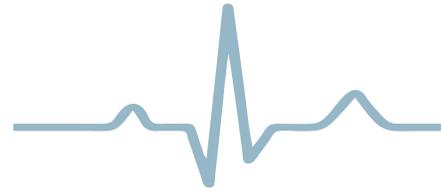


HealthBeat

FALL 2021



EBCH Takes
TOP HONORS
in Minnesota's
Best Contest



"We were humbled, appreciative, and honored to learn we won in three categories."

—Patti Banks, CEO, Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital

Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital was recognized as "Gold Winners" in three categories – Hospital, Medical Practice, and Physical Therapy – in the 2021 Star Tribune Readers' Choice Minnesota's Best contest. The program recognizes the best Minnesota businesses in nearly 400 categories.

"Initially, we were so grateful to be nominated – we felt that was a big achievement. Then to find out we

actually took first place in all three categories – that spoke volumes of the support we get from the communities we serve and our peers."

Verified nominees were placed on the Minnesota's Best ballot, and the public voted for favorites during a span of several weeks. In August, winners were announced on the Minnesota's Best website and in Minnesota's Best Magazine, which was distributed to

metro Sunday Star Tribune home delivery customers, newsstands and other select outlets.

"It's hard to put into words how our team feels, and how much it has meant at this time when there's so much change happening," adds Banks. "We know that the challenges we're dealing with as a team, individuals are dealing with too – so it's been important to us to know that we have that support."

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NOW AVAILABLE AT EBCH: ROBOTIC SURGERY

Why Choose Robotic Surgery?

Faster recovery. Fewer infections. Less pain.

What else could patients ask for from robotic-assisted surgery? Did we mention that it's right here at Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital (EBCH)?

"Robotic surgery often allows us to do better surgery when compared to open and laparoscopic surgery," says Dr. John Bollins, a general surgeon who began operating at EBCH in March 2021. "This translates into lower complication rates with less pain and a lower likelihood of developing an infection."

WHAT IS ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERY?

Robotic surgery, like a laparoscopic procedure, is a minimally invasive surgery, but robotic surgery offers an added layer of technology, including allowing the surgeon to simultaneously control the camera and three instruments. In addition, in robotic surgery, the camera shows a magnified 3D image; according to Bollins: "It's like a very large virtual reality device."



Q&A: Meet Dr. John Bollins

General Surgeon, Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital
Owner, Advanced Surgical Associates of Northern Minnesota, Hibbing, MN

How have you liked your time at EBCH so far?

Do patients seem receptive about robotic technology?

I am really enjoying my time in Ely and at EBCH. The staff at EBCH is awesome, and I am proud to be a part of the team.

The patients have been great and seem to be happy with the care we are providing. They seem to be very receptive and supportive of robotic surgery.

What would you like patients at EBCH to know about robotic surgery?

Patients who undergo robotic surgery are less likely to require a hospital stay when compared to patients undergoing a similar surgery without the robot.

Are laparoscopy and robotic surgery the same thing?

Laparoscopic surgery and robotic surgery are not the same thing. They both are minimally invasive surgeries, meaning that we do the surgery through small incisions.

Additionally, the instruments used in robotic surgeries are superior to those used in laparoscopic ones: "They not only rotate in over 500 degrees in either direction, but they are also wristed to allow for precise movements," explains Bollins. "They eliminate any hand tremors."

About laparoscopic instruments, Bollins makes this comparison: "One could imagine trying to cut and sew with long chopsticks with scissor handles to open and close the far end of the instruments."

AREN'T ROBOTIC SURGERY AND LAPAROSCOPIC REALLY THE SAME THING?

Robotic surgery and laparoscopic surgery are not the same thing: Most laparoscopic surgeries are done with the surgeon controlling two instruments while the assistant controls one additional instrument and operates the camera. Laparoscopic surgery was considered advanced at one time, but "Robotics is replacing the outdated technology of laparoscopy in many surgeries," says Bollins.

Laparoscopic surgery is performed with long, straight, handheld instruments that open, close, and rotate. Most laparoscopic surgeries are done with the surgeon controlling two instruments while the assistant controls one additional instrument and operates the camera.

Most of us can do more precise movements with the robotic instruments than we can with our own hands.

Do you plan to increase robotic surgery options over time at EBCH?

We plan to offer a wide array of robotic surgery at EBCH including gallbladder surgery, hernia repairs, colon surgery, and hiatal hernia repairs.

I hope that EBCH continues to grow and that we have other surgical specialists including gynecology and urology performing robotic surgery at EBCH in the future.



COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

People may think robotic-assisted surgery is:

- More costly
- Impersonal
- Unsafe

PATIENT BENEFITS

However, robotic surgery is:

- Billed the same as standard laparoscopic procedures.
- A tool utilized by surgeons. Patients receive personalized care throughout procedures from experts using the system for greater surgical control and precision.
- Very safe. Smaller incisions mean less blood loss, scarring, faster recoveries and lower rates of complication or infection.

Why travel out of the area for your surgery needs? Call 218-365-8724 or visit ebch.org to see if robotic surgery is right for you.



EBCH's First Robotic Surgery Patient: "NO WORRIES AT ALL"

An 81-year-old local resident was the hospital's first robotic surgery patient on September 9 – and she's feeling great. "I'm doing great," says the woman, who asked not to be named. "I'm not feeling any pain – I feel very well."

The patient said she had no concerns about the robotic-assisted procedure Dr. Bollins performed to fix her inguinal hernia: "When I went in, I just went with the flow. I had no worries at all." She describes Bollins as "a good doctor. He's easy to talk to."

She also said one of the key benefits to her recent surgery is that she was almost immediately able to go home: "With my other surgeries, I was in the hospital for a day or two; with this one, I came right home after I woke up."

Continued from cover...

**HOSPITAL WORKS
DAILY WITH AREA
PARTNERS**



When it comes to supporting each other through challenges, Banks wants to reassure area residents that EBCH continues to work tirelessly with surrounding communities to provide the best care.

"It is different now: we might be accepting patients from Hibbing, Virginia and places other than the Ely area. But as we collaborate with our regional partners, we are working together and communicating routinely, if not daily, as to capacity and our patients' needs," explains Banks. "We're working together and adjusting how we care for patients."

She also reminds patients to review their billing statements carefully in order to contact the correct EBCH campus partner.

"From a patient care perspective, EBCH is completely collaborative: you don't notice where someone works – you just know you're being taken care of," says Banks. "But we want to remind people we are actually a number of separate business entities."

Banks explains that after a visit, patients don't always realize that they're going to get multiple billing statements for a variety of services.

For example, you might see your Primary Care Provider at the Essentia Health – Ely Clinic so you would receive a statement from EH for that visit. If your provider refers you to get an X-Ray you would come over to the hospital radiology department for that imaging – that would be a separate bill from the hospital and a third bill from the radiologist in Duluth that reads your images.

"All of our EBCH campus partners work together – but we ask that patients and caregivers understand that when you call – depending on the nature of your call – you could be transferred in a different direction.

"Sometimes it takes us time, too, to connect you with the right area. We understand that this can be confusing and frustrating at times."



ELY COMMUNITY PHARMACY HAS YOU COVERED

At Ely Community Pharmacy, your health is our priority. Our pharmacist-led team is here to answer questions, help manage your medications and provide the expert care you need.

Our onsite retail pharmacy offers free, easy prescription transfers and convenient refill options by:

- Phone
- Website
- RefillRx app

Do you summer in Ely and head south for the winter? Ely Community Pharmacy manages prescription transfers for many of our snowbirds each season. All you have to do is fly—your medication will be ready wherever you land! Ask our pharmacy team for details.

EBCH manages Ely Community Pharmacy and is committed to keeping our community safe: Ask us about mailing prescriptions to your home at no extra charge.



We provide an onsite pharmacist:

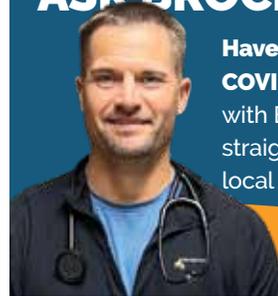
Monday - Friday	8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday	9 a.m. - 1 p.m.



Trust ECP for:

- Over-the-counter medications
- Diabetic testing supplies
- Immunizations – including vaccines for shingles, flu, and COVID-19

ASK BROCK THE DOC!



Have questions about **COVID-19**? Get the facts with Brock the Doc's straightforward answers in our local papers or visit ebch.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

1,500 area residents receive FREE flu shots annually, courtesy of EBCH and Ely Health and Hospital Foundation funding.



EBCH was very thankful to have the VCC Law Enforcement students on hand to assist with traffic control for the drive-thru flu shot clinics.

