

The MCES Communicator

April 2013

Montgomery County Emergency Service, Inc.
Building Better Tomorrows



Nell's News

April...I stand corrected. Spring started March 20th, two days earlier than I expected it last month ...although we are still waiting for nature to realize it.

Retreat

The Board/Staff Retreat on April 24th is a work in progress. Like every year, we hope to have the participation of representatives from all the shifts and disciplines. Last year we focused on culture awareness. This year we will focus on MCES' values (see end of article for values) and how we can, under pressure, sustain our commitment to them. We will have groups that will discuss questions that we believe represent the current concerns of the staff at MCES.

When we have a frame of mind full of understanding, a heart full of compassion and a rested body, it becomes easy to feel hope and work with enthusiasm. In that state of mind the idea of burnout feels quite foreign, but when we are exhausted, both physically and mentally, from our personal circumstances and the responsibility of our jobs, then having that approach to our day-to-day work becomes more difficult. To feel like a pile of ashes some time along the way is an unavoidable consequence. The questions that will be asked of participants are:

1. How to cultivate compassion when feeling frustrated.
2. How to promote hope when feel-

ing exhausted.

3. How to stop judging when feeling under the microscope.
4. How to undo burnout when you are still sizzling.

Remember that at MCES we want to have a culture of **Achievement**, where together we work for the implementation of our mission. Somehow we manage and many of our reviewers comment that the magic, the one that helps change lives, is present at MCES. But I am aware of how difficult it is, at times, to maintain this commitment. Under pressure all of us may revert to other culture styles. Our tendency has been to become more of a culture of **Support** where the staff's interpersonal relationships become, at times, a priority over our job duties. Others go for **Role** where the staff identify with their individual disciplines and what their needs are instead of becoming more open to the needs of others and work from the **TEAM** (big picture) point of view. When **Power** raises its head, control issues come into play and more difficulties may develop. In reality all these tendencies are present in any organization and can be healthy as different situations may call for their style of approach, but what counts is the hierarchy and how flexible we are when any style other than **Achievement** is called for. At MCES we want to maintain a culture of **Achievement** and we need to help each other accomplish this. Let's have an experience at the retreat where hopefully we will feel the mutual support and get energized. Like a flock of geese, get a clear sense of our North and of the energy field that can guide us as it does them.

We have identified people with a good sense of humor (surprise, surprise!) that will be the catalysts for

the groups and hopefully we can have a good time together and get a view of the big picture of MCES, so with renewed purpose we will be working together for the implementation of our mission. We all need to have more awareness of the dangers that our culture of **Achievement** will weaken as other trends are weaved into it in non-constructive ways and distract us from our purpose. As an example, we need to be aware of when our tendency to support each other can distract us from patient care, or when **Power** or **Role** issues come into play creating conflicts that just keep us from effectively functioning as a **TEAM**. We need to remember that we are a team and that each one of our roles only plays a part in what refers to our expertise. So, please keep this idea in mind, and with that, let's look at how we can bring more quality to our work lives and better outcomes for the people that we serve.

We would like to have representation from all departments and shifts. Please talk with your supervisor and/or contact Debbie Shanley at extension 105 if you would like to attend and indicate which group # you would prefer. Like other years, people who are salaried can take a half day off and people who are hourly will be paid for their hours.

Value 1: We value patient-focused care demonstrated by advocacy, compassion, respect and dignity for all patients. All policies, interventions, practices and systems are driven by the needs of the patients.

Value 2: We value delivery of quality services demonstrated by teamwork, innovations to improve the effectiveness of systems, commitment to



the MCES Quality Through Team-work Program and benchmarking out comes within the field.

Value 3: We value professionalism as demonstrated by staff maintaining professional standards of care in their respective disciplines, adhering to the MCES Code of Ethics, and providing innovative care based on current knowledge in the mental health field.

Value 4: We value commitment to a community oriented perspective through responsiveness to the needs of the community and universal access to care and services.

Value 5: We value patient/family collaboration as demonstrated by actively involving the patient and his/her significant others as partners in the treatment process through shared decision making and informed consent.

Value 6: We value commitment to a learning environment and to meeting the education needs of the patient, significant others, board members, community and staff.

Census

As you probably have noticed, except for a high peak in the month of January, the census has been quite low for several months up until a week ago...when I started working on this Communicator. For this reason we have not filled the positions that are vacant from employees moving on. This means as of now we are not filling the psychiatrist, social worker or medical records positions, or some other positions that may become vacant as time goes by. If the census remains this low, we have to revisit our staffing and/or our catchment area. We are already contacting surrounding counties to become a competitor for other hospitals that provide the care to their people in need. To the other counties our mission is not "all in need," but can offer treatment for

those that can pay for their care. Otherwise, we would just make our financial situation much worse, since when it comes to the survival of our program, it is not how many patients we have in-house, but actually how many paying patients we have in-house. I ask for everybody's understanding and want to reassure all that we are doing well. By managing our expenses, we are staying within our budget. If our census stabilizes and remains around what we budgeted for, we will then fill the vacant positions. Keep up the good work, and remember always make decisions with the best interest of the people we serve in mind.

Updates

Everyone continues to improve and to show their strengths of character. Please continue your prayers for all of us.

Visit

Staff members from Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz's office will be visiting MCES on April 18, 2013 to learn more about MCES.

Mock Survey

On March 26th a team from Mercer and a few DPW surveyors spent the day at MCES to explore the survey process regarding what refers to safety and quality. They recognized the good work being done at MCES, and we await a report with their observations in the near future.

I look forward to seeing you or your representative(s) at the Board/Staff Retreat on April 24th. Let's have an experience like the Rise of the Phoenix to help us feel at our best.

Fiscal News By Bill Myers, Chief Operating Officer

Census: The daily census for March continues the trend of being well below budget. For the month, we had an average daily census of only 48 patients per day. Our budgeted average is 60 per day, so the lower census in March brought down our daily average to 55 for the year. MCES continues to be in good financial condition, but we must be very aware of our expenses, especially the use of overtime, with such a low census.

Staffing: As Dr. Nell mentioned in her article regarding the lower census, we have been holding off on replacing staff positions as vacancies occur. This includes the vacant psychiatrist position that has been open since Dr. Javid resigned from his full time position. There have been other departments that have not filled vacancies and one option that warrants further exploration is cross-training current staff and new hires on the ability to work in several departments. This allows for opportunities to shift staff where the need is greatest each day and even each shift. As always, any suggestions you have are welcome, so feel free to give me your input on this topic.





Health Savings Account: For those of you that have the High Deductible Insurance plan through Aetna, the second quarterly deposit of the MCES employer funding will be sent this week. Remember, setting up online access to the account at Bancorp allows you to check balances and download monthly statements, so take advantage of this feature if you have not done so already.



Clothing Donations Wanted

Our clients could use casual clothing you no longer want or need, i.e. jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts, shirts, sweats, coats, jackets.

Needed right now is men's and larger women's clothing.

Please bring your clean clothing donations in a bag marked with your name to Ginny Graves' office on Thursdays.



Patient Safety By Ginny Graves

The Patient Safety Authority declared that Patient Safety Awareness Week was March 3rd to March 9th. The theme was "7/365:7 days of recognition, 365 days of commitment to safe care."

This theme coincided well with the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Authority's efforts to participate with the National Patient Safety Foundation to raise awareness of patient safety issues. At MCES the Patient Safety Committee wanted to have an "ask the staff contest" to identify issues or ideas that would make our hospital safe for everyone...patients, staff and visitors.

During the month of March, we asked for suggestions to be put in the Good Catch box, or call the safety hotline at ext. 311. We didn't get much of a response and so we are again asking for suggestions during April. There will be a gift card for the best suggestion as determined by the Patient Safety Committee at the end of April. This is in addition to the ongoing monthly Good Catch award...so lets hear from everyone who wants to contribute to a safe environment at MCES.



Human Resources By Tara Layfield

We are in the process of creating a new key inventory system and would like to be sure we have the correct key information for everyone. Each key you were issued has two numbers on it, one that tells type of key (L1, J58, LJM, etc.) and on that is the number of that key (generally it is either on the upper right hand corner or under the key type number). These are the two numbers we need to update the inventory. Please call me at ext. 165 or email tlayfield@mces.org. You can also send the information to me on the When to Work system. As

always, feel free to stop by HR with your keys, and I will be happy to record them for you.

Please be aware that your pay stubs should now reflect the correct PTO and Sick Time. If you have any problems, please see me.

CONGRATULATIONS

Josh Hoffman from Environmental Services earned his Associates Degree in Liberal Arts from MCCF.

Regina Bilynsky is currently celebrating her semi-retirement. She will continue to work two days a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM .

WELCOME



Chiemeka (Mecca)
Catalfano PT
Psych Tech
3 - 11 PM



Nicolas Depal
PT - Psych Tech
11 - 7 PM



Madlyn (Maddy)
Strouse
FT - Psych Tech
3 - 11 PM



WELCOME



John Spataccino
PT - Psych Tech
3 - 11 PM



Dean Allen
PT Environmental Service



Kaitlin
McCaney
PT Crisis
Intervention
Caseworker



Allen Stewart
PRN / EMT
Psych Tech



Doria Williams
PT - Environmental Service



Walter Patterson
PT - Psych Tech
3 - 11 PM



Justin Gindhart
PRN / EMT
Psych Tech



Smoking Policy By Environmental Care Committee

The smoking policy has been a topic of conversation this week at several meetings. In spite of the fact that we have made it very clear, that there is only one area for staff smoking, some staff members continue to smoke in front of the building, by the east and west wings, on the sides in the parking areas and, worst of all they throw their butts on the ground. We believe everyone thinks that this butt that they throw down is the only one. Multiply the cigarette butts by the number of people who go in and out of each entrance several times each day and what do you get? Lots of butts on the ground. Tony Bonimico cleaned everything up by the front entrance but, please look at the other areas when you leave today.

WE KNOW THERE ARE STAFF WHO SMOKE ONLY AT THE DESIGNATED AREA BEHIND THE FENCE BY THE EAST WING AND WE THANK YOU FOR FOLLOWING THE POLICY.

We want to talk to the people who do now follow the policy and let them know that what they are doing is not acceptable. Dr. Nell and Bill Myers have asked that department supervisors get involved and monitor the staff who refuse to follow our smoking policy. We are all adults here and, as such, are expected to do what we are asked to do. Please do what is expected here at MCES and use the designated area.

Recap

1. Staff members who are smokers are asked to smoke before work, during their break and, after leaving work.
2. Actual break is one hour, including any smoke breaks that have been pre-arranged with the department supervisor. This is not feasible with many clinical employees.
3. Smoking on the grounds is permitted **ONLY** outside the West Wind behind the fence. You may smoke in your car but all smoking residue (butts, etc.) must be deposited in a smoker output or in the vehicle ashtray.
4. **No cigarette butts are to be thrown on the ground !**

MCES Statistics March

Total Admissions - 3/31/2013	161
Total Patient Days - 3/31/2013	1,488
Average Number of Patients Per Day	48.0
Average Length of Patient Stay in Days	9.3
Percentage of Occupancy.....	65.8%
Year-to-Date % of Occupancy.....	75.9
Total Admissions -	70,411



Clean Your Medicine Cabinet By Debbie Shanley

Spring cleaning took on a whole new meaning when Montgomery County's top law enforcer unveiled a way for citizens to rid their medicine cabinets of unused and unwanted prescription drugs.

The following is a list of all the areas that you can drop off unused and unwanted medications.

Pottstown Police Department, 100 E. High St., Pottstown, PA, 24/7

Limerick Police Department, 646 W. Ridge Pike, Limerick, PA, 8am to 4pm, M-F

Souderton Police Department, 31 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA, 24/7

Hatfield Police Department, 2000 School Road, Hatfield, PA, 24 hours, M-F

Franconia Police Department, 671 Allentown Rd., Franconia, PA, 24/7

Abington Police Department, 1166 Old York Rd., Abington, PA, 24/7

Lower Merion Police Department, 71 E. Lancaster Ave., Ardmore, PA, 24/7

Upper Merion Police Department, 175 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia, PA, 24/7

There are two drop-off sites at Montgomery County Courthouse, Airy and Swede Streets, Norristown, Pa., at both public entrances between 8:30am to 4:15pm M-F.

Officials said needles and other

sharp items are "absolutely prohibited" due to safety concerns.



HOW DO THESE PEOPLE SURVIVE?

Recently, when I went to McDonald's I saw on the menu that you could have an order of 6, 9 or 12 Chicken McNuggets. I asked for a half dozen nuggets. "We don't have half dozen nuggets," said the teenager at the counter. "You don't?" I replied. "We only have six, nine, or twelve," was the reply. "So I can't order a half dozen nuggets, but I can order six?" "That's right." So I shook my head and ordered six McNuggets.

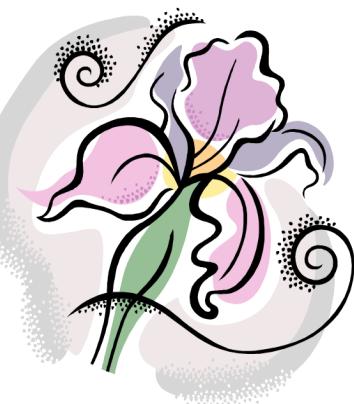
I was checking out at the local Wal-Mart with just a few items and the lady behind me put her things on the belt close to mine. I picked up one of those "dividers" that they keep by the cash register and placed it between our things so they wouldn't get mixed up. After the girl had scanned all of my items, she picked up the "divider", looking all over for the bar code so she could scan it. Not finding the bar code she said to me, "Do you know how much this is?" I said to her "I've changed my mind, I don't think I'll buy that today." She said "OK," and I paid her for the things and left. She had no clue to what had just happened.

A lady at work was seen putting a credit card into her floppy drive and pulling it out very quickly. When I inquired as to what she was doing, she said she was shop-

ping on the Internet and they kept asking for a credit card number, so she was using the ATM "thingy."

I recently saw a distraught young lady weeping beside her car. "Do you need some help?" I asked. She replied, "I knew I should have replaced the battery to this remote door unlocker. Now I can't get into my car. Do you think they (pointing to a distant convenience store) would have a battery to fit this?" "Hmmm, I dunno. Do you have an alarm, too?" I asked. "No, just this remote thingy," she answered, handing it and the car keys to me. As I took the key and manually unlocked the door, I replied, "Why don't you drive over there and check about the batteries. It's a long walk."

Several years ago, there was an Intern who was none too swift. One day she was typing and turned to a secretary and said, "I'm almost out of typing paper. What do I do?" "Just use copier machine paper," the secretary told her. With that, the intern took her last remaining blank piece of paper, put it on the photocopier and proceeded to make five "blank" copies.





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