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Asante Moment: Emergency Department Gets Wild

It was mid-morning a week before Christmas in the Asante Rogue Regional Emergency Department, and things were about to get wild.

One patient was intubated and another needed urgent dialysis. Most rooms in the Emergency Department were occupied, and due to a record-breaking hospital census, three patients waited in the ED for critical care beds to become available.



But Kari Mattson, the charge nurse on duty, didn't hesitate when she took a radio report from an ambulance crew en route from Sky Lakes Medical Center in Klamath Falls with a young female trauma patient. She had been involved in a high-speed car crash and sustained life-threatening chest injuries.

The ambulance crew didn't seem particularly concerned, but Kari recognized potential trouble in the vital signs – a blood oxygen saturation level in the 60s, and a heart rate over 130. Oxygen saturation should be near 95 percent to be considered normal, and anything below 80 can potentially compromise organ function.

Kari told members of the ambulance crew that she would meet them on the emergency entrance ramp to assess the patient, and that the patient would be brought into the Emergency Department rather than admitted directly to a post-surgical floor, which had been planned. She called Melissa Closterman, the on-duty critical care outreach nurse, and asked her to assist with the incoming patient.

The patient was being intubated when Melissa arrived, but her oxygen saturation remained below 80 percent even though she was being ventilated with high-flow oxygen. Melissa called Dr. Somnath Ghosh, an Asante Physician Partners intensivist who was on duty, and asked him to assess the new Emergency Department patient.

Dr. Ghosh arrived and the patient was placed on high frequency oscillatory ventilation (HFOV), a type of mechanical ventilation, until her oxygen saturation level slowly improved.

Melissa remained with the patient until her transfer to the Intensive Care Unit was complete.

"It was truly a team effort during a very stressful shift," said Robin Hanson, clinical manager of the Emergency Department. "Kari's critical thinking played a huge role in this young patient getting the care she needed."

As Kari, Melissa and others worked on the patient from Sky Lakes, the Emergency Department continued to pulse with near-overflow activity. Emergency Department and Critical Care staff members worked with others – including Dr. Douglas Hecox, a renal care physician – to ensure all patients received the care they needed. Nursing supervisors Mindy Baird and Cory Pulsipher worked together to find appropriate placements for patients, including those who were received in critical

care as beds became available.

“This was a very busy, very intense day in the emergency department, and it continued on the night shift, when 34 new patients arrived between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.,” Robin said. “But those are also the kinds of days where the team pulls together to do what we do best, which is taking care of emergencies.”

Robin said she received a call a few days later from one patient who wanted to thank the Emergency Department staff for the outstanding care he received on that evening a week before Christmas. “He said the Emergency Department staff made him feel like he was part of the family and that he cannot remember ever being treated so well,” Robin said.

Emergency Department staff members who were on duty and deserve recognition include:

ED Dayshift staff

Kari Mattson, RN (charge RN); Gloria Stone, RN; Kc Chamberlain, RN; Terri Carson, RN; Bobbi Hopson, RN; Dave Slawson, RN; Rebecca Fipps, RN; Crystal Hefley, RN; Julie Carte, RN; Daphne Olmos, RN; Matt Caywood, RN; Austin Owens, Tech; Mike Holmes, Tech; Jon Dallas, Tech; Kent Eastman, Tech; Justin Huntley, Tech; Donna Morgan, Coordinating Clerk; Paula Gibson, Unit Secretary; Dr. Seager; Dr. Buccino; Dr. Gaskin; Lynn Sullivan, FNP

ED Night shift Staff

Jeff Powers, RN (charge RN); Gina McConnell, RN; Tootie Laipple, RN; Janet Scimeca, RN; Tracie Lampella, RN; Matt Wattier, RN; Lisa Sutherland, RN; David Baca, RN; Zachary Dale-Harrison, RN; Lauren Anderson, RN; Laura McGlothlin, RN; Aaron Ott, Tech; Mark Baker, Tech; Alex Katkin, Tech; Ted Taus, Coordinating Clerk; Jessica Evans EN (ED Case Manager); Melissa Closterman RN (Critical Care Outreach Nurse); John Diaz (Respiratory Therapist); Dr. Jensen; Dr. Phleps; Dr. Page; Dr. McCaskill; Dr. Gosh – Intensivist; Dr. Thomas – Intensivist; Dr. Hecox – Renal