

Integris lobbying for patient care model



Integris Health @ Home is a multidisciplinary care model offering care for patients. Photos provided.

by Bobby Anderson, RN - staff writer

After launching on January 31, the Integris Health @ Home program has successfully discharged more than 100 patients who have received care in the comfort of their own homes.

But the future of the Integris offering and similar ones around the country are in doubt unless a government waiver allowing payment for treatment at home finally becomes law.

Lisa Rother, RN, is the system's program director and says the services provided are offering cost effective treatment solutions for patients.

But that could go away.

"It's pretty problematic not only for the providers who are operating under it but also those are allowing us to use the CMS waiver. They're having to hedge on the uncertainty, too," Rother said.

Rother explained the program has the approval of the state's Medicaid program and the Medicare Advantage Program offered through payor sources. Nationwide, some 200 health systems are operating similar programs under the waiver.

"The data has been very positive," Rother said. "We're showing improvements in patient experience with healthcare, reductions in readmissions from this model of healthcare and it definitely merits

further exploration to determine if we should adopt this model of care post pandemic."

Forty-six-year-old Rachael Martin had been in and out of the hospital multiple times due to congestive heart failure and respiratory issues. She was thrilled to learn there was an alternative option to the traditional brick and mortar hospital and wound up becoming the 100th successful discharge from the program.

"The hospital at home program is so much more convenient and comfortable," says Martin. "There's no place like home and that's truly where every patient would prefer to be if given the choice."

See INTEGRIS Page 2

INTEGRIS

Continued from Page 1

Integris Health @ Home provides hospital-level care to patients in the comfort and convenience of their own homes. Patients receive a remote patient monitoring kit and other clinical equipment as needed for their particular diagnoses. Standard equipment includes a blood pressure monitor, pulse oximeter, cellular-enabled digital tablet and a digital scale. Other devices can be added based on the patient's needs.

All the devices connect to a tablet through Bluetooth and transmit vital signs to a remote monitoring command center. The command center, staffed by INTEGRIS Health physicians and nurses, monitors patients 24/7 and responds immediately to a patient's medical needs via video or telephone.

Daily in-home visits by community paramedics, nurses, nurse practitioners and other health care professionals are also part of the treatment plan. IV therapies, oxygen treatments, lab tests, mobile imaging like x-rays and ultrasound are all performed in the home. Other services provided include skilled nursing, medications, infusions, behavioral health, and

rehabilitation. In early August, the Federation of American Hospitals urged Heath and Human Services to extend the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) into 2023, stressing that hospitals across the country still rely on the accompanying regulatory waivers and flexibilities.

The program has been buoyed by a November 2020 waiver from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that pays hospital diagnosis-related group payment for hospital-at-home patients. The waiver is in place for the duration of the PHE. When the PHE ends, hospital-at-home will have a 60-day grace period and then the waivers will expire.

The current PHE is set to expire in October.

For CMS to make the program permanent, legislation is required. The only proposal that has come up that would fully continue the program, the Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act, went nowhere.

Fortunately, Congress is considering the Advancing Telehealth Beyond COVID-19 Act of 2022.

This bill would authorize Medicare to continue telemedicine until Dec. 31, 2024. The bill passed



the House by a lopsided 416-12 vote. It now awaits a vote in the Senate.

On July 15, 2022, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra renewed the PHE for an additional 90 days, as authorized under the Public Health Service Act. While there was some conjecture that this might be the last renewal, and that the PHE would permanently end in mid-October, signs are now pointing to at least one more renewal, through January 2023.

"The positive that has come out of this pandemic is it has allowed

innovation to look at different ways of providing care for our patients," Rother said. "(Feedback) has been fabulous, that's why we would hate to stop it. So many of our patients have significant challenges with needing additional social support with their disease and diagnosis. We have been able to identify that earlier because we are in the home and see their environment.

"We're able to hopefully manage their chronic disease at home and better manage their health at home."

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Topping Out Ceremony for Love Family Women's Center at Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City



Mercy will celebrate a major construction milestone on a new building to serve women and infants. On Monday, Sept. 26, crews will lift the final steel beams into the frame of the new

Love Family Women's Center currently under construction on the campus of Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City.

Labor and delivery and postpartum services at the hospital have been at capacity for years, limiting Mercy's ability to serve more patients. When construction is complete in fall 2023, Mercy will have a total of 73 patient rooms to serve women in the new center, increasing capacity for deliveries by 40%.

The 175,000-square-foot building will also feature an obstetrics emergency department and the state's first hospital-based low intervention birthing unit staffed by certified midwives. It will also serve as a hub for services designed for women of all ages.

The Tom and Judy Love family, for whom the center is named, gave a \$10 million lead donation to kick off the project. Event takes place from 10 a.m. on Sept. 26, 2022 at Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City, 4300 W. Memorial Blvd. in Oklahoma City. *Look for the tent in the parking lot on the north side of the hospital, west of the visitor entrance.



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CAREERS IN NURSING:

BROADENING PERSPECTIVES - PACU NURSE GROWS WITH UNDERSTANDING

by James Coburn - staff writer

Aaron Trina finds joy at being a registered nurse working in the post-anesthesia (PACU) unit of HPI Community Hospital North. The north Oklahoma City campus is located along the Broadway Extension near Britton Road.

Every patient is a different experience for him, each with a distinct personality and story, Trina said. He cares for multiple patients waking up throughout the day feeling the effects of anesthesia.

"They ask a lot how their surgery went, usually multiple times for the first few minutes until they kind of come to (wake up) a little bit more," Trina said. "You reassure them and encourage them that everything went well. You get to meet their needs. If they're having any distress, you can immediately address it."

Some patients wake up smiling and ready to go, he said.

Families may join them during the next phase of recovery. All instructions are provided to the family with the patient at that

time to make it easier to navigate through their loved one's recovery when discharged from the hospital. Others are more intense about their needs to remedy their pain.

Trina's work in the PACU is supported by a team of care providers. He remains busy during the moments he is without a patient and another nurse gets one. He might grab the chart and fax the orders. He makes sure the anesthesiologists' signatures are intact for anesthesia and gets their patients ready to go.

"So, I admire that team mentality," he said. "We all know these tasks and we all chip in on a very short notice to help expedite and make things run smoother."

He recommends ICU experience to nurses interested in working in a PACU. This is because patients are in a vulnerable setting when first awakened from anesthesia, especially their airways, he said.

"If they want to get a little bit of experience like that it usually makes it a lot easier to transition into a

PACU setting," he added. "Now that's not always necessary, it just depends on the type of environment you want to work in. It definitely helps."

His analytical nature makes his curiosity intellectual. In choosing a nursing career, Trina made a diagram of three circles divided by what he is good at (science), what he is passionate about (helping people), and what is practical (health care offers a good job and security). He looked at all three circles for the best outcome.

"Nursing was the best fit for all three of them," he said.

Trina has a lot of experience under his belt. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree 15 years ago at Oral Roberts University, located in Tulsa. His first 10 years as a nurse was in an intensive care unit at a cancer hospital. He moved to the Oklahoma City area and has since worked in a PACU setting.

Certain memories will never be forgotten. His previous work in an ICU with cancer patients helped ease

the path to terminal outcomes. A lot of the procedures were done to extend someone's life so they could cherish a precious moment or improve their quality of life during their final years.

"I always felt that was an interesting mindset for me to go into as a nurse," he said. "I think it helped me realize that you don't always fix problems. Health care isn't always about fixing problems but about making somebody's life a little bit better for what time they have left."

Terminally ill cancer patients wanted to live long enough to see their children or grandchildren graduate from school.

He often has conversations with his wife about what being a nurse has taught him about life. Health care eventually plays a role in every person's life. He said being a nurse has broadened his perspective on how people think.

"Sometimes it's easier to think

See TRINA Page 5



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TRINA

Continued from Page 4

that people have your mindset or perspective. That's not inherently wrong, it's not really true either," he said. "When you meet all these people across the broad spectrum of the world, it makes you realize everyone is different. Everyone thinks differently. And I really appreciate that perspective (nursing) has given me — not to be narrow minded about how people see the world. There's all kinds of people out there and they all have their own special way of bringing gifts to the world."

Having a positive mindset is very helpful in life, he said. It's exciting to be a nurse at Community Hospital, he said. He celebrates when new surgeons are hired because there will be something new to learn from their practices.

"It's a great learning opportunity for me to broaden my horizons," he said.

Utilizing his leisure time with a game of frisbee golf or regular golf helps him to energize his mind and body.

"I like taking care of my lawn. Me and my wife walk our dog a lot."



Aaron Trina, RN, reflects on his nursing career and his service at HPI Community Hospital North, located in Oklahoma City.



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Rose State leads the way

Connie Kuebeck, RN, MS, MBA is the associate dean for health sciences at Rose State University.

She'll celebrate 43 years in nursing this May.

And every day she gets to be a part of molding the next generation of nurses at one of the most student-centric programs in the metro.

Located in Midwest City, Rose State has long been home to one of the most popular nursing programs in Central Oklahoma.

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Rose State prides itself on working with students.

"If a student is compelled to only come to classes in the afternoon or early evening we have a cohort we can put them in. If they prefer to come during the day we offer that, too, and at least once a year we have an online option," Kuebeck said. "It just makes it more available for those

students who already have family or work obligations or it just doesn't fit with their schedule to come during the day all the time."

Students pursuing their associate's degree in nursing have access to clinical sites throughout the metro during the four-semester program.

Nursing courses are centrally located in one of the newest buildings on campus.

"I think we're in a good location for students throughout the metro area and also the outlying areas" she said. "They don't have to come all the way close to downtown or even go through downtown if they live anywhere on the east side. We're also convenient for students living North and South because we have a great number of those.

"And we have smaller class sizes than some of the other programs that offer the same degree that we do."

Kuebeck said that for roughly every 13 students there is one faculty



member.

And, Rose State NCLEX pass rates are consistently above state and national averages.

Kuebeck shifted to education in 1998 and has seen educational offerings change with the times. The focus at Rose State has always been on the student and Kuebeck says that's why faculty focus on making those bonds.

She saw it daily during the early stages of the pandemic when hospitals kept students out of the hospital.

The encouragement was there on a daily basis, which helped students stay focused on their ultimate goal of becoming nurses.

"For the students who got to go back in and do clinicals I was amazed at their resilience," she said. "They were willing to get in there, pitch in and help. The students were watching from the sidelines at home and we all felt kind of helpless."

"When they eased up restrictions on students they were happy to get back in there and be part of the solution. It made them want to be more a part of nursing even more than before."

Kuebeck said the school welcomes applications from any and all prospective students.

"We have great advisors here with our health science division who are experts in helping people plot out their education path in the most efficient manner and to get them to their goal in the least amount of time," Kuebeck said.

"We welcome anyone to call the advisors, call the division office and get some information and start looking at the path to a new career."

For more information about the Rose State Nursing Program visit: <https://www.rose.edu/nursing>

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Jenifer Presley stresses the importance of on-the-job learning as an LPN and the assistant director of nurses at Golden Oaks Village, located in Stillwater.

Presley has served for three years at Golden Oaks Village and been a nurse for seven years. She graduated from nursing school at Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater and did undergraduate studies at Oklahoma State University.

"We learn something new every day," Presley said. "It's not just something where you go to school every day and learn everything. For years there is always something else to know."

Studying for a career in nursing gives you a good base of skills for an active career, she continued. Having performed clinical work in school proved to be a valuable resource to draw from early in a nursing career.

She understands how families feel when depending on competent health care workers to assist ailing loved ones. She was 19 when her father became ill, and her family called for

an ambulance.

"I think that's what sparked it. I love taking care of people," she said.

Presley would tell nursing school students to pay close attention to dedicated nurses in the field. Nurses who love their careers stand above the rest, she said.

"You can always point out who's a hard worker and wants to be there," she explained. "They are who you should follow and look up to. Watch the things that they do and how they deal with their patients."

Residents at Golden Oaks Village are individuals so it's good to take time to listen and learn from them, she continued.

"It makes it easier for them and for you during the process of their care," she said.

Being team oriented in a compassionate setting makes Golden Oaks Village the favorite place that Presley has ever worked, she said. As a charge nurse, Presley is a team leader offering her support to ensure care is being provided that the residents need. She said there is always help



Jenifer Presley, LPN, and the assisted director of nurses at Golden Oaks Village in Stillwater is always open to a new learning

when she needs assistance. She leads the team whenever there is a nearby emergency.

"We have a good group of girls here," Presley said. "And, if I ever need help or must do something in another room, I never have to worry about it. It feels good knowing you have support and knowledgeable people who want to be here to help."

Golden Oaks Village is located on 40 acres in Stillwater in a wooded country setting that is filled

with ponds and wildlife. A peaceful view accompanies a paved walking trail. Independent and assisted living facilities serve more than 100 seniors and the elderly every day.

"Take your time and get to know them," she said. "It can make as much difference in your life as you can in theirs. That makes for a meaningful job."

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AHA to Congress:
Expedite visas for nurses
to boost workforce

The American Hospital Association issued a statement Sept. 14 urging the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship and Border Safety to take steps to improve the immigration process to alleviate the U.S. healthcare worker shortage.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated workforce shortages at hospitals due to the physical and emotional toll workers have endured in recent years, the statement says.

The AHA argues that the shortage has resulted in increased workforce costs at hospitals and is "at a critical juncture."

To help alleviate the shortage, the group called on lawmakers to work toward short-term strategies related to the use of immigrant healthcare workers, which include physicians and nurses.

"The AHA believes the State Department and its National Visa Center, along with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Customs and Immigration Service, can and should alleviate this situation by ensuring efforts are made to prioritize and expedite the visa issuance process for eligible nurses," the group wrote. "We ask Congress to work with the State Department and USCIS to achieve this goal."

The AHA also asked Congress to consider legislative initiatives including making up to 40,000 unused visas available to healthcare workers. Additionally, the group called on Congress to reauthorize and expand the Conrad 30 visa waiver program for physicians; make unused employment- and family-based visas from fiscal years 1992 to 2022 available in fiscal year 2023; lift the cap on Medicare residency positions; and boost funding for federal programs to develop nurses and other healthcare workers.

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We're looking for the very best nurses to join our care team. Stop by to visit with nurse recruiters every First Friday to ask questions and to learn about how you may fit in with current or future career opportunities with INTEGRIS Health.

Friday, Oct. 7
8 to 10 a.m.

Panera Bread
3321 Northwest Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Get a head start and apply online anytime at integrisk.ok.gov/jobs

INTEGRIS Health considers all qualified applicants regardless of protected status as defined by applicable law, including protected veteran or disability status. AA/EOE.

Situation Update: COVID-19

New Cases 7 Day Average	621
New Cases Week of 9/11/22 - 9/17/22	4,346
Active Cases	10,439
Total Cases	1,192,429
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	16,852
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
	Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)	13 (1)
Region 2 (NE)	12 (2)
Region 3 (SW)	36 (2)
Region 4 (EC)	13 (4)
Region 5 (SE)	7 (0)
Region 6 (Central)	22 (4)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	70 (32)
Region 8 (OKC)	85 (10)
Total	258* (55)
Other Types of Facilities	
Focus Facilities	4 (1)
Rehabilitation Facilities	0 (0)
Tribal Facilities	3 (0)
Other Facilities Total	7 (1)

*Includes 23 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 2022-09-22 at 7:00 a.m.

2022 ONA ANNUAL CONVENTION

POWER OF NURSING

EDUCATE • INNOVATE • CELEBRATE

SEPTEMBER 28 - 29, 2022 | TULSA, OK

REGISTER NOW!

Connect with Oklahoma nurses and organizations at the 2022 ONA Annual Convention: Power of Nursing; Educate, Innovate, Celebrate! The convention will take place on September 28 and 29 in Tulsa, OK.

If you wish to attend the ONA House of Delegates please make sure to register separately.

Register today: <https://bit.ly/3aP1qLM>

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Medical News:

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Nerve Renewal
NEUROPATHY CLINIC

Do You Suffer With Neuropathy?

Welcome To A New Medical Therapy Covered By Medicare

Do you have any of these Neuropathy effects?

- Burning pain
- Leg cramps and spasms
- Pain with walking
- Muscle weakness
- Sensitivity to touch
- Loss of balance or coordination
- Numbness, prickling, or tingling
- Sleep loss from leg pain
- Post surgical pain
- Chronic intractable pain

Call to learn even more

Neuropathy has many different causes. The most common metabolic cause are patients with diabetes. Nearly 60% of all patients with diabetes develop neuropathy. This can commonly present as pain, numbness, swelling, burning, tingling, sleepless nights, balance issues.

Other causes of Neuropathy include:

- Chemotherapy
- Alcoholism
- Drugs/prescription medications
- Battlefield toxins, industrial toxins
- Vitamin deficiencies
- Acute physical Trauma
- Post-surgical pain

Electroanalgesia Benefits



Over 80% of patients report a significant reduction in pain.

Treatments are covered by most insurance plans, including Medicare and VA programs.

No opioid drowsiness, addiction concerns, or side effects.

Enjoy better sleep due to reduced pain and recover more quickly from knee and hip surgery.

Patients reduce chemotherapy side effects and are better able to complete the entire treatment cycle.

Patients don't feel trapped by pain. They are able to move and get exercise, leading to healthier outcomes for all other medical treatments.

405-422-9518

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