

Laural Ruggles Publishes in Prestigious Public Health Journal

VP Marketing and Community Health Improvement presents innovative frameworks for community impact

Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital is excited to announce that VP Marketing and Community Health Improvement Laural Ruggles has published “Frameworks for Community Impact - Community Case Study” in *Frontiers in Public Health*, a multidisciplinary open-access journal that publishes rigorously peer-reviewed research on June 2, 2020.

The journal plays an important part in the work of academics, clinicians, policymakers and researchers worldwide.

Ruggles’ article outlines how a community health needs assessment ignited a change in the way community partners worked together, aligned strategies, and overcame barriers to create regional system change to improve health. It also illustrates how NVRH has used community benefit dollars to accelerate action at the community level.



The article explains how, in 2014, NVRH lead the creation of NEK Prosper, a Caledonia and Southern Essex Accountable Health Community with a mission to tackle poverty as the ultimate root cause of poor health in the region. NEK Prosper now has over twenty participating organizations, and five working groups – called Collaborative Action Networks – to champion five outcome areas: that our community will be well-nourished, well-housed, physically healthy, mentally healthy and financially secure.

Continues on next page

- Laural Ruggles Publishes in Prestigious Journal
- Energize Expedition 2020
- National Nursing Assistants Week
- Four Seasons Offers Same-Day Joint Replacement
- Courtyard Sanctuary & Edible Herb Garden
- P(re)TSD
- DAR Members Make Masks
- Some Very Special NVRH Retirees
- Youth Stand Against Dangers of Flavored Tobacco & E-Cigarettes
- NVRH & Flek Receive Gold and Silver Marketing Awards
- June’s Orientation
- Positive Comments

The BrightLook is a monthly publication for employees, volunteers, providers, Corporators, and board members at Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital. Submit your articles and/or photos to Katie Moritz (k.moritz@nvrh.org) by **Friday, July 17 for the August issue.**

In January 2020, NVRH and NEK Prosper launched the NEK Prosper Healthy Cents Fund. The Healthy Cents Fund provides multi-year funding for organizations serving people in the NVRH service area of Caledonia and southern Essex counties. The purpose is to provide funding for projects that will create healthy and thriving communities and positive social, economic or environmental impact across a wide range of areas, including things like affordable and supportive housing, healthy food production and access, transportation, education and arts and culture.

In May, NEK Prosper awarded the first-ever Healthy Cents Fund grant to Umbrella, Inc. of St. Johnsbury as the lead organization representing a large group of community partners. The group will receive \$58,000 annually for three years to create a community-designed hub that connects community members to opportunities to build social and financial capital with the overall aim to increase financial security.

According to Ruggles' article, "As hospitals work to improve health in their communities, they must be intentional about improving the systems and structures within their organizations and regions to support health, well-being, and equal opportunities for all. Adding three key ingredients: leadership, stewardship, and action to the foundational structure drives NEK Prosper toward high impact and a healthier, and potentially more prosperous, region."

"NEK Prosper gives us a framework for really rethinking how we support healthy communities," NVRH CEO Shawn Tester said. "Laural's leadership has enabled real change, both here in the NEK but also statewide. We are blessed to have her leadership here at NVRH."

To read the article, visit nvrh.org/community-health-improvement. To find more information on how you can become involved in NEK Prosper, visit NEKprosper.org.

NEK Prosper Launches Energize Expedition 2020

Challenge Yourself to Get Active in the NEK!



**Energize
Expedition!**
Go forth & be active



The Physically Health Collaborative Action Network of NEK Prosper – Caledonia and southern Essex Accountable Health Community has launched the second summer of Energize Expedition as part of the Energize 365 campaign.

The challenge started July 1 and runs all summer until August 31. Energize Expedition offers a chance to challenge yourself, your family, and your friends to be active in Caledonia and southern Essex counties. Participants who are active and earn at least 30 points receive an Energize Expedition 2020 sticker and a chance to be entered into a drawing for larger prizes.

This year's expedition bridges the gap between mindfulness and physical activity and encourages participants to be present in the moment while they explore new places and activities. Traditional activities like walking and hiking and water sports all count, but also earn points for hopscotch, observing the night sky, or meditation.



“We decided to adapt the Energize Expedition into a virtual event to continue to provide individuals and families with the opportunities to create, energize and explore either at home or safely within their local communities, said Jennifer Grant, one of the organizers. “This challenge invites participants to connect with the beauty of our region, to develop connections and joyful experiences with their natural surroundings.”

To participate, go to nekprosper.org to download a copy of the brochure. Fill out the completed registration form and tally sheet by Sept. 15, 2020. The completed form can be mailed or filled out online.

“COVID-19 has forced us to change the way we do many things in our everyday life,” adds event organizer Heidi Kalb. “We know that physical activity is a familiar part of many of our daily lives. This challenge helps people to find normalcy in taking time to be physically active in beautiful spots around the NEK or their wonderful backyards!”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, remember to participate in activities safely. Keep a distance of 6 feet between you and people who are not members of your direct household. Wear a cloth face covering outdoors if distance cannot be maintained. Choose spaces to recreate close to home when possible and choose low risk or familiar activities to limit risk of injury. Wash your hands often and avoid touching shared surfaces.

Energize 365 is a community-wide campaign to promote physical activity. Learn more about Energize 365 and NEK Prosper at www.nekprosper.org

NVRH Celebrated National Nursing Assistants Week June 18 – 25

Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital recognized all of its Nursing Assistants during the 43rd annual National Nursing Assistants Week, “Nursing Assistants: Kindness in Action,” Thursday, June 18 to Thursday, June 25.

Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNAs) provide as much as 85 – 90% of the hands-on care patients experience across health systems, including long-term care facilities and in-patient hospital departments.

According to the National Network of Career Nursing Assistants, “Nursing assistants are key players in the lives of the people in their

AMSN PRISM Award®
2018-2021 Recipient

Thank you LNAs, both on Med/Surg and throughout NVRH, for all you do for our patients!

Choosing Health
NORTHEASTERN VERMONT REGIONAL HOSPITAL

care. Each day, more than 4.5 million caregivers provide hands-on care to our nation's frail, elderly, or chronically challenged citizens in nursing homes and other long term care settings. And the number is growing as an additional 700,000 new positions will need to be filled in the next 25 years."

The first day of National Nursing Assistants Week, "Career Nursing Assistants Day" celebrates the caregiving "stayers," the individuals who choose a career as an LNA to provide consistency and stability within their department. The following days highlight how LNAs create a community of caring.

"Our LNAs are incredibly important to the care our patients receive," LNA Coordinator on the Medical/Surgical Unit Michael O'Dell said. "They're often the people who interact one-on-one the most with our patients, making them feel comfortable and safe."

"As an LNA at NVRH, I get to practice kindness and be there for people when they need someone the most," NVRH LNA Sam Monfette said. "I'm really lucky I am able to work in a field that aligns so much with my values."

In 2018, NVRH's Medical/Surgical Unit received the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses (AMSNI) PRISM Award®. This prestigious honor recognizes the collective achievements and contributions of the NVRH Med-Surg nursing staff. Applications were peer reviewed by a team of medical and surgical nurses. During the selection process, the team commented that, "NVRH nurses and LNAs are engaged and flourishing in a supportive environment that encourages education, professional development and recognition or excellence."



Left: A very thoughtful patient of Dr. Stoibers brought in peonies for the whole office!



Above: Summertime Marching Band playing for staff and patients on Saturday, June 27



Above: On June 17, the Caledonia Trail Collaborative hosted a trail work session at the trail near CALEX. By the end of the evening, the trail head was clearly marked. Stop by and check it out!

NVRH Four Seasons Orthopaedics Now Offers Same-Day Joint Replacement

Using a team approach, the physicians, nurses, and physical therapists at Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH) now offer same-day knee and hip joint replacement. Same-day surgery means a patient comes in for the surgery in the morning and is resting in their own home that night.

When most people think about knee or hip joint replacement surgery, they expect a long period of recovery: multiple days in the hospital and weeks or months of being laid up at home.

Recent literature and medical studies have illustrated that same-day discharge, and even discharge within 24 hours, is safe. Surprisingly, there is no increase in complications or readmissions. Functionally, patients do just as well but get there just a bit faster. So, Dr. Matthew Prohaska, Orthopaedic Surgeon at NVRH Four Seasons Orthopaedics, asked, “Why can’t we do this in St. Johnsbury at NVRH?”

“We did not just accept doing things the way it was always done,” Dr. Prohaska said. “We wanted to do better for our patients and make changes to improve their experience during joint replacement surgery.”

Dr. Prohaska makes it clear that it takes a team for this to work. Surgical techniques have improved over the years, but setting patient expectations for getting up and moving soon after surgery and using the right pain control during and after surgery is also key to success.

“We use nerve blocks at the joint site, spinal blocks, and some sedation during surgery,” NVRH Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists Jason John said. “The typical side effects of general anesthesia, like dizziness and nausea, are gone. Using the blocks allows for a quicker recovery and improves patient comfort right from the start.”

Reduced use of narcotic pain medications is also an advantage.

The best patient candidates for the same-day joint replacement are those who are able to get around well prior to the surgery. “They may be in pain, but they are walking and going about their daily lives,” Dr. Prohaska added.

“I had total knee replacements done three and a half months apart,” Four Seasons Orthopaedics patient Nancy Poulos said. “I went home from the hospital the same day as the surgery after both procedures, once I demonstrated to physical therapy that I could (and would) faithfully do the exercises they assigned.”

People with multiple chronic conditions, such as diabetes or lung or heart disease, can still expect to recover quickly, but may have to spend another day in the hospital. “Same day discharge after joint replacement may not be for everybody, but it is possible for many more than we thought possible. It’s also important to know that age is not a major factor,” Dr. Prohaska added. “We’ve done same-day joint replacements for people in their 80’s.”

Soon after coming out of surgery, patients are cared for on the NVRH Medical/Surgical unit.

“It is wonderful to see how quickly people recover,” unit Director Sharon Mallett said. “They are very happy to be going home the same day.”

“We have seen the positive results of these improved protocols,” Physical Therapist Dan Wheeler from Dan Wyand PT Associates said. “This accelerated approach to their rehabilitation allows the patient to return to their previous state of movement, and potentially an improved version of their functional mobility.”



Dr. Prohaska

During the COVID19 pandemic, same-day joint replacements have taken on a new importance.

“These patients get to sleep in their own beds that night and wake up in their own beds in the morning,” Director of Surgical Services, Pete Tomzack said. “Patients are happier, and it is freeing up beds in the hospital that may be needed for critically ill patients with COVID-19 or other serious conditions.”

The Joy Committee has created a soothing, happy place for all NVRH employees:

Please Come and Enjoy the NVRH Café Courtyard Sanctuary

Handpick your herbs in the courtyard to create brilliant flavors.

Smell the herbs for aroma therapy to sooth your soul on a stressful day.

Submitted by Sabina Hansen

Most people use herbs and spices on a daily basis. Whether it's cracked pepper in an omelet, basil on a pasta dish or a dash of cinnamon in your oatmeal, herbs and spices play a big part in our culinary lives. While they certainly add a delightful burst of flavor to whatever you're cooking, the health benefits are often overlooked. Many health benefits of herbs and spices can be gained from eating or smelling them on a regular basis.

Aromatherapy is a holistic form of treatment and has grown in popularity, however the use of aromatic plant parts for both medicinal and religious purposes dates back thousands of years. Ancient Egyptians used oils of cedarwood, clove, nutmeg, cinnamon, and myrrth for



cosmetic, fragrance, enbalming and medicinal purposes. The actual distillation of essential oils dates back approximately one thousand years and is usually attributed to the Persians in the 10th century.



Each herb has its own unique chemical

composition and offers a variety of therapeutic properties, from antiviral to expectorant to antispasmodic.

Inhaling the relaxing scent of herbs can almost instantly ease feelings of stress and anxiety. The limbic system of your brain is primarily responsible for your emotions, but also controls the flow of adrenaline, heart rate, behavior, blood pressure, breathing, hormone balance, long-term memory, motivation and olfaction (sense of smell). Simply inhaling the scent of herbs can instantly have a positive effect on your wellbeing. We hope you come and enjoy your place to relax and rejuvenate.



Joy Committee's NVRH
Gratitude Flags adorn the
Café Courtyard



Sabina Hansen and Abby Pollender display the flags in front of the new herb garden.

We hope you'll have a few minutes to create a square for our NVRH Gratitude Flag so we can send out all of our combined good wishes and gratitude on the breezes to extend them to the rest of the NEK. There are colorful cloth squares (thank you Sabina and Patty!) in the cafeteria. Pick whatever color you'd like and draw a picture, write a quote or create a cool pattern, whatever you feel like sending out there to the Universe. There are sharpie markers in the box as well, but feel free to use your own colored markers or pens. And you're welcome to add embellishments or bedazzle your square however you'd like. It's all about your message.

The Gratitude Flag, with the contributed squares, will hang across the courtyard. There will also be one at Community Connections and one at Corner Medical.

P(re)TSD (or, What Might Have Been) Dr. David Brody

Have you ever almost done something, something that would have turned out very badly? But fate, or chance, or a kindly universe allowed you to dodge the blow? And yet afterwards you continue to replay the sequence, and just before the critical moment, even though you know how it turned out, the same sense of dread and panic still grips you? It is an odd feature of the mind that reason and imagination can at times operate in entirely insulated spheres, unable to engage.

Here are two personal examples, one from over thirty years ago, one within the past six months, which continue to haunt me.

While in medical residency I took up the cello, and while I have never achieved any beyond a certain intermediate level of competence, I was sufficiently skillful that I was able to participate in a community orchestra. During summers the orchestra offered the option to play in small chamber groups coached by a professional musician. The format was that we would prepare a piece to perform for some community group or organization, and ours was to be for a local assisted living home for Jewish seniors (I myself am also Jewish, and one of the residents was actually my then grandmother-in-law).

The piece was the adagio (slow movement) of a Haydn string quartet. It has always been a secret wish of mine to play quartets and this was my dream come true. The first violin opens the piece announcing the theme, which is then passed around amongst the members of the quartet, and when the cello – me! – had its turn it was breathtakingly sublime.

Though clearly still amateurs, we worked hard and eventually had the piece ready for performance and the date was set. However, there was some last minute glitch, the performance was put on hold – and then somehow the whole project just petered out. We never did perform.

It was sometime thereafter, I forget how it came to my attention, that I came to realize that the theme for the adagio was based on the German national anthem, Deutschland Uber Alles. Though the quartet remains a lovely work, the notion that we could have, in the home of these Jewish seniors, who had lived through the Nazi horrors; that we could have started playing this hideously inappropriate piece – even today, even as I write this, I still shudder at what might have been, and how achingly close we came to it. It would have been a mortification beyond words.

The second example comes from my flight training. In order to explain this episode I will first need to give some basic background on aerodynamics for the sense of the tale.

In normal flight an airplane can be pitched up slightly relative to its direction of motion, a sort of gentle aerial “wheelie,” to help control speed. However, if this angle should exceed some sixteen or seventeen degrees, the aircraft will enter a so-called stall. Not an engine failure, but a condition in which the wings abruptly cease to generate lift, and the aircraft will start to fall. However, an aircraft is designed nose heavy so that in a stall it will, like a shuttlecock in badminton, drop with its nose in a generally downward posture (a sort of swan dive), its wings will once again be pointing in the direction of motion and will then resume generating lift – and normal flight. However, should a stall occur with the nose canted somewhat sideways relative to the plane’s motion, a condition known as uncoordinated flight (picture a car in a skid) the aircraft can enter a spin, an uncontrolled spiral toward the ground. Even then this can be corrected, but the spin is highly disorienting and the recovery procedure is an advanced maneuver. It would be hard to imagine a more terrifying prospect for a novice pilot.

With that much as background, let me describe an event that occurred this past January during the preparation for my final exam for my pilot’s certificate. One of the requisite maneuvers during the so- called check ride is to demonstrate to the examiner that one knows how to recover from a stall (remember, just let the plane nose over and you’re flying again. Easy,



huh?). Well it’s easy enough when you’re just gliding along with the engine idling. However, there is a second maneuver in which one produces the stall at full throttle (this is to simulate what might happen during takeoff) and in this case there is an inherent tendency for the aircraft to try to nose around to the left. So in this full power on stall there is then a risk that the aircraft will be uncoordinated – the nose not pointing in the direction of flight -- and therefore potentially go into a spin when the stall occurs.

I had been practicing this maneuver with my instructor, and doing very well. The next day I went up solo and decided to do some more practice stalls. I started with a few power off stalls, and all went well. I then decided to try the power on stall: full power, then start to pitch excessively up. However, no matter how I tried I could not bring the plane into coordination (there is a special cockpit instrument that gives

a read on this); the nose remained stubbornly canted left. I held the plane with full power, pitched up just before the point of a stall, trying, trying “...should I just go for it; but what’s wrong, it went fine yesterday; should I pitch up just a little more...” And then it dawned on me with a sudden clarity that I had placed myself precipitously close to the conditions required to set up a spin -- and I eased the nose on down.

I can’t know for certain what would have happened if I had actually gone into a spin, except that it would have been a moment of supreme terror. Conceivably I might have found some instinctual reserve of focus to have applied my book knowledge of spin recovery technique, but it is likely closer to wishful thinking to suppose that a novice would have been able to pull that off.

The interesting thing is that I didn’t understand any of this at the time. But a week later, practicing the same maneuver – with an instructor -- I actually did inadvertently go into a spin. My memory of the event has a brief gap, but the last thing I recall was the left wing dropping, the aircraft starting to roll, and then a surreal sense of a rapidly whirling rotation (I misinterpreted this at the moment as the spinning of the aircraft, but I later realized it must have been an attack of vertigo induced by the plane’s briefly inverting as it started to rotate). And then the next I knew we were recovered and my instructor had done what he is paid to do!

But it was only later at home that I got to ruminating on my near miss from the week before, on what would have been an almost certain disaster. And I as play this over in my mind – I can’t seem to ever let it entirely go – I cannot help but bring myself back to that moment just before I might have added the last measure of pitch... the shaking of the plane, the wild roar of the engine, the disorienting upward view of only sky ...and again shudder at the catastrophe that was only a step away..

Regarding my ill-fated concert plans I suspect I will never entirely escape the anticipated scene, and cringing embarrassment, replaying itself in my mind; to this day it still comes up from time to time. Of course, I continue to enjoy playing the cello, though unfortunately I have not – yet – had another opportunity to play quartets.

As to aviation, I will confess that the time I spun in seriously shook me, to the point where I questioned whether I had it in me to continue to fly. But with encouragement from my instructor I pushed ahead and, as readers of this series will know, I did go on to obtain my pilot's certificate. Indeed, I plan to go on for more advanced training. But be assured this will most pointedly include instruction in spin recovery, so I will never again have to worry about whether I could handle such an emergency.

And perhaps that's the lesson: Do what you can do, and if there's nothing you can do -- then just keep on moving.

Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution Made Masks, Caps & Gowns for the 2020 Pandemic

Since the founding of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1890, its members have once again stepped up to the plate when called to do its part for the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Nola Forbes, Mimi Haley, Edna Curtin, Donna Hale, Catherine Carrara and Wendy Wright of the St. John de Crevecoeur Chapter have made approximately 1350 masks, 62 gowns and 25 caps. Over 140 yards of fabric, thread, elastic, twill and bias tape were provided by a member to complete some of the items. Also, she provided cut scores of rectangles for face mask kits. These items have gone to road crews, firemen, daycares, senior centers, nursing homes, hospitals, local businesses, friends, food and farm organizations through out Vermont, New Jersey, South Carolina and Virginia. Kelly Bormann, a member, is an essential worker as a RN in St. Johnsbury. She said, "the last two months have been difficult for the hospital because of shutting down



L-R: Nola Forbes, Mimi Haley, Edna Curtin and Donna Hale. Kelly Bormann, Catherine Carrara & Wendy Wright are not pictured

surgeries and turning the operating room into a respiratory care unit. She said, "her hospital is very grateful for the support of the community and all that has been donated to them." We are very grateful to Kelly and her co-workers.

St. John de Crevecoeur chapter is the third largest of the 13 chapters in VT. We have members in the counties of Caledonia, Essex and Orleans. We meet once a month from March thru October at various places in the three counties. The Daughters of the American Revolution is a nonprofit, nonpolitical woman's volunteer service organization dedicated to promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism. Any woman 18 years or older, who can prove direct descent from a patriot of the American Revolution, is eligible for membership. For more information on the DAR, email Stephanie Hockensmith at shocken@comcast.net.

masks
5,567
200 gowns
125 caps

Wear a mask.



Pam Smart, Betsy Merrill, Jan Loomis, Ginny Flanders, & Teala Hooker Retire

Pam Smart

“I started my career as an Emergency Room Nurse in Massachusetts and as I sit and reflect on the wonderful opportunities this profession has provided me, I recognize how fortunate I have been. I have worked in Intensive Care Units, Neuro Surgical Units, Providers offices, Camp nursing and several others, but I must admit my favorites have always been being part of a new project. I implemented a Free Clinic, a Mobile Health Van and was part of the original staff at a Walk in Center (which) was cutting edge and still exists 25 years later!

I have always been in the fore front of recognizing the need to address the social determinants of health and returned to school to study Human Services and Health Care Management.

Imagine my joy after retiring from Massachusetts and moving to Vermont that I was provided the opportunity to become a staff member at Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, a hospital that truly understands the importance in meeting the needs of the community in a holistic manner. Being part of the Community Health Team and the Vermont Blueprint for Health has been the most rewarding experience in my career. Thank You NVRH.”



Betsy Merrill

“If we think of life as an adventure, my time spent at NVRH has been a great part of that adventure. I have learned a tremendous amount, and it is all of you who I can thank for that. I cannot imagine a better group of folks to take such a journey with. I wish each of you the best in your futures.”





Jan Loomis

“25 years at Corner Medical...I’ve learned a lot and made some wonderful friends. I started back in the building by White’s Market as a per-diem before being officially hired. I would do transcription – on a typewriter! – when the full time transcriptionist was out. Eventually I was hired part-time to do transcription which I did in addition to helping my husband run Flowerland in Lyndonville. When we sold the shop, I came on full-time doing transcription and also learned to do prescription refill requests, answer the main phone line, do DME forms and medical records and eventually fill in on the front desk. Three buildings, a fire, new EMRs, marriages, births, kids’ marriages, grandbabies, we’ve been through a lot together and I think that’s what I’m going to miss most.”

Ginny Flandes

“As a dietitian for 38 years, I worked in many capacities in Kotzebue, Alaska, Ammonoosuc Community Health in Littleton, and at NVRH. It was when I came to NVRH that I was able to integrate the message I promoted to patients about a healthy lifestyle with offering hospital-wide food choices that supported the message. I was also able to develop an accredited program to support people in the community with diabetes. I am grateful for NVRH’s strong support of these initiatives. It has been an honor and privilege to work with patients and staff as part of NVRH’s effort to keep our community healthy.”



Teala Hooker

“I have enjoyed working at NVRH for 31 years. I’ve met a lot of wonderful people and befriended many. I will miss working with you all but, it’s time for a change in my life. It requires my full attention in another direction, which is focusing on my family, traveling, and just enjoying life. Farewell and good luck to you all.”



Due to COVID-19, the Birth Center is currently not doing in-person tours.

Visit the Birth Center webpage at nvrh.org to watch a video tour or call 802-748-7337 to learn more.

Local Youth Stand Against the Dangers of Flavored Tobacco and E-Cigarettes

NVRH Prevention Services congratulates student leader Jasmine Dunbar

High school members of Our Voices Xposed (OVX) and middle school members of Vermont Kids Against Tobacco (VKAT) were recognized by the Vermont Department of Health for standing against the dangers of flavored tobacco and e-cigarette use among Vermont's youth. Students participated in an annual tobacco prevention education campaign, an initiative of OVX, VKAT and CounterBalance, the state's tobacco counter-marketing campaign, to amplify the message: flavored tobacco products attract and harm youth.

During the 2019 – 2020 school year, OVX and VKAT youth members let their voices be heard by marching to the Vermont State House to educate lawmakers and the public about teens using flavored tobacco and e-cigarettes. Additionally, student leaders met with select boards to promote smoke-free public areas, and they completed logo, poster and PSA projects.

“The Danville OVX and VKAT groups put in a lot of time to learn about the dangers the tobacco industry poses to the youth of Vermont,” Danville's OVX youth and group advisor Spencer Morse said. “They then convert that learning into educating their peers and the public at large. This year, Jasmine Dunbar stepped up to take a strong lead on our group's efforts to make Joes Pond Beach substance free. We are proud of her and all of the members' efforts over this past year.”

According to the 2019 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey, since 2015, lifetime and current electronic vapor product (EVP) use has significantly increased with current use, more than doubling between 2017 (12%) and 2019 (26%). From 2017 to 2019, ever using a flavored tobacco product increased among high school students (21% to 27%) and among middle school students (5% to 8%).

“For the last few years I have been working with the Danville OVX advisors and youth,” NVRH Prevention Specialist Tennyson Marceau said. “And I couldn't be more proud of how they are changing the world. And to our Vermont State Youth Leader, Jasmine, you deserve this, thank you for all your hard work!”

The 2019 – 2020 OVX Award Honorees for leadership and outstanding accomplishment are Jasmine Dunbar, Danville High School, Outstanding Youth Leader; Shamura Awayle, Burlington High School, Outstanding Youth Leader; Melanie Sheehan, Outstanding Community Collaborator with Woodstock Middle and High Schools; Spaulding High School, Outstanding OVX Group.

“I would like to congratulate the Danville OVX/VKAT groups on their outstanding work this year,” Danville's OVX youth and group advisor Guy Pearce said. “We did so many great things and we will continue our commitment to making our environment tobacco and nicotine free. I also want to congratulate Jasmine Dunbar: she took the lead on making Joes Pond Beach substance-free. Well done!”



Danville OVX students Liza Morse (L) and Jasmine Dunbar (R) attend the House Committee on Appropriations during the 2020 OVX Rally on February 12, 2020.

NVRH and Flek Inc. Receive Gold and Silver Marketing Awards

NVRH and Flek Inc. have received two awards this past May from the Aster Awards Program: Gold for the 2019 Annual Report and Silver for Energize 365's Get Active newspaper ad series.

The Aster Awards Program recognizes healthcare marketing professionals for excellence in advertising, marketing and communications. Winning entries are judged by a panel of industry experts and are published in the Marketing Healthcare Today magazine.

The theme of the 2019 Annual Report, which was awarded Gold, was New Beginnings and highlighted many new projects and community collaborations throughout NVRH.

"2019 was a busy year with a lot of change," said Laural Ruggles, VP Marketing and Community Health. "It was Shawn Tester's first year as CEO, we opened the Northern Vermont Center for Sleep Disorders in collaboration with North Country Hospital and we acquired Northern Physical Therapy. We also implemented value-base payments as a part of OneCare Vermont."

The Get Active ad series, which won Silver, is a component of NEK Prosper's Energize 365, a campaign to support health and increase physical activity.

"Every month readers submit their photos of how they have fun while also doing something active through NEKProsper.org, and one gets chosen to be featured the following month," Ruggles said. "It's a neat way to remind folks to be active while also involving the community in the message."

Flek Inc. provided the design for both the Annual Report and the ad series. Flek Inc. is a graphic design, web development and advertising firm located in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Its three partners are Florence Chamberlin, Keith Chamberlin and Amy Hale. Together, they have more than 90 years of experience as designers, photographers, writers, web designers and marketing professionals. To meet their clients' needs, they also work with outside producers, printers, illustrators, videographers, and manufacturers.

"Partnering with the team at NVRH has afforded us the opportunity to get information out to the public on a variety of healthcare," said Florence Chamberlin, Flek Inc.'s co-owner. "We truly value our role on the team as the creators of the publications. Sure helps that we believe in NVRH and are grateful that they are the cornerstone to healthcare in our community."



June's New Hire
Orientation, from left to
right: Eilish Muir, Sharon
Chayer, Sierra Downs,
Elizabeth Paterson, Aida
Gomez, Shyla Lattrell,
Linda Moore,
and Joseph LaBounty!

What Our Patients Are Saying About Us

Ambulatory Surgery

- Had trouble getting the IV in. It took three tries so that was emotional. I apparently have valves. The nurses were very sympathetic.
- The staff I had from the start of surgery to complete were terrific. Holly - admit nurse - was super, very concerned, Carol & Maggie, anesthesia - great, and Deb in recovery.

Emergency Department

- I was taken right to the treatment area.
- The nurses at NVRH are BEST.
- My son had to wait outside in his car but was called and all was explained.
- I was treated very well.
- All were very attentive concerned and answered any questions.
- I can't say enough good things about my visit that day. It was some of the worst pain that I've ever experienced, but the staff were fantastic and they were able to help get my pain a little more bearable. I can't remember the primary nurse's name but she was very caring, kind & compassionate. We are very blessed as a community to have such a wonderful little hospital right in our back yard, and such wonderful nurses & doctors. Thank you!!
- They took him in right away.
- I first talked to the Physician at my health center and everything was all taken care of prior to my arrival due to COVID-19.
- Have a great day!!
- No delays.
- Provider was great. Attentive and did a great job of explaining my options for care.
- There were no delays.
- Had no pain to speak of.
- There were no delays. ER was quiet due to COVID-19.
- Because of COVID-19 there was no waiting and I was able to go right in.
- Very good.
- They were all nice.
- They were all good to me.
- Everyone was good.
- They were all very great.
- They were all just great, even at shift change
- Very good experience considering it was an ER! Thank you!
- I was taken right in
- No delays!
- There was no wait time. I was taken to treatment room immediately.
- Arrived in ambulance, virtually no time in waiting area.
- Very brisk, responsible, and knowledgeable.

MedSurg & ICU

- Dr. Frye gave me her cell phone number, if I needed her!
- Corona virus affected visits & behavior in general.
- Only Chaplain visited as there were no volunteers allowed.
- During COVID - rushed right into a room.
- Very stressful time for staff - they performed so well under that pressure.
- A very positive experience, little stress.
- Keep up the good work!
- Very professional.
- Follow-up calls and an offered appointment was very nice! Relieved my concern over residual discomfort & appearance within the first two days.
- Quick and sensible.
- Long-term results are excellent; she knew her job... I was initially concerned about the possibility of infection of incisions, due to redness and discomfort, but it was apparently normal for healing.
- "No problems.

Birth Center

- Jade & Kathleen were both extremely attentive, kind, and skilled.
- Dr. Siegel is excellent. He was very attentive & helpful throughout my pregnancy.
- Albert, the CRNA was excellent in explaining the epidural process and very quickly took care of my pain. He was ready and in my room VERY quickly after I requested the epidural.
- Nurse George is a GREAT asset to the hospital! As a male, he was more hands on to help me with feeding issues. He has a tremendous set of knowledge about 'baby how to's.' Keep him!
- I would recommend the NVRH birthing center to anyone. The care before and after my son was born was incomparable.
- The Murphy bed for my husband was great! It was good to know we'd both be comfortable and well-rested while staying at the hospital.
- Very quick check-in through the ED to head up to the birthing center.
- The meal service staff went above and beyond! We LOVED that they sent us home with frozen meals - they were a huge time-saver for our first

week home with a newborn!

- The food was excellent and was hot when delivered.
- All of the nurses on labor & delivery were very attentive and eager to help when needed. So happy with my experience.
- Everyone was very friendly and did a great job on blood draws, even on my newborn.

Corner Medical

- The program talking through the health portal went better than I expected. Having had many a meeting via teleconference in my working life this was well done.
- It was easy to set up the virtual appointment.
- Under the circumstances, we had a very good visit
- Considering my husband has FTD dementia and Covid 19, our experience was good
- This was a virtual visit. No wait time involved.
- This was my first time doing a telephone appt. - It went very well.
- Very good - that's why I have used NVRH for my health care for so long
- Sandy is fantastic!
- This was first video/home visit a few kinks on our part to work out - satisfying & successful.
- Dr. Sullivan is the BEST!
- Corner Medical is a fine facility I have no complaints - service is always excellent.
- Telehealth visit so no wait really after registering, just about 5 min.
- No waiting during COVID-19.
- Always good about help.
- Good, always friendly.
- Good, friendly, caring
- Left a message, Nurse called me back and we scheduled an appointment with Dr. Scott. It all worked well and went very smoothly.
- All good. I did a virtual visit.
- No Issues. Thought it went well and I was thoroughly informed
- Dr. Sullivan, Lisa and Megan were very great and accommodating in my first virtual visit! Megan was there to assist with my problems with the hardware needed for the visit.
- Very well done.
- The phone call was fine. We talked about a new medication. There were no test results.
- Dr. Sullivan always goes above and beyond to help you with issues, to make you feel comfortable, and never talks above you.
- I'm very pleased
- I love Harmony
- Telehealth visit. No waiting
- My appointment was a virtual visit and went very well
- Very good, I enjoyed the visit by portal
- Tom Broderick is a compassionate and skilled doctor.
- Always helpful, and always correct
- We are lucky to have him!
- Corner Medical is always, always professional, courteous, and caring
- It was a zoom visit so no wait time, but in the past, 5-10 minutes is the average amount of wait time
- It was a very good experience.
- The Corner Medical practice is very efficient.
- Everything about my visit was positive.
- I only waited a few minutes total. It was a very efficient process.
- I feel cared for by Adelaide as well as confident in her knowledge.
- Dr. Scott has always been impeccable
- Dr. Dobbartin is awesome!
- I am extremely pleased with Adelaide as my primary care. From the first appointment in November, she took action to resolve my health issues and then referred me to a specialist. I had questions about my CT scan which she answered and explained in detail.
- Always clear and precise when talking about test, new meds or following up on my problems.
- Amy is an amazing nurse and she is who I have every time I go there.
- I have no complaints with Corner Medical or with Joyce Dobbartin. She is intelligent, caring, and all about her patients. I am extremely lucky to her as my PCP.
- Had a pro time done at the office rather than NVRH, due to COVID 19...they had their ducks in a row surrounding safety measures and in performing the test and Dr. Scott came out promptly to discuss the results and how to adjust my meds... So much easier than a blood draw!
- My experience with Dr. Sullivan was fine.
- The nurse is very friendly and professional. She was sympathetic and caring
- Very prompt and friendly, I enjoy all my visits
- I find all the people at this practice very friendly but professional.
- Doctor spent time on needed palliative care during pandemic
- Harmony is always great
- Everyone was very helpful and prompt.
- It was a virtual visit to protect my safety
- NVRH Patient Portal is very informative

- No wait time - phone visit.
- Sandy is always so helpful.
- Was a phone appointment due to coronavirus with Dr. Sullivan and it was a very good appointment.
- Dr. Sullivan is wonderful. Puts me at ease with his professional yet caring manner.
- Nurse called first. Sandy is always thorough, very friendly & helpful.
- Office personnel are ALWAYS very helpful.
- She was easy to speak with - answered questions and anticipated my concerns.

Kingdom Internal Medicine

- Very patient! Gives me her time and attention
- No delays. In and out because of COVID-19.
- This was my first telehealth experience. I have no complaints, in fact it went very well.
- As usual, very pleasant.
- First class!
- As always, everything went well as planned and the visit was very pleasant and I'm looking forward to my next visit.
- As always the nurse was very pleasant, putting me at ease until the doctor took over.
- I was promptly referred to the nurse who in turn promptly prepared me for the doctor's examination.
- Excellent as always.
- Give you 100 brownie points for wonderful service.
- No delays.
- She helped me get connected.
- Diane is an excellent nurse and listener.
- Dr. Lee is always helpful and explains things I can understand.
- They got me in right away, super job.
- Always professional.
- Nursing staff is courteous & thorough.
- The staff always performs very well with myself & others.
- Always pleasant a appointment
- Providers are always clean & professional.
- Dr. M and Nurse Erica provided some good insight.
- Very efficient.
- My overall experience with KIM has been excellent.
- Dr. Myrter is careful about communicating. He listened carefully and explains clearly.
- Nurses consistently listen to me.
- Dr. Myrter is amazing I couldn't ask for a better doctor.
- Jessica is very thorough, and very kind. I feel very comfortable in discussing any concerns with her. She listens well, includes me in the decision making process and follows up to see how I'm doing.
- Everyone at KIM is friendly and welcoming. They make the experience very pleasant.
- The visit was online and required just a few keystrokes. Audio and video were very clear and it was a very efficient way to have an office visit when no tests or exams are required.
- Dr. Myrter is great and so is the rest of the staff
- Always a joy to call and talk to the staff. They are warm and welcoming on the phone.

North Country Otolaryngology/Audiology

- I have been going there for many years. The staff and Dr. Rankin are great.
- No delays and no wait time.
- Appointment was over the phone and it went well. The doctor was able to give me good answers around my sinuses.

Specialty Clinics

- Excellent service
- Dr. Prohaska is fantastic. He did my hip replacement, which was super successful.
- Jen, OR nurse very pleasant and of course Dr. Korsh was super.
- I was very well taken care of.
- Wonderful care for my injury in the midst of the early stages of COVID crisis.
- She suggested an alternative treatment plan and I went with it.
- Dr. Dixon is very thorough in explaining issues and very easy to talk with.
- No delays or wait at clinic.
- Laura (PA) was professional and knowledgeable about my issues. Dr. Gagnon is extremely knowledgeable about my chronic issues and the options to get me back to my normal activities. I will recommend Dr. Gagnon to anyone!
- Perfect.
- Very happy with the event.
- Perfect.
- Entire experience was above excellent!! Thank you!
- Everything was great!
- My overall experience was excellent with everybody.

- I have always had excellent medical care from Dr. Van Straten. She is very caring, very intelligent.
- Service at NVRH has always been good to excellent unless it is very busy at the time.
- Got an appointment quickly, Ashley was very professional on the phone
- Dr. Gagnon always listens to what I have to say and we discuss my treatment plan, he leaves it up to me on how I want to proceed
- Friendly
- Experience is exceptional.
- Dr. Prohaska is amazing!
- Excellent customer service at the front desk.
- Friendly, efficient. Doctor took time with me.

St. Johnsbury Pediatrics

- No wait time. Phone appointment scheduled and received call at scheduled time.
- Dr. Josh is great!
- We love St. J. Peds!
- Dr. Josh is our favorite! He always takes the time we need to talk to us about any of our questions or concerns and makes our kiddos feel safe.
- Dr. Stasny was very concise and caring during this appointment.
- All excellent!
- no delays, no wait time
- Never have had a bad experience while Dr. Josh was seeing my child!
- The Staff there are amazing. The boys love the girls at the front desk and Britney. The nurses always try and make the boys feel comfortable and happy
- Dr. Josh is great at making our children feel comfortable
- Dr. Josh is the best. We absolutely love him! He's so patient and kind, and helps make visits fun and easy!
- Dr. Stasny was amazing - she is a great thorough doctor and we are glad to have her!
- Love the girls at the front desk, very friendly and understanding!
- I had problems logging in and the staff were very helpful getting us set up for the tele-health appointment
- Thank you!

Women's Wellness

- Dr. O'Connor is a remarkably talented, reassuring, supportive Doctor! Highly recommend her skills and patient care.
- Can't praise Dr. O'Connor enough for her exemplary care and expertise.
- I didn't have any concerns but she gave me good info.
- ALL GOOD. Best place to go.
- No delays to be informed about.
- She was very nice and pleasant. Answered anything I asked.
- Courtney was personable and made me feel incredibly comfortable.
- Always very patient, thoughtful, compassionate, and kind. They do a tremendous job at making me feel safe and heard.

Diagnostic Imaging

- Excellent staff in Radiology.
- Excellent! Radiology staff is always top-notch.
- I always receive professional and caring treatment at NVRH!
- My MRI guy was very personable. I had 10 bracelets on my arms that DO NOT come off. I have had them on my arms for about 40 years and could not bear to have them cut off so we came up with a solution that worked PERFECTLY!!! Soooo happy he took the time to find a fix. xxoo
- No concerns or complaints.
- Very good.
- X-ray technician was great - Professional and compassionate.
- The mammogram was much more comfortable with the curved paddle.
- It was a very quick procedure, I was in and out before my scheduled appointment time!
- COVID-19 did not put a damper on professional care. Very professional all around
- I was very sick when I came to NVRH. I was immediately taken to the ER when all of the staff took immediate action to rule out all things that might be life threatening. Then they made me comfortable. Ordered a CT scan and reassured me that they were going to make sure that they would be with me until I went upstairs.
- I was impressed with the care and precautions taken - distancing, temperature, etc., etc. - You seem to really care about the/our community. Thank you!
- Very professional and caring staff.
- Very quick & polite.
- Always pleasant no matter who it is.
- Registration was very quickly completely, and there was only one other person in the waiting room - all good practices especially during the Corona Virus pandemic
- Gretchen was helpful.

Laboratory

- I was very satisfied with the care I received. Thank you.
- My PA doctor ordered 10 vials of blood & it was painless & skilled. This staff is good - very good! Thank you!!
- Excellent lab and staff.
- Great service & friendly staff!

- I have been treated at Dartmouth MC and feel NVRH is superior to them in many respects. Thank you for being there.
- All good & friendly people, even with their masks on.
- Got there a little early and was out early
- Anita at check in was very friendly!
- It was easy.
- Felt very secure in health protection.
- Always good.

Physical Therapy

Northern Physical Therapy

- I've recommended Northern PT to a number of people - EXCELLENT staff.

Dan Wyand PT & OT

- Excellent.
- The staff are very well trained... great addition to the hospital and community
- Dan Wyand is ALWAYS so knowledgeable, respectful, upbeat, honest, encouraging, friendly, and I am always 'blown away' by his knowledge of the body, its workings and the interconnectedness of its workings. He also listens well to the patient and responds to the patient's experiences, questions, and concerns in his treatment.
- Sara always takes time to explain everything and listens to all my questions.
- The employees at Dan Wyand PT are the best! They are always friendly and have a smile on their face.