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Learning beyond self

Mission trips and programs highlight 'Kramer way'



photo by Bobby Anderson

Community nursing provides students opportunities to learn how other people live and to be touched by their discoveries, said Pam Boeck, RN, a clinical instructor at Kramer School of Nursing.

by James Coburn
Staff Writer

Pam Boeck hopes people enter the nursing field because they feel a calling.

Students are required to do service learning at the Kramer School of Nursing at Oklahoma City University, Boeck, RN, a clinical

instructor.

"I teach community so I have had the opportunity in service learning to take students with Professor Debra Barnett to north eastern Oklahoma," said Professor Boeck, who has gone on the mission trip for the last three years. Students learned about community, did health fairs and went to a children's mission.

See KRAMER Page 3

AllianceHealth Midwest becoming chest pain leader

by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

More than two years of work and planning by multiple AllianceHealth Midwest departments culminated recently in a prestigious accolade that will benefit patients throughout the metro.

For the first time, the hospital received full Chest Pain Center with PCI (Percutaneous Coronary Intervention) Accreditation from the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care.

To receive accreditation, AllianceHealth Midwest demonstrated its expertise and commitment to quality patient care by meeting or exceeding a wide set of stringent criteria and completing on-site evaluation by a SCPC review team.

AllianceHealth Midwest is the only hospital in the state of Oklahoma to receive this level of accreditation.

"This accreditation is another large step in our commitment to providing superior emergency and cardiac care to the residents of Midwest City and Eastern Oklahoma County" said Damon Brown, CEO, AllianceHealth Midwest. "This accreditation was made possible because of the dedicated work and commitment of a multi-disciplinary team that included employees, physicians and paramedics."

Cardiology Director and Chest Pain Coordinator Mark

Macklin, RN, BSN has spent the last 12 of his 22 years in nursing in cardiac care after an emergency medicine and trauma background.

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"The most important reason to pursue this is it's the right thing to do for patient care," Macklin said. "It's a standardized system for evaluating and treating patients from the lowest risk patients to the care and treatment of the STEMI patient."

"It encompasses the entire gamut of cardiology and chest pain."

It is estimated that over 60% of all cardiac arrests are directly caused from an acute myocardial infarction.

The addition of the Resuscitation designation to Chest Pain Center with PCI accreditation enhances outcomes because the facility will have initiated early strategies such as early recognition, CPR and defibrillation, early intervention with Primary PCI simultaneously with post arrest hypothermia treatment.

"It standardized our practice, making sure we used evidence-based practice, best practice protocols and we're all doing it the same way, every time with no deviation," said Amy Baden, RN, BSN, MBA, and AllianceHealth's network

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PAIN

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director of cardiology services. "It's our roadmap that every patient will be given the exact same care no matter who their cardiologist is."

Baden said that resuscitation element is one all employees are trained in.

"Any type of employee is also educated in the signs and symptoms of an early heart attack," Baden said. "From a kitchen worker to a nurse on the floor - even the valets - have all been educated. It's a multi-faceted education process."

That education has been introduced to the surrounding communities.

AllianceHealth Oklahoma, in partnership with the American Heart Association, donated CPR kits to high schools throughout Oklahoma.

Locally, AllianceHealth Midwest donated one to the Mid-Del School District and one to the Choctaw school district.

Nurses are also going into the schools and educating students and teachers on how to properly perform CPR.

Macklin said each week the board room was filled with representatives

for nearly all departments.

"We were empowered to do that," Macklin said. "Our administration and the board signed off and we went in there every Monday with a sense of empowerment that we need to get from here to there and who's best to drive the bus to get there."

"Some days it was our Chief Nursing Officer (Gloria Ceballos, PhD, RN) who could roll out to all of nursing what needed to be done. Sometimes it was the Chief Medical Officer (Dr. Rocky Talley) who needed to get our hospitalist team on board with the protocols we were rolling out. It changed from Monday to Monday to get from where we started to where we ended."

"It really kind of brought our whole hospital around that table with a single focus."

By achieving SCPC's Chest Pain Center with Primary PCI with Resuscitation Accreditation status, AllianceHealth Midwest demonstrated expertise in the following areas and others:

- Integrating the emergency



Nurses like Amy Baden, RN (left) and Mark Macklin (middle), paramedics and other departments are helping AllianceHealth Midwest become a Oklahoma leader in chest pain treatment.

department with the local emergency medical system

- Effectively treating patients at low risk for acute coronary syndrome and no assignable cause for their symptoms

- Supporting community outreach programs that educate the public to promptly seek medical care if they display symptoms of a possible heart attack

Baden said with the help of AllianceHealth Midwest's EMS service door-to-balloon intervention time has dramatically decreased.

"We've had STEMI's that come directly to the cath lab," she said. "There's a lot of elements and

we're trying to rule in these patients quicker. We're decreasing the amount of damage and decreasing the length of stay."

"Through this we're all doing it the same way and the patients are happier. We're all talking the same talk. Patient satisfaction scores in these units have elevated as well so we're excited about that."

The SCPC is the accreditation services arm of the American College of Cardiology.

AllianceHealth Midwest, located in Midwest City on the eastern edge of Oklahoma City, is a 255-bed acute care facility with nearly 300 primary care and specialty physicians.



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KRAMER

Continued from Page 1

Adair County is one of the highest poverty levels in Oklahoma. However, it is very rich in its charity culture. So they combined servant leadership, service learning and culture.

"Professor Barnett has worked on establishing leadership in that area, and then we worked on forming the classes together," Boeck said. "I extended beyond that. On January 1st, I'll be taking my students to Belize to do another service learning/leadership."

Going to Belize will be the first venture there for Kramer students. Boeck has been there before with Dr. Charles Neff, a minister at OCU who has been taking OCU students to Belize for a couple of years on a building project. She will be taking 10 students while Neff continues his building projects.

"Some of those will be nursing students that he's taking who have done other mission trips with us," Boeck said.

The nursing students will write about their experiences when they return to Kramer. Their experience in Adair County has taught them

about doing for others when it is always easy to do for yourself, Boeck continued.

"They are always tired in the semester and they feel like they don't want to go. But they leave with a new appreciation of seeing people living in poverty, but still coming together in a community in a caring and loving way," Boeck said. "That is part of our philosophy at the school."

Some of the students are going on to careers and nurse practitioners or to teach nursing. Some of them have also earned their certification necessary to do Faith Community Nursing.

Faith Community Nursing provides an opportunity to work in one's place of worship. It is a resource for people in a church, mosque or synagogue to have a nurse to go, to plan health fairs, service learning or have somebody to listen with a spiritual aspect, Boeck said. It provides an opportunity to practice holistic health.

Boeck said when considering international health, it is very important for students to be aware of what is offered and what other communities have to bring to the table. Community nursing through

mission work is an important aspect of learning.

"We present the information to our advisory board. I know I have thought about using it for research and Professor Barnett is actually doing her thesis on servant leadership," Boeck said.

She feels the spiritual aspect of nursing. It teaches them to care and learn about life outside their community, she said.

"It gives them a taste for compassionate living and doing what's right, not just for our community. Sometimes it's finding out just how much other people have to offer us. We have the opportunity not to just reach out but to be touched by other people and how they live," Boeck explained.

This altruistic philosophy of nursing has lent itself to Kramer's expansive growth that continues today. The growth is exciting and challenging, Boeck said. Kramer is blessed to experience burgeoning growth and has learned to adapt, she added.

"I am so excited so many people want to be nurses and I think we have a wonderful place to set that up," Boeck said. "It's overwhelming some days but overall it's a good

thing."

Teaching more students is also a learning experience for Boeck as it teaches her about her strengths and what she can do different. Kramer gives students an excellent tool to surge forward in their careers.

"I think the profession has progressed and is more and more respected," Boeck said. "And it's something people want to do and stay with."

Still, she said there remains a shortage of nursing faculty in Oklahoma. It is a trusted and noble profession. Often nurses are the breadwinners for their family, she said. And sometimes nurses realize they can earn more money in other fields besides teaching.

"Education is struggling because there's not enough funding (in Oklahoma) for us to take care of our faculty as we would like," Boeck said.

Kramer is where Boeck wanted to work after earning her master's degree at Oklahoma Baptist University.

"We talk about the Kramer way a lot, and I still everyday feel grateful and honored that I have the privilege to get up and come and work here. I work with a great team and I think our students are the best."

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PEDIATRICIAN JOINS PRACTICE

Pediatrician Alexandria C. Caldwell, D.O., has established her practice with OU Children's Physicians.

Caldwell grew up in Oklahoma City and attended Bishop McGuinness High School, before attending the University of Oklahoma for her undergraduate studies. She recently finished an Academic Generalist Fellowship Training Program at the OU College of Medicine, where she also completed her pediatric residency. She earned her doctor of osteopathic medicine degree at Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Tulsa. She earned a bachelor of science degree in Zoology Biomedical Sciences at OU in Norman, graduating magna cum laude.

Caldwell is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

OU Children's Physicians practice as part of OU Physicians, Oklahoma's largest physician group. The group encompasses nearly every child and adult medical specialty.

Nearly 200 of these specialists committed their practices to the care of children. The majority of OU Children's Physicians are board certified in children's specialties. Many provide pediatric-specific services unavailable elsewhere in the state. Some have pioneered surgical procedures or innovations in patient care that are world firsts.



Alexandria C. Caldwell, D.O.

CAREERS IN NURSING

A PLACE TO CALL HOME: EMERALD SQUARE ASSISTED LIVING

by James Coburn - Writer/Photographer

Pattie Waggoner, RN, has put her husband on notice, the Yukon Denali with 150,000 miles has got to go.

A new Suburban will soon be in the Waggoner garage. With seven grandkids Waggoner needs the space.

But aside from the space, Waggoner needs something a little more reliable as she burns up the miles each month as the executive director at Emerald Square Assisted Living in Oklahoma City.

Waggoner is closing in on three years as executive director and most of those miles have come during that time.

Emerald Square offers both independent and assisted living options.

The State of Oklahoma requires a registered nurse consultant do quarterly reports, all admission assessments and sign off on the monthly orders for assisted living residences. Waggoner does all those

duties for Emerald Square as well as a sister community, Willowood at Mustang.

So she stays busy?

"All the time," she said.

But in the midst of the hustle and bustle, Waggoner makes sure her staff takes care of the little things. If the paper doesn't come that morning a staff member is dispatched to get an armful.

If a resident runs out of an item it's no trouble to run to the store and pick it up.

That's why residents from 60 to 103 call Emerald Square home.

And even with her hectic schedule it's one of the joys Waggoner takes from her role.

"Because they are still in a time of the life that was simple," Waggoner said. "We're so fast-paced now that it's pleasant to come around these folks who are OK with sitting down and having a nice conversation or just saying something very pleasant

when they come by."

"They still have a very good religious foundation to them and that's very comforting and pleasing to us the staff."

Waggoner relies heavily on Lesa Mercier, LPN, whom she's worked with for years and who takes care of the medical needs for the residents.

"She's extremely good at what she does and you have to be in this business," Waggoner said. "She's the major clinical person. We know how each other is going to think about different situations. You have to know and be ready for interventions to anything that happens."

Waggoner started off cooking in a nursing home and doing the laundry. She earned her certified nurses assistant certificate and then became a medication assistant.

From there she became an LPN followed by an RN and then administrator school.

Her daughter is going to LPN

school at Canadian Valley Technology Center at Redlands Community College.

"It's always been the love of helping the elderly," Waggoner said.

When the Waggoner grandchildren would ask what nanna did at work she always enjoyed telling them she took care of grandmas and grandpas.

"They just think that must be the coolest job ever and it really is," Waggoner said. "It's like having a whole group of loving people here to care for."

In the Waggoners' spare time they farm 2,000 acres of wheat. But the majority of her time is spent with the residents at Emerald Square.

"I want them to come here and I want them to have the best quality of life they can have," Waggoner said. "It's a simple life for them and it's not hard. That's really what they want."

Continued on next page

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Pattie Waggoner, RN, BSN loves the lifestyle she and her staff provide at Emerald Square Assisted Living.

Before becoming an administrator, Waggoner was a surveyor for the state going into residences and making sure everything was ship shape.

But before all that she was a nurse. With 25 years in nursing Waggoner knows it's all about caring for people.

"I think they enjoy that we are always available for them so we're not so tied up with business," Waggoner said. "I always have time no matter what. I'll make time for them even if there's other responsibilities on my shoulders. When they feel a problem it's a big thing for them. "They

honestly know we're going to take care of everything for them."

"Our main focus here is care."

That was abundantly clear last winter when the power went out. Instead of going home to their families Waggoner and Mercier spent the night roaming the halls with flashlights to make sure everyone was OK.

The power was off for more than 24 hours without an incident as more than 70 people spend the night at Emerald Square.

"If it's the call of duty we're going to be there," she said.



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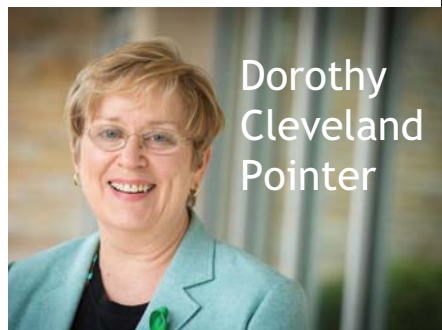
Mercy Opens Midwife Clinic in Oklahoma City

Expectant mothers now have expanded prenatal care, labor and delivery options at Mercy with the opening of a new midwife clinic. The clinic is led by Leanna Harkess and Dorothy Cleveland Pointer, both advanced practitioners and certified nurse midwives who have a combined experience of more than two decades in midwifery and hundreds of births under their belt.

"The word midwife means 'with woman,'" said Pointer. "We want to form a partnership with each and every woman to help achieve her pregnancy and healthcare goals."

Pointer first began her career as a midwife in 2008, when she became part of a small but growing minority of certified nurse midwives. In the last 20 years, the US National Library of Medicine shows that midwife-attended births have more than tripled. Pointer has provided midwifery care in both Oklahoma and Maryland, and is an active member of the Oklahoma Birth Alliance.

Harkess has worn a number of hats in the medical field; first as a critical care nurse, then as a family nurse practitioner. She said she found her true calling more than 15 years ago, when she became a



Dorothy Cleveland Pointer



Leanna Harkess

certified nurse midwife.

"For me, midwifery is both a blessing and a ministry," Harkess said. "We strive to provide women a more natural birthing experience in a hospital setting."

Both Harkess and Pointer perform births in Mercy's labor and delivery suites. In addition, they offer pre-and-postnatal care as well as gynecological care and family planning.

Mercy Clinic Midwifery is located on the campus on Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City, in the Plaza building, at 4140 W. Memorial Road Suite 408. For more information, call 405-486-8670.

Splitt decision NRH tabs leader for future



Richie Splitt, FACHE, has been named the President and CEO of the Norman Regional Health System.

By Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

An eight-month executive search ended this month with the word "interim" removed from President and Chief Executive Officer Richie Splitt's title.

The first weekend in November saw the Norman Regional Hospital Authority Board name Splitt, FACHE, to the position permanently after he took over for David Whitaker in March.

"Since his first day in 2013 and while serving as Norman Regional's interim President and CEO, Richie's dedication to this health system was evident," said Tom Clote, chair of the Norman Regional Hospital Authority Board. "He is a visionary leader who

empowers Norman Regional's team of more than 3,000 employees to achieve superior quality patient care and operational excellence."

Largely popular among staff and highly visible throughout the halls, Splitt served in the interim capacity through a nationwide candidate search as the hospital board brought a number of candidates in to interview.

Throughout the process he continued in his role helping the hospital re-open Norman Regional Moore, which was destroyed in the May 20, tornado, as well as overseeing the system's re-accreditation in several high-volume service lines.

See SPLITT page 9

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|--|---|
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Oklahoma's Nursing Times Hospice Directory

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Alpha Hospice: 7512 N Broadway Ext., suite 312
Okc, 405-463-5695 Keith Ruminer/volunteer
coordinator/chaplain

Autumn Bridge Hospice: 405-440-2440

Autumn Light Hospice: 580-252-1266

Carter Healthcare & Hospice: OKC - OKC
Pat McGowen, Vol. Coordinator, 405-947-7705, ext.
134; Tulsa - Samantha Estes, Vol. Coordinator,
918-425-4000

Centennial Hospice: Becky Johnson,
Bereavement Coordinator 405-562-1211

Choice Home Health & Hospice:
405-879-3470

Comforting Hands Hospice: Bartlesville:
918-331-0003

Companion Hospice:
Steve Hickey, Vol. Coordinator, Guthrie:
405-282-3980; Edmond: 405-341-9751

Compassionate Care Hospice: Amy Legare,
Bereavement/Vol. Coordinator, 405-948-4357

Cornerstone Hospice: Vicky Herrington, Vol.
Coordinator, 918-641-5192

Crossroads Hospice: Elizabeth Horn, Vol.
Coordinator, 405-632-9631

Cross Timbers Hospice: Ardmore-
800-498-0655 Davis-580-369-5335 Volunteer
Coordinator-Shelly Murray

Excell Hospice: Toni K. Cameron, Vol.
Coordinator 405-631-0521

Faith Hospice of OKC: Charlene Kilgore, Vol.
Coordinator, 405-840-8915

Frontier Hospice: Kelly Morris, Vol.
Coordinator, 405-789-2913

Golden Age Hospice: 405-735-5121

Good Shepherd Hospice: 4350 Will Rogers
Parkway Suite 400 OKC OK 73108 405-943-0903

Grace Hospice Foundation: Sharon Doty, Dir
of Spec. Projects - Tulsa 918-744-7223

Harbor Light Hospice: Randy Pratt, Vol.
Coordinator, 1009 N Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK
73107 405-949-1200

Horizon Hospice: LaDonna Rhodes, Vol.
Coordinator, 918-473-0505

Heartland Hospice: Shawnee: Vol. Coord. Karen
Cleveland, 405-214-6442; OKC: Vol. Coord. Tricia
Woodward, 405-579-8565

Heavenly Hospice: Julie Myers, Coordinator
405-701-2536

Hope Hospice: Bartlesville: 918-333-7700,
Claremore: 918-343-0777 Owasso: 918-272-3060

Hospice by Loving Care: Connie McDivitt,
Vol. Coordinator, 405-872-1515

Hospice of Green Country: Tulsa:
918-747-2273, Claremore: 918-342-1222, Sapulpa:
918-224-7403

**INTEGRIS Hospice, Inc. & the INTEGRIS
Hospice House:** Ruth Ann Frick, Vol.
Coordinator, 405-848-8884

Hospice of Owasso, Inc.: Todd A. Robertson,
Dir. of Marketing, 877-274-0333

Humanity Hospice:
Kay Cole, Vol. Coordinator 405-418-2530

InFinity Care of Tulsa: Spencer Brazeal, Vol.
Director, 918-392-0800

Indian Territory Home Health & Hospice:
1-866-279-3975

Interim Healthcare Hospice: 405-848-3555

Image HealthCare : 6116 S. Memorial Tulsa,
Ok. 74133 (918) 622-4799

LifeChoice Hospice: Christy Coppenbarger,
RN, Executive Director. 405-842-0171

LifeSpring In-Home Care Network: Terry
Boston, Volunteer and Bereavement Coordinator
405-801-3768

LifeLine Hospice: April Moon, RN Clinical
Coordinator 405-222-2051

Mercy Hospice: Sandy Schuler, Vol.
Coordinator, 405-486-8600

Mission Hospice L.L.C.: 2525 NW Expressway,
Ste. 312 OKC, OK 73112 405-848-3779

Oklahoma Hospice Care: 405-418-2659
Jennifer Forrester, Community Relations Director

One Health Home Health in Tulsa:
918-412-7200

Palliative Hospice: Janet Lowder, Seminole, &
Sabrina Johnson, Durant, 800-648-1655

Physician's Choice Hospice: Tim Clausing,
Vol. Coordinator 405-936-9433

Professional Home Hospice: Sallisaw:
877-418-1815; Muskogee: 866-683-9400; Poteau:
888-647-1378

PromiseCare Hospice: Angela Shelton, LPN -
Hospice Coordinator, Lawton: (580) 248-1405

Quality Life Hospice: 405 486-1357

RoseRock Healthcare: Audrey McCraw,
Admin. 918-236-4866

Ross Health Care: Glenn LeBlanc, Norman,
Chickasha; April Burrows, Enid; Vol. Coordinators,
580-213-3333

Russell Murray Hospice: Tambi Urias,
Vol. Coordinator, 405-262-3088; Kingfisher
405-375-5015; Weatherford-580-774-2661

Seasons Hospice: Carolyn Miller, Vol. /
Bereavement Coordinator, 918-745-0222

Sequoyah Memorial Hospice:
Vernon Stone, D. Min. Chaplin, Vol. Coordinator,
918-774-1171

Sooner Hospice, LLC:
Matt Ottis, Vol. Coordinator, 405-608-0555

**"I feel so empowered by the people
because when we work together we can
really achieve some big things."**

Richie Splitt

SPLITT

Continued from Page 8

He guided the system's major investment in its cardiothoracic and vascular surgery program, adding state of the art robotic surgery under vascular surgeon Dr. Jim Neel.

"It was extremely important to continue the good work of the great people already here," Splitt said. "One constant in healthcare is change and I knew we could not stand still or we would lose ground. While it was an important and top priority for me to sustain those gains I knew I was going to have to keep pushing for better results, better outcomes and all of those types of things."

"Healthcare is changing every day and we have to change along with it or we get left behind."

Before serving as the interim president and CEO, Splitt was the Chief Administrative Officer of the Norman Regional HealthPlex in Moore. He helped guide the rebuilding of Norman Regional Moore, after a tornado destroyed the former Moore Medical Center on May 20, 2013 and then expanded EMSSTAT, the health system's ambulance service, to the City of Moore. He has led the expansion of both the robotic surgery and cardiovascular service programs for the Health System. Norman Regional recently celebrated 25 years of heart surgery and its 70th year of providing lifesaving care to the community with Splitt at its helm.

"There are tremendous pressures whether it's declining reimbursements or unfunded mandates for technology or systems, data collection and submission - all of those things are high priorities for us and all the while we're in a heroic industry and have that privilege of providing sacred care," Splitt said. "We have to always remember our patients and at the same time be mindful of those requirements."

Splitt has nearly 30 years of

experience providing direct patient care, leading high growth operations in a multi-facility environment and driving operational integration and new business development. He earned his Master of Business Administration from Oklahoma City University. He earned both a Masters of Science in Health and Exercise Science and a Bachelor's of Arts in Communication/Psychology from the University of Oklahoma. He is a fellow with the American College of Healthcare Executives. Splitt has served on the board of both the



**NORMAN
REGIONAL**
Health System

Moore and South Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce.

"Hands-down are greatest strength is our people," Splitt said. "At Norman Regional we call them healers. We have nearly 3,000 healers who make a difference every single day all in the name of great patient care. By far the greatest asset for our organization is our people."

"I feel so empowered by the people because when we work together we can really achieve some big things."

The last decade has seen tremendous growth for the health system, which has now grown to three campuses across Norman and Moore.

More recently, the hospital system finished its last fiscal year meeting nearly every one of the quality, patient satisfaction and financial benchmarks set by the Norman Regional Hospital Authority Board.

"I'd be remiss if I didn't say what an honor and privilege it is for me to serve the great people of Norman Regional and I know our future is quite bright because I know the people," Splitt said. "I know their commitment to our patients and the community. When we work together, align our mission and our vision then nothing will stop us."

The Hospice Directory above does not represent a list of all Hospice facilities statewide. For a complete list visit www.ok.gov/health

INTEGRIS Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation Earns Three Year CARF Accreditation

INTEGRIS Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation has received accreditation from the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities International, known as CARF, for several of its rehabilitation and specialty programs.

It is now the only rehabilitation organization in Oklahoma to achieve three hospital specialty accreditations for stroke, brain and spinal cord injury programs. It is also the state's only facility to receive accreditation for inpatient and outpatient spinal cord care.

"INTEGRIS Jim Thorpe has been accredited by CARF for its inpatient rehabilitation services since 1996, but this is the first time we have achieved all three hospital specialty accreditations for our stroke, brain injury and spinal cord specialty programs," says Keith Wilton, vice-president of INTEGRIS Jim Thorpe. "This is also the first time we have achieved accreditation in our outpatient medical rehabilitation program for spinal cord care."

CARF represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to an organization. A facility receiving a three-year accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process. It has demonstrated to a team

of surveyors during an on-site visit, its commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable and of the highest quality.

INTEGRIS Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation is Oklahoma's premier system of inpatient, outpatient and community-based rehabilitative care for children and adults requiring stroke rehabilitation, with an acquired traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury or brain tumor, and for rehab services related to amputation and prosthesis, joint replacement and LVAD rehabilitation.

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body whose mission is to promote the quality, value and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process and continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of the persons served. Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and now known as CARF International, the accrediting body establishes consumer-focused standards to help organizations measure and improve the quality of their programs and services. For more information about the accreditation process, please visit the CARF website at www.carf.org.



Vicki L Mayfield, M.Ed., R.N., LMFT Marriage and Family Therapy Oklahoma City

If you would like to send a question to Vicki, email us at news@okcnursingtimes.com

Q. I need help. No one believes my behavior. My friends have pulled away from me because I have been in a four year relationship with a man who has cheated (with a childhood friend), he is an alcoholic and has a gambling problem. I am educated, healthy (at least physically) but I can't leave. I don't even believe I am writing this to you. Is there any hope for me?

---- Joni

A. I addressed this issue in an earlier column but because it is a "disease process" that runs rampant and affects so many people, lets talk about it again.

You are right, I am sure your behavior is perplexing to your friends. They process your behavior from a cognitive, analytical basis and don't see how many other issues create your codependent behavior. You may not even grasp how your childhood experiences primed you to stay connect to this man for four years.

Cheating, lying, drinking, gambling, mistrust.....hardly the foundation for a healthy relationship.

You also shared that you have given up activities that you enjoy to be with this man. You stopped going to church because he did not want to go. You enjoyed working out at the gym and running at the lake but stopped because you just didn't have the motivation. When you started gambling as a together activity you shared you didn't even want to do it but HE did. Now you are going alone and spending hours, leaving with bigger and bigger losses.

You appear to be extremely loyal to this man. You have put aside your own interests to do what HE wants and picked up new behaviors that make you feel worse.

This man appears to be totally unavailable to you, both physically and emotionally. You continue to seek a relationship with a man who has proven he is not there for you. Cheating, drinking, gambling appear to be his priorities. He may not say this to you, probably would deny it but his behavior speaks volumes.

This would be a great time for you to learn about codependency and love addiction. What goes on in the brain with love addiction is the same as drug addiction. It doesn't just go away.

I encourage you to attend 12 step CODA and counseling. There is a reason you cannot leave this man, AKA "YOUR DRUG!!!!!!" Its as complex as his drinking and gambling.

Take a break from the crazy train you are riding. Wait until a healthier train comes along.

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What will be on your plate this Thanksgiving? AllianceHealth Midwest - Medical-Surgical

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Jessica Culpepper, RN

I'm vegetarian so dressing and stuffing, corn and mashed potatoes.



Esther Farley, RN

Each week we visit with health care professionals throughout the Metro



Please Let us know Your Thoughts

Email:
news@okcnursingtimes.com
or mail to
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P.O. Box 239
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Basically anything. I lived in five countries so I can eat anything.



Vince Everhart, PCT

It will be smoked turkey, green bean casserole some fruit cake and white rice.



Precious Goto, APRN



Amy enjoys the simple things -- green grass in the spring and the birds sweet song in the trees. She doesn't take any moment of life for granted, but appreciates each and every breath she takes. She graduated college and married the love of her life. A few years ago Amy wasn't sure she would be alive today. After struggling with liver failure, she was placed on the transplant waiting list and prayed that a miracle match would come her way.

In a time of unthinkable loss, a family of a total stranger decided to donate their loved ones organs, and Amy was one of the grateful recipients of their many gifts.

Organ, eye and tissue donation saves lives. Please make your decision to donate life and tell your family. Register to be an organ, eye and tissue donor on your Oklahoma driver's license or state ID card or register online at www.LifeShareRegistry.org. You may also call 800-826-LIFE (5433) and request a donor registration card.



Amy

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