

## Employee Healthbeat

From the desk of Judy Wenzl, BSN, RN, infection prevention

### Prevent the spread of respiratory viruses

#### Coronavirus

On Feb. 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the current outbreak of coronavirus disease, COVID-19.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this disease. However, as a reminder, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) always recommends everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for

using a facemask: CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty. (See more information about handwashing on p. 2.)

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their health care provider immediately.

Health care providers should obtain a detailed travel history for patients being evaluated with fever and acute respiratory illness. For any patient meeting criteria for evaluation



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for COVID-19, clinicians are encouraged to contact and collaborate with their state or local health department. For patients who are severely ill, evaluation for COVID-19 may be considered even if a known source of exposure has not been identified.

State health departments will contact the CDC's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to complete a case investigation. CDC's EOC will assist in collecting, storing and shipping specimens appropriately to CDC so diagnostic testing can be conducted.

#### Travel Warning Level 3

CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to the People's Republic of China (this does not include the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, or the island of Taiwan).

To slow the spread of 2019 novel coronavirus into the United States, CDC is working with public health partners to implement new travel procedures announced in a Presidential Proclamation on Novel Coronavirus. (Continued on p. 2)

# Employee Healthbeat

*From the desk of Judy Wenzl, BSN, RN, infection prevention*

## Prevent the spread of respiratory viruses (from p. 1)

In summary:

- Foreign nationals who have visited China in the past 14 days may not enter the United States.
- American citizens, lawful permanent residents, and their families who have been in China in the past 14 days will be allowed to enter the United States, but will be redirected to one of 11 airports to undergo health screening. Depending on their health and travel history, they will have some level of restrictions on their movements for 14 days from the time they left China.
- If you are in the second group above and are traveling to the United States: Your travel will be redirected to one of 11 U.S. airports where CDC has quarantine stations. You will be asked about your health and travel. Your health will be screened for fever, cough or trouble breathing. Depending on your health and travel history, you will have some restrictions on your movement for a period of 14 days from the time you left China.

These actions are being taken to protect your health, the health of other travelers and the health of U.S. communities from the new coronavirus that is spreading from person-to-person in parts of China.

### **Influenza**

The CDC provides some key points about the current status of influenza. Outpatient and clinical laboratory data remain elevated and increased through February. Nationally, and in some regions, the proportion of influenza A viruses compared to influenza B viruses is increasing.

The predominant virus also varies by age group. Nationally, for the season overall, influenza B viruses are the most commonly reported influenza viruses among children and young adults age 0-4 years (56 percent of reported viruses) and 5-24 years (70 percent of reported viruses), while A viruses are the most commonly reported influenza viruses among persons 25-64 years (55 percent

of reported viruses) and 65 years of age and older (62 percent of reported viruses).

For this season, 51 percent of influenza positive specimens reported by public health labs were among people less than 25 years of age, and less than 13 percent were from ages 65 and older.

Overall, hospitalization rates remain similar to this time during recent seasons, but rates among children and young adults are higher. Pneumonia and influenza mortality has been low, but 92 influenza-associated deaths in children have been reported so far this season.

CDC estimates that so far this season there have been at least 26 million flu illnesses, 250,000 hospitalizations and 14,000 deaths from flu. Vaccination is always the best way to prevent flu and its potentially serious complications.

Antiviral medications are an important adjunct to flu vaccine in the control of influenza. Almost all of the influenza viruses tested this season are susceptible to the four FDA-approved influenza antiviral medications recommended for use in the U.S. ●●●

## Clean hands save lives

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. You can help yourself and your loved ones stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times:

- Before, during and after preparing food; and before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



### *Five steps to wash hands the right way*

Follow these five steps every time.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap and apply soap.
2. Lather by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
3. Scrub for at least 20 seconds. Sing the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse well under clean, running water.
5. Dry using a clean towel or air dry.

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. However, sanitizers do not get rid of all types of germs. Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy. And, they might not remove harmful chemicals from hands such as pesticides and heavy metals.

### *How to use hand sanitizer*

1. Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label for the correct amount).
2. Rub your hands together.
3. Rub the gel over the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take about 20 seconds.

*CDC information contributed to these reports. Please visit the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) for updated and more detailed information. ●●●*

## In the Spotlight

### Norton County Hospital offers program to reduce falls in older adults

One in four older adults has a fall each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). But the good news is that falls are not a normal part of aging and can be prevented.

The Stepping On program, offered by Norton County Hospital, has been researched and proven to reduce falls by 31 percent. The program will begin on March 23 in the hospital’s conference room from 9 to 11 a.m. It will continue with sessions offered each Monday through May 4. Stepping On certified trainers include two of the hospital’s nurses – Julia Thompson, BSN, RN; and Judy Wenzl, BSN, RN.

In just seven weekly, 2-hour sessions, Stepping On gives participants strategies for avoiding falls including balance and strength exercises, home safety check suggestions, medication review and more. Guest experts such as an optometrist, physical therapist and pharmacist will visit over the course of the seven sessions to provide falls prevention information and strategies for avoiding a fall.

The workshop is designed specifically for people who age 60 or older, and have fallen or have a fear of falling. Participants can expect to leave with more strength, better balance, and a feeling of confidence and independence.

To register for Stepping On, which is a free program, please contact Thompson at 785-877-3351 or [jthompson@ntcohosp.com](mailto:jthompson@ntcohosp.com). Each course is limited to 12 participants. Those who participate are asked to enter through the Medical Clinic entrance. Thompson said the hospital plans to offer another seven-week course in the fall of 2020. ●●●



### New Year, New You: Health-focused lunch-and-learn sessions

Lunch-and-learn sessions were put on by Employee Committee in January to encourage health in our co-workers. The sessions were led by our own employees! The areas of focus included:

- Rehabilitation staff talking about physical activity and chronic disease
- Gina Frack and Kayla Broeckelman discussing the new tobacco-free workplace policy and smoking effects on the body
- Brenda Dole and Sara Smith leading a conversation about nutrition and why we weigh (pictured at right)

Thanks to those who presented and those who attended! ●●●



## Recent Employee Milestones

*From the desk of Shannan Hempler, human resources*

### December

Pam Miller	17 years
Rhonda McDowell	9 years
Morgan Griffey	7 years
Carol Richmeier	6 years
Monica Hembd	2 years
Jeanette Haskett	1 year

### January

Kellen Jacobs	6 years
Claudette Graham	5 years
Jean Carmichael	4 years
Marla Kuhn	3 years, + 6 prior years
Valerie Marble	3 years
Jordan Gemboys	1 year
Marissa Schamberger	1 year

### February

Jordan Brown	11 years
Jessie Dougherty	8 years
Natalie Esslinger	4 years
Melody DeWitt	3 years
Kellie Gibson	3 years
Heather Saville	3 years
Liz Albright	1 year
Patty Clark	1 year

## In the News

*From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation*

### Hospital implements tobacco-free workplace policy

Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic properties have been tobacco free, but beginning Jan. 1, 2020, an updated policy approved by the hospital's Board of Trustees took effect. Employees serving on the hospital's Wellness Committee created the policy.

Norton County Hospital for many years has not allowed smoking in or around its facilities and properties, due to a Kansas statute banning smoking in medical care facilities and Kansas Hospital Association standards that include voluntarily expanding that ban to all hospital property.

This new policy at Norton County Hospital goes a step farther, however. It means that tobacco product use is prohibited while in work attire or while otherwise representing the hospital and clinic. Employees are prohibited from using tobacco products during work hours, at any other time on company property and at any work-sponsored event.

Visitors to company-owned or operated property are also prohibited from using tobacco products. Visitors are made aware of the policy through signage posted at the hospital and clinic.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of every three cancer deaths in the U.S. is linked to smoking. Smoking also leads to many other diseases and disabilities, because it harms nearly every organ of the body. In addition to smoking cigarettes, other products that contain nicotine are harmful to health; these products include, for example, chewing tobacco and vaping. Tobacco products such as these are also prohibited at the hospital and clinic, and are outlined in the policy.

"We are 'health,' and this policy is a step in the right direction for

modeling healthy living," said Gina Frack, Norton County Hospital's CEO. "Our hospital's greatest asset is our employees, and we are committed to creating a healthy environment for every member of our team. We also look forward to serving our patients better by providing them with the comfort and care they deserve."

Frack added that as part of the policy, the hospital will support employees who want to quit using tobacco products by providing them access to recommended tobacco cessation programs, medication and materials.

The policy was a grassroots effort, as it was developed by the hospital's Wellness Committee that worked throughout 2019 with guidance from WorkWell KS, a statewide worksite initiative that provides leadership and resources for businesses and organizations to support worksite health.

WorkWell KS aims to implement sustainable changes to benefit both employers and employees. Research shows that most U.S. adults spend the majority of their waking hours at work. With health care costs rising and more research citing that work-based nutrition and physical activity initiatives are improving employee health, employers are increasingly looking at implementing these formal worksite programs. A copy of the new policy is available on the hospital's employee intranet, *The Beat*. ●●●



### Miller receives Foundation scholarships

The Norton Regional Health Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to support the enhancement of quality health care for the residents of Norton County and surrounding counties, awards scholarships to students pursuing degrees in nursing. The Foundation awarded the following scholarships for the Spring 2020 semester:

Baylee Miller, Norton, awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the George Jones Nursing Scholarship Fund and a \$1,000 scholarship from the Warren and Jean White Nursing Scholarship Fund; Baylee is working toward her registered nursing degree at Manhattan Area Technical College.

The Norton Regional Health Foundation at Norton County Hospital awards academic scholarships each spring, summer and fall semester to students who are enrolled in college courses, are seeking degrees in nursing and express interest in working at Norton County Hospital in the future. It is through donor support that these scholarships can be awarded, and the Foundation is grateful to donors for their generous contributions. (Photos of Baylee are included below. At left, she is shadowing in the Surgery department. At right, she receives her scholarships.) ●●●



## Engage the Community

*From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation*



### Community meeting Feb. 25, to be rescheduled

Norton County Hospital postponed its community meeting on Feb. 25 due to weather conditions. The meeting will be rescheduled at a later date in March. It will be hosted at Prairie Land Electric Cooperative.

The event will be the third meeting in planned regular community-wide meetings being hosted by the hospital to educate on the current status of local health care provided at the hospital and its clinic, Norton Medical Clinic, as well as allow administration and board members to answer questions posed by the public.

Gina Frack, Norton County Hospital's CEO, plans to continue the dialogue by giving updates on the four focus areas of the hospital's current strategic plan; those areas include Facility, Funding and Public Support, Recruitment and Retention, and Regional Needs.

The main presentation for this meeting will be provided by the hospital's chief financial officer, Aaron Kuehn, who will cover the basics of hospital finance and what makes a rural hospital such a unique business. Watch *The Beat*, email and the NCH website for more information. ●●●

### 'Jump Clinic' Feb. 29

Middle and high school students from Norton and the surrounding area are encouraged to attend a 'Jump Clinic' on Leap Day, Saturday, Feb. 29. The event will be hosted from 9 to 11 a.m. at the

East Campus Gym in Norton. Cost is \$5 per person, and participants may register and pay at the door.

The event is being sponsored by Norton County Hospital's Rehabilitation department, and it will be led by two of the hospital's physical therapists, Kellen Jacobs and Spencer Shirk. Students can expect to learn more about injury prevention and performance improvement during this two-hour clinic.

"Recent research has shown a dramatic increase in the number of knee injuries, particularly in the 13- to 17-year age group," said Jacobs, DPT and director of rehabilitation at Norton County Hospital. "For this reason, we would like to educate our athletes more on what they can do to minimize their risk to stay in the game. Also, by lessening their risk, we can instruct and educate our athletes on how to improve their abilities and hopefully get the most out of their potential." ●●●

### Celebrate health March 14

The Norton Regional Health Foundation and Live Well Norton would like to celebrate health with the public in a wellness day on Saturday, March 14. The third annual "Kicks on the Bricks" event will be hosted at East Campus Gym in Norton, with registration starting at 9:15 a.m. and activities beginning at 10 a.m. All ages are welcome to participate.

Many healthy activities will be offered in 30-minute rotations, which give people a chance to try out different forms of exercise. Activities will include

yoga and Zumba classes, a walk/run on the bricks (weather permitting), a strength and conditioning session, and nutrition education. The Norton Lions Club and Kansas Lions Sight Foundation, with the help of nursing student volunteers from Colby Community College, will be providing free health screenings – including blood pressure, blood sugar, visual acuity, field of vision and hearing – in the East Campus parking lot.

Participants will be provided a punch card at registration, and those who complete the card will be eligible for many prizes! Prizes awarded in years past have included gym memberships, free exercise classes, wireless earbuds, an electric toothbrush, gift baskets, gift cards and a DNA testing kit, as examples.

Advance entries guarantee a participant prize. The advance entry deadline is March 5. After March 5, participants may still register, and remaining prizes will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Cost is \$10 per participant. Registration forms can be found on the Foundation tab of the Norton County Hospital website ([www.ntcohosp.com](http://www.ntcohosp.com)). Printed copies of the registration form are also located at Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic entrances. Forms should be returned in person at Norton County Hospital (ask for Katie Allen) or mailed to: Katie Allen, Norton County Hospital, Attn: Wellness Day, P.O. Box 250, Norton, KS 67654. For answers to questions, call Norton County Hospital at 785-877-3351. ●●●



# Engage the Community

*From the desk of Katie Allen, communications and foundation*

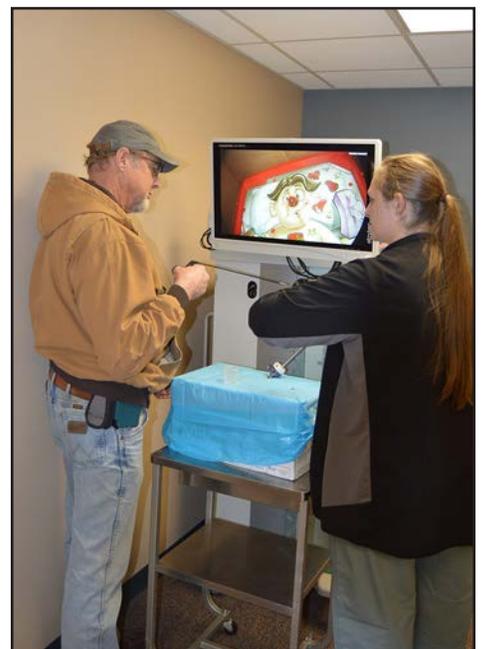
## Holiday Open House

Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical Clinic hosted a come-and-go open house from 4:30 to 7 p.m. on Dec. 10, 2019. Many staff members took part in various roles, and there was a great turnout from the community! The event included:

- Health demonstrations and information
- Showcase of hospital and clinic departments
- Treats with Santa and Mrs. Claus
- Prizes! Chamber Bucks were awarded in a drawing to Mandi Fick and Ray Mizell. All participants received a treat bag with cocoa and a candy cane. *Some photos from the event are included below.* ●●●

## Spreading holiday cheer

Santa and Mrs. Claus (Dan and Brenda Dole) were at it again spreading holiday cheer on Christmas Day! They delivered meals to patients with the help of their elf, Rita Conrad. *Photo at right.* ●●●



## Other Celebrations

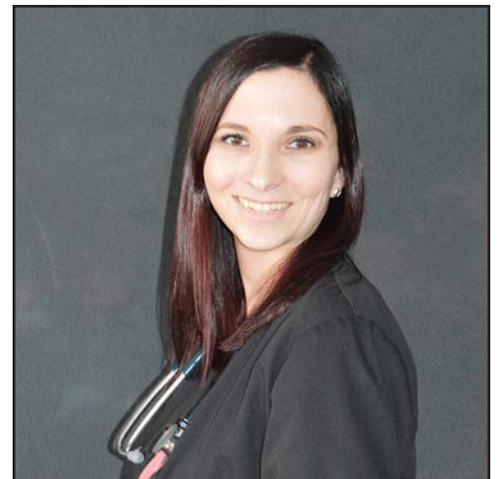
### Celebrating outstanding work with the latest ‘Employees of the Month’

Jessie Dougherty was the December 2019 Employee of the Month! Her nominations read: “I have worked with Jessie for many years, and she does an excellent job as an RN working the floor and as a Surgery supervisor. She has had many challenges in the last year with the low numbers of surgeries and staff moving to different positions and training. She has handled this above and beyond and never gave up. She is an asset to NCH and a great co-worker who always has a smile and friendly personality.”

“Jessie always has a smile on her face, and she is always willing to help others. She exemplifies the values of Norton County Hospital by always being very polite, kind, caring and hardworking. Jessie’s ‘do whatever it takes’ attitude has benefited the hospital tremendously because she independently has learned how to be an OR supervisor, scrub nurse, trainer and mentor. With Jessie’s outstanding leadership, our surgical department will continue to flourish for years to come.” *Photo of Jessie below, left.*

Dan Dole was named Employee of the Month for January 2020! His nomination read: “Dan is always willing to help and is very efficient. He juggles many things, from IT-related issues to maintenance needs. He is one of our best employees and deserves recognition for his efforts.” Dan is even our resident Santa Claus. *Photo of Dan below, center.*

Sierra Wahlmeier was chosen as the February 2020 Employee of the Month! Her nomination read: “She always works hard to make sure the patients are well taken care of. She goes above and beyond what is asked to make their experience a great one. I have had several people stop me and tell me what an awesome nurse she is and how much they appreciate all she does and that they can tell she really cares.” *Photo of Sierra below, right.*



### Employee recognition at holiday party

At the NCH Holiday Party, administration and the board presented the following service award pins:

5-year service pins:

Alan Brown, Rita Conrad, Brenda Dole, Kellen Jacobs, Megan Juenemann, Aaron Kuehn and Travis Nykamp

10-year ruby pins:

Klare Bliss, Jordan Brown, Amy Griffey and Haley Jones

20-year emerald pin:

Jennifer Schoenberger

30-year 2.0 point diamond pin:

Tami Black

Also at the party, staff members donated items for God’s Pantry and the Norton Community School’s Food Drive.

*Photo at right.*



## Other Celebrations

### Training for a hazardous material event

A decontamination training at Norton County Hospital on Feb. 6 helped staff understand what to do during a hazardous materials event (Code Orange). When this happens, NCH would receive patients who have been exposed to chemical, radiological, biological, etc. contaminants. These patients would need to be decontaminated before being allowed into the facility for medical care.

Staff members trained on how to set up the showers to 1) let the Hospital Emergency Response Team (HERT) gown up to decontaminate patients, 2) allow nursing staff to prepare ER for receiving/transferring patients and 3) understand it is a time-sensitive event, and we would need to be ready as soon as possible to receive patients. *Photos are included below.*



### Christmas sweater day

Staff members showed their holiday spirit by wearing Christmas sweaters before the holiday. This was also our hospital and clinic “grazing day,” where we shared lots of yummy snacks and treats with one another. *Photos are included below.*



# Other Celebrations

**A time to be thankful!**



Leaves on a large tree showed fellow staff members and the community all the ways we are thankful! Thanks to the NCH Employee Committee for organizing the NCH Thankful Tree! *Photo above.* ●●●

## Super Bowl mania

Some staff members wore red to support the Kansas City Chiefs or San Francisco 49ers on Friday, Jan. 31, just ahead of Super Bowl Sunday. Congratulations to the Chiefs! *Photos below.* ●●●

## American Red Cross Blood Drive

The next NCH Blood Drive is Thursday, April 16 in the conference room. This is a great opportunity for NCH staff to be able to donate right here in the hospital. Thanks to all who donated in the January drive! *Photo below, left.* ●●●



## Wearing red for heart health

On Friday, Feb. 7, staff members wore red to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease! This was National Wear Red Day.



## Meet the Team!

Norton County Hospital is excited to announce our new employees.  
Please say hello, and welcome them to our team!



### **Yvette Taylor**

***Nursing – LPN – Full Time Nights***

Joined NCH Team Jan. 31, 2020

Yvette grew up in Hill City. She attended Colby Community College. She has four boys and one girl and enjoys cooking, traveling, music and church.



### **Alyson Vahling**

***Environmental Services – PRN***

Joined NCH Team Jan. 21, 2020

Alyson was born in Norton. She attends Norton Community High School and received her CNA in the summer of 2019. Her mom, Alesha, is an administrative assistant at NCH; her dad, Greg, is a driver for CHS; and her brother, Dominic, is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. Alyson enjoys reading, going to the movies with friends, snowmobiling and spending time with family.

When asked why she chose to seek employment at NCH: "I have an interest in the medical profession."



### **Kelsee Hildebrand**

***Case Manager, LPN – Full Time***

Joined NCH Team Nov. 25, 2019

Kelsee grew up in Hill City. She is an LPN. She and her husband, Donny, have been married for 6 years. They have two daughters, Emmalynn is 2 and Quinnlynn is 1. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, riding horses and being a farmer's wife.

When asked why she chose to seek employment at NCH or what brought her to the area: "My husband was born and raised in rural Norton County."

## CEO Corner

*From the desk of Gina Frack, administrator and CEO*

Our Strategic Plan is a working document, not just words on paper. For this reason, my quarterly CEO comments will be based on that framework. Here are updates on our Strategic Plan focus areas:

### **#1 – Facility Status and Condition**

Part of our facility includes our equipment. I have been asking department heads to review their respective equipment inventory and assure it is up-to-date. We need to know manufactured date as well as purchased date. When we buy “refurbished” equipment, it may be new to us, but the actual age of the equipment can be much older than our purchased date. Moving forward, I would love for us to get away from the “nickel and dime” philosophy we have had and instead be managing all of our equipment proactively rather than waiting for failure to replace in a desperate situation. Considering how much our equipment costs are, it will take us a while to get out of this current state, but in time replacing equipment based off suggested replacement rather than end-of-life is the goal.

### **#2 – Funding and Public Financial Support**

We continue to educate staff, legislators and the public about our the challenges to rural health care at our facility, statewide and nationally. During January, we asked the Kansas Hospital Association to present to our Hospital Board a training called “Healthcare Finance 101.” This explained the complex business of health care in the U.S. and the even more challenging environment of providing health care in rural America. This same training was given to two of our three county commissioners as well. Aaron provided this presentation to the members of the Norton Regional Health Foundation Board of Directors. This same info will be presented at the next quarterly community meeting that will be rescheduled for March 2020.

### **#3 – Recruitment and Retention**

We continue to look into ways to fill our staffing vacancies across the organization. ALL positions are vital for running a hospital and clinic. It was for this reason we provided the monetary recruitment/retention incentives posted by HR to current employees who successfully recruit new staff to our organization.

For the lab, we are moving forward on learning how to use a VISA program called H1-B. Numerous rural hospitals across Kansas have used this international placement program for lab techs with much success. The process isn’t a fast one, so it will take us a few months to secure hopefully one or two people. Workforce shortages will only continue to worsen. Expanding our pool of applicants using resources such as this is a necessary move to make.

USD 211 has reached out to an array of professionals and organizations representing the diversity of employment opportunities in Norton County to better prepare our youth for the workforce. It is crucial that we do a better job of “growing our own” workforce, and that starts with our own youth. Great job to the staff members who have been supportive and gracious to the variety of students shadowing in our facility. Remember: we all were once in their shoes, so be sincerely welcoming and patient with all students. We never know which one of them will return to join our workforce someday! My dream is for our organization to someday become the “employer of choice” where we have more people sending applications to us than we have positions to fill! We continue to work with Kansas Hospital Association to explore other employee benefits and resources that we can offer our staff.

### **#4 – Regional Engagement and Needs**

We are working to better use our internal and external data analytics to “do our homework” (remember that is one of our values!). Using data to help us identify trends has a dual benefit. It validates a particular need that we then can pursue additional resources, staffing, funding, etc. One example that immediately comes to my mind is in the realm of behavioral health. I think most all of us have a “gut” sense that we are seeing and trying to care for many more behavioral health related needs. Doing some of this homework helps to quantify just how much the need is increasing.

Engagement can be seen in all the work staff are doing beyond our walls. Classes like “Stop the Bleed,” the first “Jump Clinic” to be hosted on Leap Day and the annual “Kicks on the Bricks” are just a few examples.

The quarterly community meetings are intended to increase transparency with our community members in the region. Yes, we are also exploring how to provide that interaction in ways our younger community members would appreciate – Facebook live may be coming sooner than later!

We continue to look toward the future and assess the blend of technology and health care needs. An example of this is work staff members are doing to increase our use of telehealth. A core staff group is comparing vendors of a telehealth platform that could expand with our changing needs.

Thanks to each of you for all you do for this organization and our community!

