

elevatinghealth

FALL 2025



HIGH-TECH HELPERS

AI Systems Improve
Process & Outcomes

Pg. 4

In this Issue...

- 3 Award-Winning Care, Close to Home
 - 4 Line 'Em Up: OrthoGrid
 - 5 Da Vinci 5: High-Tech Helper
 - 6 CAD Eye for Early Detection
 - 7 Community Health Needs Assessment 2025 Results
 - 10 Guadalupe River Flood Response & Resources
 - 11 Men's Health Month
 - 12 Supporting You Through Every Stage of Life
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Peterson Health Leadership

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Chief Financial Officer

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Chief Nursing Officer

Brian Robicheaux

Chief Information Officer

Christopher Glanton, MD

Chief Medical Officer

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Chief Strategic Development Officer

Tracy Davis

Chief Ambulatory Care Officer

Audrey Ducker

Chief People and Experience Officer

For more Peterson Health news and happenings, visit PetersonHealth.com/News.



A Warm Welcome to New CEO, John McDonald

I'm John McDonald, and I was born and raised in Baytown, Texas, and attended Texas A&M University, where I met my wife of 19 years, Jessica. Jessica grew up in Pleasanton, Texas, and we have many relatives in and around San Antonio. We have two daughters: Kate, who is a junior at Tivy High School, and Claire, who is in 7th grade at Peterson Middle School.

I enjoy hiking, camping, hunting, and fishing, and my favorite food is Texas-style barbecue. We have a shelter rescue dog named Charley, a Golden Retriever and Labrador mix.

I began my career in healthcare as a Patient Care Technician on a Med/Surg unit at Houston Methodist Hospital. I then held various roles in medical staff services, wound care, and physician practice management before leaving Houston to join Northwest Texas Healthcare System as an Assistant Administrator and later as Chief Operating Officer.

Most recently, I was the CEO of a hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. My exposure to healthcare began at an early age, as my mother, grandmother, and sisters were all nurses. Although I initially planned to become a physician, I fell in love with the business and leadership aspects of the healthcare industry.

Working in healthcare provides the privilege of making a significant impact on people's lives, which I find personally rewarding. My leadership style is collaborative, focusing on open and transparent communication and fostering a culture where everyone feels valued and has a voice in the problem-solving process.

I have followed Peterson Health for many years and have consistently been impressed with its accomplishments. I feel truly blessed to have this opportunity to be part of the Peterson team, and I look forward to elevating health throughout the Hill Country.

Award-Winning Care – Right Here, Close to Home

We are proud to share two recent prestigious awards recognizing excellence in patient care, clinical quality, and employment environment. These honors highlight our continued commitment to delivering award-winning healthcare – right here, close to home.

Chartis Names Peterson Health Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital

Peterson Health announced it has been named among the 2025 Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals by The Chartis Center for Rural Health. Chartis' annual Top 100 award program honors outstanding performance among the nation's rural hospitals based on the results of the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance INDEX®.



"The Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals award program elevates the very best performers and helps create a roadmap for those seeking to improve financial and operational performance while continuing to care for the communities they serve," said Michael Topchik, Executive Director, The Chartis Center for Rural Health. "This is our 10th year recognizing the Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals and we're thrilled to be able to celebrate this milestone with this year's winners."

Named Best Places to Work for Fifth Consecutive Year

Peterson Health has been selected by Modern Healthcare as one of the 2025 Best Places to Work in Healthcare for the fifth consecutive year. Peterson Health is one of only 150 healthcare organizations in the nation to be recognized.

"Being part of an organization that has received this award five years in a row is truly an honor," said Joe Piszczor, Chief Operating Officer. "It reflects the strong culture we have at Peterson Health. Our team consistently embodies the values of Peterson Health and collaborates to fulfill our mission of delivering exceptional, compassionate, patient-centered care. I am confident that what we have here at Peterson Health is not only special but also world-class."



"Being recognized as a 2025 Best Place to Work in Healthcare is a powerful testament to how these organizations value their people," said Dan Peres, President of Modern Healthcare. "In a time of constant change and challenge, this year's winners have shown a deep commitment to creating environments where employees feel supported, heard, and inspired to do their best work. That kind of culture doesn't happen by accident – it's intentional, and it's worth celebrating."

This award program identifies and recognizes outstanding employers in the healthcare industry nationwide. Modern Healthcare partners with Workforce Research Group on the assessment process, which includes an extensive employee survey.

[View full list of Peterson Health's Awards and Accolades at Peterson Health.com/Awards.](https://www.petersonhealth.com/Awards)



Peterson Orthopedics Team [L-R]: Dr. Goodrum, Dr. Morris, Dr. Mitchell, and Dr. Veurink

Line 'Em Up: OrthoGrid Elevates Joint Replacement Outcomes

Doctors who fix joints like hips and knees want to make sure everything is in the right place. That's where OrthoGrid comes in. OrthoGrid is a smart tool that helps surgeons during joint replacement surgery. It works with X-rays and computer technology to guide our providers while they work.

When a person gets a new hip or knee, it's important that the new parts fit just right. If something is even a little bit off, it can cause pain or problems later. OrthoGrid shows surgeons exactly where to place the new joint so that everything lines up the way it should.

This tool uses special software to help surgeons see more clearly during the surgery. It shows a digital "grid" over the X-ray images, kind of like lines on a map. This helps doctors make better choices in real time.

"The AI-assisted technology provided by Orthogrid ensures real time, inside the OR, accurate implant position and sizing," says Dr. Ryan Veurink, Orthopedic Surgeon at Peterson Health. "This allows patients to have a stable hip with accurate leg length adjustments. These factors, along with the anterior surgical approach, facilitates faster early recovery and long term success with hip replacement surgery."

Because OrthoGrid helps surgeons be more precise, it means patients often feel better faster. They may have less pain, move more easily, and spend less time in the hospital. That's good news for people who want to get back to walking, running, or just enjoying their lives.

Technology like OrthoGrid is changing the way doctors work. It helps them do their jobs better and keeps patients safer. This new technology is helping us elevate health, one joint replacement surgery at a time.

Learn more about our Total Joint Replacement program by visiting PetersonHealth.com/BacktoLife.



Peterson Surgical Team [L-R]: Kaycee Schmerbeck, Jaclyn Sandler, Arnold Smith Jr., and Misty Kott

The Da Vinci 5: A High-Tech Helper in the Operating Room

The Da Vinci 5 is a special kind of robot used by surgeons to do very careful and complex surgeries. Even though it's a robot, it doesn't work by itself. A skilled doctor controls every move it makes, using a special console nearby. It's like giving the surgeon extra-precise hands and eyes.

This system includes robotic arms and a powerful camera that shows clear images from inside the body. The doctor sits at a control station and moves the robot's arms using hand controls and foot pedals. These tools let the doctor perform surgery with great care, even in tiny, hard-to-reach places.

One big benefit of the Da Vinci 5 is that it allows for smaller cuts, which means less bleeding and fewer stitches. Patients often feel less pain and recover faster compared to traditional surgery. Many people are able to go home sooner and return to their normal activities more quickly.

"While we have had a surgical robotics platform for several years, the new DV5 platform allows for improved ergonomics and visualization giving us better precision and feedback during surgical procedures," said Dr. Thomas Brown, General Surgeon at Peterson Health. "This ultimately leads to better outcomes and faster recovery for our patients by reducing trauma, blood loss, and pain."

The new version, Da Vinci 5, includes even better technology than before. It's faster, more flexible, and gives doctors more information during surgery. This helps them make smarter decisions and adjust as needed while they work.

Technology like the Da Vinci 5 is changing the future of surgery. With this kind of robotic assistance, doctors can treat patients with greater care, leading to better results and healthier recoveries.

To learn more about Peterson Health's General Surgery services, visit PetersonHealth.com/Surgery.



A New Way to See: How CAD Eye Helps Early Detection

Gastroenterologists, doctors who help people with problems in their stomach, intestines, and other parts of the digestive system, sometimes use small cameras to look inside your body during surgery. This approach helps them find and remove things that shouldn't be there, like tiny growths in your stomach or intestines.

Recently, Peterson Health purchased and began using CAD Eye in Gastroenterology procedures. This technology is a special kind of computer tool that helps doctors see even better during these kinds of surgeries.

CAD Eye utilizes artificial intelligence to assist the doctor in recognizing what's normal and what's not. During surgery, it watches the video from the camera and points out anything that looks unusual, like small bumps that might be hard to see with just human eyes. It draws little boxes or marks on the screen to show where the doctor should look more closely.

"This new technology leverages the power of AI to enable real time detection of colonic mucosal lesions such as polyps and adenomas during colonoscopy, enhancing our ability to identify and remove pre-cancerous lesions that might otherwise be difficult to detect with the naked eye," says Dr. Lindy Rachal, Gastroenterologist at Peterson Health. "It's a game changer compared to traditional methods."

By finding problems earlier and more accurately, CAD Eye helps doctors do a better job. That means patients may need fewer surgeries, have a better chance of getting well, and feel more confident that nothing was missed.

With technology like CAD Eye, doctors and computers can work together to help people stay healthy. It's just one more way that smart tools are making healthcare safer and better for everyone.

To learn more about our Gastroenterology services, visit PetersonHealth.com/Gastroenterology.



Lee Ann Lambdin, President of StrategyHealth, leads a group of local stakeholders on the healthcare needs of Kerr County.

Community Health Needs Assessment 2025

In February 2025, Peterson Regional Medical Center began a Community Health Needs Assessment for Kerr County and sought input from persons who represent the broad interests of the community using several methods.

StrategyHealth, a healthcare consultancy based out of Nashville, Tennessee, provided analysis of community health data, facilitated the focus groups, and facilitated a community health summit to receive community input into the priorities and brainstorm goals and actions the community could take to improve health.

Sixty individuals from thirty-nine community organizations collaborated to implement a comprehensive process focused on identifying and defining significant health needs, issues, and concerns of Kerr County.

The three-month process centered on gathering and analyzing data, as well as receiving input from persons who represented the broad interests of the community, to provide direction for the community and hospital to create a plan to improve the health of the communities.

- Information gathering using secondary public health sources, occurred in March through April 2025.
- Twenty-eight community members and stakeholders participated in focus groups for their perspectives on community health needs and issues on April 17, 2025.
- A Community Health Summit was conducted on May 22, 2025, with community stakeholders. The audience consisted of healthcare providers, government representatives, schools, not-for-profit organizations, public safety, senior center, and other community members.

Peterson Regional Medical Center, as the sponsors of the assessment, engaged national leaders in community health needs assessments to assist in the project.

To view the full **2025 Community Health Needs Assessment Report**, visit PetersonHealth.com/CHNA2025.



Significant Health Needs Identified: Kerr County, TX

Once the stakeholders prioritized the most significant health issues, the five table groups discussed what might be done to improve the top five health issues. Below are notes from the brainstorming. We encourage other community organizations to use this list when deciding on projects and initiatives.

1. Mental Health

GOAL 1: Provide access to immediate care for 24-to-48-hour acute care.

Action 1 – Create a facility for mental health holding instead of the ER or jail.

Action 2 – Obtain funding for the facility through bond issue

Resources / Collaborators Needed – Politicians, service providers, law enforcement, schools, churches, workplaces, variety of stakeholders for funding

GOAL 2: Increase community awareness and education of the mental health crisis in Kerrville

Action 1 – Gather all data on mental health throughout the county and communicate to the citizens

Action 2 – Determine needs for those without insurance and how to get them care

Resources / Collaborators Needed – Law enforcement, mental health DD, PH, New Hope, KISD

2. Living Wages and Cost of Living

GOAL 1: Create, support, and sustain education systems

Action 1 – Provide affordable daycare so more people can work

Action 2 – Provide more financial support for people attending school, graduation, fees., supplies for those getting an associate's degree

Resources / Collaborators Needed – childcare resources, funding

GOAL 2: Create a culture where education is valued

Action 1 – Provide parenting support groups

Action 2 – Provide health navigators who can go into homes and be supportive of families and provide reading materials for example.

GOAL 3: Continue to improve affordable, accessible public transportation so people can get to and from jobs

Action 1 – Support the App-based pilot program

Action 2 – Provide a service to provide labor for car repairs using people in auto trade students

3. Attainable Housing

GOAL 1: Increase availability of attainable, diverse housing

Action 1 – Encourage more creativity among developers to look at multi housing developments and grow into larger houses for different stages of life. Look at mixed use developments, shopping, housing, encourage foot traffic.

Action 2 – Reform property tax and homeowners insurance to make them more affordable

Resources / Collaborators Needed – Engage the community on housing needs, developers, large employers, non-profits

GOAL 2: Utilize trendsetting designs

Action 1 – Explore multiuse developments

Action 2 Model after similar community developments with same issues

Resources / Collaborators Needed – developers, large employers, non-profits

4. Knowledge and Awareness of Resources

GOAL 1: Consolidate and update the existing resource lists

Action 1 – Identify all current lists, which ones are most updated, bring onto an online platform KerrKind and print copies also.

Action 2 – Determine oversight and systematic process for updating the list.

Resources / Collaborators Needed – All social service organizations

GOAL 2: Provide the resource list to the public, organizations, businesses

Action 1 – Create a marketing plan

Action 2 – Create a local call center with rotating volunteers

5. Substance Use Disorder

GOAL 1: Increase access to care

Action 1 – Identify existing resources in the community and publicize, communicate, and educate on existing resources

Action 2 – Cross promote on one another's website, social media, events, ads, newspaper, radio, etc.

Resources / Collaborators Needed – Social services, addiction care services, primary care, health care orgs, after care services, health care coalition, vocational training and education, faith communities

GOAL 2: Identify the gaps that still exist and work together to address what's lacking

Resources / Collaborators Needed - Kerrville Recovery Community Coalition



Because of You, We are Hill Country Strong

To the brave and devoted first responders, emergency crews, and city and county officials – **thank you**. In the face of unprecedented tragedy, your swift action, tireless dedication, and unwavering commitment to our community has given us hope through this difficult time.

We are strong because of you.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Peterson Hospice is here to help you through this difficult time and to provide you with the support and resources you need as you grieve. If you need support, please join us at any of the following meetings.

5:30–6:30pm | **1st Tuesday**
Hospice & Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

10–11am | **1st & 3rd Friday**
First Presbyterian Church
800 Jefferson Street in Kerrville

10–11am | **2nd & 4th Tuesday**
Hospice & Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville



What Every Man Needs to Know This Men's Health Month

When it comes to men's health, few topics are more overlooked than prostate cancer. It's the second most common cancer in men worldwide, with more than 1 million new cases diagnosed each year. And yet, many men don't know the warning signs, risk factors, or the power of early detection.

What Is the Prostate and Why Does It Matter?

The prostate is a small gland about the size of a walnut, located just below the bladder. It plays an important role in reproductive health. As men age, the prostate can enlarge or develop cancer, especially in those over 50.

Symptoms You Shouldn't Ignore

In its early stages, prostate cancer often doesn't cause noticeable symptoms. But as it progresses, some men may experience:

- Difficulty starting or stopping urination
- Weak or interrupted urine flow
- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Pain or burning during urination or ejaculation
- Blood in urine or semen
- Pain in the lower back, hips, or pelvis

These symptoms don't always mean cancer – they can also be caused by non-cancerous prostate conditions. But they do mean it's time to see your doctor.

Know the Risk Factors

Some men are at higher risk than others. These include:

- Age 50 and older
- Family history of prostate or breast cancer
- African American men
- Diets high in red meat and low in vegetables
- Obesity and sedentary lifestyle

If you fall into any of these categories, it's even more important to speak with your doctor about when to begin screening.




November is Men's Health Month, so don't wait. Make an appointment with your primary care provider to talk about prostate cancer screening. Ask questions, share your concerns, and take the first step toward protecting your long-term health. Prostate cancer doesn't have to be a silent threat. With knowledge, awareness, and regular checkups, you can take control of your health – one conversation at a time.

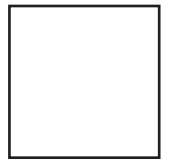
To schedule an appointment with one of our exceptional Primary Care Providers, visit PetersonHealth.com/PrimaryCare.

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For a list of physicians accepting new patients, visit our website at PetersonHealth.com/Providers.

Connect with Us!   



Supporting You Through **Every Stage of Life**

At Peterson Health, we have a safe community where you can feel seen, heard, and supported through your journey. If you or a loved one are experiencing any of these pathways, join us for a group support session.

For more information about Support Groups, visit PetersonHealth.com/Events.

BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

5:30–6:30pm | 4th Wednesday
Dietert Center
451 Guadalupe Street in Kerrville

CARDIAC SUPPORT GROUP

4:30–5:30pm | 3rd Wednesday
Peterson Health, Classroom B
551 Hill Country Drive in Kerrville

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

2–3:30pm | 1st and 3rd Friday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

5:30–6:30pm | 1st Tuesday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

10–11am | 1st and 3rd Friday
First Presbyterian Church
800 Jefferson Street in Kerrville

10–11am | 2nd and 4th Tuesday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

PALS SUPPORT GROUP

4:30–5:30pm | 3rd Tuesday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

4–5pm | 1st Wednesday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

4:30–5:30pm | 2nd Thursday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

SUICIDE LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

5:30–7pm | 1st and 3rd Thursday
Hospice and Home Care Building
250 Cully Drive in Kerrville

