

# VALLEY health & life

HELP FOR  
**INTIMATE ISSUES**

BREATHING  
**EASIER**



A NURSE'S  
**IMPACT**



## DEAR FRIENDS OF HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER AND VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEMS,

**FIRST, LET ME SHARE WITH YOU THAT,** regrettably, we have decided to postpone our Gala originally scheduled for November 20. While there is certainly improvement in the pandemic, given the continued uncertainty, we felt that we should postpone any large indoor gatherings this fall. Instead, we are planning to organize a fun event, most likely a virtual one, in the early months of 2022. Please stay tuned for more details.

The new challenge facing our organization, as well as every other hospital or health system in the country, is not directly related to the pandemic, but is rather a result of it. For a variety of reasons, many healthcare workers have left the profession or have taken jobs in non-hospital settings. Nurses and other professionals who traditionally worked in emergency rooms, ICUs and inpatient medical units have left in great numbers; some to retire early; some to stay home with children; others to take jobs at schools, outpatient clinics or insurance companies.

This trend has left hospitals across the country scrambling to find enough nurses to provide patient care. At the same time, there has been quite an increase in patients coming to hospitals for outpatient and emergency room care. This is clearly the reason every hospital has appointment backlogs and every emergency room is full.

We are working very hard to find and hire nurses, and we offer professionals who join our team significant benefits and pay. We pride ourselves, despite being a small hospital, on offering the region's most generous tuition reimbursement benefit, outstanding medical benefits, excellent pay, generous sign-up bonuses, and above all, a fantastic work environment.

We are attracting great talent, and we remain optimistic about the future. As we hire additional staff, I want to thank you for your understanding and patience, as well as assure you that we continue to strive to provide the excellent and safe care you have come to expect from us.

As you will see in the pages of this issue, the challenges we are dealing with are not stopping us from introducing new services and from expanding existing ones. As always, we welcome your suggestions and comments on ways to serve you better.

My best wishes for health and happiness during the upcoming holiday season.



**SPIROS HATIRAS**  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Holyoke Medical Center & Valley Health Systems, Inc.

**On the Cover:**  
Alan Weferling and his wife, Elaine (left), say that Allison Motyl, RN, played a key role in Alan's recovery from an inpatient psychiatric stay. Read his story on page 12.



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## Valley Health Systems, Inc.

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# HEALTHY HABITS

FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



## TAKE IT OUTSIDE

People spent more time enjoying open-air activities during the pandemic, and it turns out it did us good. A recent study found that people who were outdoors reported being in a better mood within five minutes.  
—*The Journal of Positive Psychology*



## IT'S CONTAGIOUS!

Did you know that watching someone scratching can make you feel itchy? Researchers aren't sure why, but they liken it to yawning.

—*British Journal of Dermatology*



# 2

The maximum number of hours daily you should spend on social media to protect your happiness. Spending 3.5 to 5 hours daily doubled the risk of depression in young adults, while 5 or more hours tripled the risk.

—*American Journal of Preventive Medicine*



## BRAVO, 'CADO!

Need one more reason to love avocados? They're good for your gut. A recent study found that people who ate avocados daily produced metabolites that help the stomach better break down nutrients.

—*University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*



## TREE OF LOVE

For 2021, Valley Health Systems' Tree of Love is again online and interactive! Watch it fill with twinkling lights throughout the holiday season. You can help us decorate our annual Christmas tree in memory of a loved one or to honor someone special. Add a colorful twinkling light or add the star to the top of the tree! Check back often—the lights on the tree will multiply with every donation.

You can:

- Write a personal message dedicated to someone special
- Upload a photo of your family, friends or pets
- Share your message on social media

Your support this holiday season truly makes a lasting difference at Holyoke Medical Center. We're helping and healing every day thanks to your generosity. We hope you and your family enjoy this special time of sharing and giving, and that the fun of decorating our online interactive Tree of Love adds to your enjoyment.

**Help us trim the tree!**

Visit [www.holyokehealth.com/treeoflove](http://www.holyokehealth.com/treeoflove) to make your tax-deductible donation today.

Or mail your donation to:  
Valley Health Systems, Inc.  
Development Office

20 Hospital Drive, Holyoke, MA 01040

Be sure to include who you're donating in honor or memory of, and a personal message (optional).



# BREATHING EASIER

A HOLYOKE RESIDENT MANAGES ADULT-ONSET ASTHMA AND ALLERGIES WITH THE HELP OF HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER'S PULMONOLOGY TEAM.

## CHARLES ("CHARLIE") AURNHAMMER

has been running the high-pressure steam boilers and chillers at Holyoke Community College for 40 years. The utility plant operator rises early in the morning to begin his 3 to 11 a.m. shift. It's a job he loves that allows him the freedom to pick up his daughter Lily after school.

But in early 2020, Charlie's daily routine took a hit when he began experiencing trouble breathing and constant bouts of coughing. "I was short of breath climbing the stairs at work and couldn't keep up with my wife and daughter when we were out and about," he says. "I'd tell my family, 'Go ahead of me, I don't want to be a boat anchor.'"

## A VISIT TO URGENT CARE

When the respiratory issues and related disruption to his life continued, Charlie knew he needed medical help. He visited Holyoke Medical Group's Walk-In Care center in Chicopee. The clinic's physician, Kevin Snow, DO, suspected Charlie had asthma and prescribed a corticosteroid. "I was surprised because I'd never had asthma or any breathing problems when I was younger," Charlie says.

Though the steroids provided short-term relief, Charlie found himself visiting urgent care several times for help with

bronchitis (inflammation of the bronchial tubes that causes breathing issues and a mucus-filled cough). After a chest X-ray

ruled out pneumonia, he was referred to the Pulmonology Center at HMC for further testing.

There he met Andrey Pavlov, MD, a fellowship-trained pulmonologist, and the center's nurse Sarah Maxon, LPN. "We ran a laboratory study called RAST that confirmed Charlie's asthma diagnosis with a significant allergic underlying component," says Dr. Pavlov. A RAST (radioallergosorbent) test checks a person's blood for specific Immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibodies, which the body produces in response to allergens. This helps doctors find out what substances the patient might be allergic to. "Charlie had a mix of things including dust mites and cat and dog dander," says Dr. Pavlov.

## ALLERGY TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

An initial treatment plan for Charlie included an asthma inhaler containing medication breathed directly into the lungs, as well as a nasal steroid spray and allergy pills. "The medications temporarily controlled Charlie's allergy and asthma symptoms but did not prevent them from happening," says Dr. Pavlov. He recommended a new class of therapeutics called monoclonal antibodies delivered by injection. "These biologic drugs work with the body's immune system and allergic pathways to better treat and prevent asthma. A huge benefit of the injections is that they help people get off long-term use of steroids, which can have serious side effects."

A nurse gave Charlie allergy injections every two weeks at HMC's Short Stay Surgery. "There's a section in the department reserved for people having

injections," says Dr. Pavlov. "It allows us to monitor patients afterward for adverse reactions. People typically get relief from symptoms after one or two injections, and notice a significant change after two months and a maximum benefit after six." Charlie says he noticed a difference in his breathing within weeks.

Unfortunately, Charlie had to stop receiving injections in March 2021 after his insurance company stopped paying for them. "COVID-19 was raging," he says. "My insurance company had administrative issues and my paperwork fell through the cracks." The Pulmonology Center continued treating his symptoms with other medications while HMC's Accounts Payable team worked to help reinstate insurance coverage for injections. "Holyoke has been aces," says Charlie of the staff members who assisted him. "I restarted injections in August 2021 and have been doing really well ever since."

## CHANGES AT HOME

Charlie has taken steps to improve air quality and reduce allergens at home. He installed a new split-system HVAC system that filters out irritants throughout the house and purchased an air purifier for his bedroom. "Those changes made a huge difference," says Charlie, who is sleeping better than ever.

This September, Charlie and his wife, Jennifer, took Lily to the Three County Fair in Northampton, an excursion that would have been impossible months before. "Since I got back on the shots, I've lost weight, and I'm able to live life again," says Charlie. "I could've retired this year, but I'm not ready to hang it up yet. Thanks to Holyoke Medical Center, I can keep going."



Andrey Pavlov, MD

✱ The Holyoke Medical Center Pulmonology Center is located at 5 Hospital Drive. To make an appointment, please call **413.534.2582**.

Patient Charlie  
Aurnhammer with  
Andrey Pavlov, MD, and  
Sarah Maxon, LPN.







# GETTING HELP FOR INTIMATE ISSUES

ALTHOUGH INCONTINENCE AND OTHER PELVIC FLOOR DISORDERS CAN BE DIFFICULT TO TALK ABOUT, TREATMENT IS AVAILABLE. READ WHAT PATIENTS HAVE TO SAY.

**THE PELVIC FLOOR** muscle group is one of the most intimate and overlooked areas of the body, linked with dysfunctions that many consider too private to talk about—even with their medical professionals. Stretching from the pubic bone to the tailbone, disorders in this area include urinary and bowel incontinence, pelvic pain, sexual issues and organ prolapse.

“The muscle tissue of the pelvic floor is no different than any other skeletal muscle in the body, such as calves and biceps, so

we have the ability to voluntarily contract it,” explains Michelle Broughton, PT, DPT, CSCS, Cert-MDT. “When the pelvic floor muscles show signs of weakness, pain or an inability to do their job, the issue needs to be addressed—just as any other medical condition or injury would be evaluated and attended to.”

Unfortunately, pelvic floor dysfunctions often are ignored or misdiagnosed—ignored by patients who believe what they’re experiencing is normal or are



Below left: Michelle Broughton, PT, DPT, CSCS, Cert-MDT, discusses pelvic floor anatomy with a patient. Above left: Broughton teaches Josefina Rodriguez exercises to strengthen her pelvic floor muscles. Above: Broughton discusses pelvic floor disorders with Frances Shute.

embarrassed to talk about it, and misdiagnosed because identifying the exact cause and location of the issue can be challenging. There's also a common misperception that only women have pelvic floor issues, but men also suffer from these disorders—especially urinary incontinence after prostate surgery.

## A NON-SURGICAL SOLUTION

Physical therapy is an important part of a multidisciplinary team approach to address pelvic floor dysfunction. Because of its effectiveness as a non-surgical method, Holyoke Medical Center (HMC) has added pelvic floor therapy to the roster of physical therapy services offered at CORE. Specially trained therapists work privately with patients to discuss symptoms and arrive at a customized plan for treatment. These strategies include:

- Assessment of the structures' strength and coordination
- Stretches or strength exercises for pelvic floor muscles
- Core stabilization exercises
- Biofeedback to improve coordinated contractions of the muscles
- Soft tissue mobilization, and other

manual therapy techniques to address muscle imbalances

- Self-care education, including diet and lifestyle changes
- Relaxation techniques
- Improved breathing and body mechanics that reduce stress to the pelvic floor
- Pain management

It takes a special breed of therapist to make pelvic floor patients feel comfortable discussing intimate issues. Broughton is such a professional. Her dedication stems from her own experience of pelvic dysfunction, when her issues were overlooked and misdiagnosed by the medical community. After her early pregnancies, Broughton began to suffer from urinary incontinence that continued to get worse with subsequent pregnancies. Later, she developed a more serious cluster of symptoms, including hip pain.

"I had been told by many to 'just do Kegels,' only to later find out I was doing them incorrectly." It wasn't until she was assessed by a therapist trained in pelvic floor disorders that Broughton learned she had pelvic floor weakness and that her hip pain stemmed from a muscle located in that area.

After four months of performing pelvic floor exercises, nearly all of her symptoms disappeared. It was then that she decided that this specialty would become a focal point in her personal vocation with advanced certification in pelvic floor rehabilitation.

## WHAT PATIENTS SAY

Frances Shute is one of Broughton's patients. A retired teacher and educator, Frances was initially so shy about her symptoms of vaginal discomfort that she could barely discuss them.

She had been told by her gynecologist that her symptoms were the result of a prolapsed uterus and that she'd not only require a hysterectomy, but also 12 weeks of recuperation.

Frances wasn't happy with this plan. "Like most people, I wanted to avoid major surgery and its risks. Plus, I was committed to babysitting for my first grandchild and couldn't be laid up for

that long." She eventually found a new gynecologist at HMC who told her that she actually had a prolapsed bladder.

Pelvic organ prolapse is an uncomfortable condition that afflicts women. The uterus, bladder, vagina and rectum are organs that are all supported and held in place by pelvic floor muscles. If these muscles grow weak, the organ may droop and subsequently bulge out of the vagina.

Her gynecologist spent a great deal of time talking to Frances about her non-surgical options, including physical therapy at HMC. Frances made an appointment and began working with Broughton.

"She was so marvelous and knowledgeable that she made me relax as I began my therapy sessions," Frances says. "She provided me with exercises and techniques to help me strengthen my pelvic floor."

Her work with Broughton made such a difference that she was able to avoid having surgery.

"Normally I would never discuss such private symptoms with anyone. But Michelle taught me that I could not only talk about my condition, but I could stop worrying about it. 'You can do this,' she told me. And she was right."

Another patient, Josefina Rodriguez, a personal care assistant from Northampton, was referred to Broughton by her urologist for physical therapy because of urinary incontinence and uncomfortable abdominal pressure.

Josefina says: "When I met Michelle, she showed me a regimen of exercises. She also taught me how to breathe correctly, which made me better able to perform these exercises."

She believes Broughton has been essential to her progress in the program. "Michelle made me feel comfortable discussing private details. She's more than a therapist—she's someone with whom I have a trusted relationship."

After three months, Josefina reports that the practice has improved her symptoms. "As I grow older, I believe these exercises will continue to be very important in my life."

**\* To make an appointment, speak with your primary care provider for a referral and then call CORE at 413.534.2555.**





# Living Well With HEART FAILURE

NEW ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE HELP  
HEART FAILURE PATIENTS LIVE LONGER AND BETTER.



**THOUGH A DIAGNOSIS** of heart failure may feel daunting, the good news is that advancements in medicine and technology—along with healthy lifestyles—make it possible for heart failure patients to live longer, healthier lives.

## HEART FAILURE EXPLAINED

Heart failure doesn't mean your heart has stopped working. "Heart failure occurs when the heart muscle is unable to pump enough blood and oxygen to the body," explains Khawar Maqsood, MD, a fellowship-trained interventional cardiologist at Holyoke Medical Center (HMC). "Symptoms may include fatigue, shortness of breath, breathing problems when lying down and swelling of the legs and abdomen. Heart failure is a chronic condition and a life-changing one for most patients."

Many factors and medical conditions can cause the wear and tear on the heart muscle that leads to heart failure. These include high blood pressure, coronary artery disease and past heart attack, as well as abnormal heart valves and heart defects. Cancer, lung disease, diabetes, obesity and sleep apnea can also contribute to heart failure, and unhealthy behaviors increase risk.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says heart failure affects about 6.2 million adults in the United States. Determining the cause and degree of heart failure guides cardiologists in recommending the best management options. In addition to classifying a patient's heart failure based on symptoms, cardiologists use tests—such as blood tests, cardiac catheterization, X-ray, electrocardiogram, echocardiogram, stress test and multiple-gated acquisition scanning—to assess severity.

## IMPROVEMENTS IN MEDICINE AND TECHNOLOGY

A serious medical condition that worsens over time, heart failure is a leading cause of hospitalization in people over age 65. "Rehospitalization is one of the biggest challenges

for heart failure patients," says Dr. Maqsood. "Studies show that patients with recurrent hospital stays do worse clinically and have a higher mortality." Recent advancements in pharmaceuticals for heart failure have made a difference. "This includes medical breakthroughs like SGLT2 inhibitors and sacubitril/valsartan (Entresto).



Khawar Maqsood, MD

These drugs have shown promising results in decreasing mortality and hospital readmissions for heart failure."

New monitoring devices have also helped keep heart failure patients out of the hospital by identifying medical issues early on, before they become a problem. HMC uses the Abbott CardioMEMS HF System—the first and only FDA-approved heart failure monitoring device clinically proven to significantly reduce hospital admissions. The CardioMEMS system is a dime-sized device implanted directly into a patient's pulmonary artery. The implanted sensor measures pulmonary blood flow and transmits the data directly to the heart failure care team.

"CardioMEMS provides us with pulmonary pressures of patients, which helps us monitor them and adjust medications to prevent symptoms and hospitalization," says Dr. Maqsood. "Most of the time diuretics and other medications are adjusted based on clinical exams, which can be quite challenging in certain patients. CardioMEMS gives us precise information in an easy and non-invasive way that helps guide therapies."

## HEART-HEALTHY CHANGES

Dr. Maqsood says cardiovascular health depends on the proper management of risks factors, including lifestyle choices. Recommendations that heart failure patients can incorporate into their daily lives are simple and effective: keep follow-up appointments; take medications as directed; eat a healthy, low-salt diet; exercise; avoid alcohol, drugs and tobacco; get enough sleep; and manage stress.

Education is also key. Patients admitted to HMC with heart failure benefit from disease-specific teaching done during hospitalization. "Patients are taught by nurses and physicians about what heart failure means and what strategies can help them to lead a normal life," Dr. Maqsood says. "Patients have to understand the disease and its management because non-compliance with medications and diet can lead to significant symptoms and hospital visits."

"In addition," he continues, "we have a robust cardiac rehabilitation program for patients who have coronary artery disease and heart failure. Patients come and perform supervised physical exercises and are taught about the benefits of heart-healthy lifestyle changes."

Although heart failure is a serious disease, new treatment options and close collaboration with cardiac providers can help patients prevent and manage symptoms—allowing them to lead their best lives.

✱ To learn more, please call the HMC Cardiovascular Center at **413.534.2870**.



# HONORING THE CONSUMMATE CAREGIVER



Top and above: Kimat Gul Khatak, MD, with his family. Right: Dr. Khatak with his good friend M. Saleem Bajwa, MD.



## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDEE KIMAT GUL KHATAK, MD, IS REMEMBERED AS AN ESTEEMED PHYSICIAN, BELOVED FATHER AND FRIEND TO ALL.

**AS A TEENAGER**, Nabeela Gul Khatak traveled throughout Pakistan with her father, the late Kimat Gul Khatak, MD, a cardiologist with Holyoke Medical Center (HMC) and a resident of South Hadley for 42 years. “We went to his ancestral village in the Hindu Kush and to Sindh, where he attended college and medical school,” she recalls. “My father carried a suitcase full of medications to dispense to patients who traveled from far away to see him.”

Like many tributes that poured in after Dr. Khatak's unexpected death in January 2021 from complications of COVID-19, Nabeela's story illustrates a constant caregiver who put the needs of others first—close to home and across the world. “He was a compassionate doctor who loved his patients as people. He wanted to do his best to help them feel better,” says Nabeela. Holyoke Medical Center will honor Dr. Khatak's service to the HMC community with a Lifetime Achievement Award at a future event in 2022.

### HEALER AND FRIEND

Dr. Khatak's storied life began with humble origins in Pakistan, as the eldest of 12 children. Through sheer determination, Dr. Khatak rose out of poverty, graduating top of his class from medical school and serving in the Pakistan Army Medical Corps and the Pakistan Air Force. He emigrated to the United States in 1974 and did his residency in internal medicine at Westchester Medical Center in New York, then completed a fellowship in cardiology at Baystate Medical Center.

Pulmonologist M. Saleem Bajwa, MD, describes a serendipitous encounter with Dr. Khatak in 1979 that changed the trajectory of their lives. “My kids were starting school, and I wanted to relocate to an area where they could get a good education,” he says. “Dr. Khatak invited me to his home, and we quickly became friends. We realized we had the same professional goals, and when two retiring doctors sold their Holyoke internal medicine practices, we bought them.”

Drs. Bajwa and Khatak practiced side by side for four decades at 10 Hospital Drive, specializing in pulmonary

disease and heart disease, respectively. “When we started, we were treating people in their 50s, and then we treated their children and their children's children,” says Dr. Bajwa. “Generations of patients from diverse cultures came to know and love Dr. Khatak. People walked away feeling they had seen not only an excellent doctor, but a friend. He listened to their stories

and laughed with them. Patients felt confident they could call him any time. And he was always available—24/7—to patients and colleagues.”

### ADVOCATE AND RELIGIOUS LEADER

Nabeela says her father's work ethic was heartfelt. “He left Pakistan and came to the U.S. to start a new career at the age of 40 so he could give his children opportunities—like a great education, freedom from a feudal society and the chance to have careers.” Dr. Khatak supported his extended family in Pakistan, believing it was his duty to help them succeed.

But it wasn't only family and patients who benefited from her father's generosity. Nabeela recalls returning home from a trip abroad after graduating from Smith College. “A 20-year-old Afghan girl named Fatima was living at our house and wearing my clothes! She stayed for a few years, attended community college per my parents' request and became part of our family. My dad was always ready to help anyone, anywhere.”

An advocate for Pakistani-Americans and American Muslims, Dr. Khatak was a founding member of the Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America and a lifetime benefactor of the Islamic Council of New England. Alongside Dr. Bajwa, he founded the Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts. He was the society's first president, overseeing its development from a small house to a purpose-built mosque. Dr. Khatak also founded a mosque in Springfield, Baitus Salaam, which he headed up for the past 10 years. He had a close alliance with the Interfaith Council of Greater Springfield and was a spokesperson against hate crimes. “He believed strongly in the tolerance and acceptance of all faiths.” says Dr. Bajwa.

### ON DUTY UNTIL THE END

Dr. Khatak's career plans never included retirement. “What will I do?” he'd ask. Dr. Bajwa says his friend joked he would die in the line of duty, like the military man he was. “He wanted to serve his patients until the end of his life, and that is the way he left this world.” Soon after contracting COVID-19 and just weeks before his first scheduled vaccine, Dr. Khatak died of virus-related complications.

Because of the pandemic, Nabeela was unable to fulfill her father's wish of being buried in his Pakistani village. “His last dream was to build a park in Springfield. I hope we can make that a reality one day,” she says. In addition to Nabeela and her siblings Nafees, Saema and Kaisar, Dr. Khatak leaves behind his wife, Gulnigar, granddaughter Neshmeeya, son-in-law Ahmar and a grateful Holyoke community.



Kimat Gul Khatak, MD



# A NURSE'S IMPACT

WHEN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PATIENT ALAN WEFERLING WAS ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL, HIS NURSE BECAME HIS LIFELINE.

**ALLISON MOTYL, RN**, didn't choose to be a psychiatric nurse. "The profession chose me," says Motyl, 38, who for five years has been a nurse on the inpatient unit



Allison Motyl, RN

of the Center for Behavioral Health at Holyoke Medical Center (HMC). The longtime Holyoke resident says she was fresh out of nursing





Allison Motyl, RN, with her patient Alan Weferling and his wife, Elaine.

school when HMC offered her the job. "It was a perfect fit."

Her nursing supervisor, Melissa Perry, RN, Director of Behavioral Health Nursing, agrees. "Psychiatric nurses must be compassionate and have excellent assessment skills," she says. "Sometimes it's difficult for patients with mental health issues to express themselves. Allison has that innate ability to assess needs, connect with patients and advocate on their behalf." Perry says once nurses find their niche in behavioral health, they remain. "I've been here for 27 years, and most of my co-workers are long-timers, too."

The Center for Behavioral Health—which includes inpatient geriatric and adult psychiatry units, both of which opened in Spring 2021—uses a team approach with psychiatrists, registered nurses, psychiatric clinicians, social workers and therapists working together for each patient. "We're like a family where everyone supports each other," says Motyl. "There's a sense of accomplishment in helping patients who aren't functioning due to psychiatric concerns return to a healthy life."

### A SPECIAL BOND

Springfield residents Alan and Elaine Weferling credit Motyl with lifting them up during a difficult chapter. In November 2020, Alan was admitted to the inpatient psychiatry service, seemingly due to a side effect of his antidepressant medication combined with dialysis treatment. "Alan wasn't alert, and he wasn't eating," says Motyl. "He looked like he was sleeping, but I knew he could hear me." While his physician adjusted medication, Motyl tended to Alan's medical needs and patiently waited for him to wake up.

"He started tracking me with his eyes and then gave me one-word answers," says Motyl, his primary nurse on the day shift. As Alan became more communicative, Motyl continued to encourage and cajole him to take his medication, to eat and drink, to get out of bed, to shower and to interact. "She never gave up on Alan," says his wife, Elaine, who was unable to visit due to COVID-19 restrictions. "Allison was calm, reassuring and so confident that Alan would get better. She became my lifeline. We talked on the phone daily, and she'd update me."

When the couple spent their first Thanksgiving apart, Motyl made sure Alan had company and a good meal. "I was impressed to see a young woman like Allison in charge and taking care of an older guy like me," says Alan, 68. "She kept her composure and was a model nurse." Alan was discharged after a three-week stay, and it was Motyl who walked him down to the parking lot to be reunited with Elaine. "It was emotional," admits Motyl. "They were excited to see each other, and I was happy to finally meet Elaine in person."

### MANY TALENTS

Prior to her nursing career, Motyl, who holds a bachelor's degree in business, worked in

## JOIN A TEAM WHERE YOU'LL BE VALUED!

Holyoke Medical Center is looking for registered nurses who want to be part of an award-winning team. Benefits include:

- \$20,000 sign-on/retention bonus or student loan repayment assistance to qualified BSN applicants, or \$10,000 for associate degree applicants!
- \$5,000 annual tuition reimbursement program!
- Competitive paid time off
- Generous health benefits with low employee contribution levels
- Meaningful connections with your patients
- On-campus parking
- Safe patient handling

**To learn more about career opportunities at Holyoke Medical Center, visit [www.holyokehealth.com/careers](http://www.holyokehealth.com/careers).**

retail. Her business and technology acumen proved helpful to the Nursing Department when new medical records software was introduced.

"Allison worked hard to build a psychiatric component and to train and support staff in the rollout of Meditech Expanse," says Perry, noting that Motyl was named Employee of the Month in August for her dedication to patients and staff.

Motyl shrugs off the accolades, considering herself a "quick learner" who's happy to help. She says her colleagues and patients, coupled with the family-friendly atmosphere of a small community hospital, make her job fulfilling.

"There's a sense of accomplishment," she says, "and I know I'm helping my community because mental health nursing is in high demand. Every day and every patient is different."

For Elaine and Alan, who's now in excellent health, Motyl has their gratitude and a special place in their hearts. Allison was a blessing, they say.

5

# BENEFITS OF PRIMARY CARE

IN AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX MEDICAL WORLD, HAVING ONE PROVIDER WHO KNOWS YOUR HEALTH HISTORY HAS BECOME HIGHLY IMPORTANT.

**RESEARCHERS AT** the journal *Health Affairs* found that patients who have a primary care provider benefit from better management of chronic diseases, lower overall healthcare costs and a higher level of satisfaction with their care.

Here, family nurse practitioner Daezel A. Lacanlale, MSN, FNP-C, of Holyoke Medical Group Primary Care, shares five key ways that building a relationship with a primary care provider can improve healthcare for you and your family.

**1 CONTINUITY.** Having a single provider who has seen you for everything from bellyaches to immunizations to blood-pressure control means having a health resource who knows your history. “When you have an appointment,” says Lacanlale, “you don’t have to explain that there’s heart disease in your family or list the medications you’re taking and in what doses—it’s all in your medical record already.”

**2 CONVENIENCE.** Within a primary care practice, you can access a wide variety of health services: preventive care

and screenings; care for chronic conditions such as asthma, hypertension and diabetes; and acute care for problems like coughs and high fever.

**3 HEALTH MAINTENANCE.** “Your primary care provider can help you avoid health problems,” says Lacanlale. Based on a physical examination and your medical history, he or she can determine whether you’re at increased risk for conditions like diabetes, cancer and heart disease and then help you take steps to prevent them from developing.

**4 EARLY DETECTION.** “Regular checkups and contact with a single provider make it more likely that any health issues will be detected early, when they’re most treatable,” says Lacanlale.

**5 BETTER COMMUNICATION.** When patients know their provider and the practice staff, visits are less stressful and more productive. “It’s easier to talk about sensitive issues with someone you know in a familiar setting than with a stranger in a strange place,” says Lacanlale.



## MEET DAEZEL A. LACANLALE, MSN, FNP-C

Holyoke Medical Group Primary Care is excited to welcome a highly-qualified family nurse practitioner to our team. Daezel A. Lacanlale, MSN, FNP-C, earned both her bachelor of science in nursing and her master of science in nursing from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va. She attended a two-year residency program at Holyoke Health Center, where she received exceptional training in managing chronic diseases, providing preventative care, especially in women’s health, and guiding patients through behavioral health problems. She’s a registered nurse and a certified nurse practitioner in Massachusetts and Virginia, and is certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners.

Lacanlale is dedicated to providing quality healthcare to those in underserved communities. “I believe in creating healthier patients and communities by making healthcare accessible to all,” she says, “and I look forward to getting to know my patients at Holyoke Medical Group and working with them to improve their overall health.” Services that Lacanlale provides include: management of chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, asthma and COPD; treatment of acute illnesses, such as upper respiratory infections and injuries; and co-management of HIV, hepatitis, substance dependence and transgender care.

**\* Daezel A. Lacanlale, MSN, FNP-C, is accepting new patients at Holyoke Medical Group Primary Care, 2 Hospital Drive, Suite 101, Holyoke. To make an appointment, please call 413.535.4800.**





{ POWER FOOD }

# SQUASH FOR EVERY SEASON

RICH IN HISTORY AND NUTRITION, SQUASH OF ALL KINDS  
PACKS PLENTY OF ANTIOXIDANTS—AND GOOD TASTE.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Squash's history in the U.S. predates European settlement by thousands of years. Originating in Central America and Mexico, it was a staple for Native Americans for more than 5,000 years. Europeans were introduced to squash during their explorations of North and South America. Today, Florida, Michigan and California lead the country in squash production.

## POWERS

There are a variety of health benefits attributed to squash, which is typically grouped into two categories: winter squash (such varieties as acorn, pumpkin and butternut squash) and summer squash (which include zucchini and yellow crookneck squash). Summer squash is more tender and has a thinner, edible rind. Both types are high in vitamins A and C, powerful antioxidants. They're also chock-full of carotenoids, particularly lutein and zeaxanthin, which have been recognized for reducing the risk of chronic eye diseases like age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, and for their anti-inflammatory properties, which may be beneficial to both the cardiovascular and gastrointestinal systems. Recent studies also suggest that the polysaccharides found in squash, which come from its high carbohydrate content, may help protect against diabetes and aid in insulin regulation.

## BUY | STORE | GROW

The main difference between summer and winter squash is the stage of maturity at which it's harvested. Summer varieties are harvested while immature and tender, while winter varieties

are allowed to harden. Choose winter squash that have dull, hard rinds. Available now through March, winter squash can last anywhere from one week to six months, depending on the type. They should be stored in a cool, dry place. Refrigeration is only recommended once the squash is cut, otherwise the humidity will cause deterioration. When shopping for summer squash, which are available year-round, inspect the rind and opt for those that have a sheen and are blemish-free. Store summer varieties in an airtight container in the fridge for up to seven days and avoid washing them until you're ready to use them. Should you choose to grow your own squash next year, methods will vary depending on the kind you want to cultivate. In general, squash need considerable growing space, lots of sun and good drainage. Usually, the plants are prolific producers, so you'll have plenty to use and share. Summer squash can be harvested when they're young—no more than 6 to 8 inches long. Winter squash are harvested when fully mature, at the end of the growing season.

## TASTY TREAT

Squash seeds make a nutritious snack. Remove the seeds from a winter squash (pumpkins, butternut or acorn work well). Rinse them with water and remove strings and squash remnants. Pat dry and place 1 cup seeds in a small bowl. Stir in 1 tablespoon of olive oil and ½ teaspoon salt (or to taste), until evenly coated. Spread evenly on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake at 275° F for 15 minutes, or until the seeds start to pop. Remove from the oven and cool before serving. Enjoy!

# Join A Team Where You Will Be Valued!



- ✓ \$20,000 sign-on/retention bonus or student loan repayment assistance to qualified BSN applicants, or \$10,000 for Associate Degree applicants!\*
- ✓ \$5,000 annual tuition reimbursement program!
- ✓ Competitive paid time off
- ✓ Generous health benefits with low employee contribution levels
- ✓ Meaningful connections with your patients
- ✓ On-campus parking
- ✓ Safe patient handling



*Be Part of an Award Winning Team!*

Holyoke Medical Center is hiring RNs!

## VIRTUAL HIRING EVENTS

**Every Wednesday: 1 to 4 p.m.**

**[holyokehealth.com/virtualhiring](https://holyokehealth.com/virtualhiring)**

*\* If you are a registered nurse, you could be eligible for a \$20,000 or \$10,000 signing/retention bonus or student loan repayment assistance. Attend the virtual event to learn more!*

Pre-register at [holyokehealth.com/virtualhiring](https://holyokehealth.com/virtualhiring).  
If you can't attend a virtual hiring event, please visit  
[holyokehealth.com/careers](https://holyokehealth.com/careers) to apply online.



**Holyoke Medical Center**