

Barbara Gonsalves, Customer Service Award Winner



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For more than 39 years, Barbara Gonsalves has been working behind the scenes at Newport Hospital, most recently as an inner core nursing assistant and sterile supply technician in surgical services. It's through her efforts that the ORs are kept clean, stocked and ready for surgery, and that staff have all they need to care

for patients, from sterile surgical equipment to warm blankets.

But that description only scratches the surface of the crucial role she plays. Her colleagues cite her hard work, willing attitude, attention to detail and generosity with her time. "Barbara is a nursing assistant, but she helps everybody, including surgeons, nurses, anesthesia, surgical techs, endoscopy, SSPD, ambulatory, and housekeeping," says one colleague. "When she takes a day off or is on vacation, the operating room is not the same without her."

A number of co-workers cite her commitment to quality patient care. "Barbara understands that at the heart of the schedule is a patient in need of surgery, who is likely scared," a colleague says. "In so many ways, she exemplifies excellent patient care. She strives very hard to ensure that staff in the inner core has everything they need to do the best possible job."

Gonsalves is the rock on which her colleagues depend, says Gail Delaney-Kimball, assistant clinical manager of surgical services. She keeps meticulous records, plans for alternatives, critically examines all possible needs for surgical cases in advance, and responds quickly and efficiently in emergencies. "And she does all that with a 'how can I help you' attitude and a broad smile on her face," Delaney-Kimball adds.

In addition to her numerous regular duties, Gonsalves moonlights as a patient care sitter, providing one-on-one care throughout the hospital whenever the need arises.

"Barbara is incredibly dependable, responsible and reliable, and probably the most sought after resource in Surgical Services," sums up Delaney-Kimball. "No one could be more deserving of this award."



From left: Health information services staff members Alda Brum, Rich Loechinger and Mark Hite.

Health Information Open House

Health information practices are evolving rapidly, and the health information services department wants to help keep hospital employees up to date. That was the thinking behind a recent open house the department held, at which all were invited to learn about the changes that have occurred in medical records over the last few years, as well as to enjoy a variety of snacks provided by the department staff.

Health Information Assistant Mark Hite explains that record keeping has moved "from a standard paper form to a mostly electronic documenting system." He describes the differences between tasks of the past and the current processes. "Flipping



through pages has been replaced with pointing/clicking,” he says, which has made the handling of records more efficient on many levels.

Rich Loechinger, systems manager for health information systems, says many people at the open house asked how the system works with the patient documents sent by other departments. “Our document imaging system is a combination of scanned documents and electronic documents interfaced from the common systems used in patient care,” he says.

Hite says the department open house was successful and adds, “We kindly thank all who visited.”

Linda Hurteau named a Hospital Hero

Each year the Hospital Association of Rhode Island Board of Trustees honors hospital employees who stand out for their “exemplary performance and dedication to health care.” Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Center secretary Linda Hurteau was this year’s Hospital Hero from Newport Hospital.

Vanderbilt Rehab director Melissa Fournier calls Hurteau “an outstanding employee and individual,” and notes that Hurteau enthusiastically splits her time between medical assistant duties in Vanderbilt’s wound care program and secretarial responsibilities for the Vanderbilt Rehab Center. “Linda has accepted continuous changes in her responsibilities and has embraced every new challenge thrown her way,” Fournier says, adding that Hurteau is “a shining example of our hospital’s values.”

Employee Food Drive Fills Three Trucks

Employees from across hospital departments gathered last month to assemble shopping carts full of food to be delivered to the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center. There were 22 shopping carts in all, and three pickup trucks were needed for the delivery.

This is the fourth year the hospital participated in the food drive, and each year the donations have increased. Each of 22 departments requested a shopping cart, and employees of those departments brought in not only traditional Thanksgiving



Hospital employees prepare 22 grocery carts of food for delivery to Newport’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center food pantry.

foods but also nonperishable items to help families beyond the holiday. This year’s food drive ran from November 8 to November 19.

Coordinated by the Reward and Recognition Committee, the food drive benefits families here in our own community. In past years the hospital employees have donated enough to fill two pickup trucks, but this is the first year the donations required a third.

Hospital President and CEO August Cordeiro is proud of Newport Hospital employees’ dedication and commitment to the community. “Especially during this season, I count my blessings, and one of them is to work with such caring and generous people.”

Newport Nursing News

Two Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Center nurses participated in conferences this fall. Rose Hehl, RN, CRRN, recently attended the ARN Conference for rehab nursing research and clinical practice, and Deb Nordstrom, RN, CRRN, presented at the National Magnet Conference in October. Her presentation was on “supporting and sustaining a Magnet culture in a community hospital.”



Patricia Gallagher, RN

The Newport Hospital Staff Nurse Council presented the most recent DAISY Award for nursing to Patricia Gallagher, RN, CCRN, of the intensive care unit. Gallagher was selected for the award because of her “compassion and care.” Newport Hospital is the only hospital in Rhode Island that participates in the DAISY Award Program; 560 hospitals across the country also honor their nurses with the DAISY Award.