

# Keeping Brooklyn Healthy

New Crop of Awards for TBHC



Happy Patient: Robotic Hernia Surgery



Out and About in the Community



Our Peaceful Chapel and Spiritual Care



Urology

Providing for Our Community: A to Z Services



Pulmonology



Wound Care



Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation



**Gary G. Terrinoni**

## MESSAGE FROM TBHC'S PRESIDENT New Acknowledgments

While we take pride in Keeping Brooklyn Healthy—we are, in fact, the borough's first hospital—TBHC is cultivating a growing national reputation for quality. Over the past few years, we've earned multiple awards that attest to our focus on excellence, all of

which reflect the hard work and dedication of our entire team. I'm excited to tell you about some new recognitions we earned this summer:

TBHC has been ranked **#25 in acute care by the Lown Institute**. Their index examines hospital social responsibility, calculating scores across 53 different metrics to capture performance in health outcomes, value and equity. This ranking, which included 128 hospitals in New York State, reflects TBHC's efforts to improve patient outcomes, enhance

safety protocols and maintain high standards of clinical excellence.

In addition, we have received an **American Heart Association Get with the Guidelines Gold Plus medal in Stroke Care with an Honor Roll citation in Diabetes Type 2 care**. This recognition underscores TBHC's comprehensive approach to stroke treatment and rehabilitation, ensuring that patients receive the best possible care during critical moments, and acknowledges the work we've done to prevent stroke in patients with diabetes.

Furthermore, **U.S. News & World Report has recognized five of our specialty programs: Cardiology, Diabetes, Nephrology, Orthopedics and Pulmonology**. All have been cited as high-performing for their patient outcomes and innovative treatments.

These examples highlight our commitment to quality and patient care and are in line with our dedication to Keeping Brooklyn Healthy. Keep up the good work!

## ONE PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE

# Healing Fast With Robotic Hernia Surgery

My experience with hernia surgery at TBHC was truly outstanding. From the moment I received the initial diagnosis to the follow-up care after surgery, I felt supported and cared for every step of the way.

When I first learned about my hernias, my urologist suggested surgery, considering my active lifestyle as a photographer. After discussing my options and seeking advice from a friend who knew the hospital well, I decided to go with TBHC's robotic surgery, because the recovery would be faster and with less chance of complications.

Leading up to the surgery, I was understandably nervous. However, the hospital staff alleviated my fears. They provided clear explanations and made sure I felt comfortable throughout the entire process. On the day of the surgery, everything went smoothly, and Dr. Luca Milone skillfully repaired four hernias—one in my navel and three in my groin.



The post-operative care was just as remarkable. My wife accompanied me and she was impressed by the kindness and helpfulness of the staff. During my recovery, I attended follow-up appointments where Dr. Milone ensured that my incisions were healing properly and gave me instructions to help recover fully.

Now, six weeks later, I feel like my old self again. I've been diligently following Dr. Milone's recommendations for core exercises and taking extra precautions to prevent any future issues. I can't thank him enough for his expertise and compassion throughout this journey. He truly is a brilliant and trustworthy surgeon. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend The Brooklyn Hospital Center to anyone in need of surgical care.

—Rick Schwab (shown here with Lucca Milone, MD, Director of Robotic Surgery)

# GOOD NEIGHBORS WORKING TOGETHER WITH OUR COMMUNITY

## A Busy Summer With Our Brooklyn Neighbors

### The Ed Becote

#### Back-to-School Drive

raised more than its targeted goal of \$6,000 for backpacks and school supplies, which were donated to children in shelters nearby to the hospital. Because this year's fundraising efforts were so successful, we had 200 more backpacks to give away! We turned to our community and invited families to an event on August 28, to pick up backpacks as well as some additional information about the wide range of our pediatric programs.

This annual initiative, which raises money from the hospital staff, started in 2018 by the TBHC Patient Transport Team and was championed by our late colleague Ed Becote, who was one of the drive's biggest advocates. Upon his passing in 2020, we made it a named annual effort in his memory. Shown here, above and center, TBHC staff gather with a table – full of backpacks, ready to help families go back to school!

**PATH Celebrates Pride!** Every Friday during Pride Month, PATH Center tabled on the street to offer valuable information for living healthfully with HIV/AIDS, including info on PreP. Shown here from PATH: Althea Marshall, Clerk; Carlene Vesprey, Executive Director; Matthew Parham, Outreach Specialist.



TBHC joined forces with **NYPD 88th Precinct** to celebrate several events this summer, including National Night Out and Harmony Day. At National Night Out, we had a wonderful time connecting with our neighbors and showcasing our range of services, including pediatrics, pharmacy, cardiology, family medicine, dental, women's health,

and the PATH Center. Shown here that night, 1) Captain Michael E. Goodchild of the 88th Precinct. 2) At Harmony Day, earlier in the summer, Deputy Commissioner of Community Affairs Mark T. Stewart visited our blood pressure screening table, and 3) Community Affairs Officer Evita Poole hung out with her son and Mary Godineaux, AVP for Nursing, Maternal-Child Health.



## SPECIALTIES FROM A TO Z

# Taking a closer look at some of our services, and some

We have more than 50 surgical, medical and other specialties and subspecialties at TBHC, an impressive Rehabilitation, Pulmonology, Neurology and, yes, Wound Care! We want you to understand the depth of

### PHYSICAL THERAPY & REHABILITATION: Gaining maximum function



“We want our community to know we have the range of comprehensive rehabilitative services right here in their neighborhood,” says Tanya DiFrancesco Page, MD, Chief of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (shown on cover, bottom right). “Whether inpatient or outpatient, our

goal is to help patients function at their maximum potential. We have the expert staff and appropriate gym facilities to get our patients there.”

*If you are admitted to TBHC, you will be evaluated by a physical therapist. Your therapist will work with you to manage symptoms like pain, stiffness, discomfort or physical limitations from a surgery or illness.*

TBHC also has a *10-bed acute rehab unit* dedicated to patients who need intense, comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation before they return home. This is for those who have experienced a stroke, bilateral joint replacement, amputation, neurological disorder, spinal cord or brain injury, or hip fracture, among others. Common functional problems treated by acute inpatient rehabilitation include:

- Weakness or limited motion in arms and legs
- Gait deviations
- Balance and coordination impairments
- Difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty performing daily activities such as grooming
- Memory deficits, judgment difficulties, speech-language problems

*TBHC’s outpatient rehabilitation services include:*

- Physical therapy, which provides evaluation and treatment of disabilities, injuries, diseases and other conditions
- Occupational therapy, which provides customized treatment programs that help achieve independence in daily activities at home and at work

For more information or to make an appointment, visit [tbh.org/BrooklynRehab](http://tbh.org/BrooklynRehab).

### PULMONOLOGY: Diagnosing and treating lung conditions



“Our board-certified pulmonologists are specialists in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, disorders and injuries of the lungs and bronchial tubes,” says Louis Gerolemou, DO, Chief of the Division of Pulmonary Medicine (shown on cover, center). “We also work closely

with the Center for Critical Care Services.”

The division diagnoses and treats asthma (allergic and non-allergic), chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), pulmonary hypertension, interstitial lung disease and acute lung injuries. TBHC’s pulmonologists work closely with rheumatologists for patients with autoimmune disorders that affect the lungs like scleroderma or rheumatoid lupus, or with oncologists at The Brooklyn Cancer Center, when lung cancer has been detected.

The division also uses these TBHC programs to provide the best care to patients:

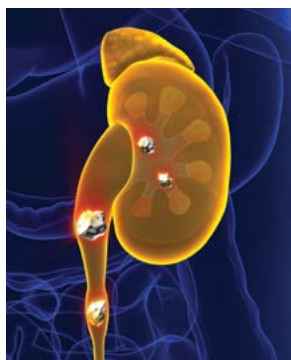
- A state-of-the-art pulmonary function test (PFT) laboratory (see photo above), which measures the function of the lungs (capacity, volumes, flow and pressure). PFT helps the team assess patients for home oxygen needs and exercise tolerance. Where necessary, inhaled medications are administered to assess response before and after.
- Imaging, which provides diagnostic CT and PET scans, bronchoscopy, lung biopsies, biopsies of nodules, and advanced endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS).
- Thoracic surgery, when needed.
- A fully accredited Sleep Center that helps pulmonologists and sleep medicine specialists treat apnea, narcolepsy, insomnia and other disorders.
- And, finally, a smoking cessation program, which provides patients the medical support to stop smoking in order to benefit their lungs and their overall health.

For more information or to make an appointment, visit [tbh.org/Pulmonology](http://tbh.org/Pulmonology).

# of the excellent providers behind them!

roster from A to Z (well, really W for Wound Care!). In this issue, we focus on Physical Therapy & expertise available and the terrific providers who deliver that care.

## UROLOGY: Comprehensive care for the urinary tract system



From the highly trained specialists to the latest in robotic surgery, The Brooklyn Hospital Center's Department of Urology provides state-of-the-art, comprehensive care for any condition impacting the male or female urinary tract.

"We offer a full range of services so we can take care

of all the issues in the urinary system," says Dhana Etwaru, MD, Chair (shown on cover, top right). "That includes stones, cancer and more." Helping Brooklynites with prostate cancer is among the most common service. "We serve a population at increased risk of the disease because of its age and demographics," notes Dr. Etwaru.

Six years ago, the department began using robotic surgery, and the impact has been dramatic. "Robotics is a huge part of what we do," Dr. Etwaru says. "The robot helps us, the surgeons, do the operation more easily, but it helps patients as well, with less pain, less scarring and faster recovery."

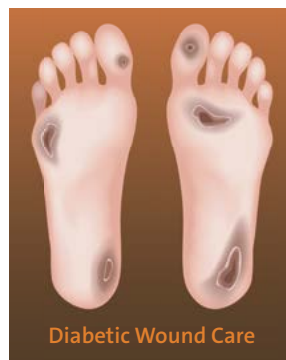
When Dr. Etwaru came to TBHC in 1995, significant incisions were required to perform surgeries. That meant a patient having a procedure on Tuesday could expect to go home on Saturday. With laparoscopic and robotic surgery, the procedures have become far less invasive. A patient treated on Tuesday now can expect to go home the next day.

The department continues to up its game. "We are planning on setting up a comprehensive Stone Center in the hospital," Dr. Etwaru says. "We already have signed a doctor fellowship-trained in stone-related diseases, and it marks the first time in Brooklyn we'll have a dedicated physician to look after patients with a wide variety of stones in terms of size." (See above illustration of kidney stones.)

Keep your eyes out for more!

For more information or to make an appointment, visit [tbh.org/Urology](http://tbh.org/Urology).

## WOUND CARE: Preserving function and salvaging limbs



"Wound care is a specialty in the surgical field that works to prevent amputations and loss of function, and salvages limbs," says O. Joseph Falcone, DPM, TBHC's Director of the Wound Care & Hyperbaric Center and Chief of Podiatry (shown on cover, bottom left).

A chronic wound—one lasting over 30 days—can be evidence of some underlying condition that inhibits healing. "Our first task is diagnosis of the wound, its nature, its cause and its systemic effect, whether that be medical, vascular or neurological," says Dr. Falcone.

As an example, in working with a patient with uncontrolled diabetes, it will not matter what Dr. Falcone and his team do to the wound, because the healing process is compromised, and that cause and effect must be understood and respected first. So, understanding, evaluating and grading a wound are the most important things the Wound Care Center does.

Given the systemic causes of a wound not healing or possible loss of limb, the approach of the center necessarily involves many other disciplines at the hospital. The wound care specialists work closely with Internal Medicine, Endocrinology, Vascular Surgery, Neurology and Orthopedic Surgery.

The latest technology and treatments include hyperbaric oxygen therapy. TBHC's four hyperbaric chambers provide increased air pressure to help your blood carry more oxygen to organs and connective tissue to promote wound healing.

The thorough, interdisciplinary care and advanced technology result in one of the most successful centers of its kind not just in the five boroughs but in the whole country. "We have a 90 percent success rate in some of the most complicated wound cases involving health-compromised patients," Dr. Falcone says.

For more information or to make an appointment, visit [tbh.org/BrooklynWoundCare](http://tbh.org/BrooklynWoundCare).



## Inside:

**TBHC Awards**

**Patient Testimonial**

**A closer look at PT/Rehab, Pulmonology,**

**Urology, Wound Care**

**TBHC in the Community**



# Spiritual Care for all Faiths and Spiritualities

Spiritual Care is available to patients, family and friends, of every faith as well as individual with no faith beliefs or traditions. Our board-certified, multifaith chaplains have graduate degrees and at least 1,600 hours of supervised clinical training. They will listen. They will respect your personal beliefs and your ability to draw on these beliefs in response to your situation. A chaplain can help if the patient or patient's loved one:

- Is having a difficult time coping with the stress of illness and hospitalization.
- Is discouraged, anxious, afraid or sad.
- Needs help coping with a difficult diagnosis or prognosis.
- Has a specific religious need or question.
- Is dealing with end-of-life issues and needs a companion for the journey.
- Has few or no visitors.
- Wants to talk to someone who has time to listen.
- Needs emotional and bereavement support during a time of grief and loss.
- Requires help sorting out a difficult ethical problem.



*Rev. Francis Joojo Obu-Mends, Director of Spiritual Care, is shown here in our chapel.*

- Has a question about or needs support appointing a Health Care Proxy or completing an Advance Directive.  
Additionally, a peaceful, interfaith meditation chapel is located on the second floor of the main hospital and is open to all visitors at all times.