



2006 Award Winner

North Mississippi Medical Center

Established in 1937, North Mississippi Medical Center (NMMC) has grown from Tupelo's solitary "hospital on the hill" to the flagship hospital and referral center for North Mississippi Health Services, a not-for-profit health care delivery system serving 24 rural counties in northeast Mississippi and northwest Alabama. At 650 beds, NMMC is the largest non-government hospital in Mississippi and the largest rural hospital in the country.

NMMC's 3,875 employees and 277 physicians provide a wide array of inpatient, outpatient and emergency services ranging from high-tech trauma and cardiac care to compassionate home, hospice and long-term care. Providing acute care is NMMC's primary service generating more than \$443 million annually, 65 percent of NMMC's operating revenue.

Treating disease and injury is not enough. To help improve the region's reputation as one of the least healthy in the nation, NMMC offers a number of programs to educate local residents in personal wellness, including health fairs, mobile mammography services, and certified health educators in schools.

Leadership

Through its mission, "to continuously improve the health of the people of our region," and its vision, "to be the provider of the best patient-centered care and health services in America," NMMC has created a strong culture of compassion and caring focused on performance results. To



Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

Named after the 26th Secretary of Commerce, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award was established by Congress in 1987 to promote excellence in organizational performance, recognize the achievements and results of U.S. organizations, and publicize successful performance strategies. For more information, see <http://baldrige.nist.gov/>

meet and sustain these long-term commitments, NMMC's leaders live by "servant leadership" concepts and have created a no-secrets, no-excuses, open communication environment. Under the servant leadership concept, NMMC's leaders are stewards of the organization's resources, including human and financial, and are encouraged to serve others while staying focused on achieving results.

For NMMC, success starts with creating an environment that draws and nurtures the best **people** who provide the best **service**, resulting in satisfied customers and excellent **quality**, producing good **financial** results and requests for more services which lead to **growth**. The entire organization is aligned and managed according to these five critical factors.

- In 2003, 2004, and 2005, NMMC was recognized by *Solucient*, a leading source of information for the healthcare industry, as one of the top 100 performance improvement leaders. NMMC is one of only four hospitals nationwide to be recognized for this distinction three years in a row.
- NMMC's charitable donations, charity care, medical cost savings, and volunteer services total about \$70 million annually.
- In 2006, NMMC provided community services to more than 156,000 people through free health fairs, screenings, health education classes, and immunizations held throughout the rural region in locations including churches and shopping centers.
- NMMC provides nurses to 21 elementary and middle schools, certified health educators to three schools serving kindergarten through fifth grade students, and certified athletic trainers to 13 high schools.

Engaged Employees CARE

A basic belief at NMMC is that engaged, motivated employees are the basis for achieving the mission, vision, and “CARES” values – Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence, Smile. Beginning with the first hour of new employee orientation and continuing throughout an employee’s career, each employee learns that the highest priorities are customer service and patient centered care.

A number of mechanisms help NMMC’s employees stay engaged and motivated, including a “Keys to Success” card which employees carry at all times. The card lists NMMC’s mission, vision, values, and critical success factors, as well as the department’s and unit’s goals and the employee’s personal goals. Other mechanisms include empowering employees to meet customer needs, providing information needed to respond to changing health care service needs, linking each employee’s work to patient and operational outcomes, and rewarding employees for initiative, cooperation, and innovation.

Recognizing the difficulty of recruiting health care professionals to the rural areas it serves, NMMC focuses on “growing their own” and finding ways to retain its top-notch staff. In addition to more traditional methods, including providing career counseling and partnering with local colleges and other schools, NMMC also goes to some unusual lengths to recruit staff. For example, NMMC has a number of programs to educate children about careers in health care, including “Let’s Pretend Hospital” for grade school children and the Nurse Mentorship Academy which encourages job shadowing and volunteering for high school students interested in a nursing career.

- Through tuition reimbursement and other activities, NMMC allocates more than \$1.4 million annually to help employees upgrade skills and advance their careers.
- Since 2000, overall employee satisfaction exceeded the 90th percentile benchmark levels from Human Resources, Inc.
- Employee satisfaction is demonstrated with an employee retention rate of more than 89 percent since 2001.
- In 2006, physician overall satisfaction, measured by Press Ganey Associates, surpassed NMMC’s benchmark by eight to nine percent with overall satisfaction and ease of practice scores at 99 percent and leadership score at 98 percent. (Press Ganey Associates provide satisfaction measurement and improvement services to the health care industry.)

NMMC has developed a comprehensive approach for listening and learning from customers that includes patient satisfaction surveys, a community relations facilitator, community health assessments, and a complaint management process. Multidisciplinary teams meet monthly and examine patient satisfaction and complaints, clinical outcomes, patient volume and staffing, market share and referral patterns. This information is used to create new services and improve existing ones.

- Results for inpatient satisfaction demonstrate consistent improvement since 2004 and, in 2006, the “Likelihood to Recommend” scores approach Press Ganey’s 90th percentile.

- Deep vein thrombosis (blood clot) rates were reduced 65 percent and pulmonary embolism rates were reduced 45 percent resulting in cost savings of more than \$760,000.

- Physician “champions” working with service line leaders and clinical teams improved the care of patients requiring long term mechanical ventilation resulting in decreased mortality and length of stay in the intensive care unit and a reduction of \$2 million in the cost of care.

- NMMC patients receiving coronary bypass surgery have fewer infections and postoperative stroke and pulmonary complications when benchmarked with the best (top 10-15 percent) in the Surgical Thoracic Society and the CareScience patient outcomes database.

Clinical and Information Innovations

In 1992, NMMC began providing physicians with individualized performance profiles of their care management and outcomes that were compared to local and national benchmarks. Sharing comparative data engaged physicians in performance improvement and set the stage for the development of NMMC’s care-based cost management (CBCM) approach. This approach links health care quality and cost containment by looking beyond traditional cost drivers, including people, equipment, and supplies, to the issues that have a much greater impact on the actual cost of care, including reducing variations in medical practices and medical complications.

- CBCM has led to more than \$11 million in savings over the last six years.

- The CBCM approach has resulted in more efficient and safer patient care processes, fewer complications, and shorter lengths of stay, helping NMMC to earn the American Hospital Association Quest for Quality Prize in 2005.

The ability to collect, organize and communicate data and information is essential to achieving NMMC’s mission, vision, and values and operational efficiency. In addition to improving patient care and safety, NMMC’s award winning management information system also allows for the creation of an extensive research database that is utilized in NMMC’s performance improvement process.

- NMMC’s management information system provides access to electronic medical records to every care giver throughout its system, including nurses in schools, physicians in their offices, and partner community hospitals.

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