Living our Cultural Beliefs during COVID-19

While facing challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, MercyOne colleagues continue to find ways to use their unique skills to make a meaningful impact. This skill and stick-to-it-iveness supports our Cultural Beliefs, while positively influencing our Key Results. The following are just two examples from our central Iowa colleagues. Read more from across MercyOne, and submit your own, online.

Be ONE:
“I have been given the opportunity to assist the ambulatory health coaches in the Population Health Service Organization (PHSO) in making post-discharge transition calls to patients who have just been hospitalized. I called a patient to check in on them and answer any questions they may have. The patient and son could only sing praises of how safe and cared for they felt at MercyOne Des Moines, seeing all of the precautions in place. They thanked us for the wrap-around care and how many people have reached out to them in these busy times to ensure they understood their care and new diagnosis. I loved hearing how much they are family were grateful for how much we can Be ONE!” — Avery Davis, Population Health Coach

Innovate:
“I had a patient who was being tested for COVID-19, on a high risk medication, and was unable to obtain all the necessary info with the patient or his wife via phone. I called and spoke with the patient’s nurse on flex, Mallory, and she told me to come to the floor and I could see the patient. Mallory was patient with me and did an awesome job of explaining what PPE I needed to put on. I had specific questions to ask the patient and needed to take note of his dosing, but would not be able to take paper in the room and back out with me. Mallory stood outside the room and listened to my conversation with the patient, and wrote down all the info I needed. She then carefully explained to me the proper way to remove my PPE, and what needed to be sanitized when I left the room. Not only was Mallory patient and helpful, she made me feel comfortable in a new situation. Thanks to Mallory, I was able to verify and document accurate information for the patient’s high risk medication.” — Emma Clausen, Pharmacy Tech-Med History

CyberKnife to broaden MercyOne’s radiation oncology capabilities

Since its installation in 2000, thousands of patients from across central Iowa have benefitted from CyberKnife technology at MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center. Thanks to a capital investment from CommonSpirit Health and funds from the MercyOne Des Moines Foundation Richard Deming Cancer Center campaign, MercyOne has reinvested in this important equipment to help even more patients.

“We are excited to broaden the scope of radiation oncology capabilities,” said Tim Hackbart, MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center director. “The new CyberKnife and its improved capabilities will increase our commitment to offer this enhanced level of care locally benefitting patients and their families for many years to come.”

Continued on next page
Helping prostate cancer patients
An important addition to new CyberKnife machine is a “head” uniquely designed to treat prostate cancer patients. This breakthrough allows patients to receive CyberKnife treatments most often in five sessions over two weeks, typically every other day. Currently, most other types of radiation technology require patients to receive a regimen of daily treatments for an average of 30-40 days.

The treatment is completely painless, lasting 20-40 minutes per day. Patients experience no immediate side effects, are able to drive themselves and continue their normal daily activities. On average, side effects experienced with CyberKnife are less severe and less frequent than those seen following “standard” daily radiation.

Improving precision for lung cancer patients
Lung tumors move as the patient breathes, creating challenges for doctors during treatment and requiring many Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SBRT) systems to treat a larger area. The CyberKnife is the only robotic radiation delivery system that incorporates Synchrony® Respiratory Technology, enabling the system to automatically and continually track and synchronize treatment delivery to motion, keeping the radiation precisely targeted on the tumor as it moves with the patient’s natural breathing.

In addition, the system can treat early stage, inoperable cell lung cancer tumors in challenging anatomical locations, such as central lung tumors surrounded by sensitive structures or lung tumors near the chest wall, and inoperable peripheral lung tumors. This increased precision will be invaluable to the MercyOne radiation oncologists and their patients.

“Radiosurgery is by definition predicated on accuracy. The CyberKnife is capable of sub-millimeter accuracy. Better accuracy means a lower dose of radiation to nearby healthy tissue, and this means fewer side-effects for the patient,” said Dr. Richard Deming, medical director, MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center.

Social distancing by six feet
To prevent the spread of virus, it’s important to keep at least six feet between yourself and others when possible:

- Take the stairs instead of elevators when able
- Avoid traveling in groups
- Walk farther apart through hallways
- Avoid being close to the person in front of you in line (entrances, cafeterias, pharmacy, etc.)
- Avoid group rounding

For more tips, download a flyer on social distancing.