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Nurse wins national award

By ESTELA VILLANUEVA-WHITMAN • Register Correspondent • January 5, 2011

Julie Campbell's dedication to mental health patients at Broadlawns Medical Center has helped earn her recognition by a national foundation.

Campbell, a registered nurse and qualified mental health professional, received a DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses for coordinating the care and goals of patients at two group homes and assisting mental health outpatients at Broadlawns. She also shares her clinical experience with nursing students as an adjunct professor at Des Moines Area Community College.

Q. What influenced you to pursue nursing and particularly mental health?

I've always wanted to be a nurse. Even as a child, I had a nurse's outfit. I always felt like it was my calling to help people. I've dealt with depression myself, and this has given me a better understanding and need to help others in what is an often-misunderstood illness.

Q. What's your role at Broadlawns?

I started in 2001 as an inpatient mental health nurse with adults. I also worked outpatient mental health with both children and adults. Later, I worked in the Clozaril (medication) and injection clinic. I am now the nurse overseeing care of residents at our two group-home facilities, scheduling their appointments, making sure they are receiving their proper medications and other general issues.

Q. What's your philosophy of care?

Sometimes clients have told their story so many times. Listening to patients is most important. People don't want to just be treated, they want someone to listen to their concerns, opinions and questions, or just someone to talk to, be there for them or even hold their hand.

Q. What are some misconceptions about mental health?

There can be a lack of understanding in society in general as to what mental health really is. We often can look at someone, and although they appear fine on the outside - in good physical health - they may be in intense turmoil emotionally with issues every bit as debilitating to their quality of life as you

would find in observable physical ailments.

Q. How does your experience help you as an educator?

I've seen a lot of different types of mental health illnesses. More and more illnesses are diagnosed all the time, and there are new medications. I feel like you have to keep up with what's going on. I try to be a resource to the students and give them as much information as I learn it.

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NO, I have some rules!

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