

# HEALTH MATTERS

## AN EPIC ACHIEVEMENT

CUTTING-EDGE HEALTH RECORD SYSTEM p. 8

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DON'T MISS THE HEALTH FAIR p. 5

GOING ALL IN ON PRIMARY CARE p. 12

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT p. 18

# HEALTH MATTERS

FALL 2022

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**HEALTH MATTERS** is a bi-annual magazine published by Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) to inform residents of the Roaring Fork Valley about the continuous improvements and investments AVH and its Network of Care clinics are making to ensure the long health and vitality of our residents and community. Leadership are current at time of printing.



# ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL



## on the COVER

Epic's MyChart app allows patients to manage their own health records and interact with their care team wherever and whenever. Read about Epic and MyChart starting on page 8.

## our MISSION

To deliver extraordinary healthcare in an environment of excellence, compassion and trust.

## our VISION

To foster our community as the healthiest in the nation.

## our VALUES

Patient-centered Care • Accountability • Respect for Others  
• Integrity • Teamwork





## SHARE YOUR STORY!

**HEALTH MATTERS** would like to hear how AVH made a positive impact for you or a loved one. Please email [communityrelations@aspenhospital.org](mailto:communityrelations@aspenhospital.org) so that we may consider your story for an upcoming issue and inspire others on their journeys.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

With regards to employment, access to, or provision of care, Aspen Valley Hospital District (AVHD) shall provide all individuals with the full and equal enjoyment of the services, privileges, facilities, advantages and accommodations without discrimination, as required by Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010. AVHD shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (which includes gender-based discrimination), disability, religion, age or veteran status. Gender-based discrimination includes discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression and nonconformity with sex stereotypes.





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We are honored to have our community's trust and support, and we hope this issue of *Health Matters* demonstrates that we will work hard to continue to be deserving of it.

As your community hospital, and much more, we feel compelled to keep you informed about what and how we are doing. For this reason, we are excited to share with you this issue of *Health Matters*, in which we provide a whirlwind tour of our progress in keeping up with the healthcare needs of our growing and active community.

2021 was our first full year in our historic partnership with The Steadman Clinic and the Steadman Philippon Research Institute. While we knew our community would be excited about having the high caliber of Steadman Clinic surgeons on this side of the mountain, we have been amazed by the record levels of orthopedic activity at Aspen Valley Hospital, as patients from all over the country have entrusted our Steadman surgeons and our AVH staff with their care.

AVH has also continued to expand our primary care services with the addition of internal medicine physician Dr. Caroline Mears. She and our Aspen Valley Primary Care team are an important part of our AVH Network of Care and our focus on providing services that maintain the health and wellbeing of our community. Through our collaboration with our partners in the **Valley Health Alliance** — which include primary care physicians from here to Parachute, several of Aspen's largest employers and neighboring hospitals — we were thrilled to introduce new health coverage in our community from Rocky Mountain Valley Health Plans with lower individual premiums and increased access to quality healthcare by our community.

2021 was also the momentous year in which AVH started the process of becoming one of the first small and independent hospitals in the country to implement the gold standard of electronic health records, Epic. Our patients will immediately notice the difference with a fully integrated system that can connect AVH and our physicians to hospitals and health systems across the country, enabling their doctors to have the information they need to provide optimal care.

We are honored to have our community's trust and support, and we hope this issue of *Health Matters* demonstrates that we will work hard to continue to be deserving of it.

Yours in Good Health,

Dave Ressler  
Chief Executive Officer

# BE PROACTIVE

*The 2022 Health Fair can help you take charge of your health!*

**A**ttending a health fair should be high up on your list of annual to-dos. The blood tests you find at the health fair are vital to monitoring your health, and Aspen Valley Hospital is offering a convenient and affordable way to get these screenings done.

The Hospital's mission is to put information in your hands so you can "know your numbers" and feel empowered to take charge of your health.

The following blood tests will be offered this year:

**HealthScreen with CBC Profile (\$70):** This test evaluates multiple metabolic functions, including blood sugar, kidney function and liver function.

**Hemoglobin A1C & EAG (\$35):** This can help detect type 1 and type 2 diabetes by measuring the amount of glycated hemoglobin in the blood.

**hsCardio CRP (\$35):** This is beneficial in assessing risk of developing heart disease, cardiovascular disease or other conditions involving inflammation.

**PSA (\$40):** PSA testing can detect abnormal conditions of the prostate gland and is particularly important for men with an increased risk of prostate cancer.

**Vitamin D (\$45):** This is used to determine bone weakness, bone malformation or abnormal metabolism of calcium due to too much, or too little, Vitamin D.

## 5 FACTS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- 1. Appointments are required:** To reserve your time, call **800-217-5866**, visit **[aspenhospital.org/health-fair](https://www.aspenhospital.org/health-fair)** or scan this QR code.
- 2. You need to fast for certain tests.** To help ensure accurate results, do not consume food in the 12 hours before your blood draw. (You can have water or black coffee.)
- 3. Masks are optional:** Per CDC guidelines (at time of print) for healthcare facilities, participants can choose whether or not to wear a mask. This is subject to change per federal, state and local guidelines.
- 4. Check-in will be held outside of the facility.** Please dress accordingly.
- 5. Payment will be collected at the time of your appointment.** Cash, checks, credit cards, debit cards and HSA cards all will be accepted.



## AWARENESS IS KEY

Getting preventive care reduces the risk of chronic disease. We hope you will take advantage of these deeply discounted screenings, and we look forward to seeing you at the health fair! ■



## 2022 HEALTH FAIR DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS

8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

### ASPEN

Aspen Valley Hospital  
0401 Castle Creek Road, Aspen

Thursday, November 10

Friday, November 11

Saturday, November 12

### BASALT

El Jebel Community Center  
20 Eagle County Road, El Jebel

Sunday, November 13



## MONTHLY EVENTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Second Monday of the month,  
at 5:30 p.m.

Meetings are available to the public via Zoom and are held in the Oden Conference Center at AVH (COVID permitting). You can access our monthly meeting information at [aspenhospital.org/events](https://aspenhospital.org/events).

## BLOOD DRIVE

In affiliation with Vitalant

This blood drive takes place at AVH and you must register ahead of time at [aspenhospital.org/events](https://aspenhospital.org/events). There are no walk in appointments available.

Tuesday, December 13

## ONGOING CLASSES AND EVENTS

### ASPEN BIRTH CENTER CLASSES

Aspen Birth Center offers the Childbirth Preparation Series, a six-week series of classes covering labor, delivery, relaxation, anesthesia, C-section, postpartum, breastfeeding and newborn care, for a total cost of \$75.

This class is offered multiple times throughout the year. Online registration is available at [aspenhospital.org](https://aspenhospital.org).



### BOSOM BUDDIES

This free support group is led by our lactation experts and provides professional and peer counseling for breastfeeding mothers. Now available in Spanish at El Jebel Community Center.

Call the Aspen Birth Center at **970.544.1130** to get more information and reserve your spot.

### CARDIAC REHABILITATION/ PULMONARY EXERCISE AND REHABILITATION

Monday - Friday at AVH

Surviving a heart attack or any other cardiovascular or pulmonary event doesn't end with a trip home from the hospital. These programs certified by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, help people reclaim the richness of an active life. For more information, call **970.544.1383**.

### DIABETES EDUCATION

In Aspen and Basalt

These ongoing classes offer education for those who are managing Type 1 or Type 2, gestational or pre-diabetes conditions. For more information, call **970.544.7394**.

### ONCOLOGY REHAB

Did you know that regular exercise can improve, or even alleviate, some of the troublesome symptoms of cancer treatment? Oncology Rehabilitation at AVH holistically addresses cancer-related symptoms during and after cancer treatment through cardiovascular exercise, resistance, balance and neuromuscular training in a supportive group environment. For class schedule information and to set up your preliminary interview, please contact Jeanne Stough at **970.544.1566** or at [jstough@aspenhospital.org](mailto:jstough@aspenhospital.org).

### DIETITIAN DEMOS

Multiple posts a month are hosted on our Instagram at [@aspenvalleyhospital](https://www.instagram.com/aspenvalleyhospital).

Registered Dietitians Lauren Mitchell, MS, RDN, CSSD, and Kristy Bates, RDN, will bring you recipes, best practices and helpful tips for staying your healthiest and most-fueled self while you plan your next adventure, whether that's a backpacking trip or just a trip to the park.

Check [aspenhospital.org/dietitian-demos](https://aspenhospital.org/dietitian-demos) for more information.

## HEALTH FAIR



We are delighted to invite you for a variety of deeply discounted lab tests so you can take charge of your health.

- Blood draws only
- By appointment only — no walk-ins

### ASPEN

Aspen Valley Hospital  
Thursday, November 10  
Friday, November 11  
Saturday, November 12

### EL JEBEL

El Jebel Community Center  
Sunday, November 13

For more details and to schedule your appointment, visit [aspenhospital.org/health-fair](https://aspenhospital.org/health-fair) or scan this QR code.



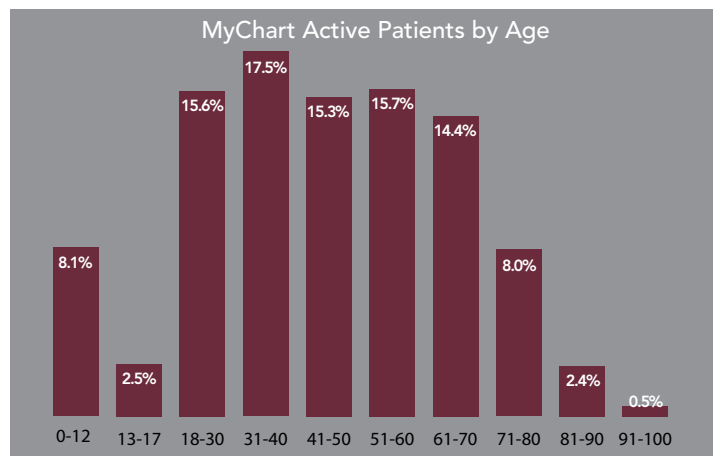
For more details on these upcoming events, visit [aspenhospital.org](https://aspenhospital.org).

# AN EPIC UNDERTAKING

The country's most widely used electronic health record, Epic, and its patient portal, MyChart, are now at Aspen Valley Hospital. Get to know more about the new system and how AVH achieved this historic implementation.



## 185.8 million



The MyChart patient portal is for everyone: snapshot of active MyChart members nationwide.

## 45

AVH members of the Epic project team who worked nearly a year to get the system up and running.



Different certifications that had to be earned by AVH's project team before starting the Epic implementation.



## 15,000

Hours of testing between May and September that were completed to ensure a successful launch.

To learn more about the revolutionary Epic electronic health records system and the MyChart patient portal, turn the page or visit [aspenhospital.org/mychart](http://aspenhospital.org/mychart).



# FOR THE RECORD

Aspen Valley Hospital has Epic,  
the gold standard in electronic health records



*Epic's patient portal, MyChart, allows patient to easily connect with a physician, schedule appointments, access test results and much more through a computer or mobile device.*

## An Epic Display of Teamwork

### IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

#### September 2021

Representatives from the Hospital's IT Steering Committee visit Epic headquarters in Verona, WI, to discuss the project scope and contract.

#### October 2021

AVH signs the contract with Epic. The hiring process begins to staff up the team responsible for implementing Epic. AVH posts 13 new jobs and gets more than 600 applicants.



**P**atients will now experience a significant upgrade to the care and services they receive from Aspen Valley Hospital's Network of Care. Epic, a comprehensive electronic health records (EHR) system, launched on October 1. And the benefits of this cutting-edge tool are nothing short of remarkable.

#### MODERNIZING PATIENT MEDICAL RECORDS

Epic is the leading EHR in the United States, and more than 268 million people in the U.S. and in 16 different countries have a record in Epic. Aspen Valley Hospital is now one of the smallest healthcare organizations in the nation to implement Epic as an independent organization, putting it on par with major hospitals and health systems throughout the country, including academic medical centers and specialty networks.

"Epic is the premier EHR in the United States and abroad," said Dave Ressler, AVH's Chief Executive Officer. "In fact, 90 percent of physicians at academic medical centers across the country are being trained on Epic. It is simply the best system on the market. Having Epic positions AVH among the top institutions dedicated to delivering the highest quality of patient care."

#### A SINGLE PATIENT RECORD = OPTIMAL CARE DELIVERY

One of Epic's most unique attributes is that the system is built on a single-patient database. This means that individuals have one electronic health record no matter where in the network they seek treatment. Rather than having various medical files with different providers, patients have the same exact record at all locations utilizing Epic.

"This decreases the patient's burden of having to combine health records or provide the same background information every time they see a new provider," said Michelle Gelroth, AVH's Chief Information Officer. "The single-record system allows providers across systems and geographies to work together to provide uninterrupted patient care."

Because Epic is the electronic medical record of choice for healthcare providers across Colorado and the country, providers will have the information necessary to assure optimal patient care delivery. Whether a patient is being referred to a larger center in Denver or coming to AVH after starting treatment at another facility, Epic will ensure the patient's data is available when needed.

#### A YEAR OF TESTING, TRAINING AND DUE DILIGENCE

Months prior to the October 1 launch, AVH formed multiple committees comprised of staff and physicians to evaluate Epic and examine the application, interfaces, hardware and functionality. During this process, the teams assessed workflows to verify the tool enhances the care experience for patients, providers and staff. In addition, Epic and AVH worked closely together on state-of-the-art security protocols.

"We take privacy and security very seriously," Gelroth said.

"We have instilled industry best practices to ensure access to records follows HIPAA requirements and are in alignment with long-standing policies and procedures to protect patient information."

One of Epic's most unique attributes is that the system is built on a single-patient database. This means that individuals have one electronic health record no matter where in the network they seek treatment.

#### January 2022

The team is finalized. Members then begin the months-long process of becoming certified on Epic.

#### February 2022

The Hospital holds an Epic Orientation Week for all staff to preview the system.

#### March 2022

As the team successfully becomes certified on Epic, they begin building out the system. AVH uses Epic's Foundation System as the basis, allowing for seamless future upgrades.

Staff training was another major initiative. Administrators, clinicians and staff were required to complete training requirements before receiving access to Epic. This helped confirm all staff members were fully prepared to use the system.

"Training does not end with the system going live," Gelroth said. "We have a robust support team to assist with the transition through at-the-elbow support and scheduled huddles addressing questions now that we are actively using the system. Additionally, we have post-implementation training classes established to ensure everyone becomes a more advanced user over time."

### OFF AND RUNNING

Since Epic was launched, staff have been singing its praises. This fully integrated system has enhanced patient care communications throughout AVH and its Network of Care.

"We can now share relevant patient information in real time, get notified of updates on labs and imaging, connect directly with medical, nursing and ancillary staff, and provide feedback directly to patients," said John "Bud" Glismann, MD, FACEP, Emergency Medicine Physician at AVH. "The easily accessed chart summaries and progress notes, in a structured format, have greatly facilitated communication between primary care and consultants."

Most importantly, these improvements benefit patients as best practice guidelines and safety measures are built into the system. This means there is much less room for error.

"Epic greatly improves patient safety and quality of care," Dr. Glismann said. "It reduces inaccuracies, helps eliminate redundant medical testing and facilitates dialogue between providers and patients."

### A TESTAMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Aspen Valley Hospital is only the second hospital with less than 400 beds in Colorado to have its own implementation. This is particularly impressive since not every small hospital, or even larger hospital, has the capacity and technical capabilities to implement Epic.

"Our capable Information Technology team and our existing infrastructure positioned us for a successful implementation," Ressler said. "We are proud that our Hospital now has the same electronic record sophistication as the most prestigious hospital systems in the country. And this didn't happen by accident. It's because of our Board of Directors' unwavering commitment to having the best and being the best." ■

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— DAVE RESSLER, AVH'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

#### April – May 2022

Numerous rounds of testing are conducted. The team thoroughly analyzes each component of the application, interfaces and hardware to verify connectivity and functionality.

#### June 2022

Readiness teams are formed to confirm preparedness for the October 1 go-live date. These groups implement staff training programs, update policies and procedures, and train a Super User team to assist with the transition.

#### July 2022

AVH begins holding Go-Live Readiness Drills, an all-hands status review to pinpoint areas needing further evaluation and improvement. These drills continue every 30 days to ensure the Hospital is prepared for the launch.

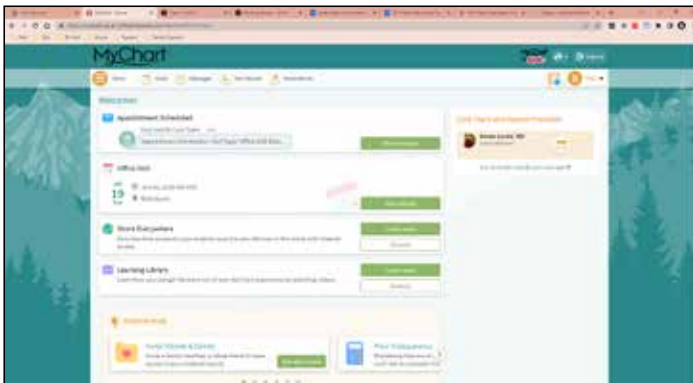


# MYCHART, MY WAY

*Take Your Health Record with You, Wherever You Go*

Thanks to Epic, you can now see your medications, test results, upcoming appointments, medical bills, price estimates and more all in one place — even if you've been seen at multiple healthcare organizations. It's called MyChart, and it's accessible by mobile app or desktop web browser.

"MyChart is Epic's portal for patients," said Michelle Gelroth, AVH's Chief Information Officer. "This portal allows patients to manage their own health records and interact with their care team from the comfort of their own homes."



Specifically, MyChart allows you to:

- **Access Test Results:** No more waiting for a letter. You can see results and doctor comments within days.
- **Schedule appointments and find care.** Make appointments at your convenience, complete pre-visit tasks from home, and find the nearest walk-in care, after-hours care or emergency room when you need it.
- **Connect with a doctor no matter where you are.** Send a message, talk face-to-face over video or arrange an in-person visit. Easily get answers to medical questions without having to make a phone call.
- **Request prescription refills.** Send a request for any of your refillable medications.
- **Share your medical record safely and securely.** Most healthcare providers can automatically access your information. But if they can't, you have the power to share your record on the spot.

"MyChart will significantly streamline the patient experience," said John "Bud" Glismann, MD, FACEP, Emergency Medicine Physician at AVH. "Patients will no longer have to fill out registration forms and medical history with each and every provider. The app even allows patients to check-in for appointments on their phones."

To create your MyChart account, simply visit **[mychart.aspenhospital.org](https://mychart.aspenhospital.org)**. If you need assistance, call **970.544.1556** Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email **[MyChart@aspenhospital.org](mailto:MyChart@aspenhospital.org)**. ■

## August 2022

Training ramps up for providers, clinicians and administrators. These activities include classroom training, user customization labs, proficiency assessments and more.

## September 2022

Testing concludes. Workstations are examined to certify each is ready to go live. Staff log in for the first time to ensure appropriate access.

## October 1, 2022

Epic is officially released, making AVH the first independent critical access hospital in the country to have this world-class electronic health record system.



*Aspen Valley Primary Care's new internist, Caroline Mears, DO, believes strongly in the importance of continuing education. Her newest studies have been in the health benefits of cold-water therapy.*



# GOING ALL IN

## *Offering Advanced, Accessible Care to Treat the Whole Patient*

In healthcare, forward thinking is critical. New techniques and technologies are constantly developing. This ultimately benefits patients as the latest protocols can help them live long and healthy lives.

Caroline T. Mears, DO, internist at Aspen Valley Primary Care, understands the importance of lifelong education. She has started exploring cold water therapy to help promote health and healing.

"One of the reasons I became interested in studying medicine is there is no end to what can be learned," Dr. Mears said. "I have recently been studying the work of world-renowned researchers who have found that cold water exposure can lead to astounding health benefits."

Studies have found that cold therapy can help reduce chronic inflammation, widely considered a leading cause of aging and disease. But the benefits don't end there. This type of treatment has also been shown to offer a host of other advantages, including boosting metabolism, helping anxiety and even improving sleep.

"I'm discovering that Aspen is rich in opportunities for cold water immersion from locals who know the best swimming spots," Dr. Mears said. "But like any new health practice, it's important to consult a physician to see if it is right for you."

### LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR GOOD HEALTH

Originally from Chesapeake, VA, Dr. Mears is a new internist at Aspen Valley Primary Care. Dr. Mears graduated from the University of Virginia before attending Campbell University of Osteopathic Medicine in Lillington, NC. She then completed an internal medicine residency at East Virginia Medical School where she was a chief resident.

As an internist, Dr. Mears treats adults ages 18 and older. Internists are also commonly called primary care physicians. To put it another way, internists are to grownups what pediatricians are to children.

"In my opinion, an internist is the foundation of health," Dr. Mears said. "I believe everyone should have one."

### RESPONDING TO GROWING DEMAND

Dr. Mears was brought on due to the practice helping more Roaring Fork Valley residents than ever before. In the three years since opening its doors, Aspen Valley Primary Care has grown from treating 2,000 patients to more than 5,000 patients from two locations — at the Hospital in Aspen and at Willits in Basalt.

"To accommodate this growth, we've increased our staff," said Alyssa Franklin, PharmD, BCPS, Director of Aspen Valley Primary Care. "In addition to Dr. Mears, we've brought on Physician Assistant Rachel Houseal, MSPAS, PA-C, to facilitate faster access to care for acute or urgent visits. And Dr. Rahul Shah, our pediatrician, has been with us for a year now."

### PROVIDING WHOLE PERSON HEALTH

In addition to adult primary care, Aspen Valley Primary Care offers extensive family and pediatric medicine services. The staff focuses on the comprehensive and interrelated aspects of physical and mental health as well as overall wellbeing. This approach is often referred to as whole person health.

Whole person health involves looking at the whole person, not just separate organs or body systems, and considering multiple factors that promote either health or disease. It means helping and empowering individuals to improve their health in biological, behavioral, social and environmental areas. Instead of focusing on a specific disease, whole person health focuses on restoring health, promoting resilience and preventing diseases across the lifespan.

*"My goal is to make every patient I see healthier and better off for making an appointment with me. I strive to provide compassionate care for all adults across the medical spectrum."*

— CAROLINE T. MEARS, DO, INTERNIST  
AT ASPEN VALLEY PRIMARY CARE

## Since first opening its doors three years ago, Aspen Valley Primary Care has grown from treating 2,000 patients to more than 5,000 patients today.

"Our team focuses on health and wellness, disease management and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses," Franklin said. "In addition to great care from experienced doctors, patients can get help making an appointment with a specialist, learn about beneficial dietary plans or talk to a professional about behavioral health challenges."

The team understands that everyone who seeks care has a unique situation that requires personalized attention. And they share the belief that healthcare isn't one size fits all.

"Our objective is to be an access point for patients," Franklin said. "Navigating the healthcare world can be complicated, and our providers are fantastic partners when patients need support."

Dr. Mears is one of those allies. Seeking medical care can be unsettling. So, she does everything she can to make patients feel open and relaxed during appointments.

"My goal is to make every patient I see healthier and better off for making an appointment with me," Dr. Mears said. "I strive to provide compassionate care for all adults across the medical spectrum."

Many patients are more comfortable seeking treatment from a male or female doctor. Having Dr. Mears on staff gives those who prefer a female physician an additional option for a primary care physician.

"I love seeing all types of patients," she said. "But sometimes, women are more comfortable discussing emotional or physical concerns with another woman. This is particularly true when there is an organ-specific complaint such as a breast mass or pelvic lesion. But no matter who you choose to see, all the providers who work in our office provide top-notch care."

### PREVENTION IS A KEY FOCUS

Providing screenings for conditions such as skin cancer, diabetes and high cholesterol help residents take control of their health. Additionally, Aspen Valley Primary Care works closely with the Valley Health Alliance, Medicare and Medicaid to promote wellness.

"Many of our patients choose to live here so they can lead active outdoor lifestyles," Franklin said. "We focus on prevention so we can detect any issues in the early stages before they become a bigger problem. Besides the obvious health benefits to patients, preventive care can help reduce the overall cost of healthcare for our community."

### UPCOMING ENHANCEMENTS TO YOUR HEALTHCARE HOME

Aspen Valley Primary Care has come a long way in a short time. But there's more to come. Over the next year, the staff intends to expand its office space and women's health services. Plans are also underway to add a new telepsychiatry program to complement the current mental health offerings.

"Behavioral health can be hard to find in our area, and we want to make it easier and more affordable to get treatment," Franklin said. "Our new service will include access to a psychiatrist or a therapist, and it will be covered by many insurances. We are very excited about expanding our offerings to better serve our community."

To see a full list of available services and to schedule an appointment, call **970.279.4111**, visit [aspenhospital.org/services/primary-care](https://aspenhospital.org/services/primary-care) or scan this QR code. ■



## "Many of our patients choose to live here so they can lead active outdoor lifestyles. We focus on prevention so we can detect any issues in the early stages before they become a bigger problem."

— ALYSSA FRANKLIN, DIRECTOR OF ASPEN VALLEY PRIMARY CARE





*As an internist, Dr. Caroline Mears treats adults 18 and older. Internists are to grownups what pediatricians are to children.*

## TWO CONVENIENT LOCATIONS IN ASPEN AND BASALT

### **Aspen Valley Primary Care Aspen Valley Hospital Campus**

0401 Castle Creek Road  
Aspen, CO 81611

### **Aspen Valley Primary Care Willits, Basalt**

1460 East Valley Road, Suite 103  
Basalt, CO 81621

### **HOURS:**

Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**970.279.4111**

# CONFRONTING THE WORKFORCE SHORTAGE HEAD ON

*Attracting and retaining top talent is vital for a healthier community*



Tom McCauley, AVH's new Chief Human Resources Officer, with members of the clinical staff.

**T**he healthcare industry is facing an unparalleled talent shortage among many specialties and services. In nursing alone, the country could have 450,000 fewer caregivers than it needs by 2025, according to new research.

While Aspen Valley Hospital has fared better than most, finding and keeping quality employees continues to be a top priority. One recent hire, Tom McCauley, is eager to champion the cause.

McCauley joined the AVH team in June 2022 as Chief Human Resources Officer. He started his career as a process consultant, and then as a financial analyst before switching gears and plunging into human resources. McCauley then served in various leadership roles including most recently as a Vice President of Human Resources at Athletico Physical Therapy, a company with more than 850 clinics across the United States.

"The healthcare industry has always fascinated me," McCauley said. "If we do our jobs right, lives are changed. Most industries cannot say that."

## CARING FOR OUR CAREGIVERS

McCauley's first order of business was learning about the specific needs of each department at the Hospital and focusing on the welfare of AVH employees. The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted healthcare services — and workers across the nation experienced burnout, anxiety and stress.

"Hospitals never close," McCauley said. "The AVH staff did herculean work to get through the pandemic. Many of our people are running on fumes, and we're doing everything we can to give them a collective deep breath. We're also examining how we can build a strong employee experience through recognition, rewards and career development."

It's not an overnight fix. But McCauley and his team are actively communicating through in-person meetings and surveys to help ensure employees are getting the support they need.

"Ultimately, we need to build a deep enough bench of talent that makes it easy for staff to take time off and enjoy our



beautiful surroundings,” McCauley said. “It is our culture as reflected through our people that will successfully navigate us through this chapter.”

### **MAKING ASPEN EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE**

Implementing initiatives to engage and retain our talent is only half the battle. McCauley and his team also are exploring innovative strategies to fill open positions. One major hurdle is creating affordable housing options for workers.

“Housing is clearly a differentiating factor here in the Roaring Fork Valley,” McCauley said. “We have a goal to secure housing for roughly half of our workforce in the coming years. It’s ambitious, but if we want to lure and keep the best talent, we must take bold measures.”

Partnering with local schools to bring in the next generation of employees is another key tactic. AVH is fortunate to have strong relationships at both high schools and colleges. At the high-school level, the focus is on awareness of various healthcare careers. But at the college level, the goals are more precise.

“We will offer college students hands-on experience to apply what they’ve learned in the classroom,” McCauley said. “As they spend time with our outstanding staff, they may choose to pursue a career here. And they will have an inside track to a position at one of the world’s best hospitals.”

In addition to identifying the right talent, it’s essential to help new employees with the adjustment. Today, onboarding involves much more than training; it’s an opportunity to promote the company’s culture.

“This is a critical function for us, as onboarding helps new hires get off on the right foot and sets them up for success,” McCauley said. “This is also a prime opportunity to showcase our differentiated culture at AVH. If we don’t focus on this from Day One, we miss a great opportunity to sink our roots in deep with our new teammates. People can decide to work anywhere. But when they select AVH, we need to reinforce that they made the right choice.”

### **ACCEPTING EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS**

If you know someone who is interested in working at AVH, have them visit [avhcareers.com](https://avhcareers.com) to see open positions. McCauley also welcomes being contacted directly by calling the Human Resources department at **970.544.1367**.

“I’m always up for a career discussion, whether or not they land at AVH,” McCauley said. “I have so much to learn from others, especially those who have lived here a long time. I really enjoy hearing people’s stories about the Hospital and the Valley in general. We’re blessed to call this our new home.” ■

## **GETTING PERSONAL WITH THE NEW CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, TOM MCCAULEY**

**Q: What college did you attend?**

**A:** I graduated from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana.

**Q: Can you tell us about your family?**

**A:** I’ve been married for 28 years to my high school sweetheart, Mindy. We have two amazing kids, who bucked the Fighting Illini trend of both their parents. Our son recently graduated from Indiana University and our daughter is a senior at the University of Kentucky.

**Q: What is your favorite outdoor activity?**

**A:** We’ve been hiking and biking a ton to burn off the calories from Portillo’s Hot Dogs and too much deep-dish pizza.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about living here?**

**A:** The views and the scent of pine trees. I also have the most scenic commute in the world.

**Q: What are you looking forward to experiencing in Aspen?**

**A:** Our first winter. I just want to stay away from trees when I’m skiing so my peers don’t have to treat me in the ER. That would be embarrassing.

“The AVH staff did herculean work to get through the pandemic. Many of our people are running on fumes, and we’re doing everything we can to give them a collective deep breath.”

– Tom McCauley, Chief Human Resources Officer



# Annual Impact Report

## HIGHLIGHTS



Melinda Nagle, MD, Chair



Lee Schumacher, Vice Chair



Chuck Frias, Treasurer



Greg Balko, MD, Director



David Eisenstat, Director

**T**he healthcare industry is constantly evolving. At Aspen Valley Hospital, we are committed to staying on the forefront — always striving to expand our Network of Care, increase our offerings and exceed patient expectations. Over the past year, our team has been hard at work on some exciting initiatives that will help us achieve these goals.

### EPIC LAUNCH IN OCTOBER

After many months of implementation and vigorous testing, we launched Epic. Used by top-ranked hospitals, Epic is widely considered the “gold standard” of patient record systems. Epic replaces our current disparate and mostly paper systems, allowing us to consolidate onto a single, shared platform. This makes it easier for our providers to communicate and access patient information.

But the benefits don't end there. Through Epic, patients now have access to MyChart, an online portal used to schedule appointments, request prescription refills, access lab reports and much more. The introduction of Epic creates a new level of automation, innovation and workflow optimization for AVH and its Network of Care.

### ADVANCED MUSCULOSKELETAL CARE COMES TO BASALT

In April, The Steadman Clinic/Steadman Philippon Research Institute (SPRI) and AVH partnered to open the new 65,000-square-foot, multipurpose medical facility in Basalt. This is the latest step in a joint initiative to deliver a full complement of nationally renowned orthopaedic services to the Roaring Fork Valley.

The facility includes offices and patient care space for The Steadman Clinic, along with an ambulatory surgery center, in which AVH is an investor and partner with The Steadman Clinic, Orthopedic Care Partners, Vail Health and Howard Head rehabilitation services. As a result of this cutting-edge medical facility, area residents and visitors can continue to receive the highest level of musculoskeletal surgery and care.

### FINAL PHASE OF THE MASTER FACILITIES PLAN BEGINS

Over the past decade, AVH has invested nearly \$170 million in new facilities as part of the Master Facilities Plan to meet our community's health and wellness needs. To date, three of the four phases have been completed.

Thanks to the dedicated support of the community and our Foundation, we are on the doorstep of funding the fourth and final phase of construction with the philanthropic support of our community. This stage will connect the newly constructed east and west wings as well as centralize registration and admissions. The outcome of years of building improvements will be a state-of-the-art, patient-centric community healthcare facility that meets national standards and evolving patient expectations.

### ASPEN VALLEY PRIMARY CARE BROADENS ITS SERVICES

Having leading edge facilities are important, but investing in our people is equally critical. We want to take care of all of you and your family's health needs in a convenient and affordable manner. That is why AVPC welcomed a new pediatrician, Dr. Rahul Shah, and internist, Dr. Caroline Mears, to our growing staff of primary care specialists in the past year.

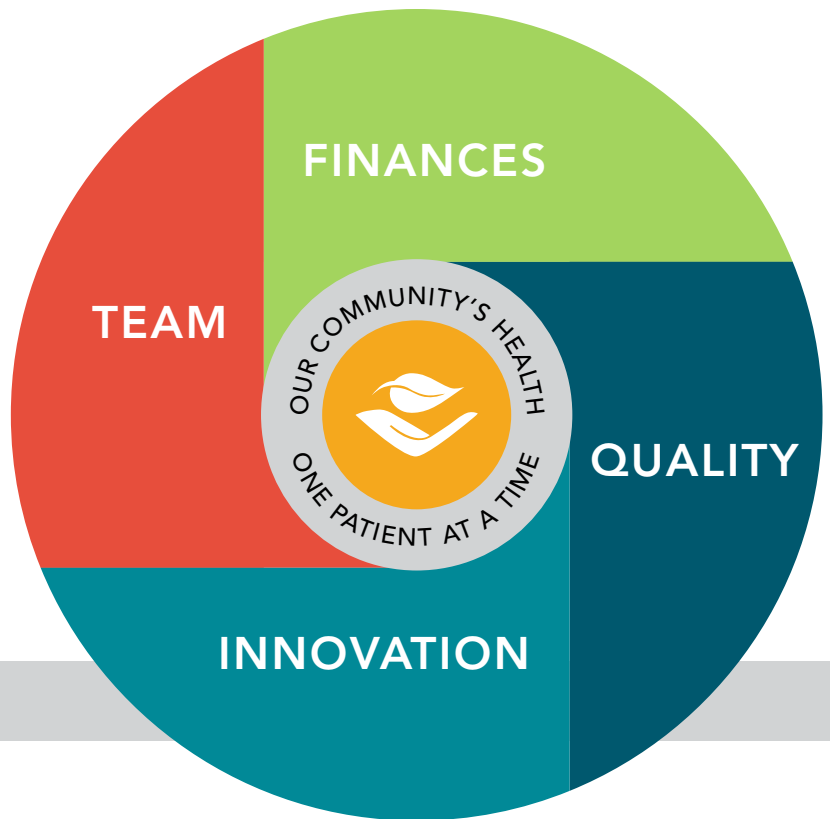
No doubt: the healthcare industry will continue to undergo significant changes. But thanks to all our staff, volunteers, our community and fellow Board members, Aspen Valley Hospital will continue to chart a course of meeting and exceeding all your healthcare and wellness needs. ■

Melinda Nagle, MD

Chair of the AVH Board of Directors

Member of the AVH Foundation Board of Directors

AVH's strategic plan continues to guide us as our talented and engaged healthcare professionals provide the highest quality care for our community while increasing our operating efficiency and maintaining financial stability.

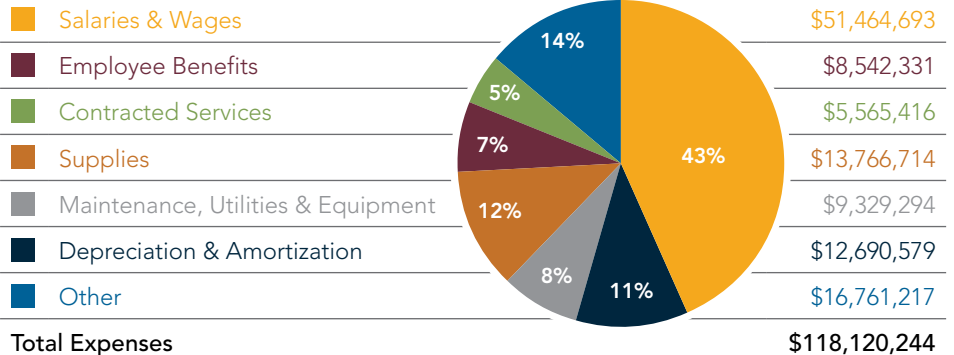


# 2021

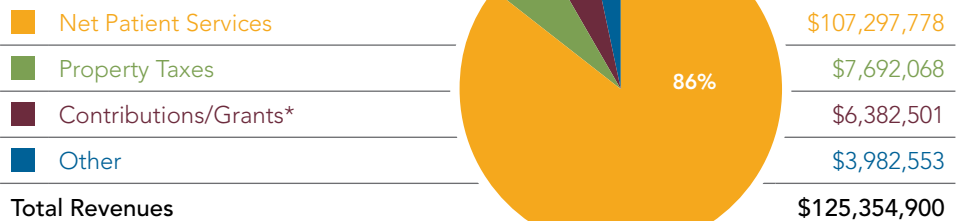
## COMMUNITY IMPACT

- **1,168** health fair blood draws.
- **7,176 COVID tests** administered to community members.
- **506 people employed**, making AVH one of the largest employers in our community.
- **\$2,265,698** of uncompensated healthcare services provided to patients in need.
- **\$10,052,021** in Medicaid subsidies.
- **\$463,850** in direct financial support to outside agencies for programs that serve the needs of our most vulnerable community members. We help to support:
  - + Aspen Detox Center
  - + Aspen Homeless Shelter
  - + Mountain Family Health Center
  - + Pitkin County Mental Health

## 2021 EXPENSES



## 2021 REVENUES



\*Includes \$3.3 million of CARES Act Funding.



## Introducing Healthy Journey

Living well is better with friends.

Wherever you live and whatever you do in the Roaring Fork Valley, our landscape weaves our lives together. Most of us socialize outdoors and our paths frequently cross while paddleboarding up Reudi, "hiking the Bowl" or picnicking at the Grottos. We can thank the trails, slopes, tracks and waterways of the valley for making an active lifestyle so enticing. But there is much more to achieving good health than staying fit.

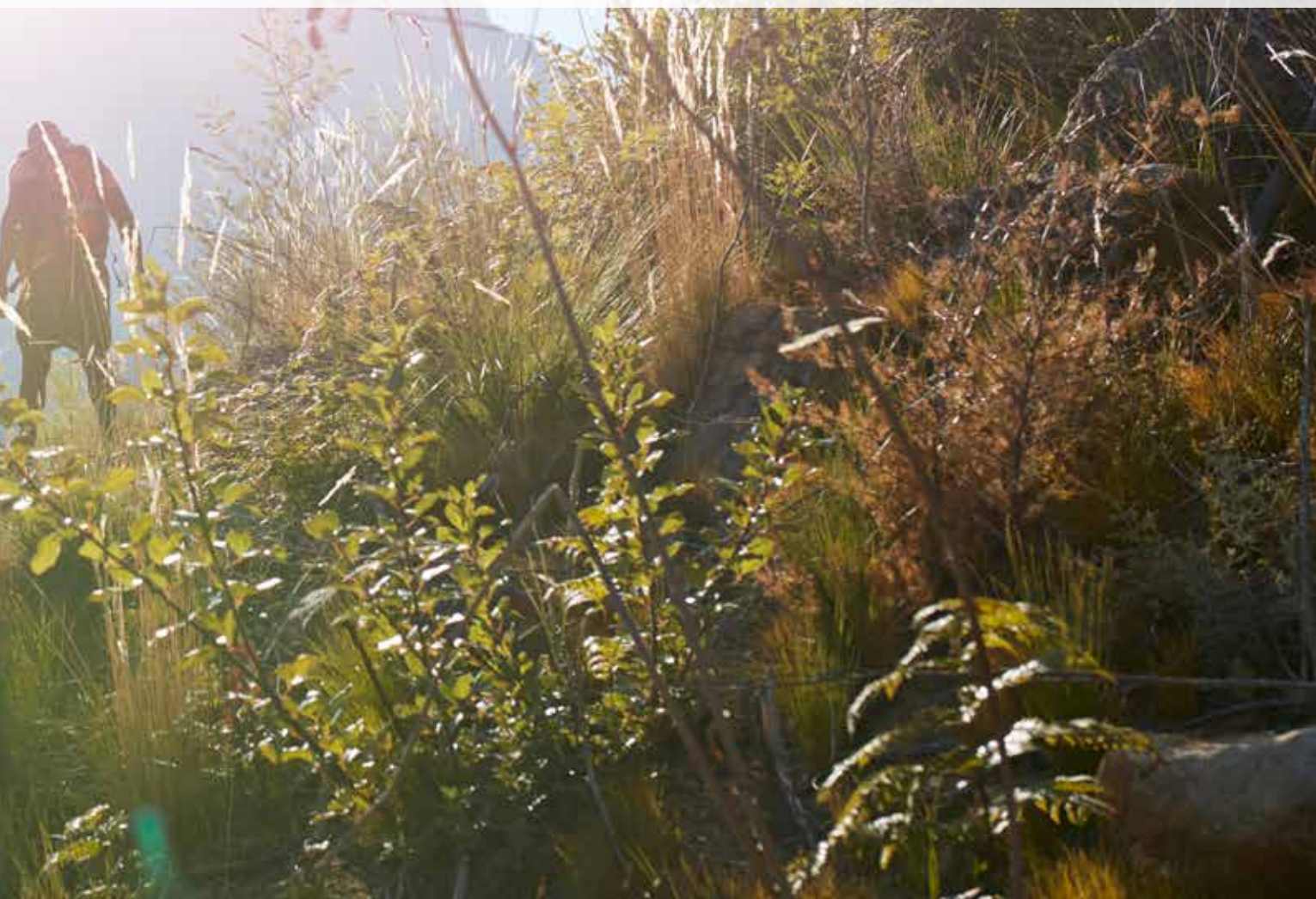
Written with you and our mountain terrain in mind, our team of doctors, physician assistants, nurses, paramedics, physical therapists, dietitians and medical writers are passionate about sharing their expertise and local know-how to encourage and support you on your healthy journey. From fitness and camping safety tips to healthy recipes for mind and body, **Healthy Journey by Aspen Valley Hospital** is here for you, your friends and your family so you can achieve optimal health at every age and stage of life.



## GOODBYE SUMMER. HELLO WINTER.

Kicking off an epic ski or boarding season begins weeks before the snow even starts sticking. Ski- and board-conditioning is a minimal investment in injury prevention with the added benefit of starting at a higher level on your first day out. Turn the page to join our healthy journey to the slopes. ■

To explore more Health Journey topics and tools, visit [aspenhospital.org/healthy-journey](https://aspenhospital.org/healthy-journey) or scan this QR code.





# Getting in shape for the ski season is a great way to avoid injuries and have more fun!

Aspen Valley Hospital physical therapist and ski patroller, Jack Michael, PT, DPT, tells you how.

**W**ith ski and snowboard season around the corner, you may be wondering what you can do to make those first few turns of the season a safer and more enjoyable experience.

Jack Michael, PT, DPT, has been a full-time physical therapist at Aspen Valley Hospital since December 2020. Jack grew up in Wisconsin skiing and racing and is now a volunteer ski patroller at Sunlight Mountain Resort outside of Glenwood Springs. Jack shares his expertise on ski conditioning below with some definite steps you can take to both avoid injuries and make your on-hill experience as enjoyable as possible.

## Why is it important for people to get in shape for ski and snowboard season?

First and foremost, being in better shape reduces your risk of injury. Additionally, you will experience less soreness and pain after a day on the slopes, and you will be able to ski all day.

## What do you recommend for someone who has not done any pre-season ski training?

If the ski season has approached a little quicker for you than expected, there are a few things to consider. Start with shorter days and stay on mostly groomed runs at a difficulty level you are very comfortable with. Additionally, I recommend avoiding tree skiing the first few days you are back on the snow.

## Are there exercises people can utilize in the early ski season to quickly improve their experience on the hill?

Completing a few focused exercises over the first several weeks of the season can supplement your strength and lower your risk of injury. Focus on strengthening legs, glutes and core so you can move on the mountain more efficiently, recover from off-balance events and have more endurance while on the slopes.

## RECOMMENDED SKIING EXERCISES

Shoot for three sets of each exercise on the days you work out.

**Walking lunge:** Stand upright with your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands on your hips. Step forward with your right leg, placing your foot down as if you were setting up a static lunge, flexing your knees (90°) and dropping your hips. Lower your left knee toward the ground. Just before the left knee makes contact with the floor, drive up and forward through your right leg, stepping into a lunge on your other side.



**Reverse lunge:** The starting position is exactly the same as a walking lunge: Keeping a neutral spine, take a step backward — the same width as you would take moving forward in a walking lunge — with your right leg. Once your knee almost touches the floor, push back up and forward to your starting position, trying to maintain level hip alignment throughout and keep your weight in your back leg. The big difference here is you're using your front leg to stabilize your body.

## Single-Leg Romanian Deadlift:

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent and raise one leg off the floor. Flex the knee on your standing/support leg for about 15-20 percent to activate the glutes.





- Without changing the bend in your knee, keep your back naturally arched, bend (hinge) at your hips and lower your torso until it's almost parallel to the floor.
- Briefly pause at the bottom, then squeeze your glutes, thrust your hips forward and raise your torso back to the starting position.

**Clock lunge:** Imagine you're standing in the middle of a clock with the numbers 1-12 around the outside. Face forward so your chest points toward 12 o'clock; you're going to have your chest and front, stabilizer foot facing noon for the entirety of the exercise. You want to be moving in a lateral plane of motion each time you push back to the start position. Your goal is to hit every clock number.

- Start with your right foot, using your left leg as a stabilizer and lunge forward to 12.
- Return to standing position and then lunge forward and slightly right to 1, and then step back.
- Continue lunging to each number on the clock, until you're stepping straight back to 6.
- Then, switch feet and finish the other numbers with your left foot, using your right leg as the stabilizer.
- A key here is to have the back foot and knee pointing toward the front foot whenever the lunging leg is behind the stabilizing leg. That will help keep you in alignment.



**Repeat these exercises** until you complete the prescribed number of repetitions and sets you set for yourself. I recommend 10-15 reps with light or no weight and 6-8 with moderate to heavy weight, with 3 sets on each leg. And remember, if you experience any pain or something that doesn't feel right, adjust the exercise or stop what you're doing right away.

### **What else is important in terms of training for someone who wants to be in shape for the ski season?**

Core strength, static and dynamic standing balance and cardiovascular endurance all are important for skiing and riding safely. Leg, arm, back, neck flexibility and conditioning are also important, for seeing what's going on around you, dealing with the changing terrain and when you fall. When people try to save from a fall, they sometimes get hurt because they don't have enough flexibility.

There is strong evidence that muscle fatigue and lack of knee stability cause the most injuries in skiing, and specifically, ACL injuries top the list.

### **What are your recommendations for visitors coming from lower altitudes who may not ski more than a few weeks per year?**

Cardiovascular and strength training before your trip can help quite a bit. Arriving in Aspen and allowing a few days to acclimate to the altitude before hitting the slopes is not always realistic, so I recommend increasing water intake and sleep and avoiding alcohol the first few days of your trip.

Remember that any preseason conditioning is better than none and will reduce the risk of injury and make your ski season a much more enjoyable experience.

### **Is there a training regimen you can recommend for someone looking to get in shape for their ski trip or the season?**

Winter sports-focused conditioning **3 or 4 days per week** for the **4-6 weeks** prior to your first day on the snow is ideal, whether you're a visitor here for a one-week trip with your family or a local getting ready for the season. But as I said above, any preseason conditioning will help your skiing or snowboarding. Begin with a warm-up before any workout: a stationary bike, walking, elliptical, or some other activity that gets your heart rate up and your muscles in motion.

If you are having any pain or are recovering from an injury, I highly recommend coming for skilled physical therapy at one of our locations in Aspen, Snowmass Village or Basalt. You may be able to receive treatment without a physician's referral, depending on your insurance coverage, so it's worth checking out.

If you have any questions, please call Jack in the Physical Therapy department at Aspen Valley Hospital: **970.544.1177**. ■





ASPEN VALLEY  
HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

# THE 2022 SUMMER POLO CHARITY CLASSIC WAS A SUCCESS!







## GENEROSITY IN ACTION

**T**ake a look at the many individuals and organizations listed on the following pages and you'll see our community's generosity and belief in our mission to raise and manage philanthropic funds for the current and future needs of Aspen Valley Hospital.

We were also shown generosity by those who attended this year's annual Summer Polo Charity Classic on August 28. Hundreds of fans enjoyed the polo play by stars of the international circuit and the pitch-side party of the season. Paddles were raised often, and every donation was matched by a very generous anonymous donor.

The Foundation's Master Facilities Plan Capital Campaign is nearing completion, but the need will continue. We can't thank Deborah Breen, outgoing Foundation President and CEO, enough for her leadership and vision that got us to this point. We wish her the very best in her new ventures and welcome her back to Aspen any time. The community is better because of you, Deb.

Sincerely,

*John Sarpa*

John Sarpa  
AVH Foundation Chairman of the Board

## WAYS TO GIVE

We would love to connect with you if you are considering a year-end gift to the Foundation. One-time gifts, gifts in memory of a loved one or grateful for patient care received, or a planned giving strategy are all ways you can support exceptional healthcare in our community.

Please contact us at **970.544.1302**. You can also use this QR code to find our donation page on the website.







## ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

# SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

*Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation gratefully recognizes the following donors who have made gifts over the past year and also donors whose lifetime cumulative giving is \$1 million or greater.*

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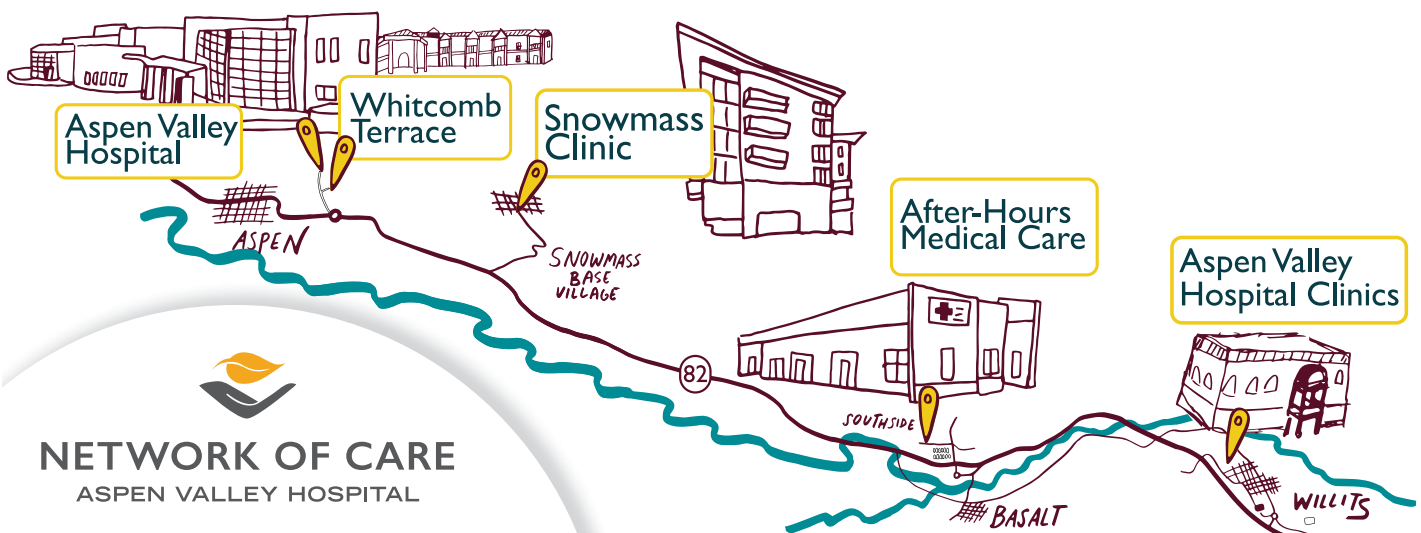
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General Information	970.925.1120
Administration	970.544.1261
Admissions	970.544.7350
After-Hours Medical Care in Basalt	970.544.1250
Aspen Ambulance District	970.544.1583
Aspen Birth Center	970.544.1130
Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation	970.544.1302
Billing Help Line	970.544.7694
Breast Center	970.544.1420
Business Office/Billing	970.544.7377
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Cardiac Rehabilitation	970.544.1383
Cardiopulmonary/Respiratory Clinic	970.544.1264
Community Relations	970.544.1296
Diabetes Education	970.544.7394
Diagnostic Imaging	970.544.1192
Diagnostic Scheduling	970.544.1392
Emergency Department	970.544.1228
Gift Shop	970.544.1304
Human Resources	970.544.1367
Laboratory	970.544.1570
Medical Records	970.544.1290
Midvalley Imaging Center	970.544.1260
Nuclear Medicine	970.544.1127
Nutrition Services	970.544.1145

Oncology & Infusion	970.544.1507
Outpatient Scheduling	970.544.1392
Pain Center	970.544.1146
Patient Care Unit	970.544.1135
Pharmacy	970.544.1778
Physical Therapy/Rehabilitation Services	970.544.1177
Same Day Surgery/Outpatient	970.544.1327
Snowmass Clinic	970.544.1518
Spanish Resources	970.544.1543
Surgery Scheduling	970.544.7391
Whitcomb Terrace Assisted Living	970.544.1530

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Center for Medical Care	
Aspen Valley Primary Care	970.279.4111
Cardiology	970.544.7388
Ophthalmology	970.544.1460
Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose & Throat)	970.544.1460
Endocrinology	970.544.1395
Gastroenterology	970.384.7510
Orthopaedics/The Steadman Clinic	970.476.1100
Pulmonology	970.298.5864
Rheumatology	970.544.1395
Urology	970.928.0808



# ASK THE EXPERTS

Gabe Muething, Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Aspen Ambulance District, and Mark Falender, Emergency Management Coordinator at AVH, provide insights into how the two organizations work together — and with other local agencies — to handle crises in the community.

**C**an you describe the partnership between Aspen Ambulance and Aspen Valley Hospital and its Network of Care?

"Aspen Ambulance is a Pitkin County service managed by Aspen Valley Hospital," Muething said. "This arrangement is quite unique, and the collaboration has many advantages. Ambulances usually provide advanced emergency care and then hand off patients to an emergency room of a hospital and never see them again. However, our responders will stay in the emergency room to assist. Additionally, if a patient needs to be moved to another facility, we are the same ones who transport them to a specialty care center. This alliance fosters continuity of care, and that is invaluable."

**What types of emergencies does Aspen Ambulance respond to?**

"We respond to a range of medical and trauma incidents from a resident experiencing chest pains or a skiing injury to allergic reactions and plane crashes," Muething said. "And due to the large tourist population, we sometimes treat illness and disease from other parts of the world. Most communities don't experience the wide variety of emergencies we do. We have to be ready for absolutely anything."

**How does AVH prepare for major crises?**

"Every two years, we perform a hazard vulnerability assessment of more than 100 potential emergencies," Falender said. "We rank the

**We go beyond traditional emergency response in our commitment to keeping our community safe.**

hazards from most to least likely. We then put detailed plans in place for situations that happen most often, like power outages. This way, our response to these events is routine, and the event doesn't develop into a crisis. If it's something that historically doesn't happen often, like a wildfire approaching the Hospital, we create response policies and go through a series of exercises to finetune our procedures. It's a thorough and comprehensive process."

**Can you describe a particularly difficult rescue Aspen Ambulance encounters?**

"We often treat people who have sustained an injury in a more remote or

difficult to access area. A good example would be Grottos Ice Cave area on Independence Pass," Muething said. "It's a difficult and complex rescue but we regularly respond to these incidents and get the injured to safety."

**How does Aspen Valley Hospital coordinate services with other community agencies?**

"The type of emergency dictates the agencies we work with, whether it's the fire department, police department or Mountain Rescue," Falender said. "And almost always, no matter the incident, we call Aspen Ambulance to assist. We are lucky they are right next door. Additionally, the Pitkin County Incident Management Team plays a vital role in coordination. During emergencies, they prioritize requests, so efforts aren't duplicated, and every agency gets the resources they need."

**Besides emergency response, what other services does Aspen Ambulance offer to the community?**

"We go beyond traditional emergency response in our commitment to keeping our community safe," Muething said.

"We also focus on prevention, education, emergency management and medical support for special events such as the Winter X Games and the Aspen Backcountry Marathon. It's a pleasure to serve this community, and we are so grateful for the funding and support we receive. It's what keeps us in operation and motivates us to be the best." ■

*Mark Falender, (left) AVH's Emergency Management Coordinator, and Gabe Muething, (right) Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Aspen Ambulance District.*







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