



# THE lamp LIGHTER

Methodist Hospitals Nurse Newsletter • Jan. 2026



## A YEAR OF Progress, Purpose, and Professional Pride

Throughout the past year, Methodist Hospitals advanced its mission through a shared commitment to clinical excellence, professional development, and compassionate care. From bedside innovations to system-wide recognitions, each milestone reflects the dedication of nurses and care teams who continue to elevate outcomes for patients and families across Northwest Indiana.

Together, these moments tell the story of a health system investing in its people, its practices, and its future.

### April: Advancing Recovery Through Early Mobility

In April, Methodist Hospitals highlighted the growing role of early patient mobility in improving outcomes for hospitalized patients. Led by nursing teams in collaboration with rehabilitation services, mobility initiatives emphasized movement as a core element of recovery.

By encouraging patients to sit up, ambulate safely, and remain engaged in their care, nurses helped reduce complications, shorten hospital stays and support safer transitions home. The initiative reinforced a powerful message: mobility is everyone's responsibility.

### May: Celebrating Excellence in Nursing Care

Nurses Week brought well-deserved recognition for Methodist nurses and caregivers. Two outstanding Emergency Department nurses, Northlake's Daniel Courtaney, RN, and Southlake's Tam Tran, RN, were honored for extraordinary compassion and clinical skill, as reflected in heartfelt patient nominations.

Our annual Nursing Awards ceremonies recognized outstanding nurses, caregivers, and interdisciplinary partners whose dedication exemplified teamwork, leadership, and patient-centered care across the organization:

#### Nursing Excellence Award

Northlake: Jenny Torres, RN | Neonatal ICU  
Southlake: Christine Eggleston, RN | Resource

#### Caregiver Award

Northlake: Symonia Allen | ED Tech  
Southlake: Ashley Gillespie | Nursing Assistant

#### Friend of Nursing

Northlake: Florence Garza | Pharmacist  
Southlake: Christina Tobbye | Surgery Coordinator

**CNO MESSAGE:**

## Battling Food Insecurity

At Methodist Hospitals, we know that excellent care extends beyond the walls of our hospital. Social determinants of health, including food insecurity, play a powerful role in our patients' ability to heal, recover, and thrive.



Marla Hoyer-Lareau, RN, BSN, MHA, Senior Vice President, Chief Nursing and Operations Officer

Addressing these challenges is not an “extra” part of care; it is essential to who we are as nurses and caregivers

The Methodist Hospitals team that reviews healthcare disparities has identified food insecurity as a target initiative and has made a meaningful commitment to address it – with direct involvement of our nursing team.

Every inpatient is screened for food insecurity at admission using standardized hunger vital sign questions. This important step, led by nurses, ensures that no concern goes unnoticed and that patients who need support are identified early.

When a patient screens positive, nursing collaborates closely with case management and dietitians to connect individuals with resources, education, and ongoing support. Through our Nutrition Station food pantry program, patients receive nutrition counseling, healthy food packages, recipes, and referrals to community resources, with follow-ups at three and six months. In the first half of 2025 alone, this program served more than 1,100 individuals.

Methodist Hospitals is also deeply engaged in broader community partnerships, including farmers markets and the Food as Medicine program, helping extend care into the neighborhoods we serve. These efforts reflect the heart of nursing: advocacy, education, and partnership.

Thank you to our nurses for participating in this effort with compassion, diligence, and purpose. Your commitment ensures that we are not only treating illness, but supporting the whole person – one patient, one family, and one community at a time.

### June: CARF Accreditation Affirms Quality

Methodist Hospitals' inpatient rehabilitation program once again earned a prestigious three-year accreditation from CARF International. This recognition affirmed decades of uninterrupted accreditation and validated the hospital's commitment to person-centered rehabilitation, measurable outcomes, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

### July: Strengthening the Nursing Pipeline

Methodist launched its newly revised Nurse Extern Program, streamlining classifications and reinforcing its commitment to developing future nurses. The updated program supports students and new graduates as they transition into professional practice, strengthening recruitment and retention while ensuring continuity of high-quality care.

### September: Supporting Safety and Professional Growth

As the year progressed, nurses were equipped with Patient Care Playbooks—quick-reference tools designed to standardize best practices and support readiness for regulatory review.

### December: Record Clinical Ladder Participation

At the same time, record participation in the Clinical Ladder program underscored nurses' commitment to professional growth. In 2025, 46 nurses earned recognition and more than \$90,000 in rewards for excellence in practice.

These milestones represent more than individual achievements. They reflect a culture rooted in learning, accountability, and compassion. As Methodist Hospitals looks ahead, our focus remains on empowering nurses, advancing care delivery, and continuing to build a healthier future for the communities it serves.



# Provision of Care Spotlight: **SKIN ASSESSMENTS**



**As Methodist Hospitals anticipates the upcoming Joint Commission survey, we are publishing a Lamplighter series focusing on various aspects of the provision of care. In this issue, we're spotlighting Skin Assessments.**

Thorough and consistent skin assessments play a critical role in patient safety, comfort, and outcomes. They're also a key focus area during Joint Commission surveys.

At Methodist Hospitals, skin assessment practices are designed to identify risks early, prevent hospital-acquired pressure injuries, and ensure timely interventions when concerns arise.

## **Admission and Ongoing Assessment**

Every patient is to receive a head-to-toe skin assessment within eight hours of admission, completed with a two-RN sign-off. This initial assessment establishes a baseline for skin integrity and identifies any existing wounds or areas of concern.

Skin assessments are then completed daily, with reassessments performed every shift and as needed based on changes in the patient's condition. All findings must be clearly documented in the patient documentation record and reflected in the Patient Plan

of Care. The Braden score is documented daily to assess pressure injury risk and guide appropriate interventions.

## **Interventions for At-Risk Patients**

When a patient's Braden score is less than 18, skin management interventions must be initiated promptly.

These include ordering a Wound Ostomy Nursing consult, documenting the use or refusal of a waffle mattress daily, and ensuring patients who cannot self-turn are repositioned every two hours. Consistent incontinence care and adherence to nutritional recommendations are also essential components of skin protection and healing.

## **Wound Identification and Communication**

If a patient is admitted with a wound or develops a new wound during hospitalization, a Wound Ostomy Nursing consult must be ordered. Dressing changes and wound care should be performed exactly as ordered, and clear wound communication must be provided to the receiving nurse during handoff to ensure continuity of care.

By following these standardized skin assessment and intervention practices, Methodist nurses help prevent complications, promote healing, and demonstrate the hospital's commitment to high-quality, patient-centered care in advance of the Joint Commission survey.

## IT UPDATE:

# Let AI Help with Your End-of-Shift Care Plan Note



## Staff Education Coming Soon; Go-Live Date TBA

Methodist Hospitals is introducing Generative AI to help streamline end-of-shift documentation. It's designed to support complete, accurate nursing notes while helping you finish your shift on time.

At the start of your shift, you'll identify the patient-specific care plan goals you plan to focus on. You'll then proceed with your shift as usual. At the end of that shift, the Generative AI system will draft a nursing note for your review based on that day's clinical activity.

The automatically generated draft note may include:

- Medication Administration Record (MAR) data, including PRN medications, blood transfusions, continuous medication rate changes, and first doses
- Significant or abnormal flowsheet values documented during the shift
- Flowsheets and LDAs related to your selected shift-focus goals
- Relevant lab, imaging, microbiology, and EKG results

### Here's how it will work:

At the beginning of your shift, select your assigned patients and sign into the Brain. Within the Brain, locate the Care Plan task and choose between two and five specific shift-focus goals for each patient. These should reflect meaningful events or priorities from the shift rather than generic goals. Please note that you may add or adjust goals at any point during your shift.

Before your shift ends, return to the Brain to review the Generated Note Draft task. After a brief processing period, the draft note will appear for review. You can hover over icons within the note to see the source of the information included.

After reviewing and editing as needed, sign the note.

While AI-generated drafts are generally accurate, they may omit important details or include information that is not clinically relevant. Nurses must review every draft carefully and apply clinical judgment to ensure accuracy. You remain fully responsible for the content of any note you sign.



## Be a Voice for NURSING

Help shape practice, elevate quality,  
and strengthen your profession at  
Methodist Hospitals through  
Shared Governance.

Scan the QR code to get involved  
and join a council today!



## OOPS!

A quick (and happy!) correction from last month's Lamplighter: **Codi Eckles, RN, BSN, Orthopedic Nursing Navigator**, was inadvertently missed in our list of Clinical Ladder bonus recipients. We're pleased to recognize Codi for earning a \$2,500 Clinical Ladder bonus. Thank you for your outstanding dedication and contributions to our patients and team.