West Bed Tower CON Approved

The Mississippi State Department of Health approved the certificate of need on March 26 for NMMC's West Bed Tower. The five-story expansion project will enlarge and upgrade 250 patient rooms. The project is in response to public feedback regarding shortcomings in patient rooms on the east and west nursing units, many of which were constructed almost 45 years ago.

Construction will begin later this year. Highlights of the project include:

- Existing patient rooms will be enlarged from approximately 165 square feet to approximately 265 square feet.
- Each room will have three distinct zones – one for the patient, the family and hospital staff.
- Patient area will include a comfortable bed, shower, built-in bedside table and wall closet, as well as a recliner.
- The patient will have bedside control of everything in the room, including room temperature, lights and even opening or closing the window blinds. The patient will also have a wider view out the window – 135-degree view as opposed to the current 90-degree.
- Staff area will include a desk and chair, as well as a sink for hand washing.
- Each of the five floors is designed to include 44 patient rooms. Sixteen rooms will be located in the existing area, and 28 new rooms will be constructed. A wide corridor will connect the two sections.

For more information, visit nmhs.net/tupelo/west_bed_tower.php.
NMMC Hosts Systemwide Safety Summit

North Mississippi Medical Center’s Safety Summit was held March 12 at the Advanced Education Center on the University of Mississippi’s Tupelo campus. The conference had 98 attendees with representatives throughout North Mississippi Health Services, including long term care, home health, the community hospitals and NMMC-Tupelo.

The goal was to create a vision for continuing to improve patient safety throughout NMHS. The event was hosted by Steve Altmiller, NMMC-Tupelo president. Karen Koch, director of NMMC’s Patient-Focused Improvement Department, presented a review of our recent Culture of Safety survey and Mark Williams, M.D., NMHS chief medical officer, gave an overview of national and local efforts to improve patient safety.

Breakout sessions, such as those pictured here, focused on specific drivers that can improve patient safety – teamwork, creating a “Just Culture,” education of the staff, translating initiatives from leadership to the bedside and the reporting of safety events.

The event was possible through the combined efforts of Altmiller, Dr. Williams and NMMC’s Patient-Focused Improvement, Strategy and Education departments.
The following employees recently received service pins in recognition of five-year service milestones.

February 2010

**Five Years**

*Clinics*
Denna Abbott, Brenda Conoway

*Home Health*
Jewel Busby

**NMMC**
Rose Boone, Derrick Buchanan, Carla Enis, Felicia Garrett, Dorothy Gillard, Tara Kilgore, Torrie Moffett, Lori Myers, Ron Richardson

**NMMC-Pontotoc**
Annie Walker

**NMMC-Eupora**
Sharon Gaston

**Women's Hospital**
Joan Helton, Christi Jenkins, Cassie Lann

**Ten Years**

*NMMC-West Point*
Susie Bash, Eddie Moye

**Clinics**
Triana Stephens

**NMMC-Iuka**
Emily Wadkins

**NMHS**
Amanda Childs, Brenda Hendrix

**NMMC**
Donna Donaldson, Tracie Floyd, Dianne Huddleston, Laurie Jones, Alesia Kendrick, Martha Langle, Cynthia McDaniel, Scotty Pounds, Debbie Rye, Patricia Strong, Tammy Sullivan, Mary Tolbert, Amy Wilson

**NMMC-Eupora**
Patricia Poindexter

**Women's Hospital**
Cheryl Clements

**Fifteen Years**

*Clinics*
Beverly Bagley, Kay Edwards, Deborah Lofton, Sharin Ragin

**Home Health**
Sharon Lee-Polk, Phyllis Wait

**NMMC-Iuka**
Gregory Meeks

**NMMC**
Patty Burks, Waydean Cooper, Carolyn Gresham, Terri Hughes, Eddie Mink, Michael Phillips, Penny Posey

**NMMC-Eupora**
Jannie Ford

**Twenty Years**

*NMMC*
Mary Adams, Marchell Graham, Sharon Patterson

**Women's Hospital**
Janet Whiteside

**Twenty-five Years**

*NMMC*
Collette Dixon

**Thirty Years**

*NMMC*
Mike Dozier

**Thirty-five Years**

*NMMC-West Point*
Debra Reese
Joyce Armstrong, certified nursing assistant in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, has been selected as North Mississippi Medical Center's February Employee of the Month.

Armstrong joined NMMC in 2002. The Hatley High School graduate earned her CNA certification in 2002 from Itawamba Community College in Fulton.

“I have never seen anyone work harder,” a coworker said of Armstrong in her nomination. “She comes in and gets everything organized and then she goes all out to get her job done. Helping turn patients, giving baths and anything else you ask of her.”

“She is the hardest working assistant that I have ever worked with in my 16 years,” another coworker wrote. “She is always wanting to do something to help others. She is very well organized and keeps the nurses well equipped with supplies, etc.”

An Amory resident, Armstrong’s family includes her husband Larry and two children – Angela Nash and Stephen Armstrong.

“The best part of my job is having the opportunity to assist with the care of the patients in our unit,” Armstrong said. “I enjoy completing the duties and assignments which are a part of my job each day, while being surrounded by a compassionate and professional staff. Working with the patients, their families and the staff at NMMC has truly been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.”

Mike Denham (left), administrator for Surgical Services at NMMC, reads off some of the accolades for February Employee of the Month Joyce Armstrong.

NMMC Employees Donate 142 Blood Products

After a very successful December drive, expectations were high for NMMC’s Employee Blood Drive on March 16-17.

Those expectations were exceeded as 156 people signed in over the two days, including 41 first-time donors. By the end of the drive, 129 people donated 142 blood products.

Charles “Nate” Smith, an employee in NMMC’s Pharmacy Department, won a 37-inch flat-screen television donated by the Cardiovascular Service Line. Dennis Kramer, manager of the Sleep Disorders Center, won a getaway package to Sam’s Town Casino in Tunica, donated by United Blood Services.

Each employee who completed a successful donation received 800 CSF Reward points and a meal voucher for the Food Court.
Home Health RN Earns Nightingale Award

Stephanie Inmon, RN, of North Mississippi Medical Center's Home Health Agency has received the 2010 Nurse Researcher of the Year Nightingale Award from the Mississippi Nurses Association and Foundation.

Presented March 1 in Jackson, the annual Nightingale Awards honors exceptional service in the nursing and health care industry across Mississippi.

Inmon has been an NMMC employee for 16 years and currently serves as a care manager. She previously worked on the neurology floor at NMMC before transferring to Home Health in 1994.

A 1991 graduate of South Pontotoc Attendance Center, Inmon earned an associate's degree in nursing from Itawamba Community College in 1993. She became certified in gerontological nursing in 1997. She and her husband Glen live in Pontotoc and have three sons – Barron, Reed and Hayden. The family attends First Baptist Church in Pontotoc.

In addition, Laura Brower, RN, was inducted into the MNA Hall of Fame. Brower formerly served as vice president for professional and support services as well as chief nursing officer for North Mississippi Medical Center-Tupelo, and now serves as chief nursing officer for the Methodist Health System in San Antonio, Texas.

Other NMMC nurses nominated for Nightingale Awards were Ruth Marie Dendy, Nurse of the Year; Mary Ann Posey, Nurse Rookie of the Year; Linda Shields, Nurse Mentor of the Year; Angela Coggins, Nursing Educator of the Year; Leila Phillips, Clinical Practice Nurse of the Year; Betty Thornton, Advanced Practice Nurse of the Year; and Elizabeth Denson, Community Service Nurse of the Year.

Michelle Burns, representing Mississippi Nurses Association's District 13 in Hinds, Madison, Rankin and Yazoo counties, left, presents Stephanie Inmon with the 2010 Nurse Researcher of the Year Nightingale Award.
Jack Goff was honored for more than four decades of service with North Mississippi Medical Center at a retirement reception on Feb. 25.

Goff, who served as director of Performance Improvement and Accreditation for North Mississippi Health Services for the past 21 years, joined the hospital on Sept. 26, 1967, as an operating room technician.

The Tupelo native is a graduate of Shannon High School. He completed the registered nursing program at Itawamba Community College. Goff moved from OR tech to clinical educator and assistant supervisor before moving into the position of director of Surgery. In 1989, he was named director of NMMC’s Clinical Quality Department, which later became NMHS’ Performance Improvement and Accreditation.

“It’s been good for me. I’ve been blessed all these years being able to work there,” Goff said. “That hospital has been my whole work life.”

Goff worked for NMMC for two years before joining the military and rejoined the hospital when he returned home to Tupelo.

“I’ve worked here for 45 years overall,” he said. “In that time, I’ve seen all of the construction at the medical center with the exception of the building of the original hospital.”

Goff was NMMC’s first Clinical Quality director when the department was formed in 1989. He had gotten the attention of members of the medical staff by instituting Joint Commission standards in the Surgery Department.

“It was a learn-as-you-go job,” Goff said. “I began working with Joint Commission when I was in Surgery because quality and safety of care in surgery was so important, we could not ignore standards and practice. So we began applying those standards and that led me into the position I later held.”

One of the things that Goff will miss most is his coworkers. “We have some wonderful people at the medical center and they have been so good to work with,” he said. “Those are some lifelong relationships.”

Goff and his wife Brenda have two children, son Kevin, who works at Norbord in Guntown, and daughter Summer Burgett, who is manager of BancorpSouth’s Saltillo branch and is married to Chris Burgett. The Goffs have two grandchildren, 20-year-old Landon and 6-year-old Lauren.

“One of the good things about retiring is getting to spend more time with my family,” Goff said. “I enjoy working outside and I read a lot. I’ve bought a lot of books over the last year that I have stacked up ready to read.”

Jack Goff and his wife Brenda greet well-wishers at his retirement reception. Goff was honored for more than 40 years of service with NMMC.
Several North Mississippi Health Services employees were recently recognized by Stars On-Line for going above and beyond their duties.

Lauren Carter and Angela Reed with NMMC's Skilled Nursing Facility teamed up to give a big assist to a deaf patient on their floor who was moving to a nursing home.

Carter, a registered nurse, donated a television with closed captioning capabilities so the patient could continue to watch television in a functional manner. Reed, activities assistant, bought a new remote control to allow the patient full access to the television. She also took time after her work hours to deliver and set up the television in the patient's assisted living room.

The donations by Carter and Reed exemplify the care and concern Skilled Nursing Facility staff show for their patients and the lengths they will go to make the patients' lives just a little more pleasurable.

Mike Hodges, a Facility Operations employee at NMMC-Eupora, was recognized for assisting the Pathology Department. The Lab and Long Term Care needed a phlebotomy cart, and estimates ranged from $700 to $1,000. Hodges, a welder, went to the facility's old equipment storage, located parts and built two carts at an estimated $40 per cart. Hodges’ efforts saved money and, because of his extra work, the carts are customized specifically for the departments and look great.

Randall Feather, physician recruiter, showed exceptional customer service and compassion for an elderly patient at NMMC. The patient repeatedly dialed Feather's office number in error while trying to reach someone in Como, Miss. Feather patiently instructed the patient how to dial long distance numbers from inside the hospital, but the man was unable to understand. So each time the patient called, Feather continued to transfer the call. This continued through a weekend while Feather was out-of-state attending a church retreat. Feather checked his voice mail several times throughout the weekend and followed up with the patient to help him place his calls.

Bradley Woodcock, a physical therapy assistant with the NMMC Home Health Agency, was recently recognized by Stars On-Line for outstanding dedication to his patients.

An orthopedic patient was discharged home with orders for daily dressing changes, but the dressings were not available locally. When the dressing order arrived, Woodcock drove to NMMC to pick up and deliver them to the patient's home late one evening.

In another incident, Woodcock's car was side-swiped by an 18-wheeler and sent into a spin, landing in the median. After completing the accident report and realizing his car could safely be driven, Woodcock hit the road again to finish his visits on this particularly busy day.

If you see an NMMC employee displaying extreme acts of kindness, nominate him or her for Stars On-Line. Nomination forms are available on the Intranet or throughout the hospital.
Medical Ethics Forum Scheduled For April 15

Medical Ethics Forum meetings are held each month to provide a forum for discussing moral values as they apply to medicine. The next meeting will be held at 7:30 a.m. Thursday, April 15, in the NMMC East Tower Education Center, Room 21. Edward Hill, M.D., will present “The History of Health Care Reform.”

Eupora Lab Assistant Captures Clinics EOM For Feb.

Barbara Doss of Eupora has been chosen as the February Employee of the Month for North Mississippi Medical Clinics.

Doss works as a laboratory assistant at Eupora Medical Clinic. She started work at North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo in January 1976. After 26 years at NMCC-Tupelo, she stopped working to take care of her mother full time. In 2003, she started work at NMMC-Eupora, transferring to Eupora Medical Clinic in July 2005. She is a graduate of South Pontotoc High School.

“Ms. Barbara gives her all to her patients and coworkers,” said a coworker who nominated Doss. “She is dependable, reliable and frugal. She comes to work every day with a great attitude. Our patients ask for her by name because they trust her and she is kind and caring.”

“The best part of my job is meeting people,” Doss said. “I’ve done it for so long and I still like going to work each day. I have something good to look forward to. I live in a town where the people are real down to earth, humble and kind. I wouldn’t trade the people I work with in the clinic for anything.”

Doss is a member of Walthall Baptist Church.

The Employee of the Month honor recognizes employees with exemplary job performance and customer service skills, as well as community involvement.

Med Tech Wins Quarterly Idea For Excellence

Johnny Ferrell, medical technologist with NMMC’s Pathology department, was recently recognized for coming up with the Idea for Excellence of the Quarter.

Ferrell’s idea was to notify the blood bank when cardiovascular surgery is cancelled or rescheduled. The idea improves quality and use of valuable resources.

For coming up with the Idea for Excellence of the Quarter, Ferrell was rewarded with 16,000 CSF Reward points.

“Before, when cardiac surgery was cancelled or pushed back, we wouldn’t get that information,” said Ferrell, an NMMC employee for the past 10 years. “That blood is tagged and waiting to be used, so we couldn’t use it on another patient. Now we can.”

Submit your ideas for ways NMMC can improve by logging on to Ideas for Excellence on the Intranet site. Each idea that is accepted nets 800 CSF Reward points and 16,000 points goes to the most outstanding suggestion each quarter.