

# nsmcNow!

THE NEWS OF NORTH SHORE MEDICAL CENTER



Participants in an NSPG urgent care planning session use Legos to model possible new floor plans. Seen here are (L-R) Wajiha Ibrahim, NSPG Kaizen Promotion Office; Cathy Babb, NSPG Patient and Family Advisory Council Member; Cathleen Lange, architect; and Harriet Sanclemente, NSPG Urgent Care Program Manager.

## THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

THE PATH OF PROCESS IMPROVEMENT LEADS TO SUCCESS  
IN RAPIDLY EVOLVING HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

In the spring of 2007, NSMC engaged in its first formal process improvement project. The task at hand was to streamline patient flow through the Salem Hospital Emergency Department (ED) with the goal of reducing wait times and expediting admissions. To do so, a multidisciplinary team of clinical and administrative staff examined every aspect of patient care in the ED and all connecting departments. Data was collected and analyzed, trouble spots were identified, new ideas were piloted and much was learned by all involved.

Two years later, a more expansive improvement project in the ED would grow from this effort, leading to the successful Integrated Care And Rapid Evaluation (ICARE) delivery model now reducing wait times and improving patient satisfaction on both campuses.

But what is most significant about this initial step into the world of process improvement is that it marked the beginning of a major culture shift at NSMC that has been growing ever since. Over the past five years—and especially since the Culture of Excellence initiative was started three years ago with its ambitious goals to eliminate serious

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## Rethinking Urgent Care

NSPG to Open Innovative New  
Center in July 2013

Be bold. This was the charge given to a large, multidisciplinary group that was assembled in January at the North Shore Physicians Group (NSPG) corporate office to brainstorm ideas for a new urgent care center being planned for 104 Endicott Street in Danvers. The facility is slated to open in July 2013.

Part of a rigorous, weeklong planning session facilitated by an instructor from the Virginia Mason Institute—industry leaders in healthcare process improvement methodology—the group was encouraged to be creative and think outside the box; anything and everything was subject for discussion and reinvention.

“We approached this planning session as a way to totally transform how we deliver urgent care,” says Sharon Lucie, NSPG Vice President of Operations. “The end result, growing from all of the great work done over the course of the week, will be a state-of-the-art, patient-centered facility that fully meets our goals to

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NSPG President Steven Kapfhammer with (L-R) Lindsay Gainer, R.N., Director of Clinical Services and Innovation, and Sharon Lucie, Vice President of Operations.



NORTH SHORE  
MEDICAL CENTER

# The Perfect Patient Experience

Dear NSMC,

As part of my job in the communications department at NSMC, I often have cause to write glowing “grateful patient” stories for one publication or another lauding our staff for its clinical expertise, professionalism and compassion. This past December I had cause to write yet another, this one my own.

I arrived in the Salem Hospital ED one night with symptoms that, according to my sister-in-law the nurse, sounded a lot like a mini stroke of some kind. Earlier that evening, while cooking dinner, I had experienced a 30-minute period of total memory loss. There was no pain or loss of speech, but I’m told I was repeating myself like a broken record and generally acting disoriented and spacey. My wife and son didn’t hesitate before whisking me off to the hospital.



A day later, after all was said and done, it was determined that I’d had an episode of amnesia, of all things. Transient Global Amnesia, a relatively harmless neurological event that can sometimes be triggered by stress. But, ruling out a stroke or seizure had meant a night on Davenport 5 for observation followed by a full day of tests—lots and lots of tests. During this time I came into contact with countless staff members from throughout the hospital. To a person, all were just as I had always described them in my stories: knowledgeable, kind and professional—from ED nurses Carly Holm, R.N., and Edison Bautista, R.N., to neurologist Ilya Bogorad, M.D., and the staff on Davenport 5, especially Jeff Lausier, R.N., and Michael Cothorn, P.A. All were exceptional.

Not that I have ever doubted the truth behind my grateful patient stories, but I now have a new level of appreciation for our staff and the big difference they can make in the experience of a patient.

Bill Ewing  
Communications and Public Affairs

*The Perfect Patient Experience is a regular column featuring letters submitted to NSMC by patients and families that honor and celebrate staff who combine clinical expertise and compassion to deliver a perfect patient experience. Letters may be edited to fit space.*



Participants in an NSPG urgent care planning session use Legos to model new floor plans. Seen here are (L-R) Gerard Georges, architect; Stacey Pappacostas, NSPG Practice Manager; Smita Kolli, M.D., NSPG urgent care physician; and Brad Williams, NSMC Facilities Project Manager.

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safety events and provide a perfect patient experience—process improvement and care redesign initiatives have become an integral part of NSMC’s corporate strategy. By embedding process improvement into everyday practice, NSMC has made great strides in enhancing the overall safety, quality and affordability of the care being delivered. New training programs being rolled out in 2013 will further expand this strategy in months to come.

“Right now, there are no less than 30 teams at NSMC working to improve virtually every aspect of how we are caring for our patients and families,” says Bob Norton, President and CEO. “This on top of the more than 120 projects that have already been completed. We are really seeing impressive results across the board.” These projects, he adds, also align NSMC with the Partners Strategic Initiatives around care redesign, quality and affordability.

“The more staff we have engaged in our operational improvement efforts, the more we make it part of our daily responsibilities and share our best practices. The better we will be able to adapt to a rapidly evolving healthcare environment.”



"It's been an exciting evolution," says Barbara Corning-Davis, Director of Operational Improvement, on how process improvement science has taken root at NSMC. "There was a definite learning curve at the beginning as we started to introduce staff to the language and methodology associated with process improvement, but the momentum has continued to grow and the bar keeps getting raised in terms of the projects we are doing."

These projects range from the creation of a new team-based care delivery model—Inpatient Paced Accountable Care Environment (IPACE), now being piloted on Davenport 5—to the development of a new assessment tool to help eliminate pressure ulcers and the standardization of how all IV pumps are maintained.

According to Corning-Davis, interest in process improvement at NSMC began to take off in 2009 when a number of training programs were introduced for staff at both NSMC and North Shore Physicians Group; it was then that Partners also started its Clinical Process Improvement Leadership Program (CPIP). Concurrently, NSMC's senior leadership team was learning about process improvement from some of the nation's foremost experts on the subject at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, the Virginia Mason Institute, the Baptist Leadership Group and Harvard Business School. Tactics and techniques culled from these resources have helped provide the necessary infrastructure for all of NSMC's current efforts.

"To date, several hundred employees have gone through our various training programs and our offerings have evolved to include classes in data presentation, statistical analysis, improvement coaching and Excel," says Corning-Davis.

"The goal for the next year is to introduce all managers to process improvement methodology, followed by all staff."

"The more staff we have engaged in our operational improvement efforts, the more we make it part of our daily responsibilities and share our best practices, the better we will be able to adapt to a rapidly evolving healthcare environment," says Norton. "Operational improvement is crucial to our ongoing success."



Process improvement in action: (L-R) Michelle Geller, M.D., NSPG urgent care physician, and Rosemarie Hinchion, L.P.N., NSPG nurse care manager.

## Network Matters

### New Ad Campaign Focuses on Primary Care, Partners Connection

In January, NSMC launched a new advertising campaign that promotes the medical center's primary care physicians and their role in connecting patients to the experts and programs of NSMC and Partners HealthCare. The campaign features two NSMC patients, Tony Doucette of Lynnfield and Joanne Cunningham of Salem, who graciously agreed to share their stories. Over the next several months, advertisements will appear on cable television, websites and in local daily and weekly newspapers. The campaign will also be featured on billboards, commuter rail station posters, direct mail pieces, a dedicated website and in online videos.

"The healthcare delivery model is rapidly changing as doctors and hospitals work to deliver higher-quality, more affordable care," says Laura Fleming, Director of Marketing and Public Relations. "Our campaign is intended to help patients understand how these changes can affect the care they receive and the many benefits of being associated with NSMC and Partners HealthCare."

The new advertising campaign builds on the Power of Us campaign that was started in 2010 and focuses on the compassion, commitment and teamwork of NSMC staff. Additional patient stories and specialty areas will be added in the months to come.

An advertisement for NSMC's "Power of Us" campaign. It features a black and white portrait of Joanne Cunningham, a cardiac surgery patient, resting her chin on her hand. The text "MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER, GREAT-GRANDMOTHER, SURVIVOR." is written across the middle. Below it, the slogan "That's the power of Us." is written in a large, stylized font. The NSMC logo and "NORTH SHORE MEDICAL CENTER" are in the top right corner. The website "NSMCPowerofus.org" is in the bottom right corner. At the bottom left, the "PARTNERS HEALTHCARE" logo is visible, along with the text "FOUNDED BY BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL AND MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL".



**Bill Klag, EMS/Emergency Preparedness Coordinator**

“Plan for the worst, hope for the best.” So says Bill Klag when asked to sum up his philosophy on emergency preparedness. In his role at NSMC, Klag relies on planning—along with education, training and drills—to make sure that all staff members are ready should an emergency incident occur. The best defense, he says, is to always have a solid game plan at the ready and a well-oiled incident command team that can hit the ground running.

“Emergency preparedness is a process, not a state of being,” says Klag. “NSMC currently has detailed emergency plans in place for both small- and large-scale incidents that could impact our staff or facilities—from hurricanes and

floods, to chemical spills and infectious disease outbreaks. My main focus is to evaluate and revise these plans, right down to the departmental sub-plans, and keep staff educated on what role they will play if something happens. This will be my priority for the next year.”

To assist in his planning efforts, Klag maintains close relationships with city, state and federal emergency response agencies as well as his colleagues at other regional hospitals and institutions. He is also a member of the Federal Disaster Medical Assistance Team for Massachusetts and co-chair of the NSMC Emergency Preparedness Steering Committee.

An avid outdoorsman and one-time wilderness survival training instructor, Klag, who is married with a young son, seems well suited to his role at NSMC. Now entering his second year, he was previously employed as a paramedic.

“NSMC currently has detailed emergency plans in place for both small- and large-scale incidents that could impact our staff or facilities.”

## Billy Costa to Host Taste of the North Shore – April 12

Mark your calendar for the 4th annual Taste of the North Shore fundraiser taking place on Friday, April 12, at Acura of Peabody. Hosted by television and radio personality Billy Costa, festivities will include delicious food from some of the area’s finest restaurants, spirited entertainment and a lively auction. All proceeds benefit cancer treatment and programs at North Shore Medical Center and the Mass General/North Shore Cancer Center in Danvers. Tickets will be on sale soon. For more information, please visit [nsmc.partners.org/giving](http://nsmc.partners.org/giving).

## Achievements

**Bethann Black, R.T. (R)**, a diagnostic radiology technologist on the Salem Campus, and **Bill Simmons, R.T. (R)**, a CT technologist on the Union Campus, were each awarded Radiology Exemplar Awards this past fall as part of NSMC’s National Radiology Technology Week festivities.

**Paul Copeland, M.D.**, recently passed the certification examination for the American Board of Obesity Medicine. This was the first time this examination has been given.

**Lawrence Monaldo, M.D.**, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, traveled to Mexico last summer with Smiles International to treat children with cleft lip and palate.

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enhance the patient experience, reduce costs and improve quality of care.” It will also expand access for patients on the North Shore—those currently affiliated with NSPG and those not, the facility will be open to both—and help NSPG meet the criteria necessary for becoming a designated patient-centered medical home.

Through a variety of dynamic, hands-on exercises, attendees of the planning session examined every aspect of the urgent care experience, from the physical design of exam rooms and staffing levels to workflows relating to admissions, discharges and transitions to other care settings. A total of 52 clinical and administrative staff members participated in the exercises, including three patients; primary care physicians from both NSPG and independent practices; and staff from the NSMC Emergency Department, Hospitalist Program, Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Laboratory and Radiology.

“In preparation for this planning session, we conducted eight weeks of observation and data collection to form a base of understanding about how our patients currently receive urgent care,” says Lindsay Gainer, R.N., Director of Clinical Services and Innovation. “We tracked patients through primary care practices, our urgent care service and the ED Fast Track at Salem Hospital looking for inefficiencies, delays and bottlenecks—always trying to see things through the eyes of the patient. We then used this to inform all of our planning efforts and we expect the new facility to be extremely efficient as a result.”

NSPG currently employ a primary care model for urgent care offering extended evening and weekend hours and same-day appointments out of their Endicott Street practice in Danvers. This service currently sees approximately 4,200 visits per year. When completed, the new urgent care center will be able to accommodate upward of 30,000 visits annually.

## Has Someone Made Your Day?

“Made Someone’s Day?” is a simple and easy employee recognition program to acknowledge and celebrate service excellence at NSMC. Honor your colleagues: call 781-581-4567, e-mail [NSMCRognition@partners.org](mailto:NSMCRognition@partners.org) or submit an online recognition form found on the NSMCConnect homepage.