



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA GERONTOLOGY

Do You Have The Cour**AGE** to Care?



METHODIST

**Thank you Methodist
Hospital for having
The Cour**AGE** to Care!**

The CourAGE to Care

Deborah Marks Conley, MSN, APRN-CNS, GCNS-BC, Gerontological Clinical Nurse Specialist and Director of Geriatrics Methodist Hospital shares her story...

As a registered nurse I always knew I wanted to work with older adults. For more than 40 years I have dedicated my nursing practice, research and teaching to geriatric care. After being in practice for several years, I obtained my Master's degree in gerontological nursing as a clinical nurse specialist from UNMC College of Nursing. I have been fortunate to work for amazing organizations, which allow me to develop and implement geriatric best practices. Working on teams has been a rewarding experience to improve care of older adults. I started at Methodist Hospital in 2001. Since then we have seen our geriatric programs flourish and the best is yet to come.

Geriatric Care Services at Methodist Hospital

In 2006, Methodist became a Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) hospital and in 2011, reached "Exemplar" status, the highest of four possible program levels awarded by the international program designed to help hospitals improve the care of older adults. [NICHE hospitals](#) recognize the unique

needs of older adult patients and they are committed to creating a hospital culture where the principal focus is on patients and their families.

Recognizing that families often need some help navigating aging issues with parents or loved ones, Methodist launched the [Geriatric Evaluation and Management Clinic \(GEM\)](#) in 1995. The outpatient clinic provides comprehensive geriatric assessments and when needed, develops a comprehensive plan of care for patients and families.

The [Acute Care for Elders \(ACE\) unit](#) opened in 2003. The complex needs of these patients are addressed through the attending physician and an interdisciplinary team trained in geriatrics. Patients are encouraged to be mobile which prevents functional decline. The motto of this unit is “The bed is not your friend”.

Methodist was one of six hospitals in the nation selected for participation in the [AgeWISE](#) program in 2010. The program is designed to expand nurses’ expertise in geriatrics, palliative and end-of-life care. The four-month program is a collaboration between Methodist Hospital and Nebraska Methodist College.

Recognizing that elder patients in our care can often become disoriented by the unfamiliar hospital setting and being out of their regular routine, Methodist Hospital implemented [The Hospital Elder Life \(HELP\) program in 2013](#). The program is designed for health profession students who apply to become a HELP volunteer.

In 2016, the newest program implemented at Methodist is the Emergency Department Geriatric Resource Nurse (GRN) model of care. The focus of this program is to triage older adults for non-emergent geriatric specific needs by a GRN, who are AgeWISE and ED nurses certified in gerontological nursing. A mini-geriatric assessment is completed and follow up appointments are made prior to discharge. Telephone follow up calls are done 24-48 hours and 7-10 days to ensure ongoing needs are addressed in a timely manner.

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