From Heart Attack to Senior Olympics
Cardiac rehab helped one man’s heart beat stronger

Patients are Family for New Doctor

New Clinical Trial Tackles Knee Pain

Tips for Winter Workouts
Ask a Doc

**Q:** Do I need an emergency room or urgent care?

**A:** Emergency care denotes any life-threatening, unexpected illnesses or injuries, such as acute chest pain, severe shortness of breath, severe and uncontrollable bleeding, stroke symptoms and severe pain. Our urgent care clinics can supplement medical care from your primary care physician for minor acute injuries and illnesses. Our urgent care centers treat conditions such as common illnesses like flu or stomach bug, minor burns, minor lacerations, sprains, fractures, or physicals for work or school. Learn more at MyHaywoodRegional.com/UrgentCareorER

Answer from: Dr. Henry Watkins, Emergency Medicine
Haywood Regional Medical Center

**Q:** Can an infant develop seasonal allergies?

**A:** Symptoms such as runny nose and sneezing in infants are typically due to viruses instead of allergies. Seasonal allergies develop after exposure to allergens. It usually takes at least 1-2 seasons of allergen exposure before symptoms of allergy develop. Seasonal allergies usually start to be symptomatic in children around the age of 2.

Answer from: Dr. Anna Mooney, Pediatrician, Mountain Pediatric Group

**Q:** What programs are available to help indigent, very poor people with serious medical problems?

**A:** Haywood Health Center in Waynesville (Blue Ridge Community Health Services) accepts patients with private and public insurance as well as those who are uninsured. Those without health coverage are charged on a sliding-scale fee system. However, no one is ever turned away for an inability to pay. Call 828.246.6372 or visit brchs.com/haywood-health-center to learn more.

Answer from: Dr. Hal Hooper – Chief of Staff
Haywood Regional Medical Center

Haywood Regional Medical Center is committed to providing the highest quality care possible, along with the expertise and leading edge technology you expect at larger hospitals, all conveniently close to home. We are supported by Duke Health’s clinical quality and patient safety and LifePoint Health’s extensive resources, knowledge and experience in operating community hospitals.

**Services encompass over 30 medical specialties, including:**

- Cardiopulmonary Services
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Emergency Services
- Fitness Center & Wellness Programs
- Home Health / Hospice
- In-Patient Psychiatric Unit
- Intensive Care Unit
- Women’s and Children’s Services including OB/GYN, Labor & Delivery, Prenatal Classes, Pediatrics, Lactation Consultants.
- Laboratory Services
- Pain Management
- Primary Care Clinics
- Rehabilitative Services
- Sleep Medicine
- Sports Medicine
- Urgent Care
- Vein Center
- Wound Care
- Surgical Services including Vascular/Thoracic, Spine, General, GYN, Orthopedics, Ear, Nose and Throat, Eye, Oral and Podiatry

Submit your general health questions at MyHaywoodRegional.com/askthedoc and your question may be answered in an upcoming issue.
From the CEO

On behalf of all at Haywood Regional Medical Center we want to wish you a Happy New Year. The year of 2016 made Haywood Regional mindful of what a wonderful community we luckily serve. We are eager to begin 2017 and will continue to make your health our priority.

This community is deserving of a hospital they can entrust with their health care needs at all times. I am dedicated to securing that trust and satisfaction. This issue of Healthy Happenings will address several of the ways we continue to follow through with our promise to provide personalized, compassionate, and quality care to improve the health of our communities. We strive to become the best hospital available in not just our immediate area, but all of Western North Carolina and beyond. Our emergency department is a perfect example. From an admission to discharge, we connect every service necessary in order to return you to an optimum healthy state. We have outstanding doctors, nurses, resources, and technology in place during your time of need. Our emergency department also offers shorter wait times and will provide a personalized approach to your needs.

This issue will also highlight our expansion of women’s care services, the benefits of cardiac rehabilitation, and ways to avoid being inactive during the long winter months. Our job is not just to treat you when you are here for a sick visit or surgical procedure. Our goal is to help you maintain health and wellness for years to come.

All of us at Haywood Regional want to thank you for choosing us as your healthcare provider. We hope you enjoy the very first edition of our Healthy Happenings magazine.

In promising health,
Rod Harkleroad, RN, MMHC
CEO, Haywood Regional Medical Center

Inside:

Ways to Avoid a Winter Workout Rut | 8  From Heart Attack to Senior Olympic Training | 14

6  Ride On: Waynesville cyclist credits Haywood Regional with getting him back on the road

8  Haywood Regional Health and Fitness Center Classes

9  Colon Cancer Screening Saves Lives

10  Haywood Women’s Medical Center Expands with New Doctor

11  Haywood Regional Expands Access in Western North Carolina

12  New Clinical Trial Tackles Knee Pain

On the Cover:
Patients are Family for Dr. Gwan-Nulla

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In promising health,
Rod Harkleroad, RN, MMHC
CEO, Haywood Regional Medical Center
Dr. Daniel Gwan-Nulla was just a little boy the first time a nurse held him up so he could see his father at work in the operating room. The inside of the human body, and the fine, technical, work of his father’s hands, made a lasting impression.

“I was fascinated,” he said.

The hospital in his native country of Cameroon was basically his home as a child. His father was the chief medical officer and his mother was a nurse. He watched his father make rounds and listened as he talked to patients. He followed his mother as she cared for the sick. He often spent weekends and nights at the hospital with his parents.

“What I really admired about my parents, especially my dad, was his compassion towards his patients,” said Gwan-Nulla. “A lot of times, if he had a sick patient, he would keep going back and forth to their room, checking on them. You could just see that he really cared.” Those early lessons in compassionate care inspired him to pursue a career in medicine.

Today, Gwan-Nulla is leading the new thoracic and vascular surgery service at Haywood Regional Medical Center. He’s the hospital’s first thoracic and cardiovascular surgeon. The specialty focuses on diseases of the chest, heart, lungs, esophagus and blood vessels. Gwan-Nulla is also serving kidney dialysis patients with surgical access needs. It’s a special calling for him because his mother was on dialysis.

The new service line means patients don’t have to travel to Asheville, or even farther, to get care. Gwan-Nulla attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania. He completed his internship and residency at the Milton Hershey – Penn State University Medical Center and was chief resident in cardiothoracic surgery at Wayne State University School of Medi-

“\textbf{What I really admired about my parents, especially my dad, was his compassion towards his patients.}”

— Dr. Daniel Gwan-Nulla
cine in Detroit, Michigan. He has tremendous expertise in minimally invasive surgery and in dialysis access surgery, as well as endovascular interventions. Gwan-Nulla started building the practice at Haywood Regional Medical Center from the ground up in August 2015. He says patient outcomes, based on objective quality metrics, have been excellent.

Patients, like Jeff Taylor, say Gwan-Nulla saved their lives. Taylor was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. The cancer had metastasized to his brain, liver and other organs. The tumor in his lung had eroded into a major airway tube causing a severe infection in his chest. He had been treated at other local hospitals but his condition was getting worse. He was then transferred to Gwan-Nulla at Haywood Regional Medical Center.

Gwan-Nulla realized the infection in his chest had to be taken care of to give him a chance to fight the cancer. It would mean major surgery to remove the large tumor in his lung. Taylor wanted a doctor who had the skills to fix the problem and who would treat him like family. Gwan-Nulla removed about 35 percent of his right lung and had to take muscle from Taylor's ribs and wrap it around the damaged airway tube to keep it from falling apart. Taylor woke to find Gwan-Nulla sitting at his bedside in the ICU – much as the doctor's father had done with patients back in Cameroon.

“I was scared, everything you can imagine was going through my mind,” Taylor recalled. “But as soon as I heard Dr. Gwan-Nulla speak, I was instantly calm.”

Today, more than a year after the surgery and chemotherapy, Taylor shows no signs of cancer.

“He’s a fantastic surgeon,” Taylor said. “I would drive to the hospital at 2 a.m. to talk with one of his patients to give them a pep talk because I owe so much to Dr. Gwan-Nulla.”

When he’s not caring for patients at Haywood Regional Medical Center, Gwan-Nulla enjoys giving back to his native Africa through the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons. The group, consisting primarily of Christian surgeons from the United States, trains surgeons in Africa. Gwan-Nulla, the academy’s treasurer, has completed missions to Cameroon and Ethiopia. He’s going to Kenya this summer. He and his wife also established the Dr. Alexander Gwan-Nulla Memorial Fund, named after his father, which aids hospitals, orphanages and educational sponsorships in Africa and Haiti.

“I think it’s a calling for me,” said Gwan-Nulla. “God blesses us so that we can be a blessing by giving back. It is very gratifying and rewarding.”

His wife, Dr. Meesha Gwan-Nulla, is an internist at Haywood Regional Medical Center. They have two daughters and a son. They came to Haywood County from Missouri, partly to be closer to family on the East Coast. He’s looking forward to expanding the practice.

“We like this community,” he said. “We like the people. We are hoping to make this our home.”

Schedule your appointment today. If you do not have a primary care doctor call our Physician Referral Line at 800.424.DOCS (3627) or visit MyHaywoodRegional.com/FindaDoc

Thoracic and Vascular Services

Vascular

- Carotid endarterectomy
- Peripheral bypass surgery such as: Femoral to femoral, femoral to popliteal and femoral to distal arterial bypass
- Vascular access: Arteriovenous fistulas and grafts for dialysis and other long-term vascular access

Thoracic

- Minimally invasive lung surgery for lung cancer and other diseases of the lung
- Minimally invasive surgery for gastroesophageal disorders such as acid reflux, achalasia and hiatal hernias
- Esophageal resection for cancer
- Diaphragmatic hernia repair
- Management of pleural and pericardial effusions
- Bronchoscopy and Mediastinoscopy
Ride On

Waynesville cyclist credits Haywood Regional with getting him back on the road

Bob Gaddis was 37 miles into his ride one Saturday in April when he saw the car pulling up to a side street ahead of him.

He made eye contact with the driver, as he’s done countless times before in his 20 years riding road bikes. He was sure she saw him coming.

But as he passed, the car pulled out.

He swerved to avoid collision. The bike hit the curb at about 15 miles an hour and went airborne.

Gaddis, still attached to his bike by shoes clipped to the pedals, slammed onto the sidewalk.

He thought he was OK at first.

Then he felt extreme pain in his hip. He could tell his hand was broken.

He got unclipped from the bike and tried to stand but couldn’t.

Gaddis called his sister. He told her he needed to go to urgent care. By the time she got there, it was clear he was seriously injured.

An ambulance took him to the emergency department at Haywood Regional Medical Center.

The first X-ray didn’t show damage to his hip. He told the doctor something didn’t feel right. She ordered a CT scan.

It identified a serious hip fracture.

“The first thing I thought was, well, my cycling days are probably over,” he says.

Gaddis had never been in surgery. He was about to head into a major operation.

But the looming surgery wasn’t his biggest fear in the emergency department that day.

His mind was racing to all the other activities he could do just to find some of the enjoyment he got from biking.

“When I was laying in the hospital room, I was thinking you’ll never get to ride down Dark Ridge, feel the sweat and the sun anymore. I like that. I just like to be out. There’s a little waterfall, and every time I ride by it, I’m just happy to be alive.”

Gaddis really likes being outside.

Fortunately for Gaddis, Dr. Paul Cutting was the on-call orthopedist the day he was injured.

When Cutting arrived, Gaddis told him his goal was to get back on his bike.

Cyclist Bob Gaddis had hip surgery at Haywood Regional Medical Center after he was hit by a car.

He credits all of the caregivers at the hospital with getting him back on his bike.

Talk with a Doc

A complimentary dinner program that features a variety of healthcare providers speaking on health topics of interest to you. Held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Haywood Regional Café. RSVP required: 800.424.DOCS (3627)

Reducing Risk of Cardiac Disease, Feb. 2; Colon Cancer - Prevention and Screening, March 21; From Pain to Performance: Hip & Knee Replacement, April 11; Women & Children’s Health, May 16; Spine Health, June 20; Better Sleep - Better Health, July 18; Sports Medicine for the Weekend Warrior, Aug. 15; Healthy Aging Panel, Sept. 19; Breast Cancer Panel, Oct. 17; Winning the War on Lung Cancer, Nov. 21
For a lot of people, in their 60s, that goal would be out of reach. But Gaddis is blessed with very dense bones and he’s got highly developed leg muscles from his years running and biking.

Cutting told him he would probably ride again.

The hip fracture was a serious case. It required special pins to put Gaddis’ bones back together.

He underwent surgery with the orthopedic surgical team of Cutting and Dr. Gerald King and then recovered for four days in the hospital. He went home with a walker and couldn’t put much weight on his leg at first.

He kept exercising and getting stronger.

Within two months, he was riding 30 miles a day – beating his goal of being on a bike by July when the Tour de France started.

Today, Gaddis credits all the caregivers at the hospital for getting him back on his bike.

“I couldn’t have gotten any better care anywhere else. Everything was smooth. Everybody was so polite. I just couldn’t believe how friendly everybody was; and that helps. From the minute I went in there, until I was discharged, it was nothing but a pleasant experience.”

— Bob Gaddis

With two locations, Haywood Regional Urgent Care is built around real families. Our convenient hours and quality providers will make sure you can easily and quickly get the care you need for non-life threatening illnesses and injuries.

Open 7 days a week from 8am – 6:30pm

Locations:

Urgent Care Waynesville
556 Hazelwood Ave
828.452.8890

OR

Urgent Care Canton
55 Buckeye Cove Rd
828.648.0282

If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please call 911 or go to your nearest Emergency Room

MyHaywoodRegional.org/urgentcare
Eight Ways to Avoid a Winter Workout Rut

1. **ATTEND FITNESS CLASSES**
   Group exercise offers a variety of benefits you might miss out on if you choose to work out on your own. Some of the benefits include exposure to a social and fun environment, a safe and effective workout, a consistent exercise schedule and an accountability factor for participating in exercise. Haywood Regional Health and Fitness Center offers an array of classes to choose from. To learn more, visit MyHaywoodRegional.com/Fitness.

2. **GET OUTSIDE**
   Embrace the cold months. Engage in other activities such as snowboarding, skiing or even sledding. Sledding can burn up to 450 calories per hour. Don’t let the cold and winter months keep you inside and from achieving your goals. Bundle up correctly, use caution and be safe if exercising outdoors.

3. **COMMIT TO HEALTHIER EATS**
   Eating healthy isn’t always easy, but committing to a healthier diet can be one of the smartest decisions you can make. Healthier food habits can increase productivity, enhance your mood, regulate weight, and help you to live longer and happier. If you’re not sure where to start, make an appointment with our registered dietician and nutritionist. For more information about nutrition, call 828.452.8092 or visit MyHaywoodRegional.com/NutritionEducation.

4. **GET A TRAINING BUDDY**
   Training with someone is a great way to have accountability. You can rely on one another for motivation and encouragement. Ideally, you will be pushing each other to do better and continue your workout routines.

5. **GET A PERSONAL TRAINER**
   Not sure where to start? The personal trainers at Haywood Regional Health & Fitness Center have academic training, numerous years of training experience and a passion for helping others achieve their health and fitness goals. You also will be educated on the necessary tools needed to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle for years to come.

6. **SET A REASONABLE GOAL**
   Setting a goal can make you look forward to achieving something. Use the acronym SMART to set your goal and stick to it. SMART stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

7. **STICK TO A ROUTINE**
   Research shows that it can take up to two months to form a new and consistent habit. Staying in a routine can help. Mark your calendars and set your alarms for the same times every day. Consistency is key.

8. **DO NOT MAKE EXCUSES**
   It’s easy to talk yourself out of being active, due to old injuries, pain, exhaustion and more. Haywood Regional Medical Center offers a comprehensive program of rehabilitation and physical therapy designed to not only eliminate the deficits of injuries but prevent them from recurring. We employ a variety of advanced techniques designed to restore normal strength, motion and flexibility, and reduce pain as quickly and safely as possible. To learn more, visit MyHaywoodRegional.com/Rehab

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Haywood Regional Health and Fitness Center Aquatics Programs

Contact the Aquatics Department at 828.452.8056 for more information on these classes.

**Star Baby Class**
Ages 6-18 months
**Tuesday, March 7-28** • **4-4:30 p.m.**
The purpose of this class is to develop a high comfort level in the water while at the same time training the adults in water safety and drowning prevention. This class provides confidence building with a fun and loving experience as a foundation for a lifetime of aquatic learning. Class integrates lots of toys, songs, and praise.

**Star Tot Class**
Ages 19-36 months
**Tuesday, March 7-28** • **4:30-5 p.m.**
The purpose of this class is to develop a high comfort level in the water while at the same time training the adults in water safety and drowning prevention. This class provides confidence building with a fun and loving experience as a foundation for a lifetime of aquatic learning. Class integrates lots of toys, songs, and praise.

**Weekend Lifeguard Training**
March 23-26
Course yields a 2-year lifeguard certification and 2-year CPR certification, suitable for employment at pool settings in all 50 states. Red Cross guidelines require complete attendance.
Colon Cancer Screening Saves Lives

Even if you believe you have no risk factors, a colon screening could help save your life

"That’s the thing with colon cancer. Many do not realize that colon cancer can begin and have zero symptoms associated with it," said Filiberto Colón, MD, Gastroenterologist of Mountain Medical Associates. "When discovered early, it is highly treatable."

AWARENESS
Established in 2000, March is now dedicated as Colon Cancer Awareness Month. A common misconception is that colon cancer is a "man’s disease." Colon cancer affects both men and women, and typically is found in individuals 50 and older. However, cases in younger adults are on the rise, making awareness and screenings more crucial than ever before.

According to the Colon Cancer Alliance, colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S. and the lifetime risk is about 1 in every 20 people will develop the cancer. Make sure you are aware if your family has a history of colon cancer in a first-degree relative (parent, sibling, child) as you may have 2 to 3 times the risk of developing the disease.

YOUR BEST BET
Having a screening is the process of looking for cancer, even if there are no signs or symptoms. A screening can help prevent cancer by detecting polyps (small growths on the lining of the colon). While many polyps are not cancerous, a vast majority of them can develop into cancerous cells.

WHAT TO EXPECT
A colonoscopy screening exam is almost always done on an outpatient basis. A mild sedative is usually given before the procedure and then a flexible, slender tube is inserted into the rectum to look inside the colon. The test is safe and the procedure itself typically takes less than 45 minutes.

Dr. Paul Levy, Gastroenterologist with Mountain Medical Associates says, “Sixty percent of colon cancer deaths could be avoided if everyone aged 50 or older were screened regularly (according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Misconceptions, thoughts, and fears about the test can lead someone to avoid getting a colonoscopy that, in fact, can save their life.”

Randy Fouts
“I had just turned 50 and Dr. John Lafata, my internist, talked to me about the importance of doing it now. I had zero symptoms but I got my colonoscopy and on Sept. 25, 2015, I was told I had cancer. Cancer isn’t something you want to hear – when you hear those words, it’s like a train has hit you. They caught this at exactly the right time because it hadn’t spread to anything. If I had put it off until the next year, it would have been a good battle. I underwent surgery and chemo and I am now cancer free. Now I feel like it’s one of my priorities to get the message out there. I try to explain that it’s not as bad as it seems. Are you going to let the embarrassment get in the way of saving your own life? Because the colonoscopy saved mine.”

Colon Cancer At-A-Glance*

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the U.S.
On average, your risk is about 1 in 20, although this varied widely according to individual risk factors.
90% of new cases occur in people 50 or older.
People with a first-degree relative (parent, sibling or offspring) who has colon cancer have two to three times the risk of developing the disease.
There are currently more than one million colon cancer survivors in the U.S.

*Source: American Cancer Society
Haywood Women’s Medical Center Expands with New Doctor

Patients can expect consistent access to caregivers and close to home as Haywood Women’s Medical Center continues to grow, its newest physician says.

Dr. David Kirk started at the practice in September 2016 after 18 years as a physician in Morganton.

Strong relationships with providers mean better patient satisfaction. “They identify with their physician and when they call and come in they know it’s the same people,” he says.

He joins Dr. Robin Matthews, a board certified physician who specializes in gynecology, at the practice.

A fulltime nurse midwife, Jody Schmit, will start soon.

Kirk exclusively performs hysterectomies laparoscopically. The minimally invasive procedure allows patients to be discharged the same day as the surgery.

Other services at the practice include:
- Obstetrics
- Well-women gynecological exams
- Adolescent gynecological care
- Ultrasounds
- Minimally invasive hysterectomy
- Abnormal pap smear treatments
- Endometrial ablation
- Infertility evaluation
- Breast and cervical cancer screenings
- Contraceptive management, including IUDs
- Hormone replacement
- Incontinence
- Pelvic pain
- Pelvic prolapse
- Perimenopausal symptoms
- Laparoscopic surgery
- Treatment of menstrual disorders

Kirk is accepting new patients. The practice is located adjacent to the Haywood Regional Medical Center campus at 35 Facility Drive in Clyde.

If you are in need of a primary care physician, please call our physician referral line at 800.424.DOCS (3627) or visit: MyHaywoodRegional.com/FindaDoc.

Classic Apple-Cinnamon Overnight Oats

Remembering to prepare these oats before bed may not be easy, but you’ll love waking up to a pre-made breakfast. Eating a healthy breakfast is important when pregnant!

- Pour one cup of nonfat milk over 2/3 cup rolled oats and stir in 1/4 tsp cinnamon.
- Cover with plastic wrap and let sit in the fridge overnight.
- In the morning, add 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts and a small apple (chopped).

Women’s Medical Center Classes

Preparation for Childbirth
March 30-April 20; June 1-June 22
Thursdays 7-9 p.m.
This class will prepare you, the expectant mother and your loved ones, with the facts about labor and delivery including information and techniques to handle the labor process.

Breastfeeding A-Z
February 9; April 26 • 7-9 p.m.
Taught by our board-certified lactation consultants, this class provides information about the importance of breast-feeding to babies and their families. Techniques for latch-on and position are demonstrated. Combining breast-feeding with pumping and returning to work or school is also introduced. Expectant mothers should attend this class 1 to 3 months before their due date.

Your Amazing Newborn
Feb. 16; May 4 • 7-9 p.m.
Newborn babies have remarkable abilities. This class focuses on the physical appearance, behaviors, and reflexes of your new baby. Daily care techniques will be demonstrated. Developmental stages of young babies will be discussed, including your important role as baby’s first teacher.

All parenting classes are located at the Fitness Center, for information please call 828.452.8440.
Spotlight on Community Involvement

Haywood Regional expands access in Western North Carolina

With the support of Haywood Regional Medical Center, Blue Ridge Community Health Services (BRCHS) opened Haywood County’s newest medical home on June 1, 2016. Haywood Health Center (formerly Good Samaritan Clinic) is located at 34 Sims Circle, Waynesville. Since re-opening under the Blue Ridge Community Health Services name, the clinic has expanded access to affordable, comprehensive health services for residents of Haywood and surrounding counties, whether patients have insurance or not. The clinic services include family medicine, behavioral health, nutrition and community education.

“Too many people in Haywood County lack appropriate access to a primary care medical home,” said Dr. Richard Hudspeth, Chief Executive Officer for BRCHS. “Haywood Regional Medical Center’s willingness to provide support for our clinic speaks volumes about the compassion the organization feels for individuals without a medical home.”

Haywood Health Center accepts most insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare, and those without insurance pay on a sliding scale based on family size and household income. As of Jan. 6, 2017, the Haywood Health Center has served 926 unique patients through 1,853 patient visits since opening with BRCHS.

“This clinic has created real opportunities to improve health outcomes for Haywood County residents,” said Donda Bennett, GSC’s Executive Director. In the building next door, the staff of Good Samaritan has continued in their mission of volunteerism and faith-based advocacy by providing much-needed wrap-around and support services, such as case management, to enhance the patient-centered experience at Haywood Health Center.

Haywood Regional Medical Center is providing funding to support the operation of the Haywood Health Center. In addition, Haywood Regional will collaborate with BRCHS to ensure access to inpatient hospitalization and specialty services for BRCHS patients. Haywood Regional will accept referrals of BRCHS patients for hospitalization, emergency medical services, urgent care, diagnostic lab and imaging, labor and delivery services, rehabilitative services and specialty physician care. Haywood Regional will also coordinate with BRCHS to provide appropriate discharge planning, patient tracking and coordination of care.

“Without a community health center, uninsured Haywood County residents are left with very few options outside of using the emergency room for non-emergent conditions,” said Rod Harkleroad, RN, MMHC, Haywood Regional Chief Executive Officer. “We’re proud to partner with BRCHS on this project because we’re certain our investment will result in a healthier Haywood County.” For more information, visit www.brchs.com/haywood-health-center or call 828.246.6372.

Haywood Health Center is a “Community Health Center” (CHC). It is a local, privately-owned, non-profit healthcare provider with a focus on serving individuals who are low income and medically underserved. Blue Ridge Health serves as a primary care medical home by offering the following integrated services: family medicine for adults and children, pregnancy care, behavioral health, dentistry, pharmacy, lab, radiology, and ultrasound. Additional services include community and migrant outreach and health education services, in both community and school-based settings. For more information, visit brchs.com/haywood-health-center or call 828.246.6372.

BRCHS is a nonprofit community health center that has been providing high quality and affordable medical, dental and mental health care, as well as promoting health awareness/education for over 50 years. Services are conveniently provided in 13 locations throughout Western North Carolina. For more information, call 828.692.4289 or visit brchs.com or facebook.com/BRCHS.

Haywood Regional Medical Center is committed to providing the highest quality care possible, along with the expertise and leading edge technology you expect at larger hospitals, all conveniently close to home. It is supported by Duke University Health System’s world-renowned leadership in clinical excellence and quality care and LifePoint Health’s extensive resources, knowledge and experience in operating community hospitals. For more information, visit myhaywoodregional.com.
A new clinical trial in Haywood County is helping participants manage knee pain through weight loss and exercise.

The program is known as WE-CAN, which stands for Weight Loss and Exercise for Communities with Arthritis in North Carolina. Participants learn about diet and exercise at Haywood Regional Health and Fitness Center, under the direction of Dr. Kate Queen, site principal investigator.

This study is funded by the NIH (National Institutes of Health) and is being done in partnership with UNC Chapel Hill and Wake Forest University. The Haywood site offers access to older residents in a rural setting and a state-of-the-art medical fitness facility on the campus at Haywood Regional Medical Center.

The study is already showing great promise. Twenty participants are recruited in a new wave every two months and three waves are underway.

Debbie Hensley, 58, decided to join because she had extreme knee pain and needed to lose weight.

She and her team are delighted that she has surpassed her goal for weight loss at this point in the study.

“My friends are all flipping out. Nobody believes it’s really me,” says Hensley. “And I have so much more energy. I have grandchildren I can keep up with. This program has really been a blessing for everybody that’s involved.”

Her knee pain is virtually gone.

WE-CAN researchers want to test the effectiveness of weight loss and exercise on the pain of knee osteoarthritis, and make sure it works in the real world.

To answer these kinds of questions, participants agree to be randomized. That means half will enter the nutrition and health group where they will learn about healthy lifestyle topics. The other half will join the supervised weight loss and exercise group. Both groups commit to return for regular follow-up for 18 months.

In most communities, doctors who want to refer their patients for supervised weight loss and exercise have no programs available, Queen says. This model will serve as a blueprint for clinicians and public health officials to implement broadly.

Using diet and exercises for pain control in knee osteoarthritis promises to limit the need for drugs and surgery, which are far more invasive and expensive.

In WE-CAN, interventionists who have completed extensive training supervise the diet and exercises. This enhances the cost effectiveness of the program and limits the need for more expensive professionals, like exercise physiologists or licensed dietitians who may not be available in every community.

Nationally recognized researchers are seeking to demonstrate to insurance companies that investing in this community based exercise and weight loss program is beneficial to patients and their bottom line.

Three times a week, participants in the diet and exercise group check in by computer on-site, and track their attendance and answer questions about their pain before each session. Participants follow a comprehensive plan comprised of walking, strength train-
ing activities, stretching and a cool-down set. They record their exertion during exercise and the number of laps they walk.

Queen says there’s already a lot of data about the importance of exercise and weight loss in reducing knee pain. An academic study found overweight patients who lost more than 10 percent of their excess body weight and exercised regularly for 18 months had a 50 percent reduction in pain even with serious degenerative arthritis in the knee.

In contrast, the medications most commonly used to manage this kind of pain, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, typically offer only a 20-30 percent reduction in pain, Queen says.

The researchers also showed that if you lose weight and exercise, you get the best results. Losing weight helps and exercise alone can also help but “if you put the two together, that’s when the magic happens,” Queen says.

“Many people respond to their knee pain by doing less and physicians don’t always understand that it’s an important part of the management to get people on their feet and going,” she says.

Participants can be in the trial as long as they are medically cleared to exercise. Participants are not excluded because of other health problems, although may need to obtain clearance from their doctor to enroll.

Debbie Hensley, who is well on her way to success after just five months, says the camaraderie of the group, and the caring staff, have made being in the trial a great experience.

And she has a new appreciation for Haywood Regional Fitness Center.

“I really appreciate it much, much more than before because I just came occasionally,” says Hensley. “But now you see how much work and effort everybody puts into making this a great place to be.”

“I have so much more energy. I have grandchildren I can keep up with. This program has really been a blessing for everybody that’s involved.”

— Debbie Hensley
It was a typical day for Darrell Douglas on Aug. 17, 2014. He was enjoying a few games of basketball at his local church when suddenly he fell face first to the ground. He was experiencing a heart attack. Onlookers immediately started CPR, then he was transported via EMS to the hospital where he subsequently had quadruple bypass heart surgery.

“I had just retired and was more active than ever before playing golf and basketball,” says Douglas. “It was one of those silent things I guess. I never would’ve thought.”

After his surgery, Douglas began to see David Peterson, MD, of Western Carolina Cardiology. Peterson recommended he begin cardiac rehabilitation at Haywood Regional Health and Fitness Center (HRHFC).

The typical cardiac day for Douglas would consist of checking vitals such as blood pressure, oxygen levels, and heart rate and then begin exercising on a treadmill, elliptical or bike, depending on what was most comfortable for him.

“You were not a number on a treadmill and left alone. The attention to detail for each person’s needs are a priority for them and easily noticeable,” he says. “They made sure to not let me do too much too soon, and cause more damage to my heart.”

He began the program slowly and ensured his heart rate stayed at the healthy level to gradually increase his stamina. Soon after, he started lifting light weights and stretching. After 36 sessions of cardiac rehab, he graduated with a certification, celebration, and lots of cow bell ringing.

“It felt good. Like you really accomplished something. They made it a big deal,” said Douglas.
After he graduated cardiac rehab, he began the STEP program at HRHFC. STEP is a physician referred supervised exercise program that starts with a physical therapy evaluation to ensure that you are ready to exercise. After his physical therapist cleared him to start, Douglas met with an exercise physiologist to develop his personal fitness plan. As part of the STEP program Douglas received full membership to the Health & Fitness center for 60 days, twice weekly small group training sessions with an exercise specialist, and nutrition education from a registered dietitian for $60.

“I used to think I ate healthy, but realized I actually didn’t after meeting with Lauren the nutritionist. Now I stay with a diet that is little to no sodium and cholesterol,” says Douglas.

Douglas now considers himself to be a better swimmer, stronger lifter and faster runner due to a 15-pound weight loss. He is now training for the Haywood County Senior Olympic Games in 2017. He strives to be active every day, and his typical workout routine consists of weight lifting, swimming laps, sprints and running.

He says that without a doubt he would recommend all the services he experienced at Haywood Regional.

“A big part of what I can do today is due to the programs and people at Haywood Regional, and for that I am eternally grateful,” he says.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Week, Feb. 12-18, focuses attention on cardiac rehabilitation’s contribution to improving the health and physical performance of people at risk for heart disease as well as those who have been diagnosed with heart disease or dysfunction. Haywood Regional wants to honor, congratulate and thank Douglas for choosing us to care for him.

“**A big part of what I can do today is due to the programs and people at Haywood Regional, and for that I am eternally grateful.**”

— Darrell Douglas

You will love this Simple Cooking with Heart Mexican recipe because it’s simple to make, it is heart healthy and budget friendly.

**Nutrition Information:**
Serving Size: 1 cup; 245 calories; 34mg sodium; 45g carbohydrates; 15g protein

**Ingredients**
- nonstick cooking spray
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tbsp. garlic, jarred, minced
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 jalapeño, chopped
- 2 16-oz. canned, low-sodium black beans, undrained
- 1 15-oz. canned, no-salt-added, diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- chopped, fresh cilantro, (optional)

**Directions**
1. Spray large pot with cooking spray, over medium-high heat add onion and cook until translucent (5 minutes).
2. Add garlic, cumin and jalapeno and cook 1 minute more.
3. Add beans to pot and lightly mash with a potato masher or fork.
4. Add tomatoes and broth. Bring to a boil and reduce to medium heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
5. Serve topped with chopped fresh cilantro (optional).
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"The teamwork atmosphere is most enjoyable and effective here at Haywood Regional. A family-like relationship between members of interdisciplinary departments makes the team work smoothly. Everyone works hard and is proud to serve our patients."

— Wendy Rector, RN

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