Building healthy hearts

For the past 26 years, 91-year-old Becky Tibessart has traveled from Orland to Chico to attend Enloe’s Cardiac Maintenance and Prevention Exercise Program. Tibessart suffered a heart attack at age 65. To assist her recovery, she joined Enloe’s cardiac rehabilitation program and has been committed to living a healthy lifestyle ever since.

She and more than 20 others meet at Enloe’s thrice-weekly, medically supervised exercise program held at California State University, Chico. “You need a program like this to get started,” Tibessart says. “You meet friends who support your battle to good health. The support and sharing keeps you coming. It’s a new way of life.”

The majority of the program’s participants, who range from their 50s to 90s, all experienced significant heart issues and completed Enloe’s cardiac rehabilitation program. Six 90-year-olds attend, including Tibessart’s exercise buddy, Margie Brinkerhoff, 92. These spry ladies spend three mornings each week pedaling a bike or walking the track during the program.

A comprehensive approach

Enloe’s cardiac rehabilitation program began in 1979. It offers a variety of exercise and education programs to help people with heart disease recover and lead healthier lives. The program aids the healing process through physical activity, education, nutrition and lifestyle changes. Enloe’s cardiac rehab team includes a cardiologist, cardiovascular nurses, exercise physiologists and registered dietitians.

The goal is twofold. “We want to condition the body so the heart doesn’t have to work as hard,” says Cathy Nagy, RN, manager of Enloe’s cardiopulmonary rehabilitation programs. “We also help participants learn the information and behaviors they need to improve their health and help keep them healthy for the long term.”

A healthier lifestyle is key

After completing the primary cardiac rehabilitation program, patients need to continue with the new habits they develop, including regular exercise. It helps prevent further damage, strengthens the heart, improves blood flow and reduces stress and blood pressure. Regular activity also increases stamina, trims excess pounds and helps control blood-sugar levels – all of which can aggravate heart disease.

Enloe’s Cardiac Maintenance and Prevention Exercise Program, which is open to the public, is designed for individuals with previous cardiac problems, as well as those with cardiac risk factors (such as high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity) to exercise in a medically supervised setting. “It’s a good environment for people with health issues that want support but do not want to go to a health club,” Nagy says.

Studies show that heart attack survivors who enroll in an exercise program often experience improved health and a more positive outlook on life. In fact, rehabilitation improves the survival rate after a heart attack by more than 50 percent.

Monitoring helps build confidence

An Enloe registered nurse, exercise physiologist and EMT with an ambulance are always on site to oversee participants, who may choose to walk, ride a recumbent or stationary bike, or do light strength training.

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After working in large medical settings for the past 20 years, hematologist and oncologist Mandy Robertson, M.D., 45, wanted to work in a setting that put patients first. “There’s a strong, positive movement in patient-centered health care at Enloe that was not a big focus in the last five to 10 years where I worked,” she says. Increased health care regulations and an emphasis on the bottom line are greatly impacting the quality of patient care, Dr. Robertson explains. “The focus and direction here continues to be about medicine, which is what we’re supposed to be doing.”

Dr. Robertson moved to Chico in 2016 after spending much of her career in Florida and Washington. “Chico is a great family community to raise our three daughters,” she says. Its mild climate, no commute time and close proximity to the mountains and beach appealed to Dr. Robertson and her active clan. The small-town environment and rural setting also provides for an improved home and family life with a balance of work and play.

Showcasing our best

Enloe has a robust physician recruitment program that annually attracts dozens of top doctors from across the country. Recruitment efforts play to Enloe’s strengths: a top-notch community-based hospital that’s recognized for its exceptional patient care and staff, and a region that provides high-quality living.

“We’ve been very successful in bringing, and retaining, physicians to the community,” says Shannon Smith, director of Recruiting Services. “Since 2014, 70 physicians have joined Enloe’s medical staff, representing physicians of all specialty areas. We’re currently looking to fill positions for more than 16 specialties.”

Too few doctors

Chico, like the rest of the nation, faces a shortage of physicians as the population grows, ages and physicians retire. This shortage has been brewing for decades, but was exacerbated by the passage of the Affordable Care Act, which increased the number of insured people and demand for doctor access.

According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the U.S. faces a shortage of as many as 90,000 physicians by 2025. In Butte County, shortages include a critical need for primary care physicians, pediatricians and specialists to treat an aging population that will increasingly live with chronic diseases, including arthritis, high blood pressure, pulmonary disease, diabetes and cancer.

Other factors that play into this shortfall include enrollment caps at medical schools and their high concentration in the northeastern U.S., where many graduates tend to stay once they’ve finished their training. Prospective doctors must complete a residency to practice medicine, but those programs – funded in part by federal dollars – aren’t located in rural areas with great need.

Why the shortage in primary care?

Only 1 in 5 graduating internal medicine residents plans to go into primary care medicine, the Journal of the American Medical Association reports. New graduates, often saddled with huge college debt, are specializing in more lucrative practice areas. Many want to work differently than their predecessors did, placing a higher premium on regular 9 to 5 hours and not taking on the demands of private practices.

To address these changing needs, Enloe added two full-time recruiters in the last year specifically for physicians. “We’re on a great path to helping fill the physician gap in this community,” Smith adds. “We’ve brought in much-needed physicians and are committed to bringing more doctors to the area to provide for the region’s health care needs for decades to come.”
Dr. Peter Magnusson honored with 2016 Physician Legacy Award

It takes commitment, dedication and passion to meet the distance and demands of riding a stage of the Tour de France, the world’s most difficult bike race. For avid cyclist and Enloe cardiologist Peter Magnusson, M.D., he tackled that challenge with the same enthusiasm and focus that he exudes in his work with his patients, Enloe Medical Center and our community.

It’s no surprise then that Dr. Magnusson was recently named Enloe Medical Center’s Physician Legacy Award winner for 2016. Each year, Enloe recognizes a member of its medical staff for exceptional service, leadership and performance in medicine and the community.

Dr. Magnusson joined Enloe’s staff in 1988 and has served in many leadership roles during his almost 30-year tenure. In addition to treating patients, he is the medical director of the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, Emeritus Trustee of the Enloe Board of Trustees, and is currently co-chair of the Cardiovascular Care Center Campaign.

Dr. Magnusson has also been a long-time member of California State University, Chico’s Advisory Board, the North Valley Chamber Chorale and Bidwell Presbyterian Church choir.

Praise for a great cardiologist

Nominations for the prestigious Enloe Physician Legacy Award are submitted by doctors on the medical staff, employees and community members. The hospital’s final decision is made by its medical executive committee.

One of his award nominations stated, “Dr. Magnusson is a great cardiologist who has improved the lives of many, both his patients and the community in general, by volunteering his time to improve the health status of Chico and Butte County.” Another wrote, “Dr. Magnusson goes the extra mile to serve and to keep the patient informed every step of the way.”

Dr. Magnusson “has been a champion of excellence for as long as I have known him,” added another.

A closer look at Dr. Magnusson

Dr. Magnusson received his medical degree from the University of Illinois College of Medicine. He completed his residency at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center and his fellowship at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. While at Cedars-Sinai, he served on the clinical faculty staff and was assistant director of inpatient cardiology services. Dr. Magnusson also worked as a cardiologist in Los Angeles for 10 years.

It was Dr. Magnusson’s love of outdoor sports and a desire to find a city similar to the quaint Midwestern town where he grew up that led him to move to Chico in 1988. “Chico is a college town, a minor bicycling mecca,” he says. “It’s close to the mountains for skiing, and has that small-town feel.”

Upon his arrival, he quickly took on leadership and advisory positions to be part of the solution to drive and improve health care in the community.

This drive continues today, as Dr. Magnusson and his wife, Kathryn, serve as volunteer co-chairs for the Cardiovascular Care Center Campaign committee. The campaign has raised nearly half of its $5 million goal in less than two years.

Dr. Magnusson’s commitment to the community is evident in so many ways, says Jolene Francis, CFRE, who has witnessed his dedication while working with him in her role as Enloe Foundation Director of Advancement and Communications.

“One on a fun note, you can often see him pedaling around town. You might ask him about his yo-yo talent — he did win the city championship in his age group awhile back,” she adds with a smile.

Heart & Sole: Run for Wellness

Saturday, April 22

Join us for a fun, timed 5k or 1-mile run or walk while enjoying the beautiful scenery of Bidwell Park. We’ll have pre-event warm-ups, selfie stops and healthy post-race activities and snacks. The event takes place at Bidwell Park’s One-Mile Recreation Area, in Chico. Proceeds support the hospital’s Cardiovascular Care Center Campaign. Register now and find details at www.enloe.org/events.
Creamy Broccoli-Cheese Soup

Can’t get your kids to eat their broccoli? Start with this lower-fat broccoli-cheese soup.

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:
2 ½ cups fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
6 ounces fresh broccoli (about 1 ½ cups), chopped
1 medium carrot, chopped
1 medium rib of celery, chopped
¾ teaspoon each salt and pepper
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup fat-free half and half
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
½ cup shredded, low-fat sharp Cheddar cheese

Instructions:
In a large saucepan, stir together broth, broccoli, carrot, celery, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, 6 to 8 minutes, or until vegetables are tender.

In a bowl, whisk half and half and flour. Stir mixture into saucepan and simmer, stirring occasionally until thickened (about 2 minutes). Add cheese. Remove from heat and stir until cheese melts.

Calories 119; fat 1.5 g; carbohydrates 18 g; protein 11 g; cholesterol 3 mg; sodium 375 mg; fiber 2 g

Building healthy hearts
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The medical staff takes blood pressure readings and EKG recordings. Participants track their own resting and recovery heart rates.

Chico resident Anita Gunther suffered a heart attack last year and struggled emotionally afterward. She completed the primary cardiac rehab program at the Enloe Outpatient Center, and admits she didn’t want the program to end. “But it was time to take off the training wheels and start leading my life again,” she says. “This (program) is my new security blanket. It’s a wonderful program.”

The Enloe Cardiac Maintenance and Prevention Exercise program is Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. at California State University, Chico. The program is open to the public and costs $45 a month. For program details, call 530-332-6898.

Classes, Events & Support Groups
Enloe Medical Center provides a variety of support programs to promote health and wellness. Find more details at enloe.org/events.

4/1 & 5/6 Walk with a Doc
4/15 Growing Healthy Children
4/15 California Nut Festival
4/20 Pre-Diabetes Class
4/22 Enloe Heart & Sole: Run for Wellness

Welcome New Doctors
These doctors recently joined Enloe’s Medical Staff.

Emergency Medicine
Christina Umber, M.D.
Erik Owen, M.D.
Mehdi Sattari, M.D.

Cardiothoracic Surgery
James Moon, M.D.

To view their profiles, visit: doctors.enloe.org.

Donate to the Enloe Foundation
Enloe Medical Center has undertaken a multi-year project to create a Cardiovascular Care Center that will expand and improve upon facilities and equipment for cardiovascular care in our north state region. Learn more about this future center and our campaign at www.enloe.org/give or call 530.332.4550.

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