On September 30, UTMB Health officially submitted its application to the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Magnet Recognition Program!

Magnet status is a prestigious award that has in the past and will once again speak volumes about the excellence in nursing at UTMB Health. We are proud to have reached and completed this stage in the journey to Magnet recognition! Not only will it contribute to the continued retention and recruitment of an already outstanding nursing team, it will help us achieve the excellence in patient care that is our most important focus.

Completing the application was no small feat. It required a great deal of time and hard work from many dedicated individuals—the document contains 677 pages of narrative with additional attachments and would be approximately 15 inches thick if printed!

In approximately three to four months, appraisers will have reviewed the document and are expected to let us know if it scores within the range of excellence. If it does score within the range of excellence, the appraisers will come to UTMB to validate and verify that UTMB Health is a Magnet.

Thank you to everyone for your hard work in ensuring UTMB remains a place of excellence for our patients and each other. A special thank you to David Marshall, JD, MSN, RN, NEA-BC; CENP, Barbara Bonificio, MS, RN-BC; and Cynthia Grasso for their personal dedication to completing the documentation on time. Additional thanks goes to all of our nurses who served on our shared governance committees. There are many other individuals who contributed countless hours and thoughts to this endeavor. Thank you to all of you!
Model Community Health Program at UTMB Health:

Shop ‘til You Drop Your Blood Sugar

Shop ‘til You Drop Your Blood Sugar began as a 2010 President’s Cabinet Award to Rebecca Castro and Diana Hearn, RN. The program helps people with diabetes learn how to modify their diets, as well as how to shop for and prepare nutritious foods at home while staying within their budgets.

Early diagnosis and effective management of diabetes are crucial in reducing the risk of developing life-changing complications such as blindness, kidney failure, heart disease and amputations.

The program helps individuals learn about healthy eating, portion sizes and understanding food labels, as well as familiarizing themselves with what foods are best for their diet.

Progress of the participants is tracked using Hemoglobin A1C levels with a goal to decrease each participant’s A1C by 1.0 over a 6-month period.

New Capital Equipment is on the Way!

Clinical Equipment Services is busy preparing recently purchased equipment for use in the newly renovated John Sealy units as well as replacements for the IV pumps! Toward the close of the FY11 budget year, the UTMB Health System had the good fortune of receiving a special, favorably rated capital allocation from the UT System totaling nearly $15 million specifically for capital equipment purchases. Equipment’s on the way!

Remember!

- Wash hands - every patient, every contact, every time
- Ensure hallways of clutter and are clean
- Check supplies and expiration dates
- Look up! - Report damaged ceiling tiles
- Report minor repairs, such as drippy faucets, toilets, etc.
- Ensure fire exits are accessible
- Report cigarette butts if found (anywhere – stairwells, outside, etc.)

Openings available in UTMB Multi-Share Plan

The UTMB Multi-Share Plan is a limited health benefit plan designed for small business owners (2-50 employees) in Galveston County. The Multi-Share Plan offers them an opportunity to provide affordable health care benefits to their employees. Subsidy dollars funded by a Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) Grant are available to employees of businesses that earn less than 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). It translates into $75 off the $250 monthly premium.

The plan emphasizes primary and preventive care with a goal to promote optimum health by enhancing access to appropriate treatment and encouraging healthy lifestyles. For more information, visit the website at http://www.utmb.edu/multishareplan or Watch the Multi-Share Plan video.
Regardless of where you work in healthcare, it’s important to understand what privacy and confidentiality mean when protecting patient information. Protected Health Information (PHI) is identifiable health information transmitted or maintained in any form or medium, including:

- verbal discussions;
- written communications; or
- electronic communications with or about patients.

PHI is private and limited to those who need the information for Treatment, Payment, and Healthcare Operations (TPO). Only those people who are authorized to use and disclose PHI should have access to PHI. In other words, if you are not directly involved in the delivery of care to a patient, you should not look at their record.

The following are important things to remember regarding PHI:

- Having access to PHI is a privilege that cannot be misused for personal reasons.
- Accessing and disclosing of PHI must only be done in the course of your job responsibilities.
- All use and disclosure of PHI must be limited to the minimum necessary to complete the task.
- There are both UTMB and Federal penalties for HIPAA violations to the individual and the institution. Individuals who inappropriately access electronic records will be disciplined up to and including job loss.
- Proper handling and storage of PHI is required.
- Photos or images of patients are considered PHI and should not be taken unless they comply with UTMB policy.
- All personnel must strictly observe standards relating to disposal of PHI.
- HIPAA guidelines must be followed even if you, as an employee, are assisting with or involved in the care of your family member or members.
- You also cannot access your own health record directly. However, you can gain access to your health information via MyChart. Sign Up!

Examples of Inappropriate Use of PHI

Example #1: A UTMB health care provider is concerned about a person that was recently admitted to the hospital. The health care provider accesses the patient’s information in the electronic medical record out of concern for the patient, but has no reason to access information as part of his/her job.

Example #2: A UTMB billing employee uses one of the billing computer systems to look up the phone number and address of a patient for personal reasons.

In both of these examples of inappropriate use of PHI, the employee would receive disciplinary action for the violation. The disciplinary action taken could result in the termination of the employee.

Reporting Privacy Breaches

If you witness activity that you believe is improper regarding patient privacy, you should report such activity. You may contact The Office of Institutional Compliance by either calling or emailing the department directly or by anonymously reporting the activity through the Fraud, Abuse and Privacy Hotline.

It is easy to determine when confidentiality has been violated, as logs are created automatically when a record is accessed. Any suspicious activity will be investigated. Any employee who violates UTMB’s HIPAA policies may be subject to disciplinary action, which may include verbal warnings, written warnings, suspension or termination.

Office of Institutional Compliance
(409) 747-8700 cpo@utmb.edu
Fraud, Abuse & Privacy Hotline
1 (800) 898-7679

UTMB Children’s Center wins design award

On behalf of Bennett Design Group and Heitkampt Swift Architects, we are pleased to announce that the design for UTMB’s Pediatric Specialty Center at Bay Colony and Academic Pediatrics has been recognized for outstanding design excellence by the American Society of Interior Designer’s Texas Gulf Coast Chapter. This competition included over 260 entries from Houston’s top architectural and design firms. This center was chosen for its healing environment and willingness to make a difference in the community it serves.

This project has been published in Houston Design Resources, Issue II, 2011 (October) magazine.
Rachel Ngingi-Munyoli (Surgery) and Steven Carrio (CT Surgery/Vascular Surgery), “were very responsive and attentive to my needs. Their demeanor, attitude and overall presence showed that they cared about my well-being and comfort...they were very skilled nurses.”

“To all the amazing nurses and staff on 7AB: I don’t know how you all do what you do! I was in the hospital for about a month due to malnutrition and I am so thankful you all were there to care and give your support. To be a nurse or aid or caregiver and face the challenges of caring for such ill people every day really takes a kind of courage and compassion I could only wish more people could know. You all have inspired me to be a better person, to live a better life and to use your passion as an example for my own life. To say “thank you” feel understated, but it’s the only language I know. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for an amazing stay and all the work you do with a generous spirit and big hearts! Much love and many blessings to all of you!”

OB-GYN staff: “I cannot say enough about the entire staff - everyone we encountered was WONDERFUL!” “I was nervous about the C-section; all staff members were wonderful and they helped ease my fears.”

“Just wanted to give a shout out to the Access Center! My Mother is still recovering from her recent accident and was concerned she might be having some complications. The folks are phobic about driving in Houston traffic and did not want to return to Memorial Hermann Downtown. Dad asked me to find a UTMB physician and try to get some questions answered. I very quickly decided to refer them to the UTMB Access Center since I was really at a loss on how to get the answers they were looking for on a Sunday afternoon. I did not know for certain what the outcome would be since they are not (currently) UTMB patients.

Mom called the Access Center sometime late afternoon. Whoever she spoke with took down her questions and concerns, contacted a nurse and gave my mother a call back all within 30 minutes (probably less). Mom & Dad were thrilled to get that type of personalized service and said they intend to establish themselves with UTMB Physicians at the very convenient Victory Lakes facilities.

My Parents are in their 70’s and 80’s and are starting to lean on me more to take care of them, yet at the same time they’re trying to stay as independent as possible. It is great to know that expert guidance is available to answer their questions and help them navigate through the complex process of finding the right physician and make an appointment that meets their specialty and location needs. UTMB will have two new patients due to this positive experience! WAY TO GO ACCESS CENTER!”

Shirley Guillory, Environmental Services

Here are just a few of the Shout Outs! from the Internal Customer Survey (Complete results of the survey will be announced in early November)

Blood Bank: Teresa Moore is phenomenal...We had a delivery issue and Darnell and Teresa solved this issue a.s.a.p. In general, the staff is always a pleasure to work with; very good response time. Very supportive of our patients and responsive to our requests; personnel we interact with are helpful and responsive.

Food Services-Dietary: Very collaborative and responsive to any patient issues; almost always available to assist with problems, even with their limited staff. Stephanie Barron is a Registered Dietician that works closely with members of the pediatric special services team. Her skills and knowledge base are incredible and she contributes tremendously to the provision of good patient care.

Food Services – Patient Meals: Good Customer service. Kudos to Eli and Mr. Chavez; Always on time and willing to accommodate when meal changes are needed at the drop of hat; Dave is great! He visits patients and does not hesitate to deliver a tray if needed; Dave has gone above and beyond to improve the patient meal service experience over the past year.

In-House Construction: Special Kudos to Earl Martin, Troy Moore and Tony Galicia for their prompt attentiveness to this department's needs. All are always professional. Always on time.

Laundry and Linen: Ms. Incalcaterra is always looking for ways to improve her service to us; Sergio and his crew are excellent.

CES Main: Micheal Brown is our savior. He is outstanding as well as James—extremely professional and kind. Very timely for everything we have needed in all 4 of my off campus clinics Mike and Jim are always very helpful and do not hesitate to go the extra mile for us.

CES Victory Lakes: Lewis “Vinnie” Ruthven does an outstanding job.

Clinical Purchasing Main: Cheryl Evans has been wonderful. We also have Deb and Olga who help us with our purchasing and they are great.

Clinical Purchasing Victory Lakes: Mr. Mireles is wonderful. He is polite, respectful and has excellent turnaround time; Ricky is extremely helpful and is always available to aid/guide when ordering is needed.

Courier Services: Derek Cerini is very pleasant and assistive. Darnell is a pleasure to work with.

Environmental Services: Special Kudos to Winnie Richard and Nick Lazaro for prompt attention to our department’s needs; Louisa, Blanca and Quintia always do a great job. Always on top of the work. They work very hard to help us turn over the unit rooms.

Environmental Services, Victory Lakes: Cynthia is wonderful. She is attentive to detail and is always positive and upbeat.