



## LPN to RN: Evening or online at WOSC



Opportunities for nurses to advance abound at Western Oklahoma State College in Altus.

Working full-time, the struggle is real for LPNs trying to get their RN.

Throw in family and the rest that life has to

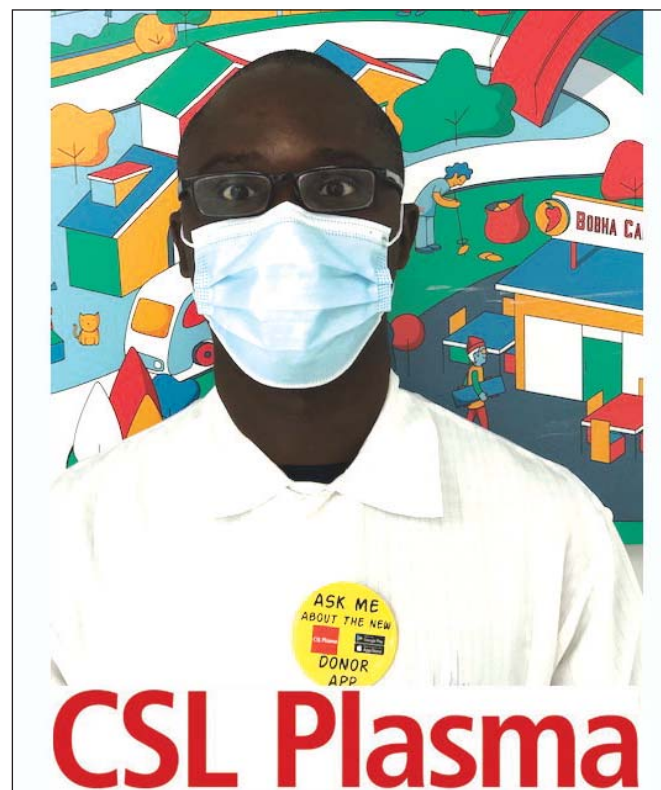
offer and it gets easier and easier to postpone your dreams.

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*As featured in  
Oklahoma's  
Education Guide for  
Nursing 2021 edition*



## Life's Blessing *CSL Plasma serves humanity*



photos provided

Wilhem Cooper, LPN is a medical supervisor at CSL Plasma.

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Nursing plays a major role in saving lives by working at CSL Plasma in Oklahoma City, as well as CSL Plasma centers across the state of Oklahoma and the U.S. There is a major need for plasma-derived therapies in the health care industry to treat many different diseases.

It takes interested plasma donor to come to CSL Plasma and donate plasma, the critical ingredient in therapies that treat patients suffering from a variety of rare and serious disorders such as intravenous gamma globulins for the treatment of primary immune deficiencies, shared Johnnie Phares, center manager of an Oklahoma City CSL Plasma center.

Many of those who benefit from plasma-

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## WOSC

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Leaders at Western Oklahoma State College recognized that reality and answered the call to bring quality, affordable and convenient nursing education to those that needed it.

And as an added bonus, it's helped Southwest Oklahoma facilities find the trained staff they need.

"We really feel that our nursing program has a strong tie to workforce," said Chrystal Overton, M.S., R.N. and Vice President for Academic Affairs at WOSC. "I feel in our state Gov. Stitt is really pushing workforce development with colleges and universities and we feel like nursing is one of those programs that has that tie."

Located in Altus, Western Oklahoma State College was originally established as Altus Junior College in 1926, and is the oldest original municipal two-year college in Oklahoma. On August 16, 1974, Altus Junior College became Western Oklahoma State College by an act of the state legislatures.

The school's nursing program began in 1981 and graduated its first class in 1983.

Two other locations are also offered: one in Lawton, housed at Cameron University and the other in Elk City, housed on the campus of Great Plains Regional Medical Center.

Accredited by the National League of Nursing Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation, the school offers a traditional program for general students and advanced standing placement for LPNs. A full-time day program is offered at each campus along with the LPN to RN online track offering an online didactic with face-to-face clinicals.

The evening track at the Lawton campus began last year through a partnership with Comanche County Memorial Hospital.

The fall of 2018 was the first online offering for LPNs to advance their education. No driving around after work and no classroom to sit in.

"This was very successful," said Stacey Machado, DNP, RN,

and the Director of Nursing Education at Western Oklahoma State College.

The first cohort of 28 students graduated in May 2019 from the LPN-RN online program that included a clinical component.

In the fall of 2019, WOSC brought in its first cohort of students in the evening track at Lawton.

Now 18 more are on track to graduate in the spring of 2021.

This evening program is a great option for many students. Having this additional option for students will increase the capacity at Western and as well as help provide southwest Oklahoma with the Registered Nurses needed to maintain healthcare in the rural parts of the state.

The program also had a goal of collaborating with clinical affiliates so students would have immediate options for work.

"It absolutely made sense," said Machado. "Our goal when our students graduate is they are immediately ready to go after passing boards. Also we wanted them to have an opportunity to work at their clinical sites."

The plan has been a win for everyone. Students are getting the hands-on experience they need and are able to scope out where they feel like they will fit in.

The clinical sites get on-the-job feedback to make offers before graduation. Machado knows facilities appreciate her students.

"A lot of feedback we get from area hospital nurses, managers and



directors is that our students come out as great critical thinkers," Machado said. "They're self-reliant and able to get on the floor and show they've come out of a program that has rigor in the training process."

The application window for the next spring period will begin November 1 for any returning or transfer students coming into nursing.


Applications for the following fall will open in December.

"To obtain an associate degree that leads to a high wage, high skill career and career is phenomenal," Overton said of the opportunity. "They can decrease the amount of student loan debt they have and be able to go out into the workforce after passing boards."

"That's pretty critical. A large number of students do go on for their bachelor's and some their master's. When you look at the economy and concern with high student loan debt, our program really makes sense."

Machado said the school's curriculum is aligned with most bachelor's programs meaning students won't be slowed down by having to take more prerequisites later on down the road.

For more information go to:  
<https://www.wosc.edu/index.php?page=nursing-admission>



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## CSL

Continued from Page 1

derived medicines are very young. "For some of these kids, it can take 600 donors to make one dose of their medicine," Phares said. Our nurses play an important role in evaluating our potential donors and verifying they meet the criteria to donate plasma, Phares added.

CSL Plasma Centers are open and the safety and protection of donors and employees are top priorities. The company has instituted temperature readings, is practicing social and physical distancing and requires the wearing of facial coverings at its centers. Centers have also enhanced disinfecting procedures to ensure the safety of donors and staff.

Every time a potential donor comes in, we check all their vitals. We also test donated plasma for safety and quality, including checking plasma for various transmissible disease, Phares explained.

Being able to provide good customer service is the most meaningful aspect of Wilhem Cooper's career, he said. Cooper, an LPN, serves as a medical supervisor at CSL Plasma.

"A typical day is getting the donors through the process safely," he said. "And that's from the new donor area, the reception, medical office, the donor floor and making sure we collect plasma safely."

He makes sure the product is in the freezer on time and that the staff is following best practices. Cooper admires the concern other nurses and staff members have for the welfare of each other and the donors who provide plasma at CSL Plasma.

"You deal with people on a daily basis. The staff tends to be protective of each other," Cooper continued. So, making sure they care about each other and our donors is so important. We know that patients in our community depend on us.

Plasma donors usually have a lot of questions if they are not familiar with the donation system. They go through a screening process and have a basic health assessment given by a nurse.

Cooper said the donors want to help others to live healthier lives with the treatments they receive. In-turn for the time it takes to donate, donors can receive compensation. Donors can be as

young as 18 and into their mid-60s, he said.

"It's a win-win situation for any who donates," Cooper said. "We try to make it as comfortable as possible."

Cooper recalls wanting to be in the health field since he was a young boy in Liberia, in west Africa. His uncle was the only physician in his rural community. "I went through a civil war, so seeing medical staff care for people-nursing became a choice-a career I could lean towards."

He migrated to the United State from Ivory Coast in 1996 before moving to Oklahoma for college. He attended Langston University to work towards becoming a registered nurse, but during the course of his studies, Cooper earned his LPN license. He's been a nurse for the past 10 years. Working at CSL Plasma was the right career choice for Cooper in a competitive field, he said.

"If you want to go into the nursing field, you have to have compassion," Cooper said. "You're going to have to have a well of compassion. Just having knowledge and doing basic nursing tasks can be taught but having compassion and making sure that you're doing it for the public, yourself and the

community, that's what drives me towards nursing," he said.

There's a lot of challenges in helping people when illness places them at their most vulnerable state, he said.

"You've got to have a good set of emotions. You've got to have discipline and professionalism to both provide care the person needs and still be able to have that compassion, that empathy to make them feel human," Cooper added.

The purpose of CSL Plasma is critical for the longevity of many people's live. It is a point of light in the health care industry.

"We all have a purpose," he said of being a nurse. Cooper said he escaped death in a civil war from starvation or a gunshot. "But that didn't happen. I somehow survived. I got blessed in the U.S.," he said. He spent two years in the Ivory Coast, living in a refugee camp. Now he has a stable life and good career at CSL Plasma.

"It's more of blessing," he said. "This is what I was called for. This is what I was blessed for."

To find out more or join CSL Plasma OKC and Norman visit: <https://www.cslplasma.com/careers>

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# CAREERS IN NURSING

## THIS TOO SHALL PASS: HOW DEATH TEACHES US LIFE

by Bobby Anderson - Staff Writer

Elizabeth Rogers has experienced a lot in a short period of time.

A Chiara malformation – often detected after birth – led to brain surgery later in life for Rogers, a mother of two and registered nurse.

A defect in the base of her skull allowed brain tissue to slip into her spine.

Severe headaches and neck pain led to her losing range of motion. She could barely turn her head. The pain was unbearable.

“During the moment having that severe pain I knew there was no way I could live my life,” she said.

At the time, it seemed as if her life might be over, even though she’d only been on this earth for nearly four decades.

“Now I just feel so much better. I’m so thankful they had an operation that would actually help and not live in pain on a daily basis,” she said, looking back at the November 2019 surgery.

So at a relatively young age, Rogers had already faced what she thought might be the end.

The experience, which spawned resilience and perseverance gave her a newfound lease on life.

One she promised she wouldn’t squander.

Growing up, Rogers always wanted to be a doctor. There was something about healing others that drew her.

Growing up with a respiratory therapist for a mom, Rogers knew the hands and feet of medicine truly were at the bedside.

A lunch meeting with her mom at the hospital cafeteria solidified her path.

“Just that moment I realized my heart was in healthcare,” she said.

A nurse since 2004, Rogers has poured her passion into helping others facing their end as a clinical manager for TenderCare Hospice in Norman.

“I like to serve people. It’s my passion to help others,” she said. “I just like to take care of people.”

Owner Brian Wilson ensures that caring for seniors is the company’s passion.

As a Medicare-certified agency, the company’s focus is solely on creating comfort for both patients and their families.

Tailoring care plans to the specific desires and needs of patients is first priority, while also preparing families for the road ahead.

Compassionate nurses, aides, social workers, chaplains and volunteers are available 24-hours-a-day for on-going support. With an extensive geographic service area covering 29 counties and ability to deliver care at home, nursing home, or assisted living center, TenderCare Hospice is the choice of doctors and families across Oklahoma.

“Being a hospice nurse has really changed my outlook on life in general,” she said. “I had never had elderly care on my radar ever but when my kids got into school I thought I would try home health.”

“From there, I just grew fond of the elderly. They can give you so much.” The prospect of entering hospice care frightened her.

“Once I got into it I can’t imagine doing anything else with my life,” she said. “These patients give you so much. It’s just amazing.”

“They thank us for what we’ve done but really it’s us that need to thank them. You learn that even though you’re going through hard

See CRAIG Page 5



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## CRAIG

Continued from Page 4

times you're going to get through it."

Learning the stories behind each individual are some of the best parts of Rogers' profession.

The joys, failures, successes and sorrows add depth to others' lives.

"You realize they've gone some of the same stuff you have to go through whether it be financial, health, loss. Then you realize you're going to be able to make it," she said. "They teach you what life is really about."

Rogers always tells her new nurses there's no way you can understand living without helping someone die. And learning how they live adds depth to your own life.

"Stories like that bring a whole lot to your life," she said. "You realize you can get through this. This is not going to be the death of me. Other people have gone through this and it's going to be OK. That's probably the thing I enjoy the most about hospice, getting to know the people and learning from them."

"It's just an amazing field."



Elizabeth Rogers, RN, has learned much from life's obstacles.

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## 140 GENERAL NURSING

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## 204 REGISTERED NURSE

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# MANAGED CARE IS A SCHEME, AND THE LEGISLATURE HAS TAKEN NOTICE.

Recently, the House Public Health Committee will hear SB 131, a bill to stop the managed care plan, which would put insurance companies in charge of patient care in Oklahoma.

We need you to call and email members of the committee today and ask them to VOTE YES on SB 131 to stop the managed care plan in its tracks.

When you reach out to legislators please remind them:

1. Medicaid is already run efficiently through SoonerCare with administrative costs among the lowest in the nation at 4%. Under managed care, administrative costs will skyrocket to 15%, leaving less money for patient care.

2. Managed care can only

provide a cost savings for the state if the insurance companies in charge ration care for patients. This means patients won't get the treatments they need, and they'll lose access to doctors, dentists, mental health care providers and specialists.

3. This \$2 billion contract was awarded to insurance companies without consulting the Legislature. The Legislature allocates taxpayer dollars, so the Legislature can stop this plan. Additionally, the contract awarded has a mechanism that cancels the contract with the insurance companies if the Legislature doesn't fund it.

4. Medicaid should continue to be run through SoonerCare, which is managed by Oklahomans for Oklahomans.

5. It's up to the Legislature to STOP managed care, and that's exactly what we're asking them to do. We need you to call and email members of the committee today and ask them to VOTE YES on SB 131 to stop the managed care plan in its tracks. **You can find emails and phone numbers below.**

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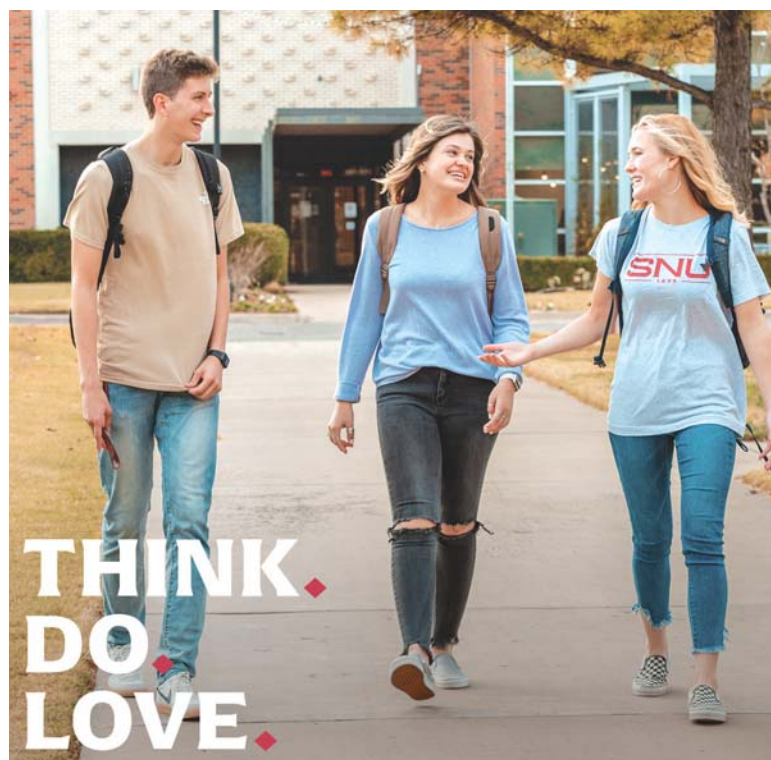
which can be summarized in the words **"THINK. DO. LOVE!"**

"To be a part of the SNU School of Nursing is to be part of a family. There are many great characteristics that the SNU SON encompasses. The faculty advocate for students and make us feel valued. We are fortunate enough to attend a nursing program that not only helps us become great nurses, but also well-rounded people.

"I feel confident that my education at SNU has equipped me to serve others and lead in love. There is so much compassion that is felt while attending the SNU School of Nursing." ~ Student Nurses' Association President and Senior Nursing Student, Ciara Lackey.

SNU welcomes all inquiries about the program!

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# Special to the Nursing Times **Opinion:** Therapeutic Foster Care changes the world, one child at a time

By Amanda Martindale, Therapeutic Foster Parent

During my music therapy internship at a state facility for teens and adults with mental illnesses, I learned that many of the adults we served within the facility, who were there largely because they had been charged with crimes, shared the foster care experience of my teens.

Most of my teens had been through about 14 different placements by the time they got to our facility and had developed negative coping mechanisms due to their life experiences. No one had taught them how to process their emotions or trauma, which would come out in explosive tantrums. Like my adult patients, they also had no one in their lives who was there just

for them, but only staff who went home at the end of each shift. Can you imagine what being raised in an institution instead of a family and not having even one consistent parent could do to a person's psyche? It turns out, it gives you no way to learn about love and respect for others.

I decided I wanted to make a difference and break this cycle. I saw that trying to understand the "why" behind their coping mechanisms, connecting and showing unconditional love (especially after behaviors meant to drive you away) brought about significant changes, even healing. As soon as I learned about Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC), I knew I wanted

to be involved.

TFC serves children in loving home settings instead of institutions, equipping foster parents to help children work through the trauma they've experienced. TFC homes receive more intensive services - weekly family and individual therapy for the child, an on-call team of therapists to help in times of crisis, monthly respite to give tired foster parents time to rejuvenate, and trauma-based trainings to help parents understand why children have developed these negative coping mechanisms and help reframe them in a more positive way.

As a TFC parent, I have seen my house walls torn apart because something I did unknowingly triggered memories of past abuse. As anger shifted to tears, I've had children melt into my arms and let me hug them as they deescalated from their meltdowns. I've seen them work hard to pay me back for damages after I didn't kick them out like so many had done before, and start to develop personal responsibility and a mutual respect for others.

As a TFC parent, I've seen kids and teens learn to identify the feelings underlying all of their anger. This has often been fear and sadness, which, when allowed to fester, become depression and anxiety. I've gotten to know my kids for who they really were and found them to be sweet, incredibly loving children who were just hidden underneath the walls they'd built to protect themselves. I got to truly connect to them in a way no one else had, and watch them learn to trust others.

Being raised in a home instead of a hospital or group home taught them what being a part of a family is like. They learned how to care about others and how their actions can hurt someone. They learned self-worth because someone was willing to love them instead of just



Amanda Martindale is a Therapeutic Foster Parent with Choices for Life Counseling and Foster Care in Oklahoma.

focusing on their behaviors. I saw them excel in school, work and activities and start to make healthy relationships. These are things that don't readily happen in institutions.

If we want to make our society a safer place, we need to teach kids how to love. As a TFC parent, you can teach by example and be a part of truly changing the world, one child at a time.

It takes all kinds of people to serve children and help them become healthy and whole again. Why not you?

*Amanda Martindale is a Therapeutic Foster Parent with Choices for Life Counseling and Foster Care in Oklahoma. To learn more about Therapeutic Foster Care or apply to become a certified TFC foster family, visit [beaneighbor.ok.gov](http://beaneighbor.ok.gov), or call 1-800-376-9729.*



When Breanna was a teenager, she woke up from a nap with jaundiced skin and her mom rushed her to the emergency room. She was later diagnosed with Hepatitis A, and instead of making a full recovery like expected - it destroyed her liver. Her condition was so severe that she was life-flighted to a transplant center that night and she received a liver transplant that morning.

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# Five 'second dose' vaccine questions, answered

With all Oklahomans now eligible to receive the Covid-19 vaccine, second shots are ramping up, and with them, concerns about the follow-up dose's side effects.

Experts at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation offer answers to five questions on the second shot to the arm.

**1. How does the second dose differ from the first?**

"It doesn't," said OMRF immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D. "The dosage is the same, and chemically, Pfizer and Moderna's second shots are identical to their first."

It's what the second dose does inside your body that is different, explained Chakravarty.

"The first shot 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."

**2. What's a normal reaction?**

The most common side effects are soreness, redness and swelling at the injection site. Other common side effects are fatigue, mild headache, chills, fever, nausea and muscle aches.

"This is the immune system hard at work. The same thing happens when you get sick," said Chakravarty. "Many of the symptoms we experience with illness are not caused by the particular virus, but by the immune system doing its job to protect us."

**3. How long could side effects last?**

"Most people feel better within a day or two of symptoms starting," said OMRF physician-scientist Hal Scofield, M.D.

While rare, Scofield noted that symptoms that worsen or last more than a few days warrant a call to your physician.

**4. If I don't have a reaction to the shot, did it work?**

"Mild or nonexistent symptoms are no reason for concern," said Scofield. "Just like with a course of the virus, vaccine reactions vary from person to person," he said.

According to a recent U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study of nearly 4,000 health care and other essential workers, Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines were 90% effective against Covid-19 infection after the second dose.

"These 'real world' studies should serve as an encouraging sign that, regardless of how you felt following your shot, the vaccines offer widespread protection," Scofield added.

**5. Is it ok to get my second dose late?**

"Stay as close as you can to the schedule recommended by the CDC, but don't worry if you miss the exact second dose mark," said Chakravarty.



OMRF physician-scientist Hal Scofield, M.D., displays his bandaged arm following the first dose of his Covid-19 vaccine on Dec. 20, 2020.

Recent CDC data showed Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines to be 80% effective at preventing infection two weeks after the first dose. The agency also says up to six weeks can safely pass between doses.

"The final boost from the second dose is important, but being delayed won't impact your immunity in the long run," Chakravarty said. "Keep your mask on and get the shot when you can."

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# SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

Cases	443,773
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date (As of 04/09/21)	3,438,372
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date (As of 04/09/21)	3,849,975
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facility Hospitalizations (As of 04/09/21)	192
Other Types of Facilities Hospitalizations (As of 04/09/21)	4
Provisional Death Count (CDC/NCHS)	8,064

- As of this advisory, there are 443,773 (204 new today) cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- 536 is today's 7-day rolling average for the number of new cases reported, including the previous unreported cases.
- 336 is today's 7-day rolling average without the previous unreported cases.
- Today's Provisional Death Count (CDC/NCHS): 8,064

- 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](https://vaccinate.oklahoma.gov), or locate other vaccine opportunities at [vaccinefinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org).  
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 2021-04-12 at 7:00 a.m.



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# OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center Benefits From \$1 Million Gift to Support Prostate Cancer

*The anonymous donation will help fund the center's launch of a year-long initiative to increase Oklahomans' awareness about detecting and treating the disease.*

Anonymous supporters have provided \$1 million to support OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center prostate cancer awareness efforts. The gift, made to the University of Oklahoma Foundation, will help fund the center's planned Prostate Cancer Awareness Initiative, a critical addition to previous prostate cancer awareness campaigns that will further bolster Stephenson Cancer Center's position as a nationwide leader in detecting and treating prostate cancer as well as increasing public awareness about the disease.

"The importance of this generous gift to raise awareness of prostate cancer, assist in community outreach to our most vulnerable men and provide funding for the ability to measure the impact of these screenings on men in Oklahoma cannot be understated," said Michael Cookson, M.D., professor and chairman of urology at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and chief of urology at Stephenson Cancer Center. "This campaign will save lives."

The gift provides a kick-start for Stephenson Cancer Center's three-part campaign strategy that consists of a year-long marketing campaign around public education and awareness; community-driven events — including free screenings — directed toward Oklahomans who are uninsured, underinsured and socioeconomically disadvantaged; and clinical research measuring the impact of prostate cancer awareness and education on screening, detection and outcomes.

Cookson noted that prostate cancer is the "No. 1 solid tumor in men." While this type of cancer typically grows slowly, it can be deadly. The American Cancer Society estimates that 248,530 new cases will be diagnosed in 2021, resulting in over 34,000 deaths. Physicians at Stephenson Cancer Center say that men should begin annual prostate cancer screening at age 50 and should begin earlier if family history

suggests greater risk.

"While we have made significant advances in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, early detection remains very important for successful treatment," said Dr. Robert Mannel, M.D., director of Stephenson Cancer Center. "Prevention of cancer is a major component of our mission, and we are grateful for this remarkable donation because it will extend our reach to even more men across Oklahoma."

The Oklahoma State Department of Health reports that one in eight men in the state will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Many of these men have a limited understanding about prostate cancer screening and little access to testing. With this awareness campaign, Stephenson Cancer Center will build upon its previous public education efforts, continuing to generate awareness and information on prostate cancer in Oklahoma.

Stephenson Cancer Center's Prostate Cancer Awareness supports the OU Health clinical strategic plan, which aims to serve more Oklahomans in the prevention, detection and treatment of cancer. Stephenson Cancer Center treats one in six Oklahomans seeking cancer treatment and the plan is focused on ensuring few Oklahomans travel out of state to receive cancer treatment.

"Across our academic health care enterprise, we have been leaders in care delivery innovation," said Jason Sanders, M.D., MBA, senior vice president and provost of the OU Health Sciences Center and acting chair of the Board of OU Medicine. "Increasing preventive services is a key part of those efforts. Today and into the future, we are committed to making our health services accessible to every Oklahoman who needs our care."

The Prostate Cancer Awareness Initiative will leverage traditional and digital media outlets to educate Oklahomans about prostate cancer detection and engage the community

in a dialogue about the disease. Stephenson Cancer Center has a goal of expanding community-based education among Oklahoma's African American population in particular, for whom prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed form of cancer.

Stephenson Cancer Center plans to organize free blood test screenings to target uninsured and underserved populations, with the Department of Urology at the OU College of Medicine serving as a point of contact for education and follow-up for individuals whose tests indicate that further assessment is needed. The data collected during the campaign will inform the effectiveness of the awareness measures and provide a diagnostic pathway for men who are identified

as having a potential marker for prostate cancer.

"The simple blood test performed prior to development of symptoms could be an indicator of prostate cancer," said Cookson. "If elevated, we have developed both additional testing known as a 'bio marker' coupled with MRI imaging to determine if a biopsy is recommended. And, this early detection can save lives." As part of the state's only comprehensive academic health system, Stephenson Cancer Center is uniquely positioned to provide statewide leadership in cancer research, education, prevention and treatment. Stephenson Cancer Center is also the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center, one of only 71 in the nation.

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