

WOOD RIVER HEALTH SERVICES

TESTIMONIAL

KALPESH SHAH, GRATEFUL PATIENT AND SUPPORTER

Kalpesh Shah smiles when he thinks about how long he and his family have been going to Wood River Health Services. "Dr. Campagnari has been my family's primary care physician for over 30 years – when we first went to him, he was a young physician and had just joined Wood River Health Services," he recalls. "His commitment to my family, to all of his patients is outstanding. Thanks to this consistency of care – and him knowing us so well – we have really been able to keep all of our health changes really under control."

As the years passed, and Kalpesh's two children grew into adults and he neared retirement, he began thinking about how he could give back to an organization that had been such an important part of his family's life. "We have lived in the Wood River Junction community for so long – just ten minutes away from Wood River's offices. This inspired my family to start doing something to support our community in a different way, through donations."

The Shah family's first gift, four years ago, helped Wood River expand how they could connect with patients. "Dr. Campagnari, Michael Lichtenstein, Wood River's then CEO, and I spoke about what the center needed to be sure that all of its patients, especially those who had trouble getting to the office, could still get quality health care. This meant really boosting their technology and wi-fi so that they could treat patients through telemedicine and telehealth." It was truly innovative at the time – and prepared Wood River for being able to continue to deliver care during the unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic.

"Later, when I heard that Wood River had plans to expand its dental program, I knew we had to support this service. Preventative treatment is essential for children and adults – once again Wood River recognized a real need in our community."

Kalpesh is incredibly proud for his family to be one of the first supporters of Wood River's new 2-story building. "Wood River serves such a large community, and we can't have a situation where someone has to wait for an appointment because they don't have enough space." Kalpesh further notes, "Current CEO Alison Crock, her team, and the entire Board has been working tirelessly to make this great vision a reality for the good of our community. And with new programs and services – including an on-site physiotherapy center, pharmacy, and additional space for dedicated and tireless healthcare providers and their supporting staff – it will make it even easier for our community to get care and make sure we are all staying healthy."

"Our parents always said: 'never forget to give back to your community'," Kalpesh says fondly. "It really is wonderful to give to Wood River. A center that gives so much to our community and makes sure we all have the tools we need to stay healthy. A center that has done so much for my family. We encourage everyone to be part of this vision for Wood River's future."

WOOD RIVER HEALTH SERVICES

TESTIMONIAL

CHRIS HEDENBERG, GRATEFUL PATIENT

I live in Hope Valley and had heard that Wood River was doing a lot of great things in women's health and infant care, so when my doctor retired, I decided to check it out," shares grateful patient Chris Hedenberg. "At 65, I was dealing with not only chronic health issues – diabetes, high blood pressure, and general aging – but also some really serious life challenges."

Chris was happy to be matched with long-standing Wood River physician, Dr. John Bergeron, a Brown University trained physician, with over 30 year's experience in general and family medicine. "From the first appointment, Dr. Bergeron really listened to my concerns, helping me get to the root of my health issues, including the impact my extreme stress was having on me."

She soon came to learn that the entire staff at Wood River is focused on your health, not just your clinical diagnosis. "Everyone at Wood River really listens to you and wants to help you with your health problems and anything in your life that could be impacting that. Even the receptionist wants to know how your appointment went and if you got all of the information you needed."

"It is amazing the level of care that is being offered in our rural community," notes Chris. "You can get all of your health need taken care of in one place, even blood work, meet with a nutritionist, and get support from social workers. And if you need a specialist, they have an amazing list and will make sure you get – and get to – your appointment."

Today, Chris feels fantastic, needing only to go to Wood River every six months for her routine appointments. "My daughter even noticed that I have my life back on track. The support I got from the team at Wood River helped me get right to the business of what I needed to do to get healthy. And stay healthy."

A native Rhode Islander, Chris Hedenberg is retired Community College of Rhode Island Facilitator, Educator, and Career Coach. She is a graduate of Roger Williams University.

WOOD RIVER HEALTH SERVICES

TESTIMONIAL

ELIZA SPEARS, NURSE CARE MANAGER

When I graduated from Nursing School, I knew I didn't want to do traditional bedside care. I wanted to support my community and have the opportunity to get to know my patients, their lives, and support their long-term health goals," remembers Eliza Spears, Nurse Care Manager. "The past four years at Wood River Health Services has been incredibly rewarding. As part of the Care Coordination Team, I am able to offer our patients connections to services and programs that go well beyond just medical care, addressing everything that could impact their health, including food insecurity, housing crises, and insurance. It really is a holistic, whole-person approach to providing care."

"As a Nurse Care Manager, I work with the highest-risk patients, many with multiple complicated health issues and life challenges," Eliza shares. "One of my long-standing patients is a single mother with chronic kidney-disease and other co-morbidities. One day she shared with me that was about to lose her home; because of her health issues, she was unable to work and couldn't afford her condo fees. She didn't know where she and her son would live if this happened." Knowing the impact losing her home would have on her health and her family, Eliza helped her apply for a grant from Hardest Hit Fund Rhode Island – which allowed her to keep her home permanently. "Over the past four years, she and I have built such a level of trust, that I understand the day-to-day things that are impacting her health. Even little things like reaching out to our community partners to find a special recliner so that she can sleep comfortably and get the rest she needs to heal."

"My favorite part of being on the Wood River team is that I get to see each patient through the entire continuum of care; from routine or sick visits here to hospital stay and discharges, I help support them at every stage, sick to healthy," Eliza says with pride. As she partners with each patient throughout their care at Wood River, she really gets to know them and their lives; their care needs and daily concerns. "Every day, I work with the team to get each patient to a better place, to their best place, and we keep trying until they are there. For some, it is a long road, but we never give up on our patients."

Eliza Spears is a graduate of The University of Rhode Island's nursing program and a lifelong resident of Hopkinton, living with her husband and their two children in Hope Valley. Since the start of COVID, Eliza has volunteered time with the RI Medical Reserve Corps and the local Emergency Management Agency doing COVID screenings, nasal testing and administering vaccines to South County's first responders. Inspired by the providers at Wood River, Eliza will be starting grad school in March, studying to become a Family Nurse Practitioner while continuing to work in her current role. With any remaining free time, Eliza enjoys studying martial arts and spending time outdoors with her family.

WOOD RIVER HEALTH SERVICES

TESTIMONIAL

DOLY FOGARTY, REGISTERED DENTAL HYGIENIST

I have always loved being part of a community health center, knowing I am really helping the people who live where I do," shares Doly Fogarty, Registered Dental Hygienist. "When I joined the Wood River team seven years ago, I quickly learned just how special their care was. Wood River has a commitment to this community, to provide the highest quality of integrated care for all of our neighbors and families – care that looks at the whole person and everything each patient needs to be healthy mentally and physically."

Doly sees her role as much more than simply routine cleanings. "It is really a process of building a relationship, trust, and motivation to keep them coming back for their dental care – to help them maintain a healthy mouth." As a trusted hygienist, patients also share their worries and stresses with her. "Because Wood River offers integrated medical, dental, and behavioral health care, I can recommend other care providers, to help them get all support they need."

"Wood River is really a visible partner in our community. Prior to COVID-19, our dentists would go into the schools for screenings and education, making sure children in need of dental care were scheduled for follow up treatment and visits," notes Doly. "And we also schedule our young patients receiving WIC services for dental visits. Dental care at a young age is so critical. With our services all in one facility, we can work together to keep an entire family healthy."

Doly is incredibly proud to be a part of the Wood River care team. "We are always working to do more, grow our services, to take even better care of our community. This is care that everyone in our community deserves."

Doly Fogarty graduated from the Community College of Rhode Island as a Dental Assistant in 2004, later returning to complete her degree as a Dental Hygienist in 2012. She brings over nine years of combined experience to her work at Wood River Health Services. She joined our staff in 2013.

WOOD RIVER HEALTH SERVICES

TESTIMONIAL

KAT MILLER, COMMUNITY RESOURCE SPECIALIST

When I first met Dana in 2018, he was only 48 years old and was in a downward spiral. He had significant cardiac issues that clearly were not going away. And the stress of trying to get the support he was entitled to was taking a real toll. To put it simply, he was barely getting by," Kat Miller, Community Resource Specialist, recalls. "Dana was experiencing so much stress that he wasn't sleeping and had started smoking again. That's when he agreed to talk with me and began to understand how Wood River could really help."

"Dana's health care needs and bills were major and mounting – he was recovering from a recent quadruple bypass and a history of stents and catheterization." Kat recognized that one of their first steps together would be to get him enrolled in insurance and to secure his disability benefits. "I remember the day he called to say he got his first disability check. Dana is a proud man who has worked hard all of his life. But he understood that this support was not charity – it would allow him to get his bills under control, to pay his rent, and to start focusing on his health."

"Wood River really understands how this level of personalized support, combined with excellent, wrap-around medical care, can have a bearing on a patient's entire health," shares Kat. "Navigating through insurance, SNAP, disability benefits, and other community programs is extremely complicated and stressful. But rather than leaving someone to figure it out on their own, we are connecting them with all the help they need, so that they can take on their health issues."

Today, Dana is doing incredibly well. "With Wood River's support, Dana is able to manage his stress and keep his cardiac issues stable. He has his supports in place and is really motivated to maintain his health and do everything he can to keep on track. He feels empowered because he knows he can count on Wood River to support him every step of the way."