



ADIRONDACK HEALTH

Better Health, Better Lives

A Legacy of Healing

More than 100 Years of Caring for Our Community





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Adirondack Health

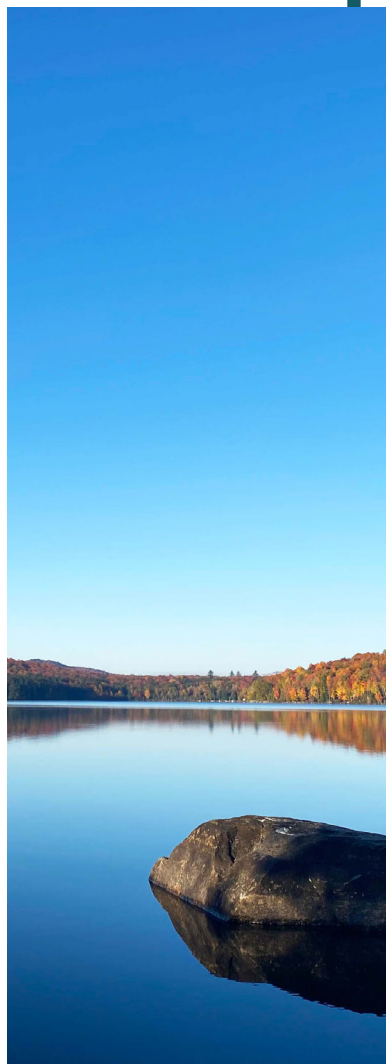
On the following pages are the varied histories of the organizations that came together in 2011 to create Adirondack Health.

There are a number of common threads that weave their way through the stories of these pioneering health organizations. First there is a recognition of a health need in the community. People coalesce around the need and choose a forward-thinking solution. The community gives generously, donating land, "fittings" for the building and funds to create a place of healing. They hire good administrators that enjoy working in a rural community and bringing leading-edge health care to community members.

This history recounts brief synopses of the organizations and facilities. There are only a few pioneers and benefactors mentioned because there are just too many people to list them all. These organizations were founded by and continue to thrive thanks to the countless nurses, physicians, technicians, staff, administrators and donors who have contributed to creating Excellent Health Care ... Close to Home.

The current members of Adirondack Health are:

- Adirondack Medical Center in Saranac Lake
- The Lake Placid Medical Fitness Center
- Community Health Centers in Keene, Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, St. Regis Falls and Tupper Lake



Mission

Excellent Health Care ... Close to Home

Vision

Adirondack Health is at the forefront of compassionate, quality health services continuing our community's legacy of healing.

Guiding Principles

Compassionate, Accountable, Respectful, Exceptional, Service

General Hospital of Saranac Lake



In 1876, **Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau** arrived in Saranac Lake. He had been diagnosed with tuberculosis and his physicians and friends urged a change of climate to improve his health. His health improved markedly and he decided to stay. In 1884, he founded the Adirondack Cottage Sanitarium, and eventually Saranac Lake became the Western Hemisphere's foremost center for the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis.

The sanitarium developed a school for nursing, and later the Trudeau School of Tuberculosis, which offered six-week summer courses for physicians who wished to learn the latest treatment methods for the disease.

In 1911, Mr. Redfield Proctor and Miss Emily Dutton Proctor decided to erect a hospital in Saranac Lake as a memorial to the late Mrs. Jane Hopkins Fairchild and Dr. Norman McLeod Carter. The first organizational meeting of physicians and businessmen was held on August 24. The minutes reflect, "The object of this corporation is the establishment, support and management of an institution for the purpose of affording medical and surgical aid to sick or disabled persons of every creed, nationality and color, and shall be non-sectarian."

The General Hospital of Saranac Lake, built at the top of Winona Avenue, opened on March 11, 1913. The first Annual Report tells us, "The hospital accommodates twelve patients and is intended to supply the great need in this region for general medical and surgical care, including maternity cases. Not only has the building been donated to us, but the furnishings have been nearly all provided by individuals, leaving sufficient funds for maintenance during the first six months of its operation."



In the first six months through September 30, the hospital admitted 90 patients with a daily average of seven patients. In the month of August, all of the beds were occupied for two weeks. The hospital was quickly fulfilling the need in the community.

The hospital expanded quickly, adding a four-person isolation cottage in 1914, and in 1924 the North Wing (also known as the Men's Wing) and Maternity Wing were added, giving the hospital capacity for 31 patients. In 1941, the Men's Wing was expanded and the Guggenheim Wing was added, which brought the hospital capacity to 51 patients.



By 1961, the General Hospital of Saranac Lake had outgrown the Winona Avenue facility. The decision was made to build a new hospital on a 25-acre site on Lake Colby donated by the Latour Fuel Company. The new hospital was completed and dedicated in 1967. The Winona Avenue building became the administration building for North Country Community College.

When it opened in 1967, the new hospital could accommodate 65 patients. Due to the generosity of Mr. Edmund Guggenheim, the building included a shell for a third floor that was completed in 1968, giving the hospital capacity for 100 patients. Twenty years later, in 1988, the General Hospital had its first major renovation including a new Emergency Room, an eight-bed Intensive Care Unit and a Business Office.



Adirondack Medical Center

On January 1, 1991 Saranac Lake General Hospital and Lake Placid Memorial Hospital merged to create Adirondack Medical Center. The hospitals merged to ensure that community members and visitors had the most robust health care system available. One organization was able to distribute services where they were needed throughout the Tri-Lakes area without duplicating efforts. Adirondack Medical Center continually invested in modernizing, growing, and adding its services. The organization opened additional primary care health centers, added two long term-care centers, and created regional specialty programs in Sports Medicine, Bariatrics, and Geriatric Psychiatry. In 1997, AMC created its first renal dialysis unit and in 1998 created a 12-bed Geriatric Psychiatric Center. Adirondack Medical Center continues to evaluate and offer new services, the most recent of which is a wound care and hyperbaric treatment center.

Mercy General Hospital

On September 18, 1918, Sister Mary Ita O'Dea and Sister Mary Dolores Riley, two Sisters of Mercy, arrived in Tupper Lake. They were invited to open a hospital to serve the Tupper Lake community. The owners of the newly established Oval Wood Dish Company wanted workers to be treated in town rather than be transported out of the area. The first hospital was a converted home that could accommodate about 15 patients.

An effort to erect a modern hospital was started in the summer of 1928. Mr. Marshall Sheppy pledged to give \$25,000 toward the \$100,000 cost if the community could raise the rest. A committee composed of Peter Propp, chairman, W. W. McCarthy, Floyd Hutchins and Sister Mary Victoria was able to quickly raise the balance.



Tupper Lake residents rallied behind the efforts to raise funds for the construction of the new Mercy General Hospital in 1964.

The new hospital opened on February 14, 1929. It was a two-story brick and steel structure and had a capacity of 23 beds and 10 bassinets. In 1932, the first addition was built and a convent for the Sisters was erected directly connected to the hospital.

In 1962, the Joint Commission advised the hospital that it could no longer be accredited unless it underwent a substantial redevelopment. A new hospital was estimated to cost \$750,000. Again the Tupper Lake Community responded. With a grant from the federal government, the community raised the balance of the funds and construction started in January 1964. The new Mercy General Hospital, a 36-bed facility, was dedicated on May 9, 1966, with hundreds of residents participating, despite a snowstorm.

Over the following decades, the need for medical services saw significant change in Tupper Lake. A decline in the demand for medical and surgical services and a growing waiting list for long-term care convinced the board to convert the entire facility to skilled nursing. Mercy General Hospital closed in 1982, underwent renovations, and Mercy Healthcare Center opened in 1983 with room for 54 residents. In 1991, a new wing was added, increasing the capacity to 80 residents.

On January 1, 2007, Adirondack Medical Center purchased the facility and renamed it AMC-Mercy. With a decline in the need for long-term care and an increase in the need for outpatient services, a major renovation was completed in 2009. The renovation reduced the capacity to 60 residents. However, a renal dialysis unit was added and outpatient Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine moved in. A new Medical Office Building across the street housed the expanded Tupper Lake Health Center and private physician offices. In 2011 it was renamed the Mercy Living Center.

In 2023, the facility transitioned to new ownership, marking the end of its time as part of Adirondack Health. While no longer under the health system's umbrella, its legacy remains of more than a century of caring for the people of Tupper Lake.

Uihlein Mercy Center

By the 1960s, the Sisters of Mercy had switched their focus from caring for tuberculosis patients to embracing the need for skilled long-term care. In 1963, a decision was reached to sell the Gabriels property to Paul Smith's College and to investigate an alternate site for a nursing home. Henry Uihlein generously donated land in Lake Placid for the new facility. With substantial support from many Lake Placid benefactors, including Mr. and Mrs. Uihlein, Mrs. W. Alton Jones, Kate Smith and the Reiss Family, Uihlein Mercy Center opened its doors in 1968.



Sister Kate Smith, second from left, joins other supporters at the grand opening of the Uihlein Mercy Center in Lake Placid.

The Uihlein Mercy Center represented “new thinking in the field of care for the aging and chronically ill,” according to Sister Mary Michele, the administrator. The building was designed with unique features to preserve residents’ dignity and privacy, and to promote small community living. Each room was built as a private room in octagonal clusters. There is a lounge and small dining area in the center of each cluster. Each octagonal unit is linked to a central core with a main dining room, chapel, physical therapy and other areas for common use. This design preserves privacy and creates a sense of community. In 1968, these were radical ideas. However, now many of these ideas are used in current nursing home design.



A view of the partially constructed Uihlein Mercy Center

The core also houses a convent for the Sisters of Mercy. They moved from Gabriels to live and work in Uihlein Mercy Center.

It had room for 94 residents. Due to demand for skilled nursing services, in 1985, an addition was completed that brought the capacity to 156 residents and the Kate Smith Auditorium was added.

On January 1, 2007, Adirondack Medical Center purchased the facility and renamed it AMC-Uihlein. In 2011, it was renamed the Uihlein Living Center, now under Adirondack Health.

In October 2016, the facility transitioned to new ownership under Elderwood, marking the start of a new chapter in its long history of care. While it is no longer part of Adirondack Health, the commitment to serving the community and honoring the vision of the Sisters of Mercy continues to guide the work done within its walls.

Placid Memorial Hospital

Early in 1947, Lake Placid community members signed a petition requesting the construction of a modern, voluntary hospital. The current hospital, a converted private home, could not accommodate increasing demands so doctors would take their patients out of town for treatment. The Placid Memorial Hospital fund was founded under the leadership of Mary Prime. The Shea family donated a parcel of land on Church Street for the hospital. On February 4, 1951, Placid Memorial Hospital opened its doors to the public with 50 beds. The very first baby was born in the hospital on February 10, 1951.



Governor Nelson Rockefeller, on the ladder, joins supporters of the Placid Memorial Hospital.

In 1968, hospital services were enhanced by expanding the laboratory and modernizing the x-ray department. In 1972, the maternity wing was converted into a long-term care unit. In 1980, in preparation of the Olympics, the Emergency Department was expanded. The growth of Lake Placid made these updates essential to meet the needs of residents and visitors alike. In 1989, the Placid Memorial Health Center was established.

On January 1, 1991 the General Hospital of Saranac Lake and Placid Memorial Hospital consolidated operations and became Adirondack Medical Center. The consolidation marked the beginning of a new era, ensuring that patients across the region had access to a broader range of services.

In 1992, after becoming part of Adirondack Medical Center, the entire south wing of the Placid Memorial Hospital building was extensively renovated to introduce a formalized Sports Medicine program. In 2003, there were additional renovations to modernize many of the departments.



A nurse reads to a young patient at the Placid Memorial Hospital.

In 2019, Adirondack Health completed the transition from the historic Church Street campus to the new Lake Placid Health and Medical Fitness Center on Old Military Road. The new facility brought together medical offices, diagnostic services, rehabilitation, and a wellness center, all under one roof, reflecting a modern approach to community health. Though the former Placid Memorial Hospital structure itself is gone, its legacy lives on in the thousands of lives touched within its walls and in the continued spirit of care carried forward at the new center.



Adirondack Health Foundation

The Adirondack Health Foundation began in 1997, organized as the Adirondack Medical Center Foundation, to sustain the tradition of generosity that has long underpinned local healthcare. Operated exclusively for the charitable purpose of assisting Adirondack Health, the Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees committed to investing every gift in ways that bring care closer to home.

The Turn of the Century Campaign (1998)

Just as Adirondack Health's facilities were entering the new millennium, the Foundation launched its first major capital campaign. The Turn of the Century Campaign, completed in 1998, raised \$3.6 million. Among its achievements: the Redfield wing addition, a state-of-the-art emergency department and intensive care unit, and a relocated pharmacy.

Building the Future of Care (2010s)

As Adirondack Health prepared to modernize again the Foundation helped rally support for the Future of Care effort, backing surgical upgrades in Saranac Lake and building the Lake Placid Health and Medical Fitness Center. By early 2019, \$16 million had been raised toward these projects. The Lake Placid site opened that year, bringing primary care, rehabilitation, and a unique medical fitness program together under one roof.

Cornerstone Campaign (2020s)

The Foundation's most recent major fundraising effort, the Cornerstone Campaign, successfully raised the funds to renovate inpatient rooms at Adirondack Medical Center. This support marked another milestone in the long tradition of generosity to strengthen healthcare in the Adirondacks.

The story of the Foundation is about the people and programs supported along the way. Scholarships have helped local students pursue careers in healthcare, ensuring a strong workforce for the future. Mini-grants have brought creative ideas to life to improve patient care. Special funds, like the Merrill Oncology Travel Fund, have lifted burdens for patients facing difficult journeys. The Foundation has continually reflected the generosity of its community, transforming contributions into better care for all who call the Adirondacks home.

Adirondack Health

More than a century of healing

August 24, 1911 – GHSL

Board of Directors is named and plans begin for a hospital on Winona Avenue in Saranac Lake.

March 11, 1913 – GHSL

General Hospital of Saranac Lake opens with 12 beds.

1914 – GHSL

An isolation cottage for four patients is added.

1941 – GHSL

Guggenheim Wing is added, increasing capacity to 50 beds.

1947 – PMH

Board of Directors is named and plans begin for Placid Memorial Hospital in Lake Placid.

1951 – PMH

Placid Memorial Hospital opens with 50 beds.



1986 – PMH

First Primary Care Clinic opens.

1988 – GHSL

Major renovations add 8-bed ICU and new Emergency Room.

1992 – AMC

Sports Medicine Program established; Adirondack Dental Service opens in former PMH building.

1995 – AMC

Tupper Lake Health Center opens.

1997 – AMC

Renal Dialysis Program introduced in Saranac Lake.

2007 – AMC

Mercy Healthcare Center (Tupper Lake) and Uihlein Mercy Center (Lake Placid) join the AMC family.

2009 – AMC

Mobile Dental Clinic begins service.

2010 – AMC

Major renovations at AMC-Mercy in Tupper Lake, including dialysis, rehab, and new medical offices.

2019 – Adirondack Health

opens Lake Placid Health and Medical Fitness Center on Old Military Road.

2020 – Merrill Oncology

Travel Fund established to assist patients with treatment transportation costs.

2020 – Adirondack Health

navigates the COVID-19 pandemic.

Abbreviation Key: GHSL: General Hospital of Saranac Lake PMH: Placid Memorial Hospital in Lake Placid
 MGH: Mercy General Hospital in Tupper Lake AMC: Adirondack Medical Center

1918 – MGH

Three Sisters of Mercy arrive in Tupper Lake to open a hospital.

1924 – GHSL

North (Men’s) Wing and Maternity Wing are added.

1929 – MGH

New Mercy General Hospital opens with 35 beds and 10 bassinets.

1961 – GHSL

Trustees decide to build a new hospital on Lake Colby Drive.

1967 – GHSL

New 65-bed hospital opens.

1972 – PMH

Maternity Wing is converted to Skilled Nursing Unit.

1980 – PMH

Emergency Room expanded for Winter Olympic Games.

1991 – GHSL + PMH merge
to form Adirondack Medical Center (AMC).

1991 – MHC
The second addition, now called the Warde Wing, is constructed bringing capacity of long term care residents to 80.

1997 – AMC Foundation
incorporated (later Adirondack Health Foundation).

1998 – AMC
Colby Unit, a 12-bed geriatric psychiatry unit, opens.

2003 – AMC
Major renovations in Saranac Lake and Lake Placid; Redfield Medical Office Building completed.

2011 – AMC celebrates
100 years; name unified as Adirondack Health.



2019 – Operating rooms at
Adirondack Medical Center recieved major renovation.

2020 – Adirondack Health begins investment in infrastructure and technological upgrades, bringing in three new roboic surgical systems over the next 5 years.



2026 – Cornerstone Forward: Construction begins on room renovations.



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ALL PATIENTS entering the General Hospital of Saranac Lake must make financial arrangements for their room, board and Hospital charges at the office of the General Hospital upon admission.

It is the rule of the Hospital that all patients shall pay for board, room and other Hospital charges **one week in advance** and that no exceptions can be made unless a special financial arrangement is made with the Superintendent.

This rule, of course, does not apply to emergency cases.

All patients having **Hospital Insurance** must present their cards upon admission.

Because of the heavy running expenses of the Hospital and the fact that there is a deficit each year, the Directors have found it necessary to put the General Hospital on a cash basis, and in no way should these terms be considered a reflection on a patient's financial standing. The cost of caring for each patient, with few exceptions, exceeds the charges.

The rates at the Hospital are as follows:

5 Private Rooms, with board and nursing care --	\$5.00 per day
13 Private Rooms, with board and nursing care --	6.00 per day
4 Semi-private Rooms, board and nursing care --	3.50 per day
(2 patients in a room)	
Ward Patients, with board and nursing care --	2.50 per day

Board for Special Nurses:

Special Day Nurses -----	1.50 per day
Special Night Nurses -----	1.00 per day

Admission Laboratory Fee -----	\$2.00
Special Laboratory Fee -----	\$4.00 up
Surgical Tissue Examination -----	\$5.00 and \$10.00

Operating Room Fees -----	\$5.00, \$10.00, \$15.00
(depending upon nature of operation)	

Delivery Room Fees:

Private Room Patients -----	\$15.00
Semi-private Room Patients -----	10.00
Baby Care, per day -----	1.00

Special medication and dressing charges, in excess, are additional

An explanation of charges for services provided at the General Hospital of Saranac Lake in 1940.