

Northwest Community Hospital

Written by Vicky Goeddeke, RN

Northwest Community Hospital (NCH) originally opened in 1959 in Arlington Heights, Illinois. The organization has grown through the years and currently is in the process of a new addition, planned to open in summer, 2010. This 488-bed hospital also offers at its campus: Busse Center for Specialty Medicine, Day Surgery Center, Youth Center (treatment for adolescents with abuse problems), and a Wellness Center. Off campus sites include: three treatment centers, an additional local imaging center, a large home healthcare department and several medical offices. Northwest Community is a Magnet designated hospital and is recognized as a top 100 Hospital, a Primary Stroke Center, and an Accredited Chest Pain Center.

The NCH Emergency Department treats more people than any other hospital in the northwest region and continues to grow. Last year, NCH had more than 70,000 visits in the ED. The new addition will add spaces up to a total of 45 rooms. The new space will also have 8 triage bays which can be used as a minor treatment area.

NCH currently is a Level 2 Trauma Center and is a destination for EMS patients from 14 surrounding municipalities. Over 19,000 of last year's ED visits at NCH arrived via these various EMS responders.

NCH features several treatment destinations within its Emergency Department. The Main ED is the destination for those with high acuity and trauma patients. The Annex is a 12-bed treatment area open 16 hours daily for ED "overflow". Unit 45 is a 5-bed treatment area open 12 hours daily. This area focuses on treatment for ESI level 4 and ESI level 5 patients, allowing them to be seen in a timely fashion and ease patient flow through the other treatment areas. In addition, the Pediatric Emergency Department is open 12 hours daily and is staffed with Board-Certified Pediatric ED physicians and Pediatric ED nurses. The Pediatric ED is currently seeing more than 10,000 pediatric patients annually.

The NCH Emergency Department currently employs 78 RNs in full time, part time, or hospital unit-based registry positions with an additional 10 RNs working in the Pediatric ED. All RNs are certified in ACLS, PALS or ENPC, and TNCC or TNS. Those RNs working any shifts in the Main ED (which is most) are also ECRN certified. The NCH ED is proud to recognize 19 CENs among its staff with four more currently registered to take the exam. NCH supports the ED staff by covering the cost of the CEN exam.

NCH encourages all staff to maintain membership in their professional organization and has numerous ENA members among the ED staff. If you would like more information about NCH or its' Emergency Department please check out the web site at NCH.org.