

Volunteer Newsletter

Fall 2021

Volunteer Program News

Welcome to the Fall Volunteer Newsletter

The quarterly Volunteer Newsletter highlights volunteer programs and Northwestern Medicine (NM) news. Volunteers are part of the NM family, and we want to keep you informed about what is happening at NM!

During this season of gratitude, we wish to thank all of our volunteers for their compassion, generosity and dedication. We are grateful to our more than 900 volunteers currently serving in 200 roles across NM. The Volunteer Services staff wishes you a Happy Thanksgiving and joyful holiday season.

Flu Vaccine Documentation Due December 1

Please be sure to submit proof of an annual flu vaccination to your volunteer manager. Documentation must be received by December 1, or you will not be able to volunteer during flu season, which ends May 1.

2 More NM Hospitals Achieve Nursing Excellence Designation

Kishwaukee Hospital and Valley West Hospital recently received Magnet® recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. The Magnet Recognition Program® distinguishes healthcare organizations that meet rigorous standards for nursing excellence.

This credential is the highest national honor for professional nursing practice. Valley West is the only Magnet-designated critical-access hospital in Illinois. Only 9% of all hospitals in the U.S. have Magnet recognition.

Kishwaukee and Valley West join six other NM hospitals with Magnet designation as noted below.

- 2021: **Huntley Hospital** and **McHenry Hospital** both previously had Magnet designation as part of Centegra. This year, they received their first Magnet designation as Northwestern Medicine hospitals.
- 2020: **Lake Forest Hospital** received its third Magnet designation, and **Northwestern Memorial Hospital** received its fourth Magnet designation.
- 2019: **Central DuPage Hospital** received its third Magnet designation.
- 2018: **Delnor Hospital** received its fourth Magnet designation.



Volunteer Q&A

Mohammed AbuBakar
Procedural Services Desk
Attendant, Lake Forest Hospital

Q. What has your volunteer experience taught you?

A. In order for a hospital to be effective, there needs to be constant and direct communication amongst multiple levels of the staff. Even when tasks seem very simple for the volunteer, completing them can make the entire hospital safer, cleaner and more organized.

Q. How has volunteering impacted you personally?

A. Volunteering has solidified my desire to be active in health care. I look forward to my future as a doctor even more than I did before I started my volunteer experience with the hospital.

Ultrasound Device Opens Blood-Brain Barrier for Effective Medication Delivery

Glioblastoma is a complex type of brain or spinal cord cancer. One challenge in treating this cancer has been getting medications past the blood-brain barrier. This microscopic structure is like a coat of cells surrounding the brain, only allowing oxygen and nutrients to go through, and keeping out toxins in the blood. That means the blood-brain barrier prevents most chemotherapy medications, including paclitaxel — one of the most potent medications — from entering the brain, says Neurosurgeon Adam M. Sonabend Worthalter, MD.

Dr. Sonabend and Neuro-oncologist Roger Stupp, MD, have pioneered a novel technology to help medications pass through the blood-brain barrier. An ultrasound device is placed into a window in the skull during surgery. Then, microscopic gas bubbles are injected into the bloodstream as the ultrasound begins. The sound waves cause these bubbles to vibrate, which weakens the blood-brain barrier to allow medication to pass through. As part of a recent trial at Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center, Dr. Sonabend has implanted the devices and Dr. Stupp has overseen subsequent successful blood-brain barrier opening for chemotherapy delivery in several patients.

Read more on *HealthBeat*: [Ultrasound Device Opens Blood-Brain Barrier](#)

Female Physicians and Scientists on the COVID-19 Front Lines

These inspiring female physicians and scientists are at the center of Northwestern Medicine's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing better care for patients while advancing COVID-19 research.

Dr. Khan is a passionate advocate for improving equitable access to health care. She has leveraged her expertise in public health to enhance awareness of the importance of equitable testing, treatment and vaccine distribution for COVID-19.

Read more on *HealthBeat*: [Yes We Can: Female Physicians and Scientists on the Front Lines](#)



Jill Horwitz
Surgical Waiting Room Volunteer,
Northwestern Memorial Hospital



Dave Wilson
Same Day Surgery Volunteer,
Delnor Hospital

Volunteer Role Spotlight Surgical Services

110 volunteers, **18** roles

Surgical Services volunteers serve by escorting patients, updating families in waiting areas, stocking critical items for the clinical staff and more.

Christine Healy, program director of Patient Access at Palos Hospital, shared the following about the volunteers who serve in the Surgical Family Waiting Area:

"I feel the volunteers are part of our Patient Access team, and we are lucky to have them. They are helpful and courteous to the patients, families and staff. We are truly thankful to have them."

All of the volunteers pictured in this issue serve in Surgical Services roles.

Volunteer With a Friend

Share this newsletter with friends and family, and encourage them to join the NM volunteer team!

Learn more: [Volunteer at NM](#)

Self-Care Tip

An autumn of gratitude

Research has shown that gratitude journaling can increase optimism, determination, enthusiasm and energy, and even improve exercise habits! Gratitude journaling can also improve the way your body feels, reducing the impact of ailments. It is different than just journaling, because the focus is building positive pathways in your brain.

Read more on *HealthBeat*: [Start a Gratitude Journal](#)