



HEALTH MATTERS
AT
ASPEN VALLEY
HOSPITAL
SPRING 2015

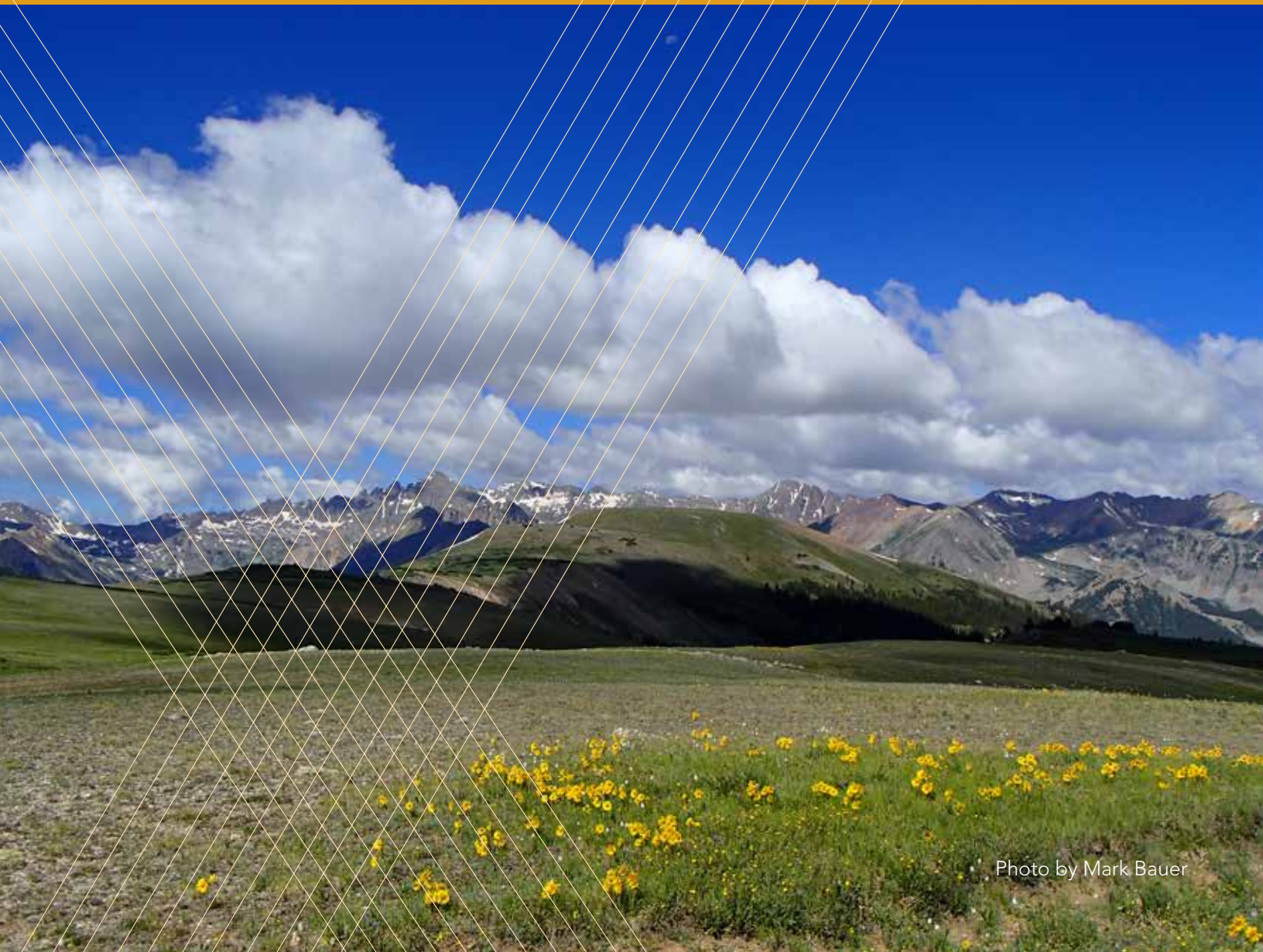


Photo by Mark Bauer

“I AM A HEALTHCARE
CONSULTANT AND FORMER
HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR.
I THINK THAT QUALIFIES
ME TO SAY ASPEN VALLEY
HOSPITAL OFFERS A TRULY
WORLD-CLASS HEALTHCARE
EXPERIENCE.”

— AVH patient

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HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The next phase of Aspen Valley Hospital's facility improvement/expansion plan will begin in April. Site work was completed in the fall and the construction site, which is on the southwest side of the campus, has lain dormant for the winter.

But, as spring descends upon Aspen, Project Manager John Schied reports that the next phase of construction — which will include the emergency department, diagnostic imaging, and surgery services — will begin.

"We will be pouring foundations and beginning the vertical work," says John. "And we will continue to meet with neighbors and other interested parties to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum, all things considered." The phase III portion of the final project is fully funded and will take approximately 28 months to complete.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE

Tuesday, May 5

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Mobile Donor Van

Aspen Valley Hospital

HEALTH FAIRS

All fairs: 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, June 4

Blood tests only at
After-Hours Medical Care
234 Cody Lane, Basalt

Saturday, June 6

Blood tests only at
Aspen Valley Hospital

Sunday, June 7

Blood tests and other screenings
at Aspen Valley Hospital

HEART SMART LECTURE SERIES

Thursdays, May 7 - 28

Noon - 1 p.m.

Topics to include:

Hypertension and Stress
David Borchers, MD, Internist

Exercise: How and How Much?
Gordon Gerson, MD, Cardiologist

Sleep Apnea and Heart Health
National Jewish Sleep Center

Managing Cholesterol
Paula Williams, RD

Call **544.1296** for more information.

FOR ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL CANCER PATIENTS, WORLD-CLASS CARE CLOSE TO HOME



Doug Rovira, MD, has provided medical oncology services to cancer patients in the valley for over 20 years.

During more than 20 years of practicing medical oncology in the Roaring Fork Valley, Doug Rovira, MD, has learned that cancer patients have a number of priorities. They want access to the most effective cancer treatments, they want to get well as quickly as possible, and they want to stay close to home.

Fortunately for area residents, a comprehensive scope of advanced cancer services for prevention, detection, and treatment is available at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH).

“After receiving a cancer diagnosis, people want to sleep in their own bed, have their families with them, and be near their friends — not traveling great distances or staying overnight in a hotel for treatment,” says Dr. Rovira. “Treating cancer is a quality of care issue and a quality of life issue. That’s why Aspen Valley Hospital is committed to providing the best in cancer services locally.”

MULTIFACETED APPROACH

While no one wants to receive a cancer diagnosis, the reality is that the disease is terrifyingly common. According to

the American Cancer Society (ACS), approximately half of all men and one-third of all women in the United States will develop cancer during their lifetimes.

However, there is good news in the war on cancer, too. Survival rates are improving, thanks to better educational efforts about reducing cancer risk, growing awareness of the importance of cancer screenings, better diagnostic capabilities, and the development of new and advanced treatment options.

The three-part approach of prevention, early detection, and advanced care summarizes AVH’s strategy for helping individuals and our community fight cancer. The hospital’s arsenal of treatments includes surgery performed onsite, as well as a state-of-the-art infusion center staffed by nurses specially trained in chemotherapy who follow nationally recognized protocols.

AVH also works with other medical facilities in the area to provide radiation therapy for a seamless treatment experience. And because the hospital is part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network,

AVH providers have access to 4,100 of the world's top physicians and scientists.

BEST MEDICINE

The old adage is true: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. To that end, two of AVH's primary goals are to prevent cancer in our community and to detect it early, when treatment is most likely to succeed. In fact, the ACS notes that survival rates are improving, especially among people whose cancers are found early.

Patients and their primary care physicians play an important role in keeping up with recommended cancer screenings. AVH supports those efforts with many of the latest cancer screening technologies, including advanced diagnostic imaging services such as 3D digital mammography, MRI scans, 64-slice CT scanning, ultrasounds, and nuclear medicine. And our laboratory staff includes three experienced pathologists. "To some degree, establishing the diagnosis determines the treatment," says lead pathologist Jerry Steinbrecher, MD. "A very specific diagnosis helps the

oncologist set up a treatment program for optimal care."

NEVER ALONE

At AVH, you are never alone in your journey through cancer. In addition to medical care, AVH offers comprehensive support services for cancer patients and their loved ones. Social workers Michelle Miscione, LCSW, and Karmen Pittenger, MSW, help patients and caregivers cope with cancer (and other) diagnoses. Support group meetings for both groups are held at AVH on a weekly basis. For more information, call **544.1147**.

"As an oncologist, I've been lucky to work with extraordinary primary care doctors, surgeons, pathologists, nurses, and other medical professionals at Aspen Valley Hospital," says Dr. Rovira. "With our superb medical staff and commitment to state-of-the art care, cancer patients don't have to worry that the quality of care they receive is anything less than the best."

For more information about AVH's oncology program, visit aspenhospital.org. Oncology appointments can be made with Dr. Rovira by calling **544.1395**.



Nancee Dodge, FNP, works closely with Dr. Rovira to ensure the best possible care for cancer patients.



Lead pathologist Jerry Steinbrecher, MD, at the microscope in the AVH lab.

CANCER CARE PROVIDERS AT ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL

ONCOLOGY

Doug Rovira, MD

Dr. Rovira has led our oncology program since its inception in 1993. He is board-certified with the American Board of Internal Medicine in both Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology. He sees patients at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) on a weekly basis and oversees all aspects of cancer care. Dr. Rovira is also on staff at Valley View Hospital, where radiation therapy is available relatively close to home. And, he is on the clinical faculty of the University of Colorado School of Medicine, facilitating referrals for clinical trials and services not provided at AVH. With a full-time presence in the valley, he is easily accessible to patients and primary care physicians.

Nancee Dodge, FNP, AOCNP

Nancee is our advanced oncology certified nurse practitioner. Affiliated with AVH since 1996, she brings a wealth of experience to our cancer patients. Nancee provides care to both inpatients and outpatients. She works collaboratively with our physicians to provide the very best in evidence-based care to patients dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

Siobhan Conway, BSN, RN, CHPN, CRNI

Siobhan's specialty certification is in palliative care. Palliative care expands the traditional disease-model medical treatments to include the goals of enhancing quality of life for patients and their families. With a palliative care focus, our patients and their loved ones are assured of a unique blend of holistic/humanistic caring, expertise in the management of symptoms, coordination of care among various healthcare professionals, and assistance and advocacy regarding advance directives.

GENERAL SURGERY

Les Fraser, MD

Joe Livengood, MD

Dr. Fraser specializes in breast cancer care; both he and Dr. Livengood are skilled in the detection and surgical treatment of many types of cancers.



Siobhan Conway, RN, administers IV medication to a patient in the infusion center.

GASTROENTEROLOGY

Jason Collins, MD

Gerry Tomasso, MD

Along with the general surgeons, Drs. Collins and Tomasso perform endoscopies to detect and treat cancers of the gastrointestinal tract. Dr. Collins sees patients in an outpatient clinic at AVH a few times a month.

GYNECOLOGY

Gail King, MD

Natasha Knight, MD

Melinda Nagle, MD

These specialists offer routine screenings and diagnostic tests for early detection of cancer and subsequent treatment.

UROLOGY

Jeffrey Fegan, MD

Jamie Lowe, MD

Urology specialists have office hours at AVH on a weekly basis and perform diagnostic tests and follow-up treatments as indicated.

PLASTIC SURGERY

Dennis Cirillo, MD

Jason Martin, MD

Drs. Cirillo and Martin offer plastic and reconstructive surgery for cancer patients on both an inpatient and outpatient basis.

PATHOLOGY

Frank Holmes, MD

Robert Macaulay, MD

Jerry Steinbrecher, MD

Pathologists review all tissue specimens to ensure an accurate, specific, and timely diagnosis for our patients.

RADIOLOGY

Lora Barke, DO

Radiology Imaging Associates (RIA) and Invision Sally Jobe play an important role in cancer care, especially as it relates to breast cancer detection and diagnosis. RIA and Sally Jobe provide care on-site and electronically through a sophisticated system for sharing images with subspecialists. While Dr. Barke is the lead breast cancer radiologist, a variety of other subspecialists are available for diagnostic services.

GENETIC SCREENING

This service is offered through collaboration with our oncologist, Dr. Doug Rovira, and Radiology Imaging Associates. Following a consultation, blood work is done to help identify a patient's statistical risk for developing a particular type of cancer. Genetic screening can help guide decisions about present and future healthcare.

PATIENT NAVIGATOR

A registered nurse, patient advocate, and liaison with physicians, our patient navigator helps patients "navigate" the healthcare system. She assists patients with information, education, and appointments and is an invaluable resource to those with a new diagnosis. She helps ease the process from diagnosis to treatment and survivorship.

INFUSION CENTER

To help meet the growing needs of our patients, AVH's new and expanded infusion center was opened in the fall of 2012. Open Monday through Friday, the center provides private, comfortable space for those who need to spend several hours at the hospital receiving outpatient infusions. With three private rooms, an abundance of natural light, and comfortable reclining chairs, the center is able to meet (and exceed) our patients' needs.

KEEP UP WITH RECOMMENDED CANCER SCREENINGS

“Some of the best weapons in the war on cancer are screenings,” says Doug Rovira, MD, Aspen Valley Hospital’s medical oncologist. “The earlier we can detect cancer cells, the better the chance for a successful recovery.”

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends that most adults have the following cancer screenings:

BREAST

- Mammogram every year starting at age 40 and continuing as long as the woman is in good health.
- Clinical breast exam about every three years for women in their 20s and 30s; every year beginning at age 40.
- Breast self-exam as an option for women starting in their 20s.

COLORECTAL

- A colonoscopy is recommended beginning at age 50 for both men and women. Frequency depends on factors such as the type of screening performed and the individual’s risk.



Joe Livengood, MD, performs a colonoscopy — a procedure designed for early detection AND the prevention of colon cancer.

CERVICAL

- Pap test every three years for women ages 21 to 29, with HPV testing only after an abnormal Pap test result.
- Pap test and HPV test every five years for women ages 30 to 65.
- HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. It — and associated problems — can be prevented by vaccination. Visit [CDC.gov/HPV/Vaccine.html](https://www.cdc.gov/HPV/Vaccine.html) to learn more.
- Cervical cancer screening should be stopped for women over age 65 if they have had regular cervical cancer testing with normal results.
- A woman who has been vaccinated against HPV should follow the screening recommendations for her age group.

ENDOMETRIAL (UTERINE)

- At menopause, women should be informed about the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer and should report unexpected bleeding or spotting.

LUNG

- Screening by CT scan is recommended for people at high risk of lung cancer due to cigarette smoking, including many people who meet all of these criteria:
 - Ages 55 to 74.
 - In fairly good health.
 - Have a “30 pack-year” smoking history AND are current smokers or have quit smoking in the last 15 years.

PROSTATE

- Beginning at age 50, men should consult their doctors and make an informed choice about the benefits of testing. Men at increased risk of prostate cancer should talk with their doctor starting at age 45.

For complete ACS cancer screening recommendations, visit [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org). You can also consult with your primary care physician about any cancer screenings, tests, and recommendations. For those with a family history of certain types of cancers, screening may be initiated earlier than the general recommendations.

CANCER IN THE NEWS

IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS

Many Americans do not know that lifestyle choices can impact their cancer risk. In a survey of more than 1,100 U.S. adults, the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) found that fewer than half indicated that actions such as avoiding tobacco, enjoying a healthy diet, and exercising regularly can reduce their chance of developing cancer. The AICR estimates that approximately 50 percent of all cancers are preventable with wise lifestyle choices. However, up to 62 percent of survey participants said they are more worried about stress, artificial sweeteners, and other factors whose link to cancer is not well supported by scientific evidence.

MILLIONS MISS CERVICAL CANCER SCREENINGS

An estimated 8 million women fail to stay up to date on potentially lifesaving cervical cancer screenings, according to a Centers for Disease Control report. More than 12,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year. Experts say that more than 90 percent of cervical cancers could be prevented with recommended screenings and vaccination for HPV (human papillomavirus). American Cancer Society recommendations call for regular cervical cancer screenings for women starting at age 21.

MEDICARE TO COVER LUNG-CANCER SCREENING

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has announced that it will cover the cost of a lung cancer preventive "screening counseling and shared decision making visit," as well as annual screening for the disease with low-dose computed tomography for certain individuals. Qualified beneficiaries must be ages 55 to 77, have no symptoms of lung cancer, and meet other criteria. Lung cancer is the second most common non-skin cancer for both genders, accounting for about 13 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers, according to the American Cancer Society.

NEW WARNING ABOUT 'VAPING'

Think e-cigarettes are safer than tobacco? Think again. In a recent issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, researchers reported that the vapor from electronic smoking devices may contain up to 15 times more formaldehyde than regular cigarettes. The risk of exposure to the carcinogen is high for users who up the voltage of their e-cigarettes to increase the amount of nicotine in the vapor. Operating e-cigarettes at these very high temperatures significantly increases the creation of compounds that contain formaldehyde.



SALLY'S GIFT SHOP

SALLY VROOM WOULD BE PROUD!

Aspen Valley Hospital had to close its beloved volunteer gift shop — named after long-time volunteer manager and buyer Sally Vroom — when construction began on the hospital a few years ago. Now, after a long hiatus, the gift shop is preparing to reopen.

With a prime location at the intersection of two main hallways in the new facility, you'll find that the gift shop is bringing back all the favorites from years past, as well as some new and unique items. And all gift items are affordably priced.

Gift shop buyer Helen Burnett explains, "While Sally's Gift Shop is a great place for patients' families to shop — especially if they are from out of town — it has also always been a special place for local shoppers. It's the perfect place to find that special gift for a new mom, hostess, friend, or family member and always at a good price."

In addition to great shopping, you'll find free parking and a strong emphasis on Colorado-based and charity-driven companies.

A grand opening will take place later this spring. Watch for an announcement soon!

DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM MERITS RECOGNITION

The prestigious American Diabetes Association (ADA) Education Recognition Certificate for a quality diabetes self-management education program was recently awarded to Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH). AVH's program was first recognized in 2000. The ADA believes that this program offers high-quality education that is an essential component of effective diabetes treatment.

The Association's Education Recognition Certificate assures that educational programs meet the National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education Programs. These standards were developed and tested under the auspices of the National Diabetes Advisory Board in 1983 and were revised by the diabetes community in 1994, 2000, 2007, and 2012.

Programs that achieve recognition status have a staff of knowledgeable health professionals who can provide participants with comprehensive information about diabetes management. "The process gives professionals a national standard by which to measure the quality of services they provide," comments Mary Margaret O'Gara, certified diabetes educator at AVH. "And, of course, it assures the consumer that he or she will receive high-quality service."



Certified diabetes educator Mary Margaret O'Gara teaches patients how to properly manage their diabetes.



Aspen Valley Hospital sponsored the Komen Foundation's 2015 "Ski for the Cure." Representing "Team AVH" are (left to right): Andrew Turchin, DDS; Kathy Niemer, RT; Deborah Breen, AVH Foundation President; and Joe Norton, AVH Foundation.

FOUNDATION UPDATE

By Deborah Breen, President

What an incredible couple of years we have had sharing news about programs, services, and projects underway at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH). As president of the foundation, I have presented at a variety of meetings and have conducted numerous one-to-one meetings with a cross-section of community members.

I am invariably encouraged by the role AVH has played in so many lives. Yet many people I talk to are not aware of the high-level of care available right here in Aspen. And care close to home certainly has its benefits.

Following are brief explanations about topics I'm often questioned about.

- **Infection rates.** Nationwide, hospital-acquired infection rates are 5 percent, while AVH's 2014 rate was 0.5 percent, 10 times lower than the national benchmark.
- **Cost of care in Aspen.** We are the first to admit that healthcare is expensive, and AVH works diligently to provide the right care at the right cost. In fact, each year we commission a third-party analysis of healthcare costs so we can ensure that our aggregate charges are at or below other hospitals in Colorado.
- **Technology.** State-of-the-art technologies include digital, 3-D mammography and breast MRI capabilities; a 64-slice low-dose CT scanner; 1.5 Tesla magnetic resonance imaging; and nuclear medicine.
- **Medical specialties.** Over 20 different medical specialties are represented on the AVH medical staff. One new addition is a general surgeon who specializes in breast cancer care.
- **Patient volumes.** We are a small hospital, but we treat nearly 8,000 patients in our emergency department each year, deliver over 200 babies, and manage over 75,000 inpatient and outpatient encounters annually.
- **Economic contribution to the community.** AVH provides over 400 people with jobs and contributes millions of dollars into the local economy.

- **Charity care.** Over \$2.5 million in charity care is provided each year.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The foundation will continue to improve our facilities and sing the praises of our skilled medical staff. Do you have a group that could benefit from learning more about our community hospital? We are happy to speak to groups, meet with you individually, and give tours of the facility. Call us at **544.1302**.

We will continue to progress with our transformational building project. The next phase includes construction of the new Resnick Family Emergency Department, a new trauma treatment suite, a rooftop helipad, and diagnostic imaging and surgical services.

These are critical components for our community hospital and are possible only because of the philanthropic support we have secured to date. I am excited to announce that figure has grown to \$22.3 million!

In addition, we will complete the final components of construction — building the Renee and Lester Crown Center for Specialty Care and designing a new laboratory, dedicated sleep studies lab, new admissions area, and chapel. We will also develop a specific area dedicated to women's imaging.

Clearly, we have accomplished much in a relatively short period of time, yet there is still much to do. We ask that our community work with us so we can move forward and be successful together. We welcome your questions and always enjoy an opportunity to discuss our master facilities plan, to demonstrate the vital role Aspen Valley Hospital plays in the lives of so many, and to articulate the continued need for philanthropic support.



This publication in no way seeks to diagnose or treat illness or serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Please see your physician if you have a health problem.

CONGRATULATIONS DRS. MASS AND KADISON

Ann Mass, MD, and Paula Kadison, MD, of Aspen Internal Medicine Consultants are pleased to announce that they have achieved “Meaningful Use Stage 2,” the most current and highest meaningful use standard for clinical practice. This represents the third consecutive year that the practice has achieved meaningful use, including awards in electronic prescribing and other quality measures.

“Meaningful Use” is a federal program administered by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that awards incentives to physicians who use electronic health records to improve patient care, communication, and coordination of services.

“We are proud to have achieved these results for the first three of a total of five years and are confident that we can continue to meet the standards set by CMS, even though the standards get higher every year!” say the doctors. “These goals are very difficult to meet, and we are the only practice in the Upper Roaring Fork Valley that has been able to sustain this type of rigorous program to help our patients across a spectrum of clinical need.”

In addition, the Mass/Kadison practice is the only one in Aspen to have received a Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative award. Only select practices across seven states have received this recognition. The initiative provides funding to assist doctors in meeting meaningful use, as well as implement other practice improvements to heighten quality of care and patient satisfaction.

“Our staff has worked diligently to implement measures such as these that will enhance our patients’ experience and help them achieve their health goals,” says Dr. Mass.

Dr. Kadison and Dr. Mass have offices at Willits and in Aspen at 225 N. Mill Street. For more information, call **970.544.1234** or visit **aspeninternalmedicineconsultants.com**.



Drs. Paula Kadison and Ann Mass of Aspen Internal Medicine Consultants.