An exceptional patient experience is created when employees, providers, and staff all work together to put Patients 1st. These stories exemplify creative ways to positively impact the patient experience.

Staff and physicians from UNMC Physicians, UNMC, The Nebraska Medical Center and others from outside the enterprise teamed to volunteer their time to ensure Olympic hopefuls were at their best when competing.

More than 160 individuals volunteered their time from across the organization. Volunteers included physicians, physical therapists, pharmacists and staff, along with massage therapists from outside the organization.

As of July 2, more than 100 unique athletes and coaches were seen by physicians. However, many of those seen multiple times and some were also seen by physical therapists.

Campus visits were arranged for those individuals who could not be treated on site.

The medical office where the medical volunteers were stationed was staffed...
14 hours a day, with physicians staffing eight hours each day. The on-site pharmacy volunteers were stationed for 10 hours each day and made sure that any prescriptions given to athletes were within the regulation guidelines for competition. Thanks to our partnership with Walgreens, athletes and coaches received free over-the-counter medications that were requested along with a free delivery service of any prescriptions that needed to be filled.

The highest volume of athletes was seen in the morning during the dedicated "sick call." During this time each morning, athletes and coaches could see a physician before the events for the day began.

"Although the number of orthopaedic cases was down from four years ago, we've been able to utilize urgent outpatient services to provide care in the clinic setting that we were not able to provide here on site," said Mark Dietrich, MD, Orthopaedic Surgery. "Thanks to the ENT, OMFS and Eye Clinics, we've been able to provide care for these high-class athletes."

Micah Beachy, DO, General Internal Medicine, said there were a high number of upper respiratory cases with ear aches, sore throats and abdominal pain.

"With the high temperatures we've experienced this past week, we've stressed the importance of staying hydrated," Beachy said. "The athletes and coaches alike have been very appreciative of the care they have received, with many of them giving their thanks."

Another ailment of athletes that was treated commonly, according to Monty Mathews, MD, Family Medicine, was sickness related to high stress and anxiety.

"With an increase of 500 athletes from four years ago, upper respiratory and GI issues were a large part of the cases we've seen," Mathews said.

Some of the faces of the competitors at the 2012 U.S. Olympic Swim Trials may have changed from 2008, but the impact the experience has had on the volunteers remained the same.

"It was a thrilling experience to be a part of the Olympic Swim Trials - truly a once in a lifetime experience," Emily Leasure, MD, General Internal Medicine. "I've been proud to represent UNMC and Omaha in providing comprehensive, on-demand care for these world-class athletes and their coaches. Those who have needed our services have been genuinely grateful. And beyond the excitement of the competition itself, I have really enjoyed working side-by-side with members of our primary care practices, pharmacy, orthopaedic surgery and physical therapy departments."

Now, as some of these athletes continue onto London to fulfill their dream of being an Olympian, there will be a few more fans back in the Omaha area cheering for them.

Jamie Stahl, Supervisor, Administrative Support, said most of the volunteers began the event not really knowing many of the athletes' names other than Michael Phelps, but left here having added more names to that list:

"After being here from the beginning and interacting with swimmers and coaches many of us started to feel a connection with them," said Stahl. "We would ask them when they were competing so we could cheer them on, and there's a feeling that we are interacting with some potential Olympic team athletes. It's also a great feeling to know we are here to help them through this stressful time."