

HealthWire

An update from the COVID-19 Task Force

Keeping our community safe and healthy through 2020 and beyond



These last couple of months have been extremely stressful for everyone,” says Dr. Charles Kendall, Chair of the COVID-19 Task Force and family medicine physician. “We have been dealing with a situation unlike anything we have faced in our lives or professional careers.”

Though the coronavirus pandemic has raised anxiety in all of us, CMH has worked hard to protect our staff and patients, implementing safety-based policies and procedures all while providing the best possible care during the public health crisis.

“We have had to adapt to ever-changing scenarios,” reflects Dennis Lennartson, Senior Vice President of Hospital and Clinical Services. “We have had to decide who can be allowed into the building. These are things we never had to think about before.”

Some insights from Dr. Kendall:

- **The pandemic is not over.**

“We still fully expect a surge, perhaps late summer, into the fall and through the next flu season,” he says. “And though we are increasingly optimistic regarding our capacity, it will be a long time before we can let down our guard.”

Community Memorial Hospital and CMH Raiter Family Clinic are fully open

Our facilities are back to operating at 100%. CMH has taken every precaution to ensure patient and staff safety, including:

- Screening everyone who enters our hospital and clinics
- Requiring all staff and the public to wear masks
- Scheduling staggered appointments for office visits and procedures
- Accommodating social distancing in waiting areas
- Ensuring consistent, specialized cleaning and disinfecting

Patients are strongly encouraged to schedule appointments for procedures and office visits that were put on hold this spring. This is especially critical for those who may be experiencing symp-

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■ COVID-19 UPDATES, continued

• Our outpatient and surgical services have resumed.

CMH went through a brief “shutdown” period for all services barring emergencies. Now our non-emergency services are back in business—following comprehensive procedures required by the state.

For the foreseeable future, we will be operating under guidelines that may place restrictions on when and how quickly we deliver non-emergency care. We ask for your patience and understanding during this time while we work judiciously to protect our patients and staff. **CMH**

■ CMH NOW REOPEN, continued

toms of potentially serious health conditions, such as heart problems or stroke.

It is important to avoid letting routine screenings for preventative care lapse, like cancer screenings and immunizations.

Patients also have the option of scheduling a Telehealth visit with their physician from the convenience of their homes. **CMH**

Meet with your provider from anywhere via CMH Telehealth

Patients can now see their healthcare provider virtually through CMH Telehealth. To have a secure conversation with your practitioner, you simply need a device with a camera and an internet connection or a smartphone (iPhone or Android).

Telehealth appointments support social distancing and are available for:

- Minor health issues or concerns
- Chronic care management
- Preventative care

During your visit, your healthcare provider will review your case and discuss any tests, procedures, or medications that you may need. Your appointment will be billed the same way it would if you were meeting with your doctor in person.

No commute or parking. Short wait times. A secure and simple interface.

Our Telehealth program is here to stay!

Patients can currently meet with most of our departments via CMH Telehealth. Stay tuned for updates on participating providers.

Distant Wine Social raises \$16,000 for CCMH Foundation COVID-19 Fund

It takes a village, and this one is pretty amazing!

The 2020 Distant Wine and Beer Fundraiser raised \$16,000 for the COVID-19 Fund, established by the Cloquet Community Memorial Hospital Foundation. We are overwhelmed by the generosity of this community and the surrounding area.

Individuals and businesses who wish to donate to the COVID-19 Fund may do so at any time by calling Laurie Korby at 218-878-7652, emailing lkorby@cmhmn.org, or mailing a check to the CCMH Foundation at 512 Skyline Boulevard, Cloquet, MN 55720. You may also donate directly at ccmhfoundation.com (specify “COVID-19 Fund” in the comment box).

A reminder to stay safe this summer

You and your loved ones deserve to enjoy the great outdoors, and everything the summer has to offer.

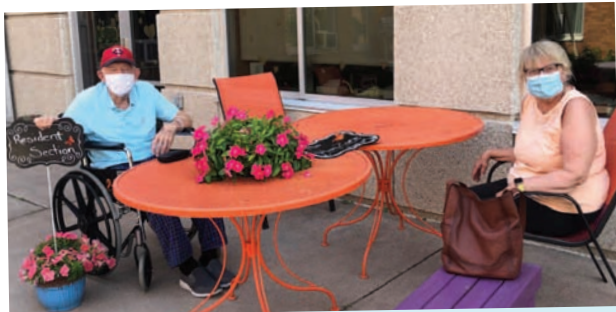
However, be sure to keep yourself and others safe by wearing a mask in public places and continuing to practice social distancing with people outside your household.

We want you to have fun this summer and soak up the sun as much as you can. Simply be mindful of the current climate!

Sunnyside Health Care Center offers virtual visits

Until pandemic-related visitor restrictions are lifted, technology and doorway visits, as well as outdoor visits, are a great way to stay connected here at SHCC.

Our residents have access to iPads and tablets featuring apps like FaceTime, Houseparty, and Skype. With permission, we have been sending



During this pandemic, SHCC resident Richard Nelson has experienced many types of visitation with his friend Linda Bush: a phone conversation, a visit through a glass door, and finally a sit-down chat with the precautions of distancing and masks.

ing videos and photos to our residents' loved ones as well. It's a true highlight when they receive a video or photo back!

Currently, a webcam is being installed on our library computer and laptops so that residents can connect at their

convenience. Assistance with technology is always available. As of late June, we can also arrange socially-distanced outdoor visits.

Staff from Chaplaincy, Nursing, Social Services, IT, and our therapies have also stepped up to assist when possible. Our Nursing staff, for instance, offer CMH Telehealth appointments regularly.

The idea is for our residents to stay connected in a safe and healthy way. If you would like to schedule a virtual visit, or perhaps a doorway, window, or outdoor visit, please call 218-878-7634. **CMH**



Jackie Ranco donates teddy bears to ER

A heartfelt thank-you to Jackie Ranco for donating another 100 teddy bears to the youngsters in our Emergency Department. Jackie has donated 500 bears to date and always offers to order more when we run low.

Our sincere gratitude to Bob Goodin as well—the driver of the bears!



CMH hires Practice Administrator for new family clinic

Community Memorial Hospital welcomes Ronald Alston, the new Practice Administrator for CMH Raiter Family Clinic and the Specialty Clinic.

Ron is originally from Washington, DC and moved to Rochester, Minnesota after high school.



He holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a master's degree in Human and Healthcare Administration.

Before joining CMH, he was employed in the Mayo system and at Essentia Health. Ron has

worked with organizations combining health-care and communities, and he hopes to carry that model into his new position. **CMH**



Our staff are coping with these unprecedented times by building connections in unique and inspiring ways—like with the thought bubbles pictured above.

CMH named Large Business of the Year



Community Memorial Hospital has been named Large Business of the Year by the Cloquet Area Chamber of Commerce. We are very grateful for the recognition. **CMH**

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Embracing our new day-to-day: the faces of CMH healthcare

We would like to take a moment to honor our employees, who have so graciously worked overtime—both literally and metaphorically—to prepare our organization for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) played a key role in the preparation process. To this day, all of our employees continue to wear masks at work!

We invite you to take a moment to consider the faces of healthcare and celebrate our essential workers. With their commitment to wearing PPE, we can continue to offer the comprehensive care you all deserve.



CMH launches Driving Rehabilitation program



Have you ever wondered whether you or a loved one is safe to drive? If so, you might consider our Occupational Therapy department's Driving Rehabilitation program. The process begins with a clinical skills assessment, which is typically covered by

insurance. This includes vision, cognitive, and motor control testing alongside a review of the patient's medical and driving history.

If testing reveals deficits in any of the above areas, outpatient Occupational Therapy may be recommended. (The driver will be given educational resources and support on alternative community transportation if driving is no longer deemed safe.) A behind-the-wheel assessment may be recommended as well to pinpoint potential adaptations to the vehicle.

To schedule a clinical skills assessment, ask your physician for a referral. Call 218-878-7040 for more information. [CMH](#)

Carlton County Public Health and Human Services (PHHS) is here for you

Community members are encouraged to call PHHS before coming in with questions: 218-879-4511. An up-to-date list of services is available at co.carlton.mn.us.

Other key resources include:

- The Governor's "Stay at Home MN" website: mn.gov/covid19

- The "Let's Talk COVID-19" mental health page: abhimn.org/covid-19-mental-health-resources

- The Minnesota Department of Health Hotline (for general health questions involving COVID-19): 651-201-3920 or 1-800-657-3903 (8am-6pm); health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus

If you are experiencing heightened stress and anxiety, thinking about suicide, or simply need someone to talk to, please text "MN" to 741741 for free 24/7 support. Again, Carlton County PHHS is here for you!