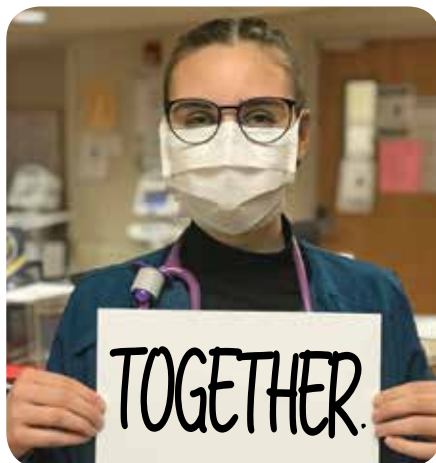
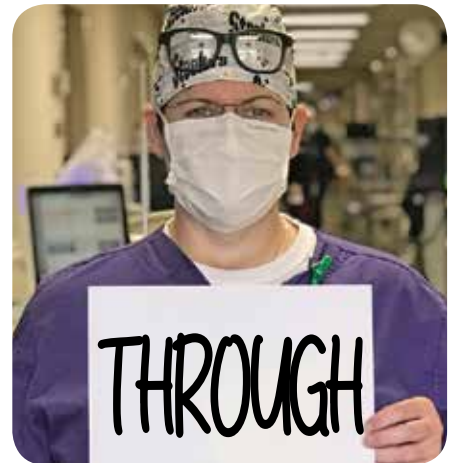


Healthy Living





Christine R. Wray, FACHE
President, MedStar St. Mary's Hospital
Senior Vice President, MedStar Health

Holly Bond Meyer
Healthy Living Editor

Jennifer Davis
Designer & Photographer

Deborah Gross
Writer

Ruby Hawks
Assistant Editor

Megan Johnson
Writer

Sandy Ondrejczak
Designer & Photographer

Win McNamee
Contributing Photographer,
Getty Images

Healthy Living is published by MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. The information is intended to inform and educate about health, not as a substitute for consultation with a physician.



Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

When St. Mary's Hospital was established in 1912, the facility housed just six patient beds in a home on Fenwick Street. At a time when the rent was \$10 per month (covered by Dr. Francis Greenwell, one of the hospital's seven founders), supportive community members turned up with what they could spare: eggs, lard, crabs. Even chickens.

More than a century later, our neighbors are still coming to our aid—now through the COVID-19 pandemic. While our supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other items remain strong, we are incredibly touched by the donations we've received. A cake of soap in 1912 has been swapped for N95 masks; coffee traded for 3D-printed face shields from our partners in the defense industry. A Mechanicsville resident recently dropped off a pack of surgical masks while his children peeked out from the backseat. He smiled through his own face covering, waving off our gratitude. "Just want to help however I can," he said.

That same spirit can be felt in every unit of our hospital. Through this crisis, our associates have been wearing many hats—stepping up and assuming new roles wherever needed. This hasn't been easy, but the impact has been great. To my colleagues: stand tall and know that the work you are doing matters, the care you are providing is essential, and the sacrifices you have made are appreciated. Thank you.

While our team has rallied, we know our neighbors have been heavily impacted as well. To have so many individuals, businesses, and groups reach out to bolster our supplies (and spirits!) has been humbling. I'm very proud of the work we do, and prouder still to be a part of such a generous community. While we have been physically distant, I feel many of us have become closer than ever.

We are all living through history—some of which we've tried to capture in this special edition of *Healthy Living*. It's a time we will reflect upon in the years to come and ask, "How did we get through that?" While we can't fully answer that question now, we will find a way—together.

Through this time of reflection and purpose, remember that behind our masks we remain your neighbors, family, and friends. We're here for you, and I thank you profusely for all the ways you continue to be there for us.

Warm regards,

Christine R. Wray
Christine R. Wray

ON OUR COVER: Pictured from top left are MedStar St. Mary's Hospital associates **Tony Brooks**, Security; **Jessica Heather**, RN, Nursing Resources & Occupational Health; **Betty Curtis**, Environmental Services; **Tyler Menseck**, Patient Access; **Dawn Yeitakis**, MS, RN, Chief Nursing Officer; **Suzanne Abell**, RRT, Respiratory Therapy; **Yahia Tagouri**, MD, Chair of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine; **Molly Abell**, RN, Three Central; **Linda Bazemore**, BSN, RN, Emergency Department.

Evolving together to tackle the COVID-19 crisis.

There's an unexpected calm that falls over a hospital during an emergency.

While the region heeds stay-at-home orders and news cycles grow more urgent, healthcare workers mask up and report to work. Associates and providers at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital continue our mission to serve the community during this major disruption to modern health care and everyday life.

MedStar Health has closely monitored the situation as terms like "social distancing" and "self-quarantine" entered the American vocabulary. In February, restrictions for staff based on travel history were put in place; by March, visitor policies were amended. Like other healthcare systems, elective surgeries were postponed, with many in-office appointments shifting to video visits.

As state leadership limited group sizes and closed non-essential businesses to help curtail the spread

of the virus, our team at MedStar St. Mary's has continued adapting to serve the community during COVID-19. From the Emergency Department (ED) to Respiratory Therapy, Rehabilitation Medicine to Imaging, our teams have seen daily operations transformed—sometimes by the hour.

"Dealing with such a fluid situation, we have been so impressed with the resilience of our staff," said Christine Wray, president of MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. "We are all grappling with personal concerns, worry for our loved ones—and to see our hospital family come together to take care of our patients and each other has been very heartening."

As the COVID-19 crisis intensified across the nation and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region, MedStar St. Mary's focused on preparation.



In partnership with the St. Mary's County Health Department, MedStar St. Mary's Hospital launched drive-up testing for COVID-19 on March 16. Meena Brewster, MD, county health officer, is pictured speaking with local media.

A new process for triaging patients with symptoms of coronavirus was instituted in the ED in early March. Our Facilities team converted more than 35 patient rooms into negative-pressure spaces, maximizing our ability to cohort patients and increasing our bed capacity.

Continued on page 4



Planning for an influx of critical patients remained a priority even as overall patient volumes stayed low into mid-April. Should demand exceed availability of critical care and emergency-trained nurses at MedStar St. Mary's, a unique team approach to nursing was developed to ensure patients would be well cared for in challenging circumstances.

During a time of uncertainty regarding how far the disease would spread, surge plans included consideration for additional care locations, if needed. The National Guard and St. Mary's County Emergency Operations Command (EOC) erected a surge tent outside the ED. MedStar Health sent additional ventilators and other essential equipment to keep on-site. "Delivering great care takes an entire

team," said Stephen Michaels, MD, chief operating officer and chief medical officer at MedStar St. Mary's. "We have been well-equipped as part of a network of resources through the Maryland Department of Health, St. Mary's County Health Department, the EOC, and MedStar Health."

Here at MedStar St. Mary's, Supply Chain personnel have monitored use of personal protective equipment (PPE) at a time when good stewardship of resources is especially crucial. Environmental Services adopted new cleaning methods to effectively sanitize rooms and bolster infection prevention. Food & Nutrition Services changed self-serve dining options to pre-packaged items. Marketing, Public Relations & Philanthropy began producing daily communications for associates with vital news during

the pandemic, among many other tasks. "Every associate has had an essential role to play," said Dr. Michaels. "We are extremely proud of the frontline care delivered by our nurses and medical staff. We also can't speak highly enough of our teams throughout the hospital, who have adapted to keep everything running smoothly during this emergency."

Many associates have adopted new roles, such as staffing our drive-through COVID-19 testing site at the Outpatient Pavilion. In partnership with the St. Mary's County Health Department, MedStar St. Mary's was one of the first facilities in the region

to offer drive-up testing beginning March 16. To get up and running quickly, a delivery model previously used to administer curbside flu shots was modified to screen for coronavirus. Hundreds of patients were tested within the first weeks.

MedStar St. Mary's was also the first to launch on-site COVID-19 testing for inpatients and healthcare workers in Southern Maryland. As testing abilities grew, the Laboratory team began to train on newly-installed equipment and process samples at our hospital in early April. More than 1,000 tests had been completed at our hospital by mid-month. In-house testing has since expanded to all MedStar Health hospitals.

"While this has been a very difficult time for our area, nation, and the world, we also know challenges like this create strong people," said Dr. Michaels. "We've all had our daily lives upended. But we have also seen great teamwork, innovation, and genuine care for others. It's been a tough time, but also a proud time for our hospital and community."

A multidisciplinary team at MedStar St. Mary's, pictured top left, practices prying ahead of a potential surge of patients needing care. Pictured center, a nurse dons personal protective equipment before seeing a patient diagnosed with COVID-19. Above, a Laboratory team member processes samples as part of the hospital's in-house testing program.

Pictured below left, the U.S. National Guard erects a surge tent outside the Emergency Department for use as needed. The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, pictured center, provided daily security for drive-through testing. An associate in Environmental Services, pictured below, is one of the many hardworking staff members who has employed new cleaning methods to strengthen infection prevention.



Need a doctor?

Telehealth options mean "stay-at-home" isn't "go-without-care."

Anytime care

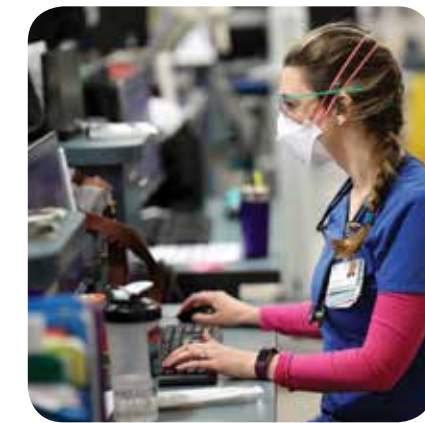
See a provider at your convenience with **MedStar eVisit**. As a service to the community, visits are currently **free** during the COVID-19 crisis.

Go to [MedStar-eVisit.com](https://www.medsstar-evisit.com) to get started.

Regular visits

- Call your provider's office to see if a **MedStar Health Video Visit** is right for your appointment.
- If so, our team will schedule you just like we would a routine office appointment.
- You'll receive a link via email/text message to connect with your provider by video from your tablet, smartphone, or computer.

Go to [MedStarHealth.org/mhs/medstar-health-video-visits/](https://www.medsstarhealth.org/mhs/medstar-health-video-visits/) to learn more, or contact your provider.



Thank you, associates and providers!

No matter how you label it—a crisis, an epidemic, a pandemic—our staff and medical providers have been present every day making sure MedStar St. Mary's Hospital is ready to take care of our community.

As so many were asked to stay home to stop the spread and be safe, our team has faced the dangers of this disease every day just by showing up to work. They have gone above and beyond to quickly adapt procedures and put in place new protocols on an almost daily basis. They have sharpened their skills with additional training, taken on new responsibilities, and have developed innovative ways to deliver unprecedented care.

They have risen to the occasion and met the challenges head on with integrity, resilience, and stamina.

We are currently in a marathon, not a sprint. This virus will reshape our lives for months, if not years to come. As we come through this historic time and regain our footing, our staff will continue to serve with bravery, professionalism and—most importantly—compassion.

Thank you to every one of our team members who have stepped up to face this invisible enemy. You are the heroes of the hour and your work is shaping history.



Feeding the positive.

As daily reports deliver somber news about the still-unfolding COVID-19 medical crisis, we asked several of our medical staff and associates to tell us what is keeping them going and what is giving them hope and strength during this worldwide pandemic.



Mark Manguerra, MD, Internal Medicine/Infectious Disease

“Being in a position to be of help to patients in a time of dire need is quite grounding by itself. But when I’m off work, there’s plenty of DIY at home to get through and keep me active! To keep positive, I remind myself that the better we stick to social distancing, the sooner this will be over, with the lowest number of people affected. That, and the Post-It next to my desk with a running list of places that I need to visit and road trips I need to take once this is over. My friends and I have become way more affectionate when we’re communicating. I find myself expressing my appreciation for them more. I’m certain they’re surprised to hear me say words like ‘I miss you!’—just not a thing I’d usually say pre-pandemic.”



Carla Emory, BSN, RN, Telemetry

“To get through this, I’ve been making sure I get plenty of rest and exercising on my days off—helps to relax my mind and stay positive. For me, the silver lining is the amount of teamwork throughout the hospital and the patients who are grateful for what we are doing for them.”



Jean Pierre El Khoury, MD, Intensivist

“I am reflecting on my whole life. It is a big transition when your daily habits are frozen in time. It is a good time to reflect on what was good and what was bad. Sometimes you need an external shock to recognize bad habits and reevaluate your life and your goals. As hard as this is, it highlights the areas where we aren’t prepared. Also, during these tough times you discover who people are—who cares and who doesn’t. It challenges relationships and it’s bringing families together.”



James Damalouji, MD, Emergency Medicine

“To stay healthy, I am exercising, and taking extra vitamin C and spending quality time with my family and appreciating the time I am getting to spend with them. I am also practicing appropriate social distancing, wearing a mask in public, and making sure when I have a shift in the Emergency Department, that I am following all protocols to avoid being infected with the virus. As far as the hospital goes, the hospital itself has shown a remarkable ability to adapt and to cohesively meet the challenge head-on. The comradery and collegiality of the administration, physician staff, nursing staff, respiratory therapy, clerical staff, and facilities has been tremendous. In retrospect, if there was ever any doubt about aligning ourselves with MedStar Health, it should now never be questioned. Our partnership with MedStar has helped guide us through the challenges we are experiencing as a rural hospital. The system resources have been fantastic.”



Stephen Michaels, MD, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Medical Officer

“Who knew it would take a worldwide pandemic to showcase the finer qualities of the human spirit? From my vantage point, I have observed an outpouring of sacrifice, dedication, caring, cooperation, and teamwork from so many people throughout St. Mary’s County. Our associates and providers develop policies and procedures and train endlessly to develop a High Reliability Culture to deliver the best care to our patients. The proof of concept, however, comes when an organization is stressed. I am humbled by all who kept to their training and, with a firm eye on our mission, fearlessly took care of very sick patients while putting themselves and their families at risk.

“Likewise, it was also extremely reassuring to see the close cooperation between the Emergency Services team, county government, and the Health Department. A real coordinated, collaborative approach to this crisis has taken place and will help keep our residents safer. This type of synergistic cooperation is not happening in all locales throughout the country. Also, the support from restaurants, businesses, and individuals has truly touched everyone here and made our tough jobs easier. The spirit of the people of St. Mary’s County has truly been amazing, and we should all feel lucky and blessed to be in this community!”



Teresa Brannigan, MSN, RN, CIC Infection Preventionist

“The amount of teamwork between departments has been incredible. I have seen so many people drop what they are doing to help out someone in need without being asked. Tackling this crisis is a huge undertaking, the depth of conversation behind the scenes among our leadership has been extensive. I am blessed to have a very supportive husband and daughter who have been staying at home throughout the pandemic. It’s a joy to come home after a long day to both of them—and an added bonus that the dishes are done and dinner is ready when I arrive.”

You've **provided...** hope and encouragement.



Thank You for helping and caring for others!

Not all heroes wear capes!

THANK YOU!
BROWNIE TROOP # 10026

You are doing the impossible!



You've **shared...** strength through meals and refreshments.



Thank you for supporting us— in ways both **big and small.**

Before the COVID-19 crisis had even reached our county, the phones at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital began to ring—and haven't stopped. From "Can we drop off lunch?" to "I'm bringing masks over now," our community has equipped us with vital supplies, helped us problem-solve, and lifted our spirits. Through 3D-printed face shields, fresh coffee during long shifts, and everything in between, we are so grateful for your support. Thank you!



You've **considered...** our current challenges, then provided innovative solutions like 3D-printed supplies.



Please note: some photos throughout *Healthy Living* were taken prior to the release of social-distancing and face mask guidelines. Individuals may be standing closer together than the current 6-foot recommendation.

You've **donated...** peace of mind with additional supplies, masks, and equipment.





MedStar Health

It's how we **treat people.**

NON PROFIT
U.S. Postage
PAID
Automated Graphic
Systems

25500 Point Lookout Rd.
Leonardtown, MD 20650

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital



Read us online!

[MedStarStMarys.org/HealthyLiving](https://www.MedStarStMarys.org/HealthyLiving)

[MedStarStMarys.org/Espanol](https://www.MedStarStMarys.org/Espanol)

Foundation of generosity continues to support our community hospital.

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital was born from a spirit of generosity.

"When our hospital began, the community supported it through donations of whatever they could offer," said Christine Wray, president of MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. "Residents of St. Mary's County wanted their own hospital and they invested in it and supported it any way they could. Decades later, our community continues to offer its unwavering support and our staff is extremely touched by the generosity."

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, its staff, and medical providers are grateful for the many donations the community has offered in support of our hospital during this uncertain time.

"Every department is working to make sure we are ready to take care of our community," said Holly Meyer, director of Marketing, Public Relations & Philanthropy. "It is so incredibly heartwarming and reassuring that our community also wants to take care of us."

Ways you can help.

This is a critical time for caregivers and patients. As a non-profit hospital, our goal is to continue providing the highest quality care to our patients. To help us accomplish this, two emergency funds have been created to support our staff and hospital during this historic time.

- **Associate Emergency Support Fund:**
For staff facing emergency and crisis situations
- **COVID-19 Critical Needs Fund:**
To help offset unanticipated expenses related to the pandemic

Visit [MedStarHealth.org/COVID-19](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/COVID-19) for more information and other ways to help.

