

Betty Hanson Administrative Assistant Martha's House, Lethbridge

The road to respect runs along both sides of the street. As you walk along one side respecting and honouring those you meet along the way, you can turn to witness that you are respected and honoured by all whom have met you along the way.

Betty Hanson is one such employee, her respect and dignity for others earns her a tremendous amount of respect from others in return.

She is a dedicated employee and lives out all of Covenant Health's values, but they all stem from her deep and abiding dedication to treat others as you would want to be treated yourself.

Of the 118 residents in which she works with daily at Martha's House, Betty is often the first person these independent living residents meet when they arrive. She's also the one they go to with questions, and she honours each one for their "varied backgrounds, faiths and cultures," said Elda Barva, Administrator.

Like many other Covenant Health staff throughout the province, Betty takes care of those who cannot take care of things on their own "by running errands, buying groceries, and she even got a resident's cat into see the veterinarian when it was ill," said Elda.

Betty says that it so very important to be patient with residents.

"We have to keep in mind their situation and listen to them, even when we've heard about their ailing health over and over. They need to know you understand and that you are not trivializing their concern. More importantly, I don't feel I can ever stop them short. Even when they have told me about a particular ache or pain for the fifteenth time that day, I still stop what I'm doing regardless of how busy I am, to hear it all again," said Betty.

Being at the hub of communication at Martha's House, Betty is known as someone who understands and honours confidentiality and is gracious about keeping residents' privacy and personal affairs safe.

"I'm very proud of everyone at Martha's House for everything they do," said Betty. "Covenant Health has been so good to me. I love going to work and could not imagine what the past few months would have been like for me if I wasn't able to do this special job for the people at Martha's House."

Carolyn Rein Recreation Manager St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital, Edmonton

Carolyn Rein has a graceful way of helping other do their best. Her positive feedback and encouragement is always appreciated by her coworkers, and she embodies the very best of Covenant's Health's mission, vision and values.

"She is full of a bright, positive energy that sets her apart from others and makes you look forward to working with her," said Lisa Evangelos. "She is a true joy to work with."

For over 14 years, Carolyn has spread this joy and respectful energy throughout St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital, as she works with residents and families to create meaningful recreation experiences for them every day.

The recreation department is diverse, and Carolyn's team gets to work with families, volunteers and staff delivering a variety of programs. From the afternoon garden program where residents get out and get some fresh air and sunshine, to music events, to afternoon tea parties with children from the community, Carolyn leads her team to make it happen.

"Adding to someone's quality of life is so satisfying," said Carolyn, adding that often people arrive in our facilities and they would rather be at home. However, over time and with some dignity and respect, they come to know that we are here to help them continue to enjoy their favourite past-times, develop a new talent or just take the day for what it has to offer them.

Regardless of the resident's ability and cognitive awareness, Carolyn has meaningful conversations with them, one on one and creates a higher sense of selfworth in them.

"I try to mirror to people the way I would like to be treated," said Carolyn. "Throughout my whole life, I've taken lessons from others on what to do, as well as what not to do, to help people achieve their goals. I love people, so naturally this is a great fit for me. I love my job; I'm still happy doing what I do and am still challenged to achieve even greater things for the recreation needs of the residents and their families."

Dr. Ahmed Meer
Site Medical Chief
Killam Health Centre

“Rural medicine and living and serving small community is charmingly wonderful,” said Dr. Ahmed Meer. “We get to practice medicine from cradle to grave. It demands that you keep your skills sharp in all areas of medicine and that each patient and their family are treated with the upmost respect.”

Representing physicians on a number of rural health initiatives over the years, Dr. Meer is a strong advocate for rural health through various working groups like the Alberta Council of Presidents, the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons, as well as Alberta Health and Wellness.

“I’ve been on both sides of the fence, contributing insight about what’s needed to practice medicine effectively in rural Alberta,” said Dr. Meer.

It’s not only his contribution to rural health care but the way he delivers these essential services to people in his community. He does it with the utmost respect and dignity.

“My practice has to be based on mutual respect. It’s imperative you treat people as you’d like to be treated, and it doesn’t matter who it is or what has happened.”

In the early days, “Dr. Meer took his own call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week,” said Geraldine Clark, Administrator. “He’d be up at night delivering a baby and then have to go to emergency. When he was done all of that, he would make rounds and then go back to his clinic for all of his appointments. Through it all he was courteous and respectful.”

For Dr. Meer, respect is easily demonstrated by letting the RN go first into a room when making rounds. He also always tells his patients that they are the one in charge of their health and wellness, and he always meets with patients and their families during a family conference. He is considerate of others’ time, he will tell nursing staff that he will call them if he needs assistance because he knows that they are very busy.

It’s no wonder that Dr. Meer will receive an Honourary Membership through the Canadian Medical Association in August.

Maintenance Staff Youville Home, St. Albert

The four-person Maintenance team at Covenant Health's Youville Home work hard each day, not only ensuring the upkeep of each unit, but fostering civility, understanding and friendship with residents and families throughout the facility.

Nominated by a family member for the Mission Award for Respect, this highly regarded team is down to earth and happily goes about their job spreading lots of unassuming joy.

Imagine for a moment the varied requests Maintenance team would receive on any given day: my room is too hot; my room is too cold; one resident is moving to this one room, while another resident moves to another room; after lunch someone will need to fix a leak in the basement; can someone else put the handle back on the door? Oh, this visitor needs to get in, that visitor needs to get out; can someone monitor how the new construction is going? What about that major renovation, anyone been there today?

Yet, every time anyone calls this team, or meets them in a hallway with a request, they always get a "gracious and courteous response," said Diana Groten, family member. "Their whole attitude show respect towards the residents, other staff, family members, visitors as well as each other."

The diversity of the team plays a key role, everyone brings their own skill and ability to the work bench. More importantly, "everyone seems to be here for the same reason. We get a great deal of satisfaction from helping those who are not always able to help themselves," said Maintenance Manager Craig Pritchard.

"I'm proud of the team. They're doing a good job," said Craig. "We work hard to positively address each request and concern the best way we know how. Saying 'no' right off the bat to a request is not an option for our team. If there's a way to accomplish what needs to get done, we almost always figure it out."

The best thing about this team is that they know the residents by name, they go out of their way to help them out even if it means portering over 200 to a site event. And when they ask you 'how you are doing,' they look at you in the eye and actually mean it.

Misericordia Volunteer Services People w/Disabilities/Challenges Misericordia Community Hospital, Edmonton

Can anyone honestly put a value on the tremendous patient care and services that are so consistently volunteered by the team led by people with disabilities or challenges? Each and every day, members of this team greet everyone in the hospital with a smile.

“They go about their daily tasks instilling hope and showing that nothing is impossible,” said Karen Tasker, Chrysalis Support Worker.

This team also raises substantial funds through sales in the gift shop and flower shop each year, with profits going directly to patient comforts so they can better enrich the mind, heal the body and nurture patients’ souls.

“They are such a gift, they give so much to us,” said Brenda Shim, Manager of Volunteer Services. “Each person is steadfast and loyal. They get up on the most frigid, darkest days to get on DATS and arrive on time to brighten and warm everyone’s hearts.”

This 15-member team excel at working collaboratively towards a common purpose and accept the ever-changing health services environment by seeing the best in everyone and everything around them.

Team members love to listen carefully and show amazing compassion and respect for humankind.

They are proud of their jobs and “my daughter now feels included in the workforce now that she has a ‘job’,” adds parent Pieta Borkent.

They improve the quality of life, foster hope and dignity and inspire so many others. The contributions of this team to Covenant Health is not only invaluable, it is priceless.

Rochelle Goodwin
Secretary
Nutrition and Food Services
Misericordia Community Hospital, Edmonton

Rochelle consistently leads by example with her coworkers by being a thoughtful, respectful person in everything she does. Although she sometimes faces some adversity and difficult challenges, she always remains positive and looks for what is good, not why it is bad. “I believe in the Golden Rule,” said Rochelle. “Being respectful means being kind, trustworthy, responsible and loving.”

Rochelle thinks everything is something special if you have the right attitude. She comes to work each day with a good attitude.

“She helps the rest of us in the office to be better people,” said her nominators Sharon Sutherby, Kelly Graves and Kelsey Fricke. “She is always encouraging people to work together to gain a positive resolution rather than let a situation escalate.”

Rochelle tries to create an environment where everyone can get along.

“It seems to be Rochelle’s nature to nurture relationships with anyone she comes in contact with,” added the nominating team. By recognizing the little things people do, Rochelle makes others feel valued.

Rochelle is an energetic and enthusiastic engagement ambassador for Covenant Health. She created incentives for staff to encourage their participation in the Fall 2010 Employee Engagement Survey and kept staff well informed throughout the process. Her efforts paid off as Nutrition and Food Services achieved 75 per cent participation, with three areas reaching 100 per cent staff participation. That isn’t a small feat for a department of approximately 120 staff. But Rochelle doesn’t think twice about it, for her it is a way to give back to an organization that has given her so many opportunities.

“I feel blessed to serve a great company where growth is encouraged so that I can provide a better future for myself and my children,” said Rochelle.