

We believe that a woman's choice to live in our region should not limit her ability to receive state-of-the-art cancer detection and treatment.

Because we can't prevent breast cancer, HRRMC is committed to offering the most advanced diagnostic tools to ensure early detection and a healthcare team that can provide exceptional, accessible treatment to patients in our rural location.

- **The Latest Technology**

Because the breast is composed of soft tissue that varies greatly from individual to individual, a variety of state-of-the-art diagnostic tools is used at HRRMC to improve early detection.

**Tomosynthesis (or 3-D mammography)** is a revolutionary technology that creates a 3-D image providing greater clarity, even in dense breast tissue. During a tomosynthesis scan, a series of low-dose X-rays are taken of each breast at multiple angles. The radiologist reviews a series of thin slices of the breast, making it easier to detect cancers that were obscured by overlapping normal breast tissue on 2-D mammography.

**Breast Ultrasound** uses sound waves to create a picture of the tissues inside the breast. It can show all areas of the breast and may provide information, such as whether a breast lump is filled with fluid (a cyst) or is solid, that may not be found on a mammogram.

**Stereotactic Breast Biopsy** is performed when a mammogram shows a breast abnormality, such as a suspicious lump. During a breast biopsy some cells are removed—either surgically or through a hollow needle—from the suspicious area and then examined under a microscope to determine a diagnosis.

**Breast MRI** uses a powerful magnetic field, radio frequency pulses and a computer to produce a detailed picture of the breast. MRI of the breast offers important information about many breast conditions that cannot be seen with other imaging modalities such as mammography.

- **National Accreditation**

The HRRMC Center for Breast Health is pursuing a national accreditation through the American College of Surgeons. The accreditation process will take about one year to complete.

- **Financial Support**

With grants from El Pomar and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, proceeds from the 2014 Jewel Ball, and the generous support of our community, the HRRMC Foundation raised more than \$360,000 to make the HRRMC Center for Breast Health a reality. We thank all of our donors for helping us to achieve this goal!



- **Payment**

HRRMC's Patient Financial Services Department will work with you to answer your billing questions, set up a payment plan, or qualify you for government-sponsored programs. A Patient Financial Services representative can be reached at 719-530-2475.

Through a generous grant from the Women's Wellness Connection Program, free breast screenings are available to qualified women. For more information about this program, contact Community Health Worker Brenda Gentile at 719-207-2088 or email [brenda.gentile@hrrmc.net](mailto:brenda.gentile@hrrmc.net).

**HRRMC Center for Breast Health**

1000 Rush Drive, Salida, CO 81201

719-530-2427 (Nurse Navigator)

[hrrmc.com](http://hrrmc.com)



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# HRRMC Center for Breast Health



**HELP. HOPE. HERE.**

## Our Breast Health Team

In addition to the most advanced diagnostic equipment, the HRRMC Center for Breast Health has a multidisciplinary healthcare team qualified to treat breast patients. Our team includes a breast surgeon, medical oncologist, plastic surgeon, radiologist, pathologist, nurse navigator, head nurse in oncology, mammography technologists, physical therapists, registered dietitian and exercise physiologist.



**Karen Johnson, M.D.**  
**Breast Surgeon**

Before joining HRRMC's medical staff in 2012, Dr. Johnson spent 17 years at Yale-New Haven Hospital, where she specialized in breast surgery. A board-certified surgeon, Dr. Johnson has a special interest in diseases of the breast and was a driving force behind establishing the Center for Breast Health at HRRMC.



**Francene Mason, M.D.**  
**Medical Oncologist**

Board-certified in internal medicine and oncology, Dr. Mason completed her internship and residency in internal medicine and then a fellowship in hematology and oncology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, where she later taught. Her practice combines traditional oncologic medicine with integrative treatments using natural health products, nutrition, exercise and other complementary therapies.



**Debra Irizarry, M.D.**  
**Plastic Surgeon**

Dr. Irizarry is a board-certified, fellowship-trained plastic surgeon who specializes in breast reconstruction at HRRMC. She works in tandem with Dr. Karen Johnson to provide top quality surgical care and reconstruction for breast-cancer patients.



**Daniel Wardrop, M.D.**  
**Radiologist**

A board-certified radiologist, Dr. Wardrop completed a fellowship in neuroradiology at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and practiced in Florida before joining HRRMC's medical staff in 2009. Experienced in all imaging modalities, he was a strong proponent of installing 3-D digital mammography (tomosynthesis) in the hospital.



**Amy Muller, M.D.**  
**Pathologist**

As medical director of HRRMC's Laboratory, Dr. Muller assists other physicians with diagnoses by reviewing tissue samples and laboratory results. Our Lab Department is accredited by the College of American Pathology and staffed by highly qualified laboratory technologists and phlebotomists.



**Diane Villalovas, RN**  
**Nurse Navigator**

Diane Villalovas is the nurse navigator for HRRMC's breast patients. She provides support and guidance by helping patients make appointments with other physicians, requesting medical records, scheduling lab and imaging tests, and teaching patients about prescribed medications and treatments. She helps patients with nutritional support and access to counseling services and complementary therapy. Diane also facilitates a monthly support group for all cancer patients.



**Laurie Merrell, RN, BSN**  
**Head Nurse Oncology Clinic**

Laurie Merrell directs the HRRMC Oncology Clinic team of experienced oncology nurses and assists Dr. Francene Mason with all oncology appointments and patient care. She works directly with breast cancer patients and all other oncology patients and hand-in-hand with the HRRMC Center for Breast Health nurse navigator.

### Medical Imaging Team

Our Medical Imaging Department is accredited by the American College of Radiology and our lead mammographer, Tracey Banks, is an experienced radiologic technologist with a B.S. in radiologic science.

### Rehabilitation Services

HRRMC's Rehabilitation Department provides a variety of services to patients recovering from breast cancer, including certified therapists in women's health physical therapy, lymphedema therapy and trigger point dry needling (for pain management).

### Nutritional Support

HRRMC's registered dietitian, Miranda Beason, provides nutritional guidance to breast cancer patients.

### Radiation Oncology

We work closely with Shaw Regional Cancer Center in Edwards and other cancer centers on the Front Range to provide integrated care for our patients.

### Exercise and Massage Therapy

HRRMC's oncologist, Dr. Francene Mason, wrote the first precriptive book on exercise and cancer entitled "The Force Program," and is an advocate of incorporating a medically supervised exercise program into the treatment of breast cancer patients. Two massage therapists also offer oncology massage at HRRMC.

