

## Employee Health Beat

From the desk of Jamey Keen, RN, employee health

### Togetherness often brings “germiness”

The holidays are here, and many people celebrate by getting together with family, friends or large groups. Even going to the grocery store puts you at risk for sharing more than gifts this holiday season.

Colds, flu and other respiratory illnesses are especially common during this time of year. As a reminder, hand washing is still the most effective way to prevent the spread of infection. Wash for 20 seconds, providing friction to the entire surface of the hands, under the fingernails and 1 inch up on the wrist. Wash before/after:

- Using the restroom
- Eating
- Preparing food
- Touching your ears, nose or mouth
- Caring for someone who is ill
- Handling money
- Blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Touching a pet

- Any kind of cleaning
- Taking out the garbage
- Changing diapers ●●●

### Who makes a New Year’s resolution?

Just as in quality improvement projects, SMART goal setting can work for your own personal goals and resolutions. To make a life change, you need more than a decision. You need a plan. Set a small, realistic goal and carry it out. Knowing you can make small changes can give you the motivation and confidence to tackle a bigger goal. You can do this any time of the year, not just at the start of a new year.

Tips that can help you successfully plan and achieve your goals (SMART, see page 2 for graphic representation):

- Be specific. Be as exact as possible.
- Put it in writing. Write down exactly what you want to achieve, and post it in a place where you will see it every day as a reminder.



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- Set realistic goals. Make sure that your goal is within your reach. Be mindful of finances, schedule and other personal affairs. It is unreasonable to expect to make a lot of big changes at the same time.
- Develop an action plan. Create a timeline with steps toward your goal. Set deadlines for each step and cross them off as you go.
- Believe in yourself. Stay positive about your progress, and share your success with a friend.
- Be flexible. Setbacks happen. Don’t get discouraged and give up. Try again! Your hard work will pay off!
- Ask for help. If you get stuck or need help, don’t be afraid to talk about it.
- Acknowledge your achievements, even small ones. Reaching a goal takes hard work, and you should be proud.

Courtesy of SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) ●●●

# Employee Health Beat


From the desk of Jamey Keen, RN, employee health

## Cold or flu? Know the difference!



### Is It a Cold or the Flu?

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	Characteristic, high (102-104°F); lasts 3-4 days
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General Aches, Pains	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue, Weakness	Quite mild	Can last up to 2-3 weeks
Extreme Exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest Discomfort, Cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe
<b>Complications</b>	Sinus congestion or earache	Bronchitis, pneumonia; can be life-threatening
<b>Prevention</b>	None	Annual vaccination; antiviral medicines—see your doctor
<b>Treatment</b>	Only temporary relief of symptoms	Antiviral medicines—see your doctor

From the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases 

## Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette

People with respiratory symptoms should:

1. Cover mouth/nose when sneezing or coughing.
2. Use tissues and dispose of appropriately.
3. Perform hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions.
4. Distance yourself from others (more than 3 feet).
5. Wear a surgical/procedural mask in health care settings.



## More on SMART goals (from page 1)

Image courtesy of [Imageimpact.org](http://Imageimpact.org)

Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Realistic	Timely
<b>S</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>S</b>
What do you want to do?	How will you know when you've reached it?	Is it in your power to accomplish it?	Can you realistically achieve it?	When exactly do you want to accomplish it?





# In the Spotlight

## Emergency preparedness

Norton County Hospital hosted a “tiny tots” tabletop drill, which provided an opportunity to bring together key community partners and examine critical roles and responsibilities for an incident involving medical care and evacuation of a daycare facility in our county. The process highlighted incident response strategies and structures for coordinating and disseminating information.

Those who participated included staff and volunteers with the Norton County Hospital, Norton County Health Department, City of Norton Fire Department, Norton County Emergency Management and a local daycare from Almena. The scenario was carbon monoxide poisoning at the daycare and how we would all assist one another in making sure patient care and the situation were under control. These drills are important; we always learn something to improve our plans! Thanks to all who participated. ●●●



# Engage the Community

*From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation*

## Career Day

Many of our Norton County Hospital staff presented at the Norton Community High School’s Career Fest in October. We are thankful to have such wonderful people working at NCH and who are willing to talk about their careers. We need more young people to pursue careers in health care!

## Car seat check lane

Norton Medical Clinic offered its fourth annual Car Seat Check Lane on Sept. 23 at the clinic’s parking lot. Sept. 17-23 was Child Passenger Safety Week, which aims to bring awareness to car seat safety. Every 33 seconds, one child under the age of 13 is involved in a vehicle crash, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Ad Council. Crashes are a leading cause of death among children 1 to 13 years old.

Thanks to Klare Givens, Angie Annon and Cami Cornelius for doing these car seat checks, not only at this event but year-round! These ladies checked 25 car seats at the September event. It was the most-attended check lane we’ve ever had!



on health insurance enrollment for 2018. This event will primarily focus on the Health Insurance Marketplace but will also cover Medicare and Medicaid. Anyone is welcome to attend on Dec. 5, 6 p.m., in the NCH Conference Room. ●●●

## Medicare event

More than 40 people attended an event focused on Medicare open enrollment on Oct. 12! Thanks to Glenna Clingingsmith from the Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging for leading the program and answering questions.

## Health insurance event - coming in December!

Once again, Norton County Hospital will be hosting an event



### Automatic Enrollment—Part A and Part B

- Automatic enrollment for those receiving
  - Social Security benefits
  - Railroad Retirement Board benefits
- Initial Enrollment Package
  - Mailed 3 months before
    - 65 or
    - 25th month of disability benefits
  - Includes Medicare card



## In the News

*From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation*

### Logan Clinic closes

Norton County Hospital's Board of Trustees decided to end health care services at Logan Clinic after Oct. 31, 2017. The hospital was in contract to provide health care services through Oct. 31, but due to incurring continued financial losses, the decision was made to discontinue services after the contract period. The hospital's board and administration feel this was a difficult and unfortunate decision to have to make, but the satellite clinic was operationally unfeasible to continue. Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic are committed to caring for all patients' needs. Those patients in Logan are welcome to continue seeing their health care provider by calling Norton Medical Clinic to schedule appointments. ●●●

### "The Heartbeat of Health Care" launches

The new Norton County Hospital intranet was launched on Nov. 13. Gina Frack, NCH interim CEO, explains the new intranet and what it is intended to do: "As with any organization, we constantly want to improve our communications and processes. This new system will allow us to have all our forms, policies and other documentation in one place that is easy to search and user-friendly. Our hospital's many departments will be able to connect on a single platform so we can work together more effectively and efficiently." Frack added that a new intranet will help improve patient care as well: "When we're able to communicate and connect with one another better as staff members, we



are able to find appropriate information quickly for patient care and will be able to dedicate more time and attention to patients' needs."

The launch party for the intranet included cookies, sundaes and opportunities to win prizes!

Bill Campbell won the drawing for the movie package. This was sponsored by the NCH Employee Committee.

Heather Saville and Megan Juenemann won prizes for participating in the intranet scavenger hunt quiz.

Congrats to Ruth Mizell for coming up with the winning name for the intranet! She came up with "The Heartbeat of Health Care," which is shortened to "The Beat" in conversation. Thanks to all staff for participating and to Anita Lyon for all her work in the intranet development and launch! ●●●

### Staff participate in ripple effect mapping

Two of Norton County Hospital's staff members, Katie Allen and Whitney Criqui, were among the 23 individuals who gathered for a "Ripple Effect Mapping" process, which allowed Norton County to gauge the effect of the last two year's Norton County Community Foundation grants. In that amount of time, 70 grants have been given in the amount of nearly \$300,000. Among those was a \$5,000 grant to help support the Armory Drive trail project, led by Live Well Norton and the Norton Regional Health Foundation. This was a neat opportunity to visit with other community members about the hospital and foundation. ●●●



## Foundation Updates

*From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation*

### Nursing scholarships awarded

Congratulations to our nursing scholarship recipients for the Fall 2017 semester! The recipients are Nova Bates (top right), who is pursuing her RN, and Destinee Stucky (bottom right), who is pursuing her LPN. Both already have nursing experience from working at Norton County Hospital. Presenting the scholarships is Katie Allen, executive director of the Norton Regional Health Foundation.

The application deadline for nursing scholarships to be awarded for the Spring 2018 semester is Dec. 1, 2017. You must be enrolled or will be enrolled in a nursing program (CNA, LPN, RN, etc.) at an accredited institution for the semester in which you are applying for funds. Preference will be given to applicants who are currently working at Norton County Hospital. Other specifications are noted on the scholarship applications, and applicants are advised to carefully read the selection criteria. Let Katie know if you have any questions: [kallen@ntcohosp.com](mailto:kallen@ntcohosp.com). ●●●



### Requests for support

The Norton Regional Health Foundation Board recently implemented a policy that covers requests for support. This policy is effective immediately. This means any requests for Foundation funding must include necessary documentation (as included in the Request for Support Form).

The goal of this policy and related documentation is so that departments within our hospital and clinic can communicate with and educate the Norton Regional Health Foundation on projects that improve patient care, community health or other health-related items in the Norton region.

The Request for Support Form (which is now available on the new intranet) must be accompanied by supporting documentation, such as the identified bid for the project. The Foundation wishes to be good stewards of donated funds and support projects that are well thought out and showcase a need to improve health and health care.

**Eligibility:** Departments, caregivers and physicians from Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic; Live Well Norton committee members (Live Well Norton is a collaborative committee of the Foundation and works on community wellness projects, such as the new trail along Armory Drive in Norton!)

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Are sustainable, one-time expenses, or expenses not paid by the department budget or purchases slated for capital improvement with Norton County Hospital administration.
- Are innovative.
- Address a need identified by the most recent Community Health Needs Assessment for Norton County and/or the most recent Norton County Hospital strategic plan.
- Showcase collaboration among Norton County Hospital departments and/or other organizations within communities of Norton County and the surrounding region.
- Increase caregiver or system productivity.
- Improve patient care and/or the patient experience.
- Improve the overall health of Norton County and the surrounding region.

More details are available on the Request for Support Form. ●●●

### Many ways to donate

The Foundation is building its assets so that it can serve as a sustainable funding source for Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic projects. The Foundation welcomes all to join our cause! You can make a tax-deductible contribution at any time. Checks can be personally delivered to the Norton County Hospital or sent via mail to:

Norton Regional Health Foundation  
Katie Allen, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 250  
Norton, KS 67654

**AmazonSmile opportunity:** An easy way to contribute is through AmazonSmile. Go to the Foundation tab of the NCH website, scroll down and click the Norton Regional Health Foundation AmazonSmile link, then shop Amazon as normal. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to the Foundation just because you designated it as your charity. It takes no additional money or effort on your part.

**Donate online:** If you would like to make a donation online using your credit card or PayPal account, please go to the Foundation tab of the NCH website, scroll down and click on the “Donate” button. After clicking the button, you will see a field to enter the dollar amount of your donation. Then you can choose to donate with PayPal or with a credit/debit card. If you have any questions, contact Katie. We appreciate your support of our Foundation!

**More donor opportunities:** Donations can come in a variety of formats! Donors are encouraged to contact the Norton Regional Health Foundation if interested in contributing through: Stocks, Commodities, Real Estate, Life Insurance, Memorials, Estate Plans, Retirement Plans, Other Assets/Planned Giving, Giving through a business, Establishing an endowed scholarship and Joining the Legacy Society.

More information: [http://www.ntcohosp.com/foundation/foundation\\_info.html](http://www.ntcohosp.com/foundation/foundation_info.html) ●●●



# Infection Prevention

*From the desk of Jamey Keen, RN,  
infection prevention*

## States Targeting Infection Via Engagement (STRIVE)

We have been a part of the STRIVE fellowship going on four months now. What is STRIVE?

STRIVE is a 12-month program for short-stay and long-term acute care hospitals. Through the support of partnerships among multiple organizations at the state level, coordination of infection prevention efforts will be improved, and stronger working relationships will be fostered. The project is designed to enhance collaboration and alignment among state hospital associations, state health departments and CMS Quality Innovation Network/Quality Improvement organizations. Partners collaborate to improve general infection prevention and control practices and includes 28 hospitals throughout Kansas and many more throughout the U.S.

Components of STRIVE include education, monitoring, auditing and providing feedback in key areas of infection prevention including:

- Hand hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment selection and use
- Catheter insertion and maintenance
- Central line care
- Clostridium difficile prevention efforts
- Antibiotic stewardship
- Environmental cleaning
- Methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus identification and prevention ●●●

## Antibiotic Stewardship



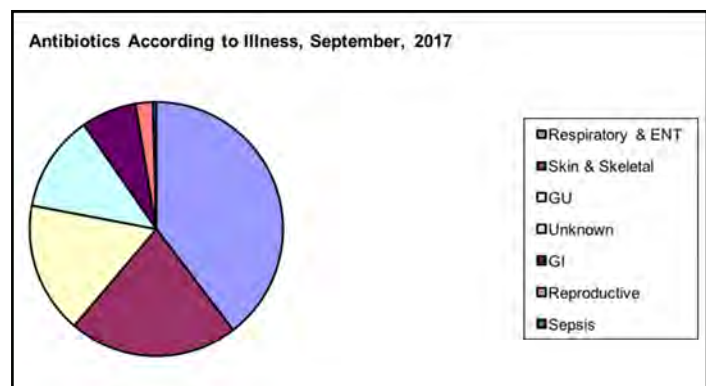
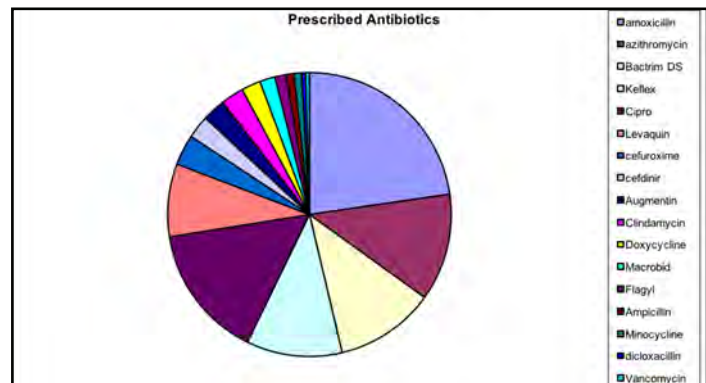
Our hospital is taking part in antibiotic stewardship efforts. Antibiotic stewardship refers to coordinated interventions designed to improve and measure the appropriate use of antimicrobials by promoting the selection of the optimal antimicrobial drug regimen, dose, duration of therapy and route of administration while making sure antibiotic prescribing is appropriate.

Our current antibiotic stewardship team includes:

- Dr. Maurer
- Bill Campbell
- Julie Campbell
- Gina Frack
- Aaron Kuehn
- Klare Givens
- Jamey Keen

Currently the team monitors antibiotic use, both inpatient and outpatient, and decides on national strategies to reduce inappropriate antibiotic use. The primary mission is to promote optimal antibiotic therapy in order to improve patient safety at Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic.

Some stats from the last antibiotic monitoring in September are shown below. In addition to the graphs below, information is available on antibiotic prescribing by prescriber, but this particular graph did not consider patient load or severity of illnesses seen. See Jamey Keen, RN, for additional information or if you have any questions. ●●●



# Quality Improvement

*From the desk of Jamey Keen, RN,  
quality improvement*

The Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), meets monthly. The PFAC is a voluntary council where partnering the patient voice to improve the health care experience is key. The council’s mission is to create a culture where patients and families of Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic are empowered to communicate with staff in a collaborative effort to promote education and change.

The vision... We are a team. We will serve those who already trust us in their care and those who have yet to obtain a relationship with us. We will provide positive outreach to our community, as well as promote trust and collaboration to empower patients, families and caregivers to use their voice. Staff members will pledge to listen to the patient voice and continuously advocate for high-quality patient experience while sustaining and ensuring care that is patient-centered.

Some topics that the PFAC has most recently worked on include:

- Patient billing
- Overuse of the ER
- Personal burning issues

Current members include:

- Gina Frack, PFAC Sponsor
- Jamey Keen, PFAC Coordinator
- Ward Foley, PFAC Co-Chair, Patient and Family Advisor
- Jennifer Schoenberger, PFAC Co-Chair, Staff Advisor
- Lori Duscher, Patient and Family Advisor
- Rita Speer, Patient and Family Advisor
- Amber Sheley, Patient and Family Advisor
- Melody Renzelman, Staff Advisor
- Lisa Herman, Patient and Family Advisor

More information is available on the website at [http://www.ntcohosp.com/our\\_people/pfac.html](http://www.ntcohosp.com/our_people/pfac.html). To bring something before the council, or to volunteer to be an advisor, please contact Jamey Keen, RN, at ext. 1274 or email Jamey at [jkeen@ntcohosp.com](mailto:jkeen@ntcohosp.com). ●●●

## Quality Reporting

There are many leading health indicators that are reported on a monthly basis to the state QHI website. For a list of indicators reported, please see Jamey Keen, RN.

## Quality Restructuring Involves YOU!

As an ongoing effort to improve our quality process, quality restructuring has taken place and is in full effect. Starting in March, Jamey had researched different quality

improvement approaches, models and framework including the total quality improvement model, lean model, etc. Brainstorming occurred between Jamey and Anita. Plans were drawn up and presented to Gina who gave final approval for restructuring quality and adding a Quality Oversight Committee.

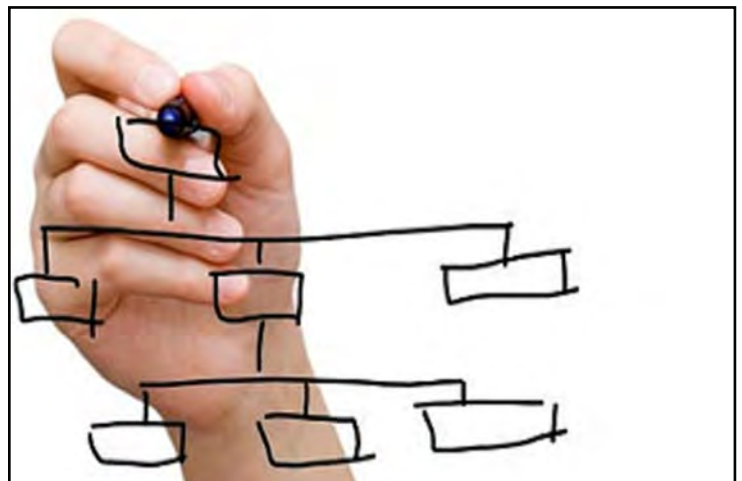
On September 26, 2017, the following occurred on Quality Council: Corene Smith, Klare Givens, Paul Gosselin, Kellen Jacobs and Staci Breiner met and discussed future plans of quality council reporting, and those ideas were put into place. These changes included providing a newsletter to staff on the changes, creating phases 1-3 for reporting to break the phases down and make them more manageable for staff, and having focus groups submit their project information 7 days prior to their report date for council member review and comment.

On October 17, 2017, supervisors met for a special meeting and were provided with information on the restructuring.

The following changes will take place effective immediately:

- An oversight committee will meet quarterly and provide data/trends/benchmarks and prioritize quality projects.
- Quality Director will meet with the appropriate supervisor and form focus groups among frontline staff, and they will develop an AIM statement (goal) together (Phase 1). The supervisor will report the AIM statement and members selected for the focus group to the Quality Council.
- Frontline staff will complete action steps to move them toward this goal and will report to the Quality Council (Phase 2).
- Frontline staff will complete the project and report on the successes of the project, and this will be reported to the Quality Council (Phase 3).
- Final approval of project completion is submitted to the oversight committee. Any further direction will be decided by the oversight committee.
- “Just Do Its” are to be completed by each and every employee. “Just Do Its” are projects that will improve your work and can be done within 2 days without involving other departments. An example of a “Just Do It” is Angie Annon suggesting a board that lists patient assignments be located in the nurses’ station with more permanent names so that they do not have to write and re-write information on a daily basis. GREAT JOB ANGIE! “Just Do It” forms will be provided to staff and will be reported on a quarterly basis by the department supervisor.

Any questions can be directed at Jamey Keen, RN. ●●●





# Patient Experience Surveys at NCH

From the desk of Jamey Keen, RN, quality improvement

## What is the HCAHPS Survey?

**HCAHPS** (the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) is a patient satisfaction survey required by CMS (the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) for all hospitals in the United States. The survey is for adult inpatients, excluding psychiatric patients. The National Research Corporation administers the survey to our patients by phone or mail shortly after discharge.

## Why is HCAHPS important?

The survey and its results are important for several reasons:

- The survey is the **voice of the patient** - it gives NCH a view into our patients' perception of the care we provide.
- The survey results are **publicly reported** on the internet for all to see - so results **impact our reputation**.
- The government **will reimburse us on results** - so, excellent survey performance **keeps the hospital financially strong**.



Patient surveys help us to hear the voice of our patients and families!



## What does the HCAHPS survey ask about?

**Doctor Communication** - respect, listening skills and communication ability of doctors.

**Nurse Communication** - respect, listening skills and communication ability of nurses.

**Staff Responsiveness** - answering call bells and responding to toileting needs.

**Pain Management** - did we do all we could to address pain?

**Medication Communication** - explaining medications to patients

**Discharge Information** - preparing patients to leave the hospital.

**Food Services** - quality of food and the courtesy of those who serve it.

**Overall Rating of the Hospital** - rating the hospital on a scale of 1-10.

## What are the questions on the HCAHPS survey?

**RECOMMEND THIS HOSPITAL**  
Would you recommend this hospital?

**COMMUNICATION W/ NURSES**  
How often did Nurses treat you with courtesy and respect?  
How often did Nurses listen carefully to you?  
How often did Nurses explain things in way you could understand?

**RESPONSIVENESS OF HOSPITAL STAFF**  
After you pressed the call button, how often did you get help as soon as you wanted it?  
How often did you get help with using the bathroom or using bedpan as soon as you wanted?

**COMMUNICATION W/ DOCTORS**  
How often did Doctors treat you with courtesy and respect?  
How often did Doctors listen carefully to you?  
How often did Doctors explain things in a way you could understand?

**HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT**  
How often were your room and bathroom kept clean?  
How often was the area around your room kept quiet at night?

## PAIN MANAGEMENT

How often was your pain well controlled?  
How often did Staff do everything they could to help you with your pain?

**COMMUNICATION RE: MEDICINES**  
Before giving you any new medicine, how often did the Staff tell you what the new medicine was for?  
Before giving you any new medicine, how often did Staff describe possible side effects in a way you could understand?

**DISCHARGE INFORMATION**  
Did Doctors, Nurses, or other Staff talk with you about help you needed when you left the hospital?  
Did you get Info in writing about what symptoms/problems to look for after you left the hospital?

## What is the rating scale for the HCAHPS survey?

Patients are asked to rate us on these questions using the following scale:

**NEVER - SOMETIMES - USUALLY - ALWAYS**  
Only the percentage of those who rate us **ALWAYS** for these questions are publicly reported.

The rating scale is based on the **frequency and consistency** of how we address the areas on the survey. For example: "How frequently was your bathroom kept clean?" Or, "How frequently did the physician or nurse communicate with you in a way that you understood?"



*Excellence every day for our patients and families means striving to provide excellent service, ALWAYS.*



# Patient Experience Surveys at NCH

*From the desk of Jamey Keen, RN, quality improvement*

<b>HCAHPS SCORE COMPARISON</b>	<b>Norton County</b>	<b>Kansas Average</b>	<b>National Average</b>
Nurse always communicated well	63%	83%	80%
Doctor always communicated well	79%	86%	82%
Patient always received help as soon as they wanted	57%	74%	69%
Pain was always well controlled	56%	74%	71%
Staff always explained about medicines before giving it to them	57%	68%	65%
Patient room and bathroom were always clean	76%	79%	74%
Area around their room was always quiet at night	58%	69%	63%
Patients reported that YES, they were given information about what to do during their recovery at home	86%	88%	87%
Patients who strongly agree they understood their care when they left the hospital	48%	57%	52%
Patients who gave their hospital a rating of 9 or 10 on a scale from 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest)	51%	78%	73%
Patients who reported YES they would definitely recommend the hospital	68%	77%	72%

*Meet the Team!*



**Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic are excited to announce our newest employees (pictured at left). Please say hello, and welcome them to our team!**

## Employee Milestones

*Congrats to these employees, and thank you for all you do!*

	<p><b>Sam George</b> Environmental Services</p> <p>Sam joined our Environmental Services staff November 27<sup>th</sup>.</p>
	<p><b>Sarah Mohr</b> Nursing—RN—Full Time</p> <p>Sarah joined our Nursing Team October 2<sup>nd</sup>. She is a recent graduate of the CCC RN program.</p>
	<p><b>Abby Bainter</b> Nursing—CNA—Full Time</p> <p>Abby joined our Nursing Team October 2<sup>nd</sup>.</p>
	<p><b>Stefanie Dodd</b> Nursing—RN—PRN</p> <p>Stefanie returned to our Nursing staff October 22<sup>nd</sup>. She will be working PRN and helping with some nursing education.</p>
	<p><b>Natasha Schmidt</b> Clinic Reception—Full Time</p> <p>Natasha joined our Clinic staff November 27<sup>th</sup>.</p>

<u>September</u>		<u>November</u>	
Nikki Wright	17	Mike Annon	37
Michele Railsback	14	Eva Harrington	19
Angie Annon	11	Shawnee Branek	16
Tara Johnson	10	Cami Cornelius	13
Sara Smith	10	Kelli Wyatt	6
Alan Brown	3	Tracey Hartzog	5
Aaron Kuehn	3	Rita Conrad	3
Ashley Glennemeier	2	Pam Bigge	2
Dr. Hoa Nguyen	2		
Autumn Murphy	1		
Melissa Pereira	1		
Desiree Schrader	1		
Jo Vacura	1		
<u>October</u>			
Jeanice Gosselin	43		
Pam Cuthbertson	37		
Kristin Vogel	10		
Travis Nykamp	3		
Gina Frack	2		
Carolyn Long	2		



# Human Resources

*From the desk of Shannan Hempler, human resources*

## 2018 Employee Benefits, HUB International

**Benefit Meetings, Updates and Q&As:  
December 5-7, 2017—Required Attendance  
Meeting times will be posted very soon!**

After a long-term relationship with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas, the decision has been made to move our self-funded medical plan administration to UMR, a division of United Healthcare. With this move, we will be making several plan design changes and will be adding a second plan option—a high-deductible health plan.

To confirm if your current medical providers are in the UHC network, you can log on to [myuhc.com](http://myuhc.com) and follow the instructions listed below:

- In the banner on the right side of the page, click on ‘Find Medical and Mental Health Providers and Facilities’
- Click on ‘Medical Directory’
- Click on ‘All United Healthcare Plans’
- Scroll down to and click ‘Choice Plus’
- Type in your provider’s zip code and click continue
- Select your provider category
- Select specialty

This link will also take you to the website: [https://www.umar.com/oss/cms/UMR/Choice\\_Plus\\_Excl.html](https://www.umar.com/oss/cms/UMR/Choice_Plus_Excl.html)

Flex Spending Accounts will also be managed by UMR in 2018. Employees will learn about this new program management at the HUB meetings.

New voluntary supplemental insurances will also be offered for 2018. We will not be enrolling any new AFLAC, Colonial, Ameritas or Reliance policies. AFLAC policies can remain in effect if employees have current policies and will remain eligible for payroll deductions. Ameritas and Reliance plans are being replaced with a Superior Vision plan. This vision insurance provides a larger network and slightly better benefits than the Ameritas insurance while providing a premium reduction for our employees. While the premiums are slightly higher than the Reliance plan, employees will enjoy a definite increase in benefits for the money. Colonial policyholders are highly encouraged to compare their current policies to the Guardian coverages now being offered. ●●●

## KPERS

### Getting Ready to Retire?

We are offering quarterly KPERS and KP&F pre-retirement webinars. They’ll cover the same information as our in-person spring seminars.

### About Webinars

- Live web-based video conference
- Lasts about an hour with a Q&A session afterward
- For KPERS 1 and 2, or KP&F members within five years of retirement
- Pre-registration is required

### Topics

- Choosing a retirement date
- How to calculate your benefit
- Steps in the process
- Payment options
- Taxes
- Life insurance

### To Register

- **KPERS 1 and KPERS 2 Members**  
Register at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/1152594226549715969>  
Choose a date from the drop-down menu.  
December 5 @ 2 p.m. or 6 p.m.  
December 7 @ 10 a.m. or 6 p.m.
- **KP&F Members**  
Register at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/2025114977324321282>  
December 6 @ 10 a.m.

### Questions?

- [kpers@kpers.org](mailto:kpers@kpers.org)
- Toll-free, 1-888-275-5737
- In Topeka, 785-296-6166

**Give yourself a financial physical:** You probably get an annual physical. Your doctor checks a few things, like your blood pressure and cholesterol, to track your health. Hopefully, your blood is pumping at 120/80 and your cholesterol is under 200.

It’s a little different when it comes time to check your financial health. There are no real benchmark numbers because everyone’s situation is different. But it may help to gauge your own situation if you look at how other people are doing.

Debt and savings are a couple vital signs that are a good indicator of your overall financial health. Go to this link to see the newest “BenefitWise” newsletter: <https://www.kpers.org/benefitwise/2017/11.html>

## CEO Search Update

Plans are in the works for on-site interviews for the top CEO candidates. In initial planning conversations with the candidates traveling, they are available mid-December. More information about interviews will be sent out to employees soon. ●●●

# Other Celebrations

## Environmental Services Week

Healthcare Environmental Services & Housekeeping Week was Sept. 10-16. We are so thankful for these staff members and all they do in keeping our facilities clean, safe and orderly! They also had a picnic to celebrate the week outside of work, which looked like a wonderful time!

Pictured L-R are Jo Vacura, Dorothy Misek, Cheryl Mann, Josie Logemann, Eva Harrington and Alan Brown. Not pictured are Abraham Burk, LaRoyce Brown, Rachel Jones and Hailey Branek. ●●●



## Foodservice Workers Week

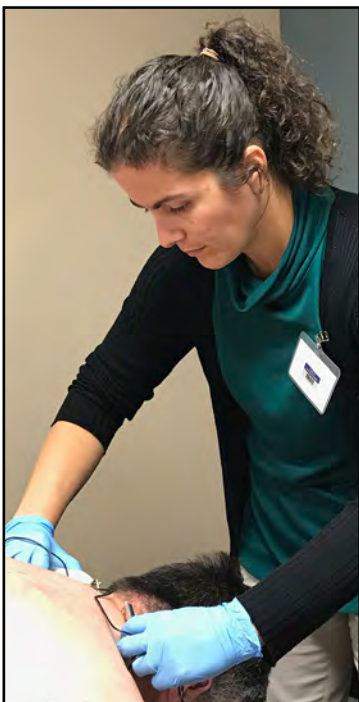
Healthcare Foodservice Workers Week was Oct. 1-7. We took time to honor our Dietary department staff who work so hard to prep nutritious meals for our patients and staff.

Pictured L-R are Dietary Manager Shaylei Johnson, Kellie Gibson, Pam Bigge, Jordan Brown, Rita Conrad, Jeanne Pharis, Pat Michael, Carol Richmeier, Mary Boyce and Jean Carmichael. Not pictured are Monica Dial and Elaine Albright. ●●●



## Physical Therapy Month

October was National Physical Therapy Month, and we recognized not only our great PT staff but also our wonderful patients and their stories! Here's a shout out to Kellen Jacobs, Monica Hembd, Natalie Bieberle, Margi Nielsen, Jan Volgamore, Dannay Rhein and Sam Brown! ●●●





# Other Celebrations

## Purchasing Week

Oct. 1-7 was National Healthcare Supply Chain Week! We recognized our Purchasing department supervisor, Pam Miller, and work-study student, Callie Uehlin (who is working with us as part of the Nex-Generation Round Up for Youth program and helped Pam early in the fall). ●●●



## Radiology Week

The first part of November brings us National Radiologic Technology Week. This week commemorates the discovery of the x-ray by Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen on Nov. 8, 1895.

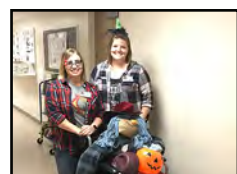
The Radiology department celebrated by providing snacks for all staff! We are thankful for the work they do. Pictured L-R are bottom row Allison McChesney, Valerie Marble and Sheri Land; top row Shawnee Branek, Mitch Bartels and Mike Annon. Not pictured is Marla Kuhn. ●●●



*Other staff weeks we celebrated on social media this fall included: Respiratory Therapy, Infection Prevention, Healthcare Quality & Engineering. Thanks so much for your efforts at NCH!*

## Halloween FUN!

Staff dressed up in spirit of the holiday.



## Breast Cancer Awareness

Staff showed support for those who are fighting the disease and raised awareness of our mammography services.



## Congrats to Deb!

Deb Bowen, RN, returned to work after surgery and credits our PT department for getting her moving again!

