



communitycare

Primary Care: Putting our Patients First

At the Clifton-Fine Hospital Primary Care Clinic, we want your healthcare experience to be the best it can be. That's why we have recently adopted Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) as our principal care model.

This team-based model of care, led by a primary care provider, emphasizes the importance of an ongoing patient-provider relationship for long-term health and utilizes a team-based approach to improve your patient experience. Your PCMH team works together to coordinate all of your health needs, including management of chronic conditions, behavioral health, visits to specialists, hospital admissions, information about preventative screenings, check-ups, and tests.

At the CFH Primary Care Clinic, we provide a full range of services for patients of all ages, including: routine physicals, preventative care, immunizations and seasonal vaccines, pediatrics, women's health, medication management, vital sign checks, school and sports physicals, pre-operative testing, care for short-term illnesses and injuries, and chronic illness care (such as asthma, high blood pressure, or arthritis).

For more information about the Patient-Centered Medical Home model, please visit ncga.gov.



Our newest provider, Erin Birchenough, FNP-C, listens to a patient's lungs.

More news from the Primary Care Clinic on page 3!

Clifton-Fine Hospital Joins HealtheConnections A Vital Link to Improved Patient Care

In today's world, most of us receive medical care from more than one healthcare provider, including hospitals, laboratories, physicians, and imaging centers. Each place keeps its own records with information about your test results, medications and medical history. However, healthcare providers can make better decisions about your care and treatment when they have as much information as possible about your health. That's why Clifton-Fine Hospital has joined HealtheConnections.

HealtheConnections is the Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) for Central and Northern New York and one of nine RHIOs in New York State. It covers an eleven county region that includes Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga, Tompkins, Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Herkimer, Lewis, Jefferson, and St. Lawrence. The HealtheConnections' Health Information Exchange (HIE) is a secure computer information system that connects all your electronic medical information including histories, labs, reports, and diagnostic tests across all your regional healthcare providers. By making this information available to your providers, HealtheConnections allows them to focus on providing you the best possible care.

Continued on page 2





Dear Friends and Neighbors:

As a new year begins and we reflect back on 2016, I want to thank everyone in our community for supporting Clifton-Fine Hospital. Our goal is to continue providing high quality healthcare services for many years to come. With your continued support, I am confident we will achieve our goal. I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank our Board of Directors, the Wilderness Health Care Foundation, the Clifton-Fine Hospital Auxiliary and our wonderful medical providers, staff and volunteers for their hard work. Their efforts, along with your support, generated great success in 2016. I would like to highlight just a few of the accomplishments:

- In 2016, we proudly celebrated our 65th year of service to our community. A wonderful celebration was planned under the leadership of Anne Hynes and a committed team of volunteers. Over 200 people participated in the event, honoring our history and recognizing those individuals and community organizations who made the hospital possible.
- Last year, we achieved national recognition as a top 20 critical access hospital in patient satisfaction for the third consecutive year.
- Erin Birchenough, Family Nurse Practitioner, relocated to Star Lake and joined our medical staff in full-time practice.

- Under the leadership of David Northrup, and in partnership with our affiliate, Samaritan Medical Center, we invested \$400,000 in new Information technology equipment, including a state-of-the-art patient heart monitoring system throughout the hospital.
- Our Primary Care Clinic received federal designation as a Rural Health Clinic, demonstrating adherence to nationally accepted standards for quality and patient safety.
- The Wilderness Health Care Foundation raised over \$17,000 at this year's annual golf tournament and over \$100,000 in this year's annual appeal. Both are amazing accomplishments made possible through the incredible support of our community. I would like to personally thank everyone who donated. Please know how much we appreciate your generosity and need your continued support.

As we look forward, our priorities in 2017 will focus on the continued growth of our preventative and primary care services, implementing new mental health services in our clinic and developing a telemedicine program to enhance our services and provide greater access to care for our community.

On behalf of all of us here at Clifton-Fine Hospital,
I wish you and your family all the best for a healthy and prosperous year.

Robert Seamon
Chief Executive Officer

Clifton-Fine Hospital Joins HealtheConnections

Continued from page 1

From a patient's perspective, healthcare becomes easier and safer when records are shared. You benefit from fewer duplicate tests and procedures, faster second opinions, and a reduced risk of errors caused by illegible handwriting or incomplete records. You'll no longer have to hand carry lab reports, radiology test results and images, prescriptions, and other medical information from provider to provider. And, in an emergency, when time is of the essence, your providers will have instant access to vital information for diagnosis and treatment.

The decision to participate in HealtheConnections is up to you. You must provide written consent for EACH of your healthcare providers to access and use HealtheConnections to provide medical care. At Clifton-Fine Hospital, all of our patients are now being asked for their consent at registration at the beginning of every visit. More information is available if you should have any questions. For more information and listing of participating providers in our area, visit www.healthEconnections.org.



Meet the Provider: Erin Birchenough, FNP-C

Ms. Birchenough is the newest full-time member of our provider team at the Clifton-Fine Hospital Primary Care Clinic.

Medical school:

Masters in Nursing from
Upstate Medical University,
School of Nursing
– Syracuse, NY

Certification:

American Association of
Nurse Practitioners

Q. Do you have any areas of specialty?

A. I am studying to become a Certified Hypertension Clinician (CHC) through the American Society of Hypertension (high blood pressure).

Q. How did you happen to first learn about Clifton-Fine Hospital?

A. While vacationing in Star Lake several years ago, my stepson was taken to the ER and then admitted for several days. The exceptional care he received has left our family with a deep gratitude and appreciation for the doctors and staff of Clifton-Fine Hospital.

Q. What impresses you most about Clifton-Fine Hospital?

A. The overwhelming community support and family atmosphere.

Q. What do you like to do in your free time?

A. I am an avid baker and love to bake specialty cakes and cupcakes. I also enjoy kayaking, oil painting, and photography.



Now accepting new patients! Call 315-848-5404.

Friendly Reminders from the Primary Care Clinic

Blood Pressure Checks – A New Service:

Now you can have your blood pressure checked with no appointment needed. Simply stop by any time the Primary Care Clinic is open to have your blood pressure taken. This service is offered as a courtesy to our patients and there is no cost to you.

Patient Portal:

You can access your health information through our patient portal by providing us an e-mail address. A summary of care document will publish to the portal after each visit. You have the ability to view, download and transmit this information. Through the Patient Portal you can also send a secure message to your provider, request an appointment and request prescriptions. Please allow 72 hours for a response through the portal. The portal should NOT be utilized for urgent or emergency situations.

Appointment Cancellations:

We understand that things happen that may cause you to be unable to keep your scheduled appointment, whether it's inclement weather, transportation issues, or simply the hectic pace of life. If you are unable to keep your appointment as scheduled, please call us at 315-848-5404 as far in advance as possible. By canceling your appointment ahead of time, you allow us to offer that time slot to a patient in need, while providing you with the best options for rescheduling.

Medications:

Please bring your prescription medications, vitamins, and over-the-counter medications in their original bottles to each appointment. This allows us to maintain an accurate list of all the medications you are taking.

Rural Health Clinic Designation:

The Clifton-Fine Hospital Primary Care Clinic recently received its official designation as a Rural Health Clinic (RHC). The RHC program is intended to increase access to primary care services for Medicaid and Medicare patients in rural communities. Achieving this designation demonstrates Clifton-Fine Hospital's commitment to providing both much-needed care to the southern St. Lawrence County area, and the highest level of healthcare possible for our patients.

Coming Soon:

Behavioral Health Services Right at the Clinic! Soon you will be able to see a psychologist/psychiatrist alongside your primary care provider. More information will be available soon.



*Proudly Supporting the
Clifton-Fine Hospital*

Wilderness Health Care Foundation

Foundation Welcomes New Director

The Wilderness Health Care Foundation recently announced the appointment of Vanessa Vaverchak as its new Executive Director. A graduate of the State University of New York at Binghamton, Ms. Vaverchak has pursued a career in art and graphic design, first with a design agency outside of New York City and later in-house with a regional bank in New Jersey. Since relocating to the Adirondacks, Ms. Vaverchak has maintained a design contract with that same bank and has also expanded her freelance client base each year.



Vanessa Vaverchak
*Foundation Executive
Director*

Ms. Vaverchak and her husband, Greg, currently live in Wanakena at the SUNY ESF Ranger School where he teaches Forestry. They have two daughters, four-year-old Natalie and sixth-month-old Lydia, and a German Short-Haired Pointer, Bella.

“Our interests lie in a love for spending time outdoors and on the water with friends and family. The continued revitalization and success of the community is of utmost importance to us as a young family. We try to live that by being involved residents and volunteering our time and talents toward those efforts,” shares Ms. Vaverchak. “As the local community coordinator for the Wildlife Conservation Society’s inaugural Cycle Adirondacks bicycle tour, I partnered with the Wilderness Health Care Foundation to recruit hospitality volunteers. Cyclists spent their very first tour night in Star Lake and still speak volumes about the warmth of our community. I also Chair the Adirondack White Out Weekend, a free annual winter festival held on Presidents’ Weekend, as one of my volunteer projects in the community. Working with the Foundation prior to coming on as Executive Director was a wonderful and enduring experience. Their dedication to Clifton-Fine Hospital is inspiring and I’m looking forward to many successes in our future.”

65th Anniversary Appeal Exceeds \$100,000 Goal

The Wilderness Health Care Foundation is truly humbled by the outpouring of generosity from community members and extended community members who donated to our Year-End Appeal. Our \$100,000 goal was not only met, but exceeded. The support for this fundraising effort included a \$20,000 grant from the Northern New York Community Foundation, a \$1,000 donation from the Clifton-Fine Hospital Auxiliary and more than 100 individual donations. Thank you to all of our supporters from the bottom of our hearts!

The Foundation is now honored with the privilege of making significant gifts to Clifton-Fine Hospital and supporting community wellness programs this year and beyond.

Our annual appeal raises unrestricted dollars that can be used immediately, allowing us to fund a wide range of programs and equipment that has, in past years, included things such as career development opportunities for staff; a training mannequin for our nurses; upgrades of hospital and clinical spaces; and replacement of critical equipment, like a fluid warming machine - all components of a first-rate healthcare provider.

We look forward to sharing how our 2016 donations will help improve the healthcare experience for patients at Clifton-Fine Hospital in the next issue of our *Community Care* newsletter.

If you have not yet contributed to the Wilderness Health Care Foundation, don’t worry - there’s still time. We need your support to ensure that quality healthcare is easily accessible to everyone in our community.

To make a tax-deductible gift to the Wilderness Health Care Foundation, please mail checks to:

Wilderness Health Care Foundation
1014 Oswegatchie Trail • Star Lake, NY 13690

Gifts made in memory, honor or celebration of a loved one may be made at any time. Please denote in the check memo or in an enclosed note.

Thank you!

**Contact
Us**

Vanessa Vaverchak
Executive Director
Wilderness Health Care Foundation
315-848-3351 ext. 284
foundation@cfhis.org



5th Annual Memorial Golf Tournament Raises \$17,600!

The 2016 Memorial Golf Tournament was held at the Clifton-Fine Municipal Golf Course on August 6th. The tournament, which honors five friends who were avid golfers and loyal supporters of Clifton-Fine Hospital: Ed DeCora, Gary Goolden, Dr. Dick Narkewicz, Bill Nevil, and Peter Van de Water, raised a record-high \$17,600, with 64 participants. We are so very thankful to the 115 contributors, both businesses and individuals, who helped make the 2016 event so inspiring.

Your Gifts at Work

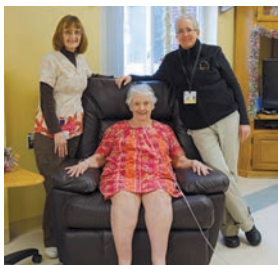
When you make a gift to the Wilderness Health Care Foundation, you are giving the gift of good health to your family, friends, and neighbors by supporting Clifton-Fine Hospital. The generosity of our Year-End Appeal donors allows us to expand the services the hospital provides and ensure that we stay up-to-date with the latest technology. The impact on our patients is immediate.

Some of the items purchased by the Foundation in 2016 included:

- Training mannequin for nursing (\$6K)
- Upgrade to our medical gas (O2) system (\$15K)

Auxiliary Makes Long-Term Care Donation

Thanks to the generosity of the Clifton-Fine Hospital Auxiliary, our long-term care residents will be sleeping a little more comfortably. The Auxiliary recently purchased new mattresses for eleven beds. For Christmas, our residents received another gift from the Auxiliary – a new massaging recliner chair, which is being enjoyed by all. Thank you to this devoted group of volunteers for their dedication to Clifton-Fine Hospital, our staff and our patients.



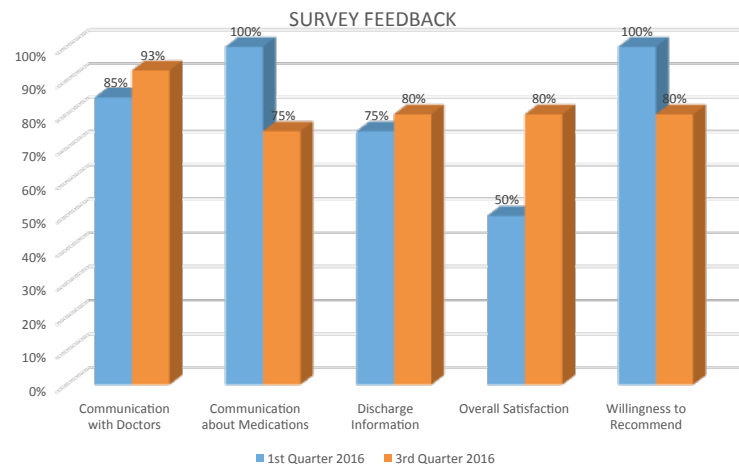
Your Voice Counts!

CFH Shares Patient Experience Survey Results

Have you been a patient at Clifton-Fine Hospital lately? If so, you may receive a patient experience survey! If you do receive a survey in the mail, please take a few minutes to complete it. Your feedback is important to us and helps us make changes to provide better experiences for our patients.

CFH's patient surveys are conducted through RMS Healthcare. The survey, from HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, pronounced "H-caps"), is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patients' perspectives of hospital care. While many hospitals have collected information on patient satisfaction for their own internal use, until HCAHPS there was no national standard for collecting and publicly reporting information about the patient experience of care that allowed valid comparisons to be made across hospitals locally, regionally and nationally.

The survey asks a random sample of recently discharged adult patients to provide feedback about topics such as: how well nurses and doctors communicated, how responsive hospital staff were to patient needs, how well the hospital managed patient pain, and the cleanliness and quietness of the hospital environment. Patients are the best sources of information on these topics. Feedback from our patients helps us learn how we are meeting your expectations and what we can do to better meet the needs of our patient community. As you can see from the chart below, we have made progress in some areas but we still have room for improvement. Your responses help us ensure we deliver trusted care, close to home for you and your family.





A Dietary Approach to Managing Irritable Bowel Syndrome & Other Gastric Issues

by Elizabeth Isenberg, MS, RD
Clifton-Fine Hospital Registered Dietitian

If you feel that this approach may be helpful for you, we encourage you to ask your healthcare provider for a referral to meet with a registered dietitian. The registered dietitian will develop an eating plan geared to you, with an overall objective of determining if one of the classifications of foods needs to be eliminated totally from your dietary choices.

Get Started:

- Low FODMAP sources (allowable) can be enjoyed.
- To add something from the high grouping, choose one desired choice such as an apple for fruits and include this daily in your diet for 1-2 weeks. If there are no issues (even after trying a second choice from the same group), it is likely that the chosen group (e.g. fruit) is not an issue. Move on and choose a “not allowed” item from another group of foods and determine your tolerance.

Gastric (stomach-related) conditions are typically treated with medications. Symptoms often improve, but side effects from some medications (and the expense) can be an issue. For one common gastric condition – Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) – a new treatment approach known as the LOW FODMAP Diet has been quite successful in improving the quality of life of people with this illness.

Irritable bowel syndrome affects the large intestine (colon), commonly causing cramping, abdominal pain, bloating, gas, diarrhea and constipation. It is a chronic condition that patients need to manage long term. With the LOW FODMAP Diet symptoms are often lessened.

Food Group	High FODMAP Sources	Low FODMAP Sources
Dairy & Substitutes	Milk, yogurt, cottage cheese	Hard cheese, lactose free milk
Protein	Kidney beans, peas	Tofu, poultry, beef, pork, fish
Fruits	Apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, mango, pears, plums, watermelon, boysenberry	Bananas, blueberries, cantaloupes, grapes, kiwi, lemons, limes, oranges
Breads, cereals, grains	Wheat, pasta, bran, rye, barley	Gluten free bread and pasta, rice
Nuts & Legumes	Cashews, pistachios	Peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pumpkin seeds
Vegetables	Asparagus, onions, cauliflower, sugar snap peas	Bell peppers, cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, lettuce, eggplant, potatoes, radishes, tomato, turnip, zucchini

The contributing factor for IBS is fermentable carbohydrates. These “carb” groups include Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, And Polyols (FODMAP). They are rapidly digested, poorly absorbed in the gut and often cause pain and gas. If you are sensitive to fermentable carbohydrates, reducing your intake may help improve your gastric health.

With the FODMAP Diet, food choices are divided into two groups – low sources of the problem carbs and those which are high sources of the problem (and therefore need to be avoided). The above chart is an initial classification of the groups as a starting point. Ideally, you should work with a registered dietitian who can develop an eating pattern tailored specifically to you.



65th
Anniversary
Celebration!

Clifton-Fine Hospital's 65th Anniversary Celebration

On Saturday, August 20th, the smallest hospital in New York State had a big reason to celebrate. Clifton-Fine Hospital marked its 65th anniversary with an afternoon filled with music, tours of the hospital, special guest speakers, and a display of classic cars. Current and former employees mixed with community members, long-time hospital supporters and family members of hospital founder, Dr. Robert Persson, and long-time area physician, Dr. Milton Lowell.

New Physical Therapy Director Gets Patients Moving



Bobbie Holmes, PT, DPT, joins our experienced physical therapy team with Melissa Streeter, PTA and Judy Benzel, PT.

Please join us in welcoming Bobbie Holmes, PT, DPT to the Clifton-Fine Hospital Physical Therapy Department as our new Director of Physical Therapy. Dr. Holmes has been a Physical Therapist for almost 20 years. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy from Daemen College in Amherst, NY and later received a Doctorate in Physical Therapy from Utica College in Utica, NY. Prior to joining the team at Clifton-Fine Hospital, Dr. Holmes worked as a home health physical therapist with Samaritan Medical Center. She lives in Fowler, with her husband, Greg, and two children, Wyatt, 13 and Grace, 11.

The Clifton-Fine Hospital Physical Therapy Department offers a variety of treatment modalities including: cervical and lumbar traction, ultrasound, electrical stimulation, and whirlpool therapy. Physical therapy services are provided to our inpatients, swing bed patients and long-term care residents, as well as to outpatients in the community.

To schedule an appointment, call 315-848-2398 ext. 281



Did You Know that our new Director of Physical Therapy, Bobbie Holmes, enjoys reading, crafts, and running? Recently she ran in a Spartan Beast race and two 200-mile Ragnar Relays in the Adirondacks. Dr. Holmes is already planning to participate in more relay races this year in Niagara Falls and around Seneca Lake.



Congratulations! 2016 Employee Service Awards

The Board of Directors and Administration of Clifton Fine Hospital honored the following staff for their years of continued dedication and loyalty to the Hospital at a dinner on September 30th. The dinner was hosted by the American Legion and their Auxiliary.

FIVE YEARS

Deborah Body, NP	Clinic
Michelle Daniels	Laboratory
Pola Wendt	Finance

TEN YEARS

Paula Hickey	Nursing
Marilyn Tellier	Nursing

FIFTEEN YEARS

Veronica LaTray	Dietary
Julie McGill	Nursing

Mr. George Persson In Memoriam

On November 26, 2016, George Persson passed away at Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, NY surrounded by his loving family. The Clifton-Fine Community was very saddened to hear the news of George's passing. Both our community and Clifton-Fine Hospital lost a very generous man who gave freely of his time and talent. George was a teacher for 27 years and is still teaching. His body was donated to science for others to benefit.



- He was a 50-year member of the Clifton-Fine Lion's Club and worked on many projects over the years. Most recently, in August, he helped his fellow Lions paint the gazebo on the Hospital grounds.
- In 2009, George was an integral member of the steering committee for the "Close to Home" Capital Fundraising Campaign, working with the Wilderness Health Care Foundation to raise \$750,000 to rebuild the primary care clinic lost in a fire in 2008.
- At the Clifton-Fine Hospital 65th Anniversary Celebration in August, George spoke of "The Persson Legacy." The Legacy started in 1938 when his father, Dr. Robert V. Persson, had

the initial idea of establishing a hospital in our community. The nearest hospital was 35 miles away at a time when cars on the road were fewer and slower. Dr. Persson was the "Guiding Light" as community support grew, and plans for the hospital took shape. Clifton-Fine Hospital opened its doors on August 5, 1951. Dr. Persson dedicated over 40 years to serving our community, not only as a physician but also as school board president and a Charter Member of the Clifton-Fine Lion's Club.

- George and his family have kept The Persson Legacy going through the many contributions they have made to the hospital over the years.

Clifton-Fine Hospital Patient Services

Primary Care Clinic

315-848-5404

The Clifton-Fine Hospital Primary Care Clinic is a convenient way to keep your entire family healthy. We provide a full range of services for patients of all ages. Now accepting new patients. Call today for an appointment.

Hours:

Monday - Friday: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Emergency Department

Our Emergency Department is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, typically with minimal wait times.

Laboratory

315-848-4232

Our full service laboratory offers walk-in lab draws with very short wait times.

Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday
7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

6:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday:

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

(On Saturdays, please use the ED entrance and register at the Outpatient Lab.)

Physical Therapy

315-848-4281

We provide physical therapy services for inpatients, outpatients, swing bed patients and long-term care residents.

Hours:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Radiology (Imaging)

315-848-4222

We offer several different imaging modalities in a comfortable setting, including: Bone Density scans, CT scans, Ultrasound and X-ray.

Hours:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Ultrasound: Wed. 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

We also provide the following services to our community:

Acute Inpatient Care

Long-Term Care

Swing Bed Program (Short-term Rehabilitation)



Clifton-Fine Hospital

A SAMARITAN HEALTH PARTNER

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1014 Oswegatchie Trail

Star Lake, NY 13670

(315) 848-3351

cliftonfinehospital.org 

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Wellness in our Community



The Clifton-Fine Hospital Weight Watchers group was started this summer as a way to help employees and community members manage their weight. The group, which meets regularly, has averaged about 25 members, with new members always welcome. To date, the group has collectively lost 450 pounds! If you're interested in joining, please contact Malinda Riquelme at 315-848-4264.



Lisa Brooker, MT, Laboratory Manager, checks out the healthy lunch choices available at Clifton-Fine Hospital.

Clifton-Fine Hospital recently received grant funding through the Creating Healthy Schools and Communities Project, which is funded by the New York State Department of Health and administered through the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative. The grant award allowed the Hospital to purchase a refrigerated rotating vending machine. This vending machine is stocked with plenty of healthy lunch and snack choices and is available to both staff and visitors.