



A message to the NEK Community:

While NVRH celebrates its anniversary every February 14th (yes, on Valentine's Day!), this year is special as it marks a significant milestone: **50 years of serving our community!**

With its existence rooted in community, Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital has been central to the life and health of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom for the past five decades. Its very existence speaks to the collaborative spirit of our community:

In 1963, a self-appointed group of medical professionals and community members came together to study the healthcare needs of the region. With two hospitals in St. Johnsbury facing ever-increasing pressures to upgrade their aging facilities, those hospitals (St. Johnsbury Hospital and Brightlook Hospital) – and the community at-large – recognized a need for a new, centralized healthcare facility that would provide a modern environment for quality healthcare.

The decision was made to close the two existing hospitals once a new one could be constructed. In 1968, a swell of community support launched a public fundraising effort to assist with the financing, for which the needed \$800,000 was raised in just four months. Coupled with federal funding, the hospitals spent the next five years planning for "Operation Transplant," which would orchestrate the move of all patients, equipment and personnel to the new facility. On February 14, 1972 Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH) opened its doors.

NVRH originally opened as a 100-bed hospital, including "Founder's Hall," an alcohol rehab facility. But through the years, NVRH has evolved to meet the region's most pressing healthcare needs by adapting and expanding space, such as:

- Providing a home for the first high-tech CAT scanner in Vermont (in partnership with Vermont Radiologists) in 1977;
- Installing a ceiling mounted microscope in the Operating Room to assist surgeons with eye, vascular and orthopedic surgeries in 1979;
- Opening a Day Surgery department in 1984;
- Launching a Community Connections program in 2002 to provide a safety net to people in need;
- Receiving a federal "Critical Access" Designation as a 25-bed facility in 2004;
- Providing space for the Norris Cotton Cancer Center in 2005 so patients can receive care close to home;
- Adapting spaces and clinical services to care for our community during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last 50 years, one thing has not changed: We are still the non-profit, community-led hospital dedicated to meeting the region's healthcare needs. We boast excellent staff, a great volunteer Board of Directors, the support of our community, and respect of our partners and stakeholders. Despite the challenges of the last several decades – and the COVID pandemic – we continue to be stable, resilient, and just as committed to our mission as we were 50 years ago!

Thank you for the privilege of providing healthcare services to our community. Through our partnership with both the community and our healthcare and human service partners, NVRH looks forward to its next 50 years, continuing to transform and save lives, and meeting the evolving needs of those we serve.

Shawn P. Tester, CEO
NVRH