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GMC’s new patient tower: an inside look

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family matters

his mother’s battle with cancer inspires actor Patrick Dempsey to help other patients heal

THIS GMC DOC ‘PAYS IT FORWARD’ page 52
Patient care at GMC will be elevated to new heights when the patient tower on the Lawrenceville campus opens later this year.
Patient safety is a top priority at Gwinnett Medical Center

Patient safety is an important issue to everyone. Naturally, you want to keep yourself and your family safe when you’re at home. Gwinnett Medical Center has had a patient safety plan in place for a long time, just to ensure you are safe when you’re with us as well.

Gwinnett Medical Center believes that patient safety is a serious business and believes in doing everything we can to make sure you stay safe at GMC facilities. We are involved in several national hospital safety-related initiatives, including programs from the Joint Commission, the Leapfrog Group and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. These, combined with our own safety programs, help to ensure your stay with us will be a safe one.

In addition, our physicians and staff practice evidence-based safety precautions to prevent mistakes. Once we identify and evaluate the effectiveness of new patient safety measures, we establish baselines for the new measures, educate our staff on the improved protocols and implement improved care for our patients.

Patient safety isn’t a new idea at Gwinnett Medical Center. But since we will never stop improving the way we care for patients, there will always be new and innovative programs to make things better. Many of these initiatives are built on existing hospital programs and give us the opportunity to compare ourselves with other hospitals, both within Georgia and nationwide. To learn more about our patient safety program, visit gwinnettmedicalcenter.org.

Phil’s feature

Patient safety is a top priority at Gwinnett Medical Center

Protect and serve

Philip R. Wolfe, FACHE
President & CEO
summer schedule

Make your health a priority this season with hot classes and events at GMC.

May
THE SPORT OF GIVING
Date: May 2009
Join the fight against breast cancer and support The Sport of Giving’s tennis, golf and run events that occur throughout May. Visit thesportofgiving.org for more information.

UNDERSTANDING INSULIN: MYTHS & REALITIES
Date: May 12, 10 a.m.
Location: Diabetes & Nutrition Education Center, Glancy Campus
This event is free to the public, but seating is limited. Registration is required—call 678-442-5000.

September
12TH ANNUAL MILES H. MASON, JR. MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
Date: Sept. 22
Location: Legends, Woodlands and Chateau courses at Chateau Elan
Register early online at gwinnettmchdcenter.org/golf. Call 678-312-8500 for more information.

Ongoing GMC-Based Support Groups
WOMEN’S CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Dates: Second Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m.
Location: Gwinnett Women’s Pavilion, Breast Health and Hope Resource Center
For information, call 678-312-4010.

PARKINSON’S SUPPORT GROUP
Dates: Second Friday of each month, 1:30 p.m.
Location: Glancy Campus (Duluth), in the diabetes classrooms
For more information, call Sharon Hansen at 678-312-6175.

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP
Dates: Third Thursday of each month, 6:30 p.m.
Location: Glancy Rehabilitation Center (Duluth)
For more information, call Kelly Dunham at 678-312-6167.

sign up now!
To register for any class or event, call HealthLine at 678-442-5000.
Patient care at GMC will be elevated to new heights when the patient tower on the Lawrenceville campus opens later this year. Here’s a sneak peek inside the state-of-the-art facility.

If you’ve been on or near the campus of Gwinnett Medical Center in Lawrenceville lately, no doubt you have noticed the eight-story patient tower that’s nearing the end of its construction.

The architectural aim of the new tower is to provide the capacity and technology necessary to prepare GMC for open-heart services and other future expansion. The driving goal behind the design is to transition GMC from a hospital model to a hospitality model by designing the facility around the needs of GMC’s three most important customers: patients, physicians and visitors.

The doors will soon open, and GMC will welcome patients and visitors to this technologically advanced facility. In the meantime, on the following pages is a preview of the building’s highlights, along with insights into the strategic architecture and design, built with the community in mind.
GMC’s new north tower has been built to house Centers of Excellence, to maximize patient care at the bedside and patient safety, and to meet the needs of Gwinnett County, today and in the future. Here are some highlights:

- Standardized layout with 31 beds per floor, totaling 129 beds
- Oversized elevators that exceed industry standards
- Patient rooms with maximum natural light, wider doorways and larger bathrooms
- Neurology, Orthopedics and Cardiology Centers of Excellence will be located in the tower. In addition, three intensive care units will be on floors linked with their specialty.

Sound reduction components of the building include:

- Double thick walls at patient room headwalls
- White noise in patient rooms to reduce exterior noise
- Door seals to reduce hallway noise
- Additional insulation to further reduce noise
Patient rooms are designed for maximum comfort and efficiency. New patient rooms will be approximately 1.5 times larger than the current patient rooms, totaling 100 extra square feet in each room, and will have wider doors (7 feet wide) and increased visibility from the hallway, which allows caregivers to observe patients without disturbing them. The room design uses three zones to provide:

- Recovery and comfort area for the patient
- An area for the family to focus and relax
- A zone for physicians, staff and medical caregivers
- Maximum control for patients at the bedside controlling the room’s amenities, including lighting, TV and room temperature
- HEPA 99.99% filtered air
Patient safety is an architectural priority. Considerations included:
• Fold-down grab bars for patient support
• Bathrooms positioned on the outer wall of the room allowing for higher toilet seats
• Hands-free faucets in ICU rooms
• Elevators throughout the new tower that exceed industry standards
• Seamless sinks in patient rooms
• Slip-resistant floors in the shower/toilet areas
• Dirty linen rooms located directly across from staff elevators to minimize exposure to patients
• 2 Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms per floor

Built-in efficiencies for staff to concentrate care at the bedside include:
• Standardized layout on each floor, with a “racetrack” design allows for maximum staff/patient/family interaction
• Centralized work zones to maximize staff collaboration when needed
• Decentralized work zones for charting, observing patient, caregiving and cleaning areas
• Noise barriers, such as reinforced walls and well-sealed doors, will support a calm environment that allows patients to rest and staff to focus on patient care and ensures clearer communication between physicians and patients and their families
• Elevators throughout the new tower are much larger, exceeding industry standards
• Three zones for the medical staff, patient and families will allow for improved convenience and organized care
A very impressive two-year-old.

Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth is still only two years old, but our medical staff combines decades of experience. At GMC – Duluth, you’ll find some of the area’s most distinguished physicians, the ones you already know and trust.

• The first all-digital hospital in north Atlanta serving Duluth, Johns Creek, Peachtree Corners, Suwanee and surrounding communities
• More than 175,000 square feet with six floors, 81 beds and six family suites
• Natural woods, sunlight and stone combine to provide a healing environment to enhance patient comfort
• Specialty care, including the Center for Orthopedics
• Room service, patient-directed visitation program, voice mail and other hotel-like amenities
• 24-hour Emergency Department with dedicated digital imaging equipment, including a 40-slice CT scanner
GMC’s Center for Sleep Disorders recognized for its top-flight quality

One thing’s sure about the GMC Center for Sleep Disorders: The doctors and staff aren’t sleeping on the job. That’s evident in the service and expertise provided, a fact that has helped the center gain an honor that only a select few centers in the area possess: accreditation by the prestigious American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

“Accredited sleep labs meet a standard of excellence that we strive for at GMC,” says Gregory L. Mauldin, M.D., medical director of the GMC Center for Sleep Disorders. “It means we are recognized as being able to provide our patients with the highest level of quality in sleep diagnosis and treatment.”

Other nonaccredited sleep labs in the area have no regulated quality standards and may not employ technologists specifically trained in sleep disorders. “Once the sleep study is performed, the information may not be interpreted by a physician who is board-certified in Sleep Medicine,” explains Danita Turner, manager of respiratory care, sleep and neurology at GMC. Turner says that all physicians at both GMC locations are board-certified in reading sleep disorder tests, and all technologists are credentialed in sleep and respiratory therapy.

Nonaccredited sleep labs generally only test for a few specific problems, whereas the GMC Center for Sleep Disorders tests for many different sleep-related disorders and provides patients with detailed information and education on those disorders.

GMC is proud to have helped the sleep-deprived through the center for more than a decade at its Lawrenceville campus. The same high level of service will be offered at the new Duluth location.

8 is enough
You can expect quality and a high level of care at the Center for Sleep Disorders. The center offers these eight benefits:

• Accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine
• All sleep studies are interpreted by a physician board certified in Sleep Medicine
• A National Sleep Foundation Community Awareness Partner
• Sleep lab technicians are also respiratory therapists and are RPSGT-certified
• Daytime and nighttime studies that fit your schedule are offered
• Free consultation and tour prior to the sleep study
• Immediate access to GMC emergency services is always available if needed
• Free consultations and education related to sleep disorders and treatment are offered
Want to lose weight? Take a brisk walk! Cut down on sugar! Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day!

If only it were so easy: Incorporate a few key pieces of advice and watch the pounds simply melt away. But as anyone who's undertaken a nutrition and exercise program knows, transforming your body and improving your health takes more than a couple of guidelines. It requires willpower, and an ability to remain steadfastly on track for the long term, when the dieting grows more tedious and your workouts start to interfere with myriad other commitments. In other words, when real life intrudes on the best-laid plans.

However, there is hope. Through the power of a positive attitude and the following motivational strategies offered by the Diabetes & Nutrition Education Center at Gwinnett Medical Center, you can stay on track and accomplish your weight-loss goals.

1. Create a blueprint.

Prior to the construction of a home, a builder draws out the plan piece-by-piece from foundation to completion with specific deadlines and milestones. It is important to structure a weight-loss program in the same way—write down your goals and the steps needed to achieve them. For example, if you want to lose 10 pounds in three months, create a timeline detailing week-by-week shopping strategies, exercise tips and so forth. “Your goals need to be reasonable and achievable,” says Cris Hartley, R.D., CDE, manager of the Diabetes & Nutrition Education Center at GMC. “We also encourage our clients to focus on the actions needed to meet their goals.”
Visualize the finish line.
Make your goals as real as possible by visualizing yourself succeeding in certain situations, like making the choice to eat an apple instead of a candy bar. It will also help to picture the results you’ll see in the mirror from working out, say, 45 minutes a week instead of 30. Then, when faced with the chocolate temptation, or the feeling that you’re too tired to work out, you can respond by imagining clearly how good it will feel when you achieve that visualized goal.

Don’t self-destruct.
It may be corny, but there’s an important lesson to be found in the classic children’s tale The Little Engine That Could. When faced with disappointment and difficulty, the engine stayed optimistic by chanting, “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.” Weight loss can benefit from positive thinking in much the same way.

We often sabotage ourselves with negative thoughts such as “I’ll never lose weight” or “This is too hard now, but I’ll try again later.” Against that backdrop, it becomes all-too-easy to convince yourself to throw in the towel.

“It is important to acknowledge that setbacks will happen, but you can use your setbacks as learning opportunities,” says Hartley. “When this happens, remind yourself of what you have done and make changes if necessary, but remember to stay positive.”

Root for the home team.
Take time to recognize your progress, and don’t focus on the setbacks. Think of all of your accomplishments, whether they are personal, professional or physical, and repeat this often to help feed your motivation. If you accomplished those goals, surely you can accomplish this one. You need to become your own best friend and respect yourself in every way. “Be sure to reward yourself along the way for each success in your weight management journey,” Hartley recommends.

Don’t adopt an “all-or-nothing” attitude.
You shouldn’t approach weight loss by thinking you need to do everything perfectly or all is lost, which will set the table for almost guaranteed failure. For dieters, a common thought is, if you give in and eat that one piece of cake, all of the hard work you’ve put in to that point is ruined. Instead, take such a minor (or even major) setback as a learning opportunity—ask yourself why you ate the cake or skipped the workout, and you will know how to approach the situation better in the future. But remember to always be kind to yourself.

Think it, see it, do it.
The old axiom “believing is achieving” is true—but that is only part of the story. You have to act on your weight-loss goals. You will have to change your diet and increase your physical activity. You can’t just think yourself two sizes smaller, but you must put yourself in the right frame of mind to achieve your goals.

Believe.
If your confidence is wavering, practice positive thinking. Repeatedly telling yourself that you can and you will succeed will go a long way to making that statement a reality.

let us help you!
The Diabetes & Nutrition Education Center at Gwinnett Medical Center offers nutrition education by registered dietitians specializing in weight management. Our dietitians will work with you to develop a comprehensive weight management plan that is tailored to meet your specific needs. As your personal weight management coach, your dietitian will guide and support you in making this healthy lifestyle change.

We have two convenient locations to serve you, in Lawrenceville and Duluth. To make an appointment, call 678-312-6040. Visit gwinnetmedicalcenter.org/DNEC for more information.
reconstructing David

plastic surgeon David Whiteman is dedicated to his family, his profession and the spirit of giving back.

David Whiteman, M.D., FRCS, is a plastic surgeon with fellowship training in breast reconstruction and cosmetic surgery hailing from Windsor, Ontario. He has been practicing for 15 years, 13 of them at GMC. Dr. Whiteman attended medical school at the University of Western Ontario and now has his private practice, Southern Plastic Surgery P.C., located on the campus of GMC - Duluth.

Besides Dr. Whiteman’s passion for his family and his profession, he is a big believer in “paying it forward.” Much of his free time is dedicated to serving with The Sport of Giving Inc. The organization has been a leader in providing funds in the fight against breast cancer in Gwinnett County, having given over $1 million to the GMC Foundation to fund state-of-the-art equipment at Gwinnett Medical Center.

Dr. Whiteman and his wife, Sheri, live in Norcross with their son, Ari, and daughter, Rachel.

Through The Sport of Giving, many contributions have been made to GMC.

Dr. Whiteman was part of an effort to donate an ambulance to Israel.

With son Ari and daughter Rachel

Dr. Whiteman and his wife, Sheri

Dr. Whiteman in his office
Q&A

1. When I was a child I dreamed of becoming a professional football player. Unfortunately, I was always the smallest kid in my class and topped out at 5'8", 140 pounds.

2. My first job was selling souvenirs at the University of Michigan’s football stadium, the “Big House.” We would sell those little souvenir footballs and then go down to the field to play before game time.

3. To wind down after a long day I enjoy a Belvedere on the rocks with three olives.

4. Right now on my iPod I’m listening to Earth, Wind and Fire. They were the first concert I ever attended and their music is so distinctive, timeless and unique.

5. My goal and inspiration is to make people feel the warm contentment when someone has really taken the time to treat you with respect and true human interest. I really enjoy people. I love hearing stories about their lives and will talk to strangers, especially when traveling. Out of simple conversation I’ve been invited to people’s homes and have shared some of the most memorable moments of my life with people I’ve just met.

6. My favorite thing about Gwinnett Medical Center is the staff. I look forward to going to work in the operating room. They are professional in the truest sense of the word.

7. My favorite restaurant for a casual night is Taqueria Del Sol. Nicer would be Rathbun’s. Both of their menus are creative and the food is delicious.

8. The next big thing in my medical specialty will likely be the use of consistently reliable fat transfer. Presently, fat transfer can be unreliable in terms of the amount of graft survival. Predictable fat transfer for both reconstructive and cosmetic purposes would be a welcomed addition to the specialty.

9. If I could be any character in literature or entertainment I would be Jon Stewart or Stephen Colbert. It must be a blast to work on their shows.

10. What I do in my spare time involves a great deal of volunteer work. I’m on the board of The Sport of Giving, which has donated over $1 million in the last eight years toward local breast cancer related issues, $800,000 of which has stayed in Gwinnett Medical Center and includes the outfitting of a screening mammography suite, mammography van and the new intervention suite in Duluth. Also, as a personal note, through the generosity of friends and family, we have donated an ambulance to the state of Israel (ambulances in Israel are only funded by private donations) in payback for the lifesaving efforts on behalf of their emergency medical technicians during a time of my personal need.
The Gwinnett Medical Center Foundation held its inaugural Cornerstone Society Donor Appreciation Gala in February 2009. At the Gala, two prestigious awards were given to two respected and valued donors, Carolyn Hill and Manfred Sandler, M.D.

**The Distinguished Service Award**
The GMC Foundation is a volunteer and donor-driven organization. Our success is contingent upon finding motivated volunteers that desire to be advocates in the community. In 2000, the GMC Foundation established the Distinguished Service Award to highlight those who have made outstanding contributions of time and energy to our mission. Kathryn Parsons Willis was the first person to be chosen as a recipient of this award, while Bruce Still received the honor in 2002. Now, Carolyn Hill becomes the third recipient of this much-deserved honor.

For 18 years, Hill has committed her time and expertise in a variety of positions at Gwinnett Medical Center. Currently, she serves on the GMC Foundation Board and on the hospital Board of Directors. She has also served as the president of the GMC Foundation Board of Trustees, chaired the “TIME MATTERS in the fight against breast cancer” campaign, and has been a part of the former GMC Foundation Ball steering committee.

“Carolyn Hill’s leadership has been an inspiration to all us involved at the GMC Foundation,” Still says. “She has been an untiring, driving force in pursuing the challenges of meeting the Foundation’s goals. Her enthusiasm and positive, persuasive attitude is infectious.”

She was instrumental to the GMC Foundation raising over $2 million for the TIME MATTERS campaign, which reached its goal six months ahead of schedule. Her desire to ensure that women in Gwinnett County have access to the very best breast health services led to the tremendous success of the campaign.

“With the TIME MATTERS campaign, we have improved the services and care we provide our breast cancer patients at GMC,” says Cindy Snyder, manager of Oncology Services. “I am grateful for all the support given by Carolyn Hill and the community toward this initiative.”

“No one deserves this honor more than Carolyn Hill,” adds Willis. “She has been an inspiration to me all through the years as she has given so much of herself to GMC and to the Foundation. She has been completely tireless in her dedication.”

Hill not only contributes to the Foundation with her time and leadership, but also gives financially. She and her husband, Wayne, are members of the Keystone Society and the Cornerstone Society. They have been vital leaders with their giving, and have encouraged many others to also support the Foundation.

**The Physician Champion**
The GMC Foundation recognized one exceptional physician who specifically champions the fundraising efforts of the Foundation in support of the mission of GMC. Manfred Sandler, M.D., chair of the GMC Foundation Board, has inspired others to give, a most contagious endeavor.

Dr. Sandler’s leadership and philanthropic spirit has impacted the Foundation in significant ways. He initiated a Physician Partners Group that now includes over 100 physicians committed to being advocates for and financial supporters of Gwinnett Medical Center.

“Dr. Sandler is passionate about having the best patient care right here in Gwinnett County,” says Phil Wolfe, president and CEO of Gwinnett Medical Center. “He has been
a leader serving on the hospital board and serving as the chairman of the Foundation board. He understands how important philanthropy is to Gwinnett Medical Center achieving its goals.

In addition, Dr. Sandler has been instrumental in the approval of the Certificate of Need for GMC to have an open-heart surgery program. He has a desire to educate his patients on the need for an open-heart program in Gwinnett County, which has motivated community members to support the GMC Foundation.

Dorothy Rainey, a patient of Dr. Sandler, says he is compassionate and very personable with his patients.

“Not only is he a great doctor, but he also sacrifices his personal time to improve healthcare in Gwinnett County.”

And Jim Maran, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce president, sings his praises as well. “Dr. Sandler has been a relentless champion for open-heart surgery and has garnered overwhelming support from the community,” Maran says. “He has the respect of the physician community, hospital administration, our state and local representatives and the business community. This stature in the community has allowed him to move the process forward in a positive manner, and we are looking forward to open heart surgery in Gwinnett.”
PrimeTime Health (PTH) has long been Gwinnett County’s premier comprehensive network of valuable services designed exclusively for adults ages 50 and older. Members can take advantage of a variety of free or low-cost services and activities, including the acclaimed PrimeTime Health Physician Speakers Bureau.

The Speakers Bureau offers seminars on health-related subjects tailored to the mature adult. Some presentation topics include advances in medicine, clinical outcomes and education. Others detail the management and treatment of diseases such as colon cancer, arthritis and heart disease.

Members who attend these presentations are often impressed that physicians volunteer their time to speak to the community on important health issues. Recently, David Carlin, M.D., made a presentation on glaucoma to a group of PTH members. “I’ve never encountered a doctor with such willingness to answer all questions like that,” said one member. “I learned a lot about my eyes and what to watch for as I get older,” said another. “He made the information so easy to understand.”

Interacting outside the clinical setting, without constraints of a typical office visit, members have the opportunity to see their physicians in a different light. “Dr. Carlin answered everything I needed to know about glaucoma,” said a third PTH member. “I felt so comfortable with him that I scheduled my husband’s eye surgery with him and he’s doing great.”

For an updated calendar of Physician Speakers Bureau presentations, visit gwinnettmedicalcenter.org and click the “Classes & Events” link. For a free membership in PrimeTime Health, call HealthLine at 678-442-5000.
Gwinnett Medical Center offers a full range of services for athletes of all ages and all levels of competition.

Our sports medicine team includes fellowship trained surgeons and radiologists, athletic trainers and rehabilitation professionals — all working to get you back in the game.

gwinnettmmed.org/sports