All in a Day's Work

Posted by petehurrey On 08/18/2009

Each Aug. 23 is Health Unit Coordinators Day, celebrating those people who are also called unit clerks, ward clerks, unit secretaries and unit managers. These unit coordinators, who work at hospitals all across the country, set up charts for patients admitted to the hospital, order laboratory tests and X-rays, transcribe physician orders, do payroll and scheduling – so many different tasks that keep hospital units running smoothly.

Bethany Klobnock

Bethany Klobnock, an Emergency Department unit secretary at St. Mary's Hospital, has worked at the hospital for nine years. She volunteered with a local rescue squad after high school and later worked at a nursing home. Eventually, she came to St. Mary's Hospital as a technician and now works as a unit secretary. She is also studying nursing and hopes to one day work as an Emergency Department nurse.

Klobnock jokes that she and her fellow unit secretaries serve as ‘pilots for the ER at the control station.’ She and her co-workers handles patient transfers and admissions, contact physicians, receive and follow up with test results, help the nurses by making beds and cleaning rooms, add medications to the computer for nurses and can help order tests.

For Klobnock, interacting with patients is the best part of her job. She explained that she is the type of person who can’t sit still and enjoys being relied upon as a go-to person in a fast-paced environment.

Klobnock’s efforts haven’t gone unnoticed – the hospital’s Patient Safety Council named her a Patient Safety Hero in March for her efforts in treating an infant with intermittent respiratory distress.

This August, take time to thank the unit coordinators at your local hospital or health care facility for all their hard work and excellence in patient care.