



## A comforting friend

Director of  
Nursing is a  
friendly face



Jody Sim, RN, leads the Perry Green Valley Nursing Home staff with confidence, knowing compassion is at hand.

by James Coburn - staff writer

Jody Sim is no stranger to Perry, Okla. This friendly familiar face is a registered nurse the director of nurses at Perry Green Valley Nursing Home.

Many of the nursing home residents have known her since she was a girl growing up in Perry. Today, Sim has been has served

See SIM Page 2

## INTEGRIS Health Edmond Celebrates 10 Years

**INTEGRIS**  
HEALTH

INTEGRIS Health Edmond will celebrate its tenth anniversary Oct. 3, 2021. There have been many accomplishments in the past decade as the hospital has grown to meet the changing needs of the Edmond community.

- The \$94 million, state-of-the art, full service hospital opens on Oct. 3, 2011
- A \$2.25 million cardiology and interventional radiology suite is added in 2013.
- Construction begins on a second medical office building in 2014. The additional \$12.5 million, 45,000-square-foot facility opens in 2015.
- The Arcadia Trails INTEGRIS Center for Addiction Recovery opens May 28, 2019. The 60-thousand square foot facility includes a treatment area, a conference center and a 40-bed living space.
- A \$95 million expansion project is complete in 2021. The once 40-bed, 143,000 square foot hospital has now doubled in size with 104 beds and just over 300,000 square feet.
- The hospital originally employed 150 caregivers, now has close to 450.
- To date, the hospital has had roughly 23,000 admissions, more than 30,000 surgeries, over 170,000 emergency room visits, delivered roughly 6,000 babies and treated approximately 500 COVID-19 patients.

"We are so excited to be celebrating our 10-year

See INTEGRIS Page 3

## SIM

Continued from Page 1

Perry Green Valley residents for 17 years. They have been mutual church goers, neighbors and friends.

"I remember the first time I took care of a lady I worked with," Sim said. "I was 15 years old at a little nursing home in town working as a dishwasher. And I remember the cook, she was a German lady and she taught me how to do my prep work. Then years later when I was a nurse here, she came in as a patient."

This experience turned full-circle for Sim when the older German lady found comfort in Sim's familiar presence.

"And, so I put her family's mind at ease, and I put her mind at ease because I was here for her. We had known each other for so long."

Sim said it was surreal knowing someone who had taught her something years before was also a friend she was caring for.

"So, I was very proud," Sim said.

Her moments at Perry Green Valley are heartfelt. Sim recalls a

nurse leaving from her shift that had ended at 10 p.m.

A resident at the time was dying without any family members present. She had no family, Sim said.

"So that nurse was there that whole night while she passed away," Sim recalled with her eyes welling up. "It was really neat. She wasn't on the clock — she didn't have to. She did it because she knew that lady had no family."

A lot happens with the residents that makes Sim happy at Perry Green Valley.

"I like it when they reach out to each other as a group," she said. "They reach out and want to know how this one is doing."

HIPPA laws prevent the nursing staff from revealing aspects of one's health, but they can say, "Let's walk down there together," Sim said.

Residents can feel close to people in a home nestled among woodlands with both shade and sunlight. Sim wouldn't have the family-like setting any other way.

Sim has focused on geriatric nursing during all her career, except for four years at Stillwater Medical

Center. Her mother is a retired licensed practical nurse who now serves part-time as a ward clerk at Perry Green Valley.

"It's always just been in my blood. I ran around in nursing homes as a kid," she said. "My mom was a charge nurse in the nursing homes. It's something I always wanted to do that I was comfortable doing."

She earned her LPN license in 1996, and in 2000 earned her nursing degree at Northern Oklahoma College. When she was in high school there was a smaller nursing home in town where she worked as a CNA. She continued there as an LPN for a while. Sim soon became impressed with the ownership of Perry Green Valley and accepted an LPN position there in 2004. She attributes her loyalty and longevity at Perry Green Valley to the company.

"They have always been nothing but kind to me, and they have always been really good with their employees," Sim said. "They like consistency of staffing and that's what I want. I want a company that backs you. If you call them and you say you need something they help."

Compassion for the residents and dedication to the job come to mind when thinking about Perry Green Valley's nursing staff, she said. Everyone in the team comes together whenever a challenge comes about. COVID further revealed what the staff is made of, Sim said. The nursing staff has been phenomenal, she continued.

Nursing students considering a career in a long-term and skilled nursing center need to be prepared to work in a holistic nursing care

environment, Sim said. A nurse in long-term care needs to be able to look at the big picture when providing a holistic plan of care for their patients making a home in the 112-licensed bed facility. The staff member should be attentive to whether the resident is compatible with their roommate, if they will come out of their room, eat their meals, take their medicine and be at a healthy weight.

"You look at it holistically like you would like somebody to take care of you — then you'll know how to take care of that patient the correct way," she explained.

She advises for families ask questions whenever they want to be reassured if a particular long-term care facility is the best choice for their loved one. Walk around and talk to the family members and residents, Sim said. She is always available to arrange a tour.

"Word of mouth is always the best in this little old town for sure," Sim said.

The staff is diligent about keeping a clean house. First things are first for Sim when arriving at work. She checks her temperature and then walks around to check on her residents and staff. Sim examines orders and audits. She looks at incident reports — all in the morning.

Sim takes a holistic approach to her own life as well when she is not working.

"I read and I enjoy sitting out back on my beautiful deck my husband bought me."

They love the peace and quiet and enjoy the variety of birds.

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INTEGRIS

Continued from Page 1

anniversary with our caregivers and this community,” said Jon Rule, chief hospital executive. “More than 10 years ago, our board, community partners and caregivers set out with a vision to provide exceptional health care to Edmond. Over the 10 years of our existence, and most recently with the heroic response from our caregivers and providers to the pandemic, I believe we’ve accomplished what we set out to do and now we are looking forward to the future.”

Angie Kamermayer is the chief nursing officer for the hospital. “Nursing at INTEGRIS Health Edmond created a reputation of quality and compassion for which our community has come to know and trust. Our nurses embody kindness, courtesy and respect from the start to end of life. Each one is a hero, leaving a powerful impression on the lives of our patients, families and health care team. I am proud of who we have become and the significance of our presence in the community.”

INTEGRIS Health Edmond offers a comprehensive list of inpatient and outpatient services, to include: emergency medicine, surgery, cardiac



cath lab and radiology, labor and delivery, primary care, Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation, wound care and more.

“INTEGRIS Health Edmond started a health care boom for the community of Edmond and gives premier full-service health care not only to Edmond but to the surrounding communities,” says Keith Gannaway, M.D., the chief of surgery at the hospital. “As an Edmond resident for 33 years, I feel that health care in Edmond has been elevated to a level that any community would be proud and honored to have.”

Dena O’Leary, M.D., is the chief medical officer. She wholeheartedly agrees, “INTEGRIS Health Edmond

is a hospital I am incredibly proud to be a part of. Although we have grown tremendously over the past few years, we continue to focus on providing great care to our patients while maintaining a warm, friendly culture with strong ties to our community. I look forward to seeing what the next 10 years have in store.”

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# CAREERS IN NURSING

## PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE: ENDURING COMPASSION WORKS WONDERS

by James Coburn - staff writer

Society does not have enough people defending the elder population, said Trina Carrell, LPN, Capital Hill Skilled Nursing & Therapy, located in Oklahoma City.

"Even with staffing shortages (across the state), there has to be somebody taking care of them," she said. "There has to be somebody who is making sure there is a good quality of life for them."

Her motivation to help people has gone from a being a CNA into the frontline of nursing. In December Carrell will celebrate three years as a licensed practical nurse. Being a nurse is something to celebrate, she said.

Carrell is a nursing school graduate of Platt College doing the night-time program because she worked full-time as a medication aide while attending school.

She wanted to be a physician while she was growing up. But life had other plans, she said.

Her infant son became very sick

when she had her third baby. He was placed in a hospital's intensive care unit.

"The doctor was really rude to me. This nurse who couldn't have been more than 5-feet tall, she got in his face and said, 'This woman — this is her third baby — she's taking care of a sick mom. She has two toddlers.' I mean she was the biggest advocate, and that's when I was like, 'I want to be a nurse. I want to be that voice,'" Carrell said. "She was amazing."

As a nurse, Carrell set her course in geriatric care so she could advocate for the elder population. To this day she has never regretted finding her niche. She gave up a more profitable job as a truck driver to become a nurse.

She learned a lot by being a CNA when it comes to caring for others. Carrell makes sure her residents are cared for. Her preference would be for all nurses to spend time as a CNA before applying for a nursing

program in order to learn the basics of care. Nurses depend on CNAs because they experience less time rendering hands-on care for each patient, Carrell said.

"The residents themselves — the patients — they teach you," Carrell continued.

The nursing team takes a team approach. Carrell works seamlessly with the same certified nurse aide, Brandi Wolf, and her CMA Shae Driskell.

"Shae is punctual, she makes sure she's on top of it for things that you need a second check with a person looking at stuff and saying, 'Did you notice this?' So, she's absolutely brilliant. And then Brandi looks at the needs that is on the floor. She's my second set of eyes. If somebody's just slightly off, she's like, 'Hey, we need to go down here and look at that.' So, if I started to assess somebody and something started to happen, she's like right behind."

Capital Hill Skilled Nursing & Therapy fits her schedule well while she works toward becoming a Registered Nurse at Oklahoma City Community College. The courses are challenging when working full-time, she said. But perseverance is one of her qualities.

She said that she doesn't know where all her energy comes from. Her husband describes her as a workaholic, she said with laughter. Carrell is a self-defined early riser. Her mind in the morning is filled with ways to get things done.

"In medical, you think you're going to have a smooth day, but the first thing you get hit with is, 'Oh, this happened,'" she explained. "So, I just like to be here and get everything organized and on time. That way if that bump hits, I'm prepared for it."

Carrell also works with Brandi's twin sister. When Brandi leaves, Candi comes walking up and down

See CARRELL Page 5



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CARRELL

Continued from Page 4

the halls making sure everything is clean and in order.

Carrell said she is abundantly blessed at Capital Hill Skilled Nursing and Therapy.

"I can't complain," she said.

Working as a nurse in long-term care involves acute organizational skills at each shifting moment. Clarity is always a plus. Carrell said support from the administrator and director of nursing is indispensable.

"You have to have that support system. Everyone needs to be on the same page working as a team," she said.

Driskell will pitch in when the assistant is busy. She's seen the administrator, who is a registered nurse, pitch in on a need whether it's answering a call light or taking out trash.

"It's that kind of teamwork that makes things happen," she said. "It makes life enjoyable. You're not getting that constant stress of feeling like you're carrying everything on your own."

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# Learning on the front lines



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*Already an experienced nurse, Verena Turner is furthering her career in public health by pursuing her bachelor's degree in nursing through OSU's online RN to BSN completion program.*

Her passion for serving patients who need her most has been elevated amid the coronavirus pandemic. Turner, who is typically a nurse in a neurology intensive care unit (ICU), transitioned to caring solely for coronavirus patients over the last several months. The day-to-day patient care is an opportunity to apply her coursework.

"I love being a nurse, although I wouldn't say being a COVID nurse was my goal for this year," Turner said. "Seeing these patients recover, getting text messages and cards and emails from families of patients we've seen at the absolute worst and not knowing if we're going to keep them alive makes it

all worth it."

Due to isolation restrictions, Turner said she may be the only person her COVID patients see for 13 hours. She endures layers of uncomfortable personal protective equipment (PPE) to spend extra time with the patients.

"Our patients a lot of the time are intubated and sedated, but they know there's somebody there," Turner said. "This has definitely opened my eyes that nurses have a really big impact."

Serving in a COVID care unit builds on Turner's past work as a licensed professional nurse on a surgical floor and more recently in the ICU. Not only does she apply hands-on experiences

from working full time to her coursework, but she also learns from classmates who are working in diverse healthcare environments.

Dr. Mary Malaska, OSU RN to BSN program coordinator, said the OSU curriculum, which consists of eight nursing classes and two health classes, is specifically designed to enhance nurses' professional skills.

"Students expand their professional nursing lens from the practical, foundational skills they learned to become a registered nurse," Malaska said. "Our coursework provides higher level thinking that teaches the 'why' behind their past education."

Students are challenged with topics ranging from leadership and goal-setting, to public health policy and nursing theory. During the COVID pandemic, the epidemiology course has been especially applicable.

"Factors like causation, testing and data analysis are key tenets of the course," Malaska said. "Their application now in a global pandemic just underscores the relevance of our program."

Balancing COVID nursing responsibilities with classwork has certainly not been easy. Some OSU RN to BSN students working in COVID units travel to as many as four healthcare facilities in one metropolitan area tending to patients, in addition to managing coursework and responsibilities at home.

Malaska is working with Dr. Alana Cluck, RN to BSN clinical faculty, to study the impact of COVID on nurses' mental health. While respondents reported positive aspects, like spending more time with family due to canceled personal events, they also reported increased stress.

"Many nurses feel like they are placed in impossible situations, having to decide which patient to tend to first when two patients are crashing at the same time," Malaska said. "This isn't a decision nurses usually have to make."

Oklahoma State nursing faculty understand that stress, and they are committed to supporting their students academically and professionally. As the world continues to social distance in order to combat the spread of coronavirus, nursing faculty have remained connected to students through weekly video updates and discussion boards.

This is part of a culture of support Turner observed even before the COVID pandemic, something she is thankful for as a full-time working mom. The 100-percent online program also added flexibility.

"My professors realize we're all in this together and have been super flexible and supportive," Turner said. "They even send emails checking to see if we're safe and okay."

For Turner, who expects to graduate in May 2021, the hands-on experience of caring for COVID patients during a pandemic as well as the healthcare applications learned from her RN to BSN program are preparing her to achieve her dreams.

"I think COVID is going to be something we're dealing with for a long time," Turner said. "The experience of working on a COVID floor, coupled with the higher-level concepts I am learning in the RN to BSN program, will shape my career."

For this nurse - whether treating COVID patients or furthering her education - each task is a labor of love.

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- Kayce (Tuter) Brown, RN to BSN student



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Tips for Quitting

Six tips to help you quit using tobacco products.

1. Contact the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline by phone or online at 1-800-QUIT NOW or [OKHelpline.com](http://OKHelpline.com) to register for FREE services. Get free quit coaching and helpful information.

2. Get Support and Encouragement. Tell your family, friends and co-workers that you are quitting. You may also be eligible for at least a two-week supply of free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges.

3. Get Ready. Set a quit date. Think about past attempts — what worked, what didn't?

4. Learn New Skills and Behaviors. Change your routine, reduce stress, plan something enjoyable each day, drink a lot of water and other fluids, make your car and home productive.

5. Get Medication and Use It Correctly. Talk with your health care provider about medications that may be right for you.

6. Remember! Setbacks Are NOT Failures. Endorse positive habits capable of quitting tobacco — it keeps making healthy decisions.

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For more info, visit [www.okquitnow.com](http://www.okquitnow.com) or call 1-800-784-8669. Spanish: 1-800-822-0100. TTY: 1-800-784-8669.

Get **FREE** Helpline Materials for Your Office

The Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline has FREE posters, pens, brochures and tip cards with helpful advice for quitting. These materials encourage your patients to quit while keeping the Helpline top-of-mind.

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To order materials, open your smartphone camera app and scan the QR code. Then tap "Open in web browser."

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# SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

Saturday's Cases	1,537
New Cases 7 day Average	1,331
Active Cases	11,288
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	10,472
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
	Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)	34 (11)
Region 2 (NE)	60 (23)
Region 3 (SW)	145 (41)
Region 4 (EC)	57 (16)
Region 5 (SE)	31 (6)
Region 6 (Central)	67 (25)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	256 (77)
Region 8 (OKC)	246 (74)
Total	896* (273)
Other Types of Facilities	
Focus Facilities	38 (15)
Rehabilitation Facilities	7 (0)
Tribal Facilities	26 (7)
Other Facilities Total	71 (22)

\*Includes 25 hospitalizations in pediatric beds.

\*\*Focus, Rehabilitation and Tribal Facilities numbers are not assigned to a specific region as their patient populations reside across the state. Information provided through survey of Oklahoma hospitals as reported to HHS as of the time of this report. Response rate affects data. Facilities may update previously reported information as necessary.

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. \*As of 2021-10-04 at 7:00 a.m.

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