



Lisa James New Diabetes Educator at AMH

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ALTON, IL -- With the information superhighway opening up more fast lanes all the time and incidences of diabetes continuing to grow, serving as a diabetes educator would seem to be a position with significant growth potential.

Lisa James, a nurse in Alton Memorial's Surgical Services department for the past 10 years and a nurse for 25 years in all, is the new diabetes educator at AMH. She replaces Judy Mayhew, who retired in December after more than a decade as the diabetes educator and more than 30 years at the hospital.



“Judy was a great role model for me,” Lisa said. “I was very fortunate to be able to work with her for almost six weeks before her retirement. That helped a great deal.”

James, a native of Granite City, earned her associate degree in nursing at Belleville Area College and her bachelor’s degree from Saint Louis University. She is pursuing her

master's degree in Nursing Education at McKendree University, with an eye toward earning that degree in 2014.

“I really enjoy working one on one with patients,” she said. “And that’s the great thing about this job. We see both inpatients and outpatients, and it could be anyone from someone who was just diagnosed with diabetes to someone who has dealt with it for years. Sometimes those are the people who need a fresh set of eyes.”

More than 27 million Americans have diabetes, and it contributes to more than 224,000 deaths each year. And yet it’s a disease that can be self-managed – as long as people follow the directions set forth by James and other educators.

“Proper diet and exercise is the basis for everything,” she said. “We want to help those with diabetes to manage things themselves. We focus on anything related to diabetes, from working with insulin pumps to helping people newly diagnosed with diabetes transition from being an inpatient to managing themselves at home.”

James will work closely with a patient’s primary care physician to help manage his or her health and reduce the risk for complications. Services include medication instruction, carbohydrate counting, exercise planning, hypoglycemia treatment and proper foot care.

“I became an educator while working in Surgical Services, so this is what I really enjoy,” James said. “I like the opportunity to work with patients and see them have success.”