

Pulse

The Heartbeat of Monadnock Community Hospital

Winter 2005

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Many years and many good stories

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 **Monadnock Community Hospital**
Care comes first

Efficiency is Their Mantra

Patient Accounts Keeps MCH on Solid Financial Footing

It's a simple fact in the world of hospital management that continuing good care and financial solvency is highly dependent upon the speedy reimbursement of medical claims. As we all know, it's the primary job of MCH's Patient Accounts Departments to promptly and accurately submit claims to generate the cash necessary to pay the bills and keep the hospital on good financial footing. Not a simple task when you are processing approximately 15,000 claims a month!

Janet Willis, Director of Patient Accounts, is responsible for the Patient Accounts Department, MCH Health Services billing, and Patient Registration. The Patient Accounts Department handles all related hospital service claims and MCH Health Services is responsible for the billing for nine of the hospital's eleven family and specialty practices. At present, only the General Surgery and Anesthesia practices are outsourced.

According to Willis, the Patient



Patient Accounts Department: Front Row l to r: Diane Cordelle, Cheryl Rockwell, Patty Lovering, Janet Willis, Tonya Naun, Second Row l to r: Nancy Johns, Sandy Raymond, Claire Cook, Pam Conroy, Annette Cooper, Back Row l to r: Cheryl Lassal, Susan Lang, Sheila Farres, and Mary Belliveau. Missing from photo: Lynn Alix and Kassy Hoiris

Medicaid, Medicare, Anthem, etc. Eleven years ago, Nancy Johns and Cheryl Rockwell did all of the billing

including five individuals handling the different insurance classes; two people dedicated to collections; a customer service representative; two individuals handling cash postings; a financial counselor; Credit/Refund poster; PA Trainer; and a Patient Accounts assistant.

With the introduction of more automated systems, Pat Lovering recently moved from IT to become the department's new Patient Account Supervisor/ISS (Information System Support). She is also the first ISS employee at MCH and is the "built-in" IT person for Patient Registration, Patient Accounts, and STAR/HBOC.

"Today, the success of the Patient Accounts departments happens in large part because of the total hospital team effort," says Nancy Johns. "With all hospital departments being on-board, up-to-date, and doing such an outstanding job, we are able to efficiently pull it all together."

Many of the employees in Patient Accounts have a long history with the hospital and the department, including



MCH Health Services: Front Row, l to r: Florence Champney, Vicky Robinson, and Janet Willis; Back Row, l to r: Bonnie Taber, Patricia Weaver, Diane Smith, Sarah Olesen, and Jessica Viel

Accounts Department has become highly specialized over the last few years because of the increased complexities of programs like

and posting with a staff of five (including switchboard operators doing data entry). Today, the Patient Accounts Department has a total of 15 employees,

"Today the success of Patient Accounts happens in large part because of the total hospital team effort."

—Nancy Johns

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Hospital Bids Fond Farewell to Jose... Large Group of Friends Say Goodbye

Photos by Paul Garcia

In December hundreds of people attended an all day going away party for one of MCH's favorite employees. Jose Garcia was honored for 32 years of long-time service in the hospital's Food Services Department. Jose's tremendous contribution to the hospital and his natural talent for making friends with both employees and patients were highlighted in numerous tributes from fellow employees. According to long-time friend Dave McMahon, "Jose is kind of a legend in the hospital. He is the only person without a last name. Mention Jose and everyone knows who you are talking about. His uniqueness sets him apart, and it will be different without him. He was a great person to work with and a friend to everyone."

Jose's background in food service started at an early age. He grew up living on the grounds of the Pontoosuc Lodge in the Berkshires where both his mother and father worked. Jose worked his way up from kitchen help to head waiter. After graduating from UMass in Amherst with a degree in forestry, Jose joined the Air Force and specialized in electronics. He was stationed in Manchester, NH and Alaska. After leaving the service, he worked for several years at Honeywell in Peterborough. When Honeywell closed their plant in Peterborough, he took a job



as a cook for two years at Camp Union in Greenfield. When Jose joined MCH in 1972 there were less than 200 employees. He worked for Marjorie Hazeltine for a year as a cook until becoming Kitchen Manager and ten years later Director of Food Services. He remained in this position for approximately ten more years until the hospital contracted with Marriott and brought in their own Food Director. For the past ten years, Jose has served in whatever capacity was needed to keep the food flowing to patients, visitors and staff.

Looking back on his many years at MCH, Jose offers stories of people who he feels really made a difference. One of his favorite nurses was Minnie Hayden who

he says had a "no nonsense" approach to nursing, but everything she did was for the patient's benefit. He also fondly recalls long-time hospital administrator Bob Slade. "Just to give you an example of Bob's personality," says Jose, "he would bring wine and champagne to the annual Christmas party and then invite everyone... more than 100 people... back to his house for breakfast." One of his proudest memories was helping to save a woman's life. Looking out a window, he saw a woman pass out on her way into the hospital. He yelled to Marie Fogg to get help and rushed out and administered CPR. Within five minutes, the woman was stabilized and in a hospital bed. This spirit of helping others also carries over into his personal life where he served as a Volunteer Fireman in Hancock for many years. In 1976 he received the Fireman of the Year Award for rescuing the son of a MCH nurse.

One of the highlights of Jose's career was putting smiles on the faces of the many children who visited the hospital. He lights up when he talks about the kids who'd stop by his office where he always

had a cookie jar and gummi bears on his desk. He says it was the children at the hospital who nurtured the caring part of his personality. Even today if he's downtown, a child will occasionally come up to him and ask if he has any gummi bears.

While Jose is now retired, he plans to be busier than ever with trips planned to Montana, Alaska, and Spain (where he has family). This summer he hopes to spend time in northern Quebec at a hunting camp. And Jose's famous "Sundeck Lounge" at his home in Hancock is the spot to be in the summer with his extensive flower and vegetable gardens which keep him busy.

Marie Fogg, who was involved with planning Jose's party, says that his party was one of the better turnouts in her long history of attending hospital going away parties. Not a surprise when you consider the thousands of people who have been both nurtured and nourished by one of MCH's all-time favorite chefs. ■



Fifty Employees Honored at Service Awards Celebration

On January 27th MCH held the annual 2004 Service Awards luncheon honoring 50 employees whose years spent at MCH total 535. Each of these employees has devoted significant time, talent and energy to the hospital and have seen much accomplished at MCH during their tenure.

The hospital recognizes that employment consistency has been a crucial component in MCH's many significant accomplishments over the years and, more than ever, it's critical for the hospital's future success. The 50 employees that were honored include:

Thirty-five years: Phyllis McGinnis

Thirty years: Lori Twiss and Linda Wilson

Twenty-five years: Gail Bartlett and Virginia Hollenbeck

Twenty years: Susan Grosso, Robin Martynowski, Daniel Nolan, Suzanne Poirier and Mary Twaddell

Fifteen years: Marcia Collins, Elaine Keenan, Diane Latimer, Deborah Morris and Patricia Rutka

Ten years: Maria Bemont, Amy Charlonne, Linda Christian, Nancy Clarke, Tomma Goodwin, Lisa Lacroix, Elizabeth Streeter and Susan Wray

Five years: Darlene Blanchette, Michael Blood, Melodi Bond, Kathleen Brandes, Hunter Burgess, Erin Chamberlain, Claudia Cleary-Nichols, Denise Coffill, Mary Courtemanche, Karen Drake, Michele Dugre, Susan Ellsworth, JoAnn Fox, Darlene Hall, Elizabeth Kelly, Terry Kilvert, Kerrie Michaud,



Linda Nickerson, Barbara Schnabel, Nellie Smith, Lisa Symonds, Jennifer Tenney, Cora Trimbur, Janet Tyler, Nancy Visceglie, Patricia Weaver and Gary Zirpolo
Congratulations to this dedicated group of MCH employees!



Peter Gosline — At a January 27th banquet Peter Gosline was honored by the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce as Business Leader of the Year. Serving as MCH's CEO for seven years, Peter has been cited for successfully re-directing the hospital to focus on the areas of healthcare that are important for a small community hospital located in a rural environment. He has also worked closely with the community at large to strengthen MCH's ties with social agencies, civic organizations, businesses, and individuals. Peter was recently named president of the NH Hospital Association.

Cindy Vaillancourt — was recently selected by her co-workers as Food and Nutrition Employee of the Year. She has worked in the department for over two years, starting out in the cafeteria but quickly promoted to cook supervisor. She was selected for her strengths in customer service, safety, accuracy, team work and attendance. Congratulations, Cindy!

Marianne Brum — in the accounting office is on her way to becoming a Certified Healthcare Financial Professional by the Healthcare Financial Management Association having successfully passed the first in a series of challenging exams on her first try. Meeting the HFMA certification requirements helps prepare individuals for increasingly responsible positions in the healthcare industry and demonstrates dedication to professional development.

Emergency Department — reports that many of their registrars are pursuing nursing in their spare time. Denise Sweet, the newest registrar, took her entrance exam in January. Lisa Milbert and Ellen Carter are enjoying a break from their nursing studies. Ellen passed her AP class with flying colors.

Sue Marshall & Priscilla Shook — Congratulations for spearheading the successful work on MCH's Core Measures Public Reporting Initiatives. These measures for improving quality of care for inpatients with heart failure, heart attack and community acquired pneumonia can save lives and improve the longevity of MCH patients. These measures are publicly reported on the CMS Website and for the month of December '04 MCH was at 100% for all of the 10 publicly reported core measures. Also thanks to Becky Trudelle, Ann Kozar, Drs. Brown, Wagner, and Lauer, and Donna Pearce for their participation on the CMTE.

Employee News...

Christopher Jacobson, ARNP, — has recently joined the Antrim Medical Group and he is very pleased and gratified to once again be in Antrim. Prior to joining the Antrim Medical Group, Chris spent the last five years as a Family Nurse Practitioner in the Jaffrey Family Medicine office.

A big, big thank you to **Lucille Dube**, a volunteer from Jaffrey who works in The Window Shop, for making a number of quilts and donating them to the OB department for all of the new little babies.



Christopher Jacobson, ARNP

Off the Cuff by Peter Gosline



Winter has finally arrived and with it the challenges of driving, parking and those faced by Environmental Services and Engineering in keeping our hospital clear of inside salt and outside snow – thanks to all who make this possible. The warm fleece blankets distributed by the Human Resource Department should help each employee fight the chill which is bound to take over as winter progresses.

In early December we once again dined and danced at our Holiday Party at Hidden Hills in Rindge. The buffet and music were especially good and those who planned this event were numerous. They all deserve our thanks for a lovely evening: Laurie Pelkey, Joanne Blaine and her daughter, Brianna, Rhonda Poux, Phyllis Ferry, Janet Brown, Sadie Jackson, Shirley Carney and her husband, Bob, Cathy Maki and her daughter, Mariah and son, Garrett, Jessica Reynolds and Mike Blood. That very same evening, Jessica Reynolds and Mike Blood delivered meals to employees on duty at MCH. On Christmas Day Mike was on hand to deliver meals to employees. How fortunate MCH is to have such dedicated and caring employees!

Santa arrived on December 5th with gifts and merriment for the employees' children at their Christmas Party. It was a sellout crowd, with the highest participation in five years. Lori Cawthern masterminded this special event with help from Mary Gleason, Cathy Maki and Mike Blood. It was wonderful to see such smiling faces enjoying the magician and the refreshments as well as the gifts from our Santa (Jim Orr) which had been selected with such care for each child present. How does Santa do that so well- just practice I guess.

I am very happy to say that MCH has been designated as a Critical Access Hospital by the State of New Hampshire. This designation will increase access to rural health care and improve the overall stability of rural hospitals. My thanks goes out to the entire staff who readied MCH for the state inspection to make this happen.

Once again our community stepped up to the plate to make our 2004 year end appeal a huge success. Our gifts exceeded the goal of \$150,000 and I would like to thank all the employees who included MCH in their charitable giving. We also were able to achieve the goal set for the Monadnock United Way appeal this year. It is gratifying to know that your generosity extends to us in so many ways.

Our Jaffrey Family Medicine office has a new physician as part of its team. She is Dr. Nadine Dubrule and a welcome addition to our staff. Chris Jacobson, ARNP, has relocated from Jaffrey to the Antrim Medical Group and is a welcome addition to that practice. We continue to actively recruit for a new physician to join Chris in Antrim, since Drs. Jaynes and Brown have moved to Peterborough to open their new practice, North Meadow Family Health.

MCH starts 2005 with enthusiasm and hope for positive changes and accomplishments; we are so fortunate to have the assistance of each one of our employees, medical staff and our volunteers to move forward in this endeavor.

Happy New Year to you all,

Peter Gosline

New Medical Staff

Nadine B. Dubrule, M.D. has recently joined the Jaffrey Family Medicine practice. Previously Dr. Dubrule worked at Spectrum Healthcare Resources. Prior to that she was at Carondelet Medical Group; in private practice; and spent time at Thomas-Davis Medical Centers — all located in Tucson, AZ. Dr. Dubrule received her B.S. degree at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and her medical degree at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Her post-graduate training was at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane, WA and her residency at Maine-Dartmouth Family Practice in Augusta, ME. She is certified by the National Board of Medical Examiners and also the National Board of Family Practice and is affiliated with the American Academy of Family Practice.

Window Shop Celebrates 35 Year Birthday



On February 11th, many of the volunteers at The Window Shop, along with hospital employees, gathered together to celebrate the shop's 35th birthday with cake and gifts for all. Founded in November of 1969, The Window Shop has grown considerably over the years and has moved three times in its history. One of the things that has remained consistent is the fact that for 35 years the shop has been completely staffed by volunteers who have to be credited with the huge success of this popular retail shop. Last October the hospital hired long-time Window Shop volunteer, Toni Gildone, as the shop's first part-time manager.

This past fiscal year, the shop grossed nearly \$50,000 and presented the hospital with a gift of \$35,000. The shop's original mission of using the profits to buy a "wish list" item for the hospital continues and last year's proceeds were used towards the purchase of the PYXIS Automated Medication Dispensing System which allows medication to be dispensed from nursing units 24/7 rather than from the pharmacy.

Congratulations to The Window Shop on this major milestone and to the many volunteers who have given unselfishly of their time to make this shop such a huge success.

Caught in the Act

Making a Difference at MCH

Here are just a few of the kind acts that we see happen every day at MCH, where fellow employees go out of their way to help another person or take the extra effort to make MCH a better place to work. If you observe one of your co-workers "Making a Difference," please fill out one of the "Caught in the Act" forms, and we may publish your comments in the next issue of the *Pulse*.

Joanne Fox, Radiology - A few weeks ago the ER was swamped. Joanne took care of all X-Rays efficiently and pleasantly, and helped in the ER changing linens and with other tasks. It may seem like a small thing, but the help was truly appreciated.

Delores Worcester, Switchboard - We would all like to thank Delores for the excellent job she does in decorating the receptionist area for the holidays. It's always so festive and welcoming!

Nancy Johns, Patient Accounts - Nancy on several occasions has covered both medicare billing positions by herself voluntarily for MCH. This is a hard enough job to do with two people. I applaud her and thank her for keeping the bulk of MCH cash flow coming on a regular basis due to her efforts.

Gary Zirpolo, EMS Coordinator - Thank you for stepping right up to the plate to help the fitness test staff on the spur of the moment!!

Jon Bouley, ITS - I needed some copies of a CD to share information with dentists for Monadnock Healthy Teeth. Jon was very helpful (as usual) and made the copies for me.

Michael Coggins, Environmental Services - When a snafu with a car rental company left a candidate stranded at MCH at the end of an interview day, Mike volunteered to drive the candidate to the airport after his shift to meet his return flight. This demonstrates a commitment to the team atmosphere MCH is known for.

Susan Lang, Patient Accounts - Thanks to Susan, our second billing is flying out the door! Thanks for all your help...you are very special to all of us!

Patrice Desrocher, Supervisor, APU - I applaud her for going above and beyond to assist APU managers in addressing the needs of the staff on off-shifts, as well as her assistance with payroll. Thank you, Patrice.

Jen Forrestall, Housekeeping - Jen brought to my attention a broken commode chair and together we were able to start the steps to have it repaired. Most of all Jen had patient safety first!

Marcel, Terry, Dan, Waide, Engineering - We want to thank the four of them for coming so quickly when they were paged for a problem last week. We appreciate their immediate response. ■

Account Services, Continued from Page 1

Mary Belliveau 28 years, Cheryl Rockwell 16 years, Diane Cordelle 12 years, Nancy Johns 12 years, and Pat Lovering 10 years. According to Willis, at times it can be a very stressful environment because most of the calls, from both inside and outside the hospital, require checking into a billing problem or issue.

Patient Accounts posts approximately \$3.2 million a month in cash with most insurers paying within 20 to 60 days. MCH's goal is not to exceed an average of 65 days payment turnaround, and currently their average is 55.54 days, which is considered very good.

MCH Health Services is a seven-person department headed-up by Vicky Robinson. Many of Health Services automated systems and functions are the mirror image of the Patient Accounts systems. This department posts approximately \$500,000 a month and averages an impressive 39.75 day payment turnaround. Two of the department's employees, Diane Smith and Pat Weaver, have been with the group for five years.

Both departments take a very pro-active approach to working with patients to determine what form of financial resources are available and appropriate (i.e insurance coverage, payment plans, financial grants, etc.). Financial counselor Diane Cordelle and Billing Supervisor Vicki Robinson work closely with these patients, giving estimates for upcoming procedures and setting up payment plans. They also work hand-in-hand with the hospital's Social Services Department in identifying individuals who may qualify for financial aid through the hospital's Financial Grant Program.

Planned social gatherings help to take some of the work pressure off these busy departments. These active women plan many events throughout the year, like their Ghoulish luncheon at Halloween, cookie swap, Yankee swap, Italian day and even host "thank you" luncheons for other departments such as the ones recently held

New Faces and Changes at MCH

September through December 2004

NEW FACES	DEPARTMENT	DATE OF HIRE
Judith Fasulo	OB - RN	9/1/04
Gregory Kriebel	Pediatrics - MD	9/20/04
Carol Dessurealt	APU - RN	9/28/04
Lynn Wilczynski	Member Services	9/29/04
Denise Swett	Registration	10/2/04
Toni Gildone	The Window Shop	10/4/04
Dennie Wing	APU - RN	10/8/04
Lisa Alaghawani	PIM	10/11/04
Susan Naun	Food/Nutrition	10/11/04
Amber Statler	The Summit	10/11/04
Tanya Naum	Pt. Accounts	10/12/04
Kathleen Brennan	Family Care	10/25/04
Sarah Olesen	HS Billing	10/25/04
Sarah Robbins-Cole	Wellness Center	10/26/04
Christine Croteau	ITS	10/27/04
Maureen Peters	ITS	10/27/04
Eric Lindquist	Respiratory Therapy	10/30/04
Janette Borks	OR	11/8/04
Arian Griffitt	Environmental Services	11/8/04
Judith King	APU - RN	11/8/04
Edgar Luchenbach	OR	11/8/04
Christy-Sue Richtarczik	APU - RN	11/8/04
Arianah Vanni	APU - LPN	11/8/04
Joseph Caron	Radiology	11/12/04
Jennifer Mixon	Fitness	11/19/04
Nicola Hill	The Summit	11/23/04
Cheryl Jessie	OT	11/29/04
Molly Hajjar	Aquatics	11/27/04
Mark Carota	Physical Therapy	11/29/04
Linda Higgins	ITS	11/29/04
Margaret Ross	Antrim Medical Group	12/7/04
Scott Aldrich	The Summit	12/13/04
Sally Bliss	APU	12/13/04
Lydia Cooper	APU	12/14/04
Dana Marangi	Wellness Administration	12/17/04
Lucy Corwin	Wellness Center	12/26/04
Christopher Blouin	Respiratory Therapy	12/27/04

DEPT. CHANGES	FROM	TO
Steve Frechette	Physical Therapy	Jaffrey PT Satellite
Sheila Heywood	APU	The Summit
Anita Rubinstein-Angel	The Summit	QI/UR
Michelle Anderson	JFM	AMG
Elizabeth Kelly	ICU	Nursing Admin.
Marie Bergeron	HS Admin	Mon. Internists
Viviane Bowen	HS Admin	Family Care
Claudia Cleary-Nichols	Emergency Dept.	Education Services
Cathy Desbiens	Emergency Dept.	Nursing Admin.
Richard Fletcher	HS Admin.	Nursing Admin
Rebecca Sawtelle	HS Admin.	NIFM
Brenda Paradise	HS Billing	Monadnock Internists
Lucille Parent	Pt. Registration	Emergency Dept.
Janet Brown	Social Services	HR
Pam Cote	Mon. Internists	Behavioral Health
Peggy-Sue Luedecke	Family Care	Antrim Medical Group
Christopher Jacobson	JFM	Antrim Medical Group

"They do an outstanding job, which allows MCH to continue to meet its mission in this community in extraordinary ways."

—Deb Shipman, CFO

for the Engineering and IT Departments.

It can't be overstated how critical this department is to the financial well-being and on-going successful operation of MCH. "Obviously, the organization's ability to pay its operating expenses (including payroll) and to invest in new technology depends on the ability of the staff in our billing departments to bill and collect appropriately for the services we provide every day," says Deb Shipman, CFO. "They do an outstanding job, which allows MCH to continue to meet its mission in this community in extraordinary ways." ■

Comments & Feedback

Since the *Pulse* is written for MCH employees, we value your opinion and would appreciate your comments or suggestions for future issues of the newsletter.

Please call or email Nancy Clarke with your feedback at extension 1702 or nancy.clarke@mch.crhc.org.