

St. Mary Medical Center Surgery Endowment Fund

It's 1986. A young man has spine surgery that produces a scar from below his shoulder blades to his tailbone, garnering him three months in rehabilitation. He must learn how to walk again, has lost his job, and has missed every single one of his son's little league games. Back then, it was the best medicine had to offer. We've come a long way. Today, right here in Hobart, a young man could have the same surgery with a scar only a few inches long, be out of the hospital in one day, and back to work in two weeks. Why? Because a community-based hospital like St. Mary Medical Center is dedicated to making the latest advances in technology available. This hospital doesn't just offer surgery. It delivers the best.



There is no question that St. Mary Medical Center must continue to invest in the health and well-being of the community. It is imperative that we make sure residents who need a specialized surgery – or even a more common one – have access to the latest medical advances - close to home, family and work. Surgery, after all, reaches people of all ages, from children, to teens, parents and grandparents. Medicine has made amazing advances in surgery that require smaller incisions and less time in the operating room, offering quicker and safer recovery times for patients. Other advantages include less chance of infection, quicker return to work and previous lifestyle, less time in the hospital, and less pain.

In heart surgery, special X-ray equipment and improved tools have all but transformed the way heart care is delivered, and new technologies are on the horizon with robotics. In neurosurgery, physicians are diligently working to offer life-changing treatments, such as artificial disc replacements in the spine, and a special surgery that supports the spine while it is being treated for cancer. In orthopedics, physicians are able to do hip, knee, spine and joint surgeries through tiny incisions, but they must have access to the highly-technical equipment that allows them to navigate the body with imaging. The possibilities in these specialties – and many others – seem endless. All this is available close to home, without having to travel to a major university medical center.

Yet, with the endless possibilities for treating our community with specialized and even routine surgeries, comes the escalated cost of space and maintaining equipment. As technology advances, so do the costs. As more people present the need to have surgery, we must be able to renovate and provide that space. In the last year, the number of surgeries performed at St. Mary Medical Center exceeded 6,300, performed in six operating rooms and one minor procedure room. As our nation's baby boomers hit retirement age and older, that number will continue to rise, and we are forever challenged to meet this important need in the community.

A gift to the St. Mary Medical Center Department of Surgery Endowment Fund will ensure that the hospital will be able to support the continuing advances being made in medicine today, both by purchasing the necessary medical equipment and renovating the space to accommodate demand. It could mean you or a family member are able to have surgery without a trip to Chicago, without other disruptions to daily life. Your support is an investment in better health and quality of life for your community. Today's gift is tomorrow's health.
