Nurse’s personalized care helps emergency patient in crisis

At MercyOne Central Iowa, we pray frequently for the ability to be the hands of Christ as we interact with our patients. During a night shift in MercyOne Des Moines Emergency Care, this prayer was recently answered by nurse Erick Vespestad as he began caring for a 22-year-old man experiencing acute heroin withdrawal. The care that unfolded demonstrated clearly the meaning of Personalized Care. In addition to medical skill, the MercyOne Values of Reverence, Excellence and Compassion could be clearly seen in Eric’s Spirit of Mercy Award winning care.

Emergency Care leaders say acute heroin withdrawal patients are challenging. A patient must receive large amounts of medication for the expected severe pain, agitation and potential uncontrollable behavior. Managing this care requires clinical skill to protect the patient and colleagues during the process. A mother put her son in our care, and Erick chose to OWN the patient’s recovery. Erick began providing the prescribed medications, while also administering kindness and compassion to the young man. This continued for several hours, until the patient eventually experienced relief. The patient was taken to intensive care and eventually went home. Leaders and colleagues say those who witnessed Erick’s care saw his acceptance of a person in crisis involving a difficult condition. They saw his ability to “connect with a stranger in their time of greatest need,” by freely providing compassion and understanding. Erick’s approach helped the patient get through the pain.

Once a patient leaves, emergency providers frequently don’t see them again. A month after his discharge, the young man and his mother returned to Emergency Care — this time as visitors. They sought out Erick and the young man asked, “Do you remember me?” Eric replied, “Yes” and the man gave him a big hug and thanks. “Because of you, I’ve turned my life around. I’ve been clean for four weeks,” he said. He added, “You saved me that night!” The man’s mother also shared her feelings, saying, “You treated my son like no one ever has. Not like a junkie — but with love and respect.”

We all have the same opportunity to be the hands of Jesus in our daily care and interactions with our patients, their families and each other. May we be ready like Erick when the time comes.

MercyOne Des Moines receives reaccreditation as a Chest Pain Center with PCI

MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center recently received reaccreditation as a Chest Pain Center with Percutaneous Coronary Interventions (PCI) from the American College of Cardiology (ACC). The hospital first received this national accreditation in 2005, and was the first hospital in Iowa to receive this accreditation.
Reaccreditation  Continued from first page

“This accreditation demonstrates MercyOne’s effective multi-disciplinary approach in which the Emergency Department staff, cardiology staff and nursing staff all contribute knowledge and expertise in the chest pain care process,” said Gary Hemann, D.O., co-medical director of MercyOne Des Moines’ Chest Pain Center and Emergency Department. “The medical center’s Chest Pain Center reaccreditation is a nice verification of MercyOne’s continued commitment to prompt, high quality treatment of all patients with chest pain or other symptoms of a heart attack.”

To become an accredited Chest Pain Center, MercyOne Des Moines engaged in a rigorous onsite evaluation by ACC for its ability to assess, diagnose and treat patients who may be experiencing a heart attack. Hospitals that have earned this accreditation must have primary PCI (coronary angioplasty) available 24/7 every day of the year. PCI is a non-surgical procedure that opens narrowed or blocked coronary arteries with a balloon or stent to relieve symptoms of heart disease or reduce heart damage during or after a heart attack.

“This reaccreditation recognizes MercyOne Iowa Heart Center’s commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients across Iowa,” said Mark Tannenbaum, M.D., chief physician officer of MercyOne Iowa Heart Center.

National Cancer Registrars Week

April 8-12 is National Cancer Registrars Week, so please help us recognize the MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center registry team: Cindy Burgin, Heather Erb, Shari Runkle, Nora McMurrey and Mary Marshall.

Cancer registrars are health care professionals who collect, analyze and report cancer data. The registries provide essential information to health care providers and health officials to better monitor and improve cancer treatment, conduct research and target cancer prevention and screening programs. Details on diagnosis, treatment and survivorship are collected for every cancer patient in the U.S. MercyOne’s registry team collects and reports information required for the cancer center to obtain and maintain various accreditations that help demonstrate the quality care provided by cancer center colleagues.

Quality

Announcements

Educate and Empower Breast Cancer Symposium

All health care professionals, survivors and individuals interested in the care and treatment of patients following a breast cancer diagnosis are invited to attend the 2019 Educate and Empower Breast Cancer Symposium on Tuesday, April 16, at 8 a.m. at the MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center East Tower Auditorium. Registration is $35 for health care professionals requesting CME/CEU credit and $25 for the general public. Registration fee includes tuition, breakfast, lunch, refreshments and educational materials. Deadline for registration is April 10. To view the conference agenda and to register, click here.