



June 16, 2008

Meet Inc. Innovator Shana Herzfeldt

Medical supervisor helps shape Collaborative Care unit at Appleton Medical

*By Maureen Wallenfang
Post-Crescent staff writer*

Q You're leading the AMC pilot program that started last year and eventually will lead to a \$90 million renovation project at both ThedaCare hospitals. How do you describe Collaborative Care?

A It really is a model of care that delivers exceptional patient outcomes.

Q How is it different?

A We work as a team. The patient, families, nurse, provider, pharmacist and care managers all working together on one interdisciplinary plan of care in which we collaborate continuously. Rather than a traditional world in which the provider comes in, sees a patient, writes orders and a nurse carries out those orders. Here we approach it as a team concept. When patients get admitted, they come to the floor and we page our team. We do an admission trio, which includes the pharmacist, the physician and the nurse. They do the admission together.

Q How was it developed?

A There are three components to the development. It took about a year and a half to design the unit. We used the lean concepts. We took the three key areas: process, environment and people. We blew up the traditional current nursing model, had input from nursing staff, invited patients to be part of our project and included providers and other ancillary services. We really developed a new process in delivering care.

Q You've used these methods for more than a year in this unit. What results are you seeing?

A Our average length of stay went from 4.3 days to 2.9. Average cost per stay decreased by about 20 percent.

Q Has it been difficult making the transition?

A It was a difficult transition initially because (physicians) have never had to practice this way before. We've asked them to speak out loud and tell us what they're thinking. When they do that, the nurse understands why we order specific tests, why we're going down this path. The nurses are easily able to identify and relate with patients and their families when questions arise.

Q Sounds like you've really empowered nurses?

A We have. Big time. Empowerment is the key to this model for everybody. That's where you get the great outcomes. You have a team working together collaboratively, rather than everyone in each of their own silos. You're documenting it on one electronic plan of care. It's easy to access, easy to see.

Q Doesn't this take more time?

A Yes, it does takes more time, but if we do it in a more thorough process, we're able to have higher-quality bedside care conferences with the families, we're able to address more issues. It's more efficient.

Q What's your particular role?

A One of the big things that I provide as a supervisor is being more proactive than reactive. With my staff I like to do a lot of coaching and mentoring rather than firefighting.

Q It sounds like a cultural shift.

A It's exactly what we're impacting. We know it will take years to achieve the cultural shift, but it's where our mission and vision and values lie. It's the step we need to take in health care.

Q Why haven't others done this?

A Other hospitals have touched base on some of the key concepts, but nobody has actually pulled it all together and has been as successful as we have seen ourselves in the last year. It takes a lot of motivation, energy, time to really invest in yourself and what you bring to this unit and your staff.

Q You didn't have a model to follow?

A No. And it continues (to change) each and every day. That's a big part of my role.

Q What an example of what you learned?

A We learned very quickly that the model of care we deliver doesn't support semiprivate rooms. When we come in with that bedside care conference team, there are multiple people talking about what's going on with that patient and if you have a roommate, you can't provide as much privacy.

Q You've done this is a 14-bed test unit. What about the rollout?

A We're considered the alpha unit. We have a beta unit at Theda Clark on the fifth floor that will start in April 2009.
