Partners for Good

Blount Memorial works with the communities we serve to build a healthy Blount County.

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Partners for Good

Blount Memorial’s positive impact extends far beyond the walls of the hospital.

Since 1947, Blount Memorial has been committed to helping our neighbors reach their highest potential for health and wellness. We achieve this goal by making sound operational decisions, by investing in the latest technologies, by recruiting talented physicians and by continually growing to meet the unique needs of the communities we serve. Hear from our hospital CEO Don Heinemann and board of directors president Robert Redwine about 2017 activities that support our mission.

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO • DON HEINEMANN

In 2017, we had the great fortune of celebrating the 70th anniversary of Blount Memorial Hospital. This milestone allowed us to celebrate so many stories that help to make up our history. We were honored to hear from a then-ALCOA, Inc. retiree who donated a day’s pay to help build our hospital about his support for something he never could have imagined, and we enjoyed sharing the story of one of our physicians who chose to come back “home” to practice medicine and raise her family after having the opportunity to practice anywhere in the world, among others.

These recollections are more than just stories, though, and there are thousands of them that easily could be shared by our friends and neighbors. And while each story is special and has its own unique details, when you really listen to them, you find that you hear so much more—you easily find within them exactly what makes our community—and our hospital—so special.

You find examples of people working together for the betterment of their friends and neighbors. You understand why generations of families choose to work at Blount Memorial. You can feel the compassion that clinicians have for their patients. You can understand the impact that our hospital has on this community every day. You can see the lives that are being saved every day.

These stories are what we hope to build on in the next 70 years, as we’re looking forward to being a strong part of the future of health care. We don’t plan on going anywhere. From the first mention of a hospital being built back in the early 1940s until now, our community has faced challenges and scrutiny in our community. As you can imagine, being a more than 30-year employee of Blount Memorial and CEO for the last eight years, I am passionate about the role Blount Memorial plays in our community, and I’m very proud of our story—and the stories we’ll continue to write in the next 70 years.

$37.3 million
The amount of charity and uncompensated care provided by Blount Memorial in 2016-17

I want our community to know that Blount Memorial Hospital is doing well, and that we’re staying busy. In fact, this last year we recorded the second-highest number of outpatient visits in the state of Tennessee, ranking only behind Vanderbilt. Since 2012, we have nearly doubled the number of outpatient visits that we provide annually, hitting more than 300,000 visits.

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Want to partner for good?

Apply to become a Blount Memorial volunteer.
The Blount Memorial Auxiliary is eager to welcome caring adults and teens who want to make a positive difference by volunteering. There are multiple ways to volunteer, such as staffing information desks, waiting areas and the Auxiliary Gift Shop; delivering flowers and reading materials to patient rooms; and assisting patients and visitors in the emergency department waiting area.

For more information or to apply, stop by Blount Memorial volunteer services located on the hospital’s service level, Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., or call 865-977-5609.

Don Heinemann
Chief Executive Officer
As the board of directors president of Blount Memorial Hospital, I want to share with you how impressed I am with our hospital, its leaders, and its physicians and employees. Each day, our people are working tirelessly to ensure that we’re providing the best health care in our region and growing to meet and plan for our community’s health needs.

I have to start out by thanking my fellow board of directors members for the work they put in every month for the betterment of health care in our community. They receive no compensation for their time, and they are very generous with it. There are a number of talented individuals who contribute to the operation of our independently run Blount Memorial Hospital Inc., which is a not-for-profit corporation operated on behalf of Blount County.

In 2017, we recognized one of our members—Jim Fiegle—who was “retiring” from his 28-year volunteer “career” on the board. Jim, who had already retired from his post at Alcoa Tenn Federal Credit Union, made a number of contributions to our group, chairing the nominating and finance committees, but also showing his support for our employees and physicians at hospital-sponsored events recognizing dedicated service and excellence. In early 2018, we had the opportunity to fill his vacated position with DENSO Manufacturing Tennessee’s Scott Powell. You can see photos of all our board members on page 8.

Many outside of the hospital don’t know that each month, our board of directors has the opportunity to tour an area of the hospital, meet a new physician or learn about a clinical specialty as part of its education session. I can’t even begin to explain how impressed I am, along with my fellow board members, with the caliber professionals we have at Blount Memorial.

When you look at the physicians our executive staff has recruited, you’ll see that they have skill sets that would be sought after by any large metropolitan health system in the country. The education and training that these physicians have also are from the nation’s leading medical schools and residency and internship programs.

Our medical staff has grown tremendously in the last eight years, alone, and industry data shows that for every new physician who joins the team, 17 new jobs are created. Our CEO Don Heinemann and his leadership team have added service lines of neurosurgery, interventional pulmonology, interventional pain medicine and reconstructive breast surgery to Blount Memorial’s growing list of capabilities. In addition to service lines, the hospital’s administration also has welcomed a number of fellowship-trained physicians for new and existing specialties.

This is good for people in our community who need these services, but it also helps Blount County become an even more attractive community for business and industry leaders to consider when they look at starting or relocating their business. Additionally, a stable medical staff and physician growth account for about $126,000 in state and local tax revenue per physician, which is good for our local economy.

Our hospital is very strong, and I continue to be impressed by those who run it and those who play a part in the service it provides every day. The hospital means a lot to me and our board, and we will continue to make decisions that keep it an excellent health care facility, but also a strong, independent part of our community.

Robert Redwine
Board of Directors President
Learn how bariatric surgery at Blount Memorial can boost energy, improve quality of life and treat obesity-related health conditions, such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension and sleep apnea.

What could you gain by losing weight?

Have you tried and failed multiple times to lose significant weight? It could be time to consider surgical weight loss, or bariatric surgery, at Blount Memorial. If you have a Body Mass Index (BMI) between 35-40 and/or have severe, obesity-related medical conditions, bariatric surgery at Blount Memorial could change your life. As a Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP)-accredited center, Blount Memorial meets the most-rigorous standards for patient care, professional expertise, proven results and lifelong support.

Read the profiles below to discover how bariatric surgery at Blount Memorial is helping Blount County residents Jim Hunsley and Sarah Collins achieve their weight, health and life goals. To find out if you’d be a good candidate for surgical weight loss, attend a free, no-obligation seminar or schedule an appointment with Blount Memorial board-certified bariatric and general surgeon Dr. James Ray by calling East Tennessee Medical Group at 865-984-3864.

PATIENT PROFILE Sarah Collins Age 32 Bariatric procedure: Gastric Sleeve

Sarah Collins has lost about 75 pounds since having bariatric surgery in May 2017. Yet, the Blount County mother of two says what’s most important to her is all that she has gained by finally being able to achieve a healthy weight.

“My physical activity level used to be non-existent,” says Collins, who weighed 274 pounds before starting the Blount Memorial pre-surgery bariatric eating regimen. “I got out of breath just bending over to tie my shoes. No matter what I did, I didn’t have stamina or energy. When my kids wanted me to go outside and play, I was winded after the first five minutes and would have to go back inside to rest. Now, I have as much energy as they do.”

For Collins, who has a family history of diabetes and high blood pressure, being diagnosed as borderline diabetic and struggling to lose weight helped inspire her to consider surgical weight loss.

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For Collins, who has a family history of diabetes and high blood pressure, being diagnosed as borderline diabetic and struggling to lose weight helped inspire her to consider surgical weight loss.

“I was trying to exercise and eat healthy, but nothing worked,” Collins adds. “I wasn’t gaining weight, but I wasn’t losing either.”

Her primary care provider, East Tennessee Medical Group nurse practitioner Summer Robinson, suggested Collins set up an appointment with Blount Memorial bariatric surgeon Dr. James Ray. After meeting with Ray, Collins decided that the gastric sleeve, or vertical sleeve gastrectomy, would be the best option for her. The gastric sleeve — created by removing about 75 to 80 percent of the stomach — accommodates only 4 to 6 ounces of food per meal, causing patients to eat less, feel fuller sooner and lose weight.

In addition to eating less, Collins says she is moving more since the surgery. During her 45-minute lunch hour, she and a friend walk around downtown Knoxville where they work. Each day, they try to go further than the day before.

“We started out walking about two blocks and, recently, we walked all the way across the Gay Street Bridge to the other side of the river and back,” Collins adds. “When the weather warms up, we’re going to start jogging and maybe even rent bikes to ride around downtown.”

Being able to jog would be a major achievement she’s dreamed about for years, says Collins.

She explains, “One of my biggest personal goals was to be able to run. From when I was a kid, I was never able to run. I was too big. It hurt my knees, my belly would jiggle and other kids weren’t always kind when I did try to run.”

Collins still hopes to lose about 25 more pounds, yet emphasizes that the victories in her life aren’t measured by diminishing numbers on a scale. She says her greatest achievement is being a healthy role model for her daughter Addyson, 10, and son Riley, 7.

“Now that it stays light after I get home from work, the kids and I can walk the loop in our neighborhood several times and play outside,” Collins adds. “I also started doing yoga because, after losing all that weight, I can move in positions now that I couldn’t before, yet my muscles are extremely tight. My daughter absolutely loves to do yoga with me, which is fun for both of us. A lot of possibilities health-wise and activity-wise have opened for me and my kids since the surgery.”

Having bariatric surgery is a big life change, but in a good way. It’s worth it.”

For Collins, who has a family history of diabetes and high blood pressure, being diagnosed as borderline diabetic and struggling to lose weight helped inspire her to consider surgical weight loss.
Tellico Village resident Jim Hunsley says the diagnosis his doctor delivered to him in January 2017 was clear: Lose weight now or lose your life within a couple of years.

“I’d been diabetic for about 15 years and was on a large dose of Metformin (a prescription medication used to treat type 2 diabetes) and took five insulin shots a day,” recalls Hunsley, 75, an Illinois native who retired to Blount County in 2015. “Turns out all the medications were damaging my kidneys. I regularly had real severe kidney infections and urinary tract infections. When I ran a 104-degree fever for five days and saw Dr. Groth (Blount Memorial family practice physician Dr. Travis Groth), he told me, “You didn’t realize it, but you were about two days away from death.”

Groth’s prescription for Hunsley was weight loss. Hunsley says, “He (Groth) told me if I could lose 50 pounds, he thought I might realize it, but you were about two days away from death.”

While Hunsley says he understood the gravity of the situation, he also knew losing significant weight wasn’t something he could do on his own. Multiple times in the past, Hunsley explains, he had lost 10 pounds only to gain back 20. Based on Hunsley’s history of weight cycling, or yo-yo dieting, Groth recommended he make an appointment with Blount Memorial bariatric surgeon Dr. James Ray to learn about surgical weight loss.

“I told Dr. Ray what was going on, and we talked about my options,” says Hunsley, who, based on his discussion with Ray, chose the gastric band procedure, the surgeon places a restrictive band around the upper part of the stomach, creating a small pouch to hold food. The band limits the amount of food that can be consumed, making patients feel full after eating small (typically 4 to 6 ounces per meal) portions. After surgery, the band can be adjusted, if needed, to make food pass more slowly or quickly through the stomach.

Ray performed Hunsley’s gastric band procedure at Blount Memorial Hospital on July 24, 2017. That’s also the last day Hunsley took any medications for diabetes.

“When Dr. Ray came into see me after the surgery, he said, ‘From what I see has happened to your blood sugar numbers already, there’s no need for you to take insulin shots or Metformin any more,’” Hunsley recalls. “I was hoping and praying that the bariatric surgery could turn everything around. It was a life-and-death situation, and bariatric surgery was my only hope. I basically chose surgery to get off the diabetes medications and save my kidneys, and I did that.”

Within seven months of his surgery, Hunsley had achieved his bariatric goals: lose 50 pounds, restore normal kidney function and eliminate all diabetes medicines. Related to diabetes, Hunsley says his life has “totally turned around.” He and his wife Joyce participate in a water aerobics class to three times a week at the Blount Memorial Wellness Center at Springbrook and regularly hit the open road on their Honda Gold Wing Trike. The couple, who will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary in November, are co-directors of the Appalachian Wings, the Maryville chapter of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association.

Hunsley adds, “I’m in better shape at 75 than I was at 40, and my wife Joyce—who was my support person through all this—lost 30 pounds and reached her ideal weight by going on the bariatric diet with me. I’d highly recommend bariatric surgery and Dr. Ray to anyone who’s struggling with health issues due to diabetes. I honestly can say it saved my life.”

Why choose Blount Memorial?

We offer the expertise, tools and support you need to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. The benefits of choosing Blount Memorial for your bariatric surgery include:

- no program fee
- a board-certified bariatric surgeon
- the latest surgical weight loss procedures
- a multidisciplinary team of weight loss professionals
- a thorough screening process to ensure you are equipped with the tools, resources and support system needed for long-term success
- bariatric support groups
- encouragement and advice available from volunteer Patient Ambassadors (post-operative bariatric patients)
- immediate access to comprehensive health and wellness services at Blount Memorial Hospital
- a Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP)-accredited center, certifying that our program meets the most-rigorous standards for patient care, professional expertise and proven results
The Year in Review

A message from the medical director
As part of our commitment to providing state-of-the-art cancer care to this community, the Blount Memorial Cancer Center continued to enhance and expand services in 2017. I’d like to share a few of the highlights with you now, and encourage you to learn more about our cancer program at any time at blountmemorial.org.

Most people don’t think about where they would go for cancer care until they or someone in their family is diagnosed with the disease. But, even if cancer screenings, diagnostics or treatments aren’t topics you’re focused on right now, I do believe it is helpful and reassuring to know that state-of-the-art cancer care is available right here at Blount Memorial. For that reason, I’d like to share some of the exciting new developments at the Blount Memorial Cancer Center.

New Treatment and Diagnostic Tools
We’re excited about the addition of our new linear accelerator, because it allows us to provide new cancer treatments, particularly using stereotactic radiosurgery. This non-surgical radiation therapy is used to treat small tumors of the brain, lung and other types of cancers requiring a high degree of precision.

Additionally, we also were able to add a new 3D mammography system, also called digital breast Tomosynthesis or Tomo, this year. It is helping us improve the diagnostic accuracy of mammograms. Basically, Tomosynthesis helps detect breast cancer earlier and at a smaller size than is possible with conventional mammography.

Advanced Treatments
Since 1993, the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC) has accredited the Blount Memorial cancer program, and that accreditation was renewed in 2017. As part of the renewal process, we identify quality improvements—or, things we can do better—each year. In 2017, we specifically looked at our lung cancer patients who are receiving radiation, particularly for advanced stage disease. We found some indication that an advanced type of radiation therapy called intensity-modulated radiation therapy, or IMRT, provides better control with fewer side effects. As a result, we’ve been increasing our use of that particular technique for advanced lung cancer, have been tracking that and seeing an improvement for those patients.

This is just a sampling of the many ways the Blount Memorial cancer program ensures easy access to state-of-the-art cancer diagnostics, treatments and services. If the need ever arises, you can be confident that you or your loved one will receive the highest-quality cancer treatment right here, close to home.

Sincerely,

Dr. Albert Petty
Radiation Oncologist and Cancer Center Medical Director

COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Screening Outcomes and Guidelines

56 PROSTATE CANCER
the number of men who took advantage of the free September prostate cancer screenings offered at East Tennessee Medical Group in Alcoa. Of the 56 men tested, four were found to have elevated PSA (prostate-specific antigen) levels and were recommended to follow-up.

Screening Guidelines: Men should talk with their doctor about whether to be screened for prostate cancer. The decision should be made after getting information about the uncertainties, risks and potential benefits of screening. The discussion should take place at age 50 for men who are at average risk for the disease, at age 45 for men at high risk (including African Americans and men who have a first-degree relative diagnosed before age 65) and at age 40 for men with more than one first-degree relative who had prostate cancer at an early age.

Source: American Cancer Society and National Cancer Institute

12 BREAST CANCER
the number of women who participated in the Mammograms in the Moonlight after-hours events at the Blount Memorial Breast Health Center. Of the 12 women who had mammograms, five were referred for follow-up testing.

Screening Guidelines: Mammography is the best tool available to screen for breast cancer and has helped reduce the breast cancer death rate in the United States by 30 percent. Women should receive an annual mammogram starting at age 40, or by age 30 if they have a family history (maternal and paternal) of the disease, certain BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutations, or other risk factors.

Source: American College of Radiology and Society of Breast Imaging

72 SKIN CANCER
the number of people who participated in the March free skin cancer screening at the Blount Memorial Cancer Center. Of the 72 screening participants, 17 were recommended for biopsies and 22 were encouraged to have follow-up exams.

Screening Guidelines: Checking your skin and knowing your moles are key to detecting skin cancer in its earliest, most-treatable stages. If you spot anything changing, growing or bleeding, see a dermatologist.

Source: American Academy of Dermatology

600 Total number of cancers diagnosed and/or treated at Blount Memorial during 2017

Blount Memorial Cancer Center Community Outreach efforts reached thousands of people through education programs, financial assistance and awareness campaigns about cancer risk, prevention and screenings.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES continued

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Cutting-edge Treatment Vaporizes Lung Tumors

Blount Memorial is first in the region to offer new endoscopic approach.

When surgery isn’t an option, people being treated for lung cancer and non-malignant lung diseases (such as benign tracheobronchial tumors) can experience breathing issues due to central airway obstruction (CAO). Generally, the airway is obstructed by at least 50 percent by the time symptoms—such as wheezing, cough, hoarseness and limited exercise capacity—develop. If left untreated, CAO can lead to death from suffocation.

A new and potentially life-saving endoscopic procedure available at Blount Memorial quickly clears obstructions to restore breathing. Blount Memorial is the first hospital in the region and the second (Vanderbilt University Medical Center was first) in the state to offer the advanced tumor-busting treatment.

“Basically, we use a new catheter—the Core catheter, which only has become available in the last six months—that uses heat energy to vaporize tumors in the main airway,” says Blount Memorial board-certified interventional pulmonologist Dr. Greg LeMense, who performs the procedure and introduced the advanced technology to Blount Memorial. “The main thing is to open the airway so that people can breathe. We really didn’t have a good alternative before.”

LeMense adds that since the new procedure is helpful only in clearing main airway obstructions, use will be limited to select patients.

“The patients we’ve treated so far include a woman whose recurrent lung cancer was growing into and blocking the main trachea,” he says. “Destroying the tumor was a palliative measure to open the airway and help her breathe. Another patient had a carcinoid tumor (a rare, slow-growing cancer), which was totally obstructing the left lung. We took everything out of the airway using the new catheter, and, if needed, we can go back and perform the procedure again.”

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LUNG CANCER CARE

Blount Memorial named Community Hospital Center of Excellence

The Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation (ALCF)—one of the largest patient-founded, patient-focused and patient-driven charitable organizations devoted exclusively to eradicating lung cancer—recently recognized Blount Memorial as an ALCF Community Hospital Center of Excellence. Earning this prestigious designation means that Blount Memorial’s pulmonary program meets the rigorous ALCF standard of care: a patient-centric, collaborative model ensuring that all patients have access to the newest and most effective diagnostic and therapeutic techniques.

According to the ALCF, Community Hospitals Centers of Excellence are places “where the greatest good can be done for the greatest number” in terms of lung cancer survival, since 80 percent of patients receive medical treatment at their local community hospital. The program is an important component of the multi-faceted ALCF effort to make lung cancer a manageable chronic disease by 2023.

To learn more about the ALCF Community Hospitals Centers of Excellence program, visit the ALCF website at lungcancerfoundation.org.
BLOUNT MEMORIAL GOOD HEALTH 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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Chair of OB-GYN

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Wilma Profitt, MD
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John Ingram, MD
Chair of Community Medicine

Jonathan Greene, D.O.
Chair of OB-GYN

Where the revenue was earned

Outpatient Services
Inpatient Services
Professional Services
Other Services

Where the revenue was spent

Salaries and Benefits
Patient Supplies
Other Expenses
Depreciation and Interest
Professional Fees

54% 37% 7% 2%