

Our Commitment to Nursing Care at Northwestern Memorial Hospital

Having a highly skilled and compassionate nursing team at the bedside can make the difference in your hospital stay. Northwestern Memorial Hospital works to ensure that the best nursing care is available for you and your family.

Our goal is to attract, develop and retain the *Best People* as our employees. Prospective nursing caregivers undergo a rigorous screening process. Once hired, they complete a day-long hospital orientation. In addition, a four-day professional nursing orientation and a four-day orientation for nursing assistants take place to ensure every nursing caregiver receives consistent basic training and understands our expectations. New nursing caregivers must undergo a four-week to three-month orientation program tailored to their role, experience level, clinical specialty and departmental assignment. Through our preceptor program, new nursing caregivers are assigned to an experienced member of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's nursing staff who oversees, mentors and evaluates their performance during the orientation period. Upon successful completion of orientation, the nursing caregiver begins to practice independently.

All nursing staff members begin their careers at Northwestern Memorial Hospital with the appropriate skills, knowledge and abilities to meet our high standards in caring for the needs of our patients. Learning is ongoing and enhanced through continuing education opportunities and training programs offered by our staff educational component, the NM Academy. Nursing caregivers are evaluated at least once every year.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital is committed to having professional, dedicated caregivers at the bedside. This commitment is supported by a yearly evaluation of:

- National staffing benchmarks for each clinical department
- Evolving nursing practices and standards
- Results of quality improvement initiatives
- Advances in healthcare technology

This information is used to update staffing plans and tailor them to the patients on each unit.

The number of nursing caregivers assigned to each patient care unit is based on specific patient needs. Prior to each change of shift, the charge nurse determines the unit's staffing requirements, which are dictated by each patient's nursing care plan as well as the total number of patients on the unit and their conditions. Decisions to increase or decrease staffing are made accordingly.

If you have additional questions about nursing staff training and daily staffing on a specific patient care unit, the manager of the unit will be happy to provide you with more detailed information.