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February 22, 2021 Vol. 22 Issue 8

Information for the Oklahoma Nursing & Health Care Professional Published Weekly. Locally Owned and Operated by Metro Publishing L.L.C.

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Local jeep club gi nurses a lift

(Right) Chris Watham and wife, Megan, helped coordinate more than 300 rides to work for nurses and other medical professionals with the Red Dirt Jeep Club. Photos Provided

by Bobby Anderson, RN - staff writer

As Mother Nature ramped up and roads became perilous, a local group recently helped metro nurses shift into four-wheel drive.

The term "essential personnel" should now officially include Chris Watham and his nearly 800 friends in the Red Dirt Jeep Club who gave more than 300 free rides to work after the winter weather hit.

"I can't take credit for this. I saw it on a group page Northeast of us," Watham said. "A year ago, they did it one stormy night. You know, me and my wife were sitting here thinking 'why couldn't we do this."

See JEEP Page 2

Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City Named a Best Maternity Hospital



Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City has been named one of the best hospitals in the country for baby deliveries.

Mercy is one of just 217 hospitals included on the Best Maternity Hospitals 2021 list compiled by Newsweek and the Leapfrog Group. It is the only hospital on the list in Oklahoma City. Mercy Hospital Ada was also recognized for its maternity care in southern Oklahoma.

To be named a best maternity hospital, providers must meet the high standards for safety and quality set by the Leapfrog Group, an independent nonprofit organization. The standards set for this honor include low rates of Cesarean deliveries (C-sections), episiotomies and early elective deliveries (prior to 39 weeks of gestation without medical necessity). Hospitals also are evaluated on their adherence to two important protocols to protect mothers and



See MERCY Page 3

JEEP

Continued from Page 1

The idea of setting up a hotline to coordinate rides came to fruition within 48 hours. Watham put out the call to the club's membership.

"I immediately had about 10 that said 'let's do it," Watham recalls. "The rest slowly trickled in."

That was February 11 just a few days before the storm was slated to move in.

He put the word out to local hospitals about what the group was planning and set up a Google Voice number to handle calls and texts coming in.

Watham's wife, Megan, initially began manning the phone. She was quickly overrun with requests and had to recruit two helpers as two more lines were added.

"The first and foremost in my and my wife's minds was safety," Watham said. "I wanted our drivers to make sure they handled the snow. A lot of them are transplants from the north - Ohio, Detroit, Chicago - so they're comfortable. We wanted to follow CDC guidelines

hauling strangers in a strange vehicle."

Watham said through the group's work with various local non-profits like the Jaxon Kade Foundation and Caring Cradles the club's name was already familiar with a lot of nurses.

"A lot of NICU nurses I ended up hauling already knew about that and the club by that," Watham said. "We always try to strive to have a positive influence in the world. It put most of our riders at ease."

Watham lost count on the number of calls and texts.

"I think it was awesome," Chris said. "Our riders loved it. When I was manning the phones and calling back I can't remember the number of peers we heard on the phone that were so grateful to have help and were so worried about getting to the hospital because half of their numbers were decimated by call-ins or Covid. They loved it just because they knew for a fact they could get there and get home.

"I had several tell me 'you don't understand how much this means to us.""

Watham wouldn't allow any of the drivers to accept tips.

The furthest ride out of the metro was Choctaw. A few calls came in from Calumet and Pauls Valley but there weren't enough

As the weather worsened, calls came in from Tulsa and then eventually Dallas and Fort

"I'm not sure how word made it down

there," Watham said.

Trista Matthew, RN, already knew her upcoming shift was going to be tough. Carrying the charge nurse phone for three ICUs on likely a short-staffed day, Matthew was preparing for the stress.

But she was more concerned about forecasts calling for nearly 15-inches of snow and how she was going to make it to work.

She heard about the offer on an ICU Facebook page. She texted the number and they called her back and scheduled her ride.

"My normal drive takes about 25 minutes and my ride picked me up in Northwest Oklahoma City all the way from Piedmont to drive me to OU," Matthew said. "She was super nice and flexible with picking me up, which was very helpful since we got put on a code yellow and I couldn't leave until about 9:30 p.m. when it was officially decided there was enough in the right places."

staff to cover night shift."

Matthew said her rides were uneventful, as they avoided I-44 and drove Northwest Expressway to avoid the I-44 bridges.

"That road is awful on a good day," she said.

She said the rides were a blessing on an already stressful

Watham said he doesn't have plans to do the rides on a regular basis but things can change.

"I know my crew is gung-ho. If there's a need for it again and we have real bad weather (maybe)," Watham said. "It was a ton of work, a ton of time, and a ton of gas spent."

A Jeep club in Tennessee contacted Watham shortly after word got out.

"They're going to do it," he said. "I got the idea from another Jeep group. It's so cool we can pass it around. It's just the right people







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MERCY **Continued from Page 1**

babies: screening newborns for high bilirubin levels and following guidelines to reduce the risk of blood clots in mothers who deliver by C-section.

trust in Mercy every year during one of the most life-changing times in their lives: when they methodology used for the Best welcome a new baby into their Maternity Hospitals 2021 list is family," said Dr. Chad Smith, available here.

chief medical officer at Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City and an active OB/GYN at the hospital. "This award is evidence our physicians and care team members are dedicated to exceeding the standards based on medical research and best practices. It also reflects "Nearly 4,000 families put their the hard work and dedication of our entire birthing team."

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Putting Covid-19 on ice?

From frozen pipes to power outages, the winter storms that swept the U.S. this week continue to cause problems for millions of Americans. But the frigid temperatures and historic snowfall might have a silver lining when it comes to the pandemic, say experts at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation.

If people can't go anywhere, they can't spread Covid-19," said OMRF immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D. "It was a stay-at-home order issued by Mother Nature."

Despite vaccinations steadily increasing and the state's 7-day average of cases in decline, officials have cautioned that people should not let their guards down, particularly with more contagious variants circulating. But the weather is at least temporarily preventing

major lapses in Covid precautions, says OMRF President Stephen Prescott, M.D.

"It's a double-edged sword, as severe weather is dangerous in its own right," said Prescott. "But from a virus standpoint, it will be interesting to monitor the Covid-19 case numbers for the next few weeks."

Although the weather may have indeed disrupted virus transmission, it also shuttered Covid-19 testing sites across Oklahoma for several days. And that, Prescott warned, could be misleading once the snow melts

"It will take time to see how much of a dent this storm really made, and whether the downward trend in cases we were already seeing nationwide is here to stay," said Prescott. "If we play it smart,



there's reason to believe it could be"

On Wednesday, the Oklahoma State Department of Health said it does not expect the state's supply of Covid-19 vaccines to be impacted by the weather, with vaccination clinics set to resume as soon as it is safe. And for those who may have had their Covid-19 booster delayed by the snow, Chakravarty offered encouragement.

"Don't worry if you're late on

your second dose by a few days or even a week, because it won't affect your immunity," she said. "But do make sure to get in as soon as you can once it's safe."

Until then, Chakravarty says, hunker down and stay warm.

"We all have a lot of practice with staying home," she said. "Let's hope this winter storm at least does us the favor of sending the Covid curve on a permanent downward trajectory."



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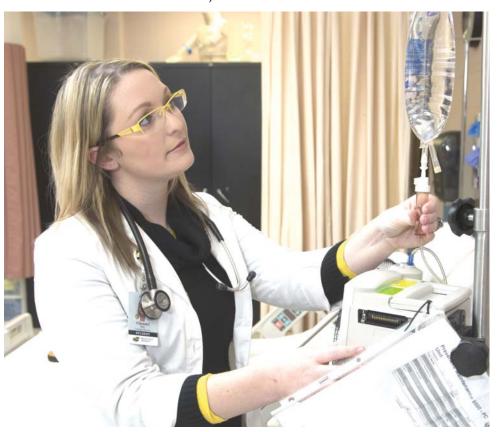
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2021 ANA Innovation Award Winners Announced

Today the American Nurses Association (ANA) and the American Nurses Foundation (the Foundation) announced the winners of the 2021 ANA Innovation Awards powered by BD (Becton, Dickinson, and Company), a leading global medical technology company.

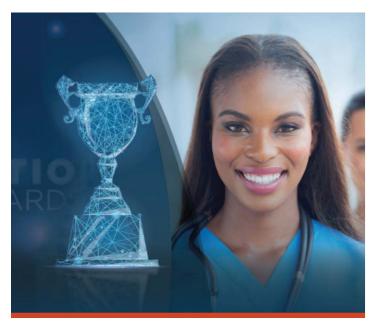
The ANA Innovation Awards highlight, recognize, and celebrate exemplary nurse-led innovation that improves patient safety and health outcomes. The individual nurse and nurse-led team award recipients will receive monetary prizes of \$25,000 and \$50,000, respectively. These funds will provide support in translational research, development, prototyping, production, testing, and in the implementation of their products over the next year.

Winner of the Individual Nurse Award:

Rebecca Cherney, RN

Rebecca Cherney, a staff nurse at a large tertiary hospital, developed TrachTrail . It's the first comprehensive, standardized adult tracheostomy care education program of its kind, focusing on combined nurse, patient, and caregiver training with emphasis on empathy for the patient and their families. TrachTrail provides user-friendly multimedia content, emphasizing patientcenteredness and builds upon multi-disciplinary collaboration to ensure quality of life with a tracheostomy at home. The need for adult tracheostomies - a medical procedure that involves placing a tube into a person's windpipe to allow air to enter the lungs has increased significantly due to COVID-19 by 15-20%. There were few standardized training programs available for

adults in the self-care of tracheostomies before discharge, leaving nurses unable to effectively instruct patients and caregivers in the skills needed to care for their tracheostomy at-home. TrachTrail includes five 2-3-minute educational videos, an interactive discharge timeline, a skills education checklist, and an at-home workbook



for patients and caregivers. Since the debut of TrachTrail on a progressive care unit in 2017, the educational program has seen a dramatic decrease in length of hospital stays from an average of 64.8 days to an average of 16.6 days, yielding higher patient and caregiver satisfaction. A wider hospital implementation is planned for 2021-2022.

Winner of the Nurse-led Team Award:

Brighid Gannon, DNP, PMHNP-BC and Pritma Dhillon-Chattha, DNP, MHA, RN

Lavender is an online psychiatry and therapy office founded, led, funded, and operated by Drs. Brighid Gannon and Pritma Dhillon-Chattha. Lavender was launched in May 2020 to provide patients with modern, accessible, and affordable mental health care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their model of psychiatry care is solely delivered by board certified psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners who offer both medication management and mental health therapy in one session. This approach is not only cost effective and time-saving for the patient, but also is proven to be 60% more effective. Mental health care services are priced at 30% below market and insurance is accepted. Since its launch, Lavender bookings have doubled every month and high rates of monthly growth continue Lavender is currently available in New York state, with plans to expand services throughout the country.

"A resounding congratulations to

the 2021 ANA Innovation Award winners. They represent the driving spirit of the nursing profession to lead significant initiatives across health care, as savvy business professionals, and innovators," said ANA Vice President of Nursing Innovation Oriana Beaudet, DNP, RN PHN. "This is an extremely difficult moment in history. For almost a year, nurses have been facing a fierce pandemic, which has presented new obstacles for health care delivery and exposed stark disparities. I am especially proud of Rebecca, Brighid,

and Pritma because they embody the excellence our profession strives for daily. All three winners have led trailblazing work that has helped to address the emerging challenges generated by COVID-19 and their innovations will continue to improve the human experience and quality of life long after this pandemic is over," said Dr. Beaudet.

"BD is proud to continue our support of nurse-led innovation, and we congratulate the 2021 winners of the ANA Innovation Awards," said BD Strategic Customer Vice President Rachelle Landry, BSN, MBA, RN. "Support for innovation continues to be essential to nursing practice excellence. Nursing innovation drives advancements in patient care delivery needs and overall health care transformation," said Landry.

ANA supports work to advance innovation to the forefront of nursing and is committed to creating a culture of nurse-led innovation in health care. BD also values nurse-centered innovation, devoting more than a century of experience to developing products and processes that transform the health care profession, including safer, smarter, and simpler technologies to address the challenges that nurses face.

The award winners will have one year to further develop their innovation and will share their outcomes and findings in 2022. The ANA Innovation Awards are supported by BD's generous contributions.



Oklahoma's Nursing Times February 22, 2021 Page 11

"I'm totally a dog person. I have a red nose pit bull. Tangie. She's spoiled rotten."



Seana Mondoux, LPN

"I have two cats and two dogs. Nala is a Chihuahua and a cuddler and she's just really sweet, and Toby is a pit bull/lab mix and love pets and attention."



Iazmine Forbes, CNA

Do you prefer cats or dogs?



Golden Age **Nursing Home**

"I have two dogs. They're friendly and nice, and love to play. Bubba and Rugar,"



Dayln Gunkel, CNA/ **CMA**

"I have two dogs and a cat. I have a 12-year-old pit bull and a 1-year-old husky, but spoiled rotten. And I have a 4-year-old cat. She's a big old love bug."



Amanda Cook

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SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

Cases	417,345
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date	2,992,254
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date	3,383,210
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facility Hospitalizations	663
Other Types of Facilities Hospitalizations	65
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	23,537
Total Cumulative Deaths	4,132

- This week, 62 Oklahoma counties are in the "orange" risk level, 14 are in the "yellow" risk level, and one is in the "green" risk level for the COVID-19 Risk Level System. OSDH continues to monitor closely the statewide hospitalization trends for COVID-19.
- The COVID-19 Risk Level System will be updated every Friday in the Situation Update at 11:00 a.m. This week's map can be seen in this update below the test results chart.
- As OSDH continues to meet with stakeholders across the state, the COVID-19 Alert Map is subject to further revisions as science and public health guidance advances with the ongoing pandemic.

- As of this advisory, there are 417,345 cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- 932 is today's 7-day rolling average for the number of new cases reported.

There are 20 additional deaths identified to report.

- For more information, visit https://oklahoma.gov/covid19.html.
- There are 4,132 total deaths in the state.
- Additional hospitalization data can be found in the Hospital Tiers report, published evenings Monday through Friday.
- Register online to receive a notification when you're eligible to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment at vaccinate.oklahoma.gov.
- For more information, visit https://oklahoma.gov/covid19.html.

*The total includes laboratory information provided to OSDH at the time of the report. As a result, counts are subject to change. Total counts may not reflect unique individuals.

***The purpose of publishing aggregated statistical COVID-19 data through the OSDH Dashboard, the Executive Order Report, and the Weekly Epidemiology and Surveillance Report is to support the needs of the general public in receiving important and necessary information regarding the state of the health and safety of the citizens of Oklahoma. These resources may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be used in any way that would determine the identity of any reported cases.

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. *As of 2021-02-19 at 7:00 a.m.

One Talk. Life-Changing Resolutions.

Current tobacco users are more likely to quit when encouraged by their health care provider.

Introduce your patients to the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline. Plus, by quitting tobacco, your patient is taking a major step in defending against serious symptoms of COVID-19.

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Norman Regional Receives the 2021 Women's Choice Award® as one of America's Best Hospitals for Heart Care



Norman Regional Health System has been named one of America's Best Hospitals for Heart Care by the Women's Choice Award®, America's trusted referral source for the best in healthcare. The award signifies that Norman Regional is in the top 1% of 4,542 U.S. hospitals offering heart care services.

According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the No. 1 killer of American women, causing 1 in 3 deaths each year—approximately one woman every minute. What's often thought of as a "man's disease" strikes more women than men, and is more deadly than all forms of cancer combined.

"With such strong prevalence of heart disease in women, we empower her to find the best cardiac care to ensure a better chance of beating the disease," said Delia Passi, founder and CEO of The Women's Choice Award. "We help women by conducting evidence-based research and by recognizing the hospitals that could one day save their lives."

The methodology used to select Norman Regional as one of America's Best Hospitals for Heart Care is unique in that it evaluates:

- * The number of cardiac/vascular services offered. Recognized hospitals must offer at least six of the following services: Cardiac Catheter Lab, Cardiac Rehabilitation, Cardiac Surgery, Carotid Stenting, Coronary Interventions, Electrophysiology, Vascular Interventions, Vascular Surgery and Coronary Intensive Care (CCU).
 - * 30-Day mortality and readmission rates for heart attack and failure
- * Patient recommendation ratings on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Survey
 - * Primary research about women's healthcare preferences

Norman Regional is one of 353 award recipients representing the hospitals that have met the highest standards for heart care in the U.S. by the Women's Choice Award.

Norman Regional is committed to providing unique and specialized care to women with its Women's Heart Program. Two female cardiologists, Archana Gautam, MD, and Katherine Hays, MD, lead the program and are dedicated to fulfilling the distinct cardiac needs of women.

"Heart disease affects both men and women. However, there are differences in how this disease presents itself in women. At Norman Regional, we are proud to offer individualized and personalized care," said Brittni McGill, Norman Regional's chief nursing officer. "To rank in the top 1% of hospitals offering heart care proves our dedication to the specific needs of female patients."

The Women's Heart Program offers a comprehensive cardiovascular risk assessment and advanced diagnostic testing.

For more information about Norman Regional's heart care services, visit NormanRegional.com/heart. For more information about the America's Best Hospitals for Heart Care, please visit https://womenschoiceaward.com/best-hospitals-for-heart-care.

OMRF experts answer your Covid-19 variant questions

Variants of Covid-19 from Brazil, South Africa and the United Kingdom are circulating in the U.S. With vaccinations up and case numbers down nationwide, will the mutations undo recent progress?

Not if we stay vigilant, say experts at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation.

1. What is a variant?

"Variants are natural, random changes in the genetic makeup of a virus," said OMRF President Stephen Prescott, M.D. "Most variants are insignificant, but some can provide viruses with an advantage, such as an ability to resist the body's existing immune responses or to move from one person to another more effectively."



Eliza Chakravarty

2. Are the Covid-19 variants deadlier?

Not necessarily, said OMRF immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D., but each appears to spread more easily than the original strain from China.

"Overall, that sounds like good news," said Chakravarty. "But we're still talking about a virus that has killed more than 460,000 Americans. So, even though the strains themselves may not be deadlier, they could lead to an increase in cases, which causes more deaths."

3. Do the Covid-19 vaccines still work?

So far, the answer seems to be yes. Pfizer and Moderna studies show their vaccines to be protective against the variants, although less effective against the South African variant in particular. That means the vaccines may not prevent infections that lead to mild and moderate illness as often.

"We'd rather people didn't get sick at all," said Chakravarty. "But the approved vaccines appear to be effective at preventing serious illness. And that really is the goal."

4. Will I need a different vaccine?

"Probably not, but additional booster shots may be needed," said Prescott, noting that Pfizer and Moderna are already developing variant-specific boosters in case they are needed.

In the two-shot Covid-19 vaccine regimen, the first dose teaches your body to recognize the virus. The second further instructs the immune system to remember the virus and make a stronger, more focused response if it sees it again. "Time will tell whether we'll need a third booster, or even an annual one," Prescott said.

5. What can I do to protect myself?

"Viruses need hosts," said Prescott. That means vaccination, masking and distancing can slow the spread and creation of new variants.

"If the pandemic has taught us anything," he said, "it's that we can't get comfortable and let our guard down."

Hope is powerful.





COVID convalescent plasma (CCP) is proven to help COVID-19 patients, providing relief in the moment and hope for the future. Now, plasma recipients can share their gratitude through Thank the Donor, a free and simple platform that allows a patient, family member or health care provider to send an anonymous message of gratitude.

These notes of appreciation will inspire donors to continue giving and encourage others to become lifesaving plasma donors, providing health and healing for COVID-19 patients like Mitch...

Dear life-saving donor,

As I look back at my recovery, one of the things that I am certain of is that without your selfless, servant-hearted decision to donate plasma, I would not be here today. Because of you, my wife is not a widow, my children still have a dad and I get to live each day here forward as a gift from God. Thank you, thank you, thank you for giving of yourself to allow me to be here today.







To send an appreciation, visit **Covid.ThankTheDonor.org** or share this website with your patients and their families.