

Appointments



ACEP names L. Anthony Cirillo, MD, of RI, as new president

SALT LAKE CITY, UT — The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) announced on September 3, 2025 that **L. ANTHONY CIRILLO, MD, FACEP**, a Rhode Island resident, has been appointed president for the 2025–2026 term.

As president of ACEP, Dr. Cirillo will prioritize efforts to ensure that emergency physicians are afforded the “3 Rs” that emergency physicians

deserve, want and need: Respect for the life-saving care we provide, the Resources to provide that care, and fair Reimbursement for the critical role we play in the healthcare system in this country.

“Emergency physicians now face a defining moment,” said Dr. Cirillo. “While ACEP rises to address the most pressing challenges in emergency medicine today, we have critical opportunities to stand together to shape the systems and develop the leaders of tomorrow. I am grateful and humbled for the opportunity to lead ACEP and usher in the changes necessary to empower every individual emergency physician.”

Dr. Cirillo will direct ACEP efforts to further the development of a comprehensive leadership development pathway for ACEP members to become the healthcare leaders of the future. With a renewed commitment to ensuring that emergency medicine is recognized as the most valuable specialty in healthcare, Dr. Cirillo will mobilize members through the work of ACEP committees to create “outside the box” solutions that question and address the many flawed constructs of healthcare delivery in this country.

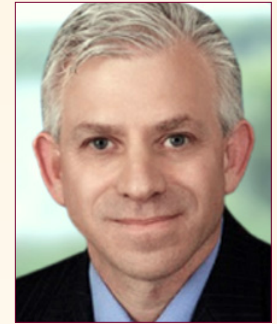
“Demand for physician-led emergency care is soaring all over the world. Emergency physicians know they can rely on ACEP to help establish best practices and serve as a professional home, regardless of their practice setting,” said Dr. Cirillo. “As we grow our best-in-class accreditation programs, we will continue to set and raise standards for the specialty at home and abroad.”

Dr. Cirillo has been a practicing emergency physician for over 30 years and currently practices as a regional traveler as well as the director of government affairs for US Acute Care Solutions. He is past chair of the ACEP Board of Directors and is a past chair of ACEP’s federal government affairs, state legislative and regulatory, and membership committees. He was the 2018 Recipient of ACEP’s Colin C. Corrie, Jr, PhD Award for Excellence in Health Policy. He is a past president of the RI Chapter of ACEP and was elected to the ACEP National Board of Directors in October 2018.

Dr. Cirillo earned his medical degree at the University of Vermont College of Medicine and completed an emergency medicine residency at UMASS Medical Center in Worcester, MA, where he served as chief resident. Following residency, he served as clinical faculty at the Albany Medical Center emergency medicine residency program for three years. In Rhode Island, he served as the Chief of Emergency Medicine at the former Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island and worked as a consultant to the Rhode Island Department of Health, where he oversaw the creation of the Center for Emergency Preparedness & Response. ❖

South County Health names Gerald Colvin, DO, Cancer Center medical director

Expands team of permanent medical oncology providers



WAKEFIELD – South County Health recently announced the continued growth of its Cancer Center, highlighted by the return of **GERALD COLVIN, DO**, as medical director of the center.

Over the coming months, Dr. Colvin will be joined by three additional permanent medical oncology providers, including **CHRISTOPHER SEIDLER, MD**, who served as interim medical director this past year, and **DONALD JOYCE, MD**, medical director of radiation therapy.

Additions to the Cancer Center

GRIFFIN REYNOLDS, MD (Starting in November)

PATRICIA KARWAN, DNP (Starting in December)

HEATHER GLENN, FNP (Starting in January)

“These appointments reflect South County Health’s unwavering dedication and promise to provide comprehensive cancer care to our community,” said **AARON ROBINSON**, president and CEO. “With Dr. Colvin returning to lead our program, and the additions of Dr. Reynolds, Patricia Karwan, and Heather Glenn, we are now better equipped than ever to deliver advanced, permanent, community-based cancer care – a truly transformative moment for both our health system and the community we serve.”

Expanding Access in East Greenwich

As part of this growth, South County Health will also open a new outpatient cancer clinic at the East Greenwich Medical and Wellness Center later this fall. This expansion will make it even easier for patients and families in central Rhode Island to receive expert cancer care, closer to where they live and work. ❖

Appointments



Kent appoints Jeffrey Sanders, MHA, interim president

WARWICK — Care New England's Kent Hospital has announced the appointment of **JEFFREY SANDERS, MHA**, as interim president. Sanders steps into the role following the recent departure of Kent President and COO, Paari Gopalakrishnan, MD,

MBA, and will provide executive leadership as the search continues for Kent Hospital's next permanent president and chief operating officer.

Sanders brings more than 20 years of distinguished leadership in healthcare administration, with a track record of delivering operational excellence, enhancing patient care, and driving strategic innovation within complex, integrated health systems and academic medical centers.

"Jeff's extensive experience, coupled with his deep commitment to patient-centered care, makes him an ideal leader during this transition," said **MICHAEL WAGNER, MD**, president and CEO of Care New England. "We are confident he will be a valuable partner to the Kent team as we continue our search for a permanent leader."

Most recently, Sanders served as President of the Southern Region at Maine Health, a \$3.5 billion integrated health system. In this role, he provided executive oversight for Maine Medical Center, a 700-bed academic medical center and the state's only children's hospital, and Southern Maine Health Care, which includes a 135-bed rehabilitation hospital. During his tenure, the medical center achieved both an "A" safety rating from Leapfrog and a 5-star rating from Medicare. He also led the successful completion of a \$179 million capital campaign and was instrumental in advancing facility modernization plans valued at over \$500 million.

Sanders holds a Master of Healthcare Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Saint Anselm College. He is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and has served on numerous boards, including the Maine Hospital Association, United Way of Greater Portland, and Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce. ❖



Jennifer M. La Luz, MBA, CPHQ, named Vice President of Operations for Kent Hospital

WARWICK — **JENNIFER M. LA LUZ, MBA, CPHQ**, has been promoted to Vice President of Operations for Kent Hospital. In her new position, she will now oversee outpatient rehab services, facilities,

security, and hospital operations. She will continue to oversee the Diagnostic Imaging Department, rehabilitation services, environmental services, and transport

Over the past 12 months, she has been serving as the Kent Hospital Operational Readiness executive for the Epic transition project, in addition to her other duties, which include expanding access to our testing and procedural services.

Since joining Kent Hospital in 2019, Jennifer has established herself as a trusted subject matter expert and change agent – consistently exceeding expectations and setting new standards for success. Most recently serving as Executive Director of Operations, she previously led as Senior Director of Quality and Access. In that role, she was recognized for her steady leadership and key accomplishments, including securing The Joint Commission's Advanced Total Joint Center of Excellence Accreditation and the Level 2-Silver Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation, among other significant recognitions.

She earned an MBA from the University of New Mexico – Anderson School of Management. She is also a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ). ❖

Recognition

Neighborhood Health Plan one of NCQA's highest-rated Medicaid health plans

SMITHFIELD — Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island (Neighborhood) has again been recognized as one of the nation's highest-rated Medicaid health plans, earning a 4.5 out of 5 in the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA) 2025 Medicaid Health Plan Ratings. This recognition marks the 22nd consecutive year – since NCQA began rating Medicaid plans – that Neighborhood has ranked in the top 10% nationally. In addition, Neighborhood is also the only Medicaid health plan in Rhode Island to achieve a 4.5 out of 5 rating.

Neighborhood has also earned NCQA's Health Equity Accreditation for its Medicaid and Exchange products – affirming its commitment to reducing health disparities and improving care for all Rhode Islanders.

"Neighborhood's 22-year streak as a nationally recognized and top-rated NCQA Medicaid Health Plan is a powerful testament to the quality of care we provide and the dedication of our team," said Neighborhood President and CEO **PETER MARINO**. "Moreover, being the only Medicaid health plan in Rhode Island to receive 4.5 out of 5 speaks volumes about our mission-driven approach and the strength of our outstanding provider partnerships, including our terrific federally qualified health centers who care for about half of our members."

NCQA's Medicaid Health Plan Ratings evaluate health plans based on the care patients receive, their satisfaction with that care, and the plans' efforts to drive continuous improvement. In NCQA's 2025 ratings, Neighborhood is one of 14 Medicaid health plans nationwide, and the only one in Rhode Island, to receive an overall rating of 4.5 (nationally, no Medicaid health plan received a 5 out of 5 rating). Notably, Neighborhood scored 4.5 out of 5 for Prevention and Equity, improving in 11 of 18 measures.

NCQA's Health Equity Accreditation recognizes organizations that lead the market in providing culturally and linguistically sensitive services and work to reduce health care disparities. This was Neighborhood's first time applying for this level of accreditation, which recognizes Neighborhood's efforts to identify and address health disparities, promote culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and engage communities in meaningful ways.

"Each of our members deserves access to high-quality care that truly meets their needs," said Neighborhood Chief Medical Officer **KRISTIN RUSSELL, MD**. "Achieving NCQA's Health Equity Accreditation affirms our commitment to addressing disparities and enhancing the safety, effectiveness, and responsiveness of care and reflects the commitment and collaboration that fuel our mission and drive better health outcomes." ❖

Kent Hospital attains verification from American College of Surgeons Geriatric Surgery program

WARWICK — Kent Hospital announced that they have received verification under the American College of Surgeons Geriatric Surgery Verification (GSV) program. Fewer than 1% of hospitals receive this prestigious designation. Kent is the 25th hospital in the nation, and the first community hospital in New England, to earn it.

The GSV program improves surgical care and outcomes for older adults by promoting comprehensive patient- and family-centered care, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and communication, and facilitating evidence-based practices. The program focuses on the overall health and treatment goals of older adults, emphasizing the importance of thorough evaluations before surgery, improved treatment plans, and highlighting the significance of discharge and postoperative care plans to ensure continuous care throughout the surgical journey.

"The population of Americans aged 65 and older has grown by 34% over the past decade, and by 2030, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65," said **PAARI GOPALAKRISHNAN, MD**, president and chief operating officer of Kent Hospital. "In response to this demographic shift, Kent Hospital has made a strategic investment in older adult care. We have placed great emphasis on our Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Unit, the Silver-Level 2 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA), and now the GSV designation, all part of our commitment to excellence in senior care. Caring for our community is our mission at Kent Hospital, and as our community ages, we are fully prepared to meet their evolving healthcare needs."

"Earning the Geriatric Surgery Verification certification from the American College of Surgeons is a proud milestone for our surgical team and is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to providing the highest standard of care to older adults," said

MELISSA MURPHY, MD, Executive Chief of Surgery, Care New England, Director, Geriatric Surgery Program. "This achievement, along with the ACE Unit and GEDA, reinforces our vision to lead in age-friendly surgical care."

As a verified geriatric surgery facility, Kent Hospital has met the standards as defined in the Optimal Resources for Geriatric Surgery manual, which helps ensure the most effective use of surgical care for a vulnerable aging population. These standards are evidence-based and define resources and processes that hospitals must have in place to perform operations effectively, efficiently, and safely for older adults. The standards are also patient-centered, so hospitals can always prioritize what matters most to individual patients regarding their needs and treatment goals. The GSV program has been shown to reduce incidents of delirium and shorten the average length of stay in the hospital after an operation.

As an ACS-verified hospital, Kent Hospital is also an ACS Surgical Quality Partner. Being a Surgical Quality Partner signifies a hospital's dedication to consistently improving procedures and approaches, while maintaining a critical eye on process at every step. ❖

Places

Brown Surgical Associates' surgeons first in New England to perform implantation of iliac branch device

PROVIDENCE — Brown Surgical Associates announced that **JEFFERY SLAIBY, MD**, and **PETER SODEN, MD**, recently became the first surgeons in New England to implant the newly FDA-approved Zenith® Iliac Branch Device (ZBIS). The procedure took place on July 29, 2025, at Rhode Island Hospital, marking a major step forward in treating patients with aortoiliac and iliac aneurysms.

The device, which gained FDA approval in May of this year, is built on Cook Medical's proven Zenith platform and is designed to offer a safer, minimally invasive option for patients with these life-threatening conditions. The ZBIS graft not only repairs aneurysms but also preserves blood flow to the internal iliac artery.

"This device expands treatment options for patients who previously might not have been candidates for minimally invasive repair," said Dr. Slaiby. "It's exciting to bring this technology to Rhode Island and be the first in New England to perform this life-changing surgery."

Dr. Soden added: "The ability to treat aneurysms while preserving blood flow is a significant advancement. We're proud to offer our patients the latest in innovative vascular care right here at Rhode Island Hospital."

Clinical trial data show strong long-term outcomes, including durable aneurysm repair and 97% of patients free from buttock claudication at five years. Cook Medical has called the launch of ZBIS an important addition to its aortic device portfolio, expanding treatment options and improving patient results. ❖

Kent Hospital's Evening of Hope Event raises over \$269,000 to benefit its ED

WARWICK — Kent Hospital recently held its annual event, Evening of Hope, at the Dunes Club in Narragansett, where more than 300 attendees enjoyed an impactful evening with delightful delicacies, friends, and fun, while supporting vital enhancements to Kent Hospital's Emergency Department, including equipment upgrades and infrastructure improvements, ensuring that every patient who walks through its doors receives the exceptional care they deserve. The event raised over \$269,000 and counting.



Edward Thomas, MD, Kent Hospital Foundation Board member, and family attend the Evening of Hope event. From left to right: **Max Charness**, **Lauren Charness**, **Alexandra Thomas**, **Michelle Thomas**, **Dr. Thomas**, and **Brian Thomas**. [COURTESY OF KENT HOSPITAL]

Kent Hospital's Emergency Department is the second largest in Rhode Island, treating nearly 70,000 patients each year. The department earned the Silver-Level 2 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA) from the American College of Emergency Physicians, making Kent the only hospital in Rhode Island to receive this distinction and one of fewer than 100 hospitals nationwide to achieve this level of recognition for excellence in geriatric emergency care.

Kent's Emergency Department is also ranked in the top 10 percent nationally for clinical excellence and patient satisfaction. With an innovative provider and triage model, the hospital has significantly reduced wait times and improved overall patient flow. These advancements have led to exceptional patient experience ratings, reinforcing Kent's commitment to delivering high-quality, compassionate emergency care to every patient who comes through its doors.

In addition, the evening celebrated **EDWARD J. COONEY, Jr.** as the 2025 Jonathan K. Farnum Outstanding Philanthropist Honoree and **JINEN THAKKAR, MD**, as the 2025 Kent Hospital President's Award for Community Care Honoree.

"Kent Hospital is much more than a workplace for our doctors, nurses, and team members; it is a place where they dedicate their lives to caring for others, demonstrating this commitment every single day. It is where our family, friends, and neighbors receive compassionate care that promotes their health and well-being. At Kent, we see the best of humanity reflected in ourselves and each other. I am deeply grateful to everyone who attended this year's event and to the staff and volunteers whose efforts made it such a success. Each year, I am inspired by the incredible support our community gives to Kent Hospital and the life-saving work performed by the devoted caregivers at Kent," said **JEFFREY CABRAL**, chief philanthropy officer, Care New England.