

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Julie Baumgart, PharmD, RP
 DIRECTOR OF PHARMACY

Julie Baumgart, PharmD, RP, started working at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH) more than 30 years ago, right after graduating from the University of Nebraska College of Pharmacy.

She's been here ever since.

Over the years, she's moved up in the department and she became director of pharmacy 13 years ago.

"Though I had never envisioned myself in management, I applied for this position because of my strong commitment to CCH and my desire to see the pharmacy department continue to excel in providing great patient care while ensuring the patients' safety," Baumgart said.

In her position as director of pharmacy, Baumgart is responsible for monitoring medication use and distribution; ensuring compliance with regulations, including appropriate opioid medication use and assisting the pharmacy staff so that they can provide patients with the best possible care.

Managing a department with this many responsibilities gives Baumgart plenty of opportunities to problem solve and that's one of the things she enjoys most.

"What I find most engaging are the challenges that stretch my abilities to problem solve, whether that's answering a medical question or fixing a medication distribution or supply issue," she said.

Baumgart noted that supply shortages of generic injectable drugs have become a daily occurrence, which requires the coordination and cooperation of many people to manage the situation. This is the sort of behind-the-scenes work that pharmacists and pharmacy staff do every day to support the hospital and its patients.

"The pharmacy staff may not have a large visible presence to the patient," Baumgart said. **"But they work faithfully with the physicians and nursing staff to ensure medication use is accurate, to avoid any unwanted adverse effects and educate patients about their medications."**

The ability to make a direct impact on patient care is one of the main reasons Baumgart chose to practice pharmacy in a hospital. She'd had experience in a hospital as part of her four-week rotations during her last year of pharmacy school and she thought it was the best fit for her.

CCH was a good fit too. Baumgart enjoys working and living in a smaller community where she can feel connected to the patients she serves and she appreciates the working environment at CCH too.

"The leadership team strives to meet the needs of the employees, providing us with the best equipment and tools so that we can provide the best care to our patients," she said. **"CCH has also supported me in advancing my education to become a better leader."**

For example, to prepare for her director of pharmacy position and to further develop her leadership skills, Baumgart completed the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists 18-month leadership course.

"I learned as much from the other students as I did the instructors, as the course was offered internationally and I worked in different groups with individuals from across the world," she said.

Baumgart was impressed by her fellow students in the course – and she's impressed by her fellow staff at CCH too.

"I have great admiration for the pride and commitment I see from the staff who keep our facility in top condition to those who provide direct patient care," she said.

But she doesn't just admire the hard work and dedication she sees at CCH – she appreciates the friendships she sees here too.

"When I think of my work at CCH, the theme song from Cheers comes to mind when it refers to 'everyone knows your name.' There is great camaraderie among the employees across all departments that work here," she said. **"I have found working at CCH to be very rewarding."**

To learn more about Baumgart or CCH's pharmacy, visit www.columbushosp.org.