

*A message from  
the Board*



By Robert Howard

What did the hospital do to prepare for Hurricane Florence? The short answer is, a lot. Administration and senior physician leaders decided the hospital would provide mission-essential services because they knew the building and emergency systems could safely protect employees and patients.

Some of the tasks the team faced: Coordinating the closure of several hospital services and all the physician clinics, running emergency operations during the storm, dealing with the inevitable contingencies, and then bringing all the services back on line after the storm. Talk about complex.

While the building sustained some water damage, the hospital was back in full service quickly thanks to 39 staff members who remained on duty and treated more than 150 patients during the hurricane.

Community support was tremendous. Leading the way were State Senator Bill

*Continues on page 2*

## HBO treatments a life saver

90-year-old Elmer Safrut of Shallotte is enjoying a 100 percent improvement to his quality of life thanks to 40 hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) treatments at Doshers national-award-winning Wound Care Center.

"I feel alive again," Elmer says, after suffering a near collapse of his jaw as a result of radiation treatments while battling cancer.

"I like corn on the cob, it's a miracle I can even eat that again. I'm surprised and quite happy. I can eat just about anything I want now," he says.

The condition Elmer had—fairly common among cancer patients—is called osteoradionecrosis, or bone damage due to radiation. Elmer's osteoradionecrosis became so badly infected it ruptured his eardrum. He was in constant pain and couldn't chew or swallow food.



*Wound Care Center patient Elmer Safrut asks to be shown eating, which he can do once again after successful HBO treatments at Doshers.*

"He had one of the worst cases I've seen. He couldn't eat anything unless it had run through a blender. And then after his first 25 treatments, he told us as he had grilled a steak and eaten it," Wound Care Director and certified hyperbaric RN John Stone says.

"A lot of friends have asked me about it and the nurses were all pleased that it worked so well," Elmer says.

No needles, no tubes. Patients are simply rolled into the airtight HBO chamber on a stretcher that Stone describes as similar in size to a telephone booth on its

*Continues on page 2*

## Doshers receives results from community health survey



*The hospital conducted its triennial community health needs assessment last spring as required by IRS Section 501(r), which was added to the Code by section 9007(a) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Affordable Care Act"), Pub. L. No. 111-148, 124 Stat. 119, enacted March 23, 2010. The results are in the full report available at [www.Doshers.org](http://www.Doshers.org).*

Of 843 survey participants, 47.7 percent indicated chronic disease is the "biggest" health concern for our community, down from 67.5 percent reported in 2015. An

alarming increase in another major health concern is drug/alcohol abuse which was reported by 29.5 percent of participants compared to 13.1 percent in 2015. Mental health also saw a dramatic increase from 1.5 percent three years ago to 5.4 percent this year.

This analysis was presented to the hospital Board of Trustees and members of the Brunswick Wellness Coalition in September. The Coalition is scheduled to present an implementation strategy of these results to the hospital board in early 2019.



HBO treatments a life saver

By Robert Howard  
continued from page 1

side. Patients lie for two hours per session as highly concentrated levels of oxygen are pumped into the chamber.

“It’s the equivalent to scuba diving down to 40 feet depth and breathing oxygen and raising levels of oxygen 20 times normal,” Stone explains.

HBO treatments “hyper-oxygenate” the body to speed healing. The treatments work on all types of wounds, including crush wounds needing blood to flow through the bone again or diabetic wounds and ulcers. The most common HBO candidates are osteoradionecrosis patients like Elmer.

“It’s like flipping a switch. All of a sudden the body can start to heal, growing new blood vessels, bone cells and actually growing new bone. We can restore the blood flow to that site to about 85 percent of what it was before radiation,” Stone says. “It’s pretty amazing what hyperbarics can do for this type of condition.”

HBO has successfully treated former breast cancer patients who had their chests radiated to rid the cancer, but were left with unhealed chest wounds. HBO also works well for stomach cancer patients whose bladders were affected by radiation treatments, causing them terrible pain and blood in their urine.

“There aren’t too many scenarios in health care where people come in with chronic pain and 40 treatments later they are all better and out the door. It’s the best part of my job,” Stone says.

Dosher’s Wound Care Center was named a “Center of Excellence” by leading U.S. wound care authority Healogics for delivering a “heal rate” of 95 percent or higher three years running, due in large part to its two HBO chambers.

Elmer’s ear, nose and throat physician says the HBO treatments saved his life.

“When I initially saw Mr. Safrit, his condition was quite serious. I began to see improvement soon after he began the hyperbaric treatments, and after completion of his treatments, there has been remarkable improvement, Otolaryngologist Robert Poe, MD, says.

“I would highly recommend these treatments. If your doctor says that’s what you need, try it,” Elmer says.

Letters to the Editor



Dr. Alex Newsom (center) poses with colleagues at Dosher Medical-North Howe Street primary care physician practice.

Articles and ads welcoming Dr. Alex Newsom to Dosher Medical-North Howe Street internal medicine practice led to dozens of calls, letters and online messages, including the following:

Dr. Alex is a wonderful doctor and he cares deeply for his patients.—Dorothy Q.

Wonderful doctor with Southport the big winner to have Alex.—Reba B.

Some of my favorite folks.—Susan D.S.

Great team before Dr. Newsom. I’m sure he will add to the greatness.—Judith B.

A top notch... friendly and professional group where you receive the best care possible. They all make going to the doctor a pleasant experience. Congrats on your new Dr. Newsom.—Donna P.M.

Best office in town.—Beth P.

My favorite Dr. Andre’ Minor. And my nurses and (other staff) are the best.—Stephanie J.

This is the best group of caregivers ever.—Billie B.

Awesome hospital.—Tammy M.

Dr. Alex is from my home town.—George B.

Barbee Bridge closure prompts Dosher service changes



Diagnostic and laboratory services at Dosher Medical Plaza, 4222 Long Beach Road, Southport, have relocated to other Dosher locations due to long-planned construction and the temporary closure of Barbee Bridge between Southport and Oak Island:

1. The laboratory draw station moved to Dosher Wellness Center, 3009 Medical Plaza Lane, Southport.
2. X-ray services are available at the Wellness Center and the hospital.
3. Mammography services are available at the hospital.
4. The bone densitometry scanner moved to the hospital and was recalibrated and tested before going into service there.

Dosher Medical-Urgent Care remains open at Dosher Medical Plaza 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays.

A tenant at this location, Carolina Sports Medicine and Orthopedic Specialists, remains open.

Other Dosher Medical clinics remain open. Read more about them at [www.Dosher.org/Clinics](http://www.Dosher.org/Clinics)

Operation Medicine Cabinet



More than 300 households participate at the Dosher drug drop on October 4.

A message from the board

continued from page 1

Rabon and State Representative Frank Iler who made sure Dosher had access to regional and state resources. Other key leaders and organizations that helped our hospital:

- Jim Powell, Southport alderman
- Bruce Oakley, Southport city manager
- Charles Drew and the Southport Fire Department
- John Ingram and the Brunswick County Sheriff’s Office
- Brian Watts, director, Brunswick County Emergency Operations Center
- Administration, New Hanover Regional Medical Center

- Administration, Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center.

While Florence made landfall with less than Category 4 winds, the disruption and danger to our community was real. The Dosher team of physicians, nurses and support professionals were here in this time of emergency—just like the many other dedicated first responders. Dosher is laser-focused on making sure we are here for our community now and in the event of future emergencies.

—Robert Howard, Dosher Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees

White socks for National Diabetes Month



Dosher Wound Care Center staffers are participating in the Save a Leg, Save a Life Foundation’s “White sock campaign.” The goal is to raise awareness of the connection between peripheral arterial disease (PAD) in the legs and diabetes. For more information on PAD, diabetic foot ulcers, and related health issues, call 910-454-1192.

Calendar

Wednesday, November 14

**6 p.m.** – Cooking demonstration by Chef Lucas Smith from Oliver’s on the Cape Fear, “Healthy seasonal foods.” 2nd floor conference room at the hospital. Free, but reservations are required to reserve a seat, 910-454-4731. Read about all Dosher programs at [Dosher.org/Calendar](http://Dosher.org/Calendar).

**Friday, Nov. 30** – Foundation Golf Classic at Oak Island Golf Club rescheduled due to Hurricane Michael. For player or sponsorship information, call 910-457-3850.



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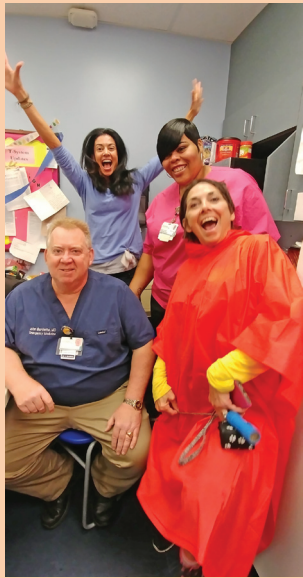
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# Thank you!

A huge heartfelt thank you to all of the physicians, staff, volunteers, and community members who helped to keep Doshier Memorial Hospital operational before, during, and after Hurricane Florence. We were able to provide medical services to more than 150 patients during those trying times and we couldn't have provided such excellent levels of care without each and every one of you!

—Tom Siemers, President & CEO

## Employees who made this happen:

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