

Employee Healthbeat

From the desk of Sara Smith, LPN, infection prevention

Holiday travel tips

Holiday travel often includes visiting loved ones or taking a vacation. Whether you're seeking a winter wonderland or escaping subzero temperatures, follow these travel tips, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for healthy and safe holiday travel.

Before travel tips

Check CDC's webpage for your destination to see what vaccines or medicines you may need and what diseases or health risks are a concern at your destination.

Make sure you are up-to-date on all of your routine vaccines. Routine vaccinations protect you from infectious diseases, such as measles that can spread quickly in groups of unvaccinated people. Many diseases prevented by routine vaccination are not common in the United States but are still common in other countries. Get up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines and get a seasonal flu vaccine.

Prepare a travel health kit with items you may need, especially those

items that may be difficult to find at your destination. Include your prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines in your travel health kit, and take enough to last your entire trip, plus extra in case of travel delays. You may also want to pack insect repellent, sunscreen, aloe, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, water disinfection tablets and your health insurance card.

During your trip

Choose safe transportation. Always wear a seat belt, and children should ride in car seats. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among healthy travelers. Be alert when crossing the street, especially in countries where people drive on the left side of the road.

Protect yourself from the sun. Apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher when traveling. Protecting yourself from the sun isn't just for tropical beaches—you can get a sunburn even if it's cloudy or cold. You are at the highest risk for UV exposure when you are traveling during summer months, near the equator, at high altitudes, or between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. When traveling in cold weather or climates, wear warm clothing in several loose layers.

Consideration for warm weather travel

If you are traveling in hot weather or in a hot climate, wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

Your chances of getting heat stroke, heat exhaustion, or other heat-related illness during travel depend on your destination, activities, level of hydration and age. Travelers who

relax on a beach or by a pool are unlikely to get heat-related illness.

Use insect repellent and take other steps to avoid bug bites. Bugs, including mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, and flies, can spread diseases such as malaria, yellow fever, Zika, dengue, chikungunya and Lyme. These bugs are typically more active during warm weather.

After travel

If you traveled and feel sick, particularly if you have a fever, talk to a health care provider and tell them about your travel.

Information from this article is from the CDC. Source: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/traveling-holidays> ●●●

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In the News

From the desk of Katie Allen Wagner, communications and foundation

Norton Regional Health Foundation awards scholarships

The Norton Regional Health Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to support the enhancement of quality health care for the residents of Norton County and surrounding counties, awards scholarships to students pursuing degrees in nursing and other medical fields. The Foundation awarded the following scholarships for the Fall 2022 semester:

- Angela Sorter (pictured below, left), Norton, awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the Warren and Jean White Nursing Scholarship Fund and a \$1,000 scholarship from the George Jones Nursing Scholarship Fund. Angela is a nursing major at Colby Community College.
- Shelby Fisher (pictured below, right), Norton, awarded a \$500 scholarship from the Marvin and Mary Wudtke Health Care Scholarship Fund. Shelby currently works in the Norton County Hospital Rehabilitation department and is a student at Colby Community College with plans to work in the dental field.

The Norton Regional Health Foundation at Norton County Hospital awards academic scholarships each year to students who are enrolled in college courses, are seeking degrees in medicine and express interest in working in Norton County in the future. It is through donor support that these scholarships can be awarded, and the Foundation is grateful to donors for their contributions. ●●●



Norton Regional Health Foundation funds several hospital improvements

Thanks to generous donations and grant funding, the Norton Regional Health Foundation has financially supported several recent needs for Norton County Hospital totaling nearly \$81,000. Specifics of these needs include:

- Norton County Match Day fundraising from 2021, along with additional fundraising and a \$10,000 grant from the Dane G. Hansen Foundation, allowed for the purchase of five new inpatient beds and one new obstetrics bed. This project totaled \$45,000, and all beds were in place by spring 2022.
- Norton County Match Day fundraising from 2022, combined with other gifts, allowed for the purchase of a portable ultrasound machine and video laryngoscope. The ultrasound machine is used mainly in the outpatient clinic, while the video laryngoscope serves as a second instrument so one could be in place in the Emergency department, while the other is in the Surgery department. The two purchased combined total \$22,600.
- A pain management table purchased in 2021 for \$9,800 is currently being used for epidural procedures monthly. This purchase was made possible through unrestricted donations to the Foundation.
- Roughly \$3,500 was spent in 2022 to purchase TelePaks to allow for better patient monitoring. *Continued on p. 4*

Norton Regional HEALTH FOUNDATION

CT Scanner Fundraising Project



"At Norton County Hospital, we strive to be as progressive as possible and keep up with new technologies. We know a new CT scanner is needed within the next 1 to 2 years, so we are planning now to make this major purchase. A new CT Scanner would have numerous patient benefits, including quicker, more precise results. This new equipment is needed to continue to keep the best care close to home for patients and help us save lives."

Mitch Bartels, Director of Radiology



Community Service Tax Credits

- The Norton Regional Health Foundation at Norton County Hospital has been awarded \$150,000 in state income tax credits through the Kansas Dept. of Commerce!
- These donations will support the new CT Scanner.
- Donations can be made in tax years 2022 and 2023, and they are being accepted now.
- Minimum \$250 donation is required.
- Rural area = 70% credit example
 - \$1,000 donation made to Norton Regional Health Foundation
 - \$700 received in state income tax credits
 - \$300 remaining is eligible for a federal income tax deduction

Interested in contributing to this project? We'd love to hear from you!

Contact Katie Wagner, Foundation Executive Director, to make your pledge.

kallen@ntcohosp.com
785-874-2205

In the News

From the desk of Katie Allen Wagner, communications and foundation

Foundation funds several hospital improvements (from p. 2)

“On behalf of the Norton Regional Health Foundation Board of Directors, I want to thank the donors who have helped make these purchases possible for Norton County Hospital,” said Katie Allen Wagner, Foundation Executive Director. “Every gift adds up to make a huge impact to support our local health care system, and our local economy. We need tools in place to support our wonderful patients and staff, and purchases such as these allow our hospital to continue to provide the best care close to home for our friends, family, co-workers and neighbors.”

The Norton Regional Health Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to support the enhancement of quality health care for the residents of Norton County and surrounding counties. It was established in 2016, and since then it has worked to fund hospital equipment, developed a scholarship program for students in the medical field, and collaborated with Live Well Norton to complete community health projects such as Norton Kids’ Café and many other community health endeavors through the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas’ *Pathways to a Healthy Kansas* program.

For more information about the Norton Regional Health Foundation, or to learn how to make a tax-deductible gift, visit the Foundation tab of the Norton County Hospital website. ●●●

New outpatient rehab location expands therapy options

Norton County Hospital’s Rehabilitation department has made the move to a new location, but there’s much more to the transition than just a physical address. For example, the department offers virtual visits, as well as more space and additional equipment. An added benefit is that patients can pull right up to the door in their vehicles. Department manager Kellen Jacobs said this move provides an opportunity to expand upon what outpatient rehab has offered up until this point.

“We have great staff, wonderful therapists who treat patients really, really well,” Jacobs said. “We’ve always had very high patient satisfaction survey results.”

Norton County Hospital Rehabilitation is primarily an outpatient therapy operation. The facility offers physical, occupational and speech therapy. Therapists also treat patients who are being treated in the hospital.

“In a rural health clinic, you kind of have to be a ‘jack of all trades,’ and all of our therapists definitely are. I’m going to speak on physical therapy primarily, because that’s my role. We see every diagnosis, every possible condition that somebody might have. We are primarily manual therapy-based and therapeutic exercise instruction-based therapists,” said Jacobs.

With a virtual component, patients are able to mix in virtual visits with in-person appointments. People may feel more comfortable checking in virtually, even if the threat of COVID has eased some. This option is also desirable for patients who have to travel quite a distance to the hospital. And, it’s a great advantage for people who need an element of flexibility to accommodate their daily schedules. Sometimes, a preferred therapist is not available at the facility—but that person may be available for a virtual session. This helps with

program adherence. The more a patient “likes” a particular therapist, the greater the chance that patient will keep up with his or her therapy.

Fortunately, there’s real no difference between scheduling a virtual visit and an in-person one. Patients can call the outpatient rehab office as they would normally do. If a patient is interested in doing virtual therapy, the receptionist will get him or her in touch with the patient liaison. Norton County Hospital Rehabilitation enlists a third-party company called Joint Recovery Services to help provide therapy, because the company has a specific platform Norton County uses.

“The patient liaison will contact that patient prior to the appointment and make sure they have all the necessary things lined up before that first visit. For example, making sure their technology is acceptable and they’ve run the patients through a couple trials,” said Jacobs. “That way, on that very first visit everything goes nice and smoothly. For the patient, really nothing changes.”

Patients can find the new location at 711 N. Norton Ave. Patients can make an appointment by calling 785-874-2222. ●●●



In the Spotlight

Cerner is coming in the new year!

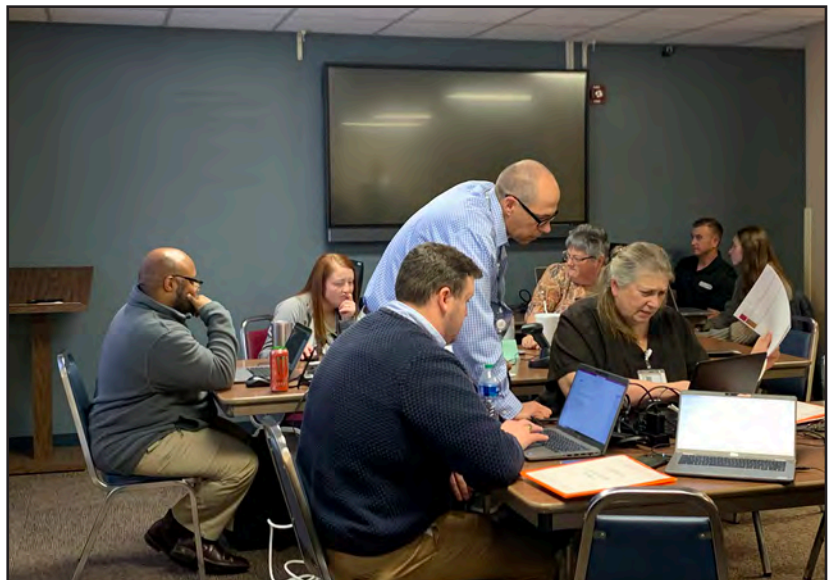
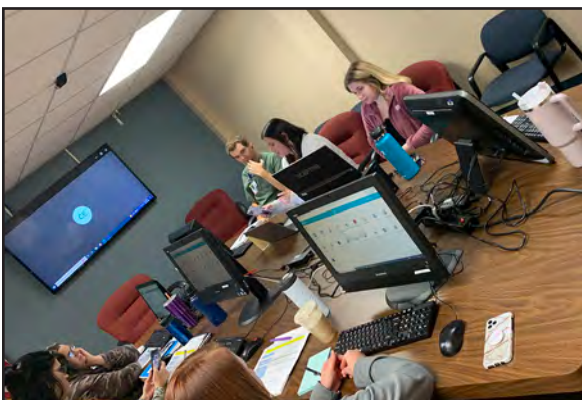
Submitted by Klare Bliss, Chief Information Officer

In the spring of 2021, Norton County Hospital was informed by our current electronic health record vendor CPSI Centriq that at the end of the year in 2022 security and regulatory updates would no longer be supported. With this news in hand, NCH pulled together and took the news as an opportunity to seek out an EHR that would better serve and support the facility and staff needs. After several demos in October 2021, it was presented to move to Cerner Community Works, and the NCH Board of Trustees approved.

Since the date of approval, staff members have been working to pull data from our current EHR to prepare for our new system. Following along with the Cerner timeline, the conversion officially kicked off in August 2022 with several events scheduled through September to December and a “go live” date anticipated January 23, 2023. NCH staff members are working hard to make sure this system is set up, users are trained and processes are tested.

A new Patient Portal opportunity will also come with this new system, which will allow patients to be connected to their health care record and their providers. Please be looking for updates coming soon on the Portal.

During our “go live” time, you may notice some areas decrease their patient volume so that our team and our patients can benefit with the new system. Cerner is a top-of-the-line system that will meet the needs of Norton County Hospital to provide better care and create an encompassing experience for our staff and patients. I greatly appreciate all our staff and the work each person is doing in “building better together.” We look forward to the New Year! ●●●



CEO Corner

From the desk of Brian Kirk, Chief Executive Officer



We have a lot to be thankful for during this holiday season. We have a fantastic medical staff that includes Dr. Joshua Gaede; Dr. Miranda McKellar; Dr. Theresia Neill; Dr. Dakota Dreher; Jonna Inman, APRN; Kristin Vogel, PA-C; Gino Salerno, PA-C; Rebecca Kahrs, APRN; and Jedidiah Kane, CRNA. We have a great nursing group and awesome employees making up our team. We've also had some success hiring new members to our workforce. We are grateful to our Norton Regional Health Foundation, which funded several different equipment needs totaling more than \$81,000 and is in the process of selling state income tax credits to fund a new CT scanner as part of the Kansas Department of Commerce's Community Service Tax Credit Program.

Our goal is to make Norton County Hospital and Clinic the best place to work, receive health care and practice medicine. There are many good and positive things happening here, that move us toward our mission to meet the evolving health care needs of our region and provide an exceptional staff and patient experience to empower health and wellness at any

stage of life. We appreciate all of our employees and were pleased to offer them a ham or turkey this year for the holidays. Kudos to Brenda Dole, dietary manager, and her department for helping to facilitate the order and distribution.

NCH is making great progress toward our ongoing financial viability, with operations improvement as compared to our prior fiscal year totaling more than \$1 million. It is not easy for any organization to change, improve and enhance. Many thanks to everyone who is making this happen. Let's continue to contribute and collaborate to make Norton County Hospital the best we possibly can! ●●●

Recent Milestones; Congrats!

September 2022

Sara Smith	15 years
Dr. Josh Gaede	2 years
Dr. Miranda McKellar	2 years
Dr. Theresia Neill	2 years
Sara Richmeier	2 years
Gino Salerno	2 years
Kellie Belleau	1 year

October 2022

Kristin Vogel	15 years
Travis Nykamp	8 years
Sarah Mohr	5 years
Todd Boller	4 years
Kayla Broeckelman	4 years
Mackenzie Blecha	1 year
Caryl Hale	1 year
Brian Kirk	1 year
Chaylee Frack	1 year

November 2022

Eva Harrington	24 years
Shawnee Branek	21 years
Jennifer Wildeman	16 years
Tracey Hartzog	10 years
Rita Conrad	8 years
Kelsee Hildebrand	3 years
Kylie Saville	2 years

NCH Blood Drive - Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023

Who can you help by donating blood?

Every day, blood donors help patients of all ages and needs: accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those battling cancer. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.

Cancer patients

Ideal donation type: Platelets donation, because certain cancers and cancer treatments prevent patients from producing their own. Ideal blood type: A positive/negative, B positive, O positive, AB positive/negative

Trauma patients

Ideal donation type: Power Red, because red cells carry oxygen throughout the body and are frequently given to trauma and surgery patients. Ideal blood type:

- For Power Red: O positive/negative, B negative, A negative
- For AB Elite: AB positive/negative

Sickle cell patients

Ideal Donation Type: Whole blood or Power Red, especially from blood donors of African descent. Patients with sickle cell disease, who are predominantly Black, can require multiple blood transfusions every year. Donated blood must very closely match to the donor's blood type to avoid transfusion-related complications. Since most patients with sickle cell disease are Black or African American, the most compatible blood type match is most often from a donor of the same race or ethnicity.

Ideal blood type: Type O, especially from blood donors who are Black.

Continued on p. 10

Other Celebrations

Recognition weeks

Norton County Hospital recognized many employees (some are pictured below and at right) for their hard work and dedication during their respective national celebration weeks, some of which included:

- National Healthcare Environmental Services & Housekeeping Week
- National Rehabilitation Awareness Week & Physical Therapy Month
- National Surgical Technologists Week
- National Healthcare Food Service Week
- National Healthcare Supply Chain Week
- Emergency Nurses Week
- National Healthcare Facilities & Engineering Week
- Medical Ultrasound Awareness Month & National Radiologic Technology Week
- National Respiratory Care Week
- National Healthcare Quality Week
- Perioperative Nurses Week
- National Nurse Practitioner & Physician Assistant Weeks ●●●



NCH awarded for teamwork

The Kansas Hospital Association is pleased to recognize and honor excellence in teamwork by health care workers. New in 2022, the Excellence in Teamwork Award focused on teamwork around workforce strategies. Ensuring a robust and resilient health care workforce and increasing workforce supply through a pipeline of talent is essential to providing optimal health in Kansas. The award recognizes a team of employees, providers or volunteers who have made a significant contribution to the wellbeing, retention or recruitment of health care workers at their facility or in Kansas.

Members of the Kansas Hospital Association recognized Norton County Hospital with the Excellence in Teamwork Award during the KHA Awards Ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 8. Part of this recognition included the creation of a video highlighting the Norton County Hospital Recruitment and Retention Committee and their work to address workforce challenges. This multi-disciplinary team demonstrated excellence in teamwork as they worked together to address challenges with creative solutions for recruitment and retention. These included establishing a tuition reimbursement program, restructuring merit and pay models, and improving employee recognition.

The Kansas Hospital Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization existing to be the leading advocate and resource for members. KHA membership includes 237 member facilities, of which 123 are full-service, community hospitals. Founded in 1910, KHA's vision is *Optimal Health for Kansans*. Source: KHA news release

Other Celebrations



New x-ray equipment is here!

Norton County Hospital would again like to thank the Norton County Commissioners for granting \$300,000 to the hospital. The funds were used to purchase updated Radiology equipment, including a digital radiography x-ray room and a digital portable x-ray machine. The equipment was put into place this fall! (Installation at right.)



Annual soup and dessert cook-off

Thanks to those who contributed an entry in the soup and dessert cook-off, hosted by the NCH Employee Committee on Oct. 26th. Brenda Dole won the soup category, and Carol Richmeier won the dessert category. Thanks also to those who sampled the entries! This is a great fundraiser to support employees.

October was Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is a good time to promote the importance of early detection and mammography.



Other Celebrations

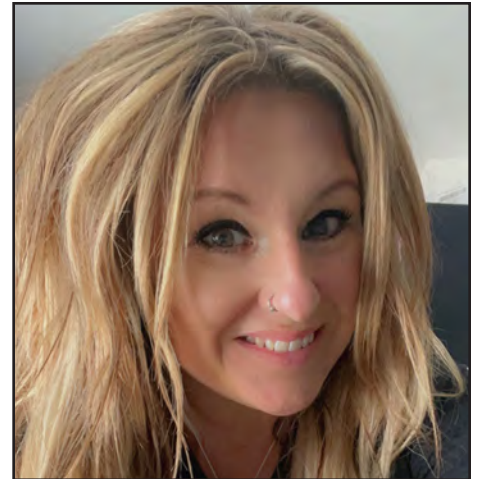
Employees of the Month

Todd Boller, Radiology: Todd was the September 2022 NCH Employee of the Month. His nomination read: "Todd is one of the nicest people at NCH! He'll do anything to help patients or other staff. He does a great job for the Radiology department, and NCH is lucky to have him here!" *Pictured below, left*

Deanna Hawks, Medical Clinic Nurse: Deanna was the October 2022 NCH Employee of the Month. Her nomination read: "Deanna works diligently to get medications and imaging prior authorized. She is always willing to help out with shots, phone calls and putting patients back. She is friendly to everyone! She works hard to be a smiling face and have a positive attitude to co-workers and patients." *Pictured below, center*

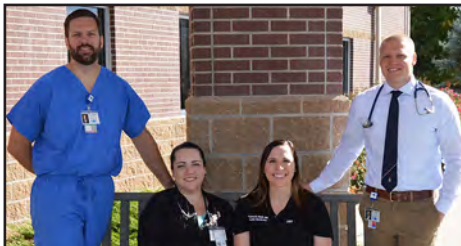
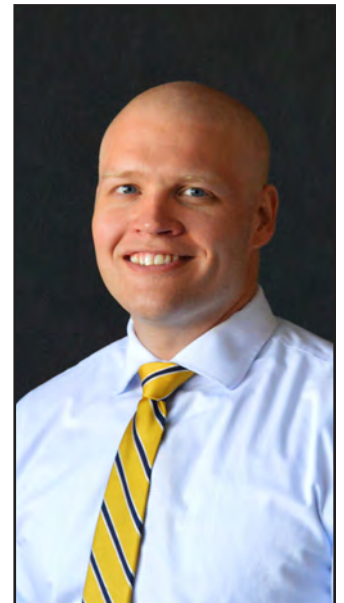
Tanya Guthrie, Nursing: Tanya was the November 2022 NCH Employee of the Month. Her nomination read: "Tanya is a pleasure to be around and an all-around great person! She's one person I know I can always count on regardless of the situation!" *Pictured below, right*

Congratulations to these employees!



Welcome, Dr. Dreher!

Dr. Dakota Dreher began working at NCH on Sept. 1st! We featured him in a recent video shoot, along with our other providers at Norton Medical Clinic. We are thrilled to have you on the team, Dr. Dreher!



Blood Drive (from p. 6)

Burn patients

Ideal donation type: AB Elite, because plasma helps maintain blood pressure and other vital functions. Ideal blood type: AB positive/negative. Type AB, the universal plasma donor's blood can be given to any patient needing plasma. Make an even greater impact for patients in need by giving an AB Elite plasma donation.

Patients with chronic diseases

Ideal donation type: A single whole blood donation can help more than one person. Ideal blood type: All blood types are needed. *Source: American Red Cross website*

Human Resources

*From the desk of Shannan Hempler,
human resources*

Health insurance open enrollment

Open Enrollment for 2023 is Dec. 8 & 9

Our representatives from HUB International will be onsite Thursday, December 8th and Friday, December 9th for open enrollment meetings and sign up. All insurance coverages and options will remain the same for 2023.

NCH health insurance employee premium cost will stay the same & HSA matching contribution doubles

NCH will stay with United Healthcare for 2023. The premium totals are increasing 7.5% for the new year. The Board approved the proposal for NCH to pay for the full increase and keep the cost to the employee the same. The Board also approved the proposal to double the matching HSA funding. This means that NCH will match up to \$40 of the employee's contribution per paycheck. Employees will be eligible to receive up to \$960 in matching funds for 2023 (Employee's \$960 + NCH's \$960 = \$1,920 to pay medical bills).

HUB received bids from BCBS for a similar plan design (more restriction on co-pays) and a self-funded plan. These bids came in at 22.5% increase and 47.1% increase, respectively. ●●●

Cost & Savings—Examples of Employee Only Health Insurance Policies					
Below are a few high level examples to consider when choosing health insurance benefit levels. Please know that co-pay payments for office visits and medications through the year also play a factor as you pay bills through the year.					
Total Out-of-Pocket Bills	\$10,000.00	*Applied to the \$1500 & \$3500 plans			
HSA "Matching" Contributions	-\$960.00	*HDHP only—match to employee's contribution up to \$40 per check			
High Deductible Out-of-Pocket	\$9,040.00	*HDHP only—bills above the eligible HSA match			
	Cost per Paycheck	Total Annual Premiums	Out-of-Pocket Deductible (*less HSA match for HD plan)	40% Co-Ins after meet deductible	Annual Cost of Premiums + \$10,000 of Bills
High Deductible \$6350 max	\$10.53	\$252.72	\$5,390.00	\$0.00	\$5,642.72
\$3500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$94.42	\$2,266.08	\$3,500.00	\$2,600.00	\$8,366.08
\$1500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$110.43	\$2,650.32	\$1,500.00	\$3,400.00	\$7,550.32
Total Out-of-Pocket Bills	\$5,000.00	*Applied to the \$1500 & \$3500 plans			
HSA "Matching" Contributions	-\$960.00	*HDHP only—match to employee's contribution up to \$40 per check			
High Deductible Out-of-Pocket	\$4,040.00	*HDHP only—bills above the eligible HSA match			
	Cost per Paycheck	Total Annual Premiums	Out-of-Pocket Deductible (*less HSA match for HD plan)	40% Co-Ins after meet deductible	Annual Cost of Premiums + \$5,000 of Bills
High Deductible \$6350 max	\$10.53	\$252.72	\$4,040.00	\$0.00	\$4,292.72
\$3500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$94.42	\$2,266.08	\$3,500.00	\$600.00	\$6,366.08
\$1500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$110.43	\$2,650.32	\$1,500.00	\$1,400.00	\$5,550.32
Total Out-of-Pocket Bills	\$2,000.00	*Applied to the \$1500 & \$3500 plans			
HSA "Matching" Contributions	-\$960.00	*HDHP only—match to employee's contribution up to \$40 per check			
High Deductible Out-of-Pocket	\$1,040.00	*HDHP only—bills above the eligible HSA match			
	Cost per Paycheck	Total Annual Premiums	Out-of-Pocket Deductible (*less HSA match for HD plan)	40% Co-Ins after meet deductible	Annual Cost of Premiums + \$2,000 of Bills
High Deductible \$6350 max	\$10.53	\$252.72	\$1,040.00	\$0.00	\$1,292.72
\$3500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$94.42	\$2,266.08	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$4,266.08
\$1500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$110.43	\$2,650.32	\$1,500.00	\$200.00	\$4,350.32
Total Out-of-Pocket Bills	\$1,000.00	*Applied to the \$1500 & \$3500 plans			
HSA "Matching" Contributions	-\$960.00	*HDHP only—match to employee's contribution up to \$40 per check			
High Deductible Out-of-Pocket	\$40.00	*HDHP only—bills above the eligible HSA match			
	Cost per Paycheck	Total Annual Premiums	Out-of-Pocket Deductible (*less HSA match for HD plan)	40% Co-Ins after meet deductible	Annual Cost of Premiums + \$1,000 of Bills
High Deductible \$6350 max	\$10.53	\$252.72	\$40.00	\$0.00	\$292.72
\$3500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$94.42	\$2,266.08	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,266.08
\$1500 Deductible + 40% Co-Ins	\$110.43	\$2,650.32	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,650.32



Human Resources

From the desk of Shannan Hempler, human resources

Just for fun—9 weird and wacky holiday traditions you'll only get if you're from Kansas

Have you ever wondered if your family celebrates the holidays like others across the state? Of course, every Kansas family will have its own traditions about food, events, and when exactly you open your gifts, but here are nine Christmas traditions from across Kansas that we can really get behind as a state.

1. Putting up the tree after Thanksgiving dinner

I don't know whether this is just a way to celebrate the holidays while your family is already together, but not too many people wait much longer than Thanksgiving to put up their tree. Of course, what's wrong with enjoying it for the whole month?

2. Stringing popcorn around the tree

Plenty of finger-pokes and broken snacks later, you have a beautiful (and edible) garland to decorate your tree.

3. A Christmas Pickle

Whoever finds the Christmas Pickle gets a special gift left by St. Nick, or good fortune for the year to come.

4. Adding small presents IN the tree instead of underneath

Ornaments used to all be handmade, and candles were used to light the tree instead of electric lights. However, for some families, the tradition of adding little presents to the tree has remained throughout the years and adds the fun of a present hunt to the celebration.

5. The Fairy Princess

For the Kansans living by Kansas City, the Fairy Princess is a tradition dating back to 1936, when it was started in Kline's as a secular alternative to Santa Claus. Of course, it's now one of the most sought-after events during the holiday season, and tickets sell out insanely fast.

6. White Elephant family exchanges

When big families get together for Christmas, it's hard on your mind and your wallet to get something for everyone. Instead, many Kansas families take a different route and opt for a gift exchange, where everyone picks at random and gets something they would have never thought of.

7. Going a little nuts with the lights

Some organizations string up more than a million holiday lights for charity or just plain show. Of course, it's not like we're complaining, but we do get a little crazy about them.

8. Saint Lucia's Day (Lindsborg)

This town's settlers established a whole community of Swedish traditions, including the festival of St. Lucia, the emblem of light. Women are adorned with a wreath topped with candles, in honor of St. Lucia, a woman who brought food and supplies to Christians hiding in catacombs, her crown lighting the way and leaving both hands free to carry as much as possible.





9. The Early Gift

For some families, opening one present on Christmas Eve night has become a common event. Some take it further and gift Christmas pajamas the night before, so they have something special to wear while they sleep in preparation for Santa's arrival and Christmas morning. *Source: Kansas Seasonal, December 22, 2017* ●●●






Meet the Team!

Norton County Hospital is excited to announce our new employees. Please say hello, and welcome them to our team!

	<p><u>Ella Carter</u> CNA – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on August 30, 2022</p>
	<p><u>Janae Castillo</u> LPN – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on August 31, 2022</p>
	<p><u>Delaine Sullivan</u> Clinic Registration – Full Time Joined the NCH Team on September 13, 2022</p>
	<p><u>Jett Schmidtberger</u> CPTA – Rehabilitation – Full Time Joined the NCH Team on September 19, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? Grainfield, KS Tell us about your family. Mom (Jennifer), Dad (Joe), 2 older brothers (Jordan & Jace) Your dream job as a child: Health care worker How do you enjoy a day off? Relax, sleep in, watch TV Your at-bat song would be: Thunderstruck You're inspired by: My dad Your favorite 15-minute break snack: fruit or Dot's pretzels Your superhero kryptonite: Romance movies What excites you most about your new position? Working with people and helping them get better/stronger</p>

	<p><u>Angela Sorter</u> LPN – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on September 23, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? Norton, KS</p>
	<p><u>Amy Long</u> Patient Financial Counselor Joined the NCH Team on September 26, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? South Central Kansas Tell us about your family. My boyfriend and I have a dog. I have a horse I run barrels on. The weekends are usually spent on the road going to rodeos. Your dream job as a child: Veterinarian/Professional Barrel Racer How do you enjoy a day off? Riding my horses and rodeoing Your at-bat song would be: Rampage by Gravedgr You're inspired by: Tana Poppino, professional barrel racer Your favorite 15-minute break snack: Homemade Rice Crispy Treats Your superhero kryptonite: Broken Heart What excites you most about your new position? Meeting new people</p>
	<p><u>Amanda Weinman</u> CNA – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on October 26, 2022</p>

	<p><u>Lacey Banks</u> Outpatient Registration/Business Office – Full Time Joined the NCH Team on October 26, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? Highland, KS Tell us about your family. I have a son, and 5 nieces and nephews. I am also one of 5 children. Your dream job as a child: Nurse practitioner How do you enjoy a day off? With my son, Barrett You're inspired by: My mom Your favorite 15-minute break snack: Skittles What excites you most about your new position? Meeting new people</p>
	<p><u>Emma Belleau</u> Nurse Aide – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on November 8, 2022</p>
	<p><u>Ainsley Collins</u> CNA – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on November 11, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? Norton, KS Tell us about your family. I have 3 sisters and a Goldenoodle! Your dream job as a child: Doctor How do you enjoy a day off? Sleeping and watching movies Your at-bat song would be: Party Mode by Dustin Lynch You're inspired by: My mom Your favorite 15-minute break snack: Cookies! What excites you most about your new position? Getting to know more people as well as getting experience in a hospital environment.</p>

	<p><u>Lauryn Harding</u> Nurse Aide – Nursing – PRN Joined the NCH Team on November 11, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? Larned, KS Tell us about your family. I live with my mom, Lea, my dad, Shawn, and my brother, Drake. And my dog, Hazel. Your dream job as a child: Pharmacist How do you enjoy a day off? Mostly sleeping and spending time with family Your at-bat song would be: Little Red Wagon by Miranda Lambert You're inspired by: My mom and dad Your favorite 15-minute break snack: PICKLES! Your superhero kryptonite: BUGS THAT FLY! What excites you about your new position: Being with my awesome co-workers and making patients smile</p>
	<p><u>Larkyn Lagge</u> EVS Tech – Full Time Joined the NCH Team on November 17, 2022</p> <p>Where did you grow up? Lincoln, NE/Cheyenne, WY Tell us about your family. I have 2 sisters and 1 brother with 2 nephews and 1 niece. Your dream job as a child: Teacher How do you enjoy a day off? Self-care, relaxing, shopping You're inspired by: My dream career Your favorite 15-minute break snack: Cheddar Jack Cheez-its</p>
	<p><u>Tami Black</u> Cerner Data Entry – PRN Thanks for taking time out of your retirement to help Lab with the Cerner project.</p>

Engage the Community

Community town hall hosted Sept. 27th

Thanks to all attendees and presenters for the town hall meeting on Sept. 27th. Answers to questions posed by the community are available on the NCH website. Thanks also to the Dietary staff members for the yummy treats they prepared!

The next community town hall is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2023, at the Prairie Land Electric Basement in Norton from 5:30-6:30 p.m. A flyer is located on the last page of this newsletter. ●●●

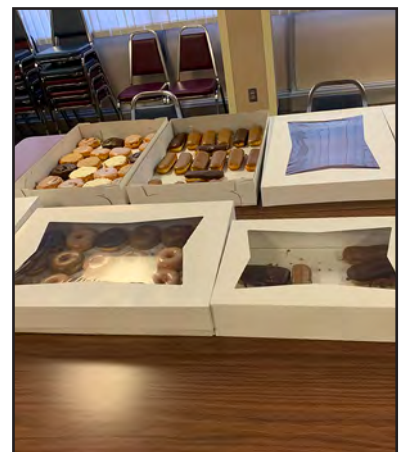
New providers welcomed to the community on Oct. 17th

We officially welcomed Dr. Dakota Dreher; Rebecca Kahrs, APRN; and Jedidiah Kane, CRNA to the community with a reception at the Heaton Building on Oct. 17th. ●●●



NCH hosted Open House on Oct. 28th

NCH hosted an open house on Friday, Oct. 28 for the community to learn about Ambience Counseling Center, meet its staff and find out more about counseling services available at the hospital. Attendees also learned about the new Outpatient Infusion and Wound Care area (located in the former Physical Therapy location) and could tour the new Outpatient Rehab facilities at 711 N. Norton Ave.! ●●●



Engage the Community

We value patient feedback!

Norton Medical Clinic has patient surveys available in each exam room, in addition to the clinic entrance where the drop box is located. Surveys are also available at outpatient registration, underneath the drop box.

Staff are encouraged to ask patients if they would complete a survey about their visit, whether it's at the medical clinic, outpatient clinic, inpatient stay or departmental visit. Patients can always put completed surveys in a drop box at the facility or use a prepaid envelope to mail them back.

Thank you for helping make Norton County Hospital the best it can be! ●●●

Norton Medical Clinic offers extended hours and same-day acute visits

Norton Medical Clinic provides same-day acute care appointments when seeing a provider can't wait. Our providers rotate acute care responsibilities, so while patients may or may not be able to schedule with their primary care provider,

our team will work to get them in with the provider on acute call. More on acute visits below. Appointments are now offered as early as 8 a.m. ●●●


Norton County Hospital hosts Medicare Part D counseling, by appointment

Norton County Hospital has been welcoming Medicare patients to make an appointment for assistance in Part D enrollment, which began on Oct. 15th and ends Dec. 7th for a Jan. 1, 2023 coverage effective date.

Appointments may be made by calling Kelsee Hildebrand, the hospital's case manager, at 785-877-3351. She is accepting appointments Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. during the open enrollment period.

For more information about Medicare, log on to www.medicare.gov.

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UNDERSTANDING ACUTE CARE

Norton Medical Clinic offers same-day acute care appointments. What does that mean?

Acute care is active, short-term treatment for an injury or episode related to illness. Examples may include but are not limited to a viral or bacterial infection, suspected broken bone or sprain, wound treatment or other condition that requires immediate treatment. While urgent care clinics treat acute care needs, Norton Medical Clinic is not an urgent care clinic. We set aside acute appointments daily when our rural health clinic is open to help with these needs. However, if you have a medical emergency, the best route is to call 911 or get to an Emergency department immediately.

Norton County Hospital and Medical Clinic are dedicated to serving your medical needs, at any stage of life!

Call for an appointment, 785-877-3305

Veterans Day Parade

Norton County Hospital had an entry in the annual Veterans Day Parade in Norton on Friday, Nov. 11th. Thanks to Klare Bliss for driving her truck, as well as Julia Thompson and Katie Wagner for helping with the entry!



Bomgaars Ladies Night

Norton Bomgaars hosted its annual Ladies Night on Sunday, Oct. 23rd. Valerie Marble and Allison McChesney were on hand that evening to talk to patrons about mammography. A portion of purchases from that evening will help the mammography program! More to come.

New billboard on display in downtown Norton!



Fall Pumpkin Patch Fun!

Thanks to the NCH Employee Committee for organizing an outing on Sunday, Sept. 25th for staff and their families at Linner's Lil Barn Pumpkin Patch in Beaver City, NE!





COMMUNITY TOWN HALL MEETING

**TUESDAY,
JAN. 17TH
5:30-6:30 P.M.**

If you plan to attend in person, an RSVP is appreciated by Jan. 13th to get a food count. Contact Katie Wagner at the number below or kallen@ntcohosp.com.

More information can be found online at www.ntcohosp.com.

785-877-3351

Join us in person or virtually to learn updates about Norton County Hospital & Norton Medical Clinic! These meetings will be hosted on a quarterly basis.

Two ways to join!



In person

Refreshments will be provided!
Prairie Land Electric Basement
14935 US-36, Norton, KS 67654



Virtually

Join us online; link will be provided prior to the event on the Norton County Hospital & Clinics page ([@nortoncountyhosp](https://twitter.com/nortoncountyhosp)).



At every stage of life, we are here!