

life's point

Focus on Health Care

Colorado Plains Medical Center



Excellence in Emergency Services

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Former players, Dave Studdard and Ken Lanier; mascot, Miles; and four cheerleading squad members from the NFL team the Denver Broncos, visited with hospital staff and patients this season as part of the Broncos' goodwill outreach services and tour.

Photos by Sandy Schneider-Engle.

Dear Friends,

As we enter the new year, it's important to take time and focus on our personal health and the well-being of our loved ones. Looking with anticipation upon the months ahead, you can continue to rely on Colorado Plains Medical Center to provide the quality, focused health services you identify with our facility. You can also expect world-class customer service as we take care of you and your family members.

Providing residents of Northeastern Colorado with essential, high-quality medical care in a customer-friendly atmosphere is a continuing mission of CPMC, and we have worked diligently to provide residents with positive healing experiences for many years.

On pages 4 and 5 in this issue of *Life's Point*, you will read about a valuable partnership CPMC has forged over recent decades to bring valuable ambulance services to the Fort Morgan area. On page 3, you can learn more about a leading-edge medical procedure available at CPMC that is enhancing treatment options for patients in our area. In addition to valuable health and wellness information, we hope this issue of *Life's Point* will give you a clearer picture of the many ways CPMC works to bring a superior level of care to the people who matter the most—our neighbors and patients.

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As always, your feedback and guidance are greatly appreciated as we continue evolving to ensure we maintain our status as the provider of choice for our growing community's needs.

Mike Patterson
Chief Executive Officer
Colorado Plains Medical Center



Paying Cash Means Paying Less

The direct pay option for medical services at Colorado Plains Medical Center offers patients significant discounts and eliminates insurance processing times that may result in debt.

Whether self-employed, unemployed, recently employed, or employed by small businesses, nearly 16 percent of Colorado residents must provide for their own health care without work-supplied insurance coverage. CPMC seeks to serve all members of the community, and the uninsured or underinsured can benefit by taking advantage of the hospital's cash pay method.

Making patients aware of costs of care prior to treatment, CPMC allows individuals and families to prepare for the cost of upcoming procedures. Discounts are then offered if patients pay for services the day of service. For balances up to \$500, a 20 percent discount is offered. If the balance ranges from \$501 to \$1,000, the discount is raised to 25 percent. Balances between \$1,000 and \$9,999 are discounted 30 percent, and anything higher is reduced by 40 percent.

A unique prompt payment plan is also available for visitors to CPMC's Emergency Department. Patients who contact the hospital to pay a balance within 48 hours of discharge are eligible for a discount on their bill.

Patients can also save money on common lab services through CPMC's Direct Pay Laboratory Testing. Approximately 20 different lab screenings are offered at significant discounts if a patient pays cash at the time of services. For example, a urine culture can be obtained for the discounted rate of \$31.00 if paid directly by the patient, and the hospital does not bill the insurance company. To request a form for this service or to receive further information on this program, contact CPMC's business office at (970) 542-3319.



CPMC also employs a full-time financial counselor who can assist income qualifying patients with various payment options and application to programs such as Medicaid and CIGP.

CPMC offers many other discounts on health services. Call the Business Office at (970) 542-3319 to find out how you can save on your health needs.

Pinpointing Strange Behavior

The aging process can be difficult mentally and physically for older adults and their families, and some seniors may begin demonstrating odd behaviors, such as memory loss and limited concentration, as they get older. At Colorado Plains Medical Center, physicians and staff members are dedicated to identifying and treating problems related to aging.

The warning signs of behavioral changes in aging adults may often be subtle, but seemingly minor symptoms can sometimes signal a serious problem. Trying to cope with the stresses of aging can prove challenging for many older adults. As a result, elderly people may experience conditions such as anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, and depression.

Changes in memory and awareness may be symptoms of dementia—a medical condition that causes changes in brain function that affect memory and behavior—or delirium, which can cause the elderly to feel confused about what is happening around them.

SPEAK UP

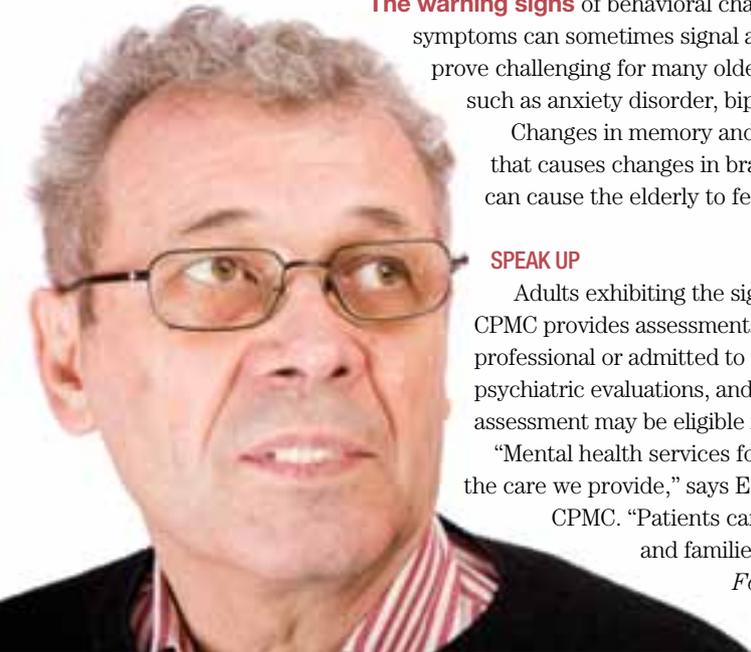
Adults exhibiting the signs of delirium or dementia should seek help. CPMC provides assessments for elderly patients referred by a mental health professional or admitted to the hospital that include medication consultations, psychiatric evaluations, and psychosocial studies. Individuals who undergo an assessment may be eligible for local inpatient and outpatient programs.

“Mental health services for the elderly are a very important aspect of the care we provide,” says E. Omar Ruiloba, MD, MS, psychiatrist at CPMC. “Patients can receive treatment here, close to their homes and families.”

For more information about services offered by CPMC’s Geriatric Behavioral Health Unit, call (970) 542-4357.



E. Omar Ruiloba, MD



Say Goodbye to Varicose Veins

If you’re one of the 25 million Americans who suffer from venous reflux disease, suffer no longer. The latest, minimally invasive treatment for severe varicose veins and the pain associated with the condition has arrived at Colorado Plains Medical Center.

The VNUS Closure™ procedure is an outpatient surgery performed under local anesthesia to provide relief for individuals suffering with venous reflux disease—a condition caused by damage to the valves that keep blood flowing out of the legs and to the heart.

During the procedure, a catheter is placed into diseased veins, and heat is applied to the vein wall, sealing it closed and routing blood to healthy veins. A bandage is placed over the insertion site, and most patients can return to their normal activities within one to two days.

“This procedure is significantly less painful than traditional vein stripping surgery,” says Edward Lopez, MD, FACS, Director of Trauma Care at CPMC. “We’re very excited to offer this state-of-the-art treatment to residents in Northeast Colorado who suffer from the pain and cosmetic struggles of venous reflux disease.”

In addition to reduced pain, patients who receive VNUS treatment have superior cosmetic outcomes with less bruising and swelling, and most patients notice improvement in their symptoms in just one to two weeks.

To find out more about the VNUS Closure procedure, call us at (970) 867-3391.



Edward Lopez, MD



It'spoint

PARTNERS in



Saving a patient's life takes teamwork. At Colorado Plains Medical Center, we're fortunate to have the emergency services professionals at Morgan County Ambulance Service (MCAS) on our team.

MCAS has been part of the fabric of Morgan County since 1967, when the organization started as a volunteer service whose members possessed training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first-aid. As emergency medical services (EMS) organizations nationwide evolved in the ensuing decades, MCAS eventually required its volunteers to possess emergency medical technician and paramedic training. A turning point for MCAS occurred in 2001, when the service transitioned to a full-time paramedic organization whose personnel worked 24-hour shifts instead of responding to calls on a case-by-case basis.

"When MCAS became a full-time paramedic service, our average response time fell from nine minutes to less than one minute," says Joe King, Director of MCAS. "Faster response times have had a profound effect on the cardiac arrest survival rate in Morgan County, which was 27 percent in 2010, compared to less than 1 percent in prior years. That outstanding statistic is mainly due to better response times, higher levels of EMS training, and more advanced equipment possessed by MCAS. Our organization used to simply transport individuals to the hospital—now we bring the Emergency Department [ED] to their living rooms."

READY AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE

MCAS today is comprised of 28 staff members, 12 of whom are full-time. The organization's 11 paramedics are skilled at delivering a wide range of emergency care and possess "standing orders," meaning they can perform procedures and administer certain medications without consulting a physician first. Four "intermediates" are members capable of providing advanced cardiac life support and can perform the same procedures and deliver the same medications as paramedics after receiving orders from a physician. Thirteen "basics" assist paramedics in rendering care and can perform certain functions on their own, such as administering first-line drugs during cardiac arrest situations.

Three of MCAS's fleet of eight ambulances are on duty around the clock. MCAS personnel stabilize and transport patients suffering from a variety of emergent conditions, including:

- arrhythmia
- bone fractures
- cardiac arrest
- heart attack
- hypoglycemia
- stroke

"As soon as MCAS personnel make contact with a patient, they obtain a history and evaluate the individual's symptoms,"



My mother-in-law had been transported by Morgan County Ambulance Service (MCAS) before, so I was familiar with the organization before I had to undergo my own transport. After receiving care from MCAS personnel myself, I was so impressed by their attitude, efficiency, and respect for me as a patient. I could not have received better treatment from MCAS."

—Brenda Shoemaker, Brush resident who was transported by MCAS from a hospital in her hometown to one in Greeley for chest pain evaluation

Saving Lives



King says. “Once the initial assessment is complete, our professionals’ goal is to eliminate the patient’s pain as quickly as possible en route to the hospital. Our job upon arriving at the hospital is to pass along accurate, detailed information to the ED staff so they can make appropriate treatment decisions.”

THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EMERGENCY CARE

When patients arrive at the ED at CPMC, they find an eight-bed department that has been certified since 1991 as a Level III Trauma Center by the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council of Colorado. To maintain this designation, CPMC provides 24-hour trauma and orthopedic surgeon coverage. An emergency medicine physician is also available around the clock in the ED. Most trauma patients and those with emergent conditions can be treated at CPMC, and those who can’t are able to receive high-quality, specialized care onsite before being transferred elsewhere.

Bentley Tate, MD, Medical Director of the ED at CPMC, is as impressed by MCAS as the organization’s personnel are by Dr. Tate and his team in the CPMC ED.

“The trained paramedics of MCAS reliably begin state-of-the-art treatment that the staff in our ED is able to continue once the ambulance arrives,” Dr. Tate says. “I’ve worked with MCAS since I arrived at CPMC 18 years ago, and during that time, the organization has made a great effort to maintain advanced protocols and equipment for treating emergent conditions. When a patient develops a serious medical condition or sustains an injury in Morgan County, the strong collaboration between MCAS and CPMC ensures he or she receives the best care possible.”

For more information about the ED at CPMC, visit www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com.

Every Bit Helps

Healthcare expenditures can be crippling to a family’s finances, especially in a difficult economy. That’s why Morgan County Ambulance Service (MCAS) offers a program to ease the financial burden of emergency transport.

Approximately four years ago, MCAS started the Morgan County Ambulance Emergency Treatment and Transport Subscription Plan. Membership in the plan costs \$35 for individuals and \$50 for families per year. Individual seniors pay just \$25 annually, while senior couples may enroll in the program for \$40 per year. When members receive ambulance services, MCAS bills their insurance company, and any deductible or copay is written off; the only out-of-pocket expense for which members are responsible is their yearly membership fee.

To enroll in the Morgan County Ambulance Emergency Treatment and Transport Subscription Plan, call MCAS at (970) 542-3570 or visit the organization’s office at 1000 East Railroad Avenue in Fort Morgan.



Because Every Step Counts

Now that the new year is here, it's time to take control of your heart health. The good news is, you don't have to run a marathon to do it.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) defines brisk walking as a moderate-intensity activity, which means walking for 30 minutes every weekday can significantly improve cardiovascular health.

KNOW THE FACTS

"You don't need to sweat bullets or spend three hours in a gym to benefit from exercise," says William H. Sammond, MD, cardiologist at Colorado Plains Medical Center. "You can engage in activities you enjoy more than 30 minutes a day, but just meeting the minimum requirement can make a big difference."



William H. Sammond, MD

If you can't seem to find time to stay active every day, the NIH recommends using common chores that can double as exercise, such as:

- gardening for 30 to 45 minutes
- pushing a stroller 1.5 miles in 30 minutes
- shoveling snow for 15 minutes
- walking your dog for 30 minutes
- washing windows and floors for 45 to 60 minutes

EXERCISE FOR BEGINNERS

If you've been sedentary for a year or more, start simple and gradually build to a more rigorous routine. Walking is a great place to start for anybody, especially those who are overweight. Walking 30 minutes most days a week burns abdominal fat, a risk factor for both diabetes and heart disease.

"Taking care of your heart is the key to living a longer, healthier life," says Paulette Bennett, BA, RRT, CPFT, Director of Cardiopulmonary Services at CPMC. "Even just a little exercise can improve your independence and overall quality of life."

Visit www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com for more information about cardiac services at CPMC.

▶ Giving You a Step Up

The cardiac rehabilitation program at CPMC is designed to help people with special heart conditions return to normal activity. If you have chronic chest pain or heart failure, have suffered a heart attack, or recently had bypass surgery or coronary stenting, our cardiac rehab can help. To schedule an appointment, call (970) 542-3385.

Welcome, Dr. Onuora

Colorado Plains Medical Center is pleased to welcome Stella Onuora, MD, the newest member of our staff at Women's Clinic of the Plains.



Stella Onuora, MD

An obstetrician and gynecologist, Dr. Onuora specializes in a full range of women's health services, including infertility treatment, preventive screenings, prenatal care, hormone replacement therapy, incontinence treatment, and surgical services.

With more than 10 years of prior experience as a registered nurse, Dr. Onuora obtained her medical degree from

Ross University School of Medicine in the Commonwealth of Dominica. She performed her residency at Nassau University Medical Center in New York, where she trained in OB/GYN care, a specialty which allows her to educate women on the importance of personal health.

A former resident of a small town in Texas, Dr. Onuora feels right at home in Fort Morgan's rural atmosphere. She appreciates the cooperative spirit she has enjoyed since joining Michelle Soriano, MD, and her staff at Women's Clinic of the Plains.

During her free time, Dr. Onuora enjoys spending time with her husband, David, and their three grown children, relaxing with a favorite novel, or knitting.

Dr. Onuora is now accepting new patients at Women's Clinic of the Plains. To schedule an appointment, call (970) 542-0390.



Turning Back the Clock

Many seniors are easing into their golden years with confidence by electing to undergo cosmetic surgery.

According to The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, in 2010 there were 84,685 cosmetic procedures performed among patients age 65 and older. While facelifts, eyelid lifts, and liposuction are commonly requested



Anne Manchester, MD

procedures among seniors, BOTOX® injections remain the most popular.

"If you're looking to diminish fine lines, crows feet, or deep-set wrinkles, we often recommend BOTOX injections or dermal fillers," says Anne Manchester, MD, internist on staff at Colorado Plains Medical Center. "Both of these non-surgical options freeze the facial muscles

temporarily and take about two weeks to achieve optimal results. The effects of BOTOX typically last for about three months, whereas fillers last around six months."

LESS IS MORE

While cosmetic surgery has sparked controversy throughout recent years due to overindulgence, senior citizens are helping to restore its reputation.

"Cosmetic surgery can really boost a senior's self-confidence," says Dr. Manchester. "If you have a realistic goal in mind and you simply want to look refreshed and rejuvenated, a minor procedure or injection can really prove beneficial."

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Manchester, call (970) 542-4390.



Celebrate Preventive Health!

Colorado Plains Medical Center is excited to invite you to our winter health fair! Scheduled for **Saturday, February 11**, at Fort Morgan High School, the fair will feature more than 40 booths offering health and wellness information, as well as free or low-cost health screenings, including:

- blood panels
- blood pressure
- body mass index (BMI)
- comprehensive metabolic profile/lipid panel for \$25
- height and weight
- prostate-specific antigen for \$20
- pulse oximetry
- skin cancer screenings
- thyroid-stimulating hormone for \$10

CPMC will also offer lab draws at these discounted rates for the week leading up to the health fair. From 6–8 a.m. each weekday morning, residents can receive health screenings at a lower cost and with no appointment. Residents who receive screenings prior to the fair can pick up their results at the event.

For more information about the health fair or business sponsorship opportunities, call Sandy Schneider-Engle at (970) 542-3346.

