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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Nursing students help open new hospital

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — Indiana University Kokomo nursing faculty and students practice their basic care skills as volunteers moving nearly 150 patients into the newly newly-opened Sidney & Lois Eskenazi Hospital.

Teams of two students, with one faculty member for support, accompanied neonatal intensive care (NICU) patients and noncritical care patients from the ambulance that transported them from the former Wishard Hospital, to rooms in the new Indianapolis hospital.

“This was really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, to be part of opening a brand new hospital,” said Lesley Connolly, clinical liaison. “It was a very awesome experience, which allowed our students to see how they can use their skills not just at work, but to help their community.”

Connolly noted that while IU Kokomo was one of many nursing schools participating, Dean Linda Wallace was the only nursing dean who volunteered.

Seeing faculty members volunteering was an inspiring experience for nursing student Bridget College.

“The most influential part, for me, was seeing some of our professors and Dean Wallace outside the classroom, doing what they love, which is helping others,” she said. “I loved being able to give back to our extended community, and also networking with nursing students from other programs.”

Wallace felt privileged to help.

“It doesn’t happen very often that we have an opportunity to actually move a hospital,” she said. “I am very proud of our students for understanding the significance of this opportunity to serve.”

The service project also gave students the chance to see Indiana's newest hospital on its opening day, and get a behind-the-scenes look.

Assistant Dean Bridget Whitmore supported two students as they helped move a premature infant to the new NICU, and said she got to know the students in a more personal way by serving.

She and several students also helped the new hospital's infection control director deliver hand-washing containers to the emergency room, and toured the emergency trauma rooms, the neonatal unit, and the labor and delivery rooms.

"This was an incredible experience for our students to be part of this move," she said. "They saw something accomplished that took a lot of detailed planning, and it was completed with success."

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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