The little things do truly make a difference

Theresa Rutherford, patient experience manager of Environmental Services at Beaumont Hospital, Dearborn, knows that small ideas can have a big impact.

She started a journey to improve patient satisfaction nearly a year ago, when Beaumont, Dearborn, saw low overall patient satisfaction scores on two of their inpatient floors. As a patient experience manager, Theresa took on the challenge of improving the scores by concentrating on the one area that would provide the biggest impact: making a connection with patients.

It’s the little things that Dearborn does really well that create a memorable experience. For instance, Theresa’s morning ritual starts with preparing the nearly 100 carnations she will deliver each day during her patient rounds. “I go into the patient’s room with a smile, make a connection and ask them if there is anything they need,” added Theresa.

This simple act was adopted and mirrored after the Ohio State University hospital and lends to one guiding and simple principle: one person can have a huge impact on the quality of a patient’s experience. Theresa’s aha moment is also, in part,
Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians delight at Dearborn

Two members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra gave a free performance at Beaumont, Dearborn, on May 5.

A flutist and violinist performed as part of a kick off for National Hospital Week.

The DSO has partnered with the Dearborn hospital since 2013, providing free performances to help lift the spirits of employees, patients and visitors alike.

Flowers

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the reason for Dearborn’s increase in overall patient satisfaction scores from the 38th to the 69th percentile.

“There are only 95 patient experience managers across the U.S. in various hospitals—and Beaumont is proud to have adopted this best practice at Dearborn,” said Theresa.

This led to the development of an often-overlooked opportunity to make a good first impression by incorporating purposeful rounding through the contributions of the environmental services staff.

“Taking the time for a one-on-one, sit-down conversation with a patient, the simple act of slowing down, listening in order to gain a better understanding and appreciation, and building relationships serve to ignite something genuine and meaningful,” said Theresa.

“These little things exceed expectations and will allow us to be successful in a new and evolving health care environment,” said Theresa. She adds that she has learned so much by taking the time to sit down and have a conversation with a patient. “I’ve heard love stories and I’ve heard war stories. One patient talked of the hospital when it was being built 50 plus years ago. But, what I love most is spreading some joy,” said Theresa. “I know some of these people are sick, and I’m happy to put a smile on their face.”
Hospice nurse escorts patient home to Israel to be with family

From birth to death is how Nancy Schneider describes her experience at Beaumont Health, spanning 30 years. A licensed practical nurse in Hospice, Nancy began her career at Beaumont in the IVF Clinic.

After the IVF clinic closed, Nancy found herself looking for a job knowing she wanted to stay at Beaumont. “I didn’t know much about hospice and there weren’t many positions for a licensed practical nurse at the time, but after speaking with the nurse manager of Hospice, I felt it was the right fit and it’s turned my life around,” said Nancy.

Working with families trying to conceive and with patients who are terminally ill has taught Nancy that every stage of life is sacred. “The beginning of life is just as important as the end, and we don’t hold life and death in our hands, but what we can do is make it as comfortable and dignified as possible,” she said.

Nancy loves her job, but never imagined it would lead to the trip of her life. A member of the Jewish Hospice and Chaplaincy Organization, she was contacted by a rabbi to escort a hospice patient overseas to Israel. The patient’s children and grandchildren lived there and wished their father to be near, hoping it would lead to his revitalization. Within hours, Nancy spoke with the patient’s daughter-in-law and the next day met with the patient, whom she describes as a quiet-spoken man. She knew it was the right fit and agreed to go.

“As soon as I found out about the trip, I talked to my managers at Beaumont and told them what I wanted to do. It involved taking vacation time during Christmas, but they didn’t bat an eye and supported me 100 percent,” Nancy said, “If it wasn’t for their support, I wouldn’t have gone.”

Before the trip, Nancy took care of the paperwork and red tape required to transport a hospice patient out of the country, and also arranged for an ambulance to take the patient and family to the Toronto Pearson International Airport. “The trip went smoothly. I monitored the patient closely and administered his medications. When we arrived in Israel, he was greeted by more than 30 of his friends and family in the airport,” she said, “It was a beautiful thing to see.”

From the airport, he was taken to a new hospice and Nancy handed her patient over to his new team. “They took over and I went over the meds and his condition. The next day I went back and worked with the doctor on his plan of care,” said Nancy.

The patient’s family covered all of Nancy’s expenses. She stayed with the family and they even arranged visits to tourist attractions and religious sights for her. Nancy considers herself blessed to have been able to take this journey alongside her patient. “This was a life-changing experience. I had a chance to do what I like and help people in hospice, but I also had an opportunity to satisfy my own religious background cravings by visiting Israel,” she said.

Nancy describes her trip as the result of a team effort, involving the rabbi, her Beaumont manager’s support and advice, the patient and his family. She explains, “It was a collaboration of effort and I was the one fortunate enough to be in the position to experience it.”

Your opinion matters

Just a few minutes is needed for the Internal Communications survey

To continue to improve communications with Beaumont Health employees, the Communications department is conducting an internal communication survey.

Its purpose is to evaluate how well we communicate with you through vehicles such as the Beaumont Blend, Huddle, In the Loop and other forms of communication.

Your feedback will help us do a better job of delivering relevant, timely news and information about Beaumont. Complete the internal communication survey and let us know what you think. It takes less than five minutes to complete.
Mark your calendars: Family Safety Day coming to Trenton

Beaumont Hospital, Trenton is bringing in several public safety authorities next week to teach people how to keep safe at home, on bikes, on the roadways and on the water.

The 7th annual Family Safety Awareness Day will take place Saturday, May 21, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the hospital campus at 5450 Fort Street. Representatives from the Trenton Fire Department, Downriver SWAT and dive teams, U.S. Coast Guard and Border Patrol and even the FBI will be on hand for a variety of educational activities.

“We want to help keep people safe, and we want to introduce them to the people who keep them safe every day,” said Barbie Loreto, RN, injury prevention coordinator/registrar at Beaumont Hospital, Trenton.

Activities will include:
• Tour of Beaumont One helicopter (weather permitting)
• K-9 demonstrations (10 a.m. and noon)
• Trenton Fire Department ladder truck
• Woodhaven Fire Department smoke house
• Distracted driving simulator
• Downriver SWAT “Bearcat” armored vehicle
• Downriver Dive Team hovercraft
• Bicycle rodeo and bicycle helmet fittings
• FBI child fingerprinting/ID kits
• Education about concussions in sports
• Free health screenings

The distracted driving simulator will be available for anyone 16 and older. It will show participants how quickly a collision can happen when drivers are distracted by a text.

“It’s very eye-opening,” Barbie said.

The event is free and open to the community.

“A lot of it is focused on children, but we’ll have plenty for adults, too,” she said. “There will be something for everyone.”

Beaumont, Wayne creates new suites for bariatric patients

Anyone who has tried to lose weight knows how difficult it is. It takes the right combination of diet, exercise, discipline and medical support, said Wendy Miller, M.D., director of Nutrition and Preventive Medicine for Beaumont Health.

Dr. Miller is the director of the Beaumont Weight Control Centers in Royal Oak, Rochester Hills and St. Clair Shores.

Beaumont has been leading the way with medical weight control programs, dating back 30 years. They were first offered at the Royal Oak hospital, and expanded to include Troy in 2012 and Grosse Pointe in 2015. This year, the program will be expanded to Beaumont Hospital, Wayne—complete with a post-surgical wing dedicated to serving recovering bariatric surgery patients.

Construction at the hospital is nearly complete, according to Sally Bailey, administrator, Clinical Operations. There are four private rooms with extended doorways, bathrooms with six-foot showers and beds with integrated scales that accommodate larger patients.

“The suites were designed with bariatric patient comfort in mind,” said Sally. “The entire wing is an innovative and state-of-the-art patient and family-centered care center. For this type of surgery, there is nothing comparable in Southeast Michigan.”

Only about 40 percent of patients who enter the program opt for bariatric surgery. Many find success through the comprehensive nonsurgical support offered through the program, which includes physicians, dietitians, psychologists, exercise physiologists, nurses and more. There is also a pediatric option, the Beaumont Healthy Kids Program.

Those services will also be included in the Beaumont, Wayne program, offered through a specialized clinic located in Canton set to open later this year. Like the other Beaumont Weight Control Centers, the Canton location will feature all of those services under one roof, including a demonstration kitchen to help patients learn how to cook and eat healthy at home, classrooms and conference rooms for educational seminars and support groups.

Dr. Miller said patients usually enter the program through one of the free informational seminars that are offered regularly throughout the communities. One of the initial evaluations is a body composition DXA scan, which measures the percentage of body fat, bone mass and muscle mass, and helps determine an individualized goal weight. “It’s not just about body mass index; it’s not just reading a number from a chart,” she said. “This is a very individualized approach. It’s different for everyone.”

For more information or to register for a free informational Weight Control program seminar or Bariatric Surgery program seminar, visit Beaumont.org/weight.
Beaumont doctor travels the world teaching pediatric surgery

When Nathan Novotny, M.D., gets ready for a trip overseas, he “packs his bags with tempered optimism.”

As part of an international medicine program through Beaumont Health, Dr. Novotny spends much of his time teaching laparoscopic surgical skills to physicians in Africa and the Middle East. He also provides guidance on pediatric surgeries and offers his skills in ORs across the globe.

“I absolutely love to travel,” said Dr. Novotny, a pediatric surgeon. “It’s crazy that I can fall asleep somewhere over Canada on a Wednesday evening and wake up at 8 a.m. in France.”

Recently, he made a trip to a conference in Irbid, Jordan to be part of a panel discussion on medical education and minimally invasive pediatric surgery. After, he made the complicated trip to Gaza City, where he was scheduled to train 15 pediatric surgeons on laparoscopic instruments—strictly simulation, no OR time.

“When I got to Gaza, I planned to set up the three simulators I brought with me,” Dr. Novotny recalled. “On our way to the hotel, I talked to the chief of surgery and he mentioned he had two cases for the next day and a list of surgeries he wanted me to review. Obviously, I was surprised, but the two surgeries he mentioned would cause large chest incisions with a lot of pain for the kids as well as potential for long-term issues if they weren’t done using minimally invasive techniques, so I agreed to do the surgeries.”

However, practicing international medicine is often a test of patience. “By the end of the second day, only one had been completed,” he said. “Also, we still hadn’t done any training at this point. But by the end of the night, I was able to meet with a few surgeons and get them started on the simulators.”

Even the simple act of practicing surgery can take complicated twists when working in a developing country. The Gaza hospital has frequent power outages and typically only has power for less than eight hours a day. Luckily, the simulators he brought had built-in lighting, so they didn’t need to use flashlights.

“In addition to the things we take for granted in the U.S., like electricity, one of the other unknowns when I travel abroad is what my accommodations will be like,” he says. “This time, I was in a hotel closer to downtown, in the largest city in the Gaza Strip, one block from the largest hospital there and my neighbor was a very vocal rooster. I am so glad my neighbors in America aren’t chickens.”

You can read the details of Dr. Novotny’s trip to Jordan and the West Bank, and see more photos, later this week on the Beaumont Health & Wellness News site.
New valve implant gives patient a new outlook on life

Gregory Goleniak, 69, of Dearborn, has a family history of heart disease, but he didn’t think it would impact him. He didn’t consider his 50 years of tobacco use and poor nutrition. Routine activities such as walking and other physical exercise became much more difficult, resulting in practically no exercise at all for many years.

Because of his major health concerns, including high blood pressure, limited mobility and oxygen therapy to help manage chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, he consulted Beaumont Hospital, Dearborn cardiovascular surgeon Reza Dabir, M.D., hoping to improve his quality of life.

Dr. Dabir identified Gregory as a candidate for a new heart valve replacement device recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration called the Perceval valve.

“When the doctor told me this procedure would reduce the amount of risk and explained that it’s been used in other parts of the world for many years, that gave me confidence and I felt much more comfortable about my decision,” said Gregory.

One week after becoming the first Michigan resident to undergo a Perceval heart valve replacement, Goleniak was back at home.

Five weeks after the procedure, he attended cardiac rehabilitation for the first time. “My goal now is to build my endurance, so I don’t have to wear oxygen anymore,” said Goleniak.

The Perceval valve has been used in Europe since 2009 and has been proven to reduce surgery time and risks for patients while promoting a speedier recovery.

The valve is made from the pericardium of a healthy cow’s heart affixed to a metal cage made of nitinol, which is a combination of nickel and titanium. Once the diseased valve has been surgically removed, the new one can be inserted through a device. The nitinol cage, compressed when the valve is inserted, naturally expands to conform to the size of the aorta, which keeps the new valve in place.

“This new valve allows us to treat patients more effectively and get them back to their regular lives quicker than ever before,” said Dr. Dabir. “We are among the first hospitals in the country to be able to provide this to our patients.”

Traditionally, when a new valve is implanted, the surgeon must suture it in place. The Perceval valve requires no suturing and this significantly reduces the time of the operation – meaning less stress on the patient’s body. Patients require less time under anesthesia, less time on the heart-lung machine and generally recover faster. The FDA approved the device for use in the U.S. following a clinical trial of 300 cases.

Dr. Dabir was one of only 25 surgeons across the country selected to take part in the clinical trial, and was the first to perform the procedure in Michigan. He said it will help patients and surgeons alike.

“All of the data that we’ve seen to date has shown excellent results,” said Dabir. “This is an advantage for patients. From my perspective, it’s not about being the first, but about providing access to another treatment that will greatly benefit our patients.”

Beaumont offers a wide range of heart valve replacement options at its Dearborn, Royal Oak and Troy hospitals. These options include traditional valve replacement surgery; minimally invasive valve replacement surgery through small incisions; and transcatheter aortic valve replacement, where a valve is replaced through a catheter without open-heart surgery for high-risk patients.

Save the date for the Walk for Miracles at the Detroit Zoo

Looking for a little family fun while supporting Beaumont Children’s? Register now for the Walk for Miracles on Saturday, June 4, at the Detroit Zoo.

Event check-in starts at 7 a.m., with the walk kicking off at 8:30 a.m.

Registration is $20 and includes all-day free admission to the zoo. Children ages 2-14 are $5 and under 2 years are free.

The Walk for Miracles is special because it’s the only walk where all the proceeds come back to Beaumont Children’s to support programs and services for our young patients.
Beaumont Health celebrates National Nurses Week

With all nurses do for their patients, it’s easy to celebrate National Nurses Week. Beaumont Health nurses kicked up their heels in style across the system to honor and recognize the great contributions of nurses.

Activities for the week included food and most of all – fun.

Paws, the Tigers mascot visited the Farmington Hills hospital, while nurses at Beaumont, Taylor had a great time with a photo booth.

Check out p. 8 for more Nurses Week photos.

Nurses: They’re our heroes. Thank you, nurses everywhere.

Beaumont Health
The tradition of the Blessing of the Hands was carried out at Beaumont, Dearborn, and across Beaumont Health.

Lora Stoner, RN, 3 North, and Emergency Technician Dijon Ways (left and right center, respectively) were the 2016 Lorraine Headley Nursing Excellence Awards winners at Beaumont, Troy.
For a quarter-century, triathlete Susan Fletcher-Gutowski, infection prevention coordinator, Beaumont Hospital, Farmington Hills, has been competing in sprint- and Olympic-distance triathlons. Sprints include a half-mile swim, 12.4-mile bike ride and a 3.1-mile run. Olympic triathlons are a one-mile swim, 24.9-mile bike ride and a 6.2-mile run.

Susan serves in a leadership role in the FAST Swim & Triathlon Club, a group of athletes who participate in swimming and triathlons.

“Participating with a training club has supported me with expert guidance and endless motivation every step of the way. We come together to inspire each other’s inner athletes,” said Susan.

Her collaborative nature extends to her career: “My work team and I partner with everyone in the hospital because preventing infection has to be an effort housewide.”

Susan is tireless in her crusade to ensure that staff wash in and wash out for each patient encounter. Her diligence in educating staff on best practices for infection prevention and control mirrors her passion for race training.

Last year, she took on the ultimate challenge: an Ironman triathlon. Ironman events have a strict time limit of 17 hours to complete the race with further time limits on each segment. “In the last four years since my three children have all graduated high school and are off to college, I have been able to train and compete in four half-Ironman events,” Susan said. “This prepared me to attempt my first Ironman event. I broke down training into manageable goals and slowly increased my distance and length of workout time.”

Was Susan ready on race day? You bet she was—ripped and raring to go. “It was an awesome experience. The racing community supported the athletes from the swim lifeguards to the police and EMS on the roads and all the cheerful faces at the water stations.”

The race was held in Tennessee. She faced 2.4 miles of swimming, a 116-mile bike ride—four miles longer in this Ironman to accommodate local road availability—and a 26.2-mile run, in that order, without a break and with long inclines in the Appalachian Mountains. “There were 2,800 athletes competing that day last September,” Susan said. “So, I wasn’t the only crazy person doing this type of race.”

Can she call herself an Ironman? Oh yes she can. Susan completed the entire event in 14 hours and 20 minutes and finished 23rd of the 55 women competing in her age group.

Susan will always remember her first Ironman. But, it’s a pretty sure bet that it won’t be her last.