

RIVER FALLS AREA HOSPITAL



The new medical record system at River Falls Area Hospital will put patient information at the doctors' fingertips. Susan Nelson, RN (left), case manager; Nancy Reihl, electronic medical record site leader; and Greg Miller, MD, review patient information.

ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD

New technology enhances care

YOUR HOSPITAL medical record is an important tool for your doctor in providing quality health care. When you come to River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH), your medical history, allergies and other information are all entered into your record. So are test results, images, and medications and treatments you receive.

“Understanding your current and past health conditions, treatments and medications is essential to providing the best medical care,” says Greg Miller, MD, River Falls Medical Clinic. Your medical record will become a much more sophisticated and useful tool when the

new electronic medical record system is implemented at RFAH this spring.

Instead of a paper folder, your hospital records will be electronic and accessible from computer terminals in patient rooms, other hospital departments, River Falls Medical Clinic, and Allina’s hospitals and clinics that are on the same system.

“It will be more current, faster to access and will allow us to easily work with other doctors, such as specialists or doctors you see away from home,” adds Miller. “This computerization of records is the biggest change in medicine in decades and will improve our ability to provide quality care.”

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RIVER FALLS AREA HOSPITAL
Allina Hospitals & Clinics

New technology

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SAFETY ALERTS

“One of the major enhancements to care is patient safety,” says Nancy Reihl, RFAH site leader. “In a paper medical record, allergies and medications are noted, but the electronic medical record actually cross-checks any new prescription a caregiver is considering.

“Alerts built into the system display a warning if there is a potential adverse reaction with a patient’s allergies or other medications and also for a missed medication dose or a duplicated test order. When lab test results are available, caregivers have immediate access and results are flagged if they need to be reviewed. All abnormal

results are highlighted for immediate review.”

TIMELY ACCESS

Information will go into the electronic medical record immediately, with no waiting for filing. Lab results, evaluations and procedures won’t have to be physically delivered to the chart, so they’ll be available faster. Whenever your medical

file information is needed, it will be available with a few clicks of the computer mouse, without waiting for a paper folder to be located. Multiple people can look at the electronic medical record at the same time—the doctor, pharmacist, nurse or even an off-site specialist.

ONE-TIME COLLECTION OF PATIENT INFORMATION

Patients only need to provide their information once, including their medical history, allergies, prescriptions and other pertinent information. At future visits, they only need to confirm that the information is up-to-date. Patient information will also be

more complete, since the system prompts with questions.

ONE PATIENT, ONE RECORD AT ALLINA FACILITIES

The electronic medical record system will be shared by all of Allina’s 11 hospitals and 65 clinics and outpatient facilities so that records from patient visits to any of those sites will automatically go into the patient’s single record.

“This will

be very helpful to us when we’re following a patient who has been cared for at another facility,” Miller says. “For example, if someone has a heart procedure at United

Hospital, all of those details will be available here. When a heart attack patient is being rushed to United for emergency angioplasty, the information from our tests here will be almost instantly available to the team there. It will be faster than faxing.”

PATIENT PRIVACY PROTECTION

The system is equipped with security measures to protect patient information, including a feature that monitors who has accessed each patient record. Caregivers and personnel are granted access only to the information they need for their jobs.

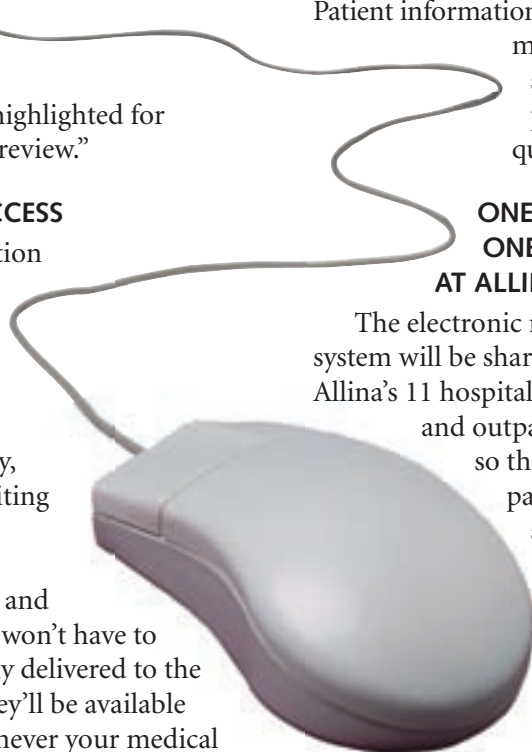
MAKING THE TRANSITION

RFAH employees have received training for the electronic medical record implementation, have studied work flow in each department and are “rehearsing” for a smooth transition to the electronic record system.

The new system is scheduled to go live on March 1. “This requires learning and change in every area of the hospital, and the initial entry of a lot of information. Things will go a little slower for a while, and that may require some patience, but we’ll be able to provide better care going forward,” Miller says. ♦

“This computerization of records is the biggest change in medicine in decades and will improve our ability to provide quality care.”

—Greg Miller, MD, River Falls Medical Clinic





A bright future. Roxann Brookshaw, surgery technician/certified first assistant, River Falls Area Hospital, was awarded a scholarship by the Kinnickinnic Health Foundation. An experienced RFAH employee, Brookshaw is now studying to become a registered nurse.

growing,” she says. “I want to continue working here, with more responsibility as an RN/first assistant.”

It won’t be the first time that a scholarship has helped Brookshaw train for her health care career at RFAH. In the early 1980s, a hospital scholarship helped her with technical school tuition to become

a surgical technologist.

INVESTING IN FUTURE CARE

“With a national shortage of health care workers and a hospital culture that values having ties to the community, the scholarship program helps the hospital recruit and retain quality employees,” says Heather Logelin, executive director of the Foundation. “It helps us

‘home-grow’ great caregivers.”

Since the scholarship program was established in 1995, the Foundation has awarded 20 scholarships totaling nearly \$15,000.

“Many of these have been to individuals working on their RN degree, but we have also supported people enrolled in programs to become childbirth educators, massage therapists, radiology techs, midwives, dental hygienists and sexual assault nurse examiners,” Logelin says.

Bill Frommelt, manager of ancillary services at RFAH, also received a Foundation scholarship. Frommelt has just started a graduate program at the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management and is working toward his master of health care administration degree.

“The scholarship was terrific,” Frommelt says. “It was very helpful, and another example of ways the hospital and Foundation invest in local employees. My coursework is already offering me ideas I can bring back to River Falls Area Hospital and support the hospital’s employees and growth.” ❖

Scholarships awarded

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL HEALTH CARE STUDENTS

IT’S NEVER TOO late to learn,” says Roxann Brookshaw, surgery technician/certified first assistant at River Falls Area Hospital, who is now also a student at the College of St. Catherine.

With her children grown up and her interest in her career still strong, Brookshaw decided last fall to go to the College of St. Catherine to become a registered nurse.

In addition to her time, the tuition and commuting costs are a big investment for Brookshaw. She was grateful when she was awarded a scholarship from the Kinnickinnic Health Foundation to help with those expenses.

After her graduation in late 2009, Brookshaw wants to continue working at RFAH.

“The doctors are fabulous, and the clinic and hospital are

Barn Dance raises more than \$50,000 for Free Clinic

More than 300 people danced and dined at the first annual Kinnickinnic Health Foundation Barn Dance in October, raising the roof and more than \$50,000.

This year the proceeds from the event will go to the Free Clinic of Pierce and St. Croix Counties, which is scheduled to open in April of this year.

For more information about the free clinic or to volunteer or make a donation, please contact Heather Logelin, executive director, Kinnickinnic Health Foundation, at 715-426-4503 or visit www.riverfallsareahospital.com and click on *Foundation*.



Growing with you in mind

RFAH SURGERY DEPARTMENT EXPANDS

The River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH) Surgery Department will soon be opening its newly remodeled space to increase capacity, reduce waiting times, and enhance privacy and comfort for patients.

“Patients will be able to get in sooner for surgery, and we’ll have the capacity we need as we add new specialists and new surgical procedures,” says Randy Farrow, president, RFAH.

RFAH is adding a new endoscopic unit, which includes two procedure rooms and four cubicles for patient intake and recovery. This unit will be in the space formerly occupied by specialists’ clinics. Equipment has also been upgraded, with monitors and other equipment that are mounted so that they are adjustable for comfortable viewing by doctors.

The operating room suites are also undergoing construction. Scheduled for completion this summer, new space will be built that will add one more operating room, more recovery space, more space for equipment storage and an employee lounge.

“Patients will have more privacy and will be isolated from noise and distractions in the hospital,” says Susan Bushard, RN, manager of Surgical Services. “The construction process is being carefully planned to avoid disturbing patients. Patients should not be affected by the construction process at all.”

Preparing for

Steps to a successful surgery

WHEN YOU’RE going to have surgery, it’s understandable to be a little nervous. Even outpatient surgery, which doesn’t require a hospital stay, can cause some anxiety.

But there are some steps you can take to ease your worries. Understanding the process and planning ahead a bit can help pave the way for a smoother time and a faster recovery.

ASK QUESTIONS

For starters, be sure to ask your doctor about anything you don’t understand. You’ll want to know the risks, what improvements to expect, how long they might last, and the risks of not having the procedure. You should also know your surgeon and his or her qualifications.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Giving yourself a little extra care beforehand can help prepare your body to handle the stresses of surgery. Get plenty of rest and eat a well-balanced diet. Your doctor may suggest a daily multivitamin as well.

If you are a smoker, you can do yourself a favor by quitting—or at least cutting back—before surgery. Smoking delays healing.

Be sure to ask your doctor if you should stop taking any prescription or over-the-counter medicines or dietary supplements before your surgery.

Before your surgery, you should plan for your recovery. You may need to make some changes in your home, such as removing scatter rugs or purchasing a raised toilet seat. Ask your doctor what supplies you’ll need and whether you’ll need to have someone



Surgery

care for you at home. Make those arrangements before your surgery, as well as transportation to and from the hospital.

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

When you have surgery at River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH), a surgery nurse will call you four to five days before your surgery to record a preoperative health history, answer any questions, review your preoperation preparation instructions, and make sure that you have stopped taking medications and supplements as directed by your doctor.

“This saves a little time when you arrive and prevents delays and cancellations,” says Susan Bushard, RN, manager of Surgical Services, RFAH. Most patients are instructed not to eat or drink during the night before or day of their surgery.

THE DAY OF SURGERY

Most patients are requested to arrive one or two hours before the surgery. Leave all your valuables and jewelry at home.

At registration you’ll receive an ID bracelet and be taken to the Same Day Surgery area. You’ll change into a gown and slippers, and get hooked up to a warm air system that will keep you warm and comfortable while your IV is started and another check is made on your health. The anesthesiologist will then discuss your anesthesia options and answer your questions.

Your surgeon will see you, confirm

Your comfort comes first. Patient comfort is important at River Falls Area Hospital. Before surgery, a Bair Hugger® gown keeps a patient cozy. The patient can control the temperature of the warm air that flows through the special gown.



the surgical procedure and the location of the surgery, and actually mark the surgery site as you watch. This is one of many safeguards to prevent errors in surgery.

“You may be asked repeated questions,” Bushard says. “We just keep checking for safety.”

After you are prepared and everyone is ready, the process stops briefly. It’s called “pause for the cause,” and it’s another check for the safety of the patient. The surgeon and staff verify out loud the patient’s name, allergies, the procedure, the site and other information.

After the surgery you’ll be taken to the recovery area where you will be monitored carefully until you meet discharge criteria. That may take from 45 minutes to five hours, depending on your surgery.

“We assess your pain and make you as comfortable as possible,” Bushard says. Your family will be notified by pager that your surgery is complete.

If you don’t need to stay overnight, you’ll be discharged into the care of a friend or family member with written instructions about caring for yourself at home, when to see a doctor and what to expect. Within a couple of days, a nurse will call you to check on your progress and answer any questions.

“We give our patients a lot of personal attention and try to make their experience as comfortable as possible,” Bushard says. In a patient satisfaction survey of metropolitan and regional hospitals, River Falls Area Hospital ranked first in same-day surgery. ♦

In a recent survey, RFAH’s same-day surgery was ranked first in patient satisfaction.



RIVER FALLS AREA HOSPITAL

EXERCISE

Tai Chi

Instructor: Mark Tomlinson
Tuesdays, Jan. 9-March 13
6:30-8:30 p.m.

RFAH Classroom B/C

\$72 per 10-week session for members, \$85 for nonmembers

Tai Chi is a martial art that uses slow, graceful movements and meditation to improve balance, posture and fine motor control. All ages and levels are welcome.

Fit Kids

Call 715-426-4545 for class schedules

5:30-6:30 p.m.

RFAH Classroom B/C

FREE

Fit Kids will get kids moving by incorporating stretches, heart-pounding action, creative strengthening techniques and even fun, hands-on learning. For ages 5 through 10.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

Childbirth

Call for class schedules

RFAH Classroom B/C

\$65 per couple

Prepare for the birth of your baby. These classes are offered both during the week and on the weekend. Classes are limited to 10 couples.

Fast Track Childbirth Education Classes

Call for class schedules

RFAH Classroom A

\$50 per couple

This fast-paced course covers information from the time that you enter our hospital in labor until immediately after delivery. Classes are limited to five couples.

Sibling Class: Big Brother/Big Sister

Call for class schedules

6:30-8 p.m.

RFAH Classroom A

\$10 per family

When families are sharing the birth of a new child with other children at home,

the brothers and sisters of the new baby also face a new relationship. We'll talk about what babies are like, practice diapering a doll and take a tour of The Birth Center, where mom will be staying when she has the baby. Recommended for children ages 2 years and older.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

American Cancer Society: Look Good, Feel Better

First Monday of the month on alternating months: Jan. 8, March 5
7 p.m.

Classroom A

COMING EVENTS

Raising Kids Who Can: Skills Training for Parents of Younger Children

Roger A. Ballou, PhD,
licensed marriage and
family therapist

Mondays, Jan. 15, 22, 29
7-8:30 p.m.

RFAH Classroom B/C

**\$30 per single parent,
\$45 per couple**

The River Falls Area Hospital's Wellness & Fitness Center is sponsoring a three-week class to teach new skills to help you successfully parent your child. Learn a highly effective parenting model by which you can guide your young child to become respectful, responsible and self-directed. This program is based on the highly successful Adlerian approach to parenting.

■ Jan. 15: "Understanding your parenting style"

This session focuses on exploring various parenting styles to understand which get positive results.

■ Jan. 22: "Encouraging good behavior and correcting misbehavior—Part 1"

This session provides you with an understanding of your child's goals and needs that may lead them to misbehave.

■ Jan. 29: "Encouraging good behavior and correcting misbehavior—Part 2"

Learn how your child responds better to natural and logical consequences rather than punishment to change behavior.



A free, national public service program to help women undergoing cancer treatment learn to cope with the appearance-related side effects of treatment and regain a sense of self-confidence and control of their lives. Contact Rebecca Hayden in the Wellness & Fitness Center at 715-426-4545.

Smoking Cessation Clinic

Mondays, Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29; Feb. 5, 12; and Wednesday, Jan. 10 7 p.m. (session lasts one to 1½ hours)

**RFAH Classroom A
\$45**

This program designed by the American Lung Association helps you quit smoking and maintain your new nonsmoking lifestyle.

Drivers Refresher Course

**Call for dates
8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
RFAH Classroom B/C
\$10 (checks payable to AARP)**

AARP is offering an eight-hour classroom refresher for drivers 50 and older. Learn how to avoid driving hazards. Auto insurance discounts are offered in most states—contact your insurance agent.

CPR, AED AND FIRST AID CLASSES

The River Falls Area Hospital and the River Falls Area Ambulance Service (RFAAS) are teaming up to offer more training opportunities right here in River Falls—so when our neighbors need help, they will get it faster. With

a wide range of choices, you can learn for the first time or take a refresher class. To register, call the hospital's Wellness & Fitness Center at 715-426-4545.

Heartsaver AED Initial (AED and CPR training)

**Thursday, Feb. 8
6-10 p.m., RFAH
\$35 (does not include book)**

**Heartsaver AED Refresher
Thursday, Feb. 15
6-9 p.m., RFAH
\$20 (does not include book)**

**Heartsaver First Aid (CPR, AED and First Aid)
Thursday, March 8
5-10 p.m., RFAAS
\$65 (does not include book)**

**Heartsaver First Aid Refresher
Thursday, March 15
6-9 p.m., RFAAS
\$25 (does not include book)**

**Healthcare Provider Initial
Thursday, Feb. 22
8 a.m.-5 p.m., RFAAS
\$60 (does not include book)
Three students minimum**

**Healthcare Provider Refresher
Thursday, March 29
6-10 p.m., RFAAS
\$25 (does not include book)**

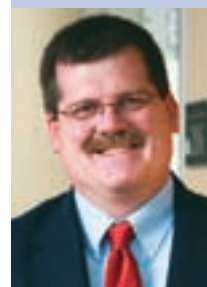
Three students minimum
CPR For Friends & Family
By request only—non-certification

Introducing new members of our medical staff



Heather Tvedt Davis, MD, board-certified pediatrician. Davis is a graduate of the University of North Dakota and served her

residency at Phoenix Children's Hospital and Maricopa Medical Center. She was board-certified in 2003, has special interests in treating asthma and diabetes, and speaks Spanish.



Patrick Sura, MD, family practice. Sura is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and has been in practice for 18 years. He served his resi-

dency at the University of Wisconsin Hospital. Sports medicine is one of Sura's special interests.

A look at cataract surgery

BLURRY, DIM, hazy, fuzzy—you might see the world this way if you have cataracts.

Cataracts are cloudy areas of the eye's lens, which is normally clear enough to let light focus sharply on the back of the eye.

Besides blurred vision, cataract symptoms might include seeing faded colors, halos around lights or objects, or having trouble seeing at night.

For many, surgery can help. If

cataracts cause vision problems that get in the way of your daily activities, such as driving, working, reading or watching TV, you might consider surgery.

Cataract surgery is one of the most common operations in the country and at River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH), and success rates are high.

“There are rarely serious problems,” says Jeffrey Christensen, MD, ophthalmologist, who performs cataract and other eye surgeries at RFAH. “Cataract surgery is much

easier than it used to be because we make very small incisions. Most people go home the same day and are back to regular activities the next day.”

Cataract surgery removes the cloudiness and may further improve vision with the new lens that is inserted during the surgery. Often, people who had to wear glasses before cataract surgery no longer need them.

If cataracts are affecting your daily life, you and your doctor may want to consider surgery. ❖

Introducing Dr. Christensen

Jeffrey Christensen, MD, ophthalmologist, is now offering eye care at the River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH) specialist clinic and performing cataract, glaucoma, eyelid and other eye surgery at RFAH.

“The core aspects of eye care can be handled very well here in River Falls,” says Christensen.

Christensen has lived in the River Falls area for 10 years. “I was very pleased to have the opportunity to see patients in the River Falls area. We enjoy knowing people in the community, and it brings a new aspect to my work here.” He will also continue to practice at the Minneapolis Medical Eye Clinic and Phillips Eye Institute in Minneapolis, where he has offered eye care for 25 years.

Christensen sees patients at the specialist clinic now located in the clinic building at the RFAH and River Falls Medical Clinic campus. For more information or an appointment, call 715-426-4518.



HOW TO REACH US

General Information . . . 715-425-6155
Kinnickinnic Foundation 715-426-4503
Sleep Center 715-426-4696
Wellness & Fitness 715-426-4545
Sports Medicine &
Rehabilitation 715-426-4537
The Birth Center 715-426-4515
River Falls Medical Clinic 715-425-6701
Ellsworth Medical Clinic 715-273-5041
Spring Valley
Medical Clinic 715-778-5591

For hospital information and services, visit www.riverfallsareahospital.com.

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