



Treating Patients Like Family

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Dr. Valinda Allen is Medical Director of Alton Memorial's Wound Care Center

ALTON, IL – One of the highest forms of praise for doctors is to say that they treat their patients like family. In the case of Dr. Valinda Allen, the medical director for the Alton Memorial Hospital Center for Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine, that's very true.

Dr. Allen has been at Alton Memorial since 2007 and was working in the Emergency Department until an opportunity came up in the Wound Care Center in 2009. Dr. David Burnside, medical director in the ED, advised her of the opportunity. Dr. Allen also had a more personal interest in wound care.

Dr. Valinda Allen has been with Alton Memorial Hospital since 2007 and in the Center for Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine since 2009.

“My grandmother had venous leg ulcers at times, and I could see there was a significant lack of knowledge about wounds,” she said. “So I became more aware of the care of both acute and chronic wounds. Over the years, that interest has evolved and become more refined.”

Dr. Allen was born and raised in St. Louis, and earned her undergraduate degree from Washington University. She went to medical school at Howard University College of

Medicine in Washington, D.C., and began training in a general surgery residency at the Washington Hospital Center. When Dr. Allen left that program, she began practicing emergency medicine. She lived and worked in Richmond, Va., for 13 years before returning to St. Louis in 1999. Dr. Allen worked at St. Joseph Health Center and Hospital West, and St. Alexius Hospital before coming to Alton Memorial.

“Our mission is to take care of chronic wounds,” Dr. Allen said. “We see wounds related to diabetes, disorders of circulation, surgical complications, pressure wounds and even trauma. We manage the wounds using the latest products and information available to us. We are open to using new innovations if they will get the best results for our patients in the least amount of time.

“We also have two hyperbaric oxygen chambers for patients with certain unresponsive wounds, or for tissue injuries related to radiation treatments. Einstein said the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different result. I am mindful of that. Our healing rates are significantly higher than the national averages, and we are proud of that.”

Dr. Allen’s other responsibilities include mentoring other physicians in the center, promoting the center within the local health care community and overseeing the quality of the program.

“I consider myself very fortunate to have the staff and the other physicians that I work with at the Wound Center,” she said. “I rely on each of them to keep our clinic running smoothly and successfully. Everyone is compassionate, respectful and friendly. You see that in our relationships with one another, other departments in the hospital and especially our patients. We frequently have former patients who stop by just to visit. Some days it’s like old home week.”