

# practice notes

July 2011

## NMHS Named as One of The Nation's Top Health Systems

**North Mississippi Health Services** has been selected for inclusion in *Modern Healthcare* magazine's listing of the nation's Top Health Systems.

Thomson Reuters compiles the annual rankings after reviewing the performance of 285 healthcare organizations. Those that made the third annual list represent the top 20% of health systems in the United States. The results are based on performance in the following quality measures: mortality index, complications index, patient-safety index, core measures, 30-day mortality rate, 30-day readmission rate, average length of stay and HCAHPS score (patient satisfaction).

"We are honored to be selected among the nation's top health care systems," said John Heer, NMHS president and chief executive officer. "This honor validates that our organization is focused on the right things. The quality measures used in this study will serve as the basis of the Federal Government's Value Based Purchasing Program, which will begin in 2012."

NMHS was the only health care organization in Mississippi to make the list. Geographically, the recipient located closest to Tupelo was Ochsner Health System in New Orleans.

According to *Modern Healthcare*, 1,944 hospitals were included in the study's 285 health systems, with each system averaging 6.8 hospitals. NMHS has six hospitals, North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo, as well as a community hospital system with locations in Eupora, Iuka, Pontotoc, West Point, Miss., and Hamilton, Ala.

## NMMC Tupelo Recognized for Clinical Excellence

NMMC in Tupelo was the recipient of a **2011 VHA Leadership Award for Clinical Excellence** for meeting or exceeding national performance standards for clinical care and improving the patient experience.

VHA, Inc., a national health care network, serves more than 1,350 not-for-profit hospitals and more than 30,000 non-acute health care providers nationwide, supporting their efforts to improve their clinical and economic performance. NMMC was one of 28 VHA member hospitals to receive the 2011 Leadership Awards for Clinical Excellence.

The VHA Leadership Award for Clinical Excellence is given annually to recognize organizations that achieve top performance on the clinical core measures established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and in the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Health Providers and Services (HCAHPS) survey that measure patient satisfaction at hospitals across the country.

"We are very proud of our physicians and staff who have worked diligently to improve care provided to our patients," said Steve Altmiller, president of NMMC-Tupelo. "This is an ongoing, relentless effort and part of our commitment to give all our best to those we serve."

"The VHA Leadership Award for Clinical Excellence recognizes hospitals that have worked to provide consistently high levels of clinical care for their patients and that emphasize the importance of improving the patient experience," said Trent Haywood, M.D., J.D., chief medical officer at VHA. "These award-winning hospitals have clearly demonstrated an organizational commitment to look at the organizational practices, organizational structures and relationships that support performance improvement."

---

A monthly newsletter for physicians, certified nurse practitioners and other health care professionals.

To submit information, call (662) 377-2371.

Visit [www.nmhs.net/physicians\\_portal](http://www.nmhs.net/physicians_portal) to read this newsletter online.



**NORTH MISSISSIPPI  
MEDICAL CENTER**



By recognizing these award-winning institutions, VHA hopes that other hospitals and health systems will apply these leading practices to identify ways to improve patient care and drive clinical excellence within their own organizations.

## Save The Date – NMHS to Host Patient Safety Summit

Mark your calendars to attend the **NMHS Patient Safety Summit**, Sept. 29-30.

Keynote speaker for the event is Paul O'Neill. He served as CEO of Pittsburgh industrial giant Alcoa, where he worked tirelessly to reduce employee safety events. He also served as United States Secretary of the Treasury under President George W. Bush. He has been a staunch advocate for patient safety efforts and serves as a board member for the National Patient Safety Foundation.

Thursday, Sept. 29, will be limited to NMHS medical staff and board members, and Friday, Sept. 30, will be open to 300 people in leadership roles throughout NMHS.

More information to follow.

## NMMC Launches Self-Care College

NMMC recently launched a **Congestive Heart Failure Self-Care College** on 3 South for patients and their caregivers.

Beginning June 1, patients with a primary diagnosis of CHF rotate through a simulation lab with three learning stations – weight, diet and medication. The lab begins at 2 p.m. each Monday, Wednesday and Friday and will expand to other days as needed. According to Lee Greer, M.D., physician champion of the Self-Care College, NMMC treats approximately 600 patients each year who have a primary diagnosis of CHF.

At the Self-Care College, a physical therapist or cardiac rehabilitation professional will stress the importance of weighing daily and will ensure that each patient knows how to properly weigh himself. If the patient does not own scales, he will be given some to take home.

At the diet station, a registered dietitian will discuss fluid restriction, acceptable foods and foods to avoid. A pharmacist will offer instruction and answer questions at the medication station. A representative from Nurse Link will also be

present to enroll each patient in a four-week call back program.

“The self care college’s primary goal is to activate the patient to be able to care for his or her disease,” Dr. Greer said. “We hope that when patients leave our facility they are prepared to manage their day-to-day care. Instead of the usual method of passive teaching with a handout or educational book, the Self-Care College incorporates active learning by asking the patient or caregiver to perform tasks that they will be required to do at home. If a patient can not complete the task, then we will be able to recognize the deficit and allocate resources to ensure a smooth transition back to home.”

The goal of the Self-Care College is to reduce the 30-day readmission rate for CHF patients. Each patient will take home a folder full of information about managing CHF, a personal health record to take to each physician and pharmacy visit, and information about prescription assistance and tobacco cessation. Each patient also gets a calendar for recording daily weight, as well as signs and symptoms that indicate CHF is worsening. For more information about the CHF Self-Care College, call Kim Mayhall, RN, in Case Management at (662) 377-3810.

## Ultrasound Conference Set For July 29-30

**The Sound Imaging Quad-State Ultrasound Conference** will be held July 29-30 at the Clarion Inn Summit Center in Tupelo.

The conference is targeted to physicians, sonographers and sonography students and anyone whose scope of practice includes the use of sonography. Friday evening’s topics include breast cysts and solid lesions and transesophageal echocardiogram. Saturday’s topics include sonography used in emergency medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, vascular medicine and obstetrics, as well as ergonomic issues for the sonographer.

Registration and payment must be made by July 12. For registration and fee information, call Kim Sallee at NMMC-West Point, (662) 495-2331.

## NMMC Offers Isolated Thrombolysis

NMMC now has a new weapon in its arsenal against deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a blood clot in the deep vein of the leg.



Done in NMMC's Cardiac Catheterization Lab, the new pharmacomechanical procedure is known as **isolated thrombolysis** and combines clot-dissolving agents ("pharmaco") and mechanical devices. Through a small incision, the doctor inserts a catheter in the location of the clot and inflates a small balloon on either side of the clot. "We inject a small volume of clot-dissolving drug into the isolated area between the two balloons," said Vishal Sachdev, M.D., cardiothoracic surgeon. "An oscillating wire that's threaded into the vein vibrates to help disperse the drug around the clot, which helps dissolve the clot faster." Once the clot is liquefied, it is sucked out to remove any danger of remnants traveling elsewhere.

"This new procedure allows us to give a high concentration of clot-dissolving drug in a very localized area," Dr. Sachdev said. "The more quickly we're able to remove the clot, the better."

In addition to Dr. Sachdev, cardiologist Barry Bertolet, M.D., performs this procedure at NMMC. For more information about the isolated thrombolysis procedure, call 1-800-THE DESK (1-800-843-3375).

## Arthritis and Driving

For most people, driving represents freedom, control and independence. Driving enables most people to get to the places they want or need to go. It is important economically to many who may drive to or from work and as part of their job.

Individuals with arthritis have difficulty with activities of daily living, including safe driving. Swollen and stiff joints can limit how far one can bend or move shoulders, hands, head, and neck. This can make it harder to grasp or turn a steering wheel, apply the brake and gas pedals, put on a safety belt or look over your shoulders to check your blind spot. It can also cause more difficulty in getting in and out of a car.

Trained occupational therapists within NMMC inpatient and outpatient services can evaluate drivers with arthritis and make recommendations regarding safe driving. These recommendations may include adaptive equipment, such as spinner knobs, extra convex mirrors, transfer assist tools, key holders/turners and gas cap tools. If the individual is determined no longer safe to drive, the occupational therapist will offer alternative transportation strategies to allow the individual to stay active in the community.

## IRB Approves, Renews Studies

The NMHS Institutional Review Board (IRB) currently oversees more than 100 biomedical and behavioral studies. The IRB meets monthly and the following studies were approved and renewed at the June meeting.

### New Studies:

**Study: *A Randomized, Double-blind, Parallel-group Study of the Reduction of Signs and Symptoms during Treatment with Tocilizumab versus Adalimumab, Both in Combination with MTX, in Patients with Moderate to Severe Active Rheumatoid Arthritis and an Inadequate Response to Treatment with only One TNF Inhibitor (MA25522)***

**Investigators:** Charles King, M.D. (PI); Amit Prasad, M.D.; Brandi Young, FNP; and Michelle Turba, FNP

**Summary:** The purpose of this study is to determine if tocilizumab is more effective than a different TNF inhibitor in rheumatoid arthritis patients who have already failed past treatment with a TNF inhibitor.

**Study: *A Phase IIb, Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Trial Evaluating Response Guided Therapy with GS-5885 Alone or in Combination with GS-9451 with Peginterferon Alfa 2a and Ribavirin in Treatment Naïve Subjects with Chronic Genotype 1 Hepatitis C Virus Infection (GS-US-256-0148)***

**Investigators:** John Phillips, M.D. (PI); Digestive Health Specialists

**Summary:** The purpose of this study is to evaluate the antiviral efficacy, safety and tolerability of GS-5885 and GS-9451 in combination with the standard of care for the treatment of hepatitis C virus infection.

### Study Renewal:

**Study: *VISTA 16 – Evaluation of the Safety and Efficacy of Short-term A-002 Treatment in Subjects with Acute Coronary Syndrome (Vascular Inflammation Suppression to Treat Acute Coronary Syndrome for 16 Weeks) (AN-CVD2233)***

**Investigators:** Barry Bertolet, M.D. (PI); Cardiology Associates of North Mississippi

**Summary:** The purpose of this study is to evaluate the safety and efficacy of short-term A-002 treatment on morbidity and mortality when added to atorvastatin and standard of care in subjects with an acute coronary syndrome. Enrollment is open.





## Continuing Medical Education

The CME Program is based in the NMMC Education Department and works to provide quality educational programming that will meet general as well as specific professional needs. Please call (662) 377-3826 or the Consult Line at 1-800-952-8101 if you have CME comments and/or suggestions. Select CME programs are by invitation only and are also subject to change. **Please RSVP upon receipt of invitation.** Visit [www.nmhs.net/physicians\\_portal/cme.php](http://www.nmhs.net/physicians_portal/cme.php) for more information.

**July 8**

### Neuro/Radiology Case Studies

Hunt Bobo, M.D., and Robert Becker, M.D.  
1 p.m., NMMC North Education Center

**July 21**

### Medical Ethics Committee

*If I Had One Day to Fix Health Care...*  
Edward Hill, M.D.  
7:30 a.m., NMMC North Education Center

**July 29**

### Ultrasound Conference (Day 1)

5:45 p.m., Clarion Inn Summit Center  
For more information or to register, call Kim Sallee at (662) 495-2331.

**July 30**

### Ultrasound Conference (Day 2)

7 a.m.-4 p.m., Clarion Inn Summit Center  
For more information or to register, call Kim Sallee at (662) 495-2331.

**August 5**

### Infection Control Conference

8 a.m., NMMC North Education Center  
For more information or to register, call (662) 377-3900.

**August 18**

### Medical Ethics Committee

*Drug Abuse, Pregnancy and Newborn Ethical Issues*  
Bryan Darling, M.D.  
7:30 a.m., NMMC North Education Center

**August 25-27**

### Aiming for the Best Outcomes Conference

Pickwick Landing State Park, Counce, Tenn.  
For more information or to register, call (662) 377-3900.

[www.nmhs.net/physicians\\_portal](http://www.nmhs.net/physicians_portal)

Non Profit  
US Postage Paid  
North MS  
Medical Center  
38801

830 South Gloster  
Tupelo, MS 38801

