

HEALTHFIRST

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Special Edition Celebrating
ANCC Magnet Status



CATAWBA
MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL



Catawba Mem 32nd Magnet

Inside

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“Recognizing quality patient care and nursing excellence, the Magnet Nursing Services Recognition Program provides consumers with the ultimate benchmark to measure the quality of care they can expect to receive.”

— American Nurses Credentialing Center

Catawba Memorial Hospital

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Catawba Memorial Hospital is a 258-bed facility serving the five-county Catawba Valley area.

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Linda Urden
 Chairperson of the Magnet Commission & Member of the American Nurses Credentialing Center Board of Directors

On May 7, 2001 Catawba Memorial Hospital achieved a significant milestone — Magnet Hospital designation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. CMH is only the 32nd hospital in the nation to seek and attain this level of excellence — the gold award in patient care. This special issue of **HEALTHFIRST** reveals how Catawba Memorial has achieved these credentials and intro-

duces you to some of the health care professionals who serve the citizens of the Catawba Valley every day. In their own words, they paint a profound picture of an organizational culture built over 30+ years, that has been focused on a single goal — continually striving for excellence and positive outcomes for patients.

“The Magnet Hospital designation recognizes health care organizations that can demonstrate sustained excellence in patient care,” said Dr. Linda D. Urden, Chairperson of the American Nurses Credentialing Center during the award ceremony by end of June at Catawba Memorial.

“The program was created in 1994 to recognize those facilities that represent the very best in nursing care, and to uphold the tradition that supports professional nursing practice.”

The Ultimate Benchmark for Measuring Quality

Dr. Urden reports that during the extreme nationwide shortage of nurses several years ago, a few hospitals had no trouble keeping and hiring nurses. The American Nurses Association completed a study of these hospitals to understand what made them different and from that

research, created the Magnet Nursing Services Recognition Program for Excellence in Nursing Services.

Today, the program serves as the ultimate benchmark for consumers to measure the quality of care they can expect to receive. Experienced nurses who seek employment look for the Magnet Hospital designation. This designation ensures that these facilities support nurses' personal career growth while understanding the work environment that allows them to provide excellent care to their patients.

“Catawba Memorial met the standards easily,” says Dr. Urden. “The nursing program at CMH is outstanding and the commitment of the hospital's management is obvious. Part of the responsibility of achieving Magnet designation is sharing outcomes, data and information with other Magnet Hospitals. Catawba Memorial can expect to get a lot of calls!”

Raising the Bar: a CMH Philosophy

“While all hospitals must meet minimum governmental and other regulatory requirements, we have continually tried to raise the bar,” says CMH President and CEO Tony Rose. “We are extremely proud of achieving this level of excellence, of joining the top 5% of hospitals nationwide who are not willing to settle for meeting minimum quality standards. We want to continually improve. After all, the good health of those who seek care at Catawba Memorial is dependent on our ability to support them.”

A Quality Nursing Program is an Investment

According to Rose, it has taken the vision of CMH leadership over many years to build an organizational culture that includes employees in decisions and

Catawba Memorial Hospital Hospital in the Nation



Jesse Salwen, CMH Board of Trustees Chairman & Tony Rose, CMH President and CEO

encourages and financially supports ongoing education and specialty training.

A recently released federal Health & Human Services study revealed a strong link between patient outcomes and nurse staffing in hospitals. The study found that a higher number of registered nurses was associated with a 3-12% reduction in the rates of adverse outcomes.

"We would not have been able to create this culture without the support of our Board of Trustees, who recognized

long ago that a high ratio of registered nurses has a direct impact on quality," says Rose. "When more than half of our expenses are salaries and benefits and when other health care facilities are cutting costs by reducing the number of registered nurses, we have chosen to invest in a nursing department that today is 80% registered nurses."

Visionary Nursing Leadership

"An important measure of quality like the Magnet Hospital designation is quite a compliment to Margery Adams and Eddie Beard, the former and current Vice Presidents for Patient Services, respectively," says CMH Board of Trustees Chairman Jesse Salwen. "Their leadership and belief in the importance of continually building expertise and specialty training has benefited both the hospital and each individual nurse working at CMH. The model of care they have developed is based on the understanding that clinical outcomes are directly related to the relationship which builds between the patients and the nurses who care for them. We are *all* the beneficiaries of that vision."

CMH Receives Congratulations

"As the Commissioner liaison to the CMH Board of Trustees, I have witnessed firsthand the sense of obligation the people of Catawba Memorial have to the health of the citizens of Catawba County and this region. While many public hospitals across the country are struggling, CMH is one of the few that have been very successful at managing the delicate balance between cost and quality. And, without the use of any tax dollars!"

— Steve Ikerd
Catawba County Commissioner

"Congratulations on being named the 32nd hospital in the nation to receive Magnet Hospital designation. I've always known Catawba Memorial Hospital to be a first-rate health care facility, and I'm pleased to see – though not surprised to hear – that it is being given national recognition for its exceptional nursing services. Much to my expectation Catawba Memorial has become one of the region's leading health care facilities. Obviously, I'm thrilled that the American Nurses Credentialing Center has decided to honor the hospital with such an impressive distinction."

— Cass Ballenger
Member of Congress
Tenth District - North Carolina

"Congratulations on your prestigious designation as a Magnet Hospital by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. . . As a fellow professional in the health care community, I do not need to remind you what an impressive distinction this is for your hospital. The mere fact that Catawba Memorial is only the 32nd hospital in the nation to receive Magnet designation speaks volumes.

"As Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Services, I want to congratulate you and the entire hospital staff for this distinct honor. Thank you for the excellent health care services you provide the people of our great country."

— Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Washington, D.C.





A Vision. . . A Trip to Florida A New Model of Care

If you or a family member have ever been hospitalized, you come to know all the buzzwords: chart, medication, vital signs, tests, and one of the best, discharge. But do you know the most important fact of all? Considering all the people who come in and out of your room, do you know who is *really* in charge of your care?

At Catawba Memorial, you will. If you are a patient here, hospitalization may still be an unsettling experience, but you will form a relationship with a single nurse who manages your care, answers your questions and focuses on your return to health. In other words, you will have a personal advocate. And that nurse

will be supported by others who specialize in particular disciplines like wound care or cancer or nutrition.

The CMH nursing care model was originally developed in the mid-1970s by Margery Adams, the hospital's former Vice President of Patient Services and later modified by Eddie Beard, the hospital's current Vice President of Patient Services. First, a bit of history. Three decades ago nurses were organized by task. For exam-

ple, one nurse distributed medications while another prepped patients for surgery. And, nurses might work on the medical unit one day and the birthing floor the next.

"It was difficult for nurses to identify with patients or vice-versa," remembers Margery. "I felt that patients deserved their own nurse – a person who knew them and their particular needs. In 1976, I read an article about Bay Front Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida. They had revamped their nursing department around this concept."

After a quick trip to Florida to see the Bay Front program, Mrs. Adams returned to Catawba Memorial to develop her own new "primary nursing care" model.

"Tender Loving Care Returns In Hospital Nursing Program"

That's how the *Hickory Daily Record* trumpeted the arrival of Catawba Memorial's primary nursing care on September 24, 1976. It began as a pilot study on the CMH Obstetrics and Gynecology Unit and was one of the first programs of its kind in North Carolina.

To promote greater familiarity with patients, Mrs. Adams and her staff organized the nursing unit into districts and assigned a registered nurse to each district. The RNs were totally responsible for the care of that group of patients and worked every day in the same district.

"Once it got up and running, I was a bit scared," admits Mrs. Adams. "I went to the OB/GYN medical staff to see how they felt. One of them said, 'Don't you change one thing!'"

The only change was that this program was implemented throughout the hospital. The word had spread among all the nursing units and the model was a hit with both nurses and patients.

Updating the Model to Meet Changing Needs . . .

"I came in 1989," says Eddie Beard, the hospital's current VP of Patient Services. "Margery was a wonderful mentor. Since the original primary care model was instituted, we've made some adjustments, but the original concept has not changed.



Eddie Beard
Vice President of Patient Services

"Today, most patients are in the hospital three days or less," Beard explains. "By transitioning from five 8-hour shifts to three 12-hour shifts, we can offer nurses better work schedules and still ensure continuity of caregivers, the important part of the primary care model.

Now primary nurses are called the 'Patient Care Coordinators' and although they may not be delivering all aspects of the patient's care, the same nurses are coordinating and overseeing the care."

Transforming the Care Model into Magnet Accreditation

"We were a Magnet Hospital long before the ANCC recognized us. "That's how many long-time Catawba Memorial nurses respond when asked how the hospital's groundbreaking care model began setting the stage for Magnet accreditation nearly 30 years ago.

"After reviewing the Magnet standards, I realized we were already meeting them," reports Eddie. "We didn't have to create or change anything. It was just a matter of documentation and on-site reviews. And the written documentation alone weighed more than 200 pounds! A dedicated team of 12 worked many long hours to document our procedures, our culture and our model of care."

When asked for her reaction to the Magnet accreditation, Margery replies, "I think it's wonderful for all the nurses at Catawba Memorial. Someone like Eddie or I can dream up an idea, but the staff has to make it work. But, of course I'm very proud of Eddie," she adds in a very protective and mentoring manner.

When Eddie asked Margery to read the Magnet application, "That was too much writing," Margery says with a grin. "We designed the original model on just two pieces of paper!" And that was just to make sure she didn't forget her ideas – the ideas that led to a care model that was nothing short of revolutionary 30 years ago and today has evolved into a nationally recognized program and a benchmark for others to follow.

Gloria Hemphill caring for and about our patients

The Care in the Care Model

The true worth of the CMH care model is measured in the ways it enables the nursing staff to touch patients' lives and if possible, help them return to health.

Patient Care Coordinator – A Personal Relationship

The Patient Care Coordinator is a registered nurse with a Bachelor of Nursing degree who is responsible for the total care of the patient. Those responsibilities range from coordinating treatment plans to teaching patients how to manage their health. They also work with patients on discharge plans to ensure there is a smooth transition from hospital to home. It's not unusual for these nurses to look up and see a former patient standing at the desk, smiling and presenting them with flowers. The all-important relationship between nurse and patient. It's almost like becoming part of the family for awhile, and is critical to clinical outcomes.

Gloria Hemphill, RN, is a Patient Care Coordinator in Catawba Memorial's Comprehensive Cancer Center. Certified in chemotherapy, Gloria's role is both clinically challenging and emotionally intense.

"I've been nursing for close to 30 years," says Gloria, shown right with Jackie Little, RN on left. "I had a tendency to be sort of 'old school'. But the patient care model has gotten me to look beyond that. Now, I can do the same clinical tasks, but have more time to be with the patient and the family.

"On the cancer unit, so much of our time is spent nurturing patients, both emotionally and spiritually," she adds. "If I can take time to sit with that patient and talk . . . I don't have words to describe how important that is. It blesses me to be able to give patients a little bit of time out of my schedule, when they are ready to open up. And the way our roles are defined here, the care model allows me to do that."

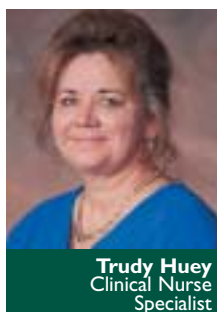
Clinical Nurse Specialist — Specialized Support for Patients and Staff

Clinical Nurse Specialists like Trudy Huey work with both patients and other nurses throughout the hospital. They are masters-level nurses with highly specialized training. As the Surgical Clinical Nurse Specialist at



CMH, Trudy is a certified wound and ostomy nurse, specializing in the prevention and treatment of acute and chronic wounds. Her role is critical since skin breakdowns, for example, can be extreme in very frail patients and can lead to a host of serious infections and health problems. Nurses throughout the hospital use Trudy as a resource for their patients, as well as for their own learning and clinical training.

"The patients I'm involved with are often the very complex patients who require a great deal of care," says Trudy. "Mrs. Adams and Eddie Beard set the culture and the tone for all of us – defining what an excellent professional and proactive nurse should be. If *'How can we make patient care better?'* is always your goal, then you're on the right path."



Trudy Huey
Clinical Nurse
Specialist



A Career at CMH Means Yo

In health care, perhaps more than in any other field, experience and competence are critical. Day in and day out, the health of hundreds of people is at stake. Sometimes training and experience can make the difference in a split-second decision that will save a life. And that's why Catawba Memorial Hospital encourages and invests in continuing education and training for its 1,300 employees.

"Are we a teaching institution or a learning institution?" muses Susan Bumgarner, RNC, MSN, CPAN, CMH's Director of Organizational Learning and Administrative Coordinator of the Area Health Education Center (AHEC). "I've

never been able to decide. The fact is, every employee has something to teach someone else . . . and we all learn from each other." Bumgarner should know. Her job, in a nutshell, is cultivating and maintaining a learning environment for the hospital and community.



Susan Bumgarner, RNC, MSN, CPAN,
Director of
Organizational Learning
and Administrative
Coordinator of the
Northwest AHEC

The "Dynamic Duo" of Education

Susan and Ginger Biggerstaff, RNC, MSN, Associate Director, Organizational Learning, are excited about their work . . . very excited. And when you talk to them about how they create a dynamic learning environment, you catch their enthusiasm, too. The services they offer include orienting new employees, providing ongoing education for every CMH

staff member; helping nurses maintain specialty certifications, and working with health care industry students from local schools. They oversee the onsite ANCC-NCNA approved provider courses that are available, free of charge,



Ginger Biggerstaff, RNC, MSN,
Associate
Director of
Organizational Learning

to CMH nurses. Oh, and they assisted in compiling and organizing the mountains of data (200 pounds.) that were sent to validate the hospital's ANCC Magnet accreditation!

All 1,300 CMH employees probably know Ginger and Susan or see their "work." They use some pretty effective tools – seminars, newsletters and emails on "hot topics," even informational fliers posted in restrooms, jokingly called "Bathroom Blitzes."

Your Highest "Credential Potential"

Catawba Memorial is serious about education and competency and offers financial support to employees who wish to pursue advanced degrees. This employee benefit is part and parcel of a career at CMH – you will always be encouraged to live up to your highest "credential potential." And the hospital's encouragement takes several forms – financial help, flexible scheduling, and good, old-fashioned, moral support.

Just ask Terry Thomas, CGRN, who works in Gastroenterology (GI). He started out as an attendant in the Operating Room and soon decided he wanted to become a nurse. With monetary assistance from the hospital, he worked weekends while pursuing his RN degree at Catawba Valley Community College.



Terry Thomas, RN, CGRN,
Endoscopy
Coordinator

Committed to the Specialty

After that milestone was achieved, Thomas completed another daunting task – certification as a GI nurse. Once again financially backed by CMH, he studied hard, flew to Denver, Colorado, took the required test and came through with flying colors.

"After I passed the test, all the GI physicians made a point to congratulate me," he remembers. "That really felt good. Getting certified shows that you are committed to the specialty. Yes, it increases your knowledge, but it also

increases your confidence as well as the confidence your coworkers have in you. Basically, it builds teamwork and that's the lifeblood of a strong health care institution."

And, once life settles down a bit for Terry (a new baby has just joined his household), he plans to start working toward a Bachelor's degree in nursing. "It's a personal goal," he explains. "Getting a BSN gives you a depth of experience and a broader scope of learning, and that's important."

Developing People Creates Loyalty and Competence

Catawba Memorial's commitment to developing its people creates incredible loyalty. Lisa Rudisill, a registered nurse on the Surgical unit, has worked at CMH for 22 years. Lisa says she's known since childhood that nursing is her calling. She joined the CMH staff when she was only 17.

Over the years, Lisa juggled her work schedule around school, earning her Associate Degree in Nursing from Catawba Valley Community College and her BSN from Gardner Webb. She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree at Western Carolina University and expects to graduate in August of 2002. At that time, she will be certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

Lisa views her educational advancement – and the increased responsibilities that come with it – through the lens of patient advocacy. "I like being the person ultimately responsible for meeting my patient's needs," she says. "



Every employee is a student. And, every employee is a teacher. Our Education Never Ends . . .

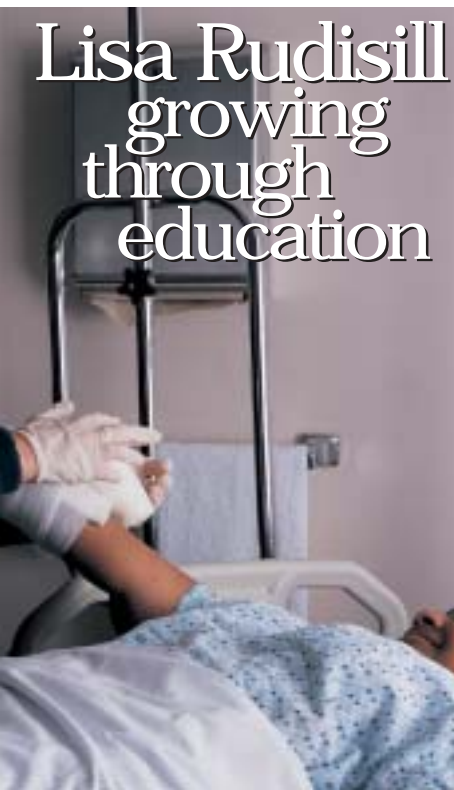
"As a Patient Care Coordinator, I may delegate certain responsibilities, but I always know what's going on and will gladly go to bat for my patients. I truly care about each and every one of them. I don't think you could work in nursing – at least not for long – if you didn't!"

Constant Learning Leads to Continuous Improvement

"Our philosophy is that organizations grow and thrive through individuals who learn," says Bumgarner. "It's our goal to create and maintain that environment. How does this benefit patients? In a word, *competence*. Constant learning improves our knowledge and our confidence, which in turn, continuously improves the quality of our care."

"That involves everyone, from the housekeeping staff, to nurses, from office personnel, to the Medical Staff," says Ginger. "Every employee is a student, and every employee is a teacher . . . we bring out the best in each other."

Lisa Rudisill growing through education



Mel Dizon building a career on compassion

"CMH was my first employer in America, and I'm so glad I landed at this hospital!" declares Mel Dizon, a native of the Philippines and a part-time certified nurse assistant currently working in the psychiatric department. "This hospital gave me a break, really, and I'm so grateful for that. I would like to someday retire from here!"

Mel, who is currently finishing up his RN degree, credits CMH with offering him a flexible weekend work schedule so that he can attend his classes at Catawba Valley Community College. But even more important to his decision to become a Registered Nurse, he says, was watching his co-workers in action. "Especially on the psychiatric floor, patients have a lot of problems," he explains. "Patients can stop the nurses who work on the unit at any time to ask them questions and they will always listen. They are very supportive. I can see that they make a difference in people's lives. That has encouraged me to attain my goal."

Everyone Needs Somebody on Their Side

Mel's long-term goal is to get his BSN and become a certified nurse anesthetist (CRNA). But for now, working one-on-one with his patients seems to be reward enough. "I'm a cheerful person, wearing a smile always," he adds. "I think this has a big impact on patients, and that's satisfying. Everyone needs somebody on their side, somebody to talk to, somebody who has empathy for them. I look forward to work at the hospital after five days in school, knowing that I can come here on the weekend and make even a small difference in my patients' lives."



Where You Work . . .

Of all the evidence that could be cited to support the excellence of the working environment at Catawba Memorial Hospital, perhaps the greatest testimonial is this: in an era where there are far more positions than there are nurses to fill them, it is not unusual for a nurse to wait months to join the nursing staff at CMH.

"When the Magnet appraisers were here, there were several nurses who said they waited six months to a year after they moved to the area until a position they wanted opened," says Eddie Beard, Vice President for Patient Services. "They may have worked elsewhere, but stayed vigilant so they could get a job here. That's the Magnet Hospital concept – an organization that draws people based on its reputation. And it's a culture that takes years to develop and mature."

Focus on Challenging Careers

So, what makes working at Catawba Memorial so special? One of the factors is the continual emphasis on self-improvement. Stressing the importance of education to staff is a mission for Eddie. "My personal philosophy has always been *the higher the level of education, the better the care*," he says. "Today, 80% of our nursing staff are Registered Nurses. And many are working toward advanced degrees and certifications. That's unheard of in health care organizations today."

According to Eddie, new nursing graduates have typically taken jobs on medical/surgical units. "In the past, that's where you paid your dues," he explains. "Then you transferred to another unit. But, there were nurses on these units who knew that medical/surgical nursing was as much a specialty as any other. And they set out to prove it to new employees."

"After a variety of methods ranging from flexible scheduling to mentor relationships, the nursing staff on the

medical/surgical unit were extremely proud when one year later not a single new graduate had asked to transfer!" he says with a grin.

Mary McDaniels of Catawba Memorial's Department of Clinical Resource



Mary McDaniels
Department of Clinical
Resource Management

Management believes that the hospital's support of self-improvement encourages nurses to develop skills and confidence that translates to satisfying careers.

"If you want to grow and progress, the environment is here to let you do as much as you are willing to do," says Mary. "I've been here 26 years. I started as a staff nurse and when I've felt like I needed more challenges and responsibility, I've been allowed to grow."

Involvement in Decisions

The hospital's administration has won high praise within its nursing community for including them in decisions that affect patient care. "Staff nurses serve on our Clinical Practice Team," says Eddie. "Their role is to continually define and improve nursing procedures. For example, our pain management program was developed and implemented by front-line nurses. Their goal was to ensure that all patients, regardless of their conditions, would have their pain managed appropriately. They implemented a pain scale (one being minimal pain, ten the most pain the patient has ever experienced) that all nurses use to assess the effectiveness of medications and other pain management techniques," he says.

When CMH needed to replace patient beds, a Clinical Support Team, whose members include staff nurses and representatives from Materials Management, worked together to evaluate different models and make recommendations. According to Eddie, the team recommended the "cadillac" –

A Hill Rom Total Care Bed. While perhaps more expensive than other options, the team's reasoning was sound: the bed had proven quite effective in protecting the skin of patients.

"So many of our patients are frail," says Eddie. "The skin is the first defense to prevent infections. Skin breakdown can be devastating. The automated Hill Rom bed assists nurses by ensuring that the patient's body does not lie in the same place. While the beds may have been more expensive initially, the team's choice has had a big impact on patient care and safety."

Employee Safety

Safety is an important concern for employees too. Needlesticks, for example, are a job hazard for nurses. That's why a Safety Committee evaluated a new "needleless" device several years ago to reduce the number of potentially dangerous accidental needle sticks. The new needles have a device that retracts over the needle while it is being withdrawn. Because of the proactive nature of CMH nurses, they had been using the system and collecting data on cost vs. reduced risk for years. They were able to provide the background data to Representative Cass Ballenger, who in turn introduced legislation at the federal level to require the practice in all health care organizations.

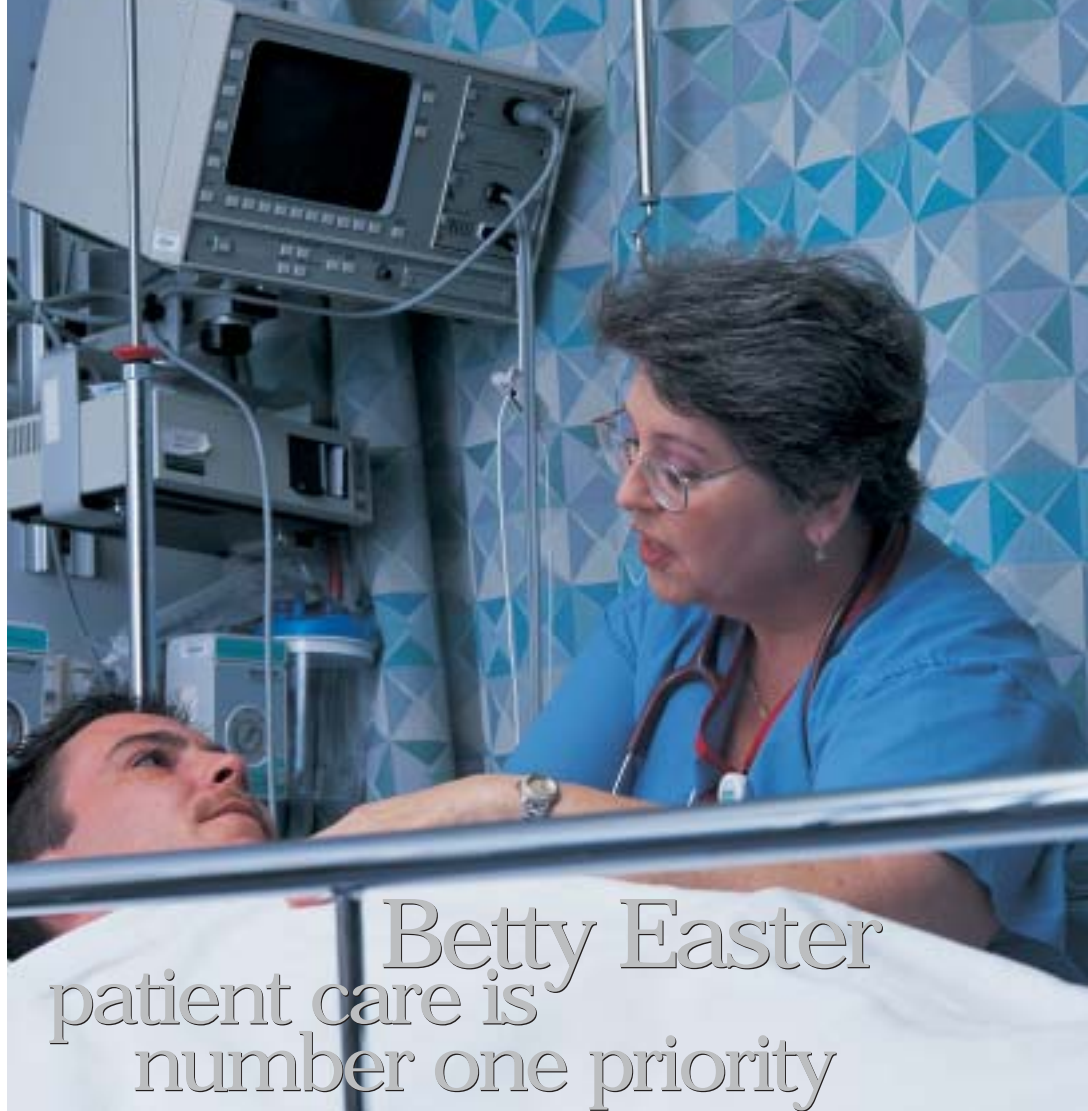
The Value of Diversity

Perhaps one of the most important initiatives that contributes to the desirable work environment at CMH is the value placed on the differences among employees and patients. Over the past 30 years, the multicultural nature of the Catawba Valley has grown much richer and deeper – a change that has been mirrored in the mix of employees working at CMH as well as in their patients.

"Our diversity initiative is one of the most important goals we have ever set for ourselves," says Eddie. "We want all employees of Catawba Memorial to

understand that we respect their differences, and that those differences result in the high quality of care and family-oriented work environment. Each individual is a valuable member of our team and contributes to our success. By respecting the differences of our coworkers, we can better understand and meet the expectations of our patients, regardless of their national origin, gender or religion," he adds. "For example, we have seen increases in the number of Spanish-speaking and Hmong patients. To achieve successful outcomes for these patients, we have had to learn about their cultures and traditions, and adapt our practices accordingly.

"We are still learning," says Eddie. "But a continuous learning environment is what makes us unique. It's what makes Catawba Memorial a great place to work."



Betty Easter
patient care is
number one priority

... Affects How You Work

Maintaining a highly educated and experienced staff is important to CMH administration. But, as the words of the following nurses attest, the true measure of success is determined by how the hospital's unique work environment translates into quality patient care.



Donna Mitchell — Pediatrics

"Our pediatric unit is quite different from many other centers. Of course, Catawba Memorial has a higher ratio of RNs, and that level of experience is really important when you're dealing with young children. You have to be able to talk to them and ease their fears – and a lot of the time you have to calm down the parents more than the

patient. Our higher level of experience helps us do that.

"One of the things I like most about working at Catawba is that they give us everything we need to do our job properly, like offering PALS (Pediatric Advanced Life Support) classes every two years, or having a reference you can go right to rather than calling the pharmacy – I like that."

Betty Easter — PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit)

"When I first came to Catawba Memorial Hospital, what impressed me the most was the support the nursing staff was given. Excellence in patient care is the number one priority; employee satisfaction is job two. Here, we support our nurses. We give them the tools they need. We give them the encouragement to become better educated and certified, to do all those things

that enhance the kind of care we give our patients.

"Administration is very supportive. If you feel there is a problem with your patient or your work space, there is a chain we go through so that nurses are not intimidated. They're not restricted from having the interaction that gets the problem addressed. That is one of the things I have highly valued through my nursing career.

"I get a lot of gratification when I leave here every day knowing that I've treated each patient like my mother or my sister or my husband — that they got the kind of care I'd want my family to have.

"I couldn't be prouder than to say that I am a Catawba Memorial nurse. I want to stay here until I retire . . . or until I die."



Journeys of Personal Growth and training stories

The extraordinary depth of Catawba Memorial's nurses played a significant role in the ANCC's decision to award the hospital Magnet certification. Statistics alone cannot convey either the scope or the depth of the Catawba Memorial nursing staff, or the indelible impact they make upon our patients and our community. During their initial training, nurses rotate throughout the specialties. One or two in particular will feel just right.

Critical Care/Heart Center

Accident victims. Patients with severe heart disease. A host of life-threatening accidents or injuries. Fast-paced. Split-second decisions. Ventilators. Defibrillators. Pulmonary artery catheters. Nurses on Catawba Memorial's Critical Care Unit must be prepared for almost any situation. They must love the intense environment and their skills must be superb. Burnout? – statistics show nurses stay on a critical care unit an average of five years before transferring to another form of nursing. Unless the adrenalin keeps pumping.

Teacher, Coach and Friend

Fellow employees report that Kathy Crowder, RN, CCRN – a Clinical Resource Management Nurse Clinician in the Catawba Memorial's Critical Care and Telemetry Departments – knows just about everything . . . and if she doesn't, she'll find out. She's the expert they turn to for guidance on difficult or challenging patients. She's their teacher, their coach and their friend.

Kathy began her career as a nursing assistant (NA) in the 70s, then joined Catawba Memorial as a licensed practical nurse (LPN) in 1980. Since then, she has earned both an Associate's

degree (ADN) and a Bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN). Kathy admits she would never have pursued her BSN without strong encouragement from Eddie Beard, VP of Patient Services.

But, the journey isn't over. The busy nurse is now working on her Masters in Nursing (MSN) through Clarkson College in Omaha, NE. Kathy completes her course work through a combination of online and teleconferences while fulfilling her clinical requirements with practitioners practicing within the community. "It's all very self-directed, but this approach allows me to go to school while balancing family and work needs. My co-workers have been very supportive and encouraging. CMH has provided me a wonderful environment for growth both educationally and interpersonally. I hope to help others to do the same."

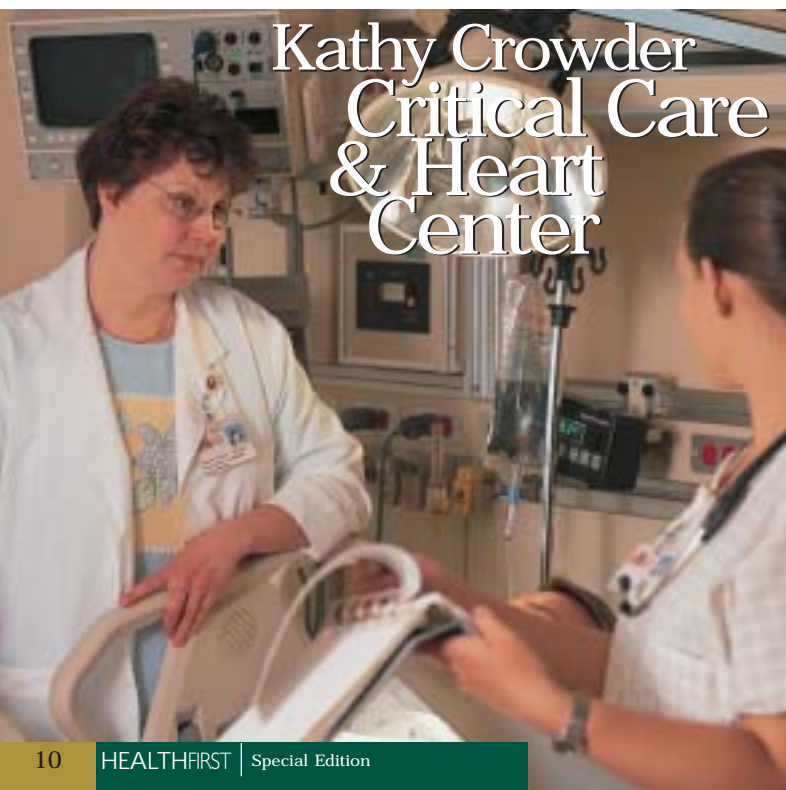
Each experience in nursing is very different. "In my role at CMH I wear several hats. Each role covers a different component and perspective of nursing," she shares. "My different educational experiences have forced me to look at patient care not only from a nurse's eyes, but from a combined role. In the end it all comes back to kindness and compassion. People remember the personal touch. It's the little things like brushing their teeth, making them comfortable, or the time you spent listening."

Women's Center — Special Care Nursery

Rebecca Yarborough, RN, has been a nurse in Catawba Memorial Hospital's Level II Special Care Nursery since 1989. Her previous experience included psychiatric care. In her current position as a Special Care Nursery nurse, she deals with mothers and distraught families. The family faced with an infant requiring critical care is consumed with fear of the unknown. "I just try to put them at ease, help them feel comfortable and involve them in care as early as possible. Working in the Special Care Nursery brings back many memories for me. My own baby weighed 3 pounds, 15 ounces, which is not small compared to a lot of the ones I see and care for today. I think back to my own emotions and can truly say, 'I know what you're going through.'"

A Love for Newborns and Topnotch Skills

The birth of a child is supposed to be a blessed, happy event. Unfortunately, about 10% of all babies born require some special care support. While these nurses must possess a love for newborns,



owth – Talents, interests eer nurses into specialties

Rebecca Yarborough Women's Center



their skill must obviously be topnotch. Annually, Rebecca has taken on the role of planning the Special Care Nursery Reunion. This is a special celebration for the nursery staff to see how the 'graduates' have grown and developed. After a 6 to 8 week stay in the nursery, many parents consider the staff as part of their extended family.

The current nursing shortage has not been experienced in the Special Care Nursery. There is very little turnover and a waiting list for positions. "Neonatal nursing has a life-long effect on our tiniest patients," shares Rebecca. "Our hands-on and tender loving care gives these special babies the best start possible."

Surgical Suites

Surgeons perform more than 11,000 surgical cases annually. That number includes a wide variety of both inpatient and outpatient procedures. These cases range from bone and joint operations to general surgery to Caesarean deliveries. The surgical suites are fully equipped and represent some of the most advanced technology in the region.

Anna Warren, an RN who was recently named as only the second North Carolina Perioperative Nurse of The Year, cites the hospital's support as an influential factor in achieving this prestigious award.

RNs Critical to Positive Patient Outcomes

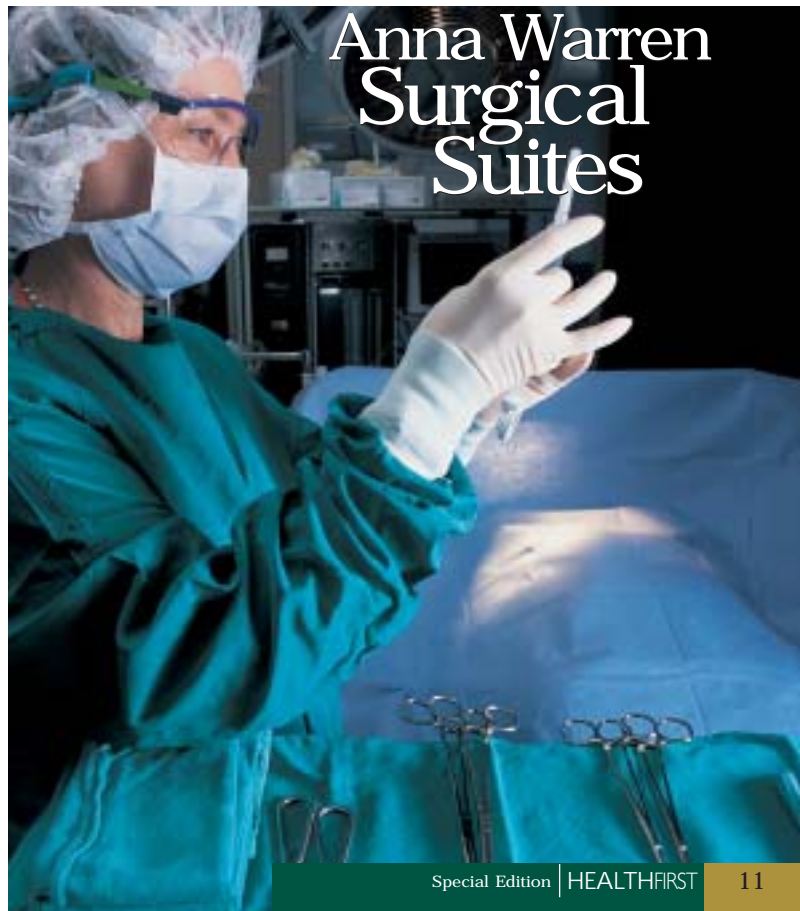
"The role of the registered professional nurse in the surgical suite is vital to achieving high quality, positive outcomes for our patients," says Anna. "Perioperative nurses serve as the patient's advocate both preoperatively as well as after surgery. Nurses are trained to assess, diagnose, develop plans of care, intervene on the patient's behalf when necessary and basically assure that the patient has a positive outcome. We teach staff and patients and educate families on postoperative care.

An Advocate for Surgery Patients

"The registered nurse is the eyes and ears of the patient," continues Anna. "For infection control and safety reasons, we cannot allow family members in the operating room. Since the patient is sedated, the registered nurse is the patient advocate. Some surgical suites do not have registered nurses. At CMH, we are highly valued members of the surgical team.

"One of the reasons I was chosen Perioperative Nurse of the Year was because I volunteer my time to community service, such as mentoring at Sipes Orchard Home and helping at my church," Anna continues. "The hospital has always given me the flexibility to serve this community – which I wouldn't necessarily have had somewhere else."

Anna Warren Surgical Suites



Lita Miller Cancer Center



Comprehensive Cancer Center

A native of the Philippines who taught psychology before coming to the United States, Lita Miller, RN, specializes in neuroprogressive and oncology care in Catawba Memorial's Community Hospital Comprehensive Cancer Center. It is the only center in the region to achieve that status by the American College of Surgeons. This status, like the Magnet Hospital designation, is a measure of quality and programming.

Caring for cancer patients can be very emotional. Many patients are readmitted frequently for chemotherapy or surgery or radiation. The nurses and patients become family. "I take care of my patients like I would my own family. I baby them," says Lita.

Finding a Home at CMH

Lita graduated from the nursing program at CVCC, while working at CMH as a secretary for two years. Once she joined the nursing staff, Lita worked in pediatrics and psychiatry before finally finding a home in the Cancer Center. She also has a BS in psychology.

"Learning from all the various departments has helped me tremendously in caring for patients," Lita elaborates. "When patients come from other hospitals and mention the excellent care they are now getting, that's the best compliment we can get. Some of them even wonder why they didn't come here in the first place!"

Administrative Nursing

Many nurses use the growth and experiences of their clinical expertise to great advantage by advancing into administrative nursing careers.

Sarah Bailey, Risk Management

Sarah Bailey, Catawba Memorial's Risk Management Director, earned her BSN in 1976 and worked in critical care before transitioning into positions ranging from director of education to vice-president of patient



Sarah Bailey
BSN, MBA, Risk
Management Director

services with several southeastern medical centers. In 1988, she was hired by an insurance company as a risk consultant for North Carolina hospitals – including CMH, which she joined in 1990. Since that time Sarah has also earned her MBA.

"Most of my actual nursing career has been in other organizations, and the percentage of professional RNs – versus LPNs and nurse extenders such as NAs – is much greater here than any facility I've worked in," Sarah says. "The desire of the staff here to be involved in policy making has been different. We set the expectation of a higher standard and we strive daily to achieve that."

Paula Lynn, Infection Control

Paula Lynn, Catawba Memorial's Infection Control Director, also comes from a far-ranging nursing background. She graduated as an RN in 1967, worked as a critical care nurse, then came to Catawba as head nurse of the critical care unit in 1973. She transitioned into a variety of positions at CMH ranging from nursing supervisor to nursing administrator for quality assurance. Paula earned her BSN, took a two-year leave, then returned as Infection Control Director in 1990. "In my critical care years, I felt I directly affected patient care as a hands-on nurse," Lynn explains. "During my nursing administration years, I felt I was affecting patient care by writing nursing policies. Now I feel like I affect patient care by putting all my skills together to develop a successful infection control program."



Paula Lynn
Infection
Control

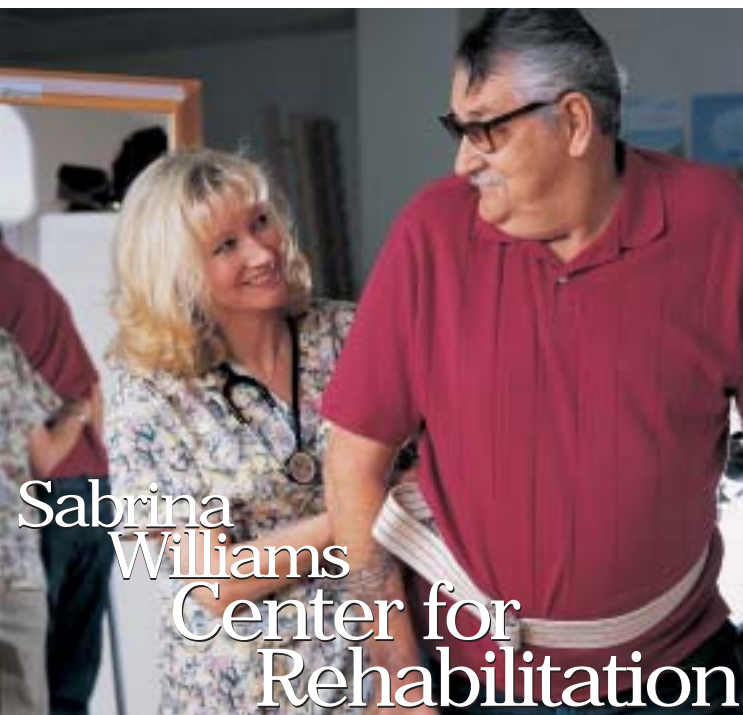
Paula's approach, typical of the CMH culture, has been to build a volunteer infection control team of staff who represent many different areas of the hospital. Again typical of the learning hospital culture, several of these employees are in various stages of achieving infection control certification. "All the members of Paula's committee, called Department Based Infection Control, have a sense of ownership," shares Dr. Grace Auten, Medical Director of IC at CMH (shown above, left, with Paula). "This

department is unique as its own unit, and yet its members are working continuously to integrate their efforts of continued low infection rates," she explains. For example, CMH's highest acceptable level for surgical site infection is 1% while the industry standard can be up to 4%. The Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations gave glowing feedback to CMH about the success of its Infection Control Program. "[It] is one of the most comprehensive, integrated, multidisciplinary programs we have ever seen.... The structure

of the program which employs the use of representatives in each department who have been educated in surveillance techniques provides continuity and provides early detection/prevention of infection outbreaks. Impressive work has been done through a multidisciplinary effort." JCAHO shared in their report to CMH that they had given such high praise to an IC program only three times in four years.

The Center for Rehabilitation

Stroke. Orthopaedic conditions. Heart Disease. Catawba Memorial's Center for Rehabilitation focuses on a single goal – returning patients to the highest possible level of independence. Patients who are referred for treatment in the Center for Rehabilitation find specially designed inpatient and outpatient facilities, advanced equipment and highly trained staff. Therapies range from Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

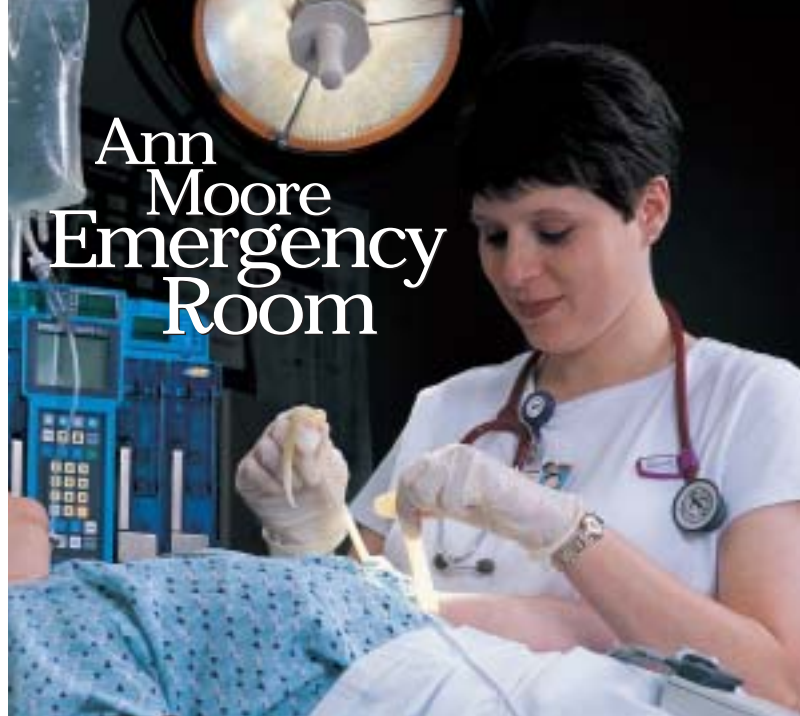


Sabrina Williams
Center for Rehabilitation

Inpatient Rehabilitation Nursing

Patients with special rehabilitation needs that warrant a hospital stay are admitted to the inpatient rehabilitation unit. Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurse (CRRN) Sabrina Williams began working as a nursing assistant (CNA) in the inpatient rehabilitation unit even before she graduated from nursing school with an Associate degree in 1995. She told her husband she just didn't want to work anywhere else. Eventually, she became a Patient Care Coordinator, left the hospital for a private practice, but returned after only 15 months.

"I missed direct patient care and this hospital," Sabrina confides. "I think that patients recover faster because of our care. I feel that they go home extremely well-informed about their problems and how to manage their health status better. That's so important. We don't just wait for them to ask questions; we initiate education from the get-go. That makes all the difference!"



Ann Moore
Emergency Room

Ann Moore, Emergency Room

Catawba Memorial recently filed a certificate of need with the state for permission to add space to the Emergency Room. Originally built to handle 34,000 visits annually, the number of visits has grown to exceed 47,000. One of the Emergency Room nurses is Ann Moore.

There is no better way to describe the role of a CMH Emergency Room nurse than through the words of a former patient. Excerpts from a letter received by CMH:

The Saturday morning after Thanksgiving I was wakened from my sleep in massive pain and nausea. My husband and I were staying at the Fairfield Inn in Hickory and found your hospital one exit away. I have never been so happy to see an Emergency Room sign. When the Emergency Room staff became aware of my symptoms and appearance, I was rushed back for treatment. Ann Moore had just come on duty I was later told. It was her knowledge of proper procedure and quick professional response that saved my life. She completely took over and manually administered cardiac drugs and averted what should have been fatal heart damage. I truly feel I owe my life to Ann. You could look the world over and never find a more caring and compassionate nurse. She never left my side.

I cannot say enough good about these nurses and staff of yours. If I am ever sick again, I would want them at my side. I feel the Lord took me to Hickory because Ann was there with her precise hands and decisiveness. Robin, Leon, Rhonda and Victoria are truly wonderful nurses . . . worth far more than you could ever pay them. They really care about their patients and make their patients feel this. They are wonderful!

I am home with my family and hope for a speedy recovery thanks to your wonderful nursing staff.

Sincerely

*Elaine Garner
Ridgeland, MS*



Health Care Profession

HealthFirst invited a handful of area medical professionals to share their thoughts about Catawba Memorial's recent ANCC Magnet



Donald Campbell, MD
Chief of Medical Staff
at Catawba Memorial
Hospital & Orthopedic
Surgeon



Naomi East
RN, MSN, Chairperson,
Health and Human
Resources Division,
CVCC



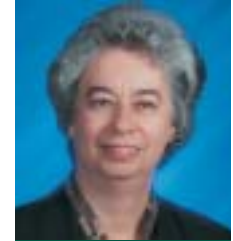
Marilyn L. Evans
PhD, RN
Associate Professor
and Director of
Outreach Programs for
School of Nursing at
UNC-Greensboro



Carol Lundrigan
PhD, RN, CS, CNAA
Coordinator for
Nursing and
Interdisciplinary
Education, Northwest
AHEC (through its
affiliation with Wake
Forest University)



Julie Packer
RN, MSN,
Director of Program
Development, Hospice
of Catawba Valley



Linda Reece, PhD, RN
Department Chair,
Nursing, Lenoir-Rhyne
College

QUESTION

As an employee and/or affiliate of CMH, what does the hospital's ANCC Magnet certification mean to you? How does this certification shape your perspective of CMH?

ANSWER

Campbell: It officially recognizes something that's been going on here for a long time. Over the last ten years, a lot of hospitals have had to cut their nursing staff, but this has not been a big problem at CMH. The nurses here seem less stressed, fresher, happier, less burned out . . . and of course that means patients are more likely to get what they need.

Packer: Hospice and the CMH nursing staff frequently work together to provide inpatient care and symptom control for our patients, often during times of crisis. ANCC Magnet certification truly reinforces the mission of Hospice to ease the end-of-life process by providing care of the utmost quality to people facing advanced, irreversible illness.

Evans: Several CMH employees who've played key roles in this certification are graduates of the educational programs with which I'm affiliated (through AHEC). And personally speaking, as a teacher, there's no greater feeling than seeing the contributions these students go on to make. It's why I teach.

East: Catawba Memorial has always provided an excellent learning environment for our students. Meeting the stringent criteria for ANCC Magnet certification promises that the learning environment will continue to improve and set high standards for nursing care. The Magnet Award promises that environment will only improve. Our nursing program has always focused on professionalism, and Catawba Memorial sets a great example.

QUESTION

How will Magnet status benefit the hospital as a whole?

ANSWER

Reece: Well, it should have recruitment benefits at all levels.

Nurses are central to everything that happens at a hospital, from diagnostic tests to lab work to surgery. When nursing excellence is recognized, it has an impact on every department. This certification is a testimony to the entire CMH team and the way it works together – and a Magnet Hospital is one that top health care professionals will want to come to.

Lundrigan: That's right, and being a Magnet hospital should also decrease turnover. When you decrease turnover, you increase continuity of care for patients and cut costs dramatically. Respect and autonomy for nurses, a high mix of experienced RNs providing top quality patient care, decreased personnel costs . . . all of these are clear benefits.

Packer: And because the hospital is a system of interdependent "communities," elevating the standards of one raises the bar for all.

QUESTION

How will it benefit the larger community?

ANSWER

Reece: Obviously, it will give patients confidence that they have a place to go to get the care they need, without having to travel long distances. When you think about the costs – financial and emotional – of traveling to and staying in another town, you can see that this confidence represents a tremendous benefit for the entire family.

Evans: ANCC certification helps focus attention on what nursing is all about. The reality is, when people end up in a hospital it's because they need around-the-clock nursing care.

als Discuss Magnet Status

Certification. Here's what they had to say.

Everything else can be done externally. So it's important that people know they have such highly qualified nurses right in their own back yard.

East: Yes, the Magnet certification does benefit the larger community. Building awareness of the quality resources available locally, and the pride that goes into providing those resources, is valuable to both the general community and the medical community.

Campbell: With the projected nursing shortage and the increase in our aging population, it's important to recruit and hold onto quality nurses for the long run. That environment will make physicians want to spend their time there, too. So it's a domino effect that will create a better hospital for the community, not just today, but in the future.

QUESTION

From your perspective, why are good nurses so important to quality patient care?

ANSWER

Reece: It's the nurse who gives 24 hour a day care. It's the nurse who is on constant vigil, constantly making decisions. It's the nurse who is there in the first few critical seconds of time when a patient codes, who sits by the bed of a patient who's distraught in the middle of the night, who teaches him how to take care of himself after he leaves the hospital. In short, you have to have quality nurses to have quality care.

Lundrigan: Nurses are not handmaidens; they are educated professionals. Nursing is assessing, planning, managing and individualizing the whole patient care situation from admission to getting the patient and family ready for discharge. In short, the more nurses, and the more experienced and professional the nurses, the better the patient outcomes.

Campbell: Nurses are the interface between the patient and me. As a physician, I may be there for twenty minutes. Nurses are there all day.

QUESTION

Let's take it a step further. If you were the patient, would you prefer that your stay be in a Magnet Hospital rather than one without this designation? Why?

ANSWER

Evans: Absolutely! I would want to know that nurses were looking at me not just as someone who requires treatment and medications, but as someone who requires an entire organized plan of care. I would want to know they were developing that

plan by looking at me in the context of my family and what I need to know after I go home from the hospital. Nurses that provide Magnet-level quality care look at the whole picture.

Packer: To me, Magnet certification would symbolize the equivalent of a "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" for nursing care. It would provide me with the reassurance that my bedside nurse meets high performance standards and plans his or her workday to achieve high clinical outcomes.

Lundrigan: If I could choose, I'd choose a Magnet Hospital. I would feel completely comfortable if I or a family member were a patient at Catawba Memorial, and would be completely confident that we would get the very best nursing care. And I don't even live in the community!

QUESTION

In your opinion, how will this new Magnet status shape the future of CMH?

ANSWER

Campbell: It will certainly elevate our image among those who think of us as "just another county hospital." The fact is, you can get very advanced care at CMH. Really, with the exception of cardiac surgery, virtually all services are available here, and Magnet status should help to get the message out that we already are a regional medical center.

Evans: Magnet certification is not the end, it's the beginning. It's the first step in a continuing process. To maintain this certification, you must have ongoing commitment from the entire organization. And that will attract and retain the best health care professionals, because they do want to work in a hospital that has Magnet status.

Packer: CMH is now among an elite group of 32 hospitals nationwide that have this title, and that is a reward to the hardworking staff. This accomplishment is bound to serve as an initiator and motivator for nursing – as well as for other departments – to continue to reach for the stars. With that in mind, the future looks bright for CMH!

East: In my position and through my affiliation with the North Carolina Nurses Association, I'm exposed to many hospitals. In the 25 years I've been involved with Catawba Memorial, I've developed a great deal of pride in that relationship. Their promotion of nursing and the leadership they've provided through nursing speaks volumes about the high quality of care they offer now, while their educational commitment speaks of the even higher standards we can expect from them tomorrow.



We don't just meet standards. We set them.



The medical community sets standards that dedicated hospitals try to live up to. But at Catawba Memorial we set the bar even higher. Because we want to be the very best medical center we can be. That's why when we achieved the prestigious Magnet Hospital designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center we were thrilled and honored, but not surprised.



The Magnet Hospital designation recognizes nursing programs that provide quality patient care in an environment that encourages and allows for continuous growth and development of the staff. It also honors nursing leadership, community involvement, and many other factors, all of which our nursing staff excels in. Above all, it recognizes hospitals which exceed the expected rather than meeting it.



Truly, this is a highly significant achievement. We are only one of 32 hospitals nationwide to be so designated, and on a list that includes institutions such as Cedars-Sinai and the Mayo Clinic.

We've received national recognition in other areas of our hospital, too. Last year, for example, the American College of Physicians and Surgeons named us a Comprehensive Community Cancer Center, the only one in the Catawba Valley region.



So if you're looking for excellence, in nursing, and in all other aspects of health care, it's right around the corner at Catawba Memorial.



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