Teamworks, October 7, 1997

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Sara Planton, a registered nurse who works in the cath lab at St. Luke's Medical Center faces the daily challenges of providing high quality patient care in a fast-paced, high-stress, technology-driven environment. She is the cardiologist's "right hand" during delicate life-saving therapies.

Last February, Sara joined Gerald Dorros, MD, a St. Luke's cardiologist, for a week of working and teaching in India. Dr. Dorros, an expert in cutting-edge interventional procedures, had been invited to work and teach at Vijaya Heart Foundation and Southern Railway Hospital in Madras and Christian Medical Center in Velore. These are cities in southeastern India, a subcontinent with nearly a billion people.

"When I boarded the plane in Chicago, I was excited, anxious and very uncertain about what was going to happen. What would the nurses and doctors be like? How could I speak to the patients, and in what language? After working at St. Luke's ultra-modern facility, what would the hospital facilities be like? Would the nurses and technicians listen to me during the procedures?" Sara had wondered.

"I never dreamed that my work could be so exciting, so exhilarating. The hospital facilities were sophisticated, something I had not anticipated. However I knew that I needed the right attitude, a non-judgmental view; this was imperative. I also began to realize that no environment is just like home," explains Sara.

The St. Luke's cath lab works at a fast rate, and Sara quickly learned that the tempo in India is slower; while Sara adjusted her pace, she did not alter her expectations of patient care.

"I had faith in Sara's ability to adapt to a variety of situations, to remain calm and focused during a crisis, and to teach and explain in a..."
In India, Sara was the only one in the cath lab who knew what to expect as Dr. Dorros worked. The Indian staff was eager to learn from both of them. “However, I often had to remind Dr. Dorros that he needed to explain both the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of each detailed step as he performed it. He often focused so totally on his work that he didn’t speak or communicate with the people in the lab, something that we have become familiar with at St. Luke’s. Here staff may not have time to ask questions later.”

“We’d also brought specialized equipment which was new and had never been seen by them. We had to demonstrate and explain,” adds Sara. The Indian nurses and technicians, skilled in coronary balloon angioplasty, were easily able to adapt their knowledge to the new equipment.

Sara looks back on February’s trip in satisfaction at the job well done and forward in anticipation of another trip to India later this month. “I’m just as excited and nervous, but more aware of what will be going on and what I can anticipate,” she says.
Local and long-distance calls among Aurora affiliates cost thousands of dollars every month, money that could be put to better use," says Debbie Janke, IS technical project coordinator. "Within the Metro Region, we’re fortunate to be able to make telephone calls through a number of cost-saving tie-lines."

For example, to call from Sinai Samaritan Medical Center to Hartford Memorial Hospital, dial 88-83 and the four-digit extension. Or if you don’t know the extension at HMH, dial 88-83, and “0” for the operator.

“That call is a free internal call, saving the cost of long-distance,” explains Debbie. Even local outside calls, at 9 cents each, add up, so Debbie recommends using the tie-line connection whenever possible.

To be cost-effective, use the following tie-line access codes, plus the four-digit extension:

- 83 — Hartford Memorial Hospital
- 83 — Aurora Health Center, Slinger
- 84 — Aurora Health Center, Racine
- 84 — Aurora Health Center, Kenosha (South Region)
- 86 — St. Luke's Medical Center
- 88 — Sinai Samaritan Medical Center

When using the access codes, think of the Heil Building as the hub. For example, from SLMC to SSMC, it’s 88-88; from SSMC to SLMC, it’s 88-86; from Slinger to Racine, it’s 83-83-84. Debbie explains that the sequence of numbers varies, depending on where you’re calling from. “It takes a little effort to learn, but the savings add up.”

If you have questions, call Debbie, at (414) 647-6401. Better yet, use the tie line access code and 6401.

Interoffice mail is another money-saving option for Metro Region employees. Be sure to use interoffice mail whenever possible. At 32 cents for a one-ounce letter, or a dollar or two for a large envelope, mailing costs add up and impact the bottom line. Check with your on-site mailroom for information on which sites are served by interoffice mail.

Do you think that ill health is an unpredictable occurrence or that much of ill health will be predictable, capable of being prevented or managed. In the old paradigm, or model, ill health was thought to be unpredictable; the new model challenges that belief.

Underlying Aurora’s care management philosophy is the belief that ill health can often be prevented or can always be managed for better outcomes.
Insomnia—the inability to fall asleep or stay asleep—is an extremely common symptom of underlying problems, such as stress. But don’t despair. Following these tips may help you to enjoy a good night’s sleep:

1. Avoid taking naps. They can interfere with your nighttime sleep.
2. Exercise may deepen your sleep, but don’t exercise just before going to bed.
3. Avoid all caffeine within six hours of going to bed.
4. Set a regular wake-up time for yourself.
5. Avoid smoking at bedtime. Nicotine is a stimulant that disturbs sleep.
6. Avoid alcohol. Alcohol may help you fall asleep, but it may interrupt your sleep and cause you to feel tired the next day.
7. Use a fan or some steady hum if your sleep environment is noisy.
8. If you are not asleep in 10 to 15 minutes, go into another room, until you feel tired, then return to your bedroom to try again.

Call Aurora Health Care Call-A-Nurse, 888-863-5502, for an assessment and self-care tips.
Sinai Samaritan Medical Center recognizes Jesse Gomez, plant operations, recipient of the August Golden Moment Award. Jesse was nominated because of a recent situation in which inpatient rehabilitation needed locks changed to help protect a brain-injured patient. Jesse was on the unit within 15 minutes, promptly changed the locks, then checked with the rehab staff to make sure everything was satisfactory before leaving the unit. Jesse was also praised for consistently providing a very high level of service that was shown by his timely response, pride of workmanship and friendly, respectful approach to coworkers and the public. Congratulations Jesse!

West Allis Memorial Hospital recognizes Donna Choinski, case manager, Robert Churchill, loss prevention officer, Kate Deakin, patient relations representative, Rita Falzarano, LPN-day surgery, Wendy Hass, CNA-surgery, Betty Kleiner, RN-surgery, and Mary Mouradian, van driver, recipients of the August GEM Awards. Robert’s nomination by a patient shows the kind of service the GEM Award recognizes: Robert led a patient, who was from Hartford, to the freeway entrance and pointed the way for him.

West Allis Memorial Hospital and the Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin have merged their home-delivered meal programs and created, Meals a’la Wheels.

“The reason for the partnership is to allow us to serve more people in the future and to provide services 365 days a year. Together, we have more resources available, including full-time volunteer coordination,” says Carol Johanson, director-dietary services, WAMH. Currently, about 450 people receive meals from Meals a’la Wheels.

The dedicated volunteers from both organizations are continuing in their current roles delivering meals. Because there are more volunteers working together, Meals a’la Wheels will be able to offer meals seven days a week with a six-week menu cycle.

“Combining existing programs gives us the ability to provide more than just a meal,” says Eric Tetzlaff, who had managed the program before being named to a new VNA position. “The volunteers will be able to observe client health, environment and overall well being so that we can make appropriate contacts, if needed,” he adds. The VNA has been delivering meals for 32 years.

For further information about Meals a’la Wheels, and for information about volunteering, call (414) 328-4444.
Care of the Older Woman Geriatrics in Primary Care Annual Conference

Care of the Older Woman, a one-day Geriatrics in Primary Care Annual Conference hosted by the Geriatrics Institute at Sinai Samaritan Medical Center, University of Wisconsin Medical School, Milwaukee Clinical Campus; and the Wisconsin Geriatric Education Center, will be held at the Milwaukee Hilton, 509 W. Wisconsin Ave., Wednesday, Oct. 22.

The program is especially geared to physicians, nurses, social workers, mental health practitioners, physical and occupational therapists and other professionals in health, human service and aging provider networks.

For further information and to register, call (414) 219-3047. Fees are discounted for Aurora physicians and employees.

Midwifery Clinic marks 10 years

The staff of the Nurse-Midwifery Clinic, Sinai Samaritan Medical Center, will be hosting a celebration of their first 10 years of service on Oct. 9. Since 1987, according to Janet DeCoopman, CNM, the Nurse-Midwifery Clinic has “delivered 3,000 babies and has provided personalized health care to thousands of women.”

Employees are invited to an open house 1-4 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 9 in the clinic at the west campus of Sinai Samaritan, 2000 W. Kilbourn Ave. Refreshments will be served. Call (414) 937-5450 for further information.

Educational Assistance Update Change in Tax Laws

The federal tax laws governing employer provided tuition reimbursement have been extended. All undergraduate classes will continue to be exempt from Federal income tax and FICA for classes starting before May 31, 2000. State tax will still apply for classes viewed as non-job related for tax purposes. Graduate classes which are not considered job-related will continue to have Federal income tax, FICA, and State income tax withheld.

This is a an update of information included in the Sept. 23 Teamworks, Metro Edition.

Respiratory Care marks special week with food drive, display

National Respiratory Care week is Oct. 12-18. The respiratory care departments at St. Luke’s Medical Center, St. Luke’s South Shore, Sinai Samaritan Medical Center, West Allis Memorial Hospital, Hartford Memorial Hospital, Memorial Hospital of Burlington and Lakeland Medical Center are having a food drive for Second Harvest (in Milwaukee) and several other local food pantries (outside Milwaukee). Employees are asked to contribute nonperishable items beginning Monday, Oct. 13. Check with the respiratory therapy department at your facility for more information.

Employees may also visit cafeteria displays, beginning Oct. 13, for answers to the following questions about asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and smoking.

1) True or false: Nearly 40% of asthmatics are children.
2) True or false: Children sometimes “outgrow” asthma.
3) True or false: COPD affects men and women with equal frequency.
4) True or false: A good eating habit for COPD patients is to eat three big meals a day.
Cut the fat, not the flavor
The Karen Yontz Women's Cardiac Awareness Center at St. Luke's Medical Center offers a Holiday Recipe Modification class, 5:30-7 p.m., Wed., Nov. 12. Call (414) 649-5767 for more information and to register. Fee is $20.

Word to the Wise
Handwashing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infection.

55 Alive/Mature Driving Class, an 8-hour classroom refresher, is offered monthly by Aurora's Freedom program with the American Association of Retired Persons. Call (414) 389-2555 for further information and to register. Cost is $8 for the two four-hour sessions.

Programs by St. Luke's Medical Center Women's Healthcare Services
- Women's Health Issues, 10 a.m., Tue., Oct. 14, St. Luke's New Berlin. Call (414) 827-2900 for more information and to register.

Teamworks
Teamworks, Metro Edition, is issued every two weeks, the Tuesday after payday. Bulletin Board deadline is three weeks in advance of the publication date. Deadline for the Nov. 4 issue is Oct. 14. Lead time for more complex stories like Employee Spotlight is at least four to five weeks. The contact is Susan Lebergen, internal communications coordinator, (414) 647-3126 or fax (414) 671-8560.

St. Luke's Medical Center Pastoral Care invites employees and volunteers to attend the 55th Life Memorial Service for the families and friends of patients who died at St. Luke's between January and April, 7 p.m., Tue., Oct. 14, SLMC auditorium. Refreshments are served after the 30 minute service.

Hartford Memorial Hospital and the American Lung Association of Wisconsin are offering a two-part Asthma Forum, 7-8:30 p.m. Tue., Oct. 28 and Tue., Nov. 4 at Germantown High School, W180 N11501 River Lane. Call (800) 586-4872 to register.

Hartford Memorial Hospital's Chaplain of the Week
- Oct. 12-18 Rev. Steven Fletcher, Fait's Bible Alliance, Neosho, 625-3538
St. Luke’s Medical Center’s Physical Therapy staff is celebrating National Physical Therapy Month in October. The theme is Healthy Living promoted by physical therapists through the development of body awareness, exercise instruction, functional mobility training and education including preventive care, support groups and community lectures. St. Luke’s staff includes 58 physical therapists, 14 physical therapy assistants, two athletic trainers and numerous clinical aides and other support staff.

St. Luke’s Medical Center Nuclear Medicine Department is hosting an open house 2-4 p.m., Wed., Oct. 8. to celebrate National Nuclear Medicine Week. Tours and refreshments will be offered.

It’s a dog’s world, a 13-minute quality service video, will be presented at Sinai Samaritan Medical Center. Free popcorn to those who turn in completed questionnaires after the video.

Showings at the West Campus cafeteria are 
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Sat., Oct. 25 and 8:30-10 a.m., 1130 a.m.-1 p.m. and 6-7 p.m. Tue., Oct. 21 and Thur., Oct. 23.

Showings at the East campus cafeteria 
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Sat., Oct. 25 and 8:30-10 a.m., 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and 6-7 p.m. Wed., Oct. 29 and

Aurora Behavioral Health Services Upcoming community education includes:

Oct. 13 — Living with a Problem Drinker
Oct. 16 — Depression Busters
Oct. 20 — Helping Move Your Child From Victim to Survivor: A workshop for parents
Oct. 20 — Trust and Intimacy
Oct. 21 — Talking to Your Partner: What really works in couples communication
Oct. 22 — Coping with W-2
Oct. 29 — Chemical Dependency: A Family Illness
Oct. 29 — Diagnosing and Misdiagnosing Attention Deficit Disorder
Oct. 30 — Healing Symbols

Programs are offered in Milwaukee, Wauwatosa, Waukesha and Kenosha. For times, locations and further information and to register, call (888) 771-2247.

The Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin and Max A. Sass & Sons Funeral Homes offer Hospice Care: It doesn’t mean giving up 6:30-8 p.m., Thur., Nov. 6, Aurora Conference Center. Free. Call (414) 328-4466 for further information and to register.

Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, which begins Oct. 1, and Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, which begins Oct. 10, are major Jewish holidays.

[Answers to Know your Metro Region quiz: A, 4; B, 3; C, 3; D, 2; E, 1; ]