

Employee Health Beat

From the desk of Judy Wenzl, BSN, RN, infection prevention

Hand washing: Separating the science from the myths

Myth 1: Antimicrobial soap provides superior hand washing results compared to normal soap

It has been widely accepted that antimicrobial soap is preferred over normal soap for increasing the efficacy of hand washing. Of all the aspects associated with hand washing, the comparison of antimicrobial vs. normal soap has been studied to the greatest extent. The general conclusion is that antimicrobial soap supports a marginal increase in the number of bacteria removed from hands. If high inoculation levels are applied to hands then the removal with antimicrobial soap is statistically significantly compared to normal soap. However, with natural skin microflora, there is no difference between the efficacy of normal and antimicrobial soap. Recent research suggests that antimicrobial soap can be detrimental through disrupting the balance of the skin microflora and irritating the skin. On this basis all the evidence would suggest that antimicrobial soap has no advantages over normal soap.



Myth 2: Warm or hot water is better for hand washing than cool water

The FDA has reviewed the recommended water temperature used for hand washing no less than three times. The results of the deliberations were that 110°F (43°C) should be set as the recommended temperature in the belief a greater proportion of microbes can be removed. However, all the scientific evidence available suggests that water temperature has no effect on the removal of microbes in the range of 4 - 49°C. However, other research in this area has illustrated that water temperature does influence the duration of hand washing with cold or hot water leading to shorter rinse times due to user discomfort.

Myth 3: Paper towels perform better than air dryers

The method used for drying hands following washing is one of the most contentious issues in the hand hygiene arena. The general thought pattern when devising the hand washing guidelines was that hands needed to be dried to prevent acquisition of contamination from surfaces. This is true to a degree, but it should also be noted that hand drying can contribute significantly in reducing microbial levels on hands following washing.

The majority of papers published to date have been pro-paper towels and even the "The Myth Busters" TV show returned

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the same conclusion. However, it should be noted that in many of the comparative studies performed, the researchers used hot air hand driers that generated a gentle breeze making the user resort to completing the drying process using one's pants. More modern high-speed (air blades) driers certainly can dry hands to the same extent as paper towels within 20 seconds. When a comparison is made between air blades and paper towels, there is no difference in terms of microbial log reduction or degree of hand dryness. Given that high speed hand driers are not universally available, the evidence would support the view that paper towels are indeed better than hot air driers.

This is an excerpt by Keith Warriner, provided by the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative. ●●●



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How does my phone get dirty?

We carry our cell phones with us everywhere, including the bathroom. Think of all the times throughout the day that you touch something dirty and then touch your cell phone. We wash our hands, but if our cell phones are contaminated, then it renders our hand hygiene invalid.

Why you absolutely should not bring your cell phone into the bathroom

Ever since mobile devices became the primary mode of contact for people, it seems no boundary exists to separate hand and cell phone. This includes the bathroom. Despite it being a most solitary endeavor, many are using it as an opportunity to multi task—checking and responding to emails, scrolling through friends' photos on social media, and even responding to texts or talking on the phone. But, according to research, this isn't just objectionable behavior, it's actually dangerous!

MetroUK asked three researchers to weigh in on the dangers of taking a phone into the bathroom, and they concluded that you could be exposing yourself and others to germs like *salmonella*, *E. Coli* and *C. Difficile*. This could happen when you wipe yourself, touch the flush handle or door lock, and then touch the phone all prior to washing your hands. Or, of course, without washing your hands at all.

If you're alarmed by the possibility of contracting such germs, but desperate to stick to your habit of relieving yourself with cell phone in tow, then you'll be glad to know there are ways you can lower your risk.

"Read the book or phone in your right hand, then transfer it to the left," hygiene expert Dr. Lisa Ackerley explains to MetroUK. "Wipe with your right, flush with the right, carry the book or phone out in your left hand without touching anything else and then wash your hands."

She goes on to say, "If you wipe your bum then pick up your phone, you may as well not bother washing your hands because all the bacteria you put on your



phone will end up back on your hands."

This is an excerpt by Alexa Erickson, provided by familyhandyman.com.

Stop bringing your phone to the bathroom

There are lots of reasons to keep your phone out of the bathroom, but protecting your phone from germs or potential falls into the toilet are secondary—though, yes, stop putting your phone in your back pocket, that's dangerous. But the real reason to leave your phone out of the bathroom is mindfulness.

For as long as there have been toilets, there have been the things we read while we sit on them—books, crossword puzzles, the backs of shampoo bottles, etc. Distracting yourself while you're on the toilet isn't new to our hyper-connected digital age.

But bringing your phone into the bathroom—to read, scroll Twitter, or play Two Dots or whatever—means something different when you're bringing your phone with you everywhere else, too. It's not news that it's good for our brains to have some downtime. Just a few minutes here or there where we're not taking

in information or stimulation can give you an important break, a chance to see what's happening in your mind.

One way to cultivate mindfulness is through meditation, but another is to find time to just let your mind wander. Even if you're not into meditation, making space for quiet can be hugely valuable. It's a chance to check in with yourself, see how you're feeling when you're not focused on work or reading or listening. It's just you. Maybe you'll notice for the first time all day that you feel anxious, or the quiet will be a chance to ruminate on a problem that's been bugging you, leading you closer to a solution. It's unstructured mental time, and that's often a precious and rare thing.

And more generally, "look at my phone less" is a difficult change to implement on its own. Any goal so vague and lacking boundaries is easy to let slide. But the bathroom is the perfect contained aspect of your life to apply this practice incrementally. Try leaving your phone outside of the bathroom and just sitting with your own thoughts. See what they turn out to be.

This is an excerpt by Jaime Green, provided by lifehacker.com.

Also, don't forget to clean your cell phones often, and be mindful of what you are touching! ●●●

In the Spotlight

NCH welcomes general surgeon visiting monthly

Norton County Hospital would like to announce a new specialty clinic starting in February 2019. Charles Schultz, MD, is a general surgeon who will be coming to Norton County Hospital the third Tuesday of each month. Dr. Schultz is with Southwind Surgical in Hays and will be performing a variety of surgeries, including endoscopy procedures, in Norton for the convenience of patients. Please ask your primary care provider if you may need a referral for specialty care. ●●●



Holiday celebrations

Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic had their annual holiday celebration Dec. 7. Staff had a great meal and music, played games, and were presented with special service awards. The following staff were recognized.

5-year service award pins:

Carol Richmeier

Elsa Temmel

Sierra Wahlmeier

10-year ruby pins:

Bill Campbell

Sherry White

15-year blue spinel pin:

Ashley Wonderly

20-year emerald pins:

Dan Dole

Eva Harrington

Shannan Hempler

30-year 2.0 point diamond pin:

Jeanne Pharis



Our staff also collected items for the Eisenhower Elementary Backpack Program at our annual Christmas celebration.

On Saturday, Dec. 15, several of our staff volunteered as “bell ringers” for Salvation Army donations to support our community and county. Thank you for your efforts!

Hospital and clinic staff also had a fun “sweater” day and shared snacks throughout the day to celebrate the holidays on Dec. 20.



In the News

From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation

Nex-Generation application available

Know someone who may be interested in a summer internship with Norton County Hospital? We are partnering once again with Nex-Tech to host an intern through the Nex-Generation program. The online application is officially live on the Nex-Generation website: www.nex-generation.org

The mission of Nex-Generation “is to educate northwest and north central Kansas students about local career opportunities by providing and supporting programs in career development, entrepreneurship, internship, and work study/apprenticeship. Through these efforts, we hope to foster a positive sense of community and encourage youth to remain or return home to prosper.”

Internship dates are May 29-Aug. 2, 2019. The application deadline is March 15. To be eligible, you must be a high school or college student, age 16 or over, who is from or attending school in one of the following 28 counties: Barton, Cheyenne, Cloud, Decatur, Ellis, Ellsworth, Gove, Graham, Jewell, Lincoln, Logan, Mitchell, Norton, Osborne, Ottawa, Phillips, Rawlins, Republic, Rooks, Rush, Russell, Saline, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Thomas, Trego and Wallace. ●●●

PFAC continues to seek applicants

In an effort to continue improving its quality of care, Norton County Hospital created a Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC). On the council are community advisors serving alongside health care staff to ensure multiple perspectives and experiences are both heard and integrated into improving quality of care. Patients and family members of patients are welcome to apply to be part of this council. More information and a link to the application are provided on the PFAC page of the NCH website. ●●●

Physician recruitment weekend recap

Norton County Hospital recently took part in a rural recruitment weekend in which eight total hospitals from western Kansas were able to show resident doctors from across the country about rural medicine in our respective communities. Norton was pleased to make connections at this event; those connections included but are not limited to other hospitals’ staff from this area of the state, and physicians and faculty members from various residency

programs. Many people, businesses and organizations stepped up to either donate funds, donate flights, or donate time and energy into helping showcase Norton County and building relationships for the hospital.

This event was meant to help these residents understand this area of the state and decide if working in a rural setting is of interest for their future. Thank you to all who were involved in this process. ●●●

KDHE designates Norton County Hospital as a Level IV trauma center

The trauma center at Norton County Hospital has again received designation as a Level IV Trauma Center by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). Every three years, designated trauma centers must meet the essential criteria that ensure trauma care capability and institutional performance as outlined by the American College of Surgeons and endorsed by the Kansas Advisory Committee on Trauma.

“We know injuries are a leading cause of death and disability in Kansas. KDHE’s Trauma Program works to ensure those who are injured in Kansas have access to an organized system of trauma care that offers them the best chance of recovery,” said KDHE Secretary Jeff Andersen. “On behalf of families and visitors in our state, we acknowledge Norton County Hospital for its commitment to provide care to trauma patients in Kansas.”

Level IV trauma centers are hospitals that have a primary role of stabilizing seriously injured patients and, if necessary, transferring them to a higher-level trauma center. Hospitals that have achieved Level IV trauma center designation have demonstrated a commitment to providing optimal care for those who have been seriously injured.

There are four separate categories of designation by the Kansas Trauma Program. Each category has specific criteria that must be met by a facility seeking that level of designation. A trauma care system includes a network of hospitals providing a spectrum of care for injured patients. Trauma center designations are based on the hospital’s care capability, for the highest, Level I, to hospitals designated Level IV.

Content for this news release was provided to Norton County Hospital by KDHE. ●●●



NEX-GENERATION
Round Up for Youth, Inc.

In the News

From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation



Scholarships awarded for Spring 2019

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, has awarded scholarships to students pursuing advanced degrees in the medical field. The Foundation awarded the scholarships for local students to use to financially support their education for the Spring 2019 semester.

Recipients include:

Nicole Henry, Norton, awarded a \$1,500 scholarship from the Helen Stevenson Memorial Scholarship Fund; Nicole currently works in the Norton County Hospital Laboratory department and is continuing her education to become a medical lab technician.

Baylee Miller, Norton, awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the George Jones Nursing Scholarship Fund and a \$1,000 scholarship from the Warren and Jean White Nursing Scholarship Fund; Baylee is working toward a degree in nursing.

The Norton Regional Health Foundation at Norton County Hospital awards academic scholarships each spring, summer and fall semester to students who are enrolled in college courses, are seeking

degrees in the medical field and express interest in working at Norton County Hospital in the future. It is through donor support that these scholarships can be awarded, and the Foundation is grateful to donors for their generous contributions. ●●●

Norton Regional Health Foundation purchases surgical instruments

In January 2019, the Norton Regional Health Foundation purchased a new set of surgical power instruments for nearly \$11,000 to be used for podiatry and other procedures at Norton County Hospital. This would be the hospital's second set of these tools. Having a second set of instruments allows for much quicker turnaround time between surgeries; therefore, more procedures could be done within a given day.

Jessie Dougherty, RN and Director of Surgery at Norton County Hospital, said the Stryker instruments would be mainly used by Dr. Robert Hinze, visiting podiatrist, who performs surgeries in Norton monthly. They could also be used in other surgeries. In addition to podiatry, the hospital offers some surgeries in orthopedics (Dr. Greg Sarin), gynecology (Dr. Todd Pankratz) and will have a general surgeon (Dr. Charles Schultz) visiting once per month starting in February.

"With the new tools, the turnaround time between cases will go from 80 minutes to less than 30 minutes," Dougherty said. "The long time between cases was due to the time needed to re-process and sterilize the same set of instruments. With the second set, we are able to add in two to three surgeries each surgical day which benefits the surgeon, surgical staff and patients."

The surgical instruments are the

second equipment purchase the Norton Regional Health Foundation has made to benefit Norton County Hospital. In early 2018, the foundation purchased a new fetal heart monitor for more than \$22,000 that allowed better mobility for laboring mothers. These items were purchased based on an internal application process in which the department supervisors formally requested funds from the foundation.

"On behalf of the foundation's Board of Directors, I want to thank Jessie and our Surgery department for being proactive and thinking of ways to enhance our services and care at Norton County Hospital," said Katie Allen, Norton Regional Health Foundation executive director. "The foundation was pleased to receive the application and ultimately purchase these new surgical tools. We are committed to growing the foundation's funds to help the hospital and keep as many services as possible close to home for patients."

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 nursing students, and collaborated with Live Well Norton to complete community health projects such as the Armory Drive Trail and Norton Kids' Café. The foundation is currently raising funds to support the purchase of a new CT scanner for the hospital.

Allen said the foundation is grateful to donors for their generous, tax-deductible contributions. These contributions allow for healthier local communities. ●●●

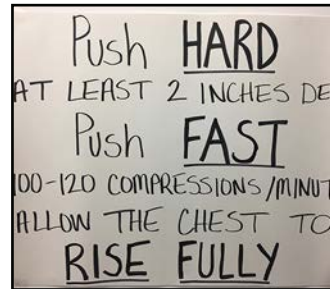


Engage the Community

From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation

Educating on health insurance

Thank you to Peggy Ritter from the Hoxie Medical Clinic for joining us Dec. 11 to help people understand and enroll in health insurance for 2019. Also, thank you to those who attended the educational event. ●●●



Alive by the Bee Gees! ●●●

More delivery of Stop the Bleed

Three of our hospital staff members joined in this emergency preparedness training Dec. 4, and our own Julia Thompson, BSN, RN, led a Stop the Bleed program (something that everyone should learn)! Thanks to Eisenhower Elementary for hosting and Norton County Emergency Management (Kansas) for organizing! ●●●



Full Court Press in Almena

To promote February as Heart Month on Feb. 7, NCH nursing staff with the assistance of some Northern Valley student volunteers demonstrated hands-only CPR to basketball fans between the varsity games. If a teen or adult is found unresponsive and is not breathing or is gasping, ensure the scene is safe to help, call 911 and begin CPR by placing the heel of one hand over the center of the victims chest, place the other hand on top lacing the fingers and push HARD (at least 2 inches) and push FAST (100-120 compressions/minute) allowing the chest to rise fully. Keep performing CPR until you see obvious signs of life like breathing, another trained responder or EMS professional can take over, you're too exhausted to continue, an AED becomes available, or the scene becomes unsafe. Student volunteers spread out on the basketball course with mannequins performing CPR to Staying

Trooper Tod visits

Thanks to Trooper Tod, KHP in Hays, for visiting Norton recently to re-certify our child passenger safety technicians! If you need your car seats installed or checked (or know someone who does), we do that for free! You do not have to be a Norton County resident to have your car seats checked. Just call the hospital at 785-877-3351 or clinic at 785-877-3305 to schedule an appointment with Angie, Cami or Klare. ●●●



Angel Tree donations for the community

Many of our staff bought gifts for the Angel Tree Program in Norton, so local children could have a wonderful Christmas. Thanks to all who were involved! ●●●

Recent Milestones!

Join us in celebrating these employees and their dedication to NCH!

December

Pam Miller	16 years
Rhonda McDowell	8 years
Morgan Griffey	6 years
Carol Richmeier	5 years
Monica Hembd	2 years

January

Kellen Jacobs	5 years
Claudette Graham	4 years
Jean Carmichael	3 years
Katelin Koch	2 years
Marla Kuhn	2 years
Valerie Marble	2 years

February

Jordan Brown	10 years
Jessie Dougherty	7 years
Claire Wellhouse	3 years
Natalie Davis	3 years
Melody DeWitt	2 years
Kellie Gibson	2 years
Cassie Lowry	2 years
Heather Saville	2 years

Celebrating Jeanice

Dec. 17th was Jeanice Gosselin's last day at Norton County Hospital. She was at NCH for 44 years! Congratulations on your retirement, Jeanice!



HR Updates

*From the desk of Shannan Hempler,
human resources*

NCH is officially on PTO & CLB

The NCH conversion for its time off program to PTO/CLB is now complete. All of the hours were converted to the new hours banks and were on your pay slips Feb. 15. Summaries of the beginning balances were either given to the employees or put in their mailbox.

Make sure that you have reviewed and understand the policy in the updated handbook dated January, 2019. Employees should be checking their time every week and completing a Time Reconciliation Form if they are short hours from their normal schedule. The form is due to the Direct Report by the Monday following the week just completed. Employees are required to turn in PTO up to their normal schedule. Please see your Direct Report for the number of hours you must reach with PTO; the only exception is in periods of low patient census which still requires the same form and must be Direct Report approved.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

The next NCH Blood Drive is Thursday, April 11 in the Conference Room. This is a great opportunity for NCH staff to be able to donate right here in the hospital.

What donors should know about iron and blood donation

The American Red Cross routinely checks your hemoglobin before each blood and platelet donation. Hemoglobin is a protein in your body that contains iron and carries oxygen to the tissues in your body. A screening test measures the amount of hemoglobin from a single drop of blood obtained from a finger stick. If your hemoglobin is too low, you must wait to donate.

Iron is an essential mineral that is a part of hemoglobin, which helps maintain your strength and energy. Your body needs iron to make new blood cells, replacing the ones lost through blood donations. There are things you can do to help maintain healthy iron levels:

- Eat a nutritious, well-balanced diet with foods rich in iron and high in vitamin C.
- Frequent donors and young donors should consult with their health care provider about taking multivitamins with 18 mg of iron.

For more specific information, or some commonly asked questions, please use the resources at the following link: www.redcrossblood.org

The Red Cross does not currently accept blood donations from individuals who have hereditary hemochromatosis or from those who require treatment for iron overload by therapeutic phlebotomy. (Continued on pg. 8)

American Red Cross Blood Drive (Continued from pg. 7)

Additional tips for the day of your donation:

- Drink an extra 16 oz. of water (or other nonalcoholic drink) before your appointment.
- Eat a healthy meal, avoiding fatty foods like hamburgers, fries or ice cream.
- Wear a shirt with sleeves that you can roll up above your elbows.
- Let us know if you have a preferred arm or particular vein that has been used successfully in the past to draw blood.
- Relax, listen to music, talk to other donors or read while you donate. *Info courtesy of American Red Cross* ●●●

KPERS—Are You Getting Ready to Retire?



Are you within five years of retirement? Not sure when and how to take that first step? You're invited to our spring pre-retirement seminars and quarterly webinars. You can register today to secure a spot (contact information below)!

Valuable Information

- Choosing a date
- How to calculate your benefit
- Steps in the process
- Payment options
- Taxes
- Life insurance
- Working after you retire

About Seminars

- Begin Feb. 25 (Norton East Campus Auditorium, April 17)
- Free to attend and run from 6:30 to 8 p.m.
- Friendly, informative (see video preview online)
- Use your online account to register
- Go to the Retirement Information Center for more info

Can't register online? Call toll-free 1-888-275-5737 or email us the following information to kpers@kpers.org:

1. Name
2. Location of meeting you would like to attend
3. Number employees attending, including you
4. Daytime phone number

About Webinars

- Hosted quarterly
- Next sessions March 5-7
- Day & evening times for convenience
- Require computer or tablet and internet connection
- See the Retirement Information Center for dates, times

and to register; Webinar recording available *Info courtesy of KPERS* ●●●

Outsmart Your Smartphone—from EMPAC resources

We love our smartphones. There's no denying it. In fact, we love them so much that we never want to put them down. Most of us constantly check text messages, emails, and the latest tweets and Facebook updates at all hours of the day, whether we're in a meeting, at lunch with a friend, or just at home in front of the TV. It's easy to justify our smartphone love. They allow us to stay plugged into what's going on both at the office and at home. They help us organize our schedules and much more. But our smartphone obsession comes with a definite downside. It prevents us from making the most of an event because we're texting and emailing the whole time. And we suffer from burnout from always being plugged into work. Here are some easy steps to take back your life from your smartphone, recover your common sense and rediscover productivity:

- Turn off cyberspace. There's no greater blow to productivity than breaking your concentration to reply to an email or text as soon as it hits your smartphone. No award will be handed out at the end of the day for the person who responded the fastest. If you're doing nothing but responding to emails and texts, you're bouncing around like a pinball. It's important to keep in mind that the purpose of email and texts is not to generate more email and texts. Unless a response is necessary in order for the sender to move ahead on a task or project, it's ok to let this person have the last word.

- Tame the social media beast. Smartphone apps make it fun and easier than ever to read our friends' status updates and to see the photos they've posted on Facebook. It makes us feel good when they "like" something we've posted or when we're tagged in one of their photos. That's one reason social media is so addicting – it's like experiencing hugs all day long. Likewise, Twitter can quickly move from social communication to an obsessive compulsive disorder. But remember, Facebook and Twitter won't be evaluating your work performance and probably can't qualify you for a raise either.

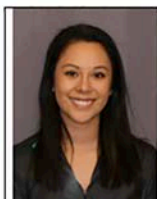
- Turn off the lights and your phone. Many of us are using our smartphones as watches and alarm clocks, keeping it plugged in to recharge on the bedside overnight. But as long as your phone is plugged in, so are you. Take a break from your phone. If it's by the bed you'll get those late night calls, tweets and texts that interfere with precious sleep. Unless there's a likelihood of an emergency, we have some rules in our house that we absolutely follow – the first is no smartphones in the bedroom.

- Crunch on kale instead of candy. Words with Friends can wait until after dinner. We have another rule that bans smartphones from the table whether at home or a restaurant with friends or clients. Checking texts and email during a meal is the social equivalent of picking your nose in public.

Though it may seem painful at first, by making these changes to your smartphone habits you'll find it can actually become the productivity tool you want it to be instead of a drain on your time and social skills. *Info courtesy of Vickie L. Milazzo, RN, MSN, JD, owner of the Vickie Milazzo Institute and author of "Wicked Success Is Inside Every Woman"* ●●●

Meet the Team!

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



Marissa Castillo

Rehabilitation-CPTA

- Joined NCH Team January 2, 2019
- Marissa moved from Texas when she was 3 and grew up in Benkelman, Nebraska. She attended the Physical Therapy Assistant program at Colby Community College. She did her clinicals and her prior employment in Kearney.
- She has a wonderful 4-year-old daughter who is an independent "sass-a-frass!" Marissa grew up being the only girl and having 5 brothers. She likes to bake, travel and visit friends and relatives, as well as making memories with her own family.
- When asked why she chose to seek employment at NCH, she said: "I'm getting married in March to a Hoxie resident who happens to be a farmer."



Bobbi Wetter

Nursing-CNA

- Joined NCH Team January 2, 2019
- Bobbi grew up in Argonia, Kansas and attended Argonia public schools K-12. After high school graduation she started her family. She has five biological daughters and two acquired daughters.
- In 2014, she attended Pratt Community College and obtained her CNA license. Then in 2016, she went back to Pratt Community College and obtained her CMA license. She has worked in long-term care since 2014.
- When asked why she chose to seek employment at NCH, she said: "I have always wanted to work in a hospital setting, and was finally presented with the opportunity to do so, through NCH."



Jordan Gemboys

Patient Access Representative

- Joined NCH Team January 21, 2019
- Watch for more on The Beat.



Jeanette Haskett

Laboratory-MLT

- Joined NCH Team December 26, 2018
- Jeanette grew up in Hays and currently lives in Plainville. She attended both Colby and Barton County Community Colleges. She has a daughter, Michelle, who lives in Hays and works at Verizon; a son, Jeremy, who lives in Plainville and works in Hays. Jeremy has two children, Josiah and Jordan; and a son, David, who recently finished Vo-tech and works for Lewis Chrysler Toyota in Hays. She also has a German Shepherd, Cheyenne; a cat, Branson and a wonderful mother.
- Jeanette enjoys flower and vegetable gardening, farmers' markets, raising finances for victims of human trafficking and painting. She loves sunshine, music and fireworks.
- When asked why she chose to seek employment at NCH, she said: "Worked here in past years, about 8 years ago or so. Enjoyed the people, patients and co-workers."



Morgan Griffey

Radiology Office Assistant

- Joined the NCH Radiology Team November 26, 2018
- Morgan grew up in Norton and graduated from Norton Community High School in 2016. She worked in the Medical Clinic from 2012-2018.
- Morgan's mom Amy is the Clinic Manager, her dad Mark is co-owner of Natoma Manufacturing Corp and her brother Lance is a junior at NCHS. Morgan enjoys music, hunting, fishing, being outdoors and spending time with family.
- When asked why she chose to seek employment in the Radiology department at NCH, she said: "I was wanting to find a full-time job for a while. The Radiology department's secretary position was perfect considering I take interest in medical diagnostic imaging as a possible future career."



Andrea Wilson

Surgery—OR Tech & Nursing & Clinic—CNA

- Joined NCH Team February 6, 2019
- Andrea grew up in Ness City, Kansas. She has received her CNA and CMA.
- Andrea's husband is Gavin. He is a deputy at the Norton County Sheriff's office. They have two boys, Carter is 7 and in 1st grade and Saylor is 2 and loves dinosaurs. She likes to bake with her two boys and go on walks.
- When asked why she chose to seek employment at NCH, she said: "My husband got a job opportunity at the Norton County Sheriff's Office, so we packed up and moved. I have always worked in health care, so NCH was the first place I chose."



Patty Clark

Laboratory--MLT

- Joined NCH Team February 7, 2019
- Watch for more on The Beat.

More HR Updates

*From the desk of Shannan Hempler,
human resources*

Keeping Gossip in Check—from EMPAC resources

The following are a few ideas for preventing or ending workplace rumors, according to Jane Demerica with Inside Business: 360.

- Putting a stop to gossip starts with you. If someone comes to you with a juicy story about Jane or wants to tell you some odd little tidbit about the president of the company, close your ears to it. Letting them know from the start that you don't want anything to do with gossip can work wonders in getting mouths to shut. Usually, it's enough for them to at least leave you alone even if they move on to the next person.

- If you are simply trying to do your work but the gossiper comes to you, they must not have any work to do. Hand them some work and tell them you sure could use some help with your workload. They will stop coming to your area because additional work is not what they are looking for. ●●●

NCH **NORTON
COUNTY HOSPITAL**

Other Celebrations

Employees of the Month

Our NCH Employee of the Month for December 2018 was Rita Conrad!

Rita works in the Dietary department. Here are some comments from her nomination:

Rita always goes above and beyond in her duties. She will make special sandwiches if something isn't available. She always has a smile on her face and is a positive influence to others.

Also, Rita is always trying to help improve the patient experience at NCH. She makes sure she is knowledgeable in her position and is always willing to



learn new things and jumps in and helps when needed. Some examples of this would be her helping Pam Miller with inventory, attending an ANFP (Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals) meeting and learning more about our dietary guidelines, offering to do extras for the patients when she is still short on time. Congrats to Rita!

Congrats to Deb Bowen, RN, for being selected as NCH Employee of the Month for January 2019!

Here is part of her nomination:

Deb works incredibly hard with nothing but her patients' best care and her coworkers at heart. She did an amazing job launching the Secret Pal program. She is always cracking a joke or providing an



encouraging word when days are tough. She is a huge asset to the hospital, and we are a better facility because of her. Deb is our chemotherapy/infusion nurse. Thanks for all you do, Deb!



Our NCH Employee of the Month for February 2019 was Kellen Jacobs, Rehabilitation Director.

Kellen's nomination read: It is obvious that

Kellen works very hard; he has been short-staffed in his department recently and took on an extra work load to accommodate patients. Patients always compliment our PT program, which I think speaks volumes to the way he works and oversees that department. Congrats to Kellen on this recognition! ●●●

Patient "Thank You"

Thank you, Tucker, for sharing your patient testimonial with us.

Tucker said: "I cannot say enough about the care I received from Jonna and Kellen, along with the other staff, during my ER visit after my football injury. Jonna, as always, did a great job of taking care of me while I was in the ER and helped to get arrangements made to send me where I needed to go for surgery. Kellen went above and beyond to not only take care

of me on the sideline but met me at the ER and stayed until I left. After my surgery in September, I have continued to see Kellen for my physical therapy, and I would not be where I'm at with my recovery without him. Kellen even showed up at my fitness class at school to give me an exercise program to follow so I can reach my goals. He is so good at what he does. NCH is very lucky to have him."

Thanks again to Tucker, and congrats to Jonna, Kellen and all staff who have been recognized for their efforts. ●●●



Supporting Heart Month by wearing red

February is Heart Month! Our staff wore red on Feb. 1 to bring awareness to heart disease. Here are some facts about heart disease from the CDC:

- About 610,000 people die of heart disease in the U.S. every year; that's 1 in every 4 deaths. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women.
- Coronary heart disease (CHD) is the most common type of heart disease, killing more than 370,000 people annually.
- Every year about 735,000 Americans have a heart attack. Of these, 525,000 are a first heart attack and 210,000 happen in people who have already had a heart attack.

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Other Celebrations

Giving back through snacks and treats

Thanks to all who supported the Live Well Norton drive for “Treats for Troops.” We collected about 125 pounds of candy and other treats for members of our active duty military and veterans! This compares to 52 pounds collected last year.

Additionally, Live Well Norton and Norton Kids’ Café donated several food items in December to the Eisenhower Elementary Backpack Program! Providing adequate nutrition to our young people is one of our passions! We will be gearing up for Kids’ Café again soon! It is a summer meal program that provides a FREE meal to anyone age 18 and younger each weekday. Did you know you can make a tax-deductible donation to support this important program for kids? Donations are accepted by Live Well Norton on behalf of Kids’ Café. Make checks payable to Live Well Norton and put Kids’ Café in the memo line. Donations can be mailed to: Live Well Norton, Attn: Katie Allen, P.O. Box 250, Norton, KS 67654 ●●●

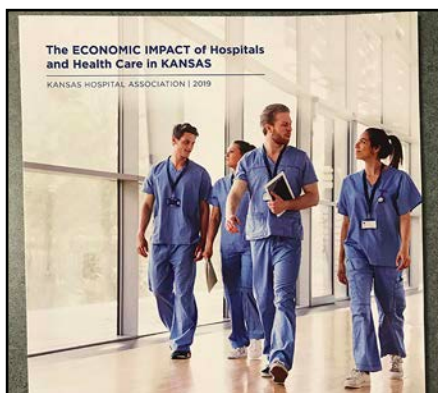


Improving quality of care, shown through sepsis data

Norton County Hospital has made positive strides in the identification and treatment of sepsis since 2016. Sepsis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is the body’s extreme response to an infection and is a life-threatening medical emergency. Sepsis happens when an infection a patient already has, such as in the lungs, urinary tract or somewhere else, triggers a chain reaction throughout the body. Without timely treatment, sepsis can rapidly lead to tissue damage, organ failure and even death.

The hospital looks at when broad-spectrum antibiotics are administered in the patient following severe sepsis diagnosis. The timeliness of giving antibiotics is crucial to the control of sepsis. The national recommendation is to start the broad-spectrum antibiotics within 3 hours of the diagnosis, but the sooner these antibiotics are given, the better. The Kansas Healthcare Collaborative encourages administration of broad-spectrum antibiotics within 1 hour of severe sepsis diagnosis.

In 2016, the 1-hour treatment goal was not met in sepsis cases seen at the hospital. In 2017, 16 percent of sepsis cases were treated with the antibiotics within 1 hour of diagnosis. In 2018, 50 percent of sepsis cases were treated with the antibiotics within 1 hour of diagnosis; however, in the third quarter of 2018, 66 percent were treated within 1 hour of diagnosis. We are showing continuous improvement in this area. Great job to our medical and nursing staff for working to diagnose and treat patients in a timely manner and continuing to improve our quality of care! ●●●



Showing economic impact

New brochures have arrived and are available at Norton County Hospital! These include data regarding the economic impact of hospitals and health care in Kansas. Did you know... “Kansas hospitals annually generate more than \$6.7 billion in direct total income paid to hospital employees. For every \$1 of income generated by Kansas hospitals, another \$0.59 is generated in other businesses and industries in the state’s economy. As a result, hospitals have an estimated total impact on income throughout all businesses and industries of \$10.7 billion. The health care sector, which includes hospitals, is the fifth largest producer of total income and total sales in the state.” *Info provided by Kansas Hospital Association* ●●●

New bench at outpatient clinics

If you have been to our outpatient and specialty clinic entrance recently, you probably saw our new addition. THANK YOU, Charlene Weskamp and family for the granite bench donation in memory of long-time staff member, Andy Weskamp. Andy was the laboratory manager from May 1973 - August 2002. He continued to fill in at the hospital until July 2012. Charlene described Andy as “dedicated” to his role: “Working in the lab was his life; he loved it.” ●●●

