

CNAs: At the Heart of Care

Marissa Prins, a certified nursing assistant at Life Care Center of New Port Richey, Florida, understands the important part that she – and CNAs everywhere – play in the health-care delivery system.

She put her thoughts down on paper and submitted her essay in a contest sponsored by the Florida Health Care Association. And she won second place!



“I have often wondered how inconsequential my job is,” she wrote, “and subsequently I have discovered through my patients how important CNAs truly are. In my experience as a nurse’s aide, I am certain that my contributions have beneficially impacted the well-being of the residents that I have taken care of. This regards not only to everyday personal care but even to their last moments on Earth.”

The work of CNAs is “a crucial factor to providing information regarding a resident’s daily health status,” she said. Doctors and nurses will see their patients for short visits, she added, while “CNAs not only get to see their residents every day, but they also get the most one-on-one interaction with them.

“A CNA is capable of knowing something is wrong before a doctor, a nurse, and sometimes even the patient,” she added, watching vital signs, such as blood pressure, temperature, and oxygen status. “As an aide, I will immediately notify the nurse of any sudden changes in hopes that we can detect the problem before it becomes crucial. A CNA can be the difference between life and death.”

Prins said that caring for the same residents daily can help improve their quality of life and overall well-being. “I can easily spot a change in a resident’s behavior on an assignment I take care of on a daily basis rather than a CNA who floats around ... I form a closer relationship with them than any other employee in the building because I spend the majority of my time with them (the group of nine residents under her care). I am not only caregiver but a friend when it’s needed.

“I know that Mildred wants a pillow under her left arm folded ever so slightly so her wrist is at maximum coziness before she even asks me to do so. And that Mary always keeps the light on because she is afraid of the dark, and to put her purse to her right side while in bed. I know what time everyone prefers to go to bed, and other personal preferences that will make them feel comfortable.”

(more)

What does Prins see as her reward?

Well, for one thing, “I burst with pride when the current patients on my permanent assignment tell me how much they missed me when I was off, and how happy they are to see me back. I know I am making a difference in their lives by providing the best care to them.”

Marissa Prins proclaims the value of the role of CNAs better than any professional orator could do. She has worked at Life Care Center of New Port Richey since Jan. 19, 2014.

“It is truly a wonderful piece she wrote,” said Kimberly Smith, senior executive director of the facility. “She totally describes the care she gives our patients. I’m so proud that our facility has such a caring individual whose work and commitment are recognized statewide now with the award she has won.”



Today is National Nursing Assistants Day, the beginning of National Nursing Assistants Week that runs through Thursday, June 18.

In each of our centers, take some time to recognize and celebrate your CNAs and showcase their work. The theme of the week is *Nursing Assistants @ the Heart of Care*.

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others (Philippians 2:4 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter