Enloe Medical Center’s role as a regional hospital took on a whole new meaning during the recent Camp Fire.

“We were getting ready to participate in a statewide disaster exercise when we received word that a massive wildfire was sweeping through the Paradise area, causing evacuation of Feather River hospital and thousands of residents,” said Marcia Nelson, M.D., Enloe’s chief medical officer.

Command, coordination and communication save countless lives

With an incident command center already in place for the drill, a team quickly assembled to implement the hospital’s much-practiced emergency preparedness plan. Enloe’s FlightCare team headed to Adventist Health Feather River hospital to begin air transport, while Butte County Emergency Medical Services provided initial ground response. EMS was immediately supplemented by five strike teams and 20 ambulances from outside the area.

Forty-nine patients from the Paradise hospital, as well as other evacuees, arrived at Enloe that first day, making it the busiest day in the emergency department’s 105-year history, said Nelson.

Enloe implemented a multi-pronged approach for treatment and support services for the tens of thousands of displaced evacuees. It helped facilitate prescription medication refills, distributed N95 masks, and coordinated medical care at the hospital, outpatient clinics and shelters.

Enloe also brought in many of the Paradise hospital’s doctors and nurses, who provided care and were a familiar face for displaced patients during a very stressful time, said Nelson.

Enloe provided its conference center to Adventist Health Feather River hospital to host its command center, employee town hall meeting and job fair. Enloe staff also worked to find clinic space for displaced Paradise-based physicians and health care professionals.

As a non-profit regional hospital with ties to the area’s many health and social service organizations, Enloe provided resource information for evacuation shelters and housing, relief efforts, and mental and behavioral health support.

Displaced Enloe staff continued to provide care and comfort

More than 350 Enloe employees lived in Paradise or Magalia; the majority lost their homes in the fire. Displaced staff continued to work, while colleagues pitched in to provide staffing, resources and housing.

Further support came from the Enloe Foundation’s Camp Fire Relief Fund to help Enloe employees, affiliated employees, medical staff, volunteers and patients who were displaced due to the Camp Fire. To date, $885,000 has been raised for the relief fund. Donations can be made at www.enloe.org/giving.

“We have all been impacted by the Camp Fire in some way,” said Enloe CEO Mike Wiltermood. “By working side by side to help and heal during this tragic time, we are learning the true definition of community. As a regional hospital, we are committed to helping rebuild Butte County and provide high-quality, patient-centered health care for years to come.”

The hospital is also working diligently with community organizations to find housing options for displaced residents and its employees.
Saving lives through organ donation

Enloe recognized for its efforts

After every organ and tissue donation, Enloe Medical Center lowers its blue and green Donate Life flag to half-staff.

It’s just one way the hospital supports organ, eye and tissue donation. In 2018, Enloe received national recognition for promoting enrollment in state organ donor registries in a national campaign sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. But for decades, the medical center has worked with Donor Network West to save lives by facilitating organ and tissue recovery for transplantation.

Enloe’s medical staff communicates quickly with Donor Network West to identify donors, honor decisions of registered donors and help families faced with difficult end-of-life decisions, said Judy Cline, director of Enloe’s Emergency Department, Prompt Care and Trauma Services. "As a hospital, we deal with such tragedy every day," she said. "When a tragedy becomes a triumph because of organ donation, so many lives are saved and changed as a result."

One donor can save many

In California, 22,000 people are on the organ transplant list; nearly 100 reside in Butte County. Nationwide, 22 people die each day due to lack of available organs. One organ donor can give life to up to eight people and enhance the lives of 75, according to United Network for Organ Sharing.

This statistic hits close to home for Enloe exercise physiologist Jennifer Stuart, whose infant daughter Lily was diagnosed with a rare disorder, requiring a liver transplant. At 7-and-a-half months old, Lily received a transplanted liver from a 4-year-old donor. Unfortunately, that transplant failed, and Lily was relisted on the national organ transplant waiting list. Her family didn’t know if she’d survive. Twelve grueling days after the first transplant, Lily received a second donated liver cut down in size from a 16-year-old donor. After months in the hospital, Lily returned home.

Things were going well, but at age 4, a test revealed Lily’s liver was again failing. She received a third transplanted liver, this one similar to her size and age. Today, the 13-year-old is healthy, happy and thriving.

"Organ donation means so much to me and my family," Stuart said. "Lily is alive today because of others' gifts." To pay it forward, Stuart is an ambassador for Donor Network West, sharing her daughter’s story to inspire others to register as donors.

If you’d like to become a donor, register at www.DonorNetworkWest.org, then designate your choice on your driver’s license and tell your family about your wishes.

The scoop on organ donation

> You can be a donor at any age.
> Donation is possible with many medical conditions.
> All major religions approve of organ and tissue donation.
> A national registry list and strict standards ensure ethical and fair distribution of organs.
> A healthy person can become a living donor by donating a kidney, or a part of his or her liver, lung, intestine, blood or bone marrow.
Your weight affects your cancer risk

It’s no surprise that being overweight can lead to diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. But you might be stunned to learn it can also increase your risk for cancer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 55 percent of all cancers diagnosed in women and 24 percent of those diagnosed in men are related to being overweight. In fact, weighing more than you should increases your risk for more than 10 common cancers, including breast, colorectal, ovarian and advanced prostate cancer.

“We’re seeing that weight is a big risk factor,” said Rebecca Senoglu, Enloe’s Cancer Support Program coordinator. “Experts agree that after not smoking, being at a healthy weight is the most important thing you can do to lower your risk.”

Luckily, you can manage your weight. But it’s not about going on a diet or implementing a meal plan for a few months. It’s about knowing your body and making healthy lifestyle choices.

Know your BMI

So where do you start? Begin by calculating your body mass index (BMI), a measurement of your body fat based on your weight in relation to your height. To do this, take your weight (in kilograms) and divide it by your height (in centimeters). Or simply Google “BMI calculator” and enter your details.

“If your weight is normal, your BMI will be between 18.5 percent and 24.9 percent. If you’re overweight, it will be between 25 percent and 29.9 percent. If you’re obese, it will be between 30 percent and 34.9 percent,” said bariatric surgeon Erik Simchuk, M.D.

“If the number you compute is higher than you expected, you’re not alone. Obesity rates have increased throughout the country,” he said. “In the past 20 years, rates have doubled, and today about 127 million adults are overweight or obese.”

Make small, healthy changes

Now that you know where you stand, start adjusting your mindset. “Begin to think of food as medicine because that’s what it is,” Simchuk said.

He recommends fueling your body with “real food,” sticking to high-protein, organic options and buying local when you can. Doing this reduces the amount of processed foods you eat, which are often higher in sodium, fat and sugar — all of which can help you pack on the pounds.

Nutrition experts recommend that fruits and vegetables should make up 50 percent of your plate at each meal. But don’t make drastic changes you can’t sustain. If 50 percent is too much right now, start by having one or two more servings a day and work from there. Or if you love carbs and they make up most of your meals, only eat them in the morning so you can work off the calories throughout the day.

It’s also important to remember that being active at least five times a week for at least 30 minutes is paramount to a healthy weight. That doesn’t mean you have to run miles at a time or take up CrossFit. Actually, Simchuk recommends brisk 30-minute walks every day. It’s his preferred form of exercise, and studies have shown it to be the healthiest way to stay active. In one study, experts compared 10,000 people who walked 30 minutes every day to 10,000 people who were sedentary. “The active population lived 10 years longer, and they had far lower rates of high blood pressure and high cholesterol,” he said.

Set S.M.A.R.T. goals

Now that you’re armed with tools to make sustainable lifestyle changes, set “S.M.A.R.T.” goals to achieve them. These goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound — and they’ll help you track your progress.

Make your first S.M.A.R.T. goal to solicit help. Losing significant weight is often hard to do on your own. Then make other goals, like walking two miles every day for a month and mark your activity on a calendar. Once you reach your goals, set others to keep your momentum going.

“Build on your successes,” Senoglu said. “They’ll add up and can make a big difference in your health.”
Italian sausage bean soup

Warm up with this Italian sausage bean soup that’s low in fat and full of flavor. Don’t have a lot of time to cook? No problem. This recipe takes minutes to prepare.

Number of servings: 6

Ingredients
Italian sausage link (about ¼ pound)
1 teaspoon olive oil
1 celery stalk, sliced
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
3 cups cooked white beans
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 bay leaf
1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes, no salt added
2 cups spinach, shredded

Directions
1. Remove the sausage casing.
2. Heat the olive oil in a soup pot and add the sausage, stirring it so the meat breaks into small crumbles.
3. Brown the meat and remove some of the sausage fat by blotting it with a paper towel.
4. Add the celery, onion and garlic, and sauté the ingredients for about 5 minutes.
5. Add the beans, chicken broth, bay leaf and tomatoes. Heat the soup thoroughly.
6. Just before serving, add the spinach.

Nutritional information per serving: about 214 calories, 16 g protein, 5 g fat, 6 mg cholesterol, 32 g carbohydrates, 8 g fiber and 203 mg sodium