Quick thinking and teamwork deliver critical medication for patient in need

At the 6:45 a.m. huddle in the Pharmacy department, Supervisor Stephanie Lingen pointed out a critical need for additional doses of an infrequently-used anti-clotting medication. Mercy and the Des Moines medical community had been able to locate one dose of the medication the night before, but more were needed. The clock was ticking – a Mercy patient needed another dose within two hours to have a chance of survival. After numerous phone calls, Stephanie found the medication at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) in Omaha.

“I called Ron Muecke, the administrator on duty, and asked to use Mercy One to go get it,” said Roxanne Ruden, Pharmacy Services manager. Emergency Transport Manager Dan Keough had just walked into work. He knew a run to Omaha would burn too much fuel. They needed a courier and Iowa Highway Patrol was not available

In Mercy Dispatch, Communications Manager Malinda Hilzer got on the phone with Air Comm in Omaha. “They know all of the EMS providers,” said Hilzer. “An American Ambulance Company unit was four minutes from UNMC in Omaha. They routed the ambulance there.”

At the same time in Des Moines, Keough and Hilzer were looking over flight times and maps. They soon decided the Atlantic Hospital helipad would be a great place to meet up and get the medication to Mercy quickly. Air Comm headed the ambulance eastward with sirens sounding. Meanwhile, Mercy One's rotors started their spin, preparing for take-off to Atlantic.

The exchange in Atlantic took a matter of moments and Mercy One lifted back toward Des Moines. The medication arrived in time. In just over two hours, eight different groups worked as one, providing a critically-ill patient with a chance at life.

“There was never a question if this was the right thing to do,” Keough and Ruden agreed. “The patient always comes first – it’s why we’re here. Sometimes that means thinking outside the box.”

The Mercy Family members involved said they felt good, knowing they had made a difference. In Dispatch, phones were ringing and the radios crackling. The next patient needing Mercy’s care was on the way.

Save the Date: 21st Annual Mercy Stork Affair

Saturday, Aug. 25, 2012
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
East Tower Conference Center

If you are currently expecting or planning to start a family, mark your calendar to attend the 21st Annual Mercy Stork Affair. This FREE event will include a Dream Nursery Giveaway, car seat safety check, open house in the Women & Infant’s Center, education expo, exhibitor hall and an interactive Meet the Doctor event to help new and expecting parents choose a care provider for their baby or themselves.

Registration is not required. For complete details, visit www.storkaffair.com.
For more than one year, Mercy Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) has not had a patient with a central line infection. Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections (CLABSI) are a contributing factor in hospital-acquired infection associated with morbidity, mortality and expense. Each year in the United States, an estimated 48,000 to 80,000 CLABSIs occur in patients cared for in ICUs, with an average attributable cost ranging between $5,700 to $23,000 per patient and an additional 4.5 to 19.5 days length of stay per patient.

Through the implementation of a multifactorial, evidence-based initiative to reduce the incidence of CLABSIs in the Mercy PICU, the staff noted a significant reduction in infection rate, which has also resulted in 265 less days of central line use due to timely removal. PICU staff implemented seven actions to help reduce the number of CLABSIs – including hand hygiene, education of health care workers, daily goal sheets, daily rounds, central venous line management bundles, use of chlorhexidine-based skin preparation and use of chlorhexidine-gel central venous line dressing.

“The PICU began these initiatives before the relocation to 6 South during the renovation,” said Jan Myers, unit nursing director for PICU. “It speaks volumes about the level of care in our pediatric intensive care unit when we have gone more than a year without a central line infection.”

PICU Nurses Amanda Thompson, RN, BSN, CCRN, and Maria Johnson, RN, BSN, presented a poster at the Mercy Excellence Fair in June detailing the PICU initiative. Moving forward, the unit plans to continue the implementation of this initiative, identify possible risk factors for CLABSI in the PICU, continue to educate staff, and ultimately, have zero reported central venous line-associated infections in the PICU.

Congratulations to...

Ashley Dominguez, 6 North, and Rafael, on the birth of their son, Gavin Valentin. Gavin was born on June 29 and is the couple’s first child.

Cindy Nielsen, Physician Billing Office, and David, on the birth of their twin daughters, Emma and Audrey. Emma and Audrey were born on June 30 and are the couple’s first children.

Tara Matlock, Emergency Department, and Geoff, on the birth of their son, Beckett Ryan. Beckett was born on July 2 and was welcomed home by Addison, 2.

Meggan Piper, 8 South, and Phillip, on the birth of their son, Jesse James. Jesse was born on July 2 and is the couple’s first child.

Lisa Pagel, Mercy Foundation, and Bob, on the birth of their twin son and daughter, Jonathan and Gretchen. Jonathan and Gretchen were born on July 4 and were welcomed home by Amelia, 2.

Ashley Lawnsdail, 5 South, and Dave Melling, on the birth of their daughter, Kathryn Mae. Kathryn was born on July 13 and was welcomed home by Abigail, 12, and Addison, 9.

Haili McKeever, PICU, and Daniel Kitchens, on the birth of their son, Gavin. Gavin was born on July 19 and is the couple’s first child.

Amber Stamper and Brian Stamper, ITS, on the birth of their daughter, Daelynn Grace. Daelynn was born on July 20 and was welcomed home by Caden, 2.

Our sympathy to...

Margy Watson, Patient Accounts, on the death of her father-in-law.

Barb Burnight, MPPA, on the death of her husband.

Cheri Saner, Medical Records and One Care, on the death of her father.

Linda Jefferson, Medical Records, on the death of her sister.

JoLynn Lund, Medical Records, on the death of her grandmother.

Volunteers needed: 21st annual Mercy Stork Affair Aug. 25

Volunteers are needed to help make the 21st annual Mercy Stork Affair a fun and successful event for expecting parents and those thinking of starting a family.

Scheduled to take place in the East Tower Conference Center from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 25, the Stork Affair needs volunteers for set-up from 3 to 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 24, as well as for a variety of tasks on the day of the event – including providing directional assistance, greeting guests at the registration table and assisting with the Educational Expo. Volunteers on Saturday may choose to work from 9 to 11 a.m., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or all day (9 a.m.–1 p.m.).

All volunteers will receive a free T-shirt. If you are interested in participating, please contact Nicole Galles, Public Relations and Marketing, at x-38745. For more information about this year’s Mercy Stork Affair, visit www.storkaffair.com.

Mercy Auxiliary hopes to reach 2,000 members

Be a part of the Mercy Auxiliary legacy and help the organization hit the 2,000 member mark this year. As one of the benefits of membership, you will enjoy discounts at Mercy Gift House & Flowers, Mercy Starbucks, Mercy Salon, Mercy West Lakes Gift House and West Lakes Brew. For more information about membership, please call x-73247 or stop by any Auxiliary location.