



Akbar Ahmed, MD (left) and Stephen Barker, MD, provide dedicated overnight surgical coverage for Crouse Hospital patients.

Surgical Nocturnists: Dedicated Overnight Care

The program — a partnership with Central New York Surgical Physicians, PC — ensures rapid, efficient surgical coverage during the overnight hours, seven days a week. “This program supports the outstanding care provided to patients by Crouse surgeons everyday,” says hospital President and CEO Paul Kronenberg, MD.

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— PAUL KRONENBERG, MD

to come in at night, plus patients are more satisfied with the immediate care and attention they receive.”

A Team Approach

Adding to that care and attention are in-house surgical physician assistants and residents, a key part of the overnight surgical team at Crouse, as well as dedicated operating room nursing and technical staff. Together, they all help speed the care provided to patients while increasing overall efficiencies, according to Dr. Ahmed.

Drs. Barker and Ahmed both bring years of surgical expertise to their nighttime roles at Crouse. Dr. Barker, who specializes in abdominal and laparoscopic surgery, has been in practice for 20 years. Dr. Ahmed, whose specialty is general and laparoscopic surgery, has nearly 30 years of surgical experience, much of it spent at New York City hospitals.

Crouse is the only area hospital with a dedicated surgical hospitalist team. “We have the complete team in place, ready to spring into action at a moment’s notice,” says Dr. Ahmed, who adds that support is also available as needed from radiology and the Intensive Care Unit.

In just six years, Crouse Hospital’s hospitalist program has grown to include 12 physicians. Working only in the hospital, these medical professionals recognize that physicians are busy — whether attending to patient visits or handling day-to-day oversight of an office practice. Hospitalists work to ease the burden of continuous visits to the hospital, offering referring physicians the assurance that their patients receive the highest level of care during an inpatient stay.

Crouse’s expanding program is rounded out by two surgical hospitalists — Stephen Barker, MD, who’s been with the program two years, and more recently, Akbar Faisal Ahmed, MD. Sometimes referred to as “surgicalists” (or “surgical nocturnists”), Drs. Barker and Ahmed — both board-certified surgeons — provide in-house, dedicated overnight coverage (7 p.m. to 7 a.m.) for patients needing emergency surgery, surgical consultation or follow-up after a procedure.

Being able to provide overnight surgical coverage for emergencies or when complications arise is a great benefit not only to the patient, but also to the hospital’s medical staff, says Dr. Barker, adding that communication between the patient’s primary surgeon and the surgical hospitalist team is maintained at all times.

Overnight Care 24/7

“If a healthy 35-year-old woman comes in at 2 a.m. with an acute gall bladder problem requiring surgery, I can do surgery that night instead of having her wait until morning,” Barker says. “This saves other surgeons from needing

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