

ECRWSS EDDM
Postal Customer

Students from the Cloquet National Honor Society provided entertainment for residents of Sunnyside Health Care Center

with the creation of snow sculptures that ranged from a sea turtle to miniature snowmen. Residents gathered near windows and watched as the students displayed their creativity. ❄️



Welcome your baby with comfort and loving care



While some community hospitals choose not to deliver babies, CMH has all the medical services you would expect at a big-city hospital. These services include childbirth in our three warm and modern Birthing Suites.

At CMH, your baby will almost always be delivered by your family doctor. Your newborn will room with you, and we'll make sure you and your loved ones are safe, healthy, and comfortable throughout your stay.

- Snuggle with your baby moments after delivery.
- Count on our warm and experienced medical team.
- Indulge in a spa-like experience, complete with our signature celebration dinner!

From caesarian births to breastfeeding support, expecting mothers can arrange a safe and healthy delivery at CMH. Please call 218-878-7012 for more information. **CMH**

HealthWire



“We are getting through it.”

**Interview with Dr. Kara Underwood,
Director of Hospitalist Services**

We recently sat down with Dr. Underwood to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic, what treatment looks like behind the scenes, and what our community can expect moving forward.

■ **How sick are COVID-19 patients compared to those with the flu or other illnesses?**

As a hospitalist, I see primarily hospitalized patients who tend to have moderate to severe cases of COVID-19. We have much more familiarity with the flu—the course of influenza tends to be fairly predictable, and we have an antiviral that can be taken orally and reduce length of illness if started early enough. With COVID-19, however, the illness runs the gamut: by the time they are needing hospitalization, patients are generally very ill.

COVID-19 has a higher mortality rate in most age groups than influenza. Patients are generally requiring more oxygen support for longer periods of time. Those who survive tend to end up with profound fatigue and weakness that can persist for many weeks, often requiring rehabilitation to regain strength.

■ **What precautions do you take during treatment?**

We wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) consisting of a respirator or surgical mask, face shield or goggles, gown, and gloves.

We have also been trained on how to properly don and doff—or put on and remove—this equipment in order to avoid contamination with the virus.

■ **Is there a typical COVID-19 patient as far as symptoms go—physically and mentally?**

Locally, most of our hospitalized patients are elderly with one or a few underlying medical conditions.

We have seen a handful of relatively-healthy middle-aged patients—so nobody is 100% safe. Hospitalization rates are known to increase with age and underlying medical conditions including obesity, hypertension, heart and/or lung disease, and diabetes.

■ **Has being on the frontline during this pandemic had an impact on you?**

Certainly, the pandemic has had an effect on all frontline workers. There is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the virus—from how best to treat patients (this has changed since March), to determining how each individual's course is

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■ DR. UNDERWOOD, continued

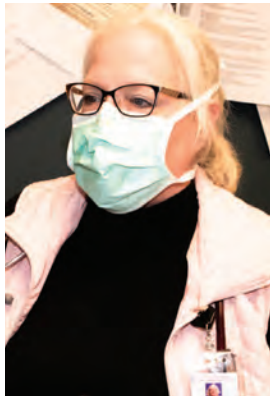
going to go, to best connecting with patients through all the gear.

There has also been uncertainty on how long this is going to last; what looked like a few weeks last March has turned into nearly a year. We have had to ask for more work from our colleagues when others are out ill. The pandemic has created many challenges, some tears, and long hours—but we are getting through it. We are very happy to see the vaccine arrive!

■ Do you have any advice for the general public regarding COVID-19?

I think most folks are doing the best they can precaution-wise, including the patients I have seen.

In terms of advice, I would say to keep doing your best. Practice social distancing, wear a mask, wash your hands frequently, and get the vaccine when you can. Do not let fear keep you from taking care of your medical issues—see your doctor. We are seeing many patients very ill with other conditions due to fear of going to the doctor during the pandemic. **CMH**



Dr. Kara Underwood

COVID-19 rapid-testing equipment produces fast results



CMH Lab Director Nikki Wilmes with the new BioFire equipment.

The CMH Lab now has a BioFire instrument that tests for the COVID-19 virus, producing results in approximately one hour.

Once a sample is gathered from a patient using a nasopharyngeal swab, the state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment works by identifying and replicating genetic material to produce a positive or negative COVID-19 result. The instrument is also used to test for 22 other viral and bacterial diseases, including influenza and strep. The tests are all performed simultaneously.

“This method of testing produces very accurate and precise results in a relatively quick manner,” says CMH Lab Director Nikki Wilmes.

The purchase of this equipment was made possible with funds from Carlton County. Wilmes says she is very proud that CMH can use this innovative instrument to serve the community. **CMH**

Residents of Carlton County can call a COVID-19 vaccination hotline for real-time updates on vaccinations, and for answers to frequently-asked questions. The hotline number is 218-499-6312.

Updates on the vaccine are also available on the Community Memorial Hospital website at: cloquethospital.com/covid-vaccine.



Beautiful artwork will soon be on display at CMH Raiter Family Clinic, thanks to local artists: Ivy Vainio, Dr. Lloyd Backus, and Dr. Dan Malkovich. Former area resident Candace Kirkedahlen is responsible for the lovely matting and framing.

Pelvic Health Rehabilitation program now available



Physical therapists Sarah Cedarleaf, PT, DPT; Misty Farrelly, PT, DPT; and Jennifer Lindquist, PT, DPT pose with models of the human pelvis.

The CMH Physical Therapy department is pleased to announce the launch of a Pelvic Health Rehabilitation program, which will include assessments, treatments, and custom exercises. Our three outpatient physical therapists have experience in treating patients with pelvic health dysfunctions.

“Many people don’t realize that there are treatments for pelvic conditions,” our physical therapists explain. “Previously, they were often referred out to other facilities. Our team has been gaining advanced training, and they can now provide more specialized, quality care closer to home.”

Now offering evaluation and treatment for the following diagnoses:

- Urinary incontinence
- Pelvic organ prolapse
- Chronic pelvic pain
- Dysmenorrhea
- Dyspareunia
- Endometriosis/Adenomyosis
- Vulvar pain
- Sacroiliac/Low back pain
- Peripartum pelvic syndrome
- Post-hernia repair

This list is not exhaustive, and many other conditions can benefit from Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy as well. Please call 218-878-7026 for appointments or more information. **CMH**

“Many people don’t realize that there are treatments for pelvic conditions.”

— CMH PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

CMH welcomes expert plastic surgeon

Community Memorial Hospital patients can now enjoy aesthetic and reconstructive plastic surgery services by Edgar Saldana, MD, FACS—board-certified plastic surgeon from the Plastic Surgery Center of Duluth.



“Sometimes physical things about our face or body affect us deeply,” says Dr. Saldana. “I understand and will work with you to achieve your goals.”

For appointments, please call 218-215-8990. The need for a referral is based on your insurance. **CMH**

Staying healthy and happy at home: Carlton county services for seniors

We know it has been hard to stay away from family and friends. Carlton County agencies are here for seniors with services and support—especially when staying apart means saving lives.

The Senior LinkAge Line can connect those in need with Carlton County agencies that provide:

- Technology support and device lending libraries
- Phone reassurance and companionship
- Virtual wellness classes
- Caregiver support
- Grocery and prescription drug delivery
- Home-delivered meals
- Transportation
- Household chore assistance

Together, these agencies help older Minnesotans find answers and get the help they need. If you or someone you care for could use these supportive services, please contact Minnesota’s Senior LinkAge Line at 800-333-2433. **CMH**