Nebraska Hospital Association recognizes member hospitals for their hard work and dedication to improving patient care.

LINCOLN, NEB. – Saunders Medical Center was recently recognized by the Nebraska Hospital Association for their work to improve quality of care as part of national Partnership for Patients’ Hospital Improvement Innovation (HIIN) Network initiative. The Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA) and 69 Nebraska hospitals partner with The Health Research and Educational Trust of the American Hospital Association (HRET) in this important work. The AHA is one of 16 national, regional, or state hospital associations, Quality Improvement Organizations (QIO), and health system organizations selected by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to work on the Partnership for Patients Initiative, reducing preventable hospital-acquired conditions and readmissions. The HIIN’s goal is to achieve a 20 percent decrease in overall patient harm and a 12 percent reduction in 30-day hospital readmissions as a population-based measure (readmissions per 1,000 people) from the 2014/2015 baseline. Efforts focus on consistently providing high quality care to the individuals in each community in Nebraska.

During the first year of the HIIN, October 2016-October 2017, Nebraska’s 69 hospitals demonstrated improvement in reducing patient harm including an estimated:

- 3,672 patient harms prevented
- 310 lives saved
- $27.3 million in cost avoidance

Saunders Medical Center has worked hard to increase patient safety and provide high quality care for our community. Staff at SMC are committed to providing safe care and helping our patients become and stay healthy. Small things that we have implemented have now become the ‘norm’. Daily huddles are done throughout the facility, several departments are part of the medication safety team, staff who provide direct patient care are involved with the Capture Falls program and so much more! The Hospital Health Coach has been conducting home visits in hopes to prevent 30-day readmissions and to make the transition from hospital to home much easier. Saunders Medical Center is committed to provide extraordinary care. You can really see staff work together as a team to treat patients as if they are family. (and sometimes they are!)

The Partnership for Patients model was one of the first models established in 2011 to be tested under the authority of section 1115A of the Social Security Act with the goal of reducing program expenditures while preserving or enhancing the quality of care. Since the launch of Partnership for Patients and the work of Hospital Improvement Innovation Networks in collaboration with many other stakeholders, the vast majority of U.S. hospitals have delivered results as demonstrated by the achievement of unprecedented national reductions in harm.

For more information on the Partnership for Patients and the Hospital Improvement Innovation Networks, please visit partnershipforpatients.cms.gov.

The Nebraska Hospital Association is the unified voice for Nebraska’s hospitals and health systems. The association offers collaborative leadership, assisting its members to provide comprehensive care to their communities, improving the health status of those communities. For more information, visit the NHA website at www.NebraskaHospitals.org.

Get to Know our New Quality Director!

![Denise Sabatka BSN, RN]

What’s your favorite meal?
I don’t have a favorite. I’m a foodie and love all food!

What’s the craziest thing you’ve ever done?
It’s too crazy to share!

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?
Mother Teresa

Have you ever met anyone famous?
I’ve met Alabama, John Michael Montgomery, Tom Osborne, Ndamukong Suh, and Bo Pelini

What’s something not many people know about you?
I’m more introverted than people may think.

Why did you become a nurse?
I like taking care of people. When I was a little girl, I’d put band-aids on my dolls and stuffed animals. I thought about being a vet, and then got kicked by a cow… and decided, maybe not.

Who’s your best friend?
My husband, Ron.
Infection Control Corner

What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile is a virus most commonly spread to people by mosquito bites. There are no vaccines to prevent or medications to treat WNV in people. Fortunately, most people infected with WNV do not have symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected develop a fever and other symptoms. About 1 out of 150 infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal illness.

How to Best Protect Yourself Against West Nile Virus

- Avoid going outside from dusk until dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Get rid of standing water around your house—wet, murky areas are where mosquitoes tend to breed.
- Wear long-sleeves and long pants if you’re going to be outside for an extended period of time.
- Use insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or products that contain oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors or use air conditioning.

Six Things You NEED to Know about Vaccines

1. We all need vaccines throughout our lives to help protect against serious disease.

Every year, tens of thousands of Americans get sick from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. Immunization is our best protection against these diseases. Vaccination is a critical step in protecting those that are most vulnerable to illness—infants and young children, the elderly, and those with chronic conditions and weakened immune systems.

2. Outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases can and do still happen in communities across the U.S. Vaccines have greatly reduced infectious diseases that once regularly harmed or killed many people. However, the germs that cause vaccine-preventable disease still exist and can be spread to people who are not protected by vaccines.

3. CDC and FDA take many steps to make sure vaccines are very safe.

Before a vaccine is approved for use in the U.S., it goes through years of careful testing to make sure it is safe and effective.

4. Vaccines give you the power to protect your children from getting sick.

Immunization has had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the U.S. Protecting your child’s health and safety is very important. That's why most parents choose immunization—it's a powerful defense that's safe, proven, and effective.

5. You can even make sure your baby is born with protection by getting vaccinated when you are pregnant.

When you get vaccinated when you are pregnant, you aren't just protecting yourself—you are passing some protection on to your baby in the first few months of life when they are too young to build immunity on their own.

6. Vaccines aren't just for kids. They can help adults stay healthy too—especially if they have health conditions.

Even if you got all of your vaccines as a child, the protection from some vaccines can wear off over time. Adults with chronic conditions like asthma/COPD, heart disease, and diabetes are more likely to get complications from certain diseases which makes vaccination an important step of staying healthy.