



An artist's rendering of Centra's emPATH unit, pioneered by Scott Zeller, MD, a professor at the University of California, Riverside.

Grateful patient's \$1 million gift fuels Virginia's first emPATH unit and a step forward in psychiatric emergency care

A generous \$1 million gift by an anonymous grateful patient and a commitment by the Centra Foundation will transform emergency care for people experiencing an acute mental health crisis, addressing one of our community's greatest health needs. The new approach will also help patients who need care for physical emergencies.

A calm, soothing space is essential for many people experiencing an acute mental health crisis. Now imagine an Emergency Department. Loud noises. Quick movements. Lights that could seem too bright.

Thanks to an anonymous \$1 million donation, Centra began construction on the Commonwealth's first

emPATH unit in September and an innovative new approach to emergency psychiatric care. The donation is the largest single outright anonymous donation and among the largest gifts ever received by the Centra Foundation, which has committed to funding the construction and initial operating expenses.

"The donor expressed appreciation for care received at Centra and wanted to help address the greatest needs," said Beth Doyle, executive vice president of the Centra Foundation. "It was a wonderful surprise. We are incredibly grateful."

EmPATH stands for Emergency Psychiatric Assessment, Treatment

and Healing. The model of care helps people experiencing a mental health crisis receive compassionate, holistic help in a calming environment that does not exacerbate symptoms. At hospitals across the country that have moved to this model, the benefits are clear. Among them: calmer patients, shorter stays, reduced hospital admissions, more available beds and resources for physical emergencies, better experiences and safer emergency departments for everyone.

About 100 units are currently in operation across the country and more are planned.

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CENTRA Foundation

Local Giving Local Impact

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MISSION

Centra is a not-for-profit community health system and relies on fundraising. The mission of the Centra Foundation is to develop and direct resources for the support of Centra.



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Learn more at CentraFoundation.com/Events



Angie Fleming, Centra Foundation donor and volunteer coordinator for Centra Hospice.

Making a difference for other patients

"I received responsive, efficient and life-saving care"

Several years ago, Angie Fleming hit what she calls "a bumpy patch" in her health and had to seek treatment.



"Each time, I saw the different specialties and staff work closely together for my best care," she said. "I received responsive, efficient and life-saving care."

With her health back on track and full of gratitude, she wanted to make a difference for other patients. She began volunteering with Centra Hospice—and made her first gift to the Centra Foundation.

"Centra is such a strong steward of the community and provides access to anyone in need, regardless of ability to pay," she said. "That is something I wanted to be part of. It is simple to give, and you can specify where your donation goes."

Her advice for anyone thinking about making a gift? Do it. "You'll feel great about it," she said.

She shared that her work with Centra Hospice is also going well, adding that "it has been even more rewarding than I expected."

She recently accepted a full-time position coordinating volunteers.

"As I was driving past the Hospice office one day, I had the strongest sense that this is where I was supposed to be," she said. "I am so glad. Connecting patients to supportive volunteers is a joy, and new volunteers are always welcome. Our volunteers provide meaningful interactions for patients and their families."

Have you or a loved one received excellent care at Centra? Make a gift in honor of your Caregiver(s) by visiting CentraFoundation.com/Grateful. Thank you for your compassionate generosity!

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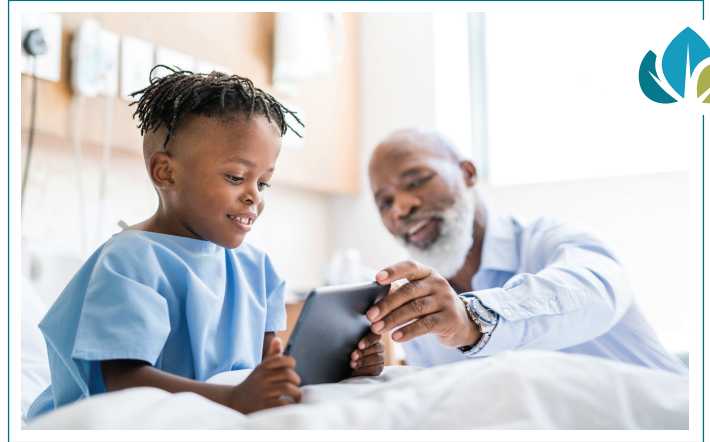
Increasing access to mental health services

When face-to-face isn't a possibility for patients already in a clinical setting, a virtual connection that provides access to mental health professionals can relieve suffering.

Thanks to your support, more children and adults are receiving care through telepsychiatry. The Centra Foundation recently funded equipment that is being used at Centra for individual sessions with patients, group therapy and family sessions.

"I want to say thank you to donors," said Senior Director of Nursing Operations for Psychiatry & Behavioral Health Shannon Miles, MSN, RN-C. "We have been able to facilitate sessions with patients who were struggling with depression and suicidal thoughts. We have also provided family sessions to develop discharge plans. Having this option has allowed us to provide quality care for more patients by trained and licensed staff."

Shannon expects the number of patients served to continue to increase due to the positive response her team has received. Caregivers are enthusiastic about the expanded possibilities to provide psychiatric care to



Your donations help patients receive telepsychiatry.

patients in different units.

"Talking on the phone is one thing," said Caregiver Vincent Ross, a mental health professional in the adult psychiatric unit who has experienced the benefits firsthand. "But seeing someone's facial reactions can motivate patients. The equipment is allowing us to provide support for patients who would not otherwise be able to receive care."

Your support helps patients heal and more

Your support is helping Caregivers across Centra enhance their considerable knowledge and skills, in turn benefitting patients who need care for a wide range of services. Wound care nurse Beth Humphrey, RN, is among the Caregivers receiving training this fall that is funded by the Centra Foundation.

Beth Humphrey, RN, knows that recovering from a wound can be scary — but doing so is vital to healing. As a wound care nurse, she sees a complex healing process at work that is beautiful and works hard to calm fears while providing excellent care.

"Being able to help patients heal so they can achieve their best quality of life is truly inspiring and a blessing," said Beth, who directs and executes the multifaceted care necessary for patients at Centra Specialty Hospital,

A photograph of Beth Humphrey, RN, standing in a hospital room. She is wearing pink scrubs and has a name tag. In the background, there is a desk with a lamp and a computer monitor. The Centra Specialty Hospital logo is visible on the wall behind her.

Beth Humphrey, RN

Your support has provided continuing education this year for Caregivers in:

- Autism & Developmental Services.
- Critical Care.
- Emergency Care.
- Orthopaedic Care.
- Wound Care.
- and more.

an acute care facility in Centra Virginia Baptist Hospital. Thanks to funding from the Centra Foundation, she can provide and ensure even better care. A 14-week training course this fall is bolstering her considerable knowledge.

"In addition to providing evidence-based care, Beth serves as a consultant, educator, researcher and patient advocate," said Kay Bowling, CEO of Centra Specialty Hospital. "She is collaborating with the healthcare team on initiatives that improve outcomes and the overall health of patients."

The course includes seminars, live classes, testing, close faculty guidance, feedback and hands-on training. Asked what she would like to share with donors, Beth said, "thank you. I am applying what I learn every day."



Grateful patient's \$1 million gift fuels Virginia's first emPATH unit

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The project at Centra is a collaboration between Emergency Services and Psychiatry & Behavioral Health. Expected to open in early 2023, the unit will be part of Centra Lynchburg General Hospital's Emergency Department.

"We are excited about this model of care," said James Bryant, vice president of emergency services. "It's going to make a huge difference for thousands of patients and our system. I want to thank the anonymous donor as well as the Foundation."



Scott Zeller, MD, the creator of emPATH, with Caregivers, board members, community partners and local media at Centra Lynchburg General Hospital. He describes the approach as "the right treatment by the right people in the right setting at the right time."



The donor expressed appreciation for care received at Centra and wanted to help address the greatest needs. We are incredibly grateful.

– Beth Doyle
Executive Vice President of the Centra Foundation

A great and growing need

Centra's recent Community Health Needs Assessment, conducted in 2021, identified mental health among the top concerns affecting the communities of central Virginia. It is a growing concern everywhere. Over the past decade, emergency departments in the U.S. have seen a 40% increase in adults who seek care for an acute psychiatric condition.

According to Centra CEO Amy Carrier, "it is crucial for Centra to evolve and innovatively tackle new healthcare issues within our community. The launch of the emPATH unit is exciting evidence of this commitment. The Foundation supports not only the areas of greatest need but also aligns with the intent of donors and the voice of our community, which is lifted up through the triennial assessment."

With more people needing emergency psychiatric care and an increased strain on the Emergency Department, "emPATH is going to mean better emergency care



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– James Bryant
Vice President of Emergency Services

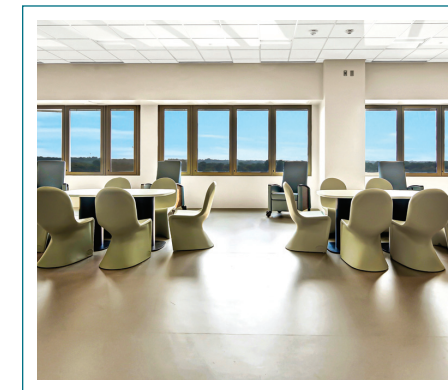
for everyone who visits Centra Lynchburg General Hospital," James said. "It's going to help patients on a number of levels."

A proven approach

Pioneered by Scott Zeller, MD, a professor at the University of California, Riverside, the emPATH model utilizes a team approach, including behavioral health experts, to quickly calm and stabilize patients. The unit is designed to be an open space that eliminates isolation where patients can be assessed and treated.

At Centra, the team will include physicians, advanced practice providers, behavioral health experts, case managers and social workers. Patients, too, will be on the team in a more active role.

"People will be able to move around, make themselves comfortable and speak with providers or even other patients," said Ismael Gama, vice president of psychiatry and behavioral health. "It is holistic care in a supportive environment. We want patients to know they are not alone."



EmPATH unit photos courtesy of CentraCare-St. Cloud Hospital, Minnesota.

The focus will be on returning patients safely to their homes with the support of outpatient services, their families and community resources.


Another key difference?

"It's really a therapeutic alliance," James said. "We can coach them,



see how medications are working, adjust and form a plan for when they leave. I truly believe it's going to be a life-changing difference for these patients."

"Put simply," he said, "I can't think of another time in my 40-year career that I have been this excited about a program."



With your support, we can tackle one of the toughest health challenges facing people in our communities. For more information or to make a gift to the Greatest Need Fund, visit CentraFoundation.com/Give

A better approach

The emPATH model of care includes:

- Rapid evaluation.
- A calm and comfortable environment.
- De-escalation of strong emotions.
- Immediate access to behavioral health experts.
- Crisis intervention.
- Rapid stabilization.
- An aftercare plan.

The emPATH model is expected to become a national best practice. Outcomes at hospitals where it has been implemented include:

- Shorter stays in the ED.
- Reduced hospital admissions.
- More available beds.
- Calmer, less agitated patients.
- Reduced re-admission rates.
- Improved patient experiences.
- More resources for physical emergencies.
- Safer Emergency Department for all.

Annual Giving Annual Impact

The Centra Society consists of loyal supporters who make cumulative gifts through the healthcare system of \$1,500 or more within the calendar year. Their generosity provides help today and hope for tomorrow for people in our communities who need access to excellent local care.

Cathy and Matt Sackett can't remember exactly when they made their first gift to the Centra Foundation, but they believe it set them on a long and rewarding journey of making an impact on local health through philanthropy.

"Giving to the Centra Foundation is important to us because of the direct impact we can see on the community we love," Cathy said. "We feel that it's important for our health system to remain strong to provide the services that members of our community need."

As a cardiologist with Centra, Matt sees that need firsthand and works hard to improve the health and quality of life of his patients.

"We feel strongly that when you have been as fortunate as we have to be able to live and work in this community, it is important to give back when you can," he said. "It's a great habit to get into."



Matt and Cathy Sackett are passionate about giving back.

For questions about Centra Society giving, contact Allison Kughn Ebert, director of development, at 434.200.2376 or allison.ebert@centrahealth.com.



Centra CEO Amy Carrier speaks at the 2022 Centra Society Reception.



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AUTUMN 2022
NEWS FROM THE CENTRA FOUNDATION

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