

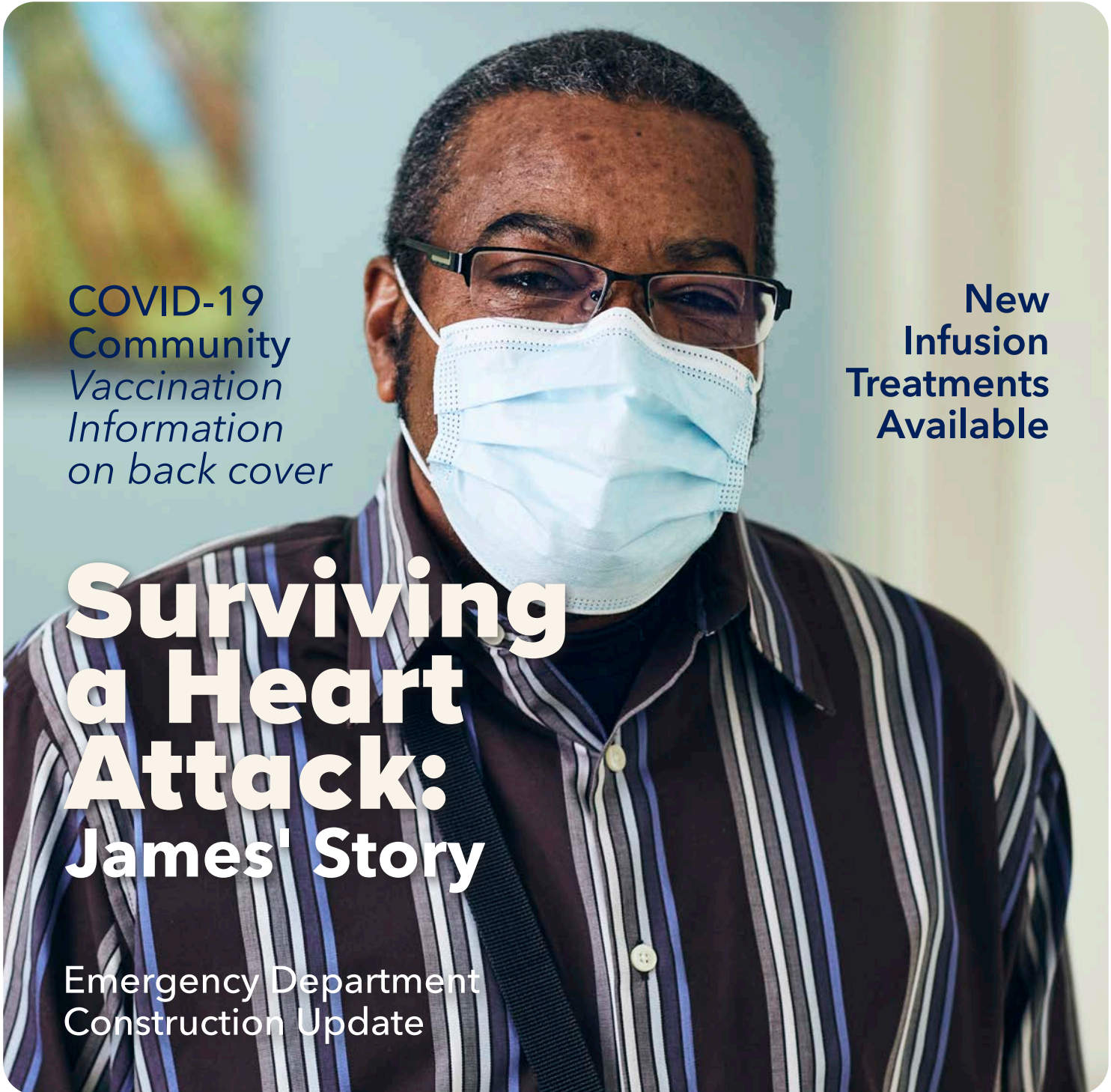
Health

COVID-19
Community
Vaccination
Information
on back cover

New
Infusion
Treatments
Available

Surviving a Heart Attack: James' Story

Emergency Department
Construction Update



Letter from the president.

Dear Neighbor,

After a challenging 2020, we at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center have begun 2021 with renewed hope and energy. We began distributing the COVID-19 vaccine in December, and we are looking forward to the completion and opening of our new emergency department and lobby later this year. Throughout this winter, we are continuing to provide excellent, quality care to our community, while taking all appropriate measures to keep patients, visitors, and associates safe from COVID-19.

In this issue of *Health*, you'll learn about our hospital's excellent cardiopulmonary rehabilitation program, which is playing a key role in helping people recover from COVID-19's long-term effects. It's changing the lives of many, including COVID-19 survivor Ronald Weiss, who shares his story.

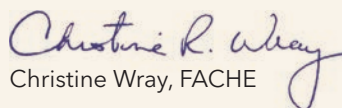
Our cardiovascular-focused special insert, *Heart & Soul*, focuses on the ways in which a person's environment can help or hurt that individual's long-term health prospects. It's a concept called "social determinants of health," and it's helping us reimagine what health looks like. You'll also read about how our team saved the life of four-

time heart attack survivor James Willett Sr., after he recognized the signs of a heart attack and took quick action.

Our hospital has more exciting news to share in this edition, including a profile of our innovative new pain management infusion options, which can help relieve tough pain—without opioids. We also highlight another important infusion option, monoclonal antibody infusion, which serves as an effective treatment for patients with COVID-19. In addition, we're welcoming James FitzGerald as MedStar Southern Maryland's chair of surgery, and MedStar has opened a new, multispecialty medical center in Waldorf, bringing world-class, coordinated care to Charles County.

Even in the midst of the toughest of years, our generous MedStar Southern Maryland associates continued to donate in support of our hospital in this year's Power to Heal campaign. I am prouder than ever to work alongside each of them.

Kindest regards,


Christine Wray, FACHE



Christine Wray, FACHE,
President, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center



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Some photos were selected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. All patients and providers are expected to follow the current MedStar Health guidelines for safety including proper masking and physical distancing where appropriate. Learn more at [MedStarHealth.org/Safe](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Safe).

Health is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. It in no way seeks to diagnose or treat illness or serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Please see your physician if you have a health problem.



Tidbits

1

Giving the Power to Heal

Despite the global pandemic, several of our associates participated in this year's Power to Heal Associate Giving Campaign in November 2020, raising close to \$60,000. The majority of these funds will go towards the creation and enhancement of various associate support resources. Remaining funds will go towards other initiatives designated by associates, such as the blanket warmer fund and the new emergency department project fund.

GIVING | ThePOWERto HEAL



2



New Emergency Department Construction

Delivery of a new CT scanner, finished treatment and waiting room spaces, and the new lobby are among the recent highlights of the hospital's emergency department expansion and renovation project. Check out the latest progress as we gear up for the grand opening, coming in 2021. To learn more, please visit page 13.

3



Infusion Pain Management

MedStar Southern Maryland is now offering patients a new pain management option—pain medication infusions. These infusions are particularly beneficial for patients with chronic, severe pain and for patients recovering from significant surgical procedures. Please see page 14 to learn more about this innovative pain management option.

4



Maryland Mom

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is proudly participating in the Maryland Maternal Health Innovation Program (MDMOM) Hospital Initiative that started in 2021. This initiative aims to address equity and safety in maternal care. Please turn to page 14 to learn more.



James Gordon Willett Sr.
Heart Attack Survivor

James is back on his feet after **life-saving heart care at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center.**

James Gordon Willett Sr. lives a full life. He loves to play baseball, go to the gym, and cook—especially barbecuing on his big grill out back—for his family. In November 2020, 61-year-old James was sidelined by a heart attack. Two things saved his life: James quickly decided to seek emergency care, and he received

the care he needed at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center.

The day of James' heart attack began like any other. "I felt fine when I woke up that morning, but I started to feel funny while I was working around the house," James remembered. "I got dizzy and started seeing spots. I also

have diabetes, and at first, I thought it was a problem with my blood sugar. But then I started feeling a little, tingly sort of pain in my chest."

Although we commonly think of severe chest pain as the classic heart attack sign, often that's not what happens. Many people, like James, don't have typical

heart attack symptoms. Signs of a heart attack can include dizziness, fainting, nausea, upper-back or jaw pain, and breaking out in a cold sweat. In fact, one out of three people don't have any chest pain during their heart attacks.

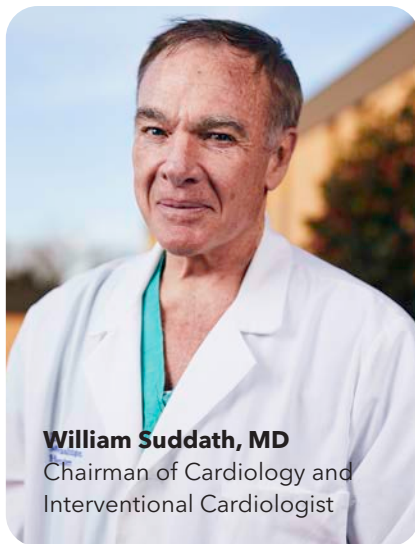
James has a history of heart trouble—he had bypass surgery in 2009, and he carries nitroglycerine with him, just in case. He needed it that day. James had a friend drive him to the rescue squad at his local fire department, which was closer than any hospital. There, paramedics did an EKG, which revealed that James was having a heart attack—his fourth. Time was of the essence to save James' heart.

James was transported in an ambulance to MedStar Southern Maryland. The paramedics started emergency care, called ahead to the hospital's emergency department (ED), and transmitted the EKG to the hospital's emergency cardiac team—all from the ambulance. When James arrived at MedStar Southern Maryland's ED, the cardiac team was waiting at the door.

"Because the paramedics in Prince George's County are activating the hospital's heart attack teams before they arrive, patients spend little or no time in the ED. It saves heart muscle and saves their lives," said interventional cardiologist William Suddath, MD, chairman of cardiology for MedStar Southern Maryland. The team immediately took James to the hospital's cardiac catheterization lab, where Dr. Suddath opened the blockage

and also placed two stents to help keep James' arteries open.

Only 68 minutes had passed from the time the ambulance arrived at MedStar Southern Maryland to



William Suddath, MD
Chairman of Cardiology and
Interventional Cardiologist

“We have built an excellent program here in Southern Maryland. We are able to take care of these patients quickly. We're saving heart muscle which means people like James are living.”

the time Dr. Suddath unblocked James' artery in the cath lab. That's an amazing achievement. "Great heart attack outcomes are

really all about time. To put it in perspective, the national standard is 90 minutes. Even the top 10 percent of hospitals in the country take around 75 minutes—to get that time down to 68 minutes is amazing," Dr. Suddath said.

"It was a very smooth process. Dr. Suddath talked with me and explained everything, and I didn't feel any pain during the procedure," James said. "After the procedure, the nurses took good care of me until I was ready to go home."

"We have built an excellent program here in Southern Maryland." Dr. Suddath said. "We are able to take care of these patients quickly. We're saving heart muscle, which means that people like James are living, they're going back to their lives, after a heart attack."

Three days after the procedure, James was headed home. He is focused on recovery. He has made changes to his diet, and for the next few months he will wear a vest with a portable defibrillator to protect his heart. James looks forward to easing back into physical activity and is enjoying time visiting with family—especially his six grandchildren. He is also passing along his best barbecue recipes and techniques to his son.

As a four-time heart attack survivor, James' advice to people who think they are having a heart attack is simple: don't panic. "If you start feeling funny in your chest, you have to go and get checked out. If you can't get to the hospital, go to the fire department or the rescue squad. They can help you in the ambulance while you're going to the hospital."



For more information about the MedStar Heart and Vascular Institute, please visit [MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Heart](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Heart).

What to know about pneumonia.



Sara Mousa, DO
Family Physician at
MedStar Mitchellville Group



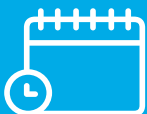
The flu is a threat we all worry about each year, and this winter, we are contending with the continued spread of COVID-19 as well. But there is a third common, potentially dangerous respiratory infection to watch for: pneumonia. Pneumonia is a common cause of hospitalization in adults and children alike, according to the American Lung Association.

Pneumonia is an infection that affects the lungs, causing inflammation that can make the lungs' tiny air sacs fill up with fluid. It can be caused by

bacteria, a virus, or fungi. Anyone can get pneumonia, but it can be especially severe among older adults (age 65+) and young children (5 and under).

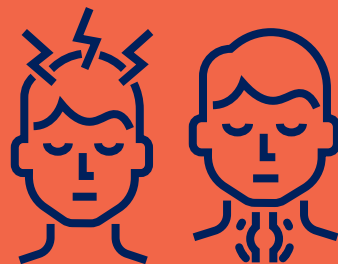
Although pneumonia can happen on its own, it often develops after another infection—like the flu or COVID-19—has already weakened the lungs and stressed the body's immune system. Signs and symptoms of pneumonia include a gunky, mucus-producing cough, trouble breathing, a fever higher than 100.4° F, chills, and pain with breathing.

"If you experience any of these symptoms, see your primary care doctor. There are certain things we look for to determine whether you can successfully treat the infection at home or whether you need to go to the hospital for treatment," said Sara Mousa, DO, board-certified family physician at MedStar Mitchellville Group.



To make an appointment with Dr. Mousa, please call **301-430-2700**.

Signs and symptoms of pneumonia.



- Cough, which may produce greenish, yellow or even bloody mucus
- Fever, sweating and shaking chills
- Shortness of breath
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Sharp or stabbing chest pain that gets worse when you breathe deeply or cough
- Loss of appetite, low energy, and fatigue
- Nausea and vomiting, especially in small children

Source: American Lung Association

Your doctor will listen to your lungs, take your temperature and blood pressure, and note your respiratory rate, which measures how hard and fast you're breathing. Your doctor may also test your blood to see if your body is fighting an infection, and your doctor can also make sure your symptoms aren't being caused by something else, like COVID-19.

Fortunately, there are ways to reduce your risk of getting pneumonia. The first step is to make sure your vaccines are up to date. "For high-risk populations, including young children, older adults, and people with certain conditions that make them more susceptible, we recommend the pneumococcal vaccine," Dr. Mousa said. Pneumococcal pneumonia is one of the most common forms.

Getting your flu shot each

year can also reduce your risk. "Pneumonia is often a secondary infection, meaning it can develop after another respiratory infection, like the flu or COVID-19," Dr. Mousa said. The flu vaccine helps prevent the flu—and lowers your chances of getting pneumonia as well.

Simple steps, like washing your hands and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze, can be very effective in stopping the spread of germs that cause pneumonia. You can also protect yourself by practicing healthy habits like getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and not smoking.



Meet James FitzGerald, MD, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's new Department Chair of Surgery.



James FitzGerald, MD
Colorectal Surgeon,
Department Chair of Surgery



James FitzGerald, MD, began his medical career specializing in colorectal surgery due to a history of colon cancer in his own family. "I like the hands-on approach of surgery and the way it allows me to directly impact patients in a dramatic way," he said. "It's a very rewarding experience to be able to help someone through a difficult time in their life."

Dr. FitzGerald first came to the MedStar Health System in 2006 as a colorectal surgeon and director of fellowships at MedStar Washington Hospital Center. He joined MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center in a limited capacity in 2014 as a colorectal surgeon. Now, after practicing colorectal and general surgery at MedStar Southern Maryland for nearly eight years, Dr. FitzGerald, is moving into a full-time leadership role as the new department chair of surgery. "I am in this new role to continue building the surgery program at Medstar Southern Maryland," he said. "I want to help provide comprehensive, high-quality surgical services right here in Clinton so patients don't need to travel outside the area to get care."

Considered an expert in his field, Dr. FitzGerald has written several peer-reviewed journal articles,

contributed to book chapters and delivered medical presentations on colon and rectal surgery. In addition to being board certified in general surgery; surgical critical care; and colon and rectal surgery, Dr. FitzGerald specializes in robotic-assisted surgery. He enjoys using the latest treatment options and advanced technology to offer the greatest benefit and quickest recovery to his patients. He believes it's equally important to provide care with compassion and understanding. "I empathize with my patients and try to put myself in their shoes," said Dr. FitzGerald. "I aim to have a down-to-earth approach and talk with my patients to ensure they understand what's going on at all times."

Dr. FitzGerald is a graduate of Georgetown University School of Medicine and completed his general surgery residency at the University of Connecticut Health Center (UConn Health). He continued at UConn Health for his fellowships in both surgical outcomes research and surgical critical care, before completing a third fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. He is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgery (ASCRS), president of the Chesapeake Colorectal Society, and serves on the Healthcare Economics Committee for ASCRS.

"I aim to have a down-to-earth approach and talk with my patients to ensure they understand what's going on at all times."

- Dr. FitzGerald



To make an appointment with Dr. FitzGerald, please call **301-877-7202**.

MedStar Health opens infusion center for COVID-19.

On January 7, 2021, MedStar Health opened an outpatient infusion center for the treatment of COVID-19, one of only seven such facilities statewide at the time, on the campus of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. By providing monoclonal antibody infusions, this center will help people with COVID-19 stay out of the hospital while they recover, reducing the disease's devastating toll in the region and across the state.

The center will be administering the monoclonal antibody infusions. The specific medication (bamlanivimab) was the first to receive emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19. It works by binding to the spikes that are on the surface of the SARS COV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, and stopping the virus from being able to attach itself to cells within the body. In early studies, monoclonal antibodies have been shown to reduce the risk of hospitalization for people with COVID-19, and it may also reduce the duration of COVID-19 symptoms.

"This infusion center is great news for our area. It gives us the opportunity to have a treatment available in this region that can help people with COVID-19 get better," said Karla Evans, RPh, MedStar Southern Maryland's director of pharmacy. "Having this treatment option available also helps keep our inpatient beds open for sicker patients

who need hospitalization."

Patients need a referral from a physician to receive the treatment, which consists of a one-hour infusion, followed by one hour of monitoring at the infusion center. The treatment is



appropriate for COVID-19 positive patients with mild to moderate symptoms who are at high risk of developing complications. The drug must be given within 10 days of the start of symptoms.

The COVID-19 infusion center is located in the Lakeside Building on Hospital Drive. The center offers four treatment rooms, and all appropriate physical distancing measures and safety precautions are in place to keep patients and staff safe. The center has additional capacity and can expand should more treatment space be needed.

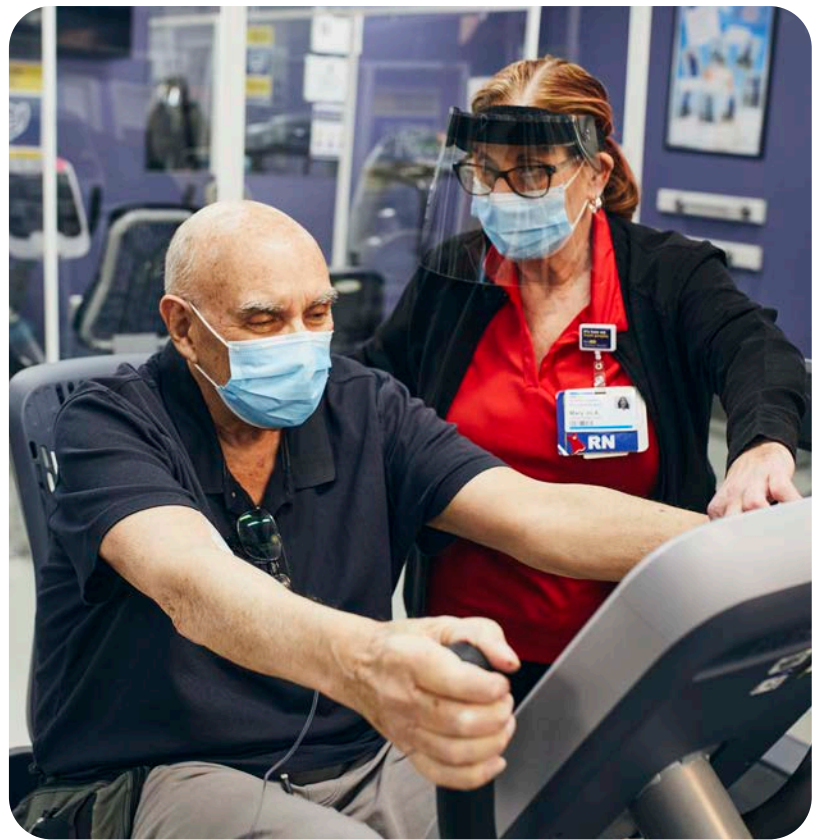
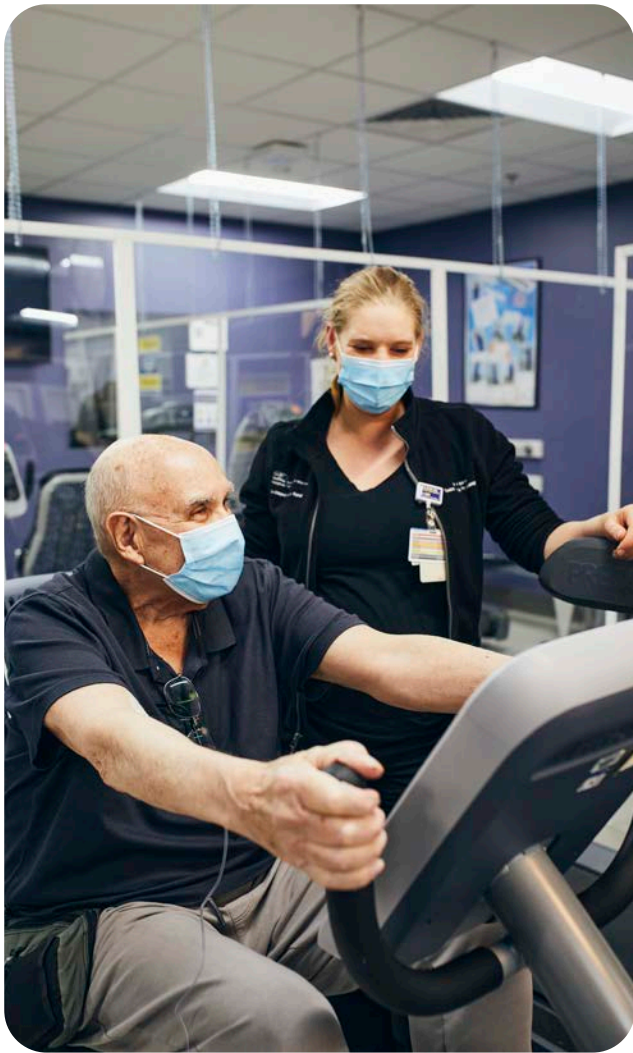
"Today, we are proud to offer convenient access to this effective treatment for Maryland's southern region," said Christine Wray, president of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital



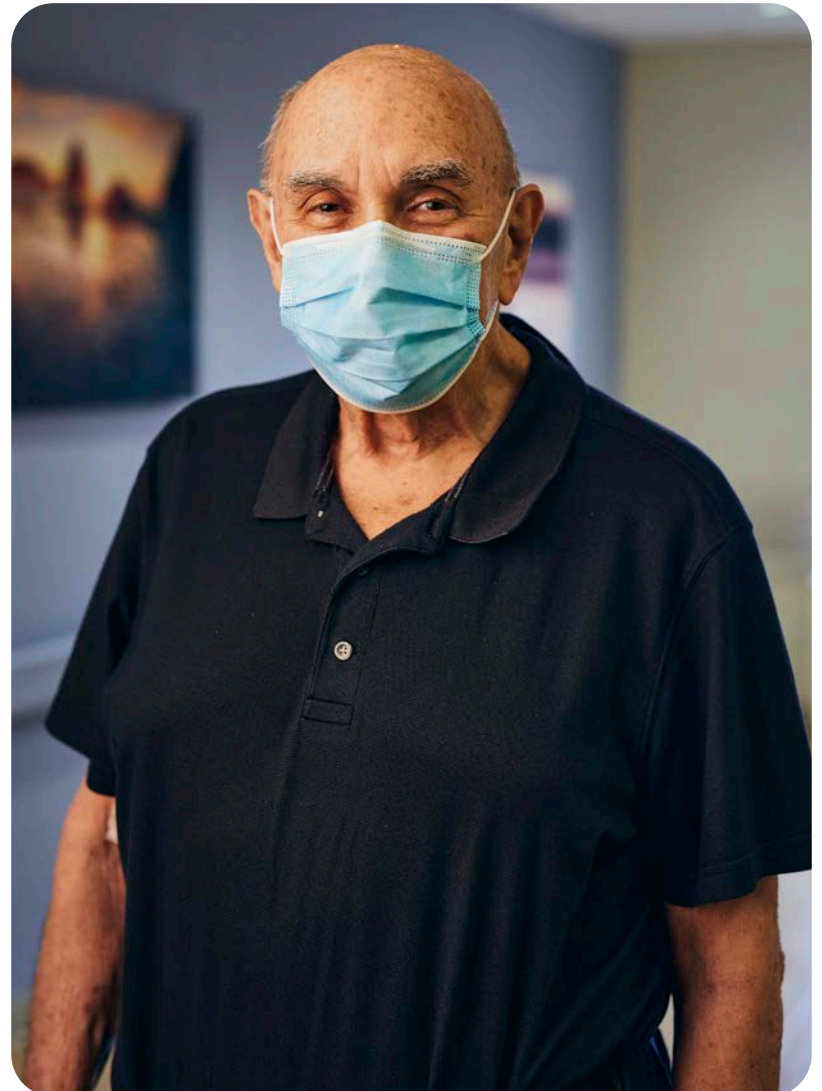
Learn more about MedStar Health's COVID-19 response at [MedStarHealth.org/COVID19](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/COVID19).



Center. "Our hospital is committed to caring for our community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and this infusion center is a key way to get treatment to people who need it, keeping them out of the hospital."



“ Because of COVID, my lungs were inflamed, and I had fluid all around them,” he said. “After coming home from the hospital, I spent most of my time on the first floor of my house because I couldn’t get upstairs without a struggle. ”





COVID-19 survivor **Ronald Weiss's** rehab journey.

What is cardiopulmonary rehabilitation?

The Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Program at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is a medically supervised exercise and education program. Designed for people who are dealing with a heart or lung impairment, the program helps patients safely improve their endurance, physical condition, functionality and quality of life. Those enrolled in the program work with a multidisciplinary team of professionals including exercise physiologists, dietitians, physical therapists and counselors. Participants also benefit from each other through weekly group education sessions that offer practical tools to live a healthy life and emotional support.

COVID-19 survivor **Ronald Weiss's** rehab journey

After recovering from COVID-19 in summer 2020, 76-year-old

Ronald Weiss was still struggling once he returned home from a long hospital stay. With a history of heart complications, Weiss was already on heart medicine and dependent on an external defibrillator. Contracting COVID-19 only aggravated Weiss's struggle to complete daily tasks. "Because of COVID, my lungs were inflamed, and I had fluid all around them," he said. "After coming home from the hospital, I spent most of my time on the first floor of my house because I couldn't get upstairs without a struggle."

When Weiss first enrolled in the Cardiopulmonary Rehab Program, his heart function was at 25 percent. But through monitored exercises tailored to Weiss's unique goals and health history, his heart function quickly increased to 35 percent. And after just a few weeks in the program, he's now easily able to go up and down the stairs in his house. "Before I started rehab it was a struggle to get

up, but I can do that without any hesitation or trouble," he said. "I've worked hard and the program has helped me increase my endurance and ability to do things. I'm able to go further on my walks outside and I can help my wife more around the house."

As Weiss continues in rehab, his ultimate goal is to avoid open heart surgery and eliminate the need to continue taking heart medication. "My rehab team pushes me to do more, but they don't allow me to overdo it. They've helped me come a long way."



For questions about cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, please call **301-877-7370**.

Now Open: MedStar Health Location in Waldorf

New MedStar Shah Medical Group location brings high-quality care to Charles County.



"It's a model of care known as a distributed care delivery network, which MedStar Shah Medical Group has already created in St. Mary's County and Calvert County. These networks utilize telemedicine and partnerships with larger hospitals to bring world-class tertiary care services into a small community by distributing that care where people live. I'm very proud of what we have done for our community in Charles County," said Dr. Shah.

MedStar Shah Medical Group of Waldorf is now officially open. The Charles County medical facility includes a walk-in primary care clinic; cancer center; pharmacy; diagnostic services (i.e. CT scans and MRIs); surgical specialties; and medical specialties such as cardiologists, neurologists, pulmonologists, cancer specialists and more. With such a wide range of services in a single location, the new building was designed to offer 'futuristic health care'—providing patients with an unparalleled level of convenience through comprehensive, preventative services.

"Instead of a patient seeing one doctor who sends him or her to different places for multiple follow-up appointments, we have a whole team of doctors in the same building working together to take care of that patient," said

Vinoh Shah, MD, medical director of MedStar Shah Medical Group. "That instantaneous collaboration allows patients to get immediate access to preventative care, like early cancer detection, with less appointments. It's complete care at one location."

The location of MedStar Shah Medical Group's newest building is as deliberate as the care it houses. While Charles County is a growing suburb of Washington, D.C., residents previously had to travel outside the county to receive specialty medical services. The new Waldorf facility brings those services close to home for residents, including partnerships with specialists at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.

One unique feature of the new facility is the ability to offer community members a second medical opinion. As a courtesy to the community, staff coordinate a second opinion for anyone who requests it, regardless of whether or not they are a current patient.

"This new building allows us to care for this community in the way we would care for our own families," said Dr. Shah. "When we take care of people that way, we do justice to our community and to our profession."



Medstar Shah Medical Group of Waldorf is located at 10 St. Patrick's Drive. To schedule an appointment, call **301-705-7870**.

Tidbit

Construction project keeps moving ahead.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's large-scale expansion and renovation project continues to move along, as the interior spaces are getting finished and ready for use. The project is scheduled to be complete in April 2021 and will provide a significantly expanded and updated emergency department, a new front lobby, and many other upgrades.

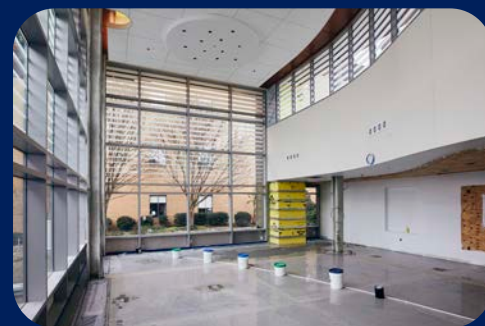
Throughout December, the construction crew kept busy finalizing and finishing the addition's infrastructure. Work wrapped up on the generator room in the basement, and lines for four different oxygen systems were put in place. Connecting the addition's electric, gas, and water systems to those of the main hospital required much preparation, planning, and coordination to link those systems up without interrupting the hospital's operations.

In February, the new emergency department space got a wonderful New Year's gift, as a new CT scanner was delivered and installed in the new space. The emergency department's treatment rooms are ready for equipment delivery and installation. "Throughout January and February, we have primarily

been making sure things are in the final state of readiness for equipment to be delivered and installed," said Grant McClure, MedStar Southern Maryland's vice president of professional services and plant operations. "We intend to have all of the installations completed by mid-March for the opening of the new addition to the emergency department."

Once it is open, patients coming in through the new entrance will notice a beautiful new design, with a two-story mezzanine and contemporary design elements. The emergency waiting room and the front lobby space, including the café, the entrance, and a new gift shop, are all finished and awaiting furnishings. "We're excited about the new gift shop, which will be twice the size of the current shop and in a convenient location," said Cheryl Richardson, the hospital's director of marketing and community relations, who oversees the gift shop.

In addition to a new entranceway, the hospital has taken on a renovation and update of the admitting and registration office. Updates took place in December, so that patients and families feel a sense of continuity between the new lobby area and the registration area.



For construction and renovation updates, visit [MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Construction](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Construction).

Tidbit

New pain medication infusions offer more comprehensive pain management options.

MedStar Southern Maryland is now offering patients a new pain management option—pain medication infusions. These infusions are particularly beneficial for patients with chronic, severe pain and for patients recovering from significant surgical procedures.

The new service is currently available in three patient units—post-anesthesia care, primary post-op care and critical care—with plans to roll out the service to more units later. Administering the infusions is a team effort; an anesthesiologist oversees a nurse practitioner who partners with the patient's primary nurse to deliver the medication. To date, about 70 nurses are trained to administer the pain medication



infusions, and that number will increase as trainings continue.

The training process began back in August 2020 and was a collaborative effort

between many departments including nursing professional development, nursing practice, biomedical, pharmacy, acute pain services and nursing informatics.

Tidbit

Maryland Mom



MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is proudly participating in the Maryland Maternal Health Innovation Program (MDMOM) Hospital Initiative that started in 2021. Through

this initiative, MDMOM will offer Maryland's birthing hospitals quality improvement activities to address equity and safety in maternal care. To lead this project, a special task force known as the Maryland Maternal Health Task Force has been assembled, bringing together a diverse group of key stakeholders, including officials from state health governing bodies, departments and agencies, professional

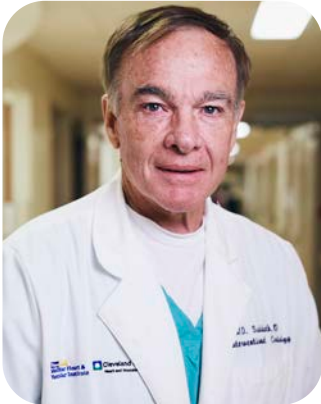
organizations, maternity health care providers, patient advocacy groups, insurance payers, and local community organizations. Members of this group have been assigned to specific workgroups with the purpose of obtaining feedback and providing recommendations that will contribute to the development of a 5-year Maryland Maternal Health Strategic Plan.



For more information about this important initiative, please visit mdmom.org.

Heart & Soul

Helping you get to the heart of the matter.



William Suddath, MD
 Chairman, Cardiology
 MedStar Southern Maryland
 Hospital Center

A message from MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's chairman of cardiology.

Dear Community Member:

As 2021 begins, we have much to be hopeful about. In this issue, we're focused on the ways in which the environment in which a person lives—everything from the number of fast-food restaurants in the neighborhood to the rate of evictions—has a big impact on a person's health. This concept is called "social determinants of health."

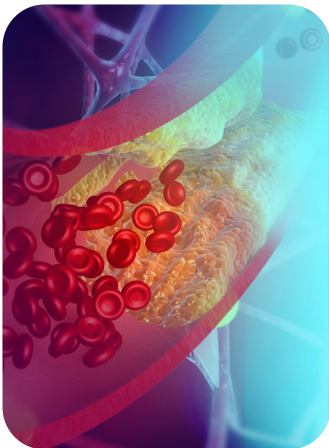
Social determinants of health can be positive or negative influences. For example, a person without stable housing will face significant barriers to achieving optimal health. It's difficult to take medication as prescribed when you don't have a local pharmacy and don't have the money to pay for prescriptions. Transportation to follow-up doctor's appointments can be a real problem as well. These are just a couple of examples of the ways people's lives and environment can make it harder for that person to follow their doctor's recommendations and manage their health well.

As a result, people facing barriers to healthcare access often don't seek out healthcare until a catastrophic emergency forces them to—ending up in the emergency room with a serious, expensive condition. As a community, we should all focus on improving social determinants of health for everyone—our failure to do so is costing lives, as people develop preventable chronic diseases at higher rates. Fortunately, our hospital conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment every three years to learn what our community's top health needs are so that we can design programs and initiatives to help address them.

I am eager to hear from you and to start a conversation in our community about ways to address social determinants of health. How can we work together to remove these barriers and give everyone equal access to healthcare?

I look forward to continuing our conversation as 2021 progresses.

Sincerely,
 William Suddath, MD



Social determinants of health.

Many factors combine to determine how healthy a person is—and many of those factors are not strictly health-related. That's the idea behind social determinants of

health, a concept that considers health from a wider perspective. As a community hospital, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is dedicated to keeping our community healthy. We approach that mission not only through a narrow, healthcare-focused lens, but through a wider perspective that considers other elements of a

person's life that affect health.

Here are some examples of social determinants of health:

- 1. Food security** – As the adage goes, you are what you eat. If a person doesn't have easy access to fresh, nutritious food, eating well can be a big challenge. Poor diet

can increase the chances of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and many other serious health problems.

- 2. Housing** - Without a stable place to call home, it's tough for anyone to focus on taking care of their health. People living in poverty, for example, are 19 times more likely to get COVID-19, in part because of crowded housing conditions, poor ventilation, and other factors.
- 3. Education** - Higher levels of education correlate to better-

paying jobs, allowing families to live in safer neighborhoods, buy healthy food, and spend money on their healthcare. Even something as simple as being able to take a walk around the neighborhood at night can be connected to both health and education.

- 4. Personal history** - Violence and trauma leave scars that are more than physical. They also contribute to stress, anxiety, and poor health outcomes.
- 5. Support systems** - Isolation leads to poor health outcomes

and increased stress. Having a strong sense of community, where a person has other people to lean on, helps make the space a person needs to focus on health.

The good news is, social determinants of health are not fixed things. People can improve their situations in many ways, with resulting improvements in health. MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital can help, by taking steps to address these determinants. By reaching beyond our hospital's walls, we can help people live healthier lives.

Top 3 ways to boost your heart health.

Trying to get healthy can feel overwhelming—but it doesn't have to be. Here are three easy ways to improve your heart health in 2021.

1. Make a healthy food switch:

Eating healthier doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing endeavor. Each simple change you make, while small by itself, can add up to better health over time. Try replacing one soda each day with a glass of water instead. Or cook at home for one more meal than usual, rather than getting fast food. Have a piece of fruit instead of a candy bar or chips for those mid-afternoon munchies, or change from white to whole-wheat bread.

2. Get active:

You don't need expensive gym memberships or a ton of free time to increase your activity level. Increase activity by parking at the far end of a store's parking lot and walking in. Use 15 minutes of your lunch break at work to take a brisk walk. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

3. See your doctor:

Many people don't have a primary care doctor, but having a relationship with a trusted medical provider can keep you healthy by catching problems early and by tracking your health over time. Make an investment in a healthy future by scheduling an appointment today.



In search of a primary care doctor? Please visit [MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Find-A-Doc](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Find-A-Doc).

Transforming health with new diabetes, mental health programs.



Regional Partnership Catalyst Grants program.

This program will allow MedStar Southern Maryland and its partners to expand access to behavioral healthcare and diabetes care across the Southern Maryland region, representing the potential to transform health outcomes across our community. This

regional partnership was the only one in the state to receive funding in two areas from the HSCRC.

“This work, in collaboration with our regional partners, is evidence of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center’s commitment to population health initiatives designed to improve our community’s health before they ever come through our doors. Projects like these can reduce hospitalizations and readmissions, expand equitable access to care, and support individuals with programs and resources to help them manage chronic conditions and live well,” said Chile Ahaghotu, MD, MBA, EMHL, FACS, vice president of medical affairs for MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center.

The first HSCRC Catalyst Grant will help expand community-based behavioral healthcare in the region over the next five years. Many times, people facing a mental health or substance use-related crisis end up in one of the region’s emergency rooms. This partnership will bring together

community resources to create a greater range of access points for behavioral healthcare, including a 24/7 crisis hotline, in-home crisis response, and expanded outpatient behavioral health services.

The second HSCRC Catalyst grant will enable our regional coalition to expand diabetes prevention and diabetes self-management program access. Although diabetes is one of the most common chronic conditions in Southern Maryland, prevention and self-management programs can transform lives by preventing serious complications of diabetes. Through the grant, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center will also provide support services including in-home visits, medication and supply drop-off, and nutrition counseling.

“Diabetes and behavioral health are two significant areas of need in the Southern Maryland community. We have a duty to help our most vulnerable community members during difficult times, whether that is a behavioral health crisis or a diabetes diagnosis,” said Dr. Ahaghotu. “Our hospital is proud to join our colleagues across the region to reimagine what’s possible, meeting patients where they are to make it easier for them to take care of their health needs.”



MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital

Center’s goal is to safeguard the health of everyone in our community. When people are sick or injured, our hospital—and our network of outpatient providers, clinics, and services as well—is here to help. But what about keeping people out of the hospital? That’s an important part of

our goal as well, and we do it through a series of initiatives, programs, and outreach designed to make it easier for people to stay healthy.

Because keeping people healthy is a team effort, MedStar Southern Maryland works with a broad coalition of government agencies, community partners, and other stakeholders to boost health outcomes in our region. One excellent example of that effort is our participation in two important population health-focused initiatives through Maryland’s Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC)



Thanks to **our utility partners.**

Everyone at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is excited to be nearing the end of our hospital's emergency department expansion and renovation project, the largest construction project in our history. We are grateful to our local utility partners for helping to make this happen, including Pepco, the Washington Suburban Sanitation Commission (WSSC), and Washington Gas.

As part of the effort to incorporate the new addition into the electrical grid, the hospital prepared for a planned

electrical outage. "Pepco showed up in force and did a really terrific job coordinating with our construction team," said Christine Wray, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center president. "Though we had all planned for a 16-hour event, it took only nine hours—remarkably finishing up just before sunset."

WSSC made sure to keep the construction project moving along by providing prompt inspections of all sanitary lines. In coordination with the construction team, WSSC handled a planned water main outage in February 2020,

minimizing down time and limiting impact to the hospital while the addition's water line was tied into the hospital's water main.

Washington Gas worked with MedStar Southern Maryland and the construction team to reroute the existing gas line on the hospital campus in order to accommodate the new addition's footprint. Each of these three utilities was an important partner as we progressed through this major construction project.

Thank you to our wonderful partners!



We are **open and safe.**

We are taking measures to keep our patients safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. To learn more, please visit [MedStarHealth.org/Safe](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Safe).



Nondiscrimination Statement

STATEMENT: MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

NOTICE: MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - ▶ Qualified sign language interpreters
 - ▶ Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - ▶ Qualified interpreters
 - ▶ Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact a Patient Advocate at 301-877-4279.

If you believe that MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Patient Advocate, 7503 Surratts Road, Clinton, MD 20735, Phone: 301-877-4279, Fax: 301-877-5813, E-Mail: Sundee.Webster@medstar.net. If you need help filing a grievance, a Patient Advocate is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

Español (Spanish)

STATEMENT: MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo.

NOTICE: MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo. MedStar St. Mary's Hospital no excluye a las personas ni las trata de forma diferente debido a su origen étnico, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center:

- Proporciona asistencia y servicios gratuitos a las personas con discapacidades para que se comuniquen de manera eficaz con nosotros, como los siguientes:
 - ▶ Intérpretes de lenguaje de señas capacitados.
 - ▶ Información escrita en otros formatos (letra grande, audio, formatos electrónicos accesibles, otros formatos).
- Proporciona servicios lingüísticos gratuitos a personas cuya lengua materna no es el inglés, como los siguientes:
 - ▶ Intérpretes capacitados.
 - ▶ Información escrita en otros idiomas.

Si necesita recibir estos servicios, comuníquese con Patient Advocate at 301-877-4279.

Si considera que MedStar Southern Maryland

Hospital Center no le proporcionó estos servicios o lo discriminó de otra manera por motivos de origen étnico, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo, puede presentar un reclamo a la siguiente persona: Patient Advocate, 7503 Surratts Road, Clinton, MD 20735, Phone: 301-877-4279, Fax: 301-877-5813, E-Mail: Sundee.Webster@medstar.net. Si necesita ayuda para hacerlo, a Patient Advocate está a su disposición para brindársela.

También puede presentar un reclamo de derechos civiles ante la Office for Civil Rights (Oficina de Derechos Civiles) del Department of Health and Human Services (Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos) de EE. UU. de manera electrónica a través de Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, disponible en <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, o bien, por correo postal a la siguiente dirección o por teléfono a los números que figuran a continuación:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Puede obtener los formularios de reclamo en el sitio web <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-844-683-9048.

Tagalog (Tagalog - Filipino)

Sumusunod ang MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center sa mga nasaangkop na Federal na batas sa karapatang sibil at hindi nandiskrimina batay sa lahi, kulay, bansang pinagmulan, edad, kapansanan o kasarian.

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-844-683-9048.

العربية (Arabic)

يلتزم MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center بملزمة بقوانين الحقوق المدنية الفدرالية المعمول بها ولا يميز على أساس العرق أو اللون أو الأصل الوطني أو السن أو الإعاقة أو الجنس.

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تحتاج ذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم ١-٨٤٤-٦٨٣-٩٠٤٨.

Français (French)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center respecte les lois fédérales en vigueur relatives aux droits civiques et ne pratique aucune discrimination basée sur la race, la couleur de peau, l'origine nationale, l'âge, le sexe ou un handicap.

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-844-683-9048.

Deutsch (German)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center erfüllt geltenden bundesstaatliche Menschenrechtsgesetze und lehnt jegliche Diskriminierung aufgrund von Rasse, Hautfarbe, Herkunft, Alter, Behinderung oder Geschlecht ab.

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-844-683-9048.

繁體中文 (Chinese)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center 遵守適用的聯邦民權法律規定，不因種族、膚色、民族血統、年齡、殘障或性別而歧視任何人。

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-844-683-9048。

한국어 (Korean)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center 은(는) 관련 연방 공민권법을 준수하며 인종, 피부색, 출신 국가, 연령, 장애 또는 성별을 이유로 차별하지 않습니다.

주의: 한국어어를 사용하지는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-844-683-9048 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

Igbo asusu (Ibo)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center na eso usoro iwu federal civil rights. Ha a nakwaghi akpachapu onye o bula n'ife e be o nye ahu si, a gburu ya, colo ahu ya, aha ole onye ahu di, ma o bu nwoke ma o bu nwananyi.

Ige nti: O buru na asu Ibo asusu, enyemaka diri gi site na call 1-844-683-9048.

èdè Yorubá (Yoruba)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center tele ilana ofin ijoba apapo lori eto ara ilu atipe won ko gbodo sojusaju lori ero eya awo, ilu-abinibi, ojo-ori, abarapa tabi okunrin ati obinrin.

AKIYESI: Ti o ba nso ede Yoruba ofe ni iranlowo lori ede wa fun yin o. E pe ero ibanisoro yi 1-844-683-9048.

Русский (Russian)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center соблюдает применимое федеральное законодательство в области гражданских прав и не допускает дискриминации по признакам расы, цвета кожи, национальной принадлежности, возраста, инвалидности или пола.

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-844-683-9048.

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center tuân thủ luật dân quyền hiện hành của Liên bang và không phân biệt đối xử dựa trên chủng tộc, màu da, nguồn gốc quốc gia, độ tuổi, khuyết tật, hoặc giới tính.

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-844-683-9048.

አማርኛ (Amharic)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center የፌዴራል ሲቪል መብቶችን መብት የሚያከብር ሲሆን ለዘርፍ በቆያ ቀለም፣ በዘር ሂሳብ፣ በእድሜ፣ በእኩል ጥፋት ወይም በጾታ ማንኛውንም ሰው አያገለግም።

ማስታወሻ: የሚናገሩት ቋንቋ አማርኛ ከሆነ የተረጎም አርዳታ ድርጅቶች፣ በእኩል ለማግኘት ተዘጋጅተዋል። ወደ ሚክሳተሎ ቁጥር ይደውሉ 1-844-683-9048

وُڙدُو (Urdu)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center اطلاق وفاقی شہری حقوق کے قوانین کی تعمیل کرتا ہے اور یہ کہ نسل، رنگ، قومیت، عمر، معذوری یا جنس کی بنیاد پر امتیاز نہیں کرتا۔

خبردار: اگر آپ اردو بولتے ہیں، تو آپ کی مدد کی خدمات مفت میں دستیاب ہیں۔ کال کریں 1-844-683-9048

हिंदी (Hindi)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center लागू होने योग्य संघीय नागरिके अधिकार कानून का पालन करता है और जाति, रंग, राष्ट्रिय मूल, आयु, वकिलांगता, या लिंग के आधार पर भेदभाव नहीं करता है।

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपको लिंग भेद पर आधारित सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-844-683-9048 पर कॉल करें।

فارسی (Farsi)

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center تبعیضی بر اساس نژاد، رنگ پوست، اصلیت ملیتی، سن، نالوانی یا جنسیت افراد قابل نمی شود.

توجه: اگر به زبان فارسی گفتگو می کنید، تسهیلات زبانی بصورت رایگان برای شما فراهم می باشد. 1-844-683-9048 تماس بگیرید.



MedStar Health

7503 Surratts Road
Clinton, MD 20735
**MedStar Southern Maryland
Hospital Center**



Read us online!

[MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Health](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Health)

Para acceder artículos seleccionados de esta
Revista de Salud en Español, por favor visite

[MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Espanol](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Espanol)

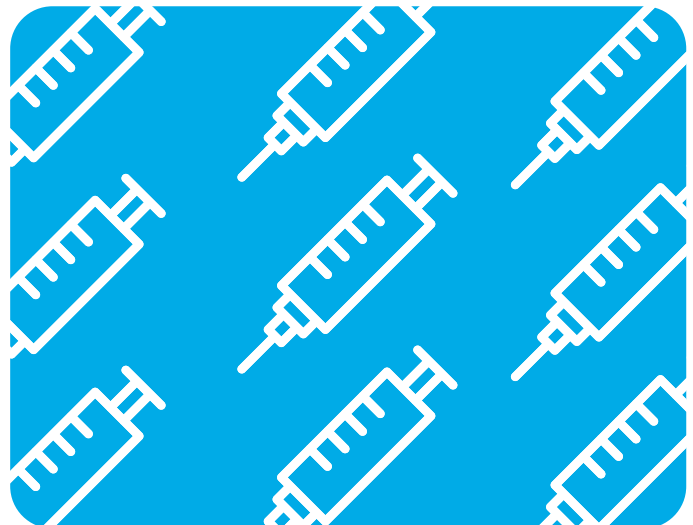
Vaccine Center Info

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is distributing COVID-19 vaccines to members of the community. We began vaccinating our hospital's associates in December, and we began community vaccinations on January 20, 2021.

Although supplies are limited at this time, we anticipate getting more vaccine doses over the next few months. Community

members can sign up now to request an appointment, and we will contact them when a vaccine appointment is available.

To reserve a place in line, community members should go to **[MedStarHealth.org/Vaccine](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Vaccine)** and fill out the COVID-19 vaccine appointment request form. More information about the vaccine and the distribution process is available on this webpage as well.



We are open for appointments!



Please visit **[MedStarHealth.org/Safe](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Safe)** to read about the extra measures we are taking to keep you safe during COVID-19.