



NMC Achieves Prestigious “Baby Friendly” Distinction

As the result of more than three years of collaboration between NMC’s Family Birth Center, Northwestern OB/GYN, and key community partners, NMC has earned the prestigious international designation of being a Baby Friendly hospital. NMC joins Northeastern in St. Johnsbury as the only two Vermont hospitals to have earned Baby Friendly designation.

“Baby Friendly means offering an optimal level of care for mother/baby bonding and infant feeding,” said Anna Gabaree, RN, Supervisor of the NMC Family Birth Center. “It is evidence-based care for newborns aligned with world-wide recommendations and it is more than breastfeeding. It means keeping families together, rooming in, encouraging skin to skin contact between baby and parents, and supporting families with breastfeeding and other feeding choices.”

The clinical differences for newborns and their parents of these best practices are already evident. “We are finding that babies are healthier and moms have less pain,” said Anna. “The studies support it and we are seeing it. By keeping families together and emphasizing skin to skin, babies are feeding better, they have low blood sugar less often, and they are crying less. Moms are requiring less pain medication and actually have less post-partum bleeding.”

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● **Creating a Lasting Bond**
{we do that here}

NMC publishes Insights on a bimonthly basis to help our neighbors have a better understanding of their primary care hospital. If you have questions or comments about this publication, please email insights@nmcinc.org or call our Community Relations Office at 524-1280.

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A Baby Friendly Hospital

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NMC's emphasis on skin-to-skin contact between a newborn and the family has been so well received, it even extends into the operating room for babies born by C-section. "Our 'gentle C-section approach has been so well received," said Anna. "It involves having the significant other present, using clear drapes for more visibility for mom, having skin-to-skin right away in the OR, and recovering on the Family Birth Center with the newborn. It keeps our families together and it is so beneficial."

Achieving the Baby Friendly designation that has helped leverage these improved outcomes involved extensive staff training (21 hours of education for each Birth Center nurse and 16 hours for each OB/GYN nurse, for example), policy change, data collection, chart review, involvement of the entire hospital organization, and an intensive on-site inspection. Only 17.9% of babies nationally are born in Baby Friendly designated hospitals, as only 356 hospitals in the United States have achieved this designation.

"Baby Friendly designation represents an alignment of our care with worldwide best standards. We are fortunate to have three board certified international lactation consultants on our staff and to have strong and supportive resources in our community," said Anna. "They help support expectant moms during pregnancy and after the baby is born. It doesn't matter what your feeding choice is, we support all growing families the same way the benefits of our baby friendly approach are many."

"Achieving this designation is such a wonderful example of exceptional care for patients and collaboration between the Birth Center and Northwestern OB/GYN and with our partners like the Vermont Department of Health and Franklin County Home Health Agency," said Jill Berry Bowen, NMC's CEO. "It means our newest community members are receiving the best of care, even before they are born and in their first days of life. I am so proud of the work of this team as they wrap around the growing families of northwestern Vermont."

Northwestern Medical Center's Family Birth Center helps welcome more than 400 newborns to our community each year. For more information on having a baby at NMC and to arrange a tour of the Family Birth Center, please call (802) 524-1040.

NMC's Construction Moving Ahead

Work on NMC's campus construction is progressing quickly with the new building structures beginning to take visible shape during August and into September. The next months of change will also mean improved traffic flow around campus as roadwork is completed and construction is located in more compact construction zones.

In August, the relocated loop of Crest Road around the back of campus will be given a first coat of pavement and sidewalks will be installed along that new portion of roadway. Finishing that road alleviates some traffic congestion created by the new construction zones. This follows the work in July, when NMC made two major changes to campus: relocation of the main entrance to the Conference Center and relocation of the loading dock to the back of the building.

At the same time, NMC stationed the new Campus Ambassador on Crest Road to help patients and visitors navigate the changes on campus. This warm, helpful greeting has been very well received and has made finding the way much easier.

Coming up next is underground and utility work in the construction zones. Then, NMC will pour foundational footings for the expansion of the inpatient wing as well as for both the new buildings: the Medical Clinics building and the Medical Office Buildings. This summer, structural steel will begin to go up for the buildings.

The construction is slated to last until winter of 2017 and includes several renovation projects including:

- Private rooms for our inpatients with renovation and expansion of our Medical/Surgical Unit.
- A new main entrance for convenient, efficient registration.
- New, efficient flexible space to house much needed medical specialty clinics.
- A new medical office building to bring important services together at the front of campus.

Here is a reminder about important changes for our visitors and patients:

- All non-emergency patients should enter through the new temporary entrance on Crest Road (the Conference Center entrance).
- Use Crest Road to access the Emergency Department by traveling around the building.
- The Outpatient Lab is now located in Doctors Office Commons #1.
- The Cardiology and Pulmonology Practices are now located in Doctors Office Commons #10.
- Patient and Visitor parking can be found directly in front of the main entrance, as well as in the lot south of Doctors Office Commons.

This construction is an exciting step in NMC's plans for a future of exceptional care for our community. To learn more about each aspect of the project, please visit our website where a special area is dedicated to regular, ongoing updates about construction progress. Visit www.Northwestern.org and check out "Learn about our expansion."





NMC Earns Distinction as a 2016 “Most Wired” Hospital

NMC was recently named one of the 2016 “Most Wired” Hospitals, using technology to improve the efficiency of care delivery and create a new dynamic in patient interactions.

Most Wired hospitals are redefining the way they provide care in their communities, using technology to build patient engagement with the individual’s lifestyle in mind, which includes electronic access to their care team. These innovations are shown by the results of the annual Health Care’s Most Wired® survey, released by the American Hospital Association’s Health Forum.

NMC’s Vice President of Information System Joel Benware said that while the award is wonderful recognition, it is by no means the end of NMC’s efforts. “This is recognition of our strategic planning efforts and that we are headed in the right direction,” said Benware. “Health Information Technology is a constant evolution of connecting patients with their healthcare so that each can make informed choices about their own personal wellness.”

Most Wired hospitals use population health management tools and partner with other health care providers to share critical clinical information used in analyzing interventions aimed at key patient groups, such as those with chronic conditions.

To ensure patients receive the most appropriate and timely care, NMC is using predictive modeling to eliminate preventable problems. In 2016, NMC created a new Information Systems division dedicated to data analytics. This division helps identify causes or trends of readmission to help patients recover at home without the risks of complications. NMC continues to maintain impressively low infection rates through continued review and analysis of trends and risks.

Data analytics help NMC provide exceptional care, and let physicians monitor their performance. By putting key information in the hands of providers, they can see what they are doing well and where they can improve.

“More frequently, providers are seeking data regarding individual performance for clinical and quality outcomes,” said Dr. Lowry Sullivan, OBGYN provider and Chief Medical Officer. “Individual provider dashboards will motivate the medical staff to strive for excellence and the dashboards will validate positive progress. We look

(Left to right) Jeannette Rose, RN, and Annette Dragoon, an RN Clinical Informaticist in NMC’s Information Systems Department scan a medication barcode on the Med-Surg unit at NMC.

forward to making these tools a standard part of our clinical and quality improvement efforts.”

As they build out new capabilities, hospitals are also taking strong actions to ensure health data is secure.

“Every year NMC invites 3rd party auditors to evaluate our network security and compliance plans and policies. These audits ensure NMC continuously improves our ability to keep patient information safe and secure,” said Dennis Boucher, Manager of Information Systems Operations.

One of NMC’s major initiatives in 2016 was modernization of its Nurse Call system.

“We replaced our antiquated phone based system with a computerized system that will become fully integrated with our phone system, and Electronic Health Record (EHR),” said Boucher. “Once fully implemented, the new system provide for improved reporting and patient room status, including visual cues for patients at risk for falls, or with special dietary needs, improving patient safety and the efficiency with which staff can respond to a patient’s needs.”

Another example is the way that NMC patient portals have become an integral part of the patient care experience. Through the portal, patients become personally engaged in their care. They are able to review labs results, and communicate with providers about their progress towards healthcare goals.

Benware also said that NMC is fostering a culture of integrated technology. “We don’t see technology as a separate tool; rather as an integrated component of the culture of our clinical and business services,” he said. “Continuous efforts are underway to remove manual processes, reduce paper and turn complex steps into more streamlined workflows.”

To learn more about NMC’s Patient Portal call NMC’s Health Information Department at (802) 524-1060.

INSIGHTS TO HEALTH

Your guide to local healthy programs, classes, and more!



Exercise

Cancer Exercise Rehab Group

Every Tuesday and Thursday 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This class pin points the common needs of patients. This includes decreased range of motion, decreased strength, cancer related fatigue and lymphedema.

Featuring: Wendy Lawrence, Certified NMC Oncology Rehab Physical Therapist

Location: NMC Rehab gym, Cobblestone Building

Pre-registration Required: Call 524-1064

Fee: Free for the first 8 weeks, then \$40 for open gym access

Fit Moms

Every Wednesday 7 to 8 p.m.

Get in shape for a strong birthing experience. Join other moms as we prepare our bodies for labor. Please consult a physician before beginning this exercise program.

Featuring: Stephanie Preedom, AFAA

Location: NMC Wellness & Fitness Room

Pre-registration Required: Call Stephanie @ 802-288-1141 or email stephanie.preedom@gmail.com

Fee: Free to Northwestern OB/GYN patients

Gentle Yoga For Seniors

Tuesdays, Sept 13 - Nov 15 9 to 10 a.m.

A safe and slower-moving class designed for seniors and people of all ages with physical challenges. We work gently to increase range of motion in shoulders, back, hips and legs to develop better balance, core awareness and breath awareness. Each class has time at the end for quieting the mind to reduce anxiety and stress, and to foster relaxation. Chair modifications will be presented. Physician authorization is required, so please sign up by September 1st.

Location: NMC Conference Center

Cost: \$50 for 10 week session

Pre-registration Required: Call Faith at 524-1217 or email fdubois@nmcinc.org

Support Groups

Latch On! Discussion Group

3rd Saturday Every Month 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Learn about breastfeeding and share your stories. Enjoy light refreshments and connect with other Moms. No registration necessary.

Location: NMC Family Birth Center



Featured Program

Stronger U

Mondays & Wednesdays, Sept 12 - Nov 16 9 to 10 a.m.

This strength-building exercise program helps women battle the losses in strength and bone mass which occur naturally as one ages. Physician authorization is required, so please sign up by September 1st.

Location: NMC Conference Center

Cost: \$99 for 10 weeks

Pre-registration Required: Call Faith at 524-1217 or email fdubois@nmcinc.org

Healthy Weight Support Group

Every Monday Noon to 12:30 p.m.

This is a weekly support group for those working on weight management. It combines behavioral and nutritional strategies to increase physical activity and decrease calorie intake. It will provide you with techniques to help you manage your eating behaviors. Come 15 minutes early for a weight check.

Location: NMC Grand isle Room

Speakers: Kay Tran, Registered Dietitian, MS, CDE, & Leslie Gardzina, Registered Dietitian, Northwestern Medical Center

Healthier Living with Chronic Disease

Mondays, Aug 8 - Sept 12 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: Northwestern Georgia Health Center

Tuesdays, Aug 9 - Sept 13 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Northwest Counseling and Support Services

Are you or someone you know living with a chronic disease? Then this Healthier Living Workshop is for you! Learn to feel better by learning how to deal with frustration, fatigue and pain, manage symptoms and medications. Please contact Debbie @524-1031 with any questions or to register.

Vermont Quit Network Freshstart Tobacco cessation class

Tuesdays, August 4, 11, 18, 25 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Location: Haston Library, Franklin

Wednesdays, Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Fairfield Community Center

Join others for this 4-session series to help you successfully quit smoking. Sessions include: understanding why you have an addiction and how to quit; mastering the first few days, mastering obstacles; and staying quit and enjoying it forever. As a Vermont resident, you can get free patches, gum & lozenges.

Pre-registration Required: To sign up call Chari at 524-8480

Healing Circle Breast Cancer Network, Healing Circle Cancer Support Group

1st Tuesday of Every Month 5 to 6:30 p.m.

A self-help cancer support group for women of all ages and lifestyles who have cancer. At our monthly meetings, we share information, offer each other support and comfort, and learn new things from speakers. We extend an invitation to any woman who has cancer, whether you are newly diagnosed or a long term survivor.

Location: NMC Conference Franklin Room

YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program

Wednesdays 12 to 1 p.m.

This program helps adults at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes reduce their risk for developing the disease by taking steps that will improve their overall health and wellbeing. **Location:** Northwestern Medical Center. Starts August 10th and runs weekly for 16 weeks, then monthly the remainder of the year. Call Debbie @ 524-1031 for any questions or to register.

Diabetes and You

Fridays, Aug 12 - Sept 9 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Enosburg Health Center, Main Street, Enosburg

Saturdays, Oct 15 - Nov 12 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Location: NMC Conference Room 2

This self-management educational program is a five part, ten hour group education program, plus telephone follow-up sessions for people with diabetes and their families. The program is accredited by the American Diabetes Association.

Facilitator: Deb Robertson, RN, BSN, CDE, Northwestern Medical Center

Program Charge: Call for pricing information

Pre-registration Required: Call 524-1031 to register or email drobertson@nmcinc.org

Program Size: Limited to 15