



A Special Message from Executive Health Director Alyssa Tallo

Dear MCH Family,
I hope that the New Year is treating you very well. Today, I want to share with you an important priority and strategic

imperative for MCH, and ask for your personal help with our effort. We continue to partner with other impacted facilities to advocate with Governor Hochul on reforming and investing in the nursing home Medicaid methodology.

As advocacy organization LeadingAge New York has reported, NY's recently released Executive Budget Proposal fails to make critically needed investments in the healthcare sector, while imposing cuts and Medicaid savings targets. On average, New York State's nursing home Medicaid rates cover only 75% of the cost of care for each Medicaid resident who is served. The rates have not been adjusted for inflation since 2007, and as a result, today there is an \$810 million Medicaid funding gap for the nursing home care provided in New York. This is unacceptable.

Given the current proposal, we need to make much more noise. We need to weigh in with our elected officials, and help them understand that the longer this situation continues, the more challenging the landscape becomes for facilities like ours – ultimately impacting patient care, which is what we care about most. As an MCH champion and concerned community member, we need your help.

Advocacy works! When your elected officials hear from you, especially in great numbers – they pay attention! Please join us in asking for the support we

need, in order to continue to provide the high-quality care that MCH has become known for. Call your State legislator and tell them that we need them to address the Medicaid funding gap urgently, in order to protect our residents and maintain the standards of care that they deserve. One phone call is all it takes. Thanks as always for your help and support!

Sincerely,

Alyssa Tallo

Checking in with Respiratory Therapist Nicole Ikewood

Tell us a bit about yourself – what's your background & experience thus far, and what brings you to MCH?

I graduated Respiratory school in 2014, worked as a per diem here at MCH, then out in Newark briefly before taking a few years off to start my family. I started back here again in January. I have a pretty flexible schedule, but I work a lot of hours! And I'm happy to be back!



What do you most enjoy about your job?

Well, I work the Vent Unit most often, and I absolutely love it there. I have a mix of all kinds of patients on any given day. And there's a lot of sub-acute care, so it's very challenging work, but I don't get completely burned out. Some of the residents I work with are here for long periods of time. And on the one hand, that can be kind of sad – but you also really get to know them, you form a relationship, you bond with them, and you appreciate all of the time you get to spend with them. And the families, too. They're wonderful. They really appreciate your work and it

shows, especially when they express it with little gestures like bringing you cards. It's a great feeling.

What do you want people to know about what you do?

That's a good one. You know, I think people sometimes think of Respiratory Therapists as nebulizer junkies. They think we just go room to room, and throw people on their treatments then we're on our merry way. But there's so much more to it than that! You know, I don't think people realize that part of what we do here, and a big part of our goal, is to move people off the Vent Unit. And that is incredibly hard to do. It's hard work – tough on us, tough on the patients. We are sometimes thrust into these acute situations where things happen very quickly and you have to move, react very quickly to figure out the right thing to do. It's a challenging field with a lot of moving parts.

Do you feel recognized & appreciated here?

We work incredibly hard here, there's no question about it! But yeah, I really do. My boss, Todd Cramer (Director of Cardiopulmonary Services), is really good about all of that. He makes you feel appreciated. Honestly, Todd is a wonderful boss. And you have a great mix of people on the team here. You don't often get such a great work environment at the bigger hospital systems. I'm very proud of our work here. I'm proud of MCH. It's a big reason I chose to come back!

Friendly Visitors Needed

Making a commitment to spend time with an MCH resident is one of our most fulfilling volunteer roles. Below are profiles of a few residents who need companionship. If you or someone you know has time to make a regular, weekly visit to any of these folks, please contact Laurie in the Volunteer Office at 760-6151 or www.monroehosp.org/volunteer to learn more.

- A resident new to MCH who enjoys BINGO, art, and would like to socialize.
- Seeking a volunteer for companionship & soothing conversations; enjoys watching TV.
- Independent-minded Veteran would like a friend to talk with and spend time with.
- Resident would love a volunteer to hang out with and eat lunch with. Enjoys reading, soccer, TV, and card games.



MCH recognized our dedicated Recreation Team during National Activity Professionals Week in January.



MCH residents celebrated the New Year with a special concert in the Auditorium by Uptown Groove!



Friendly games held in the BCR during National Fun at Work Day.