



Angela Grants says being an LPN comes naturally to her at Wildewood Skilled Nursing and Rehab.

by James Coburn - staff writer

Angela Grant will celebrate her sixth year as an LPN in February. The licensed practical nurse serves as a charge nurse at Wildewood Skilled Services and Rehab, located in Oklahoma City.

She joined the military and was soon

deployed in Iraq with the idea of becoming an Army nurse. Grant graduated from nursing school in Savannah, Ga., after having too many interruptions separating

See GRANT Page 2

## ANA calls for Investigation and Mitigate the Root Causes of Nurse Shortages

### WHAT'S CAUSING THE NURSE SHORTAGE

The American Nurses Association (ANA) continues to call on Congress and the Administration to take meaningful action to address the chronic causes of cyclical nursing shortages that have occurred over the past 50 years. While overhead costs associated with staffing agencies have recently been targeted as a driver of staffing shortages, it is only one symptom of a much larger systemic problem. More needs to be done to effectively investigate and mitigate the root causes of nursing shortages. Changes must be made in providing better work environments, appropriate compensation and benefits, and making patient safety a top priority to attract and retain nurses today and in the future.

Nurses, like all other Americans, have the right to seek employment that meets their financial needs, allows them to work in safe conditions and to provide quality care for their patients. Even before the pandemic, many nurses felt undervalued in how they are treated by their employers. The pandemic has exacerbated this issue. Nurses report that they are working too many hours with too many patients, and many are under constant stress given their responsibilities plus the fear of being assaulted at work. Staffing agencies may in some circumstances provide them greater resources, flexibility, and choices about their work environments. Many nurses are choosing this option or retiring and leaving direct patient care or the profession altogether.

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## GRANT

Continued from Page 1

her dream from fruition. She had been away from her native Oklahoma and longed to return to home.

"My grandmother had been an LPN working in a hospital. It's something that was natural and runs in my blood," Grant said.

Wildewood Skilled Services and Rehab is her place to be. She has a natural affinity with the elderly population of adults, finding them a lot of fun and a source of wisdom to learn from. They share their valuable life lessons.

"When my parents get to the age where they can't take care of themselves, and I'll take care of them, also. So, I enjoy what I do," she said.

Grant also appreciates working with other members of the nursing staff with common values about being a nurse. She served as a CNA for two years and

understands and admires her coworkers for the teamwork they invest to improve the health of others.

"They pitch in and help out on the floors with the residents," said Grant, who leads with inspiration as a charge nurse. "I lead as an example by letting the aides know any time to come to me and I'll help them with anything, changing the residents and being with the residents, anything I can help them with. I'll tell them to work together and if they need help in the hall to let me know about anything, so they are aware of that. I talk to them like human beings — all of my aides — treat them with respect and the nurses, too."

Having served as a nurse aide taught Grant to have an empathetic ear in all aspects of nursing. Everybody is different, she said. People need to be respected individually as a person in order to understand their needs. Grant seasoned her experience by working for the Veterans

Administration in Norman for two years before joining the folks at Wildewood. Home health taught her a lot, she continued. She felt comfortable when coming to Wildewood and has stayed ever since. Grant helps orient newly hired staff by taking them room to room to familiarize them with each resident. She tells them what the different elders like and don't like.

"They all have their own personality and do's and don'ts as a person," she continued.

Grant's calm demeanor is an important trait when introducing residents to their new home. They learn about their choices such as food and drinks according to their pleasure.

"I spend a little time to get to know them," she added. "I ask where they came from, and they talk to me back. I get them to talk to me as able as they can."

Families help the nursing staff become aquatinted with their loved ones by sharing what they enjoyed doing at home. She learns how residents responded new environments before, such as being a hospital patient. Wildewood Skilled Nursing Services and Rehab offers a continuity of care to familiarize the nursing staff with residents.

"We can be their family. Family might be out of state or have passed on themselves,"

Grant said. "We are their family. That's how it can be sometimes."

The resident population is becoming younger at Wildewood Skilled Nursing and Rehab, Grant said. Some have been in their 20s. Some people live with birth defects or have experienced accidents.

"You have to be flexible and patient to deal with 30 residents — their personalities — you have to be that way," she continued. "It makes their job easier to get on their level, respect them and get them happy."

Church services are available with a preacher on Sundays. Families will sometimes take their loved one to church off campus. And recreational activities including the singing of songs will further instill a sense of community, Grant explained.

"I call it the club. They listen to Elvis and a little James Brown in their time here. They love it. You sing to it and start dancing. They think it's funny and they love it, and they'll smile. They'll clap their hands sometimes."

A back yard offers a secure location for residents wanting to spend time outdoors. They enjoy the sunlight, barbeque and fresh air. Residents make new friends and greet Grant when she comes to work. They ask where she has been after her day off. But for Grant, it feels nice to be missed.



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## SHORTAGE

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Recently, Representatives Peter Welch (D-VT) and Morgan Griffith (R-VA) coauthored a letter to the White House COVID-19 Task Force calling for an investigation into staffing agencies for price gouging during the pandemic. While we applaud efforts to end price gouging by agencies, we call on Congress to ensure that travel nurses are not

negatively impacted in the process.

The nursing shortage crisis will not be solved by a short-term piecemeal approach. Nurses across the continuum of care are the backbone on the health care system, and deserve to be respected and valued. We call on health care systems and private payors to join nurses in working with Congress and the Administration to find a sustainable solution to address nurse shortages.



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# New funding accelerates aging research at OMRF

Longevity Impetus Grants has awarded nearly \$600,000 to two Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientists pursuing bold ideas in the biology of aging.

Researchers Bill Freeman, Ph.D., and Benjamin Miller, Ph.D., received grants in the inaugural round of the funding program to study cellular functions that impact "healthspan," or the period of life without disease and disability.

According to the National Council on Aging, 80% of adults over age 65 have at least one chronic condition, while nearly 70% have two or more. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by 2028, 1 in 5 Americans will be 65 or older.

"Aging is the leading risk factor

for all chronic diseases. If we can slow the process, we may simultaneously slow or prevent the onset of conditions like cancer, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's and dementia," said Miller, a physiologist in OMRF's Aging and Metabolism Research Program.

The Longevity Impetus Grant program, headed by Dutch scientist Martin Borch Jensen, Ph.D., is intended to accelerate progress in aging research by evaluating brief grant applications on a short turnaround – less than a month from submission to approval. For a traditional federal grant, the overall process from planning to award may take two years or more.

"Although it sneaks up on you,



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Benjamin Miller, Ph.D.

age-related decline is guaranteed to lead to disease and disability for every person on the planet," said Impetus founder Jensen. "We're supporting projects that could advance the field as a whole, whether by improving research tools, answering

key questions or testing the robustness of exciting results."

Studies supported by the Impetus Grants are unusual because they might be considered too risky by

See AGING Page 5

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# AGING

Continued from Page 4

traditional funding groups.

"In biomedical research, we tend to make small steps forward on projects we're already confident will be successful," Freeman said. "That progress is important but isn't moving forward as fast as it could."

Freeman's Impetus-funded project, a collaboration with OMRF scientist Jonathan Wren, Ph.D., will study biological age by measuring the accumulation of changes to the genome. Miller's study, in cooperation with Freeman's lab, will observe how proteins in an individual cell are broken down and rebuilt, rather than the standard practice of observing large groups of cells at once.

"These are hard measurements to take, and it has always been done a certain way," said Miller. "No one has ever come close to accomplishing what we've proposed, so no one wanted to take a chance on funding it until now."

Freeman said the combination of fast, innovative grants and established funding methods foster a "productive scientific environment." The proposals accepted for these grants were possible because of the ideas and data already derived from steady, long-term support.

"We always have a new big idea," Miller said. "This is our opportunity to act on one of those big ideas that could lead to a big discovery."

# Five INTEGRIS Health Family Care Clinics Recognized for Patient-Centered Care

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recently announced five INTEGRIS Health Family Care Clinics successfully earned Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition renewal.



The clinics received the initial recognition for using evidence-based, patient-centered processes that focus on highly coordinated care and long-term, participative relationships.

The facilities receiving the PCMH Certificate of Recognition renewal are listed below:

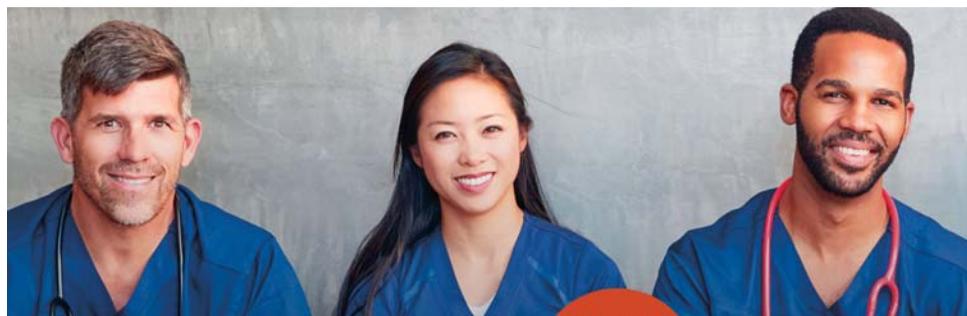
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- INTEGRIS Christopher A. Shearer, D.O.
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The NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home is a model of primary care that combines teamwork and information technology to improve care, improve patients' experience of care and reduce costs. Medical homes foster ongoing partnerships between patients and their personal clinicians, instead of approaching care as the sum of episodic office visits. Each patient's care is overseen by clinician-led care teams that coordinate treatment across the health care system. Research shows that medical homes can lead to higher quality and lower costs and can improve patient and provider reported experiences of care.

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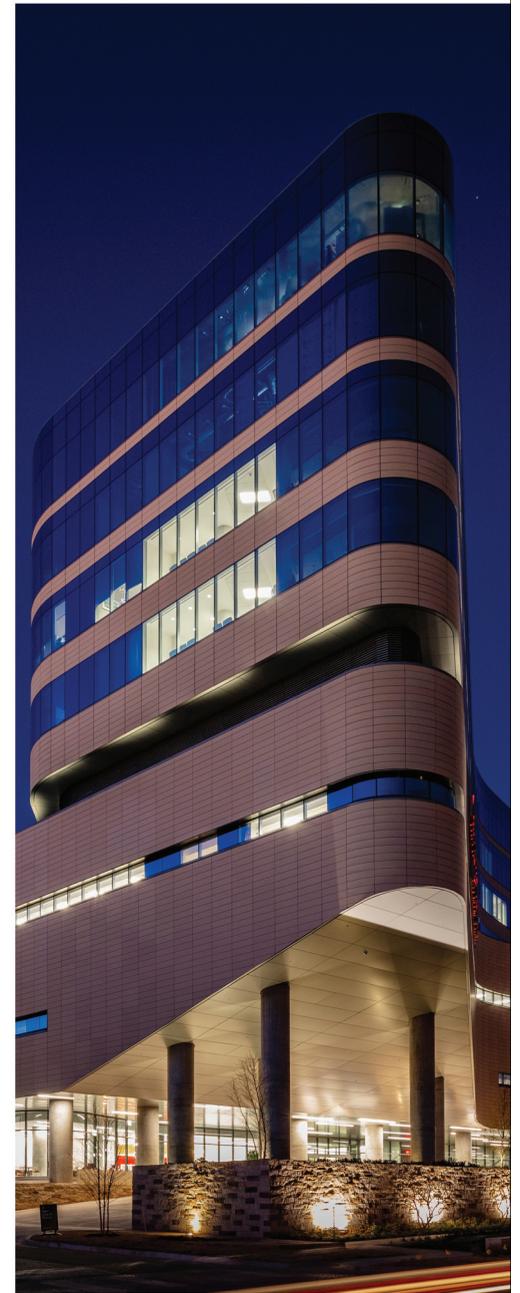
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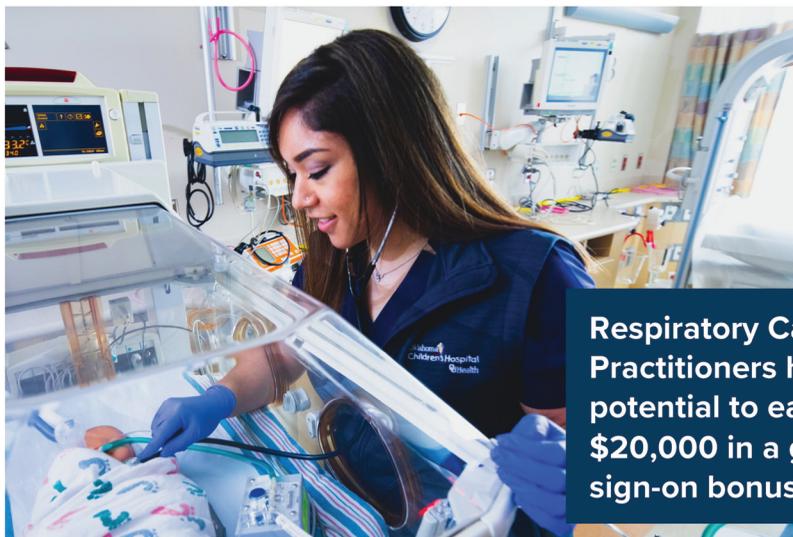
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# OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center Researcher Earns Major Federal Grant to Study New Drug Delivery Concept for Lung Cancer

Lung cancer, especially when diagnosed at stage 3 or 4, is notoriously difficult to treat. Only a fraction of patients respond to existing treatments, and the five-year survival rate is less than 18%. In an effort to improve those odds, a researcher at OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center is studying an innovative new approach to treatment — using tiny particles naturally produced by the body, loading them with chemotherapy and an imaging agent, then giving them directions to the cancerous cells.

Rajagopal Ramesh, Ph.D., recently earned a \$2.8 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to conduct the promising study, one of only a few such projects funded in the United States. He is focusing on exosomes — nanometer-sized particles produced in the billions by the body's cells. Exosomes are attractive as a drug delivery vehicle because of their nanoparticle size,

which allows them to pass through tiny blood vessels to reach areas that conventional drugs cannot. And because exosomes are naturally produced, they are likely less toxic than particles that are synthesized using chemicals.

For this study, Ramesh's use of exosomes is three-fold. First, he loads the exosomes with chemotherapy drugs. Then he adds iron oxide particles, the same agent that is used in MRIs to capture an image inside the body. Finally, he coats the entire exosome with a tumor-targeted peptide that essentially provides directions so that the exosomes travel to the cancerous cells instead of normal cells.

"Our preliminary data show that more than 90% of the exosome specifically goes to the tumor cells instead of harming normal cells with chemotherapy and causing side effects," Ramesh said. "Once it reaches the tumor, we can monitor the killing of cancer cells in real time because of the imaging agent we loaded into the exosome. After treatment, we can again image the reduction of cancer cells. That's why we call it a targeted multi-functional exosome."

Lung cancer often metastasizes to the brain, liver and bone, which makes it especially difficult to treat with conventional therapies. Because exosomes are



See **STUDY** page 9 Rajagopal Ramesh, Ph.D.

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### From: INTEGRIS Southwest Medical Center DAISY Award Winner!



Congratulations to Louella Ratzlaff, RN, OCN, oncology unit, recipient of the DAISY award. The DAISY Award honors and celebrates the skillful and compassionate care nurses provide every day. We are thankful for Louella's dedication to providing excellent care.

## STUDY

Continued from Page 8

only 30 to 160 nanometers wide (for comparison, a human hair is approximately 100,000 nanometers wide), Ramesh hypothesizes that they will be able to reach those different areas efficiently and deliver the chemotherapy.

Decades ago, researchers considered exosomes "cellular garbage," but over the past 10 to 15 years, the scientific community has reconsidered their role, Ramesh said. Both normal cells and cancer cells produce exosomes. Cancer cells produce a higher number of exosomes, and they seem to carry a message to normal cells telling them to transform into cancer cells, he said. Researchers then began thinking about using exosomes from normal cells to deliver drugs to cancer cells.

If Ramesh's laboratory study is successful, his next steps would

be to scale up the production of exosomes to be tested in humans as drug delivery vehicles. The concept is encouraging for its potential to "outsmart" clever tumor cells.

"The challenge we have with cancer, in particular lung cancer, is that tumor cells have the ability to modify themselves in a way that the drugs cannot recognize them anymore. It's like a cop constantly chasing a thief," he said. "That's why we are trying this new option to see if we can prove the concept."

Research reported in this news release is supported by the National Cancer Institute, a component of the National Institutes of Health, under the award number 1R01CA254192-01A1. The project also has been supported by the Presbyterian Health Foundation in Oklahoma City and the Jim and Christy Everest Endowed Chair in Cancer Developmental Therapeutics Research, which Ramesh holds.

## FROM OUR FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK

### From: SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Tammy Powell, President, SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital and SSM Health Bone & Joint Hospital at St. Anthony, who was recently installed as 2022-23 chair of the Oklahoma Hospital Association (OHA) board of directors!

Established in 1919, the OHA represents more than 130 hospitals and health systems across the state. OHA's primary objective is to promote the health and welfare of all Oklahomans by leading and assisting its member organizations in providing high quality, safe and valued health care services to their communities.



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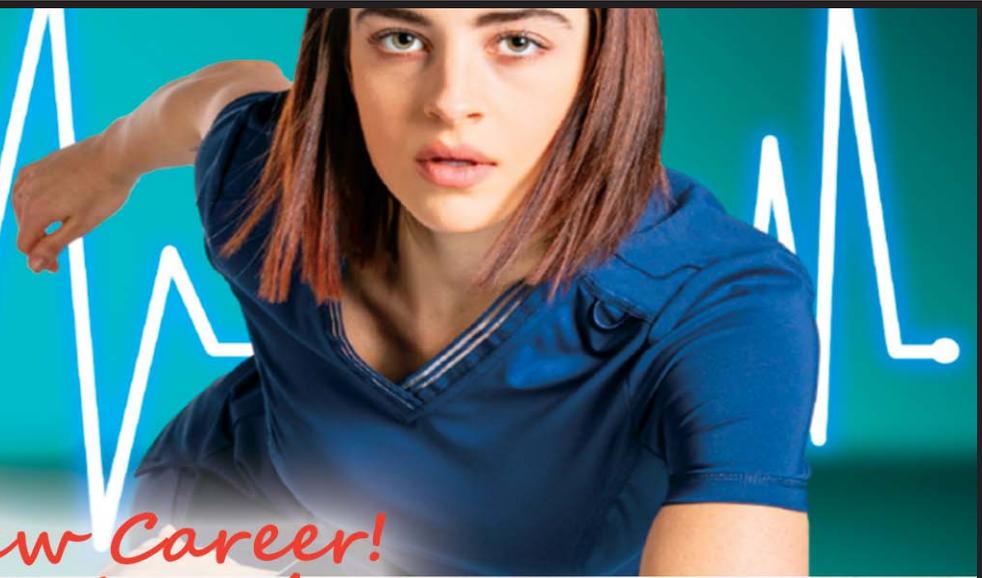
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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2021 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

# Uniform Shoppe dedicated to customer needs *Tulsa and OKC stores differ in tastes*



From left: Owner Jody Weise, Amy Mays, Renita Dearman, Melissa Buffington, and Traci Johnson understand the latest fashion trends in nursing at the Uniform Shoppe, located in Tulsa.

A fashion haven of comfort and style continues to flourish at the Uniform Shoppe in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, said Sherri Stallings, manager of the Uniform Shoppe in Oklahoma City.

The Uniform Shoppe is located in the Park Plaza Shopping Center at 6044 S. Sheridan Road, just west of Sheridan in Tulsa; and in Oklahoma City at 10503 North May Avenue, between Hefner Road and Britton Road.

Customer service at the Uniform Shoppe has been an enduring presence for the nursing industry ever since Elaine Weise and her late husband, Albert, purchased the Uniform Shoppe in 1965. By doing so, they established a new location in Oklahoma City. Her sister and brother-in-law started the

business in 1962 in Tulsa. This was when the color white was standard for nurses to wear at the time.

One thing is certain. The Uniform Shoppe has always provided its customers what they want.

"Our customers mean a lot to us and we take care of them," Elaine Weise said. "We sell fine merchandise at competitive prices."

She and her staff have made several friends through the years. The original store was located at 10th Street and Walker. Weise said she has enjoyed interacting with new and loyal customers through the years. It's part of her life and she can't think of doing anything else.

Weise has noticed a contrast in fashion has developed between what



The staff at the Uniform Shoppe in Oklahoma City includes from left: Ericka Branham, owner Elaine Weise, Brenda Young, and store manager Sherri Stallings.

customers purchase in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The differing tastes has been developing for a few years.

A jogger pant is more in demand at the Oklahoma City store, Stallings said. It's all about how durable and soft the fabric is, she said of the streamlined product.

"Mostly all of your uniforms are going to be the new fabrics. And also, it's all about the color. Our top color here in Oklahoma City is black, navy, and grey," she said.

Jody Weise, co-owner of the Uniform Shoppe in Tulsa said it's unusual that what is popular in one city doesn't sell in the other city when they are 100 miles apart.

"I don't think it is a brand thing. I think it is a style thing," Jodi said. "I think it may really come down to the enthusiasm of our salespeople."

It's not the pricing or brand name, Jody said.

"When they really love something and they really believe in it, I think that's what makes it go," Jody explained. "But part of it is, we will bring in beautiful groupings in both cities. And sometimes, it will just sit in one city and we'll sell a few pieces. But the other city wipes it out."

The demographic doesn't seem to be different in the two cities. And Jody can't say that one city sells more expensive items than the other.

The staff is equally excited about

fashion options.

Both cities sell similar colors. A lot of hospitals chose certain colors of garments for their nurses, she said.

"Sometimes it doesn't matter what it looks like. If it's the right color, it's going to sell," Jody said.

Jody said both cities seem to cater to a jogger pant or a straight leg pant with flex panels on the sides. It's easy to move around with extra pockets.

Another brand, Landau, has a popular grouping in Oklahoma City. In Tulsa, the product was moved around in display, but it didn't sell well, she said.

"Landau came out with another new grouping. It looked different. It had a lot of the same properties. It would stretch and easy-care fabric and colors, and both cities just blow it out the door," Jody said.

But in the groupings, certain styles sell better in Oklahoma City, but Jody said they stay in the store in Tulsa.

"It's the weirdest thing," she said.

Groupings that cannot be found online are doing well in the stores.

"People are finding something that is uniquely styled, priced right and durable," Jody said. Shop the categories online at <https://theuniformshoppe.com> or visit us at us in OKC at 10503 N May Ave. Mon - Sat 9:30am - 6pm or Tulsa at 6044 S Sheridan Rd. Mon - Fri 10am - 6pm and Saturday 10am - 4pm.

# Hospital Receives Women's Choice Awards for Emergency, Heart, Stroke Care

Norman Regional Health System has been named one of America's Best Hospitals for Emergency and Heart Care, as well as one of America's Best Stroke Centers by the Women's Choice Award, America's trusted referral source for the best in healthcare.

These awards signify that Norman Regional is among the top ranked hospitals offering emergency, heart and stroke care.

"Being recognized as one of America's Best Hospitals for Emergency Care, Heart Care and Stroke, reconfirms that we are continuing to focus on our patients," said Richie Splitt, president and CEO of Norman Regional. "Norman Regional and our

team our healers are committed to the measures we have in place to provide the highest level of care."

According to Women's Choice, women make or influence 94% of all healthcare decisions for themselves and others.

"We help women by conducting evidence-based research and by recognizing the hospitals that could one day save their lives," said Delia Passi, founder and CEO of the Women's Choice Award. "Knowing the Women's Choice Award has already placed their seal of excellence on a hospital is immediate validation that they have made the right decision, easing their concern during a very stressful time."



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### Emergency

Each year, there are more than 130 million emergency room visits in the U.S. Emergency departments continue to be an essential part of the healthcare system as they provide fast, lifesaving care to millions each year.

The methodology for America's Best Hospitals for Emergency Care award is unique in that it combines Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey results with primary research about women's healthcare preferences. The award recognizes excellence in emergency care based on several process of care measures focused on time patients spent in the emergency department, including:

- Total time spent in the Emergency Department
- Percent of emergency patients who left without being seen

Criteria for selecting Norman Regional as one of America's Best also included the percentage of patients who came to the emergency department with stroke symptoms who received brain scan results within 45 minutes of arrival and hospitals that performed well in responding to patients showing symptoms of severe sepsis.

The award is especially significant given that long waits and high crowding can negatively impact patient outcomes, including patients leaving without receiving medical treatment, longer overall length of hospital stay and an increase in mortality rates.

### Heart

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
- 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

"Heart disease is the leading killer of women," Passi said. "With such strong prevalence of heart disease, we want every woman to know where to find the very best heart care before she ever has an incident."

### Stroke

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in five women in the U.S. will have a stroke in her lifetime. Nearly 60% of stroke deaths are in women, and stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer. Most alarming, studies show that women are more likely to be misdiagnosed for stroke even with the same symptoms present as men.

"Timely diagnosis and effective care are critical to preventing disability and improving chances of recovery. The time to identify your community's leading hospital for stroke care is right now, not in the middle of a medical emergency when every minute is precious," Passi said. "Our award educates women about where they—and their loved ones—have the best chance to return to a full life following a stroke."

America's Best Stroke Centers are hospitals that hold a Stroke Center Certification from the Joint Commission. Credit is given for certifications on a scale based on the degree of care available to the stroke patient.

It is the only award recognizing excellence in stroke care based on robust criteria that consider patient satisfaction and clinical excellence. The methodology used to select Norman Regional as one of America's Best Stroke Centers is unique in that it evaluates Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) patient survey results along with primary research about women's healthcare preferences.

# Nominations Open for 2022 AANP National Leadership Awards



Help the American Association of Nurse Practitioners® honor two outstanding leaders who have made a national or international impact on the nurse practitioner (NP) role.

Nominations are now open for the 2022 AANP National Leadership Awards, which will recognize achievements made by individuals who have incorporated the AANP mission into the success of initiatives that made a positive difference for NPs and their patients nationally or internationally. Each award recipient will have demonstrated and promoted diversity, equity and inclusivity within health care through social justice initiatives that have increased access to quality health care for all.

The Towers Pinnacle Award was initiated in 2013 in honor of Jan Towers, PhD, NP-C, CRNP, FAAN, FAANP, an accomplished NP leader and long-time health policy expert. The award is presented annually to an individual who, through policy, practice or education, has made outstanding contributions that resulted in increased recognition of NPs nationally or internationally and who expanded opportunities for NPs to provide care to patients.

The Sharp Cutting Edge Award was created in 1996 in honor of Nancy J. Sharp, MSN, RN, FAAN, an exemplar of excellence in organizational leadership within nursing. Recipients of this award have performed extraordinary service activities on behalf of NPs on a national or international scale.

Award nominations must be submitted electronically on the AANP National Leadership Awards Nomination Form (<https://www.aanp.org/news-feed/2022-national-leadership-awards>). Any current AANP member may submit a nomination of 250 words or fewer detailing the reasons for nominating an individual for either award. Additionally, two letters of support from individuals other than the nominator must accompany each nomination. AANP elected leadership and Awards Committee members are not eligible to receive either of these awards during their term of office.

The deadline for nomination submission is March 11. Award recipients will be notified in late-March. Learn more about each of the awards.

## Situation Update: COVID-19

<b>COVID-19 Cases</b>	<b>944,461</b>
<b>New Cases</b>	<b>13,428*</b>
<b>New Cases 7 day Average</b>	<b>11,151</b>
<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>121,621</b>
<b>CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths</b>	<b>13,129</b>
<b>Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**</b>	<b>Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations</b>
	<b>Cases (ICU)</b>
Region 1 (NW)	80 (19)
Region 2 (NE)	127 (27)
Region 3 (SW)	245 (35)
Region 4 (EC)	115 (23)
Region 5 (SE)	83 (11)
Region 6 (Central)	169 (30)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	525 (105)
Region 8 (OKC)	561 (105)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1905* (355)</b>
<b>Other Types of Facilities</b>	
Focus Facilities	107 (30)
Rehabilitation Facilities	2 (0)
Tribal Facilities	55 (5)
<b>Other Facilities Total</b>	<b>165 (35)</b>

\*~2,000 of these cases were delayed in being reported to OSDH and are more than 14 days old

\*Includes 58 hospitalizations in pediatric beds.

\*\*Focus, Rehabilitation and Tribal Facilities numbers are not assigned to a specific region as their patient populations reside across the state. Information provided through survey of Oklahoma hospitals as reported to HHS as of the time of this report. Response rate affects data. Facilities may update previously reported information as necessary. Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. \*As of 2022-01-27 at 7:00 a.m.



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