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# *A Life* **GAINED**

Patient finds that weight loss surgery yields many benefits

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Meg Appel, with her dog, Gus, has a new lease on life after undergoing weight loss surgery.

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# FOLLOW THE LEADER

## Your Experience Matters to Us

Do you ever wonder what happens to feedback you give on a survey? Almost all industries use surveys to gauge how they are performing, and healthcare is no different. We are constantly learning from our patients and striving to improve every aspect of our patients' experiences, from parking to discharge and everything in between. See the story at right to learn more about how Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) handles survey data.

Of course, a large part of the patient experience has to do with the care we provide. In the area of constant improvement, we have recently added the da Vinci Xi® robot to our surgical team. Our physicians are able to perform more complex cases through smaller incisions, reducing recovery time, pain and length of hospital stay. See page 5 to read about a patient's experience with robotic surgery.

Improvement goes beyond our front door. What happens in our community matters to us, and the national opioid crisis is very real in Virginia. IFOH is committed to finding alternate treatments appropriate for use in place of narcotic pain medicines. Read more on page 4.

Here's to a happy and healthy 2018!



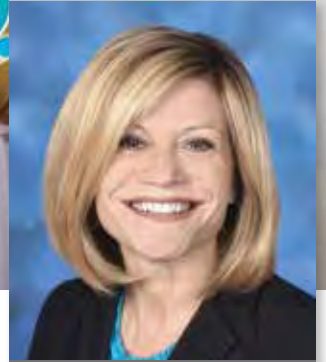
**JOHN FITZGERALD**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Inova Fair Oaks Hospital



HEALTH BEAT

### ● SURVEYS

# Focus on the Patient EXPERIENCE



**Julie Hudtloff**  
Senior Patient Experience Leader

## Inova uses survey data to improve processes and communication

Receiving a patient satisfaction survey after a hospital stay or procedure is a common occurrence for people across the country, including those who've come to Inova. But what happens to that data? Julie Hudtloff, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital's (IFOH's) Senior Patient Experience Leader, answers some questions about the survey and why it matters:

### WHO RECEIVES A PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY?

We survey inpatients and outpatients about their experiences at our hospital. Patients are randomly selected and receive the survey via postal mail or email. Oftentimes, we ask for feedback from patients while they're still in the hospital, too.

### WHAT KIND OF DATA IS COLLECTED?

Patients are asked for their feedback on a variety of topics including how well we're communicating, responsiveness of staff, discharge planning, cleanliness, food and overall experience. We contract with a third-party vendor,

which distributes the surveys, tabulates the data and allows us to review the feedback daily.

### ARE SURVEYS THE ONLY TOOL FOR GETTING PATIENT AND FAMILY FEEDBACK?

No, surveys are just one of the tools we use. We routinely speak with patients while they are here to find out what's working and address any issues in real time. We also include patients in focus groups and conduct follow-up phone calls.

### DOES THE DATA DRIVE CHANGES IN ANY WAY?

Definitely. We take patient and family feedback very seriously, and we use

that information to guide process improvement, recognize team members and steer educational development. We are always looking for ways to improve the patient experience, and these surveys help keep us on track.

### HOW DOES IFOH RATE COMPARED TO OTHER HOSPITALS?

Very well. We are consistently a top performer when compared to our peer hospitals across the country!

### SEE HOW WE PERFORM

To view hospital survey results, please visit [medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://medicare.gov/hospitalcompare).

# Tailor-Made FOR KIDS

Pediatric urgent care centers provide distinctive, child-centered services

As every parent knows all too well, children's illnesses and injuries are not limited to doctors' office hours. Until recently, the only option for nights and weekends was the emergency room (ER), which could come with long waits for minor incidents.

That's why Inova's pediatric urgent care centers — in Tysons, Dulles South and Springfield — are a welcome option for patients, parents and pediatricians. While all Inova Urgent Care Centers accept pediatric patients, these locations have specially trained pediatric providers on-site during designated hours.

"Having a pediatric-focused center goes a long way toward providing services that make kids feel comfortable, and really treats the whole family," says Director of Clinical Operations Mara Carter.

The centers offer a range of benefits:

- Staff are specially trained in pediatric emergency medicine, so they're experienced in taking care of a wide array of injuries and illnesses.



- Exam rooms and waiting areas are child-friendly, with colorful artwork, iPads loaded with games, and kid-sized furniture. This environment helps children feel more comfortable and significantly reduces their anxiety about being in a healthcare setting.
- There is transportation to Inova Children's Hospital or to the pediatric ER at Inova Loudoun or Inova Fair Oaks hospital, if needed.
- On-site diagnostic imaging is available.

Another major advantage is that the pediatric urgent care centers are connected to all the resources of Inova, adds Medical Director B. Jill McCabe, MD. "We are able to access specialists, if needed, so you have comprehensive care," she says. "These centers provide a higher level of services for children and their families."

## WE KNOW IT'S URGENT

Just walk in or reserve your spot ahead of time at [inova.org/urgentcare](http://inova.org/urgentcare).

# INNOVATIVE Approach

## New technology improves prostate cancer treatment

Prostate cancer patients at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) will now have the option of a new form of treatment: high-intensity focused ultrasound

(HIFU), a technology that's been used successfully in other parts of the world and gained approval in the United States a few years ago.

HIFU uses high-frequency waves that can traverse the rectal wall without damaging the tissue there, yet have a powerful enough impact on cancerous cells to destroy tumors. Unlike traditional prostate cancer surgery, there are no incisions or punctures to get to the prostate gland. Instead, an ultrasound probe is inserted, and the waves radiate to the cancer, according to Domingo Suatengco, MD, an Inova urologist.

About 150,000 patients have undergone HIFU therapy in Europe, Asia, South

America and Canada, he says. The treatment is likely to become popular in the U.S. as well, since it offers major advantages.

"It's minimally invasive, has a low risk of complications, with short recovery time and relatively little pain," says Dr. Suatengco. "It's just terrific."

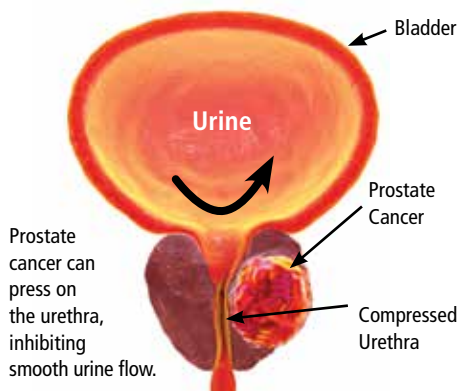
Currently, he and three other doctors at IFOH are certified to use the technology necessary for the HIFU procedure, and several others are also working on obtaining certification.

Detecting prostate cancer in earlier stages is critical as the HIFU technology is even more effective on smaller tumors.

"We are focusing on better detection and better treatment for prostate cancer," Dr. Suatengco notes.

## THE EXPERTS

Learn about Inova cancer care and treatment at [inova.org/cancer](http://inova.org/cancer).



# NEW PRESCRIPTION FOR PAIN

## ED reduces use of opioids as first-line therapy

In response to a nationwide increase in opioid addiction, the Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) Emergency Department (ED) launched the Opioid Safety Initiative Committee last January. The program was established to scale back the use of opioid orders in the ED and help patients explore effective alternative regimens.

“Pain is a major symptom of up to 42 percent of patients who come to the emergency room, and it has always been our focus to control pain aggressively,” says Alexander-Nicholas Sutingco, MD, Director of the IFOH ED. “Given the increase in opioid use, both nationwide and here in Fairfax County, we have formed an initiative to look at other ways of managing pain.”

The IFOH ED is striving to eliminate opioid dependency by educating emergency personnel about alternative therapies that may provide effective relief both in the ED and after a patient is discharged from the hospital. The initiative is largely based on Alternatives to Opioids (ALTO), a program supported



by the American College of Emergency Physicians promoting appropriate substitutes for narcotic pain medicines.

“Education is a large component of the program,” says Dr. Sutingco. “We want our providers to know that a lot of painful conditions can be managed with non-opioid treatments.”

When a patient comes into the ED with severe dental pain, for example, an ultrasound-guided nerve block may be used to numb the pain in place of a narcotic. During an uncomfortable procedure, the team may use nitrous

oxide, a mild sedative that provides relief from pain and anxiety. Low back pain can be numbed with oral and topical painkillers, as well as trigger-point injections. Opioids are used only when pain cannot be controlled with alternative techniques.

A patient leaving the hospital may be referred for alternate therapies such as physiatry, chiropractic medicine or therapeutic massage instead of an opioid prescription.

“We are more knowledgeable about the resources in our community, so we’re able to make sure that patients have adequate follow-up and are guided toward the specialist who can ultimately provide definitive care if the patient’s condition does not improve in a few days,” says Dr. Sutingco. “We want to be part of a solution, not part of the problem.”

### Providing a Solution

In 2016, there were more than 100 drug overdose deaths in Fairfax County, the highest of any jurisdiction in Virginia; 80 were opioid-related (compared to 60 in the previous year). The Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) Emergency Department’s (ED’s) initiative to prevent opioid dependency follows the state of Virginia’s new guidelines regulating opioid prescribing and requiring that alternative therapies be recommended prior to prescribing opioids.

“What we hope to achieve is to provide a lot of education so we can decrease opioid disparity patterns,” says Alexander-Nicholas Sutingco, MD, Director of the IFOH ED. “We want to encourage practitioners to first think of alternative therapies to opioids and decrease the risk of opioid dependence.”

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

To learn more about opioid addiction, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov/commissioner/opioid-addiction-in-virginia](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/commissioner/opioid-addiction-in-virginia).



One of the benefits of the da Vinci Xi® is it delivers 3-D high-definition video into the viewer located at the surgeon's console. Optics mounted at the tip of the endoscope allow the surgeon to see anatomical structures with crystal-clear definition and natural color.

# ROBOTICS IN ACTION

## Runner takes big strides toward recovery following robotic surgery

Last fall, when Philip Ritcheson got a screening colonoscopy at age 50, he wasn't expecting anything unusual. So when the test came back positive for colorectal cancer, Philip was shocked. "I have been fit and healthy all my life," says Philip, a senior executive in the Department of Defense. "I didn't have any symptoms, and I had just finished running 17 miles a few weeks before to train for a marathon."

Philip was referred to Othon Wiltz, MD, FACS, FASCRS, a colon and rectal surgeon at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH). Dr. Wiltz recommended robotic-assisted surgery, which would ensure a high level of precision and

accuracy, and a speedy recovery. Philip would become the first patient at IFOH to undergo surgery with the hospital's new, state-of-the-art da Vinci Xi® surgical system.

"Dr. Wiltz was very positive and reassuring, and he explained that the procedure with robotics would involve smaller incisions and that he would be in control at all times during the surgery," says Philip, who says he was relieved to be in Dr. Wiltz's care.

The highly trained surgeon fixed the problem using a less-invasive approach so Philip could return to his active lifestyle faster. He removed the right side of Philip's colon and attached the ends of the bowel inside the abdomen.

"He's a very active young man in a vibrant business, and he wanted to get back on his feet quickly. Robotic surgery allowed him to have a quicker recovery, less pain and an earlier discharge from the hospital," explains Dr. Wiltz.

Philip went home two days after surgery and was on the path to a full recovery.

"His prognosis is excellent because he had his screening colonoscopy early, he was taken care of promptly and he has recovered well," says Dr. Wiltz, who adds that Philip may need chemotherapy following pathology report findings.

Walking daily, Philip is glad to be back home with his wife and kids. He's also excited to resume training for next year's marathon.

### Rapid Recovery

Inova Fair Oaks Hospital now offers the latest model of the da Vinci surgical system — the Xi® — featuring 3-D visualization. The leading-edge technology offers numerous benefits over conventional minimally invasive surgery.

"With robotic-assisted surgery, there is less blood loss, patients go home earlier and they recover quicker," says Othon Wiltz, MD.

With its 3-D environment and state-of-the-art instruments, the system offers a higher level of precision than traditional laparoscopy.

"The instruments are articulated, mimicking the hand, so we can do more precise dissection," says Dr. Wiltz. "Another benefit is that the 3-D environment allows greater depth perception."

# A LIFE GA

## Patient finds that weight loss surgery yields many benefits

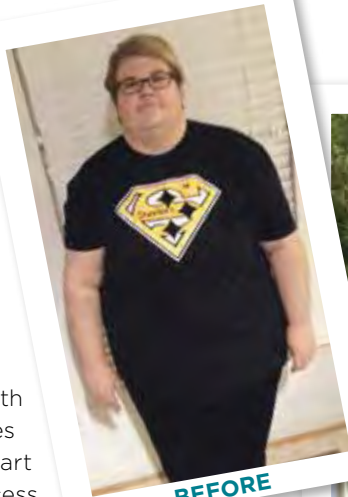
**W**hen Meg Appel and her husband started seeing fertility specialists a few years ago, none of the tests indicated why they were having trouble conceiving. But one doctor brought up a potential issue that wouldn't show up in screenings: Meg's weight.

To increase her chances of getting pregnant, Meg would need to lose a significant amount of weight. She took the doctor's advice to heart and reached out to Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH), which has an extensive bariatric surgery program. In addition to weight loss surgery, there is the Inova Medical Weight Loss Program that pairs patients with physicians, dietitians, nurses and psychologists. It's all part of ensuring long-term success that's tailored to each patient's needs, says Amir Moazzez, MD, a bariatric surgeon at IFOH.

"There is a good deal of education that has to happen before we do something like weight loss surgery," he says. "If you don't address successful eating habits, lifestyle changes and activity levels, then this type of surgery will work only in the short term."

After consulting with Dr. Moazzez, Meg decided to have weight loss surgery, and she went through the educational steps necessary to take her forward — including meeting with a psychologist to discuss emotional triggers for overeating. She also worked with an Inova dietitian to lose some weight before her surgery day.

"Inova helped me to get ready for the surgery on every level: physically, emotionally and mentally," she says. "I understood that this would be altering my body, so I needed time to really



BEFORE



AFTER

Meg Appel, who has lost 160 pounds since her weight loss surgery, and her husband, Jeff, now take walks as their special treats instead of indulging in sugary desserts. Here they are with Gus, their cavalier King Charles spaniel.

think about whether I wanted to do that, and Inova gave me the resources I needed to prepare myself for that."

### MOVING TOWARD CHANGE

Since having her surgery in October 2015, Meg has lost 160 pounds, and she and her husband are much more confident about their fertility options. But what she's found is that the potential for conceiving a child is only one of the many changes that she's experienced since losing the weight.

# INED



She and her husband now find plenty of ways to stay active and are gearing up for their first 5K run, which Meg says never would have happened if she had maintained that heavier weight. They also eat much better, and now their “treats” are going for walks or hikes instead of sharing sugary desserts.

“I’m so grateful for the Inova program,” says Meg. “They do a wonderful job of getting you prepared in every way for such a major life change. And they do it in a way that focuses on long-term success, not just on post-surgery changes.”

## Meet new bariatrician Patricia McClendon, MD

As a primary care physician joining Inova in 2014, Patricia McClendon, MD, began to realize that many of her patients shared a common condition, even when their diagnoses were very different. She was treating hypertension, diabetes, sleep apnea and other issues that could be lessened or even cured by addressing patient obesity.



“Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) has such an excellent, comprehensive bariatrics program, and when I thought about how my patients could benefit, I realized I wanted to be part of helping them,” she says.

After becoming board-certified, Dr. McClendon became the newest bariatrician at IFOH in September. She’s been thrilled with the shift because she loves being part of patient success stories.

“Obesity rates have risen dramatically in the last decade, but with the right tools and resources, like what we offer at Inova, we can do our part to bring those numbers down,” she says. “I’m already finding it very rewarding to be a bariatrician.”

## RECOGNIZED FOR WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

With its nationally recognized and comprehensive bariatric surgery program, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital is committed to tailoring weight loss treatment to each patient. Surgeons at Inova have performed more than 8,000 bariatric procedures. Learn more at [inova.org/weightloss](http://inova.org/weightloss) or call 703.348.4716.

## EFFECTS OF OBESITY

Dr. Moazzez adds that many people who are obese may not realize how much weight is affecting every aspect of life, from sleeping poorly to spending less time with family to boosting risks for serious medical conditions like diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

Meg knows that even with her weight loss, obesity is a lifelong condition that requires support and resources so she doesn’t fall back into the emotional traps that brought her to Inova in the first place.

“Weight loss surgery helped me a great deal, but it wasn’t the only thing that allowed me to lose weight,” she says. “It’s a tool that’s part of a larger program, geared toward helping patients improve their quality of life. It has truly helped set me on a better path.”

Inova is a not-for-profit healthcare system located in Northern Virginia in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, serving over 2 million people with over 1,700 licensed beds. It consists of five hospitals including the area's only Level 1 Trauma Center and Level 4 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Inova encompasses many health services including the internationally recognized Inova Heart and Vascular Institute (IHVI), Inova Translational Medicine Institute (ITMI), Inova Neuroscience Institute, Inova Schar Cancer Institute and Inova Children's Hospital. Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research. More information about Inova is at [inova.org](http://inova.org).

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# WELCOME, NEW PROVIDERS!

Here are new healthcare professionals who have joined the Inova Fair Oaks Hospital medical staff in recent months:

NAME	DEPT/SECTION	NAME	DEPT/SECTION
John Deeken, MD	Hematology/Oncology	Jamie Obedobel, CRNA	Anesthesiology
Kristin Huenink, NP	Medicine	Maureen O'Dea, MD	Ophthalmology
Susie Q. Lew, MD	Nephrology	Tina Palman, CRNA	Anesthesiology
Rita McGauvran, NP	Cardiology	Joan Schiller, MD	Hematology/Oncology
Ehsan Nobakht-Haghighi, MD	Nephrology	Violetta Sola, PA	Orthopedic Surgery
Lavanya Nutanklava, MD	Infectious Disease	Dongjin Sung, MD	Hospitalist



**We value your feedback.** Visit [inhealth-survey.questionpro.com](http://inhealth-survey.questionpro.com) to fill out a brief survey about *InHealth* and enter yourself into a \$50 gift card drawing.

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## Find a Physician



Looking for a doctor? Visit [inova.org/physicians](http://inova.org/physicians) or call our 24/7, bilingual physician-referral service at **1.855.My.Inova (1.855.694.6682)** to find one close to home or work.

## Subscribe Now!



Sign up to receive e-newsletters about health topics and programs at [inova.org/subscribe](http://inova.org/subscribe).

## Ask the Expert



Find a FREE Ask the Expert lecture on a health topic that interests you at [inova.org/AskTheExpert](http://inova.org/AskTheExpert).

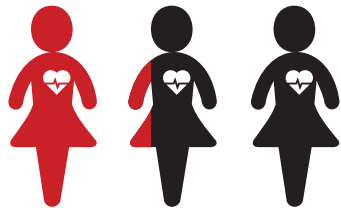
## Baby Time



Schedule a tour or complete online registration for your OB admission at [inova.org/baby](http://inova.org/baby).



More than **1 in 3 female adults** have some form of cardiovascular disease.



## WOMEN AND HEART DISEASE

Causes and symptoms of heart disease can be strikingly different between the sexes. As a result, women are more vulnerable to slower diagnosis and inadequate treatment. The Inova Center for Women's Cardiovascular Health focuses on assessing and managing the unique cardiovascular needs of women.

Recent data from the American Heart Association show heart attacks strike more women than men in this country, and death rates from cardiovascular disease remain higher among women than men. Women who suffer heart attacks also tend to have longer hospital stays and more complications than the average male patient.

"Dedicated women's heart programs consisting of heart health counseling and treatment can have a dramatic and lasting impact," says interventional cardiologist Kelly Epps, MD, FACC, who directs the Inova Center for Women's Cardiovascular Health. "At Inova, we have created a multidisciplinary team focused on personalized cardiovascular risk assessment, education and disease management throughout the lifespan of a woman."

# FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

## CAMPAIGN PROMOTES SMART HEALTH CHOICES

Making healthy choices and managing health conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure, can prevent heart disease. Controlling and preventing risk factors is especially important for people who already have heart disease.

## JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Inova Heart and Vascular Institute (IHVI), a leader in treating heart disease, would like to encourage people to make a commitment to their heart health. The American Heart Association's (AHA's) Healthy for Good™ campaign offers tips, tools and other user-friendly information to help people make lasting changes to their health and well-being.

The campaign is based on over 90 years of knowledge cultivated by the AHA. Its four core ideas (shown at left) are: Eat smart. Add color. Move more. Be well. Find out more about the movement and how you can benefit from it at [inovaheart.org/H4G](http://inovaheart.org/H4G).

## SPECIALTY HEART-CARE SERVICES AT IHVI

For those who need assistance in managing risk factors or who need treatment, Inova offers the area's largest network of heart care specialists in the following areas:

- Arrhythmia
- Cardiology
- Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery
- Vascular Medicine and Surgery

**EAT SMART.**



Get ideas for better snacking and delicious recipes, and learn meal planning tips.

**ADD COLOR.**



Add color to every meal and snack, because adding even one more serving of color each day contributes to building a healthier body.

**MOVE MORE.**



Our bodies were built to move, and they need regular activity to be healthy.

**BE WELL.**



For whole-body health, you need to rest, reset and recharge.

Learn more about the Healthy for Good movement at [inovaheart.org/H4G](http://inovaheart.org/H4G).

Find delicious and heart-healthy recipes at [inovaheart.org/recipes](http://inovaheart.org/recipes).