

Northwest

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The power of **PROACTIVE CARE**

**Bonnie Burnett's remarkable recovery
from Guillain-Barré syndrome**

**Raising the bar on
emergency care**

.....

**Help for overcoming
sleep disorders**

*Bonnie and Jon Burnett share their journey
from the emergency room to hospital
and outpatient care at Northwest.*

Compliments of

 **Northwest**

Northwest FROM THE CEO



It's important to have quality care close by when a medical emergency arises. For Bonnie Burnett, who experienced a sudden and debilitating medical issue earlier this year, our satellite emergency room, Northwest Emergency at Town Square, enabled fast access to medical treatment at a critical time. When hospital admission was recommended, Bonnie and her husband, Jon, wanted more than just great care – they also wanted a

hospital that could provide spiritual support and reassurance. On page 4, they describe their experience at Northwest Texas Healthcare System and Bonnie's remarkable recovery.

When it comes to ER care, not all emergency rooms are built alike. Here at Northwest, we are examining our processes and aligning the physician team to help ensure optimal outcomes and minimal wait times. You can read more about this on page 6. You can also learn about sleep studies at our Sleep Disorders Center, as well as mental health support provided at The Pavilion, which is discussed on the next page.

As the stories in this issue demonstrate, quality care combines proven protocols with compassionate, experienced caregivers. We're proud to provide that at Northwest, and we remain committed to supporting you and your family's continued health.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Crawford, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

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We've been re-accredited for *weight-loss surgery*

As a testament to our high standard of care, the bariatric surgical center at Northwest Texas Healthcare System has been re-accredited as a Comprehensive Center under the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP®), a joint program of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS). This means that Northwest meets essential criteria for staffing, training and facility infrastructure and protocols for care.

A Bariatric Support Group for patients, supportive family and friends, and those considering weight-loss surgery meets the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Northwest Texas Healthcare Community Lecture Room.

To find out more, call 806-354-1985 or visit www.nwth.com/bariatricsupport.



Living a better LIFE

If you or someone you love is struggling with a mental health or addiction problem, The Pavilion at Northwest Texas Healthcare System can help. Specialized services for children, adolescents, adults and senior adults include:

- Inpatient services for patients with suicidal thoughts or attempts; major depression; aggression/uncontrolled anger; bipolar disorder; schizophrenia; post-traumatic stress; or the need for detoxification, rehabilitation from addiction(s) or medication management in a hospital setting.
- Partial hospitalization for patients who require more intensive treatment but still are able to reside at home.
- Outpatient services for patients who are stepping down from inpatient care or finding it difficult to function each day.
- A dedicated Uniformed Services Unit created specifically for the military and first responders, including police, firefighters and EMTs.
- A 28-Day Chemical Dependency Program for individuals suffering from addiction.

With inpatient care, the goal is to stabilize patients and develop an individualized plan that can help them transition back into the community, explains Christina Rolerson, LCSW, ACSW, Director of Clinical Services. In the outpatient setting, patients attend morning sessions and are able to return to their regular routines after lunch, says Melissa Preece, LCSW, C-CATODSW, LCDC, MAC, Director of Outpatient Services.

During a free assessment, caring mental health professionals can determine what would best meet a person's needs and provide referrals to community resources, as appropriate, to help patients achieve their individual goals.

New leadership at The Pavilion



Northwest Texas Healthcare System is pleased to announce that **Shelley Dodd** has been appointed **Chief Executive**

Officer/Managing Director of The Pavilion.

Ms. Dodd has over 20 years' experience in behavioral health as a licensed addiction and professional counselor. She has served in director roles since 2005.

To find out more, visit us at nwths.com/pavilion, or call our Access Department to schedule a free confidential assessment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 1-800-537-2585 or 806-354-1810.



The Pavilion

Northwest Texas Healthcare System

Leap of FAITH

 **Northwest
Emergency**
at Town Square

If you believe you or someone you're with is experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency, call 911 right away.

Faced with a sudden, mysterious health crisis, Bonnie and Jon Burnett sought emergency care at Northwest Texas Healthcare System and experienced a warmth and healing they never expected. ►

Bonnie Burnett, 35, is the busy mom of two young boys and describes herself as an active person. When she started feeling feverish and achy last January after a family hike, she figured it was probably the flu. So she went to see her primary care doctor, but her flu test came back negative.

The next she day woke up with numbness in her right leg, and by 2 p.m. her speech was slurred and she was having difficulty walking. Her husband, Jon, thought she'd had a stroke. They went immediately to Northwest Emergency at Town Square, which is about a block from their home.

"They ran several tests and ruled out the possibility of stroke," Jon recalls. But Bonnie's condition was getting worse, and the staff at the freestanding emergency department recommended that Bonnie go to a hospital for care. Bonnie and Jon reached out to their primary care doctor for advice. "He thought Bonnie would need trauma care and Northwest was the best place for her," Jon says.

Jon was concerned that Northwest might not offer the spiritual support they needed, but they followed their doctor's suggestion and Bonnie was admitted to the hospital right away. Initial testing was inconclusive. Based on Bonnie's symptoms, doctors suspected Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS), a disorder in which the body's own immune system attacks its nerve cells.

"GBS is a very serious condition and can cause disability if there is a delay in treatment," explains Mazin Saadaldin, MD, who cared for Bonnie throughout most of her stay. Shortly after arriving at Northwest, Bonnie was moved into the ICU, and after consulting with Jon about her worsening condition, Dr. Saadaldin switched her to a more aggressive

treatment to help minimize the risk of a long-term disability.

Further testing confirmed the GBS diagnosis but did not reveal what caused it. Within several days, Bonnie had movement only in her lips and eyes; then her lung collapsed. A doctor was right there to intubate Bonnie, Jon recalls – "a benefit of being at Northwest," he says.

Together with her family, friends and the hospital chaplain – who visited the Burnetts every day – Bonnie fought her way back. Jon recalls how Dr. Saadaldin encouraged him to bring their boys – Knox and Jaxon – to lay with their mom. "I think it helped me to heal more quickly," Bonnie says.

Twenty-two days after arriving at Northwest, Bonnie was able to go home. "It was really like a miracle," she says. "If they had not treated me as aggressively and gotten care so quickly, I don't think I would have been walking out."

"Nurses would pray with her, the spiritual atmosphere was like nothing I had ever seen," says Jon, who now volunteers with the hospital's chaplain.

When a question arose about where Bonnie would go for outpatient therapy, she and Jon agreed without question that Northwest was where they wanted to be. "This could have been a very dark experience, but it was the complete opposite," says Bonnie. "To go all the way through, even to outpatient rehab, and to do it all at Northwest was just a great experience." ■



Bonnie's husband, Jon, and their boys, Knox and Jaxon, inspired her during her recovery.

Bringing emergency care closer

Northwest Emergency at Town Square, located at 8960 Hillside Road in Amarillo, is the only local freestanding emergency facility operated under a hospital license. That means it has the full resources and backup of the Northwest Texas Healthcare System. Emergency services are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Most insurance plans, including Medicare, are accepted.

For more information, visit www.nwths.com/townsquare.

Also, to find out more about emergency services at Northwest, see the story on page 6.

A better ER experience at Northwest



A new alliance to provide emergency services at Northwest Texas Healthcare System is elevating care, with a focus

on minimizing wait times, ensuring best practices and establishing a consistent physician team.

David Soria, MD, FACEP, FAAEM, President/CEO of TruePartners Emergency Physicians, explains how his group is working with Northwest, and what it means for the residents of Amarillo.

Q: What distinguishes the new ER approach?

A key component is establishing a team of residency-trained physicians who are board-certified in emergency medicine and bring a heightened level of experience and consistency. The goal is to ensure that physicians have an in-depth knowledge of the facility, nurses, paramedics, hospital staff and the community.

Q: What are the benefits of having a consistent physician team?

With medical emergencies, minutes can save lives. Doctors who are experienced in handling different situations and established in their roles can expedite care and know which specialists to call if more advanced treatment is needed. This helps to support the best possible outcomes and patient experience.

If you or someone you're with is experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Q: How are you reducing wait times?

Earlier this year, we opened eight new bays, which are individual patient areas with recliners and personal TVs, where patients with less serious conditions can receive medical treatment and await test results. This helps to support faster care and opens up treatment areas for more complex patients or new patients coming in.

Q: What else distinguishes services at Northwest?

Northwest is a Level III Trauma facility and is recognized in the region for its LIFESTAR emergency air transport services. It is accredited by the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care (SCPC) as a Chest Pain Center with Primary PCI and has earned Advanced Certification as a Primary Stroke Center by The Joint Commission. Northwest also has the area's only freestanding ED operated under a hospital license, Northwest Emergency at Town Square. (See related story on pages 4-5.) ■



For more information on emergency services at Northwest, visit www.nwth.com/emergency.

THE ONE NIGHT'S SLEEP THAT COULD *change your life*



An estimated 50-70 million U.S. adults have a sleep or wakefulness disorder, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For many patients, an overnight sleep study may be recommended to help monitor sleep patterns and make a diagnosis. The Sleep Disorders Center at Northwest Texas Healthcare System provides a safe, comfortable environment where you can have the testing you need to help put your sleep problems to rest.

Why is diagnosing a sleep problem important?

Sleep doesn't just affect your quality of life. It can also impact your health. For example, obstructive sleep apnea, which occurs when the soft tissue in the back of the throat collapses in the airway, can cause a person to stop breathing up to hundreds of times each night. This can lead to possible high blood pressure, heart failure, stroke, diabetes and other problems.

Along with sleep apnea, the Sleep Disorders Center also conducts testing for insomnia (difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep), restless legs syndrome and narcolepsy.

What are the symptoms?

Missy Mitchell, RRT-NPS, RCP, Manager of the Sleep Disorders Center, says symptoms that may lead to sleep testing include: loud snoring, gasping, fatigue, daytime sleepiness, morning headaches, dry mouth and sore throat, waking frequently to urinate, feeling irritable, depressed, mood swings, personality changes, memory loss and not being able to concentrate.

"You may find yourself falling asleep during still moments during the day," she notes. This can detract from productivity at work or school and may put people at increased risk of automobile accidents – a serious concern for many patients.

Getting appropriate care starts with an accurate diagnosis.

"We want to help patients get the answers they need to get a better night's rest," Mitchell says. ■



What happens in a sleep study?

During an overnight stay at the Sleep Disorders Center, clinicians monitor sleep patterns, heart rate, breathing, muscle movement, brain waves and oxygen levels. The Center is located in the Women's Healthcare Associates (WHA) building at 1301 S. Coulter, Suite 110, Amarillo.

The Sleep Disorders Center features:

- Private rooms, each with an adjustable queen-sized bed and TV (pictured above)
- Private bathrooms with a shower in each room
- Beverages and other amenities to ensure a comfortable night's stay

**The Sleep Disorders Center at
Northwest Texas
Healthcare System**

If you have concerns about your sleep, talk with your doctor. A doctor's order is required for a sleep study at the Sleep Disorders Center. For more information, call 806-351-7013 or visit nwths.com/sleep.

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**Northwest Urgent Care-
Southeast**

1900 SE 34th Avenue
806-351-7530, M-Sat. 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Learn more at www.nwths.com.

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