

## **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 Fritza, 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 STA				STAY DAYS	AY 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.







## **Our newest Nursing Assistants**

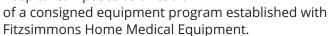
Thanks to our new
Nursing Assistant
Training Program led
by nursing assistant
educator Euphemia
Connell, DNP, another
class has completed
their training, launched
their brand new
healthcare careers
and joined our patient
care team.



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



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 26, 7am-12pm, 1pm-4pm

**SLC - Auditorium** 

Ahh Massage