



# Northwest Medical Center

A Tradition of Community Healthcare

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Northwest Medical Center Introduces New Patient Accounts Program

As your health home partner, Northwest Medical Center (NMC) continually searches for ways to improve the quality of services we provide and lower the cost of healthcare for our patients and their families. With those two things in mind, Northwest Medical Center and its physician clinics will soon begin collecting the patient-pay portion of fees (co-pays, deductibles, deposits) at the time medical services are provided.

This new process is designed to help our patients understand the insurance coverage process and to feel more comfortable in knowing up front what portion of the charges will be their responsibility. Our staff will confirm coverage with your insurance company prior to your scheduled appointment. Once your coverage has been determined, we will notify you of any co-pays or out-of-pocket expenses that you will be responsible for at the time of your appointment. In the case of unforeseen medical needs (such as with the clinic or emergency department), the process will begin upon your admission.

This process improvement results from a review of ways NMC might successfully improve our service and lower healthcare costs. During the analysis, we identified the non-payment of patient accounts as an area of substantial loss. Over the past three years alone, NMC has written off \$3.3 million - an average of \$1.1 million each year – in uncollectible patient account balances. This amount does not include amounts included in Northwest Medical Center's Financial Assistance Program, which on average has resulted in an additional write-off of \$221,000 per year. The inability to collect on patient accounts not only could lead to an increase in medical costs to other patients, but could hinder the ability of our Hospital to continue to provide the most up-to-date, technologically advanced medical services to our community.

While we anticipate that this new patient accounts payment process will be beneficial to our patients, we are aware that unforeseen circumstances may arise. Therefore, we thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as we work toward a smooth implementation of this new process. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call our Access Management Lead, Nicole Angle, at 660-726-3941.

**About-** Northwest Medical Center has provided high-quality health services to residents in Northwest Missouri since 1957. Along with four satellite clinics and a full-service home-health agency, Northwest Medical Center continues its tradition of community healthcare utilizing leading-edge diagnostic equipment and boasting one of the top emergency room facilities in the region.

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