

Pulse

The Heartbeat of Monadnock Community Hospital

SUMMER 2008

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Communications Department... Connecting Our Hospital and Our Community



Left to right: Patrice Pennington, Sandra Senn, Jane Connolly, Marie Fogg, Carol Farnham, Amanda Everhart, Maureen Campbell, Kelly Lambert, Christine Pillsbury, and April Buck. Missing: Sheryl Hamilton, Michele Morin, Susan Gignac, and Donna Everhart.

In most hospitals the main switchboard is located “behind the scenes,” but fortunately for employees, patients and visitors, MCH’s switchboard and staff are positioned in the hospital’s main lobby area, so they play the dual role of operator and receptionist. With the constant buzz of activity, especially during the daytime, this part of MCH could easily be described as the “heart” of the hospital. This large staff of friendly and cheerful operators are always poised to offer assistance to both in-coming callers, as well as helping visitors and hospital employees. In addition to the Communications Department staff, situated at the switchboard desk are Guest Services volunteers who assist patients and guests in locating various offices, registration, the laboratory and perform other tasks to help visitors.

Marie Fogg, who recently stepped down as Communications Manager, started with the department in 1977 as a part-time switchboard operator. When she joined the hospital there were only three receptionists/operators working two shifts, and total physicians numbered 24.

Thirty-one years later, MCH employs

fourteen full- and part-time receptionists who work three shifts, and physicians number 140. In the late 1970s the hospital had six outgoing phone lines with all calls routed through the switchboard and a half dozen pagers. Today there are nearly 46 phone lines, 800 extensions, 230 pagers and 22,000 incoming calls a month.

According to Christine Pillsbury, Manager of Telecommunications, the training is extensive and all new employees are trained by Marie or one of the more experienced operators. Beyond the training, operators are required to participate in 75 hours of orientation on all three shifts. They are also educated about all emergency situations, such as Code 99, the fire alarm system, trauma team activation, panic alarm system, bomb and child-infant abduction policies, disturbances, and other potential major emergencies.

“Even after training and orientation, if an operator is alone, she is encouraged to call any of the staff members with questions,” says Christine. “That makes a new employee feel good. An efficient operator has to have sound judgement and stay calm no matter what the situation.”

Beyond the switchboard, Christine and the department are responsible for analyzing communication efficiencies and supporting and maintaining all telecommunications. The department recently tracked three months of what they term “abandoned calls” (unanswered after three rings) during the busiest periods and as a result proposed a new staffing schedule. The abandoned call rate dropped 50% in three months.

Christine also maintains all phone, fax and PBX systems and does the software programming for new telephones. “I probably spent 40 hours just setting up and programming the telephone systems in the new Jaffrey and Rindge offices,” says Christine. And, most recently, she added the hospital’s 25 new BlackBerry smart phones to her list of responsibilities.

“Working at the switchboard has been ideal for me because of the flexibility that I have with my kids’ schedules, says long-time switchboard operator Patrice Pennington. “I especially enjoy helping people who call or stop by the desk—some with hospital related issues as well as non-hospital questions.”

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@mchmail.org.

MCH Simulation Lab Used in Malignant Hyperthermia Drill

BY JENNIFER L.
HILLSGROVE,
BSN, RN, CCRN

Malignant Hyperthermia (MH) is a disorder causing a rapid rise in body temperature and muscle contractions. MH is hereditary, and can be triggered by certain types of anesthesia when administered to susceptible individuals. Since discovering MH in the 1960s, researchers and health care providers of varied disciplines have made significant advances in the diagnosis and treatment of this rare complication. MH occurs once in approximately every 20,000 anesthetic cases, depending on anesthetics used and patient population.

In order to prepare for and effectively manage the patient who develops MH, the staff of Monadnock Community Hospital recently conducted a Malignant Hyperthermia drill with the help of the MCH Simulation Lab. Using the Laerdal simulator mannequin and portable tech-

nology, the Simulation Team collaborated with the Perioperative Services staff and brought to life a situation that could unfold at any moment. A major component of the MH scenario was the process of preparing and administering Dantrolene, the drug used to treat MH. The staff was able to experience preparing Dantrolene using an expired supply provided by the Pharmacy as a teaching tool for simulation. "I was really pleased that we have figured out a great method of mixing the Dantrolene in a very timely manner which is reassuring in a MH crisis situation... It was great!" according to anesthesiologist Dr. Michael Doherty. The staff was also able to become familiar with the MH supply cart and its contents, which expedited patient treatment during the simulated crisis.

As in past experiences, simulation at MCH has proven to be a valuable

educational tool for staff at all levels and areas within the organization. Simulation has provided staff with the opportunity to engage in crisis situations and learn to effectively manage them in a safe environment. As Deb Wilk, RN, states, "The simulation experience gave me a deeper knowledge base, and I feel more empowered to respond to this rare life-threatening crisis. The response to this simulation showed me the dedication of the nursing staff at Monadnock Community Hospital to work as a cohesive unit."

For every simulation conducted at MCH, there is an improvement in the quality of care the team delivers on a daily basis. MCH is committed to excellence in community care, and simulation is but one of the many ways we work toward achieving our mission as an organization.

KENYAN VISITOR TOURS MCH



Left to right: Lynn Batchelder, Doug Roland, Dorothy Maobe, Wendy Ducharme and Liz Martinez.

Dorothy Maobe, a visitor from Kisumu, Kenya, toured MCH on May 22nd. Lynn Batchelder met Dorothy while on a medical mission trip to Kenya in 2007. Dorothy is the field coordinator for Reverend David Chucha who coordinates groups that go to Kenya for humanitarian projects. Dorothy is also involved with orphan programs in Kenya. This is Dorothy's first visit out of Kenya. She was in New England for one month speaking to groups and visiting communities.

Birthing Center Distributes "Project Linus" Blankets to New Parents

Since 2007, The Birthing Center has been distributing handmade blankets and afghans lovingly created through Project Linus by "blanketeers." Susan Monkton and Sandi Turner, chapter coordinators, contacted Sara Meade and Pat O'Connell about the possibility of distributing handmade blankets and afghans to new parents. Project Linus was named after the adorable blanket-toting character in the Peanuts comic strip. It is a 100% volunteer, non-profit organization whose mission is to provide love, a sense of security, warmth and comfort. Creator Charles Shultz was aware of the blanket project and was delighted to have Linus inspire blanket makers to help comfort babies and children.

Over 155 blankets and afghans have been distributed through The Birthing Center Family Follow-up Program. One mom exclaimed, "You mean women hand-make these blankets to give to us just to be nice? They are so beautiful!!!" The Birthing Center staff shows new parents several blankets and lets them choose the one they like best. New babies often go home from MCH wrapped in Project Linus blankets.

In conjunction with Project Linus, there are other volunteers that knit blankets for babies.

Culture Corner

BY MICHAEL BLOOD, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

At a recent employee meeting, a question was asked about our culture work progress. As you might remember, we had conducted an objective assessment across the entire organization a while back. That assessment identified an organization, that while caring and performance-oriented, was still wedded to its silos. It identified an organization where collaboration was weak, conflict was avoided at all costs and accountability was something somebody else was supposed to be doing. As a result, while oriented toward performance and outcomes, the results were often mixed.

So Peter Gosline determined that he would change all of that. That decision resulted in a Culture Change Plan.

Culture is changed through changing behaviors and that begins with changing leader's behaviors. Realizing the need for high performance team development work, we began the work with the Executive Team—working on purpose, roles, agendas, decision-making, relationship building and trust.

The first phase was designed for the organizational leaders with the goal to identify our core values, beliefs and behaviors. The entire management team was introduced to concepts and skill sets designed to improve communication, conflict resolution and keeping commitments. Peter and his executive team began to articulate and communicate MCH's Mission, Vision and Values at the organizational level. These

defined the organizational purpose and identified the need for departmental alignment and individual responsibility. That work also redefined what it meant to be a caring organization. The second part of phase one was to introduce the organization to the same concepts as leadership. A goal was set at 90% of staff. We would reach 92% of the organization with this Culture Change workshop.

The second phase, the phase we are in now, was to create alignment in purpose and to begin imbedding the concepts from the workshops into the departments through the generation of agreed upon values and behaviors. This is the first step toward developing a culture built on collaboration. We focused on communication/taking responsibility, avoiding victim-playing, and making commitments. We identified value gaps in core beliefs and behaviors, and created ground rules to address the gaps. Our goal was to reach 90% of the departments this year and we are at approximately 75% of departments. So far our work has demonstrated that the departments are in alignment already—showing a high degree of commitment to excellence and a willingness to improve both communication and conflict resolution skill sets. This is reflected in common values and ground rules that are springing up in the departments, i.e., respect, trust, honesty, dependability, and accountability.

The third phase will be to lift leadership standards and create sustainability for these cultural skill sets. But more on that later... in the next *Pulse*.



Off the Cuff

BY PETER GOSLINE



Peggy Sysyn, Radiology—Peggy's husband, Leo Barrell, has moved to the U.S. from London, England to join Peggy in Hancock.

Christy-Sue Solomon, APU—On May 1st gave birth to Shamus Benjamin Solomon. He weighed 9 lbs, 7 oz and was 22 inches. He joins siblings Kate and Nick.

Michelle Cilley, PT—is now offering physical therapy services in the Monadnock OB/Gyn office on Thursdays from 8 to noon. Michelle specializes in treating women's health issues, such as incontinence, pelvic pain, and orthopedic issues during pregnancy. She has been a physical therapist for 10 years and with MCH since 2001.

Gretchen Mathieu, Radiology—gave birth to her daughter Payton Grace on May 7. Congratulations to the whole Mathieu family!

Mary Alice Lavelle, Radiology—recently graduated from Mt. Wachuset with a degree in Health Sciences/Massage Therapy. Congratulations Mary Alice!

Robin Muller, Radiology—the department welcomes Robin as a new Mammography Technologist.

Helen Burke, Pharmacy—has recently transferred from Materials Management to become a full-time pharmacy technician.

Sarah Bay, The Birthing Center—has been a PRN staff member on OB for the last 1 1/2 years and has been accepted at Columbia University, Yale University and the University of Washington Schools of Nursing for the purpose of studying Nurse Midwifery. She has chosen to attend the University of Washington and moved to Seattle in May.

Radiology—The new Hologic Discovery QDR Bone Mineral Densitometry machine has been installed. The unit is much more advanced in technology and will enable more types of exams and do them faster. Beginning the week of July 4th, Radiology will be offering MRI services four days each week (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday).

As we are already past mid-year, and well into summer, I am remembering a number of memorable events since the first of the year here at MCH. In both January and June we held successful Red Cross Blood Drives, both of which exceeded their goals. They are very important to the well-being of our community and our employees and volunteers alike help make this happen. During April we honored all of our wonderful volunteers, with our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. This event allowed us to say "thank you" to the 94 volunteers who devoted over 10,400 hours to help our patients and boost the morale of our employees! Speaking of volunteers, during May we also honored the Emergency Medical Services volunteers and staff, who serve the 13 Towns of the Eastern Monadnock region, in a ceremony held at Monadnock Country Club. There was also a special recognition for one of our ER Nurses, Pat Johnson, for her dedication of many years of service to the Hospital and its patients.

The Parmelee Society recognizes people who have included MCH in their will or estate planning, and our yearly luncheon held in May gave us the opportunity to thank them for their continued support of our Hospital. Once again MCH and the Crooked Mountain Foundation partnered for a fabulous June Gala - an evening of fine food, music, and good friends. Our proceeds went to support our Monadnock Healthy Teeth Program.

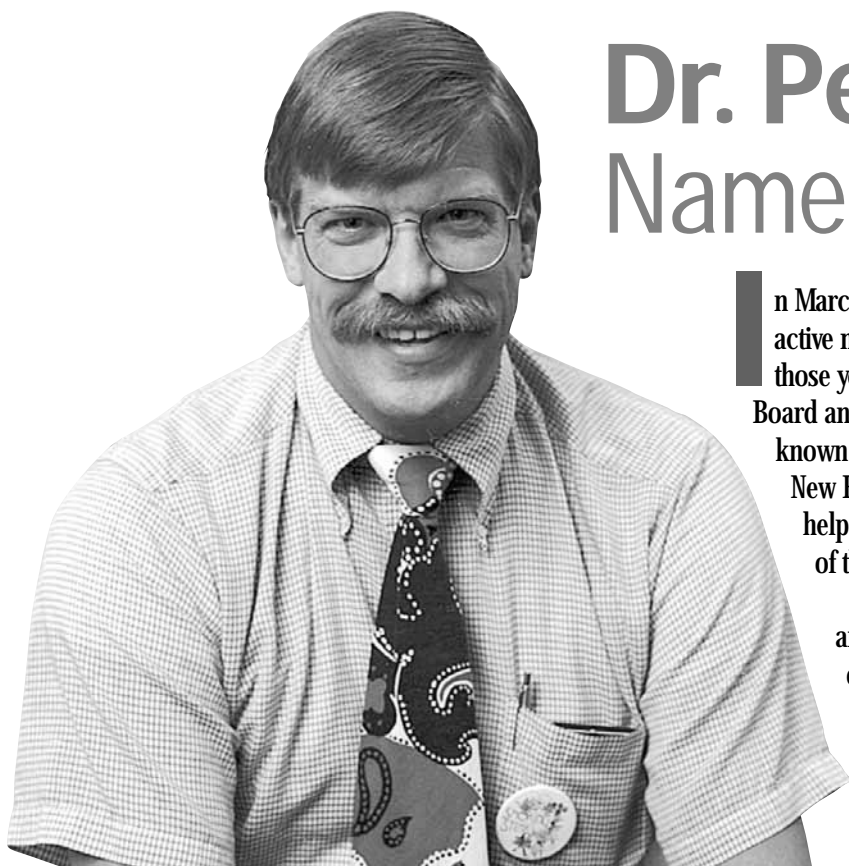
Most recently, the Shattuck Golf Club was the setting for a special reception for our Volunteers and those who continue to give of their time, talents and treasure to ensure the growth and success of our Hospital.

I hope all of you have been able to attend a presentation of the plans for the Hospital expansion and the new connector road. It is a most exciting project that will involve each and every one of us in different ways. Starting this summer the new road and parking lot construction will begin so I ask that all of you "go with the flow" and be patient with any temporary delays or inconveniences, so that we can improve our parking and circulation here at MCH, a positive step for staff, volunteers and our entire community.

Please enjoy the remaining weeks of summer and know that we as an organization have much to be thankful for, with superior employees and volunteers, a very supportive community, and yes, financially we have emerged back "in the black" once again, year to date!

Peter L. Gosline, President and CEO

Crooked Mountain/ MCH Gala



Dr. Peter Forssell Named New Medical Director

In March it was announced that Dr. Peter Forssell was named as MCH's new Medical Director. Peter has been an active member of the medical staff for 28 years, practicing both Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology for 22 of those years, and only Gastroenterology for the past six years. Peter has also served in a number of capacities on Board and Medical Staff Committees, as well as President of the Medical Staff during this time period. He is well-known and respected in the community, as well as state-wide, especially since his recent term as President of the New Hampshire Medical Society. Most recently, Peter served on the Board of Trustees' Planning Committee, helping MCH fashion the current Medical Facilities Plan, and has also been an active spokesperson on behalf of the Medical Staff during the Annual Legislative Breakfast.

As Medical Director, Peter will be assisting MCH on a part-time basis as a liaison with the Medical Staff, and on a variety of administrative projects. He may be contacted in his office, Suite 202 in the MAB, x4226 or on Groupwise (peter.forssell@mchmail.org).

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*.

Dottie Caldwell, Central Service—When we needed special instruments for an emergency case to be delivered and processed on a Saturday, Dottie came in and cheerfully and capably took care of everything for a safe and successful surgery. Thank you Dottie.

Cindy Lynch, APU/Social Worker—My lengthy hospital stay has been life saving but difficult. I always knew I could count on excellent nursing care and doctors, vigilant respiratory help and a comfortable, dear room. Again, I was never disappointed. However, this time I had to face a lot of emotional issues and changes to my life and work. Cindy seemed to always miraculously arrive at my lowest or scariest times. Her compassion, sympathy and expertise helped so immensely to heal both mind and body. Thank you Cindy and thank you MCH for not only treating the physical side of wellness!

Mary Bethel, Registration—Mary was in the café after lunch and saw another employee on crutches trying to get lunch. Instead of letting the employee struggle, Mary carried her tray and got her food for her and helped her through the line and back to her table. What a gal!

John Adams, Volunteer/SDS—John is the perfect volunteer for the same day surgery waiting area. He greets everyone warmly, then stays to sit with the visitors to reassure them. Many visitors make positive comments about John.

Dana Kumph, Materials Management—Near the cafeteria I observed him ask an elderly lady if he could help her. She appeared to be lost and he offered to escort her to the doctors office where she was going. A very kind gesture!

Terry Kilvert, Community Relations—Terry helped an elderly couple who couldn't start their car. She found security and helped them on a very snowy and cold day.

Melissa Duffy, APU—Thank you for filling most of the water pitchers and staying late to help with call lights while I was the only aid on the floor. You are a #1 team player.

Waide Pillsbury, Engineering—We were doing a photo shoot at MCH for the annual report and on very short notice Waide got out the golf cart shuttle, charged it up, and made sure it was ready to be used in the pictures. Thanks so much for your help. We got some great pictures.

Peter Bean, Security—Thank you for keeping the ED staff and patients safe and the patient safe on 5/15/08. By the way, we hear the "Pats" are looking for a linebacker!

Jodi Mattson, ED—Jodi was extremely professional in dealing with a very stressful situation. She took excellent care of the patient in addition to managing a complex transfer. You're the best.

Relay for Life

On June 6th the Monadnock OR "on call" girls participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Swanzey, NH.



Back row, l-r: Carolyn Roy, RN; Miriah Greenwood, RN; Mary Jo Allen, RN; Chris Howe, RN; Joanne Majewski, RN. Front row, l-r: Maribeth Clark, RN; Shirley Winslow, RN

Parkinson Support Group Starts-up Again

The Parkinson's Support Group will start again on August 21, 1:30-2:30, in The Bond Wellness Center conference room.

It will be held on the third Thursday of each month. Contact Bernadette 924-4650 or Suzanne 924-4635.

Green Corner

Major Initiative at MCH to Recycle and Use Green Products

BY ELIZABETH FAZIO, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER

I'm happy to report that the recycling/green initiative is moving right along. As far as recycling, we've been working closely with Monadnock Disposal to identify what we can do now in the way of recycling and what can be done in the future. MCH currently has a dumpster for cardboard and paper recycling which is emptied three times a week. We are exploring the possibility for a future compactor that would allow MCH to compact all paper and cardboard. This would eliminate the need to breakdown boxes, require fewer pick ups and allow us to reduce the amount of our regular trash. Also we are exploring the possibility of buying a new commercial shredder for the shredding room. This would allow us to shred documents that we

currently pay Monadnock Disposal to destroy twice a year.

What's new? We are using more "green" products. We have replaced the multipurpose cleaner in the Wellness Center and main hospital with a Green Seal certified cleaning product. This multipurpose product can also be used for carpet cleaning/spotting and as a glass cleaner. All of our floor wax and stripping materials have been replaced with "green" wax and low odor stripper. We have switched from plastic to paper bags in the main shredding room. This will allow all paper shredded in the main shredding room to be placed in the cardboard/paper recycling container. We are using recycled paper for our toilet tissue and paper towels. We have purchased some can/bottle/glass recycling containers. These containers will be placed outside

the cafeteria in the vending area, the main lobby, and the Wellness Center vending area. Monadnock Disposal will pick them up on a regular basis. In addition to paper products, cans and bottles, we are also recycling alkaline, lead acid and nickel cadmium batteries, compact discs, computers, fluorescent bulbs, foam peanuts, oils, pallets, and toner cartridges. These are just some steps that MCH has taken to show our commitment to creating a more "green friendly" hospital and working towards becoming an environmental leader in our community.

The "Green Team" meets every few months. We are always looking for volunteers and welcome any ideas you may have. If you would like more information on becoming a "green team" member, please email me at Elizabeth.Fazio@mchmail.org.

Students Receive Flewelling Scholarships

The Dr. Herbert E. Flewelling Memorial Scholarship, which was established to financially assist local students who plan to pursue a career in health care, was recently awarded to two local students. Sadie Jackson presented Molly Teixeira, a graduate of Conant High School who plans to attend Regis College, with a \$1,000 scholarship.

Rich Scheinblum presented Anastasia French, a graduate of ConVal High School who will be attending Sacred Heart University, with \$1,000. Molly is the daughter of Paul and Debbie Teixeira of Rindge and Anastasia is the daughter of Cynthia and John French of Antrim.