

extra

news for
Owensboro
Medical Health
System employees

Our Mission is to heal the sick and to improve the health of our community. **May 2, 2008**

The right call

OMHS Call Center celebrates successful first year

On the telephone, an anxious mother explains that her toddler's temperature has risen to 101. At the other end, an experienced nurse listens carefully to the woman's story and calmly guides her through the steps she needs to take.

A man calls trying to contact his doctor. A friendly voice tells him when his physician will be in and how to find the office.

A physician from a neighboring county calls to refer a patient and is given a list of options by a professional nurse. Access to the hospital has never been easier.

Calls like these are why the OMHS Call Center was launched one year ago. The idea was to offer a valuable service to physicians and to be a 24-hour health resource for the community. It appears to be working.

In its first year the Call Center received over 170,000 calls and now takes more than 20,000 per month. The staff has grown from 13 to 28. And the number of physicians subscribing to answering and triage services has grown from 13 to more than 70. The numbers, which surpass both first and second-year projections, suggest the Call Center is doing its job very well.

"I'm really proud of the program," says manager Lollie Alvey. "I think the nurses have done a great job. I am very pleased with what we offer our community, our physicians, and our callers."

Greg Strahan, senior vice president of business development for OMHS, says the Call Center has become everything he had hoped it would be.

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Dialing up success. Connie Lashbrook, clinical supervisor/analyst, and Lollie Alvey, manager, celebrate a very successful first year at the Call Center. "We've had a tremendous response," says Lashbrook, "and there's more growth planned in the future."

OMHS team helps March of Dimes reach goal

It was a record-setting year for the March of Dimes annual walk, and the team from OMHS was a major part of the success. The OMHS team raised \$11,670, the second highest amount tallied by any March for Babies team. According to March of Dimes division director Terra Roby, the effort by OMHS was a major reason why Daviess County raised over \$80,000 and exceeded its goal for the first time in six years.

OMHS finished in third place for best t-shirt design. The design featured the actual footprints of a 27 week-old baby; the footprints were arranged as petals on a flower stem. The OMHS team also served food for walk participants.

A total of 64 teams participated in this year's walk, which raises money for the prevention and treatment of premature births. The event took place at the GE plant on Old Hartford Road. The OMHS team consisted of about 20 walkers from the following nursing units: mother/baby, labor/delivery, and prenatal education.

Free Arthritis Awareness event set for Tuesday

Want to learn more about how you can become successful in managing your arthritis? Find out more about today's advanced treatment options and therapies at a free educational event, co-sponsored by the OMHS HealthPark and Western Kentucky Rheumatology Center. The event takes place at the HealthPark Tuesday, May 6 from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Exhibits cover a number of arthritis-related topics, including joint replacement, exercises for osteoarthritis, and keeping track of your medicines. From 5:00-6:30 p.m., expert physicians will speak on the following topics:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis: A Revolution in Treatment Options
Gerald Sims, MD, rheumatology
- Osteoarthritis: An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure
David True, MD, rheumatologist

Also register for prizes, including a bone density screening valued at \$225.



HIP Update

The following classes are available next week for Health Improvement Plan participants. Check Extra each week for updates on upcoming classes. If you have additional questions regarding HIP quarterly activities, please contact Nancy Velotta at 688-4881 or nvelotta@omhs.org.

May 7

Strength Training – Why Bother?
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
New Life Education Center

Taking Care of Your “Personalmobile”
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
New Life Education Center

Pre-Diabetes
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
New Life Education Center

May 8

Burning More Calories In A Busy Day
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
New Life Education Center

Burning More Calories In A Busy Day
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
New Life Education Center

Getting Ready for Joint Commission Spring Survey

Q: Where can the details about every chemical used in the hospital be found?

A: Information about hazardous chemicals can be found on the intranet under MSDS.

Q: Other than the MSDS, where can the hazardous material name and hazard warning for that material be found?

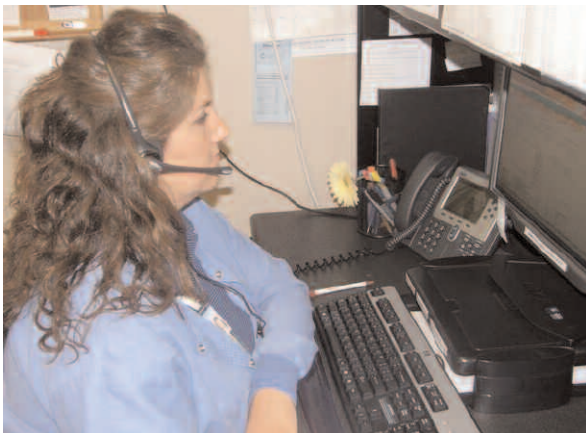
A: The information (name and warning) can be found on the container label.

Nursing education fair

The nursing education fair will take place Monday, May 12 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the OMHS Conference Center. Colleges, universities, and OMHS human resources will be on hand to answer questions about pursuing your nursing education goals.



The staff at work. Call Center employees strive to be efficient, attentive and compassionate.



Brandy Jackson, customer service rep, enjoys the interaction with callers. "I like being able to help. It's always satisfying."



Mary Ann Evans, customer service rep, says she receives about 150 calls a day. "No matter what kind of day you're having, you want your attitude to be upbeat, courteous and professional."

1-877-888-OMHS...24/7 answers for your health!

From front: Call center

"Our intention was to ease access to the healthcare system," Strahan says. "We wanted to offer top-notch triage and answering services to physicians and to engage the public with accessible healthcare information. The Call Center has become an excellent mechanism to accomplish those goals."

One of the main reasons for the success of the Call Center is that calls are fielded by experts, RNs with at least five years experience or customer service representatives with medical office backgrounds. Any call in which symptoms are being described are immediately given to an RN on staff.

When the phone rings, Call Center employees must be ready for anything. Calls may range from poison control and 911 situations to questions about fever, snakebites, bee stings, or even West Nile Virus. "It is very busy and challenging, but at the same time it's rewarding to help relieve someone's stress," says Stephanie Martin, a Call Center registered nurse.

One of the tools of the trade is the specialized computer program that helps RNs identify a caller's symptoms and recommend a course of action. While Call Center employees aren't allowed to diagnose a caller's condition, they can give advice and make important recommendations, such as whether to visit the emergency department or convenient care. With over 400 guidelines, the computer program helps nurses make the best assessment possible.

"Assessing a caller's situation is perhaps the most challenging part of the job," says Amanda Brown, a Call Center registered nurse. "You can't touch the bumps or see the shades of red," she says. "A caller's definition of 'lethargic' may be a lot different from ours." She says the nurses rely on computer prompts, other nurses and their own instincts to evaluate each situation.

Call Center nurses love what they do, Alvey says, because they're providing the same type of care on the phone as they would on the floor. "They're still assessing, they still have patient contact, and they still develop a care plan," she says.

Hospital Week is May 5 - 9. Make plans to be a part of the fun!

This year's theme –

Making A Difference Every Day

Monday, May 5th

- Kick-Off breakfast
- Holiday World ticket sale

Tuesday, May 6th

- Department celebrations

Wednesday, May 7th

- Hospital Week appreciation gift distribution
- Holiday World ticket sale; Pepsi product sale

Thursday, May 8th

- Jail 'n Bail for HOPE Fund
- Nurse Day Ritual Appreciation Gift distribution
- OMHS Nursing Excellence Award ceremony

Friday, May 9th

- Luau
- Holiday World Ticket Sale; Pepsi Product Sale in Conference Center
- Lunch – 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in Conference Center
- Evening – 5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Conference Center

- Night Shift – Through Cafeteria Line w/Meal Ticket 11:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.
- Business Center – 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- HealthPark Campus – 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- MultiCare – 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.



HIPAA Corner

What is Confidential?

Any information about a patient in any form—written on paper, saved on computer, spoken, etc., is confidential. Protected Health Information (PHI) is any information that can be tied to an individual. It includes:

- Name
- Address
- Age
- Social Security Number
- Phone Number
- E-mail address
- Medical Record Number
- Diagnosis
- Medical History
- Medications
- Observations of health
- And more...



Tools of the trade. The surgery department took home first place honors for the best display booth at the recent Health Career Exploration Day at OMHS. High school students got to experience a laparoscopic simulator, skin stapling and other surgery procedures. Pictured are Dori Meyer, Liz Carol and Jenny Whitmer. Exhibits by the Emergency Department and Cardiac units captured second and third places respectively.

