Welcome Message
It Takes A Team
Good Health Is Not A Crime

Gimme A Break’ Coming Your Way
STOMPing Out Opioid Abuse
Community events

Monthly Calendar of Events
WHAT WILL THE NEXT GENERATION SAY?

At our Hero’s Ball event in late October, I had the opportunity to expound on my vision for University Hospital by asking the hundreds of our supporters in attendance to envision what people will say about us in the future. I now ask the same of you.

What will the next generation of patients say about our hospital? They will say that our care is synonymous with quality, reliability and excellence. They will say that that journey toward excellence wasn’t easy, but that it was a result of unprecedented teamwork among patients, staff, and community. They will say that we made mistakes along the way, but that our combination of humility, tenacity and grit made us learn from every single mistake that we made. And they will say that our community is finally getting the care that it deserves and was promised in the Newark Accords.

What will the next generation of UH employees say about our hospital? They will say that our culture is characterized by respect, sister- and brotherhood, and accountability for our patients. They will say that the bonds between us are so strong that we can only be called a family. They will say that leadership respects and appreciates our employees because so many came from entry level jobs themselves, and were developed, fostered, mentored and supported by our institution. They will say that University Hospital is the best place to work in all of New Jersey.

What will the next generation of medical students, residents and physicians say about our hospital? They will say that UH and Rutgers New Jersey Medical School are bastions of academic excellence. They will say that our training is not to be rivaled by any other institution in this country. And they will say that UH is where you go to learn not only medicine, but compassionate, patient-focused and progressive care for our patients.

What will the next generation of our community say about our hospital? They will say that UH finally paid its debt to this city by honoring its commitment in the Newark Accords to deliver the best care possible to the residents who live in the blocks surrounding our hospital. They will say that our hospital not only provides health care, but that it makes people healthier, that it invests in community health and prevention, and that we go into their community instead of waiting for them to come to us. And finally they will say University Hospital was an engine for the revival and the vibrancy of the great city of Newark, an anchor of trust, a place that employs everybody in this city that it can, and an institution that has enabled its surrounding community to thrive into the future.

We not only can accomplish this, we will. And I cannot think of a better team to take us into the future.

Follow Dr. Elnahal @ShereefElnahal
While studies show that patients do not hold high expectations for the quality of food they are served in the hospital, they do place high value on the service-related aspects of their meal, such as the accuracy of their meal order, the timeliness of its delivery, and the courtesy shown by staff.

The importance of service has led to a joint initiative between the Food and Nutrition Services Department and the Patient Experience Office. An eight-step program has been launched to upgrade and supplement food service at University Hospital.

“Patients are willing to forego the quality of the food, but they want it to be accurate,” said Phil Perry, a consultant manager with Food and Nutrition Services. “When they ask for something they want it to be right.”

The key to improving hospital food service rests on four tenets, he said. Interactions with patients need to be hospitality-based; a team approach should be developed that includes nutritionists, the diet office, nurses, server staff, and kitchen staff; the process of meal-ordering should replicate typical food venues with menus and a representative selection that meets the cultural needs of all patients; and extra attention needs to be devoted to special diets.

Many of the eight improvement steps have already been implemented. For instance, At Your Service interns (such as Izabre Springer [left] and Vivian Malaga), have begun visiting in-patient areas with a Hospitality Cart providing afternoon refreshments and conversation.

“At Your Service Interns can make all the difference and help to ease the anxiety and loneliness that people sometimes experience during a stay in hospital,” said Chief Patient Experience Officer Joan Dauhajre. “One of the most important principles in customer-oriented service is creating an environment that meets or exceeds patient expectations.”

Another initiative entails utilizing the interactive TV system installed in patient rooms to obtain real-time feedback on the courtesy of the staffer who delivers meals.

Daily rounding and morning huddles have been started to monitor quality and flag issues as they arise, and an ongoing training program is underway regarding customer service.

Food servers are trained to first knock on the patient’s door and ask permission to enter their room. The food server is instructed to make eye contact with the patient, introduce themselves by name, explain their role in the patient’s care, and ask if they have any other needs. A new initiative will be training dietary staff to alert patients if they leave personal belongings, such as dentures or hearing aids, on their food trays.

“We’ve all been eating and cleaning our homes since birth,” said Perry. “So, we all have our individual benchmark for quality. It is the same benchmark that exerts an influence on our patients’ overall perception of the care experience.”
University Hospital hosted its third annual Blessing of Hands event in the UH Chapel to celebrate the contributions of its Spiritual Caregivers. Community Clergy and Chaplain Interns circulated throughout the hospital during the day to provide blessings to UH staff.

“We’re offering back and providing blessings; it’s a cycle of gratitude,” said UH Chaplain Helen Kurczynski. “We do the best that we can to reach everyone as we’re moving through the hospital.”

“What the chaplaincy does is it makes us more human as a hospital,” said President and CEO Dr. Shereef Elnahal. “Our chaplaincy volunteers take their spiritual background and supplement it with an extra layer of humanity that allows us to really treat the whole patient. We can’t do this for our patients without also caring for each other and for ourselves as a workforce.”

Imam Razzaq spoke of the Islamic Community Health Collaborative, a partnership that was created in 2005 between UH and the local Islamic community. The collaborative meets regularly with UH clinical staff to address the medical concerns of the Islamic community.

Imam Razzaq’s fellow clergy said he “always has a positive attitude, is open to working with others, and praises the gifts and talents of everyone that he is working with.” Another said, “I have seen Imam Razzaq stay beyond his allotted time to minister to patients on many occasions.”

Deanna Breglia, Executive Director of The Foundation for University Hospital, presented a “My Hospital Hero” award to Imam Abdul Aleem Razzaq, (pictured left with Chaplain Kurczynski and Dr. Elnahal), who was nominated by his peers to be honored for his 27 years of service to the hospital. Imam Razzaq was born and raised in the residential neighborhood where University Hospital now stands.
Facing legal issues is causing health issues for Newark residents, contributing to an influx of patients to University Hospital’s Emergency Department whose conditions could have been treated earlier and more appropriately through primary care.

That will be the focus of a three-year project led by Patricia Walling (left), Program Director, Trauma, Critical Care & Acute Care Surgery; Dr. Stephanie Bonne (right), and Colleen Smith, an LCSW with Newark Community Solutions, through a grant awarded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

Bonne and Smith, who developed the idea, work together with Walling on the Hospital Violence Intervention Program (HVIP) which has become a state model for reducing gun violence. Walling said her team was unaware of any model nationally for the new initiative.

“Coleen looks to find alternative solutions for people who have legal issues in Newark and she came to us with this idea,” Walling said. “One of the things she had noticed was that a lot of people who had legal issues had a lot of health issues which are being neglected because they were stressed out over their legal problems.”

Many of those individuals end up in the University Hospital Emergency Department when their health issues become so acute they can no longer be ignored.

“So the idea came about to have a nurse in the court who would be able to speak to these people about their health issues, do some health education, take blood pressure, and perhaps do some health maintenance like flu shots,” Walling said. “We also want to make our ED more aware of the legal issues people have that are keeping them from taking care of their health issues.

“We also need to try and get people into primary care sooner, so that they don’t wind up in our ED,” she said. In that regard, the new initiative dovetails with UH’s existing Population Health strategy.

The first year of the project will be a fact-finding phase to gather information and design how the program will be run. In addition to project funding, RWJF assembles an interdisciplinary team with a shared mission of reducing health disparities. Members of the multi-disciplinary team represent a wide variety of occupations, including pharmacists, social workers, physicians, nurses, dentists and even a veterinarian.

“They bring all the teams from around the country together several times a year and we learn from the faculty and we learn from each other about how to work well together to make things better,” Walling said.

“The more we work with the HVIP program, the more we are finding issues and understanding better why gun violence is such a revolving door and the health issues involved,” she said.
The first annual Hero’s Ball sponsored by the Foundation for University Hospital drew an overflow crowd of 550 supporters to a dinner fundraising event that honored Dr. David Livingston and the work of the Eric Munoz Trauma Center.

“We wanted to do something as a foundation that would recognize our employees, the people who day in and day out provide services to the greater Essex County community,” said Ciro Scalera, who chairs the Foundation’s Board. The Foundation sponsors a My Hospital Hero program that enables patients and colleagues to honor UH staff. All of the Hero recipients were invited to attend the ball.

Livingston, who joined UH in 1988, was honored for his leadership of the trauma center, the establishment of the Center for Trauma Survivorship, and his support for the Hospital Violence Intervention Program. He was recently selected as the President-Elect of the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma.

A former patient, Lisa LaBruno, offered her thanks to Livingston for his treatment of the leg injuries she suffered as the victim of a hit and run accident in 1993. She regained the ability to walk following multiple surgeries and recently competed in a 10k race.

“Dr. Livingston assumed a role so much bigger than just my ER doctor,” LaBruno said. “He saw me not just as a patient, but as a person, a human being in desperate need of reassurance, empathy and care. He instinctively and so generously gave me those things and so much more from the moment I arrived in the ER until I was discharged two months later. He was committed to my physical recovery. But it was my emotional wellbeing that really mattered to him.”

Livingston dedicated his remarks to thanking all of his colleagues and support staff for the excellence of the trauma center.

“The love and support for the trauma center, and all the heroes who make up UH every day in the trauma center is palpable,” he said.
HERO’S BALL HONORS LIVINGSTON, TRAUMA CENTER
More than five dozen employee breakrooms are scattered around University Hospital, yet few are adequately equipped with needed amenities or secure lockers and some areas have no breakrooms at all. In response, a “Gimme A Break” initiative has been launched with funding provided by the Foundation for University Hospital to better address employee needs.

A committee headed by Deanna Breglia, the Foundation’s Executive Director, and Chief Patient Experience Officer Joan Dauhajre, inventoried the hospital to identify all of the existing breakrooms, where they are located and how they were equipped.

“We have a lot more breakrooms than we thought, right now were at 61,” said Breglia. “We don’t need that many and in a number of cases they’re not even useful for us.”

Each room was surveyed to determine who was using them at what times of the day and whether they had refrigerators, lockers, tables or other amenities.

“One of our priorities was to identify employee groups who don’t have a break room at all and need one,” she said. “There are people who don’t have access to email, don’t have an office and don’t get the chance to sit down all day. They need to take a break, they need to get off their feet, and they need a nice place to rest.”

Another high priority will be providing secure lockers. “People deserve their respect to be able to lock up their belongings,” Breglia said.

The committee is utilizing Survey Monkey to find out from employees about their needs and preferences.

“What’s your favorite color? What do you think should be in a breakroom?” said Dauhajre. “It’s your breakroom and we want to know what you want it to look like. We will try to incorporate as many of your suggestions as possible.”

The Gimme A Break initiative also will play a role in culture change by creating larger rooms to enable different staffs to intermingle, rather than to isolate themselves as group.

“There are keypads on some of the breakrooms and we were told, ‘No, no only these people are allowed in there.’ That’s just putting up more walls and more silos,” said Breglia. “We need to break that down.”

Creating larger breakrooms where employees from different units can mingle will facilitate sharing of ideas and new perspectives.

“It’s the old idea of the watercooler where a scientist talks to another scientist and they come up with an idea that otherwise would never have happened,” said Breglia. “That’s how we were going to be thoughtful and think of breakrooms going forward.”

The Office of Ethics & Compliance celebrated Corporate Compliance & Ethics Week with a series of awareness events, that culminated with a prize drawing in the Garden Café led by UH President and CEO Dr. Shereef Elnahal (pictured with Kylie Rosado, Compliance Associate [left] and Tameeka Boatwright, Compliance Manager).

UH provides compliance training during the on-boarding process for new staff and at least once a year for everyone. This training may be in person or online. The Office of Ethics and Compliance also provides targeted training in response to changes in the law, issues that occur from time to time, and management requests.
opioid prescriptions for patients discharged from the Emergency Department have been reduced by nearly 70 percent since 2016 under an innovative program developed by UH called STOMP (Stewardship to Transform OUD while Medicating for Pain.)

The reduction has been achieved through new policies to administer non-opioid medication whenever viable. A notable achievement of STOMP has been any noticeable impact on patients' pain management satisfaction scores or return rates for additional care.

“The best way to prevent opioid addiction is to not expose someone to a situation where addiction can develop, and our non-opioid pain medication management strategies allows us to just do that,” said Dr. Lewis Nelson, Chair of the NJMS Department of Emergency Medicine and Chief of Service at University Hospital. “In the instances where an opioid medication is absolutely necessary, usually in cases of serious acute pain, we work with the patient to keep the dose and duration as limited as possible, because long-term use is the leading cause of addiction.”

STOMP incorporates a series of coordinated strategies to responsibly steward the use of opioids through the hospital:

- Adopting ER guidelines that reduce the reliance on opioid use by substituting non-opioid therapies
- Imposing the stewardship program on a hospitalwide basis that is strictly enforced
- Reducing the default pill counts for opioid prescriptions
- Distributing naloxone in the ED to patients and educating them on its use
- Initiating buprenorphine (Suboxone) treatment throughout UH to prevent and treat opioid withdrawal
- Adopting a “warm handoff” process that links patients suffering from addiction with immediate counseling and treatment
- Introducing peer navigators in the ED

In an OpEd published in The Star-Ledger, Nelson and UH President and CEO Dr. Shereef Elnahal, wrote: “For far too long, healthcare providers have relied on opioids as the most common tool to help patients with long- and short-term pain management. This outdated practice has led to one of the greatest drug overdose and addiction crises in our country’s history.

“We also know that many who turn to illicit drugs such as heroin and fentanyl, first started with a prescription opioid. As a health care institution and a member of the Newark community, we have a responsibility to tackle this crisis by providing effective methods to manage pain without using opioids whenever possible.”

Nelson and Elnahal cited statistics that roughly one of every four patients prescribed opioids for chronic pain misuse them, while 5 to 10 percent develop an opioid use disorder (OUD). Every day, 130 Americans dies of opioid abuse.

“We see every single day how the opioid crisis is plaguing our community. Essex County saw the highest number of drug related overdoses in the state last year,” they wrote. “We knew we needed to do something — and quickly. We looked at our own practices and asked how we could reduce our reliance on prescribing opioids, and shift to non-opioid pain management strategies.

“As a Medicaid Center of Excellence for opioid treatment, all of us here understand that we are responsible for helping lead the fight against the opioid crisis in the state. For the last two years, through the hard work of our healthcare practitioners and staff, we have seen incredible results in stemming the number of opioids that are being distributed, while also assisting those that are starting on the road to recovery.”
University Hospital did its part to raise cancer awareness during Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.

“In this community, we see patients with late-stage undiagnosed cancers far too often,” said Dr. Shereef Elnahal, CEO and President of University Hospital. “Early detection through screening is the key to turning this tide. Today, we are not only ensuring that our uninsured and underinsured residents have access to these life-saving checks, but also raising awareness so that others get screened early and often.”

About 12,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year in the U.S. Among some underserved groups, the incidence is 25 percent higher than that of the general population, but with regular screening, cervical cancer can be nearly eliminated.

When breast cancer is diagnosed in its earliest localized stages, the five-year survival rate is 98 percent. Additionally, more than 3 million Americans are living with Hepatitis C, and nearly half of all Americans have high blood pressure. Both conditions are treatable.

On Halloween Day, UH and Newark Councilwoman LaMonica McIver hosted a Mammogram Masquerade Ball that offered free screenings for breast and cervical cancers. UH Board Chair Tonya Freeman participated in the event, which included a breakfast, give-aways, raffles and entertainment, as well as blood pressure and glucose screenings.

Earlier in October, UH and Rutgers New Jersey Medical School cohosted their third annual See, Test & Treat event providing free breast, cervical cancer and other screenings with same-day results for uninsured and underinsured women. The event was held in collaboration with the CAP Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the College of American
Pathologists, with support from the Foundation for University Hospital, the Jewish Women’s Foundation of NJ, a donor-advised fund of JCF of Greater MetroWest, Merck, Becton Dickinson, and Hologic. The event also included free Hepatitis C screenings, blood pressure checks, HPV vaccines, eye exams, and colorectal screening kits for both men and women in need. Materials were made available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Creole.

“The really unique thing about See, Test & Treat is that patients can get same-day test results. Women shouldn’t have to go years without a mammogram or pap test. If you’re uninsured, or if you have insurance that doesn’t cover preventative care and your copay is too high, we’re here for you,” said Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji, assistant professor, department of obstetrics, gynecology, and women’s health, Rutgers NJMS.

“It’s important for men to come to See, Test & Treat, also. Men typically interact with the health care community late in the course of the disease process, because they don’t believe they have a disease, or they just don’t believe that they need that type of care. All are welcome,” said Dr. Theodore Barrett, associate professor, department of obstetrics, gynecology, and women’s health, Rutgers NJMS.
FREE ONE-ON-ONE HOUR FINANCIAL COACHING WITH NJ CITIZEN ACTION
Tuesdays ~ November 5, 12, 19 and 26
3:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Reserve a spot at community@uhnj.org or 2-6273.

TRANSGENDER AWARENESS WEEK
November 15 - November 22
*Various activities throughout the week.

WAIST WATCHERS
Mondays ~ November 4, 11, 18 & 25
11 AM - 12 PM
Ambulatory Care Center - Room D1635
Weight loss Self-Management Group for patients and employees. Register at 2-0527

EMPLOYEE MAMMOGRAPHY DAY
7 AM - 6 PM
205 South Orange Avenue, C-Level
Refreshments • Chair Massages • Raffles & Giveaways. Register at 2-2304, 2-2880.

*TRANSGENDER KICK-OFF
12:00PM-2:00PM
H349-H342

2ND ANNUAL PRENATAL SUMMIT
10 AM - 3 PM
Rutgers Great Hall, 15 W Washington St., Newark
Keynote by Shereef Elnahal. Resources and health screenings.

*JEOPARDY GAME
12 PM - 2 PM
UH Cafeteria

*GENDER PRONOUN TRAINING
1 PM - 3 PM
Room: UH I-355

*TRANS BINGO & HOT COCOA SOCIAL
12 PM - 2 PM
UH Cafeteria

CELEBRATE BECOMING A PARENT
BABY SHOWER
10 AM - 1:00 PM
Rosemary Gellene Room, 180 South Orange Avenue
Expectant parents and parents of a baby 6 months and under.

VAPING PANEL DISCUSSION
2:45 PM - 4:30 PM
New Jersey Rutgers Medical School Room B610
What you don’t know about vaping!

*TRANSgendEr PANEL DISCUSSIoN
WITH TANYA FREEMAN, BOARD CHAIRPERSON
12 PM - 2 PM
UH Cafeteria

SOUTH WARD CLERGY & COMMUNITY MEETING
5 PM - 6:30 PM
NAN Tech World, 400 Hawthorne Avenue, Newark
Light refreshments will be served.

More info: community@uhnj.org
or www.uhnj.org/uhnetweb

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS
To Attend To Volunteer

Get Involved
MONTHLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS
NOVEMBER 2019