



AMH Wound Care Staff Stays on Cutting Edge of Knowledge

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ALTON, IL – The only constant in health care is change, and the staff at the Alton Memorial Hospital Center for Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine knows this. Even though the Center has been open for seven years and has had outstanding healing rates and clinical outcomes, many members of the staff are continuing to develop their skills in this challenging and very specialized field.

The Wound Care Center is affiliated with Healogics (formerly Diversified Clinical Services), a national company that partners with hospitals to provide the complex wound care services that patients require.

“This affiliation provides a multitude of benefits for patients that come to be healed at our Center,” said Dave Gislason, program director of the Wound Care Center. “Benefits include the Clinical Practice Guidelines that guide the physicians and nurses, the outcomes measures and standards that the clinic strives to attain, and regional and national support teams that help with issues related to reimbursement, clinical outcomes and community education.”

PHOTO BY DAVE WHALEY

Members of the Center for Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine staff at Alton

Memorial Hospital who have recently furthered their education include, front row left to right, Patti Kain and Mike Foster; back row left to right, Kelly Skelton and Lisa Bone.

Mike Foster joined the center in March as a medical assistant, and he recently passed the Registered Medical Assistant exam to earn his RMA credential. Foster also traveled to Jacksonville, Fla., to complete a 40-hour course in Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) so that he can provide care for patients receiving this specialized treatment. HBOT is a daily treatment, in which a patient breathes 100 percent oxygen at pressure greater than normal atmospheric pressure in a hyperbaric chamber, greatly assisting in wound healing.

Kelly Skelton, RN, spent several months studying for the Certified Hyperbaric Registered Nurse exam and is now a CHRN. This added experience and credentialing means that Kelly can now administer a key test for measuring the potential benefits of hyperbaric oxygen therapy for patients in the Wound Center. Kelly will soon be starting on earning her BSN degree to further her skills even more.

“When evaluating wound care centers, it is important to consider whether the staff members are certified in HBOT and can provide the highest level of care,” Gislason said. “In addition to Kelly, AMH Wound Center already has a certified hyperbaric technician, Tonya Ballard, who received her CHT in 2010.”

Patti Kain, RN, just completed her BSN degree from McKendree University. Patti is the clinical coordinator of the Wound Care Center, and this added knowledge will benefit her and the staff at the Center as she leads them in the provision of care. Next up for Patti is the completion of the Clinical Wound Specialist program. This course is offered through Wound Educators and takes 57 hours to complete. That includes taking the national board exam through the American Board of Wound Management.

Lisa Bone, RN, BSN, will be attending an intensive 10-week course at Emory University in Atlanta to obtain her WOCN certification. This specialty certification serves as the gold standard for wound, ostomy and continence nursing care. Lisa is also pursuing her MSN degree at Chamberlain University.

“The field of wound care, like many other areas of health care, continues to evolve as we identify new treatments for chronic wounds,” Kain said. “I am so proud of our staff for continuing to enhance their skills and increase their knowledge through education.”

All clinical staff in the Wound Care Center has been certified in the application of negative pressure wound therapy, or wound vac therapy, which is another specialized

treatment for healing wounds. Wound Vac therapy promotes wound healing by applying a vacuum through a special sealed dressing. The continuous vacuum draws out fluid from the wound and increases blood flow to the area.

Finally, each staff member goes through an annual credentialing process to ensure they are skilled in providing all of the advanced modalities that the Center has available for patients.

There are four physicians of various specialties available at the Wound Care Center for your convenience. Because of this, a doctor referral or prescription is generally not required for someone to be seen in the Center. If you, a family member or a friend has a chronic wound (one that has not healed in the last 30 days), you can contact the Wound Care Center directly at 618-433-7066.