

May 10, 2012

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Yesterday was National School Nurses Day, and we celebrated the cherished and committed group of individuals that help NCH attain and preserve its quality distinctions. As **Stephanie Braun**, School Nursing Program Director and supervisor of 38 professionals who care for over 42,000 students in 52 local schools, put it, "Our nurses love what they do and are truly a dedicated group of professionals. Each day they see the difference they make in the lives of the students in Collier County." I can't cite all the wonderful things our school nurses do every day, but let me cite a couple of examples of their dedication.

• Rosa Hernandez, RN, was on duty at her school at Pinecrest Elementary in Immokalee in March. Close to dismissal time, Rosa was alerted to a 6-year-old kindergartener who had fallen off the monkey bars and injured her leg. The child was in extreme pain. As Rosa cared for the child, numerous attempts to contact the parents, who were field workers in Immokalee, were unsuccessful. Rosa's scheduled contracted hours at her school are over at 3:15 p.m., but since the child was alone and without family support, Rosa decided to follow the ambulance to NCH North and stay with the child until her parents arrived. The parents arrived in the ER at approximately 7:30 p.m., and learned that the child had a fractured tibia. At discharge, Rosa went to Walgreen's, picked up the pain med prescription for the family (spending her own money), and gave the medication with administration instructions to the parents before they headed back to Immokalee.

This, in itself, would have been heroic, but Rosa's story does not stop there. When she returned to her school the next day at 7:45 a.m., she contacted the physician's office to which the child had been referred and scheduled a follow-up appointment for the child. Any parent would want a school nurse like Rosa to care for their children. Her kindness, caring, and compassion reach far beyond her contracted duties. I also received this letter recently about our school nurses:

Dear Dr. Weiss, I read your articles each Tuesday in the Naples Daily News. Your articles are quite informative and you do give a lot of credit to those deserving – RNs, Doctors and Staff. What caught my eye was the fact that you never mention those hard working, always smiling nurses that serve the Collier County school district. I thought they were part of the NCH health system also.

Our daughter-in-law, **Susan Becker**, is one of those nurses. She drives 45 minutes one way each day to take care of the many needs of the children at an elementary school in East Naples. Her normal day consists of seeing about 30 children for various reasons—scraped knees, headaches, giving diabetic children their injections, and even patching up an occasional fight. One day she mentioned she had seen 45 children.

Sue really loves her work and all of the children she works with, and I am sure there are a lot of these nurses out there in this district that do the same as Sue. Sincerely, Lynn Becker.

Thank you, Ms. Becker. And thank you NCH School Nurses for all you do for our community's children.

Respectfully,

Allen S. Weiss, M.D., President and CEO

P.S. Feel free to share *Straight Talk* and ask anyone to email me at allen.weiss@nchmd.org to be added.