Is it a cold or the flu?
St. Charles Health System is embarking on a new chapter that starts this month with the addition of Joseph Sluka as president and CEO of the organization.

Joe comes to St. Charles from Rapid City, S.D., where he served as executive vice president and chief administrative officer for Regional Health for the past four years. Regional Health is similar in size and structure to St. Charles Health System with more than 40 health care facilities including five hospitals. It employs more than 4,500 people.

The St. Charles Health System Board of Directors unanimously voted to select Joe as the new leader of the organization because culturally and professionally he is the right person to guide St. Charles through the many changes the health care industry is experiencing. Joe has a long history of working closely with physicians and in successfully implementing Lean methodologies. These skills will help the health system meet the high standard of care our community expects and deserves.

Joe has held a number of positions with Regional Health including vice president of managed care. Prior to joining Regional Health in 2005, he served as executive director of Western Health, chief operating officer at HFM and executive director and chief operating officer at MedPartners.

He and his wife Lynn are looking forward to moving to Oregon. They have two children. Their daughter, Candace, is married and lives in the Pacific Northwest and their son, Hunter, is a senior in high school.

Please look to meet Joe at local community events in the coming months and help us welcome him and his family to Central Oregon.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Sayeg
Chairman, Board of Directors
St. Charles Health System
This fall, St. Charles Heart and Lung Center welcomed three new physicians to its team of experienced cardiologists. Dr. Gary Foster, Dr. P. Ganesh Muthappan and Dr. Allen Rafael bring more than 40 years of combined experience in multiple areas of cardiology.

“Adding these three providers to our team gives us even greater depth of training and experience to diagnose, manage and treat heart problems,” said Dr. John Nunes, chief medical officer for St. Charles Medical Group. “Adding their skills to our existing team of providers means St. Charles is now the only comprehensive heart center east of the Cascades in Oregon.”

The new providers have different backgrounds, but all three are excited to join the practice and call Central Oregon home.

Foster received his medical degree from Loma Linda University and completed his cardiology training at Harvard Medical School’s teaching hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital.

“I am interested in all aspects of cardiology, including structural heart abnormalities, arrhythmias, heart failure, prevention, exercise performance and high altitude medicine,” Foster said.

He is internationally recognized for his research and discoveries in valvular heart disease, cardiac diagnostic imaging, gene and protein expression in coronary artery disease and high altitude physiology in athletes.

Muthappan received his medical degree, with highest honors, from Washington University in St. Louis, and completed his residency in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital. After residency, he worked for Medecins sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders), running a hospital and outreach clinic at a refugee camp on the border between government and rebel-held territory in Sudan. Muthappan then performed his cardiology training at the Frankel Cardiovascular Center at the University of Michigan, where he completed fellowship training in cardiovascular disease and interventional cardiology.

“I believe in treating patients like family, and making sure that my patients and their families understand their disease and treatment plan,” he said. “I also believe in incorporating the latest research and advances in both traditional and holistic medicine to deliver effective care and prevent future disease.”

Rafael, who relocated to Bend from Arizona, completed his medical training at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, his residency in internal medicine at Emory University Hospital and his fellowship in cardiovascular disease at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Ohio State University Hospital. Rafael’s father was also a cardiologist and he said he has always found the mechanics of the heart to be fascinating.

“The cardiology field has changed dramatically,” Rafael said, explaining that he’s been impressed with the technology available at St. Charles. “There are newer techniques where we can open up vessels we couldn’t before.”

For more information or to make an appointment in Bend or at one of the satellite locations, call 541-388-4333. Satellite locations include Redmond, Sisters, Madras, La Pine, Lakeview and John Day.
Is it a cold or the flu?
New testing capability makes it easier to tell the difference

At this time of year, many illnesses look a lot alike. They start with a fever, cough, runny nose and body aches – but the symptoms could be caused by any number of diagnoses including viral and bacterial infections, which have different treatment options.

Now, St. Charles Health System has a new laboratory test that quickly identifies 17 different respiratory viruses along with several illnesses caused by bacteria making it easier for physicians to know how to treat patients suffering from cold and flu symptoms.

“This is a game changer in health care,” said Chuck Huggins, manager of clinical and technical operations at the St. Charles Bend laboratory. “What it does in that little box used to require three separate rooms. It would take hours to do the test.”

Thanks to the new polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test from BioFire, medical providers throughout Central Oregon can do a quick nasopharyngeal swab on patients and send it to the St. Charles Lab for processing. Once the sample is loaded into the BioFire instrument it takes only 90 minutes to determine if the patient is suffering from influenza, rhinovirus, enterovirus or even pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough.

Using a sterile packet, BioFire eliminates exposure to possible contaminants ensuring the lab results are accurate.

“One of the main benefits is the treatment,” said Sharon Reams, supervisor of microbiology for St. Charles Bend. “Doctors know in an hour and a half if the patient has an illness that is bacterial or viral and whether antibiotics will help.”

Having access to the test could help reduce the use of unnecessary antibiotics, which is important as more and more bacteria are becoming antibiotic resistant. The test can also determine which type of influenza a person may be suffering from – seasonal or the more severe H1N1. Access to that information can help health officials track flu outbreaks.

In the near future, Reams said, St. Charles plans to add a gastrointestinal testing panel using the BioFire device that will allow providers to determine if a bacteria, virus or parasite is causing a patient gastrointestinal distress.

“Providers will be able to order this instead of the various stool tests we do now,” Reams said. “It will take an hour and a half on the machine instead of a 48-hour culture to make a diagnosis and start treatment.”

St. Charles Family Care in Redmond looking for participants for NIH study

St. Charles Family Care in Redmond is recruiting children ages 7 through 12 who have experienced at least three episodes of unexplained abdominal pain over a three-month period to participate in a National Institutes of Health study. As a reward for participating, the children and their caregivers will receive gift cards to local and online retailers.

For more information about the study, and to enroll, call Dr. Kim Swanson at St. Charles Family Care in Redmond at 541-548-2164.
Forensic nurses provide coverage throughout region

Trained team helps victims of sexual assault

More than 50 times a year in Bend and Redmond, a trained sexual assault nurse examiner receives a call that a victim needs help.

“We do a medical exam, cover them for STDs and HIV. We do some grief counseling, crisis intervention counseling and a safety plan to make sure they are going back into a safe environment,” said Susan Yokoyama, one of the trained forensic nurses at St. Charles Bend who helps lead the program for the health system. “We do evidence collection.”

The St. Charles SANE team received an award earlier this year from the Deschutes County District Attorney’s office because it has partnered with other local agencies to ensure coverage is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To become certified, nurses must complete 40 hours of class time and an additional 40 hours of training with a preceptor.

At St. Charles, nurses from the emergency departments and Family Birthing Centers have volunteered to go through the training and provide coverage. Certified nurses are now available at all four hospital campuses in Bend, Redmond, Prineville and Madras. The nurses in Bend and Redmond take turns taking call on their days off.

“We’ve worked hard to get consistent coverage so that patients don’t have to wait until the next day to get their exam,” Yokoyama said. “We encourage victims to seek treatment sooner, not necessarily for evidence collection, but for their medical concerns.”

Nationally, sexual assault remains one of the most unreported crimes with more than 60 percent going unreported, according to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. To encourage victims to seek medical assistance, Oregon law does not require medical providers to report the assault to law enforcement agencies as long as the victim is not a minor, disabled or over the age of 65.

For those who are interested in reporting the crime, the SANE team helps with the process. They take photos of injuries and collect DNA evidence for use at trial. Sometimes they are called to testify as well.

“I find the forensic science interesting,” Yokoyama said. “You can get DNA off of clothing or different parts of the body. Every time you turn around, there is something new to learn in the field.”

The SANE team has received support for equipment through the St. Charles Foundation and volunteers. They have a forensic camera to take close-up photos and a dedicated exam room at the Bend and Redmond hospitals that are painted in warm colors with words of encouragement stenciled on the walls. The goal is to help victims feel as comfortable as possible so their medical needs can be met during a difficult time.

“We want them to know that they are a priority,” Yokoyama said.

Victims of sexual assault are encouraged to call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
CANCER CARE

Support Sisters/Brothers Would you like to talk with someone who has already faced cancer? Call to be matched with a survivor or caregiver who can offer one-on-one support and hope to you and your family members.
FREE. INFO: 541-706-3754.

DEFEAT Cancer This survivorship empowerment program focuses on nutrition, physical activity, education and inspiration. Light dinner served. FREE. MEETS: the second Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7:30 p.m., except August and December. It is also broadcast to Redmond. RSVP: 541-706-3754. INFO: www.DEFEATCancer.info.

Coffee & Connection Meet over coffee in a small group setting facilitated by a social worker. Adult survivors, family members, caregivers and friends - all are welcome. FREE. MEETS: the first and third Wednesdays monthly from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. INFO: 541-706-3754.

Harvest of HOPE Food assistance program for cancer patients while in treatment. We are accepting donations of healthful non-perishables (vegetables, fruits, soups, pasta sauce, etc.). Collection bins in the St. Charles Cancer Center lobby.

Transitioning Back to Health four-week program focusing on physical activity, education and camaraderie for cancer patients recently completing treatment and their caregivers. Two classes offered - one for men and one for women. FREE. Next series begins mid-January. INFO: 541-410-9386.

Redmond R & R Weekly Exercise Program Group discussion offered Mondays 3-4 p.m. at the St. Charles Cancer Center in Redmond for adult survivors and caregivers. MEETS: Mondays 3-4 p.m. at the St. Charles Redmond Cancer Clinic for adult survivors and caregivers. Group discussion 4-5 p.m. third Mondays monthly. RSVP: 541-706-3754.

Young Adult Survivor Network – for people ages 18-45 facing cancer – and their caregivers. Casual meet ups for camaraderie, support and fun. INFO: contact Lizzi at 541-706-2966.

DIABETES EDUCATION


Preventing Diabetes Understand what factors increase your risk for diabetes, identify your personal risk factors and develop strategies to change your lifestyle. Learn to overcome obstacles and incorporate healthier habits for a long and healthy future. This class is NOT appropriate for people with diabetes, but is great if you have been told you have pre-diabetes. Pre-registration required. FEE $25. BEND: Mar. 12, Thursday, 5:30-7 p.m.

Diabetes Support Group-Bend Included in hour is time for question/answer session. No registration required. Bring your specific questions for Q/A session. FREE.
UPCOMING TOPIC: “Answers to your diabetes issues” SPEAKER: Karen Kellingworth, nurse, certified diabetes educator, will help you start the New Year by answering questions regarding your top diabetes issues. MEETS: Jan. 13, Tuesday, 4-5 p.m., St. Charles Bend, Heart & Lung conference room.

JDRF Type 1 Bend Coffee Group For people with Type 1 diabetes, or parents of children with Type 1 diabetes. FREE. MEETS: the third Friday of every month at 10 a.m., Loomer Bean Roasting Co. 961 1/2 NW Brooks St. in Bend. Upcoming dates include Dec. 19, Jan. 16, Feb. 20. INFO: Penny Falck at 541-318-4804.

SUPPORT GROUPS

St. Charles offers a wide variety of support groups. INFO: Please see website or call 541-706-7730

HEALTHY EATING FOR LIFE

Prep to Plate Nutrition education and cooking savvy are made fun in this hands-on class. Learn to make good, nutritious meals affordable, easy to prepare and most importantly-delicious! FEE $30. BEND: Feb. 14 Topic: “Valentine Favorites - Wine and Chocolate” LOCATION: Bend Senior High School, 230 NE 6th St. INFO: 541-382-4321 ext. 7154

Eat for a Healthy Heart Reduce your risk of heart disease or continue to improve your heart health. Topics include foods to choose and how to integrate them into your lifestyle, portion sizes, physical activity and troubleshooting the heart-healthy diet. FEE: $20.
BEND: Jan. 21, Wednesday, 5:30-7 p.m.
REDMOND: Jan. 21, Wednesday, 9-10:30 a.m.
MADRAS: Jan. 23, Friday, 9-10:30 a.m.
PRINEVILLE: Jan. 23, Friday, 5-7 p.m.

NEW Start (Nourishment, Enjoyable Movement, Wellness, Start today) 10-week sessions. Health improvement program focused on good nutrition and exercise habits, overcoming obstacles to obtaining health and making it all fit into your lifestyle. Program includes two individual appointments with a St. Charles nutritionist. FEE: $90 per person.
BEND: Jan. 26-Mar. 23 (no class Feb. 16) Mondays, 9:30-10:45 a.m.
REDMOND: Jan. 28 - Mar. 25 (no class Feb. 18) Wednesdays, 6-7:15 p.m.
PRINEVILLE: Jan. 28-Mar. 25 (no class Feb. 18) Wednesdays, 6-7:15 p.m.

TOBACCO CESSATION

Freshstart Tobacco Cessation Four-week sessions. Developed by the American Cancer Society, this program can help you successfully quit smoking. FEE: $35.
BEND: Jan. 20-Feb. 10, Tuesdays, 5:30-7 p.m.
REDMOND: Jan. 26-Feb. 16, Mondays, 5:30-7 p.m.
PRINEVILLE: Jan. 21-Feb. 11, Wednesdays 5:30 p.m.
MADRAS: Jan. 22-Feb. 12, Thursdays 5:30-7 p.m.
Preventing Osteoporosis with Exercise  Eight-week sessions (two days a week). Activity for the prevention and reduction of osteoporosis. Classes led by licensed physical therapists. FEE: $63.
BEND: Jan. 5-Feb. 25 or Mar. 16-May 6
Mondays/Wednesdays, 8-9 a.m. or 9-10 a.m.
BEND: Jan. 6-Mar. 10 (no class Jan. 13, Feb. 3 or Mar. 3) or Mar. 17-May 19 (no class Mar. 24, Apr. 7 or May 5)
Tuesday/Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.
REDMOND: Jan. 5-Mar. 9 (no class Jan. 26, Feb. 23 or 27) or Mar. 23-May 18 (no class Apr. 27)
Mondays-Fridays 8-9 a.m. or 9-10 a.m.
MADRAS: Jan. 5-Feb. 26 or Mar. 16- May 7 Mondays/Thursdays, 1-2 p.m.

Parkinson's Exercise Class  Eight-week sessions. Exercises led by physical therapists. Education and discussions follow. FEE: $45.
BEND: Jan. 12-Mar. 2, Mondays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Rehabilitation Exercise Class  Eight-week sessions. Class focuses on improving strength, endurance, flexibility and balance. Specialized exercise for people with various ability levels. Classes supervised by a licensed physical therapist. FEE $80 (two times per week) OR $120 (three times per week). INFO/REGISTRATION: 541-706-2739.

Movement Disorders Exercise Class  Eight-week sessions. This class is designed for people who have mobility challenges and walk independently. Classes led by licensed physical therapists. FEE $40.
REDMOND: Jan. 5-Feb. 23 or Mar. 9-Apr. 27, Mondays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. OR Jan. 9-Feb. 27 or Mar. 13-May 1, Fridays, 12:30-1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: St. Charles Redmond - Outpatient Rehab Gym 1523 Canal Blvd.

Tetra/Paraplegia Exercise Class  Focuses on maintaining strength, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. For people with tetraplegia or paraplegia resulting from a spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis or other neurological cause. FEE $60.
BEND: St. Charles Bend Outpatient Gym. Start dates vary, Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
INFO/REGISTRATION: 541-706-2739.

Bariatric Surgery Patients (pre and post-op) Exercise Class  Focuses on education and the safe initiation and progression of an exercise program to meet your weight-loss goals. FEE $80 (two times per week).
BEND: St. Charles Bend Outpatient Gym, Tuesdays/Thursdays, 8-9 a.m.
REGISTRATION: 541-706-2739.

CARDIOPULMONARY REHAB EDUCATIONAL GROUPS

Better Breathers Club  This educational group is for people with chronic lung conditions and their caregivers and families. FREE. MEETS: Last Wednesday of every month, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. in the Heart & Lung Center conference room.
INFO: 541-706-4865.

Take Heart  This educational group is for people with chronic heart conditions, their caregivers and families. FREE. MEETS: Third Monday of the month from 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the Heart & Lung Center conference room.
INFO: 541-706-2696.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

Breastfeeding Class  This class provides families with information they need prior to birth, while in the hospital and at home. FEE: $25 per couple.
BEND: Jan. 26, Feb. 16 or Mar. 16
LOCATION: East Bend Campus (Deschutes Children's Foundation) 2125 NE Daggett Lane, Bend OR 97701

Chilhild Education Classes  Discover your options and become better prepared in this St. Charles class. Our package format includes childbirth preparation, newborn care, breastfeeding and infant CPR. Classes are highly partner focused and pricing is per couple, offered as one, all-day Saturday course or two evening classes. FEE $49 per couple.
BEND: Jan. 10, Feb. 20 or Mar. 26
Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or
BEND: Jan. 6-7, Feb. 3-4 or Mar. 3-4,
Tuesday/Wednesday evenings, 6-9 p.m.
REDMOND: Jan. 17 or Mar. 14, Saturdays,
9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or
REDMOND: Jan. 26-27 or Apr. 20-21,
Monday/Tuesday evenings, 6-9 p.m.

Madras Childbirth Education  This six-week course provides an understanding of the process of labor and delivery. Review breathing, relaxation and support measures for mother and coach. Discuss newborn behavior, care, feeding and management of respiratory emergencies. FEE $40. *Free for babies delivered at St. Charles Madras.
INSTRUCTOR: Janet Bissell
BABIES DUE BY:  CLASS BEGINS:
March 13  Jan. 7
June 5  April 1
Sept. 18  May 20
Nov. 13  July 22
Jan. 8  Sept. 30

Madras Refresher Course  This course reviews current information on the process of labor and delivery. It is not recommended for first time parents. Pre-registration required. FEE $10. *Free for babies delivered at St. Charles Madras.
INSTRUCTOR: Janet Bissell
BABIES DUE BY:  CLASS BEGINS:
March 27  Feb. 25
July 3  May 13
Oct. 23  July 8
Nov. 27  Sept. 9
Feb. 26  Nov. 18
MADRAS: Wednesday 7-9 p.m.
REGISTRATION: 541-475-3882 ext. 4047
WARM SPRINGS: Wednesday 12 - 1 p.m.
INFO/REGISTRATION: 541-553-2480 ext. 4162

ADDITIONAL OFFERINGS

Total Joint Replacement Classes  This pre-operative class helps educate patients before they receive a total knee or total hip replacement surgery. This class is recommended by our orthopedic surgeons. FREE.
REGISTRATION/INFO: Please leave a message at 541-706-4922 the class facilitator will return your call.

American Heart Association Courses  Health Care Provider CPR, Heartsaver CPR and First Aid, ACLS, PALS and NRP courses are open to the public. Offsite courses are also offered through the Workplace Training Program. INFO: http://www.stcharleshealthcare.org/ Classes. Please contact the training center coordinator with questions at 541-706-3755.

Living Well with Chronic Conditions  Six-week interactive workshop designed for people who are living with chronic health conditions or for their caregivers. It teaches real-life skills for learning to live a full, healthy life with a chronic condition. Pre-registration required. FEE $10. Classes held throughout Central Oregon. Dates and times vary. Pre-registration required.
INFO: 541-322-7430

Monthly Support Meetings for Bariatric Surgery  Facilitated by Dr. Karen Campbell, a psychologist, and LuAnn Lehnerz, a registered dietitian. FREE.
BEND: First Tuesday of each month 12:30-1:30 p.m. and the third Tuesday of each month 6:30-7:30 p.m.
REDMOND: Second Wednesday of each month 4:15-5:15 p.m.
INFO: 541-548-8131 ext. 2838

Bariatric Informational Seminar  Informational meetings with our Center of Excellence surgeons are the first step in your bariatric surgery journey. We invite all who are interested in learning more about our program to attend and hear form our surgeons as well as from those who have experienced bariatric surgery. Registration is not required, however, meetings are subject to change so please call and confirm the meeting you would like to attend. FREE.
BEND: Third Tuesday, 6-8 p.m. in odd months
CONTACT: 541-322-5753
REDMOND: First Wednesday of every month 2-4 p.m.
CONTACT: 541-548-7761

Starting the New Year After Loss: A Grief Workshop  St. Charles Hospice is offering a free, half-day grief support workshop. Starting the New Year during a time of mourning may seem overwhelming. This workshop will explore the grief journey and introduce supportive and creative methods to help this year become one of hope and transformation.
BEND: Sat., Jan. 17 conference room B 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
INFO/REGISTRATION: 541-706-6700.
The St. Charles Health System board of directors has approved a $16 million renovation to St. Charles Madras that will add 26,000 square feet to the facility and enhance outpatient and primary care services.

The 25-bed critical access hospital serves 21,000 people in Madras and surrounding communities. But the facility—built in 1967—does not meet current standards of care. Some of the most pressing problems include:

- The hospital’s laboratory, which is located in an aging modular unit that is too small to accommodate staff and equipment
- An emergency department that is only equipped with seven beds separated by curtains
- Only one operating room
- HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems that are original to the 1967 building
- Multiple entryways making it difficult for patients to identify a main entrance

Slated for construction in May 2015, the addition will include a new main entrance, a new combined operating room and emergency department, a new imaging department and laboratory. The existing infrastructure will also undergo upgrades.

St. Charles Madras and Pioneer Memorial Hospital CEO Jeanie Gentry said other options were considered, including renovating the existing space and building an entirely new facility. A renovation, however, would cost more than new construction and would interrupt critical services. A new facility would cost about twice as much.

“After studying the needs of our community and the problems with the St. Charles Madras facility, we decided that building an addition as part of a longer-term plan was the most practical and economical choice,” Gentry said.

“This renovation will help us improve efficiency and focus mainly on outpatient and primary care services, rather than inpatient volume.”

The $16 million for the project—which will be partially financed by bonds—fulfills St. Charles’ commitment to the Madras community to upgrade the hospital.

“The need for facility improvements has been recognized for years,” said Rick Martin, vice president of construction and real estate for St. Charles Health System. “This renovation to St. Charles Madras is truly going to enhance the quality and safety of patient care, and will serve the community for years to come.”
When Helen Vandervort was on the St. Charles Foundation Board of Directors many years ago, the board decided to start a legacy giving program that would encourage people to name the organization as a recipient in their will.

“I would always tell the board if they wanted to do something, they just had to be willing to do it first,” Vandervort said. “So, I put the St. Charles Foundation in my will.”

Vandervort felt she couldn’t very well go out and ask others to think about the foundation in their estate planning if she wasn’t willing to do so herself. She had a background in development from working at Central Oregon Community College for 25 years and brought that experience to the foundation board. The college had a planned giving program and Vandervort and others felt the health system should have one as well.

“Planned giving is a way for people to ensure the institution that they love and need continues on,” Vandervort explained. “It’s a painless way of giving, really, because it’s just all on paper and by the time it’s due you don’t need your money anymore.”

As with any kind of philanthropy – whether it is buying tickets to a dinner or leaving a planned gift – people need to feel a connection to the organization they are supporting. Vandervort’s husband had often needed St. Charles’ services, which gave her that connection. Patients, caregivers and volunteers may all feel a similar connection to St. Charles for different reasons.

Priscilla Welch, a long-time St. Charles volunteer, said she is strongly connected to the organization and thinks that leaving a planned gift to St. Charles Foundation is a good idea. A planned gift could go to support any number of programs that help people in need.

“I’m deep into prevention. It’s a passion of mine. I look after my body and try to look after myself as best I can,” Welch said. “I see people coming to the hospital who don’t do that and can’t do that for all kinds of various reasons. I’m just committed to helping people who can’t help themselves.”

St. Charles Foundation offers a variety of ways for people to make planned gifts to the organization including:

- **Bequest:** Include a gift in your will or living trust or name St. Charles Foundation as a beneficiary of your retirement plan or life insurance policy.

- **Charitable remainder trust:** Establish a trust that will make payments to you or those you name, and St. Charles receives the remainder.

- **Gift annuity:** Transfer cash, securities or other assets in exchange for a tax benefit and fixed annual payments to you and/or a beneficiary for life, after which the remainder of the funds will be retained by St. Charles Foundation.

- **Assets:** Donate assets, such as real estate to St. Charles Foundation, and gain financial benefits. For example, you can donate your house, continue to live in it and receive a tax break.

- **Appreciated stocks and securities:** Donate appreciated stock and securities to St. Charles Foundation to earn a charitable income tax deduction that can generate greater income while reducing or even eliminating capital gains tax.

“You are leaving a legacy,” Vandervort said. “It’s a way of being remembered. I was here and I’ve done something nice.”

For more information on St. Charles Foundation’s planned giving program, contact Lisa Dobey at 541-706-2929 or ladobey@stcharleshealthcare.org.
New balance manager system

The St. Charles Outpatient Rehabilitation Center in Bend has a new Neurocom Balance Manager System that allows caregivers to determine which balance systems are working well for patients and which are not.

"With the new system we are now able to assess three additional components of balance that we couldn’t before including more detailed tests for motor control, vestibular function and dynamic vision," said Mike Edgerton, a physical therapist at St. Charles Bend.

St. Charles is the only outpatient therapy clinic in Central Oregon with a Balance Manager System and caregivers are excited to be able to accurately assess and treat patients with balance and vestibular disorders.

To make an appointment, call 541-706-7725.

Returning to health

St. Charles Rehabilitation in Madras covers all aspects of treatment

When 94-year-old Clara Miller fell off a step stool while attempting to change a light bulb recently, she broke her leg. But her independent spirit stayed strong throughout her hospital stay and rehabilitation at St. Charles Madras.

“It’s much better than driving to Bend,” Miller said as she practiced steadying herself between parallel bars in the new outpatient rehab clinic located at the Madras hospital. Staying in her hometown community made her treatment much more convenient.

The new clinic offers outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy and accepts all patients including those on Medicare and Medicaid.

“We are able to serve a population that wasn’t being served in Madras before,” said Lynn Towle, a physical therapist at the new clinic. “I’m happy to be here. We have a lot of fun and I’m learning a lot.”

From its inpatient rehab services in Bend to its outpatient rehab clinics in Bend, Redmond, Prineville and Madras, St. Charles strives to return patients to health after an injury, stroke or other debilitating event or diagnosis. The newest clinic in Madras opened last spring.

“We are filling a need in the Madras and Warm Springs communities by specializing in services for patients with neurological impairments who can now receive physical, occupational and speech therapy services in one location,” said Laurie McCall, rehabilitation manager for St. Charles.

Appointments for multiple disciplines can be scheduled back to back for patient convenience. In addition to providing outpatient speech and occupational therapy services, the Madras clinic serves children through the geriatric population. The physical therapists offer evaluation and treatment of balance issues to assist with fall prevention. And the therapy team recently began offering a new community class at the Madras hospital called, “Preventing osteoporosis with exercise.”

For patients like Miller, who has lived in Madras since 1946 and still lives in her home on a farm outside of town, having services available closer to home makes a difference in her outcomes.

“This isn’t going to keep me down,” she said.

To make an appointment at the Madras rehab clinic call 541-460-4016.
No one told Carol Churchill-Dicks that becoming a community health worker for St. Charles Family Care in Prineville would require detective skills.

Now that she’s been doing the job for more than a year, Churchill-Dicks said she has learned how to track down her patients when they don’t have a working cell phone or reliable transportation. Sometimes she calls a neighborhood store to see if the patient has been in, or she gets in her car and drives out to meet them. Making house calls is one of many ways she works to ensure her patients are well cared for – inside and outside of the health care system.

“I really enjoy working and connecting with the patients,” she said. “A lot of what I do is being the bridge for them to non-medical services.”

Connecting community health workers and registered nurse care coordinators with patients is one way that St. Charles Medical Group is working to better coordinate care. Through a pilot project that started last spring, the team is focusing first on Medicaid patients to ensure those with serious health conditions are stabilized and those that are healthy receive preventive care before any issues become an emergency.

As part of that project, Churchill-Dicks starts each day with a report of patients who have either been admitted to the medical floor of the Prineville hospital or who have visited the emergency department. She met John Wright, a 60-year-old patient with liver failure, after he had frequented the emergency room several times due to ongoing pain.

“He was struggling with his memory. He would have episodes of these blackout-type situations and times of confusion,” Churchill-Dicks said. “His ammonia level in his body would rise and he wouldn’t know what was going on.”

During one episode, Wright happened to be shopping for a birthday present for his grandnephew. He had a toy in one hand and money to pay for it in his other hand when he became disoriented. A fellow shopper helped him find the door to the store so he could get some air, but because he left without paying for the toy he was arrested for shoplifting. Due to his health issues he was late for his court appointment and ended up with a warrant out for his arrest.

“He was scared to death to go and figure this out, plus he’s just very, very sick,” Churchill-Dicks said. “His provider wrote a letter to the district attorney’s office and described John’s illness and what happens. It was a bout of confusion and not a criminal act.”

Thanks to the letter, involvement from the St. Charles legal team and Churchill-Dicks’ tenacity, the charges against Wright were dropped. Churchill-Dicks also helped him enroll in St. Charles Hospice care.

“She’s a life-saver,” Wright said of Churchill-Dicks. “She’s been wonderful to me. I wouldn’t have gotten this far without her … If she can’t figure something out, she’ll find somebody who can.”

Helping patients address concerns beyond their immediate health care needs is one way the Medicaid pilot project is improving the health of the entire population. For patients like Wright, that means ensuring he can focus on living the rest of his life in as comfortable a manner as possible. For others, it might be as simple as encouraging attendance at diabetes education classes so they can learn to manage a chronic condition and continue on the path to wellness.

“As one of our community health workers said recently, ‘We can learn more in one visit to a patient’s home than we can in a year’s worth of appointments,’” said Emily Salmon, program manager for the Medicaid pilot project. “It’s so true. A patient’s life is so much more dynamic than how they present in an exam room.”
Thai Red Curry Kabocha Squash Soup

1 medium Kabocha squash, peeled, seeded and rough chopped
1/2 medium white onion diced
1 stalk of lemongrass smashed with a hammer
5 cloves garlic chopped
1 1/2 inch thumb of ginger chopped
2-3 T red curry paste depending on how hot you like it
1 14 oz. can coconut milk
1 T fish sauce
Juice of one small lime
3 Kaffir lime leaves
Salt to taste

Simmer first six ingredients for 20 minutes; add coconut milk and fish sauce, simmer 10 minutes. Remove lemongrass, let cool, puree, add lime leaves, lime juice and salt, reheat to steep the lime leaves.

NOTES: Kabocha squash is available at most grocery stores. You can substitute butternut squash. Fish sauce and lime leaves are available at specialty stores.

During this time of stress and uncertainty, one of the most important decisions you can make for yourself or your loved one is who will provide hospice care. And you do have a choice.

Now available in Deschutes County, St. Charles Hospice has been providing comfort and dignity for patients - and support for Central Oregon families - for 25 years. In addition to seeing patients from any physician provider, we are also the only hospice program in the region who can directly connect to St. Charles medical records, making a difficult transition a little smoother.

You have a choice in who cares for you or your loved one during this time.