



# Well for Life

Fall 2023

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### Disclaimer

Well for Life is a publication of Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital intended to share updates about events and educate the community on a variety of health topics. The articles in this publication are meant to supplement, not replace, the advice and instruction of your physician. Good health practices include regular visits to your doctor. For help finding local physicians and advanced practice providers, visit [findadoctor.spectrumhealth.org](http://findadoctor.spectrumhealth.org).

### Well for Life Editor

Meredith Schrotenboer,  
lead communications specialist

For additional copies of this newsletter, contact us at 616.748.2834. **An electronic version of Well for Life can be found at [spectrumhealth.org/wellforlife](http://spectrumhealth.org/wellforlife).**

# Point of view



Fall is here and with it the promise of cooler weather, changing leaves and plenty of football games. I'm excited to announce we're entering a new season as well. Our name is now Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital. The change became official in August and represents a significant moment in our integration as a statewide health system. It's now been two years since Beaumont Health and Spectrum Health united to form Corewell Health. Together, we are leveraging our complementary strengths to inspire hope, improve health and save lives.

As 2023 begins to wind down, I've been reflecting on some big moments over the past year. In May, Zeeland Hospital was awarded its 14th consecutive "A" grade. This national distinction celebrates Zeeland Hospital's achievements in protecting our patients from preventable harm and errors.

In July, we received a five-star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for strong performance in key quality measures including readmission rates and safety of care. It's the fifth time Zeeland has reached this significant achievement. When I came to Zeeland Hospital two years ago, my first impression was this team is incredibly skilled, endlessly compassionate and remarkably hardworking. At that time, I knew we would get exceptional results and we have. Our team members made this five-star rating possible.

Providing compassionate, exceptional care to our patients and their families is our number one priority. That is why I'm thrilled to tell you about the services expanding here on the lakeshore. Urologists Jonathan Bolthouse, MD, and Hector Pimentel, MD, are now seeing patients at 588 Lakewood and performing procedures at Zeeland Hospital. Learn more about them on page 3. And we've added another Ob/Gyn to the team. Kenna Laskovy, DO, started in August and joins a practice that includes two midwives. Read more about a new mom's awesome midwife-assisted birth on page 4.

With November just around the corner, now is an excellent time to say thank you to a veteran. Thank them for their service, thank them for their sacrifice, and in the case of Drs. Phil and Annica Waalkes, thank them for their example. They are the reason Dr. Chris Snyder joined the armed forces during medical school serving for seven years, then joined the Zeeland Primary Care team two years ago. You don't want to miss their inspiring story on page 5.

Be well!

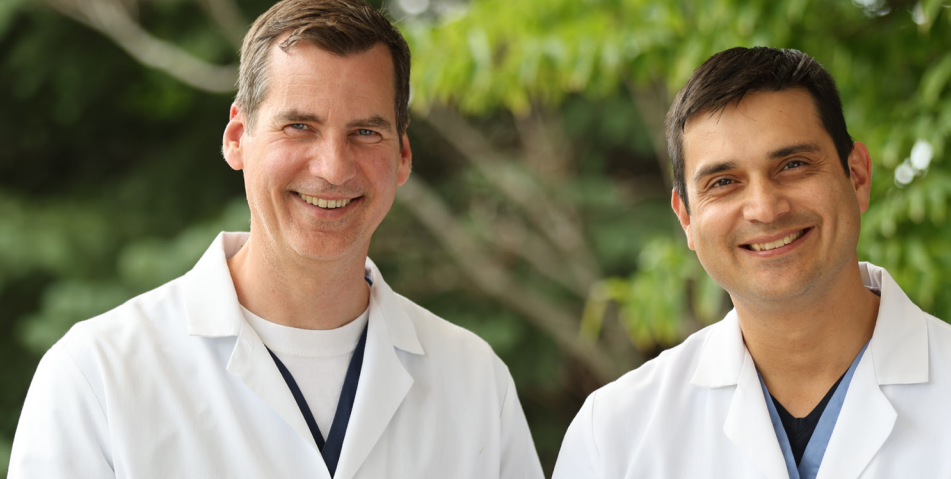
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Hoefer".

Bill Hoefer, FACHE  
President  
Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital



# Urology expands on the lakeshore



**Urinary tract infections. Incontinence. Kidney stones. Urologists treat patients with health conditions relating to the bladder, kidneys, urinary tract, prostate or male reproductive organs. This fall we are pleased to welcome two urologists to the care team at Corewell Health's Integrated Care Campus in Holland – Jonathan Bolthouse, MD, and Hector Pimentel, MD. The two will perform surgical procedures at Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital. They will continue to practice in Grand Rapids as well.**

## **Meet Jonathan Bolthouse, MD**

Bolthouse, a graduate of Wayne State University Medical School in Detroit, Mich., has been a practicing urologist for 23 years. He serves as an associate clinical professor of urology at Michigan State University Medical School and is a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society. His clinical interests include general urology with specialized interests in stone disease and voiding dysfunction.

He recalled knowing at a young age he wanted to enter the medical profession.

"My mom was a nurse, and my dad an orthodontist," said Bolthouse. "I can recall telling my mom when I was in second or third grade that I wanted to be a doctor."

As he progressed through medical school, he leaned toward urology because of the many different areas to specialize in, along with the ability to perform surgeries and procedures that often allow for quick results – and a quick recovery time.

"It is very rewarding to help people feel better quickly, especially when someone is suffering from something like a kidney stone," said Bolthouse.

He looks forward to making urological care more accessible to the lakeshore community and helping people closer to home. "I hope to make it more convenient for people to get the care they need when they need it."

When he's not working, he enjoys spending quality time with his partner and their two dogs, an English bulldog and sheepadoodle. He also loves to travel.

## **Meet Hector Pimentel, MD**

As a young boy growing up in a Spanish-speaking home in San Diego, Calif., Pimentel enjoyed school and hoped to become an engineer. An avid reader, he picked up Michael Crichton's book "Jurassic Park," and he discovered he had a strong interest in science and biology. Couple that newfound love of biology with a good friend of the family who was a physician, and as they say, the rest was history.

Pimentel graduated with his medical degree from the University of Michigan and his clinical interests include prostate disorders, erectile dysfunction surgery and treatment, female and male incontinence surgery and treatment, male infertility and kidney stone disease.

"Being able to help my patients through difficult situations and improve their symptoms or condition is why I love doing what I do," said Pimentel. "I just really enjoy helping people ... that's ultimately what drew me to the medical profession."

He looks forward to providing care for those living in Ottawa County.

"I am happy to be coming to Zeeland and Holland ... it feels good to help patients and to provide care closer to their home, so they don't have to travel as far."

In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his wife and five children, playing basketball and reading.

Both Drs. Pimentel and Bolthouse will continue to see patients at 4069 Lake Drive in Grand Rapids and maintain surgical time at Butterworth Hospital and the Lake Dr. Surgical Center.

## **Here to help**

We know it can be difficult to talk about incontinence, infections and sexual dysfunction. Dr. Bolthouse and Dr. Pimentel want you to feel at ease, no matter what the subject. Their goal is to fully understand the conditions impacting your life and give you the care you need to feel better and regain your confidence.

Contact your primary care provider for a referral.



Photos are courtesy of Health Beat

# Dancing through delivery

Adapted from Health Beat

## A midwife helped this mom have the delivery of her dreams, despite risks from high blood pressure.

For Kassie Bont, pregnancy began like a walk in the park. "We had been trying for about a year, and when it happened, I had so few symptoms I didn't even realize I was pregnant at first," she said. Bont chose Katie Steele, a certified nurse midwife at Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital, as her care provider.

In the final weeks of her pregnancy, Kassie's blood pressure rose. She had a family history of hypertension. "We take high blood pressure seriously at any point during the pregnancy," Steele said, "but especially in the last couple of weeks." Untreated, it can be fatal for both mother and baby. When blood pressure remains high at the 37-week checkup, the recommendation is to induce labor to avoid preeclampsia. Steele scheduled Kassie, who lives in Hamilton, Michigan, for induction the following day.

## Grooving to the B-52s

At 4 p.m. on August 11, 2022, Kassie and her husband, Jon, made the short drive to Zeeland. The team was determined to help Kassie stick to her carefully crafted birth plan, which included plenty of meditation and music, but very little drug relief.

At 7 a.m. the following day, her water broke. By 11 a.m., a cervix check revealed she had made little progress. With the help of Pitocin, a chemical form of a human hormone designed to kickstart labor, and dancing to 1980s classics, she began having contractions.

By 2 p.m., the pains were so intense that her lightheartedness evaporated. She started meditating, focusing as best she could. But her contractions seemed to slow. Steele recommended Kassie get on all fours on the hospital bed. Steele stood behind her, using a towel to move her belly around gently. "It's not something you see in the movies," Kassie said. "But it worked. And Katie and the other nurses were consistently by my side, helping me through all the hard contractions."

At 5:31 p.m. on August 12, baby Graham arrived weighing 7 pounds and 6 ounces. "Graham is the happiest baby I've ever met," she said. "He doesn't cry much and smiles all the time." And she's grateful Steele could continue as her provider, not just throughout the pregnancy and delivery, but in the months following the birth. "Katie and the nurses on staff were amazing," she said. "They were so helpful. I would definitely have a midwife-assisted birth again."

Corewell Health's Zeeland team now includes five physicians and two midwives. Zeeland has the only midwifery team on the lakeshore. And it's growing. Kenna Laskovy, D.O., joined the talented team back in August.



# Veteran doctors

"Shadowing Dr. Phil Waalkes in high school changed the course of my life. I knew I was interested in medicine because I loved the sciences and wanted to help others, but after Dr. Waalkes encouraged me to pursue the Health Professions Scholarship Program, I knew my path was clear. I went to college, served in the US Army while completing medical school, did four more years of active service then separated from the Army without any medical debt," explained Chris Snyder, MD, a Zeeland High School alum and primary care physician.



It's very likely you know Dr. Phil Waalkes and Dr. Annica Waalkes as the talented and compassionate providers they are today. The two met at Hope College and married while in medical school. Phil is the division chief for primary health for the southwest region and Annica is the division chief for the regional hospitalists and the director of regional medical affairs. What you might not

know is both of them served in the US Army for eight years, ascending to the rank of Major. Both completed the Health Professions Scholarship Program and highly recommend it.



Major Annica Waalkes (left) deploying to Iraq in 2005

"We did residency and then we did four years of active duty," explained Phil, whose mother learned about the military scholarship program in the newspaper and suggested it to him. When Phil applied and was accepted into the program, Annica, who started medical school two years later, applied as well. Both had roles on the teaching staff at Eisenhower Army Medical Center and both deployed overseas. "I deployed to Hungary where I served in a medical support capacity in a small clinic during peacetime. We mostly cared for the civilians who were working for us," explained Phil, whose deployment also included some time in Bosnia.

It's fair to say Annica's deployment was significantly more intense. "I spent the vast majority of my time in the Kurdish territory of Iraq. This was right after the Abu Ghraib scandal regarding how detainees and prisoners were treated. While some detainees lived in tent cities, higher target individuals were housed in prison-like settings. There was an old Russian prison up in the mountains that was converted into a detention facility. I was the medical director for the detention facility. We took care of 300 plus detainees."

"When you're signed up to serve your country, it's a cause you can't replicate. Here at Corewell Health we are trying to make health care accessible, equitable and affordable for everyone and that too is a noble cause," said Phil.

As we look ahead to Veteran's Day next month, Phil says one of the best ways to show our gratitude is to ask a vet about their experience. Show them you value them and their skill sets. "It doesn't necessarily have to be on Veteran's Day," said Annica. "Say thank you to a vet. They said yes when others didn't."

We say thank you to Phil Waalkes, DO, Annica Waalkes, MD, and Chris Snyder, MD, for their service then and for serving among us now.



Major Phil Waalkes serving in Bosnia in 2001



Major Christopher Snyder standing outside the barricade of an aid station in Northern Iraq. "We did our best to treat the routine concerns of the soldiers and staff on the Forward Operating Base as well as traumatic injuries that occurred nearby."

# A healthy you

## Tools to quit!

For more than 40 years, the American Cancer Society has hosted the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November. It's a great opportunity to use the date to decide to quit smoking. But you certainly don't have to wait until Nov. 16! Corewell Health offers tobacco and nicotine treatment services at no cost every day.



"Our program meets you where you are when you're ready," explained clinical program specialist Libby Stern with Corewell Health's Tobacco and Nicotine Treatment program. "So, whether you are curious and want to learn more about the quit process and cessation tools or if you're ready to quit now, we have a program designed for you.

**No matter how long you've been using tobacco products, becoming tobacco and nicotine free is the single best thing you can do for your health and well-being, and that of your family.** And we can help you get there. Reach out any time for more information or guidance – we're ready for you!"

**Clickotine** – The Lifestyle Medicine Tobacco and Nicotine Treatment program is excited to announce the addition of Clickotine, an innovative smartphone app designed to help anyone quit smoking. It can be used as a standalone or in conjunction with our other programs.

**Let's Talk Tobacco** – Here you'll find a safe place to explore your relationship with tobacco or nicotine.

You'll receive all the latest information about tobacco and nicotine, cessation resources and medications, with no pressure to quit. Includes four weekly virtual group sessions led by a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist (TTS).

**Let's Quit Tobacco** – Let's Quit is for those who are motivated and ready to quit smoking, vaping or chewing tobacco. This program offers the best approach to quitting, including the expert guidance of a TTS health coach, approved medications and social support. During one individual and five virtual group sessions, you'll develop and follow your own personalized quit plan.

**Let's Stay Quit** – Here you'll connect and receive support from others on the same journey. You'll learn tips for managing cravings, stress management and avoiding relapse from a TTS and others in your group. Virtual sessions meet twice monthly.

Don't wait to quit. Visit Tobacco and Nicotine Treatment Services for additional information and to sign up or call the Lifestyle Medicine team at **616.486.0385**.

## Free vein screenings

Do you have heavy or tired feeling legs? Perhaps you've noticed more bulging veins. "Chronic venous insufficiency is a condition that can progress in an individual with little warning," explained senior imaging specialist Erica Ringwald. "Fortunately, this condition is also relatively easy to identify using non-invasive screening ultrasound. Corewell Health offers free screenings for these conditions in our state-of-the-art vascular laboratory. If detected, there are many treatment options for this condition – including minimally invasive procedures," said Ringwald.

**Anyone who has any of these symptoms or risk factors qualifies for a free venous screening:**

**Heavy/tired feeling in leg(s)**



**Pain/aching in leg(s)**



**Family history of varicose veins**



**Restlessness in leg(s)**



**Bulging veins**



**Ankle swelling**



Any of these symptoms make you an excellent candidate for a free screening! Want to schedule one? You can use the MyChart app or call **616.391.VASC**.

# Classes and events Oct. 2023 to Dec. 2023

Education, event participation and outreach allow Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital to support the vitality of our community in ways that go beyond health services. The Community Health Improvement Plan has identified three priority health areas for Ottawa County: access to care, mental health and healthy behaviors. Our community programs team uses these three priorities as a guide to select impactful ways to educate, engage and support the community.

## Childbirth and parenting

- Breastfeeding support group\*
- Understanding birth
- Understanding breastfeeding
- Virtual infant car seat safety\*
- Lactation consulting\*
- Telemedicine breastfeeding support\*

## Prevention and nutrition

- First aid and CPR
- Fit and healthy families\*
- Healthy habits walking support group\*
- Mental health first aid\*
- Think smart, eat smart nutrition series
- Tobacco and nicotine treatment services\*

## Events

- Blood drives
- Car seat safety checks

\*Denotes classes that are free of charge

Based upon federal and state regulations, and for the safety of our community, classes and events are subject to change. The most updated class information and schedules can be found at [spectrumhealth.org/zeelandclasses](https://spectrumhealth.org/zeelandclasses). Register online or by calling **616.748.2834**.

## Mental health first aid classes

"We have seen a jump in mental health challenges, especially since 2020. When someone experiences a mental health challenge, all areas of their life can be affected," explained Jessica Kupres, a community health program specialist. "There is a stigma around mental health, which can make it hard for people to reach out for help. Mental health first aid helps remove the stigma."

Mental health first aid is a day-long virtual class offered several times a year. The class equips attendees with a simple, five-step approach when they notice someone developing a possible mental health challenge. "Often the first people who notice are the individual's friends, family, or community members. It's important for people to know what to do."

The class teaches how to identify, understand and respond to mental health or substance use challenges. The training provides the skills needed to reach out and offer initial help and support to someone who may be experiencing a crisis such as a panic attack or suicidal ideation. Mental health first aid takes the fear and hesitation out of starting these conversations by improving understanding and providing an action plan.

"The more people who are trained in MHFA, the more people will feel safe to talk about mental health and substance use, as well as seek professional treatment," said Kupres, who teaches this class with Vicki Kavanaugh of Arbor Circle. Their partnership helps reach a broader number of people as well as support community connections.

The next class is Dec. 1, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration closes November 28.

The adult mental health first aid class is approved for 5.5 nursing CEs and 5.5 social work CE hours and is open to all adults. Two hours of prework must be completed prior to class.





## Creating a safe space for local high schoolers

Students in our communities experience many behavioral health struggles like bullying, relationship issues with parents and friends, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, peer and social media pressures and all with often limited treatment options. Long wait times for traditional outpatient counseling services, combined with transportation difficulties, can prevent youth from receiving the mental health care they need.

Corewell Health school telemedicine clinics are located inside local high schools, giving students an opportunity to be seen by a licensed master social worker (LMSW) for therapy and counseling services without leaving the building. These clinics are crucial to providing access to care.

## Thank you to our 2023 Golf and Pickleball Sponsors!

The events raised more than \$30,000 toward our \$75,000 goal. The funds will support telemedicine clinics at Zeeland East and West and allow us to expand into other schools in greater Ottawa County.

Advanced Radiology Services

Andrea and Justin Genzink

Bazen Electric

CareLinc Medical Equipment

Connan Inc.

DeKock Family Foundation

EV Construction

Emergency Care Specialists

Geerlings Development

Gentex

Holland Charter Township Parks & Rec

John and Ann Query

Justin Fuchs

Lakewood Construction

Midwest Construction Group

Team Dieterman and Associates

The Christman Company

Tom Elhart

Trane

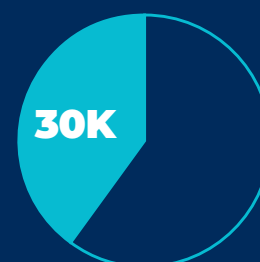
Warner Norcross and Judd

Yacht Basin Marina

Zeeland Architectural Components

Zeeland Public Schools

Thank you for helping  
us raise more than  
**\$30,000** toward  
our \$75,000 goal!



If you would like to make an additional gift of support to the youth telemedicine clinic at Corewell Health Zeeland Hospital please scan the QR code.