

hello **Healthy**

CELEBRATING THE HEALING POWER OF HUMANKINDNESS • SPRING 2018

Making it personal

New program at
Memorial Hospital
pairs patients with
docents for better
human connection

New mom Gabby Ramos and baby
Jared with docent Esmeralda Zuniga.

Start your new life now



Recognized for excellence

The Surgical Weight Loss Program at Mercy Hospitals has been recognized for its dedication to safe, high-quality care. It recently earned accreditation through the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program.

What weight-loss surgery has to offer

Weight-loss surgery can be a life-changing option for people who haven't been able to achieve lasting weight loss through diet and exercise alone.

At Mercy Hospitals' Surgical Weight Loss Program, we offer three highly successful surgery techniques:

- Gastric banding.
- Roux-en-Y gastric bypass.
- Sleeve gastrectomy.

Am I a candidate?

To learn more about the Mercy Hospitals' Surgical Weight Loss Program or take the free online assessment, call **661.282.1325** or visit dignityhealth.org/bakersfield/weightloss.

CLICK 

Here are answers to some common questions about the program:

Q: What support services do you offer?

Before you decide if surgery is right for you, you can attend a free seminar that helps explain your options and the lifestyle changes you may need to make.

If you decide to move ahead, our doctors and staff members will be with you every step of the way with nutrition counseling and one-on-one support. And our support group can keep you connected with others who are on the journey to weight loss.

Q: What results can I expect?

On average, our participants shed between 60 and 85 percent of their excess weight in the first year after surgery. And most see their diabetes, blood pressure, or sleep apnea improve.

People who've had weight-loss surgery may also find that:

- Their joints hurt less.
- It's easier to move.
- They're able to be more active with loved ones.

Hello humankindness®

We hope you enjoy this issue of *HelloHealthy*. Comments about the publication can be directed to the Marketing and Communications Department:

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Hello humankindness Friends

How do you inspire kids to be caring, generous, and kind? These “characters” are teaching local children lifelong lessons in compassion and kindness.

What began as a student-based Dream Builders community project through the Jim Burke Ford Education Foundation, the *Hello humankindness Friends* program has evolved into a positivity movement that approaches antibullying messages from pro-kindness angles.



Animated kindness

Matthew Prewitt and Bree Wattonville, from LOS Productions, collaborated with local high school students to create kid-friendly kindness lessons that feature animated character illustrations in positive, playful settings. Dignity Health Mercy & Memorial Hospitals is proud to sponsor this video series that is now featured in elementary schools throughout Bakersfield.

Each month features original animations, with accompanying lesson plans and classroom activities for lower and higher age groups.



The material is created in partnership with local students between kindergarten and eighth grade, and it even features their voices in the monthly animated shorts.



And...action!

Referred to by its creators as #KindIsTheNewCool, the curriculum features discussion topics and action plans guided by the storylines in each two-minute video. The growing library covers topics such as making friends, good sportsmanship, being kind to yourself, and helping families in need.

This fall, a Spanish-language version of the *Hello humankindness Friends* program will be introduced into Kern County classrooms.

Need a pick-me-up?

Visit dignityhealth.org/bakersfield/humankindnessfriends to watch the latest videos.

We dare you not to smile!

CLICK 



NEW!

DOCENTS FOR HOSPITAL PATIENTS

**any way you
need it**

Support

Patients at Dignity Health – Memorial Hospital are getting the star treatment, thanks to an innovative program that pairs patients with their own personal liaison, or docent. Memorial Hospital has teamed up with Docent Health, a Boston-based company. Together, their mission is to put humankindness back into health care.

Memorial Hospital is offering docent services to maternity, orthopedics, and cardiovascular patients. Specially trained service professionals, called docents, work closely with the clinical staff and with patients before, during, and after their hospital stays to ensure that their needs are met.

Smoothing the way

Lisa Corrente, Central Coast Regional Manager for Docent Health, says the goal of a docent is to turn what could be a very stressful, confusing time into a smooth, positive experience for patients and families.

“This is a new era in health care,” Corrente says. “It’s not enough to address someone’s clinical needs; they have to feel known, valued, and heard. If a patient’s stress is high, they feel like questions aren’t answered, and they don’t understand the process, the outcomes will not be as good,” says Corrente. “So



What is a docent?

A docent is a specially trained service professional who provides a single point of contact for patients throughout their health care journeys.

having an advocate is directly correlated with a positive outcome.”

The docent program aims to transform the patient’s experience by taking into account their medical history, preferences, and concerns. Before a person is admitted to the hospital, a docent contacts them to gather both clinical and personal data. The docent shares this information with doctors and nurses to ensure understanding of the patient’s needs during the hospital stay.

All the extras

Once a patient is admitted, they will be paired with a docent. Memorial Hospital has three full-time docents on site, tending to the needs of about 30 patients per day. The docents offer support in any way necessary, such as answering questions, getting a cup of coffee, or lending an empathetic ear.

“Oftentimes the clinical staff has so much on their plates that they simply don’t have time to sit down and hold someone’s hand and offer that additional time to address the nonclinical needs,” says Corrente. “All those extras—that is what patients really remember.”

An understanding partnership

Docents go through several weeks of training, including workshops and role play, before ever meeting a patient. They also live in the communities they serve, so they have a good understanding of patients. The docents are nonclinical employees, but they work hand in hand with medical staff to deliver a satisfying customer service experience.

“If you’re a clinician, this is all the stuff you would love to have more time to do, but you don’t, because you are busy saving lives,” says Corrente. “Now clinicians have a partner in meeting the patients’ needs. We’re a team, and we’re all just working to make the patient experiences as positive as possible.”

The goal of a docent is to turn what could be a very stressful, confusing time into a smooth, positive experience for patients and families.



Lisa Corrente, regional manager (left), and our three docents

Docents make all the difference!

For patients at Dignity Health – Memorial Hospital, the new docent service already seems to be making a big impact. New mom Gabby Ramos says having a docent during her hospital stay made all the difference.

“I never expected to be in the hospital that long,” Ramos says. “My nurses were great, but it was amazing to have someone else who was there for me, making sure I had everything I needed.”

Making the waiting less lonely

Ramos was admitted to Memorial Hospital’s maternity unit after her water broke when she was just 26 weeks pregnant. The 20-year-old ended up being confined to her hospital bed for more than three weeks while awaiting the birth of her son. That’s when she was paired with Docent Esmeralda Zuniga, who Ramos says made the days feel far less lonely.

“I was able to call or text her whenever I needed anything,” Ramos says. “She brought me ChapStick, hand sanitizer, face wash. And one day I told her I’d been craving chocolate, and she actually brought me my favorite kind. I didn’t even have to tell her.”

Being there for each patient

“If you just stop and listen to them, that’s the most important thing,” says Zuniga. “This is why I do this job. It’s all about the connection I have with the patient.”

Zuniga says she deeply values the relationships she forms and enjoys helping patients in their journeys from start to finish. “For me, it’s sad to say goodbye knowing I will probably never see them again, but I take comfort knowing that for this short time I was there for that person.”

As for Ramos, she and her son are both happy, healthy, and back at home. But she says she will never forget her kind and helpful docent, Esme. “I hope the program stays around for other moms, so that they can have their own Esme,” she says.



PREVENTING
COLON CANCER

Know your options

Learn the latest

What's new in colorectal cancer treatment? Watch the video with Bakersfield surgeon Lorenc Malellari, MD, at dignityhealth.org/bakersfield/roboticsurgery.

CLICK 

Love it or hate it, 50 is a milestone birthday. And you may not realize it, but it's a milestone for your health too. It's the age when most adults should start getting screened for colon cancer. This screening can not only detect cancer but also prevent it. In other words, it saves lives.

If everybody 50 or older had regular screening tests, the number of U.S. deaths from colon cancer would be greatly reduced. Here's why:

- » Colon cancer usually starts from abnormal growths, called polyps, in the colon or rectum. Over time, some polyps turn into cancer.
- » Screening tests can find polyps. Doctors can then remove them, stopping cancer from ever developing.
- » Screening tests can also find colon cancer early, before it causes symptoms. And that's when treatment works best.

A large, white, multi-armed robotic surgical system, the da Vinci Xi, is shown against a blurred background of green foliage. The robot has four main arms, each with multiple joints and grippers. It is mounted on a large, white, rectangular base. The arms are extended upwards and outwards, with the grippers pointing towards the center. The robot is designed for minimally invasive surgery.

New robot at Mercy Hospital Downtown treats patients with colorectal cancer

With help from a robot, doctors at Mercy Hospital Downtown now have a new way to treat colorectal cancer.

Bakersfield colorectal surgeon Lorenc Malellari, MD, used the new da Vinci Xi robotic surgical system for the first time last December to treat an 82-year-old man with colorectal cancer. With the robot, the procedure can be performed using small incisions, which means a much shorter recovery time.

How a robot helps

The da Vinci Xi uses tiny tools attached to robotic arms to make very precise movements. Every move is controlled by the surgeon working the system. And close-up images of the surgery can be seen in real time on a video screen.

Robotic surgery can be done through smaller incisions, compared with open surgery. That can mean:

- More precise surgical movements.
- A lower risk of infection.
- A shorter hospital stay.
- A quicker recovery.

The da Vinci Xi robot resides in the new S.A. Camp Companies Robotic Surgical Center, where it's used to treat cancer and other conditions. It was funded, in part, through generous donations to the Friends of Mercy Foundation.

You have choices

Different tests can screen for polyps or colon cancer. A colonoscopy—the most accurate test—examines the rectum and entire colon for polyps or cancer. A similar test, called a flexible sigmoidoscopy, examines the rectum and lower third of the colon. Alternatively, you can do a stool test at home, using a test kit from your doctor.

Be sure to talk with your doctor about which test is right for you—and when to start screening. People with a higher risk of colon cancer may need to start testing before age 50. Several different factors might raise your risk, including a family history of the disease or precancerous polyps.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

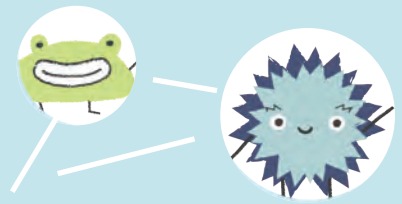
50

If everybody 50 or older had regular screening tests, the number of U.S. deaths from colon cancer would be greatly reduced.



Learn your risk factors.

Take the colorectal cancer risk assessment at dignityhealth.org/bakersfield/hra.



Meet the *Hello*
humankindness Friends!

See page 3.

National Vascular Screening Program Now Open in Bakersfield

Dignity Health Memorial Hospital brings Dare to C.A.R.E. vascular screening and disease management program to Kern County patients.

Schedule your appointment for a FREE vascular screening.

Visit **dignityhealth.org/bakersfield/daretocare** or call us at **661.843.6176** to learn more.