely care. By bringing gastroenterology services back to Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic, patients will have convenient access to specialized digestive health services closer to home, reducing travel time while improving continuity of care.

Appointments with Dr. Gaeta will be available through Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic. Patients interested in learning more about gastroenterology services or scheduling an appointment can contact the Specialty Clinic at 618-826-4581.

UPCOMING SESSIONS:
OCT 27
NOV 24

CARDIAC PULMONARY REHAB CENTER
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Beat, Breathe, Thrive
SUPPORT GROUP

CONNECT, SHARE, & STAY MOTIVATED in your health journey!
Join our monthly accountability group at Memorial Hospital's Cardiac & Pulmonary Rehab Center in Chester, IL. Sessions may include a guided topic discussion and all will allow time for Q&A, fostering support and inspiration.

Fourth Tuesday of Every Month
JOIN AT ANYTIME

1PM

Memorial Hospital
Conference Room
1900 State Street
Chester, IL 62233



Pre-Register Online at: www.mhchester.com/calendar-of-events
or call 618-826-4581 ext. 1373

Welcome New Provider to Nephrology Specialty Clinic Team



Lindsay Gwaltney, MSN, FNP-BC, BC-ADM

Memorial Hospital is pleased to welcome Lindsay Gwaltney, MSN, FNP-BC, BC-ADM, to its Specialty Clinic team. Gwaltney will provide outpatient nephrology services in collaboration with Dr. Vamsi Chilluru, expanding access to specialized kidney care for patients throughout the region.

Gwaltney began her career in healthcare as a licensed practical nurse before becoming a registered nurse. Throughout her nursing career, she gained experience in a variety of healthcare settings, including both inpatient and outpatient dialysis services. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing from Walden University in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and began practicing as a Family Nurse Practitioner in 2020.

Board certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner and in Advanced Diabetes Management, Gwaltney brings extensive clinical experience caring for patients with complex chronic conditions. Her professional background includes positions with Mercy Health System, Washington University School of Medicine, and Saint Louis University/SSM Health, where she has served in advanced practice roles focused on endocrinology, diabetes management, and patient education.

In addition to her clinical work, Gwaltney has been involved in healthcare quality improvement initiatives, provider education, clinical research, and professional speaking engagements across the region. She is recognized for her commitment to evidence-based care and improving patient outcomes through collaboration and innovation.

Nephrology clinics with Gwaltney and Dr. Chilluru are expected to begin in late summer 2026 and will be held monthly on Fridays. Patients will have access to specialized evaluation and management of kidney-related conditions close to home. To learn more about Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic services or to schedule an appointment, call 618.529.2955 or visit our website at www.mhchester.com for more information.

Dr. Baghmanli Now Offering Advanced Treatment Option for Varicose Veins



Dr. Ziya Baghmanli, M.D.

Memorial Hospital is pleased to announce the addition of the VenaSeal™ procedure, a minimally invasive treatment for varicose veins, now offered by Dr. Ziya Baghmanli, General Surgeon. The new service provides patients in the region with a modern treatment option designed to relieve symptoms of venous disease and improve quality of life.

Varicose veins affect millions of adults and can cause symptoms such as aching, heaviness, swelling, fatigue, throbbing, and discomfort in the legs. Left untreated, venous disease may progress and impact daily activities and overall well-being.

The VenaSeal™ procedure works by using a specially formulated medical adhesive to permanently close a diseased vein. Blood is naturally redirected to nearby healthy veins, helping reduce symptoms and improve circulation. The procedure is performed on an outpatient basis and typically requires only a small access site.

"The addition of the VenaSeal procedure allows us to offer patients a convenient treatment option close to home," said Dr. Baghmanli. "Many people assume varicose veins are only a cosmetic concern, but they can also cause significant discomfort and affect a person's quality of life. This procedure offers an effective solution with minimal downtime."

Patients who may benefit from evaluation include those who experience visible varicose veins, leg aching, heaviness, or fatigue, swelling in the legs or ankles, leg discomfort that worsens after standing for long periods, and symptoms associated with venous reflux disease

Because a physician referral is required, patients interested in learning whether they are candidates for the procedure should speak with their primary care provider or referring physician.

Patient results: before and after

Before VenaSeal™ procedure



Three months after VenaSeal™ procedure



Image Source: https://www.medtronic.com/en-us/l/patients/treatments-therapies/varicose-vein-treatments/venaseal-procedure.html

MRTD Expands Transportation Options for Local Residents and Seniors

Getting where you need to go has never been easier thanks to the Monroe Randolph Transit District (MRTD) and its partnership with AgeSmart Community Resources. MRTD offers a variety of affordable transportation services throughout Monroe and Randolph counties, helping residents access work, shopping, medical appointments, and other essential destinations.

Residents can choose from demand response service with curb-to-curb transportation, loop routes in Sparta and Chester, flex zone transportation within designated service areas, connector routes between communities, and Medicaid transportation for eligible medical trips. Fares range from $1 to $8 depending on the service and destination, with Medicaid-approved transportation provided at no cost for qualifying riders.

In addition, local seniors have access to a special transportation benefit through a Rural Transformative Community Grant coordinated by AgeSmart Community Resources. Adults age 60 and older can ride MRTD services free of charge through June 30, 2027. Seniors simply need to call MRTD at (618) 443-9087 to schedule eligible rides. Medicaid-covered trips will continue to be billed through Medicaid and are not included in the sponsored program.

For more information about routes, schedules, fares, or to schedule a ride, contact Monroe Randolph Transit District at (618) 443-9087 or visit gomrtd.com.




AGESMART
COMMUNITY RESOURCES
Providing Options for Independence
MRTD
MONROE RANDOLPH
TRANSIT DISTRICT
SENIORS
RIDE
FREE
(60+)
MRTD
MONROE RANDOLPH
TRANSIT DISTRICT
THROUGH
JUNE 30, 2027
CALL TO
SCHEDULE
443-9087
60+
TO QUALIFY:
BE 60+
Medicaid eligible trips will continue to be billed through Medicaid and are exempt from this sponsored program.
SPONSORED BY THE
RURAL TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNITY GRANT
IN COORDINATION WITH AGESMART COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

10 Things to Know During MEDICARE ANNUAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD

01 **Do I need to make a change at all?**
Your current plan may change for 2027. Start by reviewing what is different.

02 **What are the important Medicare deadlines?**
Know when you can review, change and enroll in coverage and when those changes take effect.

03 **Original Medicare or Medicare Advantage, which fits me?**
Understand the two basic paths and how each may work differently for you.

04 **Will I be able to use my doctors and preferred hospital?**
Confirm that your doctors and preferred hospital that you want to use participate with the plan you are considering.

05 **What happens when I travel or need care away from home?**
Your ability to receive covered care outside your local area can vary by type of coverage.

06 **Are my prescriptions covered for 2027?**
Check your medications every year. Formularies and costs can change.

07 **Does the pharmacy I use matter?**
Yes. Your prescription cost may vary depending upon the pharmacy you use.

08 **What will my Medicare coverage really cost me?**
Look beyond the monthly premium. Consider deductibles, copays, coinsurance and your potential out-of-pocket costs.

09 **What rules or restrictions do I need to understand?**
Networks, referrals, formularies and other plan requirements can affect how you receive care.

10 **How valuable are the additional benefits to me?**
Dental, vision, hearing and other benefits may sound attractive but understand what is covered and the rules for using them.

MANAGED CARE PARTNERS

We Have a Specialist for That
Expert Care, Familiar Faces

(Continued From Page 1)

What makes our specialty clinics unique is the combination of expert medical knowledge and a small-town approach to care. Patients often see familiar staff faces at every visit, receive personalized attention, and experience the warmth and compassion that have defined Memorial Hospital for generations.

We are also continually working to expand specialty services based on the evolving needs of our communities. By recruiting new physicians and developing additional specialty clinics, we remain committed to ensuring local residents have access to high-quality healthcare today and for years to come.

From heart health and cancer care to surgery, orthopedics, and beyond, Memorial Hospital is proud to offer specialty services designed to help our patients live healthier lives, right here at home.

Because when it comes to your health, chances are, we have a specialist for that.

General Surgery | Dr. Ziya Baghmanli, M.D.

Dr. Ziya Baghmanli provides comprehensive general surgery services, offering expertise in procedures ranging from colonoscopies and gallbladder surgery to hernia repair and other surgical treatments. Dedicated to treating each patient with compassion and respect, Dr. Baghmanli combines advanced surgical care with the personalized experience patients have come to expect at Memorial Hospital.

ENT (Ear, Nose & Throat) | Dr. John Park, M.D.

Dr. John Park provides specialized care for a wide range of ear, nose, and throat conditions, helping patients find relief from sinus and allergy concerns, nasal airway obstructions, sleep-related disorders, and other ENT conditions. With a focus on comprehensive evaluation and individualized treatment plans, Dr. Park combines clinical expertise with compassionate care to help patients breathe easier, sleep better, and improve their overall quality of life.

ENT (Ear, Nose & Throat) | Dr. Matthew Marino, M.D., MPH

From recurring ear infections and hearing concerns to voice, swallowing, and sleep-related disorders, Dr. Matthew Marino offers expert care for patients of all ages (1-year and older). Dedicated to identifying the root cause of symptoms and developing personalized treatment plans, Dr. Marino helps patients overcome everyday challenges associated with ear, nose, and throat conditions while delivering care with expertise and compassion.

ENT (Ear, Nose & Throat) | Dr. Rebecca Brandsted, M.D.

Dr. Rebecca Brandsted provides comprehensive ear, nose, and throat care, with expertise in treating hearing loss, sinus and allergy conditions, sleep disorders, and disorders affecting the thyroid. Whether managing chronic symptoms or addressing surgical needs, Dr. Brandsted is committed to helping patients achieve better health outcomes through advanced treatment options and patient-centered care delivered close to home.

Nephrology | Dr. Vamsi Chilluru, M.D. & Lindsay Gwaltney, MSN, FNP-BC, BC-ADM

The Nephrology Specialty Clinic at Memorial Hospital combines the expertise of Dr. Vamsi Chilluru and Lindsay Gwaltney, MSN, FNP-BC, BC-ADM, who joined the team in August of this year. Together they provide specialized care for patients managing kidney disease, hypertension, electrolyte disorders, and other complex kidney-related conditions. Dr. Chilluru brings advanced nephrology expertise focused on the diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic kidney conditions, while Gwaltney complements the team with extensive experience in nephrology, dialysis care, diabetes management, and patient education. Together, they provide a collaborative, patient-centered approach that helps individuals better understand their health, manage chronic conditions, and access high-quality kidney care close to home.
(Learn more about Lindsay on page 7)

Oncology & Hematology | Dr. Justin Floyd, D.O. & Michelle McQuillan, DNP, FNP-BC

A cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming, which is why having experienced, compassionate providers close to home is so important. Dr. Justin Floyd and Michelle McQuillan, DNP, FNP-BC, work together to provide comprehensive oncology and hematology care for patients throughout the region. Dr. Floyd offers expert medical oncology care, including access to innovative treatment options and clinical trials, while McQuillan provides ongoing support and follow-up care as part of the oncology team. Together, they are committed to delivering personalized treatment, clear communication, and compassionate guidance, ensuring patients receive high-quality cancer and blood disorder care while remaining close to the comfort and support of family and friends.

Cardiology | Dr. John Groll, M.D.

Heart health plays a vital role in overall wellness, and Dr. John Groll provides comprehensive cardiology care focused on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cardiovascular disease. From evaluating heart-related symptoms to managing complex cardiac conditions, Dr. Groll combines advanced diagnostic expertise with a patient-centered approach, helping individuals make informed decisions about their heart health while receiving exceptional care close to home.

Cardiology | Dr. M. Adil Sheikh, M.D.

Dr. M. Adil Sheikh specializes in interventional cardiology, providing expert care for patients with coronary artery disease and structural heart conditions. With a focus on advanced treatment options and evidence-based care, Dr. Sheikh works closely with patients to improve heart function, reduce cardiovascular risk, and support long-term health outcomes. His commitment to personalized care allows patients to access specialized cardiac services without leaving their community.

(Continued From Page 13)

HFS
Illinois Department of
Healthcare and Family Services

MEDICAID RULES WILL BE CHANGING

What you need to know



Stay updated. Scan the QR Code for additional information and updates on federal changes.

1-877-805-5312

Medicaid is an important health coverage program that helps individuals and families with limited income access healthcare. A new federal law (HR 1) will bring changes to Medicaid eligibility and renewal requirements beginning in late 2026 and early 2027. Understanding these changes now can help you avoid interruptions in coverage.

What Is Medicaid?

Medicaid is a public health coverage program funded jointly by the federal and state governments. In Illinois, eligibility is based on factors such as household income and family size. Some individuals may know their Medicaid coverage through plans such as All Kids, Aetna, BlueCross BlueShield, CountyCare, Humana, Meridian, or Molina.

Key Changes and Important Dates

October 1, 2026

Some non-citizens who currently qualify for federally funded Medicaid will no longer be eligible for coverage.

January 1, 2027

Certain adults enrolled in Medicaid, known as "ACA Adults," will be required to meet and report work, education, training, or volunteer activity requirements to maintain coverage. These individuals will also need to **renew their Medicaid coverage every six months** instead of once per year.

Who Are ACA Adults?

Generally, ACA Adults are individuals who:

- Are ages 19-64
- Are not receiving Medicare
- Do not have a dependent child under age 18 living at home

Many Medicaid participants **will NOT be affected** by these new work requirements, including:

- Adults age 65 and older
- Children under age 19
- Most parents and caretaker relatives enrolled in Family Health Plans

Who May Be Exempt from Work Requirements?

ACA Adults may qualify for an exemption if they:

- Are pregnant or receiving postpartum benefits
- Are former foster youth ages 19-26
- Have Medicare Part A or Part B
- Are caring for a child under age 14 or a person with a disability
- Have a serious health condition or disability
- Are participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- Are experiencing a short-term hardship, such as a hospital stay or natural disaster
- Meet certain other qualifying circumstances

What Activities Count Toward the Requirement?

To maintain coverage, ACA Adults may need to complete one of the following during at least one month of their six-month eligibility period:

- Earn at least $580 per month in income
- Attend school, college, or technical training at least half-time
- Complete 80 hours per month of:
  - o Paid employment
  - o Education
  - o Community service or volunteering
  - o Job training or workforce programs
  - o Or a combination of these activities

What Should You Do Now?

Update Your Contact Information

It is important that the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) has your current:

- Mailing address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Immigration status, if applicable

Keeping your information current will help ensure you receive important notices about your coverage and any actions you may need to take. Updating your contact information does not mean your benefits are changing.

HFS will contact Medicaid customers directly before any changes affect coverage. Be sure to read all mail you receive regarding your Medicaid benefits.

While many Medicaid recipients will not be affected by these new rules, some adults and certain non-citizens may see changes to their eligibility or renewal requirements beginning in October 2026 and January 2027. Taking a few minutes now to update your contact information and watch for future notices can help you stay informed and avoid disruptions in coverage.

(Continued From Page 11)

Orthopedics | Dr. Robert Bell, M.D.

Whether recovering from an injury, managing joint pain, or exploring surgical treatment options, Dr. Robert Bell provides comprehensive orthopedic care to help patients maintain mobility and return to the activities they enjoy. Specializing in hand surgery, upper extremity conditions, and total knee replacements, Dr. Bell offers expertise in a wide range of orthopedic and sports-related injuries. His patient-focused approach emphasizes individualized treatment plans designed to restore function, reduce pain, and improve quality of life.

Audiology | Dr. Joseph Hopper IV, AuD

Hearing health affects every aspect of daily life, from communicating with loved ones to staying engaged in work and community activities. Dr. Joseph Hopper IV provides comprehensive audiology services for both adults and children, including diagnostic hearing evaluations, tinnitus assessments, balance and dizziness testing, hearing aid fittings, and hearing protection solutions. With a focus on personalized care and patient education, Dr. Hopper helps patients better understand their hearing health and achieve the best possible quality of life.

Urology | Wesley Howell, PA-C

Wesley Howell, PA-C provides specialized urology care focused on the evaluation, treatment, and management of conditions affecting the urinary tract and reproductive system. From kidney stones and urinary incontinence to prostate health concerns, Howell works closely with patients to execute individualized treatment plans while providing the education and support needed to make informed healthcare decisions. His patient-centered approach helps individuals receive expert urologic care in a comfortable, close-to-home setting.

Podiatry | Dr. Amanda Hart, D.P.M.

Whether it's chronic foot pain, a sports injury, or a condition affecting mobility, Dr. Amanda Hart provides comprehensive podiatric care to help patients stay active and independent. Treating a wide range of foot and ankle conditions, including injuries, arthritis, bunions, hammertoes, diabetic wounds, and sports-related concerns, Dr. Hart combines specialized expertise with a compassionate approach to care. Her goal is to relieve pain, restore function, and help patients remain confident on their feet at every stage of life.

Pain Management | Dr. Tong Zhu, M.D.

Chronic pain can affect every aspect of daily life, from work and family activities to overall health and well-being. Dr. Tong Zhu provides comprehensive pain management services focused on identifying the source of pain and developing individualized treatment plans to improve function and quality of life. Treating a wide range of conditions affecting the spine, joints, muscles, and nerves, Dr. Zhu combines advanced expertise with minimally invasive treatment options to help patients find relief, restore mobility, and return to the activities that matter most.

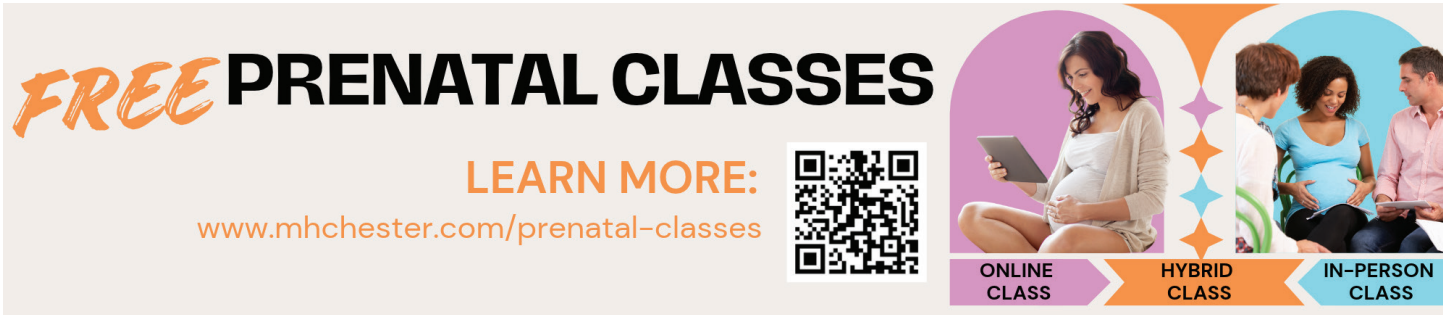
Gastroenterology | Dr. Matthew Gaeta, M.D.

Digestive health plays an important role in overall wellness, and Dr. Matthew Gaeta provides specialized gastroenterology care for patients experiencing conditions affecting the digestive system. Board certified in gastroenterology, Dr. Gaeta brings extensive training and expertise in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of gastrointestinal disorders. Returning to Memorial Hospital's Specialty Clinic in October, Dr. Gaeta offers patients access to advanced digestive health care in a comfortable, close-to-home setting. Through compassionate care and individualized treatment plans, he helps patients better understand and manage their digestive health while improving their overall quality of life. *(Learn more about Dr. Gaeta on page 6)*

Wound Care | Dr. Monica Lukose, M.D. & Angela Albertini, PA-C

Healing a chronic wound requires expertise, patience, and personalized care. Angela Albertini, PA-C and Dr. Monica Lukose, M.D., who will join the team in November, provide comprehensive wound care services focused on helping patients heal safely and effectively while remaining close to home. Combining Albertini's years of experience caring for local families with Lukose's patient-centered approach and commitment to building lasting relationships, the team works closely with patients to develop individualized treatment plans that support healing, improve outcomes, and enhance quality of life.

Your health journey doesn't have to take you far from home. Memorial Hospital's network of specialty providers works closely with your primary care team to ensure patients receive the expert care they need with the personal attention they deserve. If you have questions about your health or believe a specialist may be needed, talk with your primary care provider about specialty care options available at Memorial Hospital. Together, we're committed to bringing expert care, familiar faces, and exceptional service to the communities we proudly serve.



Community CARE

Memorial Hospital Employees, Out & About in Our Community



Thank you to Southwestern Illinois College for inviting our Human Resources Director, Julie Stern, to present, in July along with other healthcare professionals from within the region, at the Health Occupations Pathway Experience program today.

Julie had the pleasure of share a highlight of the many healthcare career options to high school students as they attended the H.O.P.E. program this week at the SWIC Red Bud campus. During the two day event students participated in interactive sessions to discover various health care professions and were immersed in panel discussions with professionals.



In August, Memorial Hospital provided life saving certification training to the Chester Unit School District 139 Stinger Care student staff. The aftercare program staff learned CPR, AED application, and choking rescue techniques. This helps prepare them for any emergency that may arise when children are in their care.



In July Memorial Hospital employees volunteered to assist with handing out meals during the Chester food distribution day. This free program allowed registered families to receive food items for each child. Any family throughout the area was eligible to register and receive breakfast, lunch, and dinner food items for everyday of the week, along with 1 gallon of milk per child per week. Volunteers served over 600 kids on one of the hottest days of the summer.



Sara Harris, Med Surg Nurse Manager, had a great time meeting with members of our community at the Senior Health Fair in Red Bud in August. What a great turnout! We love to see you prioritizing your health and looking for ways to live your best life!!



We were delighted to share information at the Chester Senior Center Nutrition Site in September about hand therapy.

Robin Pratt, OT and Hand Therapy Specialist at our Therapy and Sports Rehab Center provided information about common hand injuries and some stretches and adaptive tools that could be used to ease arthritis and carpal tunnel pain.



Thank you to everyone who stopped by the Memorial Hospital photo booth during the Chester High School Volleyball Pink Out Game vs Sparta on October 13. The evening supported individuals currently battling breast cancer, celebrated survivors, and raised awareness throughout our community.

Our Chemotherapy & Infusion Department and Mammography Team were proud to be part of this special event, providing giveaways, an attendance prize goody bag, and opportunities to connect with community members.



Thank you to the Chester Senior Center Nutrition Site for welcoming Dr. Monica Lukose in October. She had the pleasure of introducing herself and sharing information about healthy aging. She enjoyed meeting with everyone and answering their questions.



Memorial Hospital's Medical Explorers, employees and their families participated in Chester's annual Fall Festival Parade on Saturday, October 17. They enjoyed handing out goodies to everyone in attendance.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST QUARTER?

Employee of the 3rd Quarter of 2026



Apryl Bradshaw and Brett Bollmann, CEO

Brett Bollmann, CEO at Memorial Hospital named Apryl Bradshaw Employee of the Quarter for the Third Quarter 2026 on October 6, 2026.

Apryl Bradshaw, Administrative Assistant at Memorial Hospital, has been employed at Memorial for 20 years. When asked what she likes most about working at Memorial, she replied, "The teamwork. Staff members often wear many hats and work closely together to meet the needs of our patients. This collaboration creates a supportive environment where everyone is committed to providing the best possible care."

Multiple nominations were submitted on her behalf that expressed why Bradshaw was a valid candidate. The nominations recognized her outstanding dedication, reliability, and servant-hearted commitment to Memorial Hospital. Nominators consistently praised her willingness to go above and beyond, noting that she is a trusted resource for employees, volunteers, patients, and leadership, always stepping in to help solve problems, support special events, and ensure daily operations run smoothly. Her positive attitude, teamwork, compassion, and unwavering commitment to excellence make her an invaluable member of the organization and a highly deserving recipient of this recognition.

Bradshaw resides in Walsh, IL with her husband Austin and their three children. Outside of work she stays very active in her children's activities which include football, baseball, and wrestling. When she has some down time she enjoys spending it with her family and being outdoors.

Each quarter employees are encouraged to submit "star cards" for their co-workers who go above and beyond in their patient care or teamwork. Four random cards were drawn at the award presentation for Kellyn Rohlfing, Admitting Representative; Amy Kloos, Pharmacy Director; Summer Hassebrock, Phlebotomist; and Kimmie Fulmer, HIM Associate.

Annual Decon Operations Training

Memorial Hospital's Decon Operations Team conducted its annual Decontamination Operations Training on October 9, 2026, as part of the hospital's ongoing commitment to emergency preparedness and response readiness. The training focused on decontamination procedures, equipment deployment, and coordinated response operations that may be required during hazardous materials incidents. Regular drills provide team members with valuable hands-on experience and help ensure staff remain prepared to respond quickly and safely to potential emergencies.

The annual exercise builds upon previous decontamination training efforts at Memorial Hospital, including regional training events involving neighboring healthcare organizations and emergency preparedness partners. These ongoing exercises help strengthen response capabilities and ensure staff maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to protect patients, visitors, employees, and the community.

Participants included Georgia Stipe, Emergency Management Preparedness Coordinator; Charlie Bargman, Decon Team Leader; Michael Whitt; Maribeth Golding; Torrie Davitz; Amanda Johnson; Amanda Rhyne; Aaron Anthmer; Zach Dunker; and Emily Friess, Decon Team Members.

Memorial Hospital continues to prioritize emergency preparedness through regular education, training, and exercises designed to enhance organizational readiness for a variety of emergency situations.





Memorial Hospital Hosts Student Through Illinois AHEC Program



Caroline Arnold and Dr. Zachary Orme, D.O.

Memorial Hospital recently welcomed Caroline Arnold, a 2026 Millikin University graduate and aspiring physician, as part of the Illinois Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Rural Health Experience (RHE) Program, a statewide initiative designed to introduce healthcare students to the unique opportunities and rewards of practicing in rural communities.

Arnold participated in the three-day experience July 13-15, exploring a variety of clinical departments and healthcare careers throughout Memorial Hospital and its affiliated clinics. The Rural Health Experience program provides health profession students with hands-on observation opportunities in rural healthcare settings, helping them better understand the healthcare needs, resources, and providers that serve rural Illinois communities.

A 2023 Waterloo High School graduate and recent graduate of Millikin University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology Pre-Professional Studies, Arnold is currently working as a medical assistant in primary care while preparing to apply to medical school. Her long-term goal is to become a primary care physician serving a rural community.

During her visit, Arnold shadowed healthcare professionals across numerous areas of Memorial Hospital, including the Cardiac Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center, Operating Room, Diagnostic Imaging, Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation Center, Laboratory, Pharmacy, Emergency Department, Medical-Surgical Unit, Cardiopulmonary Department, Convenient Care, Chemotherapy and Infusion Services, and Memorial Specialty Clinic. She also spent time observing physicians including Dr. Bell, orthopedic surgeon; Dr. Orme, D.O.; Dr. Lowry, M.D.; and emergency medicine providers.

The experience provided Arnold with an up-close look at how rural healthcare teams work together to deliver comprehensive care. “During my time at Memorial Hospital, I learned how important physicians are to the rural community,” Arnold said. “I saw how the providers cared for patients from the community, building relationships with them and providing personalized care.”

Arnold said one of the highlights of her experience was the welcoming environment created by Memorial Hospital staff. “Everyone was so helpful and kind,” she said. “Staff members were happy to help me find different departments and were very accommodating in making sure I could see as much as possible during my visit.”

The AHEC Rural Health Experience program allows students to shadow healthcare professionals in multiple disciplines while learning about the social, economic, and health characteristics that shape rural communities. Students gain insight into the roles of various healthcare providers and are encouraged to consider rural healthcare as a future career path.

According to Arnold, the experience reinforced her desire to pursue primary care and serve patients in a rural setting. “My favorite thing about the career I have chosen is the opportunity to make a meaningful impact on my community,” she said. “Growing up, I looked up to the physicians who served my community, and one day I aspire to provide the same quality care.”

Memorial Hospital is proud to partner with programs like AHEC's Rural Health Experience to provide students with meaningful exposure to rural medicine and the many career opportunities available in healthcare. By welcoming future healthcare professionals into its facilities, Memorial helps cultivate the next generation of providers who may one day choose to practice in rural communities like those served by the hospital. "Investing in students today helps ensure access to quality healthcare for future generations," said Mariah Bargman, Community Relations Manager. "We are committed to supporting educational experiences that allow students to explore healthcare careers, connect with providers, and gain a deeper appreciation for the vital role rural hospitals play in their communities."

As healthcare workforce shortages continue to affect rural areas across the nation, programs such as the Rural Health Experience offer an important pathway for students to discover the rewards of practicing in underserved communities. Memorial Hospital remains dedicated to providing these learning opportunities and fostering the development of future healthcare leaders.

Gift Received in Memory of Marla Cushman



Pictured Left to Right: Kelly Jany, CNO; Scott and Chris Gross, Eric Hess, Michele Prange, Paige Hess, Carissa Hess, Mary Rosendohl, Henry Hess, Jim Cushman, Amy Eggeymer, Darrel Ehlers, Amy Ehlers, Maribeth Golding, Discharge Planner and Swing Bed Coordinator; Megan Buch, Occupational Therapist.

Memorial Hospital recently dedicated a new set of permanently installed parallel bars in the Medical-Surgical Department therapy room, made possible through a memorial contribution from the family of former Memorial Hospital nurse and nurse manager Marla Cushman. Family members and many of Marla's friends gathered with Memorial Hospital staff on October 17 to commemorate the dedication and celebrate her lasting impact on the hospital and community.

Marla devoted nearly 40 years of service to Memorial Hospital before retiring in 2015. During her distinguished career, she served as the Medical-Surgical Nurse Manager and was recognized as the first recipient of the Newmark Award, honoring employees who make exceptional contributions to patient care.

Following Marla's passing in May 2024, her family made a memorial donation to Memorial Hospital with the hope that it would be used in a way that would directly benefit patients. Given Marla's long history of service and leadership within the Medical-Surgical Department, hospital leaders felt it was fitting that the gift support rehabilitation services for patients receiving care on the unit.

After discussions between the Therapy Department and Medical-Surgical nursing staff, a decision was made to purchase and permanently install a set of parallel bars in the unit's therapy room. The equipment will provide a valuable resource for patients receiving rehabilitation services, helping them regain strength, balance, and mobility in a safe environment.

"It was so nice seeing such a great showing of Marla's friends and family," said Amy Eggemeyer, Nurse Manager Care Coordinator. "It just goes to show how important Marla was to them. Marla was such a kind, thoughtful person and a great nurse, too. She meant a lot not only to Memorial Hospital, but to our entire community."

The dedication serves as a lasting tribute to Marla's commitment to caring for others. Through her family's generosity, the parallel bars will continue to support patients on their road to recovery for years to come, carrying forward the spirit of compassion and service that defined her nursing career. "Memorial Hospital is grateful to the Cushman family for this meaningful gift," said Eggemeyer. "Every patient who benefits from this equipment will be part of Marla's legacy."

Child and Babysitting Safety Certified

Memorial Hospital hosted a Child and Babysitting Safety (CABS) Class in July, equipping 13 students with the knowledge and confidence to become responsible, capable caregivers.

Led by Certified BLS Instructor Mariah Bargman, the session combined classroom instruction with hands-on training to cover a wide range of essential childcare topics. Medical Explorers Kamryn Patterson and Jaimy Duran assisted with the program.



Participants practiced:

- Diapering and potty training techniques
- Safe feeding practices
- Proper hand hygiene
- Basic First Aid
- CPR and choking rescue procedures

These interactive lessons not only taught practical skills but also emphasized the importance of attentiveness, empathy, and safety that every trusted babysitter should embody.

Whether caring for siblings, neighbors, or family friends, students left the class feeling empowered and prepared to handle real-life care-giving situations with confidence.

Back Row L-R: Avery Smith, Paisley Martin, Avrie Lingle, Tinsley Ventimiglia, Adalynn York, Eriana Quintana. Middle Row L-F: Kamryn Patterson, Sophie Campbell, Anna Bendorf, Emma Braun, Arabelle Anderson, and Jaimy Duran. Front Row L-R: Abigail McConachie, Kinlee Phillips, and Madalynn Luehr.

Continuous Learning in Action: Nurses Complete Annual Skills Training



Anna Burmester, Physical Therapy Assistant; Adrienne Caby, Surgery RN; Amy Eggemeyer, RN Nurse Manager Care Coordinator; Sara Harris, RN MSU and Cardiac & Pulmonary Rehab Nurse Manager; Maribeth Golding, RN Discharge Planner & Swing Bed; Kim Ruebke, RN Nurse Manager Critical Care; Emily Friess, RN Infection Control Nurse; Morgan Cash, Respiratory Therapist; Georgia Stipe, Director of Cardiopulmonary; Sarah Rathert, RN Quality & Clinical Compliance Manager; Kelly Jany, Chief Nursing Officer; Charlie Bargman, Maintenance Clinical Tech; and Zach Dunker, RN Nurse Manager of Peri Operative and Infusion.

Memorial Hospital recently held its annual Nursing Skills Day on October 6-8, 2026. The mandatory training event brought together nursing staff from across the organization for hands-on learning, skills validation, and collaboration, all aimed at enhancing the quality and safety of patient care.

Throughout the three-day event, nurses reviewed and demonstrated a wide range of essential clinical and safety skills. Training included infection prevention, wound care, medication administration, emergency response procedures, patient mobility and transfer techniques, cardiac monitoring, oxygen therapy, stroke and heart attack recognition, and other important nursing competencies.

Nursing Skills Day provides an opportunity for nurses to practice routine and critical-care procedures, refresh their knowledge, and stay current on best practices. Ongoing training like this helps ensure patients receive safe, effective, and compassionate care from a confident and highly skilled healthcare team.

The event also highlighted the strong teamwork that exists across Memorial Hospital. Staff from Physical Therapy, Cardiopulmonary Services, Pharmacy, Plant Operations, Infection Control, Emergency Services, and Nursing worked together to provide instruction, demonstrations, and evaluations throughout the training sessions. This collaborative approach helps strengthen communication and coordination among departments, ultimately benefiting patient care.

"My favorite part of Nursing Skills Day 2026 was seeing firsthand the dedication our nurses bring to their profession," said Kelly Jany, Chief Nursing Officer. "It was also an opportunity to connect directly with our nurses and see the exceptional collaboration between departments. It reaffirmed that excellence in patient care begins with a culture of continuous learning, professionalism, and compassion. I'm extremely proud of our nursing team and the difference they make every day."

Hospital leaders reported excellent attendance among nursing staff, reflecting a strong commitment to professional development and clinical excellence. Annual training events like Nursing Skills Day help caregivers stay current on evolving healthcare standards, procedures, and equipment while reinforcing consistency and confidence across all areas of patient care.

Memorial Hospital extends its sincere appreciation to every department, instructor, and team member who contributed to the success of this year's event. Their dedication to education and teamwork helps strengthen the hospital's mission of providing high-quality, safe, and compassionate healthcare to the community.

For Memorial Hospital, Nursing Skills Day is more than an annual competency requirement. It is an investment in the people who care for patients every day and a reflection of the organization's ongoing commitment to delivering exceptional healthcare close to home.





WHAT HAPPENED LAST QUARTER?

Thirty-Nine Students Welcomed into the 2026-2027 Explorers Program

Memorial Hospital is proud to welcome 39 local high school students to the 2026-2027 Medical Explorers Program, continuing its mission of inspiring and educating future healthcare professionals. Now entering its seventh year, the program provides students with firsthand exposure to a wide variety of healthcare careers through hands-on experiences, educational presentations, facility tours, and job shadowing opportunities. The program remains open to students from their freshman year of high school through age 20 and has connected more than 175 students with healthcare career exploration opportunities since its inception.



L-R Back Row: Mariah Bargman, Program Director, Hannah Stueve, Evie Barnes, Jackson Powell, Harlow Ebers, Maribeth Strate, Rylee Shemonic, Karlie Kranz, Ella Tripp, Eli Congiardo, Hillari Cowan, Emma Rieckenberg, Alayna Schmoll, Ronin Bradshaw, Thalia Hinton. L-R Middle Row: Yami Fuentes, Brenna Hammel, Ava Deterding, Ella Kiehna, Jaimy Duran, Karsen Wedemeyer, Kaylee Cunningham. L-R Front Row: Kylie Zipfel, Elly Goeddel, Claire Wachtel, Lydia Pemper, Megan Moeller, Amelia Meyer

This year, Memorial Hospital is excited to welcome students from nine area high schools, including participation from two new schools, Freeburg Community High School and St. Vincent High School. Twenty-one students are participating in the program for the first time, while 18 students have returned to continue exploring healthcare careers. Two students are completing their fourth year in the program, and four students are participating in their third year.

Participating students include **Chester High School:** Logan Brace, Annabell Cross, Kaylee Cunningham, Hadlie Cushman, Mabrie Cushman, Jaimy Duran, Harlow Ebers, Yami Fuentes, Brenna Hammel, Kinsley Middendorf, Rylee Shemonic, and Hannah Stueve. **Coulterville High School:** Maribeth Strate. **Freeburg Community High School:** Kennedy Allen, Anna Rarick, and Lulu Steppig. **Gibault Catholic High School:** Eli Congiardo, Elly Goeddel, Amelia Meyer, and Claire Wachtel. **Red Bud High School:** Ava Deterding, Katie Deterding, Aubree Gulley, Thalia Hinton, Megan Moeller, Alayna Schmoll, and Kylie Zipfel. **Sparta High School:** Ronin Bradshaw. **St. Vincent High School:** Jackson Powell. **Steeleville High School:** Hillari Cowan, Ella Kiehna, Karlie Kranz, Kamryn Patterson, Lydia Pemper, Emma Rieckenberg, Ella Tripp, and Karsen Wedemeyer. **Trico High School:** Evie Barnes and Bailey Thies.

Throughout the program year, students will explore a broad range of healthcare professions through presentations and interactive experiences with Memorial Hospital departments and community healthcare partners. Returning Memorial Hospital departments include the Laboratory, Rural Health Clinics, Nursing Departments, Diagnostic Imaging, Surgical Services, Memorial Community Pharmacy, and Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation Center. Students will also have opportunities to learn from returning community partners including Rheinecker Chiropractic, MedStar Ambulance, Area Health Education Center (AHEC), and AirEvac.

New additions to this year's programming include career exploration opportunities with Southern Illinois Dermatology and Memorial Hospital's Sleep Lab, introducing students to specialized healthcare roles including dermatology services and sleep technology.

In addition to exploring healthcare careers, students and their families will have the opportunity to learn about educational pathways through presentations from regional colleges and universities with healthcare-focused programs. These sessions are designed to help students better understand the academic options available as they pursue careers in healthcare.

A hallmark of the Medical Explorers Program continues to be the opportunity for participants to job shadow professionals throughout Memorial Hospital. These experiences allow students to observe healthcare environments firsthand, ask questions, and gain valuable insight into daily responsibilities across various specialties. Seniors in the program are also eligible to apply for a Medical Explorers Scholarship through the Memorial Hospital Auxiliary.

"Each year, it's exciting to welcome new students while reconnecting with those who have returned to continue their healthcare career exploration," said Mariah Bargman, Marketing and Community Relations Manager and Medical Explorers Program Director. "The growth of the program and the enthusiasm shown by these students reinforces the importance of providing meaningful opportunities to learn about the many careers available in healthcare."

Bargman noted that the program's expanded schedule, introduced last year and continued this year, has allowed for more frequent interaction and deeper engagement between students and healthcare professionals. "Meeting more often gives us the opportunity to expose students to a wider variety of healthcare careers and build stronger relationships throughout the year," Bargman said. "One of the most rewarding aspects of the program is watching students ask thoughtful questions and begin envisioning what a future in healthcare might look like. Sometimes they discover a career path they hadn't previously considered, while other times they learn that one area isn't the right fit and uncover several others that spark their interest."

Memorial Hospital remains committed to supporting workforce development and encouraging the next generation of healthcare professionals. Through programs like Medical Explorers, students gain valuable experiences that help them make informed educational and career decisions while strengthening the future of healthcare in our communities.

Upcoming *community* Events

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL –Since 1962–

MH EVENTS

WWW.MHCHESTER.COM/CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS

MEMORIAL
– COMMUNITY PHARMACY –

NO LIQUIDS ILLEGAL DRUGS AEROSOL CANS NEEDLES



NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

9:00AM-1:00PM

MEMORIAL COMMUNITY PHARMACY

(Use Marked Pharmacy Entrance)

1900 State Street - Chester, IL 62233

Beat, Breathe, Thrive
SUPPORT GROUP

Fourth Tuesdays of Each Month | Oct 27 & Nov 24, No Meeting in Dec
1:00-2:00pm - Cost: FREE | Pre-Registration Recommended
Memorial Hospital - Conference Room
Pre-Registration and More Information at www.mhchester.com

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AUXILIARY
Christmas
PREVIEW SALE

November 4, 7am-5pm
November 5, 7am-2pm
Open to Everyone | Holiday Decor & Gifts | Discount Deals
Memorial Hospital - Conference Room

American Red Cross
Blood Drive

December 18
11:30am-4:00pm - Memorial Hospital Conference Room
Sign-up to Donate: www.redcrossblood.org

FREE PRENATAL CLASS

NEW Virtual Learning Option Available
Sign-Up Anytime!
Learn more at: www.mhchester.com/prenatal-classes

Go Red *for Women*

February 25, 2026 | 6:00pm Doors Open, 6:30pm Dinner Served
Chester Country Club - 1310 Lehmen Drive, Chester, IL
Pre-Registration and More Information COMING SOON at www.mhchester.com

Auxiliary Scholarships Available for Randolph County Healthcare Students

The Memorial Hospital Auxiliary is now accepting applications for its Healthcare Career Scholarship Program, designed to provide financial assistance to residents of Randolph County pursuing careers in healthcare. The scholarship program supports students who are preparing to enter the healthcare workforce and encourages future professionals to consider careers within their local community.

Scholarship awards of up to $1,000 are available to eligible Randolph County residents enrolled in approved healthcare programs. Applicants must be in their final semester of a program in the following:

- **LPN**
- **RN**
- **BSN**
- **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Technology**
- **Diagnostic Medical Sonography (Ultrasound)**
- **Respiratory Therapist**

Schools do not need to be located in Illinois; however, programs must be accredited or recognized by the appropriate approving agencies.

Applications are evaluated through a written application and interview process. Selection criteria include character, professionalism, scholastic achievement, commitment to the healthcare profession, potential for success in the chosen field, and financial need.

VOLUNTEER & AUXILIARY NEWS

The Auxiliary is committed to investing in the future of healthcare by supporting students who are dedicated to serving others. These scholarships help reduce financial barriers and encourage talented individuals to pursue careers that strengthen healthcare services in our region.

Applications for the fall semester are accepted through June 1 each year, and applications for the **spring semester are accepted through November 1** annually. Scholarship funds are paid directly to the recipient's educational institution.

Students interested in applying may download an application from the Memorial Hospital website or request one by contacting Apryl Bradshaw at 618-826-4581 ext. 1299. Applications may also be requested by writing to:

Memorial Hospital Auxiliary
Attention: Scholarship Committee
1900 State Street
Chester, IL 62233

For additional information and application materials, visit the Memorial Hospital website at www.mhchester.com.



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
AUXILIARY

TREE OF Remembrance
2026



MAKE A DONATION IN HONOR OF YOUR LOVED ONE

This year, donations to the Memorial Hospital Auxiliary will be used to purchase additional STAXI Wheelchairs to help patients get where they need to go.

Your generosity keeps care moving forward.

Honor a loved one.
Make a difference.



SUPPORTS PATIENTS AND STAFF

IMPROVES COMFORT AND SAFETY

HELPS KEEP CARE MOVING FORWARD

DONATE ONLINE

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or visit the link below.

SCAN THE CODE TO DONATE

MAIL DONATIONS TO:

Memorial Hospital Auxiliary
ATTN: Tree of Remembrance
1900 State Street
Chester, IL 62233

Together, we bring comfort and care to our community.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL'S SERVICES

Bone Density Screening
Cardiac Pulmonary Rehab Center
Chemotherapy & Infusion Center
Diabetic Resources
ECG & EEG
Endoscopy
Intensive Care Unit
Lung Screening
MRI & CT
3D Mammography
Nuclear Medicine
Radiology/X-Ray
Same Day Surgery
Sleep Disorder Treatment & Lab
Sonography/Ultrasound
Swing Bed Program
Treadmill Stress Testing
Wound Center

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL'S SPECIALTY PROVIDERS

Bringing Specialty Clinic Doctors to you so you don't have to travel away from home.

Audiology
C. Joseph Hopper IV, AuD

Cardiology
John Groll, M.D.
M. Adil Sheikh, M.D.

Gastroenterology
Matthew Gaeta, M.D.

General Surgery
Ziya Baghmanli, M.D.

Nephrology
Vamsi Chilluru, M.D.
Lindsay Gwaltney, FNP-BC

Oncology/Hematology
Justin Floyd, D.O.
Michelle McQuillan, DNP, FNP-BC

ENT/Otolaryngology
Rebecca Brandsted, M.D.
John Park, M.D.
Matthew Marino, M.D.

Orthopedics
Robert Bell, M.D.

Pain Management
Tong Zhu, M.D. PhD.

Podiatry
Amanda Hart, DPM

Sleep Lab
Terry Brown, M.D.

Urology
Wesley Howell, PAC

Wound Center
Angela Albertini, PAC

To learn more about our specialists call Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic at (618) 826-4581 ext. 1366



Welcome New Employees

Lily Koch
Jessica Gordon
Courtney Heller
Kylee Worthen
Kristin Platt
Tiffany Koon
Anthony Young
Kayla Goode

Congratulations Retirees

Carol Buckholtz
Debra Stenberg

