



DID YOU KNOW...

4 MILLION

women are living with a history of breast cancer in the United States.

1 IN 8 WOMEN

in the U.S. will develop invasive breast cancer in the course of their life.

1 IN 39 WOMEN

will die from breast cancer in the U.S.

99%

is the 5-year survival rate when breast cancer is detected early, in the localized stage.

STAY CONNECTED

**SOUTH COUNTY
HEALTH**

FOUNDATION

Christine M. Foisy
VP of Development
Chief Philanthropy Officer
401-788-1608
cfoisy@southcountyhealth.org

To receive future updates, please email foundation@southcountyhealth.org



SCH Pulse

October 2023 | southcountyhealth.org

NEW BREAST HEALTH CENTER ANSWER TO GROWING COMMUNITY NEED.



I regularly receive incredible feedback from our community regarding the exceptional quality, compassion, and professionalism with which care is delivered at South County Health.

In our mission to be Rhode Island's Most Trusted Health Partner, tending to the health of our community is at the very core of everything we do, and we take great pride in the 5-Star Overall Hospital Quality rating recently awarded to us by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The exceptional level of quality and care delivered by our providers, clinical staff, and incredible volunteers who put the safety and experience of our patients first is only one part of the necessary equation in providing for the community that we are honored to serve.

Modernization of our facilities, and strategic investment in advanced technologies, remains a central component of our ability to continue to deliver the high-quality outcomes, and exceptional patient experiences this community deserves.

We are grateful for the continued support of our patients and like-minded donors, business partners, and others who routinely give their time, trust, and treasures in support of our relentless pursuit of excellence.

Back in 2017, our community came together to meet the growing demand for cancer care in Southern Rhode Island with the creation of an award-winning Cancer Center at South County Hospital. Today, as the number of breast cancer cases continue to increase at a concerning rate, recently surpassing prostate cancer as the most common cancer diagnosed in the Ocean State according to the American Cancer Society, South County Health is responding with the creation of a progressive patient-centered Breast Health Center.

This new comprehensive Breast Health Center will work in concert with our Cancer Center and Center for Women's Health to bring expanded access, best-in-class physicians, and state-of-the-art technology in breast health from diagnosis to remission.

This is why I am asking our community for their continued partnership. Please consider making a donation today at SouthCountyHealth.org/Give or learn more at SouthCountyHealth.org/BreastHealthCenter.

Aaron Robinson
President & CEO



AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

South County Hospital Receives 5-Star Rating from CMS

South County Hospital was recently awarded a prestigious 5-Star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for 2023. This is the highest possible achievement of CMS's Overall Hospital Quality Star Ratings, and places South County in the top 10% of all hospitals nationwide. South County Hospital is one of only two hospitals in Rhode Island with a 5-Star rating.

“The 5-Star rating is a testament to the exceptional level of quality and care provided by our incredible providers and clinical staff who always put the care, safety, and experience of our patients first,” said Aaron Robinson, President and CEO of South County Health. “To have earned a distinction that places us among the nation’s top hospitals, also validates our unwavering commitment to continuously improving the quality of care provided to the communities that we serve as Rhode Island’s Most Trusted Health Partner.”

The overall star rating for hospitals nationwide is based on how well a hospital performs across quality-of-care measures compared to other hospitals in the U.S., and provides a single-star rating for each hospital. The overall rating, between one and five stars, summarizes a variety of measures across five areas of quality: mortality, safety of



Multidisciplinary care team on the Telemetry Unit on Frost 2.

care, readmission, patient experience, and timely and effective care.

The rating serves as a valuable tool for patients and their families, helping them make informed decisions about their healthcare by identifying facilities that excel in superior care and outcomes.

This achievement underscores the South County Health’s ongoing efforts to ensure that every patient receives individualized, compassionate care tailored to their unique needs.

Two Programs Receive National Accreditation



South County Hospital’s Center for Advanced Orthopedic Surgery, a joint partnership between South County Health and Ortho Rhode Island, has earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval® for **Advanced Total Hip and Knee Replacement Certification** by demonstrating the highest standards for quality and safety in joint replacement procedures.

South County Health Radiation Therapy was recently awarded a three-year accreditation from The American College of Radiation Oncology.

South County Health’s Radiation Therapy program is one of only approximately 300 practices nationwide to receive this prestigious accreditation.

WELCOME – NEW PROVIDERS

As a comprehensive health system, South County Health constantly strives to offer the services patients need in convenient locations. With offices in Cranston, Warwick, East Greenwich, Newport, South Kingstown, Westerly, and through Digital Health, we can meet you where you are at!



Matthew Danish, MD

South County Health is pleased to introduce Matthew Danish, MD.

Dr. Danish is Board Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, Hematology and Medical Oncology. He completed his fellowship at Brown University. Dr. Danish brings his expertise treating all blood diseases and malignancies to our Cancer Center in Wakefield.

p. 401-783-6670

Accepting New Patients!



Katelyn Johnson, MD

We are excited to welcome Katelyn Johnson, MD to South County Health's Urology practice.

Dr. Johnson is Board Certified by the American Board of Urology.

Dr. Johnson is seeing urology patients in our Wakefield office.

p. 401-788-8780

Accepting New Patients!



Marissa Cunetta, PA-C

We are excited to welcome Marissa Cunetta, PA-C to the surgical team at South County Health.

Marissa is Board Certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants and assists our general surgeons during operative procedures and in providing care to patients during their hospital stay.

p: 401-284-1212

Call to schedule a consultation with our General Surgeons.

ANNUAL WELLNESS VISITS

Medicare recipients, did you know you're entitled to an Annual Wellness Visit?

What is the purpose of an Annual Wellness Visit?

This visit will assist patients in developing a more personalized plan to prevent disease and to improve their health and overall quality of care. It's an extended visit with a Registered Nurse that serves as an opportunity to share a more in-depth and holistic view of their health.

Does this replace an annual PCP physical?

No, this is an additional opportunity to be seen and discuss health concerns and issues. The information will be shared with the Primary Care Provider and carefully considered in developing a plan of care.

Meet the Wellness Nurses



Cathy Baker
MSN, RN-BC



Dawn Buckley
MBA, RN

How much does a Medicare Annual Wellness Visit cost?

There is no cost, deductible, or out-of-pocket fee for any patient that is eligible. This visit is covered by Medicare and Medicare Advantage Plans (Medicare Part C).

Patients of South County Medical Group Primary Care may call **(401) 789-8543** to schedule an appointment.



Learn More!

Emily's Story

Breast Cancer diagnosis won't stop this South County mom

When **Emily Monto** received a follow-up call for additional imaging after her annual mammogram at South County Health Medical and Wellness Center in Westerly this July, she had no idea she would be one of the one in eight women who will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime.



"My son was six when I was diagnosed, he's seven now. It's so hard to believe it can happen. It's hard to believe it can happen to you. I know mammograms can be uncomfortable, and getting biopsied was not a pleasant experience," says Emily, "But regular screening is critical. More than that, it is lifesaving."

Emily, an Occupational Therapist Assistant and medical coder in her early 40's, and a longtime patient of Steven Schneider, MD, at South County Health Center for Women's Health, was busy enjoying the Rhode Island summer, her young son, and a much-needed vacation when she received that call.

Crucially, Emily did not delay the next step of her care. She came back to South County Health for a diagnostic mammogram to help determine if signs or symptoms are indicative of the presence of cancer. They were.

Emily underwent a biopsy to capture tissue for sampling. During that time a small clip was placed in the breast at the site of the lesion. This was used later as guidance by Emily's General Surgeon, Gracie Luetters, MD.

"My experience at South County Hospital was great," Emily said. "The day I came in for my surgery, it was so sweet, one of the volunteers even held my hand as they walked me to my appointment. Dr. Luetters was very good. She was concerned about what I'd been through already, and she really cared."

Emily underwent a successful lumpectomy in August and will begin treatment at South County Health Radiation Therapy in the coming weeks.

Emily is one of thousands of women nationwide who develop breast cancer each year. That number continues to rise at a startling rate, surpassing prostate cancer recently as the most common cancer diagnosed in Rhode Island, according to the American Cancer Society.

When breast cancer is detected early, in the localized stage, the 5-year survival rate is 99%. Clinical breast exams and mammograms, along with monthly self-exams, are key to early detection. ☀

Have you been putting off your annual mammogram?

Call today at **401-788-1486** to schedule your breast cancer screening.

Subscribe to our e-Newsletter

Sign up to receive updates from South County Health sent right to your email or mobile phone!

Be the first to learn about new providers, facilities upgrades, events, and more!



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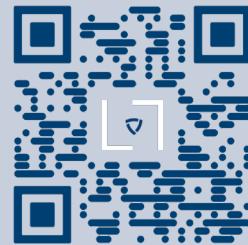
EXPRESSIONS OF Gratitude

GRATITUDE COMES IN MANY FORMS.

At South County Health, we invite patients, visitors, and staff to say 'Thank You' for the care they've received.

Please take a moment to share your story or appreciation through a simple thank you note, a caregiver nomination, or philanthropic gift.

Express Your Gratitude Today!



southcountyhealth.org/gratitude



Jacob's Story

Seeking out Skill ... and Kindness

When **Jacob Goldenberg** needed to be treated for an inguinal hernia in early 2023, “the experience,” he says, “from the very beginning, was very positive.”

Choosing the right surgeon and the right hospital for surgery is an important decision. Jacob chose general surgeon Theodore Delmonico, MD, at South County Health.

During the initial consultation “Dr. Delmonico was right on time (not used to that any longer), and he was familiar with my case before entering the examining room. He was warm, and immediately made us feel confident regarding his skills. He thoroughly briefed us. Then he fielded our questions.”



Jacob's wife, Elyse, and almost-3-year-old-granddaughter were with him at the appointment. “Dr. Delmonico is also good with kids. Another plus for South County Health.”

Healthcare delivery is a team effort. This teamwork was obvious to Jacob and Elyse as well. “Upon entering South County Hospital for my surgery, everyone was warm, assuring, and

pleasant. It was so comforting, feeling that kindness from everyone from the lobby greeters to clinical staff. The building itself is welcoming, too. It's clean and well-maintained.”

“I met with my surgery team again, which was reassuring, and my pre-op nurse, Sarah, did everything in a professional manner. That speaks volumes, not only about her training, but about South County Hospital.”

“It almost felt like having a private nurse, and she kept me so comfortable (the warm blankets are lovely!). Next thing I knew, I was being wheeled to the OR and what seemed like moments later, I was being greeted by a nurse after my surgery. In summation, thanks Doc, and to the rest of the support team and staff at South County Hospital, thank you, too, for making my ‘visit’ such a pleasant experience.” 

Call 401-284-1212 to schedule a consultation with one of our general surgeons.

Facility Upgrades



❖ BREAST HEALTH CENTER

Working in concert with our award-winning Cancer Center and our Center for Women's Health, a progressive Breast Health Center will bring expanded access, best of class physicians, and state-of-the-art technology to treat and prevent breast cancer.

This project needs your support!

❖ BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HOLDING UNIT

The overflow unit of our Hospital's Emergency Department has been renovated to better accommodate patient holding in the ED, including for patients with behavioral health diagnoses. These enhancements will promote patient safety and experience.

This project needs your support!

❖ LOBBY BISTRO

Our food service partners at Unidine will build a bistro in the main lobby to serve patients, visitors, and staff. Construction is expected to begin in December.

❖ ROSE GARDEN

A rose garden, gifted by the Vivian J. Palmieri Trust, a will be planted along the south side of the Medical Office Building on our Wakefield campus this fall. We look forward to blooms in 2024!

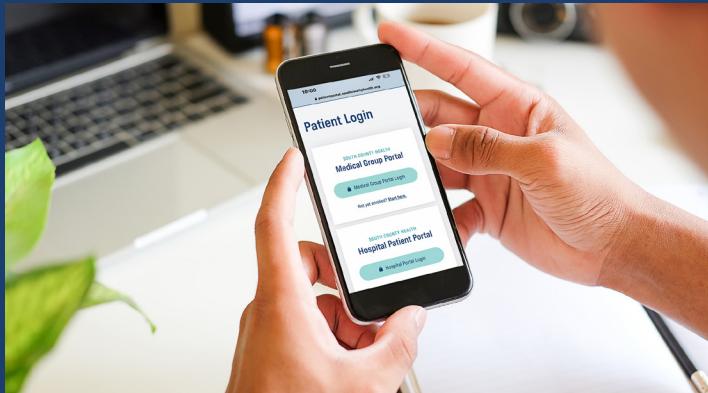


Would you like to make a gift in support of one of these projects?

Scan QR code or visit southcountyhealth.org/give

Learn more about these projects at upgrades.southcountyhealth.org

Check out the latest edition of **SCH Foundation Pulse** to learn how you can help expand access to high-quality healthcare in your community



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- ✓ View visit history and documentation
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