View My Health represents the future of health care—intelligent, convenient and even more personal. View My Health consists of two parts: Clinical and Hospital.

Clinical View My Health—Clinical connects patients directly to their clinic and primary care provider. View My Health—Clinical is available online through vmh.org or through Healow, a free mobile app available for iPhone and Android users that provides a range of functionality for patients through a clean, bright interface. View My Health—Clinical allows patients to book and manage appointments, review and reorder medications, check lab results and track their vitals including blood sugar, BMI, blood pressure and workouts. The app also allows the patient to view and update their entire medical record and contact their provider through a secure messaging system. Users can also be granted access to the medical records of family members, allowing parents to monitor the health of their children. Users receive notifications from their clinic when annual physicals are due and when immunizations are available.

For more information and a full breakdown of the View My Health system, turn to pages 4 and 5.

With the constant advancement of mobile and computer technology, the expansion of the internet and our always on, always connected society we have seen many wonderful new and easier ways to get things done. Around-the-clock online shopping and banking, instant global communication and a wealth of knowledge and information right at our fingertips are just some of the benefits that the last decade has afforded us.

And now this technology is available to help manage the most important part of your life; your health. View My Health from Vernon Memorial Healthcare brings an array of functionality to patients like never before, encouraging them to take greater ownership of their health, saving them time and money. Patients are able to book and manage appointments with ease, communicate securely and directly with their provider, as well as check lab results and order repeat prescriptions. View My Health also provides patients with access to view and print their entire medical record—useful when changing providers or travelling abroad.

The mission of VMH has always been to provide the best quality of care close to home, while helping to control the cost of healthcare for our patients. View My Health embodies this mission, putting the VMH network right at your fingertips. Having the ability to message your provider after a visit to let them know that your medication is working can negate the need for a follow up appointment. View My Health represents the future of health care—intelligent, convenient and even more personal.

View My Health consists of two parts: Clinical and Hospital.

Clinical View My Health—Clinical connects patients directly to their clinic and primary care provider. View My Health—Clinical is available online through vmh.org or through Healow, a free mobile app available for iPhone and Android users that provides a range of functionality for patients through a clean, bright interface.

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Hospital View My Health—Hospital is another web-based solution accessible through vmh.org which provides impatient with access to their hospital records. View My Health—Hospital is perfect for those patients who have spent time in the hospital and would like to see a breakdown of their stay, including medications administered, vitals and doctor’s notes. View My Health—Hospital also tracks any tests performed through the hospital lab.

For more information and a full breakdown of the View My Health system, turn to pages 4 and 5.

Dan Howard Marketing, VMH
Our good friends Market & Johnson have made incredible progress on the construction of the new La Farge Medical Clinic, La Farge.

Our Aim
To provide the best QUALITY at every step using the best staff, the best technology and having the best facilities possible
To IMPROVE the health of our communities by providing wellness programs, fitness programs and health education programs
To control and reduce the COST of health care by promoting preventative care and educating our communities on health issues

VMH Events Schedule

Carc Counting Jeopardy - Diabetes Support Group
Wednesday, January 29th, 2015. 2pm-3pm, Conference Room D, Viroqua Area Medical Office Building. Diabetes Support presented by Cassandra Steadman, RN which aims to help those dealing with diabetes to better manage their blood sugar. For more information email Rikki Sprosty, RN at rikki.sprosty@vmh.org. (608) 637-4483.

Exercise - “The Good Drug” - Diabetes Support Group
Wednesday, February 25th, 2015. 2pm-3pm, Hospital Community Room 1, 507 S. Main Street, Viroqua. Exercise presented by Eric Thunstedt, Clinic Exercise Physiologist which will look at exercise specifically tailored to those dealing with diabetes. For more information email Rikki Sprosty, RN at rikki.sprosty@vmh.org. (608) 637-4483.

Frosty February Five Card Walk
Saturday, February 28th, 2015. 9am (Registration) 9:30am (Start), Vernon Memorial Hospital Lobby, Viroqua. A 5K walk with a difference. Participants walk a 5K through local businesses picking up poker cards on the way. The best hands at the end of the walk win prizes. $5 registration fee. A portion of the proceeds go to the Vernon County Humane Society. Bring your family and your dog! For more information call (608) 637-4290 or email the VMH Wellness Center at vmhwellnesscenter@vmh.org.

Happy Feet - Diabetes Support Group
Wednesday, March 25th, 2015. 2pm-3pm, Hospital Community Room 1, 507 S. Main Street, Viroqua. Diabetes Support presented by Dr. Heather Chestleson, DPM. This presentation focuses on diabetes complications and the importance of good foot care. For more information email Rikki Sprosty, RN at rikki.sprosty@vmh.org. (608) 637-4483.

11th Annual Spring Craft Show
Saturday, May 16th, 2015. 10am-4pm, Vernon Area Medical Office Building, 407 S. Main Street, Viroqua. Once again the Friends of VMH will be hosting their annual Spring Craft Show in the lower level of the Viroqua Area Medical Office Building. This is a free event and a fantastic opportunity to purchase unique gifts and products from some of our finest local crafters. For more information or to sign up as a vendor email Phyllis Main at phyllis@mnvt.net.

Syttende Mai 5K Run/Walk & Half Marathon
Saturday, May 16th, 2015. 8am, Westby High School, Westby. Great prizes for winners. Limited Edition T-Shirts for all those pre-registered before April 16th. For more information and to register visit facebook.com/VMHWellnessCenter or email VMHWellnessCenter@vmh.org or call (608) 637-4290.
Welcome to Tom Herr, M.D.
New pediatrician joins Hirsch Clinic, Viroqua

Tom Herr, M.D.
Hirsch Clinic, VMH

My name is Dr. Tom Herr, and I am the new pediatrician at Vernon Memorial, replacing Dr. Menn. Soon after I arrived in Viroqua, I learned of Dr. Menn's strong work ethic. I will do my best to fill his boots.

I will be working at both the Hirsch and La Farge Clinics and am looking forward to getting to know the children and parents in the community. In order to ensure access to care for the children I see, I am leaving half of my appointments open every day to allow for sick visits.

Recently, while moving to Wisconsin, we had to gather our daughter's medical records from several clinics to have her complete medical record and vaccine history. This turned out to be a stack of papers that took some time to organize. Since beginning my work at VMH I have come to appreciate the View My Health system and the simple ability to access this same medical information.

I believe the most important treatments I provide every day are the vaccines that children receive in our clinics. All vaccines work naturally through our immune system, creating a memory of the disease that will be present throughout the patient's lifetime and allow the body to naturally fight an infection before disease develops. I am working with the Vernon County Public Health Nurses and for health related issues. View My Health supports the care you and your child receive at our clinics. I will do my best to continue the VMH tradition of “So Much Care, So Close”.

Welcome to Shayna Pankratz, DNP
New Nurse Practitioner joins the VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic, Viroqua

Shayna Pankratz, DNP works at the VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic in Viroqua.

PRIORities
Discussing Pregnancy Myths

Deborah Prior, M.D.
Hirsch Clinic, VMH

Pregnancy is an exciting time in a woman's life. There are lots of physical changes, many emotional ups and downs and lots of anticipation about the unknown. Will the baby be a boy or a girl? Will there be more than one? Will the labor be difficult or long? Will a C-Section be needed? With all the uncertainties, it's not surprising that people try to make predictions on what will happen.

Heart rate determines the gender

We've all heard people ask if the baby is a boy or a girl during the first trimester. It is normal reading after the first trimester is anywhere between 110 and 160. The myth that a high heart rate (greater than 140) means a girl is on the way and a low heart rate (less than 140) means a boy. Listening to the fetal heartbeat for the first time brings a look of wonder and a sense of relief. The first question after hearing it is always “is that high or low?” Studies have shown that heart rate has no bearing on gender, or vice versa, but we always wonder.

“I'm eating for two”

Another common myth is that pregnant women have to “eat for two”. Certainly it is important for them to eat healthy and have a well-balanced diet, but they are eating for a baby, not another adult! This means that they only need approximately 300 calories more per day for a singleton pregnancy—that’s the equivalent of a glass of milk or half a sandwich. The recommended weight gain during pregnancy is 25-35 pounds for women of a normal weight, around 20-25 BMI. Weight gain is less in those women with a higher BMI at the start of their pregnancy. This is so important to realize as increased weight has huge implications on the risk of gestational hypertension and gestational diabetes. Increased weight also increases the risk of complications during labor.

Flu vaccines

Of course the myth that the flu vaccination causes the flu doesn't just apply to pregnant women. What is important to understand is that pregnant women are very vulnerable if they get the flu. The physiology of pregnancy causes immune system, heart and lung changes that increase the risk for pregnant women with the flu. They are more likely to become severely ill, or even die, from the flu than those who are not pregnant.

Pain relief

Lastly, let’s talk about pain relief in the delivery room. There are many ways that modern medicine has evolved to help women with pain during childbirth.

There are IV medications and epidurals, however studies have shown that women are more likely to have a successful vaginal delivery if they have a support person in attendance. It may be a spouse, a mother, a friend or a doula. The most important thing is that it's a human being that is supportive, encouraging and reassuring—these support persons make the biggest impact.

Be healthy - Dr. Prior.
WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR HEALTH ONLINE

How View My Health keeps you connected to your clinic

Good health management starts with your provider. The doctor-patient relationship is an informative and supportive dynamic which saves lives and alleviates stresses and fears brought on by health complications. As healthcare professionals, we emphasize the importance of seeing value in your own health and encouraging you to see your doctor regularly for check-ups and to discuss health concerns.

With the introduction of View My Health-Clinical it has never been easier to stay in touch with your primary care provider and keep track of your health and wellbeing.

View My Health-Clinical provides an array of functionality for patients to manage and track their health information, contact their doctor and request prescription refills, as well as many other useful functions.

View My Health-Clinical is powered by e-ClinicalWeb and Healow, a mobile app available for iOS and Android.

Here are the top ten things you can do with View My Health-Clinical.

1. **View And Print Your Entire Medical Record**
   - Access And Print
     - Access your entire medical record and print it—useful if you're changing providers or moving to another area.
   - Review And Update
     - Update your medical record with new immunizations you have received from other providers, such as a flu shot from a local pharmacy.

2. **Chat Online With Your Provider**
   - Ask Questions
     - Something bothering you but unsure if it's worthy of a visit to the clinic? Contact your provider through our secure messaging system and ask.
   - Provide Feedback
     - A return visit may not always be necessary. Drop a quick message to your provider to let them know how your medication is working or provide an update on your symptoms.

3. **View And Book Appointments**
   - Book Appointments
     - No need to wait for the clinic to open. Now you have the ability to book appointments while it's fresh in your mind.
   - View Your Schedule
     - Keep track of your appointments. Receive notifications of appointments and manage your entire schedule.

4. **View A Summary Of Each Doctor's Visit**
   - Remember Your Visit
     - View a summary of the problems you discussed and what course of action was taken, including referrals and medications.
   - Track Your Progress
     - Your vitals will be available to view after every doctor's visit. Here you can track your weight and blood pressure to see how your health is improving.

5. **View Lab Results When They Are Available**
   - No More Waiting
     - Get notified when your results are available. View and print them if needed.
   - No More Searching
     - View and track every lab result. Particularly useful for long term monitoring of conditions.

6. **Manage Your Medications**
   - Never Miss A Screening
     - Receive notifications from your provider regarding annual physicals and preventative screenings such as mammograms.
   - Order Refills
     - Request refills online and collect them from your local pharmacy.

7. **Doctor's Notifications**
   - Take Care Of The Kids
     - Have children? Keep track of their visits, medication and test results.
   - Take Care Of The Adults
     - Family members can also be granted secure access to a patient's medical record at the request of the patient—useful if you are caring for a relative.

8. **Manage Your Entire Family's Care**
   - Keep track of the medications you have been prescribed, including dosage, duration and any special directions from your provider.
   - Order Refills
     - Request refills online and collect them from your local pharmacy.

9. **Health Notifications**
   - Be In The Know
     - Receive notifications from your clinic about seasonal ailments and local virus outbreaks.

10. **Access To A Library Of Medical Knowledge**
    - Latest Medical Knowledge
      - Find the latest medical knowledge, learn about new breakthroughs in medicine and read about the most up-to-date treatments straight from the world of medical science thanks to Healthwise®.
How far away is “The Future”?  
Will wearable devices usher in a new era of personalized health management?

Dan Howard  
Marketing, VMH

If you’re a self-professed technogeek like me, you’re probably really excited about 2015 and the release of “Apple’s most personal device ever” – the Apple Watch. The Apple Watch is a brand new product category from Apple that promises revolutionary ways to communicate, consume media and manage our personal health.

To enhance the device’s functionality, smartphone developers have created applications and augmentations to do all. What makes these devices so powerful, however, is the ability for them to combine the telephone and camera, a game console and much more. In essence they have created one device that does it all. What makes these devices so powerful, however, is the ability for third party developers to craft a range of applications and augmentations to enhance the device’s functionality.

Over the last five years, smartphone developers have created apps to help at every corner of our life, including our health. There are iPhone apps such as “Sleep Cycle”—which monitors your sleep pattern by sensing vibrations and noise from your bed while you sleep—and “Low B”—a weight loss and calorie counting app to help keep you on track—have both seen many months in the top of the App Store charts.

Another innovation which is still in the works is “Peek Retina”—an app and camera adapter which enables anyone with a smartphone and medical know-how to perform an eye exam. It is currently being used by doctors and it already has an 85% accuracy rate.

So how long before we have an app to detect cancer? Probably not as long as you think. In 2014, Professor George Zouridakis of the University of Houston unveiled the development of a new smartphone app which, along with a $500 lens attachment, can investigate suspicious moles and indicate if they are likely to develop into skin cancer. The app is still going through rigorous testing and development, but it already has an 85% accuracy rate.

What could the future look like?  
Given the trend of technology becoming even more powerful, cheaper and obtainable by the general consumer, as well as our ever expanding knowledge of medical science, it’s easy to predict that we will see smartphone apps which can help detect issues like cancer over the next decade. Such technology will become mainstream and will be carried with us through your skin and monitoring the subtle fluctuations of color through the camera’s lens caused by blood pumping through blood vessels.

Another innovation which is still in the works is “Peek Retina”—an app and camera adapter which enables anyone with a smartphone and medical know-how to perform an eye exam.

Apple Watch is expected to be released in 2015.

Currently, the plans for the Apple Watch are no more than an accelerometer, to track your activity and a heart rate sensor. But Apple is a category-defining company that has not only created new product categories but new ways of doing things. They made smartphones and tablets a necessity, even when it seemed like the hype outpaced reality. Just like the first version of the iPhone, which debuted in 2007, the first Apple Watch will be groundbreaking. But it’s the subsequent versions that will push the boundaries further. The first iPhone was never intended to measure your heart rate, but through development and advances in technology, here we are in 2015 with that ability.

Another rumor of the potential of the device include a non-invasive way to measure blood glucose levels for diabetic patients and an ability to “listen” to blood flow in order to predict a heart attack. Even the ability to share this information directly to your provider is in the cards.

It is important to mention that technological advances and devices like the Apple Watch will never replace the need to see your doctor. But it will help both you and your doctor to better manage, screen and treat health issues by making long-term monitoring of your health easier and highlighting potential health issues earlier.

We’re living in a world where technology inspires healthcare and healthcare challenges technology. It’s an exciting time to be a patient.

My experience with View My Health

Hollie Hoffland  
Nursing Services, VMH

Many of us have been ill enough to need to visit a medical provider in order to get better. Have you ever gotten home from that visit and realized you can’t remember the specifics about what the provider told you or you have a question that you didn’t think of while you were there? Unfortunately, that’s the case for many patients, even myself. Until recently, I would make a call to the clinic and wait on hold until the nurse or provider could come to the phone or I would leave a message and await a return call. (No begrudging here. I fully understand that they are as efficient as they can be with another busy day of seeing patients!)

So what changed? View My Health came to life. At first I found it annoying that the clinic receptionist was asking for my email, especially when I wasn’t feeling well. After my visit, as my health improved and the mental fog of illness lifted, I realized that I was able to instantly review my visit from just about anywhere, either with my home computer or the “Healow” app on my smart phone. I didn’t have to make a call to the clinic and explain why I was calling or wait on hold. I simply turned on the computer, went to the Vernon Memorial website and logged into View My Health. I could review my lab, medication list, medical history and the note my provider wrote about my visit. Even better, if I didn’t understand something I could send a message to my provider for clarification. In my instance I remembered a discussion we had about a potential referral to a specialist. I sent my provider a message on a Monday and by Tuesday I had a call from the nurse with a date and time for my visit to the specialist.

How’s that for service?

Most recently, I scheduled my annual physical using View My Health. These appointments can be difficult to fit into a provider’s schedule because they are usually lengthy visits. However, I submitted my request through View My Health, indicated the provider I needed, a date range and preferred times that I was available. They then booked me in and it showed up in my appointments section. I couldn’t be happier! No extra time spent on phone calls and minimal impact on my busy life.

While going to the clinic for an appointment is no one’s favorite pastime, the process just got a bit more pleasant!

Ways to Sign Up for View My Health

1. At your clinic
Stop in at your clinic and speak to our receptionist or talk with your provider about how View My Health will benefit you.

2. On the phone
Call (608) 637-2101 to speak with our team who will help sign you up.

3. Online
Visit www.vmh.org and click “Sign-up”.
A new collaborative space for all therapy services.

Kevin Hoy
Marketing, VMH

2015 is bringing an exciting change for the therapy departments at Vernon Memorial Healthcare. The Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy departments will be moving from separate areas in Vernon Memorial Hospital to a single, state-of-the-art space on the third floor of the Viroqua Area Medical Office Building. The unified space will be important for patients who see multiple therapists, such as patients with Parkinson’s disease and those who have suffered a stroke, as well as children with language and motor delays. There are multi-purpose rooms that are designed in a way that a patient will be able to receive therapy care for Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy in one unified location.

Dan Nelson
Assistant Administrator of Clinic Operations

Therapy and Speech Therapy in one place... That is now 17 years old! We opened up our first state-of-the-art Physical and Occupational Therapy department in 1997. There were many more private and semi-private (curtains instead of doors) rooms, and they were closer to the front door of the department making access for patients easier—of course once they walked through half of the hospital to find us. There was significantly more space to care for active patients and patients with limited mobility. We had roughly 7,500 square feet of room to add new equipment and treatment techniques and actually add new services. It was a great space, yet the basement location wasn’t very accessible for patients. By 2001 we added a 20 foot by 30 foot warm water therapy pool as part of a two-story addition to the south end of the hospital. At that same time we expanded Cardiac Rehab and Diagnostics and the Wellness Center.

13 years later, the therapy pool is now home to both therapy and wellness programming that continues to gain in popularity and usage. The pool provides sessions including aquatic physical and occupational therapy, aquatic bodywork, infant and parent swim lessons, warm water exercise classes and lymphedema management exercise. Despite the move, the pool will remain open and patients and customers will access the area through the Wellness Center. Due to our increased capacity, an award winning therapy staff, adaptations to the needs for special populations, great referral support from our community of health providers and a growing orthopaedic practice at VMH, the therapy departments experienced steady growth through the next decade. During this time, the highly acclaimed total joint replacement experience that were in need of more space—or more appropriate space—and improved access for our patients. The Therapy departments were recognized as areas that needed improvement. Through careful planning and deliberation we determined that the 11,000 square foot space remaining on the west side of the 3rd floor MOB would help us meet our patients’ needs and incorporate all three therapies in one space.

The move to the 3rd floor of the MOB will improve the patients experience in so many ways. We are immediately improving access for patients coming to the Therapy Department. Patients will be able to enter the MOB, ride up on the elevator and arrive into the lobby of the therapy department. Additionally, our orthopaedic patients will be able to visit the orthopaedic staff and stay within the same building for therapy sessions just an elevator ride away. Additionally, therapies will be located between the Viroqua-Gundersen Clinic and Hirsch Clinic providers, which we hope will facilitate communication between therapists and the medical staff.

The patient experience will also be enhanced with larger treatment tables and rooms, bathroom access within the treatment area, an even shorter distance to travel from the waiting room to most treatment rooms and a well-planned exercise area with plenty of natural lighting. The new Therapy Department should also work very well for the staff, allowing for better patient privacy, more space to work with each patient and the ability to collaborate with each other in a shared therapy staff office space. The therapy staff worked diligently to maximize the use of the space and helped to design a fabulous therapy department that will help heal our patients today and well into the future.

So much therapy in one place
The future home of therapy services

Jargon Buster

Physical Therapy (PT)
The treatment of disease, injury or disability through physical means such as massage and exercise.

Occupational Therapy (OT)
Therapy based on engagement in everyday activities, overcoming impairments, limitations in physical and mental functioning.

Speech & Swallowing Therapy
Therapy used to assess and treat speech, language and swallowing disorders, such as those which may arise as a result of a stroke or Parkinson’s disease.

Lee Silverman Voice Treatment.
One of the most widely practiced treatments for speech disorders associated with Parkinson’s disease.

Looking back, it is hard to believe that our once ‘new’ department is now 17 years old! We opened up our then state-of-the-art Physical and Occupational Therapy department in 1997. There were many more private and semi-private (curtains instead of doors) rooms, and they were closer to the front door of the department making access for patients easier—of course once they walked through half of the hospital to find us. There was significantly more space to care for active patients and patients with limited mobility. We had roughly 7,500 square feet of room to add new equipment and treatment techniques and actually add new services. It was a great space, yet the basement location wasn’t very accessible for patients.

By 2001 we added a 20 foot by 30 foot warm water therapy pool as part of a two-story addition to the south end of the hospital. At that same time we expanded Cardiac Rehab and Diagnostics and the Wellness Center. 13 years later, the therapy pool is now home to both therapy and wellness programming that continues to gain in popularity and usage. The pool provides sessions including aquatic physical and occupational therapy, aquatic bodywork, infant and parent swim lessons, warm water exercise classes and lymphedema management exercise. Despite the move, the pool will remain open and patients and customers will access the area through the Wellness Center.

In this period, steady volumes of patients, the addition of new programs and the growth of special populations met limitations within our former ‘new’ space. The ability to be seen in a timely manner in the therapy departments was becoming challenging. Also, the isolated location of the therapy area was continuing to be a barrier for patient access. We needed to begin looking for solutions for these problems.

The MOB was built by June of 2006. It houses a complement of Vernon and Gundersen clinics and services under one roof. The entire 3rd floor was left empty for future expansion of services as needed. By 2009, the Gundersen Dialysis service and Vernon Gastroenterology/Infusion departments moved in to the eastern half of the 3rd floor shell, while the western half of this floor remained vacant.

Then in 2012, under the guidance of CEO Kyle Bakkum, the administrative team initiated a study focused on our triple aim to enhance the patient/customer experience, improve the health of our population and to contain the cost of healthcare. We identified significant space and staff issues that were in need of more space—or more appropriate space—and improved access for our patients. The Therapy departments were recognized as areas that needed improvement. Through careful planning and deliberation we determined that the 11,000 square foot space remaining on the west side of the 3rd floor MOB would help us meet our patients’ needs and incorporate all three therapies in one space.

The move to the 3rd floor of the MOB will improve the patients experience in so many ways. We are immediately improving access for patients coming to the Therapy Department. Patients will be able to enter the MOB, ride up on the elevator and arrive into the lobby of the therapy department. Additionally, our orthopaedic patients will be able to visit the orthopaedic staff and stay within the same building for therapy sessions just an elevator ride away. Additionally, therapies will be located between the Viroqua-Gundersen Clinic and Hirsch Clinic providers, which we hope will facilitate communication between therapists and the medical staff.

The patient experience will also be enhanced with larger treatment tables and rooms, bathroom access within the treatment area, an even shorter distance to travel from the waiting room to most treatment rooms and a well-planned exercise area with plenty of natural lighting.

The new Therapy Department should also work very well for the staff, allowing for better patient privacy, more space to work with each patient and the ability to collaborate with each other in a shared therapy staff office space. The therapy staff worked diligently to maximize the use of the space and helped to design a fabulous therapy department that will help heal our patients today and well into the future.
In line with VMH’s mission, enhancing the patient experience is a key factor in moving to the 3rd floor of the Medical Office Building. We have designed the department to include all three disciplines to keep the patients from having to go from floor to floor to receive therapy services like they currently do.

The new space was designed with the patient in mind. Patients with mobility issues will be able to be seen near the front of the clinic. Proximity to the providers in the clinics including orthopaedic, complementary medicine, specialty services and family practice allows the patient to come directly from therapy to the medical provider without leaving the building. The same goes for the pharmacy, imaging and lab, which will be accessible to patients who have to make those stops before or after their therapy session.

Our excellent therapists plan to continue to provide the superior therapy care and outcomes for patients in the tri-state regional area. We will now have a wonderful space to enhance the patient’s visit with improved privacy, accessibility and comfort.

The new therapy space will provide us with a number of new opportunities, which includes merging our OT/PT/ST services together in one collaborative environment. Networking among therapists will support our team goals of becoming a center of excellence in therapy service in rural Wisconsin. We have programs that cross all three departments such as the LSVT Big and Loud program for Parkinson’s disease. Additionally, patients are often seeing more than one therapist for separate or related conditions such as disability from a stroke or traumatic accident. Our design has carefully planned for private, sound-proof treatment areas and ease of access for clients who will see more than one therapist on a given day.

The OT Department staff is excited to have more space for private hand therapy, a fully functioning kitchen area to train everyday activities in a homelike environment and a specialized treatment environment for children with developmental/sensory processing disorders.

As we vacate our current space, the opportunity arises to create a private therapy gym area for inpatient OT and PT treatments. For example, in the past patients requiring emergent hand splinting needs had to be brought to a busy outpatient clinic. The new space will be a more comfortable environment for those who are healing from acute illness, injury or surgery to receive treatment when needs arise.

If you have been interested by anything in this article please contact Kathryn Sutton-Anderson (608) 637-4383, Amy Evenstad (608) 637-4380 or Allison Pierce (608) 637-4383 for more info.
Keeping your bones healthy
Detecting osteoporosis now can save you trouble in the future

Kevin Hoy
Marketing, VMH

Did you know that Vernon Memorial Healthcare has a machine that can help detect osteoporosis before it’s too late? Our state-of-the-art bone densitometer calculates the density—the amount of calcium in your bone—and creates a chart that compares the patient’s bone density to what it should be. The higher the readings, the stronger the bone is.

What is osteoporosis?
Osteoporosis is a common condition that causes bones to become weak and brittle, which can lead to fractures caused by falls or even minor stresses like bending over. Vertebra fractures are the most common osteoporotic fracture, occurring in approximately 700,000 people per year. The next common fractures are hip fractures and distal forearm fractures.

Who can develop osteoporosis?
Osteoporosis affects men and women of all races, although it is three times more common in women than in men because women have a lower peak bone mass and partly because of the hormonal changes that occur at menopause. Estrogens have an important function in preserving bone mass during adulthood, and bone loss occurs as levels decline. That usually happens around the age of 50 years old.

Peak bone mass increases in men and women until the age of 30 years old, then it begins to decline.

What does a bone density test measure?
The bone densitometer scans the lower spine and the hip. Measuring the bone density in the hip and spine can predict the likelihood of future breaks in others bones. A scan of the forearm will also be performed if a person has scoliosis.

What can I do to prevent osteoporosis?
Make sure you get enough of the three biggies: calcium, Vitamin D and exercise.

Many published studies link low calcium intake to low bone mass, rapid bone loss and high fracture rates. Men and women between the ages of 18 and 50 need 1,000 milligrams of calcium per day. That amount increases to 1,200 milligrams when women turn 50 and men turn 70. Vitamin D plays an important role in your body’s ability to absorb calcium. Many people obtain enough Vitamin D from sunlight, but Vitamin D production has been shown to decrease in the elderly, in people who are housebound and for people in general during the winter months.

Exercise can help you build stronger bones and slow bone loss. Weight-bearing exercise is best for your bones because it forces you to work against gravity.

In addition, avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol can help you maintain strong bones. Both smoking and excessive alcohol intake have been shown to lead to bone loss.

Get in touch
If you have been interested by anything in this article please contact The VMH Imaging Department (608) 637-4350 for more info or speak to your provider.

Risk factors for Osteoporosis
- Inactive lifestyle
- Smoking
- Too much alcohol
- Too much caffeine
- Not enough Calcium or Vitamin D in diet
- Not eating enough fruits and vegetables

Who should have a bone density test?
- Women over 65
- Men over 70
- Anyone suffering a broken bone after 50
- Anyone who is considered “at risk” by their provider

Most patients require a referral from their provider to have a bone density test.

Diabetes Support Groups
- FREE to all people with diabetes and those that support them
- New topics every month
- Held on the LAST Wednesday of each month from 2:00-3:00p.m. in the Viroqua Area Medical Office Building Conference Rooms (Unless otherwise noted)

Is it flu or something else?

Rommel Heisel, RN
Infection Prevention Coordinator, VMH

We’ve all seen loved ones ill and wondered what could be ailing them.

As we head deeper into winter everyone has close contact and the opportunity of sharing our germs becomes much greater. The staff at Vernon Memorial Healthcare’s hospital and clinics want to reassure you that we are prepared to help you and your loved ones feel better.

Simple things can reduce chances of obtaining a germ and illness, such as washing your hands, using alcohol hand gels to kill organisms, covering your cough, using tissues and cleaning frequently touched surfaces. These habits can assist in reducing transfer of germs to you or your loved one.

Seasonal influenza has been showing up in our community these past few weeks, and other respiratory illness continue to surface from time to time. Simple ways to help reduce the spread of these viruses and germs are shared above.

As far as taking care of yourself, you are urged to take in plenty of fluids when you are not feeling well. Rest will also help your body heal and recover faster. I know missing work can set you back, but staying home when you or your loved one is ill will help reduce the spread of germs. Your family and coworkers will appreciate that you did not spread your illness.

If you have received the seasonal influenza vaccine, please obtain one. It may help reduce or prevent you from obtaining seasonal influenza. It takes about two weeks for your body to build up some fighting power in your immune system, so the sooner you get it the better. Anyone 6 months or older is recommended to get the influenza vaccine every year, usually in the fall.

Even when you do not see these germs, staff at VMH are preparing to help you should the need arise.

Enterovirus has been around for many years but illnesses this past fall show how these viruses can change. The recent concerns with Enterovirus and Ebola have raised many questions—be assured that many discussions and plans have been underway to keep you safe and reduce exposure at our hospital and clinics. VMH, as well as state and national organizations, is looking at ways to monitor, reduce exposure and educate the public on these topics.

Ebola has not come to our Wisconsin borders and many efforts are being made to keep it that way. Unfortunately, we may be monitoring and coming up with plans to prevent the spread of Ebola for a while longer. If you have questions or concerns about Ebola, there is a state toll-free phone number to call—1-844-604-1064—or dial 2-1-1 for more information.

If you have traveled outside of the United States or think you may have been exposed to someone that could have Ebola in the past month, we are encouraging you to call before coming to one of our VMH facilities. Staff will assist you by providing information as to where to go for the next step.

Please feel free to call our VMH clinics or emergency room services if you have an illness or concern. They will give you the information that will help you back on the road to feeling better.

Get in touch
If you have questions or concerns, please call or make an appointment to talk to or see your provider.

For more information contact:
Bikki Sprosty, RN
(608) 637-4183
rsprosty@vmh.org

Cassandra Steadman, RDN
(608) 637-4251
csteadman@vmh.org
As reported in our Fall 2014 edition, staff at VMH took part in the world-wide ‘stache growing, money and awareness raising frenzy known as “Movember”. This year seven fearless men from the VMH staff joined the cause to raise awareness about men’s health issues such as Prostate Cancer, Testicular Cancer and Mental Health.

The team consisted of Purchasing Manager Jeff May, the Maintenance Department’s Aaron Mishler, Kevin Hoy and myself from the Marketing Department, VMH Wellness Center Personal Trainer Sam Franke and Hirsch Clinic’s Tom Franke.

Dan Nelson, Assistant Administrator of Clinic Operations, also shaved his 38-year-old goatee and joined the team.

The team raised a total of $3077 for the Movember Foundation, which supports 132 year-round projects across 21 countries, financing cancer research and rehabilitation programs, as well as mental health support programs.

One of the most interesting conversations to come out of the VMH Movember Project was the topic of prostate cancer. How Lombardi had suffered with digestive tract issues as early as 1967.

The legendary coach refused to see a doctor, and in 1970 he was admitted to a hospital where a test revealed a fast-growing malignant cancer in his colon. Lombardi died in September of 1970 at the early age of 57. Lombardi had already built a legacy—what more could he have achieved if he had seen a Doctor earlier?

I feel like our efforts helped raise awareness within our local male population, as well as within the organization, about men’s health issues.

Guys are more prone to shrugging off health issues than women. We like to think we’re invincible at times when really the smart thing to do is to see our doctor regularly, have the necessary check-ups and catch the problem before it’s too late.

The VMH Movember Team wishes to thank all of you who supported our ‘stache growing efforts and would like to remind every guy reading this to go see your doctor.

Don’t suffer in silence. It’s not healthy and it’s not manly. But wearing a moustache is!

Growin’ a ‘stache and raisin’ cash

Dan Howard
Marketing, VMH

A relaxing, weightless experience

Jessie Cunningham
Marketing, VMH

I was starting to miss the little things happening around me, and when I finally noticed this, it bothered me. I knew I had to do something to get my mind on track before it affected my health.

VMH Occupational Therapist and Aquatic Bodywork specialist Heather Vuolle encouraged me to try Aquatic Bodywork. Ok, let me be honest, she had been ‘encouraging’ me to give it a try for a few years and for all kinds of silly reasons I was reluctant to schedule a session.

When I scheduled my first session, Heather filled me in on all the ‘need to know’ of my first Aquatic Bodywork experience, from what to wear (to my surprise a t-shirt and shorts were ok), to remembering to bring in shower items for after being in the pool.

Having seen a session take place before, I trusted Heather’s ability to be able to move me around the pool and create a safe and soothing environment, but I was still nervous and excited when I arrived to my first session.

Heather went through all the pool and aquatic bodywork session basics. The final thing she said was “I want you to really focus on your breathing and don’t think about anything else”.

When I felt comfortable she had me float on my back in the warm therapy pool. She was in constant contact with me, her highly trained eye watching how my body reacted to different movements. She worked my body through the water in a carefully calculated way that released tension and stiffness from areas that I didn’t even realize were causing problems.

By the end of the session I was finally able to focus on my breathing and let the worries of the day go. In that one session my mental, emotional and physical health was changed for the better. The benefits of letting my worries go and allowing my body to rest in the water for an hour exceeded my expectations. All of the reasons I gave for not trying it before seemed silly.

Before I left, I scheduled another session.

My aquatic bodywork session reminded me that it’s ok to take time for yourself.

Understand that taking 10 minutes to clear your mind on a quick walk around the building, 30 minutes for a workout or even an hour-long aquatic bodywork session can be good for you mentally, emotionally and physically.

Get in touch
If you have been interested by anything in this article please contact the VMH Therapy Department (608) 637-4385 for more information and to schedule your Aquatic Bodywork Session.
Complementing Quality Care

VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic: a mix of alternative and conventional medicine

Kevin Hoy
Marketing, VMH

There are certain dates that have special significance in our lives—of course our calendars are crammed with birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. December 6th is a date that sticks out for Laura Merwin, but for a different reason—it’s the day she transformed her health by starting the Whole30 program.

It was a decision the Boscobel resident made with Dr. Paul Bergquist of the VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic in an attempt to remedy health issues that she had been dealing with for about a decade.

“Coming into my 30s I was experiencing post-lyme syndrome,” she remembered. “I was bedridden for months. I was also having cyclical flares of an autoimmune vascular condition called Behcet’s Disease and symptoms of fibromyalgia and Raynaud’s, as well as digestive issues and other symptoms that I had since I was very young.”

Merwin’s health issues came to a head in her early 30s. At that point she was trying numerous pharmaceutical approaches and taking pain medicine up to five times per day. Things were pretty bleak.

“It was pretty much a given that in order to feel okay in the morning I would have to take pain medicine and start doing range of motion exercises and get everything in working order before I could start to get out of bed.”

Merwin’s health problems became more overwhelming—eleven doctors were involved in her care at one point. “I became my own occupation for a period of time, trying to figure out what was going on with my health,” Merwin said.

There was a stretch of four months where she gained 50 pounds while struggling to wean herself off of the steroids that she was on. “I was probably going into flares of symptoms at least monthly. I was overweight to a painful degree.”

But that’s when she and Dr. Bergquist decided it was time and they knew some changes had to be made. Although Merwin was a little reluctant when it was first brought to the table, she agreed to the Whole30 program.

The Whole30 Diet focuses on the nutrition provided by vegetables, meat, fruit, nuts and eggs, and it excludes alcohol, dairy, refined sugar, grains, legumes and other carbs. For most people, a 30-day period seems that can help change the way that they eat, but for Merwin it has been much more. She saw such great results that she is still following the program—and thriving.

“Not only did I feel better while I was on it, but those things, but it changed my cravings. It changed the way that I thought about food entirely,” said Merwin. “I’ve seen a major reduction in symptoms that I have from chronic conditions that I’ve been suffering with for ten years.”

Her body went through significant changes over the past year. She lost all the weight that she gained while trying to get off of the steroids. Her energy up—pain is down. When asked if she is surprised by the changes over the past year. She lost all the weight that she gained while trying to get off of the steroids. Her energy up—pain is down. When asked if she is surprised by the changes in her mom’s life, and she decided to try the Whole30 for herself.

“She learned a lot about her digestion and it set her on a healthier path, it helped her understand what worked with her body.”

Merwin can’t argue with the results. “That’s why she still makes the 40-minute drive from Boscobel to the VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic for appointments.”

“I come to VMH so that I can talk with the doctors at the getting too many carbohydrates are more like-minded, who think about health in a way that I think about health and who are always learning more,” she said.

“They’re always entertaining new ideas, looking into things, researching new sharing. It’s a very collaborative way to do medicine.”

Today, Merwin is thankful she found her way to the VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic. She found a healthier lifestyle, which will surely help her enjoy many more milestones in the future.

Get in touch
If you have been interested by any topic discussed in this article, call VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic on (608) 637-4799 for more info.

Achieving and maintaining fitness

How a combination of CrossFit and healthy eating can help you achieve your weight loss goals in 2015

CrossFit prides itself on the community that is built when you get a bunch of people working out together, encouraging each other to push through a workout and become better each and every day. CrossFit Viroqua is no different. We work hard to break through plateaus, crush personal records and better ourselves everyday.

I’m often asked, “how can I improve my time or increase my lift?” There’s a lot that can go into that answer, but time, persistence, consistency and diet are all factors that affect an athlete’s performance.

So what should a CrossFitter be fueling their body with to get better?

According to CrossFit Founder Greg Glassman you should “eat meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch and no sugar. Keep intake to levels that will support exercise but not body fat.”

Let’s discuss a typical American diet. Most, not all, Americans eat foods that are packaged and commercially prepared. Most of these foods are rich in refined sugars and starches and include highly processed fats and sodium. By ingesting these types of foods we are training our body to not have the feeling of satiety (the feeling of fullness). Many of these foods actually encourage us to overeat—and we don’t even notice.

The Top 6 Calorie Sources in the U.S. Diet

1. Grain Based Desserts, (Cake, cookies, donuts, pies, cobblers and granola bars)
2. Yeast Breads
3. Chicken-Based Dishes (I don’t mean roasted chicken either)
4. Sweetened Beverages
5. Pizza
6. Alcoholic Drinks

The Paleolithic or Caveman diet (Paleo) is a lifestyle of eating foods that are naturally occurring in life—not processed. The principal is to eat like a hunter-gatherer.

But are all Paleo diets the same? Are all the fruits, vegetables, meats, nuts and seeds like they were in the past?

Think back to the Paleolithic times. Depending on where one lived geographically diets were vastly different. For instance, there would have been many fruits, nuts and vegetables in the colder climates, so more animals and animal products would have been consumed. Although it is a bit easier to get fruits and vegetables in colder climates, this is still true today, which is why there is not just one specific Paleo diet.

Most fruits and vegetables are not even available in the Paleo or Paleolithic times. Through agriculture, we have bred the fruit and vegetable plants for more desirable traits.

What about Grains—doesn’t the Paleo diet avoid grains?

Yes, Paleo followers avoid eating grains because they believe that they can lead to inflammation and health related problems. If you have Celiac Disease this is true, however only about one percent of the population has an actual diagnosis of the disease.

The Basic Paleo Diet

- **Animals**: Meat, Fish, Reptiles, insects, etc
- **Animal Products**: Such as eggs or honey
- **Roots/tubers, Leaves, Flowers and Seeds**: Vegetables
- **Fruits**
- **Nuts and Seeds**: Can be eaten raw

We have to remember there are trillions—yes trillions—of microorganisms in our guts that help breakdown and digest our food. If we are eating the typical American diet, we might not be putting in good microorganisms, which leads to gut inflammation. There is research showing that a person that has an intolerance, like lactose intolerance, can actually eat certain foods like yogurt or other probiotic-rich foods that provide the bacteria to digest the fats. It is possible that the right combination of foods and probiotic supplementation to help breakdown foods that you have intolerance towards.

Truly, if we started eating more fruits and medicines, and nuts and seeds, some nuts and seeds and less processed fats and sugar-infused foods we would find ourselves much healthier with more energy to do the things we love.

We are next question… how much of this good nutrition should I be eating?

The Zone is a lifestyle where we break the three macronutrients into similar blocks. In the Zone we eat in blocks so that each meal and snack are similar throughout the day—not too low that we can’t fight off infection, just too high that our body begins to attack itself. According to Dr. Barry Sears, if you get out of the Zone, you begin to develop chronic disease at an early age and you age at a faster rate.

The Zone diet consists of 30% Proteins, 40% Carbohydrates and 30% Fats.

With the Zone, we first figure out where we are going to be getting our protein from. Examples would be chicken or fish. Next we fill our plate with colorful carbohydrates consisting of non-starchy vegetables and fruits. Finally we add fat that is high in omega-3. These are our baseline macronutrients. Everyone is different, so we might have to adjust these requirements as we go. If after four hours since your last meal you are not hungry, your percentage ratio is correct and no modification is needed.

If after four hours you have significant hunger with poor mental focus, we may have to increase our carbohydrate relative to our protein intake. We will need to maintain protein but decrease our carbohydrate by one block.

If we are hungry but have good mental focus, we may have too much protein relative to our carbohydrates. We will need to adjust by maintaining protein and increasing carbohydrates by one block.

The Zone lifestyle is a balancing act where you must pay attention to how your body is functioning. A great way to start the Paleo/Zone lifestyle is by completing the Whole30 Program. Through balanced nutrition and hard work, you will see results both in your training and body composition.

Get in touch
If you have been interested by any topic discussed in this article, call VMH Family Practice & Complementary Medicine Clinic on (608) 637-4799 for more info.
# Group Exercise Class Schedule

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# Water Exercise Schedule

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### PROGRAM INFORMATION

**Aqua-Circuit** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Aqua-based cardio strength class.

**Aqua-cise** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Aerobics class in a therapy pool.

**Cycle/Core** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Cardiovascular workout with a stationary bike followed by core strengthening.

**Interval Training** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Low to high intensity exercise interspersed with rest and relief periods. Joints in Motion $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Water-based exercise for those with arthritis and joint problems.

**Mini Bootcamp** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
30min strength and cardio circuit workout.

**Parent-To** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Water-based class to promote Parent/child bonding (6-36months old).

**Restorative Yoga** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Strength and flexibility through yoga followed by relaxation.

**SilverSneakers Classic** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Classes designed to improve muscular strength and range of movement.

**Spin** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Cardiovascular workout with a stationary bike.

**Step/Bootcamp** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Step aerobics followed by core strengthening.

**Total Body** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
A full-body strength workout using everything from ropes to kettlebells.

**TRX Suspension** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Full-body workout using your own body weight.

**Yoga/Bootcamp** $[30]$ | $[48]$  
Strength and flexibility through Yoga with a focus on building core strength.

### SPECIAL REGIONAL CLASSES

**GAYS MILLS**  
STRENGTH 101  
Wednesdays 10:30am  
Gays Mills Community Center

**WESTBY**  
YOGA/BOOTCAMP  
Tuesdays 5:15pm  
Westby Elementary School
The Trainer’s Corner

In this edition of The Trainer’s Corner, VMH Wellness Center’s Heidi Kuennen walks you through a series of stationary lunges.

Lunges are a great way to strengthen your legs, glutes, abdominals and back muscles. Try the basic stationary lunge first, then add weights and motion for an advanced workout.

To schedule an appointment with a Personal Trainer or to get advice about your fitness goals, call the VMH Wellness Center at (608) 637-4290.

Stationary Lunges

1. Maintain good form throughout to get the most out of this exercise.

2. Start with your feet shoulder width apart pointing forward. Maintain a tall, vertical stance at all times, making sure not to flop your torso forward.

3. Take a large step back with your right foot. Stand tall and keep your shoulders back.

4. Bring your right knee down until both knees are at right angles. Make sure to keep your torso vertical, shoulders back and keep your right knee off the floor.

5. Push back up with both legs. Keep your torso vertical and return to your vertical stance while lowering the weight back to its starting position. Repeat 8-10 times. Then change to your left leg and repeat. Aim for 2-3 sets for a good workout.

Stationary Lunges with Biceps Curl

1. This variation uses weights to add a level of difficulty and make your legs work harder.

2. Aim for 2-3 sets of 8-10 reps per leg.

3. Start out with small weights and increase them to your comfort level.

4. Start with your feet shoulder width apart pointing forward. Maintain a tall, vertical stance at all times.

5. Take a large step back with your right foot. Stand tall, keeping your shoulders back and hold the weight by your side at arms length.

6. Bring your right knee down until both knees are at right angles while simultaneously performing a biceps curl.

7. Push back up with both legs. Keep your torso vertical and return to your vertical stance while lowering the weight back to its starting position.

Stationary Lunges with Press

1. This variation adds another level of complexity and will test your balance and coordination.

2. Aim for 2-3 sets of 8-10 reps per leg.

3. Start out with small weights and increase them to your comfort level.

4. Start with your feet shoulder width apart pointing forward. Maintain a tall, vertical stance at all times.

5. Take a large step back with your right foot. Stand tall, keeping your shoulders back. This time hold the weight up to the side.

6. Bring your right knee down until both knees are at right angles while simultaneously raising the weight straight up.

7. Push back up with both legs. Keep your torso vertical and return to your vertical stance while lowering the weight back to its starting position.

The top three benefits of hiring a Personal Trainer

1. Accountability
   Having someone hold you accountable to work out regularly is key to maintaining a high level of motivation.

2. Technique
   Trainers pay close attention to form, giving you feedback along the way. This maximizes your workout, giving you better results and lowering the risk of injury.

3. Personalized Programs
   Personal trainers tailor fitness programs to your individual goals and strengths, helping you work out more efficiently.

Side-column Stretch

Belt-Assisted Hamstring Stretch

This hamstring stretch uses a belt or strap to help stretch out those large muscles at the back of the leg after a workout.

1. Start by laying on your back on a mat or blanket. Place the strap around the bottom of your right foot.

2. Raise your right leg, keeping it straight and holding tight on the strap. Once your leg is vertical, pull your toes forward towards you.

3. Keep your knee soft but not bent as this makes the stretch less effective and can lead to injury.