

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Kelly Murphy, RRT

SERVICE LINE COORDINATOR,
 RESPIRATORY CARE DEPARTMENT

Kelly Murphy didn't seek out a career in respiratory therapy. The career found her.

Murphy was working in David City when she applied for a medical secretary position at Butler County Hospital there. Donna Niesen, RRT, who now works at Columbus Community Hospital, was working at Butler County Hospital at the time. She looked at Murphy's resume and thought she'd be a good candidate for a respiratory therapy position that was open at Butler County Hospital.

At the time, Murphy had no idea what the position was, but it would soon become her career.

Murphy started working in respiratory therapy in 1988 and went through a work/study program from an accredited respiratory therapy program in California. The program was similar to what online courses are now, which allowed Murphy to do on the job training and her classes at the same time. She graduated in 1989, completed national boards in March 1990 and earned her certified respiratory therapist credentials.

She then worked at Butler County Hospital for six years before she and her husband, Patrick, moved to Garden City, Kansas where she worked at St. Catherine Hospital for the next seven years. The couple then decided to move back to

Columbus to be closer to home and Murphy got a position at CCH.

Murphy started working at CCH in March 2002. She's been a respiratory therapist at the hospital ever since and about four years ago she became the service line coordinator in the respiratory care department.

In this position, she serves as a staff leader, assists the department's director, helps with patient therapy and serves as a preceptor for new staff, among other duties. She also serves on the shared decision-making team and works on staff competencies.

"I think I can speak for all respiratory therapists when I say that we never have a 'typical day,'" she said.

Each day brings plenty of variety, but Murphy starts off each day the same way with a report at 6:30 a.m. She then heads up to the floor to care for patients who need therapy. She and the rest of the respiratory therapists then try to stick with certain times for scheduled treatments on inpatients so that they can schedule pulmonary function testing in between those times. Throughout the day, Murphy also responds to calls for patients needing respiratory therapy in the emergency department and other areas of the hospital.

As Murphy works to support CCH's patients, she said the hospital has also supported her. They encouraged her to

find out what it would take to be able to take the National Boards and become a registered respiratory therapist. Murphy then went on to earn her registered respiratory therapist credential after working in the field for 27 years.

In all of her years in health care, Murphy has learned that the medical profession is a 24/7 career which requires people to make some sacrifices, with their time, in particular. For example, people in health care often find themselves starting out on the night shift before working their way into day positions and they often have to learn to create a good work/life balance by learning to celebrate holidays on different days, as their shifts allow.

But despite these challenges, Murphy believes a career in health care is very much worth it and she's thankful she found one for herself.

"There will be some extremely long and busy shifts, but it is very rewarding to know that you have done something to help a person to be able to improve his or her life and health," she said.

For more information on Murphy or CCH's respiratory care department, visit www.columbushosp.org.