North Mississippi Medical Center hospitals in Tupelo and Amory have been awarded an ‘A’ from The Leapfrog Group’s spring 2019 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade.

The designation recognizes NMMC-Tupelo and NMMC Gilmore-Amory’s efforts in protecting patients from harm and providing safer health care. The Leapfrog Group is a national nonprofit organization committed to improving health care quality and safety for consumers and purchasers. The Safety Grade assigns an ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’ or ‘F’ grade to hospitals across the country based on their performance in preventing medical errors, injuries, accidents, infections and other harms to patients in their care.

“We are pleased to have earned an A grade for the seventh time in a row with Leapfrog, as it recognizes the safe, quality care we provide to our patients,” said Allen Tyra, administrator of the Amory hospital. “NMMC Gilmore-Amory has always been committed to providing the highest standards of care to our patients, and this grade is reflective of the hard work of our physicians and staff.”

This marks the third time the Tupelo hospital has earned an ‘A’ grade. “We are delighted to once again receive an A grade from Leapfrog,” said David Wilson, NMMC-Tupelo president. “This clearly demonstrates our team’s commitment to our mission of continuously improving the health of the people of our region. NMMC has an outstanding team of caregivers dedicated to patient safety, and this grade is a reflection of their efforts.”

NMMC-Tupelo is the only Level 2 Trauma Center in Mississippi to receive an ‘A.’

“To be recognized nationally as an ‘A’ hospital is an accomplishment the whole community should take pride

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in,” said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. “Hospitals that earn an ‘A’ grade are making it a priority to protect patients from preventable medical harm and error. We congratulate hospital leaders, board members, staff, volunteers and clinicians who work so hard to earn this A.”

Developed under the guidance of a national Expert Panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. acute-care hospitals twice per year. The Hospital Safety Grade’s methodology is peer-reviewed and fully transparent, and the results are free to the public.

NMMC-Tupelo and NMMC Gilmore-Amory were awarded an ‘A’ grade on May 15, when Leapfrog announced grades for the spring 2019 update. To see full grade details, and to access patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit hospitalsafetygrade.org and follow The Leapfrog Group on Twitter and Facebook.

Powell Honored with BEE Award

Tina Powell, RN, a case manager and utilization review nurse for the Heart Institute, recently received North Mississippi Medical Center’s BEE (Beyond Exceptional Expectations) Award for March.

A patient from Montana who works for the railroad was recently admitted to NMCC’s Chest Pain Center and ultimately underwent open heart surgery. “Tina developed a relationship with this patient and, after family arrived, with the patient’s brother,” wrote Melissa Thornton, a coworker, who nominated Powell. “The patient could not immediately travel home after discharge. The patient and his brother stayed in a local hotel. Tina remained in contact with the patient while he was in the hospital and after discharge, and even took meals to the hotel. Tina has a huge heart and strives to display patient- and family-centered care every day.”

A Baldwyn resident, Powell joined the NMMC staff in 1991 as a registered nurse in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. In 1997, she transferred to the Heart Institute and worked for a few years as information/triage nurse and clinic coordinator. She then worked for Cardiology Associates of North Mississippi for 18 years before rejoining the NMMC staff four years ago. She is an employee of the Case Management Department, where she does case management, discharge planning and utilization review for Heart Institute patients. Powell earned her associate degree in nursing from Itawamba Community College.

She received a certificate, a BEE Award pin, a bouquet donated by Bishop’s Flower Shop and a cake. The BEE Award is given to a deserving caregiver each month at NMMC. Nomination forms are available throughout NMMC or at www.nmhs.net/bee-award. For more information, call (662) 377-3431 or email BEEAwards@nmhs.net.
Excellence in Nursing Awards Presented

MMC's Excellence in Nursing Awards recognize and reward members from the NMMC nursing staff who exemplify standards of excellence. This year's honorees include:

- **Unit Coordinator Excellence** was presented to *Miranda Eddie* of Shannon, unit coordinator, certified nursing assistant and monitor technician on 5 Central. She studied computer programming and joined the NMMC staff 12 years ago. Eddie is a member of the Dymonds and Pearls Social Club and Mystery Ryderz Motorcycle/Social Club. She is married to Dexter Eddie and has three children – Jaliah McNeal, Terrile Eddie and Elijah Eddie. She is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

- **Nursing Support Staff Excellence** was presented to *Ashley Oakes* of Tupelo, unit coordinator, nursing assistant and monitor technician on the Pediatrics unit. A graduate of Tupelo High School, she attended Northeast Mississippi Community College. She also assists Dr. Paul Brezina of Fertility Associates of Memphis with his satellite clinic in Tupelo. Oakes is a member of the Asthma Coalition and volunteered with Camp Breathe Ezzze and Pediatric Fun Day. She and her husband, Chris, have two sons – Jacob and Caleb. They attend West Main Church of Christ.

- **Rookie Excellence** was awarded to *Chelsea Coker*, RN, of Tremont, who joined the NMMC staff last June working on 6 South. Coker graduated from Itawamba Agricultural High School in Fulton and earned her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Mississippi University for Women. She is certified as a tuberculosis nurse and as a preceptor, and is a member of the Mississippi Nurses’ Association. She is the daughter of BJ and Cynthia Canup and the wife of Caul Coker. She attends First Baptist Church in Tremont and is a member of Alpha Delta Pi.

- **Non-Traditional Nursing Excellence** was presented to *Lisa Roper*, RN, of Plantersville, who serves as care coordinator for 6 South with the Case Management Department. She holds an associate degree in nursing from Itawamba Community College and a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Mississippi University for Women. Roper joined the NMMC staff 16 years ago as a surgical technician for cardiovascular surgery. She also worked as a registered nurse, circulating nurse and nurse manager for cardiovascular surgery before assuming her current role. She and her husband, Rocky, attend Shiloh United Methodist Church in Nettleton. She also volunteers monthly with F.A.I.T.H. Food Pantry.

- **Advanced Practice Excellence** was presented to *Eddie Dalton, CRNA*, of Tupelo, a certified registered nurse anesthetist at the NMMC Women’s Hospital. Originally from Endville, Dalton earned associate degrees in electronics and nursing from Itawamba Community College, and a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Mississippi University for Women. He completed his master’s degree and CRNA training at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. Dalton joined the NMMC staff 37 years ago as a biomedical technician and also previously worked in dialysis and the Emergency Department. He completed the CREATE Foundation’s Jim Ingram Community Leadership Institute and founded Eddie’s Fund through the Health Care Foundation of North Mississippi, which provides meal tickets for families with extended stays at NMMC Women’s Hospital. He and his wife, Lisa, have two grown daughters – Kim Bucci and Dana Loden. They attend Sycamore Church.

- **Excellence in Education** was awarded to *Lana Burnett*, RN, of Tupelo, who serves as Continuing Education manager. A Corinth native, Burnett earned her bachelor’s degree from Mississippi University for Women. She is an instructor for Advanced Cardiac Life Support and Basic Life Support, and is Training Center coordinator for American Heart Association courses taught at NMMC. She has been employed at NMMC for 32 years and was a staff nurse on the cardiology unit and continuing education specialist prior to assuming her current role. She also serves as chair of the Northern Approver Committee for continuing education for the Mississippi Nurses Association. She and her husband, Phil, have two sons – Cody (wife Kathleen) and Luke. They attend Word of Life Church.

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Excellence in Mentorship was presented to Mary Pruitt, RN, of Tupelo, who works in the Medical Intensive Care Unit. A Pontotoc native, she earned an associate degree in nursing from Itawamba Community College. Pruitt joined the NMMC staff 34 years ago and has served as a preceptor and mentor for many nurses over the years. She and her husband, William, have two children – William and Ashley. She actively volunteers with Girl Scouts and at New Salem M.B. Church in Pontotoc, where she serves in the youth department and choir, and teaches young adult Sunday School.

Nurse Manager Excellence was presented to Amanda Foster, RN, of Booneville, nurse manager/educator for the Pediatrics unit. A Baldwyn native, Foster joined the NMMC staff 18 years ago. She earned her associate degree in nursing from Northeast Mississippi Community College and her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Mississippi University for Women. She and her husband, Stephen, have three children – Kaitlyn, Connor and Ethan. Foster serves on the Excel by 5 Steering Committee and is a member of the Asthma Coalition and Sigma Theta Tau nursing honorary. The family attends Casey Creek Baptist Church.

RN Excellence was presented to Jessi Miller, RN, of Smithville, charge nurse on 6 South. A native of Amory, she earned an associate degree in nursing from Mississippi University for Women and is currently pursuing her bachelor’s degree in nursing from MUW. She joined the NMMC staff four years ago and is certified in Advanced Cardiac Life Support and Advanced Stroke Life Support, and is tuberculosis certified. She and her husband, Jordan, and their son, Silas, attend Open Door Worship in Fulton.

For more information about nursing opportunities at NMMC, visit www.nmhs.net/careers or email recruit@nmhs.net.

NMMC-West Point Celebrates Nurses Week

NMMC-West Point celebrated National Nurses Week, May 6-12, with a Mexican fiesta, the rollout of the new Care Caddy and Blessing of the Hands.
NMMC-Tupelo celebrated National Nurses Week, May 6-12, with several activities for staff, including Blessing of the Hands, a visit from Tupelo Mayor Jason Shelton and Mississippi Senator Chad McMahan, themed lunches, breakfast carts, nurse shadowing and s'mores kits.
West Point Dedicates Breast Care Suite

On May 6, North Mississippi Medical Center-West Point dedicated the Kitty Bryan Dill Breast Care Suite, which features new Hologic 3D Mammography™ technology that produces exceptionally sharp images to help find breast cancers earlier, see lesions more clearly and reduce the number of unnecessary biopsies.

“This is the most incredible and exciting news for West Point, the Golden Triangle and North Mississippi!” says Mary Margaret Case of Oxford, daughter of Kitty Bryan Dill. “My mother was 42 years old when she was diagnosed with breast cancer, and she died on October 11, 1990, at the young age of 48. Early detection might have played a vital role in her living a longer life.” She was 21 years old when her mother died – her brother Ken was 19, and sisters Sarah Catherine and Caroline were 16 and 14, respectively. Their father, Kenny Dill, was serving as mayor of West Point at the time.

This new technology is proven to detect an average of 41% more invasive breast cancers compared to two-dimensional images alone. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved it as superior for women with dense breasts compared to 2D alone. The technology also allows physicians to recall prior breast imaging studies so that they can be compared to the new images side-by-side, making it easier to look for changes from study to study.

“I welcome the opportunity for the women of our community to have convenient access to the most up-to-date technology offered for breast imaging,” said Phyllis Mason, M.D., medical director of NMMC-West Point Radiology Department. “The exam is not significantly more involved than the previous mammogram exams, only about three seconds longer, and no additional compression is required to obtain the more detailed three-dimensional breast images.”

“Improved screening tests and treatment techniques are saving lives, and the women in West Point and surrounding areas are going to benefit greatly from this amazing new machine,” Case said.

The new equipment’s rapid scan time makes the process comfortable for the patient while also limiting radiation exposure. The suite also includes ultrasound equipment so that it is more convenient for patients who require additional testing.

The new Breast Care Suite is being funded in part through donations to the Health Care Foundation’s Kitty Bryan Dill Fund and NMMC-West Point employee donors.

Dill’s younger brother, George Bryan, said his sister remained active in her community throughout her valiant battle against breast cancer. “She fought it really hard,” Bryan said. “She was a very special person – she got a lot of her traits from our mother. She was an inspiration to all of us.”

The Kitty Bryan Dill Fund was established by her family several years ago as part of the Take a Swing at Cancer golf tournament. Both Case and Bryan have served on the Health Care Foundation board for many years and are heavily involved with planning the golf tournament, proceeds of which benefit the foundation’s Cancer Care Fund.

“I would like to thank the Health Care Foundation of North Mississippi and the board of directors of NMMC-West Point for helping us acquire this equipment,” said Helen Copeland, director of Radiology. “This technology allows the breast tissue to be seen in more detail and has been shown to detect irregularities that were obscured in the previous two-dimensional mammograms.”

Dill’s family knows she would be grateful for the Breast Care Suite named in her honor. “My mother was a very curious educator who loved science and science experiments. When she was diagnosed with cancer and during the five years that she lived with cancer, she was passionate about searching for the newest and best treatments to prolong her life,” Case said. “She wanted to live! How thrilled she would be to know that her beloved hometown of West Point is home to this most incredible machine that could save so many lives.”

To schedule a mammogram, call (662) 377-6655 or 1-800-THE DESK (1-800-843-3375).
North Mississippi Medical Center recently welcomed Carol Plato to the role of Vice President of Revenue Cycle.

Plato has more than 25 years of experience, working in hospitals in Colorado, Massachusetts and Florida.

She earned her bachelor’s degree in health care financial management from Northeastern University in Boston, Mass., and her master’s of business administration from Nova Southeastern University in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Plato is a Certified Healthcare Financial Professional from Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) and is a current fellow of HFMA. She is also a Certified Revenue Cycle Executive by the American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management.

Pontotoc Presents Service Awards

North Mississippi Medical Center-Pontotoc presented service awards for the past year on May 15. Twenty-five employees were honored at the awards luncheon, representing 390 years of service to the hospital and nursing home.

Featured speaker was Coach Tommy Morton.

Five-year pins were presented to (from left) Molly Bryan and Erin Tedder. Not pictured are Rhonda Baker, Dr. Jennifer Lowery, Lorie Pettit and Tammy Shelton.

Clemmie Gates (left) and Wykemah Wright were honored for 10 years of service. Not pictured are Kenneth Brame, Denise Gordillo and Carrie Lawrence.

(From left) Sonia Fuller (15 years), Lisa Ross (20 years), Leita Wilder (20 years) and Brent Sanders (20 years) were honored for their years of service at NMMC-Pontotoc. Not pictured at Jennifer Burleson, Kaye Finley, Kara Rushing, FNP, and Nichole Scola (15 years) and Cassandra Babbitt (20 years).

(From left) Barry Coker (30 years), Atina Fellows (30 years) and Claudine Miller (35 years) received pins for their years of service.
North Mississippi Medical Center-West Point honored tenured employees with a Service Pin Tea on April 30. Administrator Barry Keel recognized long-term employees who reached five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40-year milestones.

Honored for five years of service with NMMC-West Point were Tammy Schrock and Meagan Smith. Stacy Thompson also reached the five-year milestone.

Honored for 10 years of service were Stacey George and Valerie Acker. Sherry Dragoo also reached the 10-year milestone.

Honored for 15 years of service were Rose Sanders and Veronica Sawyer. Others reaching the 15-year milestone are Rebecca Stanford, Katrina Walker and Judy Wolanek.

Honored for 20 years of service were Eva Jo Surunis and Debbie Hargrove.

Honored for 25 years of service were Eric McGee, Susie Triplett, Janice Carter and Tracy Arnett. Carolyn Johnson and Dr. Andrew Wartak also reached the 25-year milestone.

Barry Keel (left) and Pam White (right) presented 30-year service pins to (from left) Sherry Acker and Donna McDonald.
North Mississippi Medical Center-Iuka recently honored 17 employees during National Hospital Week for a combined total of 285 years of service, including:

5 years:
Rachel Isbell

10 years:
Christie Flurry

15 years:
Zane Bennett

John Broadway
Kayla Colley
Wanda Gann
Kim Koehler
Daryl Long
Gina Rooker
Catherine Taylor
Ashley Spoon
Shonnie Wright

20 years:
LaDonna Hargett
David Whitfield

25 years:
Willie Coman
Melissa Odom

30 Years:
Donna Barnes

Chief Nursing Officer Pam White (far left) and Administrator Barry Keel (far right) recently recognized North Mississippi Medical Center-West Point's Academic Achievers for 2018-2019. Honored were (from left) Conner Hutson, Morgan Weems, Kevin Johnson, Tequanda Davis, Shelby Moody, Dawn Dyer, Ashlynn Beam, Eva Jo Surunis, Meagan Young, Tracy Steddens Arnett, Valerie Acker and Mary Ann Shows. Unable to attend but also recognized were Becky Brabham, Cameron Calvert, Sandra Edmonds, Keidra Knox, Brenna Little, Caitlyn Parker, Brittaney Ray, JaBria Richardson and Will Youngblood. The hospital hosted a luncheon in their honor to acknowledge the employees' various academic achievements during the past year.
Williamson Named CNO at Pontotoc

North Mississippi Medical Center-Pontotoc has named Hunter B. Williamson, RN, MHA, as chief nursing officer.

Williamson is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and the Mississippi Nurses’ Association. He obtained an associate degree in nursing from Itawamba Community College and a bachelor of science in nursing from Chamberlain College of Nursing. In 2018, Williamson completed a master of health administration degree from Ohio University.

His experience spans from intensive and critical care units, catheterization lab and medical-surgical units to roles in patient services and clinical rounding in Cardiovascular Services.

Williamson joins NMMC-Pontotoc after serving as the Health Services Administrator with Centurion of Mississippi for the past two years.

He and his wife Morgan, along with 6-year old daughter Macy, reside in Pontotoc County and are active members of Charity Baptist Church.

Hamilton Celebrates Zero Falls

North Mississippi Medical Center-Hamilton recently celebrated 200 days with zero falls. Congratulations to the team members who made it happen:

Angie Allen
Emma Berrian
Vickie Black
Jennifer Brewer
MaCall Cantrell
Renee Cochran
Adrianna Faulkner
April Franks
Dasha Franks
Lacey Frederick
Regina Harris
Candice Harrison
Tammy Holland
Nichole Kittrell
Kimberly Loveless
Kadra Lucas
Danny May
Chelsea McDonald
Natasha Pace
Sonia Pickle
Tonya Roberts
Morgan Ruple
Rebecca Simmons
Kimbo Stidham

Amanda Taylor
Ashley Thompson
Misty Tucker
Virginia Tucker
Amysha Volk
Kelli Watson
Katelyn Williams
Kendra Wright

Some of the North Mississippi Medical Center-Hamilton team members who helped achieve 200 days with no falls included (from left): Lacey Frederick, Mandy Stone, MaCall Cantrell, Candice Harrison, Jennifer Brewer and Katelyn Williams.
Home Health & Hospice Represented at Senior Fair

Carrie Tucker Mangum and Dana Whitehead Smith represented North Mississippi Medical Center Home Health and Hospice at Itawamba Community College's Senior Fair.

Dream Riders Donation

Dream Riders Biking for Children Chapter C recently presented a check for $1,100 for North Mississippi Medical Center's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Patient Assistance Fund, as well as toys for pediatric patients and food and hygiene items for the NICU Wee Care Room for families. The donation represents proceeds from Dream Riders' first Wheels for Kids: That's How We Roll event held April 27 at Frisco Park in Amory. The event included a raffle with prizes donated by area individuals and businesses, live music, a hamburger cookout and children's activities.

Baldwyn Celebrates Nursing Home Week

Baldwyn Nursing Facility's David Seay, Kara Hunter, Anna Wright, Kayla Spitler and Lacy Taylor joined in the festivities for National Nursing Home Week, May 12-18. This year's theme was “Live Soulfully.”