

# the INDEPENDENT

A Newsletter for Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

[www.Madonna.org](http://www.Madonna.org)

April 3, 2009

402.489.7102

The Madonna Independent, an employee newsletter of Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, is published every other Friday by the Marketing and Public Relations department. To submit a story idea, news item, announcement or recognition information, contact Tami Rudder, editor, at 486-8606.

All story ideas, news items, announcements or recognition information must be submitted the Friday before the Independent is printed. **The deadline for the next issue is Friday, April 10.**

*\*The Independent can be viewed online at [www.Madonna.org](http://www.Madonna.org)*

Madonna therapist receives top honor



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## Adaptive Sports gets "awesome" rating

When a child tells you, "It was awesome!" it's pretty much equivalent to earning a five-star service rating. So, when Hayden Higgins, a second grader at North American Martyrs, described his experience at the March 28 ice hockey workshop in those exact words, it thrilled Madonna recreation therapist and Adaptive Sports and Recreation Program Leader Linda Ohnoutka.

Hayden was diagnosed with Duchenne (pronounced: due-shen) Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) when he was not quite 7. It is the most common type of the disease, which is caused by a problem with the gene that makes protein in the body. The protein helps muscle cells keep their shape and strength. As a result, Hayden has had increasing difficulty walking and getting up after a fall. Although DMD is impacting how Hayden lives, it hasn't stopped him from being active.

Like his classmates, he enjoys reading, gaming on his Nintendo Wii and is a Cub Scout. Knowing their son can remain active keeps Jodie and Paul Higgins happy. "To see him smiling and interacting with the other kids is rewarding," Jodie said.

An advertisement for Madonna's youth adaptive sports and recreation workshops prompted Jodie to call Madonna. Hayden's school PTO was organizing a March 19 ice skating party and, thanks to Madonna, not only was Hayden able to participate in the party, he signed up for the ice hockey workshop, which, according to Hayden, also earned an awesome rating.



## Occupational therapy for traumatic brain injury

by Jennifer Sylva, MOT, OTR/L and Lynn Dolezal, OTR/L

March highlighted Brain Injury Awareness and April marks Occupational Therapy month.

This seemed an opportune time to share information about occupational therapy treatment for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) patients.

TBI occurs when an external force, such as a motor vehicle accident, gunshot, fall or assault causes damage to the brain. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, males are about 1.5 times as likely as females to sustain a TBI, generally due to lifestyle. The two age groups at highest risk to sustain a TBI are 0-4 years old and 15-24 years old. Costs of treating a TBI totaled an estimated \$60 billion in 2000. At least 5.3 million Americans currently have a long term need for help to perform activities of daily living as a result of a TBI.<sup>1</sup>

Most recovery from TBI occurs in the first year and can continue for the following five years. Some brain injury survivors may experience recovery throughout their lifetime. After sustaining a TBI, medical professionals measure brain recovery using a standardized measure called the Rancho

Los Amigos scale (RLA). The RLA is a scale measured from stages 1-8 ranging from a non responsive coma level (Level 1) to a purposeful independent living level (Level 8).

Brain injury survivors may begin their recovery at any level on the RLA scale and typically progress through each stage chronologically. The amount of time needed for recovery varies; therefore, the amount of time spent at each level, as well as the ability to progress through each level, depends on many factors including mechanism of injury, age and onset.

The occupational therapist's (OT) role in the recovery of a TBI covers a broad spectrum including:

- independence with self-cares
- home management skills
- return to employment skills
- return to academic setting
- family training/education
- strengthening
- vision therapy
- return to driving
- child care
- treating muscle imbalance

For a TBI patient whose recovery stage is considered a Level 5 on the RLA scale (confused, inappropriate, non-agitated), a typical occupational therapy session may include working on increasing independence with the showering/dressing routine in the



Madonna Occupational Therapist Kortney Cuddigan helps Julie Young relearn her way around the kitchen. Julie lost some of her cognitive skills due to a traumatic brain injury.

morning. The OT utilizes external written cues, such as a checklist, to help sequence through this task, including promoting safety and independence. In addition, the patient may be experiencing double vision, abnormal muscle contractions in an extremity, poor memory, and impaired attention and concentration.

The OT incorporates functional tasks to facilitate recovery in each of these areas of impairment.

Madonna served 156 individuals with brain injury during the 2008 fiscal year. Of these, 69 percent had traumatic brain injuries. Madonna has 12 inpatient and 36 outpatient occupational therapists on staff. Madonna's Brain Injury Program (BI) is one of the only programs in this region to receive CARF specialty accreditation for its Brain Injury Program.

Source: <sup>1</sup>The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Discover spring with Madonna's Child Development Center



Observation is a basic learning tool at the Madonna Child Development Center. Springtime provides an ideal climate for learning outdoors. A nature walk or a picnic provide excellent opportunities for discovery, observation and discussion.

Below are some suggestions for using a stroll outdoors as a vocabulary builder, while practicing listening and memory skills with your child:

- Devote a portion of your walk to listening. Talk about what you hear. See if you can locate where the sounds are coming from.
- Explore the textures and smells you find along the way. Touch the rough bark, smooth leaves and the soft moss. Smell the flowers.
- Compare the trees, animals, flowers and rocks you observe.
- Use descriptive words like "above, below, between, under, next to, large, medium and small," to describe the objects you discover.
- Look for tracks and houses of animals. Talk about where animals live, what they eat and how they stay warm.
- Discuss the best parts of your trip when you get home. It's not only satisfying to recall the fun events, but talking is good practice for your child's memory skills.

Look at life from the eyes of a child. Get out and enjoy spring!

## Nathenson lobbies in Washington, D.C.

Madonna Respiratory Therapist Nancy Nathenson was part of a recent delegation in Washington, D.C., asking members of Congress to allow patients who receive home respiratory care to have access to respiratory therapists under Medicare Part B.

"Our request was straightforward," said Nancy. "We simply asked our members of Congress to add respiratory therapists to the list of providers for home health care."

Currently, respiratory patients who receive home care have limited access to the expertise of respiratory therapists. Nancy explained they did not ask Congress to spend additional money to provide specialized care.

Nancy said that meeting with Congressional leaders and staffers was an educational experience. As a constituent, she felt that Congressman Jeff Fortenberry listened to her concerns about how the issue would affect the citizens of Nebraska. Congressman Adrian Smith has already co-sponsored the bill.



Nancy is a member of the Political Advocacy Contact Team (PACT), a group organized by the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) to spearhead grassroots level advocacy efforts. The AARC has a long history of advocating on behalf of respiratory patients and professionals.

The AARC and the Nebraska Society for Respiratory Care made the financial commitment to send Nancy to lobby on behalf of all respiratory patients and therapists. Asking Congress to include respiratory therapists in the home health benefit was not only the group's unified message, but it was also another step toward ensuring that patients in all care settings received the specialized, quality care provided by respiratory therapists.

## Lifestyle Challenge: dash to the finish

Teams are making a mad dash to the finish line in hopes of capturing a prize in the Lifestyle Challenge. The final check-in event is April 8 from 7:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at main campus in Sheridans and from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at ProActive.

Team awards will be given to the top three teams in weight loss and activity minutes. The top ten individuals in weight loss and activity minutes will also be recognized along with a separate category of spirit winners.

**Note: In order to be eligible for prizes, winning teams are required to have all members attend the final check-in.**

The Lifestyle Challenge post-celebration event will be held Monday, April 27, in Sheridans from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Final rankings and prizes will be awarded at the event.

## Call for nominations: St. Jane de Chantal Awards of Excellence

Please take a moment to nominate a coworker who has made a significant impact in the lives of Madonna's long term care residents. Nominees can be any Madonna staff members, excluding managers, with one year of service who provides service to the long term care units including Extended Care North and South, Subacute, St. Angela Ventilator and Special Needs, St. Anthony's programs, the Chip Woods House and The Arbors. The nominee must exemplify the characteristics of St. Jane de Chantal, most notably a commitment to serving those in need with a forgiving, lively and cheerful manner.

The award categories are:

- Margaret E. Murray award for Excellence in Promotion of Meaningful and Enriching Lives for People of All Ages
- Maj. Donald E. Murray, USAF, Ret. Award for Excellence in Promotion of Resident Health and Quality of Care
- Excellence in Leadership

Three staff members will be awarded a cash gift of \$250 on Thursday, May 14, 2009, during the celebration of Older Americans Month at a wine and cheese reception.

A nomination form is available in the Human Resources department. **All nominations must be submitted to Human Resources by Thursday, April 23, 2009.** For more information, contact Marla Buresh in Human Resources at ext. 6084 or mburesh@madonna.org.

The St. Jane de Chantal Awards of Excellence are made possible through a donation by Paul and Nancy Nathenson and their family.

## Employee Focus: Fun factoids about Jody



Jody Luzum  
Employee Health/Hospital Support  
Staff LPN  
MRH employee for 29 years

- 1 I was the women's team captain for B107.3's *Battle of The Sexes* game.
- 2 I am a CPR/First Aid instructor and volunteer on the Disaster Action Team through the American Red Cross.
- 3 I once delivered my friend's baby in her driveway.
- 4 I used to be a Capital City Clogger.
- 5 I volunteer once a month providing foot care for some of the Carmelite Sisters in Agnew, Neb.

I get the pleasure of doing most of the new employee health screens, and I love it! I do tuberculosis tests, Hepatitis B vaccinations, allergy and tetanus shots. I update employee health files and do a variety of tasks to keep Madonna employees safe at work.

In my role, I see many of the people who come to Madonna. This validates for me what an awesome place we work in. I tell people that I am sticking around long enough to see the day when a discount on a patient room at Madonna is a part of our benefits package.

## Madonna's health plan name change

The Epoch Group has joined forces with Meritain Health and will become part of the new Meritain Health. Beginning April 1, 2009, Meritain will administer all the Madonna health claims that Epoch previously handled.

There will be no changes to the employee health plan or prescription benefits with the transition to Meritain. The only changes will be in the administering and processing of claims, pre-certifications and the addition of Web site access for individual health claim needs. Health plan ID cards, phone numbers and claims payment address will change.

The following are some frequently asked questions to help with the transition.

### Who is Meritain Health?

Meritain Health is a national health benefits administrator with more than 20 years of experience. Meritain Health's 1,700 clients and million plus members enjoy exceptional service and support throughout all 50 states.

### When will I get a new ID card?

New Meritain Health ID cards were mailed on Thursday, March 26. If you have not received your card yet, please continue to use your existing ID card. Do not throw away your existing ID card until you receive your replacement ID card.

### Will the health plan customer service number change?

Yes. The new number to reach the customer service representative team will be provided on your new member ID card.

### How will I access my online tools and resources?

As of April 1, 2009, you will have access to the Meritain Health member Web site at

www.myMERITAIN.com. Your personalized Web site offers you access to your claims history and status, EOBs (explanation of benefits for claims), health tools and resources and provider lookup features. New users can register on the Web site at www.myMERITAIN.com on or after April 1, 2009.

Please note that your claims history will be transferred within a few weeks of receiving your new ID card. Contact a customer service representative should you have questions or need immediate assistance.

### Will I continue to receive Explanation of Benefits Forms (EOBs) showing claims processing?

You will continue to receive an EOB, but only for any claim denials or in the case that more information is needed to process your claim. Otherwise, you will receive a new Monthly Member Statement which will summarize all of your activity within a given month and also includes any relevant account balances. This is a new tool Madonna is offering through this new partnership with Meritain Health. All EOBs are available online through your personal Web site available at www.myMERITAIN.com.

**Please visit [www.MERITAIN.com](http://www.MERITAIN.com) to learn more.** For any questions regarding the name change from Epoch to Meritain or regarding your benefits or change, please call your customer service representative at the number on your ID card. You may also contact Wendy Charlton in Human Resources with any questions at ext. 6484.

## Dolezal garners top honor

Lynn Dolezal, OTR/L, has been selected as the 2008 Clinical Instructor of the Year by Creighton University. Lynn was nominated by Mikala Habrock for the supervision she provided to Creighton University occupational therapy students during their Level II experiences at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital.



Lynn will receive her award on April 14 at the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions' Honors

Convocation at Creighton University's main campus.

Lynn graduated from the College of Saint Mary in 2004 with a bachelor of science in occupational therapy. She has a commitment to education and enjoys sharing her knowledge with students. Lynn has been a Madonna employee for more than four years and currently works in the brain injury and pediatric programs. Congratulations, Lynn, on receiving this prestigious award!

## Celebrate National Volunteer Week April 19-25

Jo Ann Drueke, volunteer resources coordinator, recently had a daughter and her mother, a patient, stop in her office. They both appreciated Madonna's volunteers and wanted Jo Ann to express their thanks to them. "Whenever we had a question or needed help, a volunteer was right there with the answer," shared the grateful couple.

Watch for more information about Madonna's volunteers in the April 17 issue of *The Independent*.

# Madonna Volunteers

making a difference...  
one person at a time

## Best nurses in Nebraska a call for nominations

The *Lincoln Journal Star* would like to recognize hard-working nurses who have made a difference in the lives of Nebraskans. Whether you're a current or former patient, a family touched by a nurse who went above and beyond the call of duty, or a co-worker, honor them with your nomination.

- Are you a current or former Madonna patient whose nurse made a lasting impact on you or has exceeded your expectations?
- As a coworker, have you witnessed a nurse who has been instrumental in a patient's recovery?

Contact Madonna's Human Resources department for an official nomination form.

**All submissions are due by Wednesday, April 8.** Winners will be featured in a special issue of the *Lincoln Journal Star* on May 6. Please take a moment to nominate one of Madonna's dedicated and caring nursing staff.

## Radiology joins the digital age

Congratulations to Liz Edwards and Nick Roth for converting Madonna's Radiology department from X-ray film to online digital image. The unveiling of the digital system on Wednesday, March 25, was met with immediate success. Two positive examples after implementation included:

- Doctor A was asking for a same day reading. Previously, this would take a day turnaround for film creation and courier service to Advanced Medical Imaging for conversion, reading and assessment. The new online system shortened turnaround time to 25 minutes!
- Doctor B asked to see a patient's current X-ray. As Liz and a nurse prepared to assist with the new system, Doctor B saw the icon on the computer, then logged on to view the image and results. In the future, he will access results from his office instead of coming to Madonna.

Computers throughout the building have been loaded with the necessary programs to allow access to the system. No more tracking down images for doctors after hours or filling out the obligatory paper work to check out X-rays. Images that need to be taken off site can now be burned onto a CD for easy portability.

## > CALENDAR

- April 6** **NEO**  
**Introduction to Rehabilitation of Persons with Limb Loss**  
 7:30-8:30 a.m., Noon-1 p.m. or 3:30-4:30 p.m.  
 Agee  
 Call 6550, 6476 or 6406 to register  
 1 CH
- April 8** **Supervisor Education Week 1**  
 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
 Flanagan B  
 Call 6406 to register
- StrengthFinders**  
 8 a.m.-Noon  
 Agee  
 Call 6507 to register
- April 9** **Blood & Medical Assist**  
 Agee  
 Call 6550, 6476 or 6406 to register for a time
- April 10** **Grand Rounds** (No contact hours)  
**Finding Meaning in Suffering**  
*Danielle Rush*  
 Noon-1 p.m.  
 Sheridans
- April 13** **WHAM**  
**ITS Staff**  
 Noon- 1 p.m. or 3:30-4:30 p.m.  
 Sheridans
- April 16** **CPR Re-certification**  
 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 5-9 p.m.  
 Call 6550 or 6476 to register



St. Anthony's Memory Care residents joined together for the annual Chili Cook-off held March 12.

## Tobacco Free Campus reminder: No ifs, ands or butts

Please be courteous to our campus neighbors when leaving the Madonna property to use tobacco. We have had comments from neighbors who have seen Madonna employees tossing cigarette butts on the ground or in yards of homes. Please see OD 2191 for complete details about Madonna's tobacco free campus policy. Thank you for keeping the neighborhood clean for everyone's benefit.

## Chapel Services

Catholic Mass is offered Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 4 p.m., Wednesday and Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday at 4:30 p.m. The Worship Service is Thursday at 10:30 a.m., Hymn/Music Program is Sunday at 3:30 p.m.

- April 4** **Passion (Palm) Sunday Vigil**  
 4:30 p.m. Mass and liturgy with blessing and distribution of palms.
- April 5** **Passion (Palm) Sunday**  
 10:30 a.m. Mass and liturgy with blessing and distribution of palms.  
 3:30 p.m. Inspirational Music Program  
 Nebraska Wesleyan Women's Choir
- April 9** **Holy Thursday**  
 10:30 a.m. Inter-denominational Protestant Worship Service  
 4 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper
- April 10** **Good Friday**  
 Noon Finding Meaning in Suffering—  
*Presented by Danielle Rush*  
 2 p.m. Madonna Ecumenical Good Friday Worship Service  
 4 p.m. Celebration of the Lord's Passion with Veneration of the Cross and Holy Communion
- April 11** **Holy Saturday**  
 8 p.m. Mass: Easter Vigil Liturgy
- April 12** **Easter Sunday**  
 10:30 a.m. Mass: Easter Sunday Liturgy  
 3:30 p.m. Inter-denominational Protestant Easter service presented by:  
 Rev. Steve Werner, Madonna Spiritual Care

Do you belong to a group or congregation that hasn't performed at Madonna? We welcome new talent. Contact Steve Werner at ext. 6831 or [swerner@madonna.org](mailto:swerner@madonna.org).

## New "Way to Go" format

A new quarterly insert devoted to employee recognition will begin May 1 in *The Independent*. The "Way to go" section will be an avenue for sharing professional and personal achievements of Madonna employees including engagements, wedding and birth announcements, academic achievements and other milestones. Good quality electronic photographs in jpeg format will also be accepted. Employees are encouraged to highlight a coworker's achievement, as well as their own. Please send all submissions to [trudder@madonna.org](mailto:trudder@madonna.org).

## Therapy Support Services offer unique talents

The inpatient therapy departments have a group of individuals with unique talents who form an excellent team called Therapy Support Services. The members of this team are the "backbone" of the inpatient therapy department. They help keep everything running smoothly. Some of the services that they provide include:

- Scheduling for all of the inpatient therapies
- Assisting with setting up specialty wheelchairs to meet specific patient needs
- Creating and sewing specialty items for patient use, as directed by the therapist
- Monitoring heart rhythms of cardiac patients
- Providing an "extra pair of hands" during therapy treatment sessions
- Assisting therapists with splinting and casting of patients
- Assisting at the computer during body weight support therapy sessions
- Transporting inpatients to and from therapy groups
- Assisting patients with their exercise programs designed by the therapists
- Assisting with recreation based activities
- Stocking supplies in the therapy gyms and offices
- Checking out equipment, such as prisms for vision services and wheelchair cushions
- Assisting with infection control procedures in the inpatient therapy areas

Thank you, Therapy Support Services, for the talents you share with the staff and patients of Madonna.



(L to R) Jennifer Willis, Tammy Mousel, Misty Nider, Jody Jinright, Christine Zach, Lesa Lucke, Ceanna Seaman, Dawny Boutin, Angela Leddy (Back row L to R) Travis Northrop, John Cascagnette, Curtis Cascagnette and Anne Nelson. (Not pictured) Kay Wheeler, Noelle Crew, Maria Pham and Huong Tran.

## Safe patient movement update

In February 2009, Madonna had no patient transfer injuries—a big "Way to go" to all the staff! The positive results indicate the Safe Patient Movement project is working. The next step is providing nursing education on specific transfers (squat pivot, stand pivot and slideboard), which begins April 8.

The Nursing Safety Champions committee will be the first to receive the nursing education before it is rolled out facility-wide. The safety committee includes: Linda Covert, Jennifer Parker, Jacque Larson, Kara Burbach, Lindsey Regnier, Malia Morgan, Pam Kerns, Paula Hoage and Angie Howard.