

CNA career at JMHCC is rewarding

DeAnn Mosbrucker gently holds a wrinkled hand, steadying a walk. Or tips a glass of water to thirsty lips. Or shares a laugh or a joke. As a certified nursing assistant, or CNA, at Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center in Elgin, she offers dignity and quality of life to those who need it most.

“I just like helping people. I enjoy that. It’s the little things they say that make your day,” she says. “I’ve always gotten along with the elderly. I even started babysitting at a young age.”

Mosbrucker has been a CNA off and on since she was a senior in high school in Sidney, Mont., where she started her career at a local nursing home connected to a hospital.

She has been with Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center for seven years, after returning to the community with her son, Shawn Dillon, to be closer to her parents, Bernnett and Collette Ozbun, who live in Carson.

During a typical shift, Mosbrucker helps the long-term patients with their daily care, from dressing in the morning to helping with meals to tucking them back into bed at night.

“We’re their caregiver,” she describes.

“It’s not an easy job, but the return is really a plus,” says Director of Nursing RN Connie Mitchell-Gustafson. “When they smile or pat you on the cheek and tell you they missed you, that’s worth it.”

Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center (JMHCC) currently has openings for three full-time CNAs, or the equivalent part-time positions, and encourages high school students or college students interested in a medical career to start their path as a CNA.

The entry-level salary for a CNA is \$13.75 an hour, and JMHCC is currently offering a \$2,000 sign-on bonus. Applications for a CNA position are available from Kristin Heid in human resources or by clicking the “Employment” tab at www.jacobsonhospital.org.

To become a CNA, employees must complete a two-week course, then pass a written test and a skills test. The skills test might entail transferring a patient from a bed to a wheelchair, bathing a patient or brushing someone’s teeth, Mitchell-Gustafson explains. CNAs do not administer medications or shots, but may assist a nurse with basic care.

JMHCC pays for the training time and tests for an employee to become certified. Those who have experience may simply pass the tests and forego the additional training, which is the route Mosbrucker took when she joined JMHCC. CNAs must recertify with the state every two years, which is often accomplished by simply working a certain number of hours.

Becca Finck, another JMHCC CNA, completed the course and tests through JMHCC's program. The courses are not complicated, she says, and she encourages those interested to job shadow at JMHCC to see if they are interested in a CNA career.

"At least try it. See if you like it," Mosbrucker says.

"You should have the affinity to care for people and want to care for people," Mitchell-Gustafson says.

It's a career path that Mosbrucker is glad she chose.

"I like the residents. I like the people. I like putting a smile on their face, because I'm kind of a goofball," she says with a laugh.

CUTLINE:

DeAnn Mosbrucker, left, has been a certified nursing assistant at Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center for seven years.