

CARING TOGETHER

Fall 2025 Edition

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The Best in Quality & Safety

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED



LEAP FROG
HOSPITAL
SAFETY
GRADE

Shore Medical Center is proud to have earned an A rating for patient safety for the 2nd consecutive rating period!



The Healing Power of Pet Therapy

It often begins with a gentle tap of paws in the hallway, or the lift of a head from a patient's pillow. The room softens, and someone smiles - maybe for the first time that day.

At Shore, healing isn't only about medicine and machines. Sometimes, comfort arrives on four legs, wearing a harness and offering nothing more than presence, warmth, and a quiet reminder that *you're not alone*. Shore's volunteer pet therapy teams - five dogs and the dedicated handlers who love them - give so much of themselves to bring joy to patients, families, and staff throughout the hospital.

Wendy and Dietz have volunteered at Shore for more than a decade. Dietz, a 13½-year-old border collie with a calm demeanor, brings smiles and perfect high-fives wherever he goes. "It's amazing to watch Dietz work his magic," Wendy says. "He spent the

first three years of his life as a herding dog on an Oregon ranch, sleeping in a barn without toys or humans. His life has changed so much, and now he's the one changing lives." From soothing a woman in labor to helping pediatric patients forget they're sick while walking him down the hallway, Dietz lifts spirits on every floor. As a reward, he enjoys red peppers and apples, which help him stay slim and healthy.

Bruce and Skye have been part of Shore's program for five years. This outgoing eight-year-old border collie greets everyone she meets. "It's so nice to see the smiles when staff and patients see us coming," Bruce says. "Many patients miss their pets at home, and a visit from Skye comforts them until they can return to theirs." One of Bruce's favorite memories is when a young patient invited Skye to her birthday party, a testament to the bonds

Photo: Shore's pet therapy teams include, left to right, Bruce and Skye; Teresa and Sylvie Mae, Vince and Rocco, Marc and Bella, and Wendy and Dietz.

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she forms with patients of all ages. She's also beloved by staff, who keep treats for the therapy dogs, and Skye knows exactly where to find them. Outside of Shore, she enjoys watching children walk home along the bike path and swimming in her pool.

Marc is a retired pharmacist who now divides his time between Newtown Square, PA, and Margate, NJ. For the past three years, he and his 7-year-old goldendoodle, **Bella**, have made regular visits to hospitals, libraries, and college campuses where they bring comfort to patients and staff, help children gain confidence as readers, and offer students a much-needed mental break. When Marc rescued Bella from a Florida breeding dog farm, she was shy and easily startled. Marc carefully trained her to be the calm, gentle therapy dog she is today.

At Shore, Marc and Bella often spend more time with doctors and nurses than patients. "Healthcare can be stressful, but after a couple minutes with Bella, you can see their stress melt away," Marc says.



Shore radiologist Dr. Randall Snyder takes a quick work break to pet Bella. The smile says it all!



At Shore Cancer Center, medical oncologist Dr. Vijay Sandilya watches as Vince and Rocco spend some time with a patient.

Bella also helps at the Cancer Center infusion units, where a quiet moment can make treatment days feel more manageable for patients. Volunteering continues Marc's pharmacy legacy of going above and beyond for his patients. "Pet therapy is the same—it's about giving back and doing what it takes to make people's lives a little better."

Vince and Rocco are one of Shore's newest teams. Vince is Shore's VP of Human Resources who adopted Rocco, a tiny 11-year-old papillon/chihuahua mix, when he needed a companion after moving from Western Pennsylvania to work at Shore. "He's lovable, very chill, and loves attention," Vince says. In just four months, Rocco has already made a mark. "A patient who was in pain and waiting for her next medication immediately brightened when she saw Rocco. She spent about ten minutes playing with him, forgetting her discomfort. For a little while, she wasn't a patient - she just felt normal again," Vince shares. Rocco also helps staff decompress, breaking tension during busy shifts. After a day volunteering at Shore, Rocco is usually exhausted from missing his daily nap, and sleeps from dinner time until the next morning.

Teresa and Sylvie Mae joined Shore in August 2025, though they did therapy work together in Florida prior. Sylvie Mae, a 3½-year-old labradoodle, loves being with people, especially children and the elderly, and senses who needs her most. Teresa recalls some of their most touching moments together. "Sylvie Mae and I visited a very sick elderly man. She brushed against his hand and crawled onto his chest, giving gentle kisses. The man smiled, and his family was moved to tears. Another time, at a grief camp for children, a nonverbal boy held Sylvie Mae all weekend, receiving comfort each time." When not visiting patients, she enjoys watching YouTube videos of birds and other dogs.

From the tiniest lap dog to the most intuitive herder, Shore's therapy dogs bring something unique to every visit. They may not wear scrubs, but they play an essential role in the healing environment. We're grateful for our pet therapy volunteers who give something priceless - their time, their presence, and their hearts. Together, they embody what it means to be *Caring Together* for the Shore community. 

Volunteer Navigators: A New Chapter for Retired Professionals



Retired surgeon Dr. Gary Feinberg and retired labor & delivery nurse Giselle Knoblauch are two of Shore's new Professional Navigators, volunteers who provide support to ER patients and families while they wait to be admitted.

When a patient in the Emergency Department is waiting to be admitted to the hospital, the minutes can feel long and uncertain. Patients and families are often anxious, unsure of what comes next, and full of questions: "Can I go home to get clothes first?" "What will happen while I'm here?" "When will my room be ready?" It's in these in-between moments that a reassuring presence can make a meaningful difference.

To support patients and families during this transition, Shore launched its volunteer Professional Navigator Program in May, likely the first program of its kind.

Professional navigators are often retired healthcare professionals or former leaders in their fields who bring years of insight and compassion to the role. They answer questions about

hospital processes, offer comforting gestures like warm blankets or drinks, and simply sit and listen, helping people feel less alone. The program enhances the patient experience by offering connection, guidance, and a calming presence when it's needed most.

"We had an ER patient in cardiac distress whose spouse didn't want to leave their side," recalls retired labor and delivery nurse and professional navigator volunteer Giselle Knoblauch. "I gently encouraged her to step back so the care team could work, and when she was ready, I walked her to the family room and talked through what was happening until the cardiologist could speak with her. I could see her anxiety ease."

Dr. Gary Feinberg, a retired general surgeon who was one of the first to join the program, says, "I can tell

when a patient or family member has a question just by the look on their face. Where a nurse with multiple patients may not be able to stop every time, I can. We had one patient waiting for surgery who didn't know if it would be today or tomorrow. From my time in the OR, I knew who to call to find out. When I could tell them the surgery was happening that night, you could see their relief."

Giselle was inspired to volunteer after her husband had a positive experience in Shore's ER last winter. "I was really impressed with Shore and realized I missed being in the hospital," she says. Now, she loves focusing solely on the human side of care. "I enjoy giving back in a compassionate, non-clinical way, without the paperwork and pressure of nursing."

The program was developed by Shore Chief Medical Officer Dr. Leonard Galler and Shore Director of Volunteers Lisa DiTroia, who ensures each navigator is oriented, supported, and positioned for meaningful impact. "Lisa's leadership has been key in creating a program that is both valuable for patients and deeply rewarding for volunteers," says Dr. Galler.

Navigators also mentor third-year medical students and share observations that help improve the patient experience throughout the ER. When time allows, some even follow up with patients on the nursing units—closing the loop with a familiar, reassuring presence.

By centering human connection, the Professional Navigator Program reflects Shore Medical Center's commitment to compassionate, patient-focused care, making the journey from the ER to a hospital room feel smoother, clearer, and more comforting for patients and families alike. 

New Option for Patients with Persistent Arthritis Pain

Imagine living with stubborn joint pain from osteoarthritis that never eases. You've tried medications, injections, physical therapy, and lifestyle changes, but daily activities remain a struggle. Surgery feels like the only remaining option, but what if there was one more non-invasive solution?

Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, Shore now offers low-dose radiation therapy for osteoarthritis, providing a safe, noninvasive option for adults 40 and older with arthritis in joints such as the knees, hips, shoulders, hands, wrists or feet. Using very low doses of targeted radiation, this therapy helps reduce joint inflammation, relieve pain, and improve mobility, giving patients the chance to get back to the activities they love.

Treatment is quick, painless, and delivered twice a week for three weeks.

About two-thirds of patients experience meaningful pain relief and improved mobility, with minimal side effects. Relief may last a year or longer, and treatments can be repeated if symptoms recur.

The therapy is administered by Penn Medicine Radiation Oncologist Dr. John Wilson at Shore Cancer Center using our Varian TrueBeam Linear Accelerator, state-of-the-art technology that ensures precise, safe delivery. Patients are encouraged to ask their healthcare provider if this therapy is right for them.

Programs like this one reflect Shore's commitment to advanced, patient-centered care, and are made possible by people like you. Thank you for helping us continue to provide new treatment possibilities, close to home.



A patient receives radiation therapy for persistent knee arthritis at Shore Cancer Center

To learn more about radiation therapy for osteoarthritis or to schedule an appointment, call 609-653-3200. 

Your Gifts in Action



When our previous mammography machine broke this fall, your generosity allowed us to respond quickly and purchase a brand-new GE 3D Sonographer Pristina™, bringing the most advanced 3D imaging for mammograms and stereotactic biopsies to Shore. Mammography Technologist Marian Martello, pictured with the new system, says, "It offers a better experience for everyone. It's more comfortable for our patients, it offers better imaging and precision for our radiologists and surgeons, and it allows mammography techs like me to know I'm providing patients with the very best care."



Since introducing our first da Vinci Xi surgical robot in late 2023, demand for robot-assisted surgical procedures at Shore has grown rapidly. To meet this need and continue providing advanced care close to home, it became imperative to add a second robot.

Thanks to donor support, we were able to move forward with this important purchase in October. Many gifts have helped us get to this point, but we are still seeking a major donation to offset the full cost of this technology. Gifts of all sizes make a difference, and a naming opportunity is available for a major contributor. To support this project, please call Mary McGuckin at 609-653-4657.

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We extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who give \$5,000+ annually to advance care at Shore Medical Center. An asterisk denotes members of the DiOrio Society, honoring those whose planned gifts help care for future generations. We're also grateful to our anonymous donors for their lasting impact.

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