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## Progress Notes

### HealthSpan has Begun

I am sure that many of you have heard at least a bit about the experience our colleagues at the Firetower Medical Office had with their HealthSpan go-live on March 9, 2009. From what I have heard, it was a big challenge that took a lot of work by a lot of people, both those interacting directly with the patients and those behind the scenes. I have also heard that it was a great success.

In my last column, I told you we would be going live at Firetower with the Ambulatory Medical Record module on February 9. But, we delayed that by a month because we wanted to make sure that everything was ready for the go-live. And that wait really paid off. The Firetower staff was able to use that time for extra training and practice. Leaders like Mary Thompson and Tammy Holloman were able to get the system really ready for use. Without that extra month, I think we would not have nearly the same outcome.

As I write this column near the end of April, we are asking probing questions about whether the next phases of HealthSpan will be ready for go-live on Friday, May 1st. These phases cover our patient registration, scheduling and billing services. They are every bit as essential as the electronic medical record. We are just as committed to having applications that are ready for the go-live this time as we were back in February and March. At the time of printing of ClinicPulse, the decision to postpone "go-live" was made on April 24th.

You might ask why I am writing this. Why am I telling you my concerns that we may not be ready to go-live on the date we have been announcing for over a year? Doesn't that show someone is not doing their job? Doesn't it show weakness? NO! Actually, it shows our steadfast commitment to having a product that meets your needs and your patients' needs. We do not want to make you use a product that is not ready. We want to provide you with the very best tools we can to do your job.

What can you do to help? What is the role of every person in ECU Physicians in this process? It is really pretty simple:

1. Keep an open mind about the benefits that HealthSpan can bring to our workplace.
2. Understand that the patient will have very real benefits from a unified medical record and common registration process.
3. Be ready for some bumps in the road. We are doing everything we can to eliminate or minimize those bumps. We will fix the bumps that crop up as fast as we can. But there will still be bumps in the road.
4. Train. Train. Train. Be as ready as you personally can be for the go-live.
5. Finally, remember that down the road, you will wonder how you ever got along without HealthSpan.

*Nicholas Benson, MD, MBA  
Acting Medical Director, ECU Physicians  
Vice Dean*

## ECU Founders Day Convocation Service Awards

During the Founders Day celebration at East Carolina University on Thursday, March 26, 2009 faculty and staff were honored for their efforts at the university and in the community. The university's Centennial Awards for Excellence received 65 nominations with winners in four categories: leadership, service, spirit and ambition. The 2009 Chancellor's Award for Excellence are:



Carolyn Erwin in the category of Leadership. Leadership is defined as persons having provided servant leadership in a particular task, set of tasks, or for a particular activity that represents an understanding and respect for accomplishment against challenges and performed with resolve, perseverance, and/or an appreciation for inclusion. Petra Rouse, ITCS, and Mary Schiller, ECU Physicians Contact Center received the 2009 Chancellor's Award for Excellence for Ambition as member of the Emergency Communications Assessment Team. Ambition is defined as an innovative or entrepreneurial mind-set in terms of task accomplishments, of critical analysis that defies the conventional wisdom and/or action that leads to a product or creation that is beneficial to the larger community. Dr. Lee West, Department of Pathology, received the 2009 Chancellor's Award for Excellence for Service. Service is defined as excellent or exceptional service to the institution over a sustained period of time with attention to a devotion to duty and an awareness of the importance of public service.

Sixty-three faculty and staff members and 45 students were inducted into the Servire Society which honors faculty, staff and students who contributed 100 or more hours of volunteer service to the community in the previous year. Faculty and staff first-year inductees from the Health Sciences Division are as follows: Harry Adams, William Bogey, Kathleen Cox, Tommy Ellis, Roytesa Savage and Lynn Tuthill.

Faculty and staff members who earned Servire Society induction for a second year are as follows: Paul Bolin, Susan Copeland, Karen Parker, Annette Peery and Wanda Wynne.



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## HealthSpan Revenue Cycle Status as of 4-30-09

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As many of you know, we were scheduled to start using the Revenue Cycle functions of HealthSpan on Friday, May 1, 2009. These functions include all of our patient registration, scheduling and billing activities. They are vital aspects of the work we do at ECU Physicians every day.

We realized last Friday, April 24, that the system was just not going to be ready to support our work in these areas efficiently and accurately. Therefore, we decided to postpone that go-live (to use I.T. terminology) until we feel they are ready. University Health Systems (UHS) will still be going live with these functions tomorrow at all of their facilities in Greenville and throughout the region.

Because we are postponing our go-live for HealthSpan Revenue Cycle, there are several things that will be different in our clinical settings starting tomorrow. These changes will last until we are ready to go-live with Revenue Cycle. It is too early to tell exactly when that will be. But rest assured we will do that as soon as we practically can.

*Nicholas Benson, MD, MBA  
Acting Medical Director, ECU Physicians  
Vice Dean*

*This article also appeared in the Health Sciences Division and BSOM Announce Messages, posted on April 30th.*

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## Sign Language Interpreter Number Has Changed

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As of April 15th, 744 - 9030 has been removed from service and will no longer be used to schedule a sign language interpreter. If a sign language interpreter is needed, you may call the patient appointment line at 744-1111.

The state of North Carolina requires that all medical appointments use sign interpreters that are certified in medical sign language and licensed by the state of North Carolina. The Brody School of Medicine assures that the interpreters we use meet these requirements by keeping proper records of annual licensure as well as HIPAA. Family and/or friends should not be used for these appointments.

*Reminder: If an appointment is changed or is less than 10 working days out, call 744-1111.*

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## Health Information Systems/Services Update

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“Protecting Information...it’s a Top Priority” was the theme for this year’s Health Information Privacy and Security Week which was celebrated during April 12-18, 2009. This theme was prominently displayed to reassure the public that their health information is in safe and reliable hands. Just as importantly, the week was also a time to recognize those who through their hard work help to keep health information private and protected. Health information is vital to a patient’s continuity of care. Through the Health Information staff’s commitment, this valuable information is only provided to those who truly need it, thereby ensuring the trust of the patients to whom care is provided.

### Message from the Director

On March 9, 2009 the Firetower Medical Office went live with Ambulatory EMR in HealthSpan. The event was quite successful and thanks goes to all involved. We are continuing to work with those providers and staff to enhance their workflows in HealthSpan. The Ambulatory build team will soon begin to "build" for other ECU Physician clinics. We are ironing out details for the roll out of the remaining clinics.

*Mary Thompson  
Director, Health Information Systems/Services*

If you have questions regarding Centricity or need a password reset, please call 744-2030, option #2. If you have questions regarding HealthSpan and/or need password resets please call the ECU Help Desk at 328-9866. If you have questions, concerns or comments regarding article submission please contact Tracy Carawan, Staff Development @ 744-1793.

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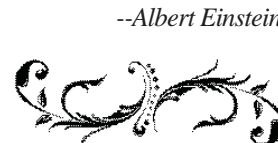
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## Word to the Wise

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Every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving.

*--Albert Einstein*



## 2009 Nurse of the Year Nominees

**Kim Winstead** is a Nurse Specialist in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Kim exemplifies what it means to be a nurse both in the workplace and in her every day life. Kim doesn't just work as a nurse, but is a nurse. She goes above and beyond for both her patients in the clinic, as well as anyone with whom she comes in contact. Kim went on a mission trip to Ecuador in July 2007, providing prenatal and gynecological care, has taught Sunday School for 25 years, makes quilts and cloths for needy children and has raised three successful children! As a co-worker exclaimed, "Kim is a very caring, compassionate nurse, and she is one of the best patient advocates that I have ever worked with. She truly cares for our patients."

**Susan Eubanks** is a Nurse Specialist in Hematology Oncology. Susan obtained her Oncology Nursing Certification and is enrolled in the RN/BSN program at ECU. Susan organizes Hematology conferences and has assisted with the development of the Hematologic Malignancy Program/Clinic. She developed a list of all active hematology patients and has made sure that their care is coordinated. Every month, she is doing something new to improve the care we deliver to our patients. Susan portrays the ideal nurse, compassionate, kind and idealistic. She gives of herself and seeks nothing in return. She never says a harsh word and she is always willing to help everyone! She would make Florence proud. But the best recommendation would be from the patients, who owe their well being to Susan.

**Terrie Holsten** is the Nurse Manager at Firetower Medical Office. Terrie exemplifies all the qualities of an excellent patient care provider. She is patient, kind and understanding and she works very hard. To sum it up in one sentence, I would say – Terrie goes the extra mile. Over the years, I have witnessed many of Terrie's encounters with patients and staff. She smiles and makes patient's feel welcome, often with a bit of humor. She is attentive as patients explain their problems, concerns and fears. Terrie is in a management position but does not hesitate to step in and help those she supervises. As we entered into the world of HealthSpan, her staff was prepared, confident and extremely supportive of each other. Terrie led by example remaining optimistic and calm during the implementation. Terrie works tirelessly to make sure every patient is given time and courtesy. Due to Terrie's leadership, our staff works better, our management team is challenged, and our patients are well cared for.

**Leslie Corbett** has worked in Hematology-Oncology for many years. Eighteen months ago, she became the Nurse Manager and has done an excellent job. Leslie has been largely responsible for our transition from a general oncology service, to one in which patients are seen by teams of providers and nurses dedicated to specific disease entities, such as breast cancer, thoracic malignancy, etc. Leslie has identified and encouraged her nurses to take ownership of these services and to provide coordination and care that can only come from a team with expertise and intimate knowledge of the patient's illness and needs. Leslie is also responsible for the administrative management of the Chemo bay but also continues to provide clinical care. Leslie ensures that the critical safeguards regarding chemotherapy are adhered to and followed. Leslie manages to be strong when it is required but is always patient and wise in her judgment.

**Susan DeAntonio** is a Nurse Manager in the Department of Cardiovascular Science. Susan re-engineered the entire outpatient clinic program for the new East Carolina Cardiovascular Institute. Her staff described it as taking apart a car and having to put all the pieces back slowly so the car would run. Dr. Chitwood feels that Susan has torn down the stovepipes that existed in each section resulting in true collaboration amongst all medical support staff. He feels it is due to the leadership, vision, and enthusiastic attitude exhibited by Susan. Susan has a very upbeat personality and it is contagious to the staff. She greets her staff each morning. She encourages a team-work attitude and atmosphere at all times and is very generous with pats on the back for a job well done. She is recognized as the "go to person" for all clinic operations. Susan is described as the essence of "leadership by example". She is a motivator, mentor, counselor and example of compassionate care to subordinates and peers alike. The foundation of her decision making is "does this make sense for the patient?"

**Christina Moser** is the Plastic Surgery Nurse Manager in the Department of Surgery. Christina serves as the only full time clinic nurse in Plastic surgery, but also is responsible for all administrative duties. Her staff says, "We have never worked with a manager who was so caring and appreciative." She goes out of her way to make each employee feel like a vital part of the team. About six months ago, Christina assisted with the complex coordination of providing surgery to a child in another country that had experienced severe burns. Due to Christina's commitment and compassion for this patient, she was able to work with different companies to have the necessary surgical tools and prostheses donated to this young girl. Our patients truly appreciate the willingness, enthusiasm and energy that Christina brings to our office every day.

**Teresa Parent's** official title in the Leo Jenkins Cancer Center is "multidisciplinary nurse coordinator." However, her role is far beyond and above that. She is program director, program developer, program facilitator, nurse navigator, referral physician contact and press secretary spokesperson. She is the consummate nurse professional. Patient care is "number one" for Teresa. We often hear her say "but what about the patient?" Teresa represents the qualities that Brody School of Medicine stands for – integrity, compassion, customer service, collaborative practice and respect. "Second-Best" is simply not in Teresa's vocabulary or approach. Her motto is a "job worth doing is worth doing well". Teresa is the nurse that you want taking care of you and your family.

ECU PHYSICIANS  
Smart medicine

### 2009 Nurse of the Year Nominees



**Terrie Holsten**  
Nurse Manager  
Firetower Medical Office



**Leslie Corbett**  
Nurse Manager, Hematology-Oncology  
Leo W. Jenkins Cancer Center



**Christina Moser**  
Nurse Manager  
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery



**Susan DeAntonio**  
Nurse Manager  
Department of Cardiovascular Sciences



**Teresa Parent**  
Nurse Specialist, Thoracic Oncology  
Leo W. Jenkins Cancer Center



**Susan Eubanks**  
Nurse Specialist, Hematology-Oncology  
Leo Jenkins Cancer Center



**Kim Winstead**  
Nurse Specialist  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

## Mercury Usage in the Workplace

Mercury is an extremely toxic substance and is listed on the EPA's Top 20 hazardous substances list. Exposure to mercury can occur from breathing contaminated air, ingesting contaminated water and food, and having dental amalgam and some medical treatments.

### Why Worry?

Mercury at high levels may damage the brain, kidneys, and developing fetus. This concern has led to mercury pollution prevention (P2) programs at the federal, state and local levels.

### What can you do?

Don't purchase materials that contain mercury, look for a better alternative. If there is existing mercury products being used, call ECU Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) at 328-6166 for pickup of these materials. This service is FREE OF CHARGE! Also, if a mercury containing product is broken call, EH&S immediately; do not attempt to clean the spill yourself!

### What can ECU do?

Our highest priority is reduction, which means not purchasing mercury containing products in the first place. Our second priority is recycling/disposal of existing mercury to reduce the risk of pollution. The ECU Environmental Health & Safety office wants to educate staff on the importance of avoiding the use of mercury containing materials, thermometers, BP monitors, etc. Also, we'd like to emphasize that alternative choices are available for purchase and use. See table below.

Nursing & Clinical	Alternatives	Batteries/Electrical	Alternatives
Thermometers	Digital or Alcohol Based	Mercuric Oxide	Zinc-air (may contain up to 25 mg mercury, 0.4 - 1.0% by weight)
Sphygmomanometers (Blood pressure monitors)	Electronic (digital) Aneroid	Button Batteries	Silver oxide (lasts longer, costs more)
G-I tubes: Bougie tubes, Cantor tubes, Miller tubes, feeding tubes	Tungsten. Considered to be as effective as mercury	Manometer gauges or vacuum gauges	Electronic (digital) Aneroid or Liquid filled
Lab Chemicals	Alternatives	Lab Chemicals	Alternatives
Histological Preservatives	Freeze drying, zinc formalin	Staining Solutions & Reagents	Some substitutes such as copper, tin and chromium

**REMEMBER!!** Please begin phasing out mercury containing products and try to have them all removed by September 2009. We appreciate your cooperation and support in keeping ECU personnel safe. Please contact EH&S with any questions at 328-6166.

## Save Money by Shopping at ECU Pharmacies

It has been reported in the Wall Street Journal that many patients are leaving prescriptions unfilled due to the economic downturn. Prescription drug sales are usually immune to the economy's ups and downs, but the current recession is having an unusually negative impact. Patients desiring to cut expenses amid the recession did not purchase 6.8% of brand-name drugs that their physicians prescribed in the fourth quarter of 2008, marking a 22% jump from the first quarter of 2007, according to a study from Wolters Kluwer Health. The report, which also states that patients did not fill 4.1% of generic prescriptions, notes that insurance requirements, including higher co-payments, contributed to the increase of people abandoning prescriptions. Insurers are rejecting coverage for more prescriptions and may deny a prescription for a specific drug because a less expensive alternative is available.

### As an ECU employee, what can you do to cut prescription expenses?

#### 1. USE THE ECU EMPLOYEE \$4.00 LIST

This benefit is just for employees and offers a one month supply of many generics for \$4.00. Medications can be filled at any of the four ECU Pharmacy locations. The list can be found at: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/ecuphysicians/patient-care/upload/DiscPrescriptions.pdf>

#### 2. CHECK OUT OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS

You can save by buying at ECU Pharmacies. During this allergy season, you have a choice. You can pay \$50.00 co-pay for brand name Clarinex or Allegra after getting your provider to do a prior authorization or you can purchase one of these at our pharmacies:

Loratadine (generic equivalent to Claritin)	# 30	\$1.68	Cetirizine (generic equivalent to Zyrtec)	# 100	\$6.62
Sudogest (generic equivalent to Sudafed)	# 24	\$0.77	Nasal spray (generic equivalent to Afrin)	15 mls	\$1.47
Diphenhydramine 25mg	#100	\$1.47	Guaifenesin DM syrup	4 oz	\$1.04
Guaifenesin syrup (equivalent to Robitussin)	4 oz	\$0.89			

Similar savings are available on other over the counter products.

#### 3. TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST

On the state employee prescription insurance plan, there is a generic alternative in almost every therapeutic class of medications. Find out what is available before you pay for brand-name co-pays.



#### Send newsletter submissions to:

Beverly DeWitt  
 ECU Physicians Administration, Brody 1K-20  
 Phone: (252) 744-1882  
 Fax: (252) 744-3447

View on-line @ <http://www.ecu.edu/ecuphysiciansadmin>