

Richmond University Medical Center

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Make It 4 in a Row: RUMC Again Named High Performing Hospital by U.S. News & World Report



Francesco Rotatori, MD, FACC, MBA, Chief, Cardiovascular Department

For the fourth consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report has awarded the title of "High Performing Hospital" to Richmond University Medical Center for its care of patients diagnosed with congestive heart failure.

About 4,500 hospitals were evaluated by U.S. News & World Report with only 652, including RUMC, earning the High Performing Hospital title. Hospitals that earned a High Performing rating typically have better patient outcomes compared to other hospitals.

Chief of the Cardiovascular Department, Francesco Rotatori, MD, FACC, MBA, said, "Receiving an award is always gratifying and the ability to be consistent for four years in a row is a testament to the incredible dedication of our team. Treating heart failure is very complex. The heart is the engine of the entire body and when it's not working all the other organs can be affected, so a holistic approach is necessary to treat our patients properly. Congratulations to our physicians, physician assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, and additional medical professionals for creating a place where excellent care is a normality of every day."

A hospital's congestive heart failure score was based on data including patient survival rates, recovery at home, number of patients treated, and more. RUMC scored particularly high in the categories of patient survival rate 30 days after hospitalization for heart failure; the percentage of patients who required breathing assistance that were treated with a noninvasive breathing aid instead of a breathing tube or surgery; and good communication between patient and nursing staff.

Heart failure is when the heart is unable to pump enough blood to provide the body with the blood and oxygen it needs. Despite the implied name, it does not mean your heart stops working. It does mean your heart does not work as efficiently as usual, with blood flowing through your heart and body at a slower rate. As a result, blood and fluids may collect in your lungs and legs over time. The condition affects nearly 7 million Americans. About 1 in 4 people will be diagnosed with congestive heart failure in their lifetime



From the President & CEO Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, MPA



It was recently reported in our local newspaper, the *Staten Island Advance*, that cancer rates in our borough are once again on the rise. Historically, elevated cancer rates and Staten Island seem to go hand and hand. New data from the New York State Cancer Registry shows that female breast, prostate, and lung and bronchus rates have risen slightly.

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, Other than skin

cancer, prostate cancer remains the most common cancer in men in the United States. This year alone, about 314,000 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed and this form of cancer will claim close to 36,000 lives. Here at home, prostate cancer, the second most common cancer on Staten Island behind female breast, now has a rate of 126.3 cases per 100,000, up from a rate of 120.4 reported from 2017 through 2021. Somewhat of a silver lining, despite this increase, the 126.3 cases per 100,000 is still about 1% lower than the New York City rate and nearly 7% lower than the New York State rate.

Looking past the facts and figures, let me state the obvious: early detection can save lives. Early prostate cancer usually has no symptoms. Pain, weakness, weight loss, fatigue and blood in the urine usually indicates that the cancer has advanced.

The American Cancer Society recommends that men consider screening at age 50 for those who are at average risk of prostate cancer, age 45 for those at high risk of developing prostate cancer, and age 40 for those at an even higher risk, such as if a person has more than one first-degree relative who had prostate cancer at an early age. Your level of risk

is something that your primary care provider can determine during an annual physical.

One of the most common early screening methods available is a PSA, or prostate-specific antigen, blood test. PSA is a protein made by cells in the prostate gland. Blood drawn as part of a routine physical or to specifically screen for prostate cancer, is measured in units called nanograms per milliliter. The higher the PSA level, the greater the risk of prostate cancer. The normal PSA range is generally considered to be below 4.0 for most individuals. However, it can vary by age.

PSA tests are just one of the many free community health screenings our hospital provides throughout our community. Partnering with community groups, faith-based organizations and neighborhood leaders, our team from the Laboratory Services Department collects and processes the blood samples, then refers them to our oncology department for analysis and to contact individuals with their results, all at no cost. It's just one way that RUMC is fulfilling its role as protector of our community's health. If you would like to know more about our free health screenings, contact the Public Relations and Marketing Department at 718-818-2309. Also, remember to ask your primary care physician to include a PSA test during your next annual physical. The best advocate for your health is you.

Remember the Power of One - You Make A Difference.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, MPAPresident and Chief Executive Officer

SLB-5 Nurses Win Nursing Quality Award for Patient Fall Reductions

Richmond University Medical Center's Quality Department is pleased to announce that the nurses of SLB-5 have earned the Nursing Quality Award for the second quarter of 2025, having demonstrated the most significant reduction in patient falls among all medical-surgical and psychiatric units across the hospital.

As part of the hospital's ongoing commitment to excellence in patient care, the Quality Department at RUMC began tracking targeted nursing quality initiatives beginning this year. The first initiative the department focused on was patient falls, with a comparative analysis across units conducted between Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2025.

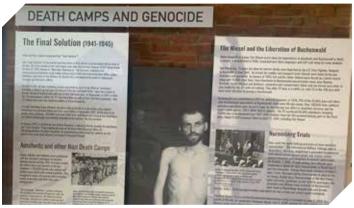


Members of the day shift team on SLB-5 alongside Anthony Basile, Vice President of Med-Surg, Critical Care, and Nursing Operations; and Nurse Manager, Cicely Edwards.

Wagner Holocaust Center Shines Light on Important Part of History & Survivors Who Made Staten Island Home









On August 5, Vice President for Public Relations and Marketing, Alex Lutz, visited the Holocaust Center at Wagner College. The center captures the horrors of the holocaust, shares the courage of those who fought back, and captures the individual stories of Holocaust survivors who call Staten Island home.

Throughout the center, there are timelines, photos and actual artifacts

from the Holocaust, including written letters and actual Stars of David that the Jewish people were forced to wear. An overriding element of the center is a focus on women who opposed the Nazi regime and fought to protect those being persecuted during World War II.

Lutz met with center director, Dr. Lori Weintrob, to discuss opportunities to have some of the exhibits brought to RUMC for staff and visitors to experience. RUMC is a longtime supporter of Wagner College and its many programs.

The Holocaust Center is located on the Wagner College campus, located at 1 Campus Road, Staten Island, NY 10301, inside the Union Building, Room 201. To learn more, including when the center is open to the public, visit https://wagner.edu/holocaust-center/.





Celebrating Excellence in Residency and Fellowship Program Honoree

Each month, one or more residents and/or fellows are selected for their exemplary service, and for embodying RUMC's commitment to fostering a collaborative culture that enhances patient care and professional excellence. Honorees are nominated by their colleagues and selected by the Office of Graduate Medical Education's Wellness Council.

This month's honoree is Rachel Blackman, MD. Dr. Blackman is a PGY-1 in the Psychiatry Department. Dr. Blackman is from Philadelphia and completed her medical degree at the Sidney Kimmel Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA.







Congratulations to our employee of the month:

Anuki FernandoFinance Assistant-Payroll Department of Finance



RUMC urologist offers tips to help ensure a healthy prostate



Michael Wilson, DO

It is important for men to stay informed about ways to support their prostate health — a key part of the urinary and reproductive system that becomes more vulnerable to enlargement or cancer with age. It is recommended that men begin prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening at age 45 and have a physical rectal exam every two years once they are age 50.

Following, Michael Wilson, DO, chief of Urology and Urology Robotics, shares helpful strategies for maintaining prostate health for the long term:

Screen Regularly for Prostate Cancer: "As part of their annual physical, we recommend that men begin prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening at age 45 and then also have a physical rectal exam by their doctor every one to two years after age 50," Dr. Wilson said. "If you're having blood drawn for other standard health evaluations (such as check of kidney function, cholesterol levels, blood counts, the presence of an infection, etc.), the PSA test can be performed using the same blood sample. Many primary care physicians are diligent about incorporating evaluation in an annual physical," he noted, "but ultimately, the patient is their own best advocate and should request that the PSA test be included in their annual physical and blood draw. There's also no substitute for a thorough physical exam of the prostate by a qualified physician every one to two years as long as you also do a PSA screening every year.

- Know Your Risk Factors: "If you have a family history of prostate cancer, it's important that you and other first-degree relatives get checked out," Dr. Wilson advised. "Statistics show that you're twice as likely to get prostate cancer if your father had/has it, four times more likely if your brother had/has it, and eight times more likely if both your father and brother had/have it," Dr. Wilson said. "In addition, one in four African American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime, so they're at a much higher risk and need to be especially vigilant." According to Dr. Wilson, women are not off the hook either, as studies show that female relatives of a male diagnosed with prostate cancer are at a greater risk of developing breast cancer.
 - Don't Ignore Symptoms: "If you're having urinary issues such as increased frequency and urgency to urinate (especially at night), a weak interrupted urine stream starting difficulty to urinate, straining to get it all out, and/or the feeling that the bladder isn't completely empty, stay in front of that and be proactive because you don't want to permanently damage your bladder," Dr. Wilson said. "Just because you're getting older doesn't mean that your urination has to suffer. These issues can be treated in numerous ways - from targeted medications to minimally invasive surgical procedures that avoid the need to be on medication for the rest of your life - to make the symptoms more tolerable." Wilson also confirmed that an prostate does enlarged necessarily mean cancer, though a man can have both issues together.

Individuals experiencing urinary issues should be proactive, because early treatment decreases the likelihood of permanent bladder damage.

- Pursue a Healthy Lifestyle: When it comes to enhancing prostate health and reducing the risk of prostate cancer, "a diet high in antioxidants (found in many fruits and vegetables, salmon, and other healthy choices) can help decrease inflammation and combat free radicals in the body, and regular exercise, refraining from smoking, and activities that minimize stress are also beneficial," Dr. Wilson said.
- Normalize the Topic of Prostate Health: While women are often more open when it comes to talking about their urinary/reproductive health and acting on it, Dr. Wilson said that men's health is every bit as important as female health. "Being proactive about your health is a manly and responsible thing to do and helps you live your best life and be around longer," he said. While data shows that half of all men over 60 will have an enlarged prostate and 90% of men over 85 will experience that condition, "men shouldn't chalk up prostate issues to 'an inevitable part of getting older' and not do anything about them rather, they should be proactive about their prostate health and talk about it. The more men talk about it," he said, "the more they'll see how many other people they know have been affected by prostate issues and the topic will become more normalized."

Dr. Wilson cares for patients at RUMC's Urology Services Center, located at 1200 South Ave., Suite 301, Staten Island, N.Y. 10314. The center can be reached at 718-370-1400. Photo: Michael Wilson, DO

New Hires — Welcome to RUMC!

Arianny Abreu Cruz — Medical Assistant

Kathiana Alexander-Isaac — *Central Sterile Manager*

Eric Anderson — Nursing Assistant

Suzette Bancolo — RN

Isabella Beharrylal — RN

Daniella Enriquez — *Unit Clerk*

Nicole Gabrielle — Staff Attorney

Shawn Gao — Pharmacist

Liam Gardiner - Food Service Worker

Aksana Gorenitsyn - OR Tech

Aloysious Kamara — Nursing Assistant

Deanna Koppie — RN

Gregory Krayman - RN

Geralyn Leone — RN

Georgie Martinez — Paramedic

Drita Maskulli — Building Service Worker

Haley McNeil — *Ultrasound Tech*

Kareem Pfuger — Building Service Worker

Roberto Pozo — Mental Health Tech

Elise Raimondi — RN

Tkai Tomlin — Unit Assistant

Marisol Ventrice — Medical Assistant

Gogilchyn Volodymyr — Respiratory Therapist

Michele Wolven — Echocardiographer

Stacy Worthley — EMT

Candy Zhao — Pharmacist

Kelvin Zheng — Pharmacist

Watch New Episodes of RUMC Vital Signs

COPING WITH THE AURA OF MIGRAINE HEADACHES

According to the American Migraine Foundation, migraine headaches affect 1 in 4 households in the United States. To help us better understand, treat, and prepare for a migraine, we sit down with Shivali Patel, a board-certified DNP specializing in neurology who is also an expert on the infamous migraine.





To watch this episode and others covering a range of health-related topics, scan the QR code.



Airing on Community Media of Staten Island Chanel 34 and available at www.RUMCSl.org, each episode of RUMC Vital Signs covers the latest trends in medicine and provides in-depth information on the services provided at Richmond University Medical Center.



Catch Up on the Latest Episodes of RUMC Connections Podcast

BEYOND THE GROWTH CHART: A PARENT'S GUIDE TO GROWTH AND SHORT STATURE

On this episode, Ishita Kharode, MD, chief of pediatric endocrinology, who specializes in evaluating growth and hormonal disorders in children, discusses normal growth in children, the possible causes of short stature, how it's evaluated, and when treatments like growth hormone might be needed. If you're a



parent who's been measuring your child's height on the kitchen wall, or just want to better understand how kids grow, this episode is for you.



To listen to these episodes and others covering a range of health-related topics, scan the QR code.



rumcsi.org/RUMCCpodcast

This month's question:

What Keeps You Grounded?



Abdul Haseeb Bapar, MD

Nephrology Fellow

"What keeps me grounded during a hard day is knowing that my hard work with other fellows and attendings keeps our patients healthy and thriving. No matter the stress of the day, I can always know that I am healing others and allowing my patients to leave the hospital feeling better than when they arrived."



Robert Simpson

Nursing Assistant, MICU

"To keep myself grounded, I make sure to always prioritize my patient care while reserving my stress for time after my shift or during breaks. Taking a second to be mindful during a shift or knowing that I have a chance to go to the gym and decompress makes the hard days a bit easier."



Margaret Finlly-Mangiero, RN

Cardiac Catherization Lab

"What keeps me grounded is my faith and the reassurance and safety that it offers me. In addition, I always remind myself that patient care comes first and that in order to provide my best care, I take everything one step at a time and never let others effect my flow and focus."



Michael DeFilippo

Director of Food Services and Environmental Services

"The things that keep me grounded are definitely the amazing team of managers supporting me in both departments. They make sure that things are always running smoothly, they are depend-able and trustworthy. When things get hectic, I know my team and their good judgment will support the hospital and myself."



Michelle Petrowski RN

Nursing/SLB6

"During a rough day, I make sure to stay grounded by realizing the importance of my position and emotions on others. By keeping a tight ship and being a leader, I am able to always keep myself in check and be reminded about how important patient care and resilience is."



Joseph Pizzonia-Scarangello

Unit Clerk, Emergency Department "What keeps me grounded is having staff help me daily to work together as a team. We often refer to ourselves as a family. Knowing that whatever the day throws at us, whether it's a difficult situation, we will always get through it together."

September Observances

Please join us in acknowledging the following health-related observances for the month of September:

Month-Long:

Baby Safety Month

Blood Cancer Awareness Month

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Food Safety Education Awareness Month

Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month

Healthy Aging Month

ITP Awareness Month

National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month

National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

National Cholesterol Education Month

National Fruits and Veggies Month

National Pediculosis Prevention Month/Head Lice Prevention Month

National Recovery Month

National Sickle Cell Awareness Month

National Vascular Disease Awareness Month

National Yoga Month

Newborn Screening Awareness Month

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Pain Awareness Month

Peripheral Artery Disease Awareness Month

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Awareness Month

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month Reye's Syndrome Awareness Month

Sepsis Awareness Month

Sexual Health Awareness Month

Sports Eye Safety Month

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Urology Awareness Month

World Alzheimer's Month

Week Long:

September 7 to 13: National Assisted Living Week

September 7 to 13: National Suicide Prevention Week

September 8 to 14: Sexual Health Week

September 14 to 20: Folic Acid Awareness Week September 14 to 20: National Rehabilitation

Awareness Week

September 15 to 19: Malnutrition Awareness Week

September 15 to 21: World Mitochondrial

Disease Week

September 18 to 22: Fungal Disease Awareness Week

Recognition Days:

September 7: World Duchenne's Awareness Day

September 8: World Physical Therapy Day

September 9: International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day

September 10: World Suicide Prevention Day

September 13: National Celiac Disease Awareness Day

September 13: World Sepsis Day

September 15: World Lymphoma Awareness Day

September 16: Get Ready for Flu Day

September 17: World Patient Safety Day

September 18: National HIV/AIDS and Aging

Awareness Day

September 19: Aortic Dissection Awareness Day

September 19: National Concussion Awareness Day

September 20: Usher Syndrome Awareness Day

September 21: World Alzheimer's Day

September 22: Falls Prevention Awareness Day

September 25: World Lung Day

September 25: International Ataxia Awareness Day

September 25: World Pharmacists Day

September 25: National Women's Health and Fitness Day

September 26: Mesothelioma Awareness Day

September 26: Sport Purple for Platelets Day

September 26: World Contraception Day

September 28: World Rabies Day

September 29: World Heart Day

19th Annual

Richmond University Medical Center

Foundation



SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, November 1, 2025

Hilton Garden Inn • Staten Island, New York

HONORING:



Francesco Rotatori, MD, MBA
Chief, Cardiovascular Department
President. RUMC Medical Staff

Robert Urs President, RUMC Foundation RUMC Board of Trustees





Special Gratitude Award presented to Angels on the Bay

For more information, please visit **rumcsi.org/gala** or contact Gina Ferreri **718.818.2106**



