

# THE pulse

 **syracuse**  
AREA HEALTH



WINTER 2024  
INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



PATIENT SUCCESS  
**A SEAMLESS RECOVERY**



NATURAL REMEDIES  
**BEYOND THE  
MEDICINE CABINET**



COMMUNITY PROJECT  
**ROOTED IN WELLNESS**

# LETTER FROM THE CEO



Dear reader,

As we embrace this winter season, I invite you to read our latest edition of The Pulse. The stories encapsulate the dedication and expertise of our healthcare professionals and reflect Syracuse Area Health's shared commitment to the health and happiness of our community.

We feature our Care Transitions Coordinator, Emily Iske, who was recently recognized with The Caring Kind Award for her compassion toward patients and amazing teamwork with coworkers. The entire SAH community is very proud of her dedication to excellence.

Inside this edition of The Pulse, you'll also find Syracuse Area Health's Annual Report. This contains some important information on our Fiscal Year 2023 financial and statistical results.

We also spotlight the healing journey of one young athlete, Sophia May, who suffered an ankle sprain. SAH's athletic training, orthopaedics, and physical therapy teams worked diligently to get her moving and back on the volleyball court.

In this issue, we hear from some of the providers at our two family practice clinics, located in Syracuse and Weeping Water. These clinic providers are critical for community members, assisting with a wide range of medical challenges, illnesses, injuries, and more.

Check out our article about some of the best natural remedies for healing a winter cold. Overreliance on decongestants is common, and while they serve a purpose, sometimes it's best to start with the basics.

Finally, you'll see an update about our Arboretum Project, with Phase I nearly complete. I look forward to seeing this project develop over the coming years!

Best wishes for the year ahead,  
**Michael Harvey, President & CEO**

## HONORED WITH THE CARING KIND AWARD

Emily Iske Recognized for  
Above-and-Beyond  
Dedication to Her Care  
Transitions Role



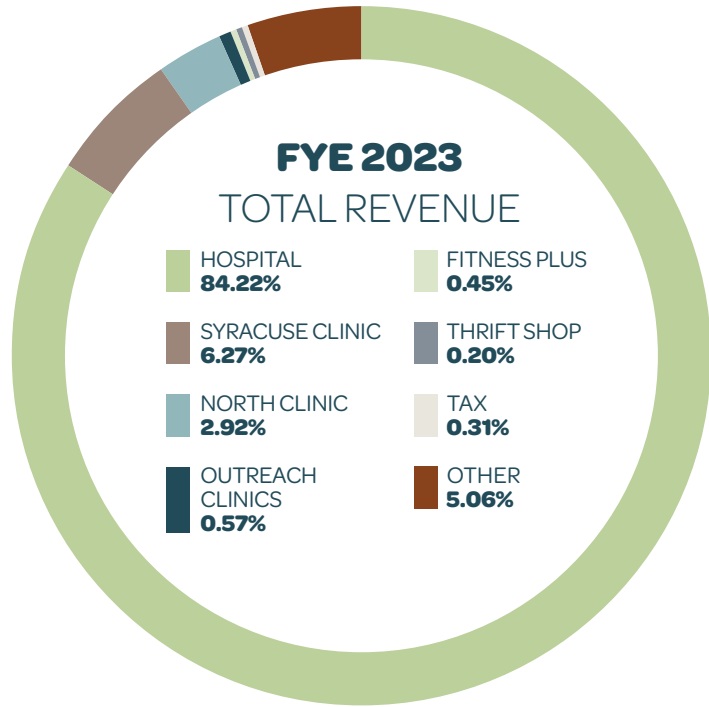
Excellent care is being recognized! Our Care Transitions Coordinator, Emily Iske, LCSW, LMHP has been recognized with the Caring Kind Award for Syracuse Area Health. This award honors outstanding healthcare employees who have demonstrated compassion for patients, cooperation with coworkers, and dedication to providing the best possible care. Emily shared: "I was so surprised and excited to receive The Caring Kind Award this year!"

*"It's such an honor to be nominated, then chosen, by my peers for doing a job I truly love. It's also a privilege to give back to my community through my work here at SAH. Being recognized for that work makes the award extra special."*

Emily embodies the spirit of compassionate healthcare. In her role, she regularly goes above and beyond to prioritize patient care, offering unwavering support to those facing substantial challenges. Beyond the hospital walls, Emily extends her kindness to community members, dedicating countless hours to assist families in obtaining crucial resources for home and healthcare. Her efforts, from driving to family homes for paperwork to collaborating with community agencies, showcase her commitment to the well-being of patients long after their appointments or stays.

Emily also shared her thanks for her colleagues: "Working in healthcare is definitely not a solo job. I couldn't do what I do without the help and support of the great team at SAH." Her well-deserved receipt of the Caring Kind Award is a testament to her outstanding contributions to both the hospital and the broader community.

# Annual Report



**Gross Revenue**

\$39,159,167

**Health Insurance Write-offs**

\$9,149,806

**Charity Care Write-offs**

\$81,516

**Uncollectible Patient Balances**

\$775,298

**Net Revenue**

\$29,152,547

**Expenses**

\$28,799,255

**Funds Left Over for Future Needs**

\$353,292

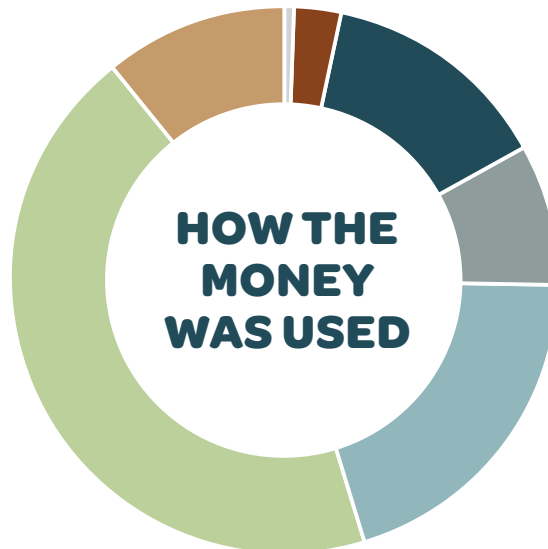
## by the numbers

### FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## 2023 Fiscal Year Ending STATISTICS

	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Inpatient/ Swing Bed Days	482	609	632
ER Visits	1,408	1,716	1,836
Surgical Procedures	343	302	304
Syracuse Clinic Visits	9,862	9,898	10,287
North Clinic Visits	2,920	3,509	4,158
Specialty Clinic Visits	3,306	3,270	3,555
CT Scans	1,040	1,214	1,705
MRI Scans	173	171	326
Laboratory Tests	26,394	30,038	34,867
Physical Therapy Sessions	11,092	11,399	13,023
Occupational Therapy Sessions	4,858	6,150	6,296
Cardiac Rehab Visits	848	649	701
Pulmonary Rehab Visits	110	206	134
Respiratory Treatments	368	546	848

- PROPERTY/LIABILITY INSURANCE  
**\$234,042**
- INTEREST EXPENSE  
**\$802,239**
- DEPRECIATION/AMORTIZATION  
**\$3,875,046**
- PURCHASED SERVICES AND FEES  
**\$2,401,272**
- OTHER PATIENT EXPENSES (SUPPLIES)  
**\$5,743,245**
- EMPLOYEE WAGES  
**\$12,655,789**
- EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  
**\$3,087,622**



# A SEAMLESS RECOVERY

*Athletic Training, Orthopaedics, and Physical Therapy Collaborate for Patient Success*

In the world of student sports, beyond the cheers of victory, there are many untold stories of resilience and recovery. Syracuse Area Health is proud to play a role in many young athletes' recovery stories. Here, the coordinated efforts of our Athletic Training, Orthopaedics, and Physical Therapy (PT) teams ensure comprehensive care for every patient.



**DR. SCOTT STRASBURGER**

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON



**MEGAN NEEMAN**

MS, LAT, ATC  
ATHLETIC TRAINER



**LAURA BULLER**

PT, DPT  
PHYSICAL THERAPIST

## The Story of Sophia May

Student athlete Sophia May found herself facing a challenging setback during a volleyball game in August 2023. A misstep led to a high ankle sprain, disrupting her senior year sports aspirations. That's where our Athletic Training team, spearheaded by Megan Neemann, MS, LAT, ATC, stepped in.

Megan was onsite at the volleyball game and, once the injury happened, she went over to help Sophia right away.

"She took me off the court and assessed my injury. She then taped my ankle, put ice on it, made sure I had crutches, and then helped me out of the building. That's when we headed to Syracuse Area Health," Sophia said.

Megan shared her perspective: "When I first saw her, she wanted to continue playing, and she had adequate strength when I tested her. We let her stay at the game as long as she was comfortable, but it soon became clear that she was in much more pain than she was letting on."

After an initial assessment and a referral to the Emergency Department to rule out a fracture, Sophia's journey continued under the collaborative care of SAH.

## Communication Across Departments: A Hallmark of Care at Syracuse Area Health

At the heart of our work is effective communication between departments.

"The athletic training staff has frequent communication with both Physical Therapy and Orthopaedics. Dr. Strasburger will often give me a call to discuss the plan of care in regard to my athletes, and his team is always very helpful if I have a quick question regarding restrictions or injuries," Megan shared.

This seamless collaboration facilitates a holistic approach to patient care, ensuring that every department involved is aware of the patient's progress and challenges.



## Achieving the Ultimate Goal: A Return to Sport

The streamlined efforts of our Athletic Training, Orthopaedics, and Physical Therapy departments are designed to result in a timely and effective return to sport for student athletes.

Laura emphasized the importance of this collaborative approach: “With smooth continuity of care, we are able to start with a leg up. We typically know what is wrong, why it happened, what is working, and what isn’t.”

For Sophia, the benefits of this efficient, collaborative care were evident. She healed and regained strength quickly, under the care of these teams at SAH. In the end, her recovery went so well that she returned to volleyball a month earlier than expected.

“I was lucky to have Megan, Laura, and the entire hospital supporting me throughout my recovery,” she explained. “Although this injury was not ideal, I was very pleased with all the help from Syracuse Area Health. I felt supported and encouraged by everyone who helped me heal.”

## Bridging the Gap Before Return to Sport: Physical Therapy

Laura Buller, PT, DPT, emerged as another key player in Sophia’s rehabilitation journey. Reflecting on the referral process, Laura shared: “When Physical Therapy is working with a student athlete, we closely partner with our ATC [Megan]. We are able to get first-hand information from the ATC about what the mechanism of injury was for the athlete.”

Sophia’s initial treatment focused on reducing swelling and pain, while restoring mobility to her ankle. Laura employed Kinesio Taping techniques to promote lymphatic mobility. She also utilized a phased approach to ensure a safe return to sports-specific activities.

“Sophia was very compliant with completing strengthening and mobility exercises at home. That made a huge impact on how quickly she recovered,” Laura explained. “Physical Therapy was the last crucial step along the path to recovery for Sophia.”

## Switching Gears from Athletic Training to Orthopaedics

Sophia’s healing journey seamlessly transitioned from Athletic Training to Orthopaedics. Dr. Strasburger, an integral part of the SAH Orthopaedics team, played a pivotal role in her case.

“Dr. Strasburger works as my supervising physician, so he’s available for questions, as well as to see my athletes. He always works them into his schedule as quickly as he can,” said Megan.

This close collaboration allowed for a swift diagnosis and a clear roadmap for Sophia’s recovery. Dr. Strasburger’s expertise complemented the insights from the Athletic Training department, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of Sophia’s injury.

# MEET SOME OF THE PROVIDERS AT OUR FAMILY PRACTICE CLINICS

## Patients Can Access Top-Tier Care at Two Clinic Locations

With convenient locations in both the Syracuse and Weeping Water areas, Syracuse Area Health's clinics offer you and your family care for a wide variety of medical challenges, illnesses, and injuries. Both clinics offer same-day care, and our North Clinic even offers on-site X-ray and lab services.

### Syracuse Clinic

2731 Healthcare Drive  
Syracuse, NE 68446  
402.269.2411

#### Hours

##### Monday - Thursday

7:00 am - 6:30 pm

##### Friday

7:30 am - 4:30 pm

### North Clinic

7512 Highway 50  
Weeping Water, NE 68463  
402.267.5330

#### Hours

##### Monday - Thursday

7:00 am - 4:30 pm

##### Friday

8:00 am - 4:30 pm



### Randy Bain, DO, FAAFP

#### Syracuse Clinic

*"To me, family practice means building health through relationships. It's a beautiful challenge to meet and treat an entire family or to see so many different health conditions in patients of all ages."*



### Doug States, MD, ABFM

#### Syracuse Clinic

*"For most health conditions and required services, a patient does not need to travel into Lincoln or Omaha. SAH has built a holistic healthcare delivery system right here in Syracuse."*



### Lindsey Eggers, APRN

#### North Clinic

*"SAH serves a vital role in keeping our community healthy and safe. As someone from this local area, I love getting to take care of people here!"*



### Heather Noerrlinger, APRN

#### Syracuse and North Clinics

*"SAH provides access, so the community can receive high-quality care from providers that keep them closer to home."*



### Kayla Heidinger, MD

#### Syracuse and North Clinics

*"Family practice is a great way to provide comprehensive care to the whole family. It is so rewarding to care for patients when they're children, as well as when they get older and become adults."*



### James Steckelberg, MD

#### Syracuse Clinic

*"It is extremely rewarding to partner with patients and provide comprehensive healthcare, delivering preventive care, as well as addressing their acute needs and chronic conditions."*



### Becca Lechner, APRN

#### Syracuse Clinic

*"As a healthcare organization, our role in the community is to build relationships and prove our commitment to evidence-based, extraordinary care."*



### Molly Skomer, APRN

#### Syracuse Clinic

*"Whether we're seeing patients for day-to-day concerns, chronic health management, preventive care, or emergency medicine, we're responsible for giving our best to each patient, every time they walk through the doors."*



# BEYOND THE MEDICINE CABINET:

## *Natural Remedies to Help Beat Winter Colds*

Winter is a season known for festive cheer, cozy fires, and unfortunately, the onset of colds and congestion.

When that small sniffle turns into a full-blown winter cold, many of us instinctively reach for decongestants. While these medications can provide relief for sinus pressure and congestion, it's crucial not to overuse them. Overreliance or misuse of decongestants has been tied to other undesirable side effects.

Fortunately, there are many natural remedies that can serve as effective and gentle alternatives.

*While the natural remedies shared here can be incredibly effective in providing relief from winter cold symptoms, everyone's body responds differently. If your symptoms persist or worsen, it may be time to consider different measures or contact your healthcare provider. A persistent cold could also be a sign of an underlying issue or a different respiratory condition that requires medical attention. Always consult with your healthcare provider if you have concerns about your health or if you're unsure about the appropriate course of action.*

### 1. Warm Steam

Warm steam can assist in opening up sinuses. Boil water, inhale the vapor, and feel the congestion melt away. You can also add a few drops of eucalyptus essential oil to enhance the soothing effect.

### 2. Humidifiers

Combat the dry winter air with a trusty humidifier, which helps to maintain correct moisture levels in your space, prevent nasal passages from drying out, and reduce annoying congestion. Opt for cool mist humidifiers to keep the air comfortably moisturized.

### 3. Hot Tea (Honey is Great, Too)

Warm up from the inside out with a cup of hot tea. Eucalyptus tea is especially great because it contains natural compounds that ease congestion and soothe a sore throat. Add a touch of honey for extra sweetness and additional throat-soothing benefits.

### 4. Neti Pot

Explore the ancient practice of using a neti pot for nasal relief. When used correctly with sterile water, this simple tool can rinse nasal passages, clear mucus, and reduce inflammation. It's crucial to follow proper hygiene instructions to keep it safe and effective.

### 5. Immune-Boosting Foods

Load up on fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C (like oranges, bell peppers, strawberries) to support your immune system. You can also incorporate raw or lightly cooked garlic into meals to boost your immune system and provide natural antimicrobial compounds.

### 6. Restful Slumber

Perhaps one of the most underrated remedies, ample rest is essential for a speedy recovery. Get enough sleep to allow your body the time it needs to heal and regenerate.



2731 Healthcare Drive  
Syracuse, NE 68446

# ROOTED IN WELLNESS

## *Arboretum Project Flourishes as Phase I Nears Completion*

Syracuse Area Health's commitment to cultivating a healing environment has taken root in the Arboretum Project, which aims to not only beautify the existing walking path at the hospital but also create a sanctuary that aligns with this vision statement: ***"Utilizing nature to inspire a healthy and healing environment for our patients and community."***

Phase I of this transformative initiative will be completed in May 2024, helping to materialize a vibrant outdoor space that enhances the well-being of patients, staff, and the broader community. Despite weather challenges in 2023, the dedicated committee – joined by volunteers, including local students and hospital employees – worked tirelessly to plant 110 trees and shrubs, as well as an impressive 2,210 daffodil and tulip bulbs.

As Phase II is eagerly anticipated for **Summer/Fall 2024**, those interested in contributing to this meaningful cause can find more information and donate at:

[syracuseareahealth.com/foundation/arboretum-project-fundraising/](https://syracuseareahealth.com/foundation/arboretum-project-fundraising/)

