



Nurse²Nurse

A PUBLICATION FOR NURSES BY NURSES

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Ann McDonald-Upton
Patrick Ybarra
Parker MacDonald

Brownsville:

Annie Mendoza
Rudy Sanchez
Rosemarie P. Del Rosario



CNO WELCOME

At the Center of the Wheel

Sometimes change happens so slowly we barely notice it, and other times it is abrupt, and we cannot fail to notice. Most of the time it is a combination of the two, and now is no different.

Recently, we merged with Vanguard Health Systems, and this is a very positive change for Valley Baptist. Vanguard has a reputation for focusing on patient care, satisfaction and safety, which supports our mission and goals.

Currently, and increasingly as we move forward, CORE measures, HCAHPS and more will be used as a measure of the care we give, and the reimbursement we receive. Health care reform will bring with it additional opportunities and, of course, change.

Throughout all these upcoming changes in healthcare, Nursing is at the center of the wheel where each spoke represents a group, including medical staff, patients, pharmacy, laboratory, administration, and others. It is up to us to foster communication and cooperation between them all. We hold the key to successful transitions during upcoming changes.

This is a big responsibility, but we have proven that we are capable of achieving significant results. On CORE measures alone, for the month of August we were at 98.93% for our entire health system: VB-H was at 100% for AMI and CHF, and VB-B reached 100% for AMI, CHF, SCIP and Pneumonia.

Now, more than ever, it is important to forget about the different silos that may have divided us in the past, and to work together to get the job done. Nurses, by way of training, character and experience, are ideally suited to make sure that it does.



Ann McDonald-Upton,
VP & CNO, VBMC-H



Annie Mendoza,
VP & CNO, VBMC-B

VBMC-HARLINGEN RECEIVES VALLEY'S 1ST SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION FOR KNEE & HIP REPLACEMENTS

Valley Baptist-Harlingen has become the first hospital south of San Antonio to be certified with a "Gold Seal of Approval™" specifically for knee and hip replacement surgeries by the Joint Commission.

The Valley's first-ever specialty certification for joint replacements was granted following a survey at VBMC-H on July 28. VBMC-Harlingen is now one of only 11 hospitals in Texas which have the "disease-specific" specialty certification in knee and hip replacements.



Dr. Rick Bassett,
Orthopedic Surgeon and Medical Director of the VBMC-H Orthopedics / Joint Replacement Program,

has performed more than 10,000 knee replacement and 2,000 hip replacement surgeries, all at Valley Baptist.

Patrick Ybarra, RN, MSN, ADON, said the Joint Commission surveyors examined the entire process, from when a doctor sees a potential joint replacement in their office until the time the patient is discharged after their surgery.

Cristina Almanza, RN, BSN, Clinical Supervisor for 6ST, said that a major focus of Valley Baptist's joint replacement program is on managing pain for patients. Valley Baptist chaplains help by providing spiritual and emotional support while patients recover



The 6ST team at VBMC-H includes Cathy Richmond, RN; Sharisse Garibay, RN; Tony Manuel, RN; Elizabeth Farinas, RN; Cristina Almanza, RN, BSN, Clinical Supervisor; and Achamma Phillip, RN.

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Jovanna De La Rosa is pregnant with her first child – a girl.
Joe Perez, RN - his wife is pregnant with their first child – a son.

ECHO / VASCULAR LAB

Congratulations to the Echo Lab and Vascular Lab; both were fully-accredited recently. All the techs are registered.

The following Cardiovascular Technologists recently received their certifications:

Rosie Mancillas, RCS; Ashley Scoggins, RCS;
Mai Le, RDCS; Registered Echo Tech
Rachel Maka, RVT - Registered Vascular Tech

SURGICAL SERVICES

The OR began a PeriOp 101 program under which 11 nurses are being trained using AORN-based modules and videos to become expert OR nurses. All OR nurses have agreed to train for the PeriOp 101 training program. We may soon be the only Surgical Services Dept. with all AORN PeriOp 101-trained nursing staff.

Gilbert M. Rodriguez became administrator for PeriOp 101 students.

Ronda Lewis became OR Manager.

Hermes Mendoza graduated from the RN program and is currently training for OR staff circulating nurse.

Lisa Bocanegra, RN, and Gabriel Martinez are two new OR circulators in training.

Juan Alanis and Juan Carlos Ramirez both became Certified First Assistants (CST-FA).

EMERGENCY DEPT.

Brad Gould, RN, was recently certified as a CEN (Certified Emergency Nurse).

5ST

Lupita Cortez, RN, was awarded "Nurse of the Year" by the physician residents at the RAHC and was presented with the award during the residents' graduation ceremony.

4 VBMC-BROWNSVILLE NURSES RECEIVE DAISY AWARDS



Four nurses at VBMC-Brownsville received the "DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses" for providing excellent care. From the left are Annie Mendoza, Chief Nursing Officer for VBMC-B; DAISY Award winners Tiffany Tryon, RN, of Labor & Delivery; Sonia Paez, LVN, of Pediatrics; Heather Thiel, RN, of the Wound Care Center; and Gayle Porter, RN, of 3-T; and Dr. Jose Ayala, DPM, CWS, Director of the Foot Care Institute at VBMC-B.

Four nurses at VBMC-Brownsville received the "DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses" after hospital patients and family members commended them for going "above and beyond" in providing excellent, professional and compassionate care.

In submitting nominations for DAISY Awards, patients and family members expressed their deep gratitude to 37 VBMC-Brownsville nurses, including the four winners: Tiffany Tryon, RN, of

Labor & Delivery; Sonia Paez, LVN, of Pediatrics; Heather Thiel, RN, of the Wound Care Center; and Gayle Porter, RN, of 3-Tower.

One patient recounted how Heather reassured her when she came to VBMC-B and credited Heather with helping to arrange home health care after her discharge – all of which helped her to get well within a month instead of six months.

"She has gone out of her way to help me – always with concern," the patient added about Heather.

Gayle was nominated for the award by a family member whose brother was hospitalized on 3ST.

"Gayle is very professional and caring," the family member stated. "She was quick to follow-up on my brother's concerns ... she is very patient – and she listened to my brother."

As for Sonia, one of her young patients in Pediatrics said that "Sonia was a very nice nurse to me ... I loved the way she took care of me and she even inspired me to become a nurse (when I'm older) -- because I would like to take care of people just the way Sonia does for me."

The mother of another patient described Sonia as very dedicated, friendly and

patient, treating her patients like family, with respect and dignity. "You can tell she really cares," another mother added.

Tiffany was nominated by a new mother in Labor & Delivery, who she Tiffany was "very courteous and made me feel very comfortable during this great moment in my life ... she also laughed at my husband's nonsense jokes, which made him feel very good, also."

Other new moms said that Tiffany is kind, considerate, helpful, attentive, sincere, professional, prompt in meeting their needs, and has a great attitude. For example, they said Tiffany was "awesome" at explaining the different procedures in L&D in detail – so they understood ahead of time what was about to happen.

The DAISY Award was established by Mark and Bonnie Barnes of California to recognize nurses for providing "amazing" care for patients such as their son, J. Patrick Barnes of California, who died at age 33 from complications of an auto-immune disease. Ever since Patrick's death, Mr. and Mrs. Barnes have been working to personally thank nurses around the country for their extraordinary care which means so much to not only patients but to countless family members concerned about their loved ones.



VBMC-HARLINGEN SYSTEM STANDOUT

Jovanna De La Rosa | RN, BSN, PCCU, Observation Unit

Education: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Family: Joseph; and a baby on the way

When and why did you decide to become a nurse: I became a nurse in 1997. I went to CNA training first and decided that I wanted to be able to do more for my patients, so I applied and was accepted into the VBMC School of Vocational Nursing.

Nursing philosophy: To provide excellent, safe, quality care to our patients through teamwork, education and evidence-based practice.

First job at Valley Baptist: Team member on PCCU

Describe your path from that job to where you are now: I started out as an LVN working for Su Clinica Familiar in Women's Health. When I decided to go back to school to become an RN, I felt that I needed to gain more experience in a hospital setting ... so I left Su Clinica and became a team member on PCCU, and have been here since. I am now Clinical Supervisor for both PCCU and the Observation Unit.

Most memorable patient experience: We had a patient on our unit for about 6 months who had multiple complications following surgery -- and had been told that he would probably never be able to walk again or lead an independent life. He was discharged to the rehab center, and about a year later he came back to visit us and was walking and doing great. He was so grateful for all we had done for him. It's those moments that remind me of why I became a nurse and how important our job really is.

What do you hope to achieve in the next few years: I plan to apply to a Master's Program, either in Nursing or Business Administration

Do you have any special talents or hobbies: I really enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I also enjoy reading and shopping to relieve stress.



VBMC-BROWNSVILLE SYSTEM STANDOUT

Robin Jones | RN, Quality Assurance

Education: U.T. Brownsville - 1994

Family: Stewart Aikman and Madison Aikman (2 yrs. old)

When and why did you decide to become a nurse: In junior high school I decided I wanted to go into healthcare. I decided medical school was too long and decided to become a nurse.

Nursing philosophy: "It takes a village." It really does take a village to provide each patient with a great, safe patient experience.

First job at Valley Baptist: I started in COPA/Cath Lab in 1996.

Describe your path from that job to where you are now: I started at Brownsville Community Health Center as a pharmacy tech as soon as I graduated from high school (while going to nursing school). I did a rotation at BCHC in my high school health occupations class. They asked my instructor to keep me for the rest of the year to train and hire me. I then graduated from nursing school in 1994 and went to work at Valley Regional Medical Center (the old one, where our East Campus is now) for Kerry Woodin, RN (who is now our Nurse Educator). In 1996, I came to BMC and worked in the COPA/Cath Lab area until 2000 when I transferred over to be a House Supervisor. In the fall of 2007, I transferred over to Quality Assurance and have been there ever since.

Most memorable nursing experience: I have many memorable patient experiences. The most amazing "miracle of life" event I witnessed was a young man who had hung himself. Patient was coded and ventilated. Neurologically, it did not look like patient would ever recover from the event and progress was grim. The next day, the patient opened his eyes and was responding. He was extubated shortly thereafter -- to be discharged with no residual effects.

What do you hope to achieve in the next few years: I always joke I can retire after VB-B gets an electronic incident reporting system and medication reconciliation module. It looks like we are on our way to getting the incident reporting system and discussing the different med. rec. systems, so I better get something else or I'll be retiring soon. I also hope to be awarded the CMS Care Transition Grant we have been working on for several years.

Do you have any special talents or hobbies: Gardening, offshore fishing (not as much as I would like to with a 2-year-old) and "Tastefully Simple."

HCAHPS

Patient surveys critical for nursing, Valley Baptist

Article By Terri Teinert, Valley Baptist Customer Service Representative

As health care providers at Valley Baptist, our main responsibility has always been to provide the highest quality of care to our patients. Our success in meeting the needs of our patients is measured by patient satisfaction surveys. One survey, known as HCAHPS (pronounced “H-CAPS”), measures our patients’ satisfaction in the adult inpatient units. This survey is required by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

We have always known that providing excellent customer service is “the right thing to do”; however, now it is even more critical with HCAHPS results being very transparent. Our consumers, the residents of the Valley, may choose which facility to visit based on the HCAHPS survey results. The results are publicly available to potential patients on www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov. In the near future, the amount of a hospital’s reimbursement from CMS will be based partly on how patients evaluate their experience based on the HCAHPS survey (this is part of the CMS “Value Based Purchasing” program).

Although this is a Medicare-based program, all types of patients will be included, regardless of the type of insurance they have. As stated earlier, HCAHPS surveys apply ONLY to adult inpatient units; Pediatrics, NBICU in Harlingen / NICU in Brownsville, Inpatient Rehab, and SNF are excluded. Discharged patients are randomly sampled every month. The survey consists of 18 questions.

As nurses, you are the primary caregiver to our patients. Your role, responsibilities and attitude play a big part in how a patient views his or her hospital experience -- which in turn will be reflected in the HCAHPS survey results. When wondering what to do to make a difference, research shows that a patient’s perception

of nursing skills is based largely on interpersonal skills; the “soft” skills. At Valley Baptist, we have implemented several strategies that can help us achieve excellent interpersonal skills. These include:

AIDET

AIDET is a customer communication tool that aides in improving our skill set in communicating with patients. The acronym stands for: Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explain, and Thank. AIDET is a template; when used correctly, it allows for a solid exchange of information in every encounter. It helps “connect the dots” in what is being said and done, which in turn provides patients and their families a better understanding of what we are doing. The goal is to use these five components in every customer interaction. Research has shown that the use of this tool enhances a patient’s experience, thus increasing patient satisfaction.

HOURLY ROUNDING

Hourly rounding can have a powerful impact on the patient’s perception of quality care. It creates the expectation with the patient that someone will check on them every hour. Specifically, it requires asking if the patient needs to go to the bathroom (potty); needs to be re-positioned for comfort; if their pain is controlled; and finally, if there is anything they need the care giver to get for them before leaving (possessions). Patients develop a sense of trust knowing that someone is going to come in each hour to assess their needs.

COMPASSION

The benefits to providing compassionate care are numerous. Providing a high level of compassion allows patients to feel more

involved with their care, more trusting with their care givers, and less anxious and fearful of their condition. There are four components of compassion. Being attentive (ATTENTION) suggests that caregivers look for signs, signals and clues that show what is most important to the patient or their family. For example, a patient may talk about their grandchildren; we should take this opportunity to ask the patient for the names / ages of their grandchildren and how often they see them. As well, you may even share with them about your grandchildren, if applicable. This makes the patient feel heard and “connected” with the care giver.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledgement is letting others know that you respect and appreciate them as individuals. Another component is AFFECTION; this is the human touch of warmth, humor, comfort and kindness. Care givers should look for opportunities to hold a hand, to laugh, and to show genuine concern. The last one, and possibly the most difficult, is ACCEPTANCE. This is allowing a person to be just the way they are, without judgment or expectations. As care givers our goal is to make our patients well -- and it can be very difficult accepting that a patient smokes, or is not compliant with meds, or is tired and does not want to continue treatment. We need to accept that there are things about our patients that we cannot change.

In conclusion, our entire health care team must work together to assure that our patients’ perceptions of the care they receive at our hospitals is as positive as possible. If we think of each and every patient as though they were our loved one, family member, mother or father, we will make a difference in each and every patient’s health care experience!

NEW VBMC-BROWNSVILLE SURGICAL SUITES OPEN



Joe Gallardo, Certified Surgical Technician with VBMC-Brownsville, shows Steris LED operating room lights in the new Surgery suites. The new lights are brighter than conventional operating room lights and generate almost no heat.

New surgery suites at Valley Baptist-Brownsville are benefiting Valley patients needing a wide variety of surgeries, including laparoscopic and other minimally-invasive surgeries.

The project included construction of four new surgery suites; renovation of four existing operating rooms, including a Cysto room for urology procedures; a new Day Surgery Unit with 6 private rooms and 14 semi-private rooms; the addition of pre-operative holding rooms; and a new 9-bed post-anesthesia care unit where patients recover following their surgeries.

The new surgery area features state-of-the-art equipment, High Definition (HD) monitors, new anesthesia machines,

and new, improved operating room lights. The Steris LED lights are brighter than conventional operating room lights and generate almost no heat.

“This expansion and renovation of our surgery suites will benefit the women, men and children of our community,” said Leslie Bingham, Chief Executive Officer for Valley Baptist-Brownsville. “Valley Baptist is committed to ensuring that our patients receive the best possible care in state-of-the-art facilities.”

Connie Clavo, RN, BSN, CNOR, Clinical Supervisor for Surgical Services for VBMC-Brownsville, said the new surgery area is ergonomically designed for “quicker and easier patient flow.”

The area includes larger rooms with all-new, state of the art equipment, including HD video which gives physicians a “crystal-clear view” as they are performing surgery, Ms. Clavo said.

Four of the surgery suites have surgical booms to house the HD equipment used for laparoscopic surgery, along with two 42” monitors in each room.

Ms. Clavo said state-of-the-art cardiac monitors in the Operating Rooms and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit allow surgeons and anesthesia providers to check each patient’s vital signs rapidly and easily.

For more information on surgical advances in the Brownsville area, consult your physician and visit www.ValleyBaptist.net.

from their surgery.

“We’ve developed a nursing plan of care specifically for knee and hip replacements,” Cristina added. Valley Baptist holds weekly pre-operative classes, taught by specially-trained 6ST nurses, to educate patients prior to their surgery and to prepare them for their hospital stay.

Jan Kauffman, RN, BSN, served as a “center of excellence” consultant, helping Valley Baptist prepare for the Joint Commission survey.

Who's On The Cover?

(A) Celebrating a recent Joint Commission specialty certification for knee and hip replacement at Valley Baptist-Harlingen are from the left, Patrick Ybarra, RN, MSN, ADON; Bill Adams, CEO for VBMC-Harlingen; and Cristina Almanza, RN, BSN, Clinical Supervisor for 6ST. VBMC-Harlingen became the first hospital south of San Antonio to be certified specifically for knee and hip replacements by the Joint Commission. **(B)** Staff of the Lenae Cooley Gray Ambulatory Infusion Unit, now located on the first floor VBMC-H’s East Tower, help treat hundreds of cancer and other patients on an outpatient basis. Staff from the left include Linda Perez, RN, Manager; Lorena Prado, Clinical Coordinator; Geneva Cantu, RN; Jesse Puente Jr., RN; Elisa García, RN; Irene Morales, Specialty Tech; and Janee Bledsoe, RN. Staff not pictured include Jose Diaz, RN; Veronica Sanchez, RN; Maria D. Torres, Specialty Tech; and Anabel Becerra, Specialty Tech. **(C)** VBMC-Brownsville Surgical Services staff celebrate the opening of new surgical suites which feature state-of-the-art equipment. Staff members in the first row above are Darleen La Coste, LVN; Rafaela Zambrano, LVN; Connie Clavo, RN, BSN, CNOR, Clinical Supervisor; Alma De La Cruz, LVN; Maru Ladilad, RN; Amy Gonzales, CST; and Nydia Morales, RN. In the back row are Jessica Hernandez, Unit Secretary; Steven Brooks, CST; Jose Gallardo, CST; Michelle Sanchez, CST; and Mary Morales, Scheduling Coordinator.

VBMC-BROWNSVILLE SNF PASSES STATE CERTIFICATION SURVEY – WITH FLYING COLORS!

The Skilled Nursing Facility at Valley Baptist-Brownsville has completed its 4th Annual State Certification Survey with NO deficiencies for both the facility and life safety categories.

Rosemarie Del Rosario, RN, BSN, Nursing Director, said the state surveyors spent two days at the SNF, which is located on the third floor of VBMC-B.

“I would like to give thanks, especially

to the SNF unit staff, and also to all of the directors and staff who assisted the SNF, including John Williams, James Cordes, Kathy Sanford, Tracey Juarez, Sandy McCurdy, Lucas Garza, Miguel Rodriguez, Grace Basa and many others, for their participation and help with the success of this survey,” Rosemarie said. “We congratulate the SNF unit !!”

Leslie Bingham, CEO for VBMC-Brownsville, said the successful state survey is an indicator of “good things to

come in our pending JCAHO hospital survey.”

“This is awesome ... congratulations to all of the team members, and thank you for your hard work,” Ms. Bingham added.

Aldercy Fernandez, RN, BSN, SNF Clinical Supervisor, said this is the fourth straight year that the SNF has passed its state survey – for all four years of its existence.