

# Vital Impact

BayCare Physician and  
Provider Annual Report 2024



The region's largest academic health system.





## A Message From Our President and CEO

To Our Extraordinary Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers,

As we reflect on another year at BayCare, I'm filled with admiration for your incredible work. Your unwavering commitment to providing exceptional care and improving the lives of our patients is truly inspiring. On behalf of all our communities and the entire BayCare team, I'm honored to say thank you. BayCare has reinforced its position as the largest academic health system in West Central Florida by announcing a strategic partnership with Northwestern Medicine and the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. This partnership embeds academic medicine into the community, fueling innovation through joint research and clinical trials, attracting top-tier medical talent and fostering a culture of excellence. With this partnership, BayCare is accelerating its evolution as a leading academic health system—ensuring patients never have to leave our region or state to have lifelong access to world-class care, from their first breath to their last.

Our commitment to advancing medical knowledge remains strong, and in 2024, you saw BayCare deepen our academic commitment to graduate medical education (GME) and research. Our goal to expand our GME program to 650 residents by 2029 exemplifies our commitment to equip the next generation of health care providers with the skills, knowledge and experience they need to excel. By engaging in research, we offer our patients access to cutting-edge treatments and therapies that might not be available elsewhere.

In an ever-evolving health care landscape, leveraging technology to enhance patient outcomes is crucial. This year, we made significant strides in implementing artificial intelligence to streamline processes and improve the quality of care. By embracing innovation, we're enhancing our capabilities and ensuring our patients receive the best possible treatment. Our integrated health care models and growing clinical institutes are central to this effort, allowing us to deliver comprehensive and coordinated care.

During 2024, BayCare introduced a new approach to its service lines aimed at enhancing service delivery, improving patient access and maintaining competitiveness throughout West Central Florida. By implementing new pathways to streamline care and improve outcomes, we're enhancing the patient experience. The formation of our clinical institutes and comprehensive care centers marks groundbreaking steps toward providing fully integrated, patient-centered care.

This year, BayCare experienced significant growth in contiguous markets, including Manatee County, expanding its reach and impact across West Central Florida. I credit much of that success to our physician enterprise because you're the reason our patients entrust BayCare with their health and well-being. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your tireless efforts and the profound impact you make every day. Your dedication and compassionate care serve as the driving force behind our commitment to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care.

Best,

**Stephanie Conners, MBA, BSN, RN**

*President and CEO*



# A Message From Our Chief Physician Executive

Dear Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers (APPs),

As chief physician executive at BayCare, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering commitment to excellence and compassionate care. Every day, around the clock, you make a meaningful difference in the lives of our patients and in the communities we serve.

This year has been a remarkable one. Our continued investment in academic medicine and research is only possible because of your leadership. As educators and mentors, you're shaping the next generation of clinicians and ensuring that BayCare remains a beacon of clinical excellence and innovation.

In 2024, the results of our Physician as Customer survey were a powerful affirmation of our culture and commitment. With a response rate well above the national benchmark, BayCare physicians demonstrated strong engagement, reflected in a 4.35 score, placing us in the 79th percentile nationally. Trust in leadership and responsiveness from our administrative teams ranked in the top quartile, underscoring our shared alignment and communication. Most importantly, year-over-year growth in engagement signals that we're moving in the right direction together.

We value your feedback—it remains essential to our growth and success. As we look ahead, we're excited to expand our footprint with the opening of a new hospital in Manatee County, bringing our total to 17 hospitals by 2028. With this growth, our physician enterprise continues to evolve to meet the increasing needs of our communities.

Your dedication, compassion and professionalism are the heart of BayCare. Thank you for everything you do, today and every day.

With appreciation,  
**Sowmya Viswanathan, MD, MHCM, MBA, FACP**  
*Chief Physician Executive*



# 2024 Highlights From Our Physician Enterprise

As one of the nation's top-performing health care systems, BayCare is renowned for delivering the highest clinical excellence combined with extraordinary, compassionate care. BayCare's Physician Enterprise is growing to ensure that patient-centered care is delivered throughout West Central Florida.

BayCare Medical Group (BMG) is Tampa Bay's leading multispecialty group, providing primary and specialty care throughout five counties. In addition to BMG, there are thousands of community physicians and allied health professionals credentialed at BayCare. In 2024, more than **94,000 patients** chose BayCare facilities for their surgeries and over **7,000 providers** treated their patients at BayCare hospitals and medical offices.

## Physician Award Recipients

These awards acknowledge physicians who demonstrate extraordinary commitment through exceptional patient care and remarkable contributions to our community.

- **Academic Excellence:** *Dr. Juan Abanses*
- **BayCare Systemness:** *Dr. Mani Vindhya*
- **Clinical Excellence:** *Dr. Manuel Betancourt-Ramirez*
- **Community Service:** *Dr. Maria del Pilar Cekan*
- **Lifetime Achievement:** *Dr. Percy Bracamonte*

**Best of BayCare**



*BayCare physicians demonstrated strong engagement, reflected in a 4.35 score, placing us in the 79th percentile nationally.*

## 2024 BayCare Physician Enterprise by the Numbers

**7,099**

Physicians and other medical professionals



**1,070**

Employed physicians



**208**

Physician practice locations



Juan Abanses, MD



Mani Vindhya, MD



Manuel Betancourt-Ramirez, MD



Maria del Pilar Cekan, MD



Percy Bracamonte, MD





# BayCare's Commitment to Academic Medicine

## Training the Next Generation

BayCare's commitment to ensuring West Central Florida has the physicians it needs in the future continued to grow in 2024 with 145 resident physicians across nine accredited programs. BayCare received accreditation approval for three more programs in 2024 to begin in the 2025-26 academic year, another step in the health care system's plan to expand graduate medical education (GME) to 650 residents by 2029.

"At BayCare, resident physicians not only learn how to deliver compassionate care, they also learn to continue to challenge themselves to deliver the best clinical care," said Dr. Sowmya Viswanathan, BayCare's chief physician executive.

In 2024, BayCare sponsored or partnered in GME programs in Family Medicine, General Surgery, Internal Medicine,

Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Sports Medicine and Transitional Year. BayCare also has postgraduate programs in Pharmacy and graduate-level programs in Respiratory Therapy.

Once fully implemented in 2029, BayCare's plans would bring an influx of close to 200 new resident physicians and fellows to the region each year. Resident physicians often end up practicing in the communities where they trained, helping all of West Central Florida for years to come.

"We're also bringing in experienced academic physician leaders for these programs," said Dr. Paul Lewis, who is the BayCare GME-designated institutional official. "That means our already robust academic and research efforts will grow."

## BayCare's Strategic Partnership

We're happy to announce that BayCare is now collaborating with Northwestern Medicine—one of U.S. News & World Report's top-tier, research-focused health systems. Northwestern Medicine is renowned for university-backed, leading-edge research, world-class physicians and groundbreaking treatments. Combined with BayCare's focus on clinical excellence, including

expanding clinical research and medical training, this collaboration is a final key step in BayCare's path as the region's leading academic health care system. It also promises to boost the local economy by creating high-skill jobs and driving investment in health care infrastructure. That's the kind of commitment that moves West Central Florida forward.



## BayCare Physician Leadership Institute

This institute is based on our belief that clinician leadership is key to the success of our health care system. After completing a 10-month program, graduates become increasingly active voices in our system, participating in and leading initiatives that drive clinical and operational standards of excellence.

### 2024 BayCare Physician Leadership Institute Participants

- Derek Batson, MD • Christian Bengtson, MD • Jonathan Cooperman, DO • Amy DeBella, APRN  
Jason Donay, PA-C • Fernando Donoso, DO • Christina Heidenberger, PA-C • Houston Hodges II, MD  
Justin Hubenak, MD • Lynn Hutto, APRN • Molly Long, MD • Rodolfo Loureiro, MD  
Sanjiva Lutchmedial, MD • Brandy Milliner, APRN • Lolita Ontiveros, MD • Bina Patel, MD  
Lourdes Pelaez-Echevarria, DO • Abhik Roy, MD • Suchet Sarda, MD • Gulab Sher, MD  
Richa Taneja, MD • Priscilla Thomas, MD • Winay Virkud, DO • Michael Weaver, MD  
Jessica Wical, APRN • Jasmine Young, MD • Michel Zales, MD

## Finding Health Care's Potential

Through 450 health research projects, including 290 sponsored clinical trials, BayCare helped advance the future of medicine in 2024. Some of the world's best-known hospital systems, academic institutions and manufacturers of medical devices and drugs sought out BayCare for participation in their own research projects. This provided BayCare patients access to potentially cutting-edge treatments before they were available to the general public.



# 2024-2025 Chief Physician Executive (CPE) Leadership Team and Chief Medical Officers



**Sowmya Viswanathan, MD, MHCM, MBA, FACP**  
BayCare Health System, Chief Physician Executive



**David Ball, DO, MPH, MBA**  
Director/CMO Ambulatory Services



**Jeremy Katzmann, MD**  
Director/CMO Bartow Regional Medical Center



**Jennifer McVan**  
VP, Physician Affairs



**Mohin Shah, MD**  
Director/CMO Morton Plant North Bay Hospital



**Ruvan Wickramasinghe, MD, SFHM**  
VP/CMO Mease Countryside Hospital and Mease Dunedin Hospital



**Samir Akach, MD, MHCM**  
VP/CMO St. Joseph's Hospital



**Christopher Bucciarelli, MD, MBA**  
VP/CMO Ambulatory Services



**Robert Kopec, MD, MBA**  
VP/CMO Morton Plant North Bay Hospital (2024), Morton Plant Hospital (as of March 30, 2025)



**Anand Nayee, MD, MBA**  
VP/CMO BayCare Hospital Wesley Chapel and St. Joseph's Hospital-North



**Brooke M. Shepard, MD**  
Director/CMO South Florida Baptist Hospital



**Mahesh Amin, MD**  
VP/CMO Hospital Service Lines



**John Haffner, MD**  
VP/CMO St. Anthony's Hospital



**Paul Lewis, MD, ABPM-CI**  
Designated Institutional Officer for GME



**Kriel Ramcharitar, MD, MPH**  
VP/CMO Value-Based Care



**Megan Tirone, MD**  
VP/CMO St. Joseph's Women's Hospital and Winter Haven Women's Hospital



**Laura Arline, MD**  
VP, Chief Quality Officer



**Karin Hotchkiss, MD, MBA**  
Director/CMO St. Joseph's Children's Hospital



**Timothy Liesching, MD**  
VP/CMO BayCare Medical Group



**Gary M. Richards, MBA**  
VP/COO BayCare Medical Group



**Mark Vaaler, MD**  
VP/CMO BayCare Hospital Wesley Chapel (retired 2025)



**Arif Asif, MD, MHCM, MBA**  
VP/CMO Winter Haven Hospital



**Jeffery Jensen, DO, MS, MBA, MPH**  
VP/CMO Morton Plant Hospital (retired 2025)



**Brendan Malik, MD**  
Director/CMO St. Joseph's Hospital-South



**Xavier Sevilla, MD, MBA**  
Director/CMO Population Health/BayCare Physician Partners



**Keith Waldrep, MD**  
Director/CMO Ambulatory Services



## Save the Date October 15-16

*Quality Sharing & Innovation Day 2025 will be held Wednesday, Oct. 15, and Thursday, Oct. 16, at the BayCare System Office in Clearwater – with live streaming available for team members who can't attend in person.*

# A Culture of Continuous Learning

## *You asked, and we listened.*

During 2024, BayCare's operations teams at the system and facility level took action to achieve the following improvement highlights based on feedback received from our physicians and advanced practice providers.

### Operational System-Level Updates

- Significant reduction of nursing contract labor in all nursing areas
- Increased chief medical officer (CMO) and senior leadership visibility and consistency with leadership rounding
- Creation of advanced practice provider (APP) councils across BayCare
- Ongoing credentialing process improvement with the CVO, decreasing the turnaround times for overall application and re-credentialing processes
- Continued standardization of medical staff privileges
- Improved Wi-Fi service for better cell phone coverage
- National Physician Week, a week-long celebration of doctors
- Enhancing the medical staff quality database – EIS (Crimson)

### Bartow Regional Medical Center

- Capital investment of \$110 million for ER/OR/ICU expansion (estimated completion: Q3 2026)
- Physician of the Year recognition with special parking
- Increased interventional radiology coverage
- Improved access and atmosphere of physician dictation area

### BayCare Hospital Wesley Chapel

- Medical staff newsletter
- Increased focus on operating room (OR) team and improving efficiency
- Daily touchpoints with nursing on floors (charge nurses and/or PCL)
- Addition of surgical robot to OR

### BayCare Medical Group

- Increased focus on improving practice efficiency
- Piloting Oracle AI to support provider documentation
- Recruitment to increase physician and APP staffing
- Recognized positive physician and APP comments/feedback from surveys and team members

### Mease Countryside Hospital and Mease Dunedin Hospital

- Anesthesiology transition to BayCare Medical Group
- Women's physician group events
- APP council has initiated monthly meetings
- Addition of APP to credentials committee
- APP quarterly in-person reports to MEC
- Physician recognition campaign – Physician of the Quarter starting Q2 2025

### Morton Plant Hospital

- Obstetrics hospitalist group (OBHG) provides 24/7 OB care and contributes to hospital efficiency and patient satisfaction
- Morton Plant Hospital APP Council has initiated monthly meetings
- Addition of APP to credentials committee
- APP quarterly in-person reports to MEC
- Texting of **status orders only** under these restricted circumstances: **Only** to the UR/UM nurses, **only** using Vocera
- Anesthesiology transition to BayCare Medical Group

### Morton Plant North Bay Hospital

- Standing desks in the physician's lounge
- Added an additional surgical robot in the OR
- Increased physician recognition campaigns – Physician of the Quarter
- Addition of APP to credentials committee
- APP quarterly in-person reports to MEC
- Anesthesiology transitioned to BayCare Medical Group

### St. Anthony's Hospital

- A capital investment of \$6.7 million in medical equipment
- Increased focus on improving OR culture and enhancing operational efficiency
- Contracted labor reduced from 200 positions to 18 in the past two years
- Annual physician and allied health professional recognition program

### St. Joseph's Hospital

- Ongoing room renovations
- Physician networking events
- Contracted labor reduced to 23
- Capital investment of \$3.8 million made in medical equipment

### St. Joseph's Children's Hospital and St. Joseph's Women's Hospital

- Increased physician recognition campaigns
- Physician and APP of the quarter recognized
- Physician involvement in building design
- Creation of robotics committee
- Expansion of breast reconstruction program and addition of breast navigators
- Upgraded workspace in physician's lounges
- Acquisition of Aveta for the OR



### St. Joseph's Hospital-North

- Blood bank testing on-site as of June 2025
- Restarted physician lectures
- Established a local peer review committee
- Started local medical staff socials

### St. Joseph's Hospital-South

- Adding a new on-site gym
- Added additional da Vinci® Xi robot
- Addition of multiple new service lines including EUS, MAKO and EP
- Opened new PACU
- Added Maternal Fetal Medicine services
- Added APPs to peer review committee
- Added new observation unit

### South Florida Baptist Hospital

- Additional bedside nurse training for procedures
- Added 24/7 OB hospitalists as we expand women's health services
- Began construction of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)

### Winter Haven Hospital and Winter Haven Women's Hospital

- \$21 million invested in two dual-plane interventional radiology systems
- \$250,000 upgrade and expansion of the physician's lounge
- Opened PCU unit and converted Swann 6 to overflow unit
- Significant reduction in emergency department wait times and LWOTs
- Increased physician recognition campaigns
- Joint Commission Maternal Level 2 Care verification obtained at Winter Haven Women's Hospital





# A New Approach to Care Delivery

BayCare is a nationally recognized health care system that delivers clinical excellence with compassionate care. Our commitment to continually elevate and expand our clinical services ensures that our patients experience care that’s both compassionate and efficient.

In 2024, BayCare implemented a transformative, systemwide approach to organizing and delivering care by forming clinical institutes. The new structure serves two overarching goals:

- To expand the breadth and depth of BayCare’s clinical offerings across West Central Florida
- To streamline the patient journey, making it easy to access and navigate

Under the Clinical Institutes, Comprehensive Care Centers (CCCs) are being developed to address the specific medical needs of patients, based on their conditions or diagnoses. To be designated as a CCC, medical specialties at BayCare hospitals must first meet rigorous standards set by the health care system for clinical quality, patient volume, physician expertise, facility infrastructure, technological capabilities and community need. Meeting these standards may involve acquiring the latest medical technology or expanding the clinical teams to ensure the highest level of care. CCCs are designed to offer streamlined access to BayCare’s most advanced services, supported by specially trained navigators who help guide and support patients throughout their care journey.

BayCare’s first CCC, the Comprehensive Total Joint and Revision Center, launched in October 2024. Several other CCCs followed in late 2024 and early 2025, with more expected as hospitals achieve the required standards. Our exciting clinical institute journey has just begun. The following pages provide more details about the six institutes, their current offerings and plans for future growth.

*“Our Clinical Institutes encompass all the services BayCare provides to meet the needs of a specific patient population, be it Heart and Vascular, Women’s or Pediatrics. We’ve built a system approach to help meet the needs of these patients and make it easier for them to navigate through our system. The goal is to ease the concerns of the patient when they receive a complex disease diagnosis.”*

**– Mahesh Amin, MD**

## BayCare Behavioral Health Institute



**Harold Levine, MD**  
Director/Chief Medical Officer, Behavioral Health



**Gail Ryder**  
VP/Behavioral Health Services

## BayCare Cancer Institute

## BayCare Heart and Vascular Institute

## BayCareKIDS

## BayCare Neuroscience Institute

## BayCare Orthopedic Institute

## BayCare Women’s Institute



**Mahesh Amin, MD**  
VP/CMO Hospital Service Lines



**Kristen Vogl**  
VP/Clinical Institutes



# BayCare Behavioral Health Institute

## Vision

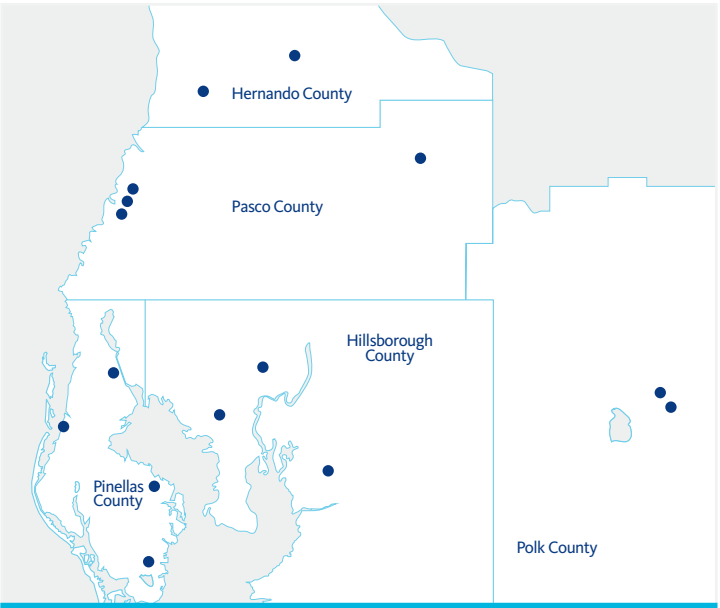
We will be the community's provider of choice, recognized for clinical excellence, innovation and access to a continuum of recovery-focused behavioral health services.

## Building the Foundation for Good Health

As the leading provider of behavioral health services in West Central Florida, the BayCare Behavioral Health Institute helps more than 70,000 adults and children every year who struggle with mental health and/or addiction issues. We understand that excellent physical health is built on a foundation of good mental health. The Behavioral Health Institute team works with community partners, health care professionals and patients to provide a comprehensive range of innovative and evidence-based treatment, and recovery and support services. These services are available in inpatient, outpatient and online/telehealth settings, meeting the needs of individuals and families in Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas and Polk counties.

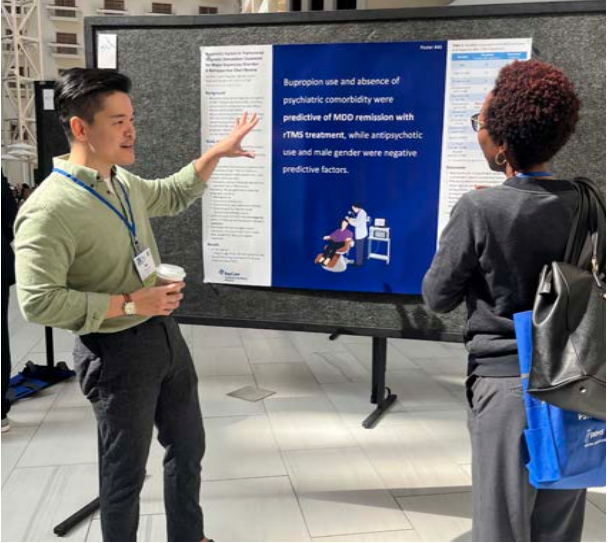
## 2024 Highlights Emphasizing Residencies and Fellowships

BayCare's first residency program began with the launch of the BayCare Behavioral Health Institute's Psychiatry Residency program in July 2022. Since then, the program has seen significant growth, expanding from 13 to 19 residents in 2024, and is projected to reach a full complement of 24 residents in 2025. The program is highly competitive, attracting over 800 applications for seven available spots in 2024. Following an extensive interview process with 140 candidates, the program matched with our top candidates who will begin in July 2025. A key component of the residency program is the strong mentorship provided by the faculty, who guide residents in required research projects. Residents have achieved notable success at state and national conferences, with one resident earning an award for best original research poster from the Florida Psychiatric Society for original research on transcranial magnetic stimulation treatment. Completion of the residency makes doctors board-eligible for certification, a requirement for credentialing at facilities.



More than 15 outpatient locations support individuals and families across five counties in West Central Florida.

In 2024, BayCare Behavioral Health received approval for its Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship Program. Three psychiatric fellows will be accepted into this two-year program each year. Residents participating in BayCare's Psychiatric Residency can transfer into this program during the fourth year of their residency to specialize in child and adolescent psychiatry. By the end of this dual-track option, fellows will have the ability to double-board in both psychiatry and child and adolescent psychiatry upon the successful completion of their board exams. Two current residents will be transferring into the fellowship during the next year, keeping them within our system during their studies. Both our Psychiatric Residency and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship programs demonstrate our dedication to developing the next generation of behavioral health specialists who will continue to provide high-quality mental health support for our communities well into the future.



## BayCare Launches the First Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center in Florida

At the beginning of 2024, the BayCare Behavioral Health Institute was awarded a three-year, \$3.6 million grant by the Pasco County Commission, and immediately set forth to develop the first Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center in Florida. Following extensive renovations to an existing building in New Port Richey, the facility opened its doors in February 2025. It offers a safe and timely alternative to emergency departments for adults in Pasco County who are experiencing urgent mental health or substance misuse crises. The center provides walk-in services such as screening, clinical evaluation, short-term intervention and referrals for ongoing care. This initiative aims to improve access to immediate behavioral health services and reduce the need for hospitalization.

## Innovations in Depression and Addiction Services

BayCare Behavioral Health continues to advance its comprehensive care for mental health and substance use disorders in 2024, offering innovative and evidence-based treatments. For individuals struggling with depression, BayCare provides transcranial magnetic stimulation, a noninvasive, FDA-cleared therapy that has demonstrated significant relief for over 60 percent of patients who haven't found success with traditional antidepressants. Additionally, esketamine, a nasal spray administered under close medical supervision, is available for those with treatment-resistant depression and major depressive disorder accompanied by suicidal thoughts. Together, these treatments can help give patients renewed hope for improved mental well-being.

Addressing the challenges of substance use disorders, BayCare offers medication-assisted treatment (MAT), using medications such as buprenorphine and naltrexone. This approach effectively manages withdrawal symptoms and diminishes cravings for opioids and alcohol, integrating medication with counseling and behavioral therapies for a holistic path to recovery. BayCare's MAT is available at five locations across West Central Florida.

## BayCare Behavioral Health Institute by the Numbers

**1,500+**  
BayCare Behavioral Health team members

**80+** Physicians dedicated to behavioral health services

**15+** Outpatient service locations

**11** Inpatient/Residential locations

**500,000+** Patient visits (2024)

**70,000+** Individuals served (2024)

*Accreditations*  
The programs administered by the BayCare Behavioral Health Institute comply with all Department of Children and Families, local, state and federal requirements. We're accredited by The Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), demonstrating our commitment to quality and patient-focused services. For patients and their families, CARF accreditation assures that BayCare's services are focused on their unique needs and preferences, ensuring a high level of care and service.







# BayCare Heart and Vascular Institute

## Vision

The BayCare Heart and Vascular Institute is the leading provider of adult and pediatric heart care in West Central Florida. Our institute gives patients the highest quality care, from preventive services to complex surgeries, using state-of-the-art technology and cutting-edge treatments for a variety of heart and vascular conditions.

## 2024 Highlights

Over the last decade, BayCare's Heart and Vascular Institute has developed a research program centered around opportunities for the community to access novel therapies through early-phase clinical trial participation. These include cell therapy, gene therapy and cutting-edge devices. Notable trial participation includes:

- **Renal denervation:** Being studied as a new treatment for patients who have resistant hypertension, this minimally invasive procedure uses catheter technology to apply thermal energy to the renal arteries, disrupting the overactive nerves. By participating in this trial, we offer patients another method of controlling hypertension.
- **TRAC AF:** As a leading cardiac surgery provider, our Heart and Vascular Institute serves as the primary enroller in the TRAC AF database, a comprehensive national registry that enables BayCare to monitor and conduct research on patients who undergo innovative surgical treatments for atrial fibrillation (AFib).
- **Left Atrial Appendage Exclusion for Prophylactic Stroke Reduction (LeAAPS):** Our cardiovascular surgical programs, along with 128 other international sites, are participating in a global study to evaluate whether surgically closing the left atrial appendage (LAA) proactively reduces the incidence of stroke. BayCare is one of the top two enrollers globally, with more than 470 patients currently being followed as part of our trial participation.

## Key Service Offerings

As the largest not-for-profit health care system in West Central Florida, BayCare's Heart and Vascular Institute provides comprehensive, high-quality care delivered with compassion. From our three flagship cardiovascular institutions to our clinically integrated network of 13 hospitals, labs and outpatient imaging facilities, physicians and their patients have access to expert care across the region. Our Heart and Vascular Institute provides comprehensive care including world-class cardiac and vascular surgery, innovative structural heart and valve care, heart rhythm management, interventional care such as percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), general and advanced heart failure care, specialized care for pediatric and adult congenital heart diseases and cardiac rehabilitation. For more information about our services and locations, go to [BayCareHeart.org](https://www.baycareheart.org).

## Our Key Programs

### Cardiovascular Surgery

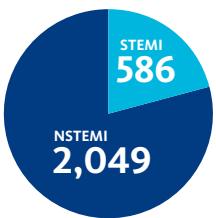
As one of the most scrutinized and data-driven specialties, with data collection on nearly every aspect of patient care, BayCare's three cardiovascular surgery programs hold the highest quality rating of three stars from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS). Their mission is to enhance the ability to provide the highest quality patient care. Our programs use extensive information from the STS database to implement meaningful changes in the treatment of patients throughout West Central Florida.

## Percutaneous Coronary Intervention

Coronary artery disease continues to be one of the main causes of mortality. Our cardiac specialists are dedicated to ensuring all patients receive optimal medical and interventional therapy. If patients need interventions, our teams perform PCI procedures including angioplasty, stenting, lithotripsy, atherectomy and chronic total occlusion revascularization.

In addition, we're one of the few health care systems in the state to offer coronary brachytherapy, a treatment for stents that have developed scar tissue. Nine of our hospitals perform PCI, all are STEMI-receiving facilities and our heart attack care outperforms national benchmarks.

2024 Myocardial Infarction Volume



## Heart Failure

Heart failure is the fastest growing form of cardiovascular disease. BayCare offers comprehensive care for patients with all types, causes and severity of heart failure, whether they're admitted to one of our hospitals, at home or at a skilled nursing facility. For patients who have advanced heart failure and experience persistent severe symptoms despite maximum medical treatment, BayCare's Advanced Heart Failure Program provides care that includes detailed medical management, mechanical support such as ventricular assist devices and transplantation evaluation. For mechanical support patients, we implant Heartmate III.

## Vascular

Within the Heart and Vascular Institute, our multidisciplinary approach brings together vascular surgeons, interventional cardiologists and interventional radiologists in inpatient and outpatient settings. These specialists perform a variety of procedures including the treatment of peripheral vascular disease by thrombectomy, angioplasty, stenting, lithotripsy and/or catheter-directed thrombolysis to improve quality of life, relieve pain and, in advanced cases, limb salvage.



## Structural Heart and Valve

BayCare's three high-quality structural heart and valve programs have dedicated, multidisciplinary teams that specialize in the medical and surgical care of these conditions. All programs hold the Transcatheter Valve Certification from the American College of Cardiology. Hospitals that achieve this certification use the best practices.

## Arrhythmia and Rhythm Management

With more than 25 years of pioneering work, our arrhythmia specialists have helped shape the field of heart rhythm disorder treatment. Through active participation in clinical research, innovation in catheter and procedural design and collaboration with experts across cardiac care, we deliver advanced, safe and effective treatments. We're proud regional leaders and early adopters of cutting-edge EP technologies such as pulse field ablation, heart failure devices such as cardiac contractility modulation therapy and fluoro-less ablation. Our network includes one of the region's only programs offering arrhythmia care for both adults and children.

## BayCare Heart and Vascular Institute by the Numbers

331,469

Visits



27,630

Inpatient and outpatient cases



4,199

Rhythm cases

9,709

Diagnostic cardiac catheterizations



300+

Specialists

43,818

Noninvasive cases



421

Pediatric cases



8

Electrophysiology (EP) labs

27

Catheterization labs



3

Three-star STS rating

717

Structural heart cases



6

Hybrid operating suites

4,808

Cardiac interventions

1,343

Open-heart cases



178

Mechanical and circulatory cases



10

Cardiovascular operating suites





# BayCare Neuroscience Institute

## Vision

The BayCare Neuroscience Institute is a regional leader in the delivery of the highest quality care for patients who have common and complex diseases of the brain, nervous system and spine. Adopting the latest treatment advances, research and technology, the institute's team implements a patient-centric approach by providing expertise through a dynamic, multitiered method of care. The BayCare Neuroscience Institute treats patients with the goal of improving quality of life and delivering an outstanding patient experience for the communities we serve.

## Key Service Offerings

### Stroke Care

Located throughout West Central Florida, BayCare hosts 13 Det Norske Veritas (DNV) Certified Stroke Centers including two Comprehensive Stroke Centers, one Primary Stroke Center Plus, nine Primary Stroke Centers and one Acute Stroke-Ready Center. Our highly skilled clinical teams work together in a tightly integrated model combining neurologists, neurosurgeons and neuro-interventional radiologists to deliver the highest level of stroke care, including medical and the most advanced endovascular treatments before and after a stroke. This includes rapid recognition and response, quick and cutting-edge interventions and follow-up treatment to optimize recovery to help prevent future recurrences including a recent implantation of a newly approved device, Vivistim®, designed to aid in the recovery and rehabilitation following a stroke.

### Spine Care

With services provided by numerous neurosurgeons and orthopedic spine surgeons, combined with a partnership with pain management, the BayCare Neuroscience Institute offers complex and minimally invasive cutting-edge spine treatments to give patients the best chance at pain relief of neurological symptoms with the most advanced and least invasive surgical options possible. Using advanced technology, including Medtronic's O-Arm™ intraoperative 2-D/3-D imaging paired with StealthStation™ Navigation intraoperative navigation, allows for precise visualization and navigated guidance of surgical instruments and procedures for minimally invasive approaches and best outcomes.

### Brain Tumor Care

Using the multifocal resource model throughout our health system, BayCare offers evaluation and local referral for treatment to experts throughout West Central Florida, including the capability of advanced imaging and multidisciplinary, coordinated care between neurosurgeons, oncologists and radiation-oncologists to offer the best personalized treatment and support. The BayCare Neuroscience Institute offers advanced technology including the latest intraoperative microscopes coupled with tumor fluorescence to differentiate tumors from surrounding normal tissue, advanced neurocritical care units to care for patients postoperatively and the latest oncological treatments and advanced radiation modalities to comprehensively care for patients, coupled with support services to help along the treatment pathway.

### Memory Care

BayCare offers the region's largest neuropsychology and neurocognitive services guided by the BayCare Neuroscience Clinical Institute's Neurocognitive Committee to offer the trifecta of neurology and neuropsychology tandem evaluation coupled with a unique Memory Disorders Center that offers support services to patients, their families and loved ones who have neurocognitive conditions. BayCare offers advanced and cutting-edge treatments, including recently approved medications such as Leqembi™ for slowing the progression of early Alzheimer's disease.



## 2024 Highlights

### Innovation in Care

In 2024, the BayCare Neuroscience Institute continued to deliver advanced neurological care, making significant strides in medical innovation, including:

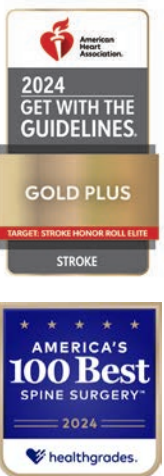
- The full implementation of RapidAI®, an advanced AI imaging interpretation and notification platform, across the system enabled the neurovascular clinical teams to push the boundaries of care, reducing time to treatment and improving patient outcomes for ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke patients.
- Continuing at the forefront of minimally invasive brain and spine surgeries, utilizing robotic-assisted systems and state-of-the-art neuroimaging and navigation for precision treatments
- The emphasis on patient-centered care was supported by a multidisciplinary team that created comprehensive treatment plans, including postoperative care for conditions such as ischemic stroke or spine pathologies. The team continues to develop new treatment pathways featuring best practices and the best patient-centric medical care to optimize quality, outcomes and patient satisfaction.

### Clinical Research

The BayCare Neuroscience Institute expanded its active involvement in clinical trials, and partnerships with research institutions have also positioned the institute as a leader in developing innovative therapies for neurodegenerative disorders, including Alzheimer's disease. In 2024, BayCare continued active membership in the prestigious StrokeNet, which affords participation in cutting-edge stroke research. The SleepSMART trial is one such study, and if the SleepSMART hypotheses are confirmed, a new strategy to prevent stroke recurrence and improve stroke recovery will be available.

## Awards and Recognitions

The BayCare Neuroscience Institute was nationally recognized in 2024, earning multiple Healthgrades awards including the Stroke Care Excellence Award and Five-Star Treatment of Stroke and Spinal Fusion Surgery, and ranking among America's 100 Best Spine Surgery Centers. Nine of BayCare's stroke programs also received various American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Quality Achievement Awards.



## Neuroscience Outcomes Data

Timely administration of thrombolytic therapy can maximize benefits and improve outcomes for ischemic stroke patients. BayCare's performance exceeds national standards.



### 2024 BayCare Door-to-Needle Time

**60 minutes**  
United States  
National Average

**36 minutes**  
BayCare Stroke  
Centers



# BayCare Orthopedic Institute

## Vision

Be the leader in orthopedic surgery and joint replacements within five counties. The institute provides superior care for patients over the orthopedic continuum, whether for fracture care or an elective total joint replacement.

## The Leading Provider of Orthopedic Care in West Central Florida

The BayCare Orthopedic Institute is West Central Florida’s leader in orthopedic services, performing more than 18,000 orthopedic surgeries and joint replacements every year. Using a multidisciplinary team approach, our surgeons, rehabilitation specialists and care coordinators provide comprehensive care to every patient we treat so they can return to the activities they enjoy with less pain. We address the full spectrum of orthopedic needs, from joint replacements and revisions to trauma and fracture care, sports injuries and conditions affecting the foot, ankle, hand and upper extremities. We also offer specialized expertise in pediatric orthopedics, rehabilitation and bone health. With orthopedic services available at 12 BayCare hospitals located throughout West Central Florida, patients are never far from innovative, compassionate care.

## 2024 Highlights

### Comprehensive Total Joint and Revision Centers Open

In a significant move, the BayCare Orthopedic Institute launched the first comprehensive care centers for BayCare in 2024. This exciting initiative began with the opening of the Comprehensive Total Joint and Revision Center at Mease Dunedin Hospital in September, followed by the Comprehensive Total Joint Center at Morton Plant Hospital in December. To receive a designation as a Comprehensive Total Joint or Comprehensive Revision Center, each location must be evaluated and continuously monitored to ensure it meets volume, physician expertise, technology, operational workflow and quality measures that are designed to exceed national standards. This guarantees that our comprehensive care centers provide a standardized, optimal, patient-focused experience that stands out from other options that patients have in West Central Florida. Looking ahead, more BayCare hospitals are on track to meet these high standards and achieve comprehensive care center designations during 2025.



## Operation Walk

BayCare’s Orthopedic Institute, in collaboration with Operation Walk and three local free clinics, demonstrated its commitment to community well-being by providing complimentary joint replacement surgeries to seven uninsured individuals in the Clearwater area. At Morton Plant Hospital, six orthopedic surgeons, three anesthesiologists and many clinical team members generously donated their expertise, while BayCare ensured comprehensive care by covering all associated costs that included presurgical evaluations, the surgical procedures, hospital stays and necessary rehabilitation services. This initiative shows BayCare’s dedication to providing essential health care access to those in the community who need it the most.

## Orthopedic Weight Loss Program Is Launched

Following a successful pilot program, BayCare formally launched an innovative Orthopedic Weight Loss Program in 2024. This helps joint replacement patients who need to lose weight in order to enhance their postsurgical outcomes, especially if excess weight poses a barrier to surgery. Led by certified health coaches, the program provides personalized action plans and weekly virtual support sessions, guiding patients toward their health goals for a better recovery. In 2024, patients completing the program had an average weight loss of 18 pounds and 3.5 points off their BMI.

## Clinical Pathways: Driving Positive Outcomes

The BayCare Orthopedic Institute has developed four clinical pathways to support our patients, physicians and advanced practice providers to help them promote consistent, high-quality care while optimizing resources and patient satisfaction. Our clinical pathways help coordinate care more efficiently, reduce variation and create a patient care journey, all supported by evidence-based practices. The results of these pathways speak for themselves as we continue to see improvements in patient outcomes.

## Awards and Recognitions

BayCare’s Orthopedic Institute earned national recognition from Becker’s Hospital Review, a leading authority in the medical field, by being named among the top 100 health systems for orthopedic programs. This prestigious listing highlights BayCare’s commitment to providing comprehensive and empathic care for patients who have a wide range of musculoskeletal issues and injuries.

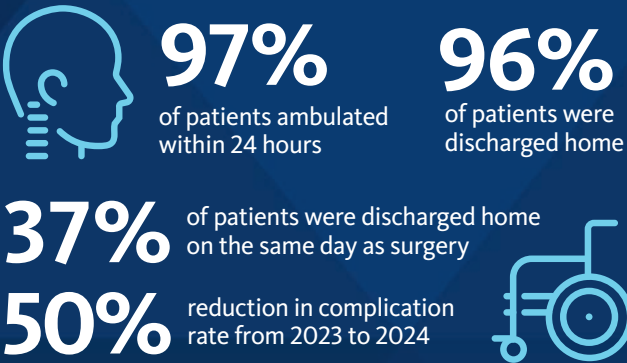


## BayCare Orthopedic Institute by the Numbers

Leader in orthopedic surgery:

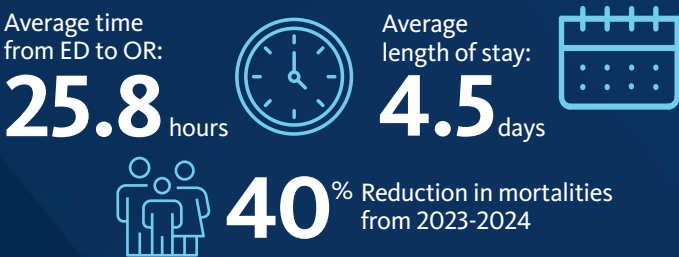


Total joint pathway results:



50% reduction in complication rate from 2023 to 2024

Hip fracture pathway results:





# BayCare Kids

## Vision

BayCare Kids will be the leading pediatric health care network and the first choice for families, delivering high-quality, patient- and family-centered care through unmatched access and a seamlessly integrated continuum of services. From routine checkups to advanced specialty and emergency care, BayCare Kids is committed to being the trusted partner in every child's health journey.

## BayCare Kids Network

BayCare Kids cares for children at every stage of their life, from birth to adulthood, from routine checkups to critical care. Services include neonatology, pediatrics, adolescent medicine, critical care, pediatric surgery and pediatric specialty care. St. Joseph's Children's Hospital (SJCH) serves as a flagship, with pediatric specialists representing 25 medical and surgical disciplines. We have more than 75 primary and pediatric care offices throughout West Central Florida and three dedicated pediatric emergency centers. The Patel Children's Heart Institute at SJCH is home to the largest congenital heart disease program in West Central Florida. In addition, BayCare Kids also provides consultations and education to numerous schools, media outlets and organizations throughout West Central Florida.

## 2024 Highlights

### Leading the Way in Pediatric Cardiology Advances

The Patel Children's Heart Institute at SJCH is the first in the southeastern United States and one of only a handful of programs in the world to implant a new stent specifically created to enlarge narrowed blood vessels in the hearts of newborns and babies. Also, we're the first in Tampa Bay to implant a leadless pacemaker in a pediatric heart patient.

### 20th Anniversary of the Mobile Medical Clinic

The Mobile Medical Clinic, a 40-foot health care clinic on wheels, reaches underprivileged children and families in Hillsborough County to provide wellness exams, immunizations, health screenings and acute care services.



### New Facility Planned for St. Joseph's Children's Hospital

The Pagidipati family made a transformational gift of \$50 million in 2024 to the St. Joseph's Children's Hospital Foundation to support the new, specially designed facility for SJCH to be built by 2030. This state-of-the-art hospital will expand access to high-quality pediatric care in West Central Florida, advance medical education and research and serve as a destination for high-acuity pediatric services. It'll also increase access to specialty care through expanded BayCare Kids clinics and be thoughtfully designed to meet the unique needs of children and their families.

### Pediatric Imaging/Sedation Reduction

A state-of-the-art portable pediatric MRI scanner is the newest addition to the pediatric intensive care unit at SJCH. The Swoop Portable MR imaging system by HyperFine is the first FDA-cleared portable point-of-care neuroimaging for critically ill pediatric patients at the bedside. This technology eliminates the risk of moving medically complex patients, improves critical care workflow and enables rapid diagnosis and treatment. It lets patients stay in their hospital room with their support system, including family and the care team, promoting a calm and relaxed setting and reducing the need for sedation. SJCH is the first hospital on Florida's west coast to receive the innovative, patient-centered system and only the fourth location in the entire state.

### Expanding the Pediatric Cardiology Service Network

In December 2024, Pediatric Cardiology Associates and Tampa Bay Adult Congenital Heart Center physicians joined BayCare Medical Group, with offices in Brandon, Lakeland, Safety Harbor, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, four locations in Tampa and Wesley Chapel. The transition involves more than a dozen physicians and advanced practice providers. This strategic expansion enhances BayCare's ability to deliver comprehensive, specialized heart care for children across the region.

## Research News

- Expansion of the children's oncology group (COG) protocols to patients age 18 and older
- Dr. Erin Cockrell has partnered with American Thrombosis and Hemostasis Network to launch a rare bleeding disorder trial at St. Joseph's Hospital and SJCH. Under Dr. Cockrell's leadership as principal investigator, this longitudinal, observational cohort study will help providers determine the safety, effectiveness and practice of therapies used in the treatment of participants who have congenital or acquired non-neoplastic blood disorders and connective tissue disorders with bleeding tendency. Dr. Cockrell currently serves as the principal investigator of more than 17 pediatric hematology research projects at SJCH.
- Drs. Larkin, Eslin, Cockrell, Obzut, Schaefer and Lone have partnered with St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital to launch a multinational pediatric neuro-oncology trial at SJCH. Dr. Trisha Larkin, pediatric neuro-oncologist, leads the partnership as principal investigator in a phase 2 clinical trial for the treatment of children under age 5 who have newly diagnosed medulloblastoma. The pediatric oncology program at SJCH currently participates in more than 70 clinical research projects led by Dr. Don Eslin. Dr. Larkin serves as the principal investigator in four pediatric neuro-oncology clinical research projects.

### Pediatric Appendicitis

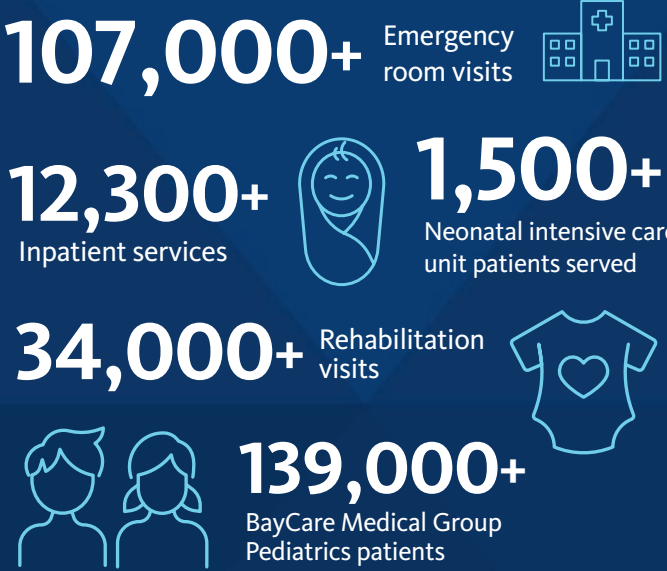
In 2024, the pediatric appendicitis quality improvement project completed revision of the pediatric appendicitis algorithm. Reducing CT Usage in Pediatric Appendicitis and Improving Ultrasound Rates in Pediatric Appendicitis projects were expanded to Mease Countryside Hospital. SJCH achieved an overall 15 percent reduction in CT usage over the last three years and a 25 percent reduction in 2023, exceeding the BayCare goal of less than 50 percent usage for the last two consecutive years.

### Florida Hospital Association's Caregiver of the Year Award

BayCare is proud to celebrate Christina Canody, MD, FAAP, for being named the Florida Hospital Association's *Caregiver of the Year*. A pediatrician at SJCH and medical director of pediatrics for BayCare, she was recognized for her exceptional leadership and comprehensive approach to pediatric care, addressing the physical and mental health care needs of her young patients. From launching the On Our Sleeves movement across BayCare and West Central Florida to integrating mental health screenings into every pediatric visit, Dr. Canody has championed a holistic, compassionate approach that's redefining how children receive care and support.

## BayCare Kids Institute by the Numbers

*BayCare Kids is the leader in pediatric health care, serving more children and trusted by more parents than any other health care system in West Central Florida.*





# BayCare Women's Institute

## Vision

To be the transformative force that revolutionizes women's health care delivery across our health system, creating a seamlessly integrated, evidence-driven ecosystem where every woman receives extraordinary, personalized care at every touchpoint—from prevention through complex care—while fostering innovation, eliminating disparities and setting the national standard for comprehensive women's health services that optimize outcomes, enhance experiences and strengthen communities.

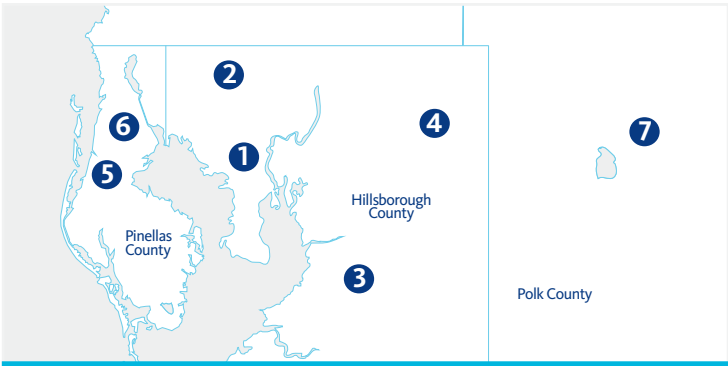
## Elevating Women's Health in West Central Florida

BayCare is proud to offer a full spectrum of women's health services, delivered with expertise, compassion and continuity of care for every stage of life. As the only health system in the region with two dedicated women's hospitals—**St. Joseph's Women's Hospital** and **Winter Haven Women's Hospital**—we provide unparalleled access to specialized care. Our services include obstetrics and gynecology, maternity and NICU care, breast health and reconstruction, pelvic and urogynecology care, and advanced gynecologic surgery. Our team also provides wellness and preventive care, genetic counseling and specialized support through menopause and beyond. Our integrated network combines multidisciplinary teams with personalized treatment plans, ensuring each patient receives exceptional care. We also prioritize community outreach and education to empower women and families across the region.

## 2024 Highlights

### Patient Safety Initiative

In 2024, the institute prioritized patient safety by enhancing postpartum care coordination and implementing systemwide process improvements. Efforts included collaborative education across departments, updated postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) education aligned with CMQCC guidelines and standardized PPH carts to support workflow and accessibility. The institute also worked with risk management to classify and track medical errors, ensuring continuous evaluation and improved outcomes for postpartum patients.



### BayCare Women's Institute: Maternity and NICU Locations

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. St. Joseph's Women's Hospital, Level IV NICU                   | 5. Morton Plant Hospital, Level II NICU         |
| 2. St. Joseph's Hospital-North, Level II NICU                     | 6. Mease Countryside Hospital, Level III NICU   |
| 3. St. Joseph's Hospital-South, Level II NICU                     | 7. Winter Haven Women's Hospital, Level II NICU |
| 4. South Florida Baptist Hospital, Level II NICU (coming in 2025) |   |

## Postpartum Hemorrhage and Hysterectomy Improvements

The institute implemented the CMQCC bundle for PPH and developed Severe Maternal Morbidity (SMM) metrics to guide improvement. Key efforts included:

- Standardized hemorrhage carts, debrief forms, drills and hysterectomy packs
- Expanded clinical education for nurses and physicians
- Investigated hysterectomy infections; no single root cause identified
- Implemented improvements to prevent hysterectomy infections:
  - Pre-op medication orders
  - Closing trays
  - ERAS protocols (added glucose screening)
  - Sterile dressings and discharge planning
  - Surgical technique audit process

## Postpartum Access and Continuity of Care

The institute implemented the **Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative** initiative to improve postpartum care. With nearly 40 percent of Florida mothers missing recommended follow-up visits—and a significant risk of mortality within 60 days postpartum—this initiative focuses on coordinated care after discharge. BayCare's bedside nurses, care coordinators and physicians collaborated to ensure a seamless care transition, helping new mothers access timely support and services.



## Improving Cesarean Section Rates (NTSV PC-02)

BayCare continued its efforts in 2024 to reduce low-risk primary cesarean section (NTSV PC-02) rates by developing metrics to identify root causes and implementing targeted strategies. Labor and delivery nurse education classes were launched with support from chief nursing officers, emphasizing patient experience, promoting vaginal delivery and improving NTSV outcomes. Additionally, the institute is closely monitoring the impact of the new Induction of Labor (IOL) Pathway on C-section rates.

The institute began developing its first pathway in labor induction as an evidence-based tool to guide consistent, high-quality care. Created through collaboration among physicians, nurses and performance improvement teams, the pathway is supported by a data dashboard for ongoing tracking and analysis. Once implemented, efforts will be made to obtain data from the pathway to better understand where opportunities are for safely lowering cesarean section (NTSV) rates systemwide.

## Top-Rated Maternal Care

BayCare hospitals continue to be recognized for excellence in maternal care.

### Joint Commission Maternal Levels of Care Verification:

- St. Joseph's Women's Hospital: Level IV (highest level)
- Mease Countryside Hospital, Morton Plant Hospital and Winter Haven Women's Hospital: Level II
- St. Joseph's Hospital-South and South Florida Baptist Hospital:
  - Recognized with the Excellence in MaternityCare Award
  - Honored for reducing unnecessary C-sections by the Florida Department of Health and AHCA





# Health on the Go >

## BayCare HealthChat® Podcasts

We created HealthChat, the official podcast series of BayCare, so that you can listen to extraordinary expertise in 20 minutes or less, no matter where you are. Featuring our health care professionals, each podcast provides the latest health and wellness information that's relevant to you and your family.

Our podcast library is constantly growing and offers podcasts about:

- Children's health
- Cold and flu
- Food and nutrition
- Healthy eating
- Pregnancy
- Sleep
- And more



**Listen and subscribe today.**

Podcasts are available on [BayCareHealthChat.org](https://www.BayCareHealthChat.org), or you can search for “**BayCare HealthChat**” on your favorite podcast platform including Spotify and Apple podcasts. For more information, scan this code.