

# MD *journal*

THE MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
WESLEY LONG COMMUNITY HOSPITAL  
THE WOMEN'S HOSPITAL OF GREENSBORO  
ANNIE PENN HOSPITAL  
MOSES CONE HEALTH SYSTEM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER  
LEBAUER HEALTHCARE



*Marie-Lyne Lavoie, MD, sits at the console of the da Vinci Surgical System, which she uses to perform minimally invasive gynecological surgeries.*

## DaVinci Robot Now Used in Gynecological Surgeries

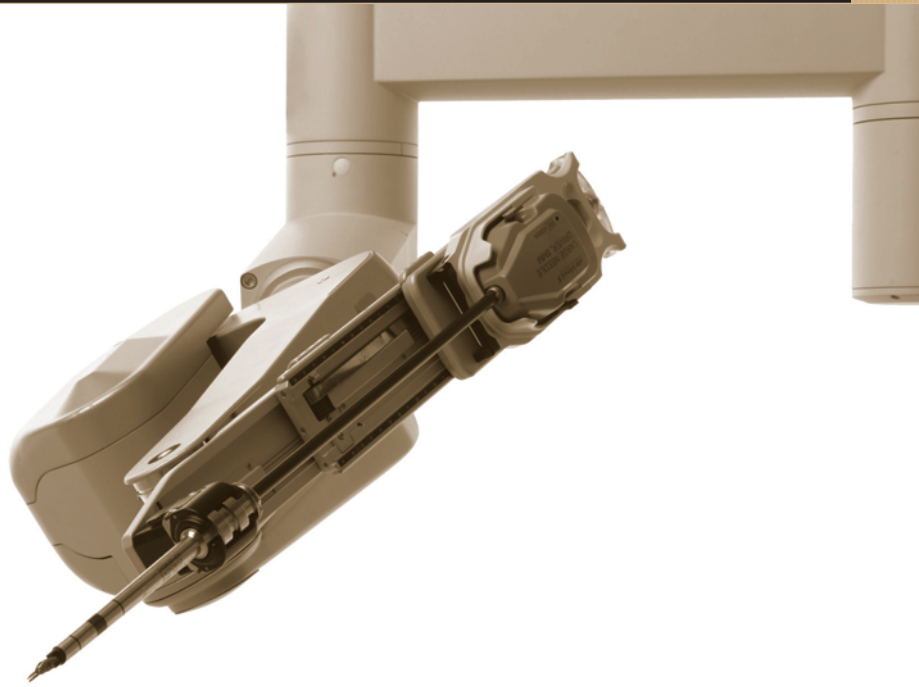
*Wesley Long Community Hospital is the first facility in the Piedmont Triad to use the da Vinci Surgical System to perform robotically assisted minimally invasive gynecological surgeries in cases that do not involve cancer.*

The surgical procedures include hysterectomy, myomectomy, oophorectomy and treatment of endometriosis, along with colposacropexy, which is done for pelvic organ descent, or prolapse.

The system offers advantages in these cases, including less bleeding, less risk of complications and a faster recovery, according to **Marie-Lyne Lavoie, MD**, an obstetrician and gynecologist with Wendover OB/GYN & Infertility.

For now, Lavoie is the only physician who is using the technology in gynecological surgeries. She began using the da Vinci system in late March and has done 20 procedures so far. In late September, **Sandra Rivard, MD**, an obstetrician and gynecologist with Central Carolina Obstetrics and Gynecology, a division of Piedmont Healthcare for Women, was expected to begin using the system.

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Lavoie says that the robotics are particularly helpful in more challenging cases, such as with obese or elderly patients.

The da Vinci system offers better access to the operating field in obese patients because the surgeon is seated at a computer console as robotic arms hold the instruments. That translates into a better experience for the surgeon and a better surgical outcome for the patient.

In cases of colposacropexy, which is often present in elderly patients, Lavoie used to make a long incision but can now do the procedure with minimally invasive robotic surgery.

Minimally invasive surgery first became possible about 20 years ago with the development of laparoscopy, which involves inserting video cameras into small incisions to show the interior of the body, along with instruments that can be manipulated to carry out surgical procedures. But laparoscopy has some limitations and can only be used in a relatively small number of surgical procedures.

With laparoscopy, surgeons see the operating field on a two-dimensional monitor and have limited hand movements. By comparison, the da Vinci system gives a 3-D view of the operating field, seven degrees of hand movement and computer-controlled movements that replicate a surgeon's hand dexterity.

"The patient is going to have less pain, a shorter recovery, and get home and back to her daily activities much earlier," Lavoie says. "There are advantages to the patient when the surgeon can see better and has better instruments. There's less risk of complications and less risk of trauma for the more difficult cases. And because there is less bleeding, you get back to your same energy level faster."

**Paul A. Jeffrey**, *Vice President/Administrator, Wesley Long Community Hospital*, says the da Vinci system is another sign of the commitment Moses Cone Health System has to provide the best patient care.

"It is improving our community in providing quality care and using technology to our benefit," Jeffrey says. "More importantly, it is a benefit to the patient themselves, to help them go back to work faster and be able to enjoy life and go back into the community again."

For referring physicians in the community, having new technology that offers more precise surgery means better patient satisfaction, Jeffrey says.

Tammy Shaughnessy, who is a registered nurse, had a hysterectomy with bilateral removal of her ovaries. She says that Lavoie told her she would be up and around in three days – and she was. By comparison, Shaughnessy has a friend who had the same procedure done with laparoscopy and was nowhere near the same point of recovery in three weeks that Shaughnessy was in three days.

"I am back to normal – grocery shopping, walking, cooking, cleaning house – and I feel the best I have ever felt," Shaughnessy says. "I was back at church after the first week. On a scale of one to five, I am at a five. The recovery time has been remarkable."

