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Wellspring

Excellence & Innovation

LET OUR DOCTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOU



Expert Care, Closer to Home

As the impact of a two-year global pandemic continues to affect our community, at NorthBay Healthcare we continue the battle as we also count our blessings.

We are nimble enough to pivot when facing a calamity, even one as enormous as this. We have the expertise to COVID-19 test thousands of residents and put vaccines into arms of tens of thousands. We relish a time when we can return to a new normal, remaining the community's trusted care provider on many fronts, from our three NorthBay Center for Primary Care offices, to our NorthBay Urgent Care clinics, from our two hospitals to our many affiliated specialists.

NorthBay Healthcare is laser-focused on bringing Solano County the very best care, from birth to the end of life, employing the latest technology and putting it into the hands of expert physicians who provide world-class care and advanced medicine, close to home.

Why travel to the Bay Area for heart surgery? NorthBay has the first accredited Chest Pain Center in Solano County. Our cardiovascular experts use minimally invasive techniques that are most effective and provide faster recovery time for our patients. We also have a state-of-the-art da Vinci Xi Robot used by a team of expert surgeons.

And let's talk about networking. We count among colleagues some world-renown health care organizations, including Mayo Clinic. NorthBay physicians and specialists collaborate with counterparts via the Mayo Clinic Care Network on behalf of our patients with the most complex cases. We recently partnered with UC Davis Medical Center to improve care when a patient suffers a major stroke. And our Magnet Program of nursing excellence has created ties with hospitals around the world. Right now we have a mentoring relationship with a hospital in Belgium.

But close to home is really where it's at.

Here is where compassion meets advanced medicine. We didn't slow down during the pandemic and we will not now.

Enjoy perusing this edition of *Wellspring*. Get to know the 100-plus physicians in NorthBay Medical Group and their wide range of specialties. They are here for you and your family, when and where you need them.

But first you have to make the choice. Choose a health plan during the open enrollment period. Choose NorthBay and you, too, will be counting your blessings.

B. Konard Jones
President and Chief Executive Officer

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Our collaboration with Mayo Clinic, through the Mayo Clinic Care Network, allows more patients to stay close to home for answers to complex medical questions.



Excellence & Innovation, At Your Service

Let Our Doctors, Teams Make a Difference for You

Excellence and innovation, close to home—that fits NorthBay Healthcare to a T. The question is, “Does NorthBay Healthcare fit you?”

It does if you're looking for expert physicians, starting with primary care specialists in Vacaville, Fairfield and Green Valley—close to home. And that's where every health care journey should start—with the selection of your primary care physician who, along with your primary care team, will see that your needs are met, even if you require a specialist along the way.

It's a good fit if you need a specialist. NorthBay Healthcare Group has more than 100 physicians, with specialties ranging from head to toe.

Need something replaced? NorthBay's orthopedic surgeons will have you asking, “Why did I wait so long to get my new knee/hip/shoulder?”

Looking to add to the family? Our Center for Women's Health team will follow you through pregnancy and delivery in NorthBay Medical Center's Baby Friendly facility.

Struggling with diabetes? Our experts and support team can help you get on track.

If an operation is in your future, wouldn't you want to consider the only hospital in the county with a robotic surgery program?

Our Emergency Departments in both Fairfield and Vacaville are 24/7/365, because you never know when you might need expert help. NorthBay Medical Center has been verified as a Level II Trauma Center since 2014 and is also a Certified Stroke Center, an

accredited Chest Pain Center and certified to provide emergency care for children.

If Urgent Care is needed, NorthBay is ready to meet your needs seven days a week in Fairfield and Vacaville. And coming in Summer 2022, a third location in American Canyon.

Of course there's more: specialists in heart and vascular, pulmonary medicine, rheumatology, osteopathic manipulative medicine, pain management, wound care, urology and a cancer center that has been around since 1987, first in Fairfield and now at the VacaValley Wellness Center in Vacaville, offering physician visits, chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

On the pages that follow, you'll meet the many physicians who make up NorthBay Medical Group, from primary through specialty care. You'll read about insurance options and how we welcome our new patients and help them navigate our system, the NorthBay Way. We've included resources you can come back to, like a map of our four main campuses and our footprint in each of the communities we serve.

An organization doesn't grow from a single hospital to a full-blown health care system in 60 years without listening to the needs of the community. And we've done that, time and time again. NorthBay has been patient when necessary, and bold when opportunities arise. We have formed strong partnerships, including our membership in the Mayo Clinic Care Network. We have found innovative solutions to bring world class medical care home to Solano County.

So if that's what you're looking for, NorthBay will fit you to a T. ❧

SERVICE DIRECTORY

NorthBay's Many Services – All Close to Home!

NorthBay Healthcare's two hospitals, three Center for Primary Care facilities, two Urgent Care centers and numerous specialty clinics are located in the heart of Solano County, delivering advanced medicine *close to home*.

IN VACAVILLE

THE NORTHBAY VACAVALLEY HOSPITAL CAMPUS:

- 1 NorthBay VacaValley Hospital**
1000 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville

Services include: 24-hour Emergency services, 44 medical-surgical beds, six critical care unit beds, 16 emergency bays, two surgery suites, full-service laboratory, diagnostic imaging services, Joint Replacement Program.



- 2 The Surgery Center at NorthBay VacaValley**
1006 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville

Services include: Same day surgery, medical procedures and dental surgeries.



- 3 VacaValley Health Plaza**
1010 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville

Specialties include: Orthopedics, rheumatology, pulmonary function testing, neurology, registered dietitian, wound care, infectious disease, pulmonology, urology and gastroenterology.



- 4 VacaValley Wellness Center**
1020 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville

Specialties include: NorthBay Cancer Center (medical and radiation oncology), diabetes, endocrinology, infusion services, rehabilitation and physical therapy, imaging, pain management, osteopathic manipulative medicine, and specialty pharmacy. (HealthSpring Fitness is temporarily closed.)



ALSO IN VACAVILLE:

- 5 NorthBay Center for Primary Care**
421 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville

Services include: Pediatrics, internal medicine and family medicine, mental health, lab, OB/GYN appointments available, nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.



- 6 NorthBay Urgent Care**
1679 E. Monte Vista Ave., Suite 104, Vacaville

Services include: Urgent Care seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; NorthBay Occupational Health and testing; COVID-19 testing and X-ray services.



IN FAIRFIELD

THE NORTHBAY MEDICAL CENTER CAMPUS:

- 7 NorthBay Medical Center**
1200 B. Gale Wilson Blvd., Fairfield

Specialties and services include: 154-bed acute care hospital, 24-hour Emergency Department with 29 emergency bays, and STEMI (heart attack) Receiving Center, Level II Trauma Center, Accredited Chest Pain Center with PCI, Primary Stroke Center, modern birthing suites, neonatal intensive care unit, critical care unit, comprehensive diagnostic imaging services, cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation, general and robotic surgical services, cardiac catheterization lab.



- 8 Gateway Medical Plaza**
1860 Pennsylvania Ave., Fairfield

Specialties include: General surgery, trauma surgery, sleep medicine, urology, pulmonology, pulmonary function testing, cardiology, cardiac and thoracic surgery, cardiovascular imaging and testing, vascular surgery, heart failure clinic, neurosurgery, neurology and neurodiagnostic testing, spine program, interventional gastroenterology, women's health (includes OB/GYN appointments, nutritional counseling by video or in person, genetic counseling), pain management, speech therapy, audiology and ear, nose, throat and voice.



- 9 NorthBay Health Plaza**
1101 B. Gale Wilson Blvd., Fairfield

Services include: Women's diagnostic imaging, ultra sound, CT scans and bone density.



ALSO IN FAIRFIELD:

- 10 NorthBay Urgent Care**
1320 Travis Blvd., Fairfield

Services include: Urgent Care services seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; COVID-19 testing and X-ray services.



ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- A NorthBay Urology – Napa**
3250 Beard Road, Napa
Monday and Wednesday,
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- B NorthBay Urgent Care – American Canyon**
416 Napa Junction Road, American Canyon
Coming Summer 2022



THE GREEN VALLEY CAMPUS:

- 14 NorthBay Center for Primary Care**

4520 Business Center Drive, Fairfield (Second floor)

Services include: Pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, psychology, lab, OB/GYN appointments available, nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.



- 14 Green Valley Health Plaza**
4520 Business Center Drive, Fairfield (shown above)

Services include: Hospice & Bereavement, Home Health, gastroenterology, cardiology, nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.

- 15 NorthBay Healthcare Green Valley Administration Center**
4500 Business Center Drive, Fairfield

No Medical Services provided. Home to the NorthBay Healthcare Conference Center, Administration, Human Resources, Patient Financial Services, NorthBay Healthcare Foundation and more.



THE HILBORN CAMPUS:

- 11 NorthBay Center for Primary Care**
2458 Hilborn Road, Fairfield

Services include: Pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, mental health, lab, nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.



- 12 NorthBay Center for Orthopedics & Rehabilitation**
2500 Hilborn Road, Fairfield

Services include: Orthopedics, podiatry, sports medicine, rehabilitation services (physical, occupational and speech therapies), X-ray services, and Orthopedic Urgent Care at Hilborn (O.U.C.H.) from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.



- 13 Occupational and Employee Health/Hilborn Administration Center**
2470 Hilborn Road, Fairfield

Home to NorthBay Occupational and Employee Health and testing; NorthBay Ambulatory Administration, Quality, NorthBay Primary Care Call Center and Project Management Office.



Ask Kelly!

Becoming a new patient at any health care organization can be a daunting task.

First you have to find the right doctor, figure out how to make an appointment, find where to go for that appointment, fill out forms on your current health and medical history, get a release of medical information, and get a handle on what specialists, programs and services your new health care system has to offer.

At NorthBay Healthcare we get it. That's why we've made sure that new patients find the help they need to navigate the system right at their fingertips.

Kelly Rhoads-Poston, senior business development liaison, has been helping patients answer questions on insurance and providers for more than 20 years at NorthBay.

She can explain the difference between an HMO and a PPO, as well as between Medi-Cal and Medicare. Do you have double coverage? She can help you get the most out of your health benefits.

And now, patients also have access to information through a "New Patient Resources" online webpage.



A direct link can be found at the top of the NorthBay.org home page, labeled "New to NorthBay?"

The webpage includes a seven-step menu to help you take care of everything from choosing a doctor to transferring your medical records.

"I think it's a valuable page for people who are new to NorthBay and it is designed to answer the most common questions patients have when they come from another health care organization," Kelly said. "It provides information on those first steps, as well as additional resources such as being able to print out new patient forms and have them filled out and ready before their first-patient visit. It's designed to help them easily become a part of NorthBay."

In addition to helping new patients choose a doctor, make an appointment, fill out forms and transfer their health records, the site also includes a link to the NorthBay patient portal page where they can sign up for MyNorthBayDoc. They'll also find links to information on specialists, NorthBay's Mayo Clinic Care Network page and information on Urgent Care services.

Have a question?

Contact Kelly

(707) 301-4071

AskKelly@NorthBay.org



NorthBay Healthcare and Meritage Medical Network have partnered to expand service areas, improving access to care and broadening specialty service options for thousands of Meritage and NorthBay Medicare Advantage HMO patients.

This provides current patients in Meritage a larger specialist network (now including 150-plus NorthBay specialists). It also gives Medicare Advantage patients who've chosen NorthBay Healthcare primary care physicians in Solano County access to Meritage's physicians in Solano, Napa, Marin and Sonoma counties.

Many Plans Include WHA...

The Western Health Advantage health plan

was created to serve local employers and better control premium costs. Now co-owned by NorthBay Healthcare and Dignity Health (formerly known as Mercy Healthcare), it continues to grow and provide expert care for individuals and families in nine Northern California counties: Solano, Sacramento, El Dorado, Placer, Yolo, Colusa, Napa, Sonoma and Marin.

The WHA network includes major hospitals and medical centers, thousands of local, trusted doctors and specialists from several medical groups, including of all NorthBay Healthcare's providers and facilities.

Western Health Advantage

Accepted Plans at NorthBay Healthcare

To see a full list of accepted health plans that allow you to access NorthBay Healthcare

VISIT

northbay.org/patients-visitors/accepted-health-plans.cfm

...And its product offerings, as well as its list of providers, continues to expand:

CalPERS

NorthBay Healthcare services are available to thousands of California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) employees in Solano County through Western Health Advantage. That includes CalPERS members who are employed by the cities of Vacaville, Suisun City, Vallejo, Dixon, Rio Vista, as well as Solano County and the two state prisons in Vacaville.



Covered California through WHA

There are many health plan options through Covered California; NorthBay Healthcare providers accept all the Western Health Advantage plan options.

The good news is President Joe Biden signed a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package dubbed the American Rescue Plan earlier this year, which brings about \$3 billion to California in the form of new subsidies to help people pay monthly health insurance premiums under Covered California.

Even people who didn't get subsidies before may qualify under the new program. You can find more information on the Covered California website, coveredca.com.

The open enrollment period for Covered California runs through the end of the year and the subsidies will be paid through the end of 2022.



Medicare Advantage HMO

WHA now offers two new Medicare Advantage HMO plans for Medicare beneficiaries in Solano County.

"A Medicare Advantage plan differs from regular Medicare coverage in that it offers lower costs, richer benefits including coverage of deductibles, prescription coverage and an over-the-counter drug coverage allowance," explained Kelly Rhoads-Poston, senior business development liaison with NorthBay.

The bottom line is "WHA Medicare Advantage offers the community a cost-saving option, over straight Medicare, to access NorthBay," added Robert Coscione, vice president, payor strategy with NorthBay.

Benicia and Winters Medical Groups Join WHA Network

Some area medical groups have joined with NorthBay under the WHA network in the past year. Those include Family Health Center of Benicia and Winters Healthcare.

Patients who see primary care doctors in those medical groups are now also able to see providers at NorthBay for services covered by Western Health Advantage.

Family Health Center of Benicia

wintershealthcare



Nguyen K. Nguyen, M.D., loves getting to know her patients and addressing their concerns.

Primary Care: Your Safe Home Base

Every health care journey should start with the basics.

At NorthBay Healthcare, that means picking out your primary care team of professionals who are there to serve you and your family with everything from annual evaluations and flu shots to blood pressure checks and immunizations.

There are three Center for Primary Care locations—one in Green Valley, one in Fairfield and one in Vacaville. Each offers a number of physicians who specialize in internal medicine, family medicine and pediatrics. Every physician is also partnered with a care team—a nurse practitioner and medical assistant who will assist on your health care journey.

Access to your care team has never been easier. Since the advent of the global pandemic, NorthBay Healthcare has expanded tele-health visits—both via telephone and video.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling (707) 646-5500, or visiting NorthBay.org/MyNorthBayDoc online. It's also a one-stop place to check out test results or send a question to your care team.

Of course not everything can be done online. Physicals, immunizations and procedures still require an in-person visit.

Nguyen K. Nguyen, M.D., is just one of a number of family medicine specialists at the NorthBay Center

for Primary Care in Fairfield. She enjoys taking care of the full age range of family members, from youngsters to older adults.

She chose NorthBay Healthcare, partly because of its proximity to her parents in Sacramento, but quickly fell in love with the system, appreciating the way it allows physicians to not only care for their patients, but be involved in the organization.

"It has been around for 60-plus years, and it's still devoted to its mission of taking care of people in Solano County," she said. "That speaks volumes."

Dr. Nguyen says her NorthBay team is like family to her.

"It's exhilarating to come to work every day," she said, noting a great rapport with Medical Assistant Catherine "Cat" Verador. "Many of our patients tell us they are impressed with how well we work together, and communicate with them and the rest of the team," said Dr. Nguyen.

It all starts with listening to the patient, hearing their story and their concerns.

"The best day at work is the one in which I know my patients' concerns have been addressed," she said. "You want a doctor who treats you as a whole person. I see my patients as someone's mom, dad, son or daughter. I try to treat them as I would want my family treated." ❄️

Help is Here for Mental Health Issues

When it comes to depression, anxiety and other disorders, NorthBay Healthcare's Center for Primary Care Behavioral Health Integration Program team wants you to know that help is here—at the NorthBay Center for Primary Care's three locations in Solano County.



The team is led by Corinna Press, Psy.D, a licensed clinical psychologist, who has an office at the Center for Primary Care in Fairfield, on Hilborn Road. She is joined by:

- **Jessica Valdez Depee**, a licensed clinical social worker, based at the Center for Primary Care in Green Valley;
- **Rachel Greenfield**, licensed clinical social worker, based at the Center for Primary Care in Vacaville;
- **Toni Perez**, Mental Health Technician, based at the Center for Primary Care in Fairfield; and
- **Karen de la Cruz**, Mental Health Technician, who is based at the Center for Primary Care in Green Valley.

Talk to your primary provider for a referral.

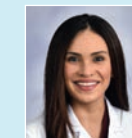
Special Visits for Women's Health Issues

In addition to regular office hours with the Center for Women's Health in Fairfield, NorthBay obstetric/gynecologic providers offer appointments at the NorthBay Center for Primary Care facilities in Vacaville, Fairfield and Green Valley. You can schedule an appointment by calling (707) 646-5500.

Center for Primary Care in Vacaville



Kulbir Bajwa, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Larissa Chartrand, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Ana Cherry, M.D.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Madhav Goyal, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Ali Hassani, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Matthew Heeren, M.D.
PEDIATRICS



Bruce Hewett, M.D.
PEDIATRICS



Shanaz Khambatta, D.O.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Stephen Newman, M.D.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Teresa Whitley, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Kevin Xunan, D.O.
FAMILY MEDICINE

Center for Primary Care in Fairfield



Amanda Adkins, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Angela Brennan, D.O.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Douglas Freeman, M.D.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Michael Ginsberg, M.D.
PEDIATRICS



Nguyen K. Nguyen, M.D.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Corinna Press, PsyD
PSYCHOLOGY



Levon Tchakmakjian, M.D.
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Judy Yang, D.O.
PEDIATRICS

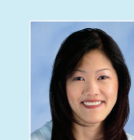
Center for Primary Care in Green Valley



Gilbert Chang, M.D.
PEDIATRICS



Ehsan Ghods, D.O.
FAMILY MEDICINE



Alina Hongsakaphadana, M.D.
FAMILY MEDICINE

Don't Get Lax: Vax, Vax, Vax!

When it comes to preventive medicine, NorthBay Healthcare has three words for you: vaccinate, vaccinate, vaccinate!

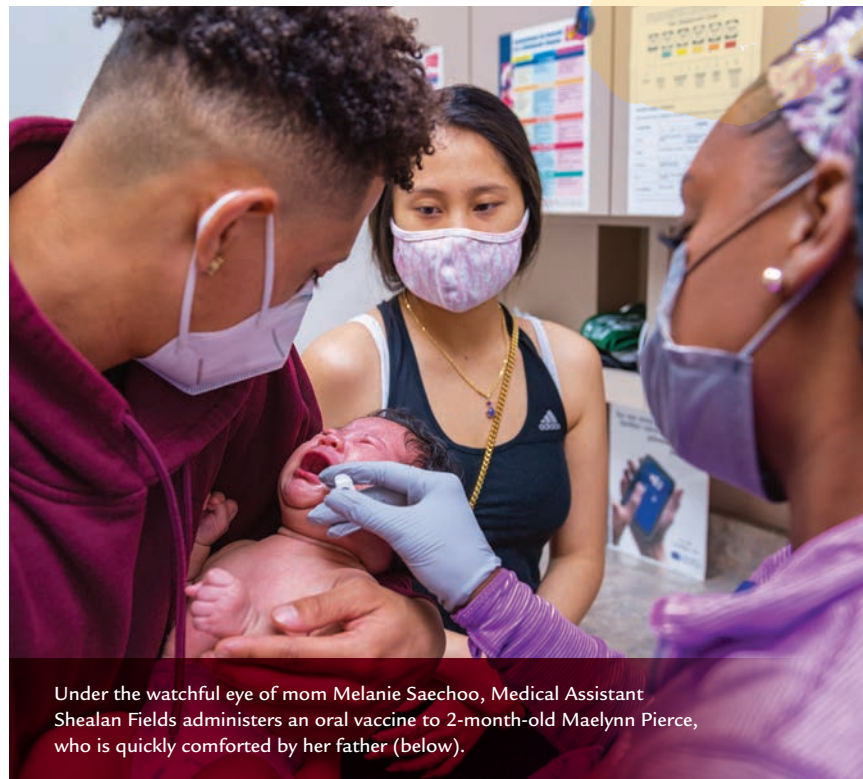
From COVID-19 vaccines and flu shots to childhood immunizations, health care experts agree it's the best thing you can do to protect you and your loved ones from life-threatening diseases.

Unfortunately, not only did the pandemic keep people away from their doctors' offices in 2020, but it delayed the vaccination schedule for a number of NorthBay's tiniest patients—babies and toddlers.

According to pediatrician Judy Yang, D.O., some parents are just starting to get back into the swing of vaccinating their children on a regular basis.

"It's so important to bring children in for their routine physicals, especially if they are due for immunizations. Infants especially need to be seen every two to three months in the first year and a half of their lives," she said.

In the early days of the pandemic, with schools locked down, most children stayed home, so exposure was minimal. But with a re-opening (in flux), the risk returns of an increase in whooping cough,



Under the watchful eye of mom Melanie Saechoo, Medical Assistant Shealan Fields administers an oral vaccine to 2-month-old Maelynn Pierce, who is quickly comforted by her father (below).

measles, mumps and chicken pox.

"Don't be complacent," warned Dr. Yang. "If parents are behind on their children's vaccines, we encourage them to come back as soon as possible. It could take several appointments to catch up, so don't delay."

In addition, when flu shots become available this fall, children six months old and older—as well as adults, should get the vaccine.

According to Rachelle Hunter, practice manager of the Fairfield Center for Primary Care, the plan is to offer free drive-through and drive-up clinics at multiple locations in Fairfield and Vacaville, to make it as convenient as possible for the patient and their family members.

NorthBay patients can schedule an appointment with a nurse during normal business hours, get it during a doctor visit, or come to one of the clinics on weekends or after hours.

Watch for a schedule to be posted on NorthBay.org soon.

In addition, it's still possible to schedule a free COVID-19 vaccine. Patients can schedule a vaccine at their primary care facility, or during the NorthBay Coumadin Clinic at the VacaValley Wellness Center in Vacaville. Schedule an appointment by calling (707) 646-5500.

Playing catch-up with vaccines? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have determined that there is no need for a 14-day wait period between vaccines, when it comes to any vaccines and COVID, said Rachelle. "So call today. What's most important is getting everyone vaccinated so we can keep flu and a host of diseases at bay."

NorthBay encourages its patients to get vaccinated through NorthBay clinics, so it is immediately documented into the patient's medical records. ❄️

Urgent Care: Stronger Than Ever

Centers Continue to Offer Testing, Plus Much More

It's been two years of pandemic pivoting, but that has only made NorthBay Urgent Care stronger and more flexible to serve the ever-changing needs of the communities it serves, according to Mary Jameson, director of Urgent Care, Primary Care in Vacaville and Women's Health.

The pandemic took hold just as NorthBay opened a second Urgent Care in Fairfield in spring 2020, and quickly turned that facility, as well as the Urgent Care in Vacaville, into one of the earliest providers of COVID-19 testing in Solano County.

The facility added travel COVID testing to its long list of services offered, so when planning trips to Alaska or Hawaii individuals receive travel credentials after a quick visit.

"When the pandemic first hit, protocols were changing daily and the need for widespread testing was huge. Our centers were right there to help answer the call."

The team immediately created safety protocols to allow testing to take place while continuing to serve the needs of other patients seeking urgent care for everything from a sprained ankle to acid reflux.

Both NorthBay facilities are operated in partnership with Carbon Health, offering immediate medical attention for non-life threatening conditions, such as strep throat, cellulitis, broken bones, shingles, hives, abrasions and bug or animal bites. It also opened access to urgent orthopedic visits from

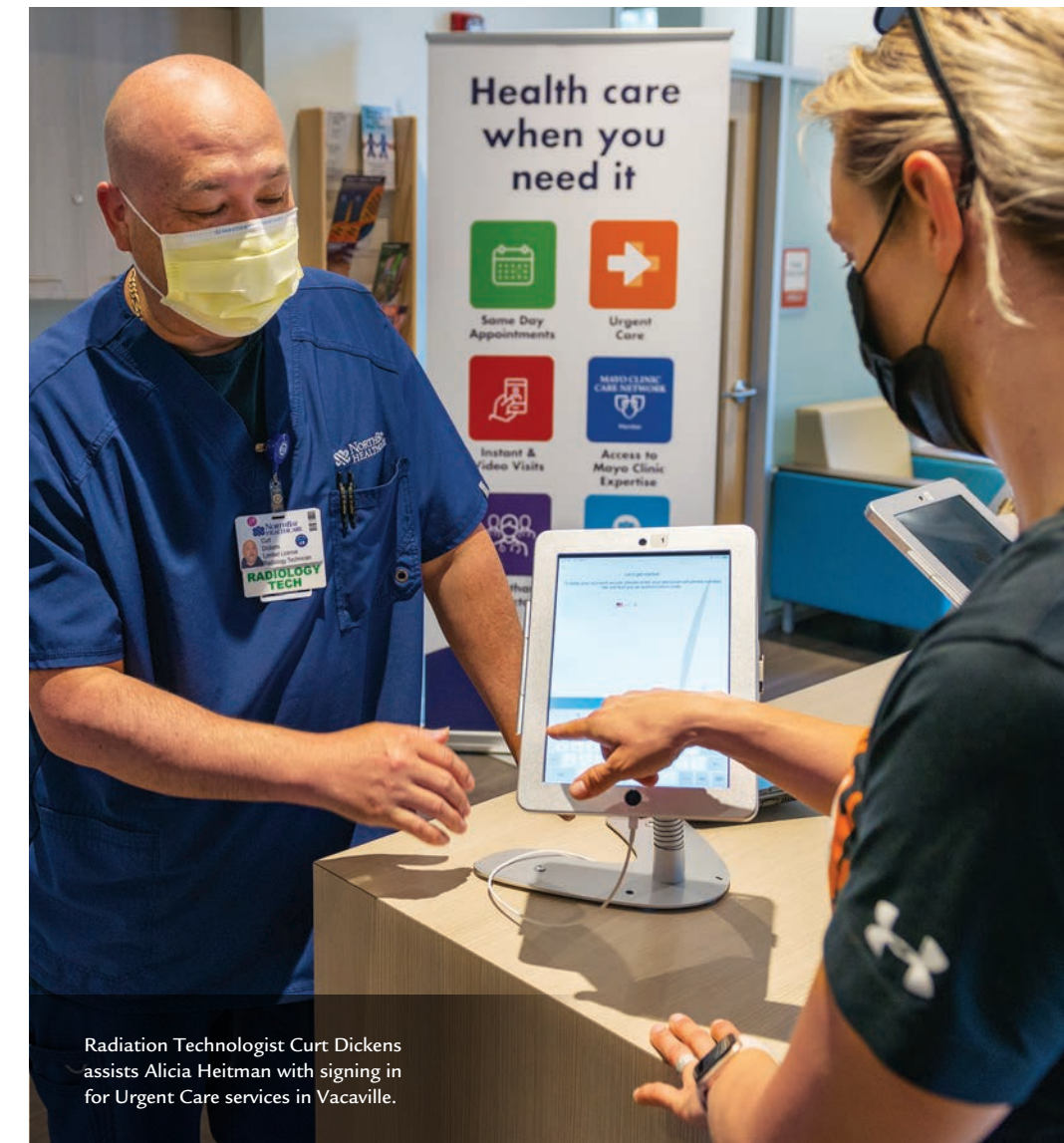
11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at 2500 Hilborn Road.

For patients, Urgent Care locations have proven to be a viable alternative to an emergency room, offering shorter waits and lower cost, and an option when a visit with their regular doctor isn't readily available.

As an added convenience, both Urgent Care centers also offer "Virtual Urgent Care," whereby patients can use their smartphones

to talk with an Urgent Care provider and get treated for a range of conditions.

Both Urgent Care centers are open seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Vacaville location is at 1679 E. Monte Vista Avenue at the Nut Tree Plaza, and can be reached by calling (707) 624-7400. The Fairfield center is located at 1320 Travis Blvd., and can be reached at (707) 646-4000. ❄️



Radiation Technologist Curt Dickens assists Alicia Heitman with signing in for Urgent Care services in Vacaville.



Michael and Jenny Roark learned she was pregnant with baby Carson the day the state locked down for the pandemic, but shared their great maternal and birthing experience at NorthBay on social media.

Pandemic Delivers a Baby Boom

A lullaby tune plays over the public address system at NorthBay Medical Center every time a baby is born, and these days the tune is playing day and night.

Although an anticipated COVID-19-induced national “baby boom” did not materialize around the United States, NorthBay Healthcare is bucking the trend. NorthBay’s Labor & Delivery and Mother/Baby departments have been humming throughout the crisis, according to Heather Troutt, clinical manager of Women & Children’s Services.

“Births at NorthBay are up overall compared to early last year,” she noted, and those numbers will prob-

ably go up even more as NorthBay began working with Sutter Health, La Clinica de la Raza and Partnership Healthplan California to offer maternal care options to Sutter’s patients after it closed its Labor and Delivery unit in Vallejo, according to Steve Davis, assistant vice president, Managed Care.

Why is NorthBay the place of choice for so many new moms to deliver? In addition to being a certified “Baby Friendly” hospital, “we have always stressed having a safe delivery for moms and babies at NorthBay, even before and then during the pandemic,” noted Stella Huang, D.O., OB/GYN. “Parents-

to-be, physicians, nursing staff—we all work well together to assure that common goal. In the early days of COVID, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocols were constantly changing, but we navigated it. It was difficult at first, with the masks and PPE, but we still worked to keep that personal touch.”

That made a difference to some local mothers who had their babies at NorthBay during the height of the pandemic, and shared their birthing experience on social media.

Jenny Roark of Vacaville learned she was pregnant with her first child on March 17, 2020, the very day the state went on lockdown due to COVID-19.

“We are first time parents and I had the best experience! From the nurses to the doctors to the security guards everyone was so kind, caring and supportive!”

—Jenny Roark
Facebook post

“Knowing we were expanding our family was great news, and at first I was sure that by the time I had my baby in November, it would be all over. But no,” she laughed. “We wondered, would we be able to see anyone, or have family be part of the moment? We just weren’t sure.”

“It was ever-changing in the early days, as we began to wear PPE to care for COVID-19-positive moms,” Christena Wetzel, R.N. said. “As nurses we’re used to the healing touch, so it was hard to be somewhat at a distance. We’ve also been caring for sicker moms, who may not have had regular pre-natal care as they avoided going to the doctor or hospital. But, we’re finding that these babies are healthy and overall they’re doing really well.”

Jenny’s pregnancy was going well but she switched health care providers to NorthBay after her 20th week, and began seeing Shanna Snow, D.O., OB/GYN.

“Right away I noticed a difference and am so thankful I did,” she said. During her early OB/GYN visits, Jenny came alone and wore a mask. Although not able to have extended family members with her for ultrasounds, she appreciated Dr. Snow videotaping them so she could share with her husband, Michael, and others. She also appreciated that Dr. Snow called Michael to see if he had any questions or concerns.

Jenny and Michael, a Security officer at NorthBay, welcomed son Carson on Nov. 13, and strict visitor policies at the time meant only Michael could be present at the birth.

“My mom couldn’t be there, but Kerri Blair, R.N., was caring like a mom would be. I was having a hard time, very nervous, and she was so calm she made me feel comfortable.”

Kristina Goodrich and husband, Adam, knew they wanted to complete their family despite the pandemic, and Kristina also knew she wanted to deliver at NorthBay for several reasons. They had just moved to Vacaville from Napa and wanted something close to home.

“I have three other children, and all births were complicated,” she explained. All required C-sections and one resulted in an extended Neonatal Intensive Care Unit stay.

For her fourth baby, Kristina did not want to risk being far from a hospital with a NICU.

“That was NorthBay,” she explained.

“I had the best birthing experience at NorthBay,” she added. “I’ve had my babies at two other hospitals and this was so different. The whole team was so caring. The nurses were checking on me and my husband; they even brought him snacks. My CNA, Melanie Callahan, did the nicest thing—she washed my back with a warm cloth, and I’ve never had that before. It was just so caring.”

“I always want to treat people like I’d want to be treated,” Melanie said. “I love being a part of people’s special moments, and since they were not able to have a lot of family around, we did what we could to fill in. I love to be around happy babies, too, and these days there are so many of them!”

While the pandemic tightened visitor policies and changed the

NorthBay Center for Women’s Health



Stella Huang, D.O.



Marlene Freeman, M.D.



Kalie Li, D.O.



Andrew Lin, M.D.



Shanna Snow, D.O.



Rachel Villalon, M.D.

post-birthing experience, both new moms said that proved to offer an unexpected bonus.

“To be honest, it’s nice to have family support, but it gave us some time to bond,” Kristina said.

“Everyone looks forward to meeting the new baby, but it was nice for our little family of three to have some uninterrupted time for a few days,” Jenny said. “That was a silver lining, I guess.”

And as for these pandemic babies, “they are going to be strong little kiddos,” Christena said. “They—and their parents—have already been through so much.” ❄️

Collaboration Brings Expertise to Diagnosis



Kinue Post was having pain in her shoulder and a persistent cough back in April of 2018. The 80-year-old Fairfield woman was moving slower than normal, and sleeping most of each day.

A visit to the emergency room ended with a diagnosis of pneumonia, but the medications didn't seem to make a difference. "We have a property in Florida and we go there to watch NASCAR," explained her husband, David Fox. But during a trip to the property, he noticed she was sleeping nearly all of the time. So when they returned to California, they headed back to the doctor and soon discovered the frightening diagnosis: cancer.

Their primary physician, Kulbir Bajwa, M.D., ordered the X-ray that first revealed the problem.

"It was this step that made a huge difference," said David. "If we didn't

"Mayo made a difference, yes. They were absolutely marvelous and every doctor and nurse we've seen at NorthBay was great."

— David Fox

get that X-ray, who knows how long it might have been before we discovered the cancer? We are beyond grateful."

Dr. Bajwa referred the couple to NorthBay Healthcare Oncologist

Jonathan Lopez, M.D.

"It was a complex case," explained Dr. Lopez. The cancer was discovered in one of Kinue's lungs, as well as the shoulder and her lymph nodes. "I needed some more information, so I reached out to Mayo Clinic."

NorthBay Healthcare has a collaborative relationship with the world renowned Mayo Clinic Care Network. Through NorthBay's membership in the network, the doctors have access to a variety of clinical tools and services,

including eConsults. Dr. Lopez was able to securely share Kinue's test results and imaging with cancer experts there.

Through eConsults, NorthBay doctors connect electronically and directly with Mayo Clinic specialists for additional input on a patient's care and at no cost to the patient.

"Mayo made a difference, yes," said David. "They were absolutely marvelous and every doctor and nurse we've seen at NorthBay was great. They could not have been any better."

David and Kinue marvel at the coordination that took place between NorthBay and Mayo Clinic. "It worked out perfect for us," David said, noting that when in Florida they were able to connect with the Mayo Clinic team in Jacksonville.

"David and Kinue were able to go to Mayo Clinic while in Florida, so the continuity of care from NorthBay was great and then when they came back to California, they transitioned here," said Dr. Lopez. Kinue had a surgery in Florida on her shoulder and when she returned to California, began chemotherapy at the NorthBay Cancer Center.

Kinue has completed a round of chemotherapy and recent tests show that while there is still some cancer in her lung, there is none located anywhere else in her body. She recently began a different, shorter round of chemotherapy. In the meantime, she said, "I feel great!" ❄

NorthBay Cancer Center



Stephen Banks, M.D.
RADIATION ONCOLOGIST



James Mitchell, M.D.
RADIATION ONCOLOGIST



James Long, M.D.
ONCOLOGIST/
HEMATOLOGIST



Jessica Powers, M.D.
ONCOLOGIST/
HEMATOLOGIST



Jonathan Lopez, M.D.
ONCOLOGIST/
HEMATOLOGIST



David Tate, M.D.
RADIATION ONCOLOGIST



Jason Marengo, M.D.
BREAST RECONSTRUCTION/
ONCOPLASTIC SURGERY



Brian Vikstrom, M.D.
ONCOLOGIST/
HEMATOLOGIST



Kinue Post had pain in her shoulder and husband David Fox (standing behind right) felt something wasn't right. An X-ray confirmed cancer and oncologist Jonathan Lopez, M.D. (left) worked in collaboration with the Mayo Clinic to coordinate her treatment.

Mayo Clinic Care Network Provides Expert Input

As a member of Mayo Care Network since May 2016, NorthBay Healthcare physicians work closely with Mayo Clinic to share medical knowledge and clinical expertise in ways that directly benefit patients.

Through e-Consults, NorthBay's local doctors have access to more than 4,000 physicians and scientists for second opinions, as another set of eyes, or simply to weigh in on complex cases.

Other care network membership benefits include:

AskMayoExpert, a database for reference at the point of care. AME offers the latest Mayo-vetted information on the management, care and treatment of a variety of medical conditions.

Health Care Consulting, which enables NorthBay to learn about Mayo's clinical, operational and business models, including how they are designed and implemented.

eTumor Boards teleconferences, during which care network physicians are invited to present and discuss complex cases with a multidisciplinary panel of Mayo experts and other participating network specialists.

Powerful Alliance

NorthBay, UC Davis Team Up in Time of Stroke

Although NorthBay Healthcare has been offering tele-stroke services at its hospitals since 2010, it entered into a new partnership with experts at UC Davis Medical Center earlier this year.

The service connects emergency departments at NorthBay Medical Center and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital with UC Davis Medical Center neurologists through wireless, bedside “robots.”

For patients, surviving and recovering from a stroke is contingent upon timely and appropriate care. Therefore, immediate access to an emergency neurologist is paramount.

At NorthBay, when a patient arrives at the emergency room and stroke is suspected, staff activates a stroke alert and are connected to UC Davis specialists.

The connection is made for every stroke patient, even when NorthBay’s own neurologists are also on scene.

The program allows the specialists in Sacramento to “project” themselves into NorthBay via a wireless, mobile “remote presence” robot, which enables them to move, see, hear and talk to patients, and NorthBay doctors and staff, as if they were actually in the room. The devices include a computer screen on a rolling mobile stand. It allows NorthBay patients to get prompt care and an expert assessment of their condition without the delay of a helicopter ride to somewhere outside the county. “We are excited about our collaboration and partnership with UC Davis and look forward to continuing to improve our stroke alert process,” said Beth Gladney, N.P., NorthBay Healthcare’s Stroke Program manager.



Emergency medicine physician Andy Lee, M.D., shows off a wireless, bedside “robot” used in NorthBay Healthcare to connect with stroke specialists at UC Davis Medical Center.

NorthBay Center for Neuroscience



Rubi Ali, M.D.
NEUROLOGY



Ameer Almulhassani, M.D.
NEUROLOGY



Patrick Maloney, M.D.
NEUROSURGERY



Atul K. Patel, M.D.
NEUROSURGERY



Shahid Rehman, M.D.
NEUROLOGY



Sherry Lee Taylor, M.D.
NEUROSURGERY

With an average of 250 stroke patients each year coming to NorthBay, providing that quick access to expert care is vital, she said.

“It allows us to continue to provide quality stroke care 24/7 to our community,” she said.

NorthBay’s Chief Medical Officer Seth Kaufman, M.D., agreed. “We are excited about the collaboration and quality that comes with this program, which has already been helpful as we fine-tune our stroke care workflow,” he said.

There are two main causes of stroke: a blocked artery (ischemic stroke) or leaking or bursting of a blood vessel (hemorrhagic stroke). Some people may have only a temporary disruption of blood flow to the brain, known as a transient ischemic attack (TIA), that doesn’t cause lasting symptoms.

“It’s important to get the diagnosis and treatment quickly. People who get medical attention early enough can receive medications and treatments to limit a stroke’s impact, or even save their life,” said Heather Theaux, NorthBay Healthcare’s director of Emergency Services/Trauma. “The advantage with telemedicine is that we can bring a specialist into the exam room at any time. We have immediate access to stroke specialists.”

It’s also important to understand the risk factors for stroke: being overweight, heavy or binge drinking, high blood pressure, smoking, high cholesterol, diabetes, obstructive sleep apnea and cardiovascular disease, among others. 🧠

Stroke Support is Here

NorthBay Healthcare has long been part of a support group program that connects stroke survivors and their caregivers with others experiencing the same thing.

NorthBay’s New Beginnings program meets once a month so stroke survivors, caregivers, family members and friends can come together to share their accomplishments and struggles.

The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 10 to 11:30 a.m., providing the opportunity for members to get the support from people who understand what they’ve been through.

For more information, call Beth Gladney at (707) 646-4034, or email at egladney@Northbay.org.

Warning Signs of Stroke

One way to learn how to recognize symptoms and what to do if you think someone is having a stroke is the acronym B.E. F.A.S.T.:

- B** **Balance**—Has the person experienced sudden dizziness, loss of balance or coordination?
- E** **Eyes**—Do they have sudden trouble seeing out of one or both eyes?
- F** **Face Drooping**—Does one side of the face droop or is it numb?
- A** **Arm Weakness**—Is one arm weak or numb?
- S** **Speech Difficulty**—Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand?
- T** **Time to call 9-1-1**—If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get the person to the hospital immediately.

When it comes to recognizing a stroke, it’s important to B.E. F.A.S.T.

Stroke is a leading cause of death in the United States and is a major cause of serious disability for adults. About 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Despite those numbers, many people cannot identify stroke warning signs or risk factors.

It is important to recognize stroke symptoms and act quickly.

“The faster you get to a hospital and faster you give treatment, the more you improve outcomes after a stroke,” explained Beth Gladney, N.P., NorthBay’s Stroke Program manager. “Time is brain and brain matters.”

Surgery on the Cutting Edge

Robotic Technology Reduces Recovery Time, Pain and Blood Loss

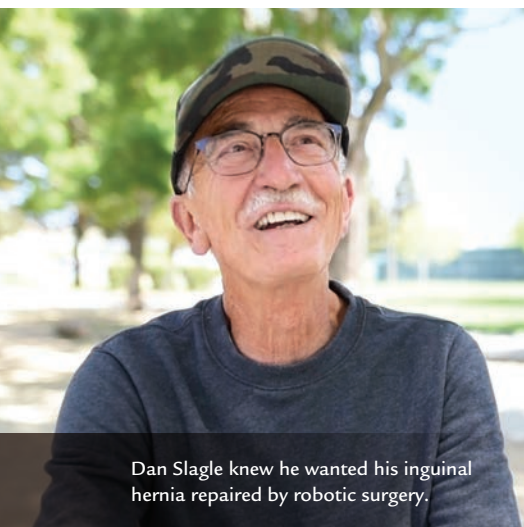
Dan Slagle is a spry, energetic 74-year-old with “a stubborn streak” that he says ultimately got in the way of his being able to live a normal life. “If others are willing to listen to my story,” he said, “hopefully they will avoid what I went through.”

Dan, a former Coast Guard engineer, was enjoying an active retirement, spending a lot of time on his gold mining hobby, installing off-grid solar systems, out and about with his two grandsons and enjoying long walks with his German Shepherd, Chevy.

Then he developed an inguinal hernia in 2019.

An inguinal hernia occurs when connective tissue has a defect, essentially a hole in the abdominal wall, allowing contents such as intestines to protrude or become trapped. The resulting bulge can be painful, especially when coughing, bending over or lifting heavy objects.

Not necessarily a dangerous condition, it won't improve on its own, and can even lead to life-threatening complications.



Dan Slagle knew he wanted his inguinal hernia repaired by robotic surgery.

At first Dan ignored it, stubbornly. But, over months it became much more than a nuisance. “I would have to lay down five, six, seven, 10 times a day to push the hernia back in,” he explained.

It was also affecting how long he could ride in a car, stand up, or take Chevy for a mile-long walk.

“One day, in the middle of one of our walks, I had to lay down on the trail to push the hernia back in. My dog was going crazy, and it was embarrassing. That’s when I knew I had to get this fixed.”

He started researching hernias, what causes them and how they can be repaired.

“Inguinal hernias, like Dan’s, can be treated with an open incision over the groin area, or using minimally invasive techniques such as laparoscopic or robotic surgery,” according to NorthBay general surgeon William Fulton, D.O. “The robotic technique is very similar to laparoscopic, but the ability to dissect, visualize and assure appropriate repair is significantly improved.”

“I knew from my research that I wanted it to be repaired through robotic surgery,” Dan explained.

Robotic surgery offers patients a shorter recovery time, less pain and less risk of blood loss.

“So, I started researching where in our area robotically trained surgery is offered and who performs them,” Dan said, “and was stinkin’

lucky to learn they do it right here at NorthBay!”

NorthBay Healthcare is the first health care provider in the area to invest in surgical robotics, having acquired the da Vinci Xi system in the fall of 2019.

“The da Vinci Xi robot is absolutely perfectly designed for inguinal hernia surgery,”

Dr. Fulton said. “Its major advantages are preventing recurrence and decreasing pain in the post-operative period. They also create smaller incisions.

Obese and overweight patients benefit significantly from minimally invasive surgery because we avoid dissecting through deep subcutaneous tissues, which can lead to fluid build-up, infection and longer healing.”

The da Vinci system allows surgeons to perform complex and delicate procedures with exceptional precision.

The da Vinci includes a 3D high-definition camera and mechanical arms with surgical instruments attached to them. The surgeon controls the arms while seated at a computer console near the operating table, while the rest of the surgical team is at the patient’s bedside.

The robotic system’s advanced technology provides the surgeon with a better view of the operating field and better access to the surgical site. The surgeon’s movements on the console are translated into very precise movements on the robotic arms, which offers greater dexterity for delicate procedures.



The da Vinci Surgical Robot



William Fulton, D.O., says the da Vinci robotic surgical system is perfectly designed for repair of such things as inguinal hernias.

Ventral and inguinal hernias are not the only surgical procedures to be performed using the da Vinci robot. “We can perform gallbladder and colon surgery, prostatectomy and nephrectomies, as well as hysterectomies and other pelvic/ovarian procedures,” according to urologist Herkanwal Khaira, M.D.

“Some patients, like Dan, come to the clinic with a very clear understanding of what robotic surgery involves and request this technique. As patients learn about robotic surgery, they understand that this is not a robot on autopilot, but rather an advanced tool for the surgeon to control,” Dr. Fulton said.

When Dan met Dr. Fulton to discuss his options, he was impressed with his demeanor and professionalism.

“He didn’t rush me and wasn’t in such a big hurry that he kept looking at his watch,” he said. “He explained what he could do with the da Vinci robot, asked if I was OK with that and I said ‘heck, yeah!’ He also personally

walked me over to scheduling to check availability and schedule the surgery.”

On the morning of his surgery, Dan said everything went smoothly.

“As I was wheeled into the surgical suite, everyone seemed to be in a good mood for a Monday morning, I looked at that cool-looking robot, asked a few questions and then, lights out! A short time later, lights back on! The nurse called my wife, Dawn, who was there to take me home. I was home by noon!”

Dan says he had three tiny incisions, didn’t experience any real pain, and had just minor discomfort.

“On the third day after surgery, I walked the dog again, but it was just a short walk. The next week I was back to gold mining. Six weeks later, I’m shoveling dirt, and moving in a new stove at home. It was all better than I expected. The quality of my life just made a dramatic improvement. I am a happy camper. And I hope that others, who are putting off getting a hernia repaired; don’t wait like I did.” ❄️

Meet our Robotic Surgeons

NorthBay Healthcare has surgeons on staff who are trained and certified to use the da Vinci Xi Robotic surgical system.

Depending on their specialty, surgeons can perform nephrectomies, prostate and hernia surgery, hysterectomies, oophorectomies (ovary removal), myomectomies (fibroid removal), ovarian cystectomies, cholecystectomies (gallbladder or gallstone removal), and colectomies (partial removal of colon).

Robotic Surgery



William Fulton, D.O.
GENERAL SURGERY



Majid Kianmajd, D.O.
GENERAL SURGERY



Herkanwal Singh Khaira, M.D.
UROLOGY



Kalie Li, D.O.
OB/GYN



Melissa Loja, M.D., is excited to be able to offer TCAR—TransCarotid Artery Revascularization—to her patients at NorthBay Healthcare.

It's a Big Wide World of Vascular Surgery

Physician Loves the Variety

The love Melissa Loja, M.D., has for medicine is not in vain—it's in vein, quite literally. And arteries. And all the amazing technology she has at her disposal to make life better for her patients.

As part of the NorthBay Center for Heart and Vascular, she deals with any and all veins outside of the heart and brain. NorthBay Healthcare's new vascular surgeon

loves the variety of procedures and technical tools almost as much as she loves her patients. Almost.

"I got into vascular surgery because you can establish a life-long relationship with your patients. You not only see them right after surgery, but you continue to see them and continue to offer ways to make their lives better," said Dr. Loja.

"I got into vascular surgery because you can establish a life-long relationship with your patients. You not only see them right after surgery, but you continue to see them and continue to offer ways to make their lives better."

— Melissa Loja, M.D.

She's excited that this fall she'll be able to offer the most cutting edge treatment for carotid artery disease: TCAR. It stands for TransCarotid Artery Revascularization and it's a way to prevent strokes from happening.

"The classic method of treatment involves a surgery. This new, minimally invasive technology is safer for high-risk patients compared to surgery, and their recovery will be much faster," she said.

Although it's difficult to predict a stroke, there are several factors that make an individual more vulnerable: a history of heart disease, hypertension, a history of smoking and TIAs (transient ischemic attacks), also known as mini-strokes. TIAs don't cause permanent damage, but are often considered a precursor for a stroke.

In any of those situations a physician, including primary care doctors, can order an ultrasound or CT scan that could confirm if TCAR could be life-saving.

Until now, patients in need of TCAR had to travel to the Bay Area or Sacramento area for such treatment. "Patients can now get the highest quality vascular care right here in Solano County," said Dr. Loja, "and the care they'll get

here following surgery will continue for the rest of their lives."

Treatment of carotid arteries are only about 30 percent of what she does as a vascular surgeon. Many of her patients suffer from PAD, or Peripheral Artery Disease, which is a problem when arteries are narrowed and blood flow is reduced to the arms or legs. She's also quite busy with vein ablations, repairing aneurysms and creating and maintaining access for dialysis.

Despite the pandemic, Dr. Loja has been able to build up a robust practice.

"There's real need here, and it's keeping me busy. Sometimes it's a simple procedure, sometimes it's very complex and technical," she said. "I love the variety, and I love being able to help my patients have a better quality of life." ❄️



NorthBay Heart & Vascular Center



Jeffrey Breneisen, M.D.
CARDIOLOGY



Milind Dhond, M.D.
CARDIOLOGY



Saba Lahsaei, M.D.
INTERVENTIONAL
CARDIOLOGY/
CARDIOLOGY



Melissa Loja, M.D.
VASCULAR
SURGERY



Cyrus Mancherje, M.D.
INTERVENTIONAL
CARDIOLOGY/
CARDIOLOGY



Shea Pribyl, D.O.
CARDIOTHORACIC
SURGERY



Mark Villalon, M.D.
INTERVENTIONAL
CARDIOLOGY/
CARDIOLOGY

Get Back on Track to Tackle Diabetes

Eat less. Do more.

If only it were that easy.

Those simple instructions may not be so simple for people trying to manage their diabetes, according to Jay Shubrook, D.O., diabetologist for NorthBay Healthcare. “It can be hard to know where to start.”

And then came COVID-19.

“The pandemic disrupted our normalcy, changed our habits,” Dr. Shubrook added. “Gyms and farmers markets were closed. Malls closed to walkers. Some even became afraid to go just outside. We know that some of our diabetic and cardiovascular patients got worse during the pandemic, especially if they avoided regular health care.”

“It has been over a year since COVID-19 changed our lifestyles,” added Sumera Ahmed, M.D., NorthBay diabetologist. “People with diabetes have been seeing a worsening of their glucose control due to substantial decrease in physical activity and exercise.”

But now it’s time to get back on track, Dr. Shubrook advised.

“The healthcare system is ready for you to return and get the care you need. Please don’t wait and possibly make your condition worse.”

And that is good advice, especially for those who might have been newly diagnosed during the pandemic.

“Many times, my patients’ first reaction to hearing they have diabetes is a bit fatalistic,” Dr. Shubrook said. “Then they ask, ‘What do I do, where do I start?’”

Dr. Shubrook has encouraging words.

“The truth is, diabetes is 95 percent preventable, and it can be self-managed,” he explained.

The trick is to find the right mix of activities and diet to match each individual’s needs and personal preferences. With diet and exercise in balance, the disease—and its side effects—can be managed, especially with the help of a diabetologist.

Why a diabetologist?

“Diabetes is a complicated condition and most primary care providers are overwhelmed enough as it is helping their patients,” Dr. Shubrook said. “A diabetologist has put a special focus on this disease and spends full time, every day, collecting research, tools and resources to help their patients manage the condition.”



As a diabetologist, Sumera Ahmed, M.D., focuses on helping her patients manage their condition, despite whatever challenges they may have faced through the pandemic.

Drs. Shubrook and Ahmed team up with John McKenna, M.D., endocrinologist; Clipper Young, PharmD, a clinical pharmacist; and Tamara Stogner, R.N., diabetes educator, to care for NorthBay’s patients with diabetes and other metabolic disorders, and they’ve honed some of their diet and exercise advice to adjust to pandemic times.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends that most adults should engage in 150 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise per week, Dr. Ahmed noted, so that’s a good place to start.

Some ways to get your 150 minutes in could be by jogging, brisk walking, hiking and biking.

“Walking up and down stairs, using resistance bands and kettlebells and weights are also ways to work in some exercise,” she added.

“We do have success stories, where patients took advantage of pandemic times to create new, better habits,” Dr. Shubrook said. “Even small changes can help, and it’s never too late to start.” ❄

NorthBay Center for Diabetes & Endocrinology



Sumera Ahmed, M.D.
DIABETOLOGIST



John McKenna, M.D.
ENDOCRINOLOGIST



Jay Shubrook, D.O.
DIABETOLOGIST

NorthBay, Mayo Clinic Solve Medical Mystery

We’ve all experienced stomach pains—after a spicy meal or a stressful day—but when Jasmine Kaur’s sharp stomach pains persisted for more than a couple of months, even without a spicy diet, the Vacaville resident made an appointment to see her primary care doctor. The physician ordered some lab work to determine the exact cause of her stomach pain.

“They came back with elevated liver enzymes,” Jasmine explained.

After running more tests, the physician referred her to Mounzer Al Samman, M.D., director of gastroenterology at NorthBay Healthcare.

“The exact cause of the elevated liver enzymes wasn’t immediately clear,” Dr. Al Samman said. “We needed an ultrasound of the liver

to examine its structure, and some more lab work. We thought it was either fatty liver (non-alcoholic liver) or autoimmune hepatitis.”

“I was so nervous but Dr. Al Samman said not to worry, it would all be OK. He was very comforting and listened to each and every problem, asking me what are you feeling and for how long? He answered all my questions.”

Jasmine ultimately needed to have first an endoscopy to examine the structure of the liver, which was inconclusive, and then a liver biopsy. Jasmine was worried about the procedures. Would the endoscopy make her gag? Would the biopsy be uncomfortable?

“But they explained that I would not feel the endoscopy because I would be asleep, and that the biopsy would be just like a pinch,” the 31-year-old noted.

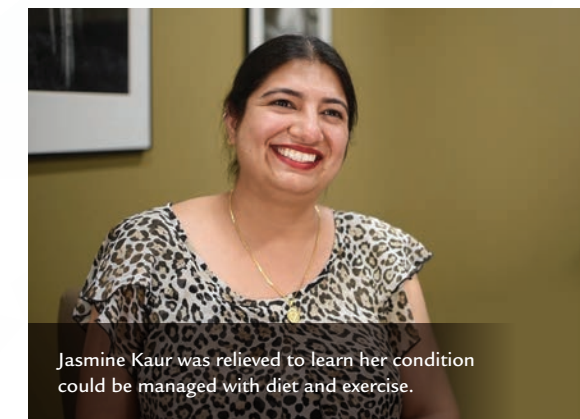
Both turned out to be true, Jasmine said, which proved to be a big relief.

“The tests did not offer a clear-cut diagnosis,” Dr. Al Samman said. “I wanted a gastroenterology pathologist to give us an exact diagnosis, so I requested a second opinion from the Mayo Clinic Care Network.”

NorthBay Healthcare has been collaborating with the Mayo Clinic Care Network since 2016, when NorthBay became the first Northern California organization to join the collaborative partnership. Through this arrangement, NorthBay physicians and their patients with complex medical questions are able to get answers from Mayo Clinic specialists without leaving home, and at no cost to the patient.



After tests returned with inconclusive results, Mounzer Al Samman, M.D. turned to the Mayo Clinic for a second opinion.



Jasmine Kaur was relieved to learn her condition could be managed with diet and exercise.

“We sent Jasmine’s medical records and images to the Mayo Clinic, and a week later the Mayo pathologist confirmed fatty liver,” Dr. Al Samman explained.

The news was a tremendous relief to Jasmine, who was concerned that the alternative—an autoimmune disorder—would mean taking medicine for the rest of her life.

Jasmine started a low fat diet and aimed to lose weight. “I took it very seriously. I stopped eating fried and fast food, and ate a lot of vegetables and proteins,” she said. “I exercised two times a day.” Within six months she lost 15 pounds and her liver enzymes had returned to normal.

“Her prognosis is excellent,” Dr. Al Samman said. “With her weight loss, her enzymes are down. There is no scarring on the liver and she is doing really well.

“NorthBay’s relationship with Mayo Clinic Care Network is beneficial, especially for complicated patients,” Dr. Al Samman added. “Mayo is happy to help.” ❄

NorthBay Gastroenterology



Mounzer Al Samman, M.D.
GASTROENTEROLOGY



Nazia Hasan, M.D.
INTERVENTIONAL
ENDOSCOPY



Michael Krier, M.D.
GASTROENTEROLOGY



Suk Charles Whang, M.D.
GASTROENTEROLOGY



NorthBay Healthcare orthopedic specialist Cornelis Elmes, M.D., points to the sacroiliac joint, which can be the real cause of lower back pain.

Back Out of Whack? It Could Be Your Sacroiliac

With lower back pain, it's common for patients and their doctors to investigate the usual suspects: the muscles and discs of the spine. But what if the culprit is actually rooted somewhere else?

In up to 30 percent of patients with chronic low back pain, the cause isn't the spine at all. Instead, it's a problem with the sacroiliac (SI) joints. These joints link the iliac bones (hips) to the sacrum, or the lowest part of the spine above the tailbone.

And thanks to an innovative, minimally invasive outpatient procedure now offered at NorthBay Healthcare, patients are finding relief from SI joint pain they never thought possible.

Cornelis Elmes, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon at NorthBay, said the biggest challenge in treating pain from the SI joint is identifying it as the source of the problem in the first place.

"The SI joint is an important but often under-appreciated and unknown cause of low back pain," said Dr. Elmes. "I call it the great

masquerader because it can look like a hip problem or back problem."

The SI joints are important because they are essentially shock absorbers for impacts from the lower extremities to your spine, for example, when running or lifting heavy objects.

The joints don't move as much as other joints in the body, but they move just enough to help diffuse some of the forces and decrease the risk of injury to the spine.

"If injured, however, an SI joint may have more motion than normal which can cause it to become a very painful problem," said Dr. Elmes.

NorthBay Center for Orthopedics offers several treatments to address SI joint pain, starting with physical therapy and exercises, especially those that help to strengthen the body's core muscles. When that's not effective, interventional treatment such as a SI joint fusion is an option.

The procedure involves a small incision along the side of the buttock through which small triangle-shaped

NorthBay Center for Orthopedics



Daniel Birkbeck, M.D.
ORTHOPEDICS/
HAND SURGERY



Andrew Brooks, M.D.
ORTHOPEDICS/
JOINT REPLACEMENT/
SPORTS MEDICINE



Cornelis Elmes, M.D.
ORTHOPEDICS/
TRAUMA/PELVIC/
FOOT/ANKLE



Kevin Miller, D.P.M.
PODIATRY/
ORTHOPEDICS/
SPORTS MEDICINE



Jay Parkin, M.D.
ORTHOPEDICS/SPORTS
MEDICINE/TRAUMA



Neil Pathare, M.D.
SPORTS MEDICINE/
ORTHOPEDICS



Robert Peterson, M.D.
ORTHOPEDICS/SPORTS
MEDICINE/SHOULDER/
JOINT REPLACEMENT

titanium implants are inserted across the sacroiliac joint. The implants, which are porous, encourage bone growth, which essentially fuses the joint so that it can no longer move, thus relieving the cause of the pain.

The procedure has proven effective in more than 90 percent of patients and because it is a minimally invasive procedure, recovery is faster.

Fusing the SI joint does not limit a patient's flexibility, he added. "The SI joint is not supposed to move much anyway," he said.

For more information on the procedure visit www.northbay.org/services/orthopedics/sacroiliac-joint-pain.cfm?cssearch=48596_1

Specialty Services Abound

NorthBay Healthcare offers a rich slate of specialty care physicians with offices in Fairfield, Vacaville, Green Valley and Napa. In addition to those highlighted throughout this magazine, you'll also find:

Infectious Disease

NorthBay Healthcare's infectious disease expert, Gregory Warner, D.O., has been in high demand since the outbreak of COVID-19 in February 2020, and has spoken to service clubs, business organizations and other community groups, sharing his vast knowledge of infectious disease control. He oversees a team of Infection Prevention specialists who work in NorthBay Healthcare's two hospitals to prevent transmission of COVID-19, as well as other viruses, including all current strains of influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. He also focuses on non-healing wounds, skin tissue and bone infections.



Anticoagulation services

NorthBay Anticoagulation services operates walk-in clinics from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital in Vacaville. A drive-through clinic for patients with special needs is available on Tuesdays at the hospital receiving dock entrance on the east side of the hospital. Participants in the clinic meet at least once every four weeks with a specially trained clinical pharmacist who evaluates the medication dosage and appropriately adjusts the level if necessary. Dosage adjustments are made right away, minimizing the possibility of complications and side effects. Admission requires a physician referral, so ask your provider.

Wound Care

Specialists at NorthBay Wound Care, on the first floor of the VacaValley Health Plaza in Vacaville, offer a variety of treatments and therapies. Patients with non-healing wounds can be treated with compression therapy, bio-engineered skin substitutes, ostomy care and wound debridement.

Pulmonary Medicine

Pulmonologists at NorthBay Healthcare specialize in treating patients with lung conditions such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), asthma, shortness of breath, chronic cough and pulmonary hypertension. A sleep specialist helps patients suffering from sleep apnea or conditions such as insomnia, sleepwalking and restless leg syndrome. NorthBay pulmonologists provide patient care and pulmonary function testing in both Fairfield and Vacaville locations.

Infectious Disease



Gregory Warner, D.O.

Wound Care



John Slade Jr., M.D.



Jason Marengo, M.D.



Kevin Miller, D.P.M.

Pulmonary Medicine



Donald Doyle, M.D.



Maqbool Ahmed, M.D.



Karan Julka, M.D.



Zakwan Quwatli, M.D.

Specialties Abound (continued)

Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine

Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) is an advanced form of hands-on care that focuses on treating the whole person, rather than the symptoms, with a goal of helping the body to heal itself. Osteopathic physicians have received specialized training in nerves, muscles, and bones to diagnose, treat and prevent illness and injury through this form of care. OMM can benefit issues including asthma, pneumonia, carpal tunnel syndrome, menstrual pain, migraines and headaches, sinus disorders, myofascial imbalance, neck and shoulder pain, foot pain and knee pain.

Rheumatology

Patients with complex arthritis, joint pain and issues affecting muscles and connective tissues such as gout, fibromyalgia, lupus and rheumatoid arthritis need special treatment and care to maintain a quality of life. Many patients have various forms of arthritis, from rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis to psoriatic arthritis. Other conditions treated include lupus, gout, fibromyalgia and ankylosing spondylitis.

Occupational Health

NorthBay Occupational Health provides cost-effective and comprehensive occupational health care to businesses and industries in Solano County.

With almost 30 years of experience, NorthBay Occupational Health is the longest-serving provider of occupational medicine in upper Solano County. Offices are open weekdays with accommodations for injury care walk-in treatment as well as scheduled appointments.

NorthBay Occupational Health clients have instant access to the information they need, and can see real-time results of office visits, work restrictions, next steps for the employee, number of visits missed and more through iSystoc.

Pain Management

Our care team for Pain Management focuses on everything from back and neck pain to runner's knee, headaches, chest wall pain and more. The team's hallmark is interdisciplinary care, which includes collaborating with nutritionists, neurology, Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) and physical therapy.



Ear, Nose and Throat

NorthBay Ear, Nose and Throat evaluates and treats patients of all ages with conditions affecting the ears, nose, throat, sinuses and voice. Board-certified otolaryngologists, speech therapists and an audiologist provide comprehensive evaluation and then employ a variety of treatments including medication, advanced diagnostic procedures and surgery to ensure personalized care.

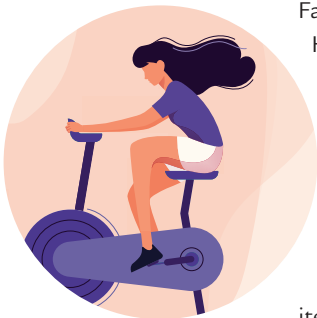
Hospice & Bereavement

NorthBay Hospice offers a team-oriented approach providing expert pain and symptom management and compassionate care for patients and families facing life-limiting illnesses. Hospice focuses on caring, not curing, and in most cases care is provided in the patient's home. Hospice care also is provided in board-and-care homes, skilled nursing facilities and other long-term care facilities. Services are available to everyone in our community, regardless of their ability to pay.

Rehabilitation Services

NorthBay Rehabilitation Services understands how crucial it is to get patients back on the right track after undergoing surgery, injury or illness. Using a team approach to rehabilitation that supports restoring function, reducing pain, promoting independence and preventing disability, the team provides physical therapy, occupational therapy, hand therapy, speech therapy, cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation and pelvic floor rehabilitation.

The therapists work closely with patients to design treatment plans tailored to their specific needs in order to get them on the road to recovery and back to an independent and productive life.



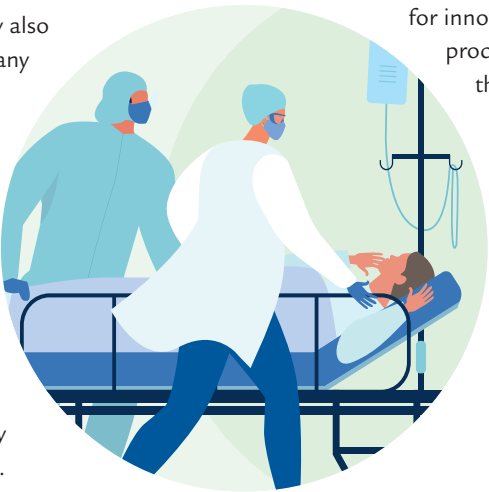
General Surgery

NorthBay's general surgeons offer procedures such as hernia repairs, gallbladder removal, colon cancer surgery, and hemorrhoid removal. Surgical procedures occur at NorthBay Medical Center, NorthBay VacaValley Hospital and the Ambulatory Surgery Center at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital.

Trauma and Emergency Services

No one plans for disaster to happen, but it's good to know a full team of emergency medicine experts are available 24/7/365 at both NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital in Vacaville.

NorthBay Medical Center was verified as a Level II trauma center in 2014, 2017 and again in 2021, by the American College Board of Surgeons Committee on Trauma. NorthBay Medical Center's verification as an accredited Chest Pain Center, Certified Stroke Center and Emergency Department Approved for Pediatrics (EDAP) may also help explain why so many seriously ill or injured patients are transported to NorthBay facilities. NorthBay VacaValley Hospital is also a Certified Stroke Center and EDAP. Both facilities have helipads to receive and transport critically ill and injured patients.



Urology

No one likes to talk about problems with their urologic system, but there is no reason to suffer in silence, say NorthBay Healthcare urologists Herkanwal Khaira, M.D. and Benjamin Dudley, M.D.

NorthBay Healthcare schedules regular office hours and some procedures in Vacaville, Fairfield and Napa, as well as some procedures and surgeries at NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield. Dr. Khaira is not only medical director for Urology, but also for the NorthBay Robotic Program, and performs some surgeries using the da Vinci Xi Robotic Surgical System.

NorthBay Urology has been designated a Center of Excellence for innovative UroLift procedures and the treatment of enlarged prostate or BPH.

Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine



Sandra Skates, D.O.

Rheumatology



Melissa Schoenwetter, M.D.

Occupational Health



Yolanta Petrofsky, M.D.



Henry Poon, M.D.

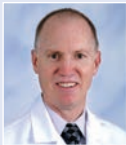
Pain Management



James Jaber, M.D.



Cynthia Pena, M.D.



Christopher Rumery, M.D.

Ear, Nose and Throat



Shaulnie Mohan, M.D.

Hospice & Bereavement



Terrell Van Aken, M.D.

General Surgery



William Fulton, D.O.



Ruth Rassel, D.O.

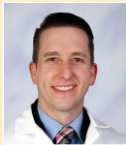


Majid Kianmajd, D.O.



J. Peter Zopfi, D.O.

Trauma and Emergency Services



Ben Williams, M.D.



J. Peter Zopfi, D.O.

Urology



Benjamin Dudley, M.D.



Herkanwal Singh Khaira, M.D.

Operation: Vaccination

NorthBay Team Does Its Part to Battle Pandemic



Above: Blagica Laboska, LVN at NorthBay Healthcare, fills a syringe with a COVID-19 vaccine at the Solano County mass vaccination clinic in Vallejo.

Right: Members of NorthBay Pharmacy Services pose for a photo with a cardboard cutout of Dr. Anthony Fauci during one of NorthBay's Saturday clinics at the VacaValley Wellness Center.



Thousands Receive Their Pfizer Doses at Clinics, Drive-throughs

It started with a couple of physicians, a handful of nurses and a respiratory therapist boldly rolling up their sleeves and receiving the first doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at NorthBay Medical Center early one morning in December 2020.

Fast forward many months later and NorthBay Healthcare's versatile team has vaccinated more than a quarter of eligible residents in Solano County. That includes 42,000-plus doses to patients and community partners; 4,300-plus doses to staff; and thousands of doses at pop-up clinics from Rio Vista to Benicia. In addition, in partnership with other health care organizations, NorthBay helped administer more than

100,000 doses at the Solano County Fairgrounds by May 31.

It was no easy feat.

Just ask Ryan Seo, NorthBay's director of Pharmacy Services. "First NorthBay had to secure a special ultra-low temperature freezer to store the vaccine. Once we were able to accept deliveries, we had to sign up staff, starting with our most vulnerable front-line workers."

It took a planning team of about 25, headed by Ryan, Pharmacy Clinical Practice Manager Dan Ford, Director of Quality Stephanie Tarter and many more to get it started.

When it came time for patients in January—starting with those age 70 and up—Damaris Valera,

assistant vice president of Primary Care and Rachelle Hunter, Center for Primary Care practice manager took over the Green Valley Administration Conference Center and kicked the clinics into high gear. Her team partnered with pharmacy staff, medical assistants, patient representatives and students from area colleges to create 12 vaccination stations and a steady flow of patients five days a week, and even on some weekends. Clinics ran from January through the end of April.

"I think I can speak on behalf of the entire team in saying I wouldn't change anything in terms of the experience we went through," Damaris said. "It's something we'll never relive but being a part of it has shaped how we live and look at things."

The payoff came from the patients, many of whom made it a point to stop by her desk and let her know how impressed they were.

"They were so grateful and emotional to where some were even crying they were so relieved to get the vaccination," she said. "It was very gratifying."

About the time the Green Valley team was starting to wind down in March, the Pharmacy team was just getting started, piloting walk-in



Shannon McCouf injects the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine into the arm of **William Avila** during a drive-through vaccination clinic.



Top: Tina Brazil, R.N., vaccinates Leslie Williams of Vacaville at the Solano County Fairgrounds mass vaccination site. **Left:** Clinical Pharmacist Tatum Urrutia (left) and Call Center Patient Services Rep. Marie Branson show off a poster encouraging patients to take a selfie with Dr. Fauci once they've received their vaccine. **Right:** Vacaville Fire Chief Kris Conception receives his vaccine from Cathy Zadnik, M.A.

and drive-through clinics in Vacaville, starting with some of NorthBay's most vulnerable patients at the NorthBay Cancer Center. It was such a success, the pharmacy team continued to offer drive-through clinics, which eventually opened to the general public (ages 12 and up) through May.

NorthBay moved to offering vaccinations at its NorthBay Center for Primary Care facilities in Vacaville, Fairfield and Green Valley, and during weekday Coumadin clinics.

"MyTurn.Ca.GOV has made it really easy to get a vaccine," said

Ryan. "The goal now is to make it as convenient as possible, so anyone who has still not received the vaccine and wants one can get it done easily."

Ryan said the next vaccine challenges will be flu clinics, and a potential booster for the Pfizer vaccine, which seems likely.

"We have so much experience under our belt now that I'm confident we'll be able to efficiently handle whatever comes our way," said Ryan. "And that's good news for our patients and our community."

New Roles for Two Familiar Faces

Two veteran health care administrators with wide-ranging experience have assumed key leadership roles with NorthBay Healthcare.

Wayne Gietz, who for the last five years guided NorthBay's outpatient services, is the new president of NorthBay Healthcare Group. He succeeds Aimee Brewer, who is the new president and CEO of Sturdy Health in Massachusetts.

Gietz has an accomplished track record in health care executive management. Prior to joining NorthBay, he held executive leadership roles in two New York City-based health systems. In his new role he will oversee NorthBay Medical Center in Fairfield and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital in Vacaville, all ambulatory services and NorthBay Medical Group, the collection of 100-plus physicians and providers.



Wayne Gietz



Tracy Geddis

Following a nationwide search, Tracy Geddis has become vice president of operations, taking over for Nicole Brocato. A veteran of Sutter Health for more than 20 years, Geddis most recently served as associate administrator of Sutter Solano Medical Center in Vallejo. While she is new to NorthBay, she is quite familiar with the community.

Geddis has served on the boards of directors of the Solano Coalition for Better Health and Vallejo Chamber of Commerce. She successfully co-chaired Solano's March for Babies, the March of Dimes fundraiser. She is a graduate of UC Davis.

Meanwhile, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Seth Kaufman, M.D., will join NorthBay's senior management team, assuming overall responsibility for quality, patient safety, licensing and accreditations and social services. An emergency medicine physician, he has been affiliated with NorthBay since 2005, and was named chief medical officer in 2017.

Welcome New Doctors



Larissa Chartrand, M.D. The Center for Primary Care in Vacaville welcomed another new physician to its team in November.

Larissa Chartrand, M.D., is an internal medicine doctor who comes to NorthBay

Healthcare from Miami Beach, Florida, where she was medical director of the primary care center and associate program director of the internal medicine residency program at Mount Sinai Medical Center.

She earned her medical degree at St. Matthew's University School of Medicine, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands. She is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.



Zakwan Quwatli, M.D. NorthBay Healthcare's Pulmonology team welcomed a new physician in March.

Zakwan Quwatli, M.D., is a pulmonologist/critical care specialist

who earned his medical degree at the University of Aleppo Faculty of Medicine, Aleppo, Syria and completed fellowship training in critical care at Oregon Health Sciences University, Portland, and in pulmonary care at Chicago Medical School at Rosalind Franklin University, North Chicago. He is board-certified in internal medicine, pulmonary disease and critical care medicine.



Henry Poon, M.D. NorthBay Occupational Health welcomed a new physician in January.

Henry Poon, M.D., earned his medical degree at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston and holds master's degrees in

public health policy and business administration from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

He is board-certified in occupational medicine and comes to NorthBay from a medical group in San Diego where he practiced occupational medicine since 2018. "My unique background in business and medicine provides me with the tools to navigate the complexities of the field," he said.



NorthBay Healthcare recently welcomed **Patrick Maloney, M.D.**, as new medical director of its Center for Neuroscience.

He earned his medical degree at Yale School of Medicine and completed his residency at

Mayo Clinic. He served as a surgeon in the U.S. Air Force, including a tour of duty in Afghanistan. He served as a staff surgeon at David Grant Medical Center on Travis Air Force Base and comes to NorthBay following a one-year intensive training on complex spine treatments.

"For me, the best part of the work is when I am able to help a patient so that they can perform at their best level," he said.

NorthBay Brings Urgent Care to Grateful American Canyon

On the heels of establishing two successful urgent care centers amid retail outlets in Vacaville and Fairfield, NorthBay Healthcare, in partnership with Carbon Health, will open a third NorthBay Urgent Care facility in the summer of 2022.

An official groundbreaking in June at 416 Napa Junction Road in American Canyon brought together NorthBay and American Canyon civic leaders, including the mayor and city manager, who are excited to welcome the facility to the Napa Junction Commercial Center.

"We are overjoyed you are bringing these services to American Canyon," said City Manager Jason Holley. "This is what our growing community needs."

The facility will be similar to urgent care centers in Vacaville and Fairfield, with an open and airy design and convenient kiosks for checking in.

NorthBay Urgent Care will lease 4,500 square feet of the new 6,600-square-foot building with the option of expanding into the remaining space with other medical services for the community. NorthBay will invest \$1.5 million in building improvements, equipment and technology to operate the urgent care center, which will feature 10 exam rooms, a laboratory to analyze on-site tests and x-ray capabilities.

"Our involvement in offering COVID-19 vaccine pop-up clinics in American Canyon in 2021 helped establish connections and paved the way for the decision to expand to American Canyon, considered the gateway to the Napa Valley," said Wayne Gietz, president of NorthBay Healthcare Group. "We look forward to serving this community."

Vacaville's urgent care is in the Nut Tree Plaza, while Fairfield's urgent care is in a strip mall in the parking lot of Solano Town Center mall, just a block from NorthBay Medical Center. Both are highly accessible for local residents and visitors alike, proving to be a viable alternative to an emergency room, offering shorter waits and lower cost, and an option when a visit with their regular doctor isn't readily available.

The American Canyon facility will be in a commercial center on Highway 29, near areas planned for housing and an industrial park. The facility will offer immediate medical attention for non-life threatening conditions, such as strep throat, broken bones and hives.

The builder is Sierra View General Contractor of Sacramento. The architect is Boulder & Associates with offices in San Francisco and Sacramento.



NorthBay Healthcare President and CEO Konard Jones (center) poses for a photo with (left to right) Buzz Butler of Lake Street Ventures; Archie Humphrey, chairman of the NorthBay Healthcare Group board; American Canyon Vice Mayor Mark Joseph; Mayor Leon Garcia; City Manager Jason Holley and Napa County Supervisor Belia Ramos.

Nine New DAISYs Bloom

Nine NorthBay Healthcare nurses have received the coveted DAISY award since August, 2020, presented to honor their outstanding patient outreach.

They are: **Susan Pack, R.N.**, a nurse in NorthBay Medical Center's Mother/Baby Unit; **Jayne Nanalis, R.N.**, a nurse in NorthBay Medical Center's 1800 Unit; **Loida de Vera, R.N.**, program coordinator for the Joint Replacement Program; **Kareen Goloyogo-Ferrer, R.N.**, in the NorthBay Cancer Center; **Carmelita Fernandez, R.N.**, on 2 North in NorthBay Medical Center; **Pat Carter, R.N.**, inpatient case manager at VacaValley Hospital; **Jeanette Jackson, R.N.**, **Alan Valentin, R.N.**, and **Paul Watson, R.N.**, all nurses at NorthBay Medical Center's 1600/1700 Unit.

The Daisy Award was created in memory of J. Patrick Barnes to express his family's gratitude for the skillful and amazingly compassionate care he received from his nurses when he was hospitalized with the auto-immune disease Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP) in 1999. He died at age 33. All of the more than 30 DAISY awardees' names are on display board at both NorthBay Medical Center and VacaValley Hospital.

Have you had an outstanding experience with a NorthBay nurse?

Forms to nominate can be found at NorthBay.org/DAISY





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