



Community Report 2007

40 YEARS

of Caring for our Community

1967 - 2007



**CATAWBA VALLEY
MEDICAL CENTER**

Message to Our Community

2007 marked the 40th anniversary of Catawba Valley Medical Center. From the very beginning, county leaders and medical professionals viewed the new hospital as a means to better serve the health needs of our citizens. Today, that mission has not changed. As the largest not-for-profit hospital in the region, Catawba Valley Medical Center stands as an important safety net for the most vulnerable citizens in our county and beyond.

In addition, the role of the medical center has expanded from the original acute care facility into an organization that offers our patients not only the latest in diagnostic and treatment technology, but also invests in providing the health and wellness programs that result in good health.

Within the pages of this report, you will find a description of the range of services offered by our key centers of excellence, highlights of our investments in leading edge technology, an overview of our commitment to access to primary care services and a definition of the benefits we



J. Anthony Rose
President & CEO

offer in this community.

The Community Benefit Report represents a new and standardized reporting methodology that all providers will use to define their community contributions. Also included in this report is an overview of the accomplishments of our nursing division over the past year. We are very proud of our Magnet Hospital designation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center which reflects our commitment to offering nurses the best place to practice nursing in the area.

On behalf of the trustees, medical staff, employees and volunteers, we thank you for the opportunities to serve you over the past 40 years and look forward to continuing to serve as your health care partners in the future.

2007 Catawba Valley Medical Center's Board of Trustees

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Caring for the People

Forty Years of Medical Innovation at Catawba Valley Medical Center

The need for a new hospital that could serve Conover, Newton and Hickory was determined following an assessment of the health needs of Catawba County citizens by a special committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce more than 40 years ago. A bond referendum funded the construction of the 200-bed facility. In 1965, county leaders broke ground and held a community open house of the brand new Catawba Memorial Hospital in September, 1967.

Dr. W. Frank Jones became the first chief of staff of Catawba Memorial Hospital with more than 50 physicians indicating their interest in staff privileges. Of the 231 original employees, 131 were nurses.

On October 15, 1967, Mrs. Kermit Cloninger of Claremont had been taken to the emergency room at the older hospital in Newton. Just before it closed at 3 p.m. that Sunday her husband drove her to the new ER at Catawba Memorial. This first admission had a baby boy weighing 8 lbs. 12 ounces just two hours later. Admissions totalled 411 that first month and more than 400 more patients were seen in the new emergency room.

Continuous growth and investment in the technology to support effective diagnosis and treatment

have marked the successful 40-year history of Catawba Valley Medical Center. For example, a new Cancer Center opened in 1977 offering radiation therapy for the first time. A new Emergency Room and Pediatric Unit opened in 1978. The first CAT scanner was purchased in 1982 and MRI diagnostics were added in 1985. After the hospital's 20-year anniversary in 1987, the next decade included significant enhancements such as a Day Surgery Center, Emergency Department, Critical Care Unit and Fitness Center. Also during these ten years, the hospital purchased several primary care practices, forming Catawba Valley Medical Group which today has grown to eight conveniently located facilities.

The site for Catawba Memorial Hospital was a rural field. Excavation began in 1964. By mid-1967, the building took the shape that would become familiar to Catawba County residents for decades.



“I have over the years been in a few other hospitals, baby, gall-bladder, and so forth, and I have never in my life been in a hospital like Catawba Valley Medical Center. From the very first person I saw to the very last one, I was treated with the most gentle, kind, compassionate, and loving care that was humanly possible.”

2002 represented a milestone in the growth of Catawba Memorial Hospital. The trustees voted to change the name to Catawba Valley Medical Center to reflect the growth of the hospital into the regional referral center it is today. Subsequent years saw collaboration with Frye Regional Medical Center to avoid expensive duplication of services including the agreement to locate radiation oncology at CVMC and open heart surgery at Frye. A second collaboration brought PET/CT imaging capability to the area to aid in the diagnosis and treatment planning for cancer patients. Over the last several years, CVMC has invested in robotic surgery, 64-slice CT scanning and a bariatric surgery program.

The next decade will bring new challenges. A growing senior population will increase the demand for services and stretch resources in an expanding national nursing shortage. Medical center leaders will continue to face cost and reimbursement issues as the federal government struggles with how to meet the needs of a growing uninsured or underinsured population. Regardless, the medical center was created as a safety net for the people of this area and it's successful 40-year history has been founded on serving each person with dignity, respect and compassion. That will never change.

“I am writing you to confirm ... how pleased I was with the treatment I got at CVMC when I had my out-patient procedure... Everybody I dealt with was professional and courteous and made every attempt to allay the natural anxiety that anyone facing a medical procedure would feel ... I cannot think of anything anybody could have done for my benefit that was not done.”



The main operating room at CMH had some of the latest equipment available for surgery in 1967. The floors were specially designed to minimize slippage.



Now, more than 13,000 cases are performed annually in the medical center's surgical suite, including a large number of knee and hip replacements by area orthopaedists.

Building the Health Partnerships that Lead to Improving Health

The key to maintaining good health throughout a lifetime is the partnership patients develop with their primary care physicians. Annual physicals, early diagnosis of chronic diseases, and access to effective emergency care when needed are critical to maintaining the best possible health.

Catawba Valley Medical Group

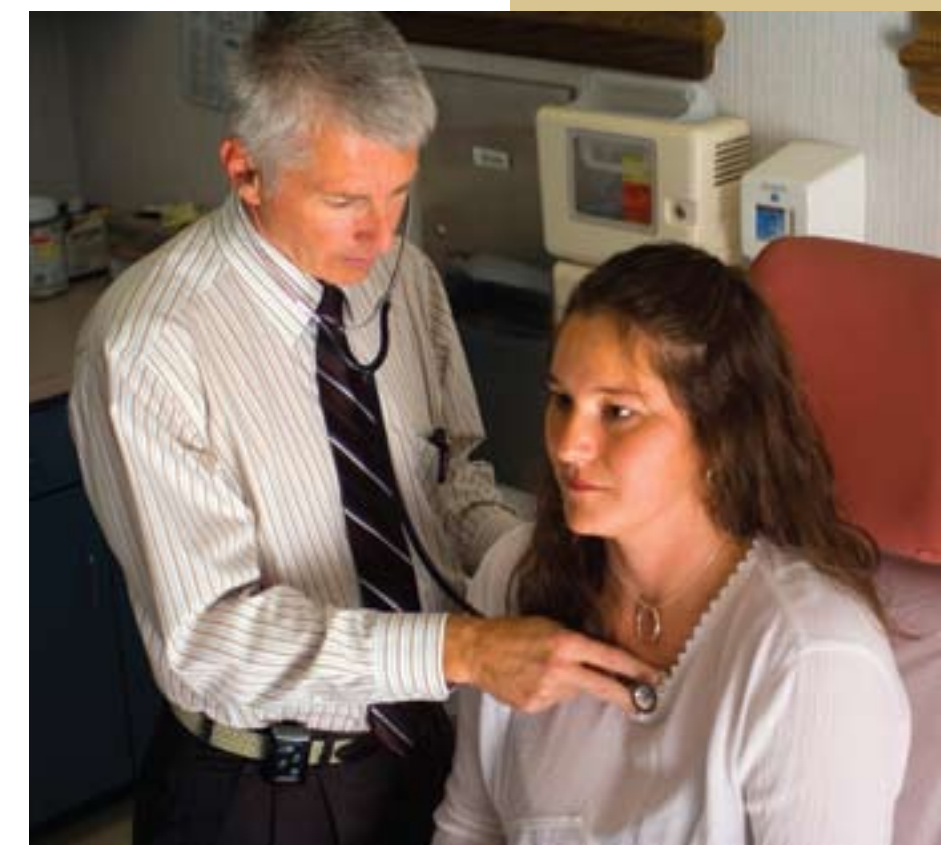
Catawba Valley Medical Center has built a network of primary care practices to assure that residents of Catawba County have access to high quality, conveniently located primary care services. A total of 22 physicians and physician extenders (physician assistants and nurse practitioners) practice in one of our eight network locations.

In the past, a Catawba County Health Department study identified primary care access problems for Medicare, Medicaid and self-pay citizens living in our region. That is why Catawba Valley Medical Group practices accept patients in need of medical care regardless of their ability to pay and represent the majority of primary care practices in Catawba County that accept new Medicare and Medicaid patients. In fact, of the total patients treated by our Catawba Valley Medical Group practices, 40 percent have either Medicare or Medicaid coverage. An additional 5 percent have no insurance at all. These percentages

are drastically different from many of the area's privately owned practices that limit their patient mix to 10 – 12 percent Medicare / Medicaid and less than 3 percent self-pay.

Catawba Valley Medical Center Hospitalists

Four physicians and two nurse practitioners serve in the medical center as hospitalists. The hospitalists have extended training in treating patients with multiple health issues. Many patients who require hospital admission are followed by one of these physicians while they are in the hospital, but are referred back to their family physician at discharge. If a patient does not have a family physician, a referral is made to a family physician at discharge. This service allows family physicians to concentrate on their outpatient practices while the hospitalists manage the hospital admissions.



Catawba Valley Medical Group

Catawba Family Practice
Catawba, NC
828/241-2377

Claremont Family Practice
Claremont, NC
828/459-7324

Maiden Family Practice
Maiden, NC
828/428-2446

Northeast Family Practice
Hickory, NC
828/256-2112

North Hickory Family Practice
Hickory, NC
828/326-0658

S.E. Catawba Family Practice
Denver, NC
704/483-0340

Viewmont Family Medicine
Hickory, NC
828/324-1699

Family Medicine Associates
Taylorsville, NC
828/632-7076

Dr. Curtis Shultz of Maiden Family Practice is one of the family practitioners in the Catawba Valley Medical Group network.

Catawba Valley Medical Center Emergency Department

For patients who must seek emergency medical care, there are several tips to follow:

- Consider trying common sense treatments at home if practical.
- Bring only one or two family members; leave small children and well elderly at home to prevent exposure to disease from other patients.
- Bring all current medications, names of physicians and immunization history.
- Bring insurance information.
- Inform ED staff of any allergies.
- Do not assume admission to the medical center will occur; have a ride home.
- No cell phones are allowed in the department and refrain from eating or drinking prior to being seen by the physician.

Emergency Department

When an emergency occurs, the medical center's Emergency Department doors are always open to people in need of medical treatment. The department is operated on a triage basis – meaning that patients are treated based on the urgency of their needs. More than 44,000 patients are treated in the Emergency department annually.

Ryan White Clinic

For patients with little or no insurance and suffering from HIV/AIDS, access to quality medical services was unorganized or unavailable locally prior to the opening of Catawba Valley Medical Center's Ryan White Clinic.

Access for them meant driving to Charlotte or Asheville – more than an hour away. Many of these patients lacked transportation and thus compliance with medical treatment plans was limited – key to managing this disease. A joint project linking ALFA (AIDS Leadership Foothills Alliance) and CVMC resulted in a three-year

federal grant to open a primary care clinic for these patients in 2003. The grant was renewed in 2006. The primary care clinic offers comprehensive medical care and case management services.

Clients find confidentiality, support and an interdisciplinary team of professionals to support them in managing their illnesses. The program is staffed by infectious disease physicians, nurse practitioner, medical social worker, pharmacist, dietitian, a minister and support staff. Two ALFA education/outreach coordinators are also housed in the facility.

Investment in Technological & Treatment Advances

Catawba Valley Medical Center serves as an important safety net in assuring that the people we serve enjoy access to quality, cost effective health services. We are committed to investing in new diagnostic and treatment technologies so that the people we serve do not have to travel outside of the area for the latest advances.

Heart Center

Cardiac MRI is the latest addition to the Heart Center's complement of advanced diagnostic tools, including the region's first 64-slice CT Scanner. The first Cardiac MRI was introduced at Catawba Valley Imaging Center in late 2006 and a second unit was installed on campus this year.

With comprehensive scans showing five times the detail of other methods, Cardiac MRI can help obtain more accurate results in diagnosing potential heart disease patients. Alternative studies can take as long as three to four hours while the cardiac MRI produces more detailed results and complete evaluations with one 30-45 minute exam.

Center for Orthopaedics

Less invasive hip and knee replacements are revolutionizing orthopaedic surgery and offering patients smaller incisions, less postoperative pain, and faster recoveries. The medical center purchased the Hanna bed (Profx



fracture table) to offer patients and their orthopaedic surgeons a new option – anterior approach to hip replacement. The value of the surgical table is that the hip joint can be reached from the front rather than the back or side. By taking this path, the surgeon can replace the hip without detaching the muscle from the pelvis or femur. Because the muscles are not detached, they don't require a lengthy healing process.

Dr. Nick Frankel leads the Radiology Department into the future with the use of our 64-slice CT Scanner and 3-dimensional imaging technology. The use of these techniques speeds up diagnosis and improves accuracy of treatment.

Cardiac catheterization is high tech heart scan that may help some people avoid more invasive procedures.



"I just wanted to write and let you know what a fabulous job ... your employees in Labor and Delivery as well as the OR did a few weeks ago... What started as a very routine delivery quickly turned into an obstetrics emergency as I suffered from an umbilical cord prolapse and needed an emergency caesarean section... Fortunately everything turned out fine."

The medical center has just purchased two innovative computer assisted surgery systems for orthopaedic surgery. The new image-based navigation systems allow the surgeon to track the movement of instruments in difficult-to-access, hard-to-visualize spaces, which may enable smaller incisions. The guidance offered by these systems may improve the alignment of artificial joints, improve the stability of those joints, and potentially lead to longer use of the implants.

The Center for Women and Children

After becoming the first hospital in northwestern North Carolina to introduce the da Vinci Surgical System for radical prostatectomies



The medical center was the first facility in the region to introduce the da Vinci Surgical System. First used for total prostatectomies, this leading edge technology is now being used to perform total laproscopic hysterectomies.

surgery and to normal activities in a few weeks.

The medical center's Neonatal Transport Unit is a state-of-the-art ambulance that transports critically ill infants from neighboring hospitals and medical facilities to our Level III Neonatal Care Unit. Designed to provide closer-to-home access to specialized neonatal care, it is now serving infants and families from as far north as the Virginia line, as far south as Gaston County, as far west as McDowell County and as far east as Forsyth County. It is one of only a few units in the state to utilize both nitric oxide

in early 2006, CVMC became the first in the region to also utilize this leading-edge technology for total laparoscopic hysterectomies. The da Vinci hysterectomy is revolutionizing women's health care by improving the treatment and recovery options. Women often are discharged the same day of

CVMC's Neonatal Transport Unit serves Northwest North Carolina and Southern Virginia infants and their families.



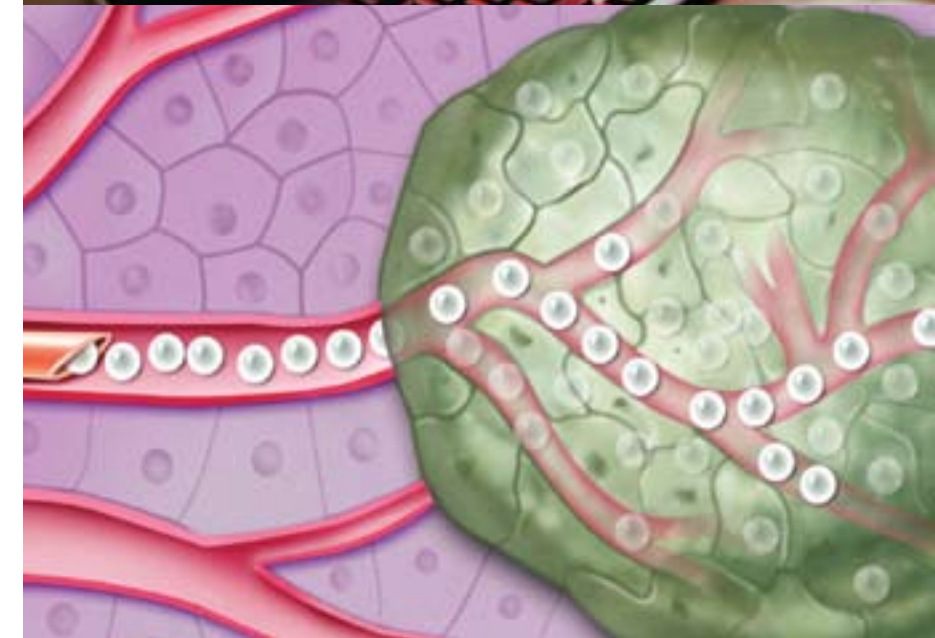
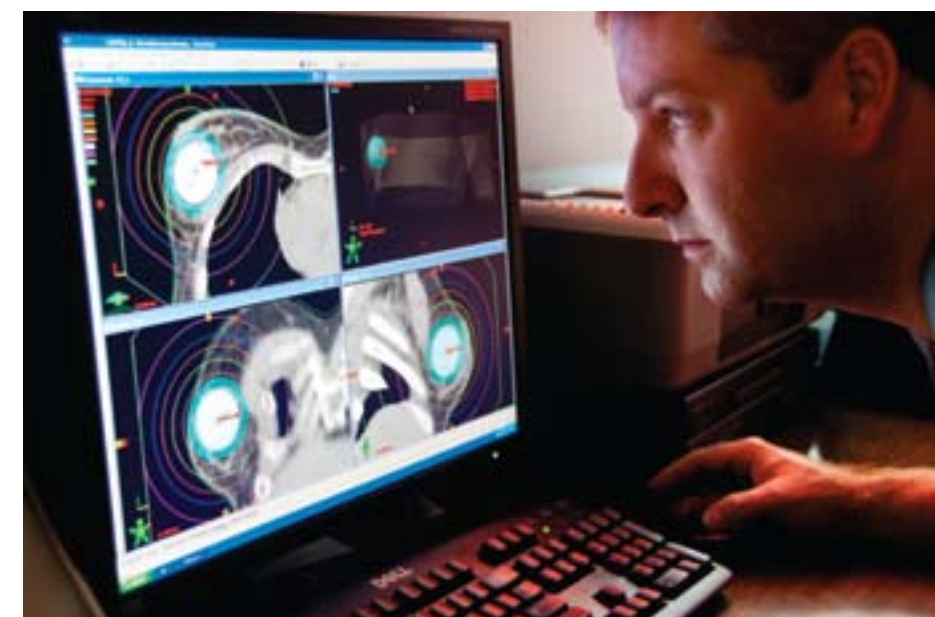
administration and high frequency jet ventilation on board at all times, and it is staffed around the clock by a specially trained nurse and respiratory therapist.

Comprehensive Cancer Center

Rapid advances in the treatment of cancers are continually impacting outcomes for our patients.

Over the past few years, the medical center has invested in several innovations that more closely focus the delivery of radiation therapy. Included in those advances are high-dose rate brachytherapy for prostate cancer. This technique delivers a radioactive source directly to the patient's tumor site quickly, with precision, and little radiation to the surrounding tissues. IMRT is another new treatment method in which the intensity of the radiation can be changed during treatment to deliver more focused radiation to the tumor, while sparing more of the surrounding healthy tissues. In addition, MammoSite RTS and intracavitary treatment is a quicker method of delivering internal radiation therapy following a lumpectomy for breast cancer.

Most recently, the medical center has invested in SIRT or Selective Internal Radiation Therapy. This technology employs the use of millions of tiny polymer beads, or microspheres, containing a radioactive element and specifically designed to attack liver tumors when it is not surgically possible to remove them. A second tool, called a Dosimeter, is a tiny implantable



device that measures the amount of radiation a tumor receives. A tiny wireless device approved for prostate or breast cancer patients is implanted in the area receiving radiation. Once there, it sends out radiation absorption rates to a handheld monitor, telling the physician whether or not the dosage is within the prescribed range.

With two MRI's available at Catawba Valley Medical Center, getting timely, high-quality imaging produced and evaluated is easier than ever! Our imaging staff members – both within the medical center and at the Catawba Valley Imaging Center on Tate Boulevard – are making every effort to fill patient needs on the day of the

Examples of new technology recently introduced by CVMC:

MammoSite (top), assists the radiation oncologists and technicians in delivering radiation dosages accurately and effectively.

SIRT Spheres (bottom) are tiny radioactive beads which are delivered straight to the tumor through the veins leading to the liver.

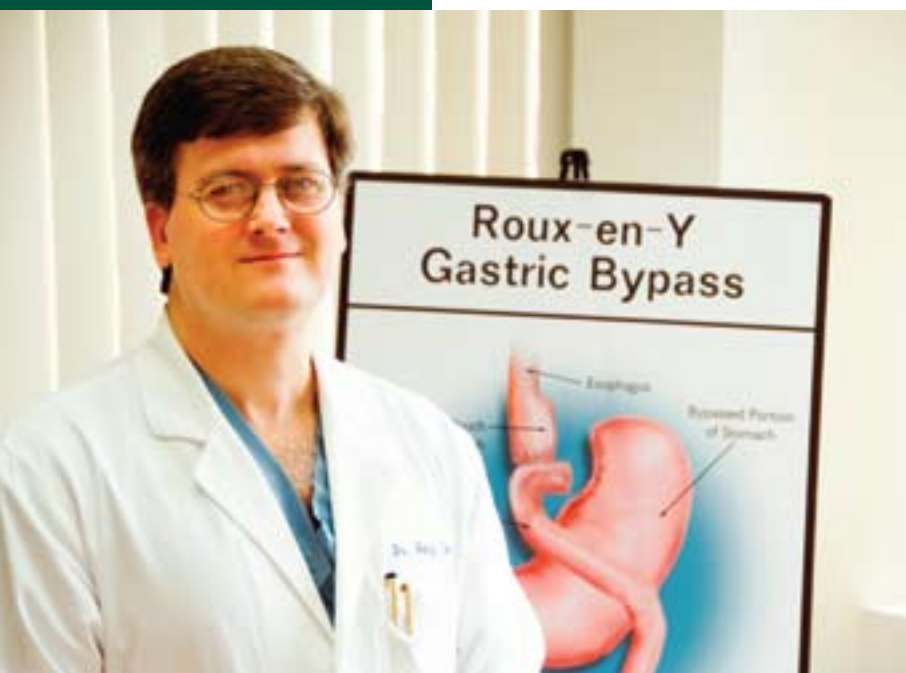
“I would like to express my thanks to the people here at Catawba Valley Medical Center who have helped in giving me a second chance at life “to live.” This Gastric Bypass program here at CVMC is not only curing people of their illnesses, but saving lives, giving us a chance at a healthier life.”

scheduling or with the least possible delay for getting a study completed. Scheduling should make it possible to stay within no more than a three-day wait time for a routine study.

This past year, the medical center added to post cancer therapeutic capabilities – lymphedema therapy. Lymphedema is swelling due to damage to the lymph system caused by cancer or its treatment, such as surgery or radiation therapy. Occupational therapists who are



The Dosimeter, a tiny implantable device, measures the amount of radiation a tumor receives during breast cancer treatment.



Dr. Monty Cox leads the Bariatric Surgery team at CVMC.

certified in manual lymph drainage work with cancer patients to reduce the swelling and improve normal functioning of the affected extremity.

Surgical Weight Management Program

Catawba Valley Medical Center’s Surgical Weight Management program, a Bariatric Surgery

Center of Excellence as recognized by NC Blue Cross Blue Shield, offers medical assistance, including bariatric surgery and support, aimed at improving health and prolonging life. Since inception the program’s surgeons have performed abdominal and laparoscopic Roux-en-Y gastric bypass procedures. In August, the interdisciplinary team attended training to certify for performing the new lap band procedure. The first lap band surgery is planned in January, 2008.

Nursing at CVMC – A Commitment to Excellence

Magnet Hospital Designation

The Magnet Hospital designation, bestowed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), recognizes nursing programs that provide quality patient care in an environment that encourages continuous staff development, nursing leadership and community involvement. Research shows that Magnet hospitals are not only more effective at attracting and keeping quality nurses, but patients there have lower mortality rates and shorter lengths of stay than at non-Magnet hospitals.

In May 2001, Catawba Valley Medical Center became only the second facility in North Carolina and the 32nd in the nation to receive designation as a Magnet hospital. In 2005, CVMC earned Magnet Hospital designation for the second time. To date, less than four percent of U.S. hospitals have been named Magnet facilities.

The designation process is rigorous involving a lengthy written document, followed by an intense site visit. The appraisal process is true “peer review” because the appraisers are nurse leaders from other Magnet designated hospitals and professors of nursing from universities and colleges. Currently, three CVMC nurse leaders – Eddie Beard, RN, MSN, CNAA, Vice President of Patient Services and Chief Nursing Officer;



Locate the nearest magnet. If you can easily check into a magnet hospital, you’d be foolish not to.”

– Readers Digest, September 2003



Susan Bumgarner, RNC, MSN, CNAA, Medical Surgical Nurse Administrator; and Sherry Hardee, RN, MSN, CNOR, CNAA, Surgical Suite Administrator – serve as national Magnet appraisers.

“Achieving Magnet hospital designation is a journey – a journey focused on continuously improving the quality and capabilities and level of professional practice nursing,” says Beard. “The first designation was an incredible achievement. Achieving designation a second time was even harder. By raising our expectations of ourselves every single day, our patients benefit. They deserve no less from us.”

“My mother passed away recently after being a patient at CVMC for several weeks. One special nurse touched my life and my family’s life in a very special way. My Dad, my brother, and I knew Mom was dying. Her nurse, Debra, just held on to me and cried right along with me. She hugged Mom and told her many times how much she loved her. Mom passed away on a Thursday and was buried on Sunday and Debra was there for us. My pastor had recently told me that God sends people to you when you need them the most, and I know that He sent me Debra. I told her that and she just replied, “No, God sent you to me.” The nursing staff loved my mom and she loved them. The love that was shown to me and my whole family will never be forgotten.”

“The potential for nursing research is big,” says Nadin Knippschild, RN. “So as not to be dependent upon others, we need our own research and evidence-based practice. As nurses, we need to move beyond following orders without question and develop into researchers ourselves. Professionally, this will lead us toward more autonomy in our practice.”

Nadin says she would like to see more early adopters of Evidence Based Practice and nursing research – nurses who question their practice, investigate to acquire more knowledge, and become implementers of practice changes or new interventions. “I believe CVMC is a pioneer among community hospitals. I do not think other community hospitals are doing what we are.”

Evidence-Based Nursing Practice

How can patient falls be prevented? How can glucose levels in critically ill patients be managed better? Will music intervention reduce pain immediately after surgery? These and other questions resulted in research projects completed by medical center nursing teams as part of CVMC’s nursing research endeavor.

Rebecca Tart, PhD, serves as Director for Research and Evidence-based Practice (EBP). Dr. Tart’s role is to develop an EBP program and to coordinate internal research at the medical center.

With the goal of improving patient outcomes, the program combines research, clinical expertise, and patient preferences when planning a change.

“Highly acclaimed models for EBP have been developed by large, academic medical centers,” reports Dr. Tart. “CVMC’s research and EBP program can become a model for other community hospitals. We are committed to evidence-based change, if the evidence warrants change in practice. Random, unsubstantiated change should not be the means by which nursing seeks to improve patient outcomes.”

Focus on Building Clinical Expertise

One of the major components of EBP is clinical expertise. Clinicians who further their professional training also heighten confidence in their ability to make sound clinical judgements.



Dr. Tart earned a PhD in Microbiology and Immunology from Wake Forest University. She was a member of the pneumococcal vaccine research team at the University of Alabama at Birmingham as a post-doctoral fellow. She joined CVMC after 10 years at Campbell University and Lenoir Rhyne College.

CVMC Nurses are encouraged and receive financial support to continue to grow professionally. Advanced degrees, clinical certifications, continuing education, participation in professional conferences, and scholarly research are tools each nurse can use to grow and learn as an individual. Over 86% of CVMC nursing staff are Registered Nurses, compared to an average of 60% in other facilities of comparable size. While many hospitals nationwide were decreasing the number of RNs at the bedside, CVMC’s Board and management continued their commitment to the value the RN brings to patient outcomes.

The focus on continuing individual education has resulted in a significant number of CVMC RNs who have become nationally certified in their areas of specialty.

For example, Pediatric nursing leadership encouraged eight eligible nurses to achieve national certification. As a result of leadership support, 75% of the pediatric unit nursing staff achieved the national certification in May, 2007. Three more RNs have completed the qualifications and are awaiting the test date.

Commitment to Serving

A hospital visit can be frightening for patients and their families, regardless of the reason. CVMC nurses enjoy a long standing reputation for their caring and compassion. Many nurses will tell you that the reason they chose nursing as a career is the opportunity to serve, to help people, and because they want to make a difference.

Adina Andreu, Administrator of The Center for Women and Children, tells a story of a young mother in an unusual situation and the response of the nurses who cared for her during her stay in the CVMC Birthing Center:

“A full-term pregnancy lasts 40 weeks,” says Adina. “This mother was admitted at 25 weeks with broken waters, far too early to deliver for the health of the infant. Her physicians ordered complete bed rest. Nine weeks later, she delivered a healthy baby with a chance to thrive.

“You can imagine how difficult a nine-week hospital stay was for her, particularly since she had two other children at home. She told me how nurses found extra time to rub her feet, bathe her, and even take



her out on a stretcher to see the sunlight during the day and at night just to see the stars. They collected small, gift-wrapped presents to give her something to look forward to each day. But perhaps the most important gift they gave her was to arrange for her two children to stay with her on weekends. One child even received help completing a school project. The relationship our nurses built with this patient was very close and they went above and beyond any expectations in helping her through this very long ordeal. When the situation became intolerable for her and she was at a crossroads – to stay or leave the hospital, I suggested an interdisciplinary team meeting with the patient and all her caregivers – physicians, midwives, nurses, social

Nurses play key roles in every aspect of Catawba Valley Medical Center, whether it’s in the Birthing Center (above) or the Emergency Department (below).

Health Career Internship Program

Catawba Valley Medical Center's (CVMC) Health Career Internship Program, a 16-year collaborative effort with Catawba County Schools, is designed to recruit, educate and prepare high school juniors and seniors for health care careers. Thus far, 275 students have completed the program.

"The internship program is extremely beneficial to students who are considering a career in health care," said Ann Moore, then coordinator of Organizational Learning at CVMC. "Our intent with the program is to assist students with making the decision



Ann Moore, RN,

to pursue a career in healthcare. While many finish the internship knowing that health care is the path they want to take after graduation, some realize that it's not for them."

The program is a total of 70 hours – 30 hours in a classroom and 40 hours shadowing a CVMC mentor.

The classroom component covers a wide range of topics, including various careers available in health care, applying to and attending college, the proper way to write a resume, and professional behavior and dress. Along with a tour of CVMC, students visit NorthEast Medical Center in Concord to learn more about services offered by a larger medical center that may not be offered at CVMC. Students also tour Catawba Valley Community College and Lenoir-Rhyne College to learn about higher education options and get an idea of what college life is all about.

In February, CVMC received the Catawba County Chamber of Commerce's "2007 Faith in the Future" award for its achievements with this program. Catawba County Schools Workforce Development Coordinator Marian Ford, who nominated the hospital for this honor, said, "I thought CVMC deserved this award because it's making a big investment in the future by giving 25 young people the opportunity to advance in both the health care and business industries each year. Now that's faith in our future."

For more information about CVMC's Health Career Internship Program, contact CVMC Organizational Learning at 828/326-3492.

workers, and therapists – to discuss options and agree on a care plan. She decided to stay and the result was positive for her and her family. She told me she would never forget our staff and their friendship."

Service for CVMC nurses can mean responding to the special needs of each individual patient, but it can also mean service through community involvement:

CVMC nurses are at every Crawdads' home game manning the first aid station. They staff the two first aid tents at the Greater Hickory Classic at Rock Barn since the inception of the tournament. They provide free flu shots at the Corner Table and the Hickory Soup Kitchen. Many departments "adopt" families every year to ensure that the holiday will be special. Several nurses serve as rape crisis nurses which requires additional training and commitment to being on call beyond regular work hours. Nursing units are actively involved in many fundraising efforts to support nonprofit agencies in the community, including March of Dimes, Rape Crisis Center, United Way, and the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

The commitment to nursing excellence at the medical center is a belief in the value each individual brings to the team and contributes to the quality of care. Their passion has earned them exceptional honors, but the honor they appreciate the most is the honor patients bestow in trusting them with their care.

Community Benefit Investments & Health Initiatives

Catawba Valley Medical Center takes a holistic approach to providing patient care. Not only is the organization a provider of traditional hospital services, its acute care offerings are complemented by a comprehensive range of preventive and health education initiatives.

Health Education

The medical center's community health programming is centered in the Health First Center located at Valley Hills Mall. Comprehensive educational programs and screenings are targeted to the unique needs of women, men, children and seniors and are taught by RNs, medical staff members and other certified allied professionals.

Parents attend the center's childbirth classes and have access to Lamaze training by the only certified trainers in the area. The SafeKids coordinator for the area, a registered nurse, is housed in the center and offers regular, ongoing programs in the Health First Center and in the community. A particularly important focus is on teaching families to correctly install car seats.

A senior membership program called "Seniority" has a membership of almost 5,700. Members enjoy discounts at the



center's quarterly cholesterol screenings, a prescription discount program and health programming designed to address senior health issues. Many participate in free aerobic exercise programs held twice a week.

The medical center's mobile mammography truck travels to

The Health First Center at Valley Hills Mall offers programs and classes for the general public, including specialized classes like Infant CPR.

CVMC SUPPORT GROUPS

- **CanSurmount** meets the 3rd Monday of each month (except December) at 7:00 p.m. in the Health First Center at Valley Hills Mall. All cancer patients and their families/friends are invited. Contact Peggy Messick for more information at 828/326-3127.
- **Hearts of Hope Breast Cancer Support Group** meets the last Tuesday of the month (except October and December) at 7:00 p.m. in the hospital classroom at Catawba Valley Medical Center. Contact Brenda Putnam at 828/326-2176 for more information.
- **US TOO** is a prostate cancer support group which meets on the second Monday of each month (except September and December) at 7:00 p.m. in AHEC Building, conference room, adjacent to Catawba Valley Medical Center. Contact Gary Skinner at 828/466-0064 for details.
- **New Voice Club of the Unifour** is a support group for laryngectomy survivors. It meets the last Sunday of each month at 3:00 p.m. in Northwest AHEC Building, room 105, adjacent to Catawba Valley Medical Center. Contact Oran Starnes at 828/324-2269.
- **The Pregnancy Loss Support Group** of Catawba Valley meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Hickory Chiropractic Clinic. Contact Susan Sain for more information at 828/326-2932.
- **LEARN Support Group**, for those who have completed the class, is the third Wednesday of the month at 1 pm or 5:30 pm. Contact Lynn Geissele for more information at 828/326-2905.
- **Gastric Bypass Support Group** is the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. It is only open to patients of Drs. Cook and Cox. Contact Libby Shaver for more information at 828/326-2082.



Center for Diabetes Control nutritionists help patients monitor their diet for better health.

employers to assure that as many women as possible have access to regular annual mammograms. The truck serves Catawba, Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Iredell, and Lincoln counties and offers the latest technology on board—digital mammography.

The Health First Center mails a monthly newsletter to 13,000 households offering articles on important health topics as well as a listing of center classes. Health screenings including prostate, cholesterol, blood sugar and bone density are offered regularly. Blood pressure checks are available whenever the center is open.

Because of the high incidence of diabetes deaths in Catawba County, the medical center operates the Center for Diabetes Control. The center has been recognized for its quality program by the American Diabetes Association since 1993. A team approach to diabetes care and management is used with an interdisciplinary team of professionals including doctors, nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, counselors, and exercise specialists. The center also offers pre-diabetes education, insulin pump therapy, continuous glucose monitoring, gestational, and nutritional programs.

Special Events

The medical center presented several special events over the past year that were designed to raise awareness of health issues, including:

- **GO TO BAT AGAINST BREAST CANCER** – a partnership with the Hickory Crawdads and area physicians and employers to raise breast cancer awareness and emphasize the importance of regular exams and early detection. Crawdads players wore pink jerseys and breast cancer survivors accepted a check to be used to fund breast cancer education.



- **PAMPER ME PINK** – a month-long event at the Health First Center to promote Breast Cancer prevention and educate women about other key healthy lifestyle options.



- **TUNE UP FOR HEALTH** – an ongoing health promotion initiative for men.



- **WALK CATAWBA VALLEY** – an outgrowth of a successful Mallwalker program, Walk



Catawba Valley was launched in February, 2007 with the goal of increasing interest in walking through incentives and education. More than 1,000 participants have registered and 30 corporate and community sponsors are involved.

Community Partnerships

The medical center partners with the Catawba County Public Health Department through several initiatives to improve

CVMC representatives (above) with a Crawdads' player at Go To Bat Against Breast Cancer game; Catawba Valley Medical Center through a partnership with the Catawba County Public Health Department committed \$1.9 million to increase the number of school nurses in the Catawba County School Systems.

Community Benefit Report Fiscal Year 06/07

Saving lives, restoring health, and providing jobs are just the beginning of hospitals' contributions to their communities. Hospitals and their employees positively affect almost every aspect of community life. That is why the N.C. Hospital Association worked with hospitals to create a fair, standard and comparable Community Benefit Report. Catawba Valley Medical Center participated on the committee that created the definitions and has compiled the following report according to the defined guidelines. The reported amounts are based on actual costs rather than charges which vary by hospital.

Direct Community Benefits

Estimated Costs of Treating Charity Care Patients	\$ 3,512,025
Estimated Unreimbursed Costs of Treating Medicare Patients.....	\$ 1,468,408
Estimated Unreimbursed Costs of Treating Medicaid Patients	\$ 6,906,459
Estimated Unreimbursed Costs of Treating Patients from Other Government Non-Negotiated Plans	\$ 1,040,193
Cash Donations	\$ 320,384
In-Kind Donations and Non-Billed Services.....	\$ 74,469
Total Direct Community Benefits.....	\$ 13,321,938

Shared Community Benefits

Other Tax Support or Other Subsidies Received for Provision Of Community Benefits Shared Community Benefits.....	\$ 0
Non-Staff Professional Recruitment Expenses....	\$ 49,859
Economic Development Expenses.....	\$ 26,160
Estimated Losses in Subsidized Hospital Services.....	\$ 1,070,826
Total Shared Community Benefits	\$ 1,146,845

Bad Debt Costs

Estimated Costs of Treating Bad Debt Patients	\$ 7,773,208
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health. A long-term partnership between the Health Department and the medical center provides nurse midwives for mothers delivering at the Birthing Center. A second partnership that includes assistance from Wake Forest University Medical School resulted in a gynecologic clinic for women with abnormal PAP smears. The most recent joint initiative is a commitment totaling \$1.9 million to increase the number of school nurses in the three Catawba County school systems which is allowing them to better serve children whose health issues are barriers to learning. They also can focus on health education and prevention of chronic disease.

The Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry is another example of a long standing and successful community partnership. The Ministry's Health Clinic serves some of the most vulnerable Catawba County citizens. The medical center provides almost \$90,000 a year in ancillary services at no cost for their patients. These services include radiological tests, surgical procedures and other therapies.

The Foundation

Catawba Medical Foundation provides invaluable financial support to underwrite new programs, enhance the medical center's current services and purchase leading edge diagnostic and treatment technology. The Foundation actively pursues grant funding to help support programs and services as well as provide emergency transportation expenses and personal items



Thanks to the Catawba Medical Foundation, CVMC's Level III Neonatal Care Unit is able to take advantage of cutting-edge technology like the Giraffe®, a new generation incubator and monitoring station that provides thermal control for infants who have difficulty maintaining their temperatures.

for patients who cannot afford them. Recent Foundation projects include purchasing three Giraffe incubators for the Neonatal Nursery and funding for an Emergency Department tracking system to help improve the efficiency of emergency treatment. The Foundation receives a significant amount of contributions from the medical center's employees. More than half of our employees contribute to the Foundation showing a remarkable commitment to the health of our community that goes far beyond their day-to-day jobs.

Investing in Our Community

Improving health is a challenge the medical center cannot accomplish alone and is affected by a host of lifestyle issues. It is therefore important that we support local community services and activities that contribute to the overall quality of life in the region. Over the past fiscal year, we have supported hundreds of local organizations including:

Health Related:

- ALFA
- Juvenile Diabetes Foundation
- Family Care Center
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Cooperative Christian Ministries (Hickory, Newton)
- Catawba County EMS
- Rape Crisis Center
- Hospice of Catawba Valley
- March of Dimes
- Catawba County Public Health Department
- Breast Cancer Coalition
- American Heart Association
- American Cancer Society
- Coaches Against Cancer

Cultural:

- Western Piedmont Symphony
- United Arts Fund
- Hickory Community Theatre
- The Green Room
- Catawba County Historical Society
- Hickory Choral Society
- Hickory Landmarks Society

Non-Profit Organizations:

- United Way
- Family Guidance Center
- Lenoir-Rhyne College
- United Hmong Association
- Centro Latino
- Southern Christian Leadership
- Catawba County Branch NAACP
- Catawba County Chamber of Commerce Jaycees
- Catawba Valley Youth Soccer League
- Rotary Clubs
- Piedmont Council Boy Scouts of America
- Council on Adolescents
- Children's Advocacy Center
- YMCA
- Women's Resource Center

Centers of Excellence

The Comprehensive Cancer Center

The Health First Center at Valley Hills Mall

The Heart Center

The Neurosciences Center

The Center for Orthopaedics

Psychiatry Services

The Center for Rehabilitation

The Center for Women & Children

The Birthing Center

Accreditations and Awards

Every industry has its unique measurements of quality and the health care industry is no exception. Chief among these measures is accreditation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations. Catawba Valley Medical Center routinely meets and exceeds basic accreditation requirements by the Joint Commission. This accreditation is achieved only following an in-depth on-site survey by several surveyors that usually lasts four – five days.

While many hospitals do not choose to seek other clinical accreditations, we routinely welcome opportunities to use outside measures to ensure that we offer quality services. We also welcome the opportunity to benchmark our services with others across the nation. We routinely share information and seek new and better methods of service delivery. Examples include:

- **Thomson Solucient Top 100 Hospitals:** Performance Improvement Leaders Award as one of only 20 medium sized community hospitals in the US recognized for achieving the fastest rate of consistent, annual organizational improvement in a number of objective measures.
- **Magnet Hospital** designation for nursing excellence -- twice – CVMC was only the 32nd hospital in the national to achieve this prestigious designation.
- **Comprehensive Community Hospital Cancer Center** designation by the American College of Surgeons. The medical center was the first facility in the region to achieve this important recognition for offering a quality cancer program.
- **Comprehensive Integrated Rehabilitation Program** by CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.
- Designation as a **Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence** by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina's (BCBSNC) Bariatric Physician Advisory Panel.

In addition to clinical quality measures, the medical center continually measures patient satisfaction. Our relationships with the people we serve are critically important to how well we meet each patient and family's needs. Others include:

- **Hospital of Choice Award** winner by the American Alliance of Healthcare Providers (AAHCP) recognizing CVMC as one of America's most customer-friendly hospitals based on excellence in meeting high standards in quality care, customer satisfaction, and community service.
- Recognized as a co-winner of the **Consumer Choice Award** for Overall Quality & Image in the Hickory-Morganton region by the National Research Corporation (NRC) for 2007/08.
- Catawba County Chamber of Commerce **2007 Faith in the Future Award** for our Health Career Internship Program
- And most recently, we were informed that J.D. Power and Associates has designated Catawba Valley Medical Center as a **Distinguished Hospital**, recognizing us as one of only 20% of facilities nationwide that meet their standards for customer satisfaction and product quality.

We are certainly proud of all of these accomplishments and consider ourselves privileged to serve the people of the Catawba Valley.



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TWO-TIME AWARD RECIPIENT

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