Eyes on Our Patients

With patient safety a top priority, NorthBay Healthcare has implemented a new high-tech program intended to keep an eye on patients who are most at-risk for pulling out IV lines, getting out of bed, wandering away or falling.

See TELESITTER, Page 7

Pilot Program Aids With Transports

This week marks the launch of a pilot program designed to make things easier and safer for staff and patients at NorthBay Medical Center.

Atlas Lift Techs are now providing transport services to NorthBay Medical Center, by transporting patients to Diagnostic Imaging, Cardiology, MRI or units to service transfer needs — one of many jobs typically handled by nurses, CNAs or imaging.

See TRANSPORT, Page 12

Open Staff

NorthBay Healthcare is already off to a great start in both our hospitals and ambulatory services for 2019, but we can’t — and won’t — let up.

That message was delivered by President and CEO Konard Jones during a series of Open Staff presentations in May.

In the first quarter alone, operating revenue is up $38 million from last year at this time. While expenses are also up about $20 million, the bottom line shows that instead of a $3 million operating loss financial performance in the first quarter is up $38 million from last year at this time.

See OPEN, Page 13
Doctor Discusses UroLift Option

Learn about an amazing new way to treat enlarged prostate that won’t require ongoing medication or surgery during a live lecture by NorthBay Healthcare urologist Herkanwal Khaira, M.D.

Dr. Khaira will present information on Urolift during Doc Talk Live events scheduled from 10 to 11 a.m. on June 27 at the Green Valley Administration Center in Fairfield; 6 to 7 p.m. Sept. 12, at the Hampton Inn & Suites, 945 Hartle Court in Napa and from 1 to 2 p.m. Dec. 12, at the VacaValley Wellness Center. Visit NorthBay.org/Urolift for more information.

Nurse Camp to Celebrate #15

NorthBay Healthcare’s Nurse Camp is celebrating its 15th anniversary in a big way. Organizers are inviting all “graduates” — more than 300 in all — and all staff, past and present, who have been involved in Nurse Camp through the years, to come to a celebration at 6 p.m. June 17 at NorthBay’s Green Valley Administration Center.

It’s the Monday before the 2019 Nurse Camp begins and will feature light refreshments, slideshows and time to reminisce.

Nurse Camp co-founder Maureen Allain, R.N., will be reunited at the event with co-founder Mary Hemp-en, who retired in 2012. No RSVP is required.
Three more NorthBay nurses have completed the perioperative nurse training program and are precepting in surgery full time, having passed their final examinations.

Desiree Larracas, R.N., Sarah Wyatt, R.N., and Nina Dazo, R.N., were hired into surgery from NorthBay and VacaValley acute care and began the training program in January. The training included comprehensive instruction where the experienced nurses learned the foundations of perioperative nursing in addition to hands-on skills, equipment training, simulation, and precepting. This marks the fourth group of nurses to go through the program. In all, 13 nurses have been trained through the program since 2015, including four who are now in leadership positions and one who is in clinical informatics for perioperative services.

Chris Johnson, R.N., and Nancy Maligaya, R.N., serve as the perioperative training program administrators.

“We are so excited to have completed this training program and extremely happy with these nurses,” said Chris. “Through this program, we build up our own NorthBay nurses by providing them a unique experience to grow, advance, and become perioperative nurses who will be future leaders in the field.”
Deanna Hall has joined NorthBay Healthcare as manager of Environmental Services. She is originally from Solano County and most recently was EVS director at Lompoc Valley Medical Center, according to Sean Zortman, director, environment of care and safety officer.

“Deanna comes to us with many years of management experience in healthcare EVS and quality assurance,” Sean said. “Her accomplishments with employee professional development, experience with improving HCAHPS scores and overall passion for EVS will be essential in the team’s ongoing focus to improve quality and productivity at each hospital.”

Happy Nursing Graduates

Congratulations to four NorthBay Healthcare employees who graduated May 22 from Solano Community College’s nursing program and earned an associate’s degree. They are (left to right) Kim Kavanaugh, C.N.A., 1600/1700 unit; Mina Behmardi Kalantari, C.N.A., 1600/1700 unit; Tarun Gohri, VacaValley Emergency Department tech; and Ashley Vasquez, Mother-Baby Unit Clerk/Nursing Assistant. Next, they’ll take their NCLEX exam to earn the coveted “R.N.” Mina and Tarun are currently studying for their bachelor’s degree in nursing at Sonoma State; Ashley will start at Touro University in August to earn her master’s degree in nursing.
Give Them a Hand!

Hooray, it’s Hand Therapy Week

NorthBay Healthcare salutes the experts who provide hand therapy at our rehabilitation facilities during National Hand Therapy Week June 3-7.

Hand therapy services are provided at the NorthBay Rehabilitation services clinic in Vacaville at the VacaValley Wellness Center, at and NorthBay Orthopedics and Rehabilitation on Hilborn Road. Patients are referred by physicians in our community and from throughout the Bay Area.

Hand and upper extremity injuries and disease are special challenges for both patients and healthcare professionals. Hand disability can impair an individual’s ability to function and can lead to prolonged periods off work.

A hand therapist is a physical or occupational therapist who has specialized in rehabilitation of the hand through advanced study and continuing education. The hand therapist evaluates and develops treatment plans to help patients obtain optimum function and the ability to return to productive work and satisfying lives.

The program services include: functional and sensibility assessment; stretching and range of motion; mobilizations and strengthening; wound care and scar management; development of customized splints or positioning devices and edema control; pain management and desensitization; and patient and family education.

If you would like more information about hand therapy, you can contact our Rehabilitation Services Department at (707) 324-8290 or (707) 646-5599.

Free Sports Physicals for Students in July

NorthBay Healthcare’s Sports Medicine will help young athletes prepare for the new season by offering free sports physicals for boys and girls ages 13 to 17. Physicals will be available 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, July 13, in NorthBay’s VacaValley Wellness Center.

Appointments must be scheduled through the student’s coach or athletic director. No insurance is needed.

Food and beverages will be provided during the daylong event.

For more information, go to www.NorthBay.org/SportsExams.
Are you Ready for June 24-26 Magnet Visit?

Magnet appraisers are scheduled to arrive at NorthBay Healthcare on June 24 for a three-day visit. Are you ready?

The team from the American Nurses Credentialing Center will collect data to back up the report NorthBay Healthcare submitted Oct. 1, 2018, for redesignation, according to Jennifer Tudor, Magnet Program director.

Magnet Survey Guidebooks are available for nurses and other staff members to help prepare them for the site visit.

“We have a new Magnet redesignation icon on ShareSpace for quick access to the Magnet redesignation document,” said Jennifer. “Nurses should be familiar with where their department is included in the document.

“The Magnet word of the month is PRIDE... we should be proud of what we do,” said Jennifer. “Think about what makes you proud to work at NorthBay Healthcare, so you can share it when the appraisers come to visit. The site visit is like an open house. Welcome attendees into your home and show off points of interest with pride.”

Last month, staff and the public were invited to share stories and provide comments about the care provided in our hospitals, the NorthBay Cancer Center, the NorthBay Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine, NorthBay Health at Home, Hospice and The Surgery Center at NorthBay VacaValley.

Anyone may send comments via email and direct mail. Comments must be received by the Magnet Program by June 14. All comments received by phone (866) 588-3301 (toll free) must be followed up in writing to the Magnet Program Office.

The visit will be to “clarify, amplify and verify what we’ve already shared in the formal, written documentation,” said Jennifer.

There are fewer than 500 hospitals in the world that are Magnet-recognized. NorthBay first earned the honor in 2014, although the official award was presented in October, 2015.

‘Attain, Engrain, Sustain’ is Theme for 2019 EBP-Based Conference

Registration opens June 1 for the 6th Annual Evidence-Based Practice & Research Conference, which will be Friday, Aug. 23, at NorthBay Healthcare’s Green Valley Administration Center.

The theme of this year’s event is “Attain, Engrain, Sustain — Pathway to Implementation Science,” said Elisa Jang, R.N., clinical nurse specialist. “A growing amount of EBP literature is now focused on the field of implementation research — the uptake of interventions that have proven effective into routine practice, with the aim of improving population health.”

Keynote speaker is Dr. Sharon Tucker, who is a Grayce Sills Endowed Professor, Research Core Director, and Nurse Scientist for the Helene Fuld Health Trust National Institute for EBP at Ohio State University.

The conference is open to all healthcare professionals who are interested in exploring the challenge of delivering evidence-based care and attempting to keep pace with the latest recommendations for excellence in clinical practice.

Visit www.NorthBay.org/conference for additional information on this year’s conference.
Dropoffs Welcome!

NorthBay Healthcare facilities are now among the few locations in Solano County to install a safe disposal system as part of our medication take-back program, announced Chief Medical Officer Seth Kaufman, M.D. While all extra medications are welcome, this program is an important part of our opioid stewardship efforts, said Dr. Kaufman. At NorthBay Medical Center, the bin is in the main hallway near the Operating Rooms. At VacaValley, it is located behind the main desk near the hospital entrance. A big thank you to Facility and Pharmacy teams who sought out the vendors, reviewed the regulations and got these life-saving bins installed, said Dr. Kaufman.

06.06.19  Retirement Plan Meetings, NBMC Health Plaza, Suite 204
06.18.19  Nurse Camp begins
06.24.19  Magnet site visits begin
06.25.19  Masquerade $5 Sale, NBMC Annex 1&2
07.02.19  Retirement Plan Meeting, GVAC Room 160
07.03.19  Retirement Plan Meeting, VacaValley Health Plaza Suite 290
07.13.19  Sports Physicals, NorthBay VacaValley Wellness Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
07.19.19  NorthBay Guild Golf Classic, Eagle Vines

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**TeleSitter ... (From Page 1)**

The AvaSys Video Monitoring System was implemented in May and allows highly trained video monitoring techs or VMTs, to sit in a central monitoring room on Unit 1600 at NorthBay Medical Center and keep an eye on up to 20 patient rooms, 14 in Fairfield and six at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital.

A two-way audio system allows for a patient and the VMT to have a conversation.

“When a patient begins to do something unsafe, then the VMT can speak to the patient directly in the room in real time and help keep them safe,” explained Greg Alexander, R.N., clinical manager for Unit 1600 at NorthBay Medical Center.

“The program just started and now we are monitoring 18 patients,” said Traci Duncan, vice president and Chief Nursing Officer. “Already we have had some incredible safety saves through immediate recognition and intervention. The VMT team has embraced the new technology and making a difference in patient lives as well as overall care delivery.”

VMTs are a dozen CNAs who have been trained to oversee the monitoring program.

“This program allows us to put other CNA staff back out on the floor, helping the nurses, rather than just sitting with one patient,” said VMT-CNA Emily Roberts, while keeping an eye on six rooms on her screen. Her co-worker, Nazreen Yasin, CNA, watched four more. “If Nazreen has to take a break, I can move all her camera views onto my screen.”

Cameras are positioned in front of the room, facing the patient, explained Harold Glenn Jr., patient care services clinical manager. Each VMT can oversee 10 rooms at a time.

“We will not be using the cameras for behavioral health cases,” said Greg. “We will still have a CNA sitter in those situations.” And, there will still be live sitters in the emergency department, especially in security situations, added Harald.

Privacy is respected at all times, said Harold. If a patient is a good candidate for the monitoring program, the patient and their family is notified and must agree to it.

When the TeleSitter light is on, the VMT can see the patient. But when the light is off, the privacy cover is on, and they cannot see the room. The privacy cover is used when a doctor or nurse come in to provide care, when the patient is dressing, bathing or using the toilet. When the doctor or nurse is finished, they ask for the privacy cover to be removed so monitoring can resume.

“We’re not actually recording anything, we’re just using the cameras to watch over our patients,” said Harold.

Harold said it took a lot of work from nursing staff, informatics and IT to make it all happen, giving a shout out to Tracey Clifton, Joan Forbush, Diane Hohn and Ed Ballerini.
All NorthBay Health-care staff was invited to come out on Wednesday, May 22, at NorthBay Medical Center and Thursday, May 23, at NorthBay VacaValley Hospital to meet first responders from Medic Ambulance, the Vacaville Fire Department, and the REACH/CalStar air ambulance.

**Demo Brings Out First Responders**

A crowd of NorthBay Security and other hospital employees watched with interest as the REACH/CalStar air ambulance touched down on the NorthBay Medical Center helipad.

There was no emergency patient to be offloaded but the visit was important nonetheless. It was part of a two-day training that took place May 22 and 23 at both NorthBay Medical Center and NorthBay VacaValley Hospital, designed to help improve safety around air and ground ambulance arrivals at the two hospitals.

In addition to the helicopter, NorthBay Medical Center staff got a look inside a Medic Ambulance. At VacaValley, the ground ambulance from Medic as well as one from Vacaville Fire Department were on hand, but the helicopter didn’t arrive, as the crew was diverted to an emergency call. NorthBay Emergency Medical Coordinator Peter Stocks said a visit with the air ambulance and its crew will be rescheduled for another day.

“This training gives us the safety to maintain the helipad and ensure that the helicopters can come in and leave without any problems,”

See DEMO, Page 9
explained Peter. “And the cross-training for our security team and engineering makes them aware of any special hazards.”

The employees learned a lot about the fuel systems on the air ambulances, their approach and departure patterns and gained tips about how and when to approach once the helicopter has landed. The REACH/CalStar crew explained safety procedures and answered lots of questions with the pilot explaining that clear communication between the ground crew and aircraft crew as they are landing is key and warning staff not to get distracted about the emergency situation.

At Vacaville, staff climbed into the back of the ambulance to get an up-close look.

“We ship patients out in ambulances all the time but do I know what the inside of an ambulance looks like? Nope. Never worked in one,” Peter said. “So this is a good opportunity to learn. It raises awareness.”

The air ambulance team was equally happy with the training/demonstrations.

“This training is important because your security personnel at the hospital will ensure the safety of bystanders, the patient and the hospital itself,” said Michele Bell, program director for Reach/CALSTAR.
Star-spangled Weekend for NorthBay

It was a busy holiday weekend for NorthBay Healthcare, which had the honor of being the presenting sponsor of the 2019 Fiesta Days Parade in downtown Vacaville.

To kick off the festivities, NorthBay Healthcare Foundation hosted a reception for past grand marshals Friday, May 24.

Then Saturday morning, Guild volunteers and NorthBay Healthcare employees turned out to decorate the float. This year’s entry featured a number of past grand marshals aboard a U.S. Navy transport vehicle donated for the day by the American Armory Museum, according to Bob Armijo, Human Resources manager/employee relations and NorthBay’s parade event organizer.
Past Fiesta Days Parade Grand Marshals who rode on the NorthBay Healthcare float included (left to right) Dave and Buff Fleming and Jim Kellogg, who wore a button photo of his wife, Wendy Wasser-man Kellogg, over his heart. The two were grand marshals in 2013. Wendy, a NorthBay Healthcare Foundation board member, lost her battle to cancer in 2018. On the other side of the vehicle (below, left) were John Lopez (1989), (left to right), Colleen Duke (1991), Donnie Huffman (1999) and Steve Kappel (2018).

NorthBay Healthcare Foundation Board Member Wendy Jackson (above, left), grand marshal in 2011, chats with Francis Murillo, who also served as a grand marshal in 2003.
technologists, according to Linda Pryor, risk management program manager. The pilot began June 3 and runs through Aug. 31.

These transport services are available seven days a week, between 7:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Transporters will handle transfer tasks for patients on units 1600, 1700, and 1800 to Diagnostic Imaging, Cardiology, and MRI — it’s a level of assistance that is sure to offer a multitude of benefits, Linda noted.

It keeps nurses from having to leave their other patients and units while they transfer someone; it reduces the risk of injury to employees or patients that may occur during transfer from a bed or wheelchair to a gurney; and it offers opportunities for transporters to coach and to provide bedside training in safe patient handling techniques.

“In Patient Care Services we continue to strive for safety and supporting our nurses time at the bedside,” said Traci Duncan, vice president and chief nursing officer.

The requesting department will coordinate with transporters to efficiently get patients to their ordered tests and scans,” explained Jerry Wilcox, director of Diagnostic Imaging.

“Having a transport program will help develop a safe, streamlined process that starts in the patient’s room,” said Jerry. “Transporters will work with nurses as coordinator of care to ensure that any and all precautions are taken for safety during the transport. By transporting all patients by gurney, we are able to provide comfort for the patient by eliminating excessive transferring.”

The Safe Patient Handling Committee recently purchased HoverMatt carts and HoverJacks with funds granted through the NorthBay Guild Wish list, to help make the transfer jobs easier and safer, noted Rica Gallegos, director of operations for Atlas Lift Tech.

“We are using HoverMatts — air-assisted lateral transfer devices that reduce the force required to move a patient’s total weight — and this equipment makes it easier to transfer patients from their beds to gurneys and exam tables,” Rica said.

“This transport pilot is something the Safe Patient Handling Team has been advocating for since we began collaborating with Atlas Lift Tech in 2012,” Linda added, “and now that we’re opening up the new wing, the need for transport assistance becomes even more clear.”

During the 90-day trial, transporters will attend daily huddles in Radiology, and on the 1600, 1700 and 1800 units to learn of scheduled tests and ones ordered throughout the day, as well as any unit-to-unit transfer needs.

Nursing staff can request transfer assistance at any time through Vocera, by calling ext. 3120 and saying, “Transport.”

“In the next 90 days, feedback from staff will be critical in helping us determine if we continue the service beyond the pilot period,” Linda said. End-user surveys will be sent to staff via email or a link on ShareSpace.

“We are thrilled for this opportunity to further our partnership with the team at NorthBay Healthcare,” said Scott Meister, Atlas Lift Tech executive director of operations, Northern California. “We are looking forward to the positive outcomes this new program will bring to the Safe Patient Handling and Mobility program as a whole, and for patient care and worker safety,” he added.
quarter of 2018), NorthBay is enjoying a $16 million operating gain.

“A lot of that is due to all the hard work that everyone put in related to OpEx 2020,” said Konard. “A lot of people ask me if OpEx 2020 is over, now that our goal is in sight, but in fact, no — Operational Excellence will be our way of life at NorthBay for years to come. It is what we must do if we are to remain an independent healthcare system.”

He praised major OpEx 2020 achievements by Nursing, Pharmacy, Care Management, and in areas of physician enterprise and Nutrition Services.

In sharing key operating statistics, Konard noted that observation days in the hospitals are down nearly 1,000 from this time last year, a move in the right direction. He also noted a decrease in Emergency Room visits by 1,100, which is a good sign because it means that more people are using Urgent Care. In fact, Urgent Care saw nearly 900 more patients in the first quarter of 2019.

Specialty Clinic visits continued to trend upward, with more than 1,100 visits in the first quarter.

Safety was a big topic of the presentation, with emphasis on patient safety and workplace safety.

Konard noted that key hospital managers are conducting a Daily Safety Briefing Call every Monday through Friday. Leaders discuss events experienced in the previous 24 hours, and items that require followup.

“It has proven a great way to increase communications, ensure that supplies are available and that everyone knows if we have issues or concerns,” said Konard.

In addition, he announced that in June, NorthBay’s Workplace Violence Team will be unveiling a campaign aimed at protecting employees.

“Some of our employees have been used to accommodating bad behavior by our patients, and that’s not OK. We have to draw the line and show them that bad behavior will not be tolerated,” said Konard. “A hospital should be a safe place to work.”

Negotiations continue for the final Blue Shield payment, following the settlement.

“There’s some dispute about exactly how much they owe us. They agree to most of it, but not on a few issues. So we’re still waiting,” said Konard.

Talks are also continuing with Anthem Blue Cross.

On the hiring front, a search continues for a new chief financial officer, as well as two new vice presidents to replace Elnora Cameron after she retires at the end of June. Elnora, who has

See OPEN, Page 15
Finders Keepers Rewards Tipsters for New Hires

NorthBay Healthcare’s Finder’s Keepers program pays rewards of up to $3,000 to employees who refer a successful candidate to hard-to-fill positions. The payments are announced at Open Staff meetings each quarter.

HARD TO FILL – First payment

The following employees will receive the first payment of the cash award for referring a “Keeper” to NorthBay Healthcare:

- Janeeh Marie Miranda referred Karen Joy Lalic, Clinical Nurse II
- Maruchi Fisher referred Shydell Rios, Clinical Nurse II
- Robert Irao referred Michelle Banzon, Respiratory Care Practitioner II
- Abby Valdez referred Mac Clayton, Respiratory Care Practitioner II
- Tamara Fletcher referred Ruth Kovacs, Clinical Nurse II

HARD TO FILL – Second payment

The following employees will receive the second half of the cash reward for referring someone who has been on staff now for one year:

- Dianne Sorrera referred Isaac Lopez, Clinical Nurse II
- Joanna Olson referred Juan Pablo Martinez, Clinical Nurse II
- Mariel Lim referred Irving Lim, Clinical Nurse II
- Alan Valentin referred Maricel Seara, Clinical Nurse II
- Julie Lyons referred Michael Starr, Clinical Pharmacist II
- Janice Vertudez referred Kristine Ordonez, Clinical Nurse II
- Cecilia David referred Rocelia Reyes, Clinical Nurse II
- Benjamin Fabro referred Vanezza Roquiza,

Clinical Nurse II

Erin Brooks referred Daisy Najera, Clinical Nurse II

Full-Time and Part-Time Drawing, $300
- Nancy Maligaya, Elizabeth Montgomery
On-Call Drawing, $100
- Jade Feury

Referral bonuses range from $100 to $3,000, depending on the position and schedule.

Pick up a referral card for your friends and colleagues and refer them to NorthBay Healthcare job openings. You’ll find cards in our cafés, break rooms, or pick up a stack in Human Resources.

We appreciate your help in recruiting quality employees.
When will we have a new chief financial officer? We’re working hard to find the perfect match for NorthBay Healthcare. We have narrowed down the field and hope to have someone here by the end of August.

What about filling the position of Elnora Cameron, who is scheduled to retire June 28 after a 32-year career at NorthBay? Elnora currently holds two positions – that of president of NorthBay Healthcare Advantage, and Vice President of Strategic Development. Our plan is to blend her duties and replace her with two vice presidents. One will be the chief strategic officer who will focus on how to grow while maintaining our independence. The other will focus on payer relations and managed care. We hope to have both in place by late summer.

If we are committed to getting costs down, how does it make sense to increase our rates? We walked through every service line to determine why our prices are what they are. We want to protect our pricing by showing the value of medicine and what we offer locally in our community. We will always evaluate to see where we can lower or where we need to raise our pricing. We never want to devalue the quality of our services.

Do you do a follow up from the morning briefing calls? An email summary is sent out daily following the call and issues are resolved in real time on the same day.

If I recommend someone for hire, how do I get my payout? Applicants need to put your name is on the application. Referral bonuses range from $100 to $3,000, depending on the position and schedule. In addition to the reward for hard-to-fill positions, we also have a drawing for all other referrals, one for full-time, one for part-time and one for on-call referrals each quarter.

Will there be a wage increase this year? It’s a little early to tell. We will have more information at the next open staff after we have completed 2020 budgets.

How are we communicating with the Anthem Blue Cross patients so that they know we can’t see them in the hospital? Unfortunately for patients, the message is complex and depends on the situation. For example, Blue Cross members can always use the hospitals in an emergency and patients with already-scheduled procedures, serious chronic conditions, pregnancy and babies up to 3 years old may qualify for continuity of care and be able to continue their course of care with us. Managers in the Medical Group and Patient Access are working one-on-one with patients to ensure that their care is not interrupted. Patients with questions can be directed to Kelly Rhoads-Poston, our health plan specialist in Business Development, at (707) 646.3280. There is also information for patients posted on the home page on NorthBay.org. https://www.northbay.org/upload/NorthBay-Healthcare-Patient-CoC-FAQs-5-2-Website_V3.pdf

When we issue visitor badges at NorthBay Medical Center, are we running IDs through a Department of Justice? Are we planning to bring this system to VacaValley Hospital? We are not currently asking for ID proof at the NorthBay Medical Center visitor badging stations. We are working on related issues at VacaValley Hospital now, so we can implement a badge system there in the near future.

This is just a partial list of questions and answers from May Open Staff meetings. For a complete list, visit My NorthBay, your employee portal, and click on Q&A under the Open Staff icon on the left-hand side of the page — Editor.
Did you know?

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Our Roots
NorthBay Medical Center’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) opened in 1985 as the area’s only Level III specialty unit equipped to provide complex care for premature or critically ill infants, and remains the only Level III unit in Solano County.

NICU-Bound
Babies born before their full gestational age of 37 weeks may spend some time in a NICU, especially if they have congenital anomalies, trouble breathing, swallowing or have difficulty gaining weight or controlling blood sugars. Some babies, born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, will spend time here as they are weaned from exposure to opioids, sedatives or antidepressants.

Eyes On You, Baby
Parents, friends and family from around the world, who are not able to be at their infant’s bedside, can visit virtually, through the NICU’s NicView video imaging service. Cameras stream real-time images of the baby directly to a smartphone, laptop, tablet or computer. No one else can see the baby’s images unless the log-in credentials are shared, and the cameras don’t transmit sound or record video.

Cuddle Time
NorthBay’s NICU recently established a special volunteer program for Cuddlers. These volunteers may spend an hour or two — as their schedules permit — rocking, holding, hugging, humming to and crockling any newborn whose parents may not be available. Research has proven that the human touch for pre-term babies provides them with pain relief, stabilizes heart rates and temperatures, helps them to sleep better and cry less, and to gain weight and grow.

Who is Caring for the Babies?
NorthBay’s NICU has a staff specially trained to care for sick or premature newborns, including four neonatologists, 27 registered staff nurses, six charge nurses, and two unit clerks. They are supported by:

- Lactation Nurses who are certified and specially trained in breast-feeding to provide assistance to mothers and their baby.
- Occupational Therapists who help with physical development of the premature and newborn.
- Speech Therapists who help resolve any sucking or swallowing problems.
- Social Workers who can help access services available within the hospital as well as those offered by community agencies.

By the Numbers

180 The number of admissions to the NorthBay NICU in 2018

16 Licensed NICU beds at NorthBay

6 The average daily census in the NorthBay NICU

18.8 Average number of days a baby spends in NorthBay’s NICU