Helping All Patients Get the Health Care They Need

In a medically underserved area like Graham County, it can be difficult for all residents to access medical care. Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center is working to change that reality.

On Oct. 1, the Rural Health Clinic opened in the medical office building behind MGRMC—the former location of the Mt. Graham Family Practice Clinic. The building was renovated to accommodate the Rural Health Clinic, which is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The clinic provides basic care for families, including treatment for conditions such as flu, minor lacerations, pediatric ear infections and strep throat. Immunizations are available at the clinic, giving patients an alternative to having to travel to the county health department for essential shots. Blood draws and urinalyses can be performed at the clinic, with specimens sent to an outside laboratory.

“The Rural Health Clinic allows people to receive low-cost, efficient care from somewhere other than the Emergency department,” says Wick Lewis, MGRMC Rural Health Clinic Manager. “The clinic is open to everyone, and it gives residents of our community—particularly those without insurance—an alternative when it comes to health care. The clinic accepts Medicaid, known in the state as Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). We’re pleased to help close the health care gap for Gila Valley residents.”

For more information about the Rural Health Clinic at MGRMC, visit www.mtgraham.org and select “Our Services.”

“We’re pleased to help close the health care gap for Gila Valley residents.”

—Wick Lewis, MGRMC Rural Health Clinic Manager

Local Nurse Practitioner Brenda Adamson brings her reputation as a quality provider of health care in our community to MGRMC’s Rural Health Clinic.
Re-inventing and Surviving

The health care industry, along with the rest of the economy, is reeling and recovering from our recent recession. One thing that has been made perfectly clear is that if you continue along the path of maintaining the status quo, you are accelerating the rate at which you will close your doors. Admittedly, there are some things you do not have control of, such as how people behave on Wall Street, the housing market, the unemployment rate, or, in the case of the hospital specifically, when the state of Arizona cuts 10 percent of revenue from 30 percent of your business through the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS).

So, like a boxer, you can cover-up and absorb those hits or, conversely, you can re-invent the type of “boxer” you are in order to be successful. At Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center we truly are changing our “style” in terms of adding new services to complement our traditional offerings. At the end of this year and early in 2012, the hospital will be adding full-time cardiology services and a new rural health clinic because the hospital’s board and administration listened to community focus groups’ concerns about access to health care. For the hospital, these services will create a win-win situation. Local patients will gain greater access to care here in the Gila Valley, and the hospital will realize new revenue streams that will provide the wherewithal to both maintain and grow additional services for the community we serve.

The Rural Health Clinic is now open in the medical office building situated immediately behind the hospital (to the west). The clinic will begin with Nurse Practitioner Brenda Adamson. According to a demographic study conducted by health care consultants Parry Associates, of Charleston, Ore., there is a shortage of primary care providers for our general population, particularly among the general, low-income and elderly populations in MGRMC’s service area. The estimated need for primary care providers in the main service area is 41 for the population. Currently, this need is being met by 25 providers, leaving a shortfall of approximately 16 providers. In an effort to encourage the use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants, Congress passed the Rural Health Clinic Services Act. If a clinic located in a health provider shortage area utilizes the services of a NP or PA at least 50 percent of the time the clinic is open, it can be certified as a Rural Health Clinic. This certification is essential in order to receive enhanced Medicare reimbursement.

As you can see from these initiatives, it is not “business as usual” at MGRMC. These changes are necessary in order to stay viable, and yet, at the same time, we are changing for the sake of better serving our community. It is our privilege to serve you, and we wouldn’t have it any other way!

Yours in good health,

Patrick Peters, CEO

Calendar of Events

October–December

October

• Breast Cancer Awareness Month
  Make pink your official color this month as you show support for the effort to find a cure.

October 29

• 2nd Annual Tour de Safford
  For more information about this fundraising event that includes 101-, 66- and 33-mile bicycle rides as well as the Gila Valley’s first half marathon, please contact Tammie Holloway at 928-348-4293.

November 4 & 5

• The MGRMC Auxiliary’s Christmas House
  For more information about this Christmas Bazaar fundraising event, see accompanying article (right), or call the MGRMC gift shop at 928-348-4041.

Kick Off the Holiday Season with MGRMC Auxiliary

November 4 and 5 will mark the beginning of the Christmas season as the MGRMC Auxiliary hosts its annual Christmas House fundraiser. Each year, the Auxilians move into a valley home and transform it into a beautiful Christmas Bazaar. Every room is decorated with homemade Christmas items donated by the Auxilians themselves or other valley residents.

This year’s Christmas House will be held at the home of Dan and Marcy Green, located at 645 Aspen Lane in Thatcher. As in years past, the evening of November 4 will be a preview night beginning at 4:30 p.m., with all items going on sale the following morning at 9 a.m. All proceeds from the Christmas House will be used to purchase equipment for Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center.

For ticket information or to donate items to be sold, please call the MGRMC gift shop at 928-348-4041.
Construction is finishing up on Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center’s new magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) addition to the hospital. The project, which began in March of this year, has an anticipated completion date of November 15. For those who have visited the hospital over the last eight months, this will be welcome news, as traffic has been blocked in several directions around the Emergency department.

**MGRMC Undertook this Project** when state licensing officials indicated the current building housing our MRI no longer met state guidelines. Any service requiring the transport of a patient must be accessible from the hospital’s main building in an entirely climate-controlled route. Because the MRI location was in a building across the hospital’s parking lot, MGRMC was no longer in compliance. After two years of poring over blueprints and building plans, the hospital administration decided building an addition on the side of our Emergency department was the most effective way to meet the state’s requirements as well as the needs of our community.

As part of the new MRI building, MGRMC is also purchasing a new MRI machine that will upgrade the technology available for patients needing this vital imaging service. We look forward to greeting the public in our newest addition on our campus.

**Register now for the 2nd Annual Tour de Safford at www.tourdesafford.com.**

Don’t forget—register now for the 2nd Annual Tour de Safford at www.tourdesafford.com.

With 33-, 66- and 101-mile bicycle ride options and the Gila Valley’s first half marathon, the Tour de Safford on October 29 supports new equipment at Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center.

Construction continues on Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center’s new MRI building. Completion is expected in November.
Anything to provide an excellent experience!