

# THE HUM

The Holy Cross Medical Center Newsletter

Fall 2019



**PAINT / A O S PINK**  
*OCTOBER IS* **BREAST CANCER  
AWARENESS MONTH**

Join us for events that benefit **Holy Cross Cancer Support Services**

# Update From Bill Patten



Some upcoming issues, projects, initiatives for HCMC

## The Mill Levy

In 2016 Taos voters approved one mill of property tax to be directed to Holy Cross; this mill levy has produced about \$1.2M/year and has been used for repairs/maintenance to our building and for the purchase of medical and capital equipment (a complete list of these items can be found on the Holy Cross website). The 2016 mill levy was for 4 years so it must be reauthorized in 2020. In addition to asking voters to reapprove the mill levy we plan to ask them to increase it to 4.25 mills; the maximum amount allowed under current law. This higher amount will produce about \$5.1M/year.

We have been discussing with a variety of community not-for-profit organizations how this increased mill levy funding can be used. Our current plan is to share 0.75 mill or about \$900,000/year with 3-5 different organizations to address issues such as creation/support of a local detox center, enhancement of local mental and behavioral health services, homeless issues, and sexual assault issues. These are the highest-ranking projects that have been discussed. If the 4.25 mill rate is approved as we will propose to the County Commissioners at an upcoming meeting, Holy Cross will issue RFP's for these projects and we will provide funding up to \$900,000/year to support other organizations

in addressing these and a few other topics.

The bulk of the new funding, 3.5 mill or about \$4.2M will be used by Holy Cross for three specific purposes:

1. About \$1.5M/year for building maintenance and repair;
2. About \$1.5M/year for operations; and
3. About \$1.0M/year for creation of a reserve fund.

The \$1.5M for operations will largely be used to enhance our current salary and benefit package; the specifics of these proposals will need to be negotiated with the 1199NM Union. It is important that everyone understand, however, that we cannot commit all of this money to base salary increases in the first few years of the new mill levy. After all, if we spend \$1.5M in year 1, then the inflationary effect of this amount in future budgets will result in salary and benefit expenditures that we could not afford. I think we have some creative ways to address this issue and look forward to discussing these ideas in upcoming union negotiations (our wage reopener is currently scheduled for early 2020).

As we take this campaign to our community it will be essential that our employees and medical staff actively support this mill levy increase project. Without your support the mill levy request will not be successful, and we will not be able to fund the important projects that I have described. Over the coming weeks and months we will provide you with a variety of ways you can get involved and show your support for this vital effort!

## The Appropriation Request

In addition to the increased mill levy funding, we are also compiling a list of campus, building, and equipment repair and acquisition projects. As recently approved by the Board, this list will be approximately \$5.6M.

This special appropriation request will be submitted in response to the projected state surplus of 1 billion dollars! If successful, this appropriation request will be a wonderful compliment to the increased mill levy funding projects!

## The Regional OB Grant

I hope everyone has heard that a regional coalition led by Holy Cross was recently awarded a 4-year grant designed to develop and test new models to provide OB services on a regional basis. Our coalition partner organizations include Miners Colfax Hospital in Raton, Union County General Hospital in Clayton, the Presbyterian Medical Services Clinic in Questa, as well as our own First Steps home visitation program. This grant will provide the coalition with about \$3m over a 4-year period. Our grant request was one of only three that were funded (a total of 21 proposals were received by HRSA). While we are exploring different ways to provide OB services, I hope no one questions our commitment to continue to provide high-quality healthcare services in Taos and our surrounding community organizations!

## Employee Service Awards

And finally, I hope many of you will be able to join us at the El Monte Segrado for our upcoming Employee Service Awards celebration! Employees who have completed service in 5-year increments will be recognized. While this small group of employees will be recognized at this event, I want to emphasize a point I made at the recent All Staff meetings; everyone at Holy Cross plays a vital role in helping us fulfill our mission - providing high quality healthcare to our local community with an emphasis on personalized service! Thank you for all that you do - you make a positive difference each and every day!



# PAINT TAOS PINK

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Join us for events that benefit **Cancer Support Services (CSS)**.

**OCT. 17**  
1-3<sup>PM</sup>

## **Look Good - Feel Great**

A special session for women experiencing cancer at the CSS office (413 Sipapu St).

**OCT. 18**  
7<sup>PM</sup>

## **Paint Taos Pink Football game**

Join us at Taos High School Anaya Field. Wear pink and come support the Tigers and CSS!

**OCT. 24**  
ALL DAY

## **Official Town of Taos Pink Day & Auction**

Show your support by wearing pink! A silent auction will take place at the **Bareiss Gallery from 5-8pm**.

**OCT. 26**  
11<sup>AM</sup>-1<sup>PM</sup>

## **Zumba Pink Party**

Join us at the Guadalupe Church Gym for Zumba with your favorite local instructors.



**Dining Out for the Cause** - Dine at the following restaurants and a percentage of the profits will be donated to CSS:

**Gutiz** (Oct. 16th, 8<sup>AM</sup> to 3<sup>PM</sup>)

**Trading Post** (Oct. 23rd, 11<sup>AM</sup> to 9<sup>PM</sup>)

**Bent Street Deli** (Oct. 30th, 8<sup>AM</sup> to 4<sup>PM</sup>)

Find our full calendar of Paint Taos Pink events:  
[www.TaosCancerSupport.org](http://www.TaosCancerSupport.org) • 575.751.8927

# New Mexico Rural Hospitals Awarded Top Honor in hospital Quality



## Hospitals meet rigorous national goals for improving patient safety.

Five New Mexico hospitals, serving the state's rural communities, earned the Hospital Improvement Innovation Network (HIIN) award, one of New Mexico Hospital Association's (NMHA's) premier honors for hospital quality. These hospitals were honored for projects that enlisted multiple teams and approaches to reduce hospital readmissions, the occurrence of infections and adverse drug events. The awards were presented in a ceremony at the 74th Annual Meeting of the NMHA in Albuquerque.

The HIIN Critical Access/Rural Hospital awardees are: Holy Cross Medical Center (Taos), Mimbres Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home (Deming), Miners' Colfax Medical Center (Raton), Roosevelt General Hospital (Portales) and Socorro General Hospital (Socorro).

"New Mexico hospitals' performance, throughout the HIIN project, has been nothing short of extraordinary," said John Harris, NMHA board member and CEO of Memorial Medical Center in Las Cruces, N.M.

Collectively, all 36 New Mexico acute care hospitals have met the 20 percent overall reduction goal of inpatient harm. These reductions translate into over 5,500 prevented patient harms, more than 476 lives saved, and over \$70 million in healthcare cost savings in New Mexico.

Since 2016, 36 New Mexico acute care hospitals have participated in HIIN

quality and patient safety programs along with 1,600 hospitals across the county. HIIN is two-year grant through the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that set aggressive goals to reduce inpatient harms by 20 percent and readmissions by 12 percent by 2019. NMHA administers the New Mexico HIIN with the Health Research and Educational Trust (HRET) of the American Hospital Association (AHA).

The NMHA's Quality Committee selected the awardees using a point system that recognized overall performance, improvement and maintenance of zero patient harms over the past 12 months. Programs like HIIN, engage hospital leadership and clinicians at all levels to build on successes and spread best practices in education and staff training, mentorship, monitoring, data collection and analysis, and governance across the state.

2019 HIIN Critical Access/Rural Hospital Awardees

### Holy Cross Medical Center:

Reduced hospital readmissions by 14 percent and has maintained harm events in C. diff infections, anticoagulation adverse drug events and central line blood stream infections (CLABSI).

### Mimbres Memorial Hospital:

Reduced opioid adverse drug events by 21 percent, reduced C. diff infections by 56 percent and maintained zero harm events in central line and catheter associated infections.

### Miners' Colfax Medical Center:

Reduced anticoagulation adverse drug events by over 50 percent and maintained zero harm events in central line and catheter associated infections, C. diff infections, and hypoglycemia adverse drug events.

### Roosevelt General Hospital:

Reduced patient falls by 34 percent, reduced hospital readmissions by almost 40 percent, and maintained zero harm events in central line and catheter associated infections.

### Socorro General Hospital:

Reduced C. diff and central line infections by 100 percent and maintained zero harm events opioid adverse drug events, catheter association infections and methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infections.

"Commitment to quality and patient safety is central to the mission of NMHA member hospitals," said Jeff Dye, NMHA president and CEO. "These hospitals' comprehensive plans, put into action, have made them leaders in the state and nation in fostering patient safety and quality,"

For more on strides New Mexico hospitals have made in advancing quality and patient safety in their communities, listen to the NMHA Advancing Quality & Patient Safety Podcast at <https://anchor.fm/nmha>. Podcast guests include healthcare and clinical experts across our state.

*New Mexico Hospital Association (NMHA) represents 46 New Mexico hospitals, health networks, ambulatory facilities, home health agencies and affiliate groups on state and federal legislative and regulatory public policy issues. NMHA partners with its members and others to improve, through best practices and innovation, the health status of New Mexico residents. It is an authoritative source for hospital data used in public policy initiatives. For over five decades, NMHA has advocated for the common good and collective interests of its members and patients, in an ever-changing health care environment.*



# RISK: Opioids

By Renee Laughlin

Every day we hear more and more about the national opioid crisis and its impact on the lives of all the people around us. But, what are we talking about? First, what is an opioid? An opioid is a class of drugs which includes illegal drugs, such as heroin, as well as prescribed medications with familiar names such as oxycodone and codeine.

Opioids are effective pain relievers but are also extremely addictive. Misuse of opioids has become a national and local epidemic. In 2015 it

is estimated that in the USA 12.5 million people misused prescription opioids and 33,091 people died from an opioid overdose.

Surprisingly, in New Mexico in 2017, most unintentional overdoses were caused by prescription opioids, and not by illegal opioids. In 2017, in Taos County 28 of our friends, family and neighbors died from an opiate overdose.

## How can we help?

We can screen our patients carefully for risk of opioid misuse. We can educate our patients about the risk associated with opioids and

encourage patients to keep the medication stored in a safe place. We can help by being knowledgeable about, and keeping an eye out for signs of misuse (such as an unexplainable change in behavior and personality) in our family members, friends and coworkers. We can encourage those who are struggling with opioid misuse to seek help for this treatable illness.

Like other illnesses, opioid misuse is a treatable condition which not does not need to end in death and devastation.

## For more information about opioid misuse:

[www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline)

## For more information about safely taking prescribed opioid medications:

[www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/prescription-drug-abuse/in-depth/how-to-use-opioids-safely/art-20360373](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/prescription-drug-abuse/in-depth/how-to-use-opioids-safely/art-20360373)

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## Compliance Corner

By Renee Laughlin

Information Technology Security is an important part of our Corporate Compliance program. Lately, more and more health care organizations, both large and small, have been targeted by malicious hackers via organizational email. The consequences of these attacks has been very serious. Sometimes hackers steal private employee and patient information which can be used for identity theft and other fraudulent activity. Sometimes the hospital's IT systems are held hostage for a ransom. **This is not a theoretical concern.** Locally, two hospitals; one a small hospital like HCMC and one a large hospital system, have suffered the costly and crippling effects of malicious Phishing attacks. To evaluate how vulnerable HCMC is to malicious Phishing attacks, our IT department has sent out "test" Phishing emails.

From these test emails, we have learned that while most of our staff recognize a "bad" email, a significant percentage of our staff click on this Phishing bait and fail the test. Each click creates a potential for exposure of the organization to hacking.

### What does this mean?

It means that our IT systems are exposed and at risk each time an inappropriate email is opened

### What email is safe to open?

Emails from a sender you know are safe. Responses to emails you have sent are safe. There are many situations in which it is difficult to know if an email is safe to open.

Erring on the side of caution and sending the email to John Gonzales, [jgonzales@taoshospital.org](mailto:jgonzales@taoshospital.org), is the action to take if you

are not sure that the email is safe to open. While this does create a delay, the delays, trouble and expense caused by opening Phishing email are much, much greater and graver.

### Good intentions, inadvertent clickings and lack of awareness do not reduce our exposure.

It takes only *ONE* person clicking on *ONE* infected email to take down our entire system...this means all our EMR programs, HRP/payroll/ time and attendance, our intranet, our phones and many other IT functions upon which we rely. What to do? Please slow down, please use caution and good judgment, and, please click safely!

# Federal Health Care Grant Awarded to Northern NM

By Gayle Martinez, Marketing & Communication Coordinator

A Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies Program grant was awarded to Holy Cross Medical Center by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The Rural OB Access & Maternal Services (ROAMS) network will develop innovative methods for providing rural OB services on a regional basis. The first year of the grant is a planning year. In years 2-4 the plan will be implemented by the network. The funding of \$593,400 in year one and \$2,389,379 in years 2-4 will be used to create an innovative and sustainable rural regional model of providing obstetric services to Northern New Mexico.

The concept is to create a network of care that will link three rural counties in northeastern New Mexico in a supported continuum of maternal and obstetric care. The target population is women of childbearing age and their families across Taos, Colfax, and Union Counties in northeastern New Mexico, with the goal of improving maternal health literacy and access to care by addressing geographic, educational and financial concerns.

Over the last decade the number of rural hospitals in America has declined and there has been even more of a reduction in the number of hospitals that provide care to pregnant patients" said Dr. Tim Moore of Holy Cross Women's Health Institute. "These women must travel further and further, hundreds of miles, to receive care and deliver their babies." Along with this the number of obstetricians and other practitioners who are trained and skilled to provide maternity care has also sharply declined. Rural America represents 75% of our land and 23% of women are age 18 years and older. Dr. Moore indicates that less than 5% of obstetricians practice in rural counties and in 50% of these areas there is no OB/GYN provider at all.

"Based upon our experience and our research, OB is a service-line that many small rural hospitals have been forced to abandon. The shrinking number of qualified providers coupled with declining and inadequate reimbursement is not a formula for success." said Bill Patten, CEO for Holy Cross Medical Center. He went on to explain, "Holy Cross Medical Center understands the importance our community places on keeping OB services local. When we learned about this grant we saw it as an excellent opportunity to partner with other small hospitals in our region. We will be able to explore new and creative ways to provide services in each of our local communities, by pooling our resources and working together."

This grant was applied for in partnership with the following entities:

- Holy Cross Medical Center, Critical Access Hospital (CAH), Taos, Taos County
- Miners Colfax Medical Center, CAH, Raton, Colfax County
- Union County General Hospital, CAH, Clayton, Union County
- Questa Health Center, FQHC, Questa, Taos County
- Taos First Steps, Home Visiting Program, Taos, Taos County

"This is a huge and worthwhile undertaking", said Jeannie Ross, Community Outreach Director for HCMC. "We knew this project would be so beneficial for our communities. Only three grants were awarded nationally and we were one of them! To be chosen on a national level and be able to bring innovative ideas and technology to our families is a great opportunity."

When asked about the importance of this funding Dr. Tim Moore indicated that this will enable northern New Mexico to create a model program to reach out and provide safe, high quality, and up to

date prenatal care to all women who reside here. "My hope is that we will then be one of many such programs across the US and show that every person deserves the best care that health care can be provided, not matter where they live."

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## Bill Patten Receives Executive Regent's Award



Our CEO Bill Batten, received the American College of Healthcare Executives Senior Level Healthcare Executive Regent's Award.

This award was bestowed on Patten by Stephen Stoddard, Executive Director, New Mexico Rural Hospital Network. The Senior-Level Healthcare Executive Regent's Award recognized ACHE members who are experienced in the field and have made significant contributions to the advancement of healthcare management excellence and the achievement of ACHE's goals.



BeStaRRs is an employee recognition program of Holy Cross Medical Center | Behavior Standards Reward, Recognition and Social activities



**ED Staff, ED Medical Staff, Dr. Darnell, Cardiopulmonary, Leslie Smith HSM, ICU Staff**  
Recognized for: TEAMWORK

During the Memorial Day holiday, the ER found themselves with multiple trauma victims due to a motorcycle accident, as well as a trauma arrest, and many other medical patients. The ED Department quickly came together and did an amazing job. The ED day shift staff stayed late, (Jaime Sampere, Estrella Padilla, and Ely Abrams), ICU nurse (Martha Jaramillo, and tele tech (Susan Duran) pitched in. ED night shift and swing staff (Kellie Prindle, Nick Ledonard, Mike Kircher, Tenaha Strain, and Emily Brown), all worked tirelessly. Cecilia, day RT, stayed late and Andrew one of our new RTs took on the challenge and together they did a great job. Dr. Bjorkman stayed late to assist. Dr. Moran, Christa Castro and Martin Neubert, also did an awesome job. House shift manager Leslie Smith and Dr. Darnell rolled up her sleeves and jumped in to help as well, while US Urbana Wilson took care of transfer paperwork, getting the patients out to higher level of care.

A big thank you to all these departments for their excellence in TEAMWORK!



**Engineering/Plant OPS**  
**Behavior Standard: Accountability**  
Nominated by: IT, Shea Brock and another anonymous individual

Nominated for the way they handled the leaks and the seal replacement project. Patrick worked tirelessly over one weekend diverting water in the hallways, creatively hooking up hoses to capture the leaking water and catch it in trash cans. He really went out of his way to engineer ways to divert the water. Manual, Julian and Steve all jumped in to help during the seal replacement. Steve would come early each morning and pre-cut the drywall so the contractors could reach the seals. Dennis was instrumental in making sure the Sandi stayed on track and fixes were done correctly. This was a true team effort and everyone took ownership.



**LDRP**  
**Nominated by: Zoe Gallegos, Dan Michaud and Lifeguard Emergency Services**  
Behavior Standard: Teamwork

Dan said, it had been a busy day/night in LDRP, delivered 4 babies, with two ill neonates and despite being short staffed, everyone chipped in with every patient. It was one of the busiest days I had seen at HCMC and the LDRP staff killed it! Thanks to Pam, Irene, Brittany, Evelyn, Tristan, OR, ED and ICU staff who assisted in the needs of the patients that day. The teamwork was exceptional, the atmosphere was busy but not chaotic and Dan said he was exceptionally lucky to be able to perform his job with such astounding individuals. The care of the infant could not have been performed so well if it wasn't for the entire team working together.



**Samantha Tafoya RN - Med Surg Unit**  
**Recognized for Quality and Safety**  
Nominated by: Kathy Alcon, PT

While on her way to mobilize a surgical patient, Kathy states she stopped first to check in with his nurse Samantha, who reported the patient had taken a lot of pain meds after having a bad night. She suggested, for safety, that she help Kathy get him out of bed. As soon as he stood up he had a negative reaction, they quickly returned him to bed, and Samantha took control of the situation. She notified the MD, who ordered a lung scan revealing multiple PE's. Per Kathy, "Sam saved this patients life all while as remaining calm, cool and collected. Her knowledge and professionalism were impressive."

HCMC is proud to have Samantha be a part of our team! Thank you for taking good care of our patients!



**Dr. Ismail - Cardiology**  
**Recognized for Communication**  
Nominated by Deb Chase

Dr. Ismail has been proactive in assisting our new Cardiologist, Frank Torres, and the team by helping to trouble shoot a solution for the billing of halter monitor visits. She took it upon herself to go to the Billing Department to see where the issue was. She then created a spreadsheet for Dr. Torres to use and spent time coaching him in how to effectively use and submit it. She also communicated with Sam Macarenas, the staff and Deb Chase about what she was hoping to accomplish and how. She addressed the problem promptly, worked with others to improve the workflow, prevent errors and improve the outcome. She worked with everyone involved and focused on patient safety and satisfaction while fixing and improving the process.

Thank you Dr. Ismail for communicating with everyone and for improving a process that was broken.





**Tristan Kwiecinski**  
**Behavior Standard: Safety and Quality**  
 Nominated by: Coworker, Mid-level and flight nurse

Tristan was calm and amazing during the delivery of four babies during a 12 hour shift. She exceeds her job expectation everyday however on this day she really showed her skill and knowledge as the primary nurse for the ill baby that had to be transported. The Flight nurse that picked up the ill neonate said she provided amazing care and her report including all the records needed. She said the neonate they picked up was the most well managed neonate she had ever transported out of Holy Cross. Treatments were spot on, correct antibiotic doses given, gases done, everything was perfect."



**Anna Martinez**  
**Behavior Standard: Respect and Courtesy**  
 Nominated by: Sue Romansky

Sue observed Anna one morning filling multiple coffee cups and placing them on a tray. When asked about the coffee Anna said she had seen a family in the hallway that had spent the night at the hospital and she thought they could use some coffee. Anna didn't know the family or the circumstances; her only thought was **what can I do to help**. She was observant, she took ownership and she put herself in their shoes. Anna went above and beyond to be friendly, courteous and respectful. She has a true customer focus and is a great role model for others.



**Irene and Melanie**  
**Recognized for Respect and Courtesy**  
 Nominated by Zoe Gallegos

While working on Med Surg, Irene and Melanie learned of a patient in ICU on comfort care who was passing away.

Melanie went out of her way to check in with the family repeatedly even though she was not assigned to the patient. She showed the family such care and compassion during a difficult time.

Irene moved the patient into a bigger, more private room, making sure everyone was comfortable and that there were enough chairs for everyone.

Thank you to Irene and Melanie for showing such respect and courtesy when it was needed most.



**Barbie Trujillo - Surgery**  
**Recognized for Accountability**  
 Nominated by Dr. Ismail

Barbie and the whole surgery team had provided wonderful care to herself and her husband Alan during a recent visit. They felt that they were the two most important people that were being cared for that day. They especially wanted to thank Barbie, who works in pre-admission, for taking a careful pre-op history and recommending additional testing. This allowed them to detect a problem they were unaware of and get it addressed. "We could not be happier with our experience"

Thank you Barbie for taking the extra time to make sure each and every patient is ready for surgery, keeping them safe and identifying problems that could cause complications.

## Please Welcome Our New Staff:



**Our New HR Director,**  
 Leslie Hixson



**Our New Orthopedic Fellows**

from left to right: Dr. Daniel Jones, Dr. Peter Neff, Dr. Donald Franklin.

## We said Happy RETIRMENT to:



**Trish Hendricks**



**Monte Stiles**



