At UTMB, excellent service starts with us. Whatever our role, from the moment we put on our UTMB badge, we become representatives of the organization, and everything we do while we wear our badge represents our commitment to our patients, visitors and colleagues. Whether we work on the front lines of patient care or in support of those who do, we each make a difference when it comes to the experiences of our patients and their loved ones at UTMB Health.

Our pledge is to care for our patients and their loved ones in the same way we would want the most cherished of our loved ones to be treated. This promise was recently exemplified by Justin Hall, patient transporter for Hospital Transportation Services. The following letter, submitted by Nurse Manager Dell Roach, shares the story of how Justin impacted the experience of a recent patient, Mr. H. (patient’s name changed to protect privacy), and his wife as they received the difficult news that Mr. H. would be going home on palliative care.

“Mr. H. had come back from dialysis and was sitting in his room alone contemplating what would happen next. His door was open and Justin walked by to say hello. Justin did this every day when Mr. H. was in the hospital. Justin asked Mr. H. if he was okay and he said yes, but Justin noticed something was wrong.

Justin went inside the room and said: ’Mr. H., you just do not seem like yourself today. Are you sure everything is okay?’

Mr. H. began to cry and told Justin the news. At that time, Justin went to the phone and contacted his supervisor, clocked out and said, ’I will be taking my lunch break a little early today.’ Justin came back to the room and sat beside the couple, talking and crying as they discussed the events of the day.

Justin demonstrated genuine compassion, concern and empathy for Mr. H. and his wife. As a member of the transportation department, he takes pride in his work and sets the bar high for his peers and other UTMB employees.

On behalf of all the staff on J9A I want him to know we are very blessed to have him on our team and recognize that it is the ’little’ things that make a big difference in the lives of our patients.”

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As we strive to be the best academic medical center in the nation, we must remain focused on creating a culture of service excellence. Let’s make it a daily practice to go above and beyond to create a positive, supportive and memorable experience for our patients and their loved ones. There are simple things we can do each day that will help contribute to providing the best possible care experience for our patients and their loved ones:

- **Greet and Assist Patients and Guests.** When you see patients and guests in the hallways and clinics, smile, say hello and make them feel welcome. Hold doors for patients and visitors, and allow individuals with disabilities primary access in hallways. Be courteous and allow guests to use the elevator first; staff can easily ensure patients and guests have access to public elevators by always using the designated staff elevators.

- **Guide Them To Their Destination.** UTMB Health is a large and growing organization with large campuses and locations across the region. Offer assistance to individuals who need help finding their destination and escort them when possible.

- **Keep UTMB Beautiful.** Keep hallways free of clutter so they are easily accessible and navigable. Please pick up and dispose of any litter or spills you find or notify Environmental Services for assistance (dial ext. 2-4040 for all service issues).

- **Demonstrate Our Values:** Demonstrate compassion for all; always act with **integrity**; show **respect** to everyone we meet; embrace **diversity** to best serve a global community; and promote excellence and innovation through **lifelong learning**.

  "Go the extra mile. It's never crowded." - Unknown

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**PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION: UTMB INFORMATION SERVICES WARNS EMAIL USERS AGAINST SCAMS**

**PHISHING:** ['fiSHiNG] Noun - The activity of masquerading as someone they’re not, with the intent of convincing people to do something they wouldn’t normally do (i.e., unknowingly give up their username and password or double click an attachment within an email).

UTMB has seen an uptick in phishing (fraudulent) emails. If you receive an email asking you to “Click Here” to validate, verify or upgrade any of your UTMB computer accounts (i.e., your PeopleSoft and/or email accounts), simply delete it; it is an attempt to steal your username and password.

No one at UTMB will ever ask you to provide your user credentials to validate, verify or upgrade any of your UTMB computer accounts.

If you receive an email asking you to “Double Click” an attachment, scrutinize it carefully before you do. It may be crypto locker, which is malicious software that will lock/encrypt all the files on your computer and network drives and then demand that you pay a ransom for the unlock code.

If you receive any email that looks suspicious or you are uncertain about its authenticity, please forward it to UTMB’s Computer Incident Response Team at utmbcirt@utmb.edu, and they will verify whether or not it is legitimate for you. For additional questions please contact the UTMB Service Desk at x25200 or via email at ishelp@utmb.edu.
UTMB ACTIVATES LIVER TRANSPLANT PROGRAM

A new chapter was recently added to UTMB’s long history of excellence in transplantation. The Liver Transplant Program at UTMB’s Texas Transplant Center was activated on February 23, 2016. Under the leadership of Dr. Jeffrey Fair, Medical Director for Transplant and Primary Liver Transplant Surgeon, who joined UTMB in January 2016, and Primary Physician for Liver Transplantation, Dr. Shehzad Merwat, the UTMB Transplant Team is currently making preparations to care for its first patients.

Comprehensive patient care will be provided by a multidisciplinary team consisting of surgeons, nurse coordinators, hepatologists, dietitians, and social workers. The team will manage all patient needs, both pre- and post-transplant. The team is actively evaluating new patients and working to list patients who meet the criteria for transplant. To increase the opportunity for transplant matches, the program team currently sees patients twice a month at a satellite clinic in Beaumont and is also working to increase referrals through outreach initiatives.

UTMB Health will celebrate 50 years of organ transplantation in 2017. The program began in 1967, with the establishment of kidney transplantation services. The program was the first of its kind in the Houston/Galveston area; since its inception, care teams have collectively performed more than 2,600 transplants. Over the past couple of years, the kidney transplant program has seen accelerated growth, and the number of candidates per months is consistently trending upward. In fiscal year 2015 alone, UTMB performed 48 kidney transplants, and last month, the program experienced a record-breaking month in kidney transplants, with 13 procedures performed.

In 2007, The Sealy & Smith Foundation generously contributed to the establishment of the Texas Transplant Center. In addition to performing transplants, the center provides medical care and services for people with organ failure or other diseases in advanced stages. Patients benefit from the work of active researchers at UTMB, who bring the latest medical advances to the patient’s bedside. Regardless of the type of procedure performed, UTMB’s transplant care team works diligently with UTMB patients, their families and referring physicians to provide constant feedback and exemplary patient-centered care.

In addition to kidney and liver transplants, UTMB offers pancreas and heart transplant services. The pancreas program has performed more than 200 procedures since its establishment in 1988. Meanwhile, the transplant team is also currently working to invigorate its heart transplant and ventricular assist device (VAD) program. UTMB Health was re-certified by The Joint Commission for VAD destination therapy earlier this year. UTMB’s care team includes staff who are trained and experienced in caring for individuals who have recently undergone a heart transplant or have a VAD implanted.

Congratulations to UTMB’s Transplant Team on the successful activation of the liver transplant program! This renewed service will enhance UTMB’s regional and national reputation in transplantation and help provide tertiary care services previously unavailable to our patients and referring physicians.

The following areas will be re-locating from John Sealy Hospital to the new Jennie Sealy Hospital on April 9, 2016

Acute Care for the Elders  Neurology ICU
Cardiology & Vascular  Neurology/Neurosurgery
Surgery  Orthopaedics/Trauma
Family Medicine  SICU
Gynecologic Oncology  Surgery
Medicine  Transplant Surgery
MICU/SICU

The Blocker Burn Unit, Mother & Baby and Labor & Delivery Units will remain in John Sealy Hospital.

March 30: Galveston Campus Parking

To improve the patient and visitor experience, several parking changes take effect March 30, in advance of the Jennie Sealy Hospital opening on April 9.

- Plaza Garage (Garage 8) will be transitioned to patient and visitor parking and renamed “Hospital Garage.” Patients can continue to park in UHC (Garage 2) and at the Primary Care Pavilion.
- New Web-based validation system for public parking goes into effect.
- Administration Garage will be dedicated to public parking and no longer have an attendant on duty. The garage entrance from the John Sealy circle-drive will be temporarily closed for construction during the John Sealy Modernization project.

See the Parking Operations website for more information. For parking-related questions or comments, email parking@utmb.edu or call 409-266-PARK (7275).
When we hear the term “health literacy”, reading comprehension is probably the first concept that immediately comes to mind. At first glance, it may seem logical that the ability to read and comprehend a language fluently equates to being health literate. However, when it comes to patient-centered health care, this is not the case.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 defines health literacy as “the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions”.

The ability to read in English does not always ensure that one is able to process and understand the information presented. This can create risk as it relates to health care. For example, patients are often discharged from hospitals with prescriptions and care instructions to follow at home. However, the Institute of Medicine found that nearly half of adult Americans have trouble understanding and using basic health information, and medication dosage errors are the most common medical mistakes associated with low health literacy.

Another example of the impact of low health literacy on wellness was shown through research that identified a direct correlation between health literacy, reading comprehension and risk for sexually transmitted infections in young women. The study found that women with lower health literacy scores demonstrated lower comprehension of written information related to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) even though they were not engaging in greater instances of high-risk sexual behaviors. This indicates an opportunity for health care providers to actively help reduce a patient’s risk of contracting an STI by simply taking a few extra moments to confirm whether or not the patient has understood the information that was presented—not just whether or not they were able to read the words.

Issues with health literacy can also be present when it comes to treating patients of diverse cultural backgrounds. For example, foreign patients may leave an appointment with hidden assumptions of words if a provider uses slang terms or figures of speech that are common in the English language. It is important for health care providers and institutions to take steps to ensure their patients are able to not only read and/or hear the health information but understand the intended meaning.

UTMB Health has initiated programs such as the SHARE Approach and the “Teach-Back Method” to help improve communication and ensure a common understanding between providers and their patients. The SHARE Approach is a shared decision making process that helps clinicians engage their patients in the care plan; it has been shown to reduce readmission rates, decrease health care costs over time, and increase patient satisfaction.

The Teach-Back Method, also called the “show-me” method, is a communication confirmation method used by healthcare providers to confirm whether a patient (or care takers) understands what is being explained to them. If a patient understands, they are able to “teach-back” the information accurately.

Maintaining an awareness of patients’ health literacy levels and actively engaging with them using methods such as the SHARE approach and Teach-Back Method will help ensure our patients are receiving accurate, accessible and actionable health information and support our care teams in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate health care services. For more information on Shared Decision Making and the Teach-Back Method, please read the February 2016 issue of Friday Focus, available at http://www.utmb.edu/fridayfocus or contact the UTMB Carolyn J. Oliver, MD Center for Patient Safety and Quality Healthcare: www.utmb.edu/olivercenter.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE SALUTE TO NURSES AWARDS ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

The Houston Chronicle is seeking nominations for the Salute to Nurses Award, recognizing the top 150 nurses in the Houston area. The top 10 winners receive special recognition in the publication and as special guests at the Salute to Nurses Awards luncheon. The luncheon hosts more than 300 attendees including nominees, hospital administrators and representatives from Houston’s top medical education institutions.

The full list of winners will be published in the Houston Chronicle during National Nurses Week, May 6–12. Last year, five UTMB nurses were recognized. Nominate a nurse online by March 31.

Monday, March 21, Donna Sollenberger, executive vice president and chief executive officer for the UTMB Health System, presented “Quantum Leaps on the Road Ahead” at UTMB’s annual Mondays in March series. Presentations by each EVP this month offered updates to the UTMB community on the institution’s progress at the halfway point of the fiscal year. It also offered a chance for faculty, staff and students to learn more about UTMB’s strategic vision, “The Road Ahead”, as it relates to our education, research and clinical service missions.

Sollenberger’s “Quantum Leaps” presentation was based on the vision set forth by University of Texas System Chancellor William H. McRaven. The Health System leaps that were identified also directly connect to UTMB’s Road Ahead. Sollenberger emphasized that in order to become the best academic medical center in the country, all mission areas will need to work collaboratively and all employees must be engaged as we strive to deliver the very best care and service for our patients and their loved ones.

We will need to make dramatic improvements, or “quantum leaps” in four areas: we must accelerate our work in the quality and safety of patient care; focus on customer service and transparency with our data to meet a growing consumer demand for excellence; be efficient in our delivery of patient care; and invest in our employees.

To improve in quality and safety, we must be a highly reliable organization. High reliability means we will be exceptionally consistent in accomplishing our goals and avoiding patient care errors. One of our greatest opportunities is in improving our mortality index by focusing on several clinical areas and additionally, focusing on clinical documentation improvement (particularly on the complexity and comorbidities of patients). To be more “effective” in the care we deliver, we will continue our focus on avoiding 30-day all-cause readmissions. To help achieve this, the Health System will provide data reports on a regular basis as a means of feedback. We will be successful by working in teams, through focus, in a blameless culture.

To improve service and transparency, we must continue providing patient- and family-centered care and services. We need to help our patients feel welcome and well informed. We must offer the very best care at the lowest cost. Although high quality at a low cost may sound counterintuitive in most industries, in health care, higher quality care actually costs less—when care is safe and effective, patients do not require as much additional care. UTMB Health will also continue working to dramatically improve patient access to care.

To make a quantum leap in efficiency, we will focus on reducing the length of time patients are hospitalized, reducing variations in practice, and reducing unnecessary laboratory/radiology testing. We must eliminate the occurrence of preventable infections and complications. Ultimately, we must respond to every question and action with: “Are we doing this with the patient in mind?”

The final section of Sollenberger’s presentation focused on UTMB’s most important asset – our employees. We will continue working closely with our employees to ensure they are given the direction and feedback they need to be successful in their roles. Sollenberger also underscored the importance of recognizing individuals for the important work they do. We must have a great work environment to engage employees to be the best!

To review any of the presentations by Dr. Danny Jacobs, Cheryl Sadro, or Donna Sollenberger, please visit http://www.utmb.edu/mondays-in-march. Join us on March 28 for the Mondays in March finale as the executive vice presidents join UTMB President Dr. David Callender in an Executive Leadership Panel Discussion.
JILL BRYANT-BOVA PUBLISHED IN JOURNAL OF ONCOLOGY PRACTICE

Chemotherapy is a high-risk medication and is the second most common cause of fatal medication errors. Jill Bryant-Bova’s goal was to decrease the number of chemotherapy order forms with at least one deviation by 50 percent within five months. Read the full abstract, “Improving Chemotherapy Ordering Process” in the Journal of Oncology Practice to learn how Jill Bryant-Bova, et al, increased quality through education and standardizing the chemotherapy ordering process. http://jop.ascopubs.org/content/12/2/e248.abstract

REBECCA CASTRO, SOCIAL WORKER OF THE YEAR

Please join us in congratulating Rebecca Castro, who was recognized as Social Worker of the Year by the Gulf Coast Branch of the Texas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Rebecca provides excellent care and service to the patients as well as support to the social workers (and many others) at UTMB. Thank you for all that you do Rebecca!

Barbara Bonificcio MS, RN and Karen Chapman PT, DPT will present the work that was done on the “Get Up and Walk” A Mobility Pilot Project at the University of Texas System Shared Visions Conference taking place April 21-22 at the Hill Country Hyatt in San Antonio, Texas. The goal of the program is to maintain the mobility of hospitalized patients who were moving around (ambulating) independently prior to admission. Patients who participated in the pilot were encouraged to undergo supervised, scheduled ambulation with a dedicated mobility technician twice a day to minimize the effects of bed rest (limited ambulation can lead to functional decline in the physical abilities of patients, which may increase length of stay, increase readmission rates and increase the risk of falls). The program was successfully piloted on three units from December 2014 through May 2015. Friday Focus covered the pilot in its June 2015 issue.

- **Dr. Louis Stryker** was excellent. He always kept me informed and my recovery went faster than I anticipated. (Orthopedics)
- **Dr. Alfred Lea** is an exceptional physician who possesses two qualities—often rare in the medical field—knowledge and compassion. He is an asset to UTMB. (Infectious Diseases)
- **Dr. Mohamed Morsy** always takes time to go over my health problems and discusses the issues with my PCP. I never have to wait longer to see him. (Cardiology)
- No matter how long **Dr. Barbara Thompson’s** day or how stressful, she always has a smile and a healing touch. I love her. (Stewart Road Family Medicine)
- **Dr. Anika Bell-Gray** has excellent bedside manner. I felt respected, understood and cared for. (Family Medicine, Friendswood Pediatric/Adult Specialties)
- **Dr. Adri Smith** is well known and respected in the community. Her name is heard in pediatric recommendations from one mother to another, while standing at pharmacies, in grocery store aisles, at the park and even recommended on social media groups. She is admirable, respectful and so comforting to talk with. When we talk, I feel as though it’s just one mom to another. (Texas City Pediatrics)
- Thank you, **Dr. Todd Masel**, for all of your support with my epilepsy after just a little more than six months! Your assistance really showed me that you care and had concern about my seizure! I look forward to working with you as the years go on. (Neurology)
- I just wanted you to know that I am so grateful we hire the best and yes, they are my co-workers. In my opinion, our employees saved my life last week. I could barely walk, I had no pulse in my foot. The quick acting staff realized my symptoms were caused blocked artery, resulting in a stent. The staff in John Sealy 7C, Vascular Surgery, OR, and Day Surgery are exceptional. They go above and beyond for their patients.
- I wanted to give a shout out to **Dr. Brian Harris**. When I showed up at the Harborside Medical Group without an appointment, he was the only provider working that day, and he saw me in a timely manner and diagnosed my “rash” as shingles. It was to my benefit to be seen as soon as possible, so I could begin taking the anti-viral medicine immediately. I appreciated his willingness to see me and his professionalism in getting me in and out of the clinic.