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*The Women's
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The Women's Health Pavilion... Phoenixville Women's Hospital

By Susan I. Shiber
Photography by Kelly O'Keefe

At Phoenixville Hospital, patient care is not only exceptional, it is personal beyond measure. Yes, Phoenixville Hospital is located outside a big city medical school environment. However, with its University of Pennsylvania Health System, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), The Philadelphia Hand Center, and Moore Eye Institute partnerships, physician proficiency is superlative. Outstanding services are nurtured with sensitivity and good neighborhood, traits that are benchmarks of the hospital.

THE WOMEN'S HEALTH PAVILION... CORE OF THE COMMUNITY

One of these benchmarks is women-driven compassionate care. As part of the hospital's more than \$90 million expansion project, the beautiful efficiently designed Women's Health Pavilion combines comfortable space with state-of-the-art technology. It features obstetrics, gynecology, a Level II CHOP neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) with 24/7 in-house neonatologists/NNPs. There are five delivery rooms, one operating room, an outpatient testing room, large family lounge, and attractive nurses' station. High-tech highlights include wireless high-speed Internet service, upgraded call systems with staff locator, and a special ceiling heating panel that assists in warming new infants during exams. A team of 14 physicians, 60 nurses, and



Audrina Gniás, the fourth child of Lindsey and David Gniás, was born at Phoenixville Hospital in March.



The Women's Healthcare Group of PA, Valley Forge OB/GYN Division team – seated left to right: M. Allyson Brown, MD, FACOG; Susan Roitman, MD, FACOG; and Michael R. Lemert, MD, FACOG, FACS; standing: Allison L. Shirker, MD, FACOG; Fredric L. Cohen, MD, FACOG; Alan Silverberg, MD, FACOG; and Amy Jane Cadieux, MD, FACOG (not pictured: Gina Cantarella, MD, FACOG; and Christine J. Sigal, MD, FACOG)

housekeeping and dietary staff support the bustling 15,000-square-foot Pavilion.

Among innumerable enhancements are 14 private post-delivery rooms complete with pullout sleep sofas for family members who wish to spend the night with mom and get to know the new baby. This suite, which is twice the

size of earlier maternity quarters, was a pleasant surprise for Aimee and Zach Bailey. The couple chose Phoenixville Hospital to deliver Dane, now 4, and Lacey, 2. Aubree, who joined the family just after 2011 dawned, was the first baby born in the Women's Health Pavilion this year.

"I was truly excited when I saw the room," exclaims Aimee. "It was awesome. Everything is extremely up to date. Zach had a place to sleep when our kids weren't bouncing on the couch. We were so happy we didn't have to share with anyone. It didn't feel like a hospital. There is even room service. I could



New patient rooms at the Women's Health Pavilion



Alan Silverberg, MD, FACOG, Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Medical Director of Women's Health Services at Phoenixville Hospital

order whatever I wanted from a menu anytime I was hungry.”

The Baileys' first baby was breech and Alan Silverberg, MD, FACOG, Medical Director of Women's Health Pavilion, performed C-section surgery. “All those involved helped calm my nerves,” recalls Aimee. “Dr. Silverberg sang the whole time. I was in the hospital for five days, and we were very sorry Zach couldn't stay over. The expanded center made it possible for him to be with us this time.”

Lacee, who was delivered by Gina M. Cantarella, MD, was two weeks early, while Aubree, arrived a few days late. She was brought into the world by M. Allyson Brown, MD. “It was New Year's Day, and we had 30 people for dinner when my water broke,” whispers Aimee. “I called Dr. Brown, and she said it would be okay to visit with our guests and have a bit of dinner. We got to the hospital around 4 P.M., although Aubree wasn't born until 6 A.M. It was just wonderful to go back to our own room to rest after such a long night.”

A big booster of the hospital's kind caring staff, Aimee notes that she would



Perinatal Nurse Concetta Poidomani, RNC, BSN, coordinates obstetrical care for high-risk patients.



Specially-trained physicians, neonatal nurse practitioners, and nurses provide exceptional care to the smallest patients in the NICU. Pictured are Donna Bowen, NICU Unit Clerk; Cindy Defeo, RN; Jane Clemens, RN; and Cynthia Kellogg, MD.



recommend it to anyone. “I had really good experiences with all three births.” “With the expansion, something that was always good is even better,” adds Zach.

Lindey Gnias echoes these sentiments. “I had two babies at Phoenixville Hospital and was in the Women’s Health Pavilion for Audrina, my fourth. With private rooms, the pullout couch for my husband, and great care, everything was wonderful. It’s much more personal now, and I was so impressed that the nurses remembered me,” she concludes.

Mona Sabatino appreciates the privacy, too. Anthony, her fourth baby, arrived in May. “I have a huge family and lots of visitors, and I didn’t feel like I couldn’t have them there,” she says. “Before, there was no place for my kids to go. Plus, the whole area is brighter.”

Dr. Silverberg, known among patients and staff for the OR singing that soothed Aimee Bailey, also melodically praises Phoenixville Hospital. As a physician with Pennsylvania University Hospital more than 25 years ago, he frequently treated its transfer patients. Even in Philadelphia, the hospital was widely respected for its Ob/Gyn services.

It was that reputation that drew Dr. Silverberg to the hospital in 1986. Improvements to the Pavilion continued with the advent of the CHOP Level II NICU in 2001.

Shortly thereafter, an alarming pattern began to diminish birthing options for women in Southeastern Pennsylvania. In 1997, the extended Philadelphia region had 19 maternity units spread throughout the area. Since then, at least 13 have closed, resulting in thousands of women no longer having a nearby place to deliver their babies.

When Dr. Silverberg was asked why Phoenixville Hospital places such strong emphasis on maternity care when the trend is going in the opposite direction, he was quick to reply. “Because our system and administration are keenly aware of the fact that everything flows from the matriarch, the hospital is here to serve that vital component of the community. When a woman has her baby here, she invariably comes back for other care. Our Women’s Health Pavilion is a hallmark that drives the hospital. Perhaps it’s one component where costs don’t



The Level II CHOP Neonatal Intensive Care Unit is under the direction of Cynthia Kellogg, MD, FAAP, NICU. Dr. Kellogg and her colleagues bring the expertise of The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia to Phoenixville.



Women’s Health Pavilion nurses and staff are often recognized by patients for providing exceptional care. Pictured are (back row) Kelly Lucas, RN; Trish Giandonato, RN; and Vickie Runkle, Unit Secretary; (front row) Barbara Dacey, RN; Lisa Atkins, RN, BSN; and Sherrie Heyser RN, BSN.



Mary Louise Mancini, BS, MHA, RNC-OB, Clinical Nurse Manager of the Women's Health Pavilion

add up at the onset, but other important successes emanate from these invaluable services. When a maternity ward closes, it takes the heart out of a community. Our goal is just the opposite. We aim to be the heart," he declares with a broad smile.

EXTENDING ITS REACH

Patients from Chester, Western Montgomery, Delaware, Berks, and Philadelphia Counties recognize how true Dr. Silverberg's analogy is. Cutting-edge technology, streamlined treatment, care that borders on pampering, and accommodations often compared to a vacation, result in 10,000 women's healthcare visits and 1,000 births annually. These statistics are expected to increase with more pregnancies anticipated in coming years and as new services are introduced.

In addition to exceptional obstetrical care, the Phoenixville Hospital team provides gynecologic, gynecologic oncology, and breast health services. Dr. M. Allyson Brown, Dr. Dominick Giuffrida, and Dr. Joanne Sansone perform robotic-assisted hysterectomies and other gynecological operations employing the hospital's da Vinci® Si HD, classified



Social workers Kathy Wilson, MSW candidate, co-facilitator of the Post Partum Adjustment Support Group, and Mary Beth Coggins, MSW, MSA, work with nurses and staff to develop integral care plans designed to give newborns, moms, and their families extra support.

as the most advanced surgical system available. Women presenting conditions such as non-cancerous fibroid tumors, endometriosis, or prolapse benefit from robotic procedures.

Removal of the uterus or hysterectomy is the second most common surgical treatment for women in the U.S. Traditionally, this operation is performed with open surgery, requiring a

wide incision below the navel. The operation can be painful, involve heavy pain medication, risk of infection, and significant blood loss. Recovery time is lengthy and incision scars cause consternation.

On the flip side, robotic hysterectomies are less invasive while offering a host of benefits. There is dramatically less pain and blood loss. Infection risk is minimal, hospital stays shorter, and



New parents Kim and Rob Ubele welcomed their first baby, Mason, into the world in March. It was Kim's first hospital stay, and she credits the Phoenixville team with making it a very pleasant one.



The Sabatino family celebrated the birth of their fourth child, Anthony, in March. The Pavilion's new private rooms offered lots of space for visiting family and friends.



Theresa Fink, RN-C, nursing coordinator; and long-term nurse Louise Bolger, RN, are active on hospital nursing committees in addition to being shining examples of Phoenixville Hospital's commitment to excellence.

recovery much quicker. Patients report better outcomes and greater satisfaction as they return to normal activities quite soon.

Waleed Shalaby, MD, a gynecologic oncologist, concurs. Masterful in robotic surgery, Dr. Shalaby extols its role in women's health. "Women's health services and robotic surgery are simply better for patients, particularly those with cancer. It's easier and recovery is faster."

One of the most recent additions is the Breast Health Center, headed by

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Bruce Weiner, MD, FACS. The program's purpose is to follow each breast cancer patient through all phases of diagnosis, treatment, and recovery. As

in other disciplines, the hospital's philosophy for breast cancer care is based on a partnership between patient and her treatment team. Dr. Weiner, works closely with the Phoenixville Hospital Cancer Center, which is a member of the University of Pennsylvania Cancer Network. The Breast Health Center offers an individualized, multidisciplinary approach, which is appreciated by Dr. Weiner's patients.

NEWBORNS TAKE PRECEDENCE

Parents love the generous space, flexible dining options, and special attention granted during maternity stays. Even more, they are relieved and gratified that a Level II NICU is seconds away if their baby shows problem signs. When a newborn with issues is whisked away from the mother to an off-site NICU, bonding and breast feeding are disrupted. Anxiety heightens and visiting the infant is often difficult. Just knowing treatment is close by is reassuring. Emotional support from familiar caregivers mollifies parents in tense situations.



Aubree Bailey was the first baby born at Phoenixville Hospital in 2011; and mom Aimee was one of the first patients in the new Women's Health Pavilion where she enjoyed the privacy and space offered by the new rooms.



Members of the experienced and compassionate staff of Valley Forge OBGYN are: (back row) Sandy Karst, RN; Christina Jenkins, LPN; Nancy Roehner, NA; Jennifer Hysore, MA; Joelle Soto, RN, BSN; Sandy Moyer, RN, and (seated) Concetta LaBresco, NA.



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The NICU team is comprised of CHOP physicians board-certified in neonatal medicine and certified neonatal nurse practitioners. Other specialists, including respiratory therapists, audiologists, physical/occupational therapists, pediatric ophthalmologists, pediatric sub-specialists, and social services professionals, are always available if needed.

Cynthia Kellogg, MD, FAAP, NICU Medical Director, was invited to launch the unit, much to her delight. “I liked the idea of starting from the ground up,” she notes. “I took bits and pieces I liked from other NICUs and incorporated them into a very good NICU. Our NICU is set up similar to a boutique practice, which allows us to customize care and really get to know families and babies. Being affiliated with CHOP is a bonus, as well. We are able to tap into their expertise.”

There are various reasons a newborn requires NICU attention. Some babies arrive before the normal full-term period of 37½ to 41 weeks. They may not be ready for breast feeding, or could have trouble breathing. Temperature regulation or treatment for infection is sometimes necessary. “Parents are often surprised because their infant looks full-term,” points out Dr. Kellogg. “I tell them that every now and then babies are like teenagers. They look grown up and act their age most of the time; then suddenly, they do something immature. A lot of late pre-terms resemble full-term infants, but they’re just not ready to hang out with the *big kids* in the full-term nursery. NICU gets them ready.”

Women’s Health Pavilion professionals prepare families, too. Subjects from breast feeding, to sibling rivalry, to what to expect if a baby is sent to NICU are covered. Game plans, types of tests, possible specialists, and other concerns are discussed prior to delivery to prevent sudden shock if there is a crisis.



More than 60 nurses and staff, including long-time environmental services team members Joyce Imirisk and Carol Smith, work together to keep the patients of the Women's Health Pavilion comfortable.

Rewards for Dr. Kellogg and her team come from photos, cards, and catching up at NICU reunions with healthy, happy babies they cared for. "Seeing families beaming with smiles, and kids running and playing is amazing," she says. "No one is frazzled. It's *wow, everything turned out okay.*"

NICU reunions coordinated by Kathy Wilson in Social Services make this possible. Last year's alumni event brought together 75 families. Dr. Kellogg opened the day with a warm welcome as people gathered around food and game



Waleed Shalaby, MD, is an experienced gynecologic oncologist who specializes in robotic surgery.

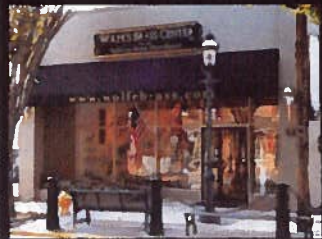
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tables. "I am blessed to have so much collaboration and support," says Wilson. "Perinatal Nurse Coordinator Concerta Poidomani and Dr. Amy Cadieux, and NICU Secretary Donna Bowen are instrumental in planning the reunion, and local businesses and hospital volunteers are exceptionally generous. We had clowns, balloon animals, face painting, great food, and goodie bags for all."

Wilson is also involved with monthly Post Partum Adjustment Support Group meetings, which are free and open to the

public. She explains that "It's not therapy. It's not treatment. It's networking and education, giving mothers an open forum to share experiences, fears, and feedback. These sessions dispel myths and shame, while getting the word out that women deserve support."

ANCHORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Support for women, families, physicians, and the hospital in general is evident every second of every day within the nursing staff. The Women's Health

Pavilion boasts a team of champions among RNs and LPNs.

Louise Bolger, RNC, has known most of them. As she celebrates her 41st anniversary with Phoenixville Hospital in June, she looks forward to what's ahead. "You rarely have this longevity if you don't like and respect the people around you. I choose not to retire."

When people wonder about her early days, Louise chuckles. "It's impossible

to compare apples and oranges. I can't believe what care for women used to be like. We didn't have an OR or private rooms in maternity. There was no fetal monitoring. If a woman had a hysterectomy, she was out of work for three months. Now, with robotic surgery, she's on the go in a few weeks."

"Another noteworthy difference is in attitude," interjects Mary Louise Mancini, BS, MHA, RNC-OB, Women's

Health Pavilion Clinical Nurse Manager. "Historically, when a mom visited a hospital to have a baby, she was treated as a sick person. Not today! Even with all of the available technology, delivering is treated as a natural experience, filled with well-being and joy. Families are more vigilant about prenatal care, staff are more in-tune with their needs, and in the end babies are healthier."

Theresa Fink, RN, is a Phoenixville Hospital baby, who always wanted to come back. "In high school, I wrote the same sentence over and over about hopes for the future:

I want to work at Phoenixville Hospital in the maternity ward.

I love babies, loved this hospital all my life, and am so happy to be here, especially in the Women's Health Pavilion."

New mom Kim Ubele admits that she's a big baby, and insists she couldn't have gotten through delivery without the Pavilion nurses. Mason is her first, and she had never stayed in a hospital before. "They all knew I was afraid and did everything they could to keep my mind off what was going on. Everyone knew my name. Lougie (Louise Bolger) sat on the edge of my bed, answered my questions, and told stories to make me laugh. I felt like I was her only patient, although she was very busy. Ron just loved the little pullout couch, and we both enjoyed great meals. The best way to describe my impression of the Women's Health Pavilion is awesome," she concludes.

Dr. Silverberg, too, expresses exhilaration every time he talks about the Women's Health Pavilion. "I am thrilled beyond words how everything fell into place beyond my expectations. From the smallest details, such as lab test checkpoints, to community outreach, Phoenixville Hospital stands out."

What more could a patient want? Whatever it is, she can surely find it at the Women's Health Pavilion, where *medicine is an art as well as a science.* ●

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