

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into nursing



Jennifer Fjell, BSN, RN, CWOCN, CLT

WOUND, OSTOMY, CONTINENCE (W.O.C.)
HEALTH CENTER NURSE MANAGER

The Wound, Ostomy and Continence (W.O.C.) Health Center at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH) offers effective treatments that can help people manage wound, ostomy or continence issues.

It uses evidence-based practices and advanced treatment options to help patients improve these conditions and more fully enjoy life.

As W.O.C. Health Center nurse manager, Jennifer Fjell, BSN, RN, CWOCN, CLT, oversees the day-to-day operations of the department and provides wound, ostomy and continence care to patients.

The position is a far cry from Fjell's earlier career plans which were focused on information technology and computer programming.

"I was attending college with a major in informational technology-computer programming when my daughter became ill at 2 months old," Fjell said. "She ended up spending five days in the hospital... and I had to miss classes and it put me behind. But it helped me to reevaluate what was important to me. It was at that point, I realized I might be in the wrong field."

Fjell turned to health care.

She started working at CCH in 2003 as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) in the skilled nursing unit while she was attending Central Community College – Columbus (CCC) for her licensed practical nursing degree.

"I started out in the LPN program because I still was a little skeptical if I could do it," Fjell said. "But after finishing the LPN program and working at CCH, I knew this was what I wanted to do."

Fjell would go on to get her associate degree in nursing from CCC while she worked in CCH's skilled nursing unit and acute care unit. After earning that degree and passing her boards, Fjell started work in the hospital's home health and hospice department.

"While working in home health and hospice, I was able to care for many patients with wounds. I never thought this was something I would enjoy, but I did," Fjell said. "When CCH decided to open the wound center, I was asked if I would be interested in being part of this. I was so excited and couldn't wait."

However, in order to work in the wound center, RNs had to have bachelor's degrees. Fjell went back to school to get her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing and completed further training and certification in wound, ostomy and continence care. In addition to this training, Fjell also became a certified lymphedema

therapist and she is currently working on her master's degree.

Fjell has been a part of the W.O.C. Health Center since it opened in August 2008 and she has served as the center's nurse manager for four years.

"I would have never thought I would have ended up in the position I am in," Fjell said. "Right out of nursing school, obstetrics was really where I wanted to go, but life took me in another direction, and I am so thankful that it did."

She's also thankful to work at CCH.

"My entire nursing career has been at CCH and it is because of their support and encouragement that I continue to advance my education," Fjell said. "We are so blessed to have a facility that not only encourages continued education, but provides the means and support to continue to advance."

Though Fjell hadn't initially set out to have a career in health care, she believes it was the right choice for her.

"Health care is like no other profession... every day is a learning experience and a new challenge," she said.

For more information on Fjell or CCH's W.O.C. Health Center, visit our website at www.columbushosp.org.