

Vital Signs

Endocrinologist Brings Expertise to BCMH Specialty Clinics

Susana D'Amico, M.D., FACE, has joined the Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) Specialty Clinics, bringing the services of a board-certified endocrinologist to the community for the first time.

As an endocrinologist, Dr. D'Amico diagnoses and treats patients with diseases of the endocrine system, including diabetes and obesity; and thyroid, adrenal and pituitary gland disorders.

"There is a need in the community for endocrinology care, especially with how common diabetes and obesity now are," Dr. D'Amico said. "Many patients have been driving to the city to see an endocrinologist, and are pleased this specialty is now available closer to their homes."

She added that BCMH has the support services necessary to treat patients with diabetes and other endocrine disorders. "We have a diabetes educator, nutritionist, podiatrist and wound care team for our diabetes patients," she said. "With these services, along with the latest medications and insulin analogs, CGM technology and insulin pumps, we can help patients better control their diabetes and stay healthier."

For patients with possible thyroid disorders, BCMH offers tests such

as thyroid ultrasound and fine needle biopsy.

Originally from Venezuela, Dr. D'Amico earned her medical degree from the Universidad Central de Venezuela. She came to the United States to perform her residency in internal medicine at the Hospital of Saint Raphael, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, Conn. She completed her fellowship in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas.

She joined Saint Luke's Health System in May 2017 after eight years at Truman Medical Center-Lakewood as a consultant in endocrinology. She was a Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

She is board certified in endocrinology, and is a fellow of the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists.



Susana D'Amico, M.D., FACE

To schedule an appointment with Dr. D'Amico, call the BCMH Specialty Clinics at 660-200-7006.



Reducing the Risk of Antibiotic Resistance

Antibiotics and similar drugs, together called antimicrobial agents, have been used for the last 70 years to treat patients who have infectious diseases. Since the 1940s, these drugs have greatly reduced illness and death.

However, antibiotics have been used so widely and for so long that the infectious organisms they are designed to kill have adapted to them, making the drugs less effective today.

In fact, each year in the United States, at least 2 million people become infected with bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics, and at least 23,000 people die annually as a direct result of these infections.

“Antibiotics are powerful, lifesaving drugs when prescribed and used appropriately,” says Mark Jones, R.Ph., Director of the Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) Pharmacy. “But if overused, the patient can become antibiotic resistant, creating an even more serious health problem.”

Missouri is one of the states the Centers for Disease Control has identified where antibiotics are frequently over-prescribed. “At Bates County Memorial Hospital, we’re committed to a Missouri Hospital Association initiative called antibiotic stewardship,” Mark says. The hospital also is working to meet the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid requirements, and Mark is pursuing additional education on this important issue.

“Our goal is to be sure antibiotics are prescribed only for bacterial infections, not for viruses, like a common cold or the flu,” Mark says.

Mark Jones, R.Ph., ▶
Director of the BCMh Pharmacy

Most unnecessary antibiotics are prescribed for respiratory conditions caused by viruses – including common colds, viral sore throats, bronchitis, and sinus and ear infections – which do not respond to antibiotics.

What’s all this mean for you?

In addition to the hospital doing its best to be sure antibiotics are appropriately prescribed, your health care provider also will be more cautious about writing a prescription for antibiotics.

“I know we would all like to just take a pill that helps us get over our cold or flu faster, but that’s not how antibiotics work. Symptom relief is usually the best treatment,” Mark says.

“Taking unneeded antibiotics for a sore throat or an ear infection may lead to future antibiotic-resistant infections, which is a far more serious threat to patient and public health,” Mark adds.

In the meantime, you can avoid drug-resistant infections by making sure you are up to date on immunizations, you prepare food safely, wash your hands frequently, and use antibiotics only when necessary and as directed.

“Our commitment at Bates County Memorial Hospital is to always use antibiotics appropriately and safely, only when they are needed to treat disease,” Mark says. “This is the best way to be sure we keep our patients healthy.”



Bates County Memorial Hospital is proud to participate in the public safety campaign from the Missouri Department of Transportation, “Buckle Up, Phone Down.” The campaign encourages everyone to fasten their safety belts and put their phones down while driving.

Swing Bed Program Allows Patients to Recover Closer to Home

Like many older adults, 77-year-old Gary VanKirk has a complex health history, including diabetes and congestive heart failure. But the Montrose man's health problems multiplied last winter when he stepped out of his truck and felt his left ankle twist, then snap.

Gary VanKirk (red shirt) ▶ and his health care team.



After surgery to repair his ankle at a hospital nearly 70 miles from Montrose, Gary developed a staph infection, a condition that required more intense care than he could receive at home, but not serious enough for admission to a hospital ICU.

Though he was in another facility, Gary asked if it was possible to continue his recovery closer to home. “Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) is only 15 miles from Montrose, and I consider it my hospital,” Gary says. His doctor agreed to his request, and transferred him to the BCMh Swing Bed Program.

Swing beds are special skilled nursing beds available to patients who may have been hospitalized for surgery, an illness or an injury, either at BCMh or another facility.

Typically, these patients are ready to be released from an acute care setting, but need further skilled nursing care or rehabilitation services, such as speech, occupational and/or physical therapies.

In addition to dedicated “swing” beds, the BCMh program includes separate activities and dining rooms for these patients. Patients wear their street clothes, not hospital gowns, and focus on recovering and regaining the skills and strength to help them reach an optimal level of strength and wellness.

“We want our patients to get up and get stronger,” says Darla Engelbrecht, MSN-Ed, R.N. Case Manager at BCMh. “Our goal is to help them transition from the hospital to home or another facility.” Darla adds that patients in the Swing Bed Program at BCMh are usually with them for a limited time, say one to two weeks.

To qualify for the Swing Bed Program, the patient must:

- > Be medically stable.
- > Have a skilled need, such as physical, occupational or speech therapies, complex wound care or IV medication administration.
- > Have been in the hospital for three consecutive inpatient overnight stays.
- > Be willing to participate in the program.

Though insurance coverage can be complex, Medicare pays for the first 20 days of a patient’s stay in a swing bed program, as do many commercial insurance policies. Medicaid, however, does not cover a swing bed stay.

For Gary, his 10-day stay in the BCMh Swing Bed Program helped him regain his strength through physical therapy, and he received the IV antibiotic therapy he needed to get the staph infection under control. Today, he continues his recovery at his Montrose home, with assistance from area home health services.

“The hospital’s Swing Bed Program was wonderful for me. I didn’t want to be at a hospital in the city, and I wasn’t sick enough that I needed to be in the ICU,” Gary says. “They took great care of me and helped me get back home. I would recommend Bates County to anyone. They’re good people, good doctors and a good hospital.”

For more information, including how to transfer from another hospital to the BCMh Swing Bed Program, contact Darla at 660-200-7115.



Expert Wound Care Heals Butler Woman

When Butler resident Patsy Withrow broke her right heel in February 2016, she had no idea the injury would turn into a difficult-to-heal wound requiring months and months of treatment.

“I had surgery to repair the heel, but it didn’t hold,” Patsy says. Instead, inserting the plate and screws to make the repair, then removing them, left her with a wound that just wouldn’t heal.

After a brief stay in a nursing home, Patsy saw the Wound Care team at Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh), hoping they could help.

In existence for nearly two decades, the program features three health care professionals who are all certified in wound care by the Wound Care Education Institute. They include Jaime Marsh, P.T., WCC; Kennette Bilyeu, P.T., WCC; and Andrea Brown, P.T.A., WCC. Kennette also is a CLS-certified lymphedema specialist and is diabetic wound certified.

Together, they take care of patients with wounds resulting from pressure ulcers, burns, surgeries or diabetes, and which have not healed with conventional treatment.

Often these patients require two to three visits with a wound care specialist initially to get their wound care under control, then they can reduce the frequency of visits as the wound heals.

That was the case for Patsy. “At first, I came for treatments three times a week,” she says. “I’ve seen Jaime, Kennette and Andrea. They’ve all done a marvelous job!”

Complicating Patsy’s wound care was the fact that she also has diabetes. Many other patients have a wide range of health issues that prevent their wounds from healing, too. These include:

- > Infection
- > Something inside the wound (piece of wood, glass, etc.)
- > Poor health
- > Smoking
- > Some medications
- > Out-of-control diabetes
- > A poorly functioning immune system
- > Age (the healing process slows down as age increases)
- > Skin cancer

The BCMh Wound Care team specializes in using a variety of wound care products, including the wound vac. “The wound vac is a negative pressure wound therapy that includes placing a foam dressing in the wound bed, then using a tube hooked to a small canister to basically vacuum the infection out of the wound,” explains Jaime. “The treatment increases blood flow and helps control the bacterial load. It’s very successful when used in patients who have heavily draining wounds.”

◀ Patsy Withrow, center, with her Wound Care team, Kennette Bilyeu, Andrea Brown and Jaime Marsh.

Other treatments available include:

- > Wound debridement for stubborn necrotic tissue, including bio-debridement
- > Pulse lavage
- > Dressing changes
- > Compression therapy for venous ulcers or lymphedema
- > Advanced wound care products

“Jaime, Kennette and Andrea have created a wound care program that is a highlight of our hospital and a great service to the county,” says Scott Ridings, Director of BCMh Rehabilitation Services. “They work in collaboration with our physicians and surgeons to provide our patients with a level of care not readily available, even at facilities in the city.”

Patsy agrees. Though her wound isn’t completely healed, it’s gone from three to four inches in width at its peak, to smaller than a dime. “I’m hoping my foot will be completely healed by Christmas, but it’s a very slow process.”

“The work they are doing for me at BCMh has been wonderful,” Patsy adds. “I’m proud of our hospital. I wouldn’t think of going anywhere else!”

DO YOU NEED ADVANCED WOUND CARE?

Often, patients wait to see if their wound or sore will heal on its own, only to have it grow larger and become infected. In addition, the team says home remedies, like peroxide or rubbing alcohol, can make the wound worse.

According to the BCMh Wound Care team, see your doctor immediately if you experience any of these signs that your wound isn’t healing:

- > Redness and increased swelling
- > Soreness and pain
- > Odor
- > Increased drainage



Contact the hospital’s Rehabilitation Services Department at 660-200-7073 to schedule an appointment with one of the certified wound care specialists.

Q&A

Frequently Asked Questions About Your Hospital Bill

BCMh Revenue Cycle Director, Margaret Gregg says, "Medical billing is complicated even for those of us who work with it on a daily basis. There are many governmental regulations and each payor has a different set of rules." She would like to share some information that she hopes is helpful.

Q. Why does health care cost so much?

A. There's no denying health care is expensive. BCMh has successfully been able to prevent the need for price increases for the past two years, but during this time we have seen a significant increase in the patient's responsibility. In an effort to reduce their insurance premiums, we are seeing our patients with much larger deductibles. In the past, the average deductible was \$250 to \$500, and now it is \$1,200 to \$2,500. To avoid confusion, be sure to check your plan to be aware of your deductible and your total out-of-pocket expenses for the year and ask for an estimate when possible.

Q. Why do I get so many bills for the same hospitalization or outpatient visit?

A. The hospital bills are for the facility portion of your care, which may also include anesthesia, ambulance and any contracted physicians. Depending on your service, you may receive a separate bill from the Saint Luke's hospitalists, Alliance Radiology, Electric City Emergency Physicians and any non-contracted specialist.

Q. Why did I receive a bill for my wellness visit?

A. One of the benefits under the Affordable Care Act is for those who have health insurance coverage to receive an annual wellness visit, without any out-of-pocket expense. To take advantage of this benefit, you will need to schedule an appointment with your primary

care provider. Specify the reason for the appointment is for your "Wellness Visit." To be classified as a "Wellness Visit," it will require you to be symptom-free when you see your provider. It is important to confirm that your health care provider and their staff know you are being seen for your "Wellness Visit." This will ensure the visit is billed correctly as preventive care.

If you see your provider for a specific problem (for example, high blood pressure or diabetes) this is not considered preventive care, and is subject to out-of-pocket costs and deductibles.

Q. Can I find out how much my bill will be before I have a service or procedure?

A. One of our Patient Benefit Advisors would be happy to provide you with a cost estimate for any of the services BCMh provides. You may call them at 660-200-2370. Be sure to inquire about our 20 percent discount if your payment is made in advance.

Q. Does the hospital offer a financial assistance program?

A. BCMh provides financial assistance for certain Bates County residents who receive emergency or other medically necessary care. To apply for financial assistance, you will be asked to complete a written application, as well as provide income and supporting documentation, as described in the Financial Assistance Policy. You may find the policy and the Financial Assistance Application on our website or you may call to request a copy, at 660-200-7314.

BCMh has several qualified on-site representatives who can assist you with your billing questions. Please call our toll-free number, 866-492-4703, to speak with one of them. You may visit the hospital website at www.bcmhospital.com for more information.

How to Join the BCMh Auxiliary

The Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) Auxiliary is a special group of men and women who come together for one purpose: to provide support to the hospital staff and raise funds to purchase medical equipment and room furnishings. Over the years, the BCMh Auxiliary has raised several thousand dollars to help the hospital purchase needed items to provide quality patient care.

BCMh volunteers enjoy planning and organizing fundraising events such as the annual bazaar and bake sale, and other special projects. Volunteers share a few hours each week performing a wide range of duties. They work in the Gift Shop, staff the Information Desk and assist in various hospital departments.

Volunteers receive recognition for hours of service and free meals while volunteering. Most important, volunteers have the satisfaction of knowing they are making a contribution to providing quality health care in the community.

Join the BCMh Auxiliary by calling 660-200-7044, or pick up an application at the hospital Information Desk in the front lobby.

UPCOMING BCMh AUXILIARY EVENTS

SALE

Garage Sale

Friday, Sept. 29, 2017
7 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the
BCMh Education Center



Operation Sock-It-To-Me

The BCMh Auxiliary is sponsoring this community project to collect socks for girls and boys kindergarten through grade 12. Please drop off new socks, in the package, at the hospital's information desk, or at any of our Family Care Clinics by Oct. 31. The socks will be distributed to children at area schools.



Welcome Bethany Fast!

Bethany Fast, MSN, FNP-C, family nurse practitioner, has recently joined the Bates County Memorial Hospital Family Care Clinics. Bethany sees patients at the High Street Family Care Clinic in Butler.

Bethany earned her master of science in nursing degree as a family nurse practitioner from Cox College, Springfield, Mo. She also received her associate's and bachelor's degrees in nursing from Cox. Currently, she is pursuing certification as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. She serves as a clinical instructor at Crowder College. Most recently, she worked at Nevada Regional Medical Center.



She cares for a broad range of health care issues, from acute to chronic conditions.

To schedule an appointment with Bethany, call 660-200-DOCS (3627) or toll-free 855-414-3627.

Need a Primary Care Provider?



Call 660-200-DOCS (3627) or toll-free 855-414-3627.

Bates County Memorial Hospital's Family Care Clinics located in Butler, Adrian and Rich Hill are accepting new patients.

- **Adrian Family Care Clinic (Adrian)**
 - Glenn Gardner, MS, PA-C
 - Laura Thiem, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC
- **High St. Family Care Clinic (Butler)**
 - William Haynie, M.D.
 - James Patterson, D.O.
 - Bethany Fast, BSN, MSN, FNP-C
- **Nursery St. Family Care Clinic (Butler)**
 - James Miller, D.O.
 - Glenn Gardner, MS, PA-C
 - Megan Reno, PA-C
- **Rich Hill Family Care Clinic (Rich Hill)**
 - Misty Tourtillott, MSN, APRN, FNP-C

BCMH Specialty Clinics

Bates County Memorial Hospital makes quality health care convenient for area residents by bringing medical specialists to our community on a regular basis. To schedule an appointment with one of the specialists, contact the number below.

Cardiology

Jeffrey Bissing, D.O. 660-200-7006
 Gerald Mancuso, M.D. 913-956-2250
 Craig Lundgren, M.D. 913-956-2250
 Jin Park, M.D. 913-956-2250
 Francisco Lammoglia, M.D. 913-956-2250

Endocrinology

Susana D'Amico, M.D. 660-200-7006

Gastroenterology

Donald Clement, M.D. 660-200-7006
 Todd Kilgore, M.D. 660-200-7006

General Surgery

William Joyce, D.O. 660-200-7134

Nephrology

Ryan Lustig, M.D. 660-200-7006
 Barry Wood, M.D. 660-200-7006

Oncology

Timothy Pluard, M.D. 660-200-7006
 Aimee Kohn, M.D. 660-200-7006

Ophthalmology

Joseph Parelman, M.D. 800-628-4258

Orthopedics

Danny Carroll, M.D. 816-322-0688
 James Whitaker, M.D. 660-200-7006

Pain Management

Roger Misasi, M.D. 800-858-8131

Podiatry

Robert Shemwell, D.P.M. 660-200-7006

Psychology/Counseling

Jerry Morris, Psy.D., MBA, MSPHarm, 660-200-7528
 ABPP, ABMP, NBCC, NCSP, CCM

Pulmonary

Timothy Smith, M.D. 660-200-7006

Urology

Robert F. Smith, M.D. 660-200-7006
 William Wilson, M.D. 660-200-7006

**For more information
 visit www.bcmhospital.com.**



NOVEMBER 17

is the Great American Smokeout!

For more information on how to quit,
 visit www.cancer.org.

Technology Makes eICU Concept a Reality

The Bates County Memorial Hospital Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is now equipped with the sophisticated technology needed to provide patients with more advanced monitoring and care than ever before.

Called the electronic ICU, or eICU, this program is a partnership with Saint Luke's Hospital that utilizes advanced telemedicine technology, along with a trained physician and experienced critical care nurses who monitor the hospital's ICU patients 24/7.

"We still provide our patients with the same care and monitoring we always have at BCMH," explains Jennifer Klinksick, R.N., Med-Surg/Critical Care Unit Manager. "But the eICU is basically an extra set of eyes for the patient and for us. It's like having two medical teams watching over you—one here and one at the Saint Luke's eICU Center," she says.

How does the eICU work for patients at the hospital?

"The patients in our four-bed unit still have their same medical team here at the hospital, including our nursing staff, the hospitalists and their primary care provider," Jennifer says. Vital signs, medications, blood test results, X-rays, and other information from bedside monitors are sent to the Saint Luke's eICU Center using private, secure, high-speed data lines. This information is displayed on computers for analysis by the eICU team. Patients also can be examined using special cameras when necessary, and the eICU Center team can talk directly with hospital doctors and nurses.

"The eICU team watches for trends in the patient's lab results, and vital signs, for example," Jennifer explains. "If they identify a possible issue, they communicate with our staff and the patient's physician about the situation, and develop a plan of care." Your doctor makes all final decisions regarding care, along with the family and patient.

Often, this early intervention can help prevent a more serious complication, making it possible for the hospital to care for more critically ill patients, rather than



Jennifer Klinksick, R.N., Med-Surg/Critical Care Unit Manager.

transferring them to an out-of-town facility. "The eICU helps patients stay closer to home, and closer to family and friends during a stressful hospitalization," Jennifer adds.

There is no charge to intensive care patients for the eICU service, and those who do not wish to take advantage of the technology may opt out of it.

VitalSigns is published routinely by Bates County Memorial Hospital for the education and information of our community. Any reproduction must be approved in writing by our editor.

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Please direct any comments or suggestions to our editor:

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Check out our new Facebook page and stay up to date on the latest news at BCMH!





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VitalSigns



BCMh Provides Four-Star Care!



Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) is focused on providing patients with the best care and experience possible, but how can you check out the hospital's performance?

Visit Hospital Compare, a consumer-oriented website that provides information on how well hospitals perform on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey.

This information can help you make informed decisions about where to go for health care. Hospital Compare allows you to select multiple hospitals and directly compare performance measure information related to conditions and patient experience.

In the case of BCMh, the hospital has a four-star rating and has made significant improvements in care related to quietness and pain management, according to Jennifer Klinksick, R.N., Med/Surg and Critical Care Unit Manager.

"We have worked very hard to improve our scores, and in almost every category rank at or above state and national averages," Jennifer says. "We're very proud of the care we provide."

Scores on the website are based on feedback from participants who have been inpatients at the hospital. Following dismissal, you may receive a call from the hospital's survey vendor, Press Ganey, at 574-309-9553, asking if you would be willing to take the survey.

"If you have been an inpatient, please take the time to participate in the survey if you receive a call," Jennifer adds. "Your responses provide us with valuable feedback so that we can continue to take great care of our community!"

For more information on the Hospital Compare initiative, visit the website at www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare and select the "Survey of Patients' Experiences" tab.