

In 2015, Orange Regional Medical Center began a \$99 million construction project for a new 153,000-square-foot, five-story medical office building, shown in a night rendering, as well as a new cancer center. IMAGE PROVIDED

Hudson Valley health-care industry's vital signs are robust

By Deborah J. Botti

For Your Health

The vital signs of the health-care industry in the Hudson Valley are quite robust. Expansions of sites and services are coursing through the very pathways of local providers. Mergers to enhance care are breathing new life into the community. And pairings with local colleges are beating at a steady pace.

The prognosis? The business of healthcare will continue to boom, given an aging population, the draw of the region and a commitment to enhance the health of individuals. Supporting data is found in the events of 2015 and the projections for 2016 – as well as the very landscape that's now dotted with

health-related buildings and billboards.

Here, then, is a sampling of what's happening, as provided by local providers.

The Greater Hudson Valley Health System

The Greater Hudson Valley Health System comprises Orange Regional Medical Center in the Town of Wallkill, which opened in August 2011 as the first newly-built hospital in the state; Catskill Regional Medical Center in Harris; the Grover M. Hermann Hospital in Callicoon; as well as corresponding physician groups, Orange Regional Medical Group and Catskill Regional Medical Group. Both were formed by the hospitals in 2014 to offer more access to needed primary and specialty care.

says Rob Lee, spokesman for the Greater Hudson Valley Health System, pointing to more than 100 board-certified physicians, nurse practitioners and support staff between the two locations.

"And we're growing and hiring in all areas," he says.

IN 2015:

- A \$99 million expansion project kicked off at the ORMC site. This includes a fivestory, 153,000-square-foot physicians' office building that will consolidate most outpatient locations, as well as a single-story 26,000-square-foot cancer center and an additional 800 parking spaces.
- A renovation project began throughout Catskill Regional, including new paint, floor

coverings and indirect lighting, using the same calming color scheme as at ORMC. The goal is to make 80 percent of the patient rooms private. The coffee shop is serving Starbucks.

- Capital campaigns at both hospitals. Catskill Regional has raised \$1.3 million of its \$5 milliongoal; ORMC's \$3.3 millioncampaign just began.
- Added 3D mammography, or digital tomosynthesis, at ORMC.
- New complementary therapy room in ORMC includes reiki, aromatherapy and salt crystal lamps.
- ORMC awarded Silver Award from Baldridge, for quality and business performance, as well as a five-star Healthgrades award for



A ceremonial dirt toss was held at the groundbreaking event for Crystal Run Healthcare's new Monroe facility on Nov. 10, 2015. PHOTO PROVIDED

bariatric surgery and natural deliveries. The Live Well Be Well program to encourage employee health through lifestyle changes, which is at both hospitals, earned the CEI Cancer Gold Standard Award at ORMC.

- The Feel Good Concert series, where local musicians perform for staff and visitors, expanded to Catskill Regional.
- Use of Vocera at Catskill Regional, a wearable voice pendant to reduce overhead pages while seeking equipment or staff.
- Use of telemedicine at Catskill Regional to diagnose and treat burns.
- Skilled nursing unit at Catskill Regional awarded a five-star rating by CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services); its CEO, Gerard J. Galarneau, awarded the Walter J. Rhulen Award for business excellence and community service.
- Catskill Regional saved \$200,000 by using compressed natural gas as its primary fuel source, reducing its carbon footprint.
- Renovations to the Grover M. Hermann Hospital, a critical access hospital in a rural setting, including new mammography and bone density equipment.
- Opened Orange Regional Medical Group
- primary care in Monroe.

 Hospitalists, who attend to ORMC

inpatients, now based out of Orange Regional Medical Group.

IN 2016:

- Completion of the ORMC expansion by the fall.
- Completion of renovations at Catskill Regional by year-end.
- Continue capital campaigns at both hospitals.
- Work toward achieving Stage 7 ranking by Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, once more than 90 percent of all hospital orders done via electronic medical records, which improves quality and efficiency.
- Three-day ORMC site visit for the Magnet Recognition Program of the American Nurses Credentialing Center, which recognizes the highest in quality nursing care.
- Bariatric weight-loss surgery will be performed at Catskill Regional.
- New website for Catskill Regional.
- Expand residency programs for Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine students at ORMC and expanding rotations for Touro students at Catskill Regional.
- Expand specialty services at each medi-

■ Add urgent care to Monroe site.

Crystal Run Healthcare

Crystal Run Healthcare celebrated its 20th anniversary on Jan. 1.

"From the very first day, my goal was to improve quality, availability and socient satisfaction. And it's the same today – with the addition of improving health outcomes," says Dr. Hal Teitelbaum, Crystal Run's founder, managing partner and CEO, who prefers the term "socient" to "patient." "(Patient' comes from the Latin word for one who endures or suffers ... while 'socient' is from the Latin word 'socitus,' meaning ally. ... We are aligned with you to get you healthy."

Teitelbaum says Crystal Run, which has more than 2,100 employees, has attracted highly-skilled staff and proven over the years that quality healthcare can be found close to home.

"We are on the bleeding edge of accountable care ... standardized base practices that avoid waste and valueless services," Teitelbaum says. "The strategic pillars of Crystal Run frame a role of leadership in healthcare



A renovation project began throughout Catskill Regional Medical Center last year. Pictured is Gerard J. Galarneau, M.D., CRMC's chief medical officer and CEO, who received the Walter J. Rhulen Award for business excellence and community service. JOHN DESANTO/FOR THE TIMES HERALD-RECORD

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... and an obligation to the patient begins with a high-value healthcare system.

"And at the end of the day, the larger we are, the more we can help."

IN 2015

- In June, Crystal Run health plans were licensed by the state, and by the end of the year, 6,000 individuals were insured through plans either offered by employers or purchased individually.
- In July, the Newburgh site opened, the model for everything going forward. It is based on The Everett Clinic in Washington, incorporates "lean" principles that focus on efficiency without compromising care.
- Ground was broken on two more stateof-the-art sites, one in Monroe and one in West Nyack.
- House calls were expanded from visiting those at risk for readmission to the hospital within 48 hours of discharge to providing primary care for the housebound.

IN 2016:

- The West Nyack office is slated to open in July; Monroe in August.
- New site locations will be explored, including options in New York City, northern New Jersey and Westchester County.
- In the second half of the year, ground breaking is anticipated on at least three

sites, with one expected to be in New York City.

- Within five years, Crystal Run expects to have locations throughout the Hudson Valley, including Orange, Sullivan, Ulster, Rockland, Westchester and Dutchess counties, as well as in Manhattan, on Long Island and the outer boroughs.
- By the end of 2016, enrollment in Crystal Run health plans is expected to double to at least 12,000 members.
- Continue the team-of-physicians approach to look at all the research and data to determine the best practices for myriad medical issues

HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley

A flip side of elementary schools closing because of fewer young people moving into an area is the economic development linked to health care spurred by an aging population that is aging in place, says Josh Ratner, the chief strategy officer for Health Alliance, which includes Health Alliance Hospital: Broadway Campus (the former Kingston Hospital) and Health Alliance Hospital: Mary's Avenue Campus (the former Benedictine Hospital).

"A focus last year was improved patient outcomes and experiences while staying with us," he says.

IN 2015:

■ Nurses at the Broadway Campus began

using the Orchid digital rounding iPad app. If a patient mentioned her meal was wrong or the room was dirty, the nurse could immediately contact the proper person to resolve the issue. Additionally, the app tracks of trends – a time of day that the temperature consistently drops, for example – to help permanently solve problems. In some areas, patient satisfaction rates rose 10 percent.

- Both campuses were recognized by IPRO for performance in quality medication reconciliation between home and hospital.
- Both campuses scored high with the CMS for low rates of hospital-acquired infections.
- Emergency Department has wait times 10 minutes faster than the average hospital.
- The Family Birth Place at the Broadway Campus (YouTube link: tinyurl.com/FamilyBirthPlace) has a collaborative agreement with midwives and even offers water births.

 IN 2016:
- The Family Birth Place is expected to receive a Baby-Friendly Hospital designation for providing optimal care in breastfeeding and mother-and-baby bonding.
- In March, the Orchid nurses "rounding tool" will be introduced to the Mary's Avenue Campus.
- Awaiting imminent word on capital funding to renovate the Mary's Avenue Campus as the sole hospital in the City of Kingston, providing inpatient and emergency services.

- The Broadway Campus will then be redeveloped into a medical village for outpatient and holistic services such as education, access to healthy foods, etc.
- In between the new hospital and medical village will be SUNY Ulster and the high school, a corridor that will offer collaborative opportunities extending beyond the year.
- The funding announcement will also trigger proceeding with the affiliation with Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHealth), a partnership that will help the hospital flourish by enhancing the ability to recruit highly-skilled specialists, such as a neurosurgeon, or technologies to be shared among Hudson Valley WMCHealth members.

The Greater Hudson Valley Family Health Center – A federally qualified health center

FQHCs, or federally qualified health centers, are nonprofit, community-directed healthcare providers that provide access to primary and preventative care services, including medical, oral, mental health, substance abuse and specialty services to 1 in 14 Americans – including the medically underserved and high-risk populations, regardless of their ability to pay.

Each health center addresses the diverse needs of their communities, which include people who do not regularly receive primary

When women take care of their health they become their own best friend. -Maya Angelou

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care, says April Gozza, senior director of public relations and government affairs, at GHVFHC. This local approach, combined with an emphasis on primary and preventative care and decreasing use of emergency departments for non-emergent reasons, generates \$24 billion in annual savings.

"The biggest trend in healthcare is the focus on value-based outcomes - not being rewarded for how often we see our patients but how well we are managing their overall health, focus on prevention which will lead to better outcome and reduced cost for the healthcare system. The Triple Aim: better care, better population health and lower health care costs," says Dr. Avi Silber, GHVF-HC's chief medical officer.

IN 2015:

- Provided primary and preventative healthcare services to nearly 23,000 individuals through eight care sites and a Mobile Health Unit. This number is up by more than 4,000. Increased access to Medicaid and affordable healthcare options, as a result of the Affordable Care Act expansion, prompted this growth.
- Enrolled almost 1,400 individuals in a health insurance plan almost triple the number from the prior year.
- Positioned a nurse health navigator in the emergency department at St. Luke's Hospital

to help with the transition of the patient's care from hospital to home, as well as working with high-risk referrals to treat chronic conditions outside of the emergency department.

■ In August, was awarded \$1 million to bring services to southern Ulster County.

IN 2016

- Name change to Cornerstone Family Healthcare. "We've remained the cornerstone in this community where all individuals, across all walks of life, through all life stages, can get access to quality health care, regardless of their ability to pay," says Linda Muller, president and CEO.
- The 2,000-square-foot Behavioral Health Suite at the Kaplan Family Pavilion is due to open in early 2016 recognizing the need to integrate primary care and behavioral health.
- In response to skyrocketing rates of prescription drug and heroin abuse and a waiting list of nearly 120 people the 20,000-square-foot Center for Recovery, and only methadone treatment center in Orange County, begins a \$5 millionrenovation in June. Services will be expanded into other areas of opioid treatment.
- In January, optometry services are being added to the Kaplan Family Pavilion.
- Expand the Informatics Department to identify patients who have gaps in care, are

not up to date on their preventive screenings and follow ups, and focus on getting them in to see their doctors. The data can also be used to identify patients who are inappropriately overusing emergency departments and engage them in primary care.

- Expand Care Management team to continue to engage the most at-risk and costly patients in primary care.
- Expand Blooming Grove Turnpike site in New Windsor from five exam rooms to eight, staffed by an internist and family nurse practitioner.
- Ground will be broken in the spring to construct a new 3,500-square-foot site in Plattekill.

Middletown Medical

Melissa Wolff, marketing director and spokesperson for Middletown Medical, which was established in 1984 and now has locations throughout Orange, Ulster and Sullivan counties, says one of the group's goals has been to meet the members of the community where they are – be it in terms of site locations or smart phone access.

"More people have health insurance coverage today," she says. "So rather than many years spent just addressing acute needs, many now want to be healthy. And the Hudson Valley is becoming a center for healthcare....

Touro College adds an educational piece that enhances people seeking our area. As a group, we are looking to respond. And in our quest to make a healthier community, we want to hear from the community, too."

IN 2015:

- Launched the Pearls for Mammograms program in October, wherein a thank-you pink pearl is given to everyone who gets a mammogram. Participants are encouraged to keep the pearls, which can be strung together in a bracelet or one day even a necklace.
- Calcium score testing was made available to people age 50 and older at a reduced fee of \$65. This CT scan, typically not covered by insurance, measures the plaque in arteries, a marker for heart disease.
- Five locations were added, bringing the total Middletown Medical sites to 18 with the opening of the Montgomery site in early January.
- The use of telemedicine was launched to bring specialty care to certain locales. For example, a patient with diabetes in the Liberty area can now travel five minutes to have vitals checked by a clinician and engage in a follow-up video conference with the endocrinologist via webcam, rather than make the trip to Middletown.

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CURCUMIN

From Page 5

However ...

What I've found, is that if you empty the capsules and add them to hot liquid, and blend with healthy fats like pastured butter or coconut, the uptake is excellent.

After all, that's how turmeric has been used traditionally, as in curries made with ghee (clarified butter) and coconut milk. There's a lot of wisdom in those traditions. I love adding it to my morning coffee, which I make "Bulletproof" by blended pastured butter and MCT oil (see my website forprevious column on how to make your coffee healthy).

But there are many ways to get curcumin in. You can blend it in tea, hot cocoa or oatmeal (I recommend glutenfree of course), just to name a few.

Just remember it needs heat and fat for best absorption. Refer to my recipe on this page for Healthy Hot Cocoa.

Give it a try and tell me what you think. I know your body will thank you.

- Fran Sussman provides non-invasive holistic solutions with compassion, support and more than two decades of training, experience and success for clients in Orange County and beyond. Find her at Sussman Holistic on Facebook or visit fransussman.com



You can blend curcumin in hot cocoa, tea, coffee or oatmeal, just to name a few. Just remember it needs heat and fat for best absorption. METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS PHOTOS

HEALTHY HOT COCOA

Make a batch ahead of time, and store in a jar. Also makes a lovely homemade gift. **Ingredients**

- ½ cup raw unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup grated raw cocoa butter
- ½ cup xylitol or more to taste (you could use sugar, but xylitol has health benefits and won't spike blood sugar)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla powder
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- Pinch of salt
- 6 capsules (250 mg each) of curcumin, emptied

Directions: Mix all ingredients together thoroughly in a bowl. No refrigeration necessary. Put 2 heaping tablespoons in a mug. Add boiling water and a dollop of full-fat coconut milk (I like Thai Kitchen Organic). Stir and serve.

– Fran Sussman

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- Physical therapy hours were expanded in Middletown. Two physical therapists now provide services from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. daily.
- "Worry-free pricing" was introduced in urgent care centers so patients without health insurance will have a general idea of the cost. Pricing for the three levels of care is posted and online. If something additional is required, the provider will talk with the patient beforehand.
- The app for Android was introduced, following in the footsteps of the app for iPhone that has been used for a couple of years. Now all patients can access the website, search for a provider, make appointments, etc. regardless of what type of smart phone is used.
- Low-dose CT scans are available for people who have smoked 15 years or longer - the only way to screen for lung cancer if there are no symptoms.
- Podiatry services have been expanded in Middletown and Chester.
- Walk-in x-ray is available in Chester without seeing a Middletown Medical provider. Just bring in a script.

IN 2016:

- Continued quest to establish affiliations with other doctors.
- Expand urgent care with extended hours and possibly a new location.
- Make more connections and build more relationships online. For example, a weekly radio show in Warwick will be podcast on the website, allowing people to hear Middletown Medical physicians talking about various health issues.

Ellenville Regional Hospital

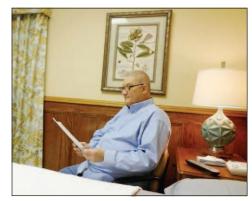
"Our patients are not numbers; they're individuals," says Deborah A. Briggs, vice president at Ellenville Regional Hospital in Ellenville. Being a small community hospital affords the opportunity to provide a personal touch, not only to inpatients but for myriad outpatient services offered.

IN 2015:

- Cardiac Rehab opened at the end of 2014, but really got rolling in 2015. Cardiac patients are often fearful of walking, let alone doing anything more strenuous. Under the supervision of a qualified telemetry nurse, patients' aerobic activities and progress are monitored in the gym. There's also an educational component that addresses negative lifestyle choices all with a goal of building confidence and strength.
- The After Rehab Club opened at the end of 2015, the brainchild of Theresa Aversano, director of physical therapy, to help those just discharged from cardiac rehab or outpatient physical therapy transition. After an initial screening and orientation, people can continue to exercise in a hospital setting. Although not fully supervised, there is a personal trainer on hand. Cost: \$36 for the screening; and \$36 a month for 10 visits or three months for



The Family Birth Place at the HealthAlliance Broadway Campus in Kingston has a collaborative agreement with midwives, from left, Whitney Hall, Susan Rannestad and Susanrachel Condon of Hudson Valley Midwifery. KELLY MARSH/FOR THE TIMES HERALD-RECORD



Michael Bamrick of Sparrowbush is shown in a bedroom of the new Sleep Disorder Institute of Bon Secours Community Hospital in Port Jervis.

\$90.

- A new state-of-the-art MRI became available in May. Rather than a trailer where the leased unit was housed, the new MRI with a larger bore or opening has its own room with large windows in the Calman Medical Arts Pavilion. The result is a far-less claustrophobic setting.
- The Calman Medical Arts Pavilion is a new, 7,850-square-foot structure that connects Ellenville Regional Hospital with the Ellenville Family Practice Center next door and brings together multiple specialties under one roof.

IN 2016

- A new, state-of-the-art Siemans CT scanner is being purchased to replace the existing one.
- The physical set-up of inpatient units is being reconfigured to enhance the delivery of care.
- Continued effort to recruit new providers.

Bon Secours Charity Health System

The national – if not international – healthcare challenge is to improve the quality of care while lowering costs, says Bain Farris, interim chief operating officer of Bon Secours Charity Health System,



The Greater Hudson Valley Family Health Center in Newburgh will officially change its name to Cornerstone Family Healthcare this year. PHOTO PROVIDED

which includes Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center in Suffern; St. Anthony Community Health Center in Warwick; Bon Secours Community Hospital in Port Jervis; the Bon Secours Medical Group with about 80 providers throughout the region; Mount Alverno adult home/assisted living in Warwick; Schervier Pavilion, which offers long-term nursing care in Warwick; and St. Joseph's Place, long-term nursing care in Port Jervis.

"The charity facilities had financial challenges," says Farris, "until the merger.

"The most exciting news then, is the joint venture with Westchester Medical Center, which was completed in May."

Farris was brought onboard at the end of September and has been involved with the integration of services and capital. Ongoing half-day weekly meetings seek to prioritize needs.

"And like any new partner, we've been spending the early stages of this relationship getting to know one another," he says. "There will be a lot (more) to announce as 2016 unfolds, which we're not quite ready to do yet."

IN 2015:

■ With the merger in place, began to work strategically and collaboratively with



Among many accomplishments last year, Middletown Medical, established in 1984, added five locations, bring total sites to 18, with the opening of the Montgomery site. Shown is Dr. Arpine Saribekyan, who practices family medicine and palliative care. ELAINE A. RUXTON/TIMES HERALD-RECORD



A new state-of-the-art MRI became available in May at The Calman Medical Arts Pavilion, which connects Ellenville Regional Hospital with the Ellenville Family Practice Center. Pictured are Tom Burke, Ellenville Regional MRI technologist, and Michel McGuckin, Ellenville Regional radiology and cardiology services manager. PHOTO PROVIDED

Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHealth).

- Opened the Sleep Disorder Center at Bon Secours Community Hospital, at 30 Canal Street in Port Jervis. It is the identical service, with the same director, as provided at St. Anthony Community Hospital in Warwick.
- The St. Anthony Community Hospital Center for Physical Rehabilitation in the ShopRite Plaza in Warwick was renovated. Inpatient and outpatient physical therapy services are managed by Access Physical Therapy, except at Mount Alverno.

IN 2016:

- Conversations will continue with physician partners about needs going forward.
- New linear accelerator will be installed at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center, to provide external beam radiation treatments to patients with cancer.
- Mattresses will be replaced in the hospitals and skilled nursing facilities, as well as many of the actual beds, by March or April.

St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital

A partnership between St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital and Montefiore Health

System has received regulatory approval by state and federal agencies, the hospitals recently announced.

"Upon closing, St. Luke's Community Hospital will be a member of the Montefiore Health System, strengthening the coordination of healthcare services at our local campuses and providing greater access to specialty care throughout the Hudson Valley," says Kate Dabroski, director of marketing and public relations. "...we look forward to building upon existing programs and continuing to transform the manner in which we deliver care to the community; providing the highest quality of care in the most appropriate setting."

IN 2015:

- SLCH was recognized as an industry leader in using information technology to improve patient care, one of just three hospitals in the nation to receive distinction as a 2015 Most Wired Innovator.
- SLCH is the only hospital in the state to receive the Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award for five consecutive years and received its fifth Get With the Guidelines Gold Plus Achievement Award from the American Stroke Association
- Created a metabolic and bariatric surgery program.
- Recruited new physicians to provide ear, nose and throat services.



Joan Cusack-McGuirk, interim president and CEO of St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, announces the new partnership between Montefiore Health System and St. Luke's at the Cornwall campus, last October. ALLYSE PULLIAM/FOR THE TIMES HERALD-RECORD

- Through the relationship with MHS, recruited thoracic surgeons, bringing back a much needed service to the community.
- Expanded the urology program.
- Move toward Level III Trauma Center designation.
- Continue to grow Cardiovascular nstitute.
- Continue to grow women's health services.

Horizon Family Medical Group

"Horizon Family will continue to care for



Michael D. Israel, Westchester Medical Center CEO, and Mary Leahy, M.D., Bon Secours Charity Health System CEO, sign papers to commemorate the new partnership between Westchester Medical Center and Bon Secours Charity Health Systems on May 20, 2015. ALLYSE PULLIAM/FOR THE TIMES HERALD-RECORD

our patients with the same passion and compassionate medical expertise as always, in which we pride ourselves. Continually growing and enhancing our group to best serve our patients, their families, and the communities

of the Hudson Valley Region is always a top priority. It is our humble honor that patients entrust their health to Horizon Family Medical," says CEO Jim Olver.

Horizon did not give further comment.



Caring for people with Huntington's, ALS, and other neurodegenerative disorders takes much more than skill and compassion. It takes teamwork.

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ArchCare's new 38-bed Center for Neurodegenerative Care at ArchCare at Ferncliff in Rhinebeck, NY brings the expertise of our renowned Huntington's disease center in Manhattan right to the Hudson Valley. We offer compassionate, world-class medical and psychiatric care, an engaging array of social and recreational opportunities, plus a wealth of support programs for individuals and families. Why? Because when it comes to caring, none of us is as strong as all of us together.

* archcare Together, We Can

archcare.org

To learn more about The Center for Neurodegenerative Care at Ferncliff, call Program Director Charissa Brown at (845) 516-1675 or visit www.archcare.org/neuro.