

## Lea Casey: Educator Exchange

### Cullman Regional Medical Center: July 20-24, 2009

I feel so blessed that as a career coach at Wallace State Community College, I had the opportunity to participate in this program. I met several amazing people within the medical field and those receiving medical treatment. I was very fortunate that I had the privilege to be so involved. I know this was a once in a life time opportunity that I will probably never have again. Keeping in guideline with the HIPPA, I am unable to elaborate on certain aspects of my exchange.

Monday I participated in the *New Employee Orientation* where I listened to various hospital administration and staff explain past, present, and future goals of the hospital. They also went over all departments, benefits, policies, and anything else a new employee should know for employment. This enabled me to become familiar with all that CRMC has accomplished over the years as well as their current goals for bettering Cullman and the surrounding counties.

Tuesday I spent the day with Lori McGrath from *Life1st*. I learned exactly how chemotherapy and radiation is used in treating cancer. I was able to tour their facility and meet some of the patients who are currently under their care. This experience truly touched my heart. I was amazed at the strength these people had as they embraced this time of suffering. Each patient was of a different age, background, and various stage and type of cancer. I also spent time in the *Critical Care Unit (CCU)* as I made rounds with a family member who is a supervisor of the nursing staff.

Wednesday was an amazing day. I visited the *lab* where I was able to go behind the scenes of the hospital. I watched as the laboratory technicians received orders and how they processed each specimen. I also viewed the blood bank to see how the technicians received, typed, and stored all blood donated to CRMC. Following this experience, I arrived in *maternity* where I was able to witness the birth of two new babies. As a mother, it was rewarding to see how both the patient and infant are cared for on the other side of delivery. It was an incredible experience that I will never forget.

Thursday I spent the morning in *diagnostic imaging*. I was astonished by the number of careers that actually fell under the umbrella of *diagnostic imaging*. Some of the career choices included mammography, x-ray, MRI, and CT. Each one of these paths requires a different registry exam. I ended the day in *respiratory*. In this department I was able to observe how patients are treated with oxygen. I also learned how and why the home breathing treatments are such a necessity after discharge.

The week ended with a morning in *rehab*. I watched the physical therapists instruct patients in their rehabilitation exercises, treatments, and water aerobic therapy. This is a prescribed service to help patients recuperate from an illness. Water aerobic therapy, however, is open to the public. I closed the day in *central registration*. In this atmosphere, I was able to observe exactly how the staff organizes and checks patients into the hospital. There are many different documents that must be completed in order to have everything ready to go whether they are inpatient or outpatient. CRMC would not be able to function without each of these departments working together on a daily basis.