## Health FALL 2024 Connections

Seasonal Newsletter of Spencer Hospital

## FIVE STAR RATED

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

- Spencer Welcomes Three Providers to Local Medical Community
- Supporting Our Community During a Natural Disaster & Beyond
- Benefits of Total Joint Replacement Surgery at Spencer Hospital
- Birth Center Offers Advanced Care in Welcoming Environment





RURAL & COMMUNITY TOP HOSPITAL 2024 9-TIME RECIPIENT Chartis



Spencer Hospital

A Message TO OUR COMMUNITIES

### SPENCER STRONG: RESILIENCE & UNITY IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

As I reflect on the past few months, it's clear that we have experienced one of the most significant challenges in our community's history-the devastating flood that impacted so many lives. It's important for me to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your remarkable support and resilience during this time. Together, we've shown that we are more than just a community; we are one united force-Spencer Strong.

The flood tested our strength and resolve, but it also illuminated the incredible spirit of our community. In the face of adversity, we came together in ways that were nothing short of inspiring. I am proud to say that Spencer Hospital was able to maintain all services during this natural disaster, thanks to the dedication of our staff, providers, and volunteers. Their unwavering commitment to care for our patients, even amidst the chaos, was truly commendable.

I also want to extend my gratitude to neighboring hospitals and communities that came to our aid during this crisis. Your swift response and willingness to help did not go unnoticed. This joint effort not only helped us respond to the emergency but has also fortified the bond between Spencer Hospital and our region. We are reminded that we are all part of one team, and together, we can overcome any obstacle.

As we move forward, we must remember the lessons learned during this crisis. The power of unity has strengthened us, and I believe we are now more resilient than ever. We've emerged from this experience not just as individuals but as a community united in purpose and spirit.

Beyond the flood, I want to express my deep appreciation for your continued support and trust in us. Your engagement in initiatives like our toy drive has brought joy to children in our community during these difficult times. It is these acts of kindness that remind us of the importance of compassion and community spirit.

Looking ahead, I am excited to share that we are in the process of developing a new five-year strategic plan that will pave the way for the future of Spencer Hospital. This plan

will focus on enhancing our services and ensuring that we continue to meet the evolving needs of our community.

I am also incredibly proud of the recognition our staff and providers have achieved. From being named among the top 100 and top 20 rural hospitals in the nation to earning a 5-Star CMS rating, our commitment to quality care is evident. Our recent CIHQ designation and various Diagnostic Imaging accreditations further showcase the excellence we strive for in everything we do.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your support and partnership. The strength and unity we have demonstrated in the face of adversity will carry us into a brighter future. Let us continue to stand together, embodying the spirit of Spencer Strong, as we work towards a healthier, more resilient community.



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**Brenda Tiefenthaler, President** 

## **SPENCER HOSPITAL:** COMMITTED TO QUALITY & EXCELLENCE IN RURAL HEALTHCARE

SPENCER HOSPITAL HAS EARNED MULTIPLE ACCOLADES AND ACCREDITATIONS, A TESTAMENT TO ITS REPUTATION AS A LEADING RURAL HEALTHCARE FACILITY IN IOWA. THIS YEAR SPENCER HOSPITAL WAS ONE OF ONLY SEVEN HOSPITALS IN THE STATE OF IOWA TO ACHIEVE A 5-STAR QUALITY RATING FROM THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES, AND THE ONLY HOSPITAL IN NORTHWEST IOWA. THE 5-STAR RATING UNDERSCORES SPENCER HOSPITAL'S COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE IN PATIENT CARE.



led to its recognition as one of the Top 20 Rural and Community Hospitals by the National Rural Health Association in 2024, highlighting its exceptional performance in healthcare delivery.



The hospital has also achieved accreditation from the Center for Improvement in Healthcare Quality (CIHQ), which reflects its commitment to care practices and standards that prioritize patient safety and quality outcomes. CIHQ's rigorous accreditation process included an extensive on-site assessment, affirming the hospital's dedication to excellence.

The hospital's Diagnostic Imaging department stands out for its use of advanced technology, offering comprehensive imaging services. Accredited by the American College of Radiology (ACR) in eight modalities-including Breast Ultrasound, MRI, and CT scans-Spencer Hospital demonstrates a rigorous commitment to high standards of image quality and patient safety. It is notably the only hospital within



Additionally, Avera@Home Hospice of Spencer Hospital has been recognized by Strategic Healthcare Programs (SHP) as a "Superior Performer," based on a caregiver and family satisfaction score that ranks in the top 20% nationally of all eligible SHP clients for the 2023 calendar year.

Julie Christensen, chair of the Spencer Hospital board, expressed pride in the healthcare team with these sentiments: "This recognition not only highlights the outstanding efforts of the healthcare professionals and staff at Spencer Hospital but also underscores the hospital's vital role in our community's health and well-being."

Ultimately, the numerous accolades and recognitions earned by Spencer Hospital reflect a simple truth: the professionalism and compassion of the hospital's employees, medical staff, and partners in care are what make it one of the state's preeminent rural hospitals. Northwest lowa is truly fortunate to have such an outstanding and caring team dedicated to providing exceptional healthcare.

### Spencer Hospital Star Tree Scavenger Hunt!

Spot 5 Spencer Hospital star trees hidden throughout this magazine! Email the page numbers to marketing Dspencerhospital.org by Nov. 30, 2024 for a chance to win a Spencer Hospital swag bag!



Notably, Spencer Hospital has been recognized as one of the Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals for nine consecutive years, making it the only hospital in lowa to maintain this status

CHARTIS throughout the assessment period by the Chartis Center for Rural Health. This accomplishment also



















a 75-mile radius designated as both a Comprehensive Breast Imaging Center and Lung Cancer Screening Center by the ACR.



### DR. DAVID KEITH HONORED WITH IOWA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION HOSPITAL HERO AWARD



ON OCTOBER 9, 2024, DR. DAVID KEITH, A BELOVED PHYSICIAN AT AVERA MEDICAL GROUP SPENCER. WAS ONE OF 12 HEALTHCARE WORKERS WHO RECEIVED THE PRESTIGIOUS HOSPITAL HERO AWARD AT THE IOWA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN DES MOINES. THIS AWARD RECOGNIZES HEALTHCARE WORKERS WHO HAVE DISPLAYED EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE IN CRISES AND DEDICATED THEIR LIVES TO SERVING THEIR COMMUNITIES. DR. KEITH WAS NOMINATED BY HIS PEERS. WHO HIGHLIGHTED HIS EXCEPTIONAL COMPASSION AND INNOVATIVE **APPROACH TO PATIENT CARE.** 

Dr. Keith's nomination paints a vivid picture of a doctor who moments of joy and sorrow with those he serves. transcends traditional expectations. Whether donning a white coat, colorful scrubs, or even a kilt, Dr. Keith's unique style reflects his commitment to his patients and the vibrant community he serves. Described as having a "heart of gold," he consistently goes above and beyond in his role. His multifaceted talents include being a doula, storyteller, photographer during deliveries, and serenading laboring mothers with his musical skills.

In the high-pressure environment of the Emergency Department, Dr. Keith excels in leading critical situations, a talent developed through vears of medical missions and mentorship. His commitment to healthcare extends to active participation in hospital committees and a readiness to embrace diverse responsibilities, including officiating weddings during the pandemic. Above all, Dr. Keith is recognized for treating every individual with compassion, addressing not only their physical ers in the field. health but also their emotional and spiritual needs.

During a surprise announcement event at Spencer Hospital, Dr. Keith shared his gratitude, reflecting on the overwhelming support he received from his colleagues. "Words cannot express how grateful I was being surrounded by a room full of my work family," he remarked. He humorously recalled being led to the event under the pretense of discussing a pet project, only to be met with a surprise celebration organized by more than thirty of his colleagues.

Having served at Spencer Hospital for eleven years, Dr. Keith initially anticipated a five-year stint before moving closer to family. However, he soon discovered that the community and the hospital had become an integral part of his life. "This position came about through God's hand." he explained, describing how he felt an immediate connection to the hospital and its mission.

Dr. Keith emphasizes the importance of community in his work, stating, "I am just another woven thread in the community." His experiences as a physician have allowed him to forge deep connections with patients and staff alike, learning from them as much as they learn from him. He cherishes the opportunity to deliver babies, comfort patients at the end of life, and share

Dr. Keith acknowledged the support of his wife, Julie, who has been his partner in both life and career. He expressed deep appreciation for the team at Spencer Hospital, recognizing their collective efforts as vital to providing exceptional care. He reflected on the honor of receiving the Hospital Hero Award. "I am deeply touched and blessed to be here," he said. "I know that I am where God needs me to be." His heartfelt words encapsulate the spirit of compassion and dedication that defines not only his career but also the essence of healthcare. The rec-

ognition he received is a testament to his unwavering commitment to his patients and community, a legacy of service that will undoubtedly inspire oth-

Sara Taylor (left), Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation Director, with Dr. Keith (right) at the Iowa Hospital Association Annual Meeting's Hospital Hero award presentation.



### **AVERA MEDICAL GROUP SPENCER** WELCOMES NEW PROVIDER

Dr. Luke De Jong is a family physician at Avera Medical Group Spencer, where he provides comprehensive care with a focus on maternity services. Growing up in Rock Rapids, he was inspired by his father's commitment to family medicine. Dr. De Jong completed his undergraduate studies at Baylor University, followed by medical school at the University of Iowa and residency at the University of Kansas. He emphasizes preventive care and holistic support, ensuring families receive compassionate guidance through significant life events, including pregnancy and childbirth, in a close-knit community setting.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. De Jong at Avera Medical Group Spencer, please call (712) 264-3500.



Dr. Luis Cuervo is a distinguished medical oncologist joining the Abben Cancer Center in Spencer, IA, through a unique partnership with the University of Iowa Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center. He will provide full-time oncology services while also serving as an associate professor at the University of Iowa, Dr. Cuervo, who completed his medical training at the University of Texas Medical Branch, is board-certified in internal medicine and specializes in medical oncology and hematology. With experience as a field surgeon in Iraq and a master's in counseling, he is dedicated to improving cancer care in rural communities.

Dr. Luis Cuervo. Medical Oncologist at Abben Cancer Center

## **PODIATRIC SURGEON JOINS NWIA BONE, JOINT & SPORTS SURGEONS**

Dr. Bobby Ivey is a podiatric surgeon with Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons, seeing patients and performing surgeries at Spencer Hospital on Mondays. He attended Des Moines University College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery and completed his residency with Sanford Health in Fargo, ND. Originally from Storm Lake, Dr. Ivey is dedicated to addressing foot and ankle conditions, such as plantar fasciitis and Achilles tendonitis. Passionate about improving patients' quality of life, he encourages those experiencing pain to reach out directly for appointments and support.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Ivey at Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons, please call (712) 262-7511.



Dr. Luke De Jong, Family Physician at Avera Medical Group Spencer

## **NEW MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST** JOINS ABBEN CANCER CENTER



Dr. Bobby Ivey, Podiatric Surgeon at **NWIA Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons** 

## **SPENCER HOSPITAL:** A BEACON OF **RELIABILITY DURING A NATURAL DISASTER**



SIOUX RAPIDS CLINIC REBUILDS AFTER FLOOD: Sioux Rapids Family Care of Spencer Hospital faced significant devastation due to floodwaters. In response, Spencer Hospital staff, along with countless community members, rallied together to clean out the clinic in preparation for a much-needed remodel. Community members have also played a crucial role in locating temporary clinic space, ensuring that healthcare services can continue while renovations are underway. This collaborative effort highlights the resilience and commitment of Spencer Hospital and the community to meet the healthcare needs of Sioux Rapids residents. The temporary clinic is located at 702 Blake St. in Sioux Rapids.

**ON JUNE 22, 2024, AS FLOODWATERS SURGED ACROSS** SPENCER AND THE REGION. SPENCER HOSPITAL EMERGED AS A TRUSTED BEACON OF RELIABILITY FOR THE COMMUNITY. IN THE FACE OF THIS UNPRECE-DENTED NATURAL DISASTER, THE DEDICATED STAFF AT SPENCER HOSPITAL SPRANG INTO ACTION, ENSURING THAT THE HEALTHCARE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS WERE MET AMIDSTTHE CHAOS AND UNCERTAINTY.

As floodwaters rose, an ambulance and emergency medical services (EMS) staff were strategically stationed on both sides of the river, ready to assist with rescues and medical emergencies. This proactive approach demonstrated the hospital's commitment to the safety and well-being of the community. Even during a time of NORTHWEST

personal uncertainty, hospital staff left their families to ensure that Spencer Hospital was fully staffed and equipped to handle an influx of patients in need of care.

Spencer Hospital was an integral partner with the City of Spencer and other government, business and nonprofit agencies as the community responded to the unprecedented flood that impacted our community," said Spencer Mayor Steve Bomgaars, "The hospital team was a vital part of the daily emergency meetings of community partners providing much needed information about the hospital's actions with regard to the citizens of Spencer. Spencer Hospital provided much needed EMS services and quickly set up a tetanus clinic to help area residents. Spencer Hospital was a tremendous partner in 10WA STRONG CARING FOR OWN

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Recognizing the importance of preventive care, Spencer reflects the heart of our mission at Spencer Hospital." Hospital, in partnership with Clay County Public Health, set up a Spencer Hospital's longstanding commitment to supporting tetanus clinic at the hospital. This initiative was vital as residents the healthcare needs of the region was evident in its actions began the arduous task of cleanup following the flood. By throughout the disaster. The dedication shown by the staff, who providing accessible vaccinations, the hospital helped protect worked tirelessly under challenging conditions, showcased the community from potential health risks associated with flood their unwavering commitment to the community they serve. recovery.

As the floodwaters recede and the community begins to heal, Brenda Tiefenthaler, President of Spencer Hospital, expressed Spencer Hospital remains a trusted resource for healthcare. her pride in the staff's unwavering commitment to patient care The actions taken during this natural disaster illustrate not during this challenging time. "I am deeply grateful for the team's just a response to an emergency, but a profound dedication advanced planning and dedication," she stated. "Their ability to to the people of Spencer and Clay County. In times of need, come together and provide quality care in the midst of a natural the hospital stands ready to support, heal, and provide hope, disaster truly reaffirming its status as a reliable beacon of care for all.

Photo Provided By: Sondra's Snapshots

### CHRISTMAS IN JULY **TOY DRIVE BRINGS JOY TO FLOOD-AFFECTED CHILDREN**

In a heartfelt response to the recent flooding that impacted many families in Spencer and Clay County, Spencer Hospital hosted a Christmas in July Toy Drive that brought smiles to the faces of over 400 children. The initiative allowed children affected Spencer resident reached out to abundance of donations, Spencer

new toy, providing them with a Foundation, which graciously sense of normalcy and joy amid challenging circumstances. They even had the opportunity to show Santa their toy before they left the hospital.

Spence Hospita

of generosity, with toys donated by hospital staff and supporters from around the country. A particularly touching moment came when a

by the disaster to pick out a the First Responders Children's Hospital delivered a truckload of toys for distribution within the community. This collaboration exemplified the spirit of togetherness that defines Spencer during difficult times.

The toy drive saw an outpouring The generosity shown during enabling them to better support the toy drive continued even after the Christmas in July events wrapped up, truly becoming the "gift that kept on giving." With an

First Responders surprised local teachers by deliverina ambulance loads of toys straight to classrooms impacted by the flooding. Additionally, daycares, churches, and other child services in Clay County also received toys, the children in their care.

Brenda Tiefenthaler, President of Spencer Hospital, expressed her pride in the hospital staff and their

meet the medical needs of the aftermath. For many children, community during the floods, but they wanted to do more," she said. "The toy drive grew from their deep care and commitment to our community. It was heartwarming to see everyone come together to spread joy to our community's children.

The Christmas in July Toy Drive people it serves. The success of provided physical gifts and the toy drive is a testament to its spirit.

receiving a new toy was a moment of happiness that helped lift their spirits and foster a sense of hope.

Spencer Hospital's commitment to the community extends beyond medical care; it encompasses the overall well-being of the

# HEALTHIER TOGETHER



commitment to the community. emotional support to families the hospital's core values and its "Our team worked tirelessly to grappling with the flooding's unwavering dedication to making a difference.

> As the community continues to recover from the flood, initiatives like the Christmas in July Toy Drive remind everyone that kindness and compassion can shine through even the darkest times. Spencer Hospital remains a steadfast partner in rebuilding the health of the community and



### **WELCOMING NEW LIFE:** DISCOVER THE BIRTH CENTER AT SPENCER HOSPITAL

STARTING A FAMILY IS ONE OF LIFE'S MOST SIGNIFICANT JOURNEYS, AND CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLACE FOR THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION IS CRUCIAL. FAMILIES IN THE REGION ARE INCREASINGLY TURNING TO THE BIRTH CENTER AT SPENCER HOSPITAL, WHERE EXPERT CARE SEAMLESSLY INTERTWINES WITH A WARM, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT. THIS UNIQUE SETTING NOT ONLY PRIORITIZES THE WELL-BEING OF MOTHERS AND THEIR NEWBORNS BUT ALSO FOSTERS A COMMUNITY OF CARE THAT MAKES EVERY DELIVERY A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE.

The Birth Center at Spencer Hospital is designed with families in mind. Each delivery suite is spacious and thoughtfully appointed, combining the latest medical technology with a homelike atmosphere. From the moment families step into the Birth Center, they are welcomed into a space tailored for comfort and care. The calming colors, comfortable furnishings, and thoughtful amenities help create a serene environment, allowing families to focus on the joyous occasion of welcoming a new member.

At the heart of the Birth Center is a collaborative team of physicians from Avera Medical Group Spencer and dedicated staff who blend expertise with compassion. This esteemed group includes Dr. David Keith, Dr. Amy Jochims, Dr. William Bensen, Dr. Yelena Coffield, Dr. Luke De Jong, Dr. Nathaniel Meyer, Dr. Travis Witt, and Dr. Amanda Young. Each physician contributes their unique skills and patient-centered approach, ensuring families



receive the highest quality care during this pivotal moment. Working in harmony with nurses, physical therapists, dietitians, and specialists, they create a comprehensive care network that supports families throughout their entire journey, from prenatal to postnatal care.

One of the standout features of the Birth Center is its commitment to supporting various birth preferences. Whether families are considering a Vaginal Birth After Cesarean (VBAC), twins' delivery, or have specific wishes for their delivery experience, the Birth Center is equipped to provide the necessary expertise and emotional support. Dr. Meyer highlights this dedication, stating, "We are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for VBAC births, empowering women to make informed choices about their delivery experiences." The medical team is well-versed in the latest practices and guidelines for VBAC, allowing families to feel confident that their individual needs will be met with care and professionalism.

In addition, Dr. Jochims emphasizes the importance of inclusivity, saying, "At the Birth Center, we strive to make all patients, and their families feel comfortable and welcome. We know that language can be a barrier to care, and we are constantly working to ensure we have the resources needed to care for all people, including our growing Spanish-speaking population." This holistic

### ENHANCING NEWBORN RESPIRATORY CARE

Starting in May, the Respiratory Therapy team at Spencer Hospital introduced Neonatal Hi-Flo and Bubble CPAP machines to assist newborns who need extra care after birth. Remarkably, three babies have been able to stay at Spencer Hospital with their families instead of being transferred to the Avera NICU in Sioux Falls. This initiative was made possible through funding from the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation, underscoring the commitment to enhancing quality care, close to home for newborns. "The Birth Center doesn't just focus on the delivery itself; it embraces a holistic approach that covers the entire journey of parenthood. Families can take advantage of a range of services, from prenatal classes that prepare them for labor and delivery to postnatal support that helps them adjust to life with a newborn." says Ann Polaschek, Spencer Hospital Birth Center Director. "This includes guidance on breastfeeding, infant care, and postpartum recovery, ensuring that both mothers and babies have the resources they need during this transformative time." Postnatal care is particularly vital at the Birth Center, as the team provides follow-up appointments to monitor the health of both mother

Postnatal care is particularly vital at the Birth Center, as the team provides follow-up appointments to monitor the health of both mother and baby. This ongoing support addresses any concerns that may arise, promoting a smooth transition from the hospital to home. Families can rest assured that they have access to a supportive network even after they leave the Birth Center. Additionally, the Best Care for Better Babies Services complements this postnatal support by offering free resources for pregnant women and parents with children from 0 to 5 years old.

"Our Best Care for Better Babies Services is an invaluable resource for our community," says Angel Smith, Clay County Public Health Director. "With individualized home visits, developmental screenings, and connections to local resources, we empower families with the knowledge and support they need for a healthy start." This holistic approach ensures that families are well-equipped to nurture their children's growth and development.

As families prepare to welcome a new member, the Birth Center at Spencer Hospital stands ready to provide expert care and unwavering support. From personalized birth plans that reflect each family's preferences to attentive postnatal care, the team is dedicated to making every step of the journey as smooth and positive as possible.

"Choosing where to start a family is a significant decision, and the Birth Center at Spencer Hospital is here to support families in making this life-changing event as special as possible," said Polaschek. For those interested in scheduling an appointment with one of the skilled and compassionate doctors at Avera Medical Group Spencer, please call (712) 264-3500. The team at Spencer Hospital is ready to help you embrace the joy of new life with expert care and compassionate support.

## DOCTORS WHO DELIVER



Dr. William Bensen



Dr. Yelena Coffield



Dr. Luke De Jong



Dr. Amy Jochims

## AT SPENCER HOSPITAL



Dr. David Keith



Dr. Nathaniel Meyer

approach ensures that every family receives compassionate and personalized care throughout their birthing journey.



Spencer Hospital Birth Center Nursing Staff





Dr. Travis Witt

Dr. Amanda Young

## ADVANCEMENTS IN PATIENT CARE: ABBEN CANCER CENTER UNVEILS ENHANCED CT

This November, the Abben Cancer Center will proudly unveil its upgraded CT scanner, a significant advancement in patient care. This state-of-the-art machine reduces scan times from 45-60 minutes to just 15, enhancing efficiency for patients. With improved image quality, radiologists can deliver more precise diagnoses. The new scanner also supports lung SBRT (Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy) planning, allowing for increased radiation doses while minimizing treatment sessions. It features heartprotecting capabilities for left breast patients and offers stereotactic radiosurgery for brain treatments, ensuring quality cancer care remains local. The Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation partially funded this upgrade, which will also benefit other patients at Spencer Hospital when not in use for Abben patients, leading to faster results and expedited treatments. "This new CT scanner is incredibly exciting and allows us to continue providing quality care closer to home, which is of utmost importance to our team," says Mindy Sylvester, Director of Abben Cancer Center.



## **NEW 3D IMAGING SERVICE** FOR PROSTATE PATIENTS AT SPENCER HOSPITAL



Spencer Hospital recently announced the introduction of a new 3D imaging service for prostate patients, fully funded by the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation. Currently, urologists rely on 2D technology for some prostate biopsies, but an upgrade to the MRI machine this fall will enhance imaging by integrating MRI and ultrasound to produce 3D images. This advancement will facilitate local fusion guided prostate biopsies and streamline treatment planning. "This is really the gold standard these days, and we are excited to offer this service to our community," says Amanda Schany, Diagnostic Imaging Director. Additionally, this upgrade will reduce MRI scan times by 50%, allowing the hospital to accommodate more patients and expedite access to MRI imaging. Gifts to the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation continue to enhance healthcare at Spencer Hospital and the Abben Cancer Center.

I recently had an MRI for my back. I do not do well with MRI's because I am very claustrophobic. Sarah in Diagnostic Imaging was so compassionate and made the experience much better than I expected. I felt comfortable the whole time I was there. Additionally, I've had two knee replacements in Spencer and cannot say enough about the exceptional care that I receive at each appointment.

- PATIENT TESTIMONIAL





712-264-6500 Spencer Hospital

## **THE BENEFITS** OF TOTAL JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY AT SPENCER HOSPITAL



(L to R) Dr. Jason Hough, Dr. Chris Rierson, and Dr. Andrew Pick -Orthopedic Surgeons at NWIA Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons.

WHEN CONSERVATIVE TREATMENTS HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED, TOTAL JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY MAY OFFER A PROMISING SOLUTION FOR INDIVIDUALS SUFFERING FROM DEBILITATING JOINT PAIN. AT SPENCER HOSPITAL, PATIENTS CAN UNDERGO THIS LIFE-CHANGING PROCEDURE WITH EXPERIENCED ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS DR. JASON HOUGH, DR. ANDREW PICK, OR DR. CHRISTOPHER RIERSON FROM NORTHWEST IOWA BONE, JOINT, AND SPORTS SURGEONS.

One of the key advantages of undergoing total joint replacement at Spencer Hospital is the use of Mako roboticassisted technology. This innovative approach allows for greater precision during surgery, leading to better outcomes, including reduced pain and shorter recovery times compared to traditional manual techniques. "The precision of robotic assistance allows me to be more accurate in placing the implant, which can significantly enhance the patient's overall experience and recovery," says Dr. Hough. This focus on precision not only helps achieve optimal alignment but also minimizes damage to surrounding tissues, which is critical for a smoother healing process.

At Spencer Hospital, our dedication to patient care goes well beyond the operating room. Our physical therapists, occupational therapists, and dietitians have teamed up with Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint, and Sports Surgeons to offer a Total Joint Replacement Class and a comprehensive informational book designed to prepare them for surgery. These valuable resources cover everything from preparing the home for post-surgery recovery to understanding what to expect on the day of the operation. They also learn how to best care for themselves after surgery, which can ensure a smoother and more successful recovery. The education provided equips patients with the knowledge they need to feel empowered and confident going into their surgical experience. "We want our patients to know that we are with them every step of the way," Dr. Hough adds. "From pre-surgical education to post-operative care, we ensure that they are fully prepared for this significant life event."

Accessibility is another hallmark of Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint, and Sports Surgeon's approach. Patients in the region can benefit from outreach clinics located at Hartley Family Care, as well as in Pocahontas, Emmetsburg, and Algona. These outreach services ensure that individuals from various communities have access to expert orthopedic evaluations and consultations without the need for extensive travel, making the journey to joint replacement surgery more convenient and accessible.

The process begins with a thorough examination by one of the orthopedic surgeons, who will assess whether a total joint replacement is appropriate for you. Following this evaluation, patients will undergo a pre-surgical physical to gauge their overall health and readiness for surgery.

On the day of the procedure, the surgical team, including nurses, anesthetists, and the surgeon, will prepare patients for their operation, which typically lasts about an hour. Afterward, patients are closely monitored and will transition to the Medical/Surgical floor for nursing care and post-operative rehabilitation.

Spencer Hospital's Short-Stay Knee Replacement Program may also be available for eligible patients, allowing for a recovery period of less than 24 hours, often enabling patients to recuperate in the comfort of their own home.

The journey to recovery continues with personalized physical therapy plans that commence immediately after the procedure. Spencer Hospital offers outpatient physical therapy at several convenient locations, ensuring that all patients have access to the care they need. This can even include specialized services like warm water therapy, which can be particularly beneficial for post-surgical rehabilitation.

If you are considering total joint replacement surgery, Spencer Hospital, along with Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint, and Sports Surgeons, is here to provide the expertise and quality care you need. To schedule an appointment, please contact Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint, and Sports Surgeons at (712) 262-7511.

Experience the difference of robotic-assisted joint replacement at Spencer Hospital, where advanced technology meets dedicated patient care, paving the way for a more active and pain-free future.



### TEAM DAISY AWARD HONORS ICU STAFF

SPENCER HOSPITAL ICU EARNS DAISY AWARD FOR COMPASSIONATE CARE



ICU STAFF MEMBERS WITH NOMINATORS TANYA SNARSKI-CARLSON, WOUND CARE, AND HUSBAND, KEVIN CARLSON.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO SPENCER HOSPITAL'S INTENSIVE CARE UNIT FOR BEING NAMED OUR LATEST TEAM DAISY AWARD RECIPIENTS!

The ICU staff was nominated by both a coworker and a family member of a patient who shared this heartfelt experience:

"Team ICU was incredible during my father-in-law's final stay at the hospital. On his first night in the ICU, we weren't sure if he would make it through. Despite the uncertainty, every team member took the time to explain everything that was happening – from vital signs to lab work – and allowed us to be actively involved in his care. They remained calm and compassionate even when we were feeling overwhelmed. They answered countless questions and ensured not only that my father-in-law was well cared for and comfortable, but also that our entire family felt supported. I deeply appreciate their care, compassion, and concern during such an emotional time for our family."

This nomination beautifully illustrates the core values that Spencer Hospital's ICU team embodies every day: compassion, teamwork, and dedication to patient-centered care. The Daisy Award recognizes the extraordinary efforts of nurses and healthcare teams who consistently go above and beyond for their patients and families, offering not just medical support but emotional comfort during some of life's most challenging moments.



## **GEM AWARD** RECIPIENTS HONORED FOR GOING THE EXTRA MILE TO PROVIDE TOP-NOTCH SERVICE

### CONGRATULATIONS TO FIVE SPENCER HOSPITAL PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED AS OUR LATEST GEM (GOING THE EXTRA MILE) AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING CARE AND SERVICE!

**Erin O'Brien**, receptionist at Abben Cancer Center, was nominated by a patient's family member who shared, "At each visit, Erin is always very positive and willing to answer questions or connect us with someone in the department that can. Every time I call Abben, Erin is professional and so accommodating to meet our needs. I've observed her consistently meeting the needs of other patients and families in the waiting room as well."

**Kara Schmillen**, patient advocate, and **Katie Cook**, social worker at Spencer Hospital, were nominated for a Team GEM award by their coworker who noted, "Kara and Katie work tirelessly to help patients return home or find suitable facilities for rehab or permanent care. They face the challenges of securing facilities willing to accept a patient's insurance and meet their needs. Despite the difficulties, they never give up and keep families informed throughout the process. They grieve with families, show compassion, and provide unwavering support. Even on long days, they return ready to continue their work. They leave personal matters at home and are always prepared to help wherever needed. They are truly a blessing to Spencer Hospital, our patients, and our staff."

Lastly, **Beth Henningsen** and **Candace Daniels** from Human Resources were nominated for a Team GEM award by their coworkers who shared, "Beth and Candace have been the driving force behind all of the Toy Drive magic this summer! When the idea of a community Toy Drive came up, Beth and Candace jumped in wholeheartedly to help! What began as a simple Toy Drive soon transformed into a spectacular Christmas in July, spreading joy like wildfire! Beth and Candace have worked tirelessly, showing hearts of gold and embodying the spirit of real-life elves of joy and generosity. They devoted endless energy to sorting, categorizing, organizing, and distributing thousands of toys – all with big smiles on their faces. They have gone above and beyond for their coworkers, area children, and our entire community.

These GEM award recipients exemplify the very best of what it means to be part of the Spencer Hospital family. Their dedication to their roles and their compassion toward patients, families, and colleagues make a lasting impact. We are so proud to honor them with these well-deserved awards. Their efforts inspire us all to continue striving for excellence in every aspect of patient care and service. Congratulations once again to Erin, Kara, Katie, Beth, and Candace for their remarkable achievements and commitment to going the extra mile!

### Nominate Someone Fantastic!

Anyone - a coworker, manager, patient, family member or physician - can complete a nomination form for either a GEM or DAISY nominee. You can nominated anyone who works at Spencer Hospital or any of the Spencer Hospital clinics - including the two offsite dialysis centers, Northwest Iowa ENT, Hartley Family Care, Milford Family Care or Sioux Rapids Family Care. The online nomination form can be found at www.SpencerHospital.org under the "Patients & Visitors" tab and then clicking on "Recognizing Our Finest."



### ERIN O'BRIEN



### KARA SCHMILLEN & KATIE COOK



### BETH HENNINGSEN & CANDACE DANIELS

## **SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED:** FOUNDATION'S EMPLOYEE DISASTER ASSISTANCE FUND



Kerin Blair, a Patient Accounts employee at Spencer Hospital, reflects on how the flood took so much but revealed heartwarming treasures like the shoes pictured above. While many of her cherished items were damaged, these baby shoes from 1928 remained in pristine condition. These Blair baby shoes were worn by all four brothers—John, Norm, Gary, and Arlo of Greenville. They are a precious reminder of resilience and family history, standing out as one of the few salvaged treasures from the disaster. AT SPENCER HOSPITAL, DEDICATED EMPLOYEES ARE THE BACKBONE OF QUALITY PATIENT CARE. THEIR COMMITMENT AND COMPASSION DIRECTLY IMPACT THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY. IN LIGHT OF RECENT CHALLENGES, PARTICULARLY THE FLOODING DISASTER IN JUNE THAT AFFECTED MANY LIVES – INCLUDING THOSE OF ITS STAFF – SPENCER HOSPITAL RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES DURING THEIR TIMES OF NEED.

To address this urgent situation, the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation established the Employee Disaster Assistance Fund. "Our Foundation board and hospital leadership team saw a unique opportunity to support our hospital staff during this crisis," said Sara Taylor, Executive Director of the Foundation. "Our mission is to enhance care at Spencer Hospital, and we couldn't achieve that without our incredible employees. It's been heartwarming to provide assistance so they can focus on caring for our patients during these tough times."

The Employee Disaster Assistance Fund has made a significant difference, thanks to the generosity of many donors, including the Iowa Hospital Education and Research Foundation. Spencer Hospital has successfully assisted over 83 employees in two phases of flood recovery efforts, helping them navigate this challenging period.

Wes Simpson, Spencer Regional Hospital Foundation Board President adds, "Spencer Hospital thrives thanks to the dedication of caring staff members who support patients' needs. To ensure this continues, we felt it was essential to create the employee disaster assistance fund. Having exceptional employees is crucial for the well-being of everyone Spencer Hospital serves."

By prioritizing employee well-being, Spencer Hospital ensures that staff can continue delivering exceptional care to patients. Their resilience and dedication are vital, and through initiatives like the Employee Disaster Assistance Fund, the hospital reinforces its commitment to both its staff and the community it serves. Supporting employees means supporting patients, and together, they strive to create a healthier, more resilient community.



\* SPENCER HOSPITAL \* auxiliary gift shop *Christmas Land* \* NOW OPEN! \*

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## **CONSTRUCTION UPDATE:** SPENCER HOSPITAL'S NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AT SPENCER HOSPITAL IS MOVING FORWARD STEADILY, WITH SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN RECENT MONTHS. AS WINTER APPROACHES, THE CONSTRUCTION TEAM HAS MADE REMARKABLE PROGRESS, AND THE BUILDING IS NOW NEARLY FULLY ENCLOSED. THIS MILESTONE ALLOWS FOR UNINTERRUPTED INTERIOR WORK, KEEPING THE PROJECT ON TRACK.

"The new emergency department will facilitate a better care experience for our patients and an enhanced work environment for our healthcare team," said hospital president Brenda Tiefenthaler. "We especially value that the project will greatly improve public access and visibility of this critical service."

With the structure nearly enclosed, the interior has become a bustling hub of activity as teams work diligently to install essential systems, finishes, and fixtures. This enclosure is vital, allowing interior crews to make headway regardless of winter weather, which helps maintain the project timeline.

The Spencer Hospital Emergency Department represents more than just a construction project; it signifies a commitment to enhancing healthcare access and services for our region. By prioritizing patient-centered care and safety, the new facility will create a state-of-the-art environment for both patients and staff, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes.

With each passing week, the vision for a modern, efficient, and safe emergency care facility is becoming a reality, poised to serve our community for many years to come. We look forward to welcoming the community to see the completed project this spring.

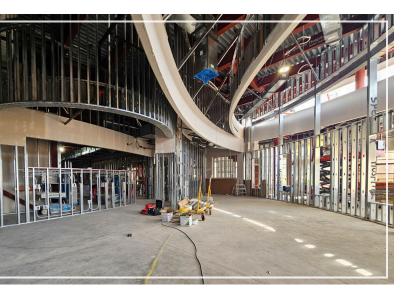
## **Cold & Flu Season: Protect Yourself from Respiratory Illnesses**

As cold and flu season approaches, it's important to keep yourself protected from respiratory illnesses, with the top three culprits bei influenza (flu), RSV, and COVID-19. All three viruses share similar symptoms, making it challenging to distinguish between them without testing.

Antibiotics are ineffective against viruses; however, a few antiviral medications are available for both flu and COVID-19. Most of the til symptoms from these respiratory illnesses can be managed home by following these guidelines:

- Get plenty of rest and stay hydrated.
- Use over-the-counter medications to treat fever and discomfort
- Read over-the-counter labels: most cough and cold medicines a not recommended for children under 6 years old.





Pictured Above: ED Entrance and Waiting Room Area

ng	<ul> <li>Stay nome from school, work, and have been fever-free for at least 24</li> <li>Seek medical attention immediatel you experience difficulty breathing</li> <li>Prevention is key to staying he</li> </ul>	hours. ly if g.
<b>ne,</b> at	Avoid close contact with	
	Primary Care Provider Jessica Kelley, ARNP	

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