

from good to great - a customer service success story

Every organization has a window to the world, and it's through that window that an organization often makes its first impressions. Take a look out your window and what do your customers see? Do they see a team of staff that is respectful, courteous, and caring? Are they neat, clean, and friendly?

Grand Itasca's Emergency Department is one of the hospital's main windows,

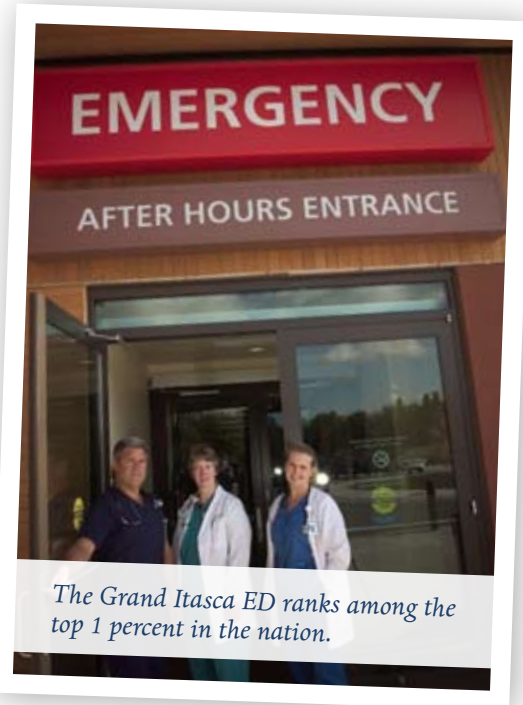
and it is at this portal where the patients who entered from October through December ranked the Grand Itasca Emergency Department (ED) in the top 1 percent in the nation. During this time frame, Grand Itasca's ED was benchmarked against 908 hospitals of various sizes nationwide.

Measurement Brings Results

At Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, patients in each area are regularly surveyed about wait times to see a physician, and the helpfulness and courtesy of the staff they encounter. The random survey mailed to the patient's household after a visit to Grand Itasca also asks the customer about how well the staff listened, how the patient's family and friends were treated, if their privacy was respected, and if they were informed about delays. In almost every one of these categories, Grand Itasca ED patients ranked the department in the 99th percentile.

How does our ED do it? Leadership, teamwork, and deliberate attention to the things people care about. Here are some of the key items that Grand Itasca's ED team continually focuses on.

1. Goals and expectations – “We expect our staff to know what great customer service is all about, but as

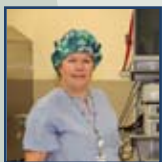


leaders we need to set expectations and show them the way,” says Tom Lorenz, MD, Grand Itasca's Emergency Department Director. Dr. Lorenz continues, “Every department's goal at Grand Itasca is to reach the 95th percentile in our Press Ganey surveys. We had been hovering around that number for the first three quarters of 2007, and then in the last quarter everything just seemed to click. Coincidentally, it is also one of the busiest times of the year in our emergency department.”

2. Teamwork – Kathy Helmbrecht, Clinical Operations Manager in Grand Itasca's ED, says, “As we continue to strive to improve our customer service,

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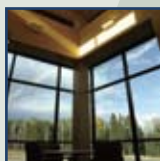
2 A learning institution



3 Focus on in-hospital Care



4 Health care Education



7 How Grand Itasca Clinic benefits our community

grand itasca, a learning institution

Many people dream of going back to school or learning new skills to do what they love for a living. Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital's educational benefits and flexible schedules can make those dreams a reality. And that reality results in benefits for you as a patient, too.

Finding the Right Path

Even when Bonnie McGuire, RN, first started her nursing career at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, she already knew she wanted to return to school for a degree or two. "I was assisting with administrative duties a lot because we were growing so much," McGuire recalls. "I had an associate's degree and needed more education to go down the administrative path, so I started with a bachelor's degree in nursing in 2006."

But the more McGuire assisted with administration, the less she thought she was on the right path. "I realized that administration was not my strong point," McGuire says. "My strong point is caring for patients and making sure they are as comfortable as possible."

McGuire decided to become a family nurse practitioner. With the help of Grand Itasca's tuition reimbursement program and flexible scheduling, she is earning a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) at North Dakota State University in Fargo, to be completed in December 2009.

"I've missed having direct contact with patients," says McGuire, who

will be the first to hold a DNP at Grand Itasca. "I look forward to learning what is important to them and helping with treatment decisions. Nurse practitioners also focus on helping people prevent illness and stay healthy." Currently, Grand Itasca has five other nurse practitioners on staff.

World-Class Training Comes Home

Breast cancer survival rates are highest when breast cancer is found early. That's why it's important for a hospital to have the best technology. But a hospital also needs physicians who have experience using the latest technology.

Dr. Steven Haugen, radiologist, got his experience through a breast imaging/ultrasound fellowship at the University of Michigan, a premier breast cancer evaluation and treatment facility.

"At Michigan, I read mammograms, did biopsies and ultrasounds, and was directly supervised by world-class physicians with expertise in breast imaging," says Dr. Haugen of his training in mammography and ultrasound screening.

Dr. Haugen was in Michigan and the Twin Cities for a year before returning to Grand Itasca. "I came back to Grand Itasca because they want to offer the highest caliber of care," Dr. Haugen says. "That's what our patients deserve."



Steve Haugen, MD
Radiologist

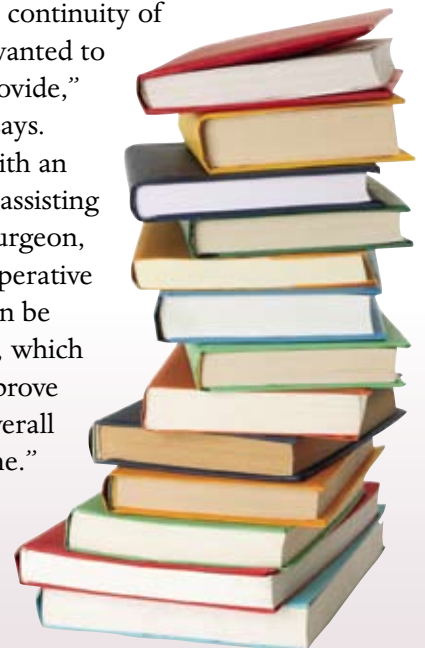


Traci Olson, RNFA

Creating Continuity of Care

If you're going in for surgery, it's comforting to see a familiar face in the operating room. At Grand Itasca, that familiar face may be Traci Olson, who was the first person at Grand Itasca to earn her RNFA (registered nurse first assistant) training. "When you're wheeled into the OR, it helps to see someone who you know," Olson says.

RNFAs assist surgeons with technical OR skills such as tying sutures and closing incisions. But RNFAs also get to know patients at before- and after-surgery visits in the clinic. "That's the kind of continuity of care I wanted to help provide," Olson says. "And with an RNFA assisting your surgeon, your operative time can be shorter, which can improve your overall outcome."



hospitalists focus on in-hospital care

Hospital care accounts for nearly half of all healthcare expenditures in the United States and is being increasingly scrutinized for opportunities to improve care and reduce costs. A hospitalist program is one approach to the cost/quality challenge that has gained traction across the country.

As a regional leader in health care services, Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital continually seeks to improve care and services to the community. As part of that commitment, we've added a new hospital medicine service this spring.

Effective April 1, 2008, John Barry, MD, and Jamison Harker, MD, both board-certified internal medicine physicians at Grand Itasca, will begin seeing patients exclusively in the hospital setting.

What Is a Hospitalist?

Little more than a decade ago, the terms "hospitalist" and "hospital medicine" were almost unknown in American Medicine. Today, hospital medicine is the newest and fastest-growing specialty area in health care.

Hospitalists are generally responsible for the inpatient component of health care and focus on improving the quality of care, shortening length of stay, and reducing the cost of care through more efficient use of hospital resources, such as laboratory tests and radiological examinations.

Hospitalists are physicians who practice hospital medicine. They

manage patients' care throughout their stay at the hospital, often through treatment in the emergency room to admission for inpatient care to hospital discharge.

Benefits of Hospital Medicine

Because hospitalists are more familiar with the hospital and its systems and functions, they are able to spend more time with hospital patients and their families than physicians with practices outside the hospital. Some of the other advantages that hospitalists provide include:

- Grand Itasca patients and family members will come to appreciate the availability of a physician in the hospital at all times and their ability to speak with this physician multiple times each day, leading to increased patient satisfaction.
- In addition to patients, nursing staff and ancillary personnel will experience increased satisfaction through the constant availability of the hospitalist in the facility.
- Grand Itasca Hospital will benefit from having 24-hour physician availability for code calls and rapid response events.
- Enhanced patient care, including streamlined coordination of care with other medical facilities if a transfer becomes necessary.
- Continual physician oversight during the hospital stay.
- Increased patient safety.
- Timely and regular updates of a patient's condition to the admitting primary care provider.
- Enhanced communication with patients and families.



John Barry, MD
Internal Medicine, Hospitalist



Jamison Harker, MD
Internal Medicine, Hospitalist

- Improved planning and communication for discharge and aftercare.
- Greater teamwork and communication with nursing, therapy services, and social services.

In addition, a study reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that the average hospital stay of patients treated by hospitalists was nearly a half day shorter than that of other patients.*

* Source: *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dec. 20, 2007.

Hospitalists will be at Grand Itasca from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week, providing a continuum of care for patients in the Medical and Intensive Care Units. If you would like more information about this exciting new program, please feel free to call us at 218/999-1453.

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAMS

staying at the forefront of health care education

Health care is a rapidly evolving industry. Equipment, treatments, prevention, and medicine advance almost daily, and it requires considerable effort to keep up. The education support programs at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital help staff members stay up-to-date on the latest theories and training so that we can continue to deliver the very best patient care.

Promoting Professional Development

“Continuing education is essential for quality health care services,” says Bob Cocker, Human Resources Director at Grand Itasca. “We provide the tools and a framework to help employees learn new things and make sure they’re doing the best job possible.”

To that end, staff members may apply for educational leaves of absence, education reimbursement for offsite workshops and seminars, and tuition assistance if enrolled in a formal education program. Employees also have access to online training materials and the hospital coordinates periodic in-house education days. In addition, physicians have weekly education sessions which are open to all employees. The hospital also provides training on all new equipment.

“Patient-centered excellence is the bottom line,” Cocker explains. “We make sure that our employees are given every opportunity to learn



about their jobs and how to do them well so that they can take the best possible care of our community.”

Grand Itasca Foundation also collaborates with the staff and administration to promote education. The Foundation Board assists with seminars or workshops for staff, and they work to educate the community about health care and resources available at Grand Itasca. They have provided LCD monitors for diabetes education and have sent cardiac rehab professionals into the community to talk about heart health.

“We work to maximize our resources,” says Elizabeth Miskovich, Foundation Director. “We connect people with the financial resources they need to seek continuing education so they can provide the best care to ensure patient-centered excellence.”

Scholarships for Tomorrow’s Health Care Providers

Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, along with Grand Itasca Foundation and Grand Itasca Volunteer Services, also offers a range of post-secondary scholarships for Itasca residents pursuing a degree in a health care-related field. The Foundation administers the Dr. and Mrs. Robert Kelly Scholarship designed to benefit the nontraditional student (those ages 25 and older), as well as scholarships to graduating seniors from area high schools. For additional information about these scholarships, contact Foundation Director Elizabeth Miskovich at **218/999-1009**.

In addition, Volunteer Services awards \$1,500 scholarships to qualifying Itasca County residents (applicants must have lived in Itasca County for one year or more) who have completed at least one year of post-secondary education in a health care field.

“Many of our scholarship recipients come to work at the hospital and share their skills with the community,” says Volunteer Services Coordinator Robyn Gunnerson.

Volunteer Services scholarship applications for 2008-2009 are available at Grand Itasca and must be postmarked by May 1, 2008.

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some questioned whether or not it would make a difference. With everyone working together and holding each other accountable for our professional behavior, we *can* make a difference. At the point of entry for each patient and all the way through to the end of a patient's visit, we all have the opportunity to make a positive impact on the patient."

3. Reward and recognize – "As an organization, you can't let successes go unnoticed," says Tana Casper, Vice President of Patient Care Services. "When we see great things being done, we send our employees or physicians a thank-you note. When results like these are achieved, we celebrate them and let everyone share in the success."

4. Emotional connections – "The staff in any emergency department doesn't always deal with the easiest of situations," says Pam Boswell, Nursing Director. "However, the one thing that often puts the patient or family at ease is our staff making an emotional connection with them. It can simply be making eye contact, or offering a warm smile, a welcoming handshake, a friendly greeting, or a comforting hug, but it brings us closer to each and every person we encounter."

Our ED survey results demonstrate Grand Itasca's commitment to providing you with the best possible care in a warm, supportive, and comfortable environment.



Follow Your Dreams

Grand Itasca employs nearly 600 people who share a mission: to deliver patient-centered excellence. If that mission is your dream, check out our job opportunities online at www.granditasca.org/employ.htm.



Podiatrist Tom Perendy, DPM, Joins Grand Itasca

Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital is pleased to announce the addition of podiatrist Tom Perendy, MD, to its list of specialty providers. Dr. Perendy received his Bachelor of Science from Mankato State University and his medical degree from the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine. He completed surgical rotations at Cook County and Lincoln West hospitals in Chicago and is a diplomate of the American Board of Lower Extremity Surgery.

Dr. Perendy specializes in all aspects of foot and ankle care. His special interests include biomechanics, diabetic foot care, and surgery.

To make an appointment with Dr. Perendy, please call 218/326-7344.

grand itasca, a teaching organization

Learning is a lifelong endeavor – those who practice medicine never stop learning themselves, and often reach out to help teach others.

At Grand Itasca, we believe in education and mentoring, and our many teaching programs foster a community of learning. We offer mentoring and internship programs for medical, nursing, pharmacy, radiology, and rehabilitation therapy students. These programs benefit not only the students themselves, but also the mentors, the community, and patients that visit the organization.

One-on-One Learning Through RPAP

One of the best ways to learn is by doing, which is why Grand Itasca hosts many medical students to give them an opportunity to experience what health care is like in a rural

community. The largest of these programs is called the Rural Physicians Associate Program (RPAP). Through an alliance with University of Minnesota Duluth Medical School and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, students spend nine months in their third year of medical school at a rural hospital, instead of doing four six-week clinic rotations in the Twin Cities.

“There are more than 300 medical students at the University of Minnesota, and around 55 of them have chosen to do an RPAP rotation this year,” says Tim Pehl, M.D., who has been the primary preceptor of RPAP at Grand Itasca for four years. “That speaks really highly about the experience.”

Dr. Pehl says it is a unique, one-on-one experience for students. “They get the benefit of being the only student around, and they don’t get lost in the crowd,” he says. “I am the student’s mentor and teacher. We often sit down after a day of seeing patients and discuss what they have seen that day. I want to know if there is anything more I can teach them about today’s experience,” Dr. Pehl says.

Many Benefits

The students participate in a wide variety of activities while doing their rotations.



They spend time with Dr. Pehl, as well as learn from surgeons, internal medicine doctors, orthopedists, urologists and ER doctors.

“The joy in this program for me is watching someone mature in nine months,” Dr. Pehl says. “By the time the students come out of the program, they have the ability to make complex decisions and handle complex patients.”

Patients can also benefit from the teaching programs we offer. “When a patient comes to see one of our doctors who is working with a student, he or she gets the benefit of more people thinking about their health at any given moment,” Dr. Pehl says. “We work as a team and formulate patient plans together.”

Another benefit is attracting high-quality doctors to a rural setting. “Small towns struggle to meet the demand for physicians, and by providing students with an honest picture of what rural medicine is all about, we hope they’ll consider a rural medicine practice when they complete their education,” says Dr. Pehl.



FILLING VITAL NEEDS

how does grand itasca clinic & hospital **benefit our community?**

When you think of Grand Itasca, you may picture people in scrubs rushing around, saving patients' lives with cutting-edge equipment and procedures. While that may be an accurate image in part, the care we provide extends beyond our walls.

We endeavor to support all people in the communities we serve – whether they need life-saving procedures or not. In fact, we also work to prevent you from getting sick or injured by offering support groups, participating in community health care initiatives, and providing education opportunities for patients, families, and students.

Investing in the Future

People of all ages can benefit from our health education services – especially children, who are the future of our community. Our concern for children begins before they are even born. We offer a comprehensive prenatal program that encourages early ongoing care and increases access to prenatal information for families of all income levels.

Grand Itasca is also a place to learn for future health care providers who will care for persons in Northeastern and Central Minnesota years from now. We provide mentoring and classroom space for students who are pursuing health care careers.

Local, High-Quality Care

If you or a loved one needs emergency medical attention, the sooner you get to a hospital, the better. You don't need to waste valuable time traveling to a larger city to find quality care. Our health care providers are committed to providing the highest quality of care locally because they make their homes in our community and care about it – just like you do!

Local health care contributes to the vitality of our community's economy. Grand Itasca employs more than 600 people in careers that offer advancement opportunities and generous benefits. We believe in treating our employees with respect because satisfied employees can focus on providing the best care to patients.

Partners in Care

The concept of hospitals has existed since the middle ages when volunteers – usually religious orders – took in and cared for those in need. That spirit of volunteerism still exists today through our Foundation and our Volunteer Services.

Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, Grand Itasca Foundation and our volunteers work together to ensure that every patient has access to the best local care. Your gifts of time, funds or services is making a difference in the way care is delivered in greater Minnesota.



Grand Itasca Board of Directors

Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of volunteer community members and Grand Itasca providers. The following is a list of our officers and members.

Frank Allen
Doug Coy, MD
Marva Jean Hutchens
Ron Ianelli
Mike Ives, Past Chair
Lisa Johnson, DDS
Mary Kosak, Secretary
Joe Maher
Peter McDermott
Barbara McDonald, Chair
Colleen Nardone
Terri Radovich, MD
Barb Sanderson
Shelly Steere
Patty Westerberg, MD

Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital
1601 Golf Course Road
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Grand Itasca Hospital
218/326-3401

Clinic Information
218/326-5000

Clinic Appointments
218/326-7344

Email: info@granditasca.org
www.granditasca.org

Hours of Operation:

Clinic Hours
Monday through Thursday 8-6,
Friday 8-4:30, Saturday 9-noon

Day Surgery
Monday through Friday 7-5
and as hospital needs dictate

Emergency Room
Open 24 hours a day

Professional Building

111 SE Third Street
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218/326-3401

Professional Building Hours:

Monday through Thursday 7-6,
Friday 8-5

Appointments can be made
during regular business hours.

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Why are these Fruits all SMILES?

Because they are FEELIN' GREAT in 2008

Grand Itasca and Children First! celebrated the 10th Annual Children's First Fair! at the IRA Civic Center on April 26th from 9 am - 1 pm.



Name _____

Age Group (circle one)

Phone Number _____

3-4 5-6 7-8

Address _____

Win some great prizes by coloring the above picture. Drop off your picture at the Grand Itasca Information Desk (right inside the front lobby) no later than April 30. Winners will be contacted by May 15.

granditascaTM
CLINIC & HOSPITAL

1601 Golf Course Road
Grand Rapids, MN 55744