

# Wellspring

Perham Memorial Hospital &amp; Home



Progressive approach. Personalized care.

## Perham's Sleep Center delivers a good night's rest

It took a fishing trip with the guys to alert Michael Lafreniere that he might be suffering from a sleep disorder.

His buddies were disturbed by his restless sleep and irregular breathing patterns, a common occurrence with people who suffer from sleep apnea. As is sometimes the case, Michael's wife didn't notice the sleep problems, but everyone in the family, including Michael, could tell his body was suffering from a lack of rest.

"I was falling asleep at 9 or 10 in the morning," Michael explains. Activities such as watching TV or even talking would quickly put him to sleep, even in the early hours of the day. Driving became dangerous, as Michael feared falling asleep behind the wheel.

"The last two years I'd wake up the mid-

dle of the night and go to the bathroom three or four times," Michael recalls of his sleep problems. He remembers waking up feeling startled, with the sensation he wasn't breathing. This inability to rest and recuperate started taking a physical toll on his body.

In just one year's time, the 46-year-old gained 70 pounds. Michael says he found it difficult to exercise with little or no energy for anything physically strenuous. "It really got bad when the weight started increasing. It became more evident there was a problem," he acknowledges. Knowing he needed some medical assistance, Michael scheduled a visit with his primary physician, Dr. Paulson in Perham.

At his appointment this spring Michael recalls, "Dr. Paulson said, 'You need a sleep study done. There is no question.'"

Michael, who lives in Frazee, was grateful to learn he wouldn't need to travel to Fargo in order to have a sleep study conducted. Since 2005, Perham Hospital, in conjunction with Sanford Health, has offered overnight sleep studies in a specialized Sleep Center located directly across the street from the hospital.

In addition to the time saved by not needing to drive to Fargo, Michael found comfort in knowing he could be treated by a local community of doctors he'd developed trust in over the years. Expressing his appreciation for the sleep medicine services in Perham, Michael adds, "If I could come to Perham for all of my family's doctoring needs, I definitely would."

Prior to his overnight sleep study, Michael met with Mary Saunders, PA-C,



Falling asleep behind the wheel is no longer a concern for Frazee resident Michael Lafreniere, since being diagnosed and treated for sleep apnea. Perham Hospital, in conjunction with Sanford Health, offers overnight sleep studies in a specialized Sleep Center located across the street from the hospital.

Sanford Health Sleep Clinic provider. Saunders schedules appointments with patients both in-person at Perham Memorial Hospital, and by interactive video conferencing for follow-up appointments. She estimates that each year she sees nearly 180 new patients from throughout the Perham area.

"Not everyone we see needs a sleep study," explains Saunders. Other sleep medicine offerings include initial assessments, medication prescriptions and refills, behavior modification, and adjustments to a patient's care plan. The most common sleep related problems Saunders sees patients for are snoring and obstructive sleep apnea.

"Sleep is one of those things that affects every system of your body," says Saunders. "In the medical community there is so much research being done and we're more aware of sleep disorders. Patients are also more educated on sleep disorders than they were even a few years ago."

During a typical overnight sleep study, a patient's sleep is recorded during his or her normal bedtime hours to simulate an average sleep period as closely as possible. Patient questions related to the nature of the test are answered, a brief pre-sleep survey is completed, and recording electrodes are applied.

"There was no pain involved at all," Michael says of the study. "There were just a lot of wires. Once you lay down though, the wires don't really bother you at all and you can move around."

"People can watch TV or read a book before bed," Saunders explains. "We can also provide a sleep medication that doesn't interfere with the study for people who are having trouble falling asleep."

Sleep study patients spend the night in an individual soundproof and climate-controlled bedroom. A polysomnographic technologist monitors the patient's



During Michael's sleep study, Trisha Baumann, RRT/ RPST, monitored his sleep activity. Sensors placed on patients record data, such as sleep stages, breathing patterns, and movements while they are sleeping. The data is then transferred to a computer monitor in the next room where the technician is located. The technician monitors this data throughout the night and is immediately available to the patient if needed.

sleep in a separate room and is continuously available should a patient require assistance. After a short post-sleep survey in the morning, patients are usually able to leave the Sleep Center around 8 a.m.

An hour-and-a-half into his study, Michael was provided with a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine, which aids respiratory ventilation. The polysomnographic technologist was then able to monitor how his body responded to the machine.

A few months after his overnight sleep study, Michael had a follow-up appointment with Mary Saunders to review the findings of the study and discuss the recommended plan of management.

After several months of treatment for his sleep apnea, Michael says he's still work-

ing on adjusting to the CPAP machine and getting his body back to normal. Although his sleep isn't perfect, he sees an immense improvement from where he was at earlier this year.

"It's getting a lot better," Michael says. "I don't fall asleep sitting in a chair. I don't fall asleep driving. And, I've lost 10 pounds already."

When he thinks back on his sleep troubles, Michael guesses some of the symptoms first started surfacing as long as six years ago. After suffering the effects of sleep apnea for so long, he's grateful to finally be getting some much needed rest.

"My wife was so used to me making noise, now it's actually too quiet," Michael says with a grin. "She has to run a fan now to fall asleep."



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## Is a sleep study right for you?

If you've noticed that you're often sleepy during the day, have morning headaches, snore heavily, or experience breathing irregularities during sleep, these may be signs of a sleep disorder. Most sleep disorders can be effectively treated once they have been accurately diagnosed. These include difficulties in falling asleep, staying asleep or remaining awake, and excessive daytime sleepiness.

Patients can arrange an appointment by calling 701-234-5673 or 1-800-437-4010 (ask for the Sleep Center). Most patients are required to have a referral from their primary doctor to receive a referral to the Sleep Center.

The referring physician will receive a full account of the patient's diagnosis and the recommended plan of management as soon as both are determined.

Mary Saunders, PA-C  
Sanford Health Sleep Clinic

# Partners in Care Council nurturing the ideal care experience

**E**ngaging patients, family, and community members to help nurture the health care experience, is the foundation for a new, 15-member advisory council at Perham Hospital. The Partners in Care Council's (PICC) purpose is to create a partnership to increase the understanding between patient/family and medical personnel. Council members work together to maintain optimum healthcare and to foster the best experience possible.

By serving as a bridge between patients and providers, the PICC shapes policies, programs, facility design, and day-to-day interactions to continuously improve patient and family satisfaction.

"As patients, our voices are heard at the table as we collaborate with health care teams and they see what is important to us as the recipients of care," said Jean Johnson, PICC council member. "The activity of the council gives us patients and our families the green light to participate in our own care which is truly a philosophy supported by Perham Hospital."

Understanding the value of involving



Partners in Care Council members include (l to r): Sharie Steeke, Bonnie Johnson, LeRoy Wegscheid, Ruth Wegscheid, Mary Ringsven, Jean Johnson, Harriet Mattfeld, Jill Carlson, Marlene Fondrick, and Courtney Vroman. Not pictured are Bob Wilkowski, Karen Doran, Kerrie Steinbach, Sue Sailer, and Marilyn Oelfke.

patients and families at all levels of the organization, hospital leadership has added PICC members to its quality team and its patient safety team. "The addition of PICC members to these teams allows our staff to see beyond routine care and to view what we do and how we do it through the eyes of our patients and families," commented Jill Carlson, PMHH Family Centered Care Director. "By doing

so, we can only make the care experience better."

The Partners in Care Council also acts as liaison between the community and the hospital and encourages the public to contact a member or Jill Carlson at (218) 346-1148 or [jill.carlson@pmhh.com](mailto:jill.carlson@pmhh.com) with comments, concerns, and ideas to further nurture the ideal care experience.

**Early detection saves lives,  
get your annual mammogram.  
Do it for those that love you.**



**Experience  
the benefits  
of digital  
mammography.**

**October is National  
Breast Cancer  
Awareness Month**

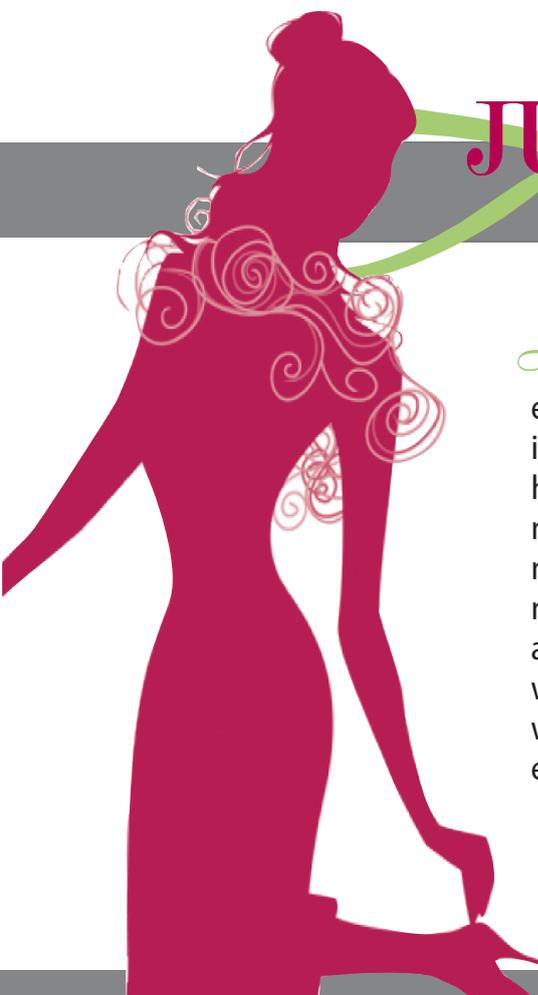
## Telephone Advice Change

To provide the best care possible, the emergency department at Perham Memorial Hospital has discontinued giving medical advice over the telephone.

If you have a major emergency, always dial 911. If you need emergency care, please feel free to come to the hospital emergency department for care. For all other questions, contact your primary physician at the clinic during regular hours, or after hours call Sanford Health Ask-A-Nurse at 800-821-5167.

If you have been in the hospital or emergency department in the past 48 hours and are having problems, please call the hospital at (218) 346-4500.

At Perham Hospital, patient safety is our number one priority.



# JUST FOR WOMEN

*Just for Women* is a free health event featuring today's women's health issues and hot topics. Experts will be on-hand to discuss helpful tips on disease management, weight control, complementary medicine, breast health and many more subjects. You can even get your flu and tetanus vaccines. Be prepared to laugh with guest speaker, Mary Jo Paloranta, who will delight you with her humorous and energetic style. A light meal will be served.

Register at  
[karla.kupfer@pmhh.com](mailto:karla.kupfer@pmhh.com) or  
(218) 346-1100

Thursday,  
October 28

St. Paul's Lutheran Church,  
Perham

5:00-6:30 p.m. - Educational  
Booths & Meal

6:30 p.m. - Guest Speaker,  
Mary Jo Paloranta

Perham Memorial  
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