COMMUNITY STARS

August 11, 2021

Thank you for completing your 2021 Community Star Individual Nominee Questionnaire!

Overview

Here is a copy of your answers for your records. All nominations will be reviewed and evaluated by members of NOSORH's Community Star Selection Committee. One Community Star will be selected per state. If you are selected as your state's Community Star, I will work with you to schedule an interview so that we can develop your outstanding story to share in our annual book of Community Stars released on Thursday, November 18, 2021.

If you have any questions, please reach out to NRHD Community Star Project Coordinator, Brea Corsaro at bcorsaro@powerofrural.org.

Your Information

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Organization or Project Website

https://melissamemorial.com

Please describe in as much detail as possible, your role within your organization and the nature of your work in rural health?

As a population health nurse it is my job to ensure that the chronic care management program continues to support those in the community to be stronger in their own self management at home. To be a part of the CCM program individuals must have 2 qualifying conditions. I also am responsible for the transitional care management program which serves our community as people are discharged from the ER and inpatient setting to ensure that the patient is successful in their home management the first 30 days after discharge. The last program that I assist in running is our principle care management which is designed for those that only have one chronic condition, such as diabetes, that requires additional management. Our community as a whole is approximately 2,500 people so the programs that we have are vital to the community in keeping people successful at management of their conditions in their home setting.

What inspired you to choose your career?

When I was 20 years old my paternal grandmother was passing away from malignant breast cancer and it was then that nursing was introduced to me through hospice. The experience with the hospice nurse lit a fire within me to serve others as my grandmother had been served. After going through nursing school I was honored to be able to start working for hospice after 5 years as a nurse. I continue with that same fire today as each person is treated with respect, dignity, and compassion.

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What is the impact of your work in your community or the rural populations you serve?

The quality of care has improved and the access that patients as well as their family/friends to their primary care providers. Measurable things such as decreased readmission rates and a decrease in the frequency some patients need to see the providers. In principle care management we have chosen to focus on diabetes care and the A1C percentage has decreased for most patients that have been participating in the program. All of this together helps to ensure that the community can stay at home longer and receive the improved access. Our innovation with CCM is that we have started a remote monitoring program and patients are leased a scale, Bluetooth enabled, blood pressure cuff that is also Bluetooth enabled, and a biometric monitor as well. All of these devices are able to sync with the patient's smart device or we can provide iPads with hot spots for accessibility. There has been a warm reception to the innovation in our community with several people taking advantage of the possibilities that it presents. As an RHC we cannot bill for the remote monitoring program so we decided that using it for CCM patients would be best. The patients then communicate with me through a HIPPA compliant texting platform. The readings as well as some patients even send in blood sugar readings as well to keep the lines of communication flowing well. Through a grant we were able to purchase a significant amount of the various devices mentioned and look forward to the possibilities in the future.

Have you accessed, benefited from, or worked directly with your State Office of Rural Health? If yes, please describe.

No

Are you or your organization a HRSA, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Grantee? If yes, which grant program? If yes, which one?

No