



February 2026



Patient and Visitor

MEMORIAL HEALTH SYSTEM
ABILENE, KANSAS

A MONTHLY HEALTHCARE NEWSLETTER FOR OUR PATIENTS AND FRIENDS

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AMERICAN HEART MONTH
NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY
Friday, February 6



Empowering Women's Heart Health
Education ~ Prevention ~ Wellness

An Ounce of Prevention: Why Wellness Visits Matter at Every Age

When life gets busy, it's easy to put your own health on the back burner, especially if you're feeling "just fine." But skipping annual wellness visits is one of the most common missed opportunities in healthcare today. Many people don't realize that these visits are often fully covered by insurance and are designed to help prevent serious health issues before they start. Simply put: if you're paying for insurance, why not use one of its most valuable benefits?

Wellness Visits: More Than a Check-the-Box Appointment

Annual wellness exams are not just quick checkups. They give your healthcare provider a chance to look at the *whole picture* of your health—reviewing personal and family history, identifying risk factors, and catching early warning signs that might otherwise go unnoticed.

High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and even some cancers often develop silently. Wellness visits help detect these conditions early, when they are easier—and less costly—to manage.

Younger Doesn't Mean Invincible

One of the biggest misconceptions about preventive care is that it's only for older adults. In reality, younger individuals have the most to gain. Healthy habits and early screenings in your 20s, 30s, and 40s can significantly reduce the risk of chronic disease later in life. Preventive visits can help address things like:

- Weight and nutrition concerns
- Stress and mental health
- Sleep issues
- Family history risks
- Lifestyle factors that impact long-term health

The choices you make now play a major role in how healthy you'll be years from now.

Prevention Is an Investment

While many preventive services are covered by insurance, some screenings or follow-up tests may involve out-of-pocket costs. Even so, these visits are an investment in your future health. Early detection can prevent more serious conditions, hospital stays, and expensive treatments down the road.

Common Preventive Services Often Covered by Insurance—Coverage varies by plan, but many insurance policies include preventive services such as:

- Annual wellness exams
- Blood pressure and cholesterol screenings
- Diabetes screening
- Tobacco use counseling
- Wellness counseling for nutrition and physical activity
- Body mass index (BMI) assessments
- Routine immunizations
- Cancer screenings, such as: Mammograms, Pap tests, and Colon cancer screenings
- Depression and mental health screenings

Your healthcare provider can help determine which screenings are appropriate based on your age, gender, and risk factors.

Your Health Is Worth the Time. Wellness visits aren't just about finding problems, they're about staying well. Taking advantage of preventive care gives you knowledge, peace of mind, and a proactive path toward a longer, healthier life. If it's been a while since your last wellness visit, consider this your reminder: prevention starts now, and your future self will thank you!

HealthCare.gov – Preventive Health Services
<https://www.healthcare.gov/coverage/preventive-care-benefits/>
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) – Preventive Care <https://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/about-the-aca/preventive-care/index.html>
Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) – Preventive Services Covered by Private Health Plans <https://www.kff.org/health-reform/fact-sheet/preventive-services-covered-by-private-health-plans/>
HealthCare.gov – Women's Preventive Care Services <https://www.healthcare.gov/preventive-care-women/>

MHS EMPLOYEES DONATE TO
CHAPMAN USD 473 FOR SCHOOL



Employees of Memorial Health System (MHS) in Abilene participated in another “Jeans Day” fundraiser throughout the month of December. Employees make a donation, of at least \$2, and are allowed to wear blue jeans at work. A total donation of \$857 was presented to Chapman USD 473 to go towards balances on school lunch accounts. The monthly Jeans Day fundraiser is organized by the MHS Employer of Choice (EOC) committee. Pictured from left are: Traci Jurgensen, EOC committee member; Kevin Suther, Chapman USD 473 Superintendent; and Matilda Calvin, EOC committee member.



 **FRONTIER ESTATES**
OF HERITAGE VILLAGE
ABILENE MEMORIAL HEALTH SYSTEM

601 N Buckeye ~ 785-263-1080
mhsks.org/frontier_estates/



APPLY NOW

**Memorial Health System Volunteer Corps
\$1000 Scholarship Opportunity!**

Those eligible to apply shall

- ... be a senior attending school in Dickinson County
- ... be seeking a medical related degree at an accredited college or vocational school.
- ... have at least a 3.0 GPA.
- ... have contributed volunteer hours within their community.

Follow the link below to find the application on our website, or scan the QR for quick access.

<https://mhsks.org/mhs-volunteer-corps/>
Deadline to apply: March 27, 2026



1 Bedroom Apartments
H.U.D Subsidized Senior Housing (age 62+)
On-Site Management
Utilities Included

**NEW CT MACHINE COMING TO
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**

Memorial Hospital in Abilene has started preparations for a new CT (Computed Tomography) machine for the Radiology and Imaging department. The CT mobile trailer arrived last Friday morning and is set up on the south side of the hospital, near the Emergency Department area. The last day of use for the existing CT machine will be on January 28th. The mobile unit will be used for patients beginning on January 29th, as the install of the old unit begins and construction for the new unit takes place. The entire project is scheduled to be completed during the last week of March of this year. The new CT machine will allow Memorial Hospital the ability to perform more exams in the Emergency Department that are now considered the “standard of care” in hospital settings. Technology is always advancing and changes happen rapidly. Memorial Hospital is excited to offer the latest in CT technology, right here in Abilene, beginning this spring.





VISITOR GUIDANCE

Do NOT visit if you have any of these symptoms?

 Fever  Cough  Runny Nose  Sore Throat  Muscle Ache  Fatigue

- Children age 12 and under should not visit inpatients
- People with compromised immune systems or pulmonary complication should visit only if absolutely necessary
- Wash your hands before entering a patient room and prior to leaving a facility
- Masks are available for your protection
- Compassionate exceptions to these restrictions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis

Memorial Health System Volunteer Corps *presents*

Coffee & Conversation



**Starting February 5
at 9:30 AM**

Relax, chat, and connect with
volunteers every other Thursday in
the hospital cafeteria!



Memorial Health System
511 NE 10th Street, Abilene
Jenny Stuck, Volunteer Mgr.
785-263-6692

Special Guest Speaker
Abilene Fire Department will be in
attendance to share safety tips to
prevent slips, trips and falls.

**Enjoy Free Coffee and
Cinnamon Rolls!**



FREE Education for Everyone!

Monthly Health Sessions

New in 2026, Memorial Health System is offering FREE monthly health education sessions designed to empower our community with practical knowledge, resources, and tools to support better health and well-being.

Join us for a variety of important health topics throughout the year!

Monday, February 9
5:30 - 7:30 PM
snacks and drinks provided



February Health Topic:
Colorectal Screenings

Presented by Dr. Thompson



Colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable cancers with regular screening, and early detection supports long-term health and wellness.

Learn why colorectal screenings are an important part of preventive care, who should be screened, and what screening options are available.



Nichols Education Center
1003 N Brady, Abilene
(located in the basement of
Abilene Childcare Learning Center—enter through the
back door)

Join us again on March 9 for a presentation by
Dr. Hinman on: Sepsis Awareness

Greek Yogurt, Blueberry & Granola Parfait

A simple, satisfying parfait that's as nourishing as it is delicious.

Ingredients

- Greek yogurt, vanilla — ½ cup
- Fresh blueberries, rinsed — ½ cup
- Cinnamon granola — ¼ cup

Directions

1. Spoon Greek yogurt into a cup or bowl.
2. Layer blueberries over the yogurt.
3. Sprinkle granola on top of the blueberries.
4. Refrigerate until ready to enjoy.

Why This Is a Healthy Choice

This parfait is a balanced blend of protein, fiber, and gut-friendly nutrients. Greek yogurt provides probiotics that support digestive health, while granola contains prebiotics to nourish beneficial gut bacteria. Fresh blueberries add fiber and antioxidants, supporting heart and colon health. Together, these ingredients create a wholesome option that promotes digestion, fullness, and overall wellness.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 292
Fat: 9 g
Carbohydrates: 40 g
Fiber: 7 g
Protein: 16 g



Recipe courtesy of our Food Services Director.



AMERICAN HEART MONTH

A Wellness Visit Helps Prevent

- ✓ High blood pressure
- ✓ High cholesterol
- ✓ Diabetes complications
- ✓ Stroke risk
- ✓ Heart disease progression
- ✓ Undetected chronic conditions

Caring for you.

Education ~ Prevention ~ Wellness

Heart Disease is the number one killer
in the United States and globally

HOW EXERCISE IS GOOD FOR THE HEART

Exercise is good for the heart because it strengthens the heart muscle and improves how efficiently the cardiovascular system works.

- ♦ **Makes the heart stronger:** Regular exercise trains the heart to pump more blood with each beat, so it doesn't have to work as hard during daily activities.
- ♦ **Improves blood circulation:** Exercise helps blood flow more smoothly through the arteries, reducing stiffness and improving oxygen delivery to the body.
- ♦ **Lowers blood pressure:** Physical activity helps keep blood pressure in a healthy range, which reduces strain on the heart.
- ♦ **Improves cholesterol levels:** It increases "good" HDL cholesterol and lowers "bad" LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, reducing plaque buildup in arteries.
- ♦ **Helps control blood sugar:** Exercise improves insulin sensitivity, lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes—a major risk factor for heart disease.
- ♦ **Reduces inflammation:** Regular activity helps lower chronic inflammation that can damage blood vessels.
- ♦ **Helps maintain a healthy weight:** This reduces the workload on the heart and lowers the risk of heart disease.
- ♦ **Reduces stress:** Exercise lowers stress hormones and supports mental well-being, which benefits heart health.

~ Impact Sports and Fitness ~



Supervisor Switch in Herington



(Jan 30, 2026) – Home Health & Hospice of Dickinson County in Herington (HH&H), an affiliate of Memorial Health System in Abilene, is happy to

announce the promotion of Registered Nurse Kristen Hajek, to supervisor of the Herington team. Hajek steps into the leadership role following longtime supervisor Shannon Walters' decision to return to full-time direct patient care. Walters will continue serving patients, with her 25 years of experience with HH&H. Her leadership legacy includes building a culture of compassion, stability and excellence within the Herington program. The leadership transition reflects a shared commitment to compassionate, patient-centered care and continuity of service for the Herington community. Walters, who has led the Herington team for nearly 20 years, will continue serving patients and families directly, while Hajek assumes responsibility for guiding team operations and care coordination.

"Kristen has truly been my right hand

for many years, so this transition felt incredibly natural," Walters said. "She is always a team player, brings a positive attitude to everything she does, and has strong leadership skills that our team respects and trusts. I've joked with here that now she gets to handle all the office duties, and I get to spend more time doing what I love most, caring directly for patients. I couldn't feel more confident having the team in her capable hands." Hajek has served the Herington community since 2014 as a registered nurse with HH&H, providing both home health and hospice care. Her background includes caring for homebound patients to prevent re-hospitalizations, educating patients and families on diagnoses and medications, delivering wound care and medication management, and supporting individuals and families through end-of-life care.

"This community trusts us during some of the most vulnerable and meaningful moments in life," Hajek said. "Being able to lead a team that provides compassionate, high-quality care means a lot to me. I'm thankful for this opportunity to support our staff here in Herington to continue to deliver the same level of care our patients and their families deserve, while also helping

strengthen and grow our presence in Herington." Hajek said her years working alongside Walters helped prepare her for the transition into leadership. "Working alongside Shannon for the last 11 years will allow me to step into her shoes," she said. "I've had the opportunity to work under her and observe her leadership style, her commitment to both staff and patients, and the way she balances clinical excellence with steady leadership." As supervisor, Hajek will oversee the Herington office, staff, and care coordination for Home Health and Hospice services in Herington. "I'm looking forward to investing in our team," Hajek said. "Supporting professional growth, strengthening collaboration and ensuring everyone feels valued and heard. In a world where everything in healthcare is changing, our goal is to provide seamless, patient-centered care, and I look forward to helping us maintain the close-knit, personal touch that makes our team so special." She also emphasized the organization's commitment to families in the community. "I'd like the community to know that our Home Health and Hospice team in Herington is committed to providing compassionate, individualized care," Hajek said. "Whether families need home health services or hospice support, they can trust that our team will walk alongside them with respect, dignity and genuine compassion every step of the way."

About Home Health and Hospice of Dickinson County

Home Health and Hospice of Dickinson County provides compassionate, high-quality home health and hospice services to patients and families throughout Dickinson County and surrounding communities. Services are delivered by a multidisciplinary team committed to dignity, respect and individualized care.



Employee of the Month!

Chris Sare

Emergency Department
Nurse Manager



Employee of the month

Chris Sare of the Emergency Department is a shining example of leadership, teamwork, and dedication at Memorial Health System. With more than five years of service, Chris consistently goes above and beyond to support her team and ensure continuity of care often stepping in during both day and night shifts to cover staffing shortages or help colleagues manage unexpected family needs. Chris is known for always having her team's back. Whether coordinating coverage during emergencies or working the shifts herself when needed, she demonstrates an unwavering commitment to her department and to MHS as a whole. Her willingness to work overtime and sacrifice personal time reflects a deep sense of professionalism and care for both her coworkers and the patients we serve. Through her tireless efforts and selfless approach, Chris helps make Memorial Health System a stronger, more supportive place to work. Chris has truly earned this recognition, and MHS is grateful for all she does.

what patients are saying.....

I live about 1/2 hr. away and because of my insurance, I was sent to Abilene Hospital. I was scheduled for an ultrasound of my upper arm. When taken to the room, the tech explained that the hospital didn't do muscle ultrasound because no one was trained for that. She said that she would put order back in the system and have it go to Salina Hospital. She explained that next step was to call Salina and set up appointment. She gave a gift certificate for gas for the inconvenience. She said she would talk to scheduling to make sure that the mistake shouldn't happen again. She was a wonderful blessing. I went home and then called my insurance to make sure all was okay, and it was. I was able to get an appointment for Monday (the next business day.) So even though I wasn't officially seen at your hospital, the Registration staff and the ultrasound tech treated me great with respect and understanding.

When I arrived at the hospital for my appointment, Matilda was the staff member that helped me get checked in. She was wonderful, kind and patient as

I dug through my purse for insurance info, etc. I also observed her helping lots of other patients/staff with the same upbeat and kind words and actions. The employee who conducted my MRI,

I wish I could remember her name, was also wonderful. I was worried about the outcome of the test and the contrast that was going to be used and she was patient and explained things thoroughly to try and calm my nerves. I would rate my experience a 100/10!

Everyone on this last visit was truly stellar. No complaints whatsoever. And for a fact, the lady that drew my blood, I informed her, thanked her many, many times and told her it's the first time in many years I didn't even feel the needle when it went in. That woman is truly, truly above and beyond anybody else I come across at her job. And of course, the ladies up at where you check in register, just phenomenal. But awesome, awesome people that I dealt with this time. Y'all got a good thing going right there.

Todd genuinely cared about our son and wanted to make sure his issue was addressed. Even though it resulted in us going to Children's Mercy in KC, we know he did what he could. He even called us to check in and see how things were going.

I had 2 appointments on the same day. The PT team is awesome. They are always pleasant and positive. I enjoy my time with them. Dr. Hinman and her staff are awesome. She listens carefully at our concerns, talks through solutions with us, and involves us in creating an action plan to becoming healthier. I couldn't ask for a better doctor.

Every person there, every nurse there was very professional, very friendly, and extremely helpful. I had no problems with any part of the visit.

Tori took excellent care of me in registration. Rhonda in Radiology is very thorough. Heather did a fantastic job guiding the student that did my blood draw! Great job by all involved!

I don't remember the people's names. I was treated great all the way down from the ambulance drivers and fire department all the way through. I really appreciate everything everybody did for me there. I don't know the names of the people, but I sure wish I did and I'd send them all a hug. I was a little concerned about going to your emergency room. I've had a rough time there before, but this time it was an amazing thing.



Salina Regional Health Center

OUTREACH CLINIC --- ABILENE

GENERAL SURGEONS



Leah Speaks, MD



Jesse Gray, MD



Justin Klaassen, MD



Megan Welborn, DO

Visit mhsks.org/providers/ for more information on visiting specialists to Abilene



Help us bring new energy to a tradition of creativity, connection, and service.
We're inviting more hands and hearts to be a part of it!

All craft styles welcome:

- sewing
- knitting
- crocheting
- needlework
- and more!



Committee gathering:

- Date: Wednesday, February 25
- Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- Location: Nichols Education Center
1003 N Brady, Abilene

(located in the basement of Abilene Child Learning Center parking and entrance in the back)

Want more information?

Contact MHS Volunteer Services Corps

Jenny Stuck, Volunteer Services Mgr.
with Stephanie Leshovsky, Craft Committee Chairperson

785-263-6692 ~ jstuck@mhsks.org

WE ARE HIRING!



BE THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

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[HTTPS://WWW.MHSKS.ORG/CAREERS](https://www.mhsks.org/careers)





511 NE 10th St.
Abilene, KS 67410
785-263-2100

WWW.CARINGFORYOU.ORG

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The Health Monitor!



<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/CNrmrRU/TheHealthMonitor>

MISSION

Enhance the health and wellness of all.

VISION

Be the healthcare provider and
employer of choice.

CORE VALUES: CARE

Compassion

Appreciation for others

Respect for everyone

Excellence that exceeds expectations



caresresources.org

Looking for resources available in
Dickinson County? Visit the CARES
Coalition website and find what you are
looking for with the online resources
guide.



*Memorial Health System is a proud member,
and sponsor, of the CARES Coalition of
Dickinson County.*