BETTER
Health & Living

A Biannual Magazine from Scotland Health

Fall 2026



Breaking Ground For The Future of Rural Health

Scotland Health's transformative projects expand access, enhance patient care, and strengthen health care close to home

SCOTLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Closer Care. Better by Far.

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Mission and Vision
The Scotland Way defines the culture of Scotland Health. It is the ideal to which we aspire and the way we currently act. We strive to be Better: Better than yesterday, Better than our peers, Better than expected, so that our patients get Better.

Our Mission:
To serve our communities by providing Safe, High-Quality, Compassionate, and Sustainable health care.

Our Vision:
To be the premier rural health care system in the Carolinas.

Our Board of Trustees:
Scotland Health is a not-for-profit, community-owned health care system located in Laurinburg, North Carolina. We are governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of local community members and hospital officials.

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A Message from David Pope

Scotland Health President and CEO

As I reflect on the stories shared throughout this issue, one theme stands out above all others: stewardship.

At Scotland Health, stewardship means making decisions that protect and strengthen health care for the people who depend on us today while ensuring we can meet the needs of future generations.

Healthcare organizations across the country, especially those serving rural communities, are navigating one of the most challenging environments in recent history. Rising costs, workforce shortages, continued pressure on reimbursement, and changes in how healthcare services are funded are creating headwinds that affect providers nationwide. Scotland Health is not immune to these realities. They require difficult decisions, thoughtful planning, and a steadfast commitment to responsible stewardship.

That commitment is evident throughout this magazine.

You will read about major investments in facilities and services, including the new Scotland Surgical and GI Center, expansion of the Scotland Cancer Treatment Center, improvements to diagnostic and imaging services, and continued progress on the new Wagram Family Practice. These projects reflect deliberate choices to strengthen health care access, improve patient care, and position our health system to meet the needs of our region for years to come. At a time when many rural providers are being forced to reconsider investments, we remain focused on making strategic decisions that support the long-term health of our region.

You will also meet outstanding physicians and advanced practice providers who have joined our team, bringing specialized expertise to the communities we serve. Recruiting and retaining talented healthcare professionals remains one of the greatest challenges facing rural healthcare, and we remain committed to ensuring patients can access exceptional care without leaving their local communities.

I am equally proud of the investments we are making in our teammates through leadership development, educational opportunities, workplace safety initiatives, and family-focused benefits. These efforts reflect our belief that caring for our communities begins with supporting the people who serve them every day.

Another important milestone highlighted in this issue is the Rural Health Clinic accreditation earned by four of our primary care practices and Scotland Urgent Care. These designations reflect our commitment to quality, access, and long-term sustainability in the rural communities we proudly serve.

The road ahead will require discipline, adaptability, and continued stewardship. While the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, I remain confident in our future because of the strength of our team, the support of our communities, and our shared commitment to serving others.

Thank you for the trust you place in Scotland Health. It is a privilege to serve this region, and we remain committed to providing safe, high-quality, compassionate, and sustainable care for all who depend on us.

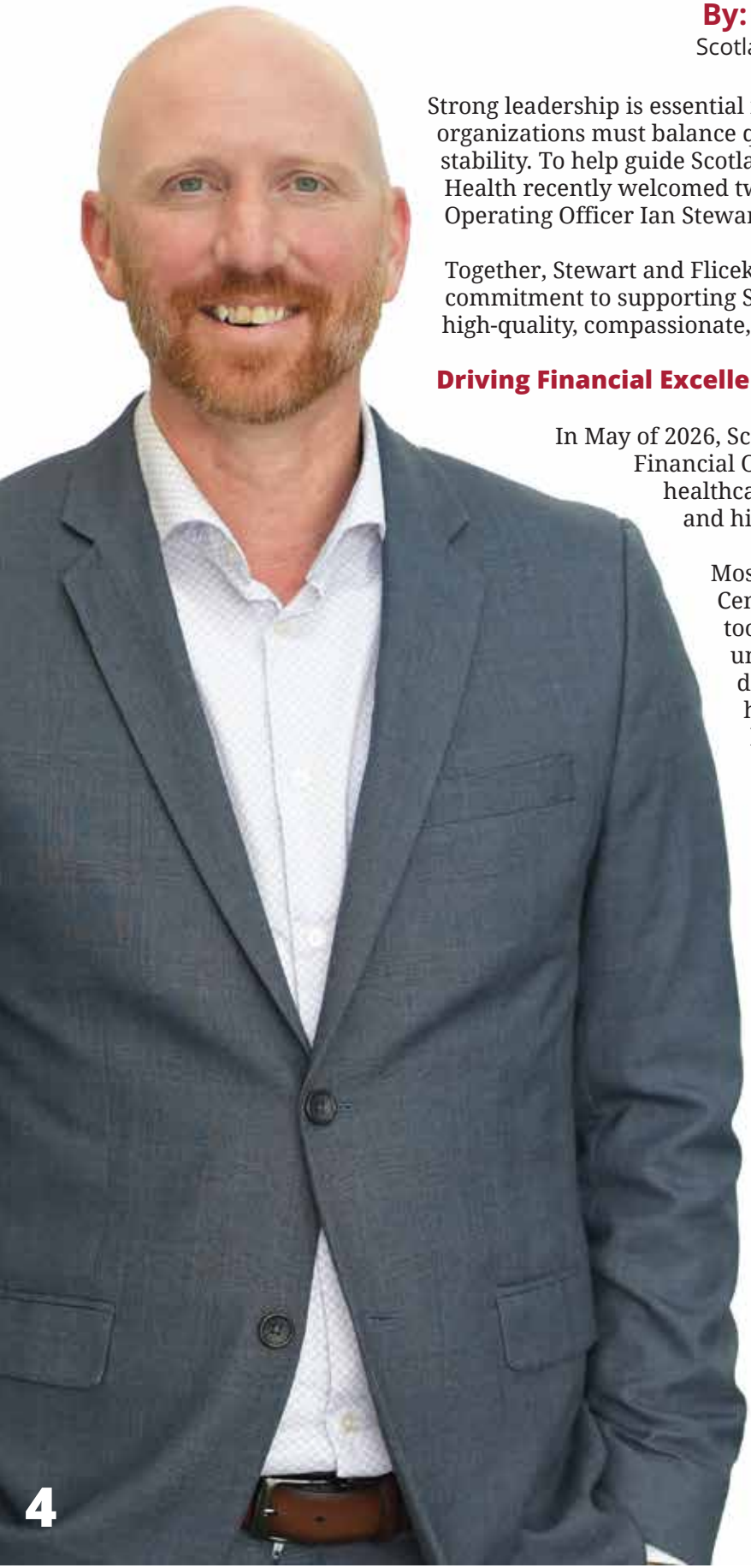


David Pope
President & CEO
Scotland Health Care System

LEADING THE

New Executive Leaders Bring Experience

By: Deon Cranford
Scotland Health Marketing



Strong leadership is essential in today's healthcare environment, where organizations must balance quality patient care, operational efficiency and financial stability. To help guide Scotland Health Care System into its next chapter, Scotland Health recently welcomed two experienced leaders to its executive team: Chief Operating Officer Ian Stewart and Chief Financial Officer Greg Flicek, CPA, MBA.

Together, Stewart and Flicek bring decades of healthcare experience and a shared commitment to supporting Scotland Health's mission of delivering safe, high-quality, compassionate, and sustainable care close to home.

Driving Financial Excellence

In May of 2026, Scotland Health announced Greg Flicek as its new Chief Financial Officer. Flicek brings a diverse background that spans healthcare finance, physician practice management, consulting and higher education.

Most recently, Flicek founded the Healthcare Finance Center, where he developed benchmarking and analytics tools designed to help healthcare leaders better understand performance and make informed strategic decisions. His career has focused heavily on helping hospitals, particularly rural and community-based health systems, remain financially sustainable in an increasingly complex healthcare environment.

Prior to founding the Healthcare Finance Center, Flicek served as Senior Manager at Ascendient Healthcare Advisors, supporting projects involving hospital strategy, mergers and acquisitions, rural sustainability initiatives and certificate of need work throughout North Carolina.

His experience also includes leadership roles at WakeMed Health & Hospitals, where he worked in both finance and operations, including managing eight pediatric physician practices. That combination of financial expertise and operational experience gives him a well-rounded perspective on the challenges healthcare organizations face.

"Greg brings an exceptional blend of financial expertise, operational insight, and strategic perspective," said David Pope, Scotland Health President and CEO. "His experience working alongside executive teams and boards, combined with his understanding of the unique challenges facing rural healthcare organizations, positions him well to help guide Scotland Health through its next phase of growth and innovation."

WAY FORWARD

and Vision to Scotland Health

As CFO, Flicek oversees financial operations, planning and reporting while helping ensure Scotland Health remains fiscally strong and positioned to invest in services, technology and patient care.

Focused on Operations

Ian Stewart joined Scotland Health in February following a national search. A native of Seneca, South Carolina, he brings extensive healthcare operations experience and a track record of leading performance improvement initiatives while maintaining a strong focus on patient-centered care.

Before coming to Laurinburg, Stewart served as Vice President of Operations for Baptist Health in Conway, Arkansas, where he provided oversight for multiple service lines and helped advance strategic and operational priorities throughout the organization. He attended Newberry College and later earned a master's degree from Saint Leo University.

At Scotland Health, Stewart oversees Materials Management, BioMed, Engineering, Environmental Services, Food and Nutritional Services, and Project Management. These departments play a critical role in ensuring caregivers have the resources, technology and support necessary to provide safe, high-quality care for patients every day.

When announcing Stewart's appointment, Pope emphasized the impact of his experience and leadership.

"His experience and strategic mindset will play a key role in advancing our operational priorities," Pope said. "Ian's leadership will help us continue delivering high-quality, patient-centered care across the local communities we proudly serve."

Stewart and his wife, Beatrice, a physical therapist who also joined Scotland Health, recently relocated to the area with their two dogs, Dorothy and Duke. As they continue to settle into the community, Stewart is eager to contribute to the organization's ongoing success and become an active part of the region it serves.

Building for the Future

While their areas of expertise differ, Stewart and Flicek share a common goal: strengthening Scotland Health for the patients and communities it serves. Together, their leadership in operations and finance will help support the organization's strategic priorities while building on a strong foundation of quality, service and compassionate care.

As healthcare continues to evolve, Scotland Health's newest executive leaders bring the experience, vision and commitment needed to help shape the future of healthcare in Scotland and surrounding counties. ■



FROM WOUNDS TO WELLNESS

Building a Better Future For Patients

By: Deon Cranford
Scotland Health Marketing

For many people, a wound is a temporary inconvenience. A scrape, cut or surgical incision heals with time and life moves on. But for others, especially those living with diabetes, poor circulation or other chronic health conditions, a wound can become something far more serious.

That is where the Scotland Wound Healing Center steps in.

Located within the Community Health and Rehabilitation Center on the campus of Scotland Memorial Hospital, the center specializes in caring for chronic and non-healing wounds through a multidisciplinary approach focused on identifying the root cause of a wound, developing a targeted treatment plan, and helping patients avoid life-altering complications. According to the center's guiding philosophy, wound care is about more than treating a symptom. It is about finding the underlying problem and correcting it.

Looking Beyond the Surface

Every wound tells a story.

A diabetic foot ulcer may actually point to uncontrolled blood sugar levels. A chronic leg wound could be a sign of poor circulation. A surgical incision that refuses to heal may reveal an underlying infection or other complication.

While the center does strive to find, treat, and heal the wounds, the main objective is to find out what's causing them.

That investigative approach aligns with the broader mission to prevent recurring wounds by addressing contributing factors such as infection, circulation problems, nutrition and other medical conditions.

The center treats a wide variety of conditions, including diabetic foot ulcers, lower leg ulcers, pressure injuries, osteomyelitis, post-operative infections, radiation-related tissue damage and other wounds that have failed to respond to traditional treatments.

Fighting One of the Region's Biggest Health Challenges

If there is one diagnosis that frequently appears among wound-care patients, it is diabetes. Diabetes can damage blood vessels and reduce circulation, particularly in the lower extremities, making it more difficult for wounds to heal.

Without proper treatment, those wounds can progress rapidly and lead to devastating consequences. Preventing amputations is one of the wound care team's primary goals.

Many patients with chronic wounds and diabetes face the risk of losing a toe, part of a foot or even an entire leg if complications are not managed early and effectively.

Education plays a critical role in that mission. Staff members work closely with patients to help them understand how blood sugar control, wound healing and overall health are closely connected.

Many of the center's patients are unaware of the underlying causes of their wounds or do not fully understand the factors contributing to their condition. By providing education and guidance, the team helps patients take a more active role in managing their health and reducing the risk of serious complications.

Advanced Treatments Close to Home

One of the center's most advanced therapies is hyperbaric oxygen therapy, commonly called HBO therapy.

The Scotland Wound Healing Center operates two hyperbaric chambers that deliver high concentrations of oxygen under pressure. The treatment increases the amount of oxygen reaching damaged tissues, helping promote healing in wounds that have struggled to improve through conventional methods.



Kristie Manuel, LPN of the Scotland Wound Healing Center sits at one of the center's two H-Series Hyperbaric Oxygen Chambers from Sechrist. The chambers are some of the most advanced and convenient chambers on the market.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy can benefit patients with chronic wounds, bone infections such as osteomyelitis and certain complications related to radiation treatment.

Before beginning therapy, patients undergo comprehensive testing to ensure they are appropriate candidates for treatment.

A Team Approach to Healing

Behind every successful outcome is a coordinated team of healthcare professionals working together on behalf of the patient.

The Wound Healing Center partners physicians, nurses, case managers, patient navigators and hyperbaric specialists to ensure patients receive comprehensive care.

Case managers help coordinate testing, monitor progress and work directly alongside physicians to identify barriers to healing.

The center also collaborates extensively with home health agencies, nursing facilities and other providers throughout the region to ensure continuity of care. Patients may receive wound care at home between visits while continuing regular follow-up appointments with the wound care team.

More Than a Wound

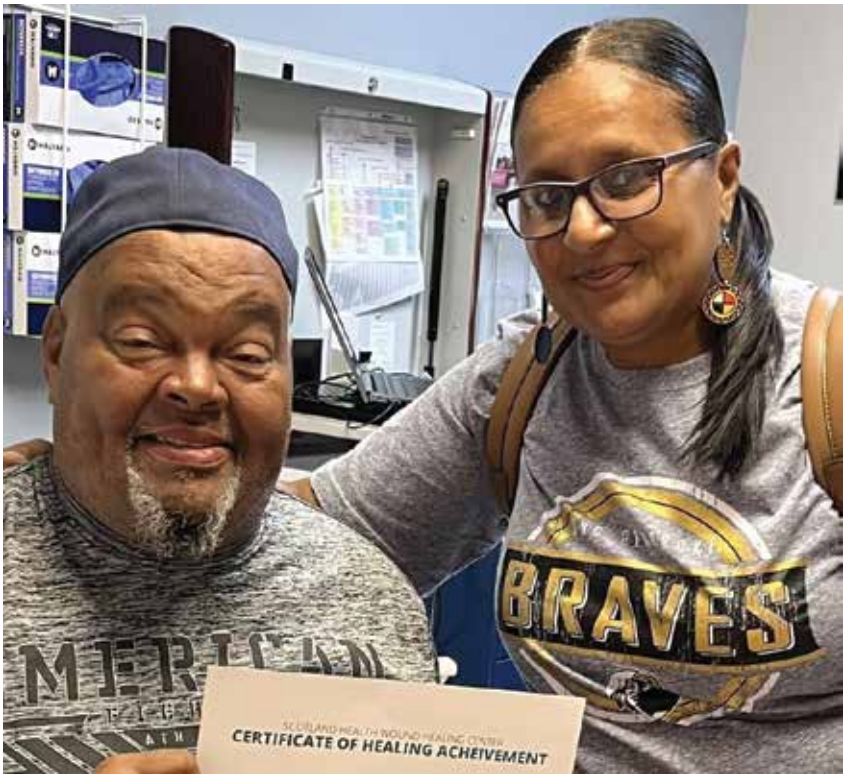
For the center's staff, every wound represents a person whose quality of life may be at risk.

A chronic wound can make it difficult to work, walk, sleep or enjoy daily activities. It can create anxiety, isolation and the fear of losing independence.

That is why the team remains focused on moving patients toward healing as efficiently and effectively as possible.

For patients living with wounds that simply will not heal, that goal can mean the difference between ongoing pain and renewed mobility, between decline and recovery, and in some cases, between keeping or losing a limb.

At the Scotland Wound Healing Center, healing begins by looking deeper, finding the cause and working together to restore health one patient at a time. ■



Celebrating Healing, Together

The Scotland Health Wound Healing Center is helping patients across the region achieve lasting healing through a partnership with Healogics, the nation's leading provider of advanced wound care and hyperbaric oxygen therapy. Together, Scotland Health and Healogics provide specialized, evidence-based care for patients with chronic and non-healing wounds, combining advanced treatment options with compassionate, patient-centered support.

This fall, the center launched a new patient recognition program to celebrate individuals who have successfully completed their healing journey. The initiative honors patients whose dedication, perseverance, and commitment to treatment helped them overcome the challenges often associated with chronic wounds with celebratory announcements on Scotland Health social media.

Healing chronic wounds requires more than addressing the wound itself. The multidisciplinary team at the Scotland Health Wound Healing Center works closely with each patient to identify and manage underlying factors that may contribute to delayed healing or wound recurrence. Through individualized treatment plans and ongoing support, the team strives to give every patient the best opportunity for long-term recovery and improved quality of life.

The healing recognition program serves as a reminder of the life-changing impact of advanced wound care and the determination of the patients who commit to the process. Each patient recognized through the program represents a success story and a milestone worth celebrating.

The Scotland Health Wound Healing Center is proud to recognize these patients and grateful for the opportunity to be part of their journey. Their success reflects the center's mission of helping patients heal, regain independence, and return to the activities that matter most.

Healogics™ SCOTLAND WOUND HEALING CENTER

RAISING THE STANDARD FOR RURAL CARE

Scotland Physicians Network Expands Rural Health Clinic Accreditation Across the Network

By: Tracie Stubbs
Scotland Health Marketing



Scotland Health Care System has reached a significant milestone in its commitment to improving healthcare access across rural communities, with four of its five primary care practices and Scotland Urgent Care now earning Rural Health Clinic (RHC) accreditation through The Joint Commission.

The achievement reflects a systemwide effort to strengthen access to high-quality care close to home for residents across southeastern North Carolina and neighboring communities. Rural Health Clinic accreditation recognizes organizations that meet nationally established standards for patient safety, quality of care, care coordination, and operational excellence while addressing challenges often found in rural healthcare settings.

The journey began in February when Laurinburg Family Practice and Urgent Care became the first Scotland Physicians Network practice to earn the designation. The accreditation marked the beginning of a broader initiative to establish consistent standards across the network.
In May, Maxton Family Practice became the second accredited location, followed by Marlboro Family Practice and Urgent Care, which completed its survey with zero deficiencies. Most recently, Pembroke Family Practice and Urgent Care earned accreditation on September 18, also with zero deficiencies, demonstrating the strength of the clinic's preparation and commitment to quality.

Scotland Health expanded the initiative beyond primary care when Scotland Urgent Care received Rural Health Clinic accreditation in September. The designation reinforces the urgent care center's role in providing convenient, high-quality treatment for illnesses, injuries, and other non-life-threatening conditions.

According to Dr. Shelly Lowery, Chief Medical Officer and Senior Vice President of Ambulatory Practices, the designation supports team-based care, strengthens care coordination, and helps ensure long-term sustainability of healthcare services in underserved communities.

The only Scotland Physicians Network primary care location not yet accredited is Wagram Family Practice, but that delay was intentional. Scotland Health recently broke ground on a new 8,650-square-foot facility in Wagram that will include expanded primary care services, laboratory testing, X-ray capabilities, and an integrated Scotland Health Pharmacy with a drive-thru. Construction is expected to be completed in 2027. Rather than pursue accreditation at the current location, Scotland Health chose to wait until the new facility opens.

For David Pope, president and chief executive officer of Scotland Health, each accreditation strengthens the organization's mission of improving health and well-being throughout the region.

With four accredited primary care clinics, a fifth preparing for certification in a new facility, and Scotland Urgent Care joining the list, Scotland Health continues building a stronger network of care for the rural communities it serves. ■

GROWING TO SERVE

Scotland Health's Transformative Projects Expand Access, Enhance Patient Care, and Strengthen Health Care Close to Home

By: Deon Cranford | Scotland Health Marketing

At Scotland Health Care System, growth is more than construction cranes and blueprints. It is an investment in people, patients, and the future of healthcare across Scotland County and the surrounding region. From expanded clinical facilities and advanced diagnostic services to improved patient experiences and greater access to care, a series of major projects, both recently completed and currently underway, represent one of Scotland Health Care System's most ambitious periods of growth in recent years.

These Phase 3 initiatives touch nearly every corner of the organization, reinforcing Scotland Health's commitment to providing high-quality care close to home while preparing for the needs of a growing community.

Expanding Critical Diagnostic Services

Behind every diagnosis is a laboratory team working to provide accurate and timely results. To support growing demand, Scotland Health is significantly expanding its laboratory services at Scotland Memorial Hospital. The project will increase the laboratory's footprint from 5,504 square feet to 8,484 square feet, creating room for enhanced technology, improved workflows, and increased testing capacity.

The expansion includes new microbiology and histology areas, a modernized blood bank, and additional clinical and support spaces. Once complete, the improvements are expected to streamline operations and improve turnaround times for patients and providers alike.

"This project allows us to significantly increase our diagnostic capacity, improve workflow for our staff, and deliver faster, more accurate results for our patients," said Ian Stewart, chief operating officer for Scotland Health. "It's a critical step in ensuring we continue to meet the growing needs of our community with high-quality, timely care."

Advanced Imaging, Greater Efficiency

Scotland Health is also investing heavily in radiology and imaging services, bringing updated technology to one of healthcare's most essential diagnostic areas. Three aging X-ray rooms are being replaced, including two new suites equipped with advanced fluoroscopy capabilities. These upgrades will provide improved image quality, expanded diagnostic capabilities, and greater efficiency for both patients and care teams.

Strengthening the Hospital's Foundation

While patients often see exam rooms, waiting areas, and clinical departments, many of the systems that support excellent care happen behind the scenes.

Several infrastructure projects are underway at Scotland Memorial Hospital to improve efficiency, accessibility, and operational performance. Plans are in place for a major renovation of the hospital's main entrance, creating a more welcoming and modern arrival experience for patients and visitors.

During construction, access will be maintained through a temporary interior entrance near the Sinclair Dining Room - Scotland Memorial Hospital’s cafeteria.

The hospital is also expanding its loading dock, an essential component of daily operations. The project will improve delivery access, increase supply capacity, and support the efficient movement of equipment and resources throughout the facility.

"The improvements to our loading dock are about strengthening the critical behind-the-scenes operations that keep our hospital running efficiently," Stewart said. "By investing in this infrastructure, we're enhancing our ability to support our clinical teams and ultimately provide better, more reliable care to our patients."

A New Home for Surgical and GI Care

One of the most visible additions to the Scotland Health campus is the new Scotland Surgical & GI facility, located just across Lauchwood Drive from Scotland Memorial Hospital. The 16,000-square-foot building, which includes a state-of-the-art Endoscopy Center, is designed to expand access to specialized surgical and gastrointestinal care while creating a more convenient, patient-centered experience.



Scotland Cancer Treatment Center's Jenna Holfert, manager, and Jennifer Wilkes, director at the July groundbreaking ceremony for the center's new expansion.



The new Scotland Surgical & GI center opened in August across the street from Scotland Memorial Hospital.

The facility features 20 exam rooms, six physician offices, and modern procedure space that will allow providers to care for more patients while offering enhanced comfort and efficiency. A ribbon-cutting ceremony and community open house were held in August.

The new center reflects Scotland Health's continued focus on bringing advanced healthcare services to the communities it serves without requiring patients to travel far from home.

Creating a Better Journey for Cancer Patients

For more than a quarter century, the Scotland Cancer Treatment Center has provided life-changing oncology services for patients throughout the region. As demand for those services continues to grow, Scotland Health is preparing for a significant expansion designed to improve the experience of every patient who walks through its doors. Supported by a $2 million capital campaign led by the Scotland Memorial Foundation, the project includes approximately 3,700 square feet of renovations and more than 7,200 square feet of new construction.

Once completed, patients will benefit from a larger waiting area, additional chemotherapy treatment spaces with private bays, expanded exam and consultation rooms, and a dedicated area for laboratory draws. Upgraded parking and a covered entrance will further enhance convenience and comfort for patients and families during treatment.

The expansion represents an important investment in ensuring cancer patients can continue receiving comprehensive care close to home, surrounded by family, friends, and support systems when they need them most.

Investing in Rural Healthcare Access

Scotland Health's commitment to community care extends beyond Laurinburg. Plans are moving



forward for a new Wagram Medical Complex, an approximately 8,600-square-foot facility that will replace the current Wagram Family Practice location and significantly expand local healthcare services.

The new complex will feature 11 exam rooms, on-site X-ray capabilities, laboratory services and potentially urgent care services in the future. It will also include an in-house pharmacy, something Wagram residents seem to be the most excited about.

Designed with patient comfort and convenience in mind, the facility will create additional capacity for providers while increasing access to healthcare services for residents in northern Scotland County and neighboring communities.

The project reflects a growing need for accessible healthcare in rural areas and reinforces Scotland Health's mission of meeting patients where they are.

A Vision Taking Shape

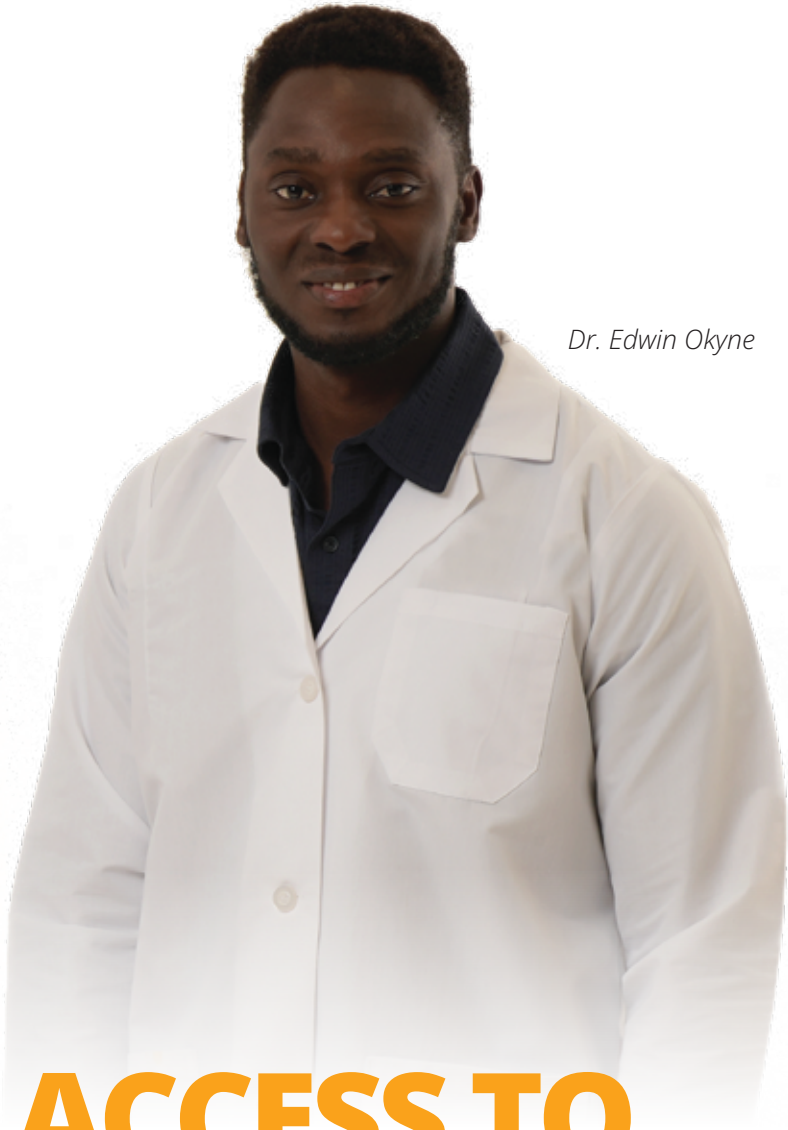
Taken together, these projects represent much more than bricks and mortar. They are a strategic investment in the future of healthcare across the region, ensuring that patients have access to modern facilities, advanced technology, and expanded services for generations to come.

"These construction and expansion efforts reflect Scotland Health's ongoing mission to provide exceptional care close to home," Stewart said. "By investing in modern facilities, expanding services, and enhancing patient experiences, Scotland Memorial Hospital and our many family practice and specialty clinics are well-positioned to continue to grow as the healthcare needs of our communities continue to grow."

As construction progresses and new facilities open their doors, the message is clear: Scotland Health is building not only for today, but for the future health of the communities it proudly serves.



Dr. Cagil Deniz Arslan



Dr. Edwin Okyne

GROWING ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED KIDNEY CARE

Scotland Health Welcomes Two New Nephrologists

By: Deon Cranford
Scotland Health Marketing

Access to high-quality kidney care is becoming increasingly important as more patients face chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and chronic kidney disease. To help meet that growing need, Scotland Health is enhancing its specialty services with the addition of two fellowship-trained nephrologists, Dr. Cagil Deniz Arslan and Dr. Edwin Okyne, who will provide comprehensive kidney care through Scotland Nephrology in Laurinburg.

Their arrival brings not only advanced expertise, but also a unique story of friendship, international experience, and a shared commitment to improving the lives of patients across Scotland County and the surrounding region.

From Stanford to Scotland County

Although they grew up thousands of miles apart, Dr. Arslan and Dr. Okyne followed remarkably similar paths.

Dr. Arslan was raised in Turkey, where he earned his medical degree from Ankara University School of Medicine and graduated with honors. During his training, he completed rotations in emergency medicine, cardiology, pediatrics, surgery, psychiatry, infectious diseases, and numerous other specialties before beginning his medical career in Turkey.

Driven by a desire to expand his knowledge and pursue advanced medical training, he moved to the United States, where he completed an Internal Medicine residency at John H. Stroger Hospital of Cook County in Chicago before earning a Nephrology fellowship at Stanford University Hospital.

At Stanford, he developed expertise in kidney disease management while also participating in research and academic presentations on topics including kidney biopsy safety, lead-related kidney toxicity, and rare causes of interstitial nephritis. His research has been published in peer-reviewed medical literature, reflecting a commitment to evidence-based medicine and continuous learning.

Dr. Okyne's journey began in Ghana, where he earned degrees from the University of Ghana and later completed his medical education at the University of Ghana School of Medicine and Dentistry. He completed extensive internship training in pediatrics, surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, and internal medicine before serving in a high-volume emergency department at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra.

Like Dr. Arslan, he later moved to Chicago to complete residency training in Internal Medicine before pursuing fellowship training in Nephrology at Stanford University. It was there that the two physicians met and formed a professional relationship that continues today.

Bringing Advanced Kidney Care Closer to Home

Both physicians are board-certified in Internal Medicine and Nephrology and have spent the past several years caring for patients in Midwest communities. Dr. Arslan previously practiced in Missouri and Iowa, while Dr. Okyne has served patients in Illinois as both a nephrologist and internist.

Together, they will provide care for patients experiencing:

- Chronic kidney disease
- Acute kidney injury
- Hypertension
- Diabetes-related kidney disease
- Electrolyte and fluid disorders
- Kidney complications associated with heart failure
- Proteinuria and other kidney abnormalities
- Dialysis management and coordination
- Long-term kidney disease prevention and management

Dr. Arslan has a particular interest in treating patients with diabetes and congestive heart failure, recognizing the close connection between those conditions and kidney health. His approach emphasizes careful medical management, patient education, and helping individuals slow the progression of kidney disease whenever possible.

Likewise, Dr. Okyne has built a reputation for compassionate, patient-focused care and has contributed to research involving chronic kidney disease, renal cancer outcomes, and kidney biopsy safety. His work reflects a dedication to improving outcomes through both clinical excellence and ongoing research.

More Than Physicians

Outside the clinic, both physicians value family, personal growth, and community involvement.

Dr. Arslan and his wife are raising two young children, and much of their free time revolves around family activities, including visits to parks and museums. He is an avid reader with interests in history and archaeology, particularly the world wars and ancient civilizations. He is also fluent in both English and Turkish.

Dr. Okyne enjoys cooking, soccer, and singing. Throughout his career he has also demonstrated a commitment to leadership, serving in youth ministry and community organizations in Ghana.

Investing in the Future of Kidney Care

Scotland Nephrology, located at 601 Lauchwood Drive in Laurinburg, welcomes both new and established patients and offers convenient access to specialty care, in-office laboratory testing, electronic medical records, and the MyScotlandHealth patient portal.

With the addition of Dr. Arslan and Dr. Okyne, Scotland Health continues to strengthen its commitment to providing advanced specialty care close to home.

For patients living with kidney disease, hypertension, diabetes, or other complex chronic conditions, that commitment means access to two highly trained physicians whose experiences span three continents but whose mission is simple: helping local patients live healthier lives. ■

For location, hours of operation, contact information, and more, please scan the QR code or visit: scotlandhealth.org

SPN SCOTLAND NEPHROLOGY

An affiliate of Scotland Health Care System



Deanna Leviner and
Dr. Petros Koutsogiannis

A SECOND CHANCE AT AN ACTIVE LIFE

How Advanced Spine Care Close to Home Helped Deanna Leviner Get Back on Her Feet

By: Deon Cranford
Scotland Health Marketing

For many people, back pain is an inconvenience. For Deanna Leviner, it became a life-altering obstacle that threatened her mobility, independence, and career. What began as a seemingly routine day helping family would eventually lead her to a diagnosis she never expected and a successful recovery that restored her quality of life.

A lifelong Scotland County resident, Leviner has spent more than 35 years as a real estate broker and state-certified appraiser, a career that keeps her constantly on the move. Her days often include climbing into attics, crawling beneath homes, and inspecting multiple properties. But in January, after helping remove a ramp from her late uncle's home, she noticed something different about the back pain she had occasionally experienced through the years.

"I've always had some arthritis and back issues," Leviner said. "But this was different."

What initially felt like a flare-up of sciatic nerve pain quickly intensified. Walking became difficult. Standing still was painful. Even sitting for extended periods became a challenge. As the weeks passed, the pain continued to worsen, making it increasingly difficult for her to keep up with the demands of her profession.

Seeking answers, Leviner worked closely with her primary care physician. She underwent X-rays and even tried chiropractic treatment, but nothing seemed to help. In fact, some treatments appeared to make the pain worse. Despite multiple evaluations, no one could pinpoint exactly what was causing her symptoms.

Finally, in April, an MRI provided a clearer picture of where the pain was coming from.

The scan revealed a synovial cyst at the L5-S1 level of her spine. The fluid-filled cyst had developed as a result of arthritis and was pressing directly against a spinal nerve, creating the severe pain shooting through her lower back and leg.

That's when Leviner was referred to Dr. Petros Koutsogiannis, spine surgeon with Scotland Health Orthopedics.

From the moment he reviewed her case, Dr. Koutsogiannis recognized the seriousness of her condition. By then, Leviner's pain had become so severe that she was relying on a cane and struggling through her workdays. While reviewing the MRI, Dr. Koutsogiannis identified the cyst and immediately began developing a treatment plan.

Still, surgery was not his first recommendation.

Instead, he pursued a series of conservative treatments, including medication and spinal injections, hoping to relieve the pressure without an operation. One injection provided temporary relief, but the pain soon returned. After exhausting nonsurgical options, Dr. Koutsogiannis determined surgery offered the best opportunity for a lasting solution.

For Leviner, the decision was not one she took lightly.

As a self-employed professional, time away from work carries real consequences. Throughout the process, she repeatedly shared her desire to find a solution that would allow her to remain active and return to her career as quickly as possible.

Dr. Koutsogiannis worked to create the least invasive surgical plan possible while preparing for more extensive intervention if necessary. Before surgery, he carefully explained every potential outcome, ensuring Leviner and her family understood the procedure and recovery process.

The operation was successful, but recovery was not without challenges.

Pathology later revealed that the cyst was approximately twice the size it had appeared to be on imaging.

Years of pressure on the nerve had left significant inflammation, and the first week after surgery proved especially difficult.

During those early days, Leviner leaned heavily on her faith.

In a message shared with family and friends on social media following surgery, she described experiencing a profound turning point in her recovery and credited the support she received through prayer.

"I attribute this positive development to the collective prayers of my family, church, parents, friends, and even individuals that I was unaware were praying for me," she wrote. "I extend my gratitude to all who have supported me through prayer."

At the same time, Dr. Koutsogiannis remained closely involved in her care. When postoperative inflammation continued to cause significant pain, he quickly adjusted her treatment plan and prescribed a steroid regimen to help reduce the swelling around the nerve.

The results were remarkable.

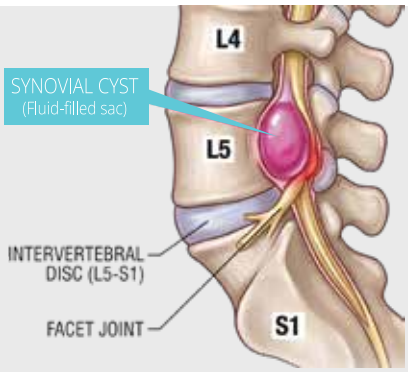
Within days, Leviner began experiencing noticeable improvement. At a follow-up visit just weeks later, she was walking normally again.

What had once been unbearable pain was quickly becoming a distant memory.

"God has seen me through this difficult period," Leviner said.

Today, Leviner is back to doing the work she loves.





What is a synovial cyst?

A synovial cyst is a fluid-filled sac that can develop near the joints of the spine, often as a result of arthritis. While many cysts cause no symptoms, larger cysts can press on nearby nerves, leading to back pain, leg pain, weakness, or difficulty walking.

She has resumed inspecting homes, serving clients, and maintaining the active lifestyle she feared she might lose. The woman who once struggled to complete a single property inspection can once again move freely and confidently.

She also remains grateful for the care she received close to home.

From the imaging department and surgical team to rehabilitation services and follow-up care, Leviner says every member of the Scotland Health team treated her with compassion and respect. Most of all, she appreciated the personal attention provided by Dr. Koutsogiannis throughout her journey.

"You never felt like just a number," she said.

Today, she shares her story with others facing similar challenges, often recommending Dr. Koutsogiannis and Scotland Health to anyone seeking answers for chronic back pain.

For Leviner, what began as months of uncertainty, pain, and prayer ultimately became something far more powerful: a second chance at the active life she loves. ■

MEET DR. MILLER

Dr. James "Jimmy" Miller Brings Experience and a Patient-First Approach to Laurinburg

By: R Quinyon DeBerry
Scotland Health Marketing



For many people living with hip or knee pain, the greatest challenge is not the discomfort itself. It is what that pain keeps them from doing.

Whether it is working in the yard, spending time with family or staying active, Dr. James "Jimmy" Miller believes understanding what matters most to each patient is the first step toward effective care.

"It really just comes down to your quality of life," Miller says.

Miller recently joined Scotland Health Orthopedics in Laurinburg, bringing extensive experience in hip and knee replacement surgery along with a treatment philosophy rooted in communication and patient choice.

"People think when you come see a surgeon in the office that they're going to tell me I absolutely need to have surgery," he says. "That's not the case."

In fact, Miller believes surgery should be considered only after conservative treatments stop providing meaningful relief.

"I never push anybody to have surgery," he says. "That's not my job. It's not my style."

Originally from Akron, Ohio, Miller completed medical school and residency training in Pennsylvania before pursuing a fellowship in adult reconstruction at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh. His practice focuses on hip and knee replacement, although he also treats general orthopedic conditions and fractures.

After eight years practicing in Columbus, Ohio, Miller and his wife began looking for an opportunity to relocate. Their interest in North Carolina was driven by family ties and a longtime appreciation for the region.

When they visited Laurinburg, they found exactly what they were seeking.

Miller says Dr. Ralph Carter played an important role in recruiting him to the area, and he quickly felt welcomed by colleagues, operating room staff and the community.

> "The staff, my partners, the community have been amazing since we've been here," he says. "It's a big reason for why we came down here."

Miller brings significant experience with anterior hip replacement and Mako robotic-assisted joint replacement technology. The system allows surgeons to create detailed surgical plans and perform procedures with greater precision.

"I think the accuracy is much better," Miller says. "We're able to get a little bit better results when it comes to accuracy, especially for more difficult surgeries."

His expertise has made him a leader in the field. Miller teaches Mako training courses for surgeons across the country and has participated in more than 1,000 joint replacement procedures in recent years.

While he believes strongly in the technology, he emphasizes that treatment decisions should always be individualized.

"It's not for everybody," he says. "But it's technology that I truly believe in."

More important than any technology, Miller says, is helping patients understand their options and feel comfortable with their care plan.

"It helps me sleep at night when I know that the patients are happy, that they understand what the care is, they understand where we're going," he says.

That often means recommending nonsurgical treatments such as physical therapy, medications or injections when they are helping patients maintain their quality of life.

"We'll try to do everything we can non-operatively," Miller says.

Only when those options are no longer effective does he encourage patients to consider whether surgery may be appropriate.

And even then, the decision remains theirs.

"I've had patients in the past say, 'Dr. Miller, I don't ever want to have a surgery,'" he says. "And I say, 'That's totally fine. Let's find something else that works for you and get you back to your quality of life.'"

For patients experiencing hip or knee pain, Miller hopes every visit starts with a conversation and ends with a plan tailored to their goals, helping them return to the activities that matter most. ■

For more information about Dr. Miller and Scotland Health Orthopedics, please scan the QR code or visit:

scotlandhealth.org/orthopedics



BUILD TO SUPPORT



HOW SCOTLAND HEALTH IS INVESTING IN THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

By: Deon Cranford
Scotland Health Marketing

Across the country, healthcare organizations are facing unprecedented workforce challenges. Recruiting and retaining talented professionals has become one of the industry's greatest priorities. At Scotland Health Care System, the answer is not simply filling positions. It is creating an environment where teammates can build meaningful careers, support their families, grow professionally, and feel safe coming to work each day.

According to Christi Meggs, senior vice president of Human Resources, Scotland Health's recruitment strategy begins with a straightforward belief: when teammates feel valued and supported, they deliver exceptional care to patients and the community.

That philosophy has helped shape a workplace culture focused on professional development, education, family support, safety, and long-term career growth.

Growing Our Own

While many healthcare organizations rely heavily on external recruitment, Scotland Health has invested significantly in developing talent from within.

One example is the system's RN-to-BSN program, which helps registered nurses continue their education while maintaining their careers. The initiative allows nurses to enhance their skills, expand their opportunities and better prepare for leadership and advanced roles throughout the organization.

Scotland Health has also created innovative scholarship opportunities designed to address workforce shortages while supporting teammates who want to advance their careers.

Among the most impactful is the Legacy Scholarship Program, which removes financial barriers for employees pursuing nursing degrees.

For many health care professionals, returning to school can feel like an impossible balancing act. Between work responsibilities, family commitments, and financial obligations, advancing an education often remains a goal for "someday."

Created through the Greg Wood Legacy Fund, the scholarship honors former Scotland Health CEO Greg Wood and his commitment to investing in people. Seeded with a $150,000 contribution from the Scotland Memorial Foundation and generous donor support, the program provides eligible associates with prepaid tuition, books, and fees up to $12,000 per year. Participants also have the opportunity to work a reduced schedule while maintaining their pay and benefits, removing many of the barriers that often prevent working adults from pursuing higher education.

For Sunshine Scott, the program provided the opportunity she had been waiting for.

Scott began her health care career in 2008 as a certified medical assistant, working alongside Dr. Glenn Harris at Harris Family Practice. When Scotland Health acquired the practice in 2010, she continued her journey with the organization, building a reputation as a dedicated team member willing to take on new challenges and responsibilities. Over the years, she worked in urgent care settings, assisted with occupational health drug screenings, managed vaccines and inventory, and participated in several organizational improvement initiatives.

Despite her extensive experience, nursing school remained a long-term goal.

"There was one other time back in 2011 I tried to go back to school," Scott recalled. "But life happens. Kids happen. I couldn't go back then, and it was always something I wanted to do."

When she learned about the Legacy Scholarship, she didn't hesitate.

"Whenever I heard about the Legacy Scholarship, I jumped all over it," she said.

Before entering Richmond Community College's nursing program, Scott spent a year completing prerequisites and earning additional certifications. The journey required determination and sacrifice. She often worked full days before attending evening classes and balancing family responsibilities at home.

Once accepted into the nursing program in 2024, however, the Legacy Scholarship transformed the experience.

With classes on Mondays and Tuesdays, clinical rotations on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and coursework filling the gaps in between, finding time to work full-time would have been nearly impossible. Through the Legacy Program, Scott was only required to work 12 hours per week while maintaining her full salary and benefits.

"The Legacy Scholarship really helped because it allowed us to have a lot of time at home to do our school work," Scott said. "I didn't have to worry about a paycheck. I knew my paycheck was coming just like it was if I was working 40 hours a week."

In May 2026, she graduated from nursing school. Today, she serves as a Primary Care Nurse Leader, helping oversee clinical operations, staffing, vaccine compliance, and quality standards within her practice. She has also expanded her role by becoming a Basic Life Support instructor, helping train fellow Scotland Health associates and providers.

For Scott, the scholarship was more than financial assistance. It was an investment in her future and a vote of confidence from an organization she has proudly called home for more than 16 years.

"I'm thankful for the Legacy Scholarship," she said. "I've always enjoyed working with Scotland Health. When I heard about it, it was a no-brainer."

Stories like Scott's demonstrate why the Legacy Scholarship Program matters. As health care organizations across the country face ongoing workforce shortages, particularly in rural communities, Scotland Health continues to invest in developing talent from within. The program not only creates new opportunities for associates, but also strengthens the future of local health care by helping dedicated professionals advance their careers while continuing to serve the communities they know and love.

Currently supporting nursing and surgical technology students, the Legacy Scholarship Program is expected to expand educational opportunities to additional allied health professions in the future, ensuring that more associates can follow a path similar to Scott's.

For Scotland Health, the Legacy Scholarship isn't simply about paying for education. It's about creating opportunities, building careers, and investing in the people who will shape the future of health care in our region.

A Culture That Puts Teammates First

Scotland Health believes that when teammates are supported, engaged, and empowered, the quality of patient care improves throughout the organization.

That commitment is reflected through competitive compensation, comprehensive benefits, flexible scheduling options, educational opportunities, and career advancement programs designed to help teammates achieve both personal and professional goals.

Whether someone is entering healthcare for the first time or looking to advance into a leadership role, Scotland Health strives to provide opportunities for growth at every stage of a career journey.



Supporting Families Through Every Stage of Life

For healthcare professionals, balancing a demanding career with family responsibilities can be one of life's greatest challenges. Scotland Health has taken a major step toward addressing that challenge through a unique childcare partnership that has quickly become one of the organization's most valued teammate benefits.

In December 2025, Scotland Health partnered with Kids Campus, a locally-owned childcare company, to open an on-site childcare center for teammates and affiliated healthcare professionals.

The company already operates successful childcare facilities in Laurinburg, Maxton, and Laurel Hill, bringing an established reputation for high-quality childcare to the Scotland Memorial Hospital campus.

The response has been overwhelming.

As of August 15, 2026, 86 children were enrolled in the center.

Children and grandchildren of Scotland Health teammates, physicians and affiliated contractors are eligible to attend. Teammates benefit from discounted tuition rates and waived application fees, helping reduce both the financial and logistical challenges associated with childcare.

The center currently operates Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 11:00 p.m., hours specifically designed to accommodate healthcare workers whose schedules often extend beyond traditional business hours.

Flexibility is another key advantage. The center offers drop-in and short-term childcare when space is available, providing families with additional support when unexpected needs arise.

Recognizing the needs of shift workers, applications are also being accepted for overnight childcare services. Once enrollment thresholds are met, those expanded services will be introduced to better support teammates working second and third shifts.

For Scotland Health leaders, the childcare center represents more than a convenience.

It is an investment in working families.

By helping teammates address one of the biggest challenges facing today's workforce, Scotland Health is creating an environment where teammates can focus on caring for patients while knowing their children are receiving quality care nearby.

Creating a Safer Workplace

While healthcare is built on compassion and service, workplace safety has become an increasing concern throughout the industry.

At Scotland Health, protecting teammates is a top priority.

The organization has developed a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program designed to create a safer environment for teammates, patients and visitors.

Central to that effort is a multidisciplinary Workplace Violence Prevention Committee that meets monthly and includes representatives from Human Resources, Security, Risk Management, Quality, Legal, Nursing, Associate Health, Facilities, Hospice, Organizational Development, Clinical Operations, and Administration.

The committee continually reviews incidents, evaluates risks and identifies opportunities to strengthen safety practices across the health system.

Over the past several years, Scotland Health has implemented numerous security enhancements, including:

- Increased security staffing throughout the organization
- Armed security officers
- Improved parking lot lighting
- Security fencing and campus visibility improvements
- Expanded security camera coverage
- Facial-recognition technology
- Controlled badge-access areas
- Panic button systems
- RAD Light My Way safety technology
- Weapons-detection screening at both the main hospital and emergency department entrances
- Bullet-resistant glass in clinic locations

Scotland Health also invests heavily in prevention and education. Teammates receive AEGIS de-escalation training and workplace violence prevention education, while organizational policies provide clear guidance for reporting and addressing incidents.

Additional measures include workplace violence prevention signage, incident tracking and follow-up procedures, support for teammates pursuing legal action after workplace incidents, and a violent-patient flag within the Epic electronic medical record system to help alert caregivers to potential concerns.

Recognizing that workplace incidents can affect emotional well-being, Scotland Health also offers a confidential Employee Assistance Program at no cost to teammates.

Together, these initiatives send a powerful message: Scotland Health is committed to creating an environment where teammates feel protected, supported, and respected.

More Than a Job

Healthcare professionals today are looking for more than a paycheck.

They want opportunities for growth. They want support for their families. They want a culture that values their contributions. And they want to know their organization is committed to their safety and well-being.

At Scotland Health, recruitment is about delivering all of those things.

From educational scholarships and career development programs to on-site childcare and comprehensive workplace safety initiatives, the organization continues to invest in what matters most: its people.

Because when teammates thrive, patients receive better care, families are stronger and communities become healthier.

And that is what makes Scotland Health more than a place to work.

It is a place to build a career. ■

JOIN OUR TEAM

At Scotland Health Care System, we employ a community of professionals that we believe truly represent the patient experience.

Founded in 1946, Scotland Health Care System is a community-owned and controlled not-for-profit organization in Laurinburg, North Carolina, with a management services agreement with Atrium Health. Our mission is to provide high quality, compassionate health care services for all those in need, through a full range of inpatient, outpatient and emergency room services, including high quality cancer care, cardiac care, surgical services, pain management and relief services, and women's health care, among others.

When it comes to culture and benefits, we recognize that when we take good care of our teammates, our teammates can take even better care of our patients. We care greatly about our associates, that is why we are always proud to offer outstanding compensation, family-friendly benefits, flexible shifts, special savings, and career growth opportunities.

So what are you waiting for? Why not join our team? If you are looking for a career, and not just a job, then Scotland Health Care System is the right place for you.

scotlandhealth.org/careers



Building a Healthier MARLBORO COUNTY

Scotland Health's Commitment to our South Carolina Neighbors

By: Deon Cranford
Scotland Health Marketing

For nearly three decades, Scotland Health Care System has served as a trusted healthcare partner for the people of Marlboro County and surrounding areas. What began as a commitment to preserve local access to care has evolved into a comprehensive network of services designed to meet the needs of patients at every stage of life. From primary care and urgent care to specialty services, orthopedics, pharmacy services, and hospice care, Scotland Health continues to invest in keeping high-quality health care close to home.

As the health system celebrates its 80th anniversary, Marlboro County remains an important part of that legacy. Community leaders, residents, providers, and teammates recently gathered to celebrate both Scotland Health's milestone anniversary and the 10-year anniversary of the Marlboro Medical Complex, recognizing the organization's continued commitment to ensuring access to healthcare in the community.

A Strong Foundation in Primary Care

At the center of Scotland Health's presence in Marlboro County is Marlboro Family Practice and Urgent care, where patients receive comprehensive primary care focused on prevention, wellness, and long-term health.
The practice offers routine checkups, annual wellness visits, preventive screenings, physicals, chronic disease management, and ongoing care for patients of all ages. Providers work closely with patients to manage conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease while emphasizing preventive care and healthier lifestyles.

That commitment to quality was recognized in May 2026 when Marlboro Family Practice and Urgent Care earned designation as a Rural Health Clinic. The practice became the third location within the Scotland Physicians Network to achieve the designation and did so with zero deficiencies identified during the certification process. The designation reflects nationally recognized standards for quality, safety, care coordination, and access in rural communities.

The practice recently expanded its provider team with the addition of Dr. Emily Milz, a family medicine physician who is passionate about building long-term relationships with patients and helping families achieve better health outcomes close to home. She joined primary care providers Brittany Branch, FNP-C and Terri Cowan, PA-C at the clinic.

Care When It Can't Wait

Healthcare needs don't always occur during scheduled office hours. Through the urgent care services at Marlboro Family Practice and Urgent Care, patients have access to prompt treatment for illnesses and injuries that require immediate attention but are not life-threatening emergencies.

Whether treating minor injuries, infections, respiratory illnesses, or other acute conditions, the urgent care team provides convenient access to care without the need for a lengthy trip outside the community.

In 2026, the practice welcomed Shannon Courtleigh, PA-C, an experienced provider with a background in family medicine, emergency medicine, and urgent care. Her expertise caring for patients across all age groups further strengthens the practice's ability to meet the community's healthcare needs. She joins previous urgent care provider Tekisha Freeman, FNP-C.

Together, Marlboro Family Practice and Marlboro Urgent Care provide a seamless continuum of care, allowing patients to receive both routine and same-day medical services from a trusted local healthcare team.

Convenience Beyond the Appointment

One of the most valuable features of the Marlboro location is the presence of a retail pharmacy, located directly inside of the Marlboro Medical Complex.

For many patients, healthcare doesn't end when the appointment is over. Prescriptions are often the next step in treatment, and having an on-site pharmacy makes that process easier and more convenient. Patients can see their provider and pick up their prescriptions before leaving the building, eliminating the need for an additional stop elsewhere.

The pharmacy is also open to the public, providing prescription services to anyone in the community. Patients benefit from minimal to no wait times, competitive pricing, and personalized service from a pharmacist who is available to answer medication questions and assist with navigating prescription insurance coverage.

By combining medical care and pharmacy services under one roof, Scotland Health helps simplify the healthcare experience while improving access and convenience for patients throughout Marlboro County.

Corie Teal, LPN, Marie Moore, PCT, Becky Taylor, Pharmacist



Bringing Specialty Care Closer to Home

Access to specialty care remains one of the biggest challenges facing many rural communities. Scotland Health has worked to address that challenge by bringing specialty services directly to Marlboro County.

Scotland Surgical and GI provides local access to surgical consultations and gastrointestinal services, allowing patients to receive specialized evaluation, treatment planning, and follow-up care closer to home. By reducing travel requirements and improving convenience, the practice helps ensure patients remain connected to their care while benefiting from coordinated treatment across providers.

These services, provided in Bennettsville by Dr. Leslie Salloum and Marcella Stanton, ACNPC-AG, are an important part of Scotland Health's commitment to expanding access and reducing barriers to specialty healthcare.

Helping Patients Stay Active and Independent

Musculoskeletal injuries and chronic orthopedic conditions can significantly impact everyday life. Through Scotland Health Orthopedics, patients have access to orthopedic expertise from Dr. Ralph Carter and Dr. John Smid for diagnosing and treating a variety of bone, joint, muscle, and sports-related conditions.

Whether recovering from an injury, managing arthritis, or seeking treatment for chronic joint pain, patients can receive specialized care closer to home. Local orthopedic services mean less travel, faster access to appointments, and a quicker path toward recovery and improved mobility.

For workers, students, athletes, and active adults, orthopedic care plays an important role in maintaining health, independence, and quality of life.

Investing in the Future of Rural Healthcare

As healthcare continues to evolve, Scotland Health remains committed to recruiting exceptional providers, expanding services, and improving access throughout the communities it serves.

The Rural Health Clinic designation, the addition of providers such as Dr. Emily Milz and Shannon Courtleigh, PA-C, the availability of specialty and orthopedic services, the convenience of Scotland Pharmacy Bennettsville, and the nationally recognized care provided by Hospice of Scotland County all reflect a healthcare system committed to meeting the needs of Marlboro County residents.

Today, residents have access to a wide range of healthcare services without leaving their community, including primary care, urgent care, pharmacy services, surgical and GI care, orthopedic services, and hospice support. More importantly, they have a healthcare partner dedicated to investing in the future of rural health and ensuring exceptional care remains close to home for generations to come. ■

Compassion Across State Lines



Healthcare extends far beyond checkups and procedures. It also means supporting patients and families during some of life's most difficult journeys. Through Hospice of Scotland County, Scotland Health provides compassionate hospice and supportive care services for patients facing serious illness and end-of-life challenges. Hospice professionals work closely with patients and families to provide symptom management, emotional support, spiritual care and guidance that promotes dignity, comfort and peace.

That commitment to compassionate care is reaching more families than ever before through the organization's growing South Carolina presence. Located at 1007 Cheraw Street in Bennettsville within the Marlboro Specialty Complex, Hospice of Scotland County's South Carolina office continues to expand its reach across the region. Earlier this year, the office achieved its highest patient census in more than two decades, reflecting both increased awareness of hospice services and the trust that local families place in the organization's care team.

The growth comes as Hospice of Scotland County continues to build on a long-standing reputation for excellence. In March 2026, the organization earned Medicare's highest five-star rating for hospice care. The recognition is based on feedback from family caregivers and evaluates communication, emotional support, symptom management, caregiver education, respect for patients and overall satisfaction. Hospice of Scotland County exceeded the national average in all eight measured categories, demonstrating exceptional performance in both clinical care and family support.

For more than 40 years, Hospice of Scotland County has served families throughout the region with personalized care, compassion and dignity. The South Carolina office's continued growth, coupled with the organization's five-star recognition, reflects an unwavering commitment to helping patients and loved ones navigate one of life's most meaningful transitions with comfort, support and peace of mind.compassionate, quality hospice care close to home. Through dedicated staff, volunteers and community support, Hospice of Scotland County is helping more families find comfort, guidance and peace when they need it most.

WELCOME TO THE **TEAM**

Join us in welcoming our newest providers who will help us increase access to care for the communities we serve.



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Nephrology

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NAVIGATING THE UNKNOWN

How Scotland Health's Nurse Navigators Guide Patients Every Step of the Way

By: Deon Cranford | Scotland Health Marketing

For many patients, a healthcare journey does not begin with a diagnosis. It begins with uncertainty.

An unexpected finding on a mammogram. A suspicious spot on a lung scan. A high-risk pregnancy that suddenly requires closer monitoring. In those moments, patients are often left with one pressing question: What happens next?

At Scotland Health, that question is answered by a dedicated team of nurse navigators whose mission is simple yet profoundly important: help patients find their way through some of life's most challenging health situations. These specially trained nurses serve as guides, advocates, educators and coordinators, ensuring patients receive the right care at the right time while never feeling alone in the process.

More Than a Healthcare Professional

While many people have never heard the term "nurse navigator," the role has become increasingly important in modern healthcare.

Nurse navigators help patients and families navigate the complexities of the healthcare system by coordinating care, providing education, removing barriers, and serving as a trusted point of contact throughout a patient's journey.

But at Scotland Health, the navigation team has taken that support a step further.

"We actually start before there's a diagnosis," explained Hope Gibson, Scotland Health's Transition Navigator. Unlike many navigation programs that begin after cancer is confirmed, Scotland Health's team often becomes involved as soon as an abnormal finding is identified, helping patients navigate the diagnostic process itself.

That distinction can make all the difference.

"That workup process can be very upsetting," Gibson said. "We're able to walk the person through that process before they even know exactly what they're dealing with."

A Familiar Voice During Uncertain Times

Imagine receiving a call that additional testing is needed after a mammogram or CT scan. Most people immediately begin searching the internet, worrying and imagining worst-case scenarios.

That's where navigators step in.

Breast navigators Kimberly Graves and newly added breast navigator Sydney Dubreuiel work with patients after abnormal breast imaging and biopsy recommendations. They help schedule follow-up appointments, answer questions, and remain connected with patients as they await results. The addition of a second breast navigator became necessary after biopsy recommendations increased dramatically over the past year, creating a need for even more patient support.

For patients facing abnormal lung findings, Joni Mabe, Scotland Health's Lung Navigator, plays a similar role.

Mabe currently tracks hundreds of patients, receiving referrals from imaging services, providers, emergency department physicians and inpatient units. Her goal is to ensure that abnormal findings never fall through the cracks.

"I'm making sure we're getting them a follow-up appointment," Mabe explained. "Whether that means a biopsy, additional imaging or seeing a specialist, we're making sure those next steps happen."

Removing Barriers to Care

Healthcare is about much more than diagnosing illness. Often, the greatest challenge is helping patients access the care they need.

Transportation issues, financial concerns, lack of family support, and missed appointments can all delay treatment.

Scotland Health's navigators frequently become problem-solvers.

They work with community health workers, transportation services, and other support programs to help patients overcome obstacles that might otherwise prevent them from receiving care.

"Some patients need help staying on track," Gibson said. "It's meeting people where they are. It's holding their hand and helping them get through those steps."

This hands-on approach is particularly important in a rural region where travel, access, and health literacy challenges can create additional complications.

Making Every Day Count

The role of a navigator becomes even more critical when cancer is diagnosed.

Once test results confirm cancer, navigators work closely with physicians, specialists and the Scotland Cancer Treatment Center to ensure patients move quickly into treatment.

Mabe attends appointments where lung cancer diagnoses are delivered, helping arrange additional testing and cancer center appointments before patients ever walk through the cancer center doors. That preparation can significantly reduce delays.

"If they can stage the cancer and lay out treatment options on the first visit, it can potentially cut a month off the delay of getting treatment started," Mabe said.

Elizabeth Parrish, Oncology Navigator, says the navigator's work helps streamline care while reducing stress for both patients and providers. By coordinating testing, appointments and resources ahead of time, patients arrive at the cancer center better prepared and able to begin treatment sooner.

"It saves so much time," Parrish noted. "It really makes a difference."

Supporting Mothers and Babies

Navigation at Scotland Health extends far beyond cancer care.

As Maternal Navigator, Heather Dunn works with high-risk obstetrical patients, including mothers experiencing conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and other pregnancy complications. Her goal is to keep patients engaged in care and ensure they receive critical testing and monitoring throughout pregnancy.

For many expectant mothers, especially those traveling from surrounding counties, missing appointments can create serious risks.

Dunn carefully tracks appointments, follows up with patients who miss visits, and collaborates with community health workers and paramedics to provide additional support when needed.

The result is earlier intervention, better continuity of care, and healthier outcomes for both mother and baby.

The Heart of Connection

Behind every appointment scheduled, every phone call returned, and every diagnosis explained is a simple philosophy: no patient should have to navigate healthcare alone.

Whether working with a patient newly diagnosed with cancer, someone waiting on biopsy results or an expectant mother facing a high-risk pregnancy, Scotland Health's nurse navigators provide a critical bridge between uncertainty and understanding.

They answer questions. They remove barriers. They coordinate care. Most importantly, they offer reassurance during moments when patients need it most.

As healthcare becomes increasingly complex, Scotland Health's navigation team continues to serve as a reminder that compassionate care is about more than medicine. Sometimes, it's about having someone beside you who knows the way forward. ■



A Legacy of Giving

By: Misty McMillan
Scotland Memorial Foundation

When Ruby Williamson and Nancy Adcock rotate off the Scotland Memorial Foundation Board of Trustees this September, they will leave behind a legacy built through thousands of volunteer hours, countless conversations, and an unwavering commitment to strengthening healthcare throughout the communities served by Scotland Health.

Ruby concludes nine years of board service, completing three consecutive terms. Nancy departs after an extraordinary eighteen years on the board. Together, they represent twenty-seven years of giving.

But ask either woman about her legacy, and neither talks first about titles or accomplishments. Instead, they talk about people.

For Nancy, the journey began nearly two decades ago when she accepted an invitation to join the Foundation Board after retirement.

"I wanted to be in an organization that makes a difference," she recalled. "And I believe I was at the right place."

That belief was reinforced almost immediately. Less than a year into her board service, Nancy received a call from the late Hewitt Fulton, one of the Foundation's most influential champions and namesake of the Fulton-Tornow Society.

"The nominating committee has met, and we want you to be vice chair," he told her.

Nancy remembers explaining that she had just joined the board and needed time to think about it. The next day, Fulton called again.

"Nancy, we really want you to be vice chair. We're going to put you down as a yes."

Nearly twenty years later, she still laughs about the exchange, but the story reflects something deeper – a culture of service that encouraged people to step forward when called.

Over the years, Nancy witnessed remarkable growth and change. She served alongside all six executive directors to date, numerous board chairs, and countless volunteers. She chaired the Foundation Board, led the Outreach Committee and Highland Society, served on capital campaigns, and helped guide the organization through many of its most significant milestones.

Yet what remains most meaningful to her is the Foundation's impact.

"The hospital has just done amazing work," she said. "I'm proud of the Foundation, and I'm proud of the hospital."

For Ruby, many of her favorite memories come from behind-the-scenes work.

Before joining the board, she volunteered with the Foundation for several years, helping wherever she was needed. Her dedication eventually led to board service and many years as co-chair of Putting on the Ritz, where she helped secure sponsorships, auction items, raffle sales, and countless details that contributed to the event's success.

Through those experiences, Ruby learned an important lesson about the communities she serves.

"People are very giving," she said. "You just have to ask."

One of her favorite stories involved collecting a donation from Quickie Manufacturing in Lumberton. After being directed to the loading dock, workers filled her vehicle with donated mops until every inch of space was occupied.

"I looked in my rearview mirror and all I could see were mops," she laughed. "I just hoped I didn't get stopped by a state trooper while driving down I-95."

It's a humorous memory, but it captures the spirit that has defined Ruby's service in that no task was too small if it helped advance the Foundation's mission.

She also remembers securing her first $2,500 donation from Wells Fargo, an experience that reinforced her belief that every conversation has the potential to make a difference.

"It inspires me," she said. "When something like that happens, you're ready to call the next person."

Both women credit relationships as one of the greatest rewards of their service. Nancy speaks fondly of mentor Betty Hasty, who introduced her to many of the vendors, donors, and community partners who have helped sustain Foundation events over the years.

Together, Ruby and Nancy helped sustain many of the traditions that have become hallmarks of the Foundation while also embracing new ideas and changes that strengthened the organization and expanded its impact.

"This is a working board," Ruby said, reflecting on the message she received when she first joined. "Everybody is on a team and we work together."

That team approach has helped support countless patients and families throughout Scotland, Marlboro, Robeson, and surrounding counties through scholarships, patient assistance programs, cancer services, transportation support, and many other initiatives.

As they prepare to step away from board service, both women hope others will consider becoming involved.

"If you want to volunteer in our communities," Nancy said, "one of the best ways is through Scotland Memorial Foundation. You will make a difference."

Continuing the Legacy Through Planned Giving

Their message is especially meaningful as the Foundation places renewed emphasis on the Fulton-Tornow Society, its planned giving program.

Named in honor of the late Hewitt Fulton and Martha Tornow, whose generosity and leadership helped shape the Foundation's future, the society recognizes individuals who choose to include Scotland Memorial Foundation in their estate plans through bequests, trusts, retirement assets, or other planned gifts.

Nancy has long supported the Fulton-Tornow Society and views planned giving as a natural extension of a lifetime of service.

Perhaps that is the greatest lesson both women leave behind: that legacies are not built through a single gift, event, or year of service. They are built through consistent acts of generosity over time.

For those who wish to make a lasting difference, planned giving offers an opportunity to support the Foundation's endowment, helping ensure that resources are available to meet the healthcare needs of future generations.

Ruby and Nancy have spent nearly three decades showing what dedication looks like in action. Their board service may be ending, but the impact of their commitment, and the example they have set for others, will continue to benefit this community for years to come. ■

For more information about the Scotland Memorial Foundation Giving Societies, please scan the QR code below or visit: scotlandmemorialfoundation.org/giving-societies

SCOTLAND MEMORIAL FOUNDATION
An affiliate of Scotland Health Care System

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Scotland Health is celebrating a remarkable year of achievement marked by national honors, quality awards, safety distinctions, specialty certifications, and practice accreditations. Since October 2025, Scotland Health, Scotland Memorial Hospital, Hospice of Scotland County, and practices within Scotland Physicians Network have been recognized for excellence in patient safety, clinical quality, rural healthcare innovation, stroke care, community partnership, and access to care.

Advanced Stroke Certification
The Joint Commission

Community Partnership of the Year
Habitat for Humanity

National Recogition for Rural Healthcare Innovation
American Hospital Association

Forbes 2026 Top Hospitals
Forbes

Five-Star Hospice Rating
Medicare's Care Compare

SDRHC Award of Excellence in Clinical Quality
NC Office of Rural Health

Becker's "Great Community Hospitals" Recognition
Becker's Healthcare

Multiple Stroke Recognitions
Get With The Guidelines® – Stroke Rural Recognition Silver award, Get With The Guidelines® – Stroke Silver Plus, Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite, and Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll
American Heart Association

Multiple Rural Health Clinic Accreditations
for Laurinburg Family Practice and Urgent Care, Marlboro Family Practice and Urgent Care, Maxton Family Practice and Urgent Care, Pembroke Family Practice and Urgent Care, and Scotland Urgent Care Center.
The Joint Commission