A Mom’s Heart-Stopping Story
Living Through Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Managing Menopause

YOU’RE IN THE RIGHT NEIGHBORHOOD FOR EXCELLENT HEALTH CARE
Dear Friends,

For nearly 40 years, Howard County General Hospital has served the health care needs of those who live and work in Howard County and surrounding counties as well. This relationship has afforded us the opportunity to be part of your lives—from day-to-day medical needs to your biggest life moments. This is especially true this year as we have cared for more patients on an outpatient and emergency basis combined, and have admitted more inpatients than ever before. Speaking for the entire caregiving team of more than 800 community- and hospital-based physicians, my 2,000 hospital co-workers and 600 volunteers, we are very grateful for the confidence you placed in us in making us your health care provider of choice.

Being able to meet the ever-expanding needs of our patients and their families is a testament to the expertise and commitment of everyone associated with HCGH, and I thank each member of the HCGH team for ensuring we provide patient and family focused care. Your daily contributions make a huge impact, ensuring that we all are truly in the right neighborhood for excellent health care.

Complementing the excellence of our dedicated staff and very broad range of clinical services are our facilities that enable patients to receive care in a warm, inviting and healing environment. As we celebrate the completion of our Campus Development Plan, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the individuals and organizations who participated in this landmark endeavor. Your support has enhanced not only HCGH but also, more importantly, the health and well-being of our community. When we embarked on this building project it was with the aim of meeting the needs of our patients. It is this ongoing commitment to our community that drives current plans to identify and address future health care needs, and I thank you for supporting the work we have done to date. I look forward to your future support of HCGH as we continue to provide the highest level of care right here in Howard County.

The numerous awards and designations HCGH received this year alone validate our commitment to excellent health care. In addition to the honors and recognitions listed on pages 10 and 11 of this publication, HCGH is proud to have received the Sustained Improvement Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Critical Care Societies Collaborative as one of only 37 hospitals in the entire United States to be recognized for our efforts to combat bloodstream infections, a leading cause of deaths in hospitals. This award reflects the significant efforts and resources put into making HCGH a safer place for you by our team of caring and committed professionals, without whom this award—and others we have earned—would not have been possible.

As we welcome fall and prepare for the start of the cold and flu season, I invite you to take advantage of all HCGH has to offer—our upcoming events, support groups and programs as well as the care provided by the more than 800 physicians on our staff who practice in our community. We all look forward to continuing to serve your health care needs and be a part of your lives for both the big and small moments.

I hope to see many of you in the community in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Victor A. Broccolino
President and CEO
Howard County General Hospital

---

**Wellness Matters** is published by Howard County General Hospital, a private, not-for-profit, health care provider, and a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine. Your physician should be consulted in regard to matters concerning the medical condition, treatment and needs of your family.

**Public Relations**
Mary Patton, director

**Writing/Editing/Design**
Bonnie Heneson Communications

**Custom Photography**
Carl Caruso
Jill Myers

**Board of Trustees**
Mary Patton, director

**Writing/Editing/Design**
Bonnie Heneson Communications

**Custom Photography**
Carl Caruso
Jill Myers

**Board of Trustees**
Evelyn T. Bolduc, chair
Peter J. Rogers, Jr., vice-chair
W. Brian McGowan, treasurer
Ann B. Mech, J.D., R.N., secretary
Vivian C. Bailey**
Victor A. Broccolino*
Francis S. Chuidian, M.D.*
Marvin P. Davis, M.D.
Adinarayana Divakaruni, M.D.
George L. Doetsch, Jr.
Miriam F. Dubin
Clairta Frazier, M.D.*
Harry L. Lundy

**Howard County General Hospital, Inc.**
Victor A. Broccolino, president/CEO

**Howard Hospital Foundation**
Paul G. Skalny, Esq., chair

**Howard County General Hospital Professional Staff**
Francis S. Chuidian, M.D., president

**Volunteer Auxiliary**
Alitia Sialetka, president

Please direct questions, suggestions and comments regarding Wellness Matters to the Public Relations Department at 5755 Cedar Lane, Columbia, MD 21044-2912

BACK PAIN: Game•Set•Match

It was a cyst the size of a small grape that sidelined Tara Dorai-Berry for several months beginning July 2010. Called a “synovial cyst,” it was taking up space within her spinal canal and irritating her L5 nerve, causing severe pain from her left hip down to her left foot and toes.

“A synovial cyst is an inflammatory, arthritis-related cyst that can be found in different areas of the body,” explains Dr. Massimo Fiandaca, a neurosurgeon on staff at Howard County General Hospital. “It occurs when the synovial lining within a joint bulges out and often fills with thick fluid. Common locations for these cysts are in the spinal joints of the lower back and behind the knee. In some patients, the pain and discomfort can be resolved by draining the fluid from the cyst; however, that was not the case for Tara.”

Although such cysts sometimes cause no symptoms, Dr. Fiandaca says the twisting and turning that Tara does as an avid competitive tennis player may have exacerbated the problem in her spine.

Thinking the problem was muscle-related, Tara tried physical therapy first. “After a few weeks, my pain was just getting worse,” explains Tara. “Not only could I not play tennis, I had a hard time standing. It got to the point where I was with my teenager at the mall and had to sit down in the middle of the floor, because my leg wasn’t going to hold me up long enough to get to a chair.”

That’s when she turned to Dr. Fiandaca. “He told me that this was unlikely to go away on its own,” says Tara. “Knowing that I had a lot of plans, including a trip to India, the doctor worked with me to try conservative measures first.”

An initial steroid injection in October helped her get back on the court for a while...still in pain, but playing. By December, however, as she was readying for her trip abroad, the excruciating pain returned in full force. Another injection helped her get through the trip, but, upon her return, it was clear that she needed to consider surgery.

In January, Dr. Fiandaca successfully removed the cyst through a small incision in Tara’s back, relieving the pressure on her nerve.

“I felt the difference as soon as I woke up in the recovery room,” says Tara. “The pain was gone.”

After several months of recovery and physical therapy, Tara was back on the court in early April doing light hitting and by May was competing in doubles matches. “I liked the fact that Dr. Fiandaca never said I had to stop playing tennis,” says Tara. “He wanted me to get back to where I wanted to be.”

“It is important to note that although patients can develop all different types of cysts in the back, most do not typically require surgery,” explains Dr. Fiandaca. “Even with synovial cysts, conservative treatments are often successful.”
“Mommy is hurt!” yelled Ginnie Gick’s 5-year-old son. Her husband, Dan, who was running late to work, came bounding down the stairs to find Ginnie lying unresponsive. It was May 20, 2010, and Ginnie, age 42, wasn’t breathing.

“I called 911,” recalls Dan. “I had no idea what had happened. I thought maybe she had fainted. I told the dispatcher my wife was unconscious and blue, and the dispatcher had me start chest compressions, counting with me. I continued with the compressions for four minutes until EMS arrived and took over.

“The paramedics sent me to get Ginnie’s medications while they continued compressions,” Dan continues. “I heard the defibrillator shock and the paramedics announce they had a rhythm. Quickly, they loaded Ginnie into the ambulance and took her to Howard County General Hospital. It was at that point that I fell apart.”

Ginnie had suffered sudden cardiac arrest.

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is a condition in which the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating, usually due to an electrical disturbance in your heart that disrupts its pumping action. If this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA is different from a heart attack, which occurs when blood flow to a portion of the heart is blocked.

Although she regularly saw Dr. Sean Gloth, a cardiologist on staff at HCGH, before that day, Ginnie did not have any of the usual risk factors or warning signs for SCA.

When Dan arrived at HCGH, the Emergency Department physicians were beginning to bring the core temperature of Ginnie’s body down to preserve brain function. “We didn’t know how long she had been without oxygen, but we were guessing six to eight minutes,” says Dan. Ginnie was flown by helicopter to Johns Hopkins Hospital, where she would continue to be cooled to 91.7 degrees Fahrenheit. The physicians’ plan was to keep her cool for 24 hours to reduce the impact on Ginnie’s brain. Ginnie was put on a respirator and induced into a coma.

“Ginnie’s case is the perfect example of the unique combination of having Johns Hopkins Emergency Medicine physicians here in our community who provide cutting edge care as well as facilitate transfers to one of the premier academic facilities in the country when time is so critical,” says Dr. Walter Atha, chairman of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Howard County General Hospital.

As Ginnie stabilized, the process of warming her body back to a normal temperature was started at the rate of only a quarter of a degree per hour. “It took a day to warm her,” says Dan. “It was the longest day spent wondering if Ginnie would still be Ginnie when she woke up.” During the next several days, Ginnie was taken off the respirator and was breathing on her own. Tests performed to check her heart function came back normal. As she was able to speak, it became clear that, other than a loss of memory for the two weeks prior to May 20, Ginnie had not suffered significant brain injury.

“The doctors couldn’t explain exactly what caused Ginnie’s heart to stop, so they suggested that she have an automatic implantable cardiac defibrillator (AICD) placed in her chest that would monitor her heart rhythm and shock it back into rhythm should it get out of beat,” says Dan.

Following the procedure to implant the AICD, Ginnie was discharged into the care of Dr. Gloth. She was weak but feeling lucky to be alive. “I went through 12 weeks of cardiac rehabilitation at HCGH to build stamina in a controlled environment where I could be monitored,” explains Ginnie.

“Life was getting back to normal, and I was building strength when, on my son’s birthday in July 2010, I started to feel lightheaded. Just as I sat down on the kitchen floor, I felt like I got kicked in the chest by a horse. The AICD had shocked my heart,” recalls Ginnie. “Dr. Gloth increased my beta blocker, and I haven’t had an episode since. I see Dr. Gloth regularly, and Hopkins remotely monitors me from the machine beside my bed that captures my heart readings. I still feel a little fragile, but so lucky. The planets aligned that day.”

**Causes of Sudden Cardiac Arrest**

“The immediate cause of SCA is usually an arrhythmia (an abnormality in your heart rhythm), which is the result of a malfunction in your heart’s electrical system,” notes Dr. Gloth.

Ventricular fibrillation (v-fib), a type of arrhythmia, causes most SCAs. During v-fib, the ventricles (the heart’s lower chambers) don’t beat normally, but rather quiver rapidly and irregularly. When this happens, the heart pumps little or no blood to the body.

According to Dr. Gloth, most of the time, cardiac-arrest-inducing arrhythmias don’t occur on their own. In a person with a normal, healthy heart, a lasting irregular heart rhythm isn’t likely to develop without an outside trigger, such as an electrical shock, the use of illegal drugs or trauma to the chest. Certain diseases and conditions, like coronary artery disease and an enlarged heart (cardiomyopathy) also can cause the electrical problems that lead to SCA.
Heart-Stopping Story

Living Through Sudden Cardiac Arrest

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST FACTS

- Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is a leading cause of death in the United States, claiming an estimated 325,000 lives each year.
- It is estimated that 95 percent of victims of SCA die before they reach a hospital or other source of emergency help.
- Survival is directly linked to the amount of time between the onset of SCA and defibrillation. If no bystander CPR is provided, a victim’s chances of survival are reduced by 7 to 10 percent with every minute of delay until defibrillation.
- Brain damage can start to occur in just four to six minutes after the heart stops pumping blood.

Everyone—from her family who did CPR, to the paramedics who were so well trained, to the ER doctors who treated her—did the right thing; all of those factors helped Ginnie survive. Medicine actually starts with the family and moves all the way through the hospital.”

— Sean Gloth, M.D.
**HEALTHY FAMILIES**

**Maybe Baby?**

**Health Issues to Consider Before Pregnancy**
Learn about important choices to consider when starting your family. Presented by Tamara Means, M.D. September 19, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

**Prenatal Exercise**
Taught by a certified instructor. Physician permission required. Thursdays, September 8–October 27, 6:30–7:30 p.m. $88/eight sessions.

**Sibling Preparation Tour**
Call at least 8 weeks before due date to schedule a tour for siblings age 4–12. Free.

**Maybe Baby?**

**Financial Planning Issues for Prospective Parents**
Learn about the financial aspects of being a parent. October 13, 7–9 p.m. Free.

**Prenatal Class for Early Pregnancy**
Parents-to-be will learn about the early stages of pregnancy. October 19, 7–9 p.m. Free.

**Birthing Center Tour**
Call at least 8 weeks before due date to schedule a tour of the labor/delivery/recovery unit. Free.

**Infant Massage**
For babies age 1 to 12 months. September 10, 10–11 a.m. $20.

**Happiest Baby on the Block**
Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Parents and parents-to-be will learn techniques to quickly soothe baby. October 18, 7–9 p.m. $50 per couple (includes parent kits).

**Baby Signing**
Learn 100 basic signs to help your baby communicate. September 21, 6:30–8 p.m., or October 29, 9–11:30 a.m. $75 per couple/ $40 per person.

**Advance Directives**
Learn how to appoint or be appointed a health care agent, and leave with an Advance Directives document. September 8, 6–7 p.m. Free.

For a brochure of Maternal Child classes and information about Maternal Child services, go to www.hcgh.org and click on the menu tab “Having a Baby.”

**Choose Your Pediatrician and Promote Your Newborn’s Health**
Learn ways to promote the health of your newborn. Presented by Alvaro Ramos, M.D. September 22, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLES**

**Couples Massage**
Learn techniques to reduce stress and promote well-being. Register by couple. Upper body: October 7, 7–9 p.m. Lower body: October 14, 7–9 p.m. $50 per couple for one class; $90 per couple for both.

**Enhance Your Brain Power**
Learn techniques and activities for thinking your way to improved brain health. October 5 and 6, 7–8:30 p.m. $30.

**Moving through Anger**
Identify your anger triggers and learn techniques to manage those triggers. November 1, 8 and 15, 6:30–8 p.m. $40.

**Adult/Child/Infant CPR/AED**
Earn a two-year American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR completion card. For not for health care providers. August 29, September 15 or 26, and October 13 or 26, 6:30–9 p.m. $55.

**Advance Directives**
Learn how to appoint or be appointed a health care agent, and leave with an Advance Directives document. September 8, 6–7 p.m. Free.

For a brochure of Maternal Child classes and information about Maternal Child services, go to www.hcgh.org and click on the menu tab “Having a Baby.”

**Choose Your Pediatrician and Promote Your Newborn’s Health**
Learn ways to promote the health of your newborn. Presented by Alvaro Ramos, M.D. September 22, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

**Flu Vaccine**
September through November. In partnership with Johns Hopkins Outpatient Pharmacy. For a schedule of dates, go to www.hcgh.org or call 410-740-7601. $25 per vaccination.

**Mammogram**
October. $50 digital “Soft Pad” mammograms will be offered to men and women without symptoms of breast disease. 410-740-7900. HCCH and the Howard County Health Department provide free digital mammograms to those who qualify. 410-313-4255.

**A Parents’ Guide to Drugs of Abuse**
October 5/7–8:30 p.m. Learn each class of abused drug, its physiology, effects on the brain, side effects and why people choose to abuse drugs. Presented by N. Joseph Gagliardi, M.D. Program geared for adults only. Free.

**Happiness & Your Health**
October 6/7–8:30 p.m. Discover how happiness impacts health and strategies to create more happiness. Free.

**Breast Changes: Normal and Abnormal**
October 19/6–9 p.m. Our team of experts will discuss normal breast physiology and contrast it to the potential changes that could indicate the presence of disease. Newest developments in the area of breast cancer will be presented. Hors d’oeuvres and door prizes. Space is limited; early registration is recommended. Free.

**Preparing for Total Joint Surgery**
October 27/7–8:30 p.m. Learn about total hip and knee surgery from health care professionals, past patients of Howard County General Hospital’s Joint Academy and Nicholas Grosso, M.D. Free.

**Treatments for Foot and Ankle Pain**
October 27/7–8:30 p.m. Presented by Ricardo Cook, M.D. Free.
Improving Your Health

Mental Health First Aid
A nationally recognized course to learn signs, symptoms and frequency of mental illness. Gain effective, appropriate assistance that can save lives, promote recovery and reduce stigma. Four-class session starts October 3, 6–9 p.m. $50.

The Mall Milers

Nutrition and Cancer
Individualized counseling for those wanting to lower their risks of certain cancers or undergoing treatment for cancer. $90.

Weight Loss through Bariatric Surgery
Learn about weight-loss surgery from Johns Hopkins Center for Bariatric Surgery. August 30 or September 27, 4–6:30 p.m. 410-550-0409 or www.hopkinsbayview.org/bariatrics. Free.

Individualized Weight-Loss Counseling
Discuss dietary concerns and goals with a registered dietitian. Payment is required at time appointment is scheduled. $35/half-hour visit.

Smoke-Free Lungs
Education and support for those wanting to quit or have quit. Attend one or all sessions. August 18, September 22, October 13 or December 1, 7–9 p.m. Free.

Living Well...Take Charge of Your Health
A chronic disease management program for people living with chronic conditions and caregivers. Next six-class session starts September 9, 1:30–4 p.m. 443-718-5980. $28.

Phase II Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program
Exercise and education to assist pulmonary patients with various forms of lung disease. 443-718-3000.

HCGH Pulmonary Rehabilitation Maintenance Program
Exercise maintenance for pulmonary rehab program graduates. Tuesday and Friday afternoons. 443-718-3000. $60 per month.

HCGH Cardiac Rehabilitation Maintenance Program
Exercise maintenance for cardiac rehab program graduates. Tuesdays and Fridays, 8 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. 443-718-3000. $60 per month.

Phase II Cardiac Rehabilitation Program
Assists cardiac patients in the recovery phase following a heart attack, angio-plasty, or cardiac surgery. 443-718-3000.

External Enhanced Counterpulsation Therapy
Non-invasive alternative treatment for patients with stage III or IV angina. 443-718-3000.

Rewiring Your Neural Pathways of Emotion
Examine emotional response patterns and use imagery, visualization, and meditation to promote positive change. October 18, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

Healthy Weight, Healthy You
Part 1–Looking to Lose Weight: Plan meals that tantalize taste buds, provide balance in your diet and promote well-being. September 26, 7–8:30 p.m. Part 2–Kitchen Wisdom: Participate in cooking demonstrations. October 3, 7–8:30 p.m. Register for one or both parts. Free.

Blood Pressure Screening & Monitoring
For a list of times and locations, go to www.hcgh.org or call 410-740-7601.

Pre-Diabetes: What Is It and What Can You Do About It
Understand what pre-diabetes is and how to prevent or delay actual diabetes. September 14, 7–9 p.m. $15.

Diabetes programs have convenient day and evening hours and are recognized by the American Diabetes Association.

Individualized Diabetes Management
Learn from a certified diabetes educator how to manage diabetes from eating to medication to getting better. 443-718-3000.

Living with Diabetes
Learn from presentations by an endocrinologist, podiatrist, psychologist, diabetes nurse educator and dietitian. 443-718-3000.

Living with Diabetes: Executive Summary
A condensed version of Living with Diabetes.

For Children and Teens

Kids Self Defense
Children ages 8–12 learn basic principles of safety awareness and age-appropriate self-defense techniques. October 8, 9–11 a.m. $27.

Self-Defense for Young Women
Teens ages 12–15 learn physical and psychological strategies of self-defense. October 29, 9–11 a.m. $35.

Home Sweet Home
Children ages 8–12 and their parents learn safe, fun ways for children to stay at home alone. September 10, 9–11 a.m. Free.

Essentials in Babysitting
Learn to effectively manage children, create a safe environment, and apply emergency techniques. August 27, September 24 or October 15, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. $50 includes lunch.

CPR for Teens
Teens ages 11–17 learn CPR for adult, child and infant. October 1, 9 a.m.–noon. $35.

Free Health Screenings

Depression
October 6, 3–5 p.m.

Podiatry (Foot)
November 2, 9–11 a.m.

Diabetes
November 9, 9–11 a.m.

Improving with Age

Be Seated
Seated fitness program for adults 50 and older. $36.

AgeWell
Ongoing exercise program for ages 60 and older. 410-313-7213.

Fitness Fun for Seniors
Exercise to music at your own pace for ages 60 and older. $32.

AARP Driver Safety
Classroom refresher for 50 years and older. $12/AARP members, $14/others.

HCGH Wellness Center
10710 Charter Drive, Suite 100, Columbia, MD 21044

Register online for HCGH’s Wellness Classes at www.hcgh.org
Advance registration is required for all classes and programs. Payment is due at time of registration. A $25 processing fee will be charged for refunds and returned checks. Classes may be cancelled due to low enrollment.

410-740-7601 – information and registration
410-740-7990 – (TDD)
www.hcgh.org – online registration and to find a physician
410-740-7750 – physician referral

Wellness Classes Registration

Scan to get a complete list of classes and events.
MANAGING
Menopause & Perimenopause

Do you have irregular or absent menses (periods), mood swings, difficulty thinking straight or concentrating, sleep disturbances, hot flashes, low libido (sex drive), or vaginal dryness? These symptoms are all common for midlife women, and they could be a sign of the approach of menopause.

According to the North American Menopause Society, menopause typically occurs around age 51–53, but anytime after age 40 is considered normal. The transitional phase into menopause (perimenopause) can last for two–eight years, ending one year after your final menstrual period. However, physical signs and symptoms often start during perimenopause and can occur even earlier.

When Should I Talk to My Doctor?

If you suspect you are experiencing perimenopause, talk to your physician, who will review your medical and menstrual history as well as your signs and symptoms. “While each woman experiences this transition differently, it is important to talk to your doctor as menopause can affect you physically, emotionally and sexually,” says Dr. Mary Hogan, a gynecologist on staff at Howard County General Hospital. “There are misconceptions about what options menopausal patients have. New studies and recent findings have shown the benefits of hormone therapy (HT), especially if started within 10 years of the onset of menopause; it is alive and a viable option.”

Is Hormone Therapy for Me?

According to Dr. Hogan, there are two approaches to HT to help manage symptoms. Local estrogen therapy provides a low dose of estrogen to the vagina and surrounding tissues for treatment of atrophy that results in vaginal dryness or pain with intercourse. Offered in the form of vaginal creams, tablets or a ring, local estrogen therapy is very safe. Used to treat hot flashes and sleep disturbances that interfere with the quality of life, systemic HT is a higher dose of estrogen, and there are some risks involved with treatment. Systemic therapy can be taken orally or through newer transdermal options that enable estrogen to be absorbed through the skin into the bloodstream. The newest data from the Women’s Health Initiative Study shows no increased risk for blood clot or stroke with the transdermal estrogens compared to oral estrogens. Transdermal estrogens are safer than oral estrogens. “When it comes to systemic HT, the goal is to use the lowest effective dose for the shortest time,” explains Dr. Hogan.

What Additional Health Concerns Should I Address?

“Reduced estrogen levels can also cause thinning of the tissues surrounding the urethra (the short tube that passes urine from the bladder out of the body). With age, the surrounding pelvic muscles may weaken,” explains Dr. Hogan. “The result: midlife women have an increased risk for urinary infections, urinary urgency symptoms and even incontinence. The good news is that while it’s common, urinary incontinence is not inevitable and can be treated. There are exercises to train and strengthen pelvic floor muscles as well as medications and surgical options you can discuss with your physician.”

“While every woman will go through menopause, the related symptoms and medical conditions can be managed so that you can maintain a high quality of life.”

— Mary Hogan, M.D.

Menopause and Sexuality
October 12 / 7–8:30 p.m. Free. HCGH Wellness Center
Menopause can impact your sexuality. Understanding changes and learning ways to adapt may result in a happier and healthier life. This interactive session will discuss basics and address questions.

Presented by
Mary Hogan, M.D.
Call 410-740-7601 to register

For a referral to a gynecologist on staff at HCGH, visit www.hcgh.org or call 410-740-7750.

Dr. Mary Hogan is a gynecologist, practicing with Signature OB/GYN in Columbia (formerly Drs. Mayer, Hogan & Associates). She has an interest in treating menopausal women with estrogen deficiency symptoms.
Foundation Chair’s Message

Dear Friends,

I am very excited to send you my first message as the new chair of the Howard Hospital Foundation, and I would like to start by sharing a little about myself and why I got involved with HHF.

Howard County is my home, and I have come to value the community a great deal. I was educated through the Howard County Public School System, and I live in Ellicott City with my wife, Cindy, and my two children, Sophie and Andrew.

HCGH is my hospital. As a member of the so-called “Sandwich Generation,” I have spent the last 10 years dealing with my children’s various mishaps as well as my parents’ cancer treatments. During this period, I have come to truly appreciate the importance of superior health care and the amazing medical resources available in this area. HCGH’s certifications, clinical achievements and newly renovated campus are but a few of the reasons that I consider our hospital to be a gem…one that exists right here in our own backyard. And so, I want to give back to an organization that gives so much to all of us.

Community involvement is very important to me, and I am honored to have the opportunity to support HCGH. I am eager to get started, and am appealing to you, my neighbor, to help me achieve my goals, the success of which will benefit our entire community.

Why does the foundation need your financial support? It is because HCGH is not funded by Howard County government and/or Johns Hopkins Medicine. Although the county supports the hospital in many ways and has generously contributed to our Campus Development Plan, HCGH is not part of the county’s annual budget, as are other community services like the fire and police departments, our nationally renowned library system and our highly acclaimed community college. And, while HCGH is a proud member of Johns Hopkins Medicine, it is not funded by that institution either. So, in order for Howard County residents to continue to receive state-of-the-art medical care close to home, we all need to get involved.

Any gift, large or small, makes a difference in the future of the hospital. Or, you can donate the gift of your time by volunteering. If you care as much about the health of our community as I do, I hope you will consider supporting the hospital in any way you can by making HCGH your “charity of choice.”

I look forward to working with you. Here’s to a healthy and successful partnership!

With warm regards and thanks,

Paul G. Skalny
Chair, Howard Hospital Foundation

Help Us Help You!

Text “HCGH” to 20222 to donate to Howard County General Hospital: A Member of Johns Hopkins Medicine

A $10 donation will appear on your next mobile phone bill. Messaging and data rates may apply.
Keeping Howard County Well & Wise

HCGH and the Howard County Library System have partnered to enhance, advance and elevate health education in Howard County. The partnership, dubbed Well & Wise, promotes healthy choices in the county through a variety of activities, including collaborative classes and events, health screenings, health initiatives, speakers on health-related topics, and cross promotion and distribution of materials.

Check out the Well & Wise blog at www.hocowellandwise.org. The hospital and library share blogging duties, and guest bloggers are welcome and encouraged to submit hospital- or health-related topic ideas to contactus@hcgh.org.

The partnership will host a Well & Wise summit on October 27, 2011, where county agencies and organizations committed to health education will discuss the state of health in Howard County.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Honors HCGH for Combating Infections

Less than 1 percent of hospitals in the nation receives this recognition

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for the first time recognized 37 hospitals and health care systems for their efforts to combat health care-associated infections (HAIs). HCGH received the Sustained Improvement Award, which recognizes progress in implementing systems showing sustained and consistent reductions over a period of 18 to 24 months.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HAIs accounted for nearly 1.7 million infections and 99,000 associated deaths in 2002, and are responsible for $28 to $33 billion in preventable costs annually.

“We are gratified to be among such a select group of hospitals receiving this recognition.”

– Victor Broccolino
President and CEO of HCGH

Howard County General/Chase Brexton Initiative Seeks to Improve Access to Care

HCGH, in partnership with Chase Brexton Health Services, has launched the Access to Care Program in order to address the needs of individuals who are uninsured or underinsured. The goals of this program are to improve overall public health in Howard County, increase access to ongoing primary care and link patients with appropriate community resources.

Following a patient’s initial assessment and treatment by a clinical caregiver, a patient identified as being uninsured or underinsured is offered information about the program.

If interested, an Access to Care Program manager is assigned to assess the patient’s needs and assist in identifying and accessing community resources, including primary care, dental health services, behavioral health services and more.

The Access to Care Program was created through a grant from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission.
HCGH Ranked in Top 20 Hospitals in Baltimore Metropolitan Area by U.S. News

HCGH has been ranked 11th out of 31 hospitals in the Baltimore metropolitan area in a new listing of “best hospitals” by U.S. News & World Report.

Based on the report, HCGH is considered a high-performing clinical provider in the areas of gastroenterology, geriatrics, gynecology, kidney disorders, neurology and neurosurgery, orthopedics, pulmonology and urology. HCGH also scored high in patient safety, demonstrating commitment to reducing accidents and medical mistakes.

The doctors, nurses, health care professionals and support staff who care for our patients have truly earned this recognition, and we thank every one for their contributions.

Howard County General Designated a Blue Distinction Center for Spine Surgery®

The Spine Academy at HCGH has been designated as a Blue Distinction Center for Spine Surgery® by CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield. Blue Distinction designations are awarded to facilities that have demonstrated a commitment to quality care by meeting thresholds for clinical quality and safety.

The Spine Academy at HCGH offers a comprehensive approach to spine surgery, focusing on engaging and educating patients throughout the entire process so they can participate more fully in their own care and recovery.

“We are grateful for this prestigious recognition,” said Nicholas P. Grosso, M.D., chair of Orthopaedic Surgery at HCGH. “It is an acknowledgement of the hard work and team effort put forth by everyone in the program—nurses, physicians, therapists and support staff—all working toward the same goal.”

Patient First to Open Medical Center in Howard County

Patient First will expand its urgent care services in Maryland with the opening of a new medical center on August 10, 2011. The new site will be located at 5900 Cedar Lane in Columbia, adjacent to HCGH. Open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., 365 days a year, Patient First physicians and their support staff will be available for urgent care; work, school, camp, sports and travel physicals; occupational health; and primary care for patients who do not have a primary care physician. Like all Patient First centers, the new location will provide routine labs, digital X-rays and a prescription dispensing service in-house.

“The goal of Patient First is to provide convenient, cost-effective medical care on a walk-in basis,” said R.P. Sowers, M.D., founder and CEO of Patient First. “At the same time, our physicians and staff always work closely and in a collaborative fashion with the area’s existing medical community to provide care.”
**August**

**Healthy Kids in Healthy Families Clinic**  
**Saturday, August 20** / 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Free.  
Center Court across from the fountain in The Mall in Columbia.  
Bring your family and participate in our screenings including pediatric vision, asthma, height, weight and blood pressure. Stop by our booths and ask the pediatrician questions. Learn physical activities for the whole family, healthy nutrition, and other health and safety tips for children and the whole family.

**Team CONQUER participates in the TriColumbia Association IronGirl Competition**  
**Sunday, August 21**  
Centennial Park  
Come support the team and join other inspiring men, women and teens who serve as ambassadors for living healthy, active lives, while fulfilling fundraising goals for the Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center. Train with us or on your own; we encourage beginners up to seasoned athletes to join Team CONQUER as we participate in walk-a-thons, marathons, relays, bike and triathlon events. For more information, visit www.hcgh.org/TeamCONQUER, email contactus@hcgh.org, or call 410-740-7570.

**September**

**WomenFest**  
**Thursday, September 15** / 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Free.  
Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood, Cooksville  
An interactive wellness event for women presented by the Howard County Office on Aging. For more information, call 410-313-5440.  
10:30 a.m.—Put Your Best Face Forward: Overview of Non-Surgical and Surgical Facial Rejuvenation:  
**Natasha Sandy, M.D.**, Columbia Medical Practice  
12:30 p.m.—Sexuality...No Expiration Date:  
**Phyllis Campbell, M.D.**, Signature OB/GYN (formerly Drs. Mayer, Hogan & Associates)  
1:30 p.m.—Got D? A Bone Health Essential:  
**Yvette Oquendo, M.D.**, Chase Brexton

**October**

**50+ Expo**  
**Friday, October 21** / 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Free.  
Wilde Lake High School  
Presented by the Office on Aging, Department of Citizen Services, the 2011 event will boast a health fair, healthy aging seminars with Howard County General Hospital physicians, flu shots, diabetes screenings, re-careering workshops, living green vendors, demonstrations, live entertainment and food.

**Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Clinic**  
**Saturday, October 22** / 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Free. Registration not required.  
Center Court across from the fountain in The Mall in Columbia.  
Speak with our physician experts. Learn about breast health, colorectal health, nutrition, smoking cessation, acupuncture, and other hospital and community health resources. Participate in screenings including fecal occult blood, pulmonary function, skin analyzer, blood pressure, height and weight with body mass index, and more.

**November**

**Fretz Autumn Extravaganza, A Harvest of Hope**  
**Thursday, November 10** / 6–9 p.m.  
Fretz Corporation Showroom, Columbia  
Enjoy a fun and festive Autumn Extravaganza to benefit the Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center. Food provided by Carrabbas Italian Restaurant and fine wines by Gus Kalaris of Axios Wines will accompany a silent and live auction, DJ, entertainment and cooking demonstrations.  
For tickets, sponsorship opportunities, auction donations or more information, please call 410-740-7570, email contactus@hcgh.org, or visit www.hcgh.org/Fretz for updates and to preview exciting auction items.

**Dazzle Dash Weekend**  
**Saturday, November 19** / 5–7:30 p.m.–Runners only  
**Sunday, November 20** / 4–7:30 p.m.–Walkers only  
Walk or run through the magical Symphony of Lights. Enjoy activities for children of all ages, food, music, entertainment and giveaways.  
Register online at www.hcgh.org/dazzledash. Space is limited.

**18th Annual Symphony of Lights**  
**Monday, November 21—Saturday, January 1, 2012**  
Drive throughs open seven days a week from 6–10 p.m., including holidays; closed December 31 for the Midnight at 7 event. www.hcgh.org/drivethrough  
Visit www.hcgh.org/symphonyofflights for $5 discount coupon for drive throughs and to learn more about the events listed above as well as Tail Lights, Blinkin’ Binkies and Midnight at 7.