

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF EVANSVILLE STATE HOSPITAL

Preparing for the Worst; Hoping for the Best

By Theresa Arvin, Community Services Director

On the afternoon of March 12, visitation at Evansville State Hospital was suspended indefinitely. The hospital's first public response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Letters, emails and phone calls went out to family members, volunteers, and contract vendors. Recommendations for long term care facilities by the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) were put into place under the direction of our Executive Team and Infection Preventionist Donna West.

The wave of social distancing, and state and local mandates for business closures has been a tremendous blow to everyone and the communities in which we live. Our hospital community too has been affected with precautionary measures and efforts to keep the virus at bay.

Precautionary measures have included giving special attention to hand hygiene, cough etiquette, and increased cleaning in high traffic areas particularly treatment program rooms and units. Staff are being screened as they report to work for signs and symptoms, and temperatures are being checked. A policy of clean in/clean out hospital-wide has been established with the washing of hands and using hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the building, units, and program areas. We've reduced the number of staff going through the geriatric unit with meals and programming taking place on the unit. Teleconferencing and video meetings are being utilized where needed.

An intermediate care unit for COVID-19 was established to further prepare the hospital for a quarantine unit when there is a need. Maintaining an essential workforce was addressed through flexible work schedules, some working from home, and the offering of meals and child care. Homemade cloth masks were acquired from the community and made available for voluntary use, a temporary policy allowing staff the option of wearing non-healthcare quality face masks to prevent the spread of illness. The primary purpose of the cloth masks is to act as a barrier between patients and staff members who may unknowingly be infected. Surgical masks are available and will be used when a suspected or positive case of coronavirus occurs. The hospital also has N95 masks available for use with these and other fragile respiratory cases.

Please know that our focus is on patient care as we promote our mission of Hope & Recovery. Thank you for your support, love and prayers.



Michelle Martin, Donna West, Candy Niswonger, and Jeffrey Duncan help with employee screenings in the morning.

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Thank you!

With the visitation restriction, also came our efforts at reducing the foot traffic at our front entrance with restrictions to the main lobby by donors and delivery staff. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

A need for 400 cloth masks was advertised by our friends in the community and we received an overwhelming response. We received almost double that amount! Thank you for your quick response. The creativity of the masks were remarkable with novelty designs and fabrics.



Glenda Bott	Brenda Mikel
Marilyn Welch	Kristi Taylor
Linda Pollock	Erin Lewis
Joann Rodriquez	Diane Braun
Kathi Goen	Jennifer Braun
Paula Hurst	Kathy & Larry Holt
Bob & Peggy Duff	Teresa Whitledge
Cathy Bell	Rhonda Hurt
Lynda Heines	Suzanne LaFollette



Deaconess
Jo Ann Fabrics
Pike Mattress Co
Sew & Serve
Friends of ESH
St. James West
Boonville First Baptist Church

New Employees

Larry Damm, Nursing Service
Jennie Deyne, Nursing Service
Lisa Grace, Nursing Service
Michael Cobb, Housekeeping
Adesha Groves, Housekeeping
Mykelle Regacho, Nursing Service
Victoria Horton, Housekeeping
Patricia Adamson, Nursing Service
Joseph Sparks, Nursing Service

Goodbye Employees

Marsha Howell, Continuum of Care/CIP
Marcia Loving-Wilkerson, Continuum of Care
Rachael Schack, Nursing Service
Carol Wurtz, Psychology



In Loving Memory

Charles Blake	Scott Huebschman
Lisa Blankenship	Larry Miller
Cathy Brandenstein	Emily Rose
Ron Cox	Dennis Thomas
Evelyne Eickhoff	Vicki Vincent
Ruth Giannini	
Lois Hardin	
Vickie Hatcher	



May is Mental Health Awareness Month!

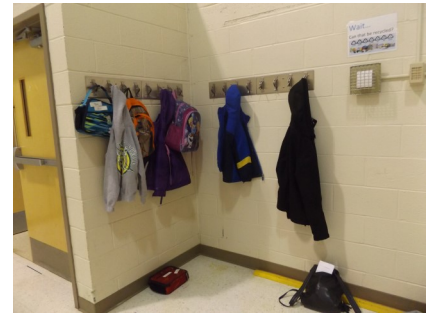


The challenges we face in life affect our mental health. Take care of yourself. If you feel like you are struggling, talk with someone you trust or seek out professional help. Employee assistance programs offer referral services and sometimes free or low-cost counseling sessions.

Helping Employees With Childcare

By Tonya Smith, Rehab Therapy Supervisor

Because of the closing of local schools during the pandemic crisis, ESH & other state hospitals were approved to provide childcare for children 5-13 years of age. This happened with the cooperation of FSSA, DMHA, The Office of Early Childhood Education and the Indiana State Fire Marshall. In a matter of days, ESH staff pulled together to create a fun and safe environment for children. Many tasks were necessary - the coordination of cleaning the make-shift childcare area, setting up supplies and organizing staff to help care for the children. One staff even came up with a name for the childcare and created a sign. She made the statement that it "takes a village" and viola *ESH Kids Village!*



The childcare was made available to all ESH and Evansville Psychiatric Children's Center staff in absolute need, no matter what shift starting March 16, Monday -Friday. The hours of operation ran from 6:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with an average of eight children. The children who have participated have had the opportunity to use the hospital's Activity Therapy building & surrounding grounds to play games such as air hockey, ping pong, pickleball, kickball, and several other sports. They've also participated in craft activities, been on walks to the sensory garden, and played electronics, board games and watched movies in the canteen with fresh popped corn. Parents have reported that their children are enjoying their stay at the Kids Village. "The boys couldn't stop talking about how much fun they had." said Steve Mathis, Physical Plant Director. "One was asleep before we got across the bridge; the other was so tired but he continued to talk about his fun day." Kudos to all who made this project a reality!

Energy Efficient LEDs

The lighting project to replace the fluorescent bulbs with LEDs began in March and involves replacing ALL the bulbs throughout the hospital. "That's over 2,000 bulbs" says John Beavin who is working on the project along with Physical Plant staff members Detrick Grant, Terry Wilson, and Ryan Kasey. The majority of the lightbulbs in hallways, main corridors, and back sections of the hospital have already been replaced, approximately 200+ bulbs. Yet to be replaced are the bulbs on the units, in bedrooms and bathrooms. The energy efficient lights will save the hospital a substantial amount along with a nice tax break. The bulbs have a guaranteed five-year life. "Everyone is noticing how much brighter the areas are with the LEDs, much like the parking lot and campus street lights which were replaced over a year ago. The LEDs really make a difference."



Pictured replacing the hallways lights are Physical Plant staff John Beavin and Terry Wilson.

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COMMUNITY CONNECTION is published every other month for friends of Evansville State Hospital. News items are welcome and should be submitted to the Community Services Office.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.IN.GOV

In Memory of Vickie Hatcher

Vickie passed away on March 11, 2020 and will be greatly missed. She was a dedicated employee of 21 years, working mostly on Unit D, evening shift in Nursing Service. She was a loyal, hard-working individual who was always willing to lend a hand. She loved a good practical joke and is remembered by her smile and laughter.



The annual **Volunteer Service Celebration** was regrettably canceled. Letters of appreciation were mailed to individual and group volunteers the week of April 23, celebrating National Volunteer Week 2020.



Thanks ☆
Hooks Apothecary

The beauty of our hospital campus in spring is remarkable, particularly the blooming redbud trees.