

Joyce Dawson, CNA, Customer Service Award Recipient



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Joyce Dawson knows just how to deal with a patient's anxiety about a pending surgical procedure. She makes them laugh.

"Joyce uses humor extremely well to make patients, families and even staff members feel less anxious," says her supervisor, Valerie Martin, RN, direc-

tor of surgical services. "She greets patients and their families with the most endearing smile, and I see her wrap her arm around someone in her welcoming manner to lead them into our department."

Dawson is an RN in the surgical services unit, and this month's customer service award recipient. She has worked at Newport Hospital since 1972, so her roots in the hospital community run deep. Her colleagues and patients consistently cite her warm, kindly manner, admirable work ethic and the compassionate attention she devotes to anyone in her care.

"Recently, I lost my father and was very upset and distraught," says one co-worker. "Joyce was always there with a kind word and a hug. She made coming to work during a difficult time in my life more bearable."

"To the patients, Joyce is a godsend," says another colleague. "She is so kind, considerate and caring that the patients will always ask for her."

In fact, Dawson is consistently singled out in patient surveys for her skill, kindness and compassion. A recent patient comment was typical: "Joyce and Karen in pre-op were efficient in getting their work done, but were so kind and reassuring. They made all the difference in the world in keeping me calm!"

Dawson's years of experience and deep connection with patients and staff are precisely what sets Newport Hospital apart, says Martin. "There is such ownership to make certain that patients and families have the very best experience with us, along with receiving high quality care," she says. "Staff members like Joyce are what makes Newport such a unique and wonderful hospital."

Vanderbilt Rehab Center Among Tops in Nation

The Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation (UDSMR), a worldwide organization that compiles national data on inpatient rehabilitation facilities using a performance evaluation model tool, has recently named the Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Center at Newport Hospital a 2010 Top Performer in recognition of its "outstanding rehabilitation program performance" in the top 10 percent.

UDSMR measures five nationally recognized indicators in its performance evaluation model: the discharge functional independence measure, which indicates patients' functional level at discharge; the change between patients' ability to function when they arrive at Vanderbilt Rehab and when they leave; how much they have improved and how quickly; the percentage of Vanderbilt patients who are discharged back to the community; and the percentage of patients who are discharged to an acute care hospital. The composite score is then ranked against 805 other rehab facilities across the United States.

Vanderbilt Rehab director Melissa Fournier, PT, is pleased with the new results. "When we started receiving these results just four years ago," she says, "we were in the 58th percentile. We're now at the 95th percentile. This high rating reflects consistent effort and effectiveness on the part of our inpatient team. We already know that our patients are highly satisfied with the care they receive at Vanderbilt, and this award confirms that they are receiving that care from a clinically high-performing facility as well."





From left: Liz Damasio, Manuela Silva, and Cathy Duquette.

Shadowing Environmental Services

Given all the daily activity at a hospital, it's easy to overlook the contributions of the environmental services team. Yet a hospital rises and falls on its cleanliness and sterile environments; without dependable people cleaning, disinfecting and readying rooms for patient care, the entire hospital would grind to a halt.

That point was brought home to Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer Cathy Duquette when she spent a day shadowing several environmental services staffers in March.

"I was so impressed with how attuned the staff was to patient needs and to how their jobs affect patient care," says Duquette. "They were so flexible, able to drop everything and clean an OR so it could turn around fast. They really make it possible for the rest of us to do our jobs well."

Duquette started the day with Manuela Silva and Elisabete Damasio in surgical services. "In the course of one hour, we turned around three ORs, vacuumed the anesthesia office, and cleaned the OR reception area," she marvels.

She then spent a few hours with Maria Pedro in the birthing center, where she was struck by the concern and extra care Pedro displayed for patients. "She was cleaning the tub, and she was so careful to rinse all the bleach out, because she knew a mother was coming in to use it," says Duquette.

Next on the schedule was a stint in the emergency department with Margaret Lawson. Together, the two cleaned the ED waiting areas, and Duquette got a lesson in proper procedure. "She paid so much attention to detail: you always use a clean cloth, and you don't put the dirty cloth back in the water—she really grilled me!"

Finally, Duquette wound up the day with Luisa Rivera and Andrew Scott as they cleaned the busy Turner 4 unit. "They were so coordinated in their efforts, just worked together so well to make sure everything got done," she says.

Overall, Duquette was impressed by how well the staff interacted with other members of the care delivery team and how they factored in the impact of their work on the patients. "It's an incredible team," she says. "We rely on them more than we know."

Newport Nursing News

Cristen O'Donnell, RN, surgical services, recently passed the certification examination for operating room nurses in perioperative practice, so she is now a CNOR in addition to an RN and BSN.

Kudos Corner

Congratulations to Bart Grimes, director of pharmacy and diagnostic imaging, on his May 16 graduation from Salve Regina University's graduate program. Grimes earned a master's degree in business administration.

Judi Smith, of the education department, received the Distinguished Community Service award from the Women's Newport League for her "hard work and dedication to our community." Smith also received a Rhode Island senate citation offering congratulations on the award.

Get Growing

The growers' market is looking for employees to donate extra produce again this year. Back by popular demand, the market will once again be set up in the cafeteria area once the season begins. Last year, bad weather during most of the spring and summer shortened the growing season and blighted many crops. Gardeners are hoping for lots of sun and heat this season, so keep the grower's market in mind as an outlet for all those zucchini and tomatoes. Call Mark Hite at 5-1170.