

HEALTH NEWS *from*

SPRING 2017

palmdale

REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Rehabilitation Institute
NOW OPEN

Ask the Doctor

Learn more about acute rehabilitation

Raising the Flag

Honoring National Donate Life Month



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PALMDALE REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER



FROM THE CEO



Palmdale Regional Medical Center celebrated a significant development in December 2016 with the opening of the hospital's Rehabilitation Institute. This dedicated inpatient facility supports patients recovering from strokes and other serious neurological and physical conditions – right here, close to home.

We had the pleasure of hosting Mayor James C. Ledford and many other community members at a ribbon cutting for the new unit, which is the first of its kind in the Antelope Valley. Not only will the new facility make acute rehabilitation more accessible for area residents, but it will also make it easier for loved ones and family members to be involved. You can learn more about the Rehabilitation Institute in this issue of *Health News*.

We also tell you on the next page about advanced services the hospital is providing for cancer, wound healing and abdominal aortic aneurysms. Later, on page 7, you can learn how we're honoring National Donate Life Month and find information about becoming an organ donor.

As the stories in this issue reflect, the team at Palmdale Regional is committed to meeting your healthcare needs and providing safe, quality, compassionate care. We're honored to play a role in supporting your continued health.

Sincerely,

Richard Allen
Chief Executive Officer

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On the front cover: The acute rehabilitation team at Palmdale Regional gathers to mark the opening of the new Rehabilitation Institute, which provides a supportive setting for patients to recover and regain their independence.

GET SET TO SUPPORT THIS YEAR'S *Relay For Life*

Palmdale Regional Medical Center and Keck Medicine of USC are proud to be the Presenting Sponsors of the Relay For Life of Antelope Valley, which raises donations for the American Cancer Society to fight cancer and raise awareness. This year's 24-hour event will begin Saturday, April 29, at 9 a.m. at Quartz Hill High School, 6040 W. Avenue L, Lancaster. During the relay, team members will take turns walking around the school track to honor the strength of individuals battling cancer.

To learn more about this event, visit www.palmdaleregional.com/calendar.



Minimally invasive AAA repair at Palmdale Regional

An abdominal aortic aneurysm (also called “AAA” or “triple A”) occurs when there is a bulge or weakening in the body’s main artery, where it passes through the abdomen. Tears or ruptures associated with this condition can cause serious, and in some cases, life-threatening complications. As an alternative to traditional open surgery, Palmdale Regional offers endovascular aortic aneurysm repair (EVAR) for patients who meet certain criteria. With this minimally invasive procedure, most patients are discharged home the day after surgery, says Vascular Surgeon Joe Chauvapun, MD. Risk factors for AAA include age, smoking, high-blood pressure, high cholesterol and heredity. **To find a physician affiliated with Palmdale Regional who can discuss screening and care for AAA, please call Direct Doctors Plus® at 800-851-9780.**



HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY *for wound healing*

The wound care team at Palmdale Regional recently gathered with patient Jimmie Roberts (pictured above in the front row to the left of Medical Director Stanley Cowen, MD) to celebrate Jimmie’s successful treatment with hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT). During this therapy, patients inhale 100 percent oxygen while lying in a carefully controlled, pressurized oxygen chamber. Jimmie says he experienced notable healing after just six or seven HBOT treatments. “I’m feeling better and healthier,” he said. To learn more about wound care at Palmdale Regional, please visit www.palmdaleregional.com/woundcare.



Marjun Philip Duldulao, MD



Gerhard J. Fuchs, MD, FACS

New Keck Medicine of USC doctors join cancer care alliance

Palmdale Regional Medical Center recently welcomed two new doctors to its alliance with Keck Medicine of University of Southern California (USC), which supports specialty urological, colorectal and breast cancer care. *Marjun Philip Duldulao, MD*, specializes in minimally invasive and robotic procedures for the management of colon and rectal cancer, polyps and other conditions. *Gerhard J. Fuchs, MD, FACS*, specializes in advanced endoscopic and urologic laparoscopic surgery, as well as minimally invasive procedures for treating kidney stones. They join USC physicians Monish Aron, MD; Kyle G. Cologne, MD, FACS, FASCRS; Sang W. Lee, MD, FACS, FASCRS; Maria Nelson, MD; and Joongho Shin, MD, FASCRS.

For information about cancer care at Palmdale Regional, visit www.palmdaleregional.com/cancercare.

in alliance with

Keck Medicine of USC



Acute rehabilitation comes to



Teresa Mendoza, RN
Nursing
Director of
Rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional Medical Center is now open to help patients recovering from stroke, spinal cord injuries, brain injuries and other disabling physical and neurological conditions.

The Institute features 27 private rooms with their own bathrooms and 24-hour nursing support. A skilled therapy team provides individualized care to help patients regain function and improve their quality of life.

"The goal is to focus on what patients will need when they leave the facility," explains Teresa Mendoza, RN, Nursing Director of Rehabilitation Services. "For example, a patient who has suffered a stroke may need to learn how to communicate or walk again," she says. For other patients with multiple traumatic injuries, the goal may be to restore function so they can go back to work, she says.



This full bathroom in the acute rehabilitation unit provides a place for patients to practice getting back to daily life. Each private patient room in the facility also has its own bathroom with a toilet, sink and full walk-in shower.

Three hours of speech, occupational and/or physical therapy are required each day – plus, patients can practice daily living tasks in shared spaces, including a full kitchen.

"We want to provide a more realistic setting, where patients can work on getting back to their regular routines," says Ryan Tingey, who oversaw the opening of the new unit.

Gyms at the Institute provide dedicated therapy spaces with equipment to help improve balance, function and endurance. The program also offers a robotic Vector Gait & Safety System®, which provides weight-bearing support to help patients who are relearning how to walk.

As patients are preparing to transition out of the unit, they and their family members can spend time in the facility's transitional apartment, where patients can practice being more independent with the support of trained care providers nearby.

"To see a patient leave us with a higher level of independence and healing is a success for us," Mendoza says. "We're excited about the unit and the difference we can make throughout the High Desert region." ■



Palmdale Regional CEO Richard Allen (center) and Mayor James Ledford do the honors in a ribbon cutting ceremony while others look on.

"We're providing a service in the community that nobody else is providing. Patients no longer have to travel out of the area for this specialized care. They can now find it right here, close to home."

– Ryan Tingey, Associate Administrator

the Antelope Valley

Celebrating a very special first

The Rehabilitation Institute is making a difference already for patients in the community – and for visitors to the area as well. We thank the facility's first patient, Barry Kiel of Minnesota, for taking time out to share his experience.

Barry was visiting family in Ridgecrest last December when he suffered his second stroke in less than a year. On December 27, he was transferred to the Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional where he became the first patient to be cared for in the new unit.

While at the Institute, Barry focused on mobility, balance and the use of his legs and his right arm and hand. He had speech therapy to help with language and occupational therapy to work on daily activities. "It was strenuous," he says. "I worked hard to progress."

"I felt the therapists were very supportive and right on in their assessment and the things they gave me to do," he notes. "All the nurses and therapists were very skilled and professional."

Beyond the physical work, Barry says he was strengthened by the emotional support he received – first from his wife, Karen, who was with him every day and was an integral part of his therapy, and also from the Institute's staff. "We became friends," he says.

Barry is now back at home in Minnesota, continuing to work on his recovery. "I'd like to publicly thank the rehab unit and the therapists," he says, remarking on the positive experience he and his wife had. "We are very grateful." ■

Following your stay at the Rehabilitation Institute, specialty care is available through outpatient therapy (see sidebar) and other services at Palmdale Regional. To learn more about rehabilitation services, please see page 6 and visit www.palmdaleregional.com/rehab.



Barry Kiel regains his strength after a stroke with support from Marilyn Sloan, RN (left) and Michelle Irving, RN, MSN.



REHABILITATION
AND ORTHOPEDIC
INSTITUTE

A PROGRAM OF
PALMDALE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Outpatient rehabilitation: Continuing the progress

The Rehabilitation and Orthopedic Institute at Palmdale Regional can provide specialized care to help patients continue their progress when they leave the inpatient unit, says Youngsun Kim, DPT, OCS, SCS, Manager of Outpatient Therapy. "We communicate with the inpatient team and can ensure consistency," he says. The therapy team continually works to improve the patient experience, he notes. "We are pleased that many of our patients have had very good things to say about the care they've received," he says.

Your questions about the new *Rehabilitation Institute* answered



Recovering from a stroke or other serious neurological or physical

conditions can be overwhelming, and you may have questions about inpatient rehabilitation and how it works. To clarify, **Fariba Vesali, MD**, Medical Director of Palmdale Regional's Rehabilitation Institute, discusses the services provided at the new inpatient unit.

Q: Do I have to be a hospital patient to be admitted to the Rehabilitation Institute?

While many patients go directly from an acute hospital stay at Palmdale Regional Medical Center to inpatient rehabilitation, you may also be referred from other hospitals and facilities. Patients must meet certain admission criteria, such as being able to perform required intensive daily therapy.

Q: Can rehabilitation help me fully recover from the effects of a stroke?

Rehabilitation cannot undo the brain damage caused by a stroke, but it can help patients relearn how to perform everyday activities. For many people, participating in rehabilitation can make a significant difference in helping them to regain independence, and in many cases, return to work.

Q: Can my family be involved in my treatment?

Absolutely. Therapists in the inpatient unit include family members and caregivers throughout the rehabilitation process. Having an acute rehabilitation facility right here in the community can make it easier for family members who live nearby.

Q: What happens when I'm ready to leave?

Planning for discharge from the Rehabilitation Institute begins when rehabilitation starts, and therapy is designed to help you meet your goals. For many patients, outpatient rehabilitation can be helpful (see sidebar on page 5). The therapy team works to ensure a smooth transition when you're ready for the next step. ■

Dr. Vesali says she is honored to serve patients at the new Rehabilitation Institute, which is the only acute care facility of its kind in the Antelope Valley. To find out more about rehabilitation services, visit www.palmdaleregional.com/rehab.



APRIL IS NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH

Throughout the month of April, Palmdale Regional will keep a flag raised in honor of organ donors.

Palmdale Regional Medical Center joins with the Donate Life and One Legacy organizations in this special observance to honor those who have left their legacy behind to save and transform lives. More than 33,600 transplants were made possible in the U.S. in 2016, according to Donate Life America.

As part of the hospital's flag raising event, Palmdale resident Anna Villafana shared her story of how she has been touched by organ donation. Anna was diagnosed with renal failure at age 18 and received her first transplant from a family member, who gave her one of his kidneys as a living donor. "It was the most amazing gift he could possibly give me," she says.

After living for 15 and a half years with that gift, her body rejected the kidney and her health plummeted. In May 2016, Anna received a call from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) that a kidney was available from a young man who had lost his life. Anna says she is so grateful to her donor for putting his name on the donor registry. For her and many others, the flag raising is an opportunity to say thank you and pay special honor and respect to individuals who have given the ultimate gift.

You can find out about organ donation and register to be a donor online by visiting One Legacy at www.onelegacy.org. One Legacy serves the seven-county greater Los Angeles area. Registration is also available through Donate Life America at www.donatelife.net.

Did you know...

The number of patients waiting for organs varies every day, but on average, the number is well over 120,000 and climbing, according to organdonor.gov. In addition to major organ transplants, eye and tissue donations can be life-changing for many people.



Palmdale resident Anna Villafana underwent her second kidney transplant in May 2016.



Community members gather at the hospital for a special flag raising ceremony.



This tree is on display throughout the year at the hospital to honor organ donors.



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NOW OPEN

The Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional

Palmdale Regional Medical Center is bringing advanced rehabilitation treatment to residents of the Antelope Valley. The new Rehabilitation Institute offers you and your family high-quality, specialized rehabilitation treatment that is close to home.

The acute rehab facility includes 27 private rooms and specialized training/activity areas designed to restore function and enhance quality of life for people with disabling physical or neurological conditions. The interdisciplinary rehab team is led by a physician and includes therapists, nurses, social workers and case managers.

A high level of care and intensive therapy help patients with spinal cord injuries, strokes, brain injuries and other conditions regain function and achieve greater independence.

To learn more about the new Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional, visit www.palmdaleregional.com.

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