Celebrating a Legacy of Care

Pain-free Living Through Top-Rated Orthopedic Surgery

Valley Medical Center’s Journey Toward Strategic Alliance

Exciting Announcement Jump Starts the New Year! VMC & UW Medicine Agree to Explore Alliance
Dear Friends,

I’ve been in this business a long time—over 20 years, in fact. While I knew 2010 would be a year of great change, I was not prepared for the hundreds of inquiries to the GoldenCare office about Medicare insurance policy changes.

While the number of Medicare prescription drug plans (PDPs) were reduced and simplified, it was confusing for those enrolled in discontinued drug plans to be “rolled over” into new plans. Going forward, fewer PDP options and more focused differences will make it easier for you to choose the right PDP. The “doughnut hole” gap is shrinking, giving earlier relief for those reaching the initial plan coverage level.

This summer, the changes to the Medicare supplement plans A through L were not so obvious. While many plans were discontinued, others were changed in subtle ways. Some plans did not disappear, but were “modernized.” For example, if you bought Plan F before June of 2010, you may not be reaping the benefits of the modernized plan with generally less expensive rates. Call your insurance company today to see if you can save money and get an improved plan—open enrollment periods only apply to Advantage plans and PDPs.

To assist you in making informed decisions about the insurance products you purchase, Golden Living will keep you informed of any significant changes occurring in the next year.

Have a healthy and happy 2011.

Grace Dalrymple, Membership Manager
A Legacy of Care

On December 16, Valley Medical Center celebrated the unveiling of its new Legacy wall, a multi-media exhibit showcasing the century-long history of Valley Medical Center. Over 90' long, the exhibit is displayed in the Winter Garden corridor between the hospital’s main lobby and the new South Tower.

Historic newspaper articles and vintage photographs etched in stainless steel and a series of videos present the chronology of Valley Medical Center’s transition: from a modest, two-story facility in Renton with 15 rooms and five nurses in 1911; to the 100-bed, 1947 Renton Hospital on Rainier Avenue, nicknamed the “wagon wheel” for its unique hub-shaped design; to the present site of Valley Medical Center, dedicated in 1969, now the largest nonprofit healthcare provider between Seattle and Tacoma. The wall also documents milestones in medicine, significant historical events and those who have served on the Public Hospital District No. 1 Board of Commissioners through 2009.

In addition to both present and former members of the Board of Commissioners and their family representatives, Rep. Marcie Maxwell, Kent Mayor Suzette Cooke, Newcastle Mayor John Dulcich and Renton Technical College President Steve Hanson attended the event.

This passion for excellence is the reason The Joint & Spine Center at VMC received HealthGrades® Clinical Achievement Recognition as #1 for Overall Orthopedic Services in Washington in 2011. “HealthGrades® judges on outcomes—medical outcomes, patient satisfaction, length of stay in the hospital, infection rates, complication rates—a complicated set of standards,” says Durnin. “It takes a really good program and a really good staff to come out on top. Another key is our emphasis on patient education. We make sure our patients know what to expect before surgery, during and throughout recovery so there are no surprises and it’s a good experience. We empower our patients to be in charge of their recovery.”

A Man Trades his Wings to Explore the World on Foot

Taking charge of his recovery after orthopedic spine surgery was no problem for Richard who had surgery in January 2010 and is now living life pain-free after decades of managing and coping.

Eighty-four years young and a former Boeing engineer with passions for flying and hiking, Richard has flown his own plane, his self-proclaimed “Magic Carpet,” to all corners of continental North America. He and his wife Nancy also explore exotic places on foot, logging over 850 10K “volkswalks” since 1987. Several years ago, Richard traded in his wings to focus on worldwide walking trips, Iceland and South Africa being personal favorites. As they trekked, he enjoyed the local people and marveled at the variety of beautiful landscapes and abundant wildlife.

Since high school, Richard has been living with back pain, using physical activity and over-the-counter pain relievers to relieve the discomfort. “I got used to pain and just did what I wanted—gritting teeth sometimes. I had been limping for 15 years, but kept going anyway...until I couldn’t.” In mid-2009 while descending a mountain ridge, both of Richard’s
legs collapsed. He was carried down a mile to the bus. “It was serious,” he says.

Richard gives his orthopedic surgeon, Christopher Howe, MD, all the credit for getting him back on the trail pain-free in just six months. “The surgery was technically very difficult. I’ve got five steel screws stabilizing my vertebrae into a solid structure. Now my limp is gone and I continue getting stronger. Being in tip-top shape has made recuperation easier.”

Just seven months after surgery, Richard and his wife explored British Columbia’s west coast and Vancouver Island. “From Whistler to one of the world’s prettiest little coves on Hwy. 101, to much trail hiking and canoeing on Vancouver Island, we recommend seeing as much of Vancouver Island as possible, especially with a good back,” says Richard.

Set a Goal and Keep Moving Toward It

Margaret, a former Boeing manager and drafter, spent years behind the computer creating the schematics for electronic airplane components. What she didn’t expect after her retirement was the collapse of some of her knee components from osteoarthritis, causing pain, limiting mobility and her plans for post-retirement travel.

While Margaret and her husband George began planning a six month trip to navigate the perimeter of the United States in their RV, she realized she wouldn’t be able to make the trip if she couldn’t climb in and out of their home-on-wheels. That’s when Margaret set her sights on getting her knee fixed and healed in time to make their dream trip happen. Her daughter’s due date happens to fall within the trip timeline which begins February 2011, so Margaret has even more incentive to be able to travel to Nevada in time to welcome her new grandchild into the family. “It’s nice to have something I’m working toward,” says Margaret.

Margaret had her partial knee replacement on December 7, 2010. Just one month after surgery, Margaret has regained full flexibility in her knee, can walk independently and has regained strength to climb several stairs. She is well on her way toward her excursion around the country.

Margaret’s Tips for an Excellent Outcome

- Attend the joint replacement educational seminar. The seminar, materials and staff prepared me well. I knew just what to expect and what was expected of me.

- Before surgery, keep up with some low impact exercise to maintain strength going into the procedure. I did water aerobics and will be going back to my class soon.

- After surgery is scheduled, start getting ready for recovery at home. Prepare some meals for the freezer. Adjust your furniture so that you have plenty of room to walk with a walker. Remove loose rugs.

- For the first week or so after surgery, have your caregiver check on you every half hour—sometimes you need help grabbing something, getting up and down or an ice pack. Have plenty of water bottles stashed around the house within easy reach.

- George recommends always keeping the ice packs cold and to give plenty of encouragement.

- Have distractions—books, TV and movies, friends visiting are all helpful.

- Get into a routine of getting up and getting dressed so you don’t feel sick and you feel more like moving around.

- For the first weeks, schedule your pain medication dosages about 45 minutes in advance of doing at-home exercise and physical therapy.

- Keep moving, keep flexible. Walk around the house at least once an hour.

- Be encouraged by your daily and weekly progress!
Valley Medical Center Announces the Exciting Exploration of a Strategic Alliance with UW Medicine

Valley Medical Center (VMC) is pleased to announce that the CEOs of UW Medicine and Valley Medical Center signed a non-binding Letter of Intent on January 18, 2011 to explore the feasibility of a strategic alliance. By integrating VMC with the UW Medical Health System, the alliance could:

- increase access to healthcare services for South King County residents; improve efficiency of care; align best practice models
- expand clinical, teaching and research programs
- position both organizations for future healthcare reform opportunities, such as the creation of an Accountable Care Organization (ACO).

The components of UW Medicine Health System currently include: University of Washington Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, UW Neighborhood Clinics, UW Physicians, Airlift NW, UW School of Medicine and Northwest Hospital. UW Medicine also shares in the ownership and governance of Seattle Cancer Care Alliance with Seattle Children's Hospital and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and Children's University Medical Group with Seattle Children's Hospital.

VMC’s in-depth evaluation with UW Medicine will include the exploration of the development of an ACO as a proactive response to meeting the challenges of healthcare reform.

Benefits to VMC and the Community

Both organizations share a history and vision of providing outstanding clinical care with a firm commitment to patient safety and excellence and a shared mission of improving community health. VMC is interested in exploring the possible expansion of:

- Enhanced, specialized services on the VMC main campus and in South King County, including senior and geriatric services
- Areas under immediate consideration for clinical enhancements include: emergency services, oncology, obstetrics, family medicine, cardiovascular and stroke care

“UW Medicine and Valley Medical Center share a commitment to providing outstanding clinical care with an emphasis on patient safety and service. A strategic alliance would support our mission of improving the health of the public and would enhance our ability to provide national leadership for healthcare reform.” – Dr. Paul Ramsey, CEO, UW Medicine and Dean, UW School of Medicine
- Enhanced, continued medical education and clinical research opportunities on the VMC campus
- Joint community education programs

Such enhancements should provide a broader range of local services for residents in the hospital district.

**VMC’s Assets Would Remain District Assets**

Public district hospitals are allowed to affiliate, merge or jointly operate with other public or nonprofit entities under Washington law. Under the proposed alliance, the District would continue ownership of its hospital, neighborhood clinics and other assets and liabilities. All tax revenue would be used exclusively for the benefit of the District and not be spent outside the District. The strategic alliance would adopt centralized planning and management, not change ownership of assets.

**VMC Would Continue Offering All Core and Clinical Services**

Patients can continue their care at VMC. VMC would retain all of the core clinical services and medical technologies currently available at the hospital, on the VMC campus and in VMC owned/operated clinics. An alliance may enhance many of the services and treatment options now offered and likely bring new services to the area.

**VMC-Employed Physicians and Employees Would Remain VMC Employees**

The Valley Medical Group physicians would continue as a separate group and not become UW Medicine physicians, though more VMC staff might seek and receive active UW clinical appointments. Private practice physicians will continue their privileges at VMC. It is envisioned that VMC employees, including management level employees, would continue to work for VMC.

**District Board of Commissioners Would Remain Intact: New Board Would Oversee VMC Management**

The District’s Board of Commissioners would continue as it currently exists. If and when the alliance is in place, VMC would be managed as a component of UW Medicine, subject to the oversight of a newly created board comprised of the District commissioners, as well as additional representatives from the hospital District’s area and UW Medicine. Public oversight of VMC would increase dramatically.

**VMC Name Expected to Reflect Affiliated Relationship**

The District’s legal name will remain Public Hospital District No. 1 of King County. VMC expects to continue to operate under its business name, Valley Medical Center, with an additional reference to UW Medicine.

**Volunteer Organizations Would Remain Separate**

VMC and UW Medicine’s volunteer groups would remain unchanged and continue to support their local, individual organizations.

**Alliance with an Organization Like UW Medicine is Consistent with VMC’s Mission**

VMC is, and will remain, a community-focused organization. The non-binding Letter of Intent enables VMC to explore how a strategic alliance would further enhance its mission.

**VMC and UW Medicine: Shared Mission to Improve Public Health**

**VMC Mission**

The District is a healthcare network committed to improving the overall health of our community. Governed by publicly elected commissioners, it provides, in collaboration with its medical staff and community agencies, comprehensive quality care and service in a cost effective and compassionate manner.

**UW Medicine Mission**

UW Medicine’s mission is to improve the health of the public by advancing medical knowledge, providing outstanding primary and specialty care to the people of the region, and preparing tomorrow’s physicians, scientists and other health professionals.
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| January 2010 | **VMC and Other Healthcare Organizations Begin Internal and External Discussions about a Proactive Response to Health Care Reform**  
During this period of healthcare reform, the government has mandated changes in how healthcare services are delivered.  
While reform will provide some type of coverage for the 30+ million uninsured Americans, healthcare organizations are charged with improving the overall health of patients and their healthcare experience, while managing the total cost of care by forming Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs).  
Some key components to an ACO’s success include:  
- Expanded patient access to a comprehensive “system of care” across multiple sites  
- Using sophisticated information technology and electronic medical records to provide affordable, reliable healthcare information to patients across systems  
- Reducing operating expenses through economies of scale, risk management and insurance coverage. |
| April 2010   | **To be Part of a Successful ACO, Collaboration Emerges as a Fundamental Step for VMC**  
In order to provide an expanded system of care, reduce operating expenses and manage the complexities of Health Care Reform, it became apparent that even a medium-sized hospital with a range of specialty services and a clinic network, like VMC, will need to collaborate with other healthcare organizations to continue successfully serving the community. Regardless of Health Care Reform, the enhanced ability to manage costs while providing more services to the community makes collaboration a logical move. |
| July 2010    | **VMC Studies Examples of Collaborative Washington State Healthcare Organizations**  
You may have noticed many Puget Sound region healthcare organizations are announcing mergers, purchases and affiliations. They too are responding to Health Care Reform through collaboration. In studying other local collaborations, it was clear that partnering with other organizations with shared goals and missions is of vital importance for a successful relationship. VMC currently has a vision and mission which may be best supported through affiliation with a larger organization—one with the capabilities and interest in further expanding the breadth and depth of clinical programs and services for District residents. |
| September – October 2010 | **President’s Advisory Council is Formed to Identify Essential Affiliation Criteria**  
To discuss and develop community-based criteria for a possible relationship with another healthcare organization, VMC formed a community advisory committee called the President’s Advisory Council (PAC).  
Chaired by Board President Sue Bowman, the PAC was comprised of a cross-section of 22 District residents representing Newcastle, Renton, Kent, Covington and Maple Valley.  
During five weeks of intensive two and three hour sessions, the PAC received extensive background in Health Care Reform, all aspects of VMC’s healthcare system, models for regional and national healthcare, and the projected impact of Washington state’s budget.  
When identifying criteria for a potential affiliation partner, both the PAC and VMC’s clinical management team of about 70 people independently concluded the following elements are essential:  
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Board Approves the Exploration of a Strategic Alliance with UW Medicine: UW Medicine and VMC CEOs Sign Non-binding Letter of Intent

UW Medicine emerged as a good match for VMC for many reasons, including: the public nature of their organization; they appeared to meet the essential criteria identified by the PAC and VMC management team; and they were receptive to establishing a cooperative relationship with VMC. On January 18, 2011, the Board met with UW Medicine CEO, Dr. Paul Ramsey, who provided a review of UW Medicine and highlighted the shared mission of the two organizations. Numerous community leaders and physicians also spoke in favor of the potential alliance. In-person and written support from elected officials include: Sen. Maria Cantwell, Sen. Patty Murray, Rep. Norm Dicks, Rep. Dave Reichert, Rep. Adam Smith, State Sen. Karen Keiser, State Sen. Margarita Prentice, State Rep. Judy Clibborn, State Rep. Marcie Maxwell, King County Councilmember Julia Patterson, Renton Mayor Dennis Law, Kent Mayor Suzette Cooke and Newcastle Mayor John Dulich. At this meeting, the Board approved the exploration of a strategic alliance with UW Medicine and with much enthusiasm, the two organizations signed a non-binding Letter of Intent.

Period of review by VMC and UW Medicine includes Due Diligence, Feasibility Study and Multiple Public Meetings for Community Input

The current non-binding Letter of Intent creates a pathway for deeper discussions and planning. In addition to formal review by both Boards, numerous public meetings will be held in the coming weeks to gather extensive agency, staff and community input before proceeding with any formal agreement. The public meetings will be scheduled soon and announced throughout the District. See valleymed.org for the most current information on public meetings in your community. Email alliance comments to alliance@valleymed.org or leave a comment at 425.656.5334.

Following this period of input and study, a joint agreement for strategic alliance could be taken to the governing Boards of all three public organizations by May 31, 2011, with an effective date of July 1, 2011.

October 2010
Extensive Board Discussions about Responses to Health Care Reform, ACO Structures and Potential Affiliation Options

The District Board participated in an intensive educational retreat and immersed itself in relevant healthcare law and ACO structures, along with various options for potential affiliation. Of note, the legal foundation for an affiliation between public agencies is provided by the Interlocal Cooperation Act, RCW 39.34, which permits local government agencies to cooperate to their mutual advantage to benefit the needs and development of local communities. Equipped with this information, as well as PAC findings, Board discussions were extensive.

December 2010
Rich Roodman, VMC CEO, Recommends Affiliation as Best Option for Fulfilling VMC’s Mission into the Future

After nearly a year of research, study and discussion with healthcare organizations, the community-based PAC, District Board and other experts, Rich Roodman, VMC CEO, recommended affiliation to the Board as VMC’s best option for fulfilling its mission and commitment to improving the health of the community into the future.

January 2011
Board Approves the Exploration of a Strategic Alliance with UW Medicine: UW Medicine and VMC CEOs Sign Non-binding Letter of Intent

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January – May 2011
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May 31 – July 1, 2011
Boards of UW Medicine and UW Regents and VMC District Commissioners Will Decide to Approve or Reject Strategic Alliance

Following this period of input and study, a joint agreement for strategic alliance could be taken to the governing Boards of all three public organizations by May 31, 2011, with an effective date of July 1, 2011.

September – October 2010 Continued

- An exceptional reputation for clinical excellence, a culture of quality and patient safety
- Compatibility with and ability to enhance an Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system
- Enhanced depth and breadth of physicians
- Compatible mission
- Teaching and residency opportunities
- Opportunities to improve local access, and strengthen, enhance and provide new community programs and clinical services
Free GLOW Event

Reserve your spot today online at valleymed.org/glow or call 425.656.INFO (4636).

Red Dress Tea and Activewear Fashion Show

Join GLOW members for a fun and informative event to help prevent heart disease—the disease that takes more women’s lives than any other.

- Presentation by Belinda Fu, MD, Family Practice and Susan Hollingsworth, DDS, about heart disease’s signs, symptoms and prevention tips specific to women and the role dental health plays in heart health
- Enjoy a variety of heart healthy teas and refreshments
- Activewear fashion show to inspire a more active lifestyle
- Wear a red dress and receive a special giveaway

Sunday, February 27, 2 – 4 PM, The Tea Palace, 2828 Sunset Lane, Renton. Seating is limited. Reservations are required.

Not a GLOW member yet? Sign up at valleymed.org/glow.

Resolve to get fit!

Join the Fitness Center Today!
One person $75 • Two for $99 • Call 425.656.4006

Join The Fitness Center and get free customized training with a certified fitness instructor, a personalized fitness program and all classes included in your monthly dues. Monthly dues are $41.50 for GoldenCare members and $46.50 for others. Additional family members are $31.50 per month. Subject to medical screening guidelines. Offer expires 3/31/11. Cannot be combined with other offers. If using the Two Person $99 special, both people must be present at the time of enrollment.

Valley Medical Center
The Fitness Center

In partnership with Valley Medical Center, Cancer Lifeline provides classes and exercise programs, resources and emotional support for all people living with cancer: patients, survivors, family members, friends and co-workers. All programs and services are free of charge. For more information and to find out about support services and classes at Valley Medical Center call 425.656.INFO (4636) or visit cancerlifeline.org.

Golden Living is published by Valley Medical Center (Public Hospital District No. 1 of King County). Material contained in Golden Living is intended to supplement—not replace—information received from your physician or other healthcare provider. To be added or removed from the mailing list, please contact grace_dalrymple@valleymed.org or call 425.226.4653.

About GoldenCare The GoldenCare program at Valley Medical Center was started in 1986 as a way to help seniors receive personalized assistance with their medical paperwork. Today, GoldenCare is nearly 20,000 members strong and serves to promote senior health and wellness through health education and programs such as the annual flu shot campaign. Personal help with medical paperwork is still available today.

About Valley Medical Center Public Hospital District No. 1 of King County—Valley Medical Center—is the oldest PHD in Washington state. Our publicly elected Board of Commissioners consists of Don Jacobson, Carolyn Parnell, Sue Bowman, Anthony Hemstad and Aaron Heide, MD. To learn more about VMC, or to express your views, please write to Sandra Sward, Assistant to the Board and CEO, PO Box 50010, VMCl-019, Renton, WA 98055.
Programs and Events

**Cholesterol & Blood Sugar Screens**
Screenings for total cholesterol (HDL and LDL), triglycerides and blood sugar will be available to GoldenCare members for just $20 on Tuesday, February 22 from 8 AM – 11:45 AM in MAC E & F. Call 425.226.4653 to schedule your appointment. For proper results, fast after midnight the night before, and refrain from drinking alcohol for 48 hours before your test.

**Cardiac Rehab**
Cardiac Rehab offers EKG monitored programs for people who have had cardiac problems. Covered by many insurance companies. Call 425.228.3440 ext 4991 to register.

**Diabetes Education Program**
VMC’s Diabetes Education & Nutrition Clinic offers a variety of classes and individual appointments at convenient times. Our programs are recognized by the American Diabetes Association and taught by certified diabetes educators, registered nurses and registered dietitians. These classes include:
- Diabetes self-management educational series
- Diabetes review
- Nutrition education class to help reduce cholesterol, high blood pressure and prevent diabetes
- Management of diabetes during pregnancy
Classes are covered by most insurance providers. Call 425.656.5377 to register.

**Classes at The Fitness Center**

**Introduction to Zumba**
Learn the basics of this Latin-inspired dance aerobics in just an hour. We will break down the different steps slowly so you can feel prepared to attend a Zumba class or refine your skills if you have attended classes before. Wear comfortable clothing. Tuesday, March 15, 1 – 2 PM

**Yoga for Beginners**
This interactive yoga workshop will provide you with the basics to practice yoga. Yoga poses will be taught in easy-to-learn stages, with yoga relaxation methods for stress management taught as well. Wear comfortable clothing for easy movement. Wednesday, March 23, 5 – 6 PM

**Abs and Back Clinic**
Strong abdominal and back muscles help prevent injuries and pain, and improve physical performance. Learn how to safely and effectively train these core muscles. This is a hands-on class, so wear comfortable clothing. Thursday, February 10, 1 – 2 PM

**Beginning Weight Training**
New to weight training or need a refresher course? Learn the basics for a well-rounded weight-training program in a comfortable setting. Monday, February 28, 1 – 2 PM

**Free Seminars**

Call 425.656.INFO (4636) for more information or to register. All seminars are held in the first floor auditorium of VMC’s Medical Arts Center, 4033 Talbot Road S., Renton. Unless otherwise noted, refreshments are available at 5:30 PM; seminars begin at 6 PM.

**Facial Rejuvenation: New Year, New You**
From Juvederm and Botox, to Latisse and minimally invasive cosmetic procedures, there are many affordable options to help you look your best. Learn about your options and get answers to your questions from Michael Solomon, DO. Thursday, February 3

**Aging Eyes**
Not seeing as clearly as you once did? Join Todd Johnston, MD, for this informative talk on keeping your eyes healthy through the years. Dr. Johnston will cover preventative care and treatment options for common age-related issues, such as cataracts, macular degeneration and glaucoma. Thursday, February 24

**Lower Back Conditions: Weighing Your Options**
Mark Remington, MD, will answer your questions about common spine conditions, including signs and symptoms, and surgical and non-surgical treatment options. Tuesday, March 15

**Hip & Knee Replacement**
Does joint pain prevent you from doing the things you enjoy? Imagine the difference a joint replacement surgery could make in your life. Learn about the procedures and what to expect during recovery from William Barrett, MD, Orthopedic Surgery. Thursday, March 24
Board of Commissioners Meetings

VMC Board of Commissioners meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to attend. We strive to be a transparent organization and welcome insights and suggestions from the community members we serve. Meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 4 p.m. in the Boardroom in the Northwest Pavilion on the VMC campus, unless changed by public notice. Meetings that fall on a holiday (Martin Luther King Day, Presidents’ Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day) are held the next business day.

Contact the Board
- Email: CommissionersEmail@valleymed.org
- Phone: 425.228.3440 ext. 5312
- Mail: Valley Medical Center Board of Commissioners PO Box 50010 Renton, WA 98058-5010

National Heart Health Month

Tuesday, February 22, 8 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Do something good for your heart during February, National Heart Month. Cholesterol (both HDL and LDL), triglycerides, blood pressure and blood sugar screens will be available to GoldenCare members for just $20 on Tuesday, February 22 from 8 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. For proper results, fast after midnight the night before, and refrain from drinking alcohol for 48 hours before your test. Heart-healthy snacks will be provided. Please call 425.226.4653 to make an appointment for your screening.

This event will be held at the Medical Arts Center, rooms E and F. To register, please call 425.226.4653.