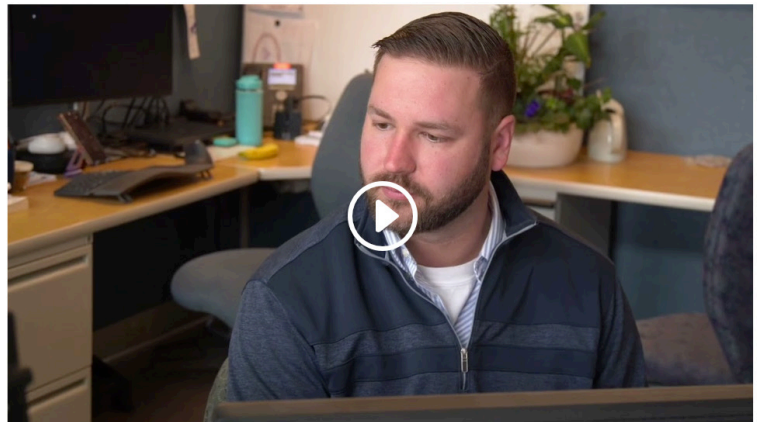


CULTURE

Growing Your Career at NMC

This year, NMC created a video that features five team members who have advanced their careers at the hospital, starting in one position and moving onward to others. Watch the video to hear about how NMC is a great place to explore your career paths, to grow and develop with support and encouragement from the organization.



Survey Shows Improvements in Staff Engagement

Items Included in Your Engagement Score

Item Text	Respondent Distribution			Overall Score & Trend	Rank vs. Nat'l HC (Empl)	Rank vs. AHA-1 Empl
	Unfav	Neut	Fav			
I would like to be working at this organization three years from now.	6%	21%	74%	3.99 ↑ +0.21	38th	52nd
Overall, I am a satisfied employee.	6%	18%	76%	3.90 ↑ +0.32	38th	52nd
I would stay with this organization if offered a similar position elsewhere.	9%	29%	61%	3.74 ↑ +0.28	33rd	45th
I would recommend this organization as a good place to work.	5%	20%	75%	3.90 ↑ +0.33	30th	39th
I am proud to tell people I work for this organization.	5%	21%	75%	3.98 ↑ +0.26	20th	24th
I would recommend this organization to family and friends who need care.	6%	22%	72%	3.84 ↑ +0.23	15th	24th
Engagement Indicator	6%	22%	72%	3.89 ↑ +0.27	27th	36th

Note: Neutral labels are hidden when percentage is less than 5%.

Every two years, NMC conducts an Employee Engagement and Culture of Safety Survey to evaluate how staff feel about the organization and the work environment. Following the previous survey, NMC worked on action plans to address identified issues, and shared progress with staff regularly.

2024's survey had a 72% response rate with 441 respondents. Our overall engagement score increased from 3.62 in 2022 to 3.89 in 2024 resulting in a 20%

percentile increase in our overall engagement results as compared to other hospitals nationally.

The survey showed increases in overall engagement questions demonstrating that team members have a personal investment in the organization and their job, as influenced by their work environment. These six questions comprise the engagement score.

Overall, NMC saw increases in all categories of the engagement survey, an encouraging result.

Progress On Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging at NMC

This year, NMC focused on three major projects on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging: SOGI Data Collection, Equity Review of Policies and Team Member Resource Groups.

SOGI Data Collection

This project aims to create a consistent and respectful way for collection data from patients about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). Gathering SOGI data will help NMC evaluate the care we deliver and ensure that we are meeting our mission of providing exceptional care for our community. In order for care to be exceptional, it must be inclusive, welcoming and supportive for all people. Learning about how to create inclusive processes also helps build a strong workplace culture where LGBTQ+ employees feel valued and welcome.

NMC is starting to update our Electronic Medical Record to collect more inclusive data, and this year rolled out organization-wide training to help NMC staff know how to make NMC a more welcoming space for our LGBTQ+ patients and colleagues.

Work will continue into the next year with the launch of the data collection process still to come.

Other DEIB Work

In addition to these three main areas of focus, NMC also continued exploring diversity topics through regular training offerings, celebration of diverse holidays, and participation in St. Albans first-ever Pride Parade. Two of the most impactful trainings for the year included sessions on the LGBTQIA+ community and the recovery community where people with lived experiences shared their powerful personal stories.

Another impactful happening on our campus this year was the raising of the flag of the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi on Indigenous Peoples Day. We were fortunate to have Abenaki Chief Brenda Gagner and the youth from the Circle of Courage after school program join us to conduct a ceremony to honor the flag and all that it represents.

Equity Review of Policies

This project builds a process to apply an equity lens when creating or reviewing hospital policies. The team working on this project created a standard checklist that leaders can use as a guide to help them consider the impacts the policies could have.

The team tested the process by applying the checklist to a number of policies for review. Next steps include rolling out the process across the organization.

Resource Groups for Staff

This project built a framework for employee resource groups (ERG) at NMC. ERGs are voluntary, employee-led, employer-recognized groups of people who join together based on shared interests or life experiences to create a positive and safe space for collegiality and support, personal and professional development and allyship. These groups, which NMC will call Team Member Resource Groups (TRGs), promote diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

The team working on this project outlined roles for TRG organizers, the process for creation, membership criteria and other infrastructure. NMC will soon pilot the first TRG on the topic of body image



Getting Creative as an Employer, Expanding Career Opportunities

Given the changing employment landscape, it is important for employers to evolve and innovate in how they recruit and retain employees. To address this, NMC has created several new programs to grow our teams and foster relationships with community partners. Here is a snapshot from three this year:

Nursing Pathway Program

The Nursing Pathway Program is a strategic partnership between Northwestern Medical Center, Vermont Talent Pipeline (VBR Foundation), Vermont State University (VTSU), Community College of Vermont (CCV), and Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) to address critical workforce skill gaps in Vermont. Advisors from CCV, VSAC, and VTSU participated in the celebration, emphasizing the importance of wraparound support services for employees in this program.

In the fall of 2024, 13 employees from various departments of NMC are embarking on a three-year educational pathway to registered nursing. Upon completion and licensure, they have committed to working at the hospital for three years as an RN.



EVS Aide Program

In partnership with Northwestern Counseling & Support Services, NMC hired individuals NCSS works with into a new role at NMC – the Environmental Services Aide. The Aides clean public and administrative spaces and meeting areas – places that give an important first impression to our patients.

The program is an example of NMC developing our own workforce and is important work in strengthening our partnership with NCSS, building relationships with community members and offering opportunities to help build job skills. The EVS Aides may stay in these roles over time, or advance to EVS Tech positions in the future, and onward to become an EVS Specialist in custodial work, an EVS Lead or other positions at NMC

Pilot Program with BFA Student

In 2024, NMC piloted a partnership with BFA St. Albans to trial volunteer work by students with developmental disabilities. The intent is to provide meaningful volunteer experience for the students, furthering their independence and supporting NMC's work needs.

Riley Bascom is NMC's first volunteer student. He is a 19-year-old young man who lives in St. Albans with his mother and his younger brother. He currently attends BFA St. Albans, where he is a member of the Community Integration Program (CIP) and participates in Special Olympics Unified Sports.

This pilot is a good example of how NMC brings our mission to life and builds a welcoming, inclusive and exceptional environment!

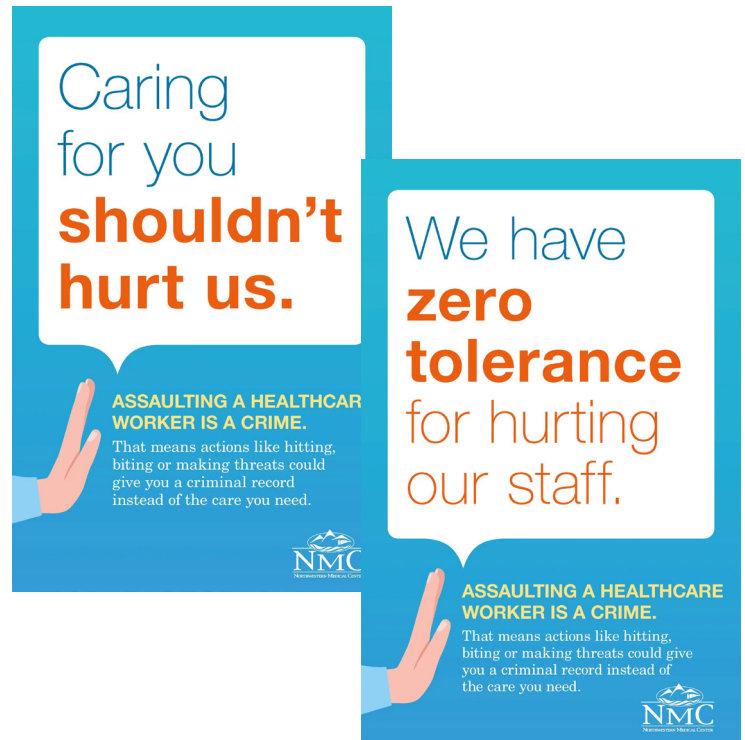


Zero Tolerance: NMC Working to Reduce Workplace Violence

NMC is working on several initiatives to address the increase in workplace violence we are seeing here, which mirrors increases across the state and nation. The work is important because we value our employees so deeply, and we know that in order to provide exceptional care, they must feel safe and secure.

These initiatives include:

- Implementation and training with the AVADE – a nationally recognized workplace violence prevention program.
- An info session with State’s Attorney Bram Kranichfeld on the prosecution process
- Updating NMC’s Use of Force Policy
- Investment in a new physical shielding tool to help subdue violent individuals
- Revamping the “Code Green Team,” a de-escalation process
- Publication of a news article by the St. Albans Messenger highlighting the issue and building community awareness
- Upcoming installation of panic buttons/duress alarms and lockdown systems in the Emergency Department
- Upcoming installation of Securitas Alarm Boxes
- A survey on workplace violence to gather data for informed decision-making
- Creation of signage to be hung in locations across the organization.



NMC Welcomes New Chief Nursing Officer

In July 2024 NMC welcomed a new Chief Nursing Officer, Michelle Buck, DPN, RN, FACHE. Michelle brought experience from both large and small hospitals in rural environments, most recently at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center where she was the Vice President of Inpatient Nursing. She has 28 years of experience in nursing with expertise in resource allocation, operations, capacity management, nursing shared governance, nursing practice, and patient flow.

Reinvigorating Shared Governance at NMC

As the new CNO, one of Michelle Buck’s priorities is infusing new energy into the hospital’s Shared Governance structure for nursing, called Clinical Practice Governance, (CPG) at NMC.

Planning work in fiscal year 2024 calls for training to learn how other hospitals around the country are using shared governance, gathering internal input through a survey and listening sessions, determining the organizational structure and then elections to councils. All these steps would ensure that NMC’s approach is built with input and guidance from nurses all around the organization.

“I believe that the professionals at the bedside have the solutions,” said Buck. “They should be deeply involved in solving the problems of the workplace. The old concept of the “leader” needing to make the decisions is no longer the future, quite frankly, of any organization. When you give nurses a voice, they feel valued, they feel ownership, and they will do great things.”