



# THE Lamp LIGHTER

Methodist Hospitals Nurse Newsletter • May 2023

## Great Teamwork Helps Reduce Average Length of Stay

Evidence suggests that the length of patients' stays determines a lot about their experience. Studies have also shown that the longer those patients stay in the hospital, the less likely they are to have positive outcomes.

Longer lengths of stay negatively impact hospitals, like Methodist Hospitals, too. Those longer stays can significantly increase costs and when patients are in beds longer than they need them, it may mean those beds aren't available for other patients who need them more.

Our hospital-wide efforts to reduce length of stay are now showing signs of success. For example, our February 2023 length of stay was not only more than 16% lower than February 2022, it was also at budget. That remarkable improvement is a testament to all our doctors, nurses and staff, including our four Admission/Discharge nurses at the center of this effort: Patrick Fritz, RN, Ellen Long, RN, Latonia Mahone, RN, and Margarita Meltzer, RN.

Over the last year, this expanded team of admission and discharge specialists has established itself as a supremely valuable resource for our entire nursing staff, as well as our physicians and their patients.

"We're all working together," Margarita said. "Previously, there were patients waiting to be discharged because

Average Length of Stay has been **REDUCED BY MORE THAN 1 FULL DAY** since last year

	AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY DAYS		
	2/2023	BUDGET	2/2022
Methodist System-wide	6.49	6.50	7.77
Northlake Campus	6.28	6.31	7.55
Southlake Campus	6.63	6.64	7.94

not enough people were communicating to make sure those patients had what they needed."

"Our floor nurses used to juggle their own discharges while managing patient care," Latonia said. "We're now able to relieve them of that responsibility – decrease their workload and help reduce stress by freeing them to focus on the nursing care that our patients deserve."

"Our nurses work so hard and they are incredible," Patrick said. "I know they really appreciate it when they get help. And

the discharge process can be hard to navigate because our nurses want to make sure we're sending their patients to a safe environment with the resources they need."

The Admission/Discharge nurses have nurtured productive relationships in every department, including physicians, case managers and social workers to safely discharge patients sooner.

"Every patient deserves to go home in a timely manner to be with their families," Ellen said. "Our main goal is to help them get home for a better quality of life."

Decreasing average length of stay improves patient outcomes and patient safety. It also impacts patient satisfaction by helping deliver a better experience, while improving the hospital's bottom line.

# CELEBRATING



## Our newest Nursing Assistants

Thanks to our new Nursing Assistant Training Program led by nursing assistant educator Euphemia Connell, DNP, another class has completed their training, launched their brand new healthcare careers and joined our patient care team.



3W2 nurse manager Debra Vanwoerden (left) and 4E nurse manager Becky Warrior (right) welcome three new nursing assistants who just completed their training at Methodist Hospitals: Krystina Nunn, Ashley Darden and Mykel Carey.

## Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Closets

To help nursing and case management expedite discharges, DME closets have been established at both hospital campuses as a result of a consigned equipment program established with Fitzsimmons Home Medical Equipment.



The Northlake DME closet is Room 175B and the Southlake closet is Room 602, on the sixth floor near the visitor elevators. Both contain bedside commodes, quad canes, and rolling walkers, including bariatric walkers for patients weighing up to 500 lbs.

This equipment may be dispensed to patients discharging to home up to two days prior to release. It is not intended for patients discharging to a SNF or Inpatient Rehab.

The process to dispense DME is:

- There MUST be a signed physician order to dispense DME in EPIC or a signed written physician order, which is attached to the equipment, i.e. rolling walker, quad cane, or commode (cannot be abbreviated, RW or BSC).
- Place a patient label on the White Delivery Ticket or write patient's name, DOB, and MRN on the ticket.
- Patient or relative – not a hospital employee – MUST sign the White Delivery Ticket.
- Patient keeps the yellow delivery ticket, equipment instructions, and Fitzsimmons Admission Brochure.
- Please return the white delivery ticket to the Fitzsimmons Form basket in the DME closet or give to Case Management, so insurance company is billed appropriately.

There is also an oxygen tank closet in the respiratory department. Please call Fitzsimmons at 219-887-7718 with any questions.

**Northlake Campus** 600 Grant Street, Gary, IN 46402 | 219-886-4000

**Midlake Campus** 2269 West 25th Avenue, Gary, IN 46407 | 219-944-4160

**Southlake Campus** 8701 Broadway, Merrillville, IN 46410 | 219-738-5500



**MAY 2023**



# YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**May 8, 9:00am (NLC & SLC)**

*Blessing of the Hands*  
Chaplains Round on all Nursing Units

**May 9, 2pm-4pm, 7:30pm-9:30pm**

*Ice Cream Social*  
NLC – South Pavilion  
SLC – Hospitality Room

**May 10, 3pm**  
NLC – Cafeteria

**May 11, 1pm**  
SLC – Cafeteria

*Nursing Awards*

**May 16, 7am-4pm**  
NLC – South Pavilion

**May 17, 7am-4pm**  
SLC – Auditorium

*Scrubs on Wheels Scrubs Sale*

**May 25, 7am-12pm, 1pm-4pm**  
NLC – South Pavilion

**May 26, 7am-12pm, 1pm-4pm**  
SLC – Auditorium

*Ahh Massage*



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