

Insights

your health and your hospital



Hearing Aid Clinic Opens This Spring

Northwestern Ear, Nose and Throat is excited to announce the launch of a new hearing aid service as a complement to the ENT practice.

Patients who need hearing devices can schedule appointments with audiologist Stephanie Maloney, Au.D. on any day of the week. Maloney will work closely with patients to assess their need and then work with hearing aid vendor Phonak to obtain a device. Maloney will walk patients through the process of evaluation, assessment, fitting, orientation and follow-up.

Hearing aids help amplify soft sounds, and improve hearing for people who are struggling with a loss. There are many different types of hearing aids which vary in features, size, fit and price. Meeting with an audiologist to assess what type of hearing aid would work best for you is important step in buying a device.

To make an appointment with Northwestern Ear, Nose & Throat, call 802-524-1000 or visit the website at www.northwestern.org/services/northwestern-ear-nose-throat.



Clear Communications
{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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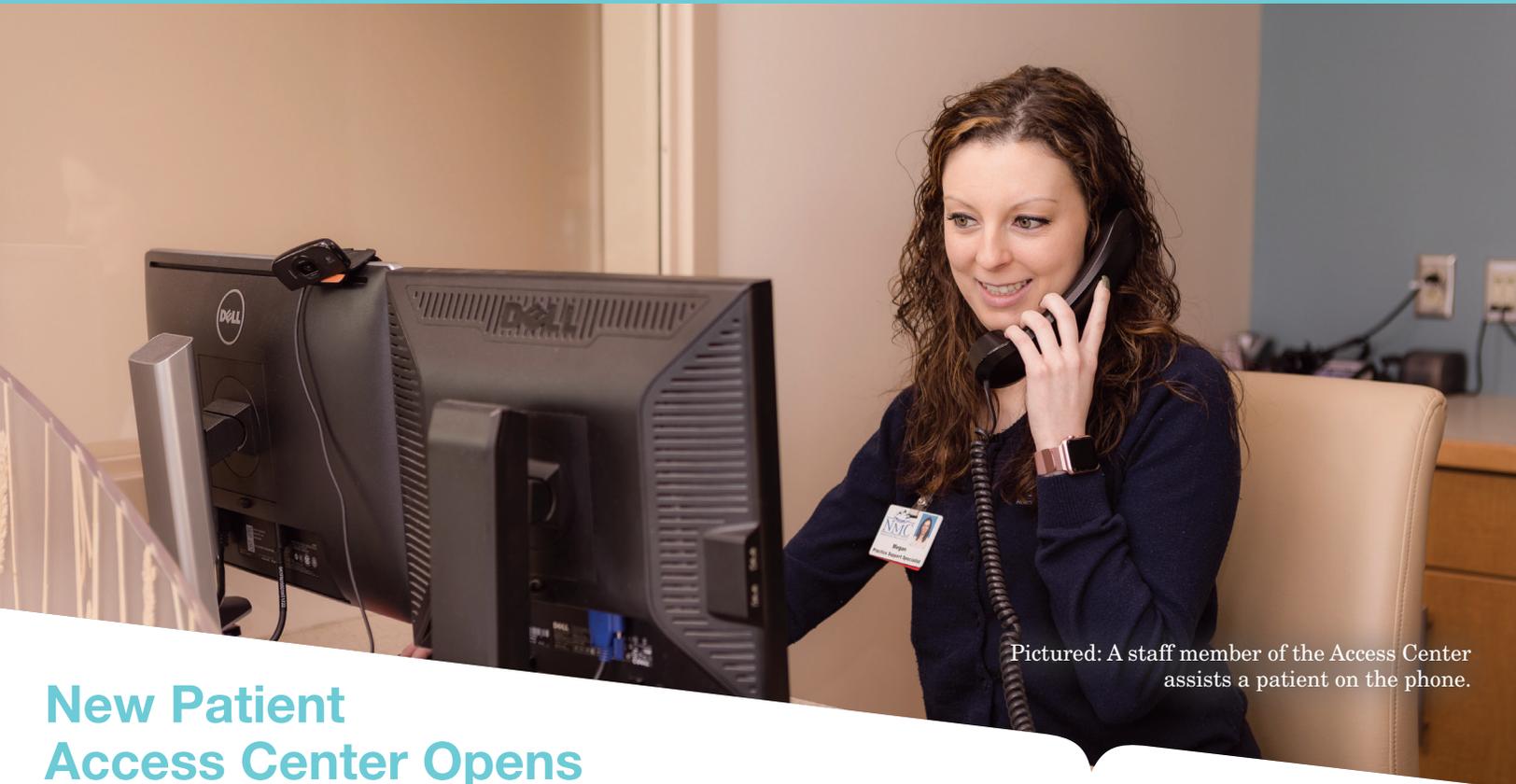
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Non Profit Org
 US Postage
PAID
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Pictured: A staff member of the Access Center assists a patient on the phone.

New Patient Access Center Opens

In January, Northwestern Medical Center opened a new Patient Access Center which serves as a centralized point of contact for patients of Northwestern Primary Care, Northwestern Georgia Health Center, Northwestern Urgent Care in St. Albans and Georgia, as well as Northwestern OBGYN, Northwestern Cardiology, Pulmonology and Neurology.

When patients of any of these practices call, they reach a central team of schedulers who are physically located inside the main building at NMC. This dedicated team handles all appointment scheduling calls and other patient contacts.

The group routes requests like medication refills and clinical questions to the individual practice for assistance. This new Patient Access Center provides patients with a quick response and better consistency of service so that all calls and questions are handled using the same process.

The Access Center also offers patients a one-stop-shopping experience so that the call-taker can schedule a primary care appointment or a cardiology follow-up all in the same interaction without transferring to another person or practice. Over time, more practices at NMC will transition into being served by the Patient Access Center.

Planned Giving: Donating Insurance Policies

Did you know you can donate a life insurance policy to charity? If philanthropy is one of your goals, donating your life insurance policy to charity can be an effective strategy. Often, this allows the donor to make larger gifts than they might otherwise be able to afford, while generating current tax benefits and enjoying the recognition. An example is illustrated below:

Consider Judy, for example. Judy is a widow and in her mid-60s with two adult children, both of whom have completed college and are gainfully employed. She has considerable savings in her retirement but continues to pay premiums of nearly \$12,000 per year on a \$2 million life insurance policy. If she simply surrenders the policy in exchange for its cash value, she will recognize \$250,000 in ordinary income. Judy's financial advisor, recognizing that she wants to give more to charity, suggested that Judy consider donating her life insurance policy, which could also improve her cash

flow. Judy would enjoy a charitable income tax deduction for the initial donation as well as for any premiums she might pay in the future (in some cases, the charity will also take over payment of the premiums).

As a result, when Judy passes away, the charity she has chosen will receive a \$2 million-dollar gift.

Whether this strategy is right for you depends on your specific circumstances and your family's financial situation. It is important to understand the tax implications of estate planning and charitable giving. If you are considering such a gift, we recommend that you consult with your accountant and/or financial planner.



For more information about joining the Northwestern Medical Center Legacy Circle or creating a special gift fund for NMC, please contact Jeff Moreau, Director of Development at jmoreau@nmcinc.org or 802-524-8467.

“If I had not been referred for the sleep study by Dr. Carol and found out that I had sleep apnea, I don’t think I would have lived as long as I plan on now.”

— Timothy Gaudette



Routine Exam Has Life-Changing Outcome

What started as a routine checkup for Timothy Gaudette’s annual Department of Transportation (DOT) certification ended up turning his life around. In April 2018, Gaudette came to Northwestern Occupational Health for a routine exam in order to renew his DOT card. For eight years Gaudette has worked full-time as the dispatcher/supervisor of operations for Green Mountain Transit - a position that he loves. On any given day he is up at 2:30 am, begins work at 4:30 am, and is typically done around 1 pm. It takes a dedicated individual to begin work at 4:30 am and Timothy says it is also important to be physically fit and in a good mind space while holding your CDL. He says that it is of the utmost importance that you are in good health while driving large vehicles, especially when transporting other people, and that the DOT exam is one way for drivers and the companies they work for to ensure that they are in fact healthy enough for such tasks.

While most individuals holding a CDL are required to renew their DOT card every two years, Gaudette is required to do so every 12 months due to his high blood pressure. The DOT card exams can be completed at many places around the state, however, Timothy prefers to complete his at Northwestern Occupational Health where he knows he will see familiar faces. All his previous DOT exams at NMC raised no concerns. However, it was different this time. In his April 2018 visit, Dr. Susan Carol began noticing increased signs of sleep apnea. Not ever having any history of sleep problems, Gaudette insisted that he was fine, but agreed to do a sleep study just to be sure.

Following completion of the sleep study, Gaudette was shocked to learn that he was having 57 “attacks,” or sleep apnea events per hour. After learning this, Timothy was referred to Apnea Air where he was able to get all the education and supplies needed in order to begin treating his sleep apnea.

“If I had not been referred for the sleep study by Dr. Carol and found out that I had sleep apnea, I don’t think I would have lived as long as I plan on now. It was like a light going on. You think you’re going through life as good as you can, until you find something like this that completely turns your life around,” says Gaudette. Through his CPAP machine provided by Apnea Air, Timothy is now able to monitor his sleep through an app on his phone that is directly connected to his CPAP machine. The daily results provide a test score that indicates how many ‘episodes’ he may have had that night – as of now, Timothy regularly receives a test score of 100, meaning he did not encounter any attacks. His snoring has completely gone away, his heart is not working as hard as it once had to, and he is able to think more clearly. After about six months of treatment, he has much more energy and says it is only getting better.

“I am so glad and thankful for my wife, to the doctor, and to everyone who has been involved, I can’t thank them enough. Dr. Carol stuck to her guns and pushed me to get the sleep study, and I am so happy she did. I even use my CPAP for naps!” said Gaudette.

Story by: Kelsey MacArt

Two NOTCH St. Albans-based primary care locations moving to NMC campus

At the end of February, the Northern Tier Center for Health will move its two St. Albans-based primary care practices onto the NMC campus, relocating to Doctors Office Commons. The move brings even greater access to important primary care services to a convenient location, near many other related healthcare services.

Northwestern Medical Center is pleased to welcome the NOTCH to campus. “We look forward to being in such close proximity to our colleagues at NOTCH,” said NMC CEO Jill Berry Bowen, RN.

NOTCH, a Federally Qualified Health Center, is also happy with the move.

“We are very excited about bringing our two St. Albans practices together under one roof at Doctors Office Commons,” said Pam Parsons, Executive Director.

“Northern Tier Center for Health has a lease agreement with the hospital for space,

which means our patients will continue to receive quality NOTCH primary care services delivered from a facility specifically designed for efficient health care work flow with improved building accessibility and plenty of parking.

St. Albans Health Center at 3 Crest Road is an office of NOTCH and its patients will continue to have access to a full range of comprehensive services (dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, etc...) and ancillary programs, including our Sliding Fee Discount Program.” The two practices will be located in Suite 3 of the Doctors Office Commons building, near the Northwestern Associates in Surgery and Northwestern Urology Services offices. Both the Fairfield Street Health Center and the St. Albans Health Centers will come together in this location.



**Northern Tier Center for Health
Federally Qualified Health Center**

INSIGHTS TO HEALTH

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



Featured Program



Athletic Training Health Fair

Saturday, March 23

1:00 to 3:00 pm

Location: Cobblestone Health Commons, PT/OT/Rehab Gym

Join Northwestern Medical Center's Certified Athletic trainers for a symposium on improving your knowledge and optimizing your health and performance.

Free functional movement screening, flexibility and strengthening exercise suggestions, nutrition for optimal performance, and baseline concussion testing will be offered for you and your family!

Join us for a fun filled and interactive morning symposium before the spring weather arrives and we are all anxious to get outside!

Fee: Free of charge and no pre-registration required.

Diabetes and You

Tuesdays, February 19 to March 19
10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Location: NMC Grand Isle Room

A self-management educational series for people with diabetes and their families, proven to help people improve control of this disease. Learn how to keep diabetes from controlling your life and improve your blood sugar control to feel better and delay/prevent complications.

Pre-Registration Required: Deborah Robertson, 524-1031

Fee: NMC will bill your insurance for the course fee. Scholarships available. No one will be turned away for lack of ability to pay.

Tai Chi Classes

Mondays, March 4 to March 25
4:00 to 5:00 pm (1st class) and 5:15 to 6:15 pm (2nd class)

Location: Northwestern Medical Center Wellness and Fitness Room (Conference Center)

Tai Chi is a form of gentle, guided movement that is sometimes referred to as "meditation in motion" and can aid in reducing stress and anxiety. It has also been found to improve balance and promote a sense of wellbeing. Open to all ages. Class size is limited to 12.

Pre-Registration Required: Please sign up online or contact 524-8485 for more information.

Fee: \$40 monthly

Therapeutic Yoga

Tuesdays, March 5 to March 26
5:15 to 6:15 pm

Location: NMC Exercise Room

Certified yoga instructor and physical therapist Katherine Lowe will lead you through a monthly series of yoga postures, poses and breathing techniques designed to ease the stress, anxiety and discomfort associated with pain. Yoga can assist in enhancing our mind-body connection. No previous yoga experience is necessary.

Fee: \$40 monthly pay in full online or at 1st class to reserve your spot

Class Size limited to: 12 people

Diabetes and You

Thursdays, March 14 to April 11 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Location: Richford Rural Health Center, 4th floor CR

A self-management educational series for people with diabetes and their families, proven to help people improve control of this disease. Learn how to keep diabetes from controlling your life and improve your blood sugar control to feel better and delay/prevent complications.

Pre-Registration Required: Deborah Robertson, 524-1031

Fee: NMC will bill your insurance for the course fee. Scholarships available. No one will be turned away for lack of ability to pay.

Movement for Parkinson's

Wednesday, March 7 5:30 to 6:30 pm
Friday, March 15 10:00 to 11:00 am

Location: Homestead at Pillsbury Manor

Movement for Parkinson's Disease is being offered for people with Parkinson's (wheel chair bound as well as able to stand participants), their care partners and/or others interested in participating. The dance class is designed to engage participants' minds and bodies through many styles of dance, while exploring stretching, muscle strengthening, postural stability, and rhythm through instruction and energizing music.

The class is offered in a relaxed social environment that emphasizes enjoyment, fun and creativity, with an eye towards connecting with the community. No Dance experience required. No fees charged but a donation is always appreciated to cover transportation costs for the instructor.

Registration/Info: Call (802) 881-9673 or email saramcm28@gmail.com (Sarah) or patrica_rugg18@comcast.net (Patty Rugg)

Cost: Free

