

Fall 2020



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IRHA Recognizes Award Winners at its 2020 Virtual Fall Conference

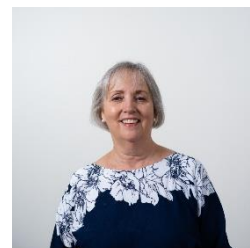


Public Service Award: Dr. Kristina Box

This award recognizes an outstanding individual, organization, company, governmental unit or other entity that has contributed to the public good and is a trustee of the rural health community. This awardee has invested in the community as a whole through acts and services in the rural health community's best interest.

Rural Health Clinic Champion: Dana Stidham

This award recognizes and honors an outstanding leader and promoter of Rural Health Clinics. Dana Stidham developed emergency preparedness exercises and resources and served as a healthcare enrollment navigator for the Marketplace and Healthy Indiana Plan and directed the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Outreach Noble County Grant Project to enroll children and their families in healthcare insurance. Dana was instrumental in acquiring generators for Rural Health Clinics for storing vaccines requiring refrigeration. She also played a leadership role in placing defibrillator devices in RHCs through IRHA grant funding to Rural Health Clinics. Currently, Dana is a Rural Health Clinic Consultant for Indiana Rural Health Association (IRHA) in which she visits clinics to perform mock RHC survey exercises or provides RHC orientation for new practice managers. She plans RHC programs for IRHA seminars and conferences, serves as a liaison in behalf of clinics, advocates for RHCs' needs, and serves as a resource for RHC questions on regulations, policies, and procedures. Dana plans to retire from IRHA on December 31, 2020.



Lifetime Service Award: Carole Kacius

Carole Kacius has served the IRHA Board of Directors in various capacities from 2003 to 2020, including Secretary, President-Elect, President, and Past President and only took the 1-year sabbatical between terms when required by the IRHA bylaws. Carole brought a passion to IRHA's mission, eager to participate at every meeting, anxious to serve on committees, supportive, and organized a student rural health association chapter on IUPUI's campus. Being a board member requires a high level of **dedication** and **commitment** to responsibilities.





NARHC Honors IRHA's Dana Stidham With Prestigious Ron Nelson Award

The Ron Nelson Award stands for Outstanding Leadership and Commitment to Rural Health Clinics in the United States. This award, presented by the National Association of Rural Health Clinics, is a fitting tribute to the life of Ron Nelson. Born in the rural community of Grant, Michigan, he was deeply concerned about underserved areas and their ability to recruit and retain quality medical personnel to the community. He was equally troubled by the limited access that rural communities had to both funding and medical services.

Critical Access Hospitals and Staff Receive Awards

The Indiana Department of Health, State Office of Rural Health, aspires to honor the Indiana Critical Access Hospitals for their performance and acknowledge the best of the best! In that regard, the CAH Award program was developed to stimulate quality improvement efforts and acknowledge distinguished members in the Indiana CAH community.

The State Office of Rural Health would like to announce awards available to Indiana CAHs and CAH staff members in the following categories. We want individuals who have guided their hospital and community through transformational change. You may nominate your hospital, staff member, provider and/or another hospital for the awards.

1. **Innovation in Quality Improvement Award:** CAH that demonstrates the **most innovative** project to improve the quality of care and patient outcomes
2. **Community Impact Award:** CAH that demonstrates a **major impact within its community on any healthcare related topic**
3. **Outstanding Rural Health Provider Award:** CAH staff member that demonstrates **outstanding rural health performance**
4. **Outstanding CAH Leadership Award:** CAH staff member that demonstrates **exceptional leadership** in an MBQIP quality improvement project endeavor

Innovation in Quality Improvement
Presented to

Perry County Memorial Hospital

Improving Outpatient Care and Billing

Indiana State Department of Health – State Office of Rural Health

October 2020

Community Impact Award
Presented to

Cameron Memorial Hospital

Response to Address COVID -19 Pandemic

Indiana State Department of Health – State Office of Rural Health

October 2020

Community Impact Award
Presented to
Decatur County Memorial Hospital
Response to Address COVID -19 Pandemic
Indiana State Department of Health – State Office of Rural Health
October 2020

Outstanding Rural Health Provider
Presented to
Matt Weber
Outstanding Effort to Improve Rural Healthcare
Indiana State Department of Health – State Office of Rural Health
October 2020

Outstanding Critical Access Hospital Leadership Award
Presented to
Mary Drewes
Outstanding Chief Nursing Officer Leadership
Indiana State Department of Health – State Office of Rural Health
October 2020

Congratulations to all!

IU Health White Memorial - Transplants



Indiana University Health White Memorial Hospital earned national recognition for its efforts to end the wait for lifesaving organ transplants.

The recognition comes via its partnership with the Indiana Donor Network, the state's federally designated organ recovery organization, and the 2020 Workplace Partnership for Life Hospital Organ Donation Campaign.

As part of the national campaign, IU Health White Memorial collaborated with the Indiana Donor Network team to educate staff, patients, visitors and the White County region about the critical need for organ, tissue and eye donation, including signing up as donors. IU Health White Memorial was one of 60 Indiana organizations to participate in the 2020 campaign — up from 50 participating organizations in 2019.

"Indiana hospitals are supporting donation in a way we have never seen previously," said Kellie Hanner, Indiana Donor Network president and CEO. "Together with IU Health White Memorial and our other partners, we are finding new ways to bring hope to the 113,000 people nationwide awaiting a lifesaving organ transplant and the many more in need of healing tissue transplants."

While more than 4 million Hoosiers are registered to give the gift of life, another person is added to the national transplant waiting list every 10 minutes, reaffirming the critical and growing need for more people to say yes to donation.

Nationwide, the 2020 WPFL campaign efforts to raise donation awareness prompted 59,662 new donors to sign up for donor registries in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. "We're proud to help spread this important message in our community," said IU Health White Memorial President Mary Minier. "Raising awareness for organ, tissue and eye donation is vital for the 1,300 Hoosiers, and thousands of patients across the country, who are waiting on a lifesaving transplant."

Anyone, regardless of age or medical history, is eligible to sign up as an organ, tissue and eye donor. To learn more, visit www.IndianaDonorNetwork.org.

The WPFL Hospital Organ Donation Campaign is a national initiative that unites the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the organ donation community with workplaces around the nation to spread the word about the importance of donation.

Woodlawn Hospital Receives INspire Award



MEDIA CONTACT

John Alley, President & CEO

WOODLAWN HOSPITAL Recognized for Excellence in Infant and Maternal Health

[Rochester, Ind.] – WOODLAWN HOSPITAL was recognized today by the Indiana Hospital Association (IHA), in partnership with Governor Eric J. Holcomb and State Health Commissioner Kris Box, M.D., FACOG, for their commitment to infant and maternal health at the first annual *INspire Hospital of Distinction* recognition program.

INspire, funded by the Indiana Department of Health's Safety PIN grant, was developed to implement the delivery of best practice care for Hoosier moms and babies and recognize hospitals for excellence in addressing key drivers of infant and maternal health.

Woodlawn Hospital earned recognition for the top award available, Hospital of Distinction, based on implementing best practices in five key areas, including infant safe sleep, breastfeeding, tobacco prevention and cessation, perinatal substance use, and obstetric hemorrhage.

"Indiana's birthing hospitals are critical partners as we work to drive down infant mortality," Gov. Holcomb said. "Thanks to their efforts, Indiana's infant mortality rate has fallen to the lowest level in state recorded history. Together we will continue this important work to save even more lives and give every Hoosier newborn the best opportunity ahead."

"I am inspired by the work and passion our birthing hospitals bring to make sure all babies born in Indiana have the best start at life," Dr. Box said. "Reducing infant and maternal mortality requires a multi-pronged approach over the course of many years to see impactful change. We're seeing that change happen, but we can't stop now. We must continue to adopt best practices so that we can celebrate more first birthdays in Indiana."

Box noted that among many successes, Indiana has seen a nearly 30 percent drop in Indiana's black infant mortality rate in just two years.

"Indiana hospitals are grateful for the leadership of Governor Holcomb and Dr. Box and are thrilled to be a partner in Indiana's successful effort to reduce infant mortality," said IHA President Brian Tabor. "We look forward to building on the progress we've made and achieving Governor Holcomb's goal for Indiana to have the lowest rate of infant mortality in the Midwest by 2024."

Indiana Hospital Association serves as the professional trade association for more than 170 acute care, critical access, behavioral health, and other specialized hospitals in Indiana.

IU Health Jay Receives Inspire Award



Jay

INSPIRE
Hospital of Distinction

November 21, 2020

Vicki Delzeith

Marketing and Foundation

Office: 260.726.1811

vdelzeith@iuhealth.org



IU Health Jay Recognized for Excellence in Infant and Maternal Health

Portland, IN – IU Health Jay was recognized recently by the Indiana Hospital Association (IHA), in partnership with Governor Eric J. Holcomb and State Health Commissioner Kris Box, M.D., FACOG, for their commitment to infant and maternal health at the first annual *INSpire Hospital of Distinction* recognition program.

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IU Health Jay earned a Hospital of Distinction recognition based on implementing best practices in five key areas, including infant safe sleep, breastfeeding, tobacco prevention and cessation, perinatal substance use, and obstetric hemorrhage.

"Our team at IU Health Jay has worked hard to combat the infant mortality rate. The Healthy Beginnings Initiative was created to address these issues and we have seen great success in reaching new and expectant mothers. I am proud of our team and all of their hard work," said Jon Vanator, IU Health Jay President.

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About IU Health Jay Hospital

IU Health Jay is a 25 bed critical access hospital in Portland, Indiana. IU Health Jay Hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission and offers emergency care, inpatient care, surgical services, several medical specialties as well as several outpatient physician practices. Jon Vanator is the President of Indiana University Health Jay. Learn more at iuhealth.org/jay.

Rush Memorial Hospital “Most Wired”

For the eighth year in a row, Rush Memorial Hospital has won the “Most Wired” award. This award is given to hospitals that excel in the area of Information Technology Management as it applies to improving healthcare, including, but not limited to:

- Protecting patient privacy
- Giving patients digital access to their own health information
- Sharing healthcare data among providers in order to improve patient care
- Preparing for disasters and reducing risks to healthcare data
- Providing the digital infrastructure for:
 - Tracking measures that improve the safety and quality of patient outcomes
 - Improving billing accuracy and operational efficiency in order to control healthcare costs

Winning this award is a particularly proud achievement, as RMH was the only Critical Access Hospital in Indiana to win it. RMH won in both ambulatory and acute care.

More Awards

Indiana Hospital Association presented awards at its annual meeting as follows:

John C. Render Award for Health Policy – Dr. Kristina Box

Douglas J. Leonard Indiana Caregiver of the Year Award – Dr. Darren Brucken

Administrative Professional Excellence Award – Robin Clark, Schneck Medical Center

Distinguished Service Award – John (Jack) Horner, Major Hospital in Shelbyville

Award of Merit – Edward Abel, Blue & Company

Mask Up Campaign for Youth

Submitted by Brooke Trissel, Director of Marketing and Community Relations, Putnam County Hospital

As much of the state, we are seeing an increased number of elderly patients with COVID or COVID symptoms. This has us questioning the safety of grandparents attending sporting events or being with their families for Christmas. The lack of individuals following the mask mandate is alarming and part of the increased numbers, in the opinion of many.

We have worked on two new campaigns. One is focused on our community businesses and their need to

keep their doors open and the fact that another shut down could cause them to permanently shut their doors for good. This campaign will also include community leaders, high school coaches etc. begging the community to wear their mask for specific reasons. For example our high school basketball coach used “Make up to save our basketball season” I have attached the blank document that is being circulated and used. We are shooting a video next week where we will visit 20-25 businesses and individuals to share why masking up is important to their business or profession. This video will then circulate through social media and on our public access channels. We have also created signs and window clings (attachment 2) for businesses to utilize. Attachment two will also be placed on a billboard and on a 30 foot banner that is hung across Indianapolis Road in Greencastle.

The second campaign we are running is focused on children. As a mother of an 8 year old boy, wearing a mask is a chore for him. He puts it on because he has to, as he rolls his eyes! I began to think about these kids. They know they wear it because of COVID, but they don't quite grasp who they are wearing it for. The campaign that has been created has a tag line “Wear Your Mask; Save Your Superhero” We have created



two superheroes; a grandma and a grandpa. Kids look up to their grandparents. They are excited to see them on holidays and when they show up to extracurricular activities. The idea is to help kids understand that they are protecting our elderly population. It is a campaign to give them a reason to wear the mask. We have created posters for the schools to utilize. We will be using the back side of the 30 foot banner to include the third attachment, along with providing each school in the county a four foot banner to put out and display in front of the school. We will be purchasing a certain number of cloth masks and neck gaiters with the picture and saying on them.

I wanted to share a couple of the new ideas we have come up. Mask fatigue is real and we are trying to kick start new campaigns to keep our community engaged, focus on the kids, and tug at the heart strings of our community members.

Brooke Trissel
Putnam County Hospital
Director of Marketing and Community Relations

Cameron Memorial Community Hospital Recognized for COVID-19 Response



The Urgent Care of Cameron Hospital team includes, from left, Kim Lazzer, Bailey Tresenriter, Barb Furrow, Sarah Hagen, Jenna Boyd, Erica Albright, Amy Zigler, Jan Gearhart, Amanda Oliver, Dr. Charles MacLean, Kenessa Midtgard, Caitlin Yager, Flo Byerly, Leslie Stamm, and Nicole Miller. The hours on the sign coincide with the availability of Cameron's COVID-19 resource line.

ANGOLA — Cameron Memorial Community Hospital has been recognized for its pandemic response with a Community Impact award from the Indiana State Department of Health's State Office of Rural Health. Cameron was honored for its quick response to the COVID-19 pandemic, transforming Urgent Care of Cameron Hospital into a respiratory clinic and making significant changes in the hospital itself to serve the local population and inform the public about the novel coronavirus. In addition, Cameron created a COVID-19 resource line for people to call with questions about their respiratory health and advice on where to seek care. "As someone who has been working directly with providers and patients through the state's call center, seeing the work put in by the team at Cameron literally blew me away. The whole state is hurting right now, but with people like the staff at Cameron we can continue working to quell this

epidemic and save as many people as possible,” said David Conrad, FLEX Grant coordinator for the State Office of Rural Health.

The State Office of Rural Health sought nominations for awards in a variety of categories for critical access hospitals in Indiana. Several nominations were received. Cameron was honored for Community Impact. “When Covid hit we implemented Incident Command to develop a framework for our response. Within days, one of our top priorities was to convert our Occupational Medicine Clinic (at Urgent Care) into a respiratory clinic. We converted the HVAC to negative air flow, replaced carpet with hard services and trained staff on the appropriate infection prevention techniques and processes,” Cameron President and CEO Connie McCahill said in the hospital’s submission to the Office of Rural Health.

On Thursday, officials from Cameron and Urgent Care said the effort paid off in serving the community, particularly with Cameron’s ability to provide testing locally and all levels of care for those who were hit with cases of COVID-19. Urgent Care went from an acute care facility, treating all sorts of ailments, to drilling down to manage mainly respiratory illnesses — particularly COVID-19 — in literally days after the pandemic hit in Indiana, said Sarah Hagen, Cameron Medical Group director.

“I think it’s been challenging. Initially we didn’t have a lot of information on COVID,” Hagen said. That meant staff constantly was reading the latest information on the disease that originated in China and has spread globally. “It was definitely a challenge.” Flo Byerly, Urgent Care director, said care at the facility became more focused and it allowed local physicians the ability to send their patients to the respiratory clinic for specialized care they could not necessarily provide and to segregate COVID-19 patients away from others to possibly reduce the spread. “All of the local primary care physicians were able to direct their respiratory patients to a safe location for evaluation, testing and treatment,” McCahill said. “It’s been a real plus for the community,” Byerly said. “It’s been an entirely different process for the community.”

Urgent Care was perfectly situated to provide care specifically for COVID-19 and related illnesses. “This provided a well-equipped and competently staffed location for the community. It allowed us to keep patients with respiratory illness segregated from patients with non-respiratory illness, and also from those needing chronic disease management,” McCahill said. “Our entire Cameron team has played an integral role in keeping COVID-19 numbers of exposures and positive cases under control and well under the state and national numbers.” Cameron started off as the only testing facility in Steuben County, except for a three-week period in May when the state opened one of its OptumServe facilities in Angola. The state moved the unit to a neighboring county that was experiencing a surge of COVID-19 cases in convalescent care facilities. That left Cameron as the lone test site. McCahill estimated that Cameron, mainly through the respiratory clinic, to date has tested approximately 5,500 people for COVID-19. The Indiana State Department of Health, in its Thursday report, said 5,923 people had been tested in Steuben County. The state number includes data from other tests sites — Steuben residents who test in other counties that are counted in the local tally.

“An additional 1,554 patients who met criteria for testing but did not require evaluation or treatment have been tested. Our hotline has fielded over 3,000 calls providing information and assurance. Under the direction of a single physician, Dr. Charles MacLean, and the nursing leadership team of Flo Byerly and Sarah Hagen our Respiratory Clinic and Urgent Care have been the only access Steuben County residents have had to testing for Covid-19 without traveling many miles away from home,” McCahill said. “Through their efforts we were able to maintain our emergency department and medical surgical inpatient services staffed and available for the more seriously and critically ill patients.” McCahill said the entire staff of more than 500 people at Cameron and community support from a variety of agencies and organizations “has been a beacon of care and confidence for our community.” She said the community has rallied together to fight COVID-19. “Steuben County and Angola have exemplified how a community can come together to meet the challenge of a historic and never-seen-before pandemic. And through it all our staff at Urgent Care and Respiratory Clinic have worked quietly, humbly, seven days a week. They are a remarkable and an amazing team and we are so proud and privileged to work with them,” McCahill said.

Awards aside, Cameron keeps working away at providing care for those with respiratory illnesses and the more traditional patient at the hospital. “We have spent thousands of dollars, but more importantly our

staff have given unselfishly countless hours to care not only for COVID patients but thousands of other patients with chronic conditions and life threatening illness," McCahill said.

Urgent Care continues to serve in its traditional role and as a respiratory clinic. It is seeing 50-60 people a day, split almost equally between acute care and respiratory care. "These guys have done an amazing job and they've done it thanklessly," McCahill said. And for those who need it, the respiratory care resource line is still being staffed seven days a week by healthcare professionals at Cameron. It is available from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The number is 667-5555.

Hagerty Hopes COVID-19 Survivors Consider Donating Plasma

ANGOLA — After getting through a bout of COVID-19, Jennifer Hagerty decided to donate convalescent plasma so it might help others who are battling the novel coronavirus.

"And maybe it will inspire others to donate their plasma if they have recovered from COVID-19. The Red Cross said they are in critical need of plasma," said Jennifer, who works as the patient relations director at Cameron Memorial Community Hospital.

Jennifer and her daughter, Hannah, decided to donate plasma last weekend after having gone through bouts with COVID-19 in July. On Saturday they traveled to Fort Wayne to make it happen. Unfortunately, Hannah was unable to give a donation because of a vein issue that occurred. "It was kind of sad. She went through the whole process and then her blood vessel just blew," Jennifer said. It all started with catching COVID-19 in July; they don't know where they were exposed. "We were very careful. We were wearing masks well before it had been mandated," Jennifer said. "I don't want to point the finger anywhere because we could have gotten it anywhere. It could have been at the store."



Hannah was asymptomatic and Jennifer had a mild case. She had some congestion, lost her sense of smell and was fatigued. She had to stay away from work for two weeks. "We feel very blessed that I had it very mild and of course, Hannah had no symptoms," Jennifer said. "We just wanted to do our part for those who are not lucky like we were, who are in the hospital." Without a vaccine and treatment for COVID-19, health officials are looking for a variety of methods to treat the virus. That's where plasma comes in. The Food and Drug Administration has issued an emergency use authorization for convalescent plasma as a treatment in hospitalized COVID-19 patients. It is being investigated for the treatment of COVID-19 because there is no approved treatment for this disease. The assumption is convalescent plasma from patients who have recovered from COVID-19 might contain antibodies against the virus. Giving this convalescent plasma to hospitalized people currently fighting COVID-19 may help them recover.

Based on scientific evidence available, the FDA concluded this product may be effective in treating COVID-19 and that the known and potential benefits of the product outweigh the known and potential risks. Individuals must have had a prior diagnosis of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test and meet other donor criteria. Individuals must have complete resolution of symptoms for at least 14 days prior to donation; a negative lab test for active COVID-19 disease is not necessary to qualify for donation. Jennifer said she and Hannah signed up on the American Red Cross website. After answering some questions in a phone interview, they were able to choose a variety of sites from where to donate and they selected Fort Wayne.

Giving plasma is very similar to donating blood but it takes a bit longer because after the plasma and platelets are removed, the blood is put back in the donor. "It was very interesting," Jennifer said, acknowledging that her background in healthcare for a couple decades helped make the decision an easy one. Information found online indicates a plasma donation would help multiple people. Helping others

was what it was all about for Jennifer and Hannah. “Again, anything I could do to help those who are less fortunate and much sicker, I just wanted to help,” she said.

Cameron Donates Masks to Steuben County Schools



Wade Regadanz, intern for Cameron Memorial Community Hospital, left, stands with Hamilton Superintendent Tony Cassel, Cameron Business Development Assistant Quinton Crowl, Principal Kristyn Watkins, and Principal Greg Piatt as the hospital donates masks to students and faculty at Hamilton.

ANGOLA — Cameron Memorial Community Hospital recently donated masks to all students and staff throughout schools in Steuben County, with most being delivered Tuesday. The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County will receive their mask donation in August. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, schools have implemented mask policies that go in accordance with orders from Gov. Eric Holcomb’s #MaskUpHoosiers initiative. “We stand united with the schools and support them in their efforts to keep everyone safe, healthy and well,” said Jenn Gibson, director of business development and marketing at Cameron.

Miller Poultry Tests All Employees for COVID-19 After Outbreak

Medical staff from Cameron Memorial Community Hospital, Angola, stand at the ready in a temporary COVID-19 testing clinic set up at Miller Poultry, Orland, where there have been at least seven people test positive for the coronavirus. Testing was conducted on Friday and Saturday.

ORLAND — Miller Poultry over two days into the weekend tested almost all of its employees for COVID-19 after there was an initial outbreak of seven positive cases on Thursday. Miller worked with Cameron Memorial Community Hospital, Angola, in setting up a testing clinic on site at the plant near Orland that employs more than 1,000 in chicken processing.



The clinic consisted of a large tent with more than 40 members of the Cameron staff in personal protective equipment running a massive, assembly line of testing that covered Friday and Saturday morning, officials said. "We are trying to react early and stay in front of this wherever that takes us to keep our employees and communities safe," Plant Manager Kevin Diehl said Monday morning. "I have never been so proud of any team in my 50-plus years of nursing. In true Cameron fashion, we saw community members in need and our brave and heroic staff mobilized in extraordinary fashion. Logistics, equipment, supplies and most importantly staffing was all coordinated in an extremely condensed time-frame," said Connie McCahill, president and CEO at Cameron. "We had over 40 staff members who stepped up to make this happen, and I cannot express how grateful I am to work beside such giving and fearless people. Swabbing 800 people seemed a daunting task until we mobilized and began the process. It is difficult to explain how remarkable an event it was."

Testing was done by a third-party, private vendor. Complete results were not available Monday, though Diehl said he thought positive numbers would be low or near zero. "We are very proud of what we were able to accomplish in a very short amount of time to support our fellow community members. It was truly remarkable," said Kelly Keirns, Cameron's director of strategy and development. It is believed that the testing and protective measures put in place at Miller is preventing the spread of COVID-19, Diehl said.

Cameron personnel started setting up equipment at 9 a.m. Friday and started testing at 12:45 p.m. Some 600 people were swabbed by 6:45 p.m. On Saturday, testing resumed at 5 a.m. and ended by 8 a.m. with an additional 160 getting swabbed. The turnaround for test results was 24 to 48 hours. Diehl did not yet have results to share as of Monday afternoon.

Diehl said Miller is getting out in front of the virus, bringing in resources that have not been required by the government when the coronavirus reaches a certain level to require a state strike team, such as what has been done in Cass County at the Tyson Foods pork processing plant that closed for 14 days after some 900 employees tested positive for COVID-19.

Cameron Transforms Itself to Deal with COVID-19



Registered nurse Lindsay Steury demonstrates how an opening in a softwall containment area allows staff to pass materials in and out of the area. It is one of the modifications made in the in-patient area of Cameron Memorial Community Hospital to provide negative pressure rooms for the treatment of patients with COVID-19.

ANGOLA — Years went into the planning of building the new Cameron Memorial Community Hospital. Then, literally in a matter of days the hospital would be transformed into a facility that would be set up to handle the worst of conditions during a pandemic that has gripped the world. Cameron has increased its bed count some 25% in response to COVID-19. And much of that increase was due to a repurposing and reconfiguring of three departments, adding negative pressure rooms in order to battle the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. "We feel confident that these engineered changes best prepare us to care for our patients and keep our staff safe," said Steve Wolfe, Cameron facilities director. Wolfe is responsible for Cameron's conversion to being COVID-19 ready. He makes it sound simple, and perhaps it is to someone with his experience in the physical side of infectious disease control in a hospital.

Nonetheless, Cameron looks a lot different these days, inside and out. "We're practiced in creating soft wall containment during routine project work so the techniques and protocols are not new to us," Wolfe said. "Steve is an expert at taking the needs of our patients and clinical teams and quickly reacting. We dream it and he does it," said Angie Logan, director of nursing. In smaller rural hospitals, space can be a challenge. Creativity and innovation are invaluable traits for a facilities team facing reorganization of limited clinical space. "When (Wolfe) initially met with our clinical team to evaluate our containment needs Steve and his team sprung in to action and afforded us the ability to confidently mitigate exposure for both our patients and staff," Logan said.

A look inside the emergency, in-patient unit and surgery departments, reveals a vast network of specialty flexible plastic walls, magnetic seals and extensive air-handling systems that create a negative pressure situation that not only prevents contamination outside of treatment areas, but cleans and expels air that might be carrying the coronavirus or any other air-borne contaminant. It was all fabricated on site by the hospital facilities staff with assistance and expertise from several contractors.

Negative room pressure is a technique used in healthcare facilities to prevent cross-contamination from room to room and provides appropriate isolation for patients. It includes ventilation that generates negative pressure, which is pressure lower than that of the surroundings. This allows air to flow into an isolation room and exhaust outside. Air handlers exhaust the air through a HEPA filter system that sends clean air out of the hospital.

A look outside Cameron reveals a series of duct work exiting what once were windows. On the second floor, a hole was cut in the roof and a rigid exhaust duct was fabricated and permanently installed to expel air from the surgical department.

To many who work in the hospital, in hindsight, it happened overnight. Yet it took planning and thought and the expertise of Cameron's facilities staff with help from some local contractors along with numerous pieces of rented equipment. "There was a lot of people involved. I just coordinated them and we feel very fortunate to have such a dedicated staff and this level of commitment from these contractors," Wolfe said. "We share in the pride of what we've all accomplished together." Needless to say, what Wolfe and his staff put together didn't arrive in some handy-dandy kit. "The equipment's not designed to do what we've done," Wolfe said. Not when you think of removing windows and cutting holes in roofs and fabricating walls and donning and doffing areas and making it function like permanent, working negative pressure structures. When it came to creating the negative pressure areas, specific requirements must be followed to make sure the air handling equipment removes a specific amount of air per cubic feet per minute. "The pressure has to be just right and must be monitored continuously," Wolfe said.

Hospital staff is going to go to great pains to document what was created in the event it must be reinstalled for a future pandemic or other public health emergency. "We're going to keep drawings if we have to go back," Wolfe said. When it was all said and done, Cameron ended up with 23 rooms or spaces that are negative pressure. In an area of the emergency department, Wolfe and his staff also created a special cough clinic for less serious patients who might be showing mild symptoms of COVID-19. As much as 50%-60% of the ER's negative pressure space has been used, Wolfe said. In the inpatient area, use has been as high as 60%, he said, and in the operating unit, where an intensive care unit was created, use has been zero. "We haven't had to use that yet. Hopefully we never will," Wolfe said. Kendy Fansler, surgery manager, agreed, but noted that in the event the equipment ever has to be used again, they'll know where everything goes so it can be put back up for the next public health emergency.

In the emergency department, medical staff are working with patients to determine the best course of care. Often COVID-19 patients can be sent home to quarantine and recover with minimal care. If necessary, patients are moved to the second floor of the hospital for inpatient treatment where there's one nurse dedicated to providing COVID-19 care. As is the case as in the ER, medical staff in the inpatient area conducts as many bedside procedures as possible at a time in order to prevent trips in and out of the containment areas, said Heather Connelly, med/surg director. To help staff be more efficient, a slit with a magnetized closure was created in one wall to enable medicine or gear to be passed in and out of the unit. A number of procedures can take place in this area, including oxygen therapy, respiratory therapy and the like.

Rush Memorial Hospital Welcomes Haylei Lorca, PMHNP-BC

RMH is pleased to welcome Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Haylei Lorca, PMHNP-BC, to our staff. With Haylei's arrival, we are now be able to offer our patients psychiatric medication management, in addition to continued counseling services. Haylei is a recent graduate of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program at Northern Kentucky University. She has a Master of Science in Nursing from Ohio State University, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the Indiana University School of Nursing in Indianapolis and a Bachelor of Science in Behavioral Neuroscience from Purdue University. She is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, the American Nurses Association, the American Psychiatric Nurses Association and the Coalition of Advanced Practice Nurses in Indiana.



When asked about her philosophy of care, Haylei says, "I'm passionate about providing evidence-based, patient-centered care while utilizing a shared decision-making approach."

Dr. Jeffrey Ginther Makes Impact on Rush Memorial Hospital's Community



In March of 2020, Dr Jeffrey Ginther performed the first total knee replacement surgery at RMH. Seven months later, he performed the first total hip replacement surgery here. Dr Ginther, has performed over 8000 total joint replacement surgeries over the course of his 35 year career. For the first part of his career, he was an army surgeon. For the second part of his career he operated in the Noblesville area.

Dr Ginther's recent move to RMH may have come as a surprise to some, since orthopedic surgery is a field usually confined to more populous regions. However, Dr Ginther feels that rural hospitals have great potential for the field of total joint replacements. Since his arrival at RMH, he has enthusiastically embraced the life of a rural orthopedic surgeon.

When asked about his transition from a large urban facility to a smaller, more rural, hospital, Dr Ginther said, "I think there is more a personal touch at RMH. Our team has a very consistent level of professionalism but there is also more of a family atmosphere. This creates an exceptional patient experience."

Rush Memorial Hospital's "Giveback Event"

"On Friday, September 25, Rush Memorial Hospital held a drive-thru event to thank our community for their extraordinary level of support during the early months of the pandemic. As was the case with most hospitals, RMH team members experienced an incredible amount of stress between mid-March and the end of May, as we all tried to prepare for the unknown. Our community responded with innumerable acts of recognition and generosity, sending meals, snacks and messages of support. This event was our attempt to show them how much their support meant to us during this difficult time.

On the day of the event, team members lined the route of the event, holding signs that expressed their gratitude. Staff volunteers manned a series of stations where attendees were thanked for their support and given a variety of "goodies" for both children and adults. While the masks, distributed by CEO Brad Smith, were the most practical gift item, the Kona Ices were received with the most enthusiasm, particularly by the many children who attended."

The Swing Bed Program at Union Hospital Clinton Allows You More Time to Heal

Recovering from a surgery, illness or injury takes time. As a rural hospital, Union Hospital Clinton can use its beds as swing beds; allowing physicians to “swing” patients from one level of care to another while staying in the same facility.

The Swing Bed Program is designed to provide additional inpatient care to those needing extra time to heal or strengthen before returning home.

"The swing bed unit allows patients to move from acute care to skilled rehabilitation," explained Andrea Spental, RN, Union Hospital Clinton's Case Manager and Swing Bed Coordinator. "A treatment plan is individualized and tailored to our patients' needs. Our top priority is to help patients recover their independence in a safe and highly-skilled healthcare setting."

Acute care patients who have stayed at least three days in Union Hospital Clinton, or other surrounding facilities, but still require further treatment, could be eligible for the Swing Bed Program. A stay in the Swing Bed Program will vary from seven to 20 days, depending on the intensity of care needed and a patient's progress.

Each patient will work with the rehabilitation team five days a week. Nursing services are provided 24-hours a day, seven days a week. The customized treatment plans from highly trained acute care staff are designed to bridge the gap between hospital and home.

Your care team members include:

- *Physician*
- *Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner*
- *Registered Nurses and Patient Care Technicians*
- *Case Manager*
- *Physical Therapist*
- *Occupational Therapist*
- *Speech Therapist*
- *Respiratory Therapist*
- *Mobility and Restorative Care Technicians*
- *Dietician*
- *Pharmacist*

Medicare and most insurance companies cover swing bed programs; however, patients must receive a physician referral first.

Union Hospital Clinton Has New Front Entrance



Conferences, webinars and other educational opportunities from the Indiana Rural Health Association...

IRHA is monitoring COVID-19 and will notify registrants if there are any changes to in-person events

Virtual Events

Indiana Public Policy Forum

January 28, 2021

Time: TBD

This event will be held virtually. Attendee registration opens on November 23 on our [**EVENT PAGE**](#).

Mark your calendar now!



Webinars

UMTRC Webinar: Reducing Length of Stay and Improving Outcomes Through the Use of Remote Monitoring

November 23, 2020

Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Presenter: Micah Dean, MBA

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss methods of data analysis
- Share optimal staffing structure
- Discuss keys for partnering with specialty units



REGISTER NOW

Regain Lost Ground and Grow

December 8, 2020

1:00pm EST

Presenter: Brian Lee, CSP, Custom Learning Systems



You Will Learn How to:

- Master the art and science of strategy
- Think three years out and bring it back to today
- Take charge of the three imperatives of long-term vision

REGISTER NOW

Membership Info

Please check to be sure you have renewed your membership. For instructions [CLICK HERE](#). We welcome new members to join at any time! To join, [CLICK HERE](#).

If you have any questions, please contact [Heidi Malone](#).

We look forward to working with you all!

I'M A PROUD MEMBER!



At IRHA, our mission is to enhance the health and well-being of rural populations in Indiana through leadership, education, advocacy, collaboration, and resource development. Our members work together to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the health care systems; identify needs and problems within the rural settings; and discuss solutions.

www.indianaruralhealth.org



Please submit future CAHoots newsletter articles to Tina Elliott at telliott@indianarha.org.