

YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

# Caring



HEADLINES FROM MGH NURSING AND PATIENT CARE SERVICES



**Debbie Burke, RN,  
DNP, MBA, NEA-BC**  
Senior Vice President for  
Patient Care and Chief Nurse

## Caring

### Editor

Mae Driscoll

### Photography

Mass General  
Photography Department

To submit story ideas to  
*Caring*, please contact  
Mae Driscoll at  
[mdriscoll0@mgb.org](mailto:mdriscoll0@mgb.org)

Copyright © 2025  
Massachusetts General Hospital.  
All Rights Reserved.

# 2024 Year in Review

## *A letter from Debbie*

It is that time of year again - an opportunity to look back at 2024 and see at how far we have come! It is with great pleasure that I share some of the milestones, memories, and valuable moments from across Nursing and Patient Care Services (PCS) in this annual Year in Review. For more than 200 years, Mass General has taken care of patients and their families with expertise and compassion. To see some of the numbers of patient interactions, papers published, staff recognized, hours served and new employees welcomed and trained, in just this past year alone, I am astounded.

Thank you to our PCS staff who advocate and advance the health professions.

Thank you to our PCS staff who take the extra time to partner with patients and their caregivers to really meet patients where they are.

Thank you to our PCS staff who come to the hospital each day and give their heart to their work.

Please enjoy this look back at 2024.



*On the cover: The Bulfinch Building at the Main Campus of MGH with a beam destined for the new Phillip and Susan Ragon Building. The new building will be the home of the Mass General Cancer Center and the Corrigan Minehan Heart Center among other specialties. Employees and visitors could sign the beam to be a part of the historical two-tower building.*

# Re-Envisioning Shared Decision-Making

One of the key initiatives in the 2021-2026 Patient Care Services Strategic Plan is to optimize the professional practice model. Shared decision-making, or leveraging the voices of staff in decisions about practice and quality of work life, is a vital part of strengthening the practice model.

“Shared decision-making has a rich history at MGH, dating back to its formal inception in 1997. Since then, it has evolved into an integral component of our work, reflecting our collective commitment to hearing staffs’ voices in decision-making,” says Debbie Burke, RN, DNP, MBA, NEA-BC, senior vice president for Patient Care and chief nurse. “Our new shared decision-making model emphasizes fostering a culture of teamwork and shared responsibility,” she says.

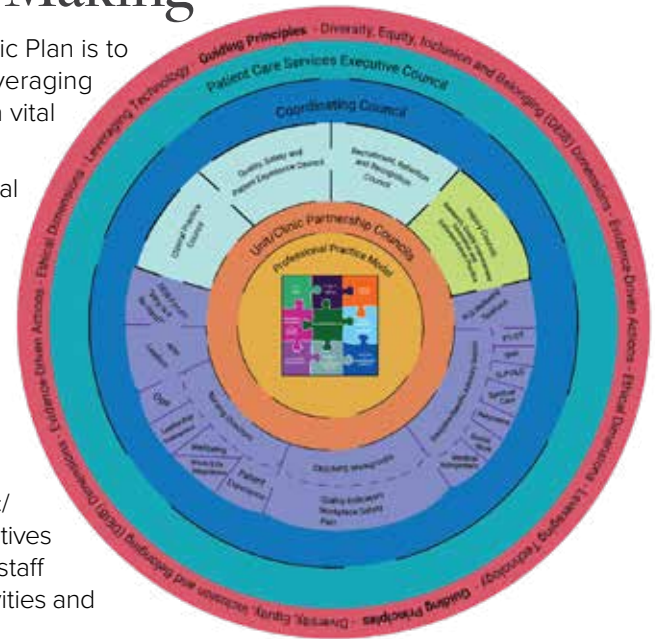
## ABOUT THE NEW MODEL

### *Unit/Clinic Partnership Councils*

Decisions should be made as close to the bedside as possible so unit/clinic/department-based councils have been launched and staffed with representatives on centralized councils to promote fluid communication. Goals will engage staff in process improvement projects, evidence-based practice, wellbeing activities and awards and recognition efforts.

### **ACCORDING TO NEW UNIT COUNCIL MEMBER LAUREN GELLY, BSN, RN, LUNDER 9 HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY:**

“Growing at MGH from a Patient Care Associate to an RN has allowed me to see the importance of collaboration when patient safety and experience are on the line. Collaborating with nurses from diverse backgrounds and specialized knowledge different from my own is a major privilege. I am confident the new shared decision-making committees will lead to honest discussion, thoughtful ideas and a measurable improvements. Providing quality care is the foundation of a therapeutic relationship and streamlining this care will benefit patients and staff alike.”



The Guiding Principles include:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- Evidence-Driven Actions
- Ethical Dimensions
- Leveraging Technology

# Shared Decision-Making: Centralized Councils



## Clinical Practice Council

Designed to develop, review and approve evidence-driven protocols, policies, and standards to guide interprofessional care delivery in all settings.

The council has begun to leverage Lippincott, an evidence-based procedure and clinical decision support repository. To date, the council has reviewed and updated 54 policies.



## Quality, Safety and Patient Experience Council

Created to leverage safety report signals, quality and safety indicator performance data, and patient experience data to identify trends and interventions to enhance safety culture.

After hosting the first meeting, the council now has 88 active members.



## Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Council

Intended to highlight staff through awards and recognition, promote certification, guide staff through career planning and mentorship, and improve employee satisfaction.

The council has established best practices for creating and maintaining a welcoming environment, particularly for those new to units and clinics.



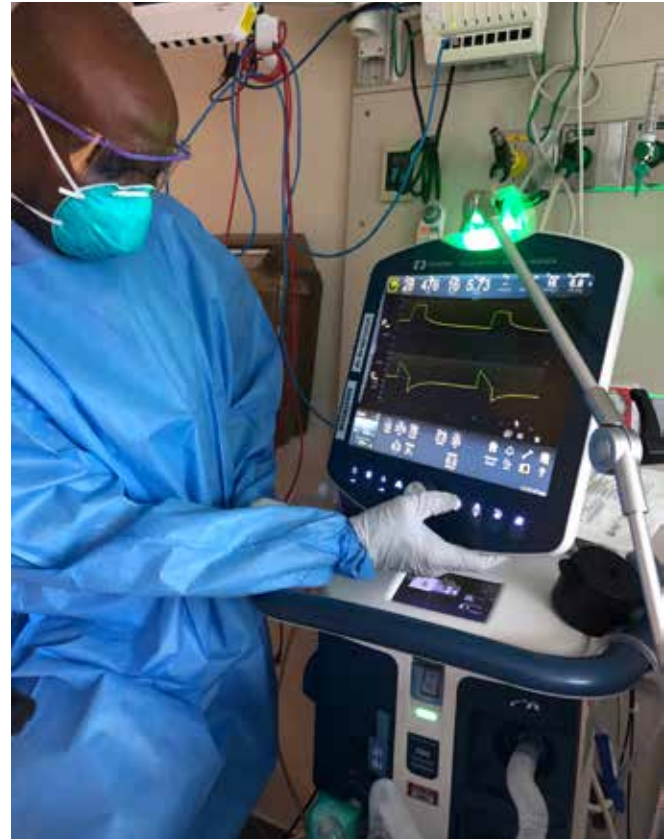
## From the Frontlines: Brian Collins, RRT

“Being paged to the delivery room for a newborn is something I truly look forward to. There are so many humbling moments I’ve had the privilege of witnessing—hearing a baby take their first cry never gets old. Watching parents hold their newborn for the first time is always an incredible experience. The pediatric delivery team, especially during high-risk deliveries, works so seamlessly together. Caring for babies in the NICU is equally rewarding. We often refer to preemies as ‘little warriors’ because they show us just how strong and brave these tiny humans can be.”

# Respiratory Care Receives first-in-New-England Award

MGH Respiratory Care Services has been named a recipient of the 2025-2026 Apex Award for Acute Care by the American Association for Respiratory Care. An Apex designation for a respiratory care department exemplifies best practices in the profession. It demonstrates that the hospital's department enhances patient care and outcomes through access to respiratory therapists who deliver invaluable, high-quality respiratory therapy.

As a 2025-2026 Apex Award recipient, the MGH Respiratory Care Services joins an elite group of respiratory care departments from around the world that have met the stringent quality and practice criteria of the award. MGH is the first and only department in New England to receive this designation.



**At right;**  
Fred Romain, RRT, MDiv, DMin;  
at a patient's bedside.



**“ It is an honor to be recognized by the AARC with this exciting designation. Each day, our staff provides not only excellent care, but comfort to patients. We work with colleagues across the hospital to ensure safe, effective, and cutting-edge respiratory care.**

**Our staff take pride in their work and pride in the care they provide, going above and beyond to be the best of the best! ”**

Above; Griffin Devine, RRT, RRT-ACCS, RRT-NPS; Michelle Young, RRT; and Amie St. Laurent, RRT; on Blake 12 ICU.



## MGH Nursing Celebrates Fifth Redesignation as Magnet Hospital



In 2003, Mass General became the first hospital in the state to earn Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). To date, fewer than 9 percent of all hospitals in the United States have received this recognition. The Magnet Recognition Program® was developed by the ANCC to recognize health care organizations that provide nursing excellence.

The hospital's fifth redesignation, although technically announced in 2023, was celebrated at the annual Magnet Conference in October 2024. Clinical nurses, nurse leaders and hospital administration attended the conference in New Orleans to walk the stage as an official recognition of the hospital community's redesignated status.



# Medical Interpreters Increase Access to Care

**569,005** **18.7%**

TOTAL NUMBER OF PATIENT APPOINTMENTS FOR PATIENTS WHO SPEAK LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

INCREASE FROM FY2023



**1,011**

MGHERS WHO ARE CONSIDERED QUALIFIED BILINGUAL STAFF (QBS)

**387,199**

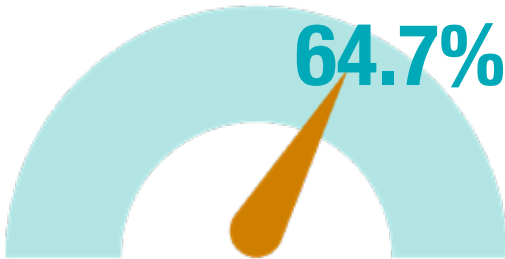
TOTAL NUMBER OF PATIENT ENCOUNTERS IN 2024



Qualified Bilingual Staff (QBS) are medical staff who have been designated as proficient in a language other than English to communicate with patients. Staff must be credentialed by an assessment process or have a university education where the curriculum was conducted in the target language.

## MEETING ACCESS MILESTONES

This year, the MGH Medical Interpreters were able to meet 64.7% of the language access needs of patients. This is the highest percentage since the department started keeping that specific metric. MGH partners with vendors to ensure all patients who need language access assistance receive it in a timely way. For comparison, the first year this statistic was measured was 2008 and the department met 27% of the language access needs.





## From the Frontlines: Cathleen Ramirez, BSN, RN, Ellison 12 Medicine

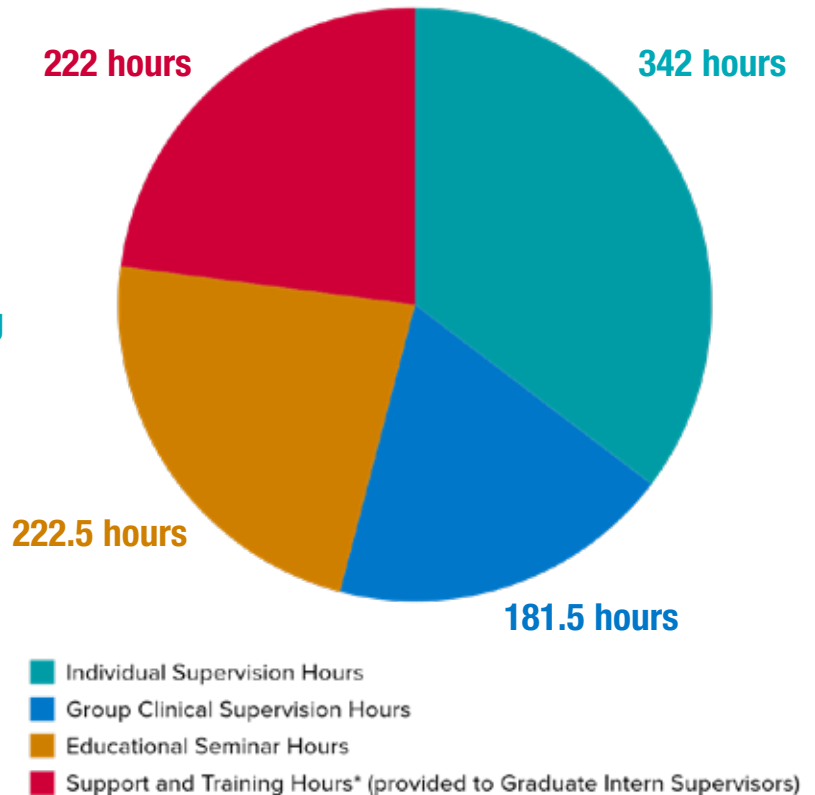
“The most meaningful part of my job on Ellison 12 is working with a supportive team in collaboration to provide quality care for our patients.”

# Department of Clinical Social Work

In 2024, the Social Service Department changed its name to better reflect its focus and expertise. Now known as the Department of Clinical Social Work, MGH's social workers and advocates help patients and families address health, mental health and safety challenges, strengthen their coping skills and heal from painful experiences.

## Clinical Social Work Education and Training

As part of a commitment to sustaining the profession, the MGH Department of Clinical Social Work helped support 24 graduate student interns in 2024, 11 of whom were placed within the Department; the remainder serving in iCMP, Transgender Health, Psychiatry and MGH Danvers.



FROM THE  
FRONT LINES

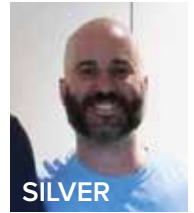


## Wellness Warrior: Reggie Silver, BSN, RN, Radiology

Through a Nursing Wellness Grant, Silver, a yoga instructor, offers weekly yoga classes in the mornings between shifts.

“I am so happy for the opportunity to share my passion with my work family. It’s amazing to see so quickly the physical emotional and energetic benefits from some basic mindful movement.

It’s inspiring to see others make the effort, even with little or no experience. I am grateful, that through the grant, I can provide a safe, comfortable and free environment for my colleagues to explore and connect their minds and bodies.”



# Speech, Language and Swallowing Disorders

In 2024, the department received **two awards and one grant**. One of the awards as well as the grant recognizes MGH's contributions to Parkinson's treatment through the Parkinson's Foundation 2024 Empowering Parkinson's Disease Care Award and a clinical education grant through the Parkinson Voice Project SPEAK OUT! Program.

In 2024, members of the department participated in **two mission trips** to Guatemala through CareWays Collaborative - one in January and the other in November.

In 2024, **six clinicians** from the MGH Speech Language Pathology Department contributed to **five publications**.

In 2024, MGHers shared their expertise across **14 professional presentations** at conferences, conventions and lecture series.

**94**

Total number of Continuing Education sessions offered

**19**

Total number of students at MGH in Speech Language Pathology externships

**20**

Total number of multidisciplinary teams that include representation from MGH SLP clinicians. These teams include the NeuroRecovery Team, Revere Pediatric Developmental Clinic, Lung Transplant Selection Committee, Intra-Operative Monitoring Team and the Down Syndrome Clinic.

FROM THE  
FRONT LINES



## From the Frontlines: Jeff Shackleton, OFM, BCC, Spiritual Care Provider

“Providing spiritual care in an acute healthcare setting is both a privilege and a responsibility. Spiritual care providers refrain from offering ‘a fix,’ but rather accompany the individual, providing support in the way most suited to that person’s need. We use the tools of empathy, compassion, spiritual awareness, insight, and attentiveness to contribute to the wellbeing of those whom we serve. I am continually struck by the beauty, complexity, and resourcefulness of the people under my care. It is a privilege and a blessing to be invited into these sacred, intimate spaces and to support people at some of the most crucial moments of their lives.”

# Spiritual Care: Company through Crisis

Donna Blagdan, BCC, director of Spiritual Care at MGH, describes the department as “the intimate strangers who accompany people through health crises - their own or the people they love. We are interfaith chaplains who provide compassionate care to patients, families, and staff in a culturally-sensitive and respectful manner.” Professionally trained chaplains collaborate with interdisciplinary teams to support patients and families through new diagnoses, changes in treatment plans, and through decision-making for goals of care.

**21,025**  
NUMBER OF INPATIENT VISITS

## LANGUAGES OFFERED:

- ENGLISH
- HAITIAN-CREOLE
- SPANISH
- PORTUGUESE
- CAPE VERDEAN
- CREOLE
- ARABIC

**168**

NUMBER OF STAFF  
SUPPORT SESSIONS

**1,675**

NUMBER OF STAFF CARED  
FOR IN GROUP STAFF  
SUPPORT SESSIONS

## STAFF SUPPORT SESSIONS

The Spiritual Care Department partners with departments across the hospital to meet the needs of patients and staff alike. Group staff support sessions include resiliency rounds, meditation sessions, debriefs, grief sessions, “Tea for the Soul” meetings, and blessing of hands.

## SACRAMENTS SHARED

**1,572:** Number of ashes imposed on Ash Wednesday

**1,873:** Number of patients who received Sacrament of the Sick while inpatient

**12,858:** Number of patients visited (face-to-face) by volunteer Eucharistic Ministers

**9,204:** Number of people who received communion from Eucharistic Ministers

**13:** Number of new Eucharistic Ministers (bringing total to 31)

# Nursing by the Numbers



**25.5%**  
OF CERTIFICATION ELIGIBLE  
REGISTERED NURSES ARE  
CERTIFIED

**9.7 YEARS**

AVERAGE YEARS OF  
SERVICE FOR NURSES AT THE MGH







## One Year In: Maggie White, Patient Care Associate, Ellison 12 Medicine

White graduated with a degree in Psychology and kicked off her healthcare career at MGH in 2024. Below, she shares insight from her first year at MGH as a patient care associate.

“This job has taught me how rewarding it can be to provide support to patients who are facing major crises, perhaps the worst moment of their lives, while simultaneously instilling patience and resilience in myself.

What keeps me coming back each day is my colleagues, since at the end of the day, it is our teamwork and camaraderie that make this job fulfilling and worthwhile.

I would describe my experience as motivating and educational as I experience new challenges every day that help me grow in my role as a PCA and further my journey to becoming a nurse. It has helped me solidify my clinical and therapeutic skills in helping vulnerable populations.”



## From the Frontlines: Carlos DePina, BCC, Spiritual Care Provider

“My service at MGH is special because I connect with patients from diverse backgrounds and languages, offering them comfort and emotional support. I help them explore what is meaningful to them, which plays a crucial role in their recovery.

The most valuable aspect of my work is the deep sense of fulfillment I gain from meeting patients’ spiritual and emotional needs. Being present with them during their health challenges, especially towards the end of their journey, allows them to find peace as they embark on their next life chapter.”

# Physical Therapy Milestones

IN 2024, MGH PHYSICAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT PROVIDED

**75,814**

INPATIENT ENCOUNTERS

**122,234**

AMBULATORY PATIENT ENCOUNTERS



Alison Squadrito, PT, DPT, GCS, was honored with the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Practice by the American Physical Therapy Association of Massachusetts recognizing her exceptional contributions and dedication to the field of physical therapy.

## INCREASING ACCESS TO COMMUNITY

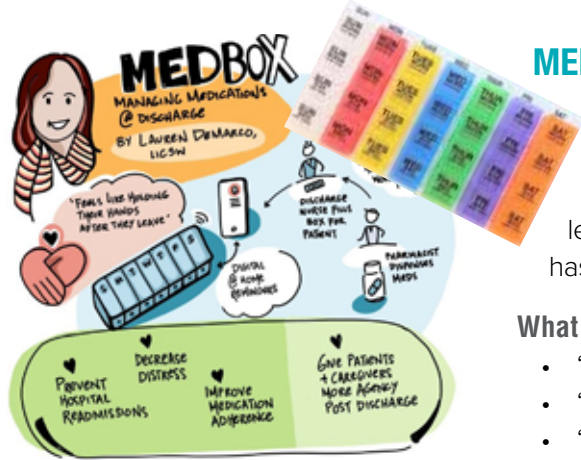
MGH Physical Therapy Department has begun staffing clinic hours within the school-based Health Centers at Chelsea and Revere High Schools. This initiative has brought access to physical therapy services to high school students that have historically encountered barriers to receiving care in traditional outpatient clinics outside of school hours. Students recovering from orthopedic and sport-related injuries and surgeries can now access therapy within their school, and the collaboration with the physical therapy department, health centers and athletic departments holds promise in program development aimed at injury prevention in student athletes.

Noam Segal, PT, DPT, OCS, received the Outstanding Clinical Educator award from the MGH Institute of Health Professions. This award truly highlights excellence in professionalism, communication, interpersonal skills, clinical teaching, and clinical practice.



# Innovation Update

The Center for Innovations in Care Delivery supports frontline caregivers as they problem solve to address pain points in how patients are cared for and how staff provide that care. In 2024, the Center supported many projects, culminating in new program rollouts, presentations and papers.



## MEDBOX ENROLLS PATIENTS

Led by Lauren DeMarco, LICSW, Lunder 9 Oncology, the MedBox project aims to address the challenges patients face when discharged with complicated medication regimens often leading to caregiver burnout or hospital readmission. MedBox has been utilized by patients and resources distributed.

### What patients are saying so far:

- “It helped meeting with a pharmacist.”
- “I learned which meds are a priority and how to be organized.”
- “I appreciated talking with someone about my medications.”

## PUMPIQ: SMART PUMP LIBRARY RESOURCE LAUNCHED

Led by Kim Whalen, MS, RN, CCRN, MGfC Pediatrics, launched the PumpIQ Clinician Application, a software system that works with smart infusion pump libraries to provide real-time clinical decision support on clinician-carried smartphones to enable safe and efficient titratable IV medication administration to critically ill patients. The team engaged engineers, pharmacists, and other clinicians to develop the algorithm and the application is now on Voalte devices.



# Serving their Community

Volunteers at Mass General serve the hospital community in a multitude of ways with the goal of making the experiences of visitors, patients and their loved ones a bit easier. Volunteers comfort patients by sharing reading materials, help caregivers wayfind through the hallways, keep loved ones informed while patients are in procedural areas and so many other meaningful acts of care and kindness.

For more information about becoming a volunteer at MGH, visit [massgeneral.org/volunteer](https://massgeneral.org/volunteer).

VOLUNTEERS PROVIDED MORE THAN

# 58,000

HOURS OF SERVICE TO THE MGH

# 1,108

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED TO THE 58,000 HOURS

# 388

NEW VOLUNTEERS ONBOARDED IN 2024

# 620

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVE IN JUST THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF 2024

## Volunteers Recognized for Milestone Service in 2024



Pierce Husted



Fredrick Earthrowl



Nikolay Demidov



Susan Broderick



## One Year In: James Sixkiller, CF-SLP, Speech Language Clinical Fellow

Sixkiller marked his first full year at the MGH at the end of 2024. Below, he shares insights from his experience.

“In my short time as a Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Fellow, I find that the most valuable and rewarding aspect of my job is the opportunity to pursue the best possible patient care. Working primarily with patients who have a neuro-oncologic diagnosis, I am humbled to serve as a clinician who can help rehabilitate cognitive-linguistic function. I am equally humbled to serve as an advocate for the patient’s care, as a resource for their loved ones, as a liaison for a wider healthcare team, and as a familiar face for patients amidst times of uncertainty and change.”

# Nurses Visit the United Nations

In October 2024, ten MGH clinical nurses were supported to attend a two-day immersion program to be introduced to the inner workings of the United Nations to provide them with knowledge and expertise to enhance further their roles as innovators, advocates and activists to address a variety of contemporary global challenges.



## INSPIRED ACTION

At right, Ryan Mullin, RN, White 9 Medicine, following his return from the UN trip, kicked off a festive holiday tradition here at the MGH sharing candy and gifts with pediatric patients through the hospital's pneumatic tube system.



With support from his colleagues, the “Tube Station Elves” brought joy to Ellison 17 and 18 patients through the month of December.



## **Patricia Simpson, RN, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at MGH Charlestown, Chelsea and Revere HealthCare Centers**

“Attending the United Nations SONSIEL conference has deeply expanded my perspective as a nurse, reminding me that healthcare is not just a local issue but a global one. It has strengthened my commitment in providing compassionate care that recognizes strength in leadership and education. High ideals, united action and compassion will benefit our patients and improve community outcomes, and will certainly elevate our colleagues practices as well.”

## **Elizabeth (Lizzi) Narcisse, RN, BSN, Emergency Department Observation Unit**

“The trip to the UN influenced my practice as a nurse through the abundance of education and perspectives that were shared. As global issues continue to emerge and evolve, we have the ability to be cognizant of, and adaptive to them. The trip reaffirmed my responsibility, as a nurse, to provide patient centered care for patients of all demographics, and to be informed about the factors that surround them.”

Inspired by the trip, Narcisse is launching a collection drive in 2025 to support a non-profit benefitting the homeless population in the Boston Area.





# Occupational Therapy

The MGH Occupational Therapy (OT) Department provides services to inpatients as well as ambulatory patients on the main campus, Waltham, Revere and Chelsea. Occupational therapy is a client-centered health profession concerned with promoting health and wellbeing through occupation. A person's ability to engage in their occupation of choice can be disrupted with an illness, disease, injury or by birth. By addressing the underlying impairments impacting function, OTs help our patients regain and/or develop independence with activities of living that are important to them.

MGH OT Inpatient Service provides care across all units in the hospital including the ICU's addressing patients cognitive, physical, sensory and mental health issues that may be factors affecting the patients level of independence.

## DEPARTMENT STAFF MILESTONES

**18:** Advanced Clinicians and Scholars recognized by the MGH Clinical Recognition Program

**12:** Certified Hand Therapists

**4:** Certified Lymphedema Therapists

**5:** Board Certified in Physical Rehabilitation

**2:** Board Certified in Pediatrics Rehabilitation



THERAPISTS SAW MORE THAN

**10,000**

PATIENTS

**27**

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST  
CLINICIANS

OT OUTPATIENT SERVICE  
ENCOUNTERED MORE THAN

**7,000**

NEW PATIENTS



## **From the Frontlines: Amy Orroth, OTR/L, CHT, Occupational Therapist**

“I find working in an environment that supports evidence-based treatment strategies that are critiqued for effectiveness of care is a vital aspect that empowers me. I am lucky to work in environment where we are encouraged to help each other improve our skills with the goal of providing optimal care to our patients.”

# Occupational Therapy Expands Services

## MGH WALTHAM EXPANSION

In 2024, the OT department expanded services at MGH Waltham, now providing comprehensive neurology services.

## A FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

The Hand Practice team, which includes staff from Boston and Waltham, collaborated with Physical Therapy colleagues to develop rehab protocols for young athletes in the surrounding communities.

## PRIORITIZING PEDIATRIC PATIENTS

The pediatric therapists collaborate weekly with interdisciplinary staff to help patients from the Feeding team, Downs Syndrome, Developmental follow up, and Developmental NeuroPediatric Program clinics.

## FND TREATMENT

Partnering with David Perez, MD, MSC, chief of the Massachusetts General Hospital Division of Behavioral Neurology & Integrated Brain Medicine, therapists are researching treatment for patients with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) using a sensory processing theory. Their work has been published in *Neurology: Clinical Practice*.



Above, Orroth is joined by colleague Tabor Hilton, OT, reviewing patient images at MGH Waltham.



## CARING COLLABORATION

At left, staff on Ellison 12 Medicine care for a patient; while at right, staff at Charlestown HealthCare Center discuss patient medication options.



**PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT IS CRUCIAL TO NURSING AND PATIENT CARE SERVICES** as it allows us to seed innovative ideas, provide opportunities for career development and advancement and improve the way we deliver care. If you are interested in learning more please visit: [giving.massgeneral.org/where-to-give/nursing-and-patient-care-services](https://giving.massgeneral.org/where-to-give/nursing-and-patient-care-services) or contact or contact Madeline Burns in the Mass General Development Office, [mkburns@mgd.harvard.edu](mailto:mkburns@mgd.harvard.edu).

# Caring

HEADLINES FROM MASS GENERAL NURSING  
AND PATIENT CARE SERVICES



 **Massachusetts General Hospital**  
Founding Member, Mass General Brigham

Copyright © 2025 Massachusetts General Hospital. All Rights Reserved.