



“This has been a huge win for our facility! We are now a World- Class Aquatic Center! It’s a no-brainer.”

Valley Health Wellness & Fitness Center opened its doors in October 2007 and is part of the Valley Health System based in Winchester, Virginia. From the start, it has been a Medical Fitness Center and is three times certified by the Medical Fitness Association (MFA) as a Certified Medical Fitness Facility. Medically integrated health and fitness centers are defining the future of professionally administered programs and services to an aging population. They are improving outcomes for clients/patients with chronic diseases and multiple risk factors. Medical fitness centers utilize exercise as the method or medicine to promote health benefits and support preventative care while traditional gyms focus on physical fitness and popular exercise techniques. In 2017 Valley Health not only won the **Certified Medical Fitness Facility of the Year Award** from the MFA but also, Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) Platinum Well Workplace Award and two individual awards from the MFA: Medical Fitness Director, Leader of the Year Award to **Jeff Jeran, Corporate Director**, and the Rising Star Award to Greg Brondos, Sales Lead. Add to that, honorable mentions in the preceding two years. Wow, what a track record!



In the aquatic's arena, Valley Health has two bodies of water; a lap pool with 92,603 gallons and therapy pool with 29,535 gallons; and prior to COVID-19, they had 6,000 members with an average age of 56 years old and saw an average of 340,000 member visits per year. It is an all-inclusive medical fitness center that houses Fitness Center, Out-Patient Rehabilitation Services, and a complete Wellness Services department focusing on Valley Health's 6,000+ healthcare employees and the community members with Health Coaches and a Registered Dietitian.

Earlier this year, during the COVID-19 shutdown, they very smartly used the time to upgrade their pool as a surprise for members when they returned. I don't think I have ever seen a project come together quite that quickly. Timothy and I sat down with Jeff Jeran to discuss his experience with the project from installation in May 2020 to feedback he currently gets from his members.

Timothy and Jeff met in 2014 at FISA East; Timothy visited the facility shortly thereafter to evaluate the pool area for a TMI system. Timothy's first question today was, "Why did you choose to do this now?" Jeff explained that back then (2014), they were working on other capital projects, and he used the time to do his research. At that point, he had not experienced swimming in a salt pool. In the intervening years, Jeff swam in several, and the difference was dramatic, this intrigued him. When the pandemic hit, he realized he had the perfect window to complete this kind of installation even while the pandemic created unique challenges. The result was "most admirable," and it went from design to install in an "awesome amount of time".

Q: Did the fact that you were a medical facility influence your decision?

A: Yes. Being a medical fitness facility, our demographic consists of older individuals with an average age of 56, and chlorine was damaging to their skin! Now they can enjoy their swimming experience without concern about skin reactions.



Jeff Jeran

Q: It's only been a few months, but would you say you made the right call?

A: Yes. It has improved the member experience on the Aquatics side of things. We have always had excellent programming, but adding the TMI Salt Pure® system and controllers to the existing UV systems has made an enormous difference. This is validated by our annual average Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 82%. NPS scoring goes from a negative -50 to 100%; The Net Promoter Score is representative of the percent of customers likely to recommend a company (Promoters) minus the percentage of dissatisfied customers (Detractors). Industry-leading companies have an NPS of 50% or higher.

Q: What about swimmer comments?

A: "Well, the amazing part of this story was that we announced nothing during the closure. When we were able to re-open, our members were surprised by the water. They would ask what we did because the water felt so incredible, did we drain the pools? We purposefully delayed the announcement to members so we could surprise them, and we have only had positive comments even from those members who typically tend to complain."



Q: I understand it is difficult to predict at this time due to COVID-19, but have you seen an increase in pool usage and/or membership?

A: Yes, we are not advertising, and as we work to encourage members to return, the members who do return are telling their friends about the pools. Honestly, we are making more sales than we expected. People aren't afraid to come mostly because of the Salt Pure® environment!"

Q: Let's talk about the TMI system as a whole. What benefits do you see?

A: The entire system is excellent including the Bridging Binder®, which is super ideal, especially with no face-to-face, which was delayed due to COVID. Virtual Training was hugely important, and then there is zLOG®, your software. Which is one of the reasons I decided to go with TMI. The controllers feel like they are "plug and play" in comparison to what I had before. The system was commissioned on May 04th, and I have not had to do anything. Previously, I was constantly checking and adjusting. To be honest, I almost forget, I have a pool here. It is self-maintaining. The controllers stay calibrated whereas previously (and it was not an old controller), I was calibrating at least once per week, especially the pH; I was cleaning the probes every two weeks to a month. The maintenance was more time consuming, and this has given me an additional half an FTE because I'm not fiddling with the pools. Your on-site training visit was beneficial, and I learned more in 4 hours than I learned in years."

Q: You previously had a UV system, did the Salt Pure® system make a difference to the air quality?

A: Yes, the smell was a surprise. Before we added the Salt Pure® system, we didn't have a massive problem with chloramines, but you could still smell the pool. *The air is so much fresher, and the feel, smell, and clarity of the water is incredible!*



Q: What would you say to another MFA member who is considering an upgrade?

A: "Don't get hung up on price. The member experience, the payback, add to that the member retention and the new members, not to mention the decrease in chemical costs, all this will more than pay for your system."



Our system at Valley Health Wellness will pay for itself in less than a year or two. How much can I make by increasing member satisfaction and decreasing costs, it's a no brainer!"

Q: Last words?

A: "This has been a big win for our center. **We are now offering World-Class water to our members.** As an operator of pools for 16 years, I had never worked with salt, and in my 17th year, I now see what the hype is about, and I can't believe I didn't do it sooner. I'm currently working on another location with two pools, and we intend to include the TMI system at that location."

If you are interested in learning more about Valley Health Wellness and Fitness, located in Virginia, go to <https://www.vhwellfit.com>.

For more information on TMI Sustainable Aquatics click [here](#). If you would like to contact TMI, email timothy@tmiaquatics.com.

*TMI Sustainable Aquatics
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