UWMC Surgery Liaison Volunteers

Did you know that the waiting room of our main OR is coordinated by UWMC volunteers? The Surgery Waiting Room Liaison volunteers are a specialized team that provides a personal link between the staff of the Operating Room (OR) / Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), and the patient’s family and friends.

The Surgery Waiting Room is a waiting area for family and friends of predominantly inpatient (some outpatient) Main Operating Room surgery patients. A busy surgery day can involve 50 to 60 surgeries that may include biopsies (1-2 hours), neurosurgeries (3-10 hours), open-heart surgery (6 hours), Otolaryngology (10-12 hours) and transplant surgeries (8 hours).

Family members and loved ones are often waiting for the duration of the surgery and are typically worried, concerned and anxious about their loved one. Surgery Liaison volunteers assist families in reading the White Board which gives updates on the surgery process. They help direct phone calls from surgeons and OR/PACU staff to appropriate family members. They also escort families into the PACU post-surgery and direct them to various locations within UWMC during their wait times.

Most importantly, Surgery Liaison volunteers provide a human connection for these worried families. “Volunteers provide a ‘front line’ connection with our patients and families which can ease the tension for family members who are waiting for loved ones,” said Daniel Kaiser, RN, Operating Room Health Services Manager. “Surgical intervention can be extremely stressful, and emotional support is better served by the human connection.”

PACU Nurse Manager Shelley Deatrick agreed, “The volunteers in the Surgery Waiting Room are invaluable! They provide that link between the surgery patient’s family and the medical center staff and physicians. They are wonderful family advocates.”

Currently, there are six active Surgery Waiting Room Liaison volunteers. Most serve one 8 hour shift per week. These volunteers are incredibly committed and have served in their roles from 3 to 14 years!

(Continued on page 2)
UWMC Surgery Liaison Volunteers (continued from page 1)

We asked them what volunteering meant to them, and why they kept returning week after week and year after year:

“I enjoy helping families in difficult situations. In this volunteer job, you are completely involved with families and not yourself. You are thankful for being able to help frightened and worried families.”
- Shawn Roth, retired Seattle Public School teacher

“I enjoy greeting and meeting the families. Knowing that I can make a difference in reducing their stress by providing information is a great feeling. It’s a great way to give back to our community and represent this wonderful medical center.”
- DeDe Backstrom, retired Boeing manager

“It is inspiring to witness the concern and commitment of the patients’ family and friends, and the concern, commitment, and professionalism of the UW Medical Center staff.”
- Walt Neves, retired Century Link employee

“I enjoy the interactions with the families waiting, and it is very rewarding when family members thank you for all the help given. We all need positive feedback. I find the staff at the hospital very supportive and feel that we are appreciated.”
- Dorothy Elvins, retired bookkeeper

“It has been a rewarding experience, due to the appreciation shown for my effort [serving] the families of patients having surgery. That appreciation comes from both the families and from the staff in the OR and PACU. Working with the staff in the OR and the PACU is a privilege and rewarding in itself.”
- Frank Zellner, retired UWMC Materials Management employee

We are so grateful to all our Surgery Waiting Room Liaison volunteers for their commitment to serving our patient families during very stressful and emotional times. It takes a truly special person to provide the level of compassion, service and care that these volunteers bring to the role.

Thank you to our Surgery Liaison Waiting Room volunteers for always putting patients and families first. You are an inspiration to all of us.

What is the best part about volunteering at UWMC?

“I like being able to interact with patients and work in a friendly environment full of people who are here to help others.”
~Breanne Yamamoto, PACU Volunteer

“I enjoy helping the wonderful patients at the medical center who are always so grateful.”
~Luke Johnson, Patient Escort

“What I like best about volunteering at UWMC is definitely the fast-paced environment. I learned how to set priorities and problem solve in order to finish tasks efficiently.”
~Hayoung Yoon, Emergency Department Assistant

“The best part about volunteering at UWMC is getting to interact with patients and gaining experience that will help me in my future career.”
~Elizabeth Webb, Patient Escort
A Word From Renée...

Happy holidays to our UWMC volunteer community and best wishes to our UW students who will soon be completing their 1st quarter finals. As 2013 draws to a close, we reflect with heartfelt gratitude upon our volunteers who have given so much of themselves to support our medical center and its patients. To those who donate quilts, clothing, funding and even magazines to comfort our patients—we are grateful.

On Wednesday, December 4, we invite our volunteers to join us in the Volunteer Lounge for a special Winterfest holiday meal sponsored by UWMC and the Recognition Team. The Service League is also helping us to thank our volunteers with a holiday gift certificate which can be redeemed at the UWMC Service League retail businesses including the Gift Shop, Espresso Bars, and Tea Room. (See page 10 for more information about both of these events.)

Following the close of another successful year, the Service League is proud to be able to offer grants for the funding of items not provided in the operational budgets of UWMC clinics, nursing units and programs. Our Service League Board of Directors would like to encourage all of these groups to take this opportunity for additional support.

To all of our volunteers, Service League Board of Directors, donors, and UWMC staff, we look forward to continuing our good work together in 2014!

Cheers to our devoted team!

Renée DeRosier, Director

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established in 2009, the White Light Fund supports many important facets of cancer care at the UWMC, including “The Living Well with Cancer” series, The Collegiana, and uncompensated patient expenses.

during the month of december, 10% of all sales from the university village glassybaby store will be donated to the White Light Fund

thank you for sharing the light

glassybaby.com
Service League Grants Help Reduce Patient Readmissions

Through funding provided by the Service League, low income heart failure patients from 5NE were provided scales and blood pressure monitors to track their weight and blood pressure following discharge.

“For patients with heart failure, part of staying as healthy as possible—and out of the hospital—is having the ability to track weight and blood pressure on a daily basis,” explained Leah Spacciate, Nurse Manager on 5NE. “Gaining a few pounds over a day or two is a sign that the patient’s body is starting to hold on to water and that they need to have their medications adjusted or be seen by their doctor.

“Heart failure patients are also on medications to keep their blood pressure low. Being able to track blood pressure at home helps to ensure that they are on the proper medication and meeting their goal blood pressure. If their blood pressure becomes too low, they are at risk for falls. Patients report their results so that their medication can be adjusted before readmission is necessary.”

Added Leah, “We are so grateful for the Service League’s aid in this effort. Being able to provide a blood pressure monitor and/or scale to patients who cannot afford them allows us to provide patients with the tools they need at home. Tracking these important numbers is vital for patients to stay safe, healthy, get early interventions, and stay out of the hospital.”

In a letter to the Service League, Linda Sorensen, Assistant Administrator for Patient Care Services and Dr. Christopher Wong, Attending Physician, wrote, “Heart failure readmission rates have dropped nicely over the past year as a result of a combination of interventions, including the provision of scales and blood pressure monitors to at-risk patients. Please extend our thanks to the Service League for this valuable service!”

Service League Now Accepting Grant Applications

The Service League is pleased to offer $1,000 grants to UWMC clinics, nursing units, and patient programs. Applications are available on the Volunteer Services Intranet page or in the Volunteer Services office. The application deadline is January 19, 2014.

Funding is allocated to support patient programs and activities not traditionally covered by departmental budgets. Last year, the Service League awarded nearly $18,000 to UWMC programs and services. Award recipients included the Inpatient Psych Unit 7N, who purchased yoga mats, step aerobic equipment and training DVDs to supplement healing through movement for their patients. Upon receiving the initial funding from the Service League, yoga and step aerobics have grown in popularity and are now integral activities for patients on this unit.

If you have questions about the Service League Grants Program, contact Renée DeRosier, Director of Volunteer and Community Based Services, at derosier@uw.edu.
UWMC Ranked #1 Hospital in Washington State

The University of Washington Medical Center is the number one best hospital in Washington state and in the Seattle metro area, according to the recently released 2013-14 edition of U.S. News & World Report.

U.S. News evaluated data from almost 5,000 hospitals, using objective measures such as patient safety data and nursing staffing levels. Patients use this report to guide their choice when choosing hospitals that can provide the highest levels of care.

UWMC also scored very highly—among the nation’s top 10—in three specialty areas: rehabilitation, cancer, and diabetes/endocrinology.

Volunteers: Help prevent the spread of flu and infection at UWMC!

It’s important to practice consistent hand hygiene while volunteering at the medical center. Wash your hands frequently with soap and hot water, and use the hand gels provided throughout the hospital to clean your hands as needed.

The 2013-14 flu shot is required for all volunteers. The flu shot is provided for free in the Employee Health office between 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. every weekday (except holidays). Thank you for doing your part to keep our vulnerable patients healthy and safe from the flu this season.

UHC Quality & Accountability Study

By Lisa Goben, Associate Director, Center for Clinical Excellence

UW Medical Center, and its sister hospital Harborview Medical Center, received a score of 4 stars out of 5 in this year’s University HealthSystem Consortium Quality and Accountability Study. This is a monumental achievement considering the many excellent academic medical centers who are members of University HealthSystem Consortium (UHC). UWMC particularly excelled in Patient Safety and Patient Centeredness.

The UHC Quality & Accountability Study uses and in-depth methodology ranking system based on data analysis, which is designed to help academic medical centers identify structures and processes associated with high performance in quality and safety across a broad spectrum of patient care activity. The Institute of Medicine’s 6 domains of care—mortality, effectiveness, safety, equity, patient-centeredness, and efficiency—were used as a guide in structuring the study.

UHC is an alliance of the nation’s leading academic medical centers which are focused on delivering renowned medical care solutions in the areas of performance improvement, comparative data and analytics, supply chain management, strategic research, and public policy.

“The achievement was an ‘all-slate’ effort by our staff and validates what we do every day at UMWC; focusing on our patients and providing world class health care to all who come here,” states Julie Duncan, Director of the Center for Clinical Excellence at UWMC.
UWMC Volunteer Profile: Irene Seto

Irene Seto is currently UWMC’s longest active volunteer. Irene started volunteering at UWMC before we had a volunteer database and kept volunteer records on index cards. She started in the mid-1980’s which means she has volunteered for UW Medical Center for close to 29 years.

Over the years, Irene has kept a journal recording her experiences volunteering at UWMC. She started by doing a variety of volunteer tasks ranging from receiving donations and dispersing them to patients, to putting donated artwork into frames around the hospital. Eventually she moved into the Escort role, stationed at the Lobby Information Desk. She remembers doing many “tube runs” when the old pneumatic tube system was being replaced.

Irene worked in real estate prior to volunteering but a surgery prevented her from returning to work. That’s when she began volunteering at Seattle Children’s Hospital. A desire to broaden her experience led her to UWMC. “I love the hospital because everyone is so nice,” said Irene. “I love helping other people because there are so many people and so much work to do.” Volunteering has helped to keep her active and involved in her community.

When asked to share a memorable story, Irene lit up and said, “There are so many stories!” She recalled a gentleman patient who asked to be taken to the cafeteria. The patient started singing and Irene tried to tell him not to (she was worried it was loud and disruptive). But he kept singing. When she escorted him back to the lobby, the patient asked if he could sing a song to thank her. Irene requested *O Holy Night*, and they sat together in the lobby as he sang it to her. This memory has always stayed with her.

Irene recalled another time that someone approached her at the Information Desk and asked why she volunteered. She said they seemed confused as to why anyone would volunteer their time at the Information Desk. Irene replied with a smile, “It makes you happy to volunteer here.”

Irene, you make us happy too! Thank you for your commitment and years of service to patients, families and staff at UW Medical Center.

Important Changes to Code Blue at UWMC

During orientation, volunteers learn the meanings of different hospital emergency response codes such as Code Red (Fire), Code Silver (Security), Amber Alert (Infant Abduction), and Code Blue (Medical Emergency). When a Code Blue is called, UWMC medical teams rush to the site of the emergency.

Volunteers may have recently noticed a change in Code Blue. In an effort to reduce unnecessary noise and stress for patients, the overhead announcement for Code Blue has been minimized to a simple message: “Code Blue Activated.” The location is no longer announced and the code is no longer repeated. Members of the Code Blue team are instead paged with the location of the emergency, creating less confusion and disturbance for our patients and visitors.

At UWMC, we are always looking for ways we can improve service. Thank you to all our volunteers for helping us to create a welcoming, healing hospital environment—you are an important part of the services we provide every day to patients and their families!
Annual Valentine’s Day Card Project

UWMC’s Art Program invites all UWMC and UW staff members, their family and friends, volunteers, and members of the community to participate in our sixth annual Valentine Card Project.

For the past five years, staff, volunteers and community members have participated in creating the most beautiful Valentine’s Day cards for UWMC’s inpatients. The project culminates on February 14, when each inpatient receives a special handmade Valentine delivered directly to their room. This year, with the addition of the new Montlake Tower, we will need 450 cards and we are inviting you to participate in this creative and beautiful gesture. You do not need to be an artist!

UWMC’s Art Program will provide all the necessary materials to make the cards but you are welcome to use your own materials as well. Starting Wednesday, January 8, beautiful and inspiring materials will be available to pick up in the Volunteer Services office, NN-303. Or feel free to use materials you may have at home.

Our goal is 450 beautiful and unique handmade cards ready for delivery to our patients on Valentine’s Day. Here are the specifics:

- Create one or more beautiful and unique handmade Valentine’s Day cards.
- No envelopes please.
- Maximum size - approximately 5” x 7”.
- Materials available in NN-303 from January 8 through February 6 (or use your own materials).
- Please include a personalized message and sign your card. A few examples are: “Thinking of you today,” “Wishing you the best,” “Happy Valentine’s Day,” etc. Please keep the message secular in nature.
- Signatures need not be your name. They may be more general, such as “From all of us at UWMC,” “From UWMC’s Accounting Department,” “From the Forsythe Family,” etc.
- Finished Valentines are due in the Volunteer Service’s office by Friday, February 8. Cards may be dropped off in person (NN-303), put in campus mail, or U.S. mail. Mailing address: Volunteer Services, UWMC, 1959 NE Pacific Street, Box 365144, Seattle, WA, 98195-6144.

UWMC Art Collection: New Acquisition

The UWMC Art Collection recently purchased a number of new pieces, including this beautiful painting (below) by local artist Fred Lisaius which is currently installed in the Radiation Oncology Clinic waiting area:

Artist statement: “The deeper I go into the forest, the closer I feel to the truth. Off the trail, there is a quiet calm where ideas can be contemplated and refined. In my paintings and my sculptures, I utilize the forum of nature to explore our relationship to the natural world and to each other.

“When it’s foggy, I see everything more clearly. Shapes are simplified, colors subdued, and a veil of mystery is cast. Weather, change of season, and day into night affect mood and create atmosphere in my work.

“Some of the themes that I explore in my work are community, diversity, harmony, exploration discovery and change. My paintings and sculptures provide a portal to a place where dramas unfold, explorations can occur, and discoveries are made.”

“Mountain Garden” by Fred Lisaius (acrylic on panel).
Thanks to generous donations of funding from glassybaby to the White Light Fund, UWMC oncology patients have the opportunity to create lovely, meaningful, reflective and even whimsical art. Art Therapist Zandi Salstrom works with patients at their bedside as well as with patients and families in group activities on the unit. Here she shares the story of one family member’s experience creating art—and why it’s important for caretakers to take “mini vacations”:

One of the art therapy projects we create with our patients and family members is inspired by the tradition of Guatemalan Worry Dolls. Traditionally, children receive Worry Dolls when they are anxious and unable to sleep. The child shares their worries with the doll, and then sleeps with the doll under their pillow. The doll has been thought to worry in place of the child, therefore reducing anxiety and allowing the child to sleep.

We have been using this project in our Arts in Healing program for years, and have found that it works well for patients and family members of any age. We start the project by thinking of something we want to get rid of (e.g., a worry, stressor, problem, feeling, etc.), and we imagine a color that is associated with that thing. Then using a pen of that same color, we write down the worry, stressor, problem, or feeling on a small piece of paper which we glue around an old-fashioned wooden clothespin.

The clothespin becomes the body of our doll. Patients and family members thoughtfully choose colors of embroidery floss and create clothing and hair. They take great pride in drawing faces, adding embellishments such as acorn shells for hats, or creating necklaces out of wire and tiny beads. Family members will often create dolls of the patient, especially if the patient is not well enough to join the Arts in Healing group.

A woman recently approached the Arts in Healing table, claiming she was just sitting down for a moment. She expressed a curiosity about what we were doing but also that she needed to “get going.” She shared with us that she was the mother of a young patient who was at the hospital for another round of chemotherapy.

As she talked, her hands gravitated toward the art supplies, and over the next hour, she created a Worry Doll like none we had seen in the group before. Rather than the traditional shirt/pants or skirt/shirt combination, this doll was wearing a bathing suit and a sunhat. This doll was ready for a vacation and so was the mother!

Every week, we talk to family members who are nervous to leave their patient’s bedside, but so clearly need a break. They pass by our groups on the way to get coffee or use the restroom, and they stop out of curiosity. They often say they would love to join us “but I have to get back to the room,” followed by details of what is going on with the patient.

Mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters are tired, scared, and feel guilty about taking any time for themselves. However, they need time to decompress and renew, just as their patients need time to rest and heal. They need a chance to give their worries to someone (or something) else, and to take a few moments during which they can lose themselves in a positive experience. They need mini vacations.

The Arts in Healing groups provide opportunities for these moments to occur. Family members can take a break, engage in creativity, talk about their fears, worries, and stresses, and then return to their patients with a more positive and rested state of mind.

We are so grateful to be able to offer creative and healing outlets to all of our patients and family members, providing moments of creativity, healing, and renewal.
UWMC Gift Shop - December Sales Events

December is a busy month for the UWMC Service League’s retail program. Check out these upcoming sales events that are sure to offer special holiday gift ideas.

**Elles Beads:** Ellen Harbison creates home essentials that are beautifully and artistically handmade with her own creations of lampworking glass beads attached to a variety of tools such as cheese knives, bottle openers, salad servers, magnifying glasses, letter openers, and more.

**December 4-5,** 9:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m., Wednesday & Thursday, Gift Shop, third floor.

**Two Old Bags:** Always a popular event, at this sale you will find trendy jewelry and accessories that look expensive at an affordable price. This event is so popular, we’ve added a third day.

**December 10 – 12,** 9:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday, Gift Shop, third floor.

**Jewels of Hope:** In 2005, at the age of 7, Greer Gates started making and selling bracelets out of buttons to help raise money to cure cancer. Greer is a teenager now and still going strong with her mission. In 2012, she won the Washington Jefferson Award for Public Service. Jewels of Hope is now a registered charity, with 100% of the proceeds benefitting cancer research here at UWMC. Don’t miss this energetic young lady!

**December 18–19,** 9:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m., Wednesday & Thursday, Gift Shop, third floor.

**SPECIAL PROMOTION:** Now you can drink your espresso in New York City style without wasting a paper cup! Based on the classic to-go paper cup design as seen on Law & Order and other TV shows.

Purchase a $25 pre-paid card from any UWMC Service League locations and receive this classic NYC porcelain espresso cup valued at $6.00.

Offer good while supplies last! Promotion starts on **December 2**.

Gift Shop, Tea Room, Lobby Espresso, Pavilion Espresso and Roosevelt Espresso. **All purchases at any of our 5 locations help support patient care programs at UWMC.**

Thank You to the Maple Park Church Quilters!

Thank you to Rebekah Karlen and the Maple Park Church Quilters for their recent donation of 27 hand-crafted quilts and infant clothing items for the newborns on UWMC’s Labor and Delivery Unit.

Rebekah has been organizing and coordinating this wonderful project since 2007. She solicits donations and manages the fabric and quilting supplies to put together kits for the members of the congregation. With these kits, volunteers are able to make the baby quilts at home.

Rebekah has taught many members of her church how to quilt. She devotes her own talents to supporting the art of quilting and sustaining her church group’s generous gift to UWMC.

“Families are thrilled and touched to receive a handmade quilt for their newborn,” shared Vangie Schass, Assistant Nurse Manager in the Maternity & Infant Center. “On some occasions, new parents might not have all of their baby items prepared—or for families that have many children and their newborn baby items are worn out, these gifts are greatly needed and appreciated.”

We are grateful to Rebekah and the Maple Park Church Quilters for their commitment to our smallest patients and their families. This community group donates over 100 handmade quilts to UWMC annually, in addition to much-needed infant clothing for low-income families. Thank you for sharing your talents, gifts and your heart.
Volunteer Appreciation for the Holidays

The Volunteer Services office needs your magazines! You will be de-cluttering your home at the same time that you are helping patients and families at UWMC.

Our volunteers deliver them to waiting rooms throughout the medical center. By request, nurses and volunteers also personally deliver magazines to patients in their rooms.

Light subject matter is preferred. Especially popular are *People*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Sunset*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *The New Yorker*. Magazines should not be older than six months.

Please deliver your gently used magazines to the Volunteer Services office, NN-303.

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Holiday Office Closures, December & January

The Volunteer Services office will be closed for the following holidays:

**Christmas**: December 25, 2013
**New Year’s Day**: January 1, 2014.
**Martin Luther King Day**: January 21, 2014.

Patient Escorts may volunteer on holidays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Volunteers in other areas should check with their supervisor to see if their assistance is needed during the holidays.

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“If you can’t fly, then run. If you can’t run, then walk. If you can’t walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.
Help Wanted: Volunteer Opportunities

**Nursing Units:** Open to adult/college volunteers. 6NE and 6SE (General Medicine), 4NE (Medical Surgery), 4SE (Transplant), 5SE (Cardiothoracic ICU), 5NE (Medical Surgical, Telemetry), Radiology, ICRU (Interventional Cardiac Recovery Unit), 6S (Antepartum Service Unit), 6E (Labor & Delivery), Regional Heart Center and Surgery Center all have openings for nursing unit assistants. These assignments provide great opportunities for pre-nursing student volunteers who have completed their Escort pre-requisite. Nursing unit volunteers will assist nursing staff with Level Green patient transport, patient comfort tasks, stocking, errands and clerical duties.

**Physical Therapy:** Assist in the 8E Physical Therapy department! Open to all adult/college volunteers. Volunteers help with group classes, Level Green transports, phone calls, equipment clean-up, and observing and assisting therapists.

**Lobby Ambassador:** Create a welcoming environment by greeting and assisting patients and visitors at the medical center. Assist with overall Information Desk way finding requests, ride assistance, flower deliveries, Level Green patient transport, and wheelchair rounding.

**Patient Clinics:** A variety of clinics need volunteer support to help with collating patient packets, managing paperwork, answering phones, photocopying, appointment reminders, running errands, and Level Green patient transport. Current clinics seeking volunteers include Anatomical Pathology, Bone & Joint Clinic, Cardiac Cath ICRU, Center for Pain Relief, CHDD, Dermatology, Diabetes Care Center, ECHO Lab, Exercise Training, General Internal Medicine, Medical Specialties, Neurosurgery, Nuclear Medicine, Outpatient Psychology, Pathology, Pre-Anesthesia Clinic, Radiation Oncology, Radiology, Regional Heart Center, Risk Management, Surgical Specialties, Transplant, Urology, and Women's Healthcare Clinic.

If interested in any of these positions, contact Cynnie Foss during her office hours, M-F, noon-1:00 p.m. or at fossc@uw.edu.

Welcome New Volunteers

Volunteer Services recently interviewed, placed, and trained 45 new volunteers.

We are delighted to have you with us! You are already making a difference for patients, families, visitors and staff members at UWMC.

A BIG welcome to: