

# THE Importance of Caring

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## my journey into health care



**Lisa Weber, Social Worker**

### HOME HEALTH AND HOSPICE

Lisa Weber has always had a passion for geriatrics. That, combined with her love of social work, led her to a career at Columbus Community Hospital.

Weber was pursuing her bachelor's degree in social work at Nebraska Wesleyan when she had the opportunity to be part of a program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Through this program, Weber realized she enjoyed the medical process. She also discovered she was interested in how social and emotional issues affected people's physical conditions and recoveries.

This experience would lead Weber to a career in medical social work. She went on to earn a master's degree in social work and counseling, as well as become a licensed mental health practitioner and licensed in clinical social work.

Along with this education and training, Weber gained experience in social work and with the geriatric population by working in nursing homes where she developed an interest in caring for people in the dying process. This new interest would lead Weber to her current position as a social worker with Columbus Community Hospital's Home Health and Hospice Program.

Weber started working at CCH in 1997 in the Social Work Department while she also worked for the Home Health and Hospice Program on a case-by-case basis. As the Home Health and Hospice Program grew, Weber moved into a full-time position there.

In this position, Weber coordinates admissions of hospice patients; works with patients and their families to meet their emotional, spiritual and caregiving needs; follows up with hospice families to address their bereavement issues; and works with hospice volunteers to help meet the emotional and companionship needs of hospice patients.

**"There is no typical day in my job. The best-laid plans for the day can be disrupted by one telephone call, or a change in condition of a patient,"** Weber said.

Though her job offers plenty of variety, there is one constant – Weber is always working to connect with patients and their families. She makes visits to patients and their loved ones and spends time getting to know them and building relationships. She also helps them with practical matters like advanced planning and decision-making following a terminal prognosis.

Working with people in the dying process in this way is challenging and Weber is often asked how she does it. Weber's education helps as she has received specialized training in grief support and palliative care – but she said the support of her work family makes the job easier as well.

**"It has been a privilege to work at Columbus Community Hospital,"** Weber said. **"My co-workers, both in my department and throughout the hospital system, are always there to assist in a difficult situation, provide guidance or just offer emotional support."**

With this support, Weber is able to meet the challenges of her job and appreciate the positives of her work as well.

**"A career in health care can be both rewarding and challenging, but you will always go home knowing that you helped someone and that you made a difference,"** she said.

**For more information on Weber or CCH's Home Health and Hospice Program, visit [www.columbushosp.org](http://www.columbushosp.org).**