

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into nursing



Sue Hrnicek, Surgical Services Director
 COLUMBUS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

When Sue Hrnicek says that Columbus Community Hospital is the most employee friendly hospital she's ever worked for, it's no small compliment. In her more than 30 years as a nurse, Hrnicek has worked at 18 hospitals, including big name institutions like Duke and Dartmouth medical centers.

Hrnicek is now surgical services director at CCH and she's seen things here she's never seen before.

"It is definitely the most employee friendly facility I have ever worked for," she said. **"They do things here for employees that people don't even dream about."**

For one, Hrnicek highlighted CCH's focus on employee education. She noted that the Hospital supports and encourages employees to attend national conferences. Here, they can network with medical staff from across the country and learn the most up-to-date medical information.

"They allow us to put money in the budgets to go to national conferences," she said. **"I can honestly tell you that I have never seen that in my entire life. Ever. They just encourage education here more than I've ever seen."**

And, Hrnicek has seen a lot. In her career, she's done **"every type of nursing"** from intensive care, home care and floor nursing, to work in cardiac

and medical intensive care units. Now, as surgical services director, Hrnicek is involved in all parts of CCH's surgical process. She oversees five hospital departments that cover pre-admission to the recovery room.

In a typical day, Hrnicek attends to the needs of staff members, patients and patients' families in each of these departments. Additionally, she handles the usual work of a supervisor – hiring, budgeting, **"everything that goes with having a department."**

Hrnicek's work is made easier, in part, because of the people she works with every day. At CCH, she said, she was able to get to know people in a way she wasn't able to at larger facilities.

"It's nice to get to know people. When you're in the big hospitals, you really don't know anyone," she said. **"And there are amazing people here. Every department has amazing people."**

Hrnicek stressed that she doesn't make these compliments lightly. Instead, she makes these compliments, because she has seen hospitals that run much differently than CCH.

"I really wish that people who have started their career here and not been anywhere else could get the understanding of how amazing this place truly is," she said. **"I can't instill that in anyone who hasn't seen anything else."**

Though Hrnicek's medical career has allowed her to see many different facilities in many different states, she's happy to be in Nebraska.

For her, it's coming home. Hrnicek grew up on a farm in Bruno. That's a big part of the reason she took a job at CCH in August 2011.

Hrnicek started at CCH as a service line coordinator in Same Day Services. A few years later, she was made surgical services director.

Though she has worked in several other hospital departments during her career, Hrnicek always found herself coming back to the operating room.

"It took me a little while to figure out this is where I always needed to be," she said.

Though Hrnicek admits that a career in health care comes with making sacrifices, she said it's worth it.

"You go into health care to take care of some other person's loved ones. That means you'll be giving up weekends, nights, holidays. You will be giving up time with your family to care for someone else's," she said. **"But it's incredibly rewarding."**

To learn more about Hrnicek or CCH's surgical services, visit our website, columbushosp.org.