



AMH Job Shadow Program Promotes Teamwork

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ALTON, IL – The People Team at Alton Memorial Hospital coordinated a job shadow program Aug. 31 to provide employees an opportunity to learn more about a department with which they interact. Many of the 28 employees who participated said the experience was a real “eye-opener.”

“I have a new appreciation for how hard everyone in the ED works,” said Mary Demko of Health Information Management, who shadowed unit secretary Candace Hausman in the Emergency Department. “Candy is the queen of multi-tasking. The many things she has going at one time is amazing. If I hadn’t seen it for myself, I wouldn’t have believed it.”

“My big take-away was this – I will NEVER call the operator again to ask for an extension number or to be connected to another department,” said case manager Susie Moore, who shadowed Samantha Berry in ER registration. “It’s unbelievable the amount of things that ER registration does.”

Candace Hausman, a unit secretary in Alton Memorial Hospital’s Emergency Department, prepares patient records to be scanned while Mary Demko, an outpatient coder in Health Information Management, looks on during the job shadow program held at Alton Memorial on Aug. 31.

While most of the participants gained a new appreciation for their peers, some of the lessons learned were very basic.

“We were faxing physician orders to registration on goldenrod paper, which makes the faxes very hard to read,” said Tammy Miller from the Wound Care Center, who shadowed Betty Tormino in Registration. “If I hadn’t spent this time with Betty, I would have never known that.”

Cindy Dickinson from Medical Imaging shadowed Kristin Darr in the ICU.

“I learned that there are needle-less injectors to draw up meds,” Dickinson said. “Kristin actually gave me one, so now I can order them for my department.”

Vanessa Graff from the Outpatient Cancer and Infusion Center shadowed Vanessa Weishaupt from the Inpatient Pharmacy. Both gained a better understanding of the processes and how, by working together, they can positively impact patient care.

“I work in the lab and shadowed in the Emergency Department,” said Cassie Fisher. “Other departments rely on lab work in order to do their work. In the ER, it’s especially important to get their results to them quickly.”

“Shadowing in the Center for Senior Renewal gave me a better understanding of their clientele,” said case manager Darla Wilfong. “Now I’ll be looking for potential referrals to Senior Renewal.”

The goals of the job shadow program are to encourage interdepartmental teamwork and foster a better understanding of the contributions each department makes to Alton Memorial’s mission. Participants were encouraged to share the experience with members of their own department.

“In addition to hearing a lot of peer-to-peer recognition, we also identified some areas for improvement,” said Nikki Schaefer, chair of the People Team. “Those are areas that may benefit from a RIE (Rapid Improvement Event).”