UTMB recognized as 5-star academic health center

The health system of the University of Texas Medical Branch, UTMB Health, is now a 5-star academic health center, ranking among the Top 12 academic health centers nationally for quality, accountability and safety, according to the latest Vizient Quality and Accountability Study.

UTMB is also a winner of the 2017 Vizient Bernard A. Birnbaum, MD, Quality Leadership Award. Receiving five stars, the award recognizes UTMB for demonstrating superior quality and safety performance as measured by the Vizient Quality and Accountability Study, conducted annually since 2005.

Twelve out of 107 academic health centers participating in the study received the prestigious award. UTMB ranked ninth, rising from No. 76 in 2016. The academic health center winners for 2017, including UTMB, are:

1. Mayo Clinic – Rochester
2. NYU Langone Health
3. Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin – Froedtert Hospital
4. Rush University Medical Center
5. Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
6. University of Utah Health
7. UC Health University of Colorado Hospital
8. Lehigh Valley Health Network
9. University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
10. The University of Kansas Hospital
11. Nebraska Medicine
12. Oregon Health & Science University Hospital

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Recognizing the significance of the 2017 Vizient Bernard A. Birenbaum, MD, Quality Leadership Award, Dr. David L. Callender, president of UTMB said, “It is an honor to see UTMB listed among other top academic medical centers across the nation striving to provide top quality care to all patients. It is a great honor for everyone involved in the Best Care effort.”

Making such a significant improvement in ranking in just a year’s time required a concerted performance improvement effort on behalf of the entire organization. This work began in earnest in June of last year after University of Texas System Chancellor William H. McRaven announced a “bold and sweeping path forward” for the entire UT System. His vision for the future challenged UTMB, along with other members of the UT Health Care Enterprise, to improve its quality performance to become known nationally for delivering the finest health care possible.

UTMB’s journey to the top required a multi-faceted approach that was based on one simple premise: always delivers the right care, at the right time, in the right way, for the right person, with the best possible results for every patient, every time. This approach, coined “Best Care,” was based on six specific aims for health care improvement outlined in “To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System,” released by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in 1999. The six aims are that health care should be:

- **Safe** – avoiding injuries to patients from the care that is intended to help them.
- **Timely** – reducing waits and sometimes harmful delays for both those who receive and those who give care.
- **Effective** – providing services based on scientific knowledge to all who could benefit and refraining from providing services to those not likely to benefit (avoiding underuse and overuse).
- **Efficient** – avoiding waste, in particular waste of equipment, supplies, ideas and energy.
- **Equitable** – providing care that does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and socioeconomic status.
- **Patient-centered** – providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs and values, and ensuring that patient values guide all clinical decisions.

Throughout the year, UTMB benchmarked its performance compared to other academic health centers nationally by monitoring its quarterly ranking in the Vizient Quality and Accountability Study, which measures quality in six different domains: patient-centeredness, effectiveness, mortality, safety, efficiency and equity. Performing well in the study not only offers participating organizations the chance to assure patients that they have a strong reputation in quality care, but also fosters a drive and focus to improve the quality of health care on a national level.

Led by Dr. Gulshan Sharma, vice president, chief medical and clinical innovation officer, UTMB’s improvement efforts specifically focused on improving the specificity and accuracy of clinical documentation, decreasing its mortality rate, assuring patients experienced a safe and timely discharge, avoiding potentially preventable patient readmissions within 30 days of discharge, and improving patient safety – all while assuring that care remained patient-centered and equitable for all patients, regardless of their race, age, gender, economic status or any other factor.

Quarter by quarter, individuals in every role of the organization maintained a steadfast focus on how they personally contributed to Best Care. And, quarter by quarter, UTMB saw its performance steadily improve.

The tremendous achievement made by UTMB is attributed to the hard work of faculty and staff throughout UTMB, from those who provide direct patient care to those in other roles who ensure a positive patient experience, who train the future health care workforce to provide best care, and who provide our caregivers with the tools and treatment options they need to provide the best care to every patient, every time.

“School implemented an initiative, Best Care, to be the best in 2016, and I am proud to say this award shows all of our hard work is paying off,” said Donna K. Sollenberger, executive vice president and chief executive officer, UTMB Health System. “We thank our dedicated faculty and staff for their daily efforts that are allowing UTMB Health to achieve excellence.”

Vizient, Inc. is the largest member-driven health care performance company in the U.S. and has conducted the study annually since 2005. In previous years, the Vizient Excellence Awards were known as the University HealthSystem Consortium Awards.
UTMB again achieves Magnet recognition

GALVESTON, Texas – The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston has again been recognized for meeting the highest standards of nursing. The American Nurses Credentialing Center notified UTMB on Sept. 20 that it had met the criteria of the Magnet Recognition Program that distinguishes health care organizations that meet rigorous standards for nursing excellence. This credential is the highest honor for professional nursing practice.

This is the second consecutive time UTMB has received the distinguished status from the ANCC since 2012.

“I am so proud of the health care team at UTMB. Our dedicated nurses, physicians, caregivers and hospital staff collaborate every day to provide the highest level of quality and experience to those we serve,” said David Marshall, UTMB’s chief nursing and patient care services officer.

Magnet recognition signifies that UTMB nursing staff meet high standards of patient care, nursing excellence, and innovation in professional nursing practice. The coveted status is based on quality indicators and standards of nursing practice.

UTMB is one of 468 U.S. health care organizations out of more than 6,300 to achieve Magnet recognition.

Hospitals applying for recognition must provide an environment that empowers nurses, values their contributions and supports nursing leadership.

Donna Sollenberger, executive vice president and chief executive officer of the UTMB Health System explains what Magnet recognition means for UTMB. “Upholding the highest standards of nursing has always been a proud tradition at UTMB. Every day we hear from our patients about how our nurses make a difference in their lives, and it is this consistent delivery of high-quality care that lets our patients know that no matter where they are within our health system, they are being cared for by the very best.”

According to the ANCC, Magnet health care facilities consistently deliver better patient outcomes than non-Magnet facilities and report higher nurse retention, recruitment and job satisfaction rates.

Joint Commission Awareness Week

OCT. 17 - 24

UTMB’s Department of Quality & Healthcare Safety will promote Joint Commission Awareness Oct. 17-24. Events are planned for all three campuses and throughout UTMB’s ambulatory locations. Dates are as follows:

- **Galveston Campus**: Oct. 17 from 6:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. and Oct. 18 from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. in Jennie Sealy Hospital, Floor 4
- **Angleton Danbury Campus**: Oct. 24 and Oct. 26 from 7:00 a.m. – noon, 12 Angleton Danbury, Floor 2
- **League City Campus**: Oct. 19 from Noon – 6:00 p.m., League City Hospital, Floor 3 (classroom)
- **Ambulatory locations** will celebrate in conjunction with the above days and times

Events include prize drawings and freebies for participants.

Adult and Pediatric Urgent Care Clinic Now Open in Galveston!

6416 Broadway

**Adults**: Monday – Friday: 6 p.m. – 10 p.m. Weekends: 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.
**Children**: Monday – Friday: 3 p.m. – 10 p.m. Weekends: 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

For more information visit utmbhealth.com/urgentcare
As a new fiscal year begins at the University of Texas Medical Branch, it's time to set our sights on a new year of adventure and opportunity in the Health System.

At UTMB, we understand that each patient’s experience is more than a measure of how well expectations for their care were met. It's also about the creation of a relationship of trust with their care team. Patients and their families need to feel like they’ve made a good decision in choosing UTMB! That's why in the coming year, we will maintain a continued focus on enhancing every patient’s experience through hospitality, effective communication, shared decision-making and a sensitivity to our patients’ unique needs. Through an array of training programs, both existing and in development, the Health System is working closely with our partners in Human Resources to ensure we support UTMB’s values and patient-centric culture.

Working together with the Academic Enterprise and Institutional Support, the Health System will continue to build on our foundation of Best Care to become a high-value practicing organization, delivering patient care that yields exceptional outcomes at an affordable cost. To increase the value of the care we deliver, we will work to ensure appropriate testing, procedures and treatments; improve the management of valuable resources, such as blood products; and continue managing our patients’ medications and the protocols under which we prescribe (e.g., opioid and antibiotic prescriptions). Reducing variation in care to ensure we purchase the best quality supplies at the best possible cost is an effort that will also continue – this initiative, known as the patient-centered resource optimization program (PROP), saved UTMB $7.2 million last year alone. Promoting evidence-based medicine, disease prevention and chronic disease management are all aimed at improving the value with which care is delivered.

We will leverage technology and analytic tools, like UTMB Discover (our enterprise-wide data warehouse), to improve clinical and business decision-making. Additionally, a recently added module in the Epic electronic medical record system called “Healthy Planet” will receive added functionality. This component supports care management efforts by compiling patient data to produce a variety of patient reports. Care managers are then able to utilize various dashboards and work-flow tools in the system to coordinate care for individual patients while monitoring trends in overall patient populations to identify and help prevent common reasons for potentially avoidable readmissions.

UTMB will continue expanding its regional presence through partnerships and affiliations. Expanding our primary and specialty care capabilities will be an important focus. For example, a long-awaited adult urgent care service was recently added at the Pediatric Primary Care, Galveston Island West clinic location. Developing relationships with post-acute care providers, such as our partners at Regent Care Center in League City, will help UTMB better manage the quality of care our patients receive when they require rehabilitation or long-term care services.

As outlined in our five-year Clinical Strategic Plan, UTMB will strive to become a premier health system and destination for carefully selected service lines that advance our excellence in patient care and research. Initially, we will focus on developing an Integrated Neurosciences Service Line, which will capture downstream heart and musculoskeletal activity. Meanwhile, creating an Eye & Ear Institute will grow ophthalmology and otolaryngology services. A plan for select oncology services is underway, as well.

Ongoing construction and expansion projects will continue across our organization, including the modernization of John Sealy Hospital to provide services for women, infants and children. The expansion of the League City campus facilities will also continue, which includes the addition of seven-story parking garage and bridge connecting to the existing hospital. A five-story South Tower will also be built to provide additional patient care and support spaces. UTMB will continue working in close collaboration with the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center to open the new four-story outpatient cancer facility on the campus in mid-2018. An Academic and Patient Care Center is also part of the plan.

The Health System's vision for 2018 is bold and exciting. By wisely managing our resources and maintaining a steadfast focus on The Road Ahead, we will achieve all of our goals for the coming year and position UTMB well with patients, payors and businesses. Along the way, we’ll celebrate successes, keep our eyes on the horizon, discover new and innovative ways to improve health care delivery and continue to deliver the very Best Care.
Avoid the flu with just one shot: flu season begins Oct. 1

Flu season officially begins Oct 1. UTMB offers its employees, retirees and volunteers free flu shots each year to help prevent the spread of seasonal influenza.

To prepare for the 2017–2018 flu season, vaccinations will be available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Times</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jennie Sealy Hospital, 4th Floor Corridor</td>
<td>Sept. 26 – Oct. 5</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – Noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecting Hospital and CSW</td>
<td>(T/W/TH)</td>
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<tr>
<td>League City Campus Hospital, Hallway</td>
<td>Oct. 10, 11 and 12</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – Noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjacent to Lori’s Gift Shop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angleton Danbury Campus Hospital, Hospital Lobby</td>
<td>Oct. 24 and 26</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Health Clinic, Primary Care Pavilion, Suite 125</td>
<td>Beginning Sept. 26</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (M/W/F)</td>
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<td>7 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (T/TH)</td>
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The flu vaccine is the best defense against the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend a yearly flu vaccine for everyone six months and older. Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk for flu-related complications. High-risk groups include adults 65 years of age and older, pregnant women and those with chronic health conditions. It takes about two weeks for full protection to set in, so it’s important to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Incorporating some general healthy habits into your daily routine can also help prevent the spread of the flu and germs to you and the people around you. For example, avoid close contact with people who are sick and if you are sick, do your best to stay home. Remember to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Practicing proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness, so wash or sanitize your hands as frequently as possible! Other good health habits such as eating a balanced diet, exercising, getting plenty of sleep and managing stress also go a long way in keeping your immune system running at its peak performance.

Local pharmacies like CVS, Walgreens, Target, Walmart, Randall’s and Kroger also administer flu vaccines, or you can schedule an appointment with your primary care provider.

Please visit https://hr.utmb.edu/ehc/flufree/ for details about the vaccination locations and UTMB's health care worker requirements.

State Employee Charitable Campaign kicks off

The 2017 State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) officially launched Sept. 27 with a goal of $550,000. The theme of the celebration is “Come Together” in recognition of the many challenges that families, friends and colleagues have experienced in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.

This year, Information Services (IS) is offering a larger email mailbox to everyone who donates a minimum of $20 online using the payroll deduction option to the campaign. Previously, this benefit only went to employees in departments or areas with 100 percent SECC participation. To receive the email incentive, the gift must be a minimum of $20 and made online using payroll deduction to receive the IS incentive. Visit the SECC website to learn more: https://www.utmb.edu/secc/home.
SHOUT OUTS!

Ryan Richburg was the best nurse. He was very helpful and attentive, he was good at administering my IV, and he explained all of my medications and procedures. (Medicine/Cardiology)

Elsa Auconsela was the housekeeper while my child was admitted. She was very kind and friendly. She did a great job! (Pediatrics)

Dr. Shiloe Burzinski listened carefully, took my wishes into consideration and worked with me so we could make care decisions together. (Obstetrics/Gynecology)

Dr. Avi Markowitz is the greatest. He deals with patients who have cancer all the time, but he never appears stressed. He is always happy and positive and makes patients feel good about themselves and confident. His patients love him. (Medical Oncology)

Dr. Robert Rakowczyk was by far the best provider I have seen in years. He was willing to listen and explore options, and when he didn’t know something he said so. His manner is gentle and understanding. He is a fine physician. (Family Medicine)

This was my first time seeing Dr. Adrian Subrt. I love him!

He listened, he explained things well and he personally called with my results. I will tell family and friends what a great doctor and office this is! (League City Dermatology)

Dr. Denise Wilkes is one of the best. She's knowledgeable in her practice and always explains my care plan in detail! I’m also thankful for Dr. Daneshvari Solanki! (Anesthesiology, Pain Management)

I have now been cancer-free for more than two years and I owe it to Drs. Aakash Gajjar, Bagi Jana and Todd Swanson. I see Dr. Aakash Gajjar every three months for a cancer check-up. I always receive excellent care from him and his staff. (Oncology)

Dr. Judy Trieu heard all I had to say, was courteous and explained what she was doing very well. She gave me confidence that I was with the right provider. (Internal Medicine)

Dr. Kathleen Vincent was personable, caring, knowledgeable, & went above & beyond what I expected. She was so informative about the ultrasound and was honest yet positive and reassuring. (Obstetrics/Gynecology)

Join us to celebrate our 5-Star achievement!

On Oct. 16, please join UTMB leadership at one of our three campuses to celebrate our designation as a 5-star academic health center, which was made possible by our ongoing Best Care initiative.

Events will be held:

On the Galveston Campus from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Old Red Plaza with a light lunch provided. Brief remarks will begin at 11:30 a.m. by UTMB President Dr. David L. Callender; Donna Sollenberger, executive vice president and chief executive officer of the UTMB Health System; and Dr. Gulshan Sharma, vice president, chief medical officer and clinical innovation officer for UTMB Health.

On the League City Campus from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Foyer, Clinic Side with refreshments provided. Brief remarks by Dr. Callender at 3:30 p.m.

On the Angleton Danbury Campus from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the First Floor Foyer with refreshments provided. Brief remarks by Donna Sollenberger and Dr. Sharma at 3:30 p.m.
Hurricane Harvey parting shots

Donna Sollenberger, executive vice president and CEO, rounded with staff on the Galveston campus throughout the storm.

Nurse Manager Dell Roach prepares for an interview with NBC Nightly News.

Deb McGrew, vice president and chief operating officer, and Ann O’Connell, vice president for Ambulatory Operations, board the Austin Duck Adventures vehicle sent to assist in supply deliveries.

The SICU team made time for a photo as they rode out the storm.

Health System leadership delivered goodies to staff who stayed throughout the storm to care for patients.

Douglas Tyler, MD, chair of the Department of Surgery, and Jeremy Brynes, associate vice president for Health System Business Development, hand out snacks in League City.