Healthy Holidays from the UTMB Health System

On behalf of the UTMB Health System, thank you for the work you do. May health and happiness greet you all throughout the holidays, and best wishes for a bright New Year!

Pictured above: Annette Macias-Hoag, Tom Riley, Mark Kirschbaum, Jeremy Brynes, Donna Sollenberger, Deb McGrew, Ann O'Connell, Cheryl Bryant, Kim Tindel and Casey Peterson

More holiday photos on pages 8-12!

IN THIS ISSUE...

UTMB Health Angleton Danbury Campus Holiday Celebration | Health System Administration Delivers Holiday Meals | Health System Holiday Campus Celebration | UTMB Angleton Danbury: Advancing our Academic Mission | Meet Sheri and Remus: Animal Assisted Therapy at UTMB | Winter Blood Drive | Patient Blood Management at UTMB: Reducing Transfusions | Season’s Greetings from the UTMB Diversity Council | EAC Corner | Shout Outs

Miss an issue? www.utmb.edu/fridayfocus Submit a story: friday.focus@utmb.edu Friday Focus Team: Mary Feldhusen and Erin Swearingen
Community partnerships among health care providers are important in a reformed health care environment for a number of reasons. Some of the most common goals include creating better access to care, improving overall health of the community, and reducing health disparities.

UTMB’s partnership with the UTMB Health Angleton Danbury Campus creates mutual efficiencies that position both organizations for a successful future, achieves a greater level of service in our communities by offering access to a vast network of primary, specialty and chronic care services, and offers better access to tertiary care facilities such as UTMB’s John Sealy Hospital and Jennie Sealy Hospital (opening Spring 2016). However, one of the most important purposes behind the partnership is something special, and it is helping to accomplish an important goal for the State of Texas.

In 2010, during the 82nd Texas Legislative Session, the state asked academic medical centers like UTMB to begin developing plans to increase student enrollment of doctors, nurses and other health care workers to help meet critical shortages in the state. Such efforts would be crucial to help keep up with a rapidly growing population—Texas has been the fastest growing state in the nation for the past two decades. It would also help improve the overall ratio of health care workers per capita—for example, Texas ranks 42nd out of 50 states in the ratio of physicians to people.

In response, UTMB’s Academic Enterprise immediately began devising a strategic plan to attract a greater number of students to help meet the dire need in Texas and the nation for more health care providers and scientists. The long-term plan aims to achieve the following by 2020:

- 100% increase in enrollment in the School of Nursing
- 100% increase in enrollment in the School of Health Professions
- 25% increase in enrollment in the School of Medicine
- 25% increase in enrollment in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

To meet these goals, many resources would be needed, such as increased space for teaching and labs, and clinical training facilities for student and resident programs.

The partnership with Angleton Danbury is helping to meet these very needs. Joining forces will create new residency training opportunities in primary care, obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN), and internal medicine—all in a community hospital environment. The site also will provide additional clinical training opportunities for medical, nursing, and health profession students as enrollments increase.

Another important benefit of the partnership will be increased access to clinical research trials for patients in the community. Clinical trials help bring patients the latest and most innovative treatments, which are fundamental to the development of groundbreaking medicines, vaccines and devices to treat and prevent illness. Trials also often offer the best chance of curing many diseases.

UTMB Health and the Angleton Danbury Campus look forward to a bright future as we grow our programs to bring the best health care to the Greater Angleton area, the hospital district and surrounding communities as we move forward into the future. As a statewide leader in training the future’s physicians, nurses and allied health professionals, UTMB views this new relationship as vital to our educational mission and to the future health of Texans.
Meet Sheri & Remus: Animal Assisted Therapy at UTMB

Meet Sheri Leavitt, a training instructor with the Laboratory Biosafety Training Program in the Galveston National Laboratory at UTMB, and her four-legged friend, Remus (a six-year old border collie). Sheri and Remus volunteer at UTMB to provide animal assisted therapy (AAT) for patients in the Children’s Hospital, the Acute Care for the Elderly (ACE) unit, the NASA sleep study program, and local nursing homes.

Sheri and Remus were certified through Pet Partners, a non-profit organization that brings individuals together who share a common passion: a love of animals and people. The certification includes a full-day training course with basic obedience, followed by a separate temperament test to evaluate how the dog behaves in different situations. Once the team has passed the course, they are ready to offer their services at places like UTMB.

Sheri Leavitt began volunteering at UTMB six years before Hurricane Ike with her first AAT partner, Gideon, who was also a border collie. In 2013, she returned to UTMB with Remus.

A typical visit to UTMB for Sheri and Remus lasts about two hours. They begin in the Children’s Hospital, and always ask the family and patient if they would like to have a visit. The patient can pet, brush and play ball with Remus. Sheri is always present during the visit to ensure Remus “play well together,” and she answers all the questions the patient and their family may have.

From the Children’s Hospital, the duo visits the Acute Care for the Elderly (ACE) unit, where most of the patients simply enjoy petting Remus. When Sheri and Remus visit the NASA sleep study program, the subjects are only able to pet Remus, since they must stay in their beds—the team knows these patients are relieved to have something different to look at during their 60- to 120-day study!

Sheri says two visits have been especially significant. The first occurred when she and Gideon were visiting a little girl in the Children’s Hospital. Sheri and the nurse asked her parents if she could be visited by Sheri and Gideon, and they agreed. As it turned out, the patient had recently been attacked by a dog. Sheri and the family weren’t sure how she would react, but as soon as Gideon entered the room, the little girl got up, hugged Gideon and began talking to him. Her parents said that had been the most excited they had seen her since her attack.

The second occasion occurred during a visit to the ACE unit. Sheri was with Remus that day visiting an elderly woman who was unable to sit up in the bed. A sheet was placed on the bed so Remus could sit beside her. Once Remus was on the bed, he promptly fell asleep. The woman smiled and told Sheri how Remus reminded her of her dog. The woman’s daughter told Sheri that her mother had been in quite a bit of pain, and this was the first time she had seen her smile since being admitted.

Sheri and Remus enjoy volunteering because of the positive impact that animal assisted therapy has on the patients’ experiences. Sheri says she feels greatly rewarded that she can share the company of her wonderful dog, Remus, with others. Look for pair on the third Friday of each month—they’ll be walking the halls at UTMB and spreading a little joy!

For more information on Pet Partners, visit www.petpartners.org.
Winter Blood Drive

The UTMB Blood Bank would like to thank all of our dedicated donors who have rolled up their sleeves this year.

The Holiday Season is a time to celebrate with good spirit and an open heart. However, it is also a time of year when we experience blood and platelet shortages, which significantly challenge our ability to provide greatly needed transfusions to our patients.

This year, our region is already experiencing a supply shortage of platelets and group O blood, and it is anticipated that the shortage will continue until at least mid-January. UTMB and the Shriners Burns Hospital require four apheresis platelet donors per day to maintain our supply and as many group O blood donors as possible.

If you are a male, or if you are a female who has never been pregnant, please consider making an automated apheresis platelet donation. An automated donation is a safe and simple process that enables the collection of a specific blood component. The same basic conditions apply as those of regular blood donors with some additional requirements.

Thanks in advance for your continued support of the UTMB Blood Center and the patients we serve!

Schedule an Appointment

New Galveston location:
1.120 John Sealy Towers
Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
409.772.4861

Victory Lakes Town Center Location:
UTMB Multispecialty Center, Suite 4
Tuesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
832.505.2016

All automated donors will need to make an appointment.

Patient Blood Management at UTMB: Reducing Transfusions

Blood transfusions are the most common procedures during hospitalizations. Although they continue to be lifesaving in carefully selected circumstances, blood transfusions are emerging as a treatment with limited efficacy and substantial risk.

In the traditional blood risk paradigm, blood transfusions were assumed to be largely beneficial with the greatest risk primarily being transmissible infectious diseases. However, the new blood risk paradigm shows that liberal transfusions practices have shown to be ineffective or harmful in a number of controlled clinical trials and that non-infectious risks predominate such as lung injury, volume overload, organ dysfunction, and suppressed immunity leading to increased infections.

Formerly, the therapeutic window for treatment during this time was very broad. Today, the therapeutic window for treatment is much narrower.

UTMB’s Patient Blood Management (PBM) Program was initiated in March 2013 in partnership with Strategic Healthcare Group, LLC. This program serves to promote appropriate use and management of blood and blood components while improving patient outcomes, reducing risks, and costs to the health care system.

Since implementation of the program, UTMB has achieved a reduction in utilization of all blood components, including Red Blood Cells, 22%; Platelets, 12%; Plasma, 25%; and Cryoprecipitate 33%. The avoidance of transfusion of such components has helped decrease potential complications associated with length of stay, deaths, and nursing hours. In addition, a product acquisition cost savings to the institution of $895,994 was attained.

Watch a video about Blood Management at UTMB: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hf-8291PD1k (also posted on the Health System Intranet page)

continued on page 5
Blood Management Programs Highlights:

- Physician Champions and Transfusion Safety Officer identified: Dr. Vincent Conti, Cardiac-Thoracic Surgery and Dr. Lisa Farmer, Anesthesiology; Angel Male, RN, respectively.
- Extensive education of clinical staff regarding current evidenced-based literature supporting conservative transfusion practices and transfusion safety.
- Expansion of Transfusion Committee membership which includes multidisciplinary representation from clinical departments.
- Newly updated transfusion guidelines based on evidence. The Transfusion Committee generally supports the transfusion of red cells at a hemoglobin trigger of 7g/dL, when clinically indicated.
- Incorporation of transfusion guidelines into the blood orders set in the Epic EMR.
- Initiation of a pre-operative anemia management program to proactively treat patients identified as anemic prior to surgery to reduce exposure and risk of perioperative blood transfusions.
- Prospective review of red blood cell orders for non-hemorrhaging patients to help screen for appropriate clinical indication and dose.

Season’s Greetings from the UTMB Diversity Council

This is the season of many celebrations. Some find spiritual renewal with an infusion of community, family, worship and memories from seasons past. During this time of year, it is important to take into consideration that not all people celebrate in the same way or at the same time. Some do not celebrate the season at all.

However, with the obligations that many people feel as they prepare for the many festivities this time of year, or are faced with other personal challenges, stress levels can be high and emotions brittle. This is true for our patients and their families as well. Temporarily or permanently, our patients may be separated from their loved ones and may feel their isolation more profoundly. Likewise, many of our staff and students are unable to be with their loved ones to celebrate in the comfort of their family homes.

As we count down to the winter solstice and New Year’s Eve, remember others who may feel overwhelmed. Be mindful of how each of your coworkers and patients celebrate. Ask them to tell you more about their traditions and customs. If asked, speak freely of your own traditions and customs. Respect others silence as well. Be appreciative of our differences and let this be the gift we give each other.

Like snowflakes (please consult Wikipedia if you have never seen one!), we are all uniquely different as individuals; and, like snowflakes that accumulate to form snow, we accumulate together to form the human race.

Let this be a season of respect and appreciation of our differences!
EAC CORNER

UTMB Health System and Correctional Managed Care Elect New Employee Advisory Committee Representatives

Congratulations to newly elected Employee Advisory Council members! **Dawn Meyer** will represent Hospitals and Clinics, and **Angel Morales** will represent Correctional Managed Care.

Elections are held each year to replace members who have fulfilled their commitment to the council. Members are elected from four widely-grouped areas within UTMB: Academic Enterprise, Correctional Managed Care, Hospitals and Clinics, and Institutional Support. More than 1,275 employees voted in the election.


SHOUT OUTS!

**Alison Glendenning-Napoli** has been selected to serve on a case management standard-setting panel for the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). ANCC’s internationally renowned credentialing programs certify and recognize individual nurses in specialty practice areas; recognize health care organizations for promoting safe, positive work environments; and accredit continuing nursing education organizations. Congratulations, Alison!

*The UTMB Heart Team* is outstanding! **Dr. Daniel Beckles** took a serious situation and calmed my fears with positivity, facts and illustrations of a complex operation in layman's terms. After my surgery, the staff in the SICU watched over me with skill, genuine concern and pleasant attitudes. Everyone was courteous. The gentleman serving meals came in with a bright smile and cheerful greetings. The nurses were outstanding! The follow-up after my release with Dr. Beckles’ staff, nurse practitioner and nurse made every effort to make sure I received the best care.

**Dr. Rex McCallum** is the only doctor within the past five years who addressed the chronic pain and inflammation in my hands. Dr. McCallum is an excellent, caring, compassionate, knowledgeable physician. He dramatically improved the quality of my life. I trust and respect him without reservation. I am thankful for this care. (Rheumatology, PCP Internal Medicine)

continued on page 7
My brother was brought to your hospital in October, and hospitalized for a month after a bad accident. We drove from all the way from Chicago to see him. I would like to thank everybody who had contact with my brother and his case. I cannot stress enough how lucky he was to get the care received—this couldn’t have happened without the staff. I wouldn’t change a thing about the care my brother received as a patient or our experience as visitors.

I want to bring to attention one employee in particular, Michele Times. I have had my own experiences in hospitals in my lifetime, and I have never met anyone who compares to the care she gives. Michele held me up from day one. My brother and I are very close, and this accident was extremely hard on me—it still is. Michele was there every time I turned around. When I would pass by the desk in the morning or afternoon, she would always stop to make sure I was okay. She could tell when I needed someone to talk to. Michele cried with me, she stood straight and tall so I could lean on her, and most importantly she has a caring heart!

I have never met someone that was so caring to a stranger. Any other hospital patients that are admitted to her unit, or people who simply have her in their life are very lucky. My family and I would like to thank her for what she has done for us. UTMB will never be forgotten, and Michele Times will never be forgotten in our lives.

I know you have protocol for everything, but I’m asking that this email goes as far up as it can for her. She is no longer an employee to us but an angel from up above. Again, thank you UTMB for everything you have done for my brother. You have a great hospital and staff. I want to wish you ALL a very Merry Christmas and a very happy, safe and healthy New Year.

I want to take a minute to tell you how exceptional my family’s experience has been during my mother’s stay on J5D. On Friday, my mother had a clinic appointment with Dr. Carlos Clark at the PCP. While in the clinic, the decision was made to admit her. I was a little nervous because I anticipated a really long wait for a bed. To my surprise, not only did we have a bed very quickly, but the transportation staff arrived immediately to take her to her room. When we arrived on the unit, her nurse greeted her, and the room already her name and special instructions posted. I never realized how little things like that could be so important! What makes this even more of a feat was that her arrival was during an unscheduled Epic downtime. As strong as that first impression was, our experiences with the staff on J5D only improved from there—they should be proud; they epitomized the level of care and excellence everyone at UTMB should strive for.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case, we didn’t get the name of everyone who was involved in mom’s care; but the excellence of the staff went beyond those directly assigned to her care. Part of what made this inpatient stay more special were small things like staff saying “Good morning. How are you?” or simply smiling as we passed one another on the unit.

There are a few staff members that we would like to mention specifically: Yanling Feng, Tony Eappen, Doniqua Hayes, Keith Smith, and Rachel Fischer (UTMBHCS). All of these individuals provided great care, but even more than that treated my mom as more than just a patient. They listened to her and demonstrated genuine caring and compassion. There are also the unsung heroes of the health care team—those with transportation and food services. Everyone my mother interacted with from these teams demonstrated a great team spirit.

I think sometimes those of us who don’t provide direct patient care forget that when we are on the job, we become part of the patient’s and their family’s overall experience at UTMB. One person who really drove that point home to me was Martha Juarez, who was working the parking booth at the Administration Building Garage. I mentioned casually to Martha when she greeted me one day that I had been visiting my mother and was heading home. Martha remembered that, and when I saw her after another visit, she asked me how my mom was doing. That’s a perfect example of how much we all can influence the patient experience. Little things like that make our patients and their families feel special.

This was one of the most positive patient experiences we’ve had not just at UTMB, but at any hospital. Everyone brought A+ game!
UTMB Leadership hosted a Holiday Celebration at UTMB’s Angleton Danbury Campus on December 12.
Health System Administration Delivers Holiday Meals

Health System Administration loaded up their sleighs and delivered holiday meals to UTMB clinics across Galveston Island and the mainland on Thursday, December 11.

Left: Galveston clinic employees received food prepared by Smooth Tony’s, pictured above along with UTMB’s Emily Blomberg (3rd from left), Dr. Selwyn Rogers (4th from left) and Richard Foy (4th from right).

Below Left: Randy Allison and Cheryl Bryant at the Access Center
Below Center: Casey Peterson and Cheryl Bryant
Below Right: Shirley Hilton and Ann O’Connell

Left: (Smooth) Tony Gonzalez helps Jenny Lanier pack up her car with holiday meals for island clinics. Meals were delivered to five island clinics and fed more than 260 employees
Right: Ann O’Connell and Annette Macias-Hoag
On December 19, a reception was held in Café on the Court for both day and evening shifts. It was a wonderful way to welcome the holiday season and to thank our team members for the phenomenal work they do each and every day! Photos continued through page 12.