

WHAT'S UP DOC?

PHYSICIAN NEWSLETTER OF HOUSTON NORTHWEST MEDICAL CENTER

Physician Helps Save Lives in Hospital, Abroad and in the Air



Emergency medicine physician Dr. Anteneh Roba's initiation into the world of compassion and suffering started in 2003 when he visited his native Ethiopia and witnessed babies dying of diseases that were treatable and preventable. When he returned home to the United States (he had become a U.S. citizen in 1996), Dr. Roba realized he needed to do something to alleviate the suffering in Africa.

"I wanted to give back what was so generously given to me," explains Dr. Roba. "The idea of the International Fund for Africa was born, in memory of my mother, and the organization has been taking an active role in improving the health, and even survival, of children in Ethiopia since 2007."

The International Fund for Africa (IFA) has provided medical equipment

and supplies to several hospitals in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, including one called Yekatit 12. At that hospital, the neonatal unit has grown from one room and a couple of beds to a seven-room, 30-bed unit. IFA gave the hospital a wide array of equipment made possible through numerous donations, as well as supplies collected from the nurses in the emergency department at Houston Northwest Medical Center. Today, the neonatal unit at Yekatit 12 is believed to be the first and only neonatal intensive care unit in the country and the mortality of neonates at the hospital has plummeted from 17 percent to slightly more than 4 percent.

Most recently, the IFA delivered life-saving medical equipment to Ghandi Memorial Hospital, also in

Addis Ababa. As the oldest maternity hospital in the city, in 55 years the facility had never had a neonatal unit to speak of until recently. Thanks to IFA and the generosity of Drs. George Davis, Libby George, Alan Bentz, Levon Vartanian, Woodrow Dolino and Gail Meacham, R.N. the hospital now has a functioning neonatal unit and babies will not die due to reversible or avoidable conditions such as hypothermia, jaundice or infections. For more information about IFA, visit www.ifundafrica.org.

In addition to working in the hospital emergency department and helping save the lives of countless babies in Africa, Dr. Roba has been called up on several occasions to care for fellow passengers while flying. He was on a flight recently when approximately 40 minutes before landing a fellow passenger collapsed of a possible heart attack. When asked if there was a physician on board, Dr. Roba volunteered to help and possibly saved the person's life. Because the airline carrier, Lufthansa, had medical emergency equipment on the airplane, Dr. Roba was able to intubate, initiate an intravenous line, get an electrocardiogram, and give medications as necessary. As a result of the successful resuscitation, the airplane was diverted to a nearby military base and the patient was then taken to a hospital for further treatment. This incident was the third time Dr. Roba has stepped in to provide emergency medical care to fellow passengers while on an airplane.

Welcome New Physicians



Xavier Villa, MD

Pediatric Gastroenterology

Joined the medical staff in May 2010 and is board certified in Pediatrics. Dr. Villa earned his medical degree at Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in Santiago. He completed his residency at University of Illinois Hospital and fellowship at University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital. Dr. Villa is a member of the Society of Critical Care Medicine, American Gastroenterologic Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and Harris County Medical Society.

Importance of Hand Hygiene

Houston Northwest Medical Center, along with Tenet Healthcare Corporation, recently joined 11,500 hospitals worldwide in the World Health Organization's (WHO) Save Lives Clean Your Hands Global initiative. Hospitals participating in this WHO initiative took part in a hand hygiene point prevalence study on compliance at Moment 1 throughout the hospital. Those observed using soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching a patient and his/her immediate surroundings included: nurses 87 percent of the time; Auxiliary members, 78 percent; medical doctors, 57 percent; and others

(such as therapists or technicians), 75 percent. A goal of 95 percent has been set for 2010.

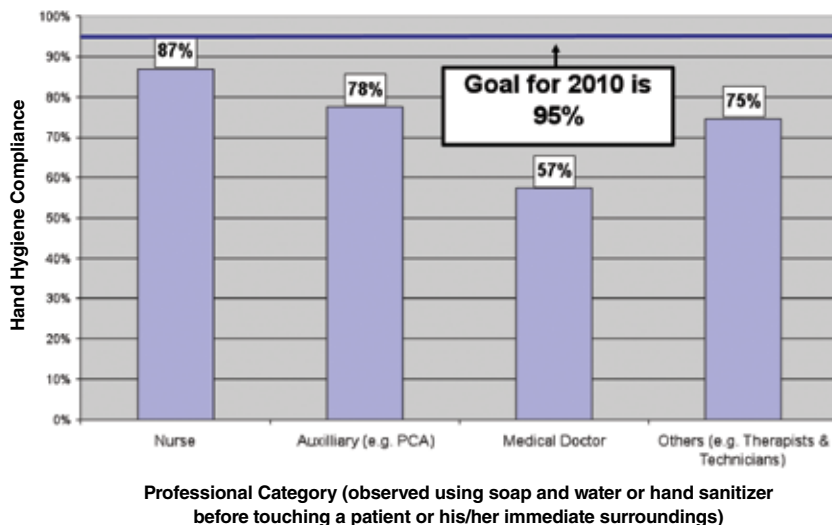
The WHO initiative emphasizes that most health care associated infections (HAI) are preventable. Clean hands reduce the burden of disease attributable to HAI by preventing the spread of harmful germs. At any time, millions of people worldwide are suffering from HAIs, which occur on a daily basis. However most are preventable. Good hand hygiene, the simple task of cleaning hands at the right times and in the right way, should be central to all that health care workers do.

Hospital Cancer Program Receives Approval

The Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) has renewed the accreditation for the cancer program at Houston Northwest Medical Center. The Approvals Program sets standards for cancer programs and reviews them to make sure they conform to those standards. Approval by the Commission on Cancer is given only to those facilities that have voluntarily committed to provide the best in diagnosis and treatment of cancer and to participate in a rigorous evaluation process and review of its performance. In order to maintain approval, facilities with accredited cancer programs must undergo an on-site review every three years.

The cancer program at the hospital has been approved by ACoS since 1993 and is one of approximately 1,400 programs accredited by the Commission on Cancer in the United States. The cancer registry at Houston Northwest Medical Center has more than 13,000 patients covering all cancer sites. Every patient diagnosed and/or treated at the hospital is followed from the time of diagnosis until they pass away.

HNMC Hand Hygiene Moment One Observation May 5, 2010



Hospital Nurses Receive Awards



Elaine Johnson



Pat Ruffing

Elaine Johnson, RN, staff nurse/educator, is the recipient of the Broad Shoulder Award from *Houston Woman Magazine*. The award is given to “a woman who exemplifies sincere friendship and provides comfort and support in

good times and bad.” Johnson, who has been a nurse for nearly 40 years and worked most recently at The Breast Center at the hospital since 1999, is an advocate for early detection of breast cancer and a tireless supporter for patients facing the diagnosis of breast cancer. Award recipients are nominated by readers of *Houston Woman Magazine* and selected by publication staff.

Pat Ruffing, RN, human resources nurse, has been named one of the 10 outstanding nurses to receive the Salute to Nurses Award from the *Houston Chronicle*. Winners were selected from approximately 1,700

nominations submitted by newspaper readers. Ruffing was among those recognized at the ninth annual Salute to Nurses luncheon hosted recently by the *Houston Chronicle* in honor of Nurses Week. She was nominated by her daughter, Jeni Ruffing, RN, who works as an operating room nurse at the hospital. Over the course of her nursing career, Pat Ruffing has worked in labor and delivery, as a school nurse, and in a family practice and emergency room. She now works as the occupational case manager after spending 15 years in the hospital’s emergency department.

Physician-to-Physician Consults

For several months the Medical Executive Committee has been discussing the mechanism and timing of requesting consults from medical staff members. After review and discussion of a recent community survey, the Medical Executive Committee has recommended the following parameters for requesting a consult.

For purposes of this process, the following terms have been defined:

STAT – These consults require a four-hour response time and must be requested by the attending physician personally contacting the consulting physician either in person or by telephone.

Urgent – These consults require an eight-hour response time and it is recommended the consult be requested by the attending physician contacting the consulting physician personally.

Non-emergent – These consults require a 24-hour response time.

To improve communication between all practitioners and provide the optimum in patient safety, the Medical Executive Committee strongly recommends all attending physicians contact the consulting physician directly. Any questions regarding consults can be referred to the Medical Executive Committee.

Hospital Designated a Community of Respect™ Partner

Houston Northwest Medical Center has become the first Community of Respect™ Medical Center in the Anti-Defamation League’s (ADL’s) Southwest Region. The Community of Respect program is an innovative, community-wide anti-bias initiative. As a Community of Respect partner, the hospital is joining numerous other community organizations, businesses, and houses of worship to create more inclusive and bias free communities

where everyone can work, play and pray.

“This initiative reflects our values of creating a work environment that recognizes different cultures and building a positive atmosphere for all employees and patients,” says Judy White House, chief human resources officer. “Achieving and maintaining hospital effectiveness is enhanced through trust, respect and caring, which are three vital components of this program.”

The Community of Respect program is a nationally recognized, award winning, cross-cultural communications program that is based on the ADL’s successful No Place for Hate® school program. The Community of Respect program is designed to show participants how cultural values determine how individuals interpret the behaviors of others and how to effectively communicate with a person from another background.

Message from the Chief of Staff



On Monday, May 24, I spent my entire working day practicing pathology. Each phone call was patient related; each doctor walking into my office had a question about a biopsy or a clinical lab result; each technologist calling or stopping by had a lab procedural question or concern. It was a great day. I can't remember the last time it happened, nor do I expect it to happen again.

The reality is hospital meetings, billing problems, contractual issues, computer issues, and personnel

concerns – to name a few – are all a part of our daily lives. Why do we concern ourselves with all these things? Wouldn't it be better if someone else took care of these things for us?

In the May issue of the Harris County Medical Society newsletter, William Gilmer, MD, president of the organization, made an argument for the doctor's responsibility related to hospital by-laws. He made a statement, "If we do not take care of ourselves, I assure you no one else will." When it comes to the "non-medical" aspects of today's physician's practices, I would like to amend that wording to the following, "If we do not take care of ourselves,

I assure you, someone else will and we won't like the results."

Non-medical aspects of a physician's practice do affect patients. The agreements you make with insurance companies and the number and quality of your employees not only affects your bottom line, but they also affect patient care. Hospital by-laws, department meetings, utilization review committee – for example – all affect both you and patient care. So get involved. Consider it all a part of your mission or someone will get involved for you.

— Robert Wessels, M.D., Chief of Staff

HOSPITAL RECOGNIZED AS AN AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION START! FIT-FRIENDLY COMPANY

Houston Northwest Medical Center has been recognized as a Platinum-Level Start! Fit-Friendly Company by the American Heart Association's Start! movement for helping employees eat better and move more. Platinum-level employers increase healthy eating options at the worksite, promote a wellness culture in the workplace, and demonstrate measurable outcomes related to workplace wellness.

"Physical activity and employee wellness are important priorities at Houston Northwest Medical Center," says Judy White House, chief human resources officer. "We are honored and excited to be recognized by the American Heart Association's Start! Initiative. We earned the platinum level designation due to the efforts of our team members."

The Start! Fit-Friendly Companies Program is a catalyst for positive change in the American workforce by helping companies make their employees' health and wellness a priority. Many American adults spend most of their waking hours at sedentary jobs. Their lack of physical activity raises their risk for a host of medical problems, such as obesity, high blood

pressure and diabetes. Start! helps change corporate cultures by motivating employees to start walking, which has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity.

Employers that join this program qualify for official recognition by the American Heart Association. Participating companies also get free access to program resources such as the free Start! Walking Program, materials to help promote company wellness programs to employees, internal newsletter templates, and consultation on CPR/AED (automated external defibrillator) programs.

Start! also offers MyStart! Online, a free Web-based fitness and nutrition tracker for companies and individuals. A "dashboard" feature lets human resources or wellness managers view employee participation in Start!.

"I am proud of our staff's active participation in wellness activities – especially Healthy@Tenet," says White House. "Our continued focus on fitness benefits employees, their families, and our hospital."