



SOUTHWEST HEALTH SYSTEM

Annual Report
2024



JOE THEINE

Chief Executive Officer

When our community works together so much can be accomplished. This year's Annual Report reflects on just that – the results we achieved together, as employees, medical staff, governing Board, members of the community, and patients. There is a lot to celebrate as we look back over the last twelve months and look ahead to the future. I'll reflect on how our community worked together to invite providers to join Southwest Health System, the addition of a Chief Medical Officer, and some reflection on the years ahead.

The past year we worked together to welcome several physicians and advanced practice providers to our community. This has been a community-wide effort. Many members of the community participated in addition to our employees and medical staff. Representatives from school districts, local governments, business leaders, retired physicians, and more spent time with physicians and their families during their visits. In 2024 seventy-seven (77) providers took an interest in our community. We invited twelve (12) physicians and one nurse practitioner to interview with our team and visit the community. From this group, we made eight (8) offers, all of which were accepted. Many of the physicians and APPs have already started caring for patients. We will be welcoming some of the physicians to our community in 2025. Thank you to everyone who has been part of sharing the best of SW Colorado and our health system with so many people.

We also celebrate a milestone in the leadership of the hospital. In 2024 Southwest Health System (SHS) hired its first Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jennifer Gero. Dr. Gero joined SHS in 2016 serving as a physician in our emergency department. Since that time, she has continued to provide care to patients in our walk-in clinic, and occupational medicine program and has served as a medical director of the physician practices. Dr. Gero has already made an impact as our Chief Medical Officer. She has led our Provider Leadership Council, played a significant leadership role in recruiting physicians, and is a part of the executive team reporting to the CEO. Dr. Gero is involved in the long-term decision-making for the hospital and daily operations.

As we look to the future there remain many uncertainties in rural healthcare. Rather than sit back and wait to see what happened, the Southwest Health System Board (SHS board), Medical Staff, and leaders came together to plan for our future. Throughout the coming years, you will hear more and see the results of this group's insights and direction to our health system. The Board approved their objectives in December of 2024 including a focus on our people & service, safety & quality, and growing services. As you read through our accomplishments in 2024 see how many members of our team are recognized for their contributions and the national recognitions SHS has already received for it. Look for stories sharing how SHS invested in our current and future healthcare workforce. These include investments in our employees to care for people today and to be effective leaders of teams. We inspired middle school and high school students to consider a healthcare career. We are supporting college programs to train nurses, radiology technicians, pharmacists, physical therapists, physicians, advanced practice providers, and other professionals. Together, we are supporting care providers today and building those who will be caring for all of us in the future.

While many things in life and healthcare may be uncertain, we can be certain that by working together and choosing to receive care close to our homes, Southwest Health System will be here to care for you and your families well into the future.

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy and prosperous 2025.

Quality Healthcare



Our Mission

Our mission is to provide the highest quality health care to our community by bringing excellence, value and service together to promote, improve and restore health

Southwest Health System Named Among "100 Great Community Hospitals for 2024" by Becker's Healthcare

SHS joins other community hospitals on Becker's list that provide clinical and academic excellence, personalized, and holistic care, and overall improved health in their communities.

Becker's based its selections on nominations and outside rankings and ratings organizations, including U.S. News & World Report, Healthgrades, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), The Leapfrog Group, the National Rural Health Association and The Chartis Center for Rural Health.

Southwest Health System has been given a 5-star rating from CMS for Staff Responsiveness

CMS shares 10 Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems star ratings based on publicly reported HCAHPS measures. The staff responsiveness star rating combines data from two HCAHPS survey questions and summarizes how quickly patients felt they received help after pressing the call button or asking for help to use the restroom or a bedpan.

"It takes everyone working together for our patients/community members to experience this level of responsiveness. Congratulations!", Joe Theine.

Quality Healthcare



National Rural Rating System - 5 Star Rating

Southwest Health System earned a prestigious 5 Star Rating from the National Rural Rating System (NRRS)! This esteemed designation is a testament to SHS's dedication to delivering high-quality care and exceptional patient experiences.

NRRS evaluates hospitals based on rigorous standards, including patient satisfaction, quality of care, and overall hospital performance. This recognition reflects SHS's ongoing commitment to meeting the unique healthcare needs of the rural communities we serve despite the challenges often faced by rural healthcare facilities.



Our Vision

We envision a health system in which all providers work together to make excellent, patient centered health services available in our community.

Sleep Lab - 10-Year Accreditation Milestone Recognition

The Southwest Health System Sleep Lab has maintained accreditation from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine for 10 consecutive years, demonstrating its commitment to the provision of high-quality care for people who have sleep problems in our community. To receive and maintain accreditation for a five-year period, a sleep center must meet or exceed all standards for professional health care as designated by the AASM. These standards address core areas such as personnel, facility and equipment, policies and procedures, data acquisition, patient care, and quality assurance. Additionally, the sleep center's goals must be clearly stated and include plans for positively affecting the quality of medical care in the community it serves.

Care Close to Home



Services

• Southwest Memorial Hospital (SWMH)

- Cardiopulmonary & Respiratory Therapy
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Emergency Management Services
- Family Birthing Center
- Infusion
- Inpatient Intensive Care
- Inpatient Medical & Surgical
- Laboratory
- Patient Education – Diabetic Education & Nutrition
- Rehabilitation Services
- Sleep Center
- Same Day & Surgical Services



• Southwest Medical Group (SMG)

- General Surgery
- Orthopedics & Orthopedic Surgery
- Podiatry & Podiatric Surgery
- Primary Care – Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Pain Management
- School-Based Health Center
- Sleep Medicine
- Visiting Physicians – Interventional Spine Care and Cardiology
- Women’s Health
- Wound Care



Locations

Southwest Memorial Hospital

- Emergency Department - 24/7

Southwest Medical Group

- Medical Office Building
- Mancos Valley Clinic
- Walk-In Care Clinic
 - Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM
 - Saturday & Sunday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- School-Based Health Clinic - Montezuma-Cortez High School



Contracted Insurances

Medicare Advantage plans

SHS has contracts with:

- UnitedHealthcare Group Medicare Advantage
- Rocky Mountain Health Plan – Medicare Advantage
- AARP/Medicare Complete
- Cigna True Choice Medicare PPO
- BCBS/Medicare Advantage CO Pera Anthem Medicare Preferred
- Aetna Medicare PPO

Traditional Medicare

- Medicare supplements

Colorado Medicaid

Commercial Insurance plans

SHS is Contracted with:

- Anthem BCBS
- Cigna
- Aetna
- United Healthcare
- Rocky Mountain Health Plan
- PEHP
- Summit SRT Administrators
- Meritain
- Friday Health



NURSES AND HOSPITAL WEEK

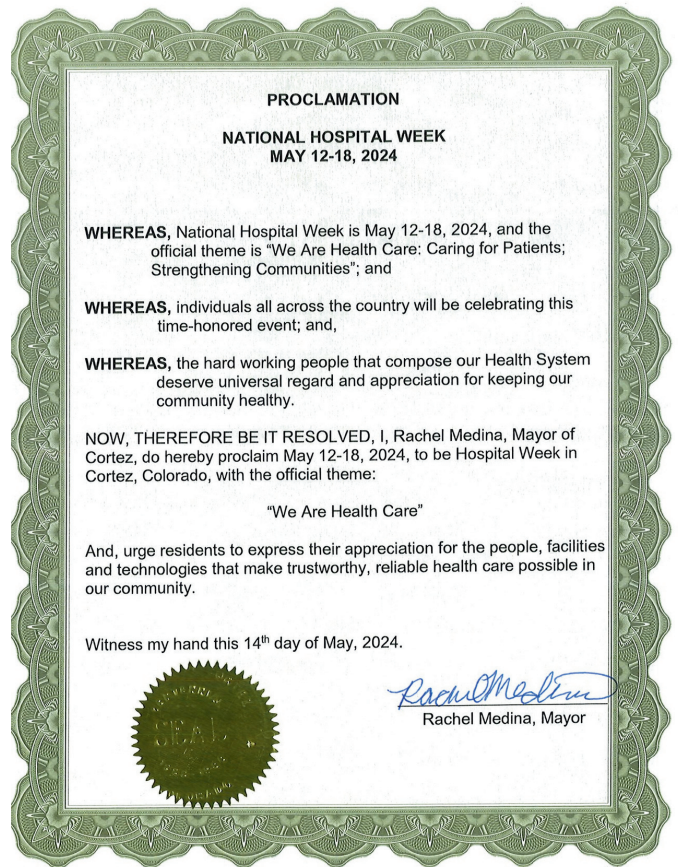
Each year, SHS celebrates Nurses and Hospital Week during the first two weeks of May.

National Nurses Week is dedicated to recognizing the vital contributions of nurses around the world, especially within our SHS health system. Throughout this week, SHS honors its nursing staff by introducing a special theme and providing daily treats for each nurse.

National Hospital Week acknowledges all healthcare professionals who are dedicated to delivering quality care to patients in medical facilities. In 2024, SHS marked this event with its employees and the community. The celebrations included a 5k walk/run with around 50 participants from SHS and the community, themed dress-up days filled with various activities, coffee carts, ice cream, a pancake breakfast, and a Frito pie lunch at the week's conclusion, bringing together 330 employees and community members.

This year, during Hospital Week, SHS organized a food drive to benefit local food pantries, resulting in a generous donation of 556 lbs of food!

Additionally, Cortez City Mayor Rachel Medina officially proclaimed May 12-18, 2024, as Hospital Week in Cortez, CO, with the theme: "We Are Health Care."



FINANCIALS

Revenue

What We Billed Insurance or Patients (Gross Revenue)

Inpatient	\$21,497,000
Outpatient	\$135,746,000
Total Gross Revenue	\$157,243,000



What was billed but did not receive payment For (Contractuals and Discounts)

Government Programs Discounts	\$37,197,000
Managed Medicare Discounts	\$18,527,000
Commercial Insurance Discounts	\$10,565,000
Charity & Indigent Discounts	\$4,872,000
Other Discounts	\$11,804,000
Chase	(\$14,582,000)
Total Discounts	\$82,965,000

Total Net Patient Revenue (Gross Revenue - Discounts) \$74,278,000

Additional Sources of Non Operating Income

Other Revenue	\$7,564,000
Non Operating Income	\$613,000
Sales Tax MCHD	\$2,211,000
Total Additional Revenue	\$10,388,000

Net Revenue (Total Net Patient Revenue + Total Additional revenue) \$84,666,000

Expenses

Operational Spend

Employee Pay and Benefits	\$47,115,000
Medical Supplies, Drugs and Other Supplies	\$14,189,000
Building and Equipment Costs: utilities, R&M, maintenance contracts, etc.	\$2,502,000
Purchase Services	\$3,857,000
Other Expense	\$11,851,000
Total Operating Expense	\$79,514,000

Reinvestment in Facility and Equipment

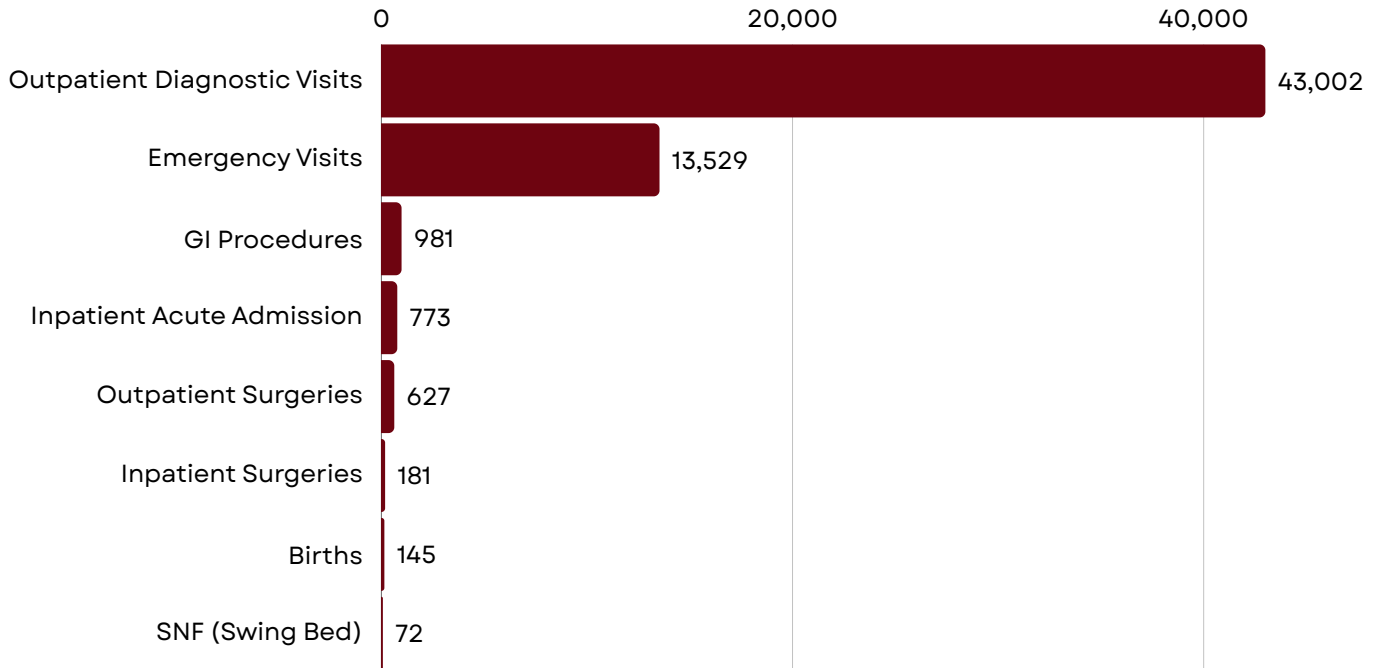
Bond Debt Repay (P&I)	\$1,964,000
Line of Credit Equipment (P&I)	\$902,000
Capital Equipment Purchases	\$793,000
Added Capital Improvement Fund	\$1,468,000
Total Reinvestment Expense	\$5,127,000

Total Operating Expense + Reinvestment in Facility & Equipment \$84,641,000

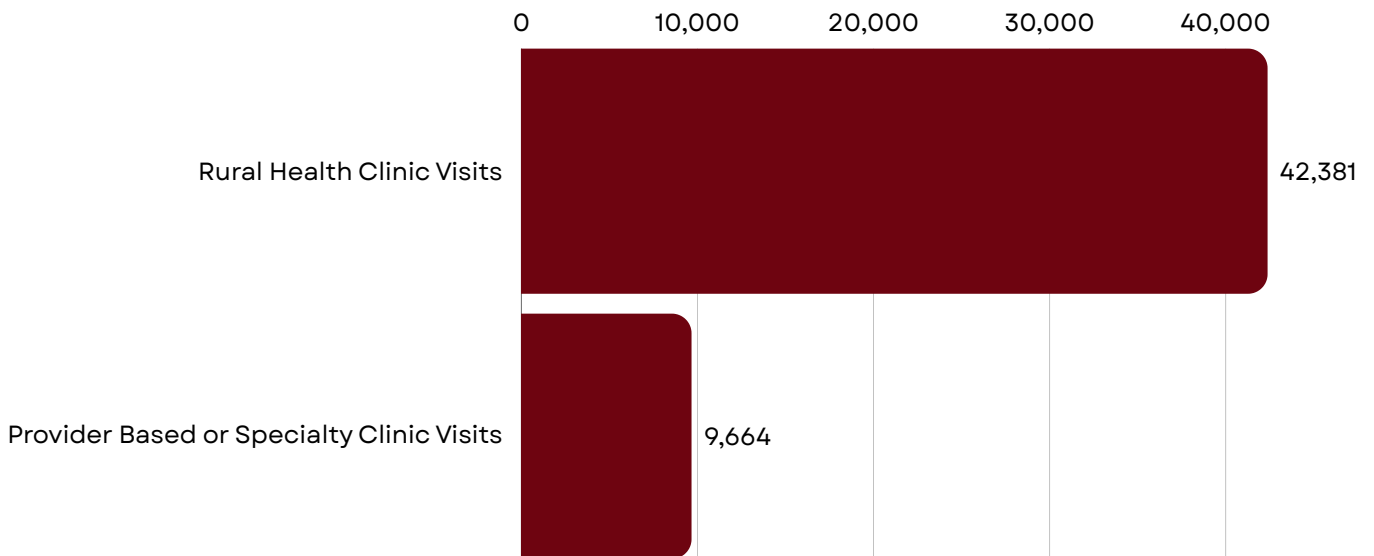
Net Income \$5,152,000

VISIT VOLUMES

Southwest Memorial Hospital



Southwest Medical Group



Lisa Gates Achieves NRHA Rural Hospital CNO Certification

Southwest Health System (SHS) is proud to announce that Lisa Gates, Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), has successfully completed the National Rural Health Association's (NRHA) Rural Hospital CNO Certification Program. This rigorous six-month program included comprehensive sessions, education, and testing through each module.

Throughout the program, Lisa was mentored by Judy Geiger, Vice President of Patient Care Services and CNO at Columbia Memorial Hospital, gaining invaluable insights and experience.



Geiger said, “it has been a pleasure to work with Lisa during her Rural CNO Certification course. She has great insight into her role as a CNO. It is very apparent that she has her hospital’s and staff’s best interests at heart. I am honored to call her a colleague. Congratulations Lisa on your certification.” Now certified, Lisa is committed to paying it forward by mentoring the next cohort of CNOs entering the program.

Lisa Gates expressed her enthusiasm, stating, “I was passionate about becoming certified as a rural health CNO with the National Rural Health Association to address the unique needs required of my CNO role while supporting and growing operations of an organization such as SHS and continuing the needed focus on our community health needs.”

The NRHA Rural Hospital CNO Certification Program was developed by successful rural hospital CNOs to strengthen leadership skills and help lead hospitals to success. The curriculum covers four key areas: leadership performance, operational performance, financial performance, and clinical performance. Participants engage in interactive activities and are mentored by experienced CNOs.

Joe Theine, CEO of SHS, shares his congratulations to Lisa and is excited for Lisa to pay forward her experiences in the program as she serves as a mentor for future participants in the certification program.

“This is a great example of how Lisa is investing some of her time to get better in her role and to help improve healthcare delivery in Southwest Colorado. Lisa's experience is one example, of many, of how Southwest Health System and our employees are investing in the future of our workforce!” said Theine.

A Dedication to Lil Bostrom

Southwest Health System honored nurse Lil Bostrom, 80, at the beginning of Nurse Appreciation Week with the announcement that an operating room would be dedicated to her.

Bostrom has served at Southwest Memorial Hospital as an OR nurse for 48 years. Her nursing career began in 1961, and she joined the staff at the hospital not long after.

A celebration was held at the hospital atrium where fellow nurses, doctors, friends, and family members filled the room, with many standing on the stairs and along the walls to honor Bostrom and her dedication to the hospital.

Lisa Gates, Chief Nursing Officer, spoke of Bostrom's many contributions to the hospital and community, while thanking her for her impact, noting that her calming presence not only affects patients but also medical staff.

"Lil is truly a testament of what nursing means to patient care and how that dedication has influenced so many patients' lives," Gates said. "Her impact with her peers and providers is beyond measurable."

"Lil, you are an inspiration to me and to so many patients, staff, and community members for your commitment to nursing," Lisa said. "Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Colleague after colleague took their turn speaking about Bostrom's presence in their life, with one doctor jokingly telling a story of how Bostrom wasn't afraid to correct him, offer a suggestion or even tell him she wasn't going to do something his way. Though Bostrom is 80, colleagues shared how when asked, she said she just wasn't ready to retire yet.

Others spoke of how anxious patients would calm down when they saw Bostrom because they trusted her.

Many reminisced about their time as a newbie at the hospital and how Bostrom took them under her wing while maintaining a calm and helpful presence in times of stress.

A tear or two were shed as well. Heather Welch shared how she had worked with Bostrom for 16 years before moving to a different position, saying it was nearly impossible to sum up what Bostrom meant to the hospital community and to her as a fellow health professional, friend and mentor.

"Lil is truly a testament of what nursing means to patient care and how that dedication has influenced so many patients' lives."



"As I started to put pen to paper, I discovered that this wasn't so easy. How do you sum up and honor someone's career, one that spans decades, in just a few paltry words?" Welch asked. "How do you honor the impact on the lives she has touched in just a few moments?"

Welch went on to talk about all the advancements Bostrom had witnessed in her time as a nurse, adding that Bostrom embodied the words courage, conscientiousness, perseverance, resilience and passion.

"Thank you, Lil, for your unwavering dedication and for touching the lives of so many. Thank you, personally, for making me a better OR nurse and director," Welch said. "Your legacy will live on in the hearts of all who have had the privilege of knowing you."

A plaque will hang outside of the operating room that will be dedicated to her for her service to Southwest Memorial Hospital.

The plaque reads, "This operating room is dedicated in honor and recognition of Lil Bostrom for her passion, excellence in health care, and years of devotion to the operating room. Lil's service and dedication to surgery at SHS is truly outstanding and admirable."

"It's a small community, so you see a lot of return patients," Bostrom said. "I love seeing these patients and working with this incredible staff."



New Physicians and Recruitment Success

Since August 2023, Southwest Health System (SHS) has made significant strides in its recruitment efforts. Over 100 candidates were considered, resulting in 28 interviews and 18 offers, of which 17 were accepted. The recruitment plan established by the Board in December 2023 was completed in less than a year, successfully bringing on board several new physicians, including:

- Drs. Megan Viquez and Kari Barnard (Family Medicine, OB)
- Dr. Jameson Laub (Family Medicine with Pediatric Call)
- Dr. Rebecca Moore (Internal Medicine)
- Dr. Joycelyn Hirschman (Family Medicine focused on Older Adult Outpatient Medicine)
- Dr. Mark Neimat (Hospitalist)
- Dr. Chris Jetter (Podiatrist)
- Dr. Eve Bruneau (General Surgeon starting early 2025)
- Dr. Eric Viquez (Emergency Department Physician).

The support from the medical staff, community members, and the Board has been instrumental in attracting these physicians to Southwest Colorado. SHS continues to actively engage with physicians and advanced practice providers about opportunities in the region.

The Board Provider Recruitment, Contracting, and Retention committee has been active over the past year, providing insights to prioritize future recruitment and retention efforts.



Megan Viquez, MD



Kari Barnard, MD



Jameson Laub, DO



Rebecca Moore, MD



Jocelyn Hirschman, MD



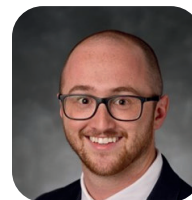
Matthew Neimat, MD



Chris Jetter, DPM



Eve Bruneau, DO



Eric Viquez, MD

Provider Leadership Committee

Provider Leadership Committee (PLC) meets regularly with provider representatives from each specialty to discuss items to enhance patient care. This collaboration helps to improve provider satisfaction by addressing concerns and streamlining processes, creating a more efficient and supportive work environment.

THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE

In 2024, SHS opened its doors to several high school students, offering them tours and internships to experience firsthand what it's like to work in the healthcare field. Additionally, SHS participated in a few Futures Fairs to showcase the realities of a career in healthcare.

HIGH SCHOOL TOURS

High school students from Cortez, Mancos, Dolores, and Dove Creek toured SHS to explore our hospital. During their visit, they had the opportunity to stop by the ER, OR, Diagnostic Imaging, and ICU, gaining hands-on insights into the functions and requirements of each department. The experience was enjoyable for the students, with many expressing that the tour reinforced their desire to pursue a career in healthcare.

SUMMER INTERN PROGRAM

The 2024 Summer Internship Program offered high school students a chance to delve into healthcare careers while working alongside experienced staff at SHS. This program allowed participants to not only gain insights into the healthcare field but also to inquire about colleges and academic pathways. Interns rotated through various departments, including MS, ICU, FBC, ER, OR, Imaging, and Rehab. Additionally, they engaged in weekly hands-on learning sessions that focused on essential skills such as wound care, calibrating instruments, IV starts, injections, and basic life support.

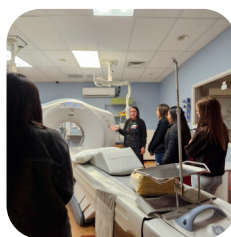
The 2024 Summer Interns were:

Alexis Martinez from Cortez. She is interested in emergency medicine

Alexis Anderson from Dolores. She is interested in radiology

Amalie Cover from Mancos. She is interested in becoming a PA or physician

Madison Thornbrugh from Dolores. She is interested in Family Birthing and NICU

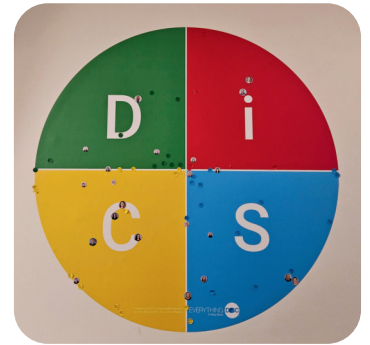


INVESTMENT IN EMPLOYEE TRAINING

The SHS Board and leadership have pledged to invest in the training of all employees at SHS. This initiative encompasses training for every staff member, not just those in leadership roles. Employees engaged in group training sessions held at the hospital, within the community, and through virtual platforms.

DISC TRAINING

In 2024 many of our leaders learned about their natural behavioral styles through this framework. We learned how each of us can communicate more effectively with others when our natural styles are not the same and to bring the strengths of each of our styles to our work to accomplish more together than we can on our own. Heaven Spohn recently earned her certification as a DiSC facilitator. She piloted an introduction to DiSC to two departments at SHS. If your department is interested in learning more about DiSC, talk with your department leader. In 2025 this introduction to DiSC is taking place as a part of New Hire Orientation. Last week our first new hire orientation group participated!



DiSC is one framework that helps each of us focus on our strengths and the strengths of members of our team. It helps us work well together and have more opportunities to do what each of us does best at work every day.



DiSC facilitator, Heaven Spohn said, “my goal as a DiSC facilitator is to build and maximize productive relationships within our organization. I am excited to provide our staff with tools and resources to deepen their understanding of self-awareness, strategies for engaging with others and effective communication. Knowing what drives and motivates your peers moves mountains in the workplace! I look forward to spending time with each department, introducing a common language that will ultimately help drive our daily interactions with one another and create a safe space for open dialogue.”

INVESTMENT IN EMPLOYEE TRAINING

REALITY-BASED LEADERSHIP TRAINING

A group of hospital leaders gathered for a day of Reality-Based Leadership training, facilitated by Angelina Salazar, the CEO of the Western Healthcare Alliance. This training, inspired by Cy Wakeman's principles of eliminating workplace drama and transforming excuses into actionable results, saw participation from over 25 leaders who came together to enhance their leadership skills.

This training was one significant investment SHS made to strengthen its leadership capabilities as a hospital in 2024.



PROJECT RUN

Wendell Heck, retired Director of Diagnostic Imaging, Cardio, and Sleep Lab, together with Robert Owens, Director of Plant Operations, Safety, and Security, engaged in an 8-week leadership micro-credential program offered by Project RUN. This program, titled Fundamentals of Leadership & Management II: Strategy, focused on strategy and planning. Having completed several weeks, they discovered ways to enhance support within our organization and are sharing their valuable insights with your immediate leaders.

LEADERSHIP MONTEZUMA

Adam Conley, CFO, Ashley Berry, Radiology Supervisor and Robert Eytalis, Laboratory Director were selected to participate in Leadership Montezuma. The purpose of Leadership Montezuma is to cultivate a diverse cohort of emerging leaders from various backgrounds, occupations, and cultures to foster learning and forge strong connections with the many sectors of our community. The program is designed to promote engaged and informed community leaders, as well as expand our citizen's understanding of community resources, organizations, and systems.

Adam, Ashley, and Robert will attend 9 full-day, jam-packed, and engaging leadership-driven sessions led by community leaders and subject matter experts from Montezuma County. They will focus on improving their skill sets and gain knowledge on how to confront change, improve systems, and create sustainable success. They also gain the knowledge to implement purposeful and positive community change, form effective local relationships, and sustain community vitality.

After they complete a year in Leadership Montezuma, they will then become the planners for the following years classes.

Better Equipment Better Service

Equipment Development :

In 2024, SHS received funding from the LOR Foundation and the Southwest Memorial Hospital Foundation to purchase new equipment that either replaced outdated equipment, or added to or brought new service lines into SHS.



Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES)



Newborn Hearing Screener



EMS Ambulance Equipment



Panda Warmer for Maternal Infant Care

Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES)

In December of 2023, the Southwest Memorial Hospital Foundation held a successful fundraiser to support the acquisition of a Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) system for SHS. This advanced equipment, officially introduced in 2024, enhances the hospital's Speech-Language Pathology services.

The FEES procedure is crucial for assessing swallowing anatomy and function, particularly for patients experiencing difficulty swallowing food or liquids, coughing during meals, or feeling like items get "stuck." These symptoms may indicate issues with muscular coordination or timing necessary for normal swallowing.

Our skilled Speech-Language Pathologists at Southwest Health System are proficient in conducting the FEES procedure and designing personalized treatment plans for all patient types. This addition significantly bolsters our ability to provide comprehensive care and improve patient outcomes.

FEES Patient testimonials:

"The study (FEES) was easily tolerated even though I had a little cough going on that day. I was worried it might interfere, but it didn't. I try and do my swallowing exercises every day and I have noticed my food going down a lot easier lately– and my pills have also been easier."

"I think (the FEES) helped. I was amazed by all the pieces and parts we could see– and how things work together for swallowing. The flip-book with pictures of the swallow anatomy was also helpful. I'm definitely more aware of my posture now when eating."



Better Equipment Better Service

EMS Ambulance Equipment

In the Spring of 2024, the Southwest Memorial Hospital Foundation demonstrated its unwavering commitment to enhancing emergency medical services by organizing a successful fundraiser. The event aimed to generate matching funds for SHS, specifically to acquire additional ambulance equipment for the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department. Thanks to the generosity of our community, the Foundation raised an impressive \$53,000. This amount matched a state grant, enabling the purchase of a powered loading system, a powered ambulance cot, and a chest compression system for the SHS EMS Department's ambulances. These vital additions will significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our emergency response capabilities.



POWERED LOADING SYSTEM

Reduce the RISK of injuries when loading and unloading cots.

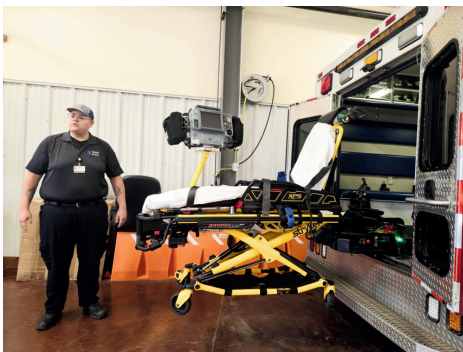
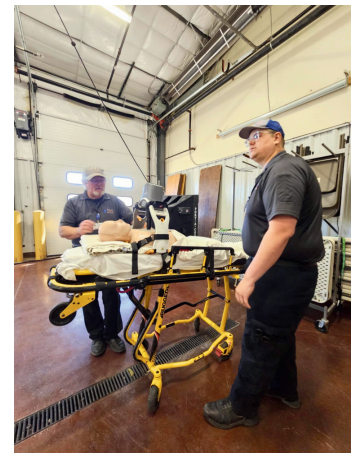
POWERED AMBULANCE COT

Power-PRO XT-powered ambulance cot utilizes a battery-powered hydraulic system effectively raising and lowering a cot at the touch of a button.



CHEST COMPRESSION SYSTEM

Performs high-quality chest compressions and fewer interruptions than manual CPR. The LUCAS will Administer guidelines-consistent, high-quality compressions until the job is done



Better Equipment Better Service

New Born Hearing Screener and Panda Warmer for Maternal Infant Care

This year, the Family Birthing Center at SHS introduced a new newborn hearing screener, generously funded by the LOR Foundation. This advanced device is essential for the early detection of hearing loss in newborns, ensuring that every baby receives the best possible start in life. The screening process is safe, painless, and typically performed while the baby is asleep. There are two main types of newborn hearing screening tests:

1. **Otoacoustic Emissions (OAEs):** This test measures sound waves produced in the inner ear. A small earbud is placed in the baby's ear, which emits sounds and measures the echo that bounces back from the inner ear. If the baby has normal hearing, an echo is detected; if there is hearing loss, no echo or a reduced echo is measured.
2. **Automated Auditory Brainstem Response (AABR):** This test measures the brain's response to sound. Small electrodes are placed on the baby's head, and earphones are placed in or around the baby's ears. Sounds are played, and the electrodes measure the brain's response to these sounds. A normal response indicates normal hearing, while no response suggests hearing loss.

Early detection through these screenings allows for timely intervention, which can help children with hearing loss achieve normal or near-normal speech, language, and hearing milestones. Introducing this cutting-edge technology at the Family Birthing Center underscores our commitment to providing comprehensive and compassionate care to our youngest patients.

The LOR Foundation in Cortez also generously provided funds to the Family Birthing Center to acquire a new Panda Warmer for maternal-infant care.

Family Birthing Center at SHS proudly introduced the Panda Warmer, a state-of-the-art piece of equipment designed to provide a warm and comfortable environment for newborns immediately after birth. The Panda Warmer offers several advanced features that enhance the care we provide to our youngest patients:

- **Direct Heat Application:** The Panda Warmer delivers direct heat to keep newborns warm without the need for overhead heaters, allowing caregivers to interact easily with the infant.
- **Integrated Scale:** With a built-in scale, the Panda Warmer makes it easy to weigh babies without moving them to another device, ensuring minimal disruption.
- **Hands-Free Alarm Silence:** Caregivers can control alarms by simply waving a hand in front of a sensor, maintaining a calm and quiet environment.
- **Full-Color Display:** The warmer's full-color display shows important patient information, such as temperature, weight, and vital signs, in an easy-to-read format.
- **Adjustable Lighting:** Featuring dimmable observation lights and an integrated procedure light, the Panda Warmer allows caregivers to adjust lighting as needed for different tasks.
- **Integrated Resuscitation Systems:** Some models come with built-in resuscitation systems, providing immediate care if necessary.

We are deeply grateful to the LOR Foundation for their generous funding, which made the acquisition of the Panda Warmer and the Newborn Hearing Screener possible. Their commitment to improving healthcare services in our region is deeply appreciated and will have a lasting impact on the well-being of our youngest patients and their families.



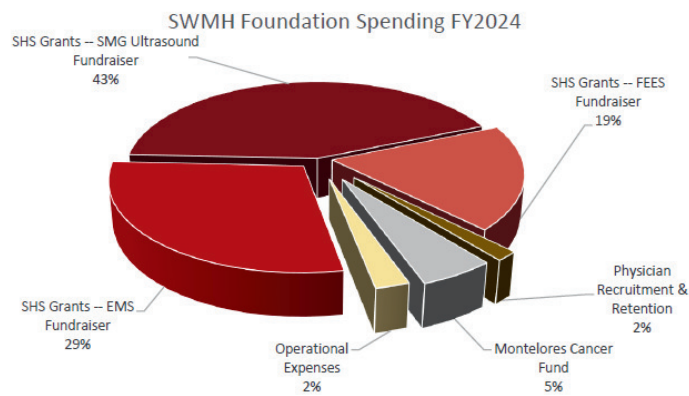
Southwest Memorial Hospital Foundation

The Southwest Memorial Hospital (SWMH) Foundation aims to back Southwest Health System, Inc. in delivering top-notch, easily accessible healthcare to Montezuma County residents and neighboring regions. Additionally, it strives to aid in the recruitment and retention of medical professionals, acquire new equipment and furnishings, maintain effective and efficient emergency care, and offer other services in collaboration with the hospital.

Southwest Memorial
Hospital
Foundation



In 2024, the SWMH Foundation welcomed four new board members, completing the foundation's board. The team quickly began focusing on fundraising efforts and setting annual goals.



In 2024, the Foundation successfully supported various entities. While a significant portion of assistance was directed towards three fundraisers, it also contributed to the Montelores Cancer Fund by granting ten awards to patients battling cancer in Montezuma and Dolores County. Additionally, the Foundation aided in physician recruitment and retention by offering welcome gifts to eight visiting providers.

In the spring of 2024, the Foundation organized a fundraiser to support a matching grant received by the SHS Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department from the State of Colorado, aimed at acquiring new ambulance equipment. The fundraiser successfully raised \$73,000 for this purpose. To express gratitude to the many generous donors who contributed, the Foundation hosted a Donor Appreciation Event in August, where donors and SHS staff had the opportunity to see the new equipment up close and engage with EMS first responders about their roles and experiences with the new equipment.

In the fall of 2024, the Foundation set another fundraiser goal to raise money for an Obstetric Ultrasound Machine for the Mancos Valley Health Clinic. The Foundation held an Oktoberfest Fundraiser at Wild Edge Brewery and raised their goal of \$80,000.

The Obstetric Ultrasound Machine is set to be operational at the Mancos Valley Clinic in early 2025. This will enable the clinic to offer obstetric care for the very first time.

The Foundation is eager to hit the ground running in 2025. The board aims to raise \$250,000 for SHS while also continuing its support for the Montelores Cancer Fund and the Physician Recruitment and Retention initiatives.



Senior Lunch Program

In 2024, The LOR Foundation and Southwest Health System joined forces to provide lunches and social gatherings for older adults (aged 60 and above) in our community. Bill Stroop initiated the Senior Lunches program to combat loneliness and isolation among older adults.

According to a 2023 U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, about one-in-two adults in America report experiencing loneliness and feeling isolated, invisible, and insignificant. Loneliness is more than just a bad feeling; it is linked to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death. The mortality impact of social disconnection is comparable to smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day.

Recognizing the dangers of social isolation and the healing power of social connection and community, The LOR Foundation and Southwest Health System took action to create opportunities for older adults to connect with others. Sharing a meal is a fundamental way humans have connected since the earliest days of humankind.

Thanks to a generous grant from The LOR Foundation and the hospitality of Southwest Health System, older adults (aged 60+) enjoyed delicious meals at a significantly reduced price throughout 2024. The program subsidized up to 3,000 meals for participating seniors. With additional funding secured, the program will continue in 2025.



Walk with a Doc

In the summer of 2024, Southwest Health System joined forces with the Walk with a Doc organization to host a monthly organized walk led by our healthcare providers for community members.

Walk with a Doc is a nonprofit dedicated to inspiring communities through movement and conversation. Founded in 2005 by Dr. David Sabgir, a board-certified cardiologist in Columbus, Ohio, the program has since expanded to hundreds of chapters globally.

Jennifer Gero, Chief Medical Officer of Southwest Health System, spearheads this initiative alongside several of our providers. On the third Saturday of each month, they meet with participants from the community for a 30-minute walk, either around the park or on the indoor walking track at the Rec Center. They also conduct brief discussions on various healthcare topics.

Southwest Health System is eager to continue these walks in 2025.



SHS COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Every year, SHS aims to give back to the community by sponsoring events, donating to charities, supporting our schools, and organizing toy drives. In 2024, SHS introduced a new process that enabled the community to present their events to the health system by submitting a form with their event details. This approach allowed different staff members to evaluate each request and allocate funds for support.

In 2024, SHS contributed \$18,400 to the community through sponsorships and donations.

High Desert DEVO - Mountain Film	Pretty in Pink Fashion Show	Montezuma-Cortez High School
100 Club of Montezuma 5th Annual First Responder Golf Tournament	Four Corners Child Advocacy Gala	Mancos High School
Hospice of Montezuma Golf Tourney	RISE Southwest Suicide Awareness Walk	Dolores High School
BurroFest	Tour De Shield	Dove Creek High School
Fair Ground Speedway	Mancos Days	Southwest Open High
Southwest Colorado Concerts	Dove Creek Pick-N-Hoe	Montezuma County Fair Livestock Auction
Montezuma School to Farm 15th Anniversary Celebration	Escalente Days	Ute Mountain Rodeo
Dolores Rodeo Series and 4-H	Everybody Easts Annual Fundraiser	Four Corners Indigenous Art Market
Ute Mountain Mesa Verde Birding Festival	Montezuma Land Conservancys 4th Annual Cross-Cultural Programs Fall Event	Cortez Fireworks - Cortez Fire Department
Cortez Chamber of Commerce	Mancos Chamber of Commerce	Dolores Chamber of Commerce

Visits from Elected and Appointed Officials

U.S Senator John Hickenlooper

U.S. Senator John Hickenlooper visited Southwest Memorial Hospital in August to engage with local providers and officials in Cortez regarding the challenges faced by rural healthcare. He emphasized that the government should strive to offer equal quality of care to everyone, whether they reside in a large city or a small town.

Among those present during the visit were: Dr. Jennifer Gero, Chief Medical Officer; Lisa Gates, Chief Nursing Officer; Rachel Medina, Mayor of Cortez; Eric Croke, SHS Board Member; Sean Flaherty, MCHD Board Member; Haley Leonard-Saunders, Director of Public Relations at Axis Health System; Travis Anderson, Montezuma County Administrator; Jim Candelaria, Montezuma County Commissioner; SHS Nurse; Joe Thiene, SHS CEO; and Drew Sanders, City Manager of Cortez.



Each attendee had the opportunity to express their concerns, which were of great importance to them. The shared objective was to enhance services for the residents of Cortez and Montezuma County.

“Being in this room with all of you gives me a leg up in Washington,” stated Hickenlooper (D-Colo.). “You’re empowering me to advocate for your needs.”

Joe Thiene, CEO, remarked, “We were able to share with Senator Hickenlooper how our community collaborates to provide exceptional care close to home. The Senator is working with us to secure federal funding for our infrastructure projects. It truly requires the collective effort of our community and our elected officials to ensure that patients receive world-class care near their homes.”

STATE SENATOR CLEAVE SIMPSON VISITS SHS

On October 8th, Southwest Health System had the privilege of welcoming Senator Cleave Simpson (District 6) to our hospital. Our Senator was able to see firsthand the positive impacts that investments in rural healthcare delivery have and the need for further investments. Senator Simpson toured through the new hospital addition and looked at some of the infrastructure that needs updating. We discussed some of the impacts of legislation passed in Colorado over the past several years as well as important priorities for the upcoming legislative session, including the Colorado Rural Futures project. Senator Simpson has been an advocate for rural communities & local healthcare. He has always made time to listen and ask questions about legislation that is being considered in Denver. It was an honor to have Senator Simpson visit our facility and meet with some of our staff.

Visits from Elected and Appointed Officials

Regional Director Lily Griego

Regional Director, Lily Griego, at the US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) in Denver, visited SW Colorado on Monday, September 9th. Southwest Health System hosted Lily as she met with several people from the SHS Board, the SWMH Foundation Board, the Senior Leader Team, the Senior Friends group, and the League of Women Voters.

Director Griego addressed many topics from Secretary Xavier Becerra's priorities for HHS including:

- Addressing the Mental Health Crisis, strengthening Behavioral Health: Roadmap for the integration of Behavioral Health
- Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis: The White House Blueprint to Address Maternal Health Disparities
- Health Equity: HHS Equity Plan
- Access to Healthcare
- Access to affordable Health Insurance: New HHS Report Shows National Uninsured Rate Reached All-Time Low in 2023 After Record-Breaking ACA Enrollment Period
- COVID-19 and preparedness for future potential health emergencies
- Federal Funding Opportunities



WESTERN HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE ANNUAL SUMMIT

At this year's Western Healthcare Alliance Annual Summit Joe Theine, CEO, and Caitlin DeCrow, Compliance Manager, Quality Project Navigator, had the opportunity to lead a presentation during the Trend Forum. "Change Management: A mini case study on leading at a critical access hospital", featured sharing ideas and concepts for leading in the few months of a new position. The case study was based partly on events when Joe started as the CEO at SHS. Several SHS leaders and one of our board members were in the audience.



Maddie Wright, Quality/Risk Manager/Infection Preventionist, one of our SHS leaders in the audience said this about the presentation, "Being in the crowd and watching Joe and Caitlin educate and interact with everyone at the WHA conference was inspiring. When they started the case review it was interesting to hear all of the people at my table from different hospitals and their different opinions on what actions they would take and what they felt was important. At the end of their presentation, everyone at my table and in the room was in awe of the growth we have been able to achieve at SHS."

Dan Wilford Award Nominee and Physical Therapy Educator of the Year

Staci Cost, DPT, Physical Therapist, was the recipient of the 2024 SHS nomination to the CHC Wilford Award. The Dan Wilford Award for Compassion and Community Service, first instituted in 2010 by the Community Hospital Corporation (CHC), recognizes individuals who demonstrate remarkable concern for the welfare and happiness of patients, significant contributions to the improvement of their community's health and welfare, a level of commitment to community service beyond the daily operation of the facility, extraordinary acts of kindness, a positive effect on others, and competent, consistent, and people-oriented day-to-day performance.



Staci was nominated by her colleagues, who said, "This year as a department, the Rehab staff at Southwest Health System nominates Lead Physical Therapist, Staci Cost, DPT, for the 2024 Dan Wilford Award for Compassion and Community Service. Staci consistently shows her compassion for all people, but especially her patients and coworkers, by always putting these people before herself and ensuring that they get the best care and resources to feel better and be better. She strives to do the best work that she can on a daily basis, moving patients up to start care early, assisting other therapists with treatments, and going out of her way to help patients and coworkers accomplish their goals. Staci is the type of person to go above and beyond in her job and personal life to make other's lives easier, even if it complicates her own. It is our belief that you would have a difficult time finding another person who is more caring and compassionate on all levels than Staci."



In addition, Staci Cost was selected as the 2024 Outstanding Physical Therapy Clinical Educator of the Year by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Colorado Chapter. "Staci dedicates a lot of her time to create a great space for our students to learn, grow, and have not just a great experience at work, but in our community," said Brenton Wright.

Staci is an active member of the Regis Clinical Education Advisory Board and CU PT Clinical Education Rural Advisory Board. She shares her expertise with the Regis and CU Clinical Team and offers support and educational improvements for all Colorado DPT Clinical Education programs.

"Students who have been lucky enough to be under her mentorship during clinical education experiences always return speaking with great enthusiasm about the quality experience Staci provides," said Jill Flaherty, President of the Colorado Chapter of the APTA. Congratulations, Staci, on being named the PT Educator of the Year!

Congratulations on an amazing year, Staci!

SHS Employee Recognition Program

Southwest Health System appreciates the dedication of every SHS Employee, recognizing those who go above and beyond to fulfill the mission of providing exceptional healthcare to the community. All SHS Employees, including Staff, Physicians, and Contract Employees, are eligible for acknowledgment. Each month, the Employee Recognition committee reviews "Caught in the Act" nominations to select an Employee of the Month, while a Leader of the Quarter is chosen quarterly. Honorees are celebrated each month and quarter. At the end of the year, a Leader of the Year and an Employee of the Year is selected from the pool of Employees of the Month and Leaders of the Quarter. Each recognized employee through "Caught in the Act" receives a \$10 reward, and SHS staff will receive an email detailing the nominations.

2024 Leader of the Year



2024 Employee of the Year



SHS Employee Recognition Program

Leaders of the Quarter in 2024

<p>Leader of the Quarter 1st Quarter - 2024</p> <p>Thank you for your hard work. You are an Inspiration.</p>  <p>Chuck Krupa, Southwest Health System's Chief Information Officer</p>	<p>Leader of the Quarter 2nd Quarter - 2024</p> <p>Thank you for your hard work. You are an Inspiration.</p>  <p>Deanna Wilson, Southwest Health System's Director of Patient Financial Services and Patient Access</p>
<p>Leader of the Quarter 3rd Quarter - 2024</p> <p>Thank you for your hard work. You are an Inspiration.</p>  <p>Lindsay Gaasch, Southwest Health System's Clinical Coordinator of the Surgery Department</p>	<p>Leader of the Quarter 4th Quarter - 2024</p> <p>Thank you for your hard work. You are an Inspiration.</p>  <p>Matt Lindsay, Southwest Health System's EMS Director in the Ambulance Department</p>

Employees of the Month in 2024

<p>Employee of the Month January 2024</p>  <p>Heather Hines, Registered Nurse in the Southwest Health System's ICU Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month February 2024</p>  <p>Rachel Corcoran, Speech Therapist in the Southwest Health System's Rehab Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month March 2024</p>  <p>Heather Spahr, Employment Coordinator in the Southwest Health System's Human Resource Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month April 2024</p>  <p>Araceli Ramirez, Physical Therapy Assistant in the Southwest Health System's Rehab Department</p>
<p>Employee of the Month May 2024</p>  <p>Lizette Ornes, Registered Nurse in the Southwest Health System's Surgical Services Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month June 2024</p>  <p>All Taylor, Registered Nurse in the Southwest Health System's ICU Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month July 2024</p>  <p>Edin Hasek, Registered Nurse in the Southwest Health System's Family Building Center</p>	<p>Employee of the Month August 2024</p>  <p>Sofia Hsing, Ultrasound Technologist in the Southwest Health System's Diagnostic Imaging Department</p>
<p>Employee of the Month September 2024</p>  <p>Brianca Baha, Patient Access Representative in the Southwest Health System's Patient Access Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month October 2024</p>  <p>Loren Moore, Pharmacy Technician Southwest Health System Inpatient Pharmacy</p>	<p>Employee of the Month November 2024</p>  <p>Megan Curney, Front Service Worker in Southwest Health System's Food & Nutrition Department</p>	<p>Employee of the Month December 2024</p>  <p>Shelley Williams, Case Management RN Southwest Health System's Case Management Department</p>

Years of Service Recipients

Five years

Andrew Placencio
Caitlynn Lewis
Elena Martinez
Ethan Schwartz
Gennavieve Wilkerson
Heather Bullis
Heather Frazier
Jeffrey Sederlin
Kristi Dennison
Megan Gurney
Michelle Brown
Mikayla Harris
Roxann Joe
Scott Hoehn
Tiffany Cheney
Zoe Nutt

Ten years

Heidi Larrick
Karen Hubley
Kaitlin Kennedy
Katherine Fletcher
Lindsey Gaasch
Randy Davidson

Fifteen years

Bill Alexander
Mischelle Jordan
Martha Whaley
Veronica Sam
William Graves

Twenty years

Felicita Vigil
John Hughes
Matthew Lindsay

Twenty-five years

Louis Lock

Thirty years

Joe Gurule
Loretta Combs

Thirty-five years

Cynthia Hutchinson

Forty-five years

Elaine Powell

Patient Testimonials

SMG WALK-IN CARE

I can easily say that Dr. Stanwix is one of the best doctors I have ever had. She has incredible listening skills and eye contact. She makes you feel like you are her only patient. She is extremely knowledgeable and immediately takes care of your needs. She is very empathetic and not only remedies the situation but teaches you what is wrong and how to fix it. If you do exactly what she says.. you will be cured. She is incredible and definitely an asset to her patients as well as the hospital. She definitely has a special gift. Hats off!!

The entire staff was very helpful and compassionate and kind in treating my 8-year-old daughter from the reception staff to the nurse or MA. And then the doctor, Jeff, was very kind to my daughter and diligent in treating her. And then aftercare was really awesome, too. So thank you.

SMG SPECIALTY CARE

Always so grateful for care here in our rural setting. Dr Jetter has great energy and kindness too! I can tell he loves his work!!!! We are very fortunate to have another great doctor join the team.

Ariel did an amazing job checking in on my insurance. Sarah and Aubrey were great at the check-in process and getting x-rays done and gathering a history for my daughter. Dr. Jones did a great job discussing the options that we had for our healthcare. This team is a great asset to our community.

SMG PRIMARY CARE

I had an excellent experience with Shawn Palmer. Actually, the whole crew from the minute I walked in, and then the person in Sean's office who took my blood pressure. People were professional, they were courteous, and they were also friendly. And you could tell they were listening. And I just really enjoyed being able to talk to Shawn about my health and my body and get his ideas on things.

This was an excellent experience at SW Medical Group beginning with the check-in clerks to the doctor. I saw the check-in staff go to great lengths to be courteous and accommodating to a Hispanic lady who did not speak English. Dr Mullen was detailed in her knowledge and medical questions and seemed very caring as well.

SMG WOMEN'S HEALTH

My visit was easy to schedule. The provider was amazing. All the positive things that I've heard about the Women's Health Clinic at SHS are known to be accurate and I'm super excited to have that service available to us in our community in Cortez. Thank you.

Absolutely amazing care! A c-section was something I dreaded and feared. I wanted nothing more than a natural birth but because my baby was breech, a c-section was the safest option. Dr. Kaplan promised to make my baby's birth as close to a natural birth as she could through a c-section and she delivered on all fronts! My baby's birthday was a celebration in the OR! I breastfed immediately, received delayed cord clamping, and was allowed to watch my baby being born. I could not have asked for a more beautiful experience. And all this with my husband and doula present. Dr. Kaplan kept me and my baby safe while giving me the experience of my dreams.

SMG WOUND CARE

Wendy is very thorough. She is very direct and she is very professional in what she is working on. So I really appreciate her services and the receptionist, they did well, just as well. They treated me with kindness and they tried to get me in on my appointment dates and time. So thank you.

Patient Testimonials

SMG MANCOS VALLEY CLINIC

I can't say enough good things about the Mancos clinic! Very good staff and provider. They all take the time to listen to my concerns and help out. Whatever Southwest Health is doing to provide services is working really well! Thanks again.

The Mancos clinic is run in a very organized and efficient manner. The staff is kind and courteous and always communicates effectively with the patients and providers. Karen has always provided exceptional care and includes her patients in their healthcare goals and treatment plans.

SMG PEDIATRICS

Dr. Tarpey is hands down the BEST doctor we have ever had the pleasure of working with! She is thorough and she actually cares! I am so glad that she is here and is our doctor for our kids!

Dr. Tarpey is the most caring and thorough doctor you could ask for and the staff is awesome and accommodating even at the last minute and I appreciate all of you.

SOUTHWEST MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

My dad was admitted on October 25th. I came from Georgia and arrived on October 27th. Every person I encountered during his stay was phenomenal. Very attentive and accommodating. Easy to talk to and informative. The charge nurse, Erin, in ICU most especially. But really everyone was fantastic. Daddy passed on 10/29 and the awful situation that it was for us was handled with such dignity and care from the staff. I would not hesitate to bring anyone to this hospital if the need arose. Also, the cafeteria food was really decent. Thank you to all the ICU staff who helped us during my dad's end of life. We will never forget your kindness.

Every visit I have had at Southwest Memorial Hospital has been excellent. From the welcoming receptionists to the excellent doctors and everyone in between, I have experienced nothing but courtesy, kindness, a sense of humor and professional caliber work. Thank you everyone at SWMH!

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

My ER experience was top-notch. I had to go on twice in 24 hours and both visits went very well. I would like to shout out the following staff member: Elaine Powell, she is the absolute best nurse at SWMH. Her knowledge and professionalism is outstanding and commendable. Kati Anderson was always on top of my care and very attentive. Dr. Davidson was very thorough and paid attention to every detail to diagnose my problem. Salem was attentive and professional as well. Hope, Ashley, and Joel in DI were great. Dr. Farr was extremely attentive, and thorough and I could tell he was concerned about my condition and got me accepted to a higher level of care quickly and efficiently. I have no complaints about my care and feel confident that if I have to come in again I'll be in good hands.

The team was very helpful, friendly, cheerful, and considerate, answered all our questions, gave us good advice, and called in the prescription as promised. We're grateful that we had the opportunity to meet the doctor and the nurses there. Everybody treated us very fine. Thank you so much.

SAME DAY SURGERY

Having someone who knew my name open the door to the surgical suite within 30 seconds of me pushing the buzzer was highly reassuring- a highly professional beginning to the experience. Many thanks for that.

Everyone from the person who registered me to the nurses and doctors was very professional and friendly. No one likes to have medical procedures but Southwest made it as pleasant as possible.

Southwest Health System



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THANK YOU !

Southwest Health System expresses gratitude to the community, board members, and stakeholders for entrusting SHS with the care of themselves and their families in 2024. SHS achieved significant progress this year and is looking forward to what 2025 has in store.

