



The Thanks We Get Special Edition...

The Thanks We Get features letters of appreciation from patients, their families, the community and the UMDNJ staff. We thank them for reminding us of everything we do to help and heal our patients.

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Despite the fact that the outcome was not what this family wanted for their loved one, the care provided will never be forgotten.

My brother was taken to your hospital because he was a victim of a drive-by shooting. Even in the horror of this tragedy, my family still noticed that the **UH staff** was filled with compassion, kindness and empathy. Your staff met us in our sorrow. They comforted us. They lovingly cared for my brother, as if he were one of their own. For this we are truly blessed and grateful.



Good health is the best gift of all, as expressed by this appreciative patient.

Every birthday I take the time to thank all the people who helped keep me healthy during the past year. Your **Cardiology Staff** came to my rescue this year. Thanks to them, I am able to celebrate another birthday.



In this letter, an appreciative sibling expresses his gratitude.

I want to give my heartfelt thanks to the **Liver Transplant Team**. You are coordinated in your efforts to assist. I am truly impressed by your professionalism, kindness and concern. Collec-

tively, you are the "Imperial Staff." Thank you for helping my brother get a new opportunity to live.



Success is a team effort, as seen in the following letter from a grateful patient.

I would like to recognize the staff in the **Neuro Intensive Care Unit**, specifically, **Eridania Jimenez, RN, Suja Abraham, RN, Clarita Cesar, PCT, and Nina Antonio**, unit clerk. They not only provide good care, but they show compassion. I received excellent care and was shown a great deal of love. This staff is the BEST....I'm telling you....the BEST!



The employee described here, made a great impression by caring deeply about his patient.

While my husband was in the hospital, he had a severe seizure and collapsed. He turned blue and was unresponsive. Respiratory therapist, **Jay Patel**, responded immediately and provided oxygen. My husband was placed back on the breathing machine, while Mr. Patel continued to assist. I really feel Mr. Patel, the physicians and your well-trained staff saved my husband's life. I would recommend University Hospital to all my friends and family members.

The following staff members possess the skill, knowledge and compassion to ensure a positive patient experience.

My wife and I wish to express our gratitude to the **Recovery Room/PACU staff** and the extraordinary efforts of **Cynthia Baez, RN**. I had cancer surgery on my tongue and an incision was made in my neck. Everyone in the unit was very kind and professional, however Ms. Baez was outstanding. She is a very efficient, professional and caring nurse and her calming reassurance and soothing bedside manner helped ease the trauma of stitches in my tongue and neck. Thank you.



It makes a big difference to our patients when we take the time and interest to respond to their requests.

I would like to thank the **G-Blue staff** for the wonderful care they provided to me during my stay. **Barbara Atkins, RN** and **Deborah Joseph, CNA**, were especially attentive to my needs. Thanks again.



The nurses described below are champions! They live, eat and breath service excellence!

I was recently a cardiology patient on **F-Yellow**. The nurses there were true healers. The dictionary defines a nurse as “a person formally educated and trained to care for the sick.” I define a nurse as someone who has compassion, strength and will do whatever it takes to help a patient; someone who leaves behind their own problems to help you get through yours; and someone who offers you

a shoulder to cry on. I define a nurse as **Clara Memba, RN, Jacqueline Okemwa, RN, Tashia Williams, RN, Maritza Mendez, RN** and **Ana Tavares, RN**. These strong and admirable women supported and cared for me through the most difficult time of my life. There are no words to describe how grateful I feel and how honored I am to know them. They treated me like a member of their own family. They are true caregivers.



It looks like the staff of H-Yellow have the “art of caring” down to a science.

My thanks to the **H-Yellow nurses** for providing me with excellent care. Each one of you, in your own unique way, has provided me with hope and a new light of day! I’d like to send special love and thanks to **Jeanette Lee, RN** and **Helen Richardson, LPN**, for their passion and professionalism.



Hat’s off to these individuals for their kindness, generosity and thoughtfulness!

I really appreciate the **entire staff** of the **PALM Room**. They allowed me to use the computer and their own cell phones to call my daughter on her birthday. They care so much. I think they are wonderful.



Everyone has a direct effect on the happiness and satisfaction of our patients...everyone!

Everyone from the **Food and Nutrition Department** is a winner! The servers went out of their way to be friendly and helpful. The food is delicious and eye-appealing. You were kind to me even when I was on a ‘clear’ diet and feeling grumpy! You all are gracious people and your food and service were outstanding.

“The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (FICN) at University Hospital is blessed with experienced and talented nurses, a strength that is well recognized by physicians and parents, but is not often stated. It was therefore gratifying when I found out that they had been appreciated in such a unique way coming especially from a parent.

The mother in this story took the time to personally address a thank you note by name to each nurse despite the difficulties and outcome that her child experienced. Our nurses have a unique talent and retention rate that makes our patient outcomes superior. I, on behalf of all physicians in the unit, want to join this mother in thanking this dedicated group and their leader, Gloria Igwe, NM, RNC, BSN, MSN, DNP.”

Onajovwe Fofah, MD
Chief of Pediatrics/Neonatology, UMDNJ-The University Hospital

To Serve With Love

It was a cold, bleak day in December when Tawanna, a young, anxious mother-to-be was rushed into the Labor and Delivery Department of UMDNJ-The University Hospital. Although only 24 weeks along, there was no doubt about it – this mother was delivering *today*.

At only 750 grams, Baby N was immediately placed in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (FICN), a department which provides round-the-clock care for the tiniest patients. Like other “preemies”, Baby N faced a host of challenges just to survive. With so little body fat, it was hard for him to maintain his body temperature. He could cry, but only softly. He had difficulty feeding, so he was on a “G” or gastrointestinal tube. There were other serious worries too, like infection, episodes of stopped breathing and neurological problems.

Baby N stayed in the FICN for the next five months where he received an abundance of tender loving care. “Most of us are moms ourselves, so we tend to the babies and love them, as if they were our own,” reported nurse manager, Dr. Igwe.

Tawanna visited the FICN morning, noon and night and actively participated in the care of her son. Under the careful supervision of the FICN nurses, she learned how to bathe him, change his diapers, take his temperature and manage the feeding tube. But mostly, she just loved him.

Tawanna also attended the FICN’s weekly meetings where new parents learn the fine nuances of caring for their premature infants. Some of the topics they cover include feeding, changing, bathing, the importance of communication and bonding and how to determine when their baby may be in medical trouble.

Over time, Tawanna and Baby N became part of the FICN family. But sadly, just when it was almost time for Baby N to go home, he quietly and peacefully died. As heartbreaking as

this was for Tawanna, she told the nurses she felt this was the “Lord’s calling.” She added that she had peace of mind knowing her baby received the *best* of care and love from the FICN staff, a gift she would treasure forever.

Tawanna’s feelings were beautifully expressed in a note that she wrote to **Barbara Escalona, RNC**, who was with Tawanna when her baby died.

“I simply wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to you for the kindness and excellent care you gave to my baby during his long hospitalization. Of course, I am very saddened by his death, but I am comforted in knowing that he received the best care available. Your sensitivity and support helped me through a very difficult time, and I will never forget your kindness and patience. My baby’s inner peace and happiness shone on his face throughout his final hours. Remembering your kindness will help diminish the pain of my loss. Thanks for giving me the chance to enjoy my baby and bond with him one last time.”

In the days that followed, the nurses and Palliative Care Team helped Tawanna cope with her loss. “This was a mother in pain,” reported Dr. Igwe. But despite her pain, she was able to carry on, knowing that we had done everything possible to care for her baby.”

After Tawanna left the hospital, she sent personalized notes of appreciation to every staff member on the unit. “I feel this is a true testament to the highly professional and holistic care provided by the staff of the FICN. I am so proud of this remarkable team,” concluded Dr. Igwe.



Here are the thank you notes sent to the FICN staff from this appreciative mother.

Virginia Abadilla, RNC: Thanks for your assistance, expertise and skills in the care of my baby. You really go above and beyond the call of duty.

Ines Aguilar, RNC: You really go above and beyond the call of duty. Many thanks for all you do! My baby and I were so lucky to have you.

Badroonesa Baksh, PC: You really went above and beyond the call of duty. Many thanks for all you did.

Miriam Bautista, RNC: You really go above and beyond the call of duty. Thanks for all you do!

Gladys Bonsu, NA: You are very special! Thanks for everything!

Cecilia Cameles, RNC: May God bless you as you continue to take care of premature babies and their families. We were so blessed to have you.

Grace Concepcion, RNC: You really go above and beyond the call of duty.

Erlinda Domingo, RNC: You really go above and beyond the call of duty. Many thanks for all you do. My baby and I were so lucky to have you.

Tessy Edison, RN: Your calming reassurance and soothing manner helped ease my anxiety and pain. Thanks for always giving me courage to take care of myself. I will forever carry gratitude in my heart for you.

Belen Ferraren, RNC: Thanks for the excellent care you gave to my little angel baby. You really went above and beyond the call of duty. Many thanks for all you did.

Float Pool Nurses: Thanks for your kindness, sensitivity, genuine concern and patience. It meant more to me than words alone can tell.

Meredith Guirnela, RNC: You are a very special person who goes above and beyond the call of duty. Many thanks for all you do!

Gloria Igwe, RNC, NM: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! My baby and I were so lucky to be under your supervision.

Miriam Lustre, RNC, ANM: Thanks for the excellent care you gave to my baby.

Elizabeth Mathew, RN: The support you've shown and the closeness we've shared during my baby's short life has helped me become a better person. You add love and compassion to your job. Thank you so very much for making me feel special - like a billion dollars! It meant so much to me that you shared in my joy, pain, and hope...but most importantly, crying with me and giving me a shoulder to cry on as I experienced the sudden death of my baby. I will never forget you!

Angela Moffat, NA: Thanks for all your assistance in the care of my baby.

Leisha Nepomuceno, RNC: Thanks for the excellent care you gave to my baby.

Felicia Olaga, NA: Thanks for your assistance in the care of my baby.

Jemina Orejudos, RNC: Thanks for your assistance in the care of my baby.

Juliet Reyes, RNC: Thanks for your assistance in the care of my baby. You are such a beautiful person inside and out.

Reena Reyes, RNC: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! We were so lucky to have you.

Claire Tonel, RNC: Thanks for your assistance in the care of my baby. Your help made all the difference. Thank you so very much for all you've done for my little angel.

Narcisa Tuason, RNC: Thanks for your assistance in the care of my baby.

Sandra Washington, UC: This is just a small token of my appreciation. Many thanks for always making me laugh in spite of my pain, for all the hugs, and for your understanding and availability.



Congratulations on a job well done..we're so proud of you!



The UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey