MercyOne: Patient Advocate

Kaitlyn Bahlmann
University of Northern Iowa

Copyright ©2020 Kaitlyn Bahlmann
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/csbsresearchconf
Part of the Patient Safety Commons

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.uni.edu/csbsresearchconf/2020/all/75

This Open Access Poster Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences/Events at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in CSBS INSPIRE Student Research & Engagement Conference by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.

Given the connection between body and mind, it would make sense that nurturing one would positively affect the other. Researchers decided to study the effect that therapeutic interpersonal interactions had on different conditions in influencing the patient’s emotional comfort. The results of a study showed that positive interactions with patients increased both the patient’s emotional and physical comfort (Iurita, 2003). This can help decrease both inpatient and outpatient recovery time and increase compliance after discharge. This provides benefits to the hospital by increasing efficiency and patient satisfaction.

As a patient advocate, my role is to meet with the surgical patients, and their family if applicable, while making sure their needs are met. This can mean getting them beverages and snacks, grabbing a nurse for them, or just talking and playing games with them. You’ll see new patients every shift if you volunteer weekly. The number of patients every day will also vary quite a bit. My role is to alleviate stress of other hospital workers and help to provide excellent patient care.

My favorite part of my experience so far has been with elderly patients, especially those who are pleasantly confused and enjoy talking for awhile. I have noticed that most patients who desire longer, sit-down conversations are over age 70, while patients who desire more quiet and alone time are younger and otherwise healthy. I have found that the best way to first introduce myself to each patient is to state that I am a volunteer, since they feel more welcomed to ask something from me and converse longer. Another part of the experience that I have enjoyed is seeing the medical field from another perspective, while being surrounded by nurses, doctors, and other healthcare professionals.

Since a lot of time is put into the process of becoming a volunteer, MercyOne asks you to commit to 0.5-2 years minimum of volunteering. As for weekly hours, there is no requirement. I volunteered two hours weekly, but you can choose anywhere from one to over ten hours weekly if you’re looking to commit more time. You can easily transfer to different hospitals or switch between different volunteer roles.

Becoming a patient advocate is an easy but somewhat time-consuming process. 1. You must apply on MercyOne’s website. 2. MercyOne will schedule an interview, background check, and health screening that you must have done before starting. 3. You will fill out more paperwork and receive your uniform and badge.

Becoming a Patient Advocate

Volunteer Services

“This unique opportunity to help assist others in a hospital setting allows our volunteers to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.”

MercyOne Hospital

References