

## Grace Cottage Voted “Best Place to Work” and “Best Physical Therapy”



We are pleased and proud to announce that Grace Cottage has been named “Best Place to Work” and “Best Physical Therapy” in the Brattleboro Reformer’s 2017 Readers Choice Awards! Testimonials, below, from employees about what it’s like to work here mean so much. There

can be no question that “Best Place to Work” and “Best Physical Therapy” go hand-in-hand with the national award we received this spring, “Top 20 Critical Access Hospital in the United States for Patient Satisfaction.”

*“Grace Cottage is an amazing place to be, whether you are a patient or an employee. I have been blessed to work here for 5 ½ years, where we are supported, treated as family, and this wonderful culture of ‘We Go Beyond Patient Care’ is embraced, promoted, and fully supported....we are blessed at Grace Cottage to have a team full of providers and nurses who care about what they do and LOVE what they do!”*

– Verna Joslyn, Business Office

*“What a wonderful experience it has been for me to be an employee at Grace Cottage! My son and I must relocate to Pennsylvania, but for the past 7 years I’ve been providing Diagnostic Imaging Ultrasound services here. It has been a great honor to personally experience the true empathy, dedication, and respect the medical providers here give to the local community. I had never before experienced the feeling of community that exists here. Thank you, Grace Cottage, for being such a positive chapter in my life!”*

– Brenda Horgan Smith, Sonography

## CEO Roger Allbee to Retire



Grace Cottage CEO Roger Allbee announced in July that he will be retiring as soon as a new CEO has been hired. A healthcare search firm, Phillips DiPisa, has been hired to manage this process which, it is hoped, will be wrapped up by early 2018.

“The Board is pleased with the direction that Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital has taken during Roger’s tenure here over the past three years,” said Board Chair, Stephan Morse. “Without Roger’s dedicated service, Grace Cottage would be a very different facility today. Under his leadership, Grace Cottage has been recognized locally, statewide, and nationally for exceptional patient care.”

“It’s been a privilege for me to serve as Grace Cottage’s chief administrator,” said Allbee. “We have an excellent team of providers, a dedicated and professional staff, and a community that generously and wholeheartedly supports Grace Cottage because of the quality of the care that we provide. I’ll miss it, but I’m not going far – my wife and I will continue to live in Townshend and I’ll be around!”



So long, antique boiler!

## Heat, Glorious Heat!

We want to thank everyone who contributed so generously to the new Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) system that is currently being installed in Grace Cottage Family Health. The ancient steam boiler system failed last winter, so time was of the essence for replacement. The total project cost, including insulation, was over \$500,000, and much of the amount needed has been

raised since fundraising began in June, thanks to numerous generous supporters and the proceeds of Hospital Fair Day. Grace Cottage’s energy consumption has decreased almost 30% since 2009, and this project will help to reduce our energy cost and consumption by \$30,000 a year (based on current energy costs).

“Compared to the other hospitals, your patient satisfaction is through the roof. It really is a different model. Obviously it’s got something to do with scale, but it’s got to do with other things that are tangible... we really do realize what a valuable resource you are to Vermont. You’re a standard in many ways that other people can’t even think about, and it’s important that you stay there and stay alive.”

– Con Hogan, State of Vermont Green Mountain Care Board

## A Word From the CEO

### Grateful patients write:

“We want to give a great big thank you to Danny and the staff who worked Monday evening 4/24/17. They were quick in diagnosing our little girl with appendicitis and making arrangements for her to go to Dartmouth. They were comforting to her and the male nurse was stern with her when needed to be sure she got the care she needed in her situation. I have a lot of respect for that. She had surgery and is recovering nicely thanks to that team and their quickness in her care. A big thank you from the Corriveaus!”

–Crystal Lyn Corriveau,  
Windham, VT



“Grace Cottage has saved my life several times over the years. My family and I are very grateful!”

– Nell Lasch,  
South Newfane, VT



It’s been a very steep learning curve for me during the past three years moving, as I did, from the field of agriculture (pun intended) to healthcare. The most important takeaways for me are:

- Grace Cottage is excellent at what we do. We recognize that we have a certain niche – primary and preventive healthcare, rehabilitation services, a Critical Access Hospital with extremely high patient satisfaction scores, our Community Health Team, to name a few. We stick to our knitting, only doing what we do best, and we have wonderful providers.
- The economic paradigm in healthcare is upside down. Primary care, wellness services, preventive care – these aren’t reimbursed well, or at all; the money goes to specialized services and tertiary care. How is our nation going to shift from fee-for-service to value-based payment?
- In this day and age of healthcare reform and mega-mergers, how do we keep the lights on at Grace Cottage? The number of Critical Access Hospitals in the U.S. has shrunk from 2,500 in 2007 to 1,332 today. Many that still exist have been taken over by large healthcare systems, while Grace Cottage remains independent (yet very collaborative). We know that increasing productivity without compromising patient care is challenging, but key to our success. We need to reduce costs where we can, and increase revenue.
- Our community support is unparalleled for our size. At last count, we had 230 active volunteers (including Fair Day) that give so generously of their time, expertise, and energy. This year, we’ve received over 2,300 individual donations, totaling over \$1.3 million; these gifts enable us to buy new equipment and provide certain services that we wouldn’t otherwise be able to offer (the expansion of our Community Health Team is just one example).

I look forward to continuing to serve on the Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital Board, as we work to ensure Grace Cottage’s continued focus on primary care for the community that we serve.

–Roger Allbee, CEO



### Mass Casualty Training

Grace Cottage teamed up with Rescue, Inc. and Leland and Gray High School in May to conduct a mass casualty exercise, to test our readiness and capability to respond should a mass casualty incident occur. Leland & Gray students acted as accident victims, Rescue, Inc. transported them to Grace Cottage’s ER, and the team at Grace Cottage’s ER passed the “test” with flying colors. We hope that such an event never transpires but, if it does, Grace Cottage will be prepared.

### A grateful patient writes:

“Thank you for the wonderful care I received while recovering from injuries I suffered in an auto accident last year. The staff couldn’t have been more caring.

The nursing staff was great, but I want to make particular reference to Hilarie Walsh and Jodi Perkins, who were outstanding. It’s often the little things that matter: checking on you often, giving you advice, and making sure you are comfortable enough to get some sleep.

I was also very impressed with the quality of care I received from physical and occupational therapists, who gave me a good start on being able to cope when I returned home.

Thanks to the doctors and nurses, I recovered nicely and am able to go about my usual daily routine.”

–Aine Paulus, Walpole, NH



## Wishes Granted...

- Thanks to a grant from the Fanny Holt Ames & Edna Louise Holt Fund, an updated blood coagulation testing machine was purchased for the laboratory.
- A grant from the Deerfield Valley Rotary enabled Grace Cottage's Rehab Department to purchase a knee joint demonstration unit for patient education.
- Lynette Hamilton donated the funds for the purchase of a VersaSlider for Rehab patients.
- Ernie Friedli made a donation for the purchase of an updated sanitizer for Grace Cottage's ultrasound.
- Louise Williams donated the funds for the purchase of an additional vein finder (several are needed in various care areas of the hospital).
- Stanley Knapp made a donation for the purchase of a heavy-duty commercial ice machine for the hospital inpatient areas.
- Many Grace Cottage supporters have donated the funds to help make it possible to have a new heating/AC/ventilation system installed in Grace Cottage Family Health. As of late August, these donors included: Anonymous, Betty Benson, Bruce Benson, Margaret Bernache, Shane & Alexa Boatright, Tom & Irene Buzby, John & Mia Clark, Jean Danilow, John & Sue Eastwood, High Meadows Foundation, Brett Friedli, Ernie Friedli, Gunther & Elsie Garbe, David Gould, Beth-Ann Guthrie-Radwanski, Gene & Betty Horton, Victoria Kohler, Elaine Lambert & John Klein, Margaret MacDonald, Carl & Jean McNeely, Mary Moberly, Tom & Catherine Nemchek, Irwin & Dorothy Nessel Foundation, David & Arlene Parmelee, Jack Reed & Virginia Oppenheimer, Michael Roemer, Mike & Andrea Seaton, David & Rachel Stettler, Dr. Tim Shafer & Deborah Luskin, Richard & Dawn Truesdell, West River Westies, and The Harry Wolff Trust.



## Wishes Made...

- The hospital needs an additional Hi-Lo bed, to make it easier to help patients get in and out of bed. \$3,000.
- An iPad for use by patients when they're in the hospital would be greatly appreciated. It can be used for music therapy, games, puzzles, social media, connecting with family, and Internet searches; it would be lent to patients by the Activities Coordinator, Lorraine Gleason, for 2-hour intervals. The cost, including software, case, and screen protector is \$581.
- The Rehab Department is in need of medium and large ankle/foot orthosis equipment for patients. \$175.
- A new supply of 9" tangerine-colored china plates is needed for patient meals. \$115. Also, soup bowls. \$87.
- The Dietary Department often makes vegetable and fruit smoothies for patients, to augment their nutritional intake; a new industrial-strength blender is needed for this purpose. \$500.
- The Rehab Department's speech therapists need a new testing kit which would help diagnose patients with neurological aphasic syndromes. \$532.
- The Housekeeping Department is in need of a floor burnisher, \$2,200, and a heavy-duty laundry cart with a lift, \$536.
- Grace Cottage Family Health needs four wheelchairs, \$175 each, and 8 blood pressure cuffs, \$90 total.

*Grace Cottage's Wish List is updated monthly on our website, at [www.gracecottage.org](http://www.gracecottage.org), or call 802-365-9109 for more information.*



## A Ton of Tomatoes!

In partnership with the West River Valley Community Project and the Townshend Community Food Shelf, Grace Cottage is collecting fresh tomatoes throughout the growing season, processing, and freezing them for distribution to families in this area throughout the year. Our goal is to collect one full ton (2,000 lbs.) of tomatoes. By the time you read this newsletter, we hope to have achieved our goal of stocking the Food Shelf with local, nutritious tomatoes throughout the winter months.

### Grateful patients write:

"I travel a lot and I've never been to a place like Grace Cottage. You do such a wonderful job. Everyone is efficient and nice; Grace Cottage is very precious."

*—Claude Rollins, Bondville, VT*



"Grace Cottage is an excellent hospital with a wonderful staff. The level of respect and caring that I was shown in the ER was amazing, and the staff is so well educated. They do a great job. I changed my primary care physician to Grace Cottage because of how well I was treated in the ER."

*—John Pease, Brattleboro, VT*



# 13th Annual Tour de Grace



Many thanks to the 107 bicyclists who rode down the mountain from Stratton to Grace Cottage to help raise money for the hospital on Saturday, July 8. Although the weather forecast was dismal, the rain held off until the end, so that only the last 10 riders got soaked, and the first thunderclap was heard just as the final rider crossed the finish line at noon.

**Tour de Grace** is sponsored by Stratton Mountain Resort, Solstice at Stratton, Village Square Shops at Stratton, Cota & Cota, D&K Jamaica Grocery, Equipe Sport, Howard Printing, and Three Mountain Inn. Special thanks also to the Army Corps of Engineers, who cleared the riverside trails prior to the ride, and to Rescue, Inc. for “sweeping” the route. More than 35 volunteers and Stratton staff, including shuttle bus drivers (most bicyclists don’t want to ride 19 miles back up the mountain!), helped to make the event a success, and over \$6,000 was raised for Grace Cottage. Next year’s event will be on Saturday, July 7, and we hope you’ll join us – it’s fabulous family fun!



## Spring into Health 5K

On Saturday, May 13, runners and walkers of all ages assembled on the Townshend Common for the 8th Annual Grace Cottage **Spring into Health 5K**. There were a record number of participants this year, with 163 registered and 138 crossing the finish line. Proceeds from the event benefit Grace Cottage’s Patient Care Fund. Lucas Newton (16) and Elkanah Linder (20), both of Townshend, were the first male and female to cross the finish line. People’s United Bank was the Event Sponsor; Cota & Cota fueled the runners with water; River Bend Farm Market supplied fresh fruit; and Drew’s All Natural Salsa, Big Picture Farm, and Smith Family Maple contributed prizes for the 5K. Special thanks to Allura Cameron for designing this year’s 5K logo for the performance shirts given to all participants. **Save the date: Saturday, May 12, 2018.**

## 8th Annual Tee It Up for Health

- “We just want to tell you once again, how great the tournament was! The weather couldn’t have been better! (A little thunder just added to the ambiance...)” – *Betsy & Freddy DeFinis, Norwalk, CT*
- “Thanks so much for a great day...! It was a fantastic event and you should be proud of your team’s hospitality!” – *Steve Gordon, Brattleboro, VT*
- “WOW, What a great day! You all worked so hard to help us have a great time. Lunch was great, and dinner perfect. Our golf game was not so wonderful, but we had many laughs. Thanks again for a great day and all the helpers who made it possible.” – *Richard & Carol Steiner, Stratton, VT*



The 8<sup>th</sup> annual **Tee It Up for Health**, held at The Hermitage Club at Haystack on Friday, June 9, was a great success: \$30,000 was raised for Grace Cottage’s Patient Care Fund, after expenses.

**Event Sponsors:** The Richards Group; Hermitage Club at Haystack.

**Platinum Sponsors:** Elizabeth Walker; Eileen Ranslow. **Gold**

**Sponsors:** Bennington Subaru; Cerner Corporation. **Silver Sponsors:** Baker, Newman, Noyes; Andy & Linda Barber; Brattleboro Memorial Hospital; Lawrence & Lober Electric; People’s United Bank. **Hole Sponsors:** Advance Notice Advertising; Andrea Anker, in memory of Kjell Anker; Durand Motors; Reverend Samir & Kathy Habiby; Homestead Landscaping; Howard Printing; Irving Energy; Multiview; Northeast Delta Dental; Primmer, Piper, Eggleston & Cramer; River Valley Credit Union; Southern Vermont Podiatry; Suzanne Welch; West River Family Dental; Windham Foundation; WW Building Supply. **Bronze Sponsors:** Blue Cross Blue Shield VT; Brown Computer Solutions; Canon Solutions; Lawton Floor Design; Leader Beverage; Northwestern Mutual; Two Tannery Road Restaurant.

*continued on page 7*



## Singing in the Rain – 67th Annual Fair Day a Big Success!



Kevin & Tinna Therrien and their children came all the way from Gothenburg, Nebraska for Fair Day and said that it was well worth the trip!



Bagpipers from the Taconic Pipe Band lead the Birthday Parade and the famous Stork around the Common.



Tom & Jenny Connor of Jamaica make Face Painting/Costumes so much fun.



Ray & Claire Sorrentino of Townshend helped sell lots of ice cream.



Hula hoops serving a dual purpose!

Dire forecasts of thunderstorms all day (which never transpired, at least in Townshend!), plus rain in the early morning and a deluge at 2:45 (with some sunny skies in between) meant that there was never a dull moment at this year's Hospital Fair Day on Saturday, August 5th. However, intrepid, loyal, and generous fairgoers came through for Grace Cottage, and the amount raised in one day on the Common was \$60,364.27, which is \$305 MORE than last year's total. After Fair Day expenses, this should net about \$40,000 for Grace Cottage's Heat Fund (see page 1).

Many volunteers at almost every booth commented that people were indeed very generous this year. A cashier at the Food Booth said that a young boy handed her \$5 for onion rings and when she gave him his \$1 change, he looked at it and then handed it back to her, saying, "I've been in the Grace Cottage Emergency Room three times for stitches – keep the change!"

A similar refrain was heard often from fairgoers of all ages, at every booth. The Auction was wonderful, thanks to auctioneer Kit Martin and his many helpers, including Dr. Robert Backus.

THANK YOU for your support of our community hospital. It takes an army of volunteers to plan, organize, set up, manage, and take down Fair Day, and your help is so appreciated, as is the attendance of so many fairgoers. An 8-year-old boy from Ridgewood, NY, told a volunteer: "I've been coming to Fair Day with my grandparents since I was three – it's a tradition!" We hope that it has been or will become a tradition for your family as well!

*We're ready to start picking up items for next year's fair, but are in desperate need for a volunteer driver with a truck. Call me at 802-365-9992.*

*–Laura Smith, President  
Grace Cottage Auxiliary & Fair Day Chairperson*



## Super Heroes in Scrubs!



(l. to r.); Travis Donna, Stacy Switzer, Christine DeVault, Andrew Semegram, Brittini Coe Petry, Chris Petry, Amie Waller, Jeremy Cole, and Nakita LeBlanc

On Sunday, June 25th, six Grace Cottage Hospital nurses, joined by three friends/family members, participated in Tough Mudder at Mount Snow to raise funds for Grace Cottage. These Super Heroes in Scrubs raised \$2,350 to purchase equipment needed for hospital inpatients, and their team had a fabulous (and challenging) time, running 12 miles, “sliding, scaling, and fumbling through more than 20 obstacles” along the course. “We’re already training for next year!” said organizer Stacy Switzer.



## Healthcare Matters

Thanks to producer Marty Cohn, Grace Cottage now has a monthly 30-minute cable show on Brattleboro Community Television (BCTV.) The goal of the show is to provide health information of general interest. The premiere episode featured CEO Roger Allbee talking about Grace Cottage, and Nurse Practitioner Jorda Daignault speaking about tick borne diseases, while the second episode was A Back to School special with Pediatric Occupational Therapist Melinda Roy and Health Coach Liz Harrison. All shows can be viewed at [www.gracecottage.org/videos](http://www.gracecottage.org/videos).



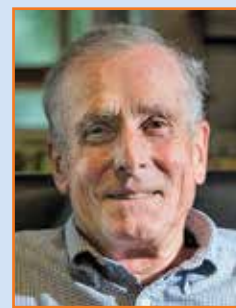
## The Dr. Joyce C. & Joseph L. Heller Conference Room

in Grace Cottage’s Community Wellness Center was dedicated in May by family and friends of the Hellers. The ribbon

was cut by Scott Heller (r.) and Dave King of Newfane.

## With Great Appreciation

I thank all of you who contributed to the Backus Tribute Fund.\* Your donations will be dedicated to promoting excellence in geriatric care at Grace Cottage. May you all be blessed with good health and much laughter. –*Bob Backus, Wardsboro, VT*



\*Over 270 individual donations have been received!



## Foundation Board Welcomes Rebecca Pappas Clark

Rebecca Pappas Clark joined the Grace Cottage Foundation Board in May. A native of Block Island, RI, she attended Suffield Academy in CT and graduated from Pace University in NYC. Becky and her

husband, Tim, have owned and managed the Beachhead Restaurant on Block Island since 2010; in 2013, they purchased TC’s Restaurant in West Dover, VT, and in 2016 they bought Two Tannery Road Restaurant, also in West Dover. Becky holds real estate licenses in NY, RI, and VT and a broker’s license in Rhode Island. Becky and Tim divide their time between Block Island and West Dover, VT.

In her free time, she enjoys skiing and snowboarding.



**A dedication ceremony** was held in June for two exam rooms in Grace Cottage Family Health, in memory of Robert K. Jones and in honor of Joyce Jones of Stratton, thanks to a generous donation from the Robert & Joyce Jones Foundation. Above, Joyce Jones is surrounded by members of her extended family.

## SAVE THE DATES:

Grace Cottage’s Cabin Fever Online Auction will be live at [www.32auctions.com/gracecottage](http://www.32auctions.com/gracecottage) from February 14-28, 2018.

**Flag Sponsors:** Deerfield Valley News; Dot's of Dover, in memory of Joe & Irene Reagan; Five Maples; Four Season's Sotheby's International Realty; Gateway Travel; Katie & Lady Rogan; RSI Flooring; In memory of Joan McConnel; Tracy Sloan, CPA; W&B Maintenance, in memory of Effie Chamberlin.

Two holes at the tournament were dedicated in memory of Jim Heal and in memory of Chip Walker. Save the date for next year, **SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 2018** at The Hermitage Club at Haystack, 1:30 shotgun start.

## Cottage Door

is published by Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital  
185 Grafton Rd. (Route 35) Townshend, VT 05353  
(802) 365-7357 info@gracecottage.org  
gracecottage.org

Grace Cottage Hospital & Grace Cottage Foundation  
are 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations.

The mission of Grace Cottage Foundation  
is to raise funds on behalf of Grace Cottage.

Donations to Grace Cottage Foundation are tax  
deductible to the extent allowable by law. Grace  
Cottage Foundation's Federal Tax ID #: 03-0343282.

Donations may be made by cash, credit card, check, stocks,  
bonds, or other tangible assets. Call Andrea Seaton,  
Executive Director, at (802) 365-9109.



## Healthy Aging Conference

**Grafton, Vermont  
November 7-8**

Take charge of your own health,  
your security, and perhaps even

your longevity at Grace Cottage's second annual Healthy Aging  
Conference, held at the historic Grafton Inn in Grafton, Vermont.

Take time for yourself in a beautiful, relaxed environment, as you  
listen and learn from 15 highly-respected professionals on matters of  
physical, mental, and financial health. While we all know that we  
should eat right, exercise, make amends, and mind our wallets, we  
don't always do what's best for us. This conference is designed to give  
participants new reasons and techniques to go forward on a path of  
maximum health and happiness.

Here's just a sampling of sessions: *Staying Active As We Age;*  
*Staying Connected in Your Community;* *Good Nutrition;* *Medication*  
*Interactions;* *Financial Strategies for a Successful Retirement;* *The*  
*Psychology of Aging Well and the Power of Positive Thinking;*  
*Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia;* *Spirituality as We Age;*  
*Downsizing Home and Finding Freedom;* *Creativity and the Aging Brain.*

Registration is limited to the first 50 people who sign up (there  
are 35 slots left); the cost is \$90 per person per day and participants  
can register for either or both days. Continental breakfast and lunch  
are included in the registration fee. The Grafton Inn is offering  
discounted overnight rates for conference attendees. Call 802-365-  
9109 to register or to receive more information about the Healthy  
Aging Conference.

## Donations Were Recently Received In Honor Of:

Roger Allbee ❖ Dr. Robert Backus ❖ Dr. Maurice Geurts ❖ Dee Gibson ❖ Grace Cottage Rehab Department  
Grace Cottage volunteers ❖ Devan Lucier ❖ Bea MacFarland ❖ Dr. Miles Powers ❖ Lillian Slover ❖ Suzanne Welch

## Memorial Gifts

*Donations have been received between April 25th and August 15th in memory of the following individuals:*

Harlan & Jessie Allbee ❖ Kjel Anker ❖ Russ Barber ❖ Cecil Bills ❖ Barbara Brisson ❖ Susan Bristol ❖ Kimberly Brooks  
Norman Brooks ❖ Gladys Brown ❖ David Brownell ❖ Chris Coleman ❖ Phil Coleman ❖ Wendell Covey ❖ Dottie Coyle  
Charles "Chuck" Cummings ❖ Vincent Del Vecchio ❖ Otto & Ruth Denzel ❖ Martha Desrochers ❖ Earl Douglass  
Joan Dunham ❖ Herb Eisenberg ❖ Don Elliott ❖ Jennifer Ellis ❖ Victor English ❖ Nancy Evans ❖ Jim Faas  
Nat & Irene Fillow ❖ Bud & Kathy Fletcher ❖ John & Dorothy Fornuto ❖ Roland Gould ❖ Joseph Greene ❖ Roberta Greiner  
Sandy Hadden ❖ Joseph Hamilton ❖ Ken & Alberta Harris ❖ Mary Anne Higgins ❖ Irene Hohmann  
Stan Holt ❖ Lin Hozempa ❖ Edward Hurley ❖ Jack & Hope Johnson ❖ Joel Johnson ❖ Joe & Rose Keller ❖ Frankie Kershaw  
Ezri Abigail King ❖ Luanne Kopecky ❖ Richard & Mary Kuhlman ❖ Jack Lambert ❖ Richard Lapan ❖ Sue Lescher  
Barbara Litchfield ❖ Wally Lowe ❖ Jeanne Marion ❖ Joan McConnel ❖ Dawn McCormick ❖ Mary Meyer ❖ Verne Moberly  
Florence Moore ❖ Donna Nappi ❖ Arline Olson ❖ Carlos & Ruth Otis ❖ Jane Parlman ❖ Irene Phelps ❖ Edwin Phoenix  
Ann Rabinowitch ❖ Robert Reffi ❖ Betsey Regan ❖ Ruth Russel Seward ❖ Garcia Joanne Shepherd ❖ Nathan & Anne Slater  
Jean Stewart ❖ Marty Stilton ❖ Leona Tabell ❖ Chip Walker ❖ Fred & Helen Wilkins ❖ Jack Winner

*We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of these loved ones, and our appreciation to those who have given in their memories.*

*When memorial gifts are received by Grace Cottage, the donor is thanked, and the next of kin is notified of the gift. (The amount given is never divulged.)*





“After open heart surgery in September, 2016, I was admitted to Grace Cottage. The Rehab Department and doctors turned my life around. They all did wonders for me. I also liked the fact that so many of the doctors stopped in to see me when I was in the hospital, to check up on my progress, even though I wasn’t their patient!”

– Don Jennison, Walpole, NH



**GraceCottage**  
FAMILY HEALTH & HOSPITAL  
P.O. Box 216  
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## How Can I Sleep Better? Tips From Some of Grace Cottage’s Medical Providers

Do you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep? If so, you are not alone. 40% of Americans report that they get less than the recommended seven or more hours of sleep per night.

If you are among that 40%, you may want to start by visiting your primary care provider to determine if you have a physiological issue. For example, sleep apnea (pauses in your breathing during sleep), a common disruptor to the natural sleep cycles, is treatable.

Those whose insomnia is brought on by anxiety may find that mental health counseling helps. The following are sleep tips from some of our medical providers at Grace Cottage Family Health:

**Eileen Arama, Licensed Clinical Social Worker:** What helps me is to “relax and be OK with it.” I stay in bed, make myself comfortable, and enjoy the dark and the quiet of the night. I breathe and tell myself that if I am resting both my brain and my body, I will manage my day just fine.

**Dr. Ewa Arnold:** The best sleep environment is a cool, dark room. And reserve the bedroom for two activities only—sex and sleeping.

**Jorda Daigneault, Family Nurse Practitioner:** Avoid alcohol. Instead, I drink Sleepy Time tea. It has herbs that relax you and are good for your stomach. Reading in bed for a few minutes (a book, not on an electronic device) always puts me to sleep!

**Dr. Maurice Geurts:** Sleep in a dark, quiet bedroom. Have a regular bedtime.

**Natalie Harding, Physician Assistant:** Do 30 minutes of yoga before bed. Meditation also helps.

**Dr. Elizabeth Linder (Pediatrician):** Kids benefit from a regular bedtime routine. Turning off the TV, the phone, and the computer an hour or two before bedtime helps. And the old tried-and-true method is still one of the most effective ones: read a bedtime story together.

**Dr. Moss Linder:** A regular exercise routine during the day will help you sleep better at night. Try to walk 30 minutes a day, outside if possible.

**Devan Lucier, Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner:** Avoid taking naps during the day if possible. And if you lie in bed watching the clock, hide the clock!

**Louise McDevitt, Family Nurse Practitioner:** If insomnia lasts more than a couple of months, it’s important to see your medical provider to identify the cause. It could be related to anxiety, excess weight, posture, or medications.

**Dr. Timothy Shafer:** Exercise daily. No caffeine after mid-day. Don’t go to bed until you are ready to sleep.

**Benjamin Wright, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner:** Dr. Andrew Weil’s 4-7-8 breathing technique is very helpful for sleep and for stress. Inhale to a count of four, hold your breath for a count of seven, and exhale for a count of eight. If you do it regularly, it becomes a habit that can kick in naturally to help you relax.

*Grace Cottage Family Health is a federally-designated Rural Health Clinic that has been certified by the National Committee of Quality Assurance as a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home, the highest level achievable. Grace Cottage’s primary care providers offer family practice, pediatrics, geriatrics, urology, and mental health services.*