Exercise buddies Katrina Davis (at left) and Tanika Gross motivate and encourage each other at World Gym in Waldorf. The Charles County teachers signed up as part of CMH’s KeepWell@Work program.
Strong Leadership, Solid Performance Define New CEO
Teague Puts Focus on Quality, Service and Community
Teague, who stepped into the top slot on March 1, is a seasoned healthcare executive that has distinguished himself in a variety of leadership roles. Before joining CMH as chief operating officer in 2012, he served as vice president of operations for six years at Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, MD.

In 2006, he retired from the US Navy after 24 years of active duty. Prior to his retirement from the Navy, he was the senior administrator for three years of the White House Medical Unit, which provides health care for the President, Vice President and the cabinet members. He has a master’s in healthcare administration and is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

“When I go to department leadership meetings (at Calvert Memorial), I see a team of people who genuinely care about the community and are committed to doing a good job,” said Teague. “It’s up to me to see that they have what they need to do just that.”

He went on to add, “We have some real superstars on our executive team. They know their areas of expertise and do a really good job.”

Teague said the volunteers who serve on the board of directors also play a vital role in ensuring that the organization meets the needs of the community. “They take time out of their busy lives to make sure the hospital is run well. They make decisions based on what is good for the community.”

The first thing Dean Teague will tell you is that he knows how lucky he is. “As an administrator, it’s great to know that Calvert Health System is on a sound financial footing. We’re able to invest in new technology and we have a great strategic plan in place.”

Q&A

Getting to Know Dean

Hometown: I grew up in Marshfield, 30 miles from Boston on the South Shore. Our house was 312 steps from the police station where dad worked. Mom was a homemaker and then a Realtor.

Family: I’m the oldest of four and have a brother and two sisters. I enlisted in the Navy when I was 17. I finished high school and went to boot camp. I didn’t go to college until I was 26. I married Pam when I was 20. I couldn’t imagine a world without her.

The sports teams you root for: Anything New England…the Red Sox, the Patriots and the Bruins but since I’ve been down here I like to watch the Nationals and Orioles.

Favorite song: Mr. Blue Sky by ELO. The tune is catchy and it talks about the sun coming out and starting a beautiful new day. I think people take for granted how short life is.

What’s playing on your iPod right now? I listen to WROR out of Boston…really to any kind of music but I tune into talk radio and sports.

Activities you enjoy outside of work? I just like hanging out with Pam and Kaitlyn (his wife and daughter). I like mowing my own lawn and fixing my own car and working in my woodshop.

Who has had the greatest influence on you and why? My parents…They taught us honesty and that the truth will set you free and the value of family.

What do you consider your greatest accomplishment? So far, what I’m most proud of is raising a great kid who just graduated from the business school at (the University of) Maryland…and for being married for 30 years but Pam gets the credit for that.

What do you enjoy most about your work? I like talking to people and I enjoy the challenges of health care. If at the end of the day, I’ve helped just one person – it’s been a good day.

If you could give one piece of advice to young people, what would it be? Don’t let anybody tell you “no.” Dream big and go for it but be true to yourself.

“I like talking with people and I like the challenges of health care. If at the end of the day, I’ve helped just one person – it’s been a good day,” said Teague, shown here chatting with a family member in the main lobby.
Commitment to Service

Recognized and respected by his colleagues at Calvert Memorial as someone who is an effective team builder and a good listener, Teague is particularly passionate about customer service.

“For me, customer service is number one,” he said. “Everything we do is service. We’re a service organization. Everyone who comes here is sick or visiting someone who is. It’s our job to make sure there are no hiccups. We don’t just treat the patient – we treat the whole person.”

As COO, he organized a number of focus groups in the past two years to get feedback from patients about their experience. “The voice of the patient is very important,” he said. “We need to hear from them what their experience was. We learn a lot that way.”

Teague went on to add, “Success is measured in a lot of ways. Is the business running in the black and operating smoothly? It’s also about whether our patients are being taken care of in a way that I would expect my parents to be cared for.”

Ensuring Access to Care

“In the long term,” Teague said, “we need to recruit and keep good physicians and build upon our ‘best of breed’ relationships with tertiary centers like MedStar Washington Hospital Center, Johns Hopkins Medicine, Mercy Medical Center, the University of Maryland Medical Center and MedStar Georgetown which allow us to bring regional expertise close to home for Calvert residents.”

He went on to add, “We are fortunate to have great physicians and I will do my best to support them by making investments in technology, education, training and infrastructure so that we will always stand ready to help our patients get well as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

Teague said Calvert reminds him a lot of home with the river on the west and the Bay on the east. In the past two years, he’s already set down roots, joined the Chamber of Commerce and served on the United Way board. “I want people to know that Calvert Health System is part of this community and we are invested in providing the resources and support they need to live their healthiest lives.”

What’s Your IDEA?

I’d like to hear your ideas about what you think would make Calvert Health System great. Just click on “Submit Ideas” at the bottom of the CMH website home page and send me your thoughts and suggestions.

– Dean Teague, FACHE, President and CEO
CMH Breast Program Offers Expanded Resources, Access

“The Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care at Calvert Memorial Hospital is about offering women in Southern Maryland access to the latest technology and treatment options, as well as the utmost in care and service in a supportive environment that is close to home,” said Dr. Arati Patel, who has assumed a larger role as the center’s medical oncology director.

Located in Suite 201 of the Calvert Medical Arts Center on the hospital campus, it is the centerpiece of Calvert’s comprehensive breast health program, which integrates cancer prevention and early detection with expert medical care and a variety of support services, education and community outreach programs.

“We are committed to providing for all your breast health needs in one convenient location,” said Deanna Bitner, the new director of oncology services at CMH (see related article page 9).

Bitner went on to add, “We take care of the entire continuum – from women with healthy breasts to those with an abnormal mammogram or family history of breast cancer who are worried about their future risk.”

Fellowship-trained breast surgeon Dr. Wen Liang of the Geaton and JoAnn DeCesaris Cancer Institute Breast Center at Anne Arundel Medical Center is the most recent member to join the multidisciplinary breast center team at CMH. Dr. Liang, who has specialized in breast surgery exclusively since 2001, lectures across the country and internationally on issues related to breast disease.

She actively participates in the weekly breast cancer case conferences at Calvert Memorial, provides patient consults and performs surgery there. The center also benefits from the surgical expertise of Dr. Theodore Tsangaris, who served as director of breast surgery at Johns Hopkins and is currently the surgical director of the Jefferson Breast Cancer Center in Philadelphia.

“Our tumor board which includes specialists from breast imaging, medical oncology, breast surgery, radiation oncology, pathology and plastic surgery,” said Dr. Patel, “provides a forum for sharing insights on complex cases. This coordinated and collaborative approach helps us design the best course of action for each patient.”

The breast center team has expanded to also include a full-time board certified oncology nurse practitioner with 25 years’ experience. Sandra Cassell-Corbin, CRNP, specializes in genetic counseling for cancer risk, oversees the new high-risk surveillance clinic. Additionally, she is readily available to answer patient’s questions, see those with urgent needs and provide follow-up care, as needed.

The high-risk clinic is designed as another resource for women who are at increased risk for breast cancer to provide them with the added surveillance, management and education they need to implement risk-reducing strategies to increase their overall survival.

She is joined by new breast care navigator Ramona Couteau, RN, BSN, MA, who has 30 years of nursing experience in a wide array of clinical settings including intensive care, surgical services and emergency medicine. Couteau helps arrange appointments and follows up with patients to ensure they understand the intricacies of their care plans and follow their physicians’ instructions.

A breast cancer survivor herself, Couteau said, she finds her master's in education helpful in preparing patients and their families to care for their loved ones during their acute care phase as well as with the long-term steps involved in the healing process.

Pictured (l-r) are Deanna Bitner, director of oncology services at CMH; Dr. Arati Patel, the breast center’s medical oncology director, breast surgeon Dr. Wen Liang, breast care navigator Ramona Couteau and Sandra Corbin, genetic counselor, who oversees the high-risk surveillance clinic.
“Working out with a buddy has been extremely motivational and a lot of fun,” said Katrina Davis, a kindergarten teacher at Malcolm Elementary in Waldorf. In January, she signed up for Calvert Memorial Hospital’s KeepWell@Work program along with her friend and co-worker Tanika Gross.

Since then, they’ve been exercising regularly at the World Gym near their school. “It’s been great,” said the 47-year-old Gross. “We go three days a week. We switch it up between cardio, circuit training and weights. Two Saturdays a month we take classes.”

Gross said she has noticed many positive changes as a result. “It’s been amazing. I definitely have more energy and stamina.” She said her attitude about wellness has also changed. “Now, I find myself parking across the lot and looking for ways to increase my steps throughout the day.”

Calvert Memorial started the KeepWell@Work program in 2006 to help area employers promote healthy habits among their workforce. Since its inception, the innovative program has continued to grow and each year more companies – large and small – are choosing to partner with the hospital.

According to CMH Community Wellness Director Margaret Fowler, the KeepWell@Work program provides participating employees with education and resources to help them take charge of their health. Fowler said the most important of these is the Health Risk Assessment (HRA), which identifies potential risk factors and makes recommendations for reducing them. She said the program also offers discounted nutrition and fitness services to help employees like Davis and Gross work at their wellness goals.

“I am very appreciative of the generous benefit of the discount World Gym membership provided by Charles County Public School system,” said Davis.

Reaching Out to the Community

Community wellness programs like KeepWell@Work are at the heart of a strategic vision to focus on the overall health of the people who live in Southern Maryland. “As a community health system” said CMH President and CEO Dean Teague, “we’re always thinking about the health and well-being of everyone in our community.”

He went on to add, “There are many ways that we are reaching out to the community and making a real difference in the lives of those we touch with programs like our school walking clubs, health ministry and dental clinic.”

The Calvert Community Health Improvement Roundtable identified unmet dental needs as a significant concern in our area. Poor oral health is linked to a number of chronic diseases including diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Its complications are a source of pain and disability for young and old alike. Working together with its community partners, the hospital
Building a Healthier Community

created Calvert Community Dental Care in Lusby, which provides dental services such as screenings, cleanings, sealants, basic restorative care and extractions to low-income families.

With 52 participating churches, the hospital’s Health Ministry Team Network is a vital component of its outreach efforts to promote prevention and wellness. Through the partnership, Calvert Memorial provides resources and training to area church volunteers who in turn bring the health information and important screenings to those in need.

Going Beyond Traditional Hospital Care

“Health care today is more than simply providing medical care,” said Teague. “It is providing each patient with education and connecting them with the resources they need to stay healthy after they go home.”

Other health system initiatives are improving care coordination, reducing readmissions and helping those deal with chronic conditions gain better control of their condition. The hospital’s Transition to Home program, now in its third year, has transitional care navigators who contact each patient within 72 hours of discharge and follow up by phone for 45 days to ensure they understand their diagnoses and care instructions, have filled their prescriptions and scheduled their follow-up appointments.

Last year, CMH added a transitional pharmacy program that provides a pharmacist who does medication education for high-risk patients at discharge and, when needed, conducts home visits alongside the transitional care navigator to evaluate medication issues at home.

Earlier this year, Calvert Memorial opened a Discharge Clinic, designed to assist patients with complex medical needs once they have been discharged. Historically, most patient readmissions occur between three and 10 days after a hospital experience. The clinic provides a bridge between the hospital and primary care offices, offering free assessments, education and medication management as well as resource support and care coordination with the patient’s physician.

“We’ve gotten wonderful feedback about how great the experience was,” said Karen Twigg, who heads up the hospital’s integrated care management team. “The patients tell us how nice it is to be able to sit down with a nurse, a doctor, a pharmacist and a social worker in a non-rushed setting, and actually have an hour with each of them to discuss concerns and needs and to become better educated about how to manage their chronic illness.”

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calvert Dental Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>KeepWell@Work Program</td>
<td>410-535-8233</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Ministry Network</td>
<td>410-414-4574</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition to Home Program</td>
<td>410-414-2725</td>
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Calvert Memorial helps area businesses like Charles and Calvert County Public Schools work with employees and their families to get and stay healthy through its KeepWell@Work program.
New Cardiologist Joins CIMG

Board-certified cardiologist Dr. Cassius Belfonte has joined Calvert Internal Medicine Group in Prince Frederick. His practice includes general cardiovascular disease but he has a strong interest in detecting and treating heart rhythm disorders and congestive heart failure.

During his training, Dr. Belfonte received numerous accolades for his clinical work and teaching. “These skills enable me to discuss cardiac issues in a way that patients can understand and thus make informed decisions regarding their care,” he said.

Dr. Belfonte completed his residency in internal medicine at Howard University Hospital in Washington, DC and went on to complete his fellowship in cardiovascular disease there, as well.

“I became a cardiologist because it is a very challenging and rapidly developing field,” said Dr. Belfonte. “New technology is always emerging and it is my duty to keep my patients up to date.”

He went on to add, “I want my patients to leave the office with a sense of empowerment and determination to improve their health. My motto is always: put the patients and their families first.”

Dr. Belfonte is board certified in nuclear medicine and cardiovascular diseases. He joins Dr. Samuel Foster in Suite 303 of the Calvert Medical Office Building located adjacent to the hospital.

CPA Welcomes New Primary Care Providers

Calvert Physician Associates (CPA) is pleased to welcome two new primary care providers – board-certified family medicine physician Dr. I. Monet Ouwinga (right) to Calvert Primary Care at Dunkirk and Carol Boehm (far right), board-certified family nurse practitioner to Calvert Primary Care at Solomons.

They provide personalized health care for the whole family including health screenings, preventive medicine, complete physicals, well-baby checks, immunizations and annual gynecological exams.

Dr. Ouwinga, who is fellowship trained in maternal and child health, most recently served as a Hospitalist at Northwest Hospital in Randallstown, MD, specifically admitting and consulting on surgical patients. Boehm, who has over 40 years of nursing experience, brings with her a wealth of knowledge and skill in family practice as well as emergency, urgent and acute care.

Nurse care coordinators provide extra support for those with chronic conditions. A patient portal makes it easy to communicate with your care team online 24/7 and electronic medical records enhance information sharing between providers. The practice is part of the CPA network that includes specialists in GI, ENT, general surgery, OB/GYN, hematology/oncology, pain management and physical medicine and rehabilitation.

CMH Recognized for Patient Safety

Calvert Memorial has received the 2015 Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award™, placing it in the top 10 percent of hospitals nationwide for preventing patients from serious complications during hospital stays. CMH was one of 467 hospitals recognized for excellent performance as evaluated by Healthgrades, a leading online resource for comprehensive information about physicians and hospitals.

“This type of recognition means so much,” said CMH President and CEO Dean Teague, “because it shows that our focus on patient safety and quality care is making a positive difference.” He went on to add, “I am so proud of our entire team. They work hard every day to provide the best possible care for each patient and that includes keeping them safe.”

Healthgrades found that Patient Safety Award recipients performed higher than non-recipients during the study period (2011-2013) in safeguarding Medicare patients, as measured by objective outcomes for 13 indicators defined by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.
New Leadership at Calvert Memorial Hospital

Golway to Head Education & Training
Mary Golway, MS, RN-BC, PMP, has joined Calvert Memorial Hospital as its new director for the Education and Training Department. Most recently, she spent six years at the American Nurses Credentialing Center overseeing the development and deployment of educational and consultative services such as workshops, webinars and online learning for domestic and international nursing clients.

“Mary also has extensive experience in hospital-based staff development and education, both as a manager and an educator,” said Tony Bladen, VP for Operations at CMH.

In addition to a bachelor’s and a master’s in nursing, she is board certified in Nursing Professional Development and is a certified Project Management Professional. “I am looking forward to helping our hospital grow to serve the emerging needs of our community,” said Golway.

She went on to add, “I believe that it is important to link education and training initiatives with desired outcomes and to measure whether we are meeting those goals.” For instance, during the past year there was a big focus organization-wide on customer service. This was followed by an upswing in patient satisfaction scores.

In the coming year, Golway said she plans to explore opportunities to collaborate with community partners to maximize teaching and learning resources.

Bitner to Direct Oncology Services
Deanna Bitner, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, has been selected to direct Oncology Services at Calvert Memorial Hospital including the CMH Infusion Therapy Center, the Gynecologic Oncology Center and the Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care. Bitner comes to us from St. Joseph Mercy Medical Center in Ann Arbor, Mich. where she was nurse coordinator of the Outpatient Oncology Infusion Center.

“Deanna brings robust experience in the realms of hospice, infusion therapy, oncology and leadership,” said Diane Couchman, VP for Patient Care Services at Calvert Memorial. “She will be instrumental in moving our cancer program to the next level. We are thrilled to have her as part of our leadership team.”

Board certified as an Advanced Nurse Executive, Bitner has 20 years’ nursing experience with 12 in leadership. She obtained her bachelor’s in nursing administration from Ursuline College and her master’s in nursing from Madonna University.

“Although CMH is a community hospital, it has many of the resources of a much larger university or research hospital” said Bitner. “As a service line, we will be focused on early detection and prevention as well as the treatment of cancer.”

She went on to add, “With a growing population of cancer survivors there will be increased attention on survivorship care planning.”

Hospital Board Appoints New Members, Elects Officers
The Calvert Memorial Hospital Board of Directors has appointed four new members for 2015 – Rev. David G. Showers, Dr. Varkey Mathew, chief of the medical staff at CMH, Dr. Kenneth Abbott, who was recently elected vice chief and Dr. Gyan Surana, the medical staff’s representative on the board. They also welcomed back longtime board member Kevin Betz.

CMH board members are all volunteers and play a vital role in ensuring that the organization meets the needs of the community.

For the past 25 years, Betz has been the CFO and COO of Total Comfort Care, Inc. He has a bachelor’s in finance and went on to earn an MBA and a master’s in finance from Loyola University of Maryland. His training and skills include finance, mechanical engineering and small business operations.

“As a small business owner, he brings invaluable insights to board deliberations,” said CMH President and CEO Dean Teague.

Rev. Showers is rector at Middleham and St. Peter’s Episcopal Parish. The 400-member parish has two campuses, eight staff and emphasizes educational programs for all ages and outreach. He holds a bachelor of arts, a master’s of divinity and a certificate in Anglican studies.

“We are very fortunate to have Rev. Showers serve on our board,” said Teague. “He is very committed to the health and well-being of our county and his intellect on so many issues will be a tremendous asset.”

Kevin Niemmann, who has been a CMH board member for 10 years, was re-elected chairman. The other officers for the coming year are Henry S. Trentman, vice chairman; Donald J. Parsons, Jr., treasurer and Richard B. Fleming, secretary.
Calvert Memorial Hospital Foundation board member Maria Lubrano – a busy wife and mother of triplets who oversees two local restaurants with her husband, Sal, and is gearing up to open a third this summer – sat down recently to talk about why she believes so strongly in supporting the hospital.

Tucked into a cozy booth on a rainy Friday morning with a cup of coffee, Maria shared her passion for helping her community’s hospital to grow. “When we came to the county in 1997, everyone was very nice to us,” she said. “So, we wanted to find a way to give back.”

She went on to add, “I feel there is a need to give back to the whole community. The hospital is something that everybody uses. When you support the hospital, you are really supporting the whole community.”

Her husband agrees. He said they try to help out wherever they can – hosting breakfast with Santa, the Boys & Girls Club, the schools, the United Way, the Relay for Life, Calvert Hospice – “but the hospital is number one. It is the most important thing.”

Maria shared a personal story to make her point. Recently, Sal fainted at work following a change in his blood pressure medication and was taken by ambulance to the emergency department at Calvert Memorial Hospital for evaluation and was kept overnight for monitoring and observation.

“Focusing on the Big Picture”

“When you’re sick and you call 911, they are taking you to the local hospital,” she said, “so, if we can improve the hospital, that is the best thing to do.”

The Dunkirk resident went on to add, “The hospital is an important resource for all of us who live and work in the county. I use Calvert Memorial a lot for our three children, my mother (who passed away three years ago) and myself. The hospital has been wonderful to me. My mom had congestive heart failure and everyone was extremely good to her and my whole family.”

“I think we need to focus on the big picture,” she said. “Good schools and a good hospital go hand in hand in defining the quality of a community.”

“We (Mamma Lucia) are a community place,” Maria added, “so we need to give back to those who support us.” Their restaurants in Dunkirk and Prince Frederick are open every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas so their employees can spend the holidays with their families.

Now on her second cup of coffee, Maria stressed how growing the hospital serves the young and the old alike. “Our community is growing, so we need to make sure that the hospital is keeping pace with that growth and that our hospital has what it needs to provide excellent care.”

“Encouraging Others to Give”

“I tell people whatever you do will make an impact,” she said. “Our hospital is an independent hospital. It’s a privilege to have a hospital with such a wonderful rating (referring to Calvert’s reputation for quality care and patient safety).”

Maria added, “It’s a privilege to be part of it. In a small way, we are part of all that is being accomplished. I tell people whether you give one dollar or a hundred dollars it will be put to a good use. Whatever you can contribute helps.”

The hospital’s charitable foundation offers many opportunities to support ongoing...
advances to patient care at CMH – by attending or sponsoring a fundraising event, making a financial gift, donating an item for auction or volunteering on a committee.

Over the years, the Lubranos have supported the hospital in many different ways – as donors and business sponsors. They’ve provided food for Casino Night and contributed prize baskets for auction. Maria has served on the Harvest Ball committee and co-chaired the sponsorship committee. They’ve dedicated a portion of the proceeds from special dates at their restaurants in support of new technology. They hosted the Spotlight Music Series at their Dunkirk location several times in support of The Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care at CMH.

The breast center is a place especially close to Maria’s heart. “I was so happy to see Dr. Goldberg develop the breast center (in 2010),” she said. “Not everyone can afford to jump in a car or on a train and go somewhere else for care. It’s amazing that we have that level of specialized care here.”

Located in the Calvert Medical Arts Center on the main hospital campus, the breast center offers comprehensive, coordinated care for women from outreach and screening to diagnosis and survivorship, all under one roof. (See related article on page 5.)

A couple of years ago, she was approached about joining the board for the hospital foundation. “I thought this is a way for me to spread my wings and help more people at the same time.”

Never one to shy away from a challenge, she has agreed to co-chair this year’s Harvest Ball with fellow board member Mickie Frazer. 2014 was a banner year for the ball with the retirement of longtime President and CEO Jim Xinis and attracted record attendance and raised $400,000 (see photo at right). She smiled and added, “I think we can match that or do better.”

Golf Classic Raises Over $60,000 for Lab Equipment

Some 156 players enjoyed a day of great golf, excellent food and friendly competition at the 26th Annual Calvert Memorial Hospital Foundation, Inc. Benefit Golf Classic on May 18 at Lake Presidential Golf Club in Upper Marlboro while raising over $60,000 to purchase new technology to improve health care in our community.

This year’s proceeds will be used to purchase state-of-the-art centrifuge equipment for the hospital’s clinical laboratory. The advanced technology will help speed patient results to physicians for the diagnosis and treatment of everything from diabetes and heart disease to different types of cancer.

Since it began in 1990, the popular golf tournament has raised more than $1 million. Last year’s proceeds helped realize a new patient portal that allows hospitalized patients the ability to access essential medical information that makes it easier for them to manage their care when they return home. Special thanks to our top sponsors:

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Study Helps Target **Health Priorities** in Community

“I’m happier because I can enjoy life more,” said Kristina Ganyon of Port Republic after losing 62 pounds through Calvert Memorial Hospital’s Weight Loss for Life program that combines nutritional education with group exercise instruction.

At 5’6”, the 38-year-old mother of two said she knew she needed to get serious about making a change when her scale read 250 pounds. “The program is a whole new way of learning and living,” said Ganyon. “Now, I can breathe. I have more energy and I can move. I don’t want to go back to the old me. I was miserable.”

The healthy eating program is one of many that Calvert Memorial initiated in 2011 as part of a countywide effort called “Calvert CAN: Eat Right, Move More” aimed at reducing obesity for all ages. According to CMH Community Wellness Director Margaret Fowler, the campaign was created to tackle the high levels of obesity reported by local residents in the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by CMH that year.

Fowler explained that the hospital does an assessment every three years to identify health needs in the community. “It helps us identify the greatest needs,” she said. “It also helps ensure that our resources are being directed toward opportunities where the most impact can be realized.”

She went on to add, “Calvert Memorial’s commitment to community health is an essential part of our mission.” Fowler said that the Community Health Needs Assessment helps guide the hospital in planning programs to address prioritized needs. “Special attention is given to the needs of vulnerable populations,” she said, “and unmet health needs or gaps in service.”

The assessment completed in December, Fowler said, pinpointed the need to improve access to primary care along with services for cancer and substance abuse. She said the hospital will be collaborating with its community partners to develop an implementation strategy to respond to the needs identified.