

# PRINCETON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL IN THE KNOW



## **A New Era in Cancer Care Begins**

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**Cutting-Edge Emergency  
Department Slated for Bluefield**

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**New Treatment Option for  
Early-Stage Alzheimer's**

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**Step Up For Diabetic  
Foot Pain Relief**

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**Using MyWVUChart  
is a Breeze**

**MAY  
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 **WVU**Medicine



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# A NEW CANCER BEGIN





# POWER IN CER CARE NS

**IN THE HEART OF MERCER COUNTY,  
A BEACON OF HOPE IS RISING  
AGAINST THE SHADOW OF CANCER.**



WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital (PCH) has embarked on a transformative journey set to redefine cancer care in the region with the construction of a new Cancer Center. With a commitment of \$40 million from WVU Medicine, this venture is not just bricks and mortar, but a lifeline for countless families battling the disease across the region.

"This investment represents WVU Medicine's commitment to building a best-in-class health system for the people of West Virginia and our surrounding counties," announced Karen Bowling, president and CEO of PCH.

Plans for the Cancer Center extend beyond mere construction; they embody a vision for a new era of cancer care that extends far beyond Mercer County. While physically rooted in Princeton, its impact spans across a 10-county region in southern West Virginia and southwest Virginia. The promise lies not only in updated equipment or expanded facilities, but in the renewed sense of hope it brings to those facing the challenge of cancer.

"This is an exciting time for all of us—our patients, our staff, and the surrounding region," Bowling remarked. "For us, this project is the next stage in our evolution toward greater breadth and depth of our programs to provide high quality care right here in our community."

Cancer touches the lives of countless individuals across West Virginia. Bowling emphasizes the urgency of addressing this pressing need within the region. "Unfortunately, our statistics aren't very good in our state," she said. "The number of people per capita who have cancer is extremely high. In southern West Virginia we're more disproportionately impacted in a negative way."

**"It's extremely important to cancer patients that we take care of them close to home," Bowling continued. "We are very fortunate to have an academic medical center partner, which is the Cancer Institute at WVU Medicine."**







Receiving cancer treatment from a hospital that has a relationship with an academic medical center brings together the best of both worlds: the cutting-edge advancements and expertise of academic research institutions, coupled with the personalized, patient-centered approach of community hospitals. PCH patients stand to gain access to the latest clinical trials, innovative treatment modalities, and multidisciplinary teams comprising top-tier specialists collaborating to tailor care to individual needs.

The seamless integration of resources and knowledge-sharing between the WVU Cancer Institute and PCH ensures that patients will receive comprehensive, evidence-based care backed by the latest research findings. This collaborative model enhances treatment outcomes and provides patients and their families with invaluable peace of mind, knowing they are receiving the highest standard of care available.

The 24,000 square foot comprehensive Cancer Center will be built on the north end of the PCH footprint in Princeton. With a projected completion date of January 2028, the facility will feature two levels initially, with provisions for future expansion. Radiation oncology will find a new home on the first level, while chemotherapy/infusion services will occupy the second, liberating premium space within PCH for much-needed inpatient beds.

As the Cancer Center at PCH takes shape, it signifies more than just physical construction—it embodies a future where access to cutting-edge cancer treatment is within reach for all who need it. ■

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*Photo captions:*

*Left, middle: Cecil Marson, Bluefield City Manager; Ron Martin, Bluefield Mayor; and Daniel Wells, Bluefield City Council*

*Left, bottom: Sam Lusk, Princeton Economic Development Authority Director; Mike Webb, Princeton City Manager; David Graham, Princeton Mayor; Rusty Sarver, PCH Board of Directors President*

*Right, top: Karen Bowling, President and CEO of PCH*

*Right, bottom: Rhonda Lilly, PCH employee and cancer survivor*



*Julie Lilly, BSNRN, Outpatient Oncology Clinic Manager; Khristy Shrewsbury, Director of Outpatient Cancer Services; Karen Bowling, President and CEO; and Rusty Sarver, Board of Directors President*



# Phase 1—Oncology Services Move to North Tower

In the first phase of improving cancer care, oncology services are being consolidated and updated at PCH to make access and treatments more convenient for patients. The new location is on the third floor of the hospital's North Tower (formerly Parkview Center).

The two oncology clinics where patients have been receiving care—one in the hospital and one located nearby on Undercliff Terrace—have been combined into one comfortable and convenient location.

“Providing cancer care in one building is exciting for our patients,” states Khristy Shrewsbury, Director of the Cancer Center. “This lessens travel and provides more resources which is very important in our rural area.”

The new center is expanding to 14 exam rooms, two procedure rooms and a lab space. Staffing will grow with the addition of two advance practice providers, one for inpatient consults and one for the infusion center.

“We will also be doing labs for our patients right here,” Shrewsbury says. “They can receive their labs prior to their appointment and any needed labs after the appointment is completed. This is especially important for cancer patients who are immunocompromised because it decreases travel time to other lab facilities.”

This phase of the new Cancer Center will also move oncology infusion from the fourth floor of the hospital to the second floor. This location is closer to the PCH pharmacy which decreases the time to get the infusion medications to the patient.

Shrewsbury says that infusions for Alzheimer's, Crohn's disease, and multiple sclerosis will be provided along with chemotherapy and blood products.

New infusion chairs with heat and massage are being added for patient comfort. An open floor plan will offer better patient visualization by nurses and new telemetry and vital sign machines add to the unit's technology. ■



# Cutting-Edge Emergency Department Slated for Bluefield

Bluefield and the surrounding area are on the brink of a transformative healthcare upgrade. With a commitment of \$24.5 million from WVU Medicine, the landscape of emergency medical services is set to undergo a significant overhaul. The cornerstone of this initiative is a state-of-the-art Emergency Department (ED) poised to redefine the standard of care in the region.

Scheduled to be constructed as an 11,000 square foot addition and 12,300 square foot renovation of existing space in the Behavioral Health Pavilion of the Virginias, the new ED represents a bold step forward in healthcare infrastructure.

The addition of 10 observation beds underscores the commitment to accommodating the growing healthcare needs of the region. Equipped with advanced imaging and lab services, the new ED project adds MRI and ultrasound technology to enhance diagnostic capabilities and streamline patient care.

The existing Bluefield ED, with its two-decade-old CT scanner, is due for an upgrade. By replacing it with cutting-

edge MRI and ultrasound facilities, WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital is ensuring that patients receive the highest quality of care available.

Design and permitting for the project will kick off in August with an estimated completion date in early 2028.

A significant advantage of the new ED's location is its proximity to the Behavioral Health Pavilion. Co-locating these facilities facilitates seamless access to medical services for inpatients and ensures round-the-clock medical support. Patients receiving mental health treatment will have 24/7 assurance of onsite physicians, and access to essential lab services and medical imaging.

The impact of this development extends beyond Bluefield and into Tazewell, Bland, and McDowell counties. With the current ED already serving approximately 20,000 patients annually, the need for expanded facilities is evident. As the population grows and healthcare demands evolve, WVU Medicine's investment heralds a new era of emergency healthcare for the region. ■





# Step Up For Diabetic Foot Pain Relief

WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital is now offering Qutenza®, a non-invasive, FDA approved treatment for diabetic peripheral neuropathy (DPN), which is the foot pain felt by more than half of those with diabetes mellitus.

Qutenza® treats pain differently by directly targeting the fibers in the foot responsible for DPN pain. A prescription-strength topical system (patch) delivers medical-strength capsaicin directly to the source of the pain. Capsaicin is the natural chemical in chili peppers that make them spicy.

A patented technology allows the capsaicin to penetrate the epidermal layer and work directly on the damaged nerves to prevent the transmission of pain signals to the brain.

Qutenza® is applied by a medical professional in-office. It involves no injections or surgery, takes only 30 minutes, and provides up to three months of pain relief. In a clinical study of adult patients, Qutenza® delivered statistically and clinically significant DPN pain relief.

Qutenza® is non-opioid, does not interact with other medications you may be taking, and has a low risk for side effects. Qutenza® can also be prescribed for adults experiencing post-shingles nerve pain.

Qutenza® treatment will require a referral from your primary care physician. Talk with your doctor to find out if Qutenza® may be right for you.

**Ask your doctor to call 304-487-7987 to get you on the path to relief from diabetic nerve pain of the feet. ■**







# PCH and RNI Partner to Offer Local Treatment for Early-Stage Alzheimer's

There is no cure for Alzheimer's, but there are advances that can protect memory, preserve cognitive function, and delay the progression of the disease.

In partnership with the WVU Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute (RNI), PCH is now able to administer Leqembi, a promising treatment for early-stage Alzheimer's. Leqembi treats mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia caused by Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's disease is often caused by a buildup of protein called amyloid in the brain, forming harmful amyloid brain plaque. Leqembi targets harmful amyloid proteins and helps remove them.

RNI will determine if a patient is a candidate for treatment with Leqembi. Patients will need to travel to RNI in Morgantown for assessment and testing. Once a determination is made, patients can choose to have their treatments at PCH, closer to home and loved ones.

Treatment with Leqembi consists of a bi-weekly infusions and follow-up tests to check for possible side effects and treatment effectiveness, all of which can be performed at PCH.

"We are excited to announce that we've had our first three local patients start their memory care treatment here at PCH," said Karen Bowling, PCH president and CEO. "This is just one of the ways that our affiliation with an academic medical center brings incredible benefits to our local community."

"We are connecting our experts at the RNI Memory Health clinic with WVU Medicine hospitals throughout the state, to offer innovative treatments to patients in their communities," said Marc Haut, M.D., director of the RNI's Memory Health Clinic. "This is a part of our mission to care for patients throughout West Virginia, ensuring they receive the same high-quality care and access to new, innovative treatments without traveling to Morgantown every other week." ■



# New CT Brings Advanced Imaging to Region

In a first for West Virginia, WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital opened its new Phillips Spectral Computed Tomography (CT) 7500 scanner, which is an intelligent system that delivers fast, high quality spectral images to help improve disease characterization and reduce rescans and follow-ups, all at the same dose levels as conventional scans.

Unlike a conventional CT, which uses a single X-ray energy level, a spectral CT uses X-ray photon energy spectra which makes it superior in differentiating tissues in higher quality, data-rich images with more precise information to inform treatment plans.

The new scanner will also provide PCH with the ability to perform cardiac CTs, which is a noninvasive way to see real-time, three-dimensional images of the moving heart and surrounding structures and blood vessels. Cardiac CTs provide more detail than any other type of imaging and can be useful in evaluating the cause of chest pain and shortness of breath, assessing the health of arteries and valves, and planning for other cardiac procedures.

The CT 7500 unit is also faster. Spectral chest scans and head scans take less than one second, and a full upper body spectral scan can be completed in less than two seconds—while still delivering high quality imaging that allows the physician to rapidly deliver a confident diagnosis and effective treatment plan for each patient.

According to an analysis by CARTI Cancer Center in Little Rock Arkansas and University Hospitals of Cleveland, the new Spectral CT 7500 has demonstrated a 34% reduction in time to diagnosis, a 25% reduction in repeat scans and a 30% reduction in follow-up scans.

“We are excited to add the Spectral CT 7500 to our list of tools to provide the very best healthcare to people in our region,” said PCH President and CEO Karen Bowling. “This new technology provides more certainty, simplicity and reliability in cardiac care, oncology, and other clinical specialties, and helps our clinicians send patients the right treatment pathway with a more confident diagnosis.” ■



# Take Control of Your Healthcare: It's In the Palm of Your Hand

MyWVUChart is a free, online patient portal available 24/7 from a computer or a mobile device - all you need is Internet access and e-mail.

MyWVUChart is simple and easy to use. With MyWVUChart you can:

- Easily schedule and manage your appointments
- View test results as soon as they are final
- Request medication refills
- Communicate directly with your medical team
- Access and download your health information
- View and pay your bill

MyWVUChart can notify you about upcoming appointments, new test results, or messages from your health provider.

To get started Visit [MyWVUChart.com](http://MyWVUChart.com) or download the MyChart app and select WVU Medicine. You can sign up with an activation code that will be on your after-visit summary or you can get an activation code online.

To obtain access to a family member's myWVUchart, please request access in person, with the patient, during your next appointment.

MyWVUChart is not intended for use in emergencies. For urgent medical matters, contact your doctor's office by phone. If you have a medical emergency, dial 911.

MyWVUChart puts control of your health care at your fingertips. Sign up today. ■

**Scan the QR code below and learn how to sign up.**



## Using MyWVUChart is a Breeze

Steve Jesse has seen a lot of changes at Princeton Community Hospital since he was born here. One change he has welcomed is MyWVUChart, which helps him stay on top of his appointments and actively manage his healthcare.

Steve decided to try MyWVUChart because he wanted to see his lab reports faster. He has diabetes, so tracking his A1C is essential.

Steve enjoys other MyWVUChart benefits too – like getting appointment reminders sent to his phone and being able to read the doctor's notes after office visits.

He says that having access to his medical information 24-7 has been beneficial. And being able to message his medical team helps him stay in touch.

"After we got signed in, it's just been a breeze on there," Steve said. ■



**Scan to hear Steve Jesse talk about why he uses MyWVUChart.**

# PCH Goes *Radio Active*

## NEW RADIO PARTNERSHIP BROADCASTS REGULAR HEALTH PROGRAM

PCH is on the airwaves! A new program called *Radio Active—the Health Report with Princeton Community Hospital* puts PCH care team members in front of the microphone for an hour of live radio to discuss the hospital's latest activities, events, and healthcare topics.

*Radio Active* is a weekday morning talk radio show produced locally in Bluefield, WV, by WHIS NewsTalk (whisradio.com), 1440 AM/97.3 FM on the dial. PCH is featured on the show every other Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Craig Hammond is the host.

Dr. Stephen Ward, cardiologist, was the show's first guest on Feb. 7. He spoke on the latest advances in heart health and offered heart disease prevention tips to coincide with American Heart Month during February. Continuing a focus on heart health, David Rumley, director of the cardiac cath lab, visited the show on Feb. 21. He was joined by Bill



Larrison, administrator of the Behavioral Health Pavilion, who shared his story of how adopting a heart-healthy lifestyle impacted his life for the better.

Jackie Mincy, MSN, RN, director of PCH Women's Services, and Kat Stafford, HR Business Partner/Volunteer Coordinator, were next in the line-up on March 6. They discussed sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and the annual Macey Whittaker SIDS Awareness 5K Walk/Run. As part of the hospital's month-long Colorectal Cancer Awareness campaign in March, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Yoginder Yadav discussed colorectal cancer risks, prevention and screening on March 20. ■



Archived copies of the shows are available at [facebook.com/radioactivewv](https://facebook.com/radioactivewv) or by scanning the QR code. To listen to upcoming shows visit WHIS Newstalk 1440 AM - 97.3 FM (whisradio.com)







# Construction Projects Enhance Patient Care

A number of exciting construction projects have recently been completed at PCH with more on the horizon. Bringing added convenience and enhanced care to our patients, these improvements to the hospital have been celebrated with ribbon cuttings, media coverage, and employee gatherings.



Phlebotomy lab draw stations for outpatients have been moved to the front of the hospital in the main lobby. Thanks to this upgrade, patients can now register and have their labs done without having to walk to the lab's previous location toward the center of the hospital. There's even a special room devoted solely to pediatric patients. A ribbon cutting was held on Feb. 20 for this area.

A new obstetrics triage unit has been added to the Women's Center. Adding these two rooms creates a more streamlined and efficient admission process for expectant mothers. The space also reduces wait times for inductions and scheduled C-sections by taking some of the load off the available labor rooms. Each room has a private restroom, comfortable labor bed, television, and fetal monitoring system. The OB triage unit was unveiled on March 7.



The hospital's new Critical Care Step Down Unit features eight private rooms dedicated to providing specialized care for patients recovering from cardiac conditions or significant health events. This unit is designed to meet the unique needs of patients who require a higher level of monitoring and support than a standard medical-surgical unit but are stable enough to no longer require intensive care services. Each private room is equipped with advanced monitoring technology and amenities to ensure patient comfort and safety during this crucial stage of their recovery. This new unit was announced on March 11.

Looking ahead, the 4th floor of the hospital is being renovated to add 18 private rooms which will help move patients more quickly from the emergency department to patient rooms. Work on these additional rooms – along with a facelift on the entire floor—is anticipated to begin in August or September of this year.

The emergency department is also getting a facelift. This will include new flooring, cove base, lighting, and paint. ■



Beth Lusk, LPN, receives her Daisy Award among coworkers.



Tracy Jessee, RN, has been awarded with the Daisy Award.



Did you have a nurse at PCH who should be recognized? Nominate them by scanning the QR code or visiting: [www.daisyfoundation.org/daisy-award/thank-your-nurse-nomination](http://www.daisyfoundation.org/daisy-award/thank-your-nurse-nomination)

## Nurses Honored with Prestigious DAISY Award

Beth Lusk, an LPN at Mercer Medical Group Urology, and Tracy Jessee, RN, who works in PCH's Bluefield emergency department, are recipients of The DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. They recently received their awards from PCH administrators during surprise ceremonies in their respective units.

During the past six months, four PCH nurses have received this prestigious international award that recognizes the outstanding, compassionate care nurses provide to patients every day. Nominations come directly from patients and their families and employees' coworkers.

Beth was nominated by a coworker who said, "If you look up the definition of nurse, Beth's name should appear. She treats every patient that comes through the door as if they were her family."

"We had a patient who was recently diagnosed with cancer and having a difficult time understanding the diagnosis," the nomination continues. "She made multiple follow-up calls to assure all the questions were answered and learned that the patient did not have any family and relied on friends for transportation to appointments. Beth arranged for the patient to get assistance for the long journey to his next appointment without any expense to him."

Tracy was also nominated by a coworker whose father was in the ER experiencing heart attack symptoms. The nomination says, "Tracy was his nurse that day and she never left his room. She made sure both of us were comfortable and managed dad's pain and heart problems quickly and efficiently. I am so glad to not only have Tracy to take care of my family but also to work with her. She is an exceptional nurse." ■



# Calendar of Upcoming Events

## MAY

**Mental Health  
Awareness Month**

**National Trauma  
Awareness Month**

**May 6-10**

Nurses Week

**May 7, 14, 21**

Childbirth/Breastfeeding Classes

*Call 304-487-7092 to register.*

*Participants should register for all classes.*

**May 13-17**

Hospital Week

**May 22**

Grand Opening Celebration

Cancer Center Phase 1

**May 30**

Diabetes Education at PCH

12-4 p.m.

*Call 304-487-7642 to register.*

## JUN

**Alzheimer's and Brain  
Awareness Month**

**Men's Health Month**

**June 4, 11, 18**

Childbirth/Breastfeeding Classes

*Call 304-487-7092 to register.*

*Participants should register for all classes.*

**June 25-27**

Bluefield State University & PCH

WV Junior Nurse Academy

## JUL

**Healthy Vision Month**

**Juvenile Arthritis  
Awareness Month**

**July 2, 16, 23**

Childbirth/Breastfeeding Classes

*Call 304-487-7092 to register.*

*Participants should register for all classes.*

**July 22**

Diabetes Education at PCH

4-8 p.m.

*Call 304-487-7642 to register.*

**July 30**

PCH Night at the Ballfield

Bluefield Ridge Runners

Bowen Field, Bluefield, WV

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

# New Providers

Welcome to our new physicians and advanced practitioners

## MERCER MEDICAL GROUP PRIMARY CARE

**Caleb McDonald, APRN, FNP**  
Primary Care

## PRINCETON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

**Wes Childers, M.D.**  
Emergency Medicine  
(Director)

**George Maidaa, M.D.**  
Internal Medicine -  
Hospitalist

**Karthik Ramakrishnan, M.D.**  
Internal Medicine -  
Hospitalist

**Teresa Frazer, M.D.**  
Pediatric Hospitalist

**Steven Mares, M.D.**  
Pediatric Hospitalist

**Kenneth Martin, M.D.**  
Pediatric Hospitalist

**Larry Cook, D.O.**  
Internal Medicine -  
Hospitalist

**Richard Conley, D.P.M.**  
Podiatry

**Yasar Sattar, M.D.**  
Internal Medicine -  
Hospitalist

**Frederick Berg, D.O.**  
Urology

**Brandon Murphy, D.O.**  
Emergency Medicine

**Howard Lafferty, D.O.**  
Emergency Medicine

**Younna Mousattat, M.D.**  
Pediatric Hospitalist

**Conleth Crotser, M.D.**  
Pediatric Hospitalist

**Vonzell Williams, M.D.**  
Internal Medicine -  
Hospitalist

**Fernando Arzola, M.D.**  
Emergency Medicine

# Accepting New Patients

Primary and Behavioral Health Care Providers Operated by WVU Medicine Princeton Community Hospital

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

**Behavioral Health  
Pavilion of the  
Virginias Outpatient  
Counseling Program**  
1333 Southview Drive  
Bluefield, WV 24701  
304-327-9205

## PRIMARY CARE

**Athens Medical Center**  
401 Vermillion Street  
Athens, WV 24712  
304-384-7325  
*Dr. Jessica Aliff*  
*Natasha Barker, PA*

### Bluefield Family Medicine

106 Huffard Drive  
Bluefield, VA 24605  
276-322-3427  
*Dr. LaDonna Bowling*  
*Cathy Bryson, NP*  
*Amy Harrup, NP*

**Bluefield Internal  
Medicine**  
510 Cherry Street,  
Ste. 206  
Bluefield, WV 24701  
304-324-2661

*Amy Alvis, PA-C*  
*Kim Matzel, PA-C*

**Bluewell Family Clinic**  
154 Majestic Place  
Bluefield, WV 24701  
304-589-4377

*Dr. Eric McClanahan*  
*Angie Collins, FNP*

**Mercer Medical  
Group—Blue Ridge  
Internal Medicine**  
407 12th Street Ext.  
Princeton, WV 24740  
304-487-0232

*Beverly Whitt, NP*  
*Ashley Larkin, NP*

**Mercer Medical  
Group Pediatrics**  
114 Undercliff Terrace  
Princeton, WV 24740  
304-425-0025

*Dr. Lyndsey Weatherly*

**Mercer Medical Group  
Primary Care**  
118 12th Street  
Princeton, WV 24740  
(Behind PCH)  
304-487-7936

*Dr. Martye Marshall*  
*Caleb McDonald,*  
*APRN, FNP*  
*Amanda Neal, CRNP*