

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Bernie Hergott

DIRECTOR OF PATIENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Bernie Hergott, director of Patient Financial Services at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH), didn't set out to have a career in health care. She'd considered teaching before she made her way into health care and then found a home at CCH.

"I actually liked the idea of being a teacher, but because of finances, I felt I needed to work more before going to college...Then, I met my husband, so I took the scenic route to getting my college education," she said.

Hergott would go on to get a bachelor's degree in business administration, an associate degree of applied science and a certification in the revenue cycle for health care administrative management. She then worked as the supervisor of the word processing department at Lincoln General Hospital in Lincoln for about 12 years before she moved to Columbus.

At that point, Hergott worked for a bank for a short time. Though she enjoyed it, she knew she wanted back into health care.

Hergott returned to health care with a job at Columbus Pediatric Clinic before coming to CCH in 1990 to be coordinator of CCH's Home Health.

When CCH added hospice services, Hergott served as coordinator of Home

Health and Hospice before becoming the director of CCH's Patient Financial Services in February 2003.

Hergott has held the position ever since.

In this position, Hergott oversees the operations of the hospital's Patient Accounts Department, Registration Department and the charge master. She ensures that CCH follows all federal, state and payer regulations when registering patients and billing claims.

Hergott has no typical day at work, because health care changes, new technology, regulations, audits and a variety of customer needs, keep Hergott and her staff on their toes.

But no matter what the day throws at her, Hergott knows she can handle it with the help of her staff.

"The one constant that I can always count on is my staff," Hergott said. **"They don't skip a beat. My registration and patient account staff are second to none. They are compassionate and dedicated and go above and beyond for each other and our patients, each and every day."**

Hergott noted that her staff are there for patients during holidays and snowstorms, ensuring that the hospital's Emergency Department is staffed 24/7.

"They have even been known to sleep here," she said.

Hergott said this level of commitment is something she has seen from everyone at CCH and that's one of the reasons she is so happy to work here.

"Many others before me have shared how committed everyone is to providing the highest quality of service to our patients, so I think this is my chance to say thank you to my wonderful work family at CCH," she said. **"I am truly blessed to work here and have such wonderful friends and co-workers."**

Though Hergott didn't plan on a health care career, she's glad she ended up in the field and even happier to have ended up at CCH.

"Even though we are on the business side of health care, it is such a rewarding field and Columbus Community Hospital is truly an outstanding and progressive health care system and hospital," she said. **"I am honored to be a part of it and I sincerely believe we are the best."**

For more information on Hergott, CCH's Patient Accounts Department or the high-quality services provided through Columbus Community Hospital, visit www.columbushosp.org.