

HEALTH NEWS from

FALL 2018

Northwest

Her new **HEALTHY LIFE**

**Kalandra Bearden tells
how weight-loss surgery
gave her a fresh start**

Ask the Doctor

**The importance of regular
mammogram screenings**

.....

News from Northwest Emergency at Town Square

**A new medical
director and more!**

Compliments of

 **Northwest Texas
Healthcare System**

FROM THE CEO

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Meet our new medical director



This is an exciting time at Northwest Texas Healthcare System and I am so pleased to share with you the great things happening here. I'm most excited about our journey to improve patient safety and the quality of care. Our clinical care teams and our physicians are effecting changes that are resulting in a higher quality of care and resulting in awards and accolades. Recently, the Northwest wound care program received the Center of Distinction Award for excellence.

The Texas Department of State Health Services designated Northwest as a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Blue Cross Blue Shield® recognized us for exemplary care in bariatric (weight-loss) surgery.

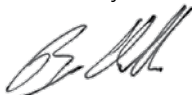
What does it all mean for you? You can be assured that we're dedicated to providing the highest quality of care possible. Your care and safety are our priorities.

I'm also happy to report Northwest is growing to meet the needs of Amarillo and the region. Northwest Emergency at Town Square continues to treat patients in an environment that offers the resources of Northwest right in your neighborhood.

As we continue to develop new programs and services, our need to recruit the best and brightest employees grows. Please check our employment opportunities at nwths.com/careers if you're interested in joining the awesome team at Northwest.

Patients are at the center of everything we do and the results are being demonstrated in the improved quality and safety goals. Whether you need specialized care for a new or chronic health condition, or emergent treatment, you can count on Northwest.

Sincerely,



Ryan R. Chandler, MHA, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer



We're proud to be the largest Level III NICU in the Panhandle

Northwest Texas Healthcare System has received designation as a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) from the Texas Department of State Health Services. Two key requirements for Level III are 24-hour in-house coverage by specialized personnel and board-certified neonatologists available around the clock. The designation is a result of legislation passed in 2013 requiring Texas to establish and implement neonatal level of care designations to ensure that NICUs have the expertise and resources needed to comply with mandatory rules guiding provision of appropriate high-quality care.

To learn more about our services, visit nwths.com/nicu.

Your **SLEEP** is their specialty!

Are you losing sleep over problems with snoring, daytime tiredness and trouble catching your zzz's? To get to the bottom of your nighttime woes, the Sleep Disorders Center at Northwest can help by providing sleep studies that are used to diagnose sleep apnea, insomnia and other conditions. Studies are conducted by technologists with advanced credentialing, and board-certified sleep specialist physicians use the results to determine a diagnosis.



Missy Mitchell,
RRT-SDS, RCP



Ivey Garcia,
RRT-SDS, RCP



Cindy Johnson-
Dawson, RRT-SDS, RCP

Overnight sleep studies are provided in private rooms with an adjustable queen-size bed, private bathroom, individual temperature control and technologist support, as needed. Sleep disorders not only affect people's quality of life, but can be associated with an increased risk of heart attacks, stroke, motor vehicle accidents and other problems. Getting help is important. The Sleep Disorders Center is located on the first floor of the Women's Healthcare Associates (WHA) building, next to the hospital.

To make an appointment, call 806-354-1701. For more information, visit nwths.com/sleepcenter or call 806-351-7013.

"Wow" results for wound care



Achieving outstanding clinical outcomes for 12 consecutive months, and patient satisfaction scores higher than 92 percent, the Wound Care and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Center at Northwest was recognized with a 2017 Center of Distinction Award from Healogics®.

As part of its comprehensive services, the wound care center treats patients with peripheral artery disease (PAD). This occurs when there is narrowing of the arteries, causing restricted blood flow to the limbs and often resulting in chronic wounds. "Early intervention is key," says wound care specialist Christy Hernandez, FNP. If you notice symptoms such as abnormal sensation or a temperature difference in your lower extremities, any open sores, swelling, or pain while walking, talk with your doctor right away.



To schedule an appointment, call 806-351-4152. To learn more about our services, visit nwths.com/heal.



Meet our new CFO

We're pleased to introduce Divya Matai as the new chief financial officer (CFO) at Northwest.

She brings robust experience to this position, with particular expertise in improving revenue cycle functions, decreasing supply expenses and managing the various Texas-specific programs. She previously served in similar financial leadership positions, and is wished much success in her new role on the leadership team!

Losing the weight and finding herself

Kalandra Bearden was 26 and beginning a new journey as a single mom when she decided to pursue weight-loss surgery. Her biggest motivation was to be healthier for her two daughters and more involved in their sports and other activities. “You want to be able to participate in those things with them instead of just always standing back and looking,” Bearden says. ►



Kalandra with her daughter before she had weight-loss surgery four years ago.



Summer 2018, Kalandra (right) with her girls.



She was familiar with weight-loss surgery because she worked in hospital admissions at Northwest Texas Healthcare System and had gotten to know many patients who had gone through the bariatric program. She saw the success they were having and thought it might be something that could help her. "I was assessed and met all the criteria," she says. Soon after, she had gastric sleeve surgery at Northwest.

Gastric sleeve is generally done as a minimally invasive laparoscopic procedure, in which the surgeon removes part of the stomach and creates a thin vertical sleeve. This reduces the size of the stomach and restricts the amount of food that can be eaten at a time, decreasing hunger and increasing the feeling of fullness.

Bearden says her experience from before surgery through recovery was amazing, and everyone at the hospital was so supportive. In the weeks that followed, she began to lose weight and celebrated each time she lost another 10 pounds. "It really does what it's supposed to do," she says of her procedure.

A Bariatric Support Group for people considering weight-loss surgery and those who have had surgery, as well as supportive family and friends, is held the last Monday of each month, except May.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT NWTHS.COM/WEIGHTLOSS. FOR A CONSULT WITH THE WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY COORDINATOR, CALL 806-354-1985.

"You still are able to enjoy food, with portion control and in a healthier way. You learn what you can handle and how much you can handle."

Exercise is an important part of her regular regimen. "Just being able to walk a few miles was the best feeling in the world," she says of the improved fitness she experienced as she lost the weight. "Eventually I was running. It was just kind of happening in front of my eyes."

In all, she lost about 115 pounds. She's thrilled to now have more energy for her "kiddos," and she's also happy to enjoy clothes shopping without her weight holding her back. This "boosts your self-esteem way beyond what I can tell you," she says.

It's been four years since her surgery, and she's now able to give the same support she received to people who go through admissions at Northwest for a weight-loss procedure. "It's been a really good experience for me," she says of her personal journey. "You're no longer hiding in that shadow anymore. You truly find yourself." ■

We've been recognized!

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas has recognized Northwest Texas Healthcare System with a Blue Distinction® Center designation in the area of bariatric (weight-loss) surgery as part of the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program. Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated healthcare facilities shown to deliver quality specialty care based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical community for patient safety and better health outcomes.

The bariatric surgical center at Northwest is also a Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP®) Accredited Comprehensive Center with Adolescent Qualifications. To earn this designation, Northwest met essential criteria for staffing, training and facility infrastructure and protocols for care, ensuring its ability to support patients with severe obesity.



Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.

Have you had your *mammogram*?



"Even if you're feeling well and have no complaints or symptoms, it's important to

have your annual mammogram screening," says **Mary Grace Bridges, MD**, a breast surgeon with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. Dr. Bridges provides specialized care for cancer, benign masses and other conditions of the breast. She emphasizes that screening is important to detect cancer earlier, when it is more treatable.

Q: When should I start regular mammograms?

Annual screening mammograms should start at age 40, and sooner for women at higher risk, including certain women with a family history of breast cancer. A number of factors are considered with regard to heredity. For example, was it a first-degree relative (e.g., mother, sister) who had cancer, and how old was she when diagnosed? Talk with your doctor about what constitutes high risk and whether you may be a candidate for genetic testing.

Q: I have "dense breasts." What does this mean?

Dense breasts appear whiter on a mammogram test than fatty breasts, and cancer usually appears white. This can make it harder to see any type of abnormality. 3D mammography can help because it takes multiple thin slices, which makes images easier to read. If there are concerns, additional testing, such as an ultrasound, can be provided. Generally, as women get older, their breast tissue becomes more fatty.

Q: What are "3D" mammograms, and are they better?

Both two-dimensional and three-dimensional (3D) mammograms use X-rays to provide detailed images of the breast. 3D tests provide multiple images from different angles, and are better able to detect abnormalities. Another advantage of 3D is a lower rate of "call backs." This can reduce the anxiety of having to return for additional testing.

Q: How else can I protect myself?

Along with regular mammograms, you should have "breast awareness." In other words, be familiar with your breasts, and if you notice a lump, skin changes, nipple discharge or something abnormal, tell your doctor. Also, it's important to have a clinical breast exam with a doctor at least every year, even before the age of 40. ■



 *The Women's Imaging Center*
at Northwest Texas Healthcare System

For an appointment, call 806-351-6266. To learn more, visit nwths.com/mammo.



Get to know the **new medical director** of Northwest Emergency at Town Square



A proud resident of Amarillo, **Frederick D. Poage, DO**, began working at Northwest Emergency at Town Square in May 2017 as an emergency physician. He has since become the facility's first medical director, still seeing patients in

conjunction with this leadership role. "I love taking care of people," he says. "One of my goals is to improve the efficiency of care and coordinate a better overall patient experience."

An advantage of being the area's only hospital-licensed freestanding emergency department is having access to the comprehensive resources of Northwest Texas Healthcare System. This means, unlike a typical freestanding facility, Northwest Emergency at Town Square is an extension of the main Northwest emergency department.

"The specialist physicians who are on call for the main hospital are on call for us as well," Dr. Poage says.

To help facilitate patients' continued care after they leave Northwest Emergency at Town Square, Dr. Poage has established a process that automatically sends a provider letter and follow-up report to the patient's primary care doctor and specialists, if applicable.

He has also implemented a brief survey for patients to complete upon discharge, to get feedback in real time. Dr. Poage says to stay tuned for other updates and enhancements.

A native of Texas, Dr. Poage is a husband and dad of two sons, as well as a pilot who enjoys flying in his free time. "It is rare to find a job that doesn't feel like a job," he says. "I absolutely love going to work." ■

Located at Hillside and Soncy, Northwest Emergency at Town Square is open 24/7/365. Learn more at nwths.com/townsquare. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911.



**Northwest
Emergency**

at Town Square

a service of Northwest Texas Healthcare System

ATTENTION, SENIORS: Attend a Medicare informational seminar!

Informational presentations about Medicare plan options are scheduled. For dates and times, visit prominencemedicare.com/ntxseminars.

Prominence[®]
Health Plan

Blue Cross Blue Shield® *Now accepted at Northwest!*



Quality care just got more accessible.

Northwest now accepts most Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas plans, and members can enjoy the full complement of patient-centered care from Northwest:

- Designated Trauma Center
- Specialty Children's Hospital
- Dedicated Heart Hospital
- Northwest Emergency at Town Square



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HEALTH NEWS FROM
NORTHWEST TEXAS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

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