Q & A with Bob Ritz

Q. What is Mercy Health Network (MHN) doing to combat the opioid crisis in Iowa?

A: MHN is committed to partnering with all stakeholders to address opioid use through prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery initiatives.

To do this we must recognize the sacredness and dignity of every person by promoting person-centered care in our communities.

We are working with government officials and regulatory leaders at all levels on three fronts:

1) Supply Reduction
2) Provider Education
3) Access to Treatment

The MHN Integrated Clinical Leadership Team (ICTL) has formed an opioid task force and charged the team with developing a common, consistent plan for MHN medical centers to address the opioid epidemic in Iowa. The plan will draw from existing resources. Malissa Sprenger, Coordinator of Mercy Medical Center’s Turning Point Treatment Center in Dubuque, will chair the task force.

Have questions for Bob?
Email MHNinfo@mercydesmoines.org.

Mercy-Dubuque’s Leadership in Combating the Opioid Crisis Gets Attention of Governor

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds visited with Mercy staff and toured Mercy Turning Point Treatment Center. The visit was part of Opioid Awareness Week and highlighted initiatives to combat the opioid crisis.

“We started [the tour] with Mercy Turning Point because of the great work that you’ve done, to really understand what you’re doing, look for opportunities to scale it and bring that awareness to other communities across the state of Iowa,” Gov. Reynolds said.

Mercy has worked diligently for several years to address the growing opioid problem, including taking the following actions:

- Offering Suboxone, a medication that blocks opioid cravings and withdrawal symptoms, to treat those who are addicted to opioids
- Working with physicians on safe opioid prescribing practices and use of the State’s prescription drug-monitoring program
- Training community members and emergency responders on the use of Narcan, an overdose reversing drug

The Governor is planning to introduce an action plan for the state to combat the growing opioid epidemic.

Mercy-Des Moines Physician Earns International Recognition

Jan Franko, MD, an international expert in the field of Peritoneal Metastases, delivered the keynote lecture at the Fourth International Pressurized IntraPeritoneal Aerosol Chemotherapy (PIPAC) Symposium in Tübingen, Germany. His address focused on systemic chemotherapy for peritoneal metastasis.

Dr. Franko is one of only two physicians from the United States invited to attend this conference. Congratulations to Dr. Franko on this outstanding accomplishment.
Patients at Mercy Hospital in Oelwein now benefit from access to the latest computed tomography (CT) diagnostic technology.

“The new CT scanner allows us to provide care to our patients using more advanced technology,” said Terri Derflinger, Mercy Hospital site administrator.

The GE Optima CT540 Scanner provides essential diagnostic imaging capabilities of structures inside the body; allowing for the detection of conditions such as stroke, pulmonary embolism and aortic aneurysm, as well as traumatic findings such as fractures and intracranial bleeding. It also allows for faster scans that produce high-quality images, so medical staff can quickly determine health status and course of treatment while giving patients access to up-to-date health care technology close to home.

“Mercy is 82 miles from a Level I Trauma Center, which increases our need for rapid diagnosis, stabilization and transfer of the patient to advanced care in emergency situations. This state-of-the-art CT scanner allows us to meet the needs of our patients and community even better than we previously did,” said Allison Ingels, RT(R)(M), RDMS, RVT, CT, Mercy Hospital Radiology Supervisor.

The purchase of this equipment was made possible through a $400,000 grant awarded by The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust’s Rural Healthcare Program.

Accreditation by the NAPBC is only given to centers that voluntarily commit to providing the highest quality of breast care, undergo a rigorous evaluation process and review of performance. During the survey process, a center must demonstrate compliance with standards established by the NAPBC for treating women diagnosed with the full spectrum of breast disease.

“The NAPBC accreditation process challenges us to enhance the care we provide by addressing patient-centered needs and measuring the quality of the care we deliver against national standards,” said Dr. Susan Beck, Medical Director at Mercy Katzmann Breast Center.

“Our team of specialists come together to form an amazing breast program for our patients,” said Kelly Flaucher, Covenant Comprehensive Breast Center supervisor. “Everyone is fully engaged – the radiologists, technologists, surgeons, nurses, breast care navigator, medical and radiation oncology doctors and staff, and various other support staff from several modalities within our network. We all know that by making the Covenant Comprehensive Breast Center a quality breast center program, it ensures each and every one of our patients receives the best care possible. We have always strived to put our patients first, and the focus of being an accredited breast center is the patient.”

Spotlight on Patient Care Improvements

Mercy Hospital in Oelwein Begins Use of New CT Equipment

Mercy Katzmann Breast Center and Covenant Comprehensive Breast Center Receive Repeat Accreditation

Mercy-Sioux City Purchases New Vein Visualization Technology
David Shufelt is lucky to be alive. On Aug. 9, David was helping a friend fix his roof in Clive when suddenly he got overheated and started experiencing chest pain. His friend rushed him to Mercy West Urgent Care, where he collapsed as he walked through the door. The doctor quickly evaluated him and said Shufelt was experiencing a heart attack and called for an ambulance to take him to Mercy Medical Center.

Upon arrival to the emergency department, Shufelt was in full cardiac arrest. The medical team shocked his heart several times and performed CPR for at least 40 minutes. The staff told Shufelt’s fiancée, Anita, not to get her hopes up, it didn’t look good.

Since the resuscitative efforts weren’t working, emergency physician Dr. Andrew Terry started advocating for the use of a potentially lifesaving technology known as Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO).

Dr. Terry was familiar with other hospitals that had successfully used ECMO in similar situations.

“I felt ECMO could be a life-saving treatment for Mr. Shufelt, to buy time for the cause of his cardiac arrest to be fixed while maintaining blood flow to his brain and vital organs,” said Dr. Terry.

ECMO involves the use of a sophisticated pump that takes over the functions of the heart and lungs, essentially breathing for the patient by pumping oxygenated blood to vital organs so the lungs can rest. This helps reduce stress on the heart. The device is traditionally used to support adults in cardiac failure waiting for a heart transplant and to help protect the delicate respiratory systems of infants born prematurely.

Iowa Heart Center interventional cardiologist, Atul Chawla, and advanced heart failure cardiologist, Frances Johnson, were contacted for their assessment. Dr. Chawla agreed to take Mr. Shufelt to the cardiac catheterization lab to evaluate his coronary arteries and facilitate ECMO placement. Shufelt had a coronary artery that was 100 percent blocked that was opened and a stent placed because of the ECMO, which he remained on for five days.

“The machine literally kept him alive – it maintained blood flow and oxygenation during his procedure and allowed his heart, lungs and body to recover in the days following,” Dr. Terry said.

Shufelt spent nearly two weeks in the hospital and now enjoys spending time with his family and appreciating life even more. “They literally saved my life by putting me on ECMO and I couldn’t be more thankful,” Shufelt said. “The care I received was wonderful, and I hope more people are able to benefit from this in the future.”
You, make the difference for our patients. Scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs are two ways we support colleagues in advancing their careers to continue to improve patient care.

All MHN market ministries are committed to helping colleagues who want to earn their first degree or advanced degree to succeed. The next newsletter will talk about opportunities beyond the classroom including preceptor programs, tech practice days, nurse residency programs and more.

**Mercy-Clinton**

**Scholarships** – Every year, Mercy Healthcare Foundation awards more than $20,000 in scholarships to students pursuing a nursing or medical career. Tuition reimbursement is also available for colleagues. Full-time colleagues can receive up to $2,000 for tuition reimbursement per year. Part-time colleagues can receive up to $1,000. For more information on these programs, please contact Mercy Healthcare Foundation at (563) 244-3535.

Mercy–Clinton also offers a **BSN Pathway Program** through Loyola University and Mount Carmel College of Nursing. For more information on this program, please contact Laura Gassman at (563) 244-3647.

Colleagues can obtain their CNA, ADN or sonography degree through Eastern Iowa Community College. Other programs include the medical technician or medical laboratory technician through Weber State University. For all of these programs Mercy pays the tuition on behalf of the colleague. For more information, including eligibility requirements contact Angie Ketch at (563) 244-7578.

All these programs require a commitment from the colleague to continue working at Mercy-Clinton after receiving the tuition reimbursement or completing a degree. The programs are open to benefit eligible colleagues who have been with Mercy for six months, do not have written disciplinary action and work 32 hours per pay period.

**Mercy-Des Moines**

**Tuition Reimbursement** – Full and part-time colleagues who sign up for college coursework directly related to their position are eligible for tuition reimbursement. After receiving pre-approval, colleagues can take classes at almost any academic institution. Colleagues working part-time are eligible to receive up to $1,500 in tuition reimbursement each year, and full-time employees are eligible to receive up to $3,000 per year.

**Mercy Scholars Tuition Program** – Mercy colleagues, their spouses and children can apply for tuition benefits with the Mercy College of Health Sciences (MCOHS), through the Mercy Scholars Tuition Program. Colleagues whose status is at least 0.6 FTE are eligible. The application period for the spring semester is **November 1-30**. For more information on Mercy-Des Moines’ education programs, contact human resources at (515) 247-3100.

**Mercy-Dubuque** strives to provide the highest quality health care for our patients and our community by encouraging and assisting colleague self-development through education. **Tuition/education assistance** is provided for certain educational coursework which will help Mercy meet its present and future workforce needs. Colleagues working full-time (budgeted to work 70+ hours per pay period) may receive up to $4,000 in tuition assistance per calendar year and colleagues working part-time (budgeted to work 32-69 hours per pay period) may receive up to $2,000 per calendar year.

These $500 **scholarships/awards** also support continuing education:

- Ott Family Award for Excellence in Surgical Nursing
- Thomas C. Piekenbrock, M.D. Award for Excellence in Psychiatric Nursing
- Rita Trenkle BSN Completion Scholarship
- Mercy Nursing Alumni Scholarship
Mercy Health Network (MHN) Supports Colleagues Who Want to Continue Their Education (continued)

**Mercy Iowa City** awards up to $2,500 per year in tuition reimbursement to nurses who are pursuing their professional education in nursing. In addition, the Mercy Hospital Foundation awards $500-$1000 scholarships each spring and fall semester to be used in conjunction with tuition reimbursement received from the hospital.

**Mercy-North Iowa** offers the Mercy Nurses Rock Scholarship. This program assists with costs for colleagues earning an associate degree in nursing and bachelor of science degree in nursing. Colleagues are eligible to apply after six months of employment. Scholarships are available up to $16,000 depending on FTE status.

For both the Mercy Nurses Rock Scholarship and the loan payment program, colleagues will be required to sign a Mercy Scholarship Agreement with an employment commitment of four years.

Additionally, colleagues may apply for a loan to pursue a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. Under this program, colleagues may receive up to $5,250 per calendar year tax free. Any dollars received above $5,250 per calendar year must be taxed at time of receipt.

For more specific information related to the Mercy Nurses Rock Scholarship program or loan program, click here. Additional tuition reimbursement/educational loan information is also available for colleagues pursuing other healthcare related degrees.

**Mercy-Sioux City** offers colleagues up to $4,000 per calendar year to pursue a bachelor’s degree or above. Colleagues taking any coursework related to their current position are eligible for up to $2,000 per year. Tuition reimbursement is open to any colleague once 2,080 hours have been worked. Benefit amounts are pro-rated for colleagues who work part-time. A three-year commitment to our organization is required as part of the tuition reimbursement program.

**Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Oelwein Offer An Education Repayment Program**

Many clinical positions qualify for education repayment. The maximum repayment level depends on shortage level. There is a critical shortage in the positions identified below. Colleagues seeking education in these positions are eligible for up to a maximum of $10,000 ($1,000 per 0.1 FTE):

- Bedside RN
- Physical Therapist
- Clinic Lab Tech
- Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Speech Therapist
- Pharmacist
- Medical Technologist
- Lab Scientist
- Nurse Practitioner
- Certified Nurse Midwife
- Occupational Therapist
- Lab Technician
- Physician Assistant
- House Supervisor

Colleagues seeking education in the following positions are eligible for up to a maximum of $5,000 ($500 per 0.1 FTE) toward education repayment:

- Radiologic Technologist
- Nuclear Med Tech
- Certified/Registered Respiratory Therapist
- Cardiac Sonographer
- Mammographer
- CT Technologist
- Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant
- RN Non-Bedside
- MRI Technologist
- Ultrasonographer
- EMT PS (Paramedic & Lead)

A three-year commitment to our organization is required as part of the education repayment program.
New Centralized Scheduling Service Improves Access to Care at Mercy Clinics in Des Moines

Mercy Clinics in Des Moines recently unveiled Access 2 Health, a new service that will make it easier for current and prospective patients to find a primary care provider and schedule appointments.

With Access 2 Health, patients can call one number to schedule an appointment at any primary care clinic, find a primary care provider close to them or receive professional advice from a registered nurse.

When callers dial the Access 2 Health phone number (515) 2HEALTH (243-2584) – the phone is answered by a scheduler who helps the person locate a primary care provider close to their home, work or school. The scheduler can check providers' appointment availability and schedule appointments during the call, saving patients both time and effort. In addition, current patients can utilize the service to schedule appointments with their preferred providers outside of regular office hours.

The former “Mercy Nurse” phone service has transitioned into Access 2 Health, and will continue to evolve so current or new patients can utilize the service to obtain free, expert health information from a Mercy registered nurse. They will support the scheduling staff to identify the best access point for patients needing medical services.

Access 2 Health is staffed by a multidisciplinary team. Currently phone lines are answered Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Soon, patients will also be able to call on Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Mercy-Sioux City Expands Interventional Radiology Services

Mercy Medical Center has expanded the Interventional Radiology department in order to provide more cutting-edge options for the patients of Siouxland. Interventional radiologists specialize in the treatment of vein disorders, cancer and pain management.

Douglas Powell, DO, a vascular and interventional radiologist began practicing at Mercy Medical Center in September. Dr. Powell’s training allows him to perform what were once invasive treatments with minimally intrusive methods using image-guided catheters. Learn more about Dr. Powell here.

A second board certified vascular and interventional radiologist will begin serving patients at Mercy-Sioux City in early 2018.

Leadership Positions Across the Network

Clinton
- Director of Perioperative Services
- Director of Quality Performance and Care Management

Des Moines
- Director of Pediatric Nursing Physician Recruitment and Engagement Leader (Central Iowa)
- Vice President, Chief Medical Officer

Dubuque
- Director of Clinical and Professional Development
- Director of Home Care

Iowa City
- Director of Medical Records / HIM Manager
- Director of Radiology

North Iowa
- CEO/Vice President - Hansen Family Hospital - Iowa Falls
- CEO/Vice President - Palo Alto County
- Health Services - Emmetsburg

Waterloo
- Vice President of Medical Affairs

Awards and Accolades

Mercy-Sioux City's Wellness Specialist Awarded Lifestyle Change Award

Natalie Olorundami-Hughes, a wellness specialist at Mercy-Sioux City, was awarded the Lifestyle Change Award from the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association.

The Lifestyle Change Award recognizes individuals who have made significant and positive changes to improve their quality of life and overall health.
American College of Physicians/Society of Hospital Medicine Conference Highlights

The Internal Medicine (IM) Residency Program was well represented at the American College of Physicians (ACP)/Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM) conference held Oct. 5-6, in Iowa City.

A few highlights include:

- Kristin Olson, DO, won the SHM poster competition, with Barry Cooper, DO, receiving runner up
- Lindsey Rearigh, DO, was the first Mercy resident to present an ACP Clinical Vignette
- Leatrice Olson, DO, IM Residency Program Director, and Daniela Frankova, MD, PhD., IM faculty, served as judges for the ACP Clinical Vignette and SHM poster competitions
- Anessa Afroze, MD, IM department chair and residency faculty, was a speaker at the Break Out Session on the topic of “Antimicrobial Stewardship”

The two have been on the medical staff at Mercy Sioux City for 40 years. Askar is a pathologist, and Fahima, is a radiologist.

Mercy Hospital Named Industry Volunteer of the Year in Oelwein

Mercy Hospital and its associates were recognized at the Annual Oelwein Chamber and Area Development (OCAD) Community Awards on Oct. 18, 2017, receiving two awards.

OCAD named Mercy Hospital the 2017 Industry of the Year. The hospital opened its newly-renovated emergency department last fall. The hospital is planning to open a new convenient care and occupational medicine clinic by the end of this year. Mercy has also upgraded technology in several areas.

"Being an important asset to all our residents and surrounding areas is important with growth, adding to services and expansions that have proven the strong foundation that anchors this industry in our Community," said OCAD Executive Director Deb Howard.

"I am so proud of our associates!" said Mercy site administrator Terri Derflinger. "They continue to put our Mission of helping others at the forefront of everything they do!"

Two Mercy-Sioux City Physicians Receive Spellman Award

Drs. Askar and Fahima Qalbani, longtime married physicians in the Siouxland area, are this year’s recipients of Mercy Medical Center Foundation’s annual George G. Spellman Service Award.

The award was presented at the 2017 Mercy Fall Gala on Nov. 4, 2017.

Named after the late Dr. George G. Spellman, a longtime Sioux City physician, the Spellman Award recognizes community members or groups whose generosity with their time, talent and treasure exemplify the values of Mercy Medical Center.

"Being a part of a community is more than living or working in a community. It takes being an active role model, volunteering and helping whenever possible," said Howard. "This award is being presented to a group of volunteers who have exceeded the definition of a great volunteer. Thank you to Mercy hospital employees for being a part of our community!"
Mercy Iowa City Named a Top 50 Cardiovascular Hospital

Mercy Iowa City was named one of the nation’s 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals, the only one in Iowa, in a report released on Nov. 6 by IBM Watson Health. The annual study, conducted by Truven Health Analytics, identifies the top U.S. hospitals for inpatient cardiovascular services.

The Watson Health 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals study measures attainment in key performance areas including risk-adjusted inpatient mortality, risk-adjusted complications, percentage of coronary bypass patients with internal mammary artery use, 30-day mortality rates, 30-day readmission rates, severity-adjusted average length of stay, wage and severity-adjusted average cost per case and, new this year, CMS 30-day episode payment measures. The study has been conducted annually since 1999. This is the first time Mercy Iowa City has been recognized with this honor.

“Mercy Iowa City is a top performer for both health care quality and patient satisfaction,” said John Mehegan, MD, Medical Director Cardiovascular Services. “We are honored that our cardiovascular physicians, nurses and staff have been recognized for our commitment to quality. This distinction reflects the culture of excellence at Mercy Iowa City. We believe our outstanding team of caregivers, our robust quality assurance program and our environment in which patients and families can recover and heal in the comfort of a private room all contribute to achieving exceptional outcomes.”

Mercy-Des Moines Designated an Aetna Institute of Quality for Total Joint Replacement and Spine Surgery

Aetna Insurance has designated Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines as an Aetna Institute of Quality Orthopedic Care Facility for total joint replacement and spine surgery, and has designated Mercy Medical Center-West Lakes as an Aetna Institute of Quality Orthopedic Care Facility for Total Joint Replacement.

Aetna recognizes hospitals and facilities in its network that offer specialized clinical services for certain health conditions, Institutes of Quality facilities are selected for consistently delivering evidence-based, safe care.

Four Clinics Awarded Exemplary Provider® Accreditation as Rural Health Clinics

Mercy Family Medicine of West Branch, Tipton, West Liberty and North English have been awarded Rural Health Clinic Exemplary Provider accreditation status by the Compliance Team, Inc., the only Medicare approved health care accreditation organization that offers the Exemplary Provider® award. These locations are four of the 27 primary and specialty clinics in the Mercy Iowa City system. Exemplary Provider accreditation focuses on what matters most to patients-safety-honesty-caring.

Exemplary Provider Rural Health Clinic accreditation is only conferred on providers that demonstrated 100 percent compliance to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ (CMS) rigorous Conditions for Certification. The Compliance Team’s proprietary operations-driven, nationally recognized accreditation is a comprehensive continuous quality improvement program that standardizes the provider’s policies and procedures, streamlines its operation and validates its quality. The Rural Health Clinic accreditation is valid for a three-year period.

Colleagues Are Keeping Kids Safe in Woodbury County

Karin Ward and Amy Scarmon of Mercy’s Child Advocacy Center are the co-coordinators of Safe Kids Woodbury County which is part of a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent childhood injury.

A recent grant project has enabled Amy to work with families in need through local HOPES programs at the Crittenton Center, Lutheran Services in Iowa and Siouxland District Health, to provide car seat and other safety information to families involved in these programs. The project has the potential of reaching 75 low-income families in a six month period. Amy also works with the Head Start program in Sioux City, providing families with safety education.
New Care Providers Across the Mercy Health Network

Gastroenterology
- Angela Schmitz, ARNP
  Waterloo

General Surgery
- Joel Rand, PAC
  Des Moines

Hospitalists
- Holly Melahoures, DO
  Des Moines
- Joseph Russo, DO
  Indianola

Midwifery
- Krisi Allison, CNP
  Waterloo

Neurology
- Anne Lewis, ARNP
  Des Moines
- Marietta Walsh, DO
  Waterloo

Pediatrics
- Lindsay Behl, DO
  Des Moines
- Julie Hanson, MD
  Norwalk

Primary Care
- Amy Crane, PAC
  Family Medicine
  Norwalk

Podiatry
- Travis Tidwell, DPM
  Waterloo

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
- Cassie Gehling, PAC
  Clive

Primary Care
- Briana Ducey, PAC
  Family Medicine & Urgent Care
  Des Moines
New Care Providers Across the Mercy Health Network (continued)

Primary Care

Jennifer Messersmith, PAC
Family Medicine
Des Moines

Margaret Runyan, ARNP
Gerontology
Mason City

Jordan Shipley, PAC
Family Medicine & Urgent Care
Indianola

Katelyn Stein, PAC
Des Moines

Idea to Try

Help Patients and their Families Celebrate the Holidays

Being in the hospital during the holidays can be hard for all patients and their families. NICU nurse Christina Gillen knows it is especially hard for new moms and dads when they miss what is a normal milestone for most parents: celebrating their baby’s first Halloween with costumes.

Together with her mom, Christina hand-made 63 costumes and allowed parents in the NICU to select the perfect costume for their baby. See all the pictures and read the heartfelt comments from parents here. https://www.facebook.com/mercydesmoines/posts/10155950390817873

As we head into the holiday season think about how you and your team can create special moments for patients and their families:

- If your unit does a service project, give patients an opportunity to participate
- Write your patients notes letting them know you are thankful for the opportunity to care for them and include something special about them
- Give patients a Christmas card signed by the care team
- Celebrate New Year’s Eve with plastic flutes with sparkling cider, hats and decorations
- Deliver flowers for birthdays (e.g., Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines administration members deliver flowers personally to the patient’s room when he/she has a birthday while hospitalized)
- Provide a cake for a couple celebrating an anniversary while one is in the hospital
Celebrating Two Colleagues Who are Living Our Mission and Values

Judy Harms, LBSW, and Jesse Watters, RN, Case Manager, went above and beyond in their involvement with a young male patient recently admitted to our mental health unit. Judy and Jesse served this patient with Reverence and recognized his sacredness and dignity when he was at a very low point in his life. They demonstrated Commitment to the Poor by serving him when he was very vulnerable.

Their story of service is inspirational.

The patient has a history of mental health issues and entered Mercy Medical Center-North Iowa (MMCNI) after being homeless for the past year and a half. This patient’s state of residency is Idaho, where his mother and stepfather still live. He had been traveling the county without support and at the time of admission he was very acutely ill, lacking the ability to live unsupervised. He also lacked insurance coverage.

Judy was able to locate and make a positive connection with the patient’s mother. During that conversation Judy realized the patient had been on probation and was afraid he would have to go to jail so he fled the state. Judy connected with his probation officer and was told the officer would support the patient returning to Idaho without serious consequences. It became apparent to Judy and Jesse it was in the patient’s best interest to arrange for him to return to his home state under the support of family. The patient’s mother was in agreement and willing to drive to Iowa and take the patient back to his home state. This however was not financially feasible for the mother, and the patient continued to need psychiatric inpatient treatment.

Judy and Jesse began thinking outside the box for answers and realized that Trinity had a hospital in Boise. They elicited the assistance of the department director and vice president to negotiate a lateral transfer of the patient from MMCNI to Saint Alphonsus in Boise, funded by MMCNI. In the process they worked with PFS to start the Idaho Medicaid application for funding to cover costs at Saint Alphonsus. Judy and Jesse agreed to escort the patient by plane. Psychiatry arranged for an order of medication for anxiety to be administered at Jesse’s discretion. Saint Alphonsus agreed to accept the patient pending the next available bed. The agreement included a bed hold of 24-hours. Jesse and Judy agreed to be available to transport on short notice. Judy and Jesse picked up the patient at 2:30 a.m. to drive to Des Moines and fly to Boise. They settled the patient safely at Saint Alphonsus and made their way back to Iowa. They returned home after midnight and both reported to work the next morning on just a few hours’ sleep.

By fostering relationships with MMCNI and our sister facility in Boise, Judy and Jesse were able to promote the common good and honor the sacredness and dignity of this patient. Their compassion for this patient's needs, not only while in our facility but for his future, resulted in placement back in his home state with the support of his family.

Our Mission calls us to “serve with fidelity to the Gospel as a compassionate, healing ministry of Jesus Christ.” These two colleagues give us a modern day example of the Gospel story of the paralytic, who was unable to go to Jesus for healing because he was paralyzed and unable to travel on his own. His friends realized, “If not us, then who?” They also “thought outside the box” by carrying their friend to Jesus by lowering him through a hole in the roof. Judy and Jesse are today’s examples that the healing ministry lives by their commitment to overcome obstacles that could have kept this patient from the healing he needed.

In recognition of their exceptional service and living the Mercy Values, they received The Sister Corita Heid Spirit of Mercy Award.

Our Mission
Mercy Health Network serves with fidelity to the Gospel as a compassionate, healing ministry of Jesus Christ to transform the health of our communities.

Our Values
- Reverence
- Integrity
- Commitment to the Poor
- Compassion
- Excellence
- Justice
- Stewardship