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Robots Bring Innovation to Winter Haven's BayCare Campuses

The two new employees at Winter Haven Hospital and Winter Haven Women's Hospital are very friendly. No, they can't tell you their names, and no, they don't talk much, but they are all about helping their fellow team members.

These team members are actually relay robots, which means they can make deliveries between departments, saving team members the time they would normally take in running the items themselves. They reflect BayCare's ongoing commitment to innovation dedicated to providing extraordinary care to patients.

One robot will be based at Winter Haven Hospital while the other will be based at Winter Haven Women's Hospital.

The idea to bring the robots to the Winter Haven campuses started when **Kristen Smith**, the Polk Region chief nursing officer, learned of the robots at St. Anthony's Hospital in St. Petersburg.

"I heard from those colleagues about how much the team appreciated them," she said. "I wanted to advocate for some of our teams that do not have access to the pneumatic tube system, so they can spend more time in their departments and less time traveling back and forth."

At WHWH, one robot will run lab work to the urgent care department and at the main hospital, the other robot will do the same for the pharmacy, lab and infusion center.

To bring the robots to Winter Haven, the hospital worked with the company Relay Robotics. Their team mapped out the routes that the robots would take through the hospitals and ensured that elevator sensors would enable them to board them. The robots are also equipped with cameras so they can see their surroundings and are programmed to avoid contact with those nearby.

Team members authorized to use them need only to use their badges to gain access to the robot's cargo area, where specimens can be safely placed. They've been training with the robots to get more comfortable with them over the last couple of weeks.

"The robot is easy to use, and the most exciting part is how it will positively impact patient care," said **Karin Thatcher**, a member of the pharmacy team. "It will save time for team members who would be running between departments, but also reduce wait times for our infusion center patients. It's a win-win."

The Winter Haven Hospital Foundation helped bring the robots on campus, by way of generous donations from various donors.

"It's wonderful to see this innovation available to our community," Foundation president **Wayne Olson** said. "We hope this is just the beginning for the program."

And although all team members are required to display their badges at work, these two have a temporary pass. As part of the robot rollout, the Foundation held a naming contest, and their names were unveiled on May 6, their first day on the job. The Winter Haven Hospital robot is named Miles and the women's hospital robot is named Stork.


In addition to the relay robots, BayCare is moving forward to explore how innovation can help improve patient care. This month, [the system announced a strategic partnership with Rovex](#), a Florida-based robotics company, to pilot how robotics could support hospital operations and patient transport workflows at Morton Plant Hospital.

About Winter Haven Hospital

Founded in 1926, Winter Haven Hospital has an outstanding reputation for superior, patient-centered care. The 447-bed hospital concentrates in the treatment of heart disease, cancer, stroke, and behavioral health. The hospital also provides emergency care, outpatient diabetes education, endoscopy services, neurological, orthopedic and in-patient rehabilitation, outpatient surgery and imaging services. Part of BayCare Health System, the hospital is located at 200 Avenue F Northeast in Winter Haven, Florida. For more information: BayCare.org/WHH

About Winter Haven Women's Hospital

Built in 1987, Winter Haven Women's Hospital (formerly the Regency Center for Women and Infants) is a 61-bed facility accredited by the Joint Commission. Located at 101 Ave. O S.E. in Winter Haven, Florida, the hospital is dedicated to the unique needs of women and newborns by providing on-site obstetric services 24 hours a day/7 days a



week, a level II neonatal intensive care unit, education classes, an outpatient surgery center and a Breast and Imaging Center.

Winter Haven Hospital and Winter Haven Women's Hospital joined BayCare Health System in 2013. For more information, call (863) 294-7010 or visit

WinterHavenWomensHospital.org

About BayCare

BayCare is a leading not-for-profit health care system that connects individuals and families to a wide range of services at 16 hospitals and hundreds of other convenient locations throughout the Tampa Bay and central Florida regions. The system is West Central Florida's largest provider of behavioral health and pediatric services and its provider group, BayCare Medical Group, is one of the largest in the region.

BayCare's diverse network of ambulatory services includes laboratories, imaging, surgical centers, BayCare Urgent Care locations, wellness centers and one of Florida's largest home care agencies, BayCare HomeCare. Its Medicare Advantage insurance, BayCarePlus, is among the region's few 5-star-rated plans and the system is ranked in the top 20 percent by Fortune/Merative. BayCare's mission is to improve the health of all it serves through community-owned, health care services that set the standard for high-quality, compassionate care. For more information visit BayCare.org.

