Nursing excellence: Hallmark Health earns Magnet® recognition
Hallmark Health System (HHS) is exceedingly pleased and proud to announce that we have received Magnet® recognition, the highest honor for excellence in nursing professionalism and practice from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Only eight hospitals in Massachusetts have achieved this recognition and HHS is the only health system in New England to achieve this status. Nationwide, fewer than 7 percent of hospitals/systems are Magnet organizations.

Magnet recognition is an amazing achievement. It is a true testament to HHS’s continued commitment to excellence. During their visit, Magnet appraisers were very impressed with our facilities, our dedicated staff and our attitude toward superior patient care. They particularly noted the high level of mutual respect among nurses, medical staff and the health care team. They were impressed by the innovative practices and professionalism evident throughout our system. Everywhere the survey team visited, they reported seeing excellence in care and a never-ending commitment to the highest levels of patient safety and quality. A truly powerful statement from one of them said the appraisers encountered the same high degree of standards and commitment from the board room to the bedside, permeating all levels of the organization.

What is most important, however, is what this means for our patients. This is the caliber of excellence in health care that is available right in your neighborhood: nationally recognized for clinical excellence and the latest advances in medical care, one of the finest medical staffs in the region with a system-wide belief that patient and family concerns always come first. Congratulations to all of our staff and to our patients and members of our communities.

To learn more, please visit www.hallmarkhealth.org.

Michael V. Sack, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hallmark Health System

A lot has changed since Lawrence Memorial Hospital (LMH) of Medford opened its doors on April 1, 1924, but one thing remains the same – the hospital’s commitment to its patients and community.

The LMH and Medford communities paid tribute to this commitment with a celebratory event on April 1, the hospital’s 90th anniversary, which also marked the Lawrence Memorial/Regis College Nursing Program’s 90th anniversary. Current and former employees, city and state officials and residents shared memories and stories of the hospital over the years and enjoyed old photos of past employee events and the hospital as it looked in earlier days.

In 1915, Daniel Lawrence, a prominent Medford citizen, earmarked $100,000 to build a modern hospital after his death and named his son, Rosewell Lawrence, as executor of the estate. Daniel Lawrence died in 1921 and work on the hospital began soon after. The hospital officially opened on April 1, 1924, with a capacity of 64 beds.

It is believed that the first patient was admitted on April 2, 1924 – a young woman who delivered a baby boy. During the Great Depression, many patients could not pay for their care. Charles Johnson, hospital administrator from...
1967-1997, tells the story of one patient who offered to work for two weeks at “The Lawrence,” as it was called, to pay off the bill he owed for the birth of his daughter. He then wanted to stay and went on to work at the hospital for the next 40 years until he retired.

Since then, the hospital has continued to expand with additional buildings and capacity as well as new programs and services. Today, the hospital provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient services.

Longtime patients and supporters still refer to the hospital as “The Lawrence,” the hospital that has cared for generations of their family as if they were one of their own. “Let our family take care of your family” has always been a theme at LMH and that continues to this day.

Hallmark Health System thanks the Medford Historical Society for information and photos provided for this article.

To learn more, visit www.hallmarkhealth.org and select “Hospitals and Health Centers.”
Since her first day at Hallmark Health System (HHS), Associate Chief Nursing Officer Diane Hanley, MSN, RN-BC, EJD, has had one goal for the organization – achieve Magnet® recognition, the gold standard for nursing excellence. Everything she did from that point, whether it was attend a meeting, discuss nursing protocols or just visit one of the floors, she had this goal in mind.

Recently Hanley, along with nursing leadership and all their peers, got the call they’d been hoping for. The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) had granted HHS Magnet recognition, an honor granted to only eight hospitals in the state, and fewer than 7 percent of hospitals in the United States. HHS is the only system in New England to receive this recognition.

“I am very proud that our organization has received Magnet recognition,” said Michael V. Sack, president and chief executive officer of HHS. “Our staff worked tirelessly and diligently to bring our organization to this high level of excellence for our communities. To be a part of such an elite group of hospitals across the country is a true honor.”

Magnet recognition is determined by the ANCC’s Magnet Recognition Program®, which ensures that rigorous standards for nursing excellence are met. With this credential, HHS joins the Magnet community, a select group of 401 of nearly 6,000 United States health care organizations.

Magnet recognition has become the gold standard for nursing excellence and is taken into consideration when the public judges health care organizations. In fact, U.S. News & World Report’s annual showcase of “America’s Best Hospitals” includes Magnet recognition in its ranking criteria for quality of inpatient care.
What it means for patients

Magnet® recognition is an affirmation that patients are receiving the highest quality care, measured by outcomes in key aspects of practice such as fall prevention, reduction in hospital acquired infections and inter-professional communication and collaboration. In addition, Magnet recognition has been shown to provide benefits to hospitals and patients including, among other points, higher patient satisfaction with nurse communications and higher job satisfaction among nurses.

The Magnet appraisers and commission reported that it was clear from the “board room to the bedside” that HHS has set a vision and focus on quality and safety. They applauded HHS for being a role model for other Magnet hospitals in the following areas:

- Hospital programs dedicated to helping newly licensed nurses successfully transition to specialty areas of practice.
- The hospital’s commitment to providing programs and services that serve the health care needs of our communities.
- The extensive use of research by nurses at all levels, noting that a culture of clinical inquiry is evident throughout the system.

“Magnet recognition provides our community with the ultimate benchmark to measure the quality of patient care,” said Judy Thorpe, MS, RN, NE-BC, interim chief nursing officer for HHS. “Achieving Magnet recognition reinforces the culture of excellence that is a cornerstone of how we serve our community. It’s also the tangible evidence of our nurses’ commitment to providing the very best care to you, our patients, of which we are extremely proud.”

To learn more, visit www.hallmarkhealth.org and select “Programs” and “Nursing.”

The Magnet journey has allowed me to grow in the nursing profession in a way that I never expected. By being leaders at the bedside, staff nurses instill practice changes, seek new knowledge, apply research findings, engage in teamwork and keep patients at the heart of care. I value working for an organization that strives to deliver the very best care for our patients.

Joy Welsh, BSN, RN-BC
Lawrence Memorial Hospital of Medford

Magnet means that nurses are not only valued as employees, but also are able to change patient outcomes through our ideas, councils and experiences. We are the ones on the front lines and administration supports our autonomy and profession. I am so proud to work at a Magnet-recognized hospital and love telling my family, friends and patients! We are letting the community know that Hallmark Health System is a place where its nurses are working tirelessly to improve patient care and, hopefully, they will rest assured they are getting the best possible care around. As one floor advertises, ‘let our family take care of your family.’

Allie Hamner, ASN, RN
Melrose-Wakefield Hospital
Donald Monteiro, MD, is board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology

What motivated you to become a doctor?
I started my career in medicine thinking I would become an operating room technician. I joined the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War. When I returned to the states after my tour of duty, I decided to go to nursing school. After several years in health care, I realized that my true path was to be a physician. I decided to enter medical school and enrolled at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Why did you choose to specialize in obstetrics and gynecology?
I didn’t know at the outset that I was going to specialize in obstetrics and gynecology, but during my residency and training I was assigned to women’s health. I enjoyed the work and felt I had a natural affinity for it.

Why do you choose to practice at Hallmark Health System?
Most of my later medical training occurred at Melrose-Wakefield Hospital. I was very impressed with the high level of care and skill that the medical staff provided to each patient in every instance of care. I also had a sense that the administration ran the hospital very efficiently with a strong emphasis that the patient was always the center of care.

What is the most rewarding part of your job as a physician?
Being able to help people and make a difference in the lives of my patients and their families. There is great satisfaction in providing good care and useful information to help them lead healthier and more satisfying lives.

If you could have lunch with anyone, who would it be?
That’s easy. It would be my mother. She was a remarkable woman.

What do you do for fun when you are not caring for your patients?
I enjoy being outside, gardening and doing yard work around my home.
Elizabeth Donahue, NP, is the nurse practitioner for the Hallmark Health Medical Associates office at Hallmark Health Medical Center, 30 Newcrossing Road, Reading

What motivated you to go in to medicine?
I was in college studying communications and I joined the town’s ambulance squad. As part of my training, I was required to spend time with a triage nurse at a trauma center. After a few hours, I was convinced that medicine was definitely my calling. I chose to pursue a career as a nurse practitioner because I wanted to care for my patients from a nursing point of view, but yearned for the autonomy to be able to care for them further both medically and holistically.

Why did you choose to specialize in primary care?
I really enjoy the experience of primary care because I can assist my patients in maintaining their health with preventive care, yet also care for them when they are not as healthy. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to help patients in all stages of life and health.

Why do you choose to practice at Hallmark Health System?
I wanted to be part of a health care team that gave compassionate, quality care. I found that immediately working with the staff in Dr. Lina Feldman’s office years ago. I still find that now. I was also impressed at how easy it was to communicate with my colleagues to discuss treatment plans for mutual patients. It gives me great confidence in HHS as a health care team.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?
The rewards are many. It is an honor to make a difference in peoples’ lives by assisting them to feel better and motivate them to stay healthy, both mentally and physically.

If you could have lunch with anyone, who would it be?
My grandmother, Isabel, who is deceased. She was a good friend and always gave great advice. Secondly, Pope Francis. He is a wonderful example of how human beings should treat each other.

What do you do for fun when you are not caring for your patients?
When I am not caring for my patients, I am caring for my children, which I find quite fun most of the time! I also enjoy walking my dog, reading and camping.
I put on almost 100 pounds in a year due to gastroparesis* and it really took a toll on me. I lost myself – my personality and confidence just faded away. One year after gastric bypass surgery at the Hallmark Health System Center for Weight Management and Weight Loss Surgery I am happy to say that I am back and thankful to the team for my success.

It’s still shocking, I have so much more energy. If it wasn’t for the center’s team I wouldn’t be here and I wouldn’t be this happy.

I was against surgery at first because it seemed extreme. Still, I figured it was worth looking into so I went to one of the center’s information sessions and researched several other hospitals in the area. One day I opened up my local newspaper and saw an article on Jennifer Lane, MD, one of the center’s surgeons. I took it as a sign and decided to set up an appointment.

The entire staff was extremely warm and welcoming and there was never any judgment. Lawrence Memorial Hospital was the only hospital I felt comfortable with.

Since surgery, my life has changed quite a bit. I’ve lost 110 pounds and am now down to a size 8. It’s crazy! I am also dating an amazing guy who loves that I took control of my life again by having the surgery. I also recently started a new full-time job. All of my co-workers thought I was in my mid-20s, even though I turned 33 in May! Now that I have lost the weight I am also hoping to run a 5K this year in honor of the anniversary of my surgery.

Most importantly I am happy and confident again, something I lost with my weight gain. Everyone says my personality is back to how it used to be. It is nice to feel like myself again. The center gave me my life back.

‘It is nice to feel like myself again. The center gave me my life back.’

*Gastroparesis is a condition in which the stomach muscles don’t function normally, preventing the stomach from emptying properly.
Taste of Spring benefit a great success

The first annual Taste of Spring event was held in March at Flagship Motorcars of Lynnfield. The event, which featured tastings from a dozen local restaurants, raised more than $42,000 to support the North Suburban Child and Family Resource Network as well as cancer care, cardiology and emergency services throughout Hallmark Health System.

Thank you to the following restaurants:
- Bobby C’s
- Brix Bakery
- Burtons Grill
- Davio’s Northern Italian Steakhouse
- Henry’s
- La Q’chara
- Mexico Lindo
- New England Coffee
- Pamplemousse
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A special thank you to our top sponsors:

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Kelly Doherty, Maureen Pierog, vice president of quality improvement at HHS, Ken Pierog and William Doherty, MD, executive vice president and chief operating officer at HHS.

Michael V. Sack, president and chief executive officer of HHS, K. Eric Henrikson, MD, chief of radiology at HHS and Wayne Wivell, MD, associate chief of radiology at HHS.

Evan Goodrow and band provided live jazz music at the event.

Deedie Beidler and Donna Anastasi of Henry’s, which featured a risotto bar at the Taste of Spring.
One of the keys to maintaining good health and keeping fit is eating the right foods. That is why Hallmark Health System (HHS) offers comprehensive inpatient and outpatient nutrition services to help meet the nutritional needs of the communities it serves.

Jillian Pollock, RD, LDN, manager of Nutrition Services, said her department of six full-time registered dietitians has the knowledge and expertise to help patients set and meet attainable and sustainable goals for healthy living.

Because good nutrition is fundamental, the staff of Nutrition Services has been integrated into many HHS programs. Dietitians support and provide resources to the Center for Weight Management and Weight Loss Surgery, the Joslin Diabetes Affiliates at Lawrence Memorial Hospital of Medford and Melrose-Wakefield Hospital and the Cardiac & Endovascular Center, among others.

In conjunction with the Center for Weight Management and Weight Loss Surgery and the Rehabilitation Services Department, Nutrition Services has developed a rigorous 12-week medically supervised weight loss program for patients who are committed to losing excess weight and developing a healthier lifestyle. This non-surgical approach to weight loss embraces the fundamental equation for weight loss: calories out must exceed calories in. The program features weekly check-ins with a registered dietitian to help patients stay on track and maintain their progress.

Nutrition and wellness

“People are inundated with nutrition advice via the news, magazines and social media,” said Pollock. “Everybody has an opinion about food, but we are nutrition experts and will work with patients to weed out misinformation and focus on the facts. The truth is that there is no magic pill or super food, and we work closely with patients to help them succeed.”

Pollock added, “the good news is that we are lucky to have access to a wide variety of healthy, good-tasting, nutritious food options. A balanced diet with the right portions is best. People should look for foods rich in whole grains and choose a wide variety of different colors of fruits and vegetables that provide nutrients the body needs. It is important to remember that moderation is the key.”

To learn more, visit www.hallmarkhealth.org and select “Programs.”
Now that the weather is improving and people are thinking of fitness and better health, what precautions should be taken when starting a new fitness program?

Better weather and longer days beckon us to go outside and move. After an inactive winter, give yourself time to warm up and get into shape. Start slowly and increase your activity level gradually.

Walking is a great fitness activity. If you are age 45 or older, have any medical conditions or just need some guidance or reassurance, be sure to see your provider before beginning any exercise program. Stop your activity if you feel dizzy or short of breath, have chest pain or headaches or feel ill.

Avoid going out when it is really hot or on days with high humidity. Wear a protective helmet if you plan on doing anything that puts you at risk for falls, crashes, trips or other mishaps. Wear wrist and knee guards for protection if you are rollerblading and follow all recommended safety precautions from equipment manufacturers. Always be aware of where you are and what you are doing. When you are active, be sure to drink plenty of water. Above all, don’t be afraid to exercise. Just be smart about it.

What steps can be taken to manage spring allergies?

Spring and summer allergies can be a real drag. Here are a few tips on how to minimize allergy symptoms.

We like to open the windows when spring gets here. Keeping windows closed is best, but if you need them open then be sure to use screens. You might also try using special screens that do a better job trapping pollen, an air purifier or a vacuum that has a HEPA filter. Finally, be sure to clean the vents in your heating/cooling systems.

Avoid triggers for your allergies whenever possible. If you are allergic to certain trees, flowers or grasses, avoid them. Hair and especially hair gels and lotions trap pollen. Wash your hair and clothes after being outside. Keep your nose clean with blowing, nose drops and nasal rinses. If you work in the yard or garden a lot try using a mask to block the pollen and dust.

If all else fails, you can try over-the-counter medications. If you have any medical conditions or are taking any medications, be sure to speak with your doctor or the pharmacist before taking any medication, even over-the-counter ones. See your provider if your symptoms do not improve.
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The information in this magazine is not a substitute for medical advice or professional medical care. If you have a question about your health, please consult your physician.

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Medford
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