



Delivering on Care

An ongoing commitment to maternity services at Fairfield Medical Center

Ashley Dunkle always wanted a big family, so when she became pregnant with her first child in 2017, she was careful about finding a provider who would support her through all her pregnancies and a hospital that would give her a great birthing experience each time. Her search led her to Fairfield Medical Center and Emily Burnette, DO, of Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Obstetrics & Gynecology. Seven years later, Ashley is a mother of five and a strong proponent of FMC's Maternity Services and the FHP OB/GYN office.

"It's always been an easy decision to return to FMC for my prenatal care and delivery because I know Dr. Burnette and the Maternity Team will be there for me and provide a great experience." Ashley said.

Over the years, Ashley has had an opportunity to watch FMC grow its maternity services through the development of an OB and pediatric hospitalist program, as well as the addition of midwifery services for patients who desire a more holistic, natural childbirth. In 2020, Ashley's third child was delivered by a hospitalist, and in 2024, certified nurse midwife Joanie Ray assisted Dr. Burnette with the delivery of her family's newest addition.

"Every delivery experience, regardless of who was in the room with me, was flawless," Ashley said. "I have always understood what is going on because they take the time to explain everything to me. Every time I go there to deliver, I'm never nervous because I know I'm in great hands. I have even had the same labor and delivery nurse for three of my five deliveries."

FHP OB/GYN and Midwifery Services

Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Obstetrics & Gynecology opened its doors in 2019 and has grown considerably just within the past year, welcoming Barbara Keirns, MD; Jessica Bolden, CNP; and Joanie Ray, CNM, to accommodate an increase in patient volume. The office also is now able to provide acute care services for both obstetric and gynecological patients.









"Women's health is such a vital aspect of community care," Dr. Burnette said. "It's something I'm passionate about and it has been extremely rewarding to add like-minded providers to that mission."

The addition of midwifery services was something Fairfield Healthcare Professionals had explored for some time, and the right fit ended up being Ray, a long-time member of FMC's Maternity Services team. A former labor and delivery nurse of 12 years, Ray began training to become a midwife in 2021. In 2024, she earned her certification and delivered her first baby without physician assistance in May. In Ohio, certified nurse midwives can deliver babies on their own and provide prenatal and post-partum care if the pregnancy is low risk.

"The biggest difference between a midwife and a physician is we follow the path of a physiological, natural childbirth with minimal intervention, as long as the patient is without complications," Ray said. "For patients, a midwife truly gives the best of both worlds because you can have as little intervention as you want with the safety net of delivering in a hospital where physicians and an Emergency Department are right down the hall if you need it."

Certified nurse midwives generally deliver in a hospital and have access to the same equipment as a physician. They also have a physician available to them at any time in the event of an emergency or a complication that would require a C-section or the use of a vacuum or forceps. Prior to delivery, CNMs can also manage wellness and prenatal appointments, and assist with family planning.

Maternity Services & OBHG Hospitalists

In addition to expanding its outpatient clinic, FMC has focused on growing inpatient coverage through its OB/GYN hospitalist partnership. Ob Hospitalist Group (OBHG) provides round-the-clock obstetric services to all women admitted to the FMC Maternity Department or the Emergency

Department at the main campus. Together, they provide an extra level of delivery support for Dr. Burnette, Ray and Sean Jerig, MD, of River Valley Women's Health in Lancaster.

"We work closely and are in contact every single day," Dr. Burnette said. "They know every patient who is laboring or post-partum. They take care of our triage patients while comanaging labor patients and answering any questions nurses may have. I really do think of them as an extension of myself."

The hospitalists work in collaboration with the nurses and the patient's established physician



Meet the Team – Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Obstetrics & Gynecology





Emily Burnette, DO

Barbara Keirns, MD





Jessica Bolden, CNP

Joanie Ray, CNM

Commonly offered services:

- Midwiferv care
- · Wellness visits
- Menstrual cycle health
- Family planning
- Prenatal care and delivery
- Diagnosis and treatment of reproductive system disorders
- Minimally invasive, gynecological surgery
- Menopause management
- Infertility evaluation and treatment



To refer a patient to FHP OB/GYN, call 740-689-6690.

Pictured top left: Jessica Bolden, CNP, talks with a patient at the FHP OB-GYN office.

Bottom left: OBHG Hospitalist Kyle Beiter, MD, visits with Olexa, Joshua and Leilani.

to manage the labor and delivery process, even if that patient's physician is not affiliated with FMC. The hospitalists also can deliver babies for patients who do not have an established provider.

"Being in-house means we are immediately available to care for pregnant patients who come in with complaints or emergencies and cannot be seen in that moment by their private physician," said OBHG hospitalist Johanna Voutyras, MD. "Laboring patients might also be paired with a hospitalist if the private physician needs to sign them out to us to continue with their labor."

Along with the success of the OBHG hospitalist program, FMC also has a long-standing partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital to provide 24/7 pediatric hospitalist services. Like many of the OBHG hospitalists, the pediatric hospitalists who round at FMC are all familiar faces in the community with years of experience, a resource that provides comfort and reassurance to anxious parents.

Finally, the heart of every Maternity Services program is its team of labor and delivery nurses, and FMC is no exception. In fact, many of FMC's labor and delivery nurses are long-time veterans of the floor who have welcomed babies of their own in the unit. By drawing from their own experiences, these dedicated caregivers are able to guide and support their patients with confidence and compassion.

"I truly believe it's our nursing staff that sets our Maternity Department above and beyond other local hospitals," Dr. Burnette said. "Nursing support while in labor is different for every patient based upon their needs and desires, and our nurses are great at making that connection and filling in as that support person."



OBHG Hospitalists



Marvin Almquist, MD



Kyle Beiter, MD



Scott Delong, DO



Tiffany Hall, MD



Johanna Voutyras, MD

Nationwide Children's Pediatric Hospitalists



Jennifer Gibson, MD



Jean Robertson, MD



Kara Tencza, MD

Pictured top: Maternity nurse Laura Gornall cares for a patient in FMC's Maternity unit.

Pictured left: Dr. Jean Robertson, Nationwide Children's Hospital – Pediatric Hospitalist, checks a newborn in the FMC nursery.

New Technology

Robotic surgery team celebrates major milestone with da Vinci XI Surgical System

In May, Fairfield Medical Center completed its 1,000th robotic surgery using the da Vinci XI Surgical System, which was acquired in 2022 and is one of two cutting-edge devices that make up the organization's robotic-assisted surgery program.

"This technology gives our surgeons the ability to use their skills in different ways to improve the patients' outcomes and allow patients to regain a life balance much sooner," said FMC Surgery Director Jeff Collins. "I am grateful to be part of this program, and to work alongside our exceptional surgeons and operating room staff. All of them have been amazing ambassadors for this program."

More than 30 procedures, from hernia repairs to lung surgery to biopsies, can be done at Fairfield Medical Center with the da Vinci or the ION Endoluminal System, a second robotic device that uses CT mapping and shape sensing technology to perform complex bronchoscopies. Scott Johnson, MD, director of FMC's robotic program, said robotic-assisted surgery benefits the patient in many ways, including smaller incisions, less tissue trauma, less post-operative pain and a faster return to work, when compared to open surgery.



"Robotic surgery has been changing the surgical landscape since 2000," Dr. Johnson said. "The new graduating surgeons are trained in robotic technology more than traditional laparoscopy, so FMC's investment in a robotic surgery program was vital for the recruitment of new surgeons."



To learn more about robotic-assisted surgery, or to refer a patient, call 740-687-8858.

Afib technology can eliminate arrhythmia triggers, reduce damage to tissues and structures



Alex Hattoum, MD

Fairfield Medical Center recently introduced pulsed field ablation (PFA) therapy for the treatment of atrial fibrillation (afib). While ablation techniques have treated afib for several decades, the Medtronic PulseSelect™ PFA System offers breakthrough technology to deliver excellent results with a lower risk of complications.

Typically, traditional ablation therapies rely on thermal effects to form scar tissue within the heart, interrupting irregular electrical pathways and returning the heart to its normal rhythm. Rather than using extremely hot or cold temperatures to achieve this goal, PFA deploys pulsed electric fields to efficiently target, isolate and eliminate triggers of the arrhythmia. By using non-thermal energy, this novel approach safely

and efficiently treats both paroxysmal and persistent atrial fibrillation while reducing the risk of damage to surrounding tissue and structures.

"When it comes to patient care and serving our region, Fairfield Medical Center continuously strives to adopt the latest technological innovations," said cardiologist Alexander Hattoum, MD, who performed the first PFA procedures at FMC. "This addition is truly a game changer for the safety and speed of atrial fibrillation ablations. It will allow us to nearly double our procedural volumes, particularly for those with paroxysmal afib, and return patients to health quicker than ever before."



New Technology

FMC, Community Heart Watch help build network of 'smart' AEDs



Fairfield County is one of seven communities in the country that has built a network of Avive AEDs to reduce time to defibrillation and save more lives from cardiac arrest. Fairfield Medical Center and its affiliate, Community Heart Watch, are leading the charge and have already placed more than 150 Avives in local businesses, public spaces and homes, with a focus on rural areas where AEDs are less accessible and EMS response times are longer.

Avives are equipped with Wi-Fi, cellular, Bluetooth and GPS connectivity. This technology allows emergency dispatchers to activate an alert to nearby Avives, which then display a map with the location of the cardiac arrest, prompting bystanders to bring the AED to the scene. The connectivity of the Avive also makes incident reports and EKG strips immediately available to medics and hospital staff, leading to faster diagnosis and treatment. In addition, Avive owners

and system administrators receive email alerts when a device is at risk due to low battery, expiring pads or excessive temperatures.

Teri Watson, chair of Community Heart Watch, said the placement of Avive AEDs in the community is important because the existing AED system is often ineffective. AEDs are expensive, which means individuals are less likely to have one in their home, where 80 percent of cardiac arrests occur. In addition, AEDs in many public venues are not accessible after business hours and are not equipped with the technology to provide alerts about nearby cardiac arrests or issues with AED readiness.

Since Avives are small, portable, affordable and equipped with the latest technology, building an Avive network can help address those issues. "To help make the technology even more affordable for businesses and individuals, Community Heart Watch has negotiated special pricing of \$349 per year through the end of the year to lease an Avive," Watson said. "The devices are rechargeable and come with one set of replacement pads per year, so there are no ongoing operating expenses."

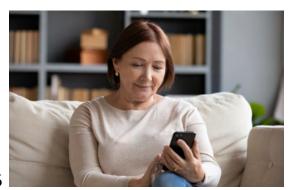
Community Heart Watch

Community Heart Watch is a collaboration of FMC, first responders, educators, public health and civic leaders that is dedicated to improving cardiac arrest survival rates in Fairfield, Hocking and Perry counties. They have placed hundreds of AEDs in the community, developed an inventory of over 800 AEDs, trained thousands of residents in CPR and AED use, accredited schools and businesses as heart safe and developed a mobile CPR unit that provides free training.



To learn more about Avive and Community Heart Watch, contact Teri Watson at 740-687-6929 or teri.watson@fmchealth.org.

Phreesia improves process for patient check-in, registration, payments



Fairfield Medical Center and Fairfield Healthcare Professionals are excited to announce its transition to Phreesia, a software that automates the patient check-in process and other administrative functions, from payment collection to consent management. Patients can complete pre-visit registration for their appointment, including screening tools and submitting insurance information, from their own mobile device or via an in-office tablet when they arrive, which interfaces directly with Cerner. Phreesia's abilities will help reduce the staff's manual data entry and improve record accuracy, while increasing the overall efficiency of the organization and allowing for more personal connection with patients in the office.

Service Line Spotlight

New implantable device helps manage advanced heart failure



Frin Ribo, CN

Cardiac contractility modulation (CCM) therapy is creating a new pathway for patients with worsening or poorly managed heart failure. This first-of-its-kind treatment, pioneered by Impulse Dynamics, is delivered via a small implantable device known as the Optimizer. With leads placed in the right ventricle, precisely timed electrical pulses during the absolute refractory period cause subsequent heart beats to be more forceful, increasing the output and circulation of oxygen-rich blood.

Treatment is delivered for a total of five hours a day in regulated one-hour intervals. The device is charged externally for one hour each week from the comfort of the patient's home. CCM therapy may be recommended for those with NYHA Class III heart failure who remain symptomatic despite guideline-directed medical therapy as well as those with left ventricle ejection fractions of 25-45 percent.

"Managing heart failure, especially as it progresses, is a challenge for practitioners and patients alike," said Erin Ribo, CNP, of Fairfield Medical Center's Heart Failure Clinic. "Eventually, medications lose effectiveness or are not well tolerated, and we begin to see decline despite our best efforts. Now, we have one more tool to potentially improve quality of life and reduce hospitalizations."



Indications/Contraindications

Indicated for patients with:

- LVEF 25-45%
- NYHA Class III
- Symptomatic despite GDMT

Contraindications:

- Mechanical Valve
- No vascular access for procedure
- Not indicated for CRT (cardiac resynchonrization therapy)



To refer a patient to FMC's Heart Failure Clinic, call 740-689-6498.

FHP General Surgery combined office to open in August

Fairfield Healthcare Professionals is merging its two general surgery offices into one new office – FHP General Surgery. The office will be located at 135 N. Ewing St., Suite 305, in the Pavilion on FMC's Main Campus (pictured right). Providers from the former General Surgical Associates (GSA) office, previously located at the Fairmore, will begin seeing patients at the new location on Aug. 6. The River View office will follow in late August.

The merger comes several months after the providers at General Surgical Associates – David Robertson, MD; Jeffrey Yenchar, MD and Margaret Sawyer, MD – joined Fairfield Healthcare Professionals. They will care for patients alongside David Hasl, MD; Scott Johnson, MD; Daniel Hyatt, MD; Amanda Myers, PA; Amy Belott, PA and Bethany Smith, PA. The office will continue to expand with the addition of two new providers in late summer and early fall. Together, this skilled provider group will perform advanced, minimally invasive outpatient procedures, as well as traditional surgical interventions.







Service Line Spotlight

Non-chemo infusion available at FMC

Fairfield Medical Center's on-site Infusion Center offers an array of chemotherapy and non-chemotherapy treatments. Many patients – including those with cancer or conditions pertaining to blood, neurological, gastrointestinal, rheumatic or autoimmune dysfunction – may benefit from these intravenous or injectable therapies. Our infusion clinic is easily accessible on the first floor on the Fairfield Medical Center Pavilion and is equipped to make each patient's visit a comfortable one.



Services – Cancer Care & Infusion Center

- Chemotherapy
- Immunotherapy
- Targeted therapy
- Genetic testing
- Biomarker testing
- Biologic immunomodulators
- Hematologic growth factors

- IV steroids
- Bisphosphonates
- Therapeutic phlebotomy
- Central line catheter care
- Hydration therapy
- Intravenous therapies (many types)
- IV antibiotic therapy
- Iron infusions
- Blood transfusions
- Intramuscular injections
- Subcutaneous injections



To refer a patient to our Infusion Center, please call 740-687-6900.

Joint replacement surgery can provide pain relief, restore mobility and improve quality of life



Dr. Juan Santiago, an orthopedic surgeon at FHP Orthopedics and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, tailors joint replacement solutions to each patient's unique needs. By carefully considering factors such as diagnosis, activity level, overall health and postsurgical support, he provides personalized care to optimize outcomes.

Juan Santiago, MD

"I believe in providing individualized care for each patient undergoing knee, hip or shoulder replacement surgery. Carefully considering options such as anatomic versus

reverse shoulder replacement, cemented versus cementless knee replacement, and the suitability of outpatient surgery is essential to achieving the best possible outcomes for my patients," Dr. Santiago said.

We understand that the decision to undergo surgery is a major one. That's why we offer comprehensive education for patients about the entire process, from preoperative preparation to postoperative recovery. Our team is committed to providing exceptional care and support throughout patients' journeys.



Our experienced and dedicated orthopedic surgeon and team will develop a treatment plan to get your patients back to living life without pain. For more information, or to refer a patient to FHP Orthopedics and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, call 740-689-4935.



Services - FHP Orthopedics and **Physical Medicine & Rahabilitation**

- Hip, knee and shoulder joint replacements
- Upper and lower extremity fractures
- Carpal tunnel
- Cubital tunnel release
- Fracture care

To read more stories about patients at Fairfield Medical Center, scan the QR code.



"The work they do matters": Patient defies odds following heart attack

The odds were very much against Ron Brame when he suffered a near-fatal heart attack in 2021 – no one knew that better than his son, Grant Brame, a physician assistant at Fairfield Medical Center who had cared for numerous critically ill cardiac patients just like his father.

Ron's situation was perilous from the moment he arrived at FMC on Oct. 13, 2021, with chest pain. He barely made it through the doors of the Emergency Department before he coded and was rushed to the Cath Lab, where it would take more than an hour of CPR and determined intervention for staff to restore his heart function using stents and a heart pump. As Ron was placed on a ventilator, Grant and the rest of the family worried over what his outcome would be. Ron had a less than 1 percent chance of survival with return of normal brain function – however, he surprised everyone when he began to show signs of improvement almost immediately.

"He is the luckiest man I know and truly a medical miracle," Grant said. "It's almost hard to comprehend how many people were involved in his survival and recovery, and to say we feel blessed would be an understatement when it comes to my coworkers and teammates at FMC."

Over the course of a month, Ron was cared for by more than 15 different physicians and numerous departments. He battled complications from pneumonia, anemia and acute kidney injury to a saddle pulmonary embolism and right chest wall hematoma. During his stay, Ron underwent multiple surgeries, including an open procedure to plate his ribs and an emergency thrombectomy that was successful despite coding in VIR.

"What I love about working at FMC is that Ron's care required the coordination of several specialties including cardiology, pulmonology, nephrology and cardiothoracic surgery," said John Lazarus, MD, PhD, of Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Cardiology. "This coordination of complex care was possible because of the culture of collaboration at FMC. Ron's exceptional clinical outcome continues to inspire us to bring cutting edge services and care to our community."

With the help of a temporary pacemaker in the weeks following his second cardiac arrest, Ron's condition improved enough for him to be discharged to a rehab facility in mid-November. By Christmas, he was back home with his family – and eager to return to FMC to personally thank the many people who played an integral role in his recovery.

"They worked so hard to keep me alive, and I know they provide that same level of care to everyone," Ron said. "I just wanted to let them know I think the world of them, and the work they do matters."

After completing cardiac rehabilitation at FMC in early 2022, Ron was well enough to walk a full 5K during the FMC Heart & Lung Run that August. In honor of his perseverance and recovery, the cardiac rehab team presented him with the Ed Readman Award, which represents the dedication, determination and resilience of cardiopulmonary rehab participants.





Stephanie Young, cardio fitness team leader, said it was obvious to the entire team that Ron was deserving of the award due to his optimistic attitude and incredible work ethic. "When Ron started rehab, he was still weak, using a cane for balance and was eager to get back to work, even if it was only part time," Stephanie said. "When he finished in the beginning of April, he was up to over 40 minutes of exercise without a cane and was back at work full time. Watching him, his brother, son and granddaughter finish the Heart and Lung Run in 2022 brought tears to my eyes. He is truly a special person, and his story will always have a special place in my heart."

Provider/Office Spotlights

New Providers



Juan Santiago, MD FHP Orthopedics 2384 N. Memorial Dr. Lancaster 740-689-4935



Daniel Hyatt, MD FHP General Surgery 135 N. Ewing St., Ste. 305 Lancaster 740-687-5437



Joshua Hernandez, MD FHP Vascular Surgery 618 Pleasantville Rd., Ste. 302 Lancaster 740-687-6910



Autumn Kincaid, CNP FHP Internal Medicine 2405 N. Columbus St., Ste. 280 Lancaster 740-689-4470



Aaron Murfin, CNP FHP Neurology 135 N. Ewing St., Ste. 204 Lancaster 740-687-8888

FMC Foundation Recognizes Quarter 2 Legendary Caregivers

The FMC Foundation's Grateful Patient & Family Program is a meaningful way for patients to celebrate the extraordinary care they or their loved one received at FMC. The following providers and departments were recognized in the 2nd quarter of 2024:

Providers:

- Emily Burnette, DO
- Magaret Sawyer, MD

Departments:

- FHP General Surgery
- FHP Obstetrics & Gynecology
- ICU
- Maternity
- Sixth Joint Unit



Local provider, Medical Alliance help nursing student complete her education

Growing up, Ali Imani, MD, was always encouraged by his mother, Fatemeh Arabi, to never stop learning. Raised in a rural area of Iran that offered little opportunity for education, Fatemeh learned how to read and write as an adult and taught herself English so she could pass the US citizenship examination. She believed in the importance of pushing boundaries in education and encouraged her sons, Dr. Moe Imani and Dr. Ali Imani, to follow their dreams and attend medical school.

When Fatemah passed away in 2024, Dr. Ali Imani of Fairfield Hospital Medicine decided to carry on his mother's legacy by making a donation

to the Fairfield County Medical Alliance (FCMA) scholarship. In June, the scholarship was awarded to FMC nursing assistant Sierra McQueary, who will begin her sophomore year at Ohio University Lancaster this fall. Much like Fatemeh, McQueary had encountered obstacles that initially prevented her from starting her nursing career, which made her an ideal candidate for the scholarship. Dr. Imani said he is thankful to the FCMA for the opportunity to encourage and support students like McQueary in their education. "The Alliance scholarship made it possible to implement my mother's legacy in helping individuals with talent pursue their dreams," he said.





Fairfield County Medical Alliance

Formed in 1947 "to support our medical family with camaraderie and to support our community with social services," the FCMA just recently celebrated its 77th anniversary. Over the years, it has participated in multiple service activities including sponsorship of families in need for the holidays, funding to furnish hospital rooms and outfit the nursery, collaborative projects with Fairhope Hospice and the Red Cross, and scholarships for nursing students.

To learn more about FCMA, contact president Chelsea Dearth at chelseadearth@gmail.com.

Patient Experience

The following comments were submitted by FMC patients and compiled through Press Ganey.





Roopa Saha, MD, FHP Hematology Oncology

"Dr. Saha is fantastic. She definitely takes time with you and never makes you feel like you're rushed out. I couldn't ask for a more caring person. She makes her patients her No. 1 priority."



Jason André, MD, FHP Vascular Surgery

"I brought a list of questions in my cell phone. Dr. André was eager to answer and explain, and he even used a white board to draw a picture to help answer my questions. To me, that is going beyond what I expected. I am very satisfied and pleased with Dr. André and the excellent carotid surgery he performed."



James Obney, MD, FHP Cardiothoracic Surgery

"Dr. Obney gave me an overall assessment of my progress since bypass heart surgery. He explained things in great detail, including continuing limitations and some restrictions that could be eliminated. His information was very thorough, and he listened and answered all my questions in a professional manner."



Margaret Sawyer, MD, FHP General Surgery

"Dr. Sawyer has cared for me since 2022. She never gives up on me and has worked to address why I'm having symptoms. I feel so confident with her decisions as to what she recommends for me."



Brian Higgins, DO, FHP Orthopedics and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

"I believe Dr. Higgins to be an exceptional physician. I have seen him over 15 years and he has seen the best and worst of me and has kept me going where most would have written me off. Fairfield Medical Center is lucky to have him on their team."



Barbara Keirns, MD, FHP Obstetrics & Gynecology

"Dr. Keirns is the best OBGYN I've seen in a while. I felt like she listened to my concerns and took them seriously. We talked about what I came into the office for and she had a game plan in action for me."

Quick Reference



Fairfield Medical Center

401 N. Ewing St., Lancaster, Ohio 740-687-8000 fmchealth.org



We are a nonprofit organization that provides full-service, general acute health services to more than 250,000 residents in Fairfield, Pickaway, Perry, Hocking and Athens counties.



In addition to our Main and River Valley campuses, we have more than a dozen satellite locations specializing in primary care, specialty care, urgent care, lab and imaging.



Fairfield Healthcare Professionals (FHP) is a multispecialty medical group of more than 90 providers owned and operated by FMC.

Clinical Connections is designed to share information about Fairfield Medical Center's medical staff, services and capabilities with healthcare providers in Southeastern Ohio.

If there is anything you would like to learn more about, or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call 740-687-6929.



401 N. Ewing St. Lancaster, OH 43130-3371 fmchealth.org

