

A publication of FHN

Volume 11, Issue 2

# Insight

**Working Together  
for a Healthy  
Community**

**Meet FHN's  
Orthopaedics  
Team**

***'You're Too Young to Be Limping Around'*  
Putting the Spring Back Into Debbie's Step**



*We're here, for you.*

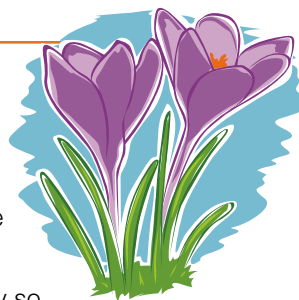
**FHN**

**Visit [fhn.org](http://fhn.org) for the latest information  
on COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)  
in northwest Illinois.**

## Spring Is In the Air

As many of us look forward to being more active in pleasant weather – or attacking household projects as weekend warriors – it’s good to know that FHN has your back ... and your knees ... and your feet ... and so on! This issue of INSIGHT highlights

to help improve everyone’s general health, and helps us work with partners to move all of us forward toward being the healthiest community possible.



And while spring is in the air, unfortunately so still is COVID-19, the novel coronavirus. I’m sure the situation has changed since this issue of INSIGHT went to print, but you can find out what you need to know at [www.fhn.org/coronavirus](http://www.fhn.org/coronavirus) – we keep the website current on everything local as well as offering useful information from national sources, and we share frequent updates on this and many other health-related news stories on FHN’s Facebook page. Please rest assured that we’re here for you.

Of course there are events and other details you’ll want to know about and as warmer weather kicks off, I’ll look forward to seeing you out walking or biking, discovering more of the great entertainments our region offers, or maybe just enjoying a farmers market. It’s the beginning of a busy season for everyone, and as always, we are grateful for the privilege of serving as your healthcare provider.

**Thank you for choosing FHN!**



the many talented providers in our orthopaedics department, from physicians and surgeons to rehab specialists and the nurse navigator who helps orthopaedic patients coordinate their care. And speaking of surgical services, there is an update on our upcoming plans to enhance our surgical suite.

You’ll learn how FHN is expanding our behavioral health services throughout the region; we are pleased to provide more of these important services, when and where they’re needed. You’ll also read about our new pelvic health specialist and meet other new providers, and learn about the accomplishments of several of our staff who have achieved national recognition.

We’ve summarized our Community Health Needs Assessment for you, too – this is a comprehensive plan we complete every three years that takes community input about what’s needed

### SAVE THE DATE (Subject to Change)

Mark your calendar now for these upcoming FREE FHN events, **all of which take place from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the FHN Family Healthcare Center–Burchard Hills.** Register online at [www.fhn.org](http://www.fhn.org), or call toll-free 1-877-600-0346 ext. 901. **Hope to see you soon!**

Thursday, May 7

#### **Stroke: Know the Signs, Save a Life**

Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Every 4 minutes, someone dies of stroke. Every year, almost 800,000 people in the United States have a stroke. Learn more about stroke and FHN’s Stroke Program from FHN Stroke Program Coordinator Tracy Love, MSN, RN, CNL, who will talk about how to recognize a stroke and what to do if one is happening to you or someone you love. Tracy received the 2018 Illinois Rural Health Association Award for Rural Health Professional of the Year. The work she and the FHN Stroke Team have done has resulted in FHN being awarded the Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards, as well as the Gold Plus Award in 2018, from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.

Wednesday, June 10

#### **Get Moving Again!**

When you need a new hip or knee, it’s important to understand what’s involved in the process and how you’ll benefit from making the decision for joint replacement

surgery. FHN providers and members of the recovery and rehab team will discuss how joint replacement can significantly improve your quality of life. You also will have a chance to talk with and hear from some satisfied patients! If you’ve been putting off this important decision, come and learn why you don’t need to be in pain any longer – we are ready to get you moving again!

Wednesday, July 8

#### **Colon Cancer is on the Rise – Learn More!**

Join FHN gastroenterologist Timothy Laurie, DO, in a free presentation to learn more about this disease. A study led by American Cancer Society researchers finds that new cases of colon cancer and rectal cancer are occurring at an increasing rate among young and middle-aged adults in the US. Why? Is colon cancer hereditary? What are its symptoms? When should you be tested for it – and how? How can it be treated and to what degree of success? Dr. Laurie will review these questions and more, including a description of FIT testing, a new colon cancer screening option from FHN.

# Simple, Non-Invasive FIT Testing Available at FHN

Did you know that according to the American Cancer Society (ACS), colorectal cancer is the third most common type of cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States? It's also the second most common cause of cancer deaths. Colorectal cancers are estimated to have taken the lives of more than 51,000 Americans last year.

Here's a more encouraging fact: Colorectal cancers are some of the most preventable and, if found early, most treatable forms of cancer.

Proper screening can help your healthcare team detect colorectal cancer early when it's more likely to be cured and through the removal of polyps, even prevented. The ACS recommends that adults over the age of 45 talk to their healthcare provider about when and how to start screening.

## What's Your Risk?

Your risk of developing colorectal cancer depends on a number of things, some of which you can't change, like:

- A personal history of colorectal polyps or cancer
- A personal history of inflammatory bowel disease
- A family history of colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps (the kind that can develop into cancer)
- An inherited gene mutation
- Your race – African-Americans and Jews of Eastern European descent are at a higher risk
- Having type 2 diabetes

You can, however, affect some of the risks of developing colorectal cancer:

- Being overweight or obese
- Physical inactivity
- A diet high in red meat
- Smoking
- Heavy alcohol use

If you and your provider decide you are at low risk of developing colorectal cancer, he or she may suggest that you begin with a FIT (Fecal Immunochemical Test) screening. It's a simple, non-invasive test that looks for hemoglobin in the stool, which can be a sign of gastrointestinal disorders including cancer.

FHN offers the full range of colorectal screening services, from colonoscopies to the new FIT screening. If you're a candidate for this type of test, your provider will prescribe you a test kit, which you can use at home with no dietary restrictions or special preparation necessary.



You'll use a small specimen tool and bottle to collect a stool sample, which you'll then mail or bring to the FHN lab for testing.

The FIT test used by FHN goes a step further than some of the tests you may have seen advertised on television. Those tests are only designed to detect fecal occult blood in the stool.

Our immunological (the "I" in FIT) test detects human hemoglobin, which has proved more accurate than simple fecal occult tests. Like the tests you see on TV, there's no special preparation required, no dietary restrictions, and no need to take time off as you would for a traditional colonoscopy. It also costs much less than a traditional colonoscopy.

We can't guarantee your provider will recommend the FIT screening – it's your health at stake, so we want to be as thorough as possible! Whether your provider calls for a simple FIT test or decides it's time for a colonoscopy, you can be confident that your FHN healthcare team will make it as easy and comfortable as possible.

Read an FHN colon cancer success story at [www.fhn.org/stouffer.asp](http://www.fhn.org/stouffer.asp)



FHN is an award-winning regional healthcare system committed to the health and well-being of the people of northwest Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Organized in 1995, non-profit FHN is comprised of FHN Memorial Hospital, the Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital, and 13 family healthcare centers in 5 counties spanning northwest Illinois offering primary and specialty medical care, hospice, and outpatient mental health services. For more information about us please visit [www.fhn.org](http://www.fhn.org).

# Meniscus Surgery Gives Debbie Oppold a Spring in Her Step

All it took was a quick slip on the ice to tear Debbie Oppold's meniscus, a disk-shaped piece of cartilage that acts as a shock absorber inside the knee joint. She was getting into her husband's truck at home when she hit a slick spot and caught herself without falling. At the time, she was pleased she hadn't taken a tumble, and went on to work without another thought. But later that night, the pain started ... and it just kept increasing.

## 'Every Step Hurt'

"I had lots of swelling, and I hoped that ice and ibuprofen would do the job," Debbie explains. "I put my leg up and tried to rest for a few days, but I work on a second floor and the stairs were really challenging. Every step hurt. So I called my family physician, Dr. M.J. Merry, and

After returning home, Debbie conferred with FHN orthopaedic surgeon Greg Dammann, MD, to evaluate her options.

"A tear like this occurs because of trauma caused by forceful twisting or hyper-flexing of the knee joint," Dr. Dammann says. "In Debbie's case, she really wrenched her knee when catching herself and that was enough to damage her meniscus."

## 'You're Too Young to be Limping Around'

Dr. Dammann explained Debbie's options in detail. She chose a steroid injection and physical therapy to strengthen her muscles and stabilize her knee joint in an effort to avoid surgery. For several months, she continued exercises at

that was causing her so much grief. His one simple phrase gave Debbie the conviction that she was doing the right thing: "You're too young to be limping around."

She also was grateful to receive assistance from orthopaedic nurse navigator Keri Wall, BSN, RN, CPAN, a former recovery room nurse who guided her through the entire process and became a trusted advisor. "Keri made the whole process mesh," says Debbie. "She explained all the anti-bacterial protocol, set up after-care appointments, and was very reassuring throughout pre- and post-surgery. She encouraged me to call her at any time with questions or concerns. And I did!"

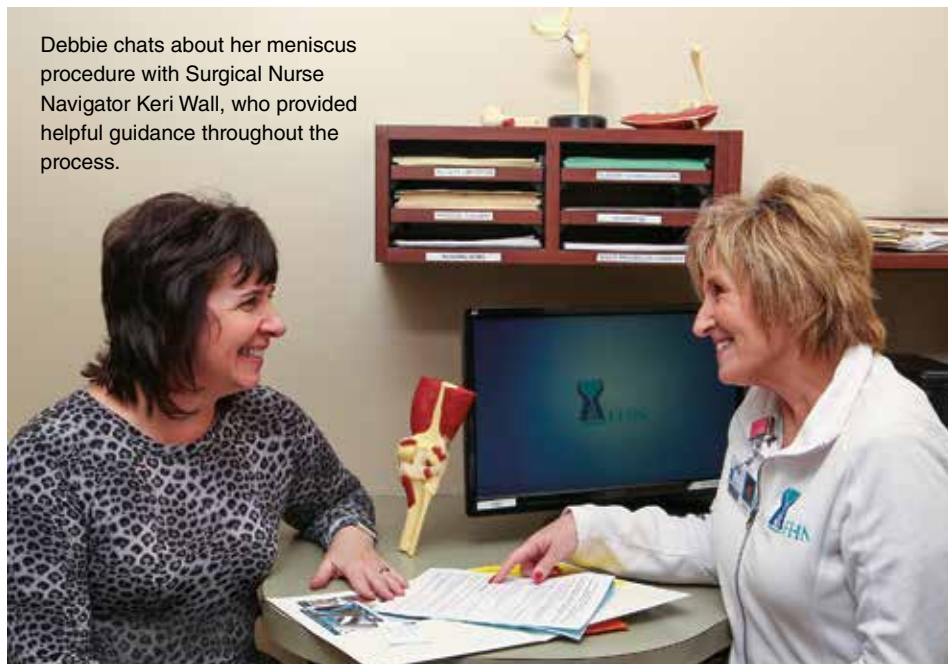
## '100% Confident in His Care'

The day of her surgery, Debbie was a bit apprehensive. "I asked Dr. Dammann to pray with me, and his sincere words and tender care really helped me stay calm," she emphasizes. "He has great bedside manner, and I felt 100 percent confident in his care."

One unexpected issue concerned the team: On the morning of the surgery, Debbie suffered a migraine headache from not eating breakfast—a common pre-op instruction. Plagued by migraines for years, Debbie gives high marks to anesthesiologist Maria Laporta, MD\*, who came to her rescue and provided appropriate IV medications to prevent a surgical delay. Debbie shares, "Dr. Laporta was so comforting and so timely. She really came in and saved the day!"

Arthroscopic meniscus surgery is relatively common and generally done on an outpatient basis. Despite the migraine situation, Debbie was in and out of the hospital within several hours.

\*Dr. LaPorta is not an employee or agent of FHN; she is employed by Rockford Anesthesiologists Associated, LLC.



Debbie chats about her meniscus procedure with Surgical Nurse Navigator Keri Wall, who provided helpful guidance throughout the process.

he quickly scheduled an MRI. Sadly, it showed the meniscus tear.

"I was bound and determined to go on my vacation, so with his blessing, my husband and I went on a long-scheduled cruise. I promised to take it easy and spend a lot of time in a lounge chair."

home, but with her knee still hurting and feeling like it could buckle, she ultimately realized that surgery was the only way to move forward with confidence.

She met again with Dr. Dammann, who scheduled surgery promptly and explained the procedure he would use to "clean up" the jagged meniscus tear



Yoga student Debbie Oppold and instructor Pat Leitzen Fye, from *Your Core Being* in Freeport, perform a seated twist.

Dr. Dammann encouraged Debbie to continue with her physical therapy exercises and gave her the blessing to pursue yoga, which she has been doing to gain strength and flexibility. “He told me to keep moving,” explains Debbie, “and not to stop. Staying active will minimize my risk or at least postpone the need for knee replacement surgery. So now I am really committed to yoga and walking my dogs when the weather is nice.”

### ‘I Can’t Say Enough Good Things about FHN’

She continues, “With hindsight being 20/20, I wish I would have had the surgery right away. But ultimately, I am very happy with the outcome and can’t say enough good things about Dr. Dammann and the entire FHN team. My daughter is getting married soon, and now I will be able to walk down the aisle at her wedding without restriction. No more limping around!”

With the help of a walker, she got up and moved around almost immediately and went back to work within a week.

She felt “pretty normal” in two weeks, and could do stairs pain-free and with confidence in four weeks.

## Surgical Nurse Navigators Help Guide the Way

Just as RN Keri Wall guided Debbie Oppold through her knee surgery, so do several other Surgical Nurse Navigators assist patients at multiple FHN locations.

### What exactly does a Surgical Nurse Navigator do?

- Assists patients in understanding their prescribed surgery
- Helps patients prepare for their surgery
- Educates patients so they know what to expect from their surgery
- Serves as an essential link between patients and all their care providers

Many of our patients appreciate the vital link this service provides between them and all their other care providers. Navigators schedule physical appointments, patient education classes, postoperative appointments, and other supportive care. Perhaps most importantly, the Navigators follow patients throughout the care continuum, including pre-operative appointments, inpatient admissions, home care,

and outpatient physical therapy. They provide a concise itinerary that can be utilized by patients, family members, and the entire care team.

Surgical Nurse Navigators also are involved in collaborating with multi-

disciplinary team members to provide the utmost care to patients during their surgical experience. They are valuable partners throughout the entire surgical process. Patients overwhelmingly agree: Nurse Navigators are a godsend!



Surgical Nurse Navigators, pictured above, are located in three FHN locations. From left to right, FHN Harlem Street Clinic: Glenda Schimetz, BSN, RN, CAPA; FHN Burchard Hills Clinic: Keri Wall, BSN, RN, CPAN; FHN Stephenson Street Clinic: Hannah Jansen, BSN, RN; and FHN Burchard Hills Clinic: Lorrie Heeren, BS, RN, CPAN.

# Working Together for a Healthy Community

Every three years, all hospitals in the United States must complete a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) from community input, using it to create a plan to improve the health of the hospital's service area. For some organizations, that exercise may just be checking another box in a long list of governmental requirements, but at FHN, it's an important part of our strategic plans.

Behind this assessment is the understanding that while healthcare organizations can and do play an important role in your health, our role is actually relatively small compared to other elements that impact your well-being. So it's important to reach out to our partners in the community to hopefully help stop or slow many health problems before they start. This is well illustrated in this graphic from the American Hospital Association, which demonstrates the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH).

## First: Listening and Learning

FHN surveyed nearly 50 community leaders and more than 25 members of various FHN teams who work regularly with partners outside FHN. We took input on a range of issues, including community resources, barriers to healthcare, and reasons for high rates of disease and other health problems.

FHN also collected data on a broad array of health indicators and demographic information, such as chronic disease and mortality information, family planning and births, general community/environment information, and local, state, and national trends and statistics.

Based on what we learned, we identified the most important community health needs:

- 1 **Community Health and Well-Being**
- 2 **Chronic Disease Management**
- 3 **Adolescent Health**
- 4 **Behavioral Health**

## Looking Forward

1 To help improve **Community Health and Well-Being**, one of our primary focus areas will be on educating and promoting healthy eating and physical activity, since poor diet and inactivity greatly increase the risk for developing health conditions such as diabetes and obesity.

2 **Chronic Disease Management** efforts will look at chronic conditions, like heart disease, stroke,

cancer, type 2 diabetes, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), obesity, and arthritis, which are among the most common and costly of all health problems. We'll work to transform from a system that responds mainly when a person is sick to one that keeps them as healthy as possible. We've launched two new programs to help: Our Complex Care Management program and a palliative care program called Supportive Care.

3 When it comes to **Adolescent Health**, we'll be working on ways to improve behavioral health, food and nutrition, child abuse and neglect, physical activity, and safety. Much of the primary research helping to direct us in this area was conducted by the Stephenson County Health Department.



4 We identified **Behavioral Health** as a widespread focus area underpinning many of the physical health challenges of our community. From obvious examples such as physical and substance abuse to depression, poor eating habits, and loneliness, behavioral health impacts a majority of issues facing the northwest Illinois community. This has been demonstrated through an increasingly higher level of suicide, more visits to the emergency department for extreme health issues as well as behavioral health incidents, greater levels of incarceration, and a strongly negative impact on area youth.

## Connecting the DOTS

In 2016, FHN began leading a community-wide effort called Connect the DOTS (Doors of Team Support) that includes dozens of community partners from first responders to transportation providers to various social service agencies and schools. Over the past three years, we have seen a tremendous increase in the response of the organizations involved with Connect the DOTS, and it will be a primary way to address the needs of our CHNA over the next three years as well.

We invite you to read both the study and our plan for the next three years on our website at [www.fhn.org](http://www.fhn.org) (under Community, click on Community Health Needs Assessment), and if you'd like to learn more or be part of the Connect the DOTS team, contact Tammy Edler at FHN ([tedler@fhn.org](mailto:tedler@fhn.org) or 815-599-6209). We're looking forward to working with you to continue to improve the overall health of our community!

# When You Gotta 'Go,' You Can Go to FHN

## New pelvic health specialist may be able to **help you live a better life**

Problems with pelvic health can cause a long list of difficulties, from incontinence to weakness to pain in many parts of your body. You might worry about leaking when you cough, sneeze, or have a good laugh. You might do a little dance, even when you don't hear any music. You might feel bloated and uncomfortable. Yet many people never seek treatment because they are self-conscious about discussing what seems like a very personal situation.

Though each human body is different, most pelvic health issues start in similar ways. Patients likely notice one or more of these signals—can you relate to any of them?

- **Urgent need to urinate**, perhaps suddenly, making you fear you might have an accident
- **Frequent need to urinate**, making you constantly search for the next bathroom or get up in the night
- **Involuntary loss of urine** with physical exertion, like lifting, coughing, or sneezing
- **Leaking bladder** that requires pads
- **Fullness, burning, or numbness** in the pelvis, lower abdomen, or perineum
- **General pain** in pelvic joints, hips, buttock, and/or tailbone
- **Reduced tolerance for sitting** or bike riding
- **Pain during or after intercourse**

These symptoms are quite common. Indeed, nearly 50 percent of women over age 50 cope with incontinence issues, and men deal with similar problems, often related to the prostate. Women also may contend with other conditions, such as pelvic organ prolapse, related to childbirth, surgery, constipation, or other causes.



### **Gain Control With Pelvic Rehabilitation**

Using a combination of physical therapy, biofeedback, manual techniques, muscle re-education, and other strategies, chances are pelvic rehabilitation can significantly



improve your quality of life if you have any of the symptoms listed. FHN pelvic health therapist Maddie Pickard, PT, DPT, a native of Lena, has received advanced training from the Herman and Wallace Pelvic Rehabilitation Institute, widely recognized for the treatment of incontinence, pelvic pain, and pelvic dysfunction.

### **Don't Be Embarrassed!**

After a thorough physical and lifestyle assessment, Maddie often helps patients see dramatic results. "Many women come to me embarrassed and with little hope that they can do anything, but that couldn't be farther from the truth! I enjoy working with patients to provide exercises and strategies that give them more confidence and control over their symptoms. It is such a common problem, especially after childbirth and menopause. No one should be self-conscious or nervous about talking to me."



If you're tired of running to the restroom, wearing pads, limiting beverages before bedtime, or feeling discomfort in your pelvis, consider making an appointment with your family physician, your gynecologist, or an urologist for a consultation. Or, call the FHN Rehabilitation Services Department to talk with Maddie at 815-599-6340 for more information. After evaluation, you will receive a comprehensive assessment and plan tailored to your unique situation.

# Orthopedics (or Or-tho-pae-dics)

*Noun:* The medical specialty concerned with correction of deformities or functional impairments of the skeletal system, especially the extremities and the spine, and associated structures, as muscles and ligaments.

**You might think orthopaedics is all about bones ... but that's not quite it.**

**FHN's orthopaedic medicine team includes ...**

## **PEOPLE**

who can set and stabilize a broken bone ...

## **and PEOPLE**

who can repair a torn tendon ...

## **and PEOPLE**

who can help reduce foot pain ...

## **and PEOPLE**

who can help patients recover from an injury ...

## **and PEOPLE**

who help athletes learn how to avoid injuries ...

## **and PEOPLE**

who can completely replace a worn-out joint ...

## **and PEOPLE**

who can be ready on the sidelines for athletes' safety ...

**and ... well,  
you get the picture.**



FHN's Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine team is proud to offer services ranging from high-tech surgery and podiatrics to sports training, physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Our team cares for patients of all ages, and our goal is to help you achieve and maintain your best mobility, overcome or adapt to injuries or conditions, and live your best life.

## Let's Start with the Basics

A "typical" patient's experience with FHN's Orthopaedic team often starts outside our offices. A bad sprain or broken bone might send you to the FHN/Physicians Immediate Care Urgent Care Clinic in Freeport, where you'll see a provider and likely have some x-rays done. Your first stop also might be your primary healthcare provider or even the Emergency Department at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport.

The Orthopaedic team at FHN Family Healthcare Center—Burchard Hills in Freeport treats conditions from broken bones and strained or sprained ligaments to issues with the spine and joints. Our

surgeons are fellowship-trained and skilled in procedures from the very small, like arthroscopic knee surgery, to very big, including total joint replacement surgery.

Our TruMatch™ knee replacement system is customized to fit each patient and helps our surgeons operate more efficiently, eliminating some steps in the surgical process and offering the best possible outcomes. FHN Memorial Hospital was the first hospital in the area to offer TruMatch, which reduces both hospital and home recovery time.

FHN also offers direct anterior hip replacement surgery using the Hana® surgical table. This approach means our surgeons don't need to cut muscles off the bone and reattach them, which reduces the risk of dislocation after surgery. That means fewer restrictions on movement, faster recovery time, and less post-surgical pain.

FHN's podiatrists and their staff are an important part of our Orthopaedics team, as well. These talented experts focus on





Occupational Therapy



Athletic Training



Podiatry



Orthopaedic Consultation

conditions and injuries of the foot, ankle, and related structures of the leg. From surgery to repair broken bones, bunions, and hammertoes, to treating arthritis in the foot's 33 joints, nail care, and diabetic foot care, we share the same goal – keeping you moving as pain-free as possible.

## Sports Medicine

FHN's orthopaedic physicians also lead our Sports Medicine team. (In fact, our Dr. Draxinger is an accomplished athlete himself – he represented Canada as a member and men's captain of the Canadian Olympic Swim Team in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics!)

Our Athletic Trainers are the most visible part of FHN's Sports Medicine team. You'll see them working with athletes at high school and Highland Community College sporting events across the region, but their work doesn't end there. We offer year-round sports injury reduction training as well as sport-specific training and individual, personalized training for athletes of all types.

## Wide Range of Rehabilitation Services

Our Rehabilitation team has more than 40 friendly, skilled people ready to help patients of all ages. They offer everything from Joint Club, which starts with in-hospital rehab the same day as joint replacement surgery, to physical and occupational therapy, speech therapy, pelvic health therapy, lymphedema care, work conditioning, and ASTYM, a targeted soft-tissue treatment that stimulates the body's healing response.

Outpatient rehabilitation services are offered in two Freeport locations – at FHN Memorial Hospital and at FHN Memorial Hospital Rehabilitation in the FHN Family Healthcare Center – Burchard Hills. We also offer outpatient services at our FHN Family Healthcare Centers in Stockton, Lena, and Mount Carroll.

**So make no bones about it:** Our ortho team is ready to help you and your family in all kinds of ways!

# FHN Orthopaedics Team Lineup:

## ORTHOPAEDICS & SPORTS MEDICINE



Kevin Draxinger, MD  
[www.fhn.org/Draxinger](http://www.fhn.org/Draxinger)



Greg Damman, MD  
[www.fhn.org/Damman](http://www.fhn.org/Damman)



Andrew Blint, MD\*  
[www.fhn.org/Blint](http://www.fhn.org/Blint)



Judy Cullor, FNP-BC  
[www.fhn.org/Cullor](http://www.fhn.org/Cullor)

## PODIATRISTS



Richard Bell, DPM  
[www.fhn.org/Bell](http://www.fhn.org/Bell)



Roland Tolliver, DPM  
[www.fhn.org/Tolliver](http://www.fhn.org/Tolliver)

Plus a team of professionals in physical and occupational therapy, speech therapy, pelvic health therapy, lymphedema care, work conditioning, and ASTYM

\*Dr. Blint is not an employee or agent of FHN; he is founder of NITROOrthopaedics in Rockford.

## Thompson Named OnCon Icon

Congratulations to FHN's Senior Human Resources Business Partner/ Operations Leader Ramona Thompson, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, for being a recipient of the 2020 OnCon Icon Top 100 Human Resources Professional Award! The OnCon Icon Awards recognize the top human resources professionals and human resources vendors in the world. Finalists were selected by peers to determine the recipients, and the 2020 awards were presented at OnCon 2020 January 17 at the Gaylord Palms Resort in Orlando, Fla.

Ramona says: *"It is because of the support of our team and FHN's opportunities for career and professional development that I received this award. It is an honor to work for an organization in which the leadership recognizes accomplishments and continually supports growth to deliver excellence."*



## More Grateful than Ever for FHN's Expert Care, Close to Home

I have spent nearly four years raising money through the FHN Foundation to support the FHN mission to improve the health of our community while providing quality healthcare services. During that time, I've visited my primary provider along with a few specialists and have felt honored to be in a position to support their important work.



FHN Foundation Executive Director Tonya Thayer in her walking boot.

During the pre-dawn hours of January 15th, however, I was offered an opportunity to see first-hand how fortunate we are to have so many healthcare options in our community.

As an avid runner for more than 30 years, I've enjoyed the peace and calm of hundreds, probably thousands, of morning runs in the brisk winter air. This particular morning, as I was preparing for a half-marathon coming up the next weekend, I was about a mile from home when I twisted my ankle on some frozen mud in the road. By the time I got home and inspected my ankle, I knew it was probably a pretty bad sprain – or worse.

I considered contacting my primary physician at Highland View Drive but given the early morning hour, I opted to go directly to FHN/Physicians Immediate Care Urgent Care Clinic near our Burchard Hills location in Freeport.

I was the first in the door at 8 a.m. that morning. They got me in immediately, inspected my ankle, and sent me down the hall for an x-ray. By 8:30 a.m., I received the news that I had broken the tip of my fibula bone at my ankle. With all my years of running, this was my first real injury. It was quite a shock. But the staff was very kind as they told me my next step would be to meet with

an orthopaedic specialist to discuss if surgery was necessary.

A few hours later, I received a call from the orthopaedic department at FHN Family Healthcare Center – Burchard Hills, letting me know I could see FHN Orthopaedic Physician Kevin Draxinger, MD, the next morning. Imagine my relief when Dr. Draxinger reviewed my x-ray and told me "no surgery"! This definitely made up for his next statement: "No running for 3 months and wear a walking boot 24/7 for 6 weeks."

Since then, Dr. Draxinger (and a follow-up x-ray) have allowed me to cut my time in the walking boot down to 5 weeks. And we've talked about other exercise opportunities for me until I'm able to run again.

I feel so fortunate that this situation has turned out so well. I realize that many people with broken bones aren't as lucky. I am so appreciative that Physicians Immediate Care and Dr. Draxinger were able to see me so quickly and that my road to recovery will be short. Unfortunately, I had to do some re-thinking of my training and racing schedule for this spring, but with the help of some physical therapy and a good training plan, I plan to finish the year strong!



## Giving Makes a Difference in Your Community's Health

I am privileged to act as a conduit for generosity all year. Some very special people in this community, your friends and neighbors, come to the FHN Foundation with a plan to be a part of something greater than themselves — to make a difference in the health of people they love. These thoughtful donors join others in giving financial support that then can lead to something amazing. I am fortunate to be able to assist our neighbors in achieving their dreams of making a difference in the healthcare provided to our community. I am so honored!

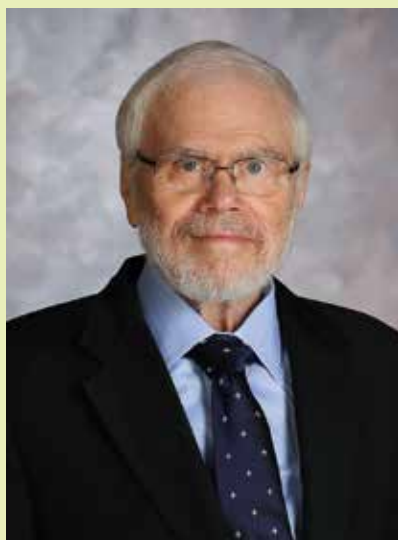
Last year, you stood up and answered the call to support local behavioral health. Together, our community pledged more than \$800,000. Nearly 600 community members including patients, staff, physicians, and local employers contributed to the campaign. Regardless of the dollar amount—because every dollar is needed—all of these donors can take pride in knowing they made it possible. They will have made a difference for our patients experiencing a behavioral health crisis by supporting the Crisis Stabilization Center at FHN Family Counseling Center.

*So, what's next?* We are now turning our attention to a transformative update to the surgical services center inside FHN Memorial Hospital. Our commitment to our patients and the community remains the same: We commit to the delivery of safe, quality care. This project will include advanced video laparoscopic equipment to deliver enhanced visualization of anatomy during surgery, new LED panel light fixtures, resurfaced walls with impact-resistant material, and seamless, welded flooring. The plan also includes automatic doors throughout to assist staff with patient transport.

Will you join us? Will you be a part of this campaign to transform the surgical services center? We have a number of naming opportunities for individuals or businesses who want to honor or memorialize a loved one with their name on the waiting room or one of the consultation rooms.

If you want to be a part of this transformational change by helping to bring this new technology to your local surgery suite, call the FHN Foundation today at 815-599-6900 or email me at [ttayer@fhn.org](mailto:ttayer@fhn.org). Thank you for supporting healthcare in your community!

## Geller Named to Top Infectious Disease Physician List



FHN infectious disease specialist Robert Geller, MD, MS, FACP, FIDSA, has been named a Castle Connolly Top Doctor in the field of infectious disease. Physicians named to the Top Doctors list are among the top 10–15 percent of doctors in the nation.

Dr. Geller was selected for the honor by Castle Connolly's physician-led research team. He is a Fellow of the Infectious Disease Society of America and of the American College of Physicians. Dr. Geller also is a member

of the European Society for Microbiology and Clinical Infectious Diseases. He holds faculty appointments at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the University of Illinois Chicago–Rockford School of Medicine.

After earning his medical degree from Cornell University Medical College in New York City, Dr. Geller served a residency in internal medicine and infectious disease at the North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, NY.

Physicians do not (in fact, cannot) pay to be included in the Castle Connolly list. The physicians included in America's Top Doctors® were nominated by their peers in an extensive survey process of thousands of American doctors each year. Each doctor's medical education, training, hospital appointments and more are screened by the Castle Connolly physician-led research team. The doctors who are among the very best in their specialties and in their communities are selected for inclusion.



FHN physicians are no strangers to the Top Doctors list. FHN's Top Doctor honorees include:

- Surgeon  
**Barry Barnes, MD, FACS**
- Surgeon  
**Rafael Castro, MD, FACS, WCC**
- Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Specialist  
**Timothy Jessen, MD**
- Family Medicine Physician  
**Michael McFadden, MD**
- Cardiologist  
**Madhu Malladi, MD, FACC, FASE**
- Gastroenterologist  
**Vivek Mehta, MD**
- Cardiologist  
**Bhadresh Patel, MD, FACC, FACP**
- Family Medicine Physician  
**Jeffrey Schleich, MD**
- Medical Oncologist  
**Arshad Shaikh, MD**



## Additional Providers, New Locations

### FHN Behavioral Health Services Expanding

As studies continue to discover more ways that our behavioral and emotional health affects our overall health, FHN is working to make our behavioral health services more accessible to a greater number of people.

“We now have three ‘prescribing’ providers – healthcare providers who can prescribe psychiatric medication and help patients manage their medications – and are in the

process of adding a fourth,” says FHN Family Counseling Center Executive Director Gabe Gonzalez, MSW. “That means we’ll have about 2,000 more appointments available to help patients this year.”

### Bringing Patients Closer Through Telemedicine

The Family Counseling Center isn’t limiting its expansion to people, though: Appointments with behavioral health providers and therapists are now available through telemedicine visits at the **FHN Family Healthcare Center – Stockton** and the **FHN Family Healthcare Center – Savanna**, with further expansions in the plans, too. It may not be convenient – or even



FHN Family Counseling Center staff from left to right: Parent Educators Rassny Homer and Julie Knauer, Prevention Specialist Dana Jarrard-Lameyer, and Executive Director Gabe Gonzalez.

possible – for some area residents to arrange transportation for an appointment in Freeport. Telemedicine behavioral health appointments provide a quiet, safe, confidential space for them to talk to a therapist or healthcare provider, closer to home.

“These appointments make it possible for a patient and his or her therapist to meet comfortably and as often as needed, without the added stress of arranging rides out of town,” Gonzalez says. He says the FHN Family Counseling Center will continue to invest in making behavioral health appointments available in the primary care environment at satellite FHN clinics this year, with a possibility of expanding to two more offices.

### Crisis Stabilization Center Update

The big news about behavioral health services at FHN, of course, is the progress on the Crisis Stabilization Center at FHN Family Counseling Center in Freeport, which will provide coordinated care for people experiencing a mental health crisis in a local, therapeutic, living room-type environment, instead of the hospital’s Emergency Department or local law enforcement facilities.

“We are finishing up the architectural planning, and will work with a local contractor to complete construction,” says Gonzalez. “We have a goal to have the Center open early this autumn.”

The Crisis Stabilization Center has been “fast-tracked” thanks to the generosity of local donors. Plans for the Center were announced at FHN’s Festival of Trees Gala in November 2019, and we’re excited at the prospect of having “doors open” within one year.

“Our FHN Foundation donors and the many people who gave to this project should be very proud,” says FHN Foundation Director Tonya Thayer. “Their dedication to helping friends and neighbors in need is a wonderful example of the generosity of northwest Illinois.”

# Surgical Suite Enhancements Will Give Patients Even Better Care

If you or a loved one are having surgery at FHN, you already know you are in good hands. But in 2020, some innovative improvements to our Surgical Center will give patients and providers an even better environment for all things related to surgery.

## Our 2020 upgrades include \$1.4 million in renovations, including:

- High-tech video equipment that uses military-grade technology to enhance laparoscopic procedures, with the ability to help distinguish critical anatomy with nine dedicated surgical camera specialty settings
- New flooring for enhanced cleaning, infection control, and transport
- Modern, high-tech surfaced walls and ceilings to simplify and enhance sterilization
- State-of-the-art lighting that improves visibility in challenging conditions



FHN Chief Operating Officer and Chief Nursing Officer Kathy Martinez is eager to see the construction begin. She says, "This project will enhance the functionality of all seven of FHN's operating rooms. Scheduled for this summer, construction will be completed in phases and should take about 16 weeks, with much of the work taking place at night and on weekends. We will continue to provide uninterrupted, safe, and compassionate services for our patients during this time."

Tonya Thayer, executive director of the FHN Foundation, adds that anyone interested in donating funds to the surgical suite campaign, including naming rights, can contact the Foundation offices at 1-815-599-6900 or go to [FHN.com/donate](http://FHN.com/donate).

## Welcome Back, Angela!

### Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Joins FHN Family Counseling Center



We are pleased to welcome board-certified psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner Angela Heuerman, DNP, PMHNP-BC to the FHN Family Counseling Center.

Angela actually began her nursing career in the surgical department at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport. She's a proud Pearl City High School and Highland Community College graduate.

She has earned a doctorate in nursing degree from Rush University College of Nursing in Chicago and a bachelor's degree in nursing at Saint Anthony College of Nursing in Rockford.

Angela has years of experience caring for patients at Rockford's Rosecrance Substance Abuse and Mental Health centers, where she served in nurse manager, psychiatric nurse, and detox/inpatient services capabilities.

For more information about care at FHN Family Counseling Center or to make an appointment, call 815-599-7300.

## Cardiology, Ob/Gyn Teams Grow

### Nurse Practitioner Joins Cardiology Team



Kristine Fosler, ACNP-BC, has joined FHN's cardiology team. She cares for patients at FHN Specialty Care – Stephenson Street and at FHN Memorial Hospital.

She earned a master's degree and her Acute Care Nurse Practitioner credentials at the University of Illinois at Chicago in Rockford. She holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Phoenix in Phoenix, Ariz., and an associate's degree in nursing from Highland Community College.

Kristine has cared for cardiac patients at SwedishAmerican Hospital in Rockford, the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital in Madison, Monroe Clinic and Hospital, and Beloit Memorial Hospital. She is a member of the clinical adjunct faculty at University of Wisconsin – Madison nursing and physician assistant programs.

For more information on cardiac care available at FHN or to make an appointment, call 815-599-7722.

### Dr. Tomur Added to FHN Ob/Gyn Team



Board-certified Ob/Gyn physician Rashmi Tomur, MD, has joined the hospitalist staff at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport.

Dr. Tomur holds a medical degree from AN Magadh Medical College in Gaya, India. She served her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Miami in Miami, Fla., where she also completed a research fellowship in reproductive endocrinology.

As FHN's first Ob/Gyn Hospitalist, Dr. Tomur cares for laboring mothers at the FHN Family Birthing Center in FHN Memorial Hospital. Once an Ob/Gyn patient leaves the hospital, Dr. Tomur coordinates and turns over their care to their regular FHN Ob/Gyn provider.

Dr. Tomur is fluent in English, Hindi, and Urdu, and speaks medical Spanish.

**THIS INFORMATION WAS CORRECT AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION;  
The COVID-19 outbreak is expected to cause additional cancellations and  
postponements. Please see FHN's online calendar at [www.fhn.org](http://www.fhn.org) for changes.**

**Welcome to FHN's Wellness Calendar** FHN is proud to offer many opportunities for you to learn about health and wellness— from informational programs and events to free health screenings all year long.

**Blood Pressure Screenings<sup>1</sup> Dates prior to May 10 are cancelled**



Location	Time	Date	Details
Gospel Outreach Food Pantry	9–11 a.m.	April 4   May 2   June 6	211 W. Spring Street, Freeport
Liberty Village Estates	10:30–11:30 a.m.	April 8   May 13   June 10	2140 Navajo Drive, Freeport
St. John's Lutheran Church	12:30–1:30 p.m.	April 8   May 13   June 10	625 Country Lane, Lena
Salvation Army	10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	April 9 <sup>2</sup>   May 14 <sup>2</sup>   June 11 <sup>2</sup> April 23   May 28	106 W. Exchange Street, Freeport
Golden Meals	10 a.m.–12:30 p.m. 10:30 a.m.–noon	April 10 <sup>2</sup>   May 8 <sup>2</sup>   June 12 <sup>2</sup> April 14   May 12   June 9	524 W. Stephenson Street, rear entrance, lower level, Freeport
New Jerusalem Church of God	11 a.m.–1 p.m.	April 16   May 21   June 18	4 E. Iroquois Street, Freeport
Joseph's Pantry Faith Center	4–6 p.m.	April 21   May 19   June 16	203 W. Pleasant Street, Freeport
Mt. Calvary Church of God in Christ	10 a.m.–noon	April 25   May 23   June 27	420 Challenge Street, Freeport
Pearl City Methodist Church	9–11 a.m.	April 25   May 9   June 11	411 S. Main Street, Pearl City
Pecatonica United Methodist Church Food Pantry	10 a.m.–noon	April 28   May 26   June 23	528 Washington Street, Pecatonica
Freeport Area Church Cooperative (FACC)	9–11:30 a.m.	April 29   May 27   June 24	514 S. Chicago Avenue, Freeport

<sup>1</sup> No cost or registration required; open to the public.

<sup>2</sup> Free blood pressure, glucose, and foot health screening. Please do not eat or drink anything other than water for 8 hours before the glucose screening test.

**Community Programs**



Program	Time	Date	Details
<b>Food Fight Against Cancer</b> Postponed until further notice	6–10 p.m.	April 3	Grand River Hall, 101 S. Liberty Avenue, Freeport Join us for a casual fun-filled evening of food and dancing in support of the Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital. Enjoy music by Distilled and appetizers courtesy of area restaurants and caterers. Tickets are \$35 each; \$65 a pair or 4 for \$130. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit <a href="http://www.fhn.org/foodfight">www.fhn.org/foodfight</a> or contact the FHN Foundation at 815-599-6441.
<b>Spring into Summer Family Health Fair</b> Postponed until further notice	9 a.m. – noon	April 25	King Community Campus, 511 S. Liberty Avenue, Freeport Healthy fun and good information for the whole family. Free blood pressure screenings offered by FHN Top 50.
<b>Striking Success for Children</b> Postponed until further notice	5 p.m.	May 7	4 Seasons Bowling Center, 1100 W. Galena Avenue, Freeport Bowling begins at 6 p.m. It's Imagine-a-bowl, a fun-filled evening of bowling, will benefit the youth served by the FHN Family Counseling Center. For more information or to register, visit <a href="http://www.fhn.org/StrikingSuccess">www.fhn.org/StrikingSuccess</a> or contact the FHN Foundation at 815-599-6441.
<b>Talk–TBA*</b>	1–2 p.m.	May 22	Prairie View Assisted Living, 500 E. McNair Road, Winnebago
<b>Talk: Shingles</b>	1:30–2:30 p.m.	June 9	Liberty Village Estates, 2140 Navajo Drive, Freeport

\*No cost or registration required; open to the public.

## Support Groups Dates prior to May 10 are cancelled



Group	Time	Date	Details
<b>Living Through Grief</b>	6 – 7:30 p.m.	<del>April 13</del>   <del>April 27</del> May 11   June 8   June 22	FHN Memorial Hospital Cafeteria Dining Rooms – Lower Level For more information, call 815-599-7240.
<b>The First Steps Grief Support Group</b>	10 – 11:30 a.m.	<del>April 21</del>   May 19   June 16	FHN Memorial Hospital cafeteria meeting rooms – Lower Level No charge; registration not required. For more information, call FHN Spiritual Care Coordinator Sean Huguenin at 815-599-6160
<b>Adult Diabetes Support Group*</b>	1 – 2 p.m.	<del>May 5</del> – Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label June 2 – Living with Diabetes – Self-Management	FHN Memorial Hospital Memorial Room – Lower Level For more information, call 815-599-6253.

\*No cost or registration required; open to the public.

## Training and Education Dates prior to May 10 are cancelled\*



Class	Time	Date	Details
<b>Breastfeeding Class</b>	7 – 9 p.m.	<del>April 7</del>   June 2	FHN Memorial Hospital, 1045 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport – Conference Dining Room Instructor is Annette Gielenfeldt. Registration is required; for more information or to register, call 815-599-6221.
<b>Prenatal Class</b>	6 – 8:30 p.m.	<del>April 14</del>   <del>April 21</del> May 12   May 19 June 10   June 16	FHN Memorial Hospital, 1045 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport – Conference Dining Room This class provides information about pregnancy, labor, delivery, Cesarean sections, and postpartum recovery. Registration is required; call 815-599-6221.
<b>Safe Sitter Essentials® with CPR</b>	9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	<del>May 2</del> June 15	FHN Memorial Hospital, 1045 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport Class designed to prepare students in grades 6 – 8 to be safe when they're home alone or babysitting. Full-day course is \$50, which includes the Safe Sitter Essentials Student Handbook and completion card and basic CPR skill practice. (Class does not qualify for CPR certification.) Financial assistance is available for eligible students; call 815-599-6707 for more information about eligibility. Register online at <a href="http://www.fhn.org/safesittercpr">www.fhn.org/safesittercpr</a> .
<b>Heartsaver® First Aid, CPR &amp; AED</b>	8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	May 16	FHN Memorial Hospital, lower level, 1045 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport Hands-on learning program to teach members how to perform high-quality CPR, first aid, and proper Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use in adults, children, and infants. The course is \$60, which includes student workbook and CPR certification card that is valid for 2 years. Registration is required; call 815-599-6707 or email <a href="mailto:coil@fhn.org">coil@fhn.org</a> for more information or to register.
<b>Heartsaver® Pediatric First Aid, CPR &amp; AED</b>	8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	June 13	FHN Memorial Hospital, 1045 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport Hands-on learning program to teach high-quality CPR, first aid, and proper Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use specific to infants and children. The course is \$60, which includes student workbook and CPR certification card that is valid for 2 years. Registration is required; call 815-599-6707 or email <a href="mailto:coil@fhn.org">coil@fhn.org</a> for more information or to register.

## Mobile Rx Pantry Program Pickup Days



Location	Time	Date	Details
Participants can pick up their supply of produce, milk, eggs, and frozen and canned meats from the Mobile Rx Pantry program, a partnership between FHN's Connect the D.O.T.S. (Doors of Team Support) and the Northern Illinois Food Bank. No screenings will be held, and social distancing will be practiced. Volunteers will prepare baskets and deliver directly to participant vehicle trunks. No vouchers needed. For more information, call 815-599-6317.			
<b>Fire Station #1</b>	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	April 15   April 29	904 S. Park Boulevard, Freeport
<b>St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church</b>	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	May 13   June 3	607 E. Stephenson Street, Freeport
<b>Lincoln Mall</b>	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	June 17	1247 W. Galena Avenue, Freeport

# Join the FHN Team as a Certified Medical Assistant

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If you've visited FHN Memorial Hospital or one of our 13 family healthcare centers recently, you likely came in contact with one of our many friendly and professional certified medical assistants (CMAs).



They are responsible for performing physician and provider support services and other skilled tasks that help ensure that patient care at FHN runs smoothly. Certified medical assistants work in clerical, administrative, or clinical capacities, and may perform more specialized tasks depending upon their department or area.

"We currently employ 44 talented and committed CMAs," says FHN Talent Acquisition Specialist Carol Boeke, RN. "They are responsible for a wide array of responsibilities that are essential to delivering high-quality patient care at FHN. We are committed to providing them with an outstanding place to work, ongoing opportunities, and the chance to build a career with excellent people with a shared commitment to compassion and quality."

Erin Lamm has been a Certified Medical Assistant at FHN for 13 years. She enjoys working directly with patients and the flexibility provided as a part of FHN's work/life staff support. "A few years ago I became a first-time mother, and with the support of my co-workers and administrators, I am able to fulfill all of my mom duties with my daughter," Erin says.

Whether you are new to the field or a seasoned CMA, and you share our commitment to providing personal and professional healthcare (or know someone who might), check out the career opportunities available at FHN. Our CMA positions offer a \$2,500 sign-on award for a three-year commitment.

## **Current Certified Medical Assistant Opportunities at FHN**

- Certified Medical Assistant – Burchard Hills Family Practice, Full-Time, Freeport, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Certified Medical Assistant – Highland View Drive, Full-Time, Freeport, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Certified Medical Assistant – Ob/Gyn, Flexible Full-Time, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. (may require 7 a.m. starts and 6 p.m. evenings)
- Certified Medical Assistant – Float Pool – Full-Time, Freeport, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Certified Medical Assistant – Pediatrics – Full-Time, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For more information about career opportunities at FHN, visit [www.fhn.org/careers](http://www.fhn.org/careers) or call us toll-free at 1-877-6000-FHN.



*to our team of talented staff  
committed to delivering healthcare excellence  
in our community*

## Insight



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