COVID-19 pandemic brings out the very best in the Palomar Health team and our community.
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Purpose is the biannual magazine of Palomar Health Foundation, 960 Canterbury Place, Suite 200, Escondido, CA 92025. Please contact the Foundation office at 760.739.2787 for information about supporting Palomar Health or visit our website at www.palomarhealthfoundation.org.

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Message from the President & CEO
Greetings from Palomar Health!

We’re so delighted to have the chance to connect with you in this first issue of our new “Purpose” magazine. As you’ll discover, your contributions have made a very real impact on the quality care we deliver to our community. Let me say on behalf of our entire team — thank you for being a vital part of the work we do.

As you know, COVID-19 has been the single biggest healthcare issue of our time. It has challenged and changed all of us: our families, our neighborhoods, and this healthcare system. Like other providers around the country, Palomar Health has marshaled an extensive response to a virus that was only discovered eight months ago. It has been an incredible undertaking, and our success is due to the professionalism and dedication of our doctors, nurses and frontline staff.

This effort has come at a significant financial cost which will impact Palomar Health’s future and some of our plans for expansion. However, the experience has given us a chance to sharpen our focus and prioritize the programs that are most critical to your health and safety. Moving ahead, we will continue investing in projects and initiatives that have the greatest impact on our community, including an expansion of our oncology services. We’re also committed to upgrading our skilled nursing facility, which we recently renamed The Villas at Poway, and working to address the county’s behavioral health challenges by opening a Crisis Stabilization Unit. Potential future plans include a behavioral health hospital.

What we have learned is that we must continue adapting and evolving. We must think creatively about how to provide better care and new ways to keep doctors and patients in touch with telehealth. This year we’re also building even stronger affiliations with Graybill Medical Group and Arch Health Medical Group to give our patients a higher level of coordinated care. We’ll continue to explore any partnership or innovation that can improve health outcomes in our district.

Through it all, one thing remains constant and that is our commitment to serve our community and provide you with facilities that are safe and ready when you need them. Our team members have gone to great lengths to protect our hospitals and this community from the pandemic. Their incredible energy and innovation are what will see us through this recovery and get our community on track to a successful future.

Your support over these past months has been truly meaningful to all of us at Palomar Health. I’m confident that together we will defeat the challenge of coronavirus and emerge as a smarter, safer and more responsive healthcare system. We’re grateful for the chance to continue partnering with you in our mission to heal, comfort and promote health in the community we serve.

Sincerely,

Diane Hansen
President and CEO, Palomar Health

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Foundation News

Foundation Earns Guidestar 2020 Gold Seal of Transparency

Palomar Health Foundation has been awarded the 2020 Gold Seal of Transparency from GuideStar, a research and reporting site that maintains a database of more than 2.5 million non-profits.

The seal is awarded to foundations like ours that voluntarily provide data on finances, oversight/governance and how we make use of donor gifts. By adding information about our goals, strategies, capabilities, achievements and progress indicators, we are highlighting the difference we help to make.

We’re proud to have received this award for two years in a row for our commitment to transparency! To see our GuideStar profile, visit: https://www.guidestar.org/profile/93-3573154

Palomar Health Receives Crucial Donation of Mobile Disaster Command Center

Ready America, a Vista-based company that sells disaster preparedness supplies, has given Palomar Health a mobile command center trailer. The 48-foot trailer is currently being used as a COVID-19 screening area at Palomar Medical Center Poway. In the future, the trailer can help with Emergency Department surges or can be towed to other locations for health clinics and screenings.

Palomar Health Foundation Unveils Board of Directors’ 2021 Officers

A new slate of officers has been chosen to lead Palomar Health Foundation’s Board of Directors for the 2021 fiscal year, which began July 1, 2020. Kirk Effinger has been elected as the new chair of Palomar Health Foundation’s Board of Directors. Kirk, a Murrieta-based realtor, has served on the board since 2016, most recently as Vice-Chair.

Also selected for officer positions for the 2021 fiscal year are Dr. Osman Khawar of Carlsbad, Vice-Chair, and Dr. Jaime Rivas of Escondido, Secretary.

The Foundation extends its sincere gratitude to Harvey Hershkowitz for leading the board over the past several years and looks forward to his continued efforts as he serves on the board as Immediate Past Chair. The Foundation is also grateful to Fred Nasseri, who is departing the Board after nine years of dedicated service.

Palomar Health Foundation leaders gathered to thank Fred Nasseri for his contributions on the board. L-R: Wayne Herron, Harvey Hershkowitz, Fred Nasseri and Kirk Effinger.

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It’s Full Speed Ahead for Palomar Health’s Ambulance Restoration

Palomar Health’s antique World War II ambulance was in dire need of some TLC when Arie de Jong, a longtime friend of the Foundation, came to the rescue. He is overseeing the mechanical repairs of the 1943 Dodge WC-54 ambulance that Palomar Health acquired more than a decade ago. Once it’s in tip-top shape, the ambulance will be used to carry the Palomar Health name into the community at public events.

The story actually began in 2007, when Palomar Health mechanic Roger Tapia found the antique ambulance and thought it would be a great project for the guys in the shop that would help promote Palomar Health.

Tapia and his colleague Rick Johnson were soon on the road to Utah to close the deal and tow the ambulance back to Palomar Health. Initially, the engine ran perfectly, but soon after arriving at its new home, it blew up in a cloud of smoke.

Now, after years in disrepair, the ambulance is set to undergo a complete restoration, fulfilling the dream that Roger had years ago.

Thanks in large part to de Jong, the ambulance will soon be used to represent Palomar Health at community events.

New Garden Will be a Source of Healing and Comfort for Poway Patients and Staff

Palomar Medical Center Poway looks more beautiful these days thanks to a special gift to Palomar Health Foundation. The Healing and Comfort Garden was installed at the hospital entrance this spring, a project fully funded by friends of the Foundation.

You Can Help Palomar Health Foundation With Your Amazon Purchases

Did you know you can support Palomar Health Foundation each time you shop at Amazon?

Shop at smile.amazon.com and 0.5% of your eligible purchase total will be donated to the Foundation. Products and prices are exactly the same as traditional Amazon, and so is your shopping cart, your wish lists and other account settings. Your shopping experience remains the same, but now you’re helping Palomar Health meet its funding priorities. If you use the Amazon mobile app, just open it and go to Settings in the main menu. You’ll find easy Amazon Smile instructions there.
Message from the VP of Philanthropy & Chief Philanthropy Officer

I don’t think there’s ever been a time when health has been such a part of the daily conversation. With COVID-19 dominating headlines for months now, we’ve all had to rethink and in many ways reinvent all kinds of aspects of our daily life: how we visit with family members and friends, how we work and shop, whether we extend a handshake or a hug.

As a supporter of Palomar Health, I know that taking care of yourself and loved ones is an important part of your life. Personally, I rest easier having seen how this healthcare system, with great help from the community, has responded to the challenge. I’ve watched firsthand how our dedicated team members stepped up for their patients and for each other. This includes brave doctors and nurses as well as hundreds of other employees who often work behind the scenes with little fanfare, from the staff who keep our facilities clean to supply chain professionals who guided us through a global shortage of personal protective equipment. And I’m heartened to see the hundreds of donors just like you who joined in to support this work.

I’m sure your life has changed in many ways because of COVID-19, just as mine has. But now more than ever, I take pride in knowing I’m part of an organization and a community that cares for each other and will stand strong in times of crisis. I hope this magazine gives you a chance to learn more about how we are doing that and making a real difference. Together, we provided more than $3.6 million in direct support to Palomar Health in the 2020 fiscal year.

Your friendship is very meaningful — and especially so at times like this. So please don’t hesitate to reach out and let us know what’s on your mind. At Palomar Health, we’re here for you in partnership and in health, and we hope to hear from you soon.

Kind regards,

Wayne Herron
Vice President of Philanthropy and Chief Philanthropy Officer
COVID-19 Response

Rising to Meet the Moment

On December 31, 2019, Chinese authorities reported dozens of cases of an unknown pneumonia originating in the city of Wuhan. Within days, doctors and researchers declared it a novel, or new, coronavirus, which has now become known as COVID-19. This small outbreak seemed worlds away, but the virus was quietly and quickly branching out from its very first hosts. Within a month, cases were reported in Washington state and then California. The world was becoming a lot smaller. By February 10, San Diego County confirmed its first case of COVID-19. The world had just arrived in our backyard.

As the pandemic began, nobody knew how the story would unfold. It is a story as much about the resilience of people as it is about a life-threatening virus. It is the story of healthcare professionals who put their lives on the line to keep their community healthy. And it is the story of a community that rallied together to support these healthcare professionals and express gratitude for the important work they do.

Continued on page 7
Preparing for the Surge

Palomar Health employees had the virus on their radar at the start of 2020 as the virus became an international event. Our healthcare professionals understood the enormity of the situation and how to prepare for it. Frontline workers made sure they were ready to go when local patients began showing up for testing and treatment.

“ER physicians and nurses are always thinking about what is coming next,” said Brian Grennan, Emergency Department Manager at Palomar Medical Center Escondido. “As we heard the news of this new virus, we began thinking of the possibilities. Will the virus leave Wuhan? What if it hits Hong Kong?” What happens next? Grennan and his ER colleagues realized something big was about to happen and they needed to prepare.

Alarm bells also sounded for Palomar Health’s Infection Prevention Department.

One of the department’s roles is to identify potential infectious disease outbreaks both nationally and internationally. In early January they realized there was a very real possibility of COVID-19 spreading beyond Asia. The team met regularly with Dr. Sandeep Soni, Medical Director of Infectious Diseases, and other medical staff to closely monitor the rapidly developing situation.

Valerie Martinez, Senior Director of Quality, Patient Safety and Infection Prevention, kept a cautious eye on dwindling supplies of personal protective equipment. “Our first concern was if we had enough of the necessary PPE for our staff’s safety, should the virus hit our community,” she said.

While all hospitals around the country were working frantically to source PPE for their staff and patients, several things were working in Palomar Health’s favor.

“What saved us was that we had a really good safety stock of N95 masks and the purchasing team was able to source both isolation gowns and surgical masks from other suppliers,” Paul Sas, VP of Supply Chain, Purchasing and Construction Management, said.

“We were able to pull from the emergency supply without having to spend the crazy amounts they were charging for N95 masks. Masks that normally sold for 50 cents to $1 each were now being sold for as much as $20 each. The price gouging that has been going on is painful,” Sas explained.

Staying on top of rules and recommendations from multiple state and federal agencies posed another constant challenge. Martinez kept coming back to a question she confronted every day: “How are we getting these...
and is not recirculated to other parts of contaminated air leaves the building outside the room, ensuring that the room lower than the air pressure rooms keep the air pressure inside or negative pressure rooms. These rooms, called airborne isolation rooms accomplished through special hospital Isolating infected patients is critical physical distancing.

Reimagining Healthcare Delivery

Treating patients with airborne infectious diseases calls for special instructions and specialized facilities. The first order of business was to develop a process for screening potentially infectious patients before they entered the building.

“Once an infectious patient enters the building, the risk of transmission to others is higher,” Martinez said. “So we knew we had to treat this as an emergency situation.”

Palomar Health knew from previous flu outbreaks that surge tents were an effective way of triaging patients outside the hospital. Building on this past experience, team members modified the plans to include a new precaution against COVID-19: physical distancing.

Isolating infected patients is critical to minimizing transmission. This is accomplished through special hospital rooms, called airborne isolation rooms or negative pressure rooms. These rooms keep the air pressure inside the room lower than the air pressure outside the room, ensuring that contaminated air leaves the building and is not recirculated to other parts of the hospital.

Only a small percentage of all hospital rooms in the U.S. are outfitted as negative pressure rooms. Prior to the pandemic, Palomar Medical Center Escondido had two negative pressure rooms on each floor and one in the ER, while Palomar Medical Center Poway had five rooms. In March, a decision was made to convert regular patient rooms into negative pressure rooms to prepare for the potential influx of COVID-19 patients.

Because both hospitals have different construction and different heating, ventilation, cooling and air conditioning systems, they both required vastly different solutions. Dan Farrow, Senior Director of Facility Operations, and his team ably handled the challenge, adding 48 additional negative pressure rooms at PMC Escondido and 15 additional rooms at PMC Poway.

The same team was tasked with another job — converting the vacant 10th and 11th floors of PMC Escondido into a 202-bed Federal Medical Station (FMS). This “hospital within a hospital” was built at the request of San Diego County to assist with the COVID-19 response efforts by increasing bed capacity.

Despite the complexities the job entailed, including installing a completely new and separate HVAC system, Farrow’s team managed to complete the entire project in just 12 days. “It gives you a sense of pride to see your team put together creative solutions to a really tough problem,” Farrow said. “I am always amazed at the creativity of the staff.”

What were your first big concerns about this virus? What was keeping you up at night?

Initially the biggest thing was how it spreads. Was it going to be an airborne infection? We haven’t seen something with such rapid spread before, at least in the US. From what we saw in China, the virus seemed to not only spread rapidly but also had high mortality and morbidity rates.

Based on what we knew, our goal was to take the highest level of precaution — what we call airborne and contact precaution — using a face mask, goggles or face shield. The next question was, ‘Do we have enough rooms to accommodate the surge of patients?’ We told the executive team we needed to create a lot more negative pressure rooms because we are not going to have the capacity if it spreads.

Before we got any cases, we were creating new negative pressure rooms and making sure our supply chain was on top of personal protective equipment and how we source it. That was vital. Every part of the process became a vital part.

What have we learned as a healthcare system from this experience?

Collaboration and transparency are key. We have about 4,000 employees and we need to get information to them as soon as possible. It keeps people’s panic levels low so they feel comfortable doing their jobs. One of the biggest things for me is letting them know I am there right with them working on the front lines. So is my wife, who is a critical care doctor. We are taking the same risks that we’re publicly telling our employees to take.

What gives you cause for optimism?

Overall, I’m pleased that nobody has said no to us in infection control. We were very aggressive to start airborne precautions and keep it going. Not many hospitals are doing that. I think it’s the right thing to do until the patient improves.

I’m optimistic in terms of our staff being comfortable with the process of going into rooms. Staff safety is our number one priority. From that aspect, our nurses have been doing a phenomenal job.

Q&A with Sandeep Soni, MD

Medical Director of Infectious Diseases

Continued on page 9
The FMS is funded by the County and equipped with supplies from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Its purpose is to handle patient overflow if the region’s hospitals reach 80 percent occupancy due to a sudden surge. The hospitals have remained under capacity so far, not rising above 55 percent, and the medical station remains ready as an emergency resource.

Committed to Compassion
Palomar Health’s facilities have so far been spared the surge of COVID-19 patients seen in other parts of the state. They have cared for many of these patients, though — some of whom are very ill.

Caring for these patients is hard work. Frontline healthcare workers also have to deal with the fear of bringing the virus home to their family, on top of managing childcare and schooling concerns and supporting loved ones who are impacted by the economic crisis.

Still, they come to work each day to take care of their community. They comfort sick, scared and lonely patients as best they can, keeping in mind that most won’t get to have visitors. No family. No friends. The caregivers fill the void by providing support, which can exact a heavy emotional toll. And these healthcare heroes get up the next morning and do it all over again.

The emergency room is often the first stop for COVID-19 patients. They are the frontline of the frontline, “The ER staff has performed exceptionally well,” Grennan said. “They have worked many days under very difficult circumstances, but they have knocked it out of the ballpark. They are an extraordinary team of people because their job requires a tremendous commitment to providing the very best care while serving an unlimited number of patients.”

Each COVID-19 patient who recovers is a symbol of hope and when they go home from a Palomar Health hospital it’s cause for celebration. With each patient discharge, a “Code Rocky” is called overhead to summon available staff to the lobby for a heartfelt send-off, complete with cheers and a round of applause. This celebration is an acknowledgment of the strength and fighting spirit of the patient. It is also a tip of the hat to the dedication and exceptional work of the care team.

Mask Making: A Labor of Love

On March 20, a Palomar Health volunteer contacted Margaret Mertens, Director of Volunteer Development and Spiritual Care with a simple request, “Does your hospital need masks? I want to make masks.” Within hours of the volunteer’s email, a mask taskforce was in place.

The call for masks and the instructions to make one were posted on Palomar Health’s website, which spread to social media. Groups of people began sewing masks for Palomar Health in earnest.

People were excited. “I started receiving calls from all over asking, ‘Hey, how can I help? I want to make masks,’” recalled Mertens. “Other area hospitals were not accepting masks, so Palomar Health became the place to call. The community outreach was just amazing.”

The pandemic was hitting New York hard and Palomar Health doctors were concerned about a possible shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE). Dr. Soni asked Mertens if her volunteers could make 5,000 masks in the next 12 days. “I sent out a call to action,” said Mertens. “We did it. We had 10,000 masks in a week. They just kept coming in.”

Mertens was inundated by calls from the community, asking how they could help. “When I think about it, it was amazing,” she marveled.

All told, Mertens estimates at least 30,000 masks were made. She believes the mask initiative was so successful because the community wanted to do something to help the Palomar Health staff. “They were at home, they had the time, the materials,” according to Mertens. “And we gave them what we needed. We gave them information so they could feel like they were a part of Palomar Health.”

As PPE became more readily available, staff were given masks to take home to keep themselves and their family members safe. Masks were also given to local community organizations.

Employees were touched by the community’s gesture. “The staff just love how beautiful the masks are,” Mertens remarked. “A lot of time and thought went into them. They were so lovingly made. These masks made a big difference for our staff and let them know the community was behind them.”
High School Robotics Team Designs, Donates Face Shields

A local high school robotics team used their competition robot to deliver 100 face shields they custom designed and 3D printed to staff at Palomar Medical Center Escondido. The high school students are members of Singularity, a San Diego-based robotics team that competes in the FIRST Tech Challenge Competition.

The high school students said they wanted to do something to contribute to hospital workers’ call for more face shields. They raised more than $5,900 through GoFundMe to pay for materials, then worked with a local company to create the face shields for hospitals in the US and Mexico.

The Circle of Gratitude

The outpouring of support from local businesses and community members has been nothing short of extraordinary. Donations of meals, PPE, homemade masks, notes of thanks from community members and other acts of appreciation have bolstered the Palomar Heath team during these long days.

Grennan saw how much these acts of kindness meant to the staff. “It is so touching and so moving,” he said. “We were overwhelmed by their kindness and it was quite lovely. It was joyous. And it happened again and again and again and again.”

Those who have had a chance to see both sides — the dedicated healthcare staff and a grateful community — say that’s part of the solution to a challenge like this.

“We do our best work when we work together,” Sheila Brown, Palomar Health’s Chief Operating Officer, said. “That’s what we’re doing at Palomar Health and that’s how we’re going to get through this.”
Thank You for Your Support!
Palomar Health Foundation has received an outpouring of donations including financial support for our COVID-19 response. Between February 2020 and June 2020, we received $569,439 in cash donations. In addition, the Board of Directors moved to transfer $500,000 in unrestricted funds to ensure Palomar Health has the resources to perform at its highest level.

Palomar Health donors can be proud of the way they stepped up to face the biggest public health crisis of our generation.

### Critical COVID-19 Care Items and Supplies Purchased Through Donor Support

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<th>Item</th>
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<th>Cost</th>
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<tr>
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<td>$54,279</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laptop computers (for staff to work remotely)</td>
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32 minutes without a heartbeat.

When Robert Coucher packed his bags for a yacht trip on San Diego Bay, he never guessed it would end like that. A weekend on the water with his wife, Gigi, was much-needed time away from his career in the fast-paced world of tech sales. But then, a strange sensation struck.

“I was unloading the car when I began to feel out of breath. I was puzzled for a moment but didn’t really give it a lot of thought,” Robert recalled. “Within minutes, I began to feel a strong burning pain in my left arm, neck and jaw. This is when I realized I was having a heart attack.”

He and Gigi instinctively dialed 911; frantic seconds passed until the ambulance arrived and rushed them to Palomar Medical Center Poway. Robert was in good shape, of healthy weight, and a non-smoker. How could he have known that he had a 99 percent blockage in his coronary artery? But en route to the hospital, his heart came to a sudden, dramatic stop.

At the emergency room, Dr. Bret Ginther and Dr. Allan Hansen were on duty and recognized the urgency of the situation. Their team wasted no time, administering CPR for a full half-hour to keep him alive. Robert described the frightening moment when doctors told Gigi he might not make it.

“At 30 minutes, Dr. Ginther took her aside and said that they should probably call it. Even if I did survive, I would probably have brain damage,” he said. “She told them to keep working. And two minutes later, after Dr. Hansen suggested that they administer a clot buster, my heart started to beat again.”

Robert made a successful recovery with no lasting brain damage or heart damage. He’s become the first Palomar Health patient to recognize his “Guardian Angels.” This new program — inspired by the letters, calls and emails that Palomar Health receives every day from grateful patients — gives people like Robert the chance to honor a doctor, nurse or any employee who provided exceptional care.

By making a donation in honor of their Guardian Angel, patients are not only extending gratitude to someone who made a difference, whether through a life-saving medical decision or by sharing a smile or gesture that brightened up a difficult day. Their gifts to Palomar Health Foundation also help to improve healthcare for the entire community, as donations are directly used to upgrade technology and facilities that benefit others.

For Robert Coucher, his expression of gratitude to the medical staff wasn’t a hard decision to make.

“Literally, the only reason I am alive is because I went to Palomar Health,” Robert said.

And now, thanks to his Guardian Angel gift, others can hope for the same bright future.

If you would like information on how you can honor your Guardian Angels, please call 760.739.2787 or visit our website: www.palomarhealthfoundation.org
More than 500 people joined Palomar Health Foundation’s “Rhythms of the Night” Gala on October 26, 2019 at the Park Hyatt Aviara Resort. The spectacular evening, which transported guests back to old Havana, raised $526,308 for the Forensic Health Services program and the Emergency Department at Palomar Medical Center Poway. This event was a reboot of Palomar Health’s Miracles in Motion gala after a seven-year hiatus.

Palomar Health Foundation is grateful for our generous supporters and sponsors, who were instrumental in making the evening so successful and so memorable.

The 2020 Miracles in Motion Gala was canceled due to public health concerns related to COVID-19. Save the date, however, for our 2021 gala: Saturday, October 2 at Rancho Bernardo Inn.
Palomar Health Foundation has initiated a fundraising campaign to meet the growing healthcare needs of our community. Going forward, Palomar Health must address two key needs: a place for physicians to rest while working shifts that can stretch to nearly 24 hours; and a space for medical staff and employees to gather face-to-face, post-pandemic, where they can collaborate on the operation of the hospital and patient care.

Palomar Medical Center Escondido’s Physician and Conference Center of the Future is the remedy to this critical need. The new 4,000 square foot structure will ensure that patients are treated by well-rested physicians who are ready to carry out their mission, no matter the hour. It also will serve as a central forum for the Palomar Health team to collaborate with each other and the wider community.

A Space for Collaboration
The forthcoming Physician and Conference Center of the Future will enable entire service lines to gather for face-to-face meetings. All surgeons, for example, or all ICU nurses can come together in one place for a dialogue about new ideas, data and solutions. The center will support meetings and events of up to 200 people.

This space will also support the relationships Palomar Health has forged with trusted outside experts such as UCSD and Mayo Clinic, providing a large classroom-style environment for continuing education.

A Space for Recharging
Palomar Health’s medical staff — more than 600 physicians in dozens of specialties — face higher patient volumes with increasing medical complexities in our aging patient population. This adds up to larger caseloads, longer hours in the hospital and more unpredictable schedules. At any given time, 35 doctors are on call, but Palomar Medical Center Escondido has fewer than 10 sleep rooms. Increasingly, Palomar Health doctors are getting creative in finding their own makeshift sleep spaces. Those wanting to shower in between surgeries or before heading home at the end of a 20-hour shift have few places to do so; some find themselves looking for an empty patient room or heading downstairs to the morgue to shower. With the addition of physician on-call rooms, our physicians will have adequate, comfortable space to rest while on call to support their wellbeing and ensure the best possible patient outcomes.

Your Support Matters
Palomar Health Foundation is seeking to raise $3.5 million to fund the construction of the new Physician and Conference Center of the Future. We are asking for your help to bring this crucial project to fruition.

We offer a variety of options for you to help us realize our goal. Naming opportunities are available to lead donors. Your gift will give physicians a place to rest and recharge so they perform under optimal conditions. In addition, by creating a new space to exchange ideas and keep abreast of the latest medical advancements, we can keep Palomar Health at the forefront of patient care.

For more information on how you can support the Physician and Conference Center of the Future at Palomar Health, please call Palomar Health Foundation at 760.739.2787 or visit www.palomarhealthfoundation.org.
Your generosity has helped propel Palomar Health Foundation to new heights in the past year. In fact, the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2020 was our most successful in five years.

In addition to funding five ultrasound echocardiogram systems valued at nearly $900,000 and major support for Palomar Health’s COVID-19 response, your gifts provided a glidescope and examination lights for Palomar Medical Center Poway, chemo certification for nurses, a mobile X-ray system, music therapy programs at The Villas at Poway and much more.

Your support is a sign of confidence in this healthcare system and the dedicated men and women who come to work every day with your best health in mind. We are grateful to each donor and volunteer who has contributed to the mission of Palomar Health: to heal, comfort and promote health in the communities we serve. The Foundation is committed to applying your gift with responsibility and respect towards the technology, programs and capital projects that have the greatest impact.
Cardiology Initiative Brings Latest Imaging Technology to Palomar Health Patients

With your help, the Foundation has fully funded the purchase of five new echocardiogram ultrasound systems for patients at Palomar Medical Center Escondido and Palomar Medical Center Poway. We have provided $887,305 in funding for this cutting-edge technology.

An echocardiogram uses ultrasound to create a detailed moving image of the heart. The test can identify many kinds of heart disease. With the new equipment, doctors can see even greater detail than older machines, providing a more accurate diagnosis.

"Access to the latest technology made possible by the generous support of our donors has empowered me to provide higher and better quality care to members of our community," said Hamed Bayat, MD, Medical Director, Cardiovascular Services.

Because of you, as many as 50 Palomar Health patients per week can be prevented from having to undergo invasive exploratory surgery.
Impact Report

Gift Enables Rehab Center Expansion

Fully Equipped Center Will Help More Domestic Violence Survivors

Thanks to the generosity of a grateful couple who wanted to honor Palomar Health’s caregivers, the Outpatient Rehab Center at Palomar Medical Center Poway has expanded and is providing crucial services to more patients, including survivors of domestic violence. The anonymous gift was very personal for the couple since the husband had been a patient of Palomar Health’s rehab services after suffering a major medical emergency. He and his wife were so grateful for the care and attention they received from the Rehab team that they made a six-figure gift to help Palomar Health fully equip the Poway facility.

“It is only with critical gifts like this, provided by generous donors, that we are able to provide state-of-the-art rehabilitation for our community throughout the entire continuum of care,” said Virginia Barragan, Vice President of Clinical Support Services and Continuum Care.

Newly opened in April, the 6,500 square-foot Outpatient Rehab Center boasts more than 50 new pieces of equipment in its gym. Rehab centers are thought of as a place for patients recovering from joint replacements, strokes or other neurological injuries. Not only is the couple’s generous gift impacting these types of recoveries, but the equipment is also helping survivors of domestic violence who have suffered traumatic brain injuries, balance problems, loss of coordination or speech or swallowing deficits. One special tool — a software program called VisiPitch — helps strangulation survivors with voice and speech resonance disorders due to vocal cord damage.

As the only provider of forensic medical exams for domestic violence survivors in San Diego County, Palomar Health's Forensics team recognized that survivors were being underserved for the life-altering injuries resulting from strangulation and head trauma. The team partnered with Palomar Health Outpatient Rehabilitation Services to develop a program modeled after the prestigious Barrow Neurological Institute’s Domestic Violence Traumatic Brain Injury Program.

Palomar Health's Outpatient Rehab Centers at Poway and San Marcos count on a dedicated small team of physical, occupational and speech therapists to provide crucial services to survivors of domestic violence.

Bill Levanduski, Director of Rehab Services, said, “Victims of domestic violence, and in particular those victims of strangulation, often have a unique set of physical, cognitive and emotional issues related to their injuries. Key members of the Rehab team have received advanced education with this patient population at the world-renowned Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention. This training has been an essential tool in the understanding of effective treatment strategies for these patients.”

Therapists received training to approach and treat survivors with sensitivity to their trauma and history; they are also trained to understand the anatomy and medical aspects of survivors. Now, with this special gift from a caring couple, the team will continue providing compassionate and comprehensive rehab services that help survivors recover from trauma and thrive.
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There are no adequate words to convey the depth of our gratitude for our nurses, doctors, and the entire frontline team at Palomar Health.

We are in awe of your commitment, inspired by your dedication, and touched by your compassion.

We couldn’t be more proud or more grateful.

Thank you!