We Put Wellness First for You and Your Family

Check Out Our New Look!
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Difficult Decisions To Ensure Future

Earlier this summer NorthBay Health—like a lot of nonprofit hospitals around the country—found itself in the unenviable position of having to make extremely difficult but necessary decisions to ensure the future of our health care system, which has been serving the Solano County community for 62 years.

As the global pandemic started to ebb, serious economic headwinds created the perfect storm. You know how painful surging gas costs have been to your pocketbook. Imagine similar spikes for already costly, complex medical devices, supplies and medications.

At the same time, the percentage of Medi-Cal and government insured patients NorthBay serves continues to rise, and the non-negotiable reimbursement rates for these patients fall far short of our actual costs to provide those services.

With the rising cost of insurance and health care deductibles, we’ve seen more patients choosing to delay or cancel elective procedures and surgeries.

Add to that the extreme cost of temporary labor, which hospitals around the country have had to rely on to deal with erratic and burgeoning patient populations throughout the pandemic.

The NorthBay Health leadership team has come together to create a multi-part recovery plan to reduce our costs and increase revenue when possible, while at the same time maintaining as many services as possible for the health of our community. It’s a difficult balancing act, to say the least. We’ve had to say goodbye to a number of our colleagues and a handful of programs across the system. Some programs and services have been consolidated, while others may operate on a tighter schedule for the foreseeable future.

We’ve had to be extremely creative in envisioning a leaner, but more sustainable system that will continue to serve our community for years to come. We are realigning our workforce to implement operational efficiencies, reducing and/or modifying the costs of some services through renegotiated contracts and bringing some services in-house; and looking at ways to partner with similar organizations that can serve our patients well.

We ask for your patience as we weather this storm.

Our top priority and guiding light is the safe, compassionate care of our patients.

We will continue to offer 24/7/365 emergency and trauma services at NorthBay Health Medical Center and NorthBay Health VacaValley Hospital. We will continue to offer our primary and many specialty care services at offices in Fairfield and Vacaville. We will continue to partner with amazing physicians, allied health professionals, nurses and more to be able to provide advanced medicine closer to home.

Decisions have been difficult, even heartbreaking, but failure is not an option. Our goal is to give NorthBay Health a sustainable financial foundation that enables us to keep our promise to the community, to continue to provide care and be your trusted health care partner for many years to come.

To help the community to keep an eye on our recovery plan, we have created a special place on our website. Visit NorthBay.org/community and come back frequently for updates.

B. Konard Jones
President and Chief Executive Officer
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NorthBay’s Many Services –

NorthBay Health’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 HEALTH VACAVALLEY HOSPITAL CAMPUS:**

1. **NorthBay Health VacaValley Hospital**
   1000 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville
   Services include: 24-hour Emergency services, 44 medical-surgical beds, 15 emergency bays, full-service laboratory and diagnostic imaging services.

2. **The Surgery Center at NorthBay VacaValley**
   1006 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville
   Services include: Same day surgery, medical procedures and dental surgeries.

3. **Vacavally 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. **Vacavally Wellness Center**
   1020 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville
   Specialties include: NorthBay Cancer Center (medical and radiation oncology), infusion services, rehabilitation and physical therapy, imaging, pain management, and specialty pharmacy. (HealthSpring Fitness is temporarily closed.)

5. **NorthBay Health Primary Care**
   421 Nut Tree Road, Vacaville
   Services include: Pediatrics, internal medicine and family medicine, lab, OB/GYN appointments available, nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.

### ALSO IN VACAVILLE:

6. **NorthBay Health Urgent Care**
   1679 E. Monte Vista Ave., Suite 104, Vacaville
   Services include: Urgent Care services seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; COVID-19 testing and X-ray services.

### IN FAIRFIELD

**THE NORTHBAY HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER CAMPUS:**

7. **NorthBay Health 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 STEM (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, ultrasound, CT scans and bone density.

### ALSO IN FAIRFIELD:

10. **NorthBay Health 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.
All Close to Home!

THE HILBORN CAMPUS:

11 NorthBay Health Primary Care
2458 Hilborn Road, Fairfield
Services include: Pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, lab; nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.

12 NorthBay Health Orthopedics
2500 Hilborn Road, Fairfield
Services Include: Orthopedics, podiatry, sports medicine, rehabilitation services (physical, occupational and speech therapies), X-ray services. Orthopedic Urgent Care at Hilborn (O.U.C.H.) from 11 a.m. to 3 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; Hospice & Bereavement, Home Health, NorthBay Ambulatory Administration, Quality, NorthBay Primary Care Call Center and Project Management Office.

THE GREEN VALLEY CAMPUS:

14 NorthBay Health Primary Care
4520 Business Center Drive, Fairfield (Second floor)
Services include: Pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, 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: Gastroenterology, cardiology, nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.

15 NorthBay Health Green Valley Administration Center
4500 Business Center Drive, Fairfield
No Medical Services provided. Home to the NorthBay Health Conference Center, Administration, Human Resources, Patient Financial Services, NorthBay Health Foundation and more.

COMING SOON IN AMERICAN CANYON

1 NorthBay Health Urgent Care – American Canyon
3250 Beard Road, Napa
Services include: Pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, lab; OB/GYN appointments available; nutrition counseling with registered dietitian available via video conference.

NEW SERVICES IN AMERICAN CANYON

B NorthBay Health Urgent Care – American Canyon
416 Napa Junction Road
American Canyon

COMING SOON IN DIXON

A NorthBay Health Urgent Care – Dixon
1305 Stratford Ave
Dixon

NEW SERVICES IN AMERICAN CANYON

B NorthBay Health Urgent Care – American Canyon
416 Napa Junction Road
American Canyon

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NEW SERVICES IN AMERICAN CANYON

B NorthBay Health Urgent Care – American Canyon
416 Napa Junction Road
American Canyon
Accepted Plans and Groups

When it comes to connecting with NorthBay Health, our patients have plenty of options.

NorthBay now accepts more plans than ever—including Blue Shield Access+ HMO, Health Net HMO, WHA and United Healthcare. And our network of doctors continues to grow.

The Western Health Advantage health plan was created to serve local employers and better control premium costs. Now co-owned by NorthBay Health 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 all of NorthBay Health’s providers and facilities.

CalPERS offers NorthBay Health through WHA

NorthBay Health 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 Access through WHA

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

There is federal funding made available 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.

Two New Medicare Advantage Plans

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, health plan specialist with NorthBay.

NorthBay Health Physicians Join Hill Group

All NorthBay providers are now partners with the Hill Physician Group Network. NorthBay’s Managed Care team signed new agreements with the Hill network that expand not only provider network options for our community but also health plan options for our hospitals and medical group.

For example, someone who has Blue Cross HMO or Blue Shield HMO can now be cared for by a NorthBay doctor—for primary care and specialty care. Additionally, it means that Hill Physicians Group doctors can refer to NorthBay for any specialty and for any hospital procedures. This new expansion gives more options to those who live in Vallejo, American Canyon and Benicia, just a short drive and no bridge tolls, to receive expert care.

Benicia, Winters Groups Part of the Mix

Some area medical groups have joined with NorthBay under the WHA network in the past two years. They 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.

Building a Bridge to Napa, Sonoma and Marin

NorthBay Health and Meritage Medical Network have partnered to expand service areas and improve access to care and specialty services for thousands of Meritage and NorthBay Medicare Advantage HMO patients. The partnership means Meritage patients have access to NorthBay’s 150-plus specialists and Medicare Advantage patients with a NorthBay primary care physician have access to Meritage’s physicians in Solano, Napa, Marin and Sonoma counties.

Ask Kelly

If you have questions or need a little extra help getting your health care plans solidified, Kelly Rhoads-Poston is ready to help.

Kelly, a health plan specialist, has more than 20 years of experience in the health care and insurance industries.

The quickest way to get answers is to visit www.NorthBay.org/openenrollment and click on “Ask Kelly.” You’ll need to fill out the form and can expect a response within two business days.
7 Steps to Help New Patients Connect With NorthBay Health

New to NorthBay? Here are some simple first steps you can take to get plugged in to NorthBay’s world-class system of care.

1. **Choose a doctor**
   Connecting with a great health care system starts by finding a primary care doctor that is right for you. Try the “Find A Doctor” search on our website (NorthBay.org), where you can reach our physician biographies, patient reviews and watch their videos.

2. **Set your first appointment**
   Once you’ve found your doctor, you can set your first appointment by calling (707) 646-5500 and selecting “option 1.” As a new patient, you’ll be asked to sign some forms. You can download them in advance, print them out, complete and sign them and bring them with you to your appointment, or plan on arriving to your appointment 15 minutes early so you can fill them out in person.

3. **Sign up for our patient portal, MyNorthBayDoc**
   Designed to help you conveniently take control of your health care needs and stay connected to doctors online, schedule appointments, message your care team, request medications, view lab and test results and access your health care records securely. You can sign up online (NorthBay.org/MyNorthBayDoc), by calling (707) 646-5500 or at your appointment.

4. **Transfer your medical records**
   This is an important step for maintaining seamless care from your previous provider to NorthBay Health. You can print out a form and submit it by visiting northbay.org/patients-visitors/new-patients.cfm

5. **Manage your prescriptions**
   Bring all of your prescriptions in their original bottle with you to your first appointment, or snap a photo with your smart phone. You and your doctor will review your medications and, if needed, new prescriptions will be provided. Your prescriptions can be sent to any pharmacy that your insurance provider contracts with.

6. **Access specialists and get referrals**
   If you need specialty care, your primary care doctor will make recommendations and connect you with the NorthBay specialist best suited to meet your needs. We have specialists located throughout the county. Because NorthBay is a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network, our patients can get a second opinion from national experts without having to leave home.

7. **Urgent Care**
   Access to convenient care is important and NorthBay’s Urgent Care centers in Vacaville, Fairfield, and soon in Dixon and American Canyon provide convenient alternatives to the emergency room and shorter waits or when you can’t get in to see your regular doctor. Schedule online seven days a week until 7 p.m. northbay.org/services/urgent-care/index.cfm
There are Hidden Extras for our Primary Care Patients

Patients at the NorthBay Health Center for Primary Care have a choice among 27 physicians who specialize in pediatrics, family medicine and internal medicine at three locations in Solano County, in Vacaville, Fairfield and Green Valley. Every physician is also partnered with a care team—a nurse practitioner and a medical assistant—who put the patient at the center of all they do. As an added bonus, there are a number of hidden extras at primary care that are both comforting and convenient, including several specialists who rotate in regularly to address a handful of needs:

**Our OB-GYN care**
Want to see an obstetrics/gynecology specialist? NorthBay’s core team of Women’s Health physicians offer numerous office hours at each of the three CPCs, as well as appointments Monday through Friday at the Center for Women’s Health in Fairfield.

**Close to heart**
A hypertension clinic is offered by NorthBay Pharmacy Services team at all three CPCs to help individuals who have suffered a heart event or who battle high blood pressure stay on top of their game.

**Need a nutrition expert?**
We have a registered dietitian who is happy to schedule a consultation to help get you on the right path toward healthier eating.

**Need a shot?**
NorthBay Health goes into full gear during flu season, and also provides COVID-19 vaccines. Watch for information on this year’s flu shots coming out this fall on NorthBay.org/flu.

**Appointment? Check!**
Regular checkups are scheduled after a patient and parents establish with a pediatrician. Those visits come with well-baby screenings, vaccinations and a free book for each young patient courtesy of Solano County Library Foundation’s Reach Out and Read Program.

**Our patients**
You are welcome to schedule vaccines as needed, through the care team without a doctors’ appointment. Need a shingles shot? Tetanus vaccine? No problem.

**Just a Reference Away**
If your situation requires a specialist, your primary doctor or physician assistant can refer you to one of NorthBay Health’s 50-plus physicians who cover everything from ear, nose and throat cases to cancer and orthopedics, all right here in Solano County.

If your situation is unusually complex, rest assured you came to the right place. NorthBay Health is part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network, which means our physicians can get a second opinion on complex cases from Mayo Clinic experts without any cost to our patients.

To schedule an in-person or virtual appointment or an “extra,” call (707) 646-5500.
Soothing Advice for Youngsters

Children’s immune systems may have done a better job than most adults in fending off COVID-19, but it didn’t protect them from the emotional scars of the pandemic, according to NorthBay Health pediatrician Michael Ginsberg, M.D.

I’m seeing many mental health issues. There’s a lot of depression and anxiety in my patients coming in, and parents are looking for ways to fix it.”

Michael Ginsberg, M.D.

As schools shut down, children’s routines went sideways. They watched their parents struggle through uncertain times, some as essential workers and some who lost jobs. They may have worried about family members or themselves getting sick and even dying.

And when school resumed — virtually — they had to adapt to a whole new world. It was more difficult for children who were already struggling with learning disabilities, said Dr. Ginsberg. Stress was high, distractions were abundant and staying focused became a greater challenge.

Even more confounding, information about how to stay safe kept changing, Dr. Ginsberg added. “Usually, in most times, the adults in their lives had more experience … but this was the great equalizer. We all had the same amount of pandemic knowledge, and we were all working with the same limited information.”

On the physical side, children weren’t spared from pandemic pounds, added Dr. Ginsberg. “Sports were canceled, and even walking from class to class is an exercise they weren’t getting. They were stressed and anxious, and their pantries were readily available. Weight is easier to put on than it is to take off.”

When schools finally opened back up for in-person instruction, things still weren’t the same. Dr. Ginsberg said he saw new kinds of anxiety, new fears and depression in his young patients. “They had to readjust to social situations, and there was still a lot of uncertainty about the virus,” he said.

Dr. Ginsberg urges patients and their parents to give themselves time and ask for help.

“There are some aspects of our lives, and kids’ lives that will never go back to normal,” said Dr. Ginsberg. “And it’s OK to mourn that loss of the world before COVID-19 and the missed milestones such as proms and graduations. These kids have survived a lot.”

NorthBay Health screens children for anxiety and depression at their annual check-ups through a simple questionnaire. By identifying concerns early, Dr. Ginsberg said, children can get the access they need for help.

Tips for navigating mental & physical health concerns in children

- Have patience with yourself. The world has changed, don’t expect life to go back to the way it was. Give yourself time to adjust.
- Be respectful to others. They may be going through loss or health concerns, and they may make different decisions than you. Respect their boundaries.
- Get involved in an organized sport. Physically and mentally, there are many benefits.
- Any hobby with physical activity can be beneficial, such as dance or martial arts.
- Continue regular visits with your doctor and reach out with questions. Don’t be afraid to ask your pediatrician for resources or referrals to mental health services.
Primary Care Doctors

NorthBay Health
Primary Care in Vacaville

- Kulbir Bajwa, 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

- Rajdeep Kular, M.D.
  Family Medicine

- Sumerra Khan, D.O.
  Family Medicine

- Shanaz Khambatta, D.O.
  Family Medicine

- Stephen Newman, M.D.
  Family Medicine

- Stephanie Toy, M.D.
  Pediatrics

- Teresa Whitley, M.D.
  Internal Medicine

NorthBay Health
Primary Care in Fairfield

- Amanda Adkins, M.D.
  Internal Medicine

- Angela Brennan, D.O.
  Family Medicine

- Douglass Freeman, M.D.
  Family Medicine

- Michael Ginsberg, M.D.
  Pediatrics

- Rajmeet Mann, M.D.
  Internal Medicine

- Nguyen K. Nguyen, M.D.
  Family Medicine

- Judy Yang, D.O.
  Pediatrics

NorthBay Health
Primary Care in Green Valley

- Gilbert Chang, M.D.
  Pediatrics

- Ghods, D.O.
  Family Medicine

- Alina Hongsakaphadana, M.D.
  Family Medicine

- Ankit Dubey, M.D.
  Internal Medicine

- Paarth Shah, M.D.
  Internal Medicine

COMING SOON
NorthBay Health
Primary Care in American Canyon

- Frances Brit Benko, D.O.
  Family Medicine
Patrick Maloney, M.D. (left) explains to Paul Palma how a rare spinal cord tumor was affecting his ability to walk and maintain his balance.

Grad Walks, Thanks to Doc

Paul Palma, 18, knows his way around obstacles.
He came to this country from the Philippines in the middle of the pandemic with his father and two siblings. They returned home last year, but Paul decided to stay with two of his aunts in Fairfield so he could graduate from Rodriguez High School.

He started classes in 2020, when everything was online, which meant he didn’t get to know his fellow students. Then he started experiencing back pain in November 2021.

At first, his aunts thought it was probably because he was sitting all the time. He’d been an active kid in the Philippines. He loved volleyball and running around. So he tried to exercise,
but it only made it worse. He started experiencing pain in his side.

“He started to lose control of his balance, and would sometimes fall,” recalled his Aunt Michelle Palma, a lab scientist at NorthBay Health. She took him to a local clinic for care, but nothing improved.

By January, his left leg became numb and he walked with a limp.

“I kept thinking it was no big deal and it would go away,” he recalled. “In my family, I’m the one who rarely gets sick. I thought I just tried to do too much, too soon.”

But a visit to the Emergency Room on Feb. 2 proved otherwise. An MRI revealed a thoracic spinal cord tumor and led to surgery a few days later with neurosurgeon Patrick Maloney, M.D., who specializes in complex spine surgery. Dr. Maloney earned his degree from the Yale School of Medicine and completed his residency at Mayo Clinic. He served in the Air Force and was a neurosurgeon at Travis Air Force Base before joining NorthBay Health in 2017, and becoming chief of neurosurgery in 2021.

“Schwanommas in young patients are rare,” said Dr. Maloney. “They’re usually developed in adults age 50-plus.”

Paul had a 2- to 3-centimeter tumor between the lumbar spine and the thoracic spine.

“It was taking up so much room within the spinal canal, it was causing a lot of compression on the spinal cord, resulting in weakness and inability to walk,” explained Dr. Maloney. “If not removed, it could have started to affect his right side and make it difficult to stand or walk.”

Paul’s Aunt Loida de Vera, program coordinator for NorthBay’s Joint Replacement Program, knew the surgery was necessary, but admitted it was worrisome, with Paul’s family back in the Philippines. She and Michelle were calling the family constantly.

“It was so nice that Dr. Maloney used Facetime to talk with Paul’s dad to answer his questions,” said Loida. “I find it is essential to speak with as many family members as possible, especially for large cases that are higher risk,” said Dr. Maloney. “We used Facetime and similar programs quite a bit during the pandemic, and they have become part of our practice today. They allow us to be more nimble with our patients, who are less mobile or want to involve others in the surgical decision-making.”

Another physician, Anit Patel, M.D., also helped with communications, translating the complex medical information.

Fortunately for Paul, the tumor turned out to be benign. Dr. Maloney and his surgical team were able to remove it completely, and Paul’s prognosis is good.

“We will follow your spine with imaging over the next several years, and hopefully no further treatment will be needed,” Dr. Maloney told Paul. After a 10-day stay in the hospital, Paul was up and doing physical therapy.

Thanks to Dr. Maloney and the surgical team, not only could the teen walk normally again, he was able to literally walk in his high school graduation on June 10.

“Dr. Maloney told me that I’ll recover some of my abilities eventually, but if I do outpatient physical therapy, it will happen a little quicker. That I should be able to run again, some day.”

From Dr. Maloney’s perspective, Paul’s recovery was remarkable. “It’s a credit to his young age and rehab work,” he said. “He does
not need a brace, since we placed instrumentation at the time of surgery. He needed to refrain from heavy lifting, twisting and bending for about six weeks. Now he is completely free to regain normal activities.”

Loida said she and her family are thankful that all their concerns were heard, and that Paul was able to get the MRI right away, and then the surgery.

“Honestly, this is what it’s all about — helping people get back to their full lives. It’s wonderful to be part of a patient’s journey of recovery from illness/disease.”

Patrick Maloney, M.D., neurosurgeon

“The support during and after his surgery has been tremendous,” she said. “It really felt like family, they were right beside us the whole way. The nurses were amazing. They knew he missed home and brought him Filipino delicacies. They’re still checking in on him.”

Paul’s Aunt Michelle Palma agreed. “The medical team and allied services did an extraordinary job throughout his medical journey. We can never thank enough all the people who helped.”

Dr. Maloney is also grateful. “Honestly, this is what it’s all about,” he said, “helping people get back to their full lives. It’s wonderful to be part of a patient’s journey of recovery from illness/disease. I am extremely grateful and lucky to have a skill set that allows me to help people.”

For more information on NorthBay Center for Neuroscience, visit NorthBay.org/Neuro.
Ted Neima is loving his new lease on life following heart valve replacement.
Vacaville resident Ted Neima keeps a small slip of paper in his wallet—a fortune cookie message he got the night before he had a valve in his heart surgically replaced. “Look forward to great fortune and a new lease on life,” it reads and Ted says that sums up his experience at NorthBay Health just perfectly.

Ted got his new lease thanks to a minimally-invasive heart procedure offered at NorthBay Health known as Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) which provides an alternative to traditional open-heart surgery.

It was no surprise to him that he needed the surgery. The Vacaville business owner said he had been diagnosed with a developing aortic stenosis years before and the condition had been treated with medications and monitored by his cardiologist Cyrus Mancherje, M.D., who had explained that there would come a point where the problem would require a valve replacement. An aortic stenosis is a condition in which his heart’s aortic valve thickens and becomes stiff (calcified) so that it can’t fully open to allow blood flow from the heart into the body.

“If I’m honest, I can remember laying on my side at night in bed and listening to my heart beat and I could hear it squishing as it pumped,” he says.

The condition left him feeling fatigued and often out of breath, he said. “I would send my employees to the store to shop or send them to run errands for me because I just couldn’t do it,” he said.

When it became clear that the time for a valve replacement had arrived, Ted was connected with NorthBay interventional cardiologist Saba Lahsaei, M.D. “Mr. Neima’s condition really couldn’t wait,” Dr. Lahsaei said. “With aortic stenosis, the valve opening is narrowed, the heart has to work harder to pump enough blood to the body. That extra work can cause the left ventricle to thicken and enlarge and eventually the strain can cause a weakened heart muscle which can ultimately lead to heart failure.”

The TAVR procedure involves a thin, flexible catheter tube that is inserted into a blood vessel via a small incision on the leg and then guided into the heart. Moving X-ray images help the doctor place the catheter into the correct position and then a replacement valve is passed through the catheter and placed in the area of the aortic valve. A balloon on the catheter tip inflates, to press the new valve into place. The year 2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the first-ever TAVR procedure, which was done in France.
Because it is minimally invasive, TAVR patients are generally able to go home within a day or two of the procedure. In Ted’s case, he spent a night in the hospital for observation and was able to go home the next day, said Dr. Lahsaei.

“TAVR is a great advancement in heart care,” said Dr. Lahsaei. “It is far less invasive than open-heart surgery, leaves only a small scar and poses a lower risk of infection with a much faster recovery time.”

Dr. Lahsaei and fellow interventional cardiologist Mark Villalon, M.D., each performed hundreds of TAVR procedures prior to joining NorthBay in 2019. Along with cardiovascular surgeon Shea Pribyl, M.D., and a cardiac catheterization team, they have performed about 50 in the past two years at NorthBay Health Medical Center where a new state-of-the-art hybrid operating room is used for the specialized procedure.

“When they took me in for the surgery and I looked at the room with its high tech equipment and computer screens, I mean, I’ve never seen anything like it,” Ted recalled. “It was beyond Star Wars!”

And he said he still is impressed by how organized and caring his entire Heart & Vascular team was — from the medical assistant that made sure his calls were returned, to the nursing staff and the anesthesiologist who held his hand and helped keep him calm and comfortable.

“That’s one thing people need to understand — it’s a team of people,” Ted said. “From my first appointment with him, Dr. Lahsaei laid everything out for me, explained it all using a tech board that he could draw on and he made it all make sense for me. And there was a whole team meeting about my case. I realized that when Dr. Villalon was in the operating room too.”

He calls his experience a “God send” and said the same is true for the team in NorthBay Cardiac Rehabilitation who helped him with recovery and learning to follow a healthy diet and exercise regime.

“It really has changed my life. I have so much more energy. I don’t have to send my employees out to do things for me because I can do it myself now,” he said. “I will say that when I think about it all, I get emotional. I am so grateful and I’m doing great. It takes me back to that fortune cookie — I got a new lease on life.”

For more information on TAVR and NorthBay Heart & Vascular, visit NorthBay.org/TAVR.

Interventional cardiologists Mark Villalon, M.D. (left) and Saba Lahsaei, M.D. (center) along with cardiothoracic surgeon Shea Pribyl, D.O., are all part of the team at NorthBay Health that provides Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), which provides an alternative to open-heart surgery.
Fairfield resident Maria Murillo finds a lot of joy these days simply taking long rides in a car, hiking or being able to walk up stairs.

That’s because for the past couple of years, those simple tasks were impossible for Maria to endure without excruciating pain in her lower back.

Thanks to a minimally-invasive surgical procedure she had at NorthBay Health, that pain is long gone and Maria says she couldn’t be happier with the outcome.

“I had lower back pain issues for years but then in 2020, I took a pretty slippery fall on concrete flooring and after that, the back pain got really bad,” she explained. “I had tried adjustments, acupuncture, physical therapy for years, but nothing seemed to work.”

The pain got so bad, that she couldn’t lay on her right side, she couldn’t walk up stairs, drive or ride in a car for long periods or pick up her young nephew who likes to be held.

After seeing her regular doctor and specialists, it was determined that she had a problem with a sacroiliac (SI) joint. The SI joints link the iliac bones (hips) to the sacrum, or the lowest part of the spine above the tailbone.

In 15 percent to 30 percent of patients with chronic low back pain, the cause isn’t with their spine but rather with the SI joints. The joints are important because they act as shock absorbers for impacts.
from the lower extremities to the 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.

Maria needed a surgery to fuse the joint on the right side of her body. SI joint fusion involves a small incision along the side of the buttock through which small triangle-shaped 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.

Maria began researching the surgery and looking for surgeons who offer it and was excited to find NorthBay orthopedic specialist Dr. Cornelis Elmes, M.D.

However, when it came time to choose a surgeon, she listened to a friend who convinced her to try a Bay Area health provider. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and many surgeries were delayed at health care organizations across the country. In addition, she had insurance approvals to win. So by the time she was able to get the surgery, her surgeon had left the area.

“But I remembered Dr. Elmes and now I feel like I should have just gone with him from the beginning,” she said. “He was very knowledgeable and when we first met in person, I had a lot of information but he gave me even more and I was very comfortable with him. He seems like a very chill doctor and I am very impressed.”

NorthBay Health Orthopedics offers several treatments to address SI joint pain, starting with physical therapy and exercises, especially those that help strengthen the body’s core muscles. Wearing
a sacroiliac belt, or a device designed to limit movement of the joint, can help provide support for the area as well. For some patients, steroid injections in the area can provide relief for a short time, Dr. Elmes said.

When that’s not effective, interventional treatment such as a SI joint fusion is an option. In Maria’s case, prior treatments had little effect.

It is not uncommon for patients to undergo other treatment options or to have just endured the pain for years, not realizing the cause, said Dr. Elmes.

“Or they don’t have a problem until they fall,” he said. “Also, it’s common to think it’s low back pain, and even to have been told it’s back pain by a primary care physician in the past when it’s actually SI joint pain.”

Maria had the fusion surgery in March and says she is pain-free.

“I am able to sleep on my right side, and just went for a long car drive with no issues,” she said. “I am so happy I got this surgery done. I’m very happy.”

SI joint fusion has proven effective in more than 90 percent of patients and because it is a minimally invasive procedure, recovery is faster. “Most patients find that after years of chronic pain, their pain is essentially gone within six weeks of the surgery,” said Dr. Elmes.

Fusing the SI joint does not limit a patient’s flexibility, and Maria can expect great long-term pain reduction. “The SI joint is not supposed to move much anyway,” he said.

“Studies are showing great outcomes with sustained pain relief and it should cure her (Maria) forever,” Dr. Elmes said.

He added that in his experience, patients report their “pain is 95 percent better, often pain-free, with only certain activities that cause minor pain.”

Maria has advice to others who may be dealing with the same issues or contemplating the surgery: “Go for it. It’s worth getting it done,” she said.

For more information on SI Joint fusion, visit NorthBay.org/SIJoint.
Breathing Easy Again

Errant Carrot Causes Near Catastrophe

Vacaville resident Judy Fisher had experienced asthma as a young athlete years ago. But when she found herself in the NorthBay Health Emergency Department, straining to breathe, she knew it wasn’t asthma.

“They examined me and couldn’t see anything so I was sent home with an inhaler,” she recalled.

But the difficulty with getting enough air into her lungs continued. Her primary care doctor prescribed a stronger inhaler. Still, the problem persisted until she was once again in the Emergency Department. An X-ray revealed possible pneumonia and she was referred to a pulmonary specialist.

Fortunately, NorthBay Health pulmonologist Karan Julka, M.D., specializes in diseases and disorders of the lungs and is an expert in bronchoscopy. He told her that one of her lungs was beginning to collapse and she needed a bronchoscopy immediately.

Bronchoscopy is a procedure that lets the doctor look at a patient’s lungs and air passages. A thin tube (bronchoscope) is passed through the nose or mouth, down the throat and into the lungs.

In Judy’s case, Dr. Julka was able to find that her airway was blocked by what turned out to be a small piece of carrot. He was able to remove it and her breathing improved immediately.

A day before her first visit to the hospital, Judy had choked while eating a carrot. She thought her coughing had cleared up the issue but that was certainly not the case.
Monarch Milestone

Monarch—a cutting edge robotic technology for use in diagnostic and therapeutic bronchoscopic procedures—is now part of the arsenal of advanced medical care in use at NorthBay Health.

Created by Auris Health Inc. (part of the Johnson & Johnson Medical Devices Companies), Monarch allows physicians to accurately access small and hard-to-reach lung nodules, enabling biopsy for early diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide. Nodules are typically small, deep in the lungs and difficult to reach using traditional bronchoscopy, making early-stage diagnosis and treatment difficult.

“This technology is an exciting advancement in care available at NorthBay,” said pulmonologist Karan Julka, M.D. “With this system, we can see and biopsy remote parts of the lung that were previously inaccessible.”

With Monarch, the doctor uses a hand-held controller to manipulate an innovative telescoping endoscope attached to flexible robotic arms that allow greater dexterity, reach, vision, and control. Integrated software combines traditional endoscopic views of the lung with computer-assisted navigation, all based on 3-D models of the patient’s own lung anatomy.

Her airway tissue had grown around the carrot leading to lung collapse. Judy required multiple bronchoscopies with use of a laser to fully fix her breathing tube.

“I hate vegetables!” she jokes these days, but at the time it was no laughing matter.

Judy was relieved that it was done quickly.

She also has plenty of praise for Dr. Julka and the team who cared for her.

“Everyone was really nice,” she said. “They were always professional and everything went really well.”

And as for carrots? “I’m giving up vegetables,” she joked.

Bronchoscopy can be used to:

- Identify a lung infection;
- Biopsy tissue from the lung;
- Remove tumors;
- Place a small tube (stent) to hold open an airway; and
- Treat a lung problem, such as bleeding or an abnormal narrowing of the airway (stricture).

For more information on pulmonary care, visit NorthBay.org/Pulmonary.

A bronchoscopy is an essential tool in pulmonology. It is used not just in cases of obstructions but in the diagnosis of many lung issues.”

Karan Julka, M.D., pulmonologist
Perhaps the most transformational time in a woman’s life is when she becomes a mother, observed Kalie Li, D.O., an OB/GYN for NorthBay Health.

“It’s such a huge milestone for a woman. Life is now so different and there are a lot of unexpected things that may occur. The arrival of the first child is such a shock to your world, but is good in many good ways, definitely,” Dr. Li said. “For me as a physician, it’s rewarding to be able be supportive. And I can relate, because I’m the parent of three children under the age of 5. I try to talk to my patients in a way that provides that extra support.”

The team at NorthBay Health Women’s Services offers women a full range of specialized care, from pre-puberty to menopause and everything in between: infertility, pregnancy and delivery, pelvic pain, abnormal bleeding and hormone-related changes. There can be a lot to follow, Dr. Li explained, and that is exactly the appeal for her as a medical professional.

“The best part of my job is being able to establish a relationship with my patients that will go across their life-times. It’s huge and rewarding for me to be part of all those life transitions.”

NorthBay Health Medical Center has long had a reputation for being a safe, comfortable place to have a baby and that’s by design, according to Heather Troutt, director, Women’s Services.

“We’re Solano County’s only ‘Baby Friendly’ hospital, which means we have specially trained staff to educate, encourage and support our new moms in their breastfeeding experiences. We take the designation very seriously and our entire team strives to assure that this is the best place for our families to welcome their newest member.”

NorthBay’s Labor & Delivery Unit has become a very busy place in recent months, as Sutter Solano closed its Labor & Delivery services, and David Grant Medical Center is on divert for maternity services, at least through the fall. As a result, many new moms and dads are choosing to deliver at NorthBay, rather than going out of the county, according to Heather.

One of them was Jessica Butler who, with husband Robert, came to NorthBay Health Medical Center to deliver their second daughter via cesarean section. Andrew Lin, M.D., delivered little Eliza in early June.

“We wanted Dr. Lin to deliver our baby here, because he delivered our daughter, Margaret Jean, almost four years ago,” Jessica said. “It was a great experience,” the new dad recalled. “Everything
NorthBay Health has surgeons on staff who are certified to use the da Vinci Xi Robotic surgical system. Depending on their specialty, surgeons can perform nephrectomies, prostate and hernia surgery, hysterectomies, excision of endometriosis, salpingectomies, ovarian cystectomies, ovary and fibroid removal, gallbladder or gallstone removal, and partial removal of the colon.

**Our Experts in Robotics**

NorthBay Health has surgeons on staff who are certified to use the da Vinci Xi Robotic surgical system. Depending on their specialty, surgeons can perform nephrectomies, prostate and hernia surgery, hysterectomies, excision of endometriosis, salpingectomies, ovarian cystectomies, ovary and fibroid removal, gallbladder or gallstone removal, and partial removal of the colon.

**NorthBay Center for Women’s Health**

Currently has five surgeons who are certified to use the da Vinci, including Dr. Li and Marlene Freeman, M.D. Stella Huang, D.O., and Shanna Snow, both obstetricians and gynecologists, are certified to assist.

For more information on Women’s Services, visit NorthBay.org/WomensServices.

My patients can go home the same day, and frequently with just Tylenol or ibuprofen, no narcotics.”

Kalie Li, D.O., obstetrician/gynecologist

William Fulton, D.O.
General Surgery

Marlene Freeman, M.D.
OB/GYN

Majid Kianmajd, D.O.
General Surgery

Herkanwal Singh Khaira, M.D.
Urology

Kalie Li, D.O.
OB/GYN

Sutter physicians with privileges at NorthBay Health

Denise Veloria, D.O.
Iram Zubair, D.O.
The NorthBay Health Cancer Center, in the VacaValley Wellness Center in Vacaville, is more than just a place; it’s a coordinated program of comprehensive cancer prevention, detection, treatment, rehabilitation and support services. It is staffed by oncology experts—physicians, nurses, pharmacists, technologists and therapists who strive to provide a compassionate approach to cancer treatment and care to patients and their families, supported by state-of-the-art technology and access to cutting-edge clinical research protocols.

It moved to its Vacaville location in 2016, after 30 years in Fairfield on the NorthBay Health Medical Center campus. Radiation Oncology occupies the first floor, and features a linear accelerator, which arrived in pieces from around the globe. It was assembled and calibrated to deliver precise treatments in less time to radiation patients. On the third floor, spacious private and semi-private bays with sweeping views are used for patients receiving infusion of chemotherapy. Just down the hall is the pharmacy that prepares the medications.

“It’s all about putting the patient experience first,” said oncologist and hematologist James Long, M.D., medical director for the Cancer Center. “We looked to some of our
industry leaders in patient experience and borrowed heavily from their playbook when the center was designed. The goal is to make each visit as calm, comfortable and healing as possible."

Oncology nurse navigators are available to assist patients as they start their complex cancer journey. Navigators not only expedite appointments and organize test results but serve as a resource for information about support groups and clinical trials. In May 2016, NorthBay Health became a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network. This gives oncologists the ability to consult with Mayo Clinic experts for second opinions on complex cancer cases. "It’s absolutely free for the patient, doesn’t even involve seeking insurance approval, and the response is quicker than it would take to refer a patient to a regional cancer center in California," said Dr. Long, who also serves as NorthBay Health’s physician champion for the Mayo Clinic Care Network.

At the center of it all are the Cancer Center’s physician team of oncology, hematology and radiology, oncoplasty and breast reconstruction specialists. The Cancer Center offers genetic counseling, radiation therapy, infusion services and an in-house pharmacy that delivers precise medications for infusions. Chemotherapy and bioterror treatments are administered using the highest level of care by staff of oncology-certified nurses and other clinical staff.

Advanced imaging services include the center’s state-of-the-art Varian TruBeam linear accelerator—that kills or shrinks cancer cells using an advanced image-guided radiation therapy system, while avoiding healthy tissues and organs. Other advanced imaging services include digital mammography, MRI, ultrasound, 3D mammography, MRI-guided breast biopsy, CT, PET scans and X-ray services. For more information on cancer care, visit NorthBay.org/Cancer.

Mayo Clinic Care Network Provides Expert Input

Since May 2016, NorthBay Health has been a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network, allowing NorthBay Health physicians to work closely with Mayo Clinic specialists—sharing medical knowledge and clinical expertise in ways that directly benefit patients.

Through eConsults, NorthBay doctors have access to more than 4,000 Mayo Clinic physicians and scientists for second opinions on rare, serious or complex cases. Other care network membership benefits include: AskMayoExpert, a database for reference at the point of care. AME offers the latest Mayo Clinic-vetted information on the management, care and treatment of a variety of medical conditions. Health Care Consulting, which enables NorthBay to learn about Mayo Clinic’s clinical, operational and business models, including how they are designed and implemented.

eBoard conferences, which allow NorthBay Health physicians to gather with multiple specialists from Mayo Clinic and other care network health care organizations to discuss complex cases.
Specialties Abound at NorthBay Health

**Infectious Disease**

The global pandemic has made NorthBay Health’s busy Infectious Disease expert busier than ever. The practice not only covers Infection Prevention for both of NorthBay Health’s two hospitals, but also includes treatment of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, complex wound/bone infections, infections requiring long-term antibiotic therapy, in addition to a variety of conditions due to various viruses (Influenza, COVID-19), fungi (Valley Fever) and parasites.

**Occupational Health**

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

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. Clients have instant access to real-time results of office visits, work restrictions, next steps for the employee, number of visits missed and more through iSystoc.

**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 Health Medical Center and at the Ambulatory Surgery Center at NorthBay Health VacaValley Hospital.

**Robotic Surgery**

NorthBay has surgeons on staff who are certified to use the da Vinci Xi Robotic surgical system. This advanced technology allows surgeons to perform complex and delicate procedures with exceptional precision, while offering patients reduced recovery time, pain and blood loss.

Depending on their specialty, surgeons can perform nephrectomies, prostate and hernia surgery, hysterectomies, ovarian cystectomies, ovary and fibroid removal, gallbladder or gallstone removal, and partial removal of the colon.

**Ear, Nose & Throat**

NorthBay Ear, Nose & 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 a comprehensive evaluation and then employ a variety of treatments including medication, advanced diagnostic procedures and surgery to ensure personalized care.

**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 and ankylosing spondylitis.

**Urology**

No one likes to talk about problems with their urologic system, but there is no reason to suffer in silence. NorthBay Health schedules regular office hours and some procedures in Vacaville, Fairfield and Napa, with two urologists, as well as some procedures and surgeries at NorthBay Health Medical Center in Fairfield. Some robotic surgeries are done using the da Vinci Xi Robotic Surgical System.

**Gastro**

NorthBay Gastroenterology’s team of board-certified experts employs a variety of advanced treatments, from medications to minimally invasive endoscopic procedures and complex digestive endoscopy. Patients with complex conditions benefit from education and case management provided by our specialized nurses. The Interventional Endoscopy program at NorthBay Health offers minimally invasive endoscopic services to the Solano County community and beyond.

**And More**

NorthBay Health also offers Anti-coagulation Services, Pain Management, Wound Care, Hospice & Bereavement and Rehabilitative Services. For more information on these and more, visit www.NorthBay.org.
NorthBay Health Foundation Presses Forward with Vision, Vigor

**After a two-year hiatus, NorthBay Health Foundation is launching its re-envisioned structure and mission this fall, under the guidance of a new board of directors, and new NorthBay Health Foundation President Paul McGinty.**

Given the post-pandemic crunch that nonprofit hospitals are facing around the country—with inflation, high labor costs and low reimbursement rates, NorthBay Health needs the community’s support now more than ever, and Paul believes there are many philanthropists here in Solano County who can come forward to make significant contributions toward sustaining an independent health system.

“`There is the capacity in this community to accomplish this,” he said. “I believe that there are those who desire to be part of this transformation; to see themselves as donor/investors, and want to share ownership in taking philanthropy to the next level.”

Shortly after his arrival in March, he immediately went on a listening tour to get a good read on the pulse of the community.

“My first goal was to figure out the culture of philanthropy within and outside NorthBay, meeting with the management team, board members, physicians and nurse leaders, as well as community leaders, to hear their impressions of what philanthropy looks like.

“NorthBay is the home team for Solano County and what we’ve accomplished here—with competition on either side—that’s very rare for a community,” he added. “NorthBay provides ‘Big City’ care close to home. It’s also a 60-plus-year institution that has grown recently with only a modest reliance on community philanthropy.”

During the hiatus, four Foundation core leaders—Dennis Landis, Al Shaw, Bill Fell and Scott Reynolds—worked with CEO and President Konard Jones to create new bylaws, priorities and partnerships for future board members, Paul explained. “We are in the final stages of completing their work and have begun to recruit new members. The new board’s first task will be to envision a strategic plan for the next three to five years.”

Moving forward Paul envisions a newly constituted Foundation that embraces transformational, not transactional, philanthropy. Building a culture of giving in the community will mean NorthBay can bring in funding to support the capital budget that fuels NorthBay’s growth and development.

“There are donors here who want to do more,” he said. “They want to be the ones to help acquire better technology for the hospitals, to support the high-end services that our hospitals have been providing its residents.”

Paul believes the timing for the Foundation’s transformation is good. “People are sick of COVID, they don’t want to meet virtually any more, they want to get out and participate, and do things for the collective good,” he said.

He promises that the NorthBay Guild will make its return, as will the NorthBay Wine, Brew & Food Jubilee, a “reimagined” Open that Bottle Night for top donors and perhaps the Guild Golf Tournament, in 2023.

There’s lots of work to be done, but Paul is up for the task. “I’m energized, excited, and ready.”

Paul McGinty has been very busy getting to know his new community since arriving in Solano County earlier this year.

“`I believe that there are those who desire to be part of this transformation; to see themselves as donor/investors, and want to share ownership in taking philanthropy to the next level.”

Paul McGinty, NorthBay Health Foundation President
Awards

NorthBay Health has received a number of prestigious awards and accreditations in recent months.

NorthBay Health Medical Center is recognized as “High Performing” by U.S. News & World Reports for 2022–23 in six specialty procedures/conditions: COPD, Heart Attack, Heart Failure, Kidney Failure, Pneumonia and Stroke. A “High Performing” rating acknowledges care that was significantly better than the national average, as measured by factors such as patient outcomes. In addition, the hospital is recognized as “High Performing” for maternity care for 2021-22 and was listed as one of the top 50 hospitals in the state for 2021-22.

For the sixth consecutive year, NorthBay Healthcare received the American Heart Association’s GoldPlus Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Quality Achievement Award, for its commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines. NorthBay also earned the association’s Target: Stroke Honor Roll award and the Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll award.

NorthBay Health Medical Center made the California Health and Human Services, along with Cal Hospital Compare’s Maternity Honor Roll, as one of just 124 hospitals that met or surpassed a statewide target aimed at reducing births via cesarean sections in first-time mothers with low-risk pregnancies.

NorthBay’s Trauma program has been re-certified by the American College of Surgeons. Verified trauma centers must meet the essential criteria that ensure trauma care capability and institutional performance, as outlined by the American College of Surgeons’ Committee on Trauma. The achievement recognized NorthBay’s dedication to providing optimal care for injured patients.

NorthBay Health Medical Group, for the second year in a row, earned the 2021 Excellence in Healthcare Award from the Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA) for top performance on clinical quality, patient experience, and cost measures. In addition, the organization also honored NorthBay Medical Group with an award for achieving the 90th percentile or above in IHA’s patient experience measurements. The award recognizes provider organizations that perform in the top 50 percent in all three major areas: clinical quality, patient experience and total cost of care.

Re-certification by The Joint Commission was also achieved in 2021 after a year’s delay because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NorthBay Health’s Oncology Program was re-certified by the American College of Surgeons, Commission on Cancer in 2022.
Executive Team Sees Big Changes

As NorthBay Health charts its road to economic recovery, it does so with several new faces on its executive team, all committed to dynamic leadership and creative approaches to building a sustainable health care system that will continue to serve the community for years to come.

Paul McGinty, President of NorthBay Health Foundation.
Paul came to NorthBay in March from Humboldt County, where he served as Chief Philanthropy Officer for Providence Health’s two hospitals on the North Coast. For more than 10 years, he guided a philanthropic campaign leading the St. Joseph Hospital and Redwood Memorial Foundations.

“It was important to find the right person to guide the future of our foundation, which meant taking the time necessary to search far and wide,” noted B. Konard Jones, NorthBay Health President and CEO. “When you meet Paul, recognize his enthusiasm and hear his vision for taking us to the next level, you will know that it was worth the wait.”

Paul understands the importance of his role in NorthBay’s economic recovery plan, and is already at work organizing donor events and fundraising efforts. (See Page 25 for more details the evolution of the Foundation.)

Heather Resseger, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer.
Heather has taken on the role of Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer. Heather has worked at NorthBay since 2016, most recently serving as Assistant Vice President of Quality and Care Management.

Heather said she considers the Chief Nursing Officer job a dream come true, giving her a chance to work closely with front line nurses and patient care teams in delivering excellent care.

“I love nurses and being able to connect with staff in this role is very exciting,” she said.

Heather has been a nurse for nearly 20 years with wide-ranging experience, from bedside as an ICU and telemetry nurse, to management roles at facilities in Oregon and California. Prior to joining NorthBay Healthcare in 2016, she served as director of nursing operations at Rogue Regional Medical Center in Medford, Oregon, and was director of inpatient nursing at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital before that.

She has extensive experience at both large and community-based medical facilities. At NorthBay, she oversees quality reporting and care management; she has worked with physicians and nursing leadership to improve data collection and analysis; helped implement a Daily Safety Briefing; and introduced several new programs including Clinical Documentation Improvement, Safety Saves, and the Journey to Zero Harm.

Heather will be working with clinical teams to streamline work flow within the hospitals to improve efficiency and ensure quality and safety.

Sheniece Smith, Chief Administrative Officer and General Counsel.
Sheniece joined NorthBay Health in October 2021. She is responsible for the legal, risk management, public relations, marketing and physician compensation departments. Prior to this role, she served as Vice President General Counsel for Hannibal Regional Healthcare System where she had direct oversight for legal, risk management, clinical information systems and technical services and securities.

Sheniece joined the Hannibal Regional team in 2019 after working at Children’s Hospital of Orange County for more than 10 years in various roles, including Chief of Staff to the CEO and Associate General Counsel.

Sheniece is also an adjunct professor at USC Gould School of Law where she developed and teaches a health law and policy course. Sheniece has a passion for helping the community and remains involved in volunteer activities to help the underserved.

Her work has been recognized with the Top 100 Healthcare Visionaries Award presented by the International Forum on Advancements in Healthcare earlier this year, by the Orange County Business Journal which named her one of OC’s 500 most influential leaders in 2018, and by Senator Lou Correa who presented her with the Women Making a Difference Award.

Longtime leader retires. Steve Huddleston, who served as Vice President of Public Affairs from 2008 to 2020, retired in July and will not be replaced. His work in health care followed a 32-year career as a journalist—a writer, editor and finally publisher of the daily newspaper in Vacaville. At NorthBay, he oversaw government affairs, community outreach, public relations and communications.

“We wish Steve well in his retirement and thank him for all his years of service to NorthBay Health and to our community,” said Konard. “He will be missed but not forgotten.”
NorthBay Health Welcomes New Physicians

Stephanie Toy, M.D., specializes in pediatrics and family medicine and joins NorthBay Health after providing pediatric care at a local independent pediatric care group. Her practice is in the NorthBay Health Primary Care facility in Vacaville.

She earned her medical degree at Sidney Kimmel Medical College in Philadelphia and holds a master of science degree in bioengineering from the University of Pennsylvania and a bachelor’s degree in bioengineering from the University of California, Berkeley.

Dr. Toy practices “evidence-based holistic medicine” and said her model for care means it is “a shared decision between the family and me to develop an individualized plan.” In her free time, she enjoys exploring with her children, walking, gardening, line dancing and volunteering in the community.

You can read her full profile and watch her video here: www.northbay.org/doctors/our-doctors/Phys3101.cfm

Sumerra Khan, D.O., is a board-certified family medicine physician. Her practice is in the NorthBay Health Primary Care facility in Vacaville.

She earned her doctor of Osteopathy medical degree at Western University of Health Sciences, in Pomona and completed her residency in family medicine with a concentration in diabetes at the Health Valley Consortium for Medical Education in Modesto.

Dr. Khan said she loves family medicine as it gives her the opportunity care for patients of all ages and said her style of practice is to be a “patient, empathetic and good listener” who works to “provide the best evidence-based care possible.”

Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with family, traveling, cooking and catching up on sleep.

You can read her full profile an watch her video here: www.northbay.org/doctors/our-doctors/phys9054.cfm

Cassandra Puccinelli, M.D., is an otolaryngologist (ear, nose and throat specialist) who comes from a medical center in Nebraska. She is earned her medical degree at the University of Nevada School of Medicine and was fellowship trained at Stanford University.

Ankit Dubey, M.D., is an internal medicine physician who will care for patients at the NorthBay Health Center – Green Valley. He most recently served at a medical center in Hemet, Calif, and earned his medical degree at St. George’s University, Grenada.

Paarth Shah, M.D., is an internal medicine physician who is also joining the team at the NorthBay Health Center – Green Valley. He completed his residency at a hospital in New Jersey and graduated magna cum laude with a medical degree from St. George’s University, Grenada.

Frances Brit Benko, D.O., is a family medicine physician who will provide primary care services at NorthBay Health Urgent Care in American Canyon, when it opens this fall. She earned her doctor of osteopathic medicine from Nova Southeastern University in Florida and holds a master’s degree in molecular medicine from the University of South Florida College of Medicine.

Rajdeep Kular, M.D., is a family medicine physician who will work at the NorthBay Health Center – Vacaville. He completed his residency in Columbus, Ohio and holds a medical degree from American University of the Caribbean.

Nikki Thaker, D.O., is a family medicine physician who will work at the NorthBay Health Center – Vacaville. She previously worked as a clinical assistant professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center and earned a doctor of osteopathic medicine from Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Rajmeet Mann, M.D., is an internal medicine physician who will join the team at NorthBay Health Center – Fairfield. She completed her residency in Virginia and earned her medical degree at American University of Antigua College of Medicine in Antigua and Barbuda.

NorthBay Health will welcome several new physicians from now through mid-September in its primary and specialty care offices.
Check us out! A new name, a bold look, new colors, but the same trusted health care partner you’ve come to expect from an organization that has grown up in Solano County and continues to serve the patients of our community under the same, sustaining mission: Compassionate Care, Advanced Medicine, Close to Home.

Today we’re NorthBay Health. With our evolved brand, we are reintroducing NorthBay to the community as an integrated health system with offerings from primary and preventive care to complex and specialty services, advanced imaging and more.

Take a close look and you’ll notice we elevate the word health—intentionally—in our new logo, just as we put your health above everything else.

You’ll spot a forward-leaning N—for NorthBay. Look closer and you can see two hearts, still beating strong with our commitment to our patients. Our new colors reflect our regional pallet, from the rolling hills to the bay.

A brand is more than a logo, it’s a symbol of our organization, and our promise of top-notch care, when you need it and where you need it. And true to that promise, we’ve packed this issue with information to help you understand the breadth of the system that’s here to serve you.

We’re a proud member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network. Our physicians may partner with expert counterparts at Mayo Clinic to obtain a second opinion at no extra cost—for patients with complex cases.

Our hospitals—NorthBay Health Medical Center, our flagship hospital in Fairfield; and NorthBay Health VacaValley Hospital in Vacaville—have been designated as Magnet facilities of nursing excellence and offer 24/7/365 emergency and trauma care.

We have convenient primary care facilities in Vacaville, Fairfield and Green Valley. Our specialty care physicians cover everything from head (neuroscience) to toe (podiatry).

Our new brand demonstrates that we are community-friendly, patient-centric and forward-thinking in our quest to offer the most advanced, state-of-the-art care to our Solano County neighbors for many years to come.
Access to Mayo Clinic Expertise Right Here

Working together to solve patients’ complex health problems.

Learn More NorthBay.org/Mayo