In 2016, NVH became an integral part of the KRH family, which also includes Kalispell Regional Medical Center, The HealthCenter, Brendan House, The Summit Medical Fitness Center, physician clinics, and many other supporting health care services.

The primary objective of KRH and NVH coming together has been to enhance care coordination and increase access to the wide range of services that enable our community to receive care close to home. We are excited to share many recognized benefits of the affiliation such as streamlined care transitions, clinical collaborations and expanded opportunities for philanthropy.

Following are additional accomplishments of the affiliation:

- Expanded collaborative health care services:
  - Infusion
  - Chemotherapy
  - Cardio/pulmonary rehabilitation
  - Nuclear medicine

- Coordinated health care services and projects:
  - Geriatric and palliative care
  - Trauma services
  - Joint emergency preparedness program
  - Sharing of best practices across multiple departments
  - Integrated marketing and communications activities and strategies
  - Sharing clinical staff among facilities
  - Community Health Needs Assessment
  - Community relations activities

- Centralized efficiencies:
  - Medical tourism
  - Co-location of materials management departments

- Physician collaborations to standardize care:
  - Sepsis protocol
  - Pulmonary consults via telemedicine
  - Transfer protocol for critically ill patients
  - Pediatric care admission criteria
  - Rapid stroke assessment and best practices
  - Telepathology

In the past two years, we have been amazed by the many stories demonstrating the tremendous value the integration of the two organizations has created for our patients, communities and healthcare providers.

Learn more about local health care services available at North Valley Hospital and many other members of the Kalispell Regional Healthcare family by visiting krh.org.
Bob McElrath had recently moved to Whitefish when he went to his doctor for a new patient exam. "It was a regular appointment, but the doctor heard something unusual with her stethoscope, so she scheduled an echocardiogram test for me at North Valley Hospital." Just thirty days and several appointments later, McElrath had heart surgery at Kalispell Regional Medical Center to replace a tight heart valve.

"First of all, the quality of health care in the valley — at all facilities from my doctor's office to North Valley Hospital to Rocky Mountain Heart & Lung and KRMC — was exceptional. Being new here, I was amazed and very grateful that we have access to such high-quality care. You often hear people remark about the skilled physicians and great medical care in the Flathead, and now I know that to be true."

McElrath went back and forth between North Valley Hospital in Whitefish, where he lives, and the specialist appointments in Kalispell. "My heart is healthy again, and I owe that to the excellent health care system we have here," said McElrath. He shares his experience with all who will listen, including his friends out of state and abroad. "They are surprised we have such high-quality care here, so I'm proud of that, as a community member."

"From the echocardiogram at NVH to surgery at KRMC, there was a seamless transition of care between doctors and facilities. The communication between all providers was incredibly quick, accurate, and helpful. To a patient like me, that's impressive and reassuring."  
- Bob McElrath

Doug Nelson, MD, vice president of medical affairs at Kalispell Regional Healthcare, explains additional benefits that the hospitals have seen from the affiliation. "This summer, KRMC had a very high number of patients in the hospital, leading to a situation in which we really had no available beds to serve patients needing care," he says. "We worked with the staff at North Valley Hospital to hospitalize several patients there. This ease in transition and availability was of great assistance to our teams during the busy season."

"From a patient safety and health care outcome perspective, communication between providers is essential," says Dr. Cohen. "The affiliation has dramatically improved both the quantity and quality of communications between providers in the system at all levels. That improved communication helps us make sure each patient gets the right care, in the right amount, at the right time."

- Jason Cohen, MD