

# Lifelines

**Newport  
Hospital**

November 2010

## Bette Cote, Customer Service Award Winner



Bette Cote

As a medical assistant with Family Physicians of Newport, Bette Cote is often the voice of the practice, the phone and front desk contact for patients and their families. It's an important role, setting the tone for the relationship between patient, family and provider. And it's a role that Cote fills with the utmost profession-

alism and courtesy, making her this month's customer service award winner.

"I was fortunate to be in the office when [Bette's award] was announced," says John Camus, Newport Health Care Corporation director of physician practice. "Bette was extremely surprised and everyone in the office, physicians included, was proud of Bette's achievement."

Cote has worked at Newport Hospital since 1993. Writing in support of her award, one patient says, "Bette is always pleasant and greets one with a smile. This past winter was very difficult for me and my family. I had to call this office many times and when I heard Bette on the phone, she relaxed me and helped me with what I needed."

Colleagues and patients alike cite her compassion and her competence. "Bette knows her job extremely well and happily directs the patients to the services and care needed," a patient says. "When you see Bette Cote at the desk, you can relax in knowing everything is going to be all right."

"Bette deserves this award because she treats everybody with kindness and caring, even if those individuals are not patients," Cote's nomination reads. "NHCC has achieved the summit award for patient satisfaction and I am sure Bette was an instrumental part of that."

## For Your Information...



Newport Hospital President and CEO August Cordeiro manning the info desk with information desk receptionist Colleen Collum (left), and volunteer Alberta Furtado.

As the president and CEO of Newport Hospital, August Cordeiro felt he could handle most any question from the public—until he spent a day on the hospital information desk.

"I guess I wasn't expecting the variety of issues they're confronted with," he says. "You never know what's going to walk through that door."

Cordeiro's recent day fielding questions was part of the hospital's job-shadowing initiative, under which administrators spend a day in employees' shoes. As he pushed wheelchairs, rode in golf carts and manned a desk, Cordeiro was shadowing a variety of staff members and volunteers, from information receptionists to patient transport volunteers to a security officer.

"I learned that dealing with the public is not an easy job," he says. "People come in with partial information—they'll just say, 'I'm here for my test,' without knowing what test, or they'll say, 'I'm here to see the doctor,' without knowing what doctor. You have vendors, families, policemen, truckers, all walking in with a huge variety of questions. And the staff is really great: they're kind and patient and they don't hesitate to track down the answers."

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Cordeiro worked alongside information receptionist Colleen Collum, and volunteers Alberta Furtado and Clara Nunes at the desk. He then spent some time shadowing transport volunteers Marty Kinsella and A.J. Sardella, and was impressed with their skill and adherence to safety guidelines.

“They’re very adept,” he says. “It made me a bit nervous, because they have challenging patients. People can be unhappy, upset, woozy from a procedure...but they’re very skilled at keeping them safe.”

He also spent some time with security officer Bob Borges, as he shuttled patients from their cars to the front entrance. “He’s a very unique individual,” Cordeiro says of Borges. “He’s in constant motion and takes his job very seriously. If there’s something that needs to be done, whether it falls within the job description or not, he does it. He’s wonderful.”

In general, Cordeiro says, he ended the day with a new appreciation for the role of these diverse volunteers and employees—all of whom are often the public’s first point of contact with Newport Hospital.

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## Hats Off!

Congratulations to two Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Center therapists in the VRC outpatient department. Patrick McCormick, PT, DPT, has earned the title of physical therapist II, and Ian Conroy, PT, MSPT, has achieved physical therapist IV. These promotions reflect dedication to their profession, to the hospital, and to the patients we serve.

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## Benefits Corner

Did you know that you are required to apply for a leave of absence if you’re out of work for two or more weeks, other than for a planned vacation? You can pick up a leave-of-absence packet at employee health, or go to

<http://intra.lifespan.org/lhb/Forms.htm>.

## Hospital Advocates Healthy Food



Gus Cordeiro and food and nutrition director Pam McLaughlin with Newport Hospital’s signed pledge.

In October, Newport Hospital President and CEO August Cordeiro signed the Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge, which outlines steps to be taken by the health care industry to improve the health of patients, communities and the environment.

The pledge states, in part: “We are aware that food production and distribution methods can have adverse impacts on public environmental health...we are committed to the goal of providing local, nutritious and sustainable food.”

Efforts to achieve that goal include increasing inpatient meal and cafeteria offerings of fruits, vegetables and unrefined foods; working with local farmers and food suppliers; encouraging our vendors to supply food that is not produced with toxic pesticides or hormones; and educating our employees, patients and community about our healthy food practices.

Newport Hospital is among the first in the region to join this movement, which is led by the national organization Health Care Without Harm. Learn more at [www.NoHarm.org](http://www.NoHarm.org).