Acute Myocardial Infarction Certification

St. Rita’s Medical Center has achieved the Joint Commission’s certification for all services under the Disease Specific Care Certification Manual for Acute Myocardial Infarction. The certification process is designed to ensure safe, high-quality care, treatment and services. This certification program is designed to look at the clinical program across the continuum of care.

Acute myocardial infarction (AMI) happens when there is a diminished blood supply to the heart; this is also known as a heart attack. During an AMI, the tissues around the heart can become damaged, which can be life-threatening. The diminished blood supply to the heart is due to blocked or narrowed arteries when a buildup of plaque occurs.

ABOVE: Thank you to all team members who helped St. Rita’s achieve this certification. The Joint Commission’s standards go above and beyond state and federal regulations, and they set high standards for quality and safety.
Helping our patients get back to the life they love

Every year Dave Buckland returns home to Leipsic, Ohio and then, along with his brothers and nephews, he travels to Canada for a canoeing trip. Unfortunately, Dave wasn’t able to make the journey this past year. The morning of the trip began like any other; Dave and his brother got up earlier than the rest of the family, they made breakfast and set out on a 20-mile bike ride.

Around the 17 mile mark, Dave stopped because he wasn’t feeling well. He thought it was just indigestion, and after walking around for a little bit, he and his brother got back on their bikes to travel the remaining three miles home. But Dave quickly realized he wasn’t going to be able to make it back to Leipsic. Dave waited at the bridge of the Blanchard River, while his brother biked home and returned with a car. Dave’s brother and nephew returned to get Dave and knew immediately something wasn’t right. They went straight to Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center.

Dave walked into PCACC, told the front desk about his chest pains and was taken back within minutes. The team quickly realized he was having a heart attack, and life-flight was called in to transport Dave to St. Rita’s. Dave was taken into surgery with Dr. Shaheen the minute he arrived at the medical center. The surgery involved putting a stent into Dave’s left anterior descending artery, also known as the widow-maker. Fortunately for Dave, his very active lifestyle had prepared his body to handle the heart attack, and he was able to be a part of the survival rate.

About a week later, Dave was able to return home. He began rehabilitation, which helped him work his way back to the physical strength he had before the heart attack. A few months after his surgery, Dave had the opportunity to visit his son in Alaska and go cross country skiing. Dr. Shaheen told Dave that his athletic lifestyle prepared his heart to handle all of this, which made for a quicker recovery than the average individual. Dave and his family are so grateful for the care they received. “St. Rita’s brought me into this world, and now they have kept me in this world,” Dave said.

Dave Buckland (right) is back to an active lifestyle with friends and family.

Primary Stroke Center Certification

St. Rita’s Medical Center has once again earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Heart-Check mark for Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers. St. Rita’s Medical Center underwent a rigorous onsite review in 2015 to achieve recertification. Joint Commission experts evaluated compliance with stroke-related standards and requirements, including program management, the delivery of clinical care and performance improvement. This was a renewal process for St. Rita’s to achieve the certification received in 2013.

Stroke is the number five cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States, according to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds; someone dies of a stroke every four minutes; and 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

“Our team at St. Rita’s is pleased to receive Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers from The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association,” said Cory Unverferth, RN, BSN, Neurosciences Clinical Manager at St. Rita’s Medical Center. “The certification provides us with the opportunity to highlight the exceptional stroke care we provide as well as to continually strive to advance our care even further.”
Game changers—being the MVP of patients’ care

Jeff Giesken had an appointment with Dr. Kato in our Heart Specialists and Dr. Kato ordered a heart cath to be done the next day. Nurse Jacquie Halker made sure to tell the patient if for any reason he did not feel well or experienced chest pain to come back in immediately. Jeff got back down to the car and his wife called the office shortly after—asking for Jacquie. She said that Jeff wasn’t feeling right, so Jacquie instructed Jeff and his wife to come back up to the office. Jacquie spoke to Dr. Kato, and Dr. Kato direct admitted him. They performed a heart cath which identified severe left main disease. This is exactly what Jacquie was meant to do—she helped save Jeff’s life that day.

After Jeff’s unexpected quintuple bypass heart surgery, he set a goal to be back in shape for baseball season. His sons gave him a signed baseball, reminding him to stay focused on that goal. Jeff is excited to report that he will be playing ball with his sons this spring. And the whole family has recognized nurse Jacquie Halker as their MVP! Jeff presented that baseball to her, saying “She was a game changer who went above and beyond before, during and after the game.”

Jeff’s wife, Jill, wrote to Jacquie: “As we discussed who an MVP should be we decided it should be someone who was a ‘game changer.’ Someone who went above and beyond—before, during and after the game. The decision became an easy one: YOU! Your concern and relief was so genuine! Your phone call to me pre-surgery was totally unexpected and so very thoughtful. You were my angel at that moment; you helped me step out of the craziness for a moment to breathe. There are no words (although it seems I’ve written plenty) that can thank you enough. So please accept our corny little token of love! You truly were our game changer.”

Happy Heart Month, with love from Shawnee Elmwood first graders

Thanks to Mrs. Chung’s and Mrs. Mayse’s first graders at Shawnee Elmwood, some of our patients at St. Rita’s had a sweeter Valentine’s Day and a happier Heart Month!

The students were learning about healthy bodies and the American Heart Association and also about giving to charity and helping others. Their teachers decided to put the lessons into action, and these kind kiddos made heart-themed cups filled with goodies and wrote uplifting notes to encourage sick patients in the hospital. Our nurses handed the cups out to pediatric patients and the cards were given to heart patients.
Dr. Hemraj Makwana performing new ASD procedure

Since October 2015, Dr. Hemraj Makwana, interventional cardiologist, has been performing a new procedure to fix atrial septal defects (ASD) of the heart. According to Dr. Makwana, “This is essentially a hole in the heart.” The condition, which is present at birth, develops when the interatrial septum (the wall that divides the upper chamber of the heart into the left and right atrium) forms abnormally and leaves a hole. The hole causes blood to leak from one side of the heart to the other, which causes pressure in the lungs to build up. Over time, there will be less oxygen in the blood that goes to the body. ASD is one of the most common birth defects of the heart, but it may not be discovered until later in one’s life as the defect does not always cause problems right away.

One of Dr. Makwana’s ASD patients, Vickie Vasquez, didn’t realize she had a hole in her heart until she was 59 years old. She began seeing Dr. Zoheir Abdelbaki, cardiologist, for regular checkups a few years ago after her husband passed away of a heart attack. Dr. Abdelbaki scheduled EKGs for Vickie every year, stress tests and echocardiograms every other year and kept a close eye on her heart murmur, but there was no way of knowing about her ASD – that is, until she began feeling different. There were no signs of heart attack or stroke, but Vickie said she began feeling extremely tired, experiencing shortness of breath, and swelling in her legs kept getting worse and worse. She decided to pay a visit to the Heart Specialists at St. Rita’s Medical Center where Dr. Abdelbaki performed a transesophageal echo or TEE, which identified Vickie’s ASD. Vickie said: “I was born with ASD, but I didn’t know it. Normally people catch it when they are young, and sometimes the hole will close on its own, but not in my case. I feel very fortunate that we were able to catch it when we did, before it caused serious complications.”

To fix the hole in Vickie’s heart, Dr. Makwana would perform the new procedure, called percutaneous ASD closure, which allows him to close ASD defects without invasive surgery. The procedure involves placing a closure device into the heart through catheter tubes. Through a small cut in the groin, the catheters are inserted through a blood vessel up into the heart; then the closure device is placed across the hole and the ASD defect is closed. Vickie had her ASD procedure on November 17; the closure was completed by noon and she was discharged by noon the next day.

Before the procedure, Vickie and her two daughters scheduled an appointment at the Structural Heart and Arrhythmia Clinic with Dr. Makwana to go over what to expect. Vickie said she left that meeting feeling very confident that Dr. Makwana was going to help her feel better. “Dr. Makwana spent quality time explaining everything to me and my family, and everyone felt very comfortable with the procedure because it was clear that the heart team knew what they were doing.”

Because the procedure is relatively new, ASD patients used to be transferred out of town for this care. Now, thanks to Dr. Makwana’s expertise, patients can have this procedure done closer to home. Vickie and her family are thankful for that: “My kids would rather have me home, so it made them feel more comfortable that I wouldn’t have to travel out of town. I think it is great that people can get this care here in Lima.”
On a winter evening in January, Robert Yant and his wife Marlene went for a walk in the Columbus Grove School building, as many community members regularly do for exercise. In the middle of their walk, Bob collapsed. He was having cardiac event, but thankfully, several bystanders were able to take action and with CPR, an AED device and early 911 activation, they were able to save Robert’s life.

Fortunately, several nurses and medical professionals were in the building that night, walking the halls and attending a junior high basketball game, which had just ended when Robert collapsed. Nurses jumped in to help, and began performing CPR on Robert. One bystander ran to get the automated external defibrillator (AED) machine, which was used to shock him multiple times and make his heart start pumping correctly again.

Shortly after, paramedics arrived to take Robert to St. Rita's Medical Center. Thanks to the rapid response of the Columbus Grove and Putnam County EMS teams, and the therapeutic hypothermia procedure performed at St. Rita's, Robert is alive and getting back to his daily routine.

Brian Anderson, EMS Coordinator at St. Rita’s said: “It takes a lot of courage as a bystander to step up and take action, but this is a perfect example of how bystander CPR techniques, AED use and early 911 activation truly make a difference.” Robert is thankful that these heroes saved his life that day.

As a result, the Columbus Grove and Putnam County EMS teams were able to quickly transport Robert to St. Rita’s, where medical professionals were able to perform the therapeutic hypothermia procedure to help improve his recovery. This procedure involves cooling the patient’s body to slow down the body’s metabolic rate and reduce the risk of brain damage. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the EMS team, Robert is now alive and getting back to his daily routine.

Robert Yant recognizes and thanks the bystanders who helped save his life when he had a heart attack in Columbus Grove High School.

Nurse Practitioner Logan Smith, Clinical Manager Cory Unverferth and patient Shawn Gregg stand next to the telemedicine robot.

Keeping stroke patients closer to home

A drug called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) dissolves clots and restores blood flow, and can make all the difference to patients suffering a stroke. Before 2016, St. Rita's had been transporting stroke patients to either Mercy St. Vincent's or OSU for care and monitoring, following the administration of tPA. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our stroke team, led by Dr. Almudallal, we can now keep our patients closer to home.

Stroke patients are examined using telemedicine—a robot allows physicians in Toledo to see patients and assess them just as they would in person. Then, they are treated here at St. Rita’s. Clinical Manager Cory Unverferth shared: “This allows our patients to stay here locally and to be treated right here in our hospital for their treatment plan along the way and also for rehabilitation.”

Shawn Gregg was the first tPA patient to be kept at St. Rita’s for care in January. He said he is so appreciative that this care saved his life. “And the best thing about the whole experience... When they brought me to St. Rita’s I thought they were going to have to transfer me to another hospital, but I was able to stay here—close to home. This allowed my family to visit me, which really made a difference.”

Nurse Practitioner Logan Smith, Clinical Manager Cory Unverferth and patient Shawn Gregg stand next to the telemedicine robot.
Generous donation makes PCACC renovations possible

If you have been to the Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center recently, you probably noticed new décor throughout the main lobby. This renovation was made possible through a donation by Thomas Erhart. Unfortunately after a 10 month battle with tuberculosis, Tom passed away on January 6, 2013 at The Meadows in Kalida. However, with his generous donation, Tom was able to leave his mark in Putnam County. This renovation created a fresh, new and welcoming look for PCACC patients. Patients are still receiving the same great care they have for years, but are now walking into a warmer, more positive atmosphere.

Tom was very involved throughout the Kalida and Putnam County community. He was the owner of Erhart-Stechschulte Insurance Agency. Along with owning his own business, he was a member of the Lima Deanery Serra Club, St. Rita’s Medical Center Development Committee and the Kalida School Board. Along with these memberships, he also held a variety of leadership roles throughout his life. But even with everything Tom had been involved in, nothing was more important to him than his family.

St. Rita’s and PCACC had also been a big part of Tom’s life. In his will, he left $12,000 to St. Rita’s, but he wanted his family to decide where the money would go. After some thought, Tom’s family decided to give the money to PCACC because their father thought the world of all the individuals who worked there. Tom had been on a first-name basis with the team at PCACC as he had to stop in regularly to get tests done. Even though the antibiotics he had been taking throughout his treatment made him feel very sick, Karen Vorst, Director of PCACC had nothing but kind words to say about Tom and remembers his visits clearly—“Even though you knew he was in pain during those visits, he would always have a smile on his face and would stop in and say hi whenever he was in for a test.”

Sisters Jo Jo and Sharon are proud of the legacy their father, Tom Erhart, has left at the Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center.

Tom continued his treatment, but unfortunately his health continued to decline. His four children agreed their father could receive a better continuum of care at The Meadows in Kalida. Tom’s two daughters, Jo Jo and Sharon said that their father enjoyed his time at The Meadows because he was in peace and able to enjoy the rest of his life. Tom left behind four children, two sons and two daughters, eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Even though Tom Erhart is gone, his memory of leadership, graciousness and generosity will always be remembered by our team at the Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center.
Hoopin’ for a cure

In January, the Columbus Grove basketball program helped to raise over $11,000 for the Sherry Halker Pink Ribbon Warrior Fund with a silent auction, 50/50 raffles, a lottery tree, and the opportunity for fans to shoot hoops for money during the boys’ and girls’ basketball games against Leipsic High School. The Sherry Halker Pink Ribbon Warrior Fund helps to provide financial assistance for breast imaging services and treatment support to uninsured or underinsured women.

Thank you to Randy and Roxie Schumacher, Mike and Anne Clymer, Jeff and Nikki Clement, Jim and Gina Wurth and Dave and Christie Tabler for helping put on this event, and to the boys and girls basketball players and cheerleaders for their efforts throughout the day. This event helped to raise money for a great cause!

Mary Kay Verhoff, Director of the Women’s Wellness Center at St. Rita’s said, “We are proud to be able to carry on Sherry’s legacy as a breast health navigator. Even though she is no longer with us physically, we feel her presence in the work that we can offer to those who are financially challenged and help make a difference in the lives of people in our own community.”

Inpatient Hospice

Over the past 98 years our community has witnessed and celebrated St. Rita’s growth and progress many times as we’ve continued to improve care for our patients. For over 30 years our Hospice team has quietly and compassionately been providing support for dying patients and their families all across our region. Each day, our staff has the privilege of being guests in our patient’s homes and having “kitchen conversations” with the families of our patients. These conversations reveal that what keeps our patients and their families up at night is not entirely their medical situation, but also their unique life circumstances. Our patients and their families want to focus upon their life, rather than the process that may ultimately deprive them of it. They want to spend their final days creating memories, and during moments of quiet and stillness, experience laughter, tears and togetherness with those for whom they care most.

For more than 30 years we have done our very best to serve hospice patients and now we will be able to do it even better, thanks to St. Rita’s new inpatient hospice unit. Our new unit is designed not only to care for the patient, but for their entire circle of friends and family. The unit includes quiet patient rooms, a meditation space, a kitchen and living room for guests, books and video games for visiting children, sleeping arrangements for guests if needed, guest showers for those who may be with us for a few days, and more.

This new space will truly offer dignity, privacy and beauty for our hospice patients and their families. In this unit, we will continue to deliver on St. Rita’s pledge to our community to always provide the highest level of care and compassion for our most vulnerable patients and their loved ones. Inpatient hospice will help those involved focus on the meaningful moments of their life, while providing comfort in its final stages.

Generous donations helped make the beauty of St. Rita’s Inpatient Hospice Unit possible, and St. Rita’s would especially like to thank local artists, Thomas Cullen, Robert Lepo and David Lepo for their creative contributions.
St. Rita’s Nurse Alumni Association

Mark your calendar!

St. Rita’s Nurse Alumni Reunion
September 9, 2016
St. Rita’s Auxiliary Conference Center

Alumni dues submission

Please print:

Married name

Name

(First) (Maiden)

Address

City State Zip

Email address

Year graduated

Dues for 20 $10.00

Return to: St. Rita’s Alumni Association
            Carol Schmenk, Treasurer
            1755 Northbrook Dr.
            Lima, OH 45805

Payable by October 1, 2016. Please make checks payable to: St. Rita’s Alumni Association
            Lima, Ohio
MEMORIALS

Individuals who made contributions are listed below the name of the person they have chosen to remember.

Hospice

ESTELLA S. ADAMS
David S. Adams

BOB ARNZEN
Alice Arnzen

KATHRYN AULBY
Eddy L. Bowers

DEAN AND VIRGINIA BAER
Judi Young

GARY BARNES
Ray and Pam Barnes

RAY AND AGNES BARNES
Ray and Pam Barnes

BETTY BILLINGSLEY
Ross and Pam Hollinger
Bruce and Charlene McCullough
Phil and Sue Osmon
Kenneth R. Smith
Art and Penny Welenken

ANNE MARIE BONIFAS
Thomas A. Bonifas

MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH F. BONIFAS
Thomas A. Bonifas

MARY ANN BONIFAS
Thomas A. Bonifas

JAMES A. BONNELL
The Roscoe Fickel Family

FRED AND OPAL BOWEN
Ginny Stedke

ELDON BOWSHER
Jean Bowsher

JAMES R. BOYED
Judy Shatney

ELVA BRADFORD
Danny and Jean Bradford

RICHARD BUFFENBARGER
Dale and Jean Cummings
Neal and Rose Walton

JACK V. BURDEN
Mrs. James Baker

LYNN CHRISTIAN
Mickey & Bob Ryan

HOWARD AND BEA CLARK
Beverly Beery

LOUIS CLEMENTZ, II
Lois C. Schwieterman

BRIAN CONNER
Roger and Janet Conner
Beverly O’Hara

DREW COOK
Dan and Denise Cook
Helen Corbeille
Clovis Ring-Hagood

SHARON AND JOSEPH COSYN
Lucien and Patricia Cosyn

GARY CRAWFORD
Jo Bray
Kathy Willis

VIRGINIA AND JACK CROUSE
Karen C. Miller

MARY E. CUSTER
Gale and Margaret Kline

JACK DAVISSON
Mary Jane Davisson

DECEASED FAMILY MEMBERS
Larry and Shirley Hammond
Shirley Lamberts

DECEASED FAMILY MEMBERS
Ruth Ferline

PARENTS, HELEN AND WINTON DECKER
Judith E. Beers

MILDRED S. DEERHAKE
J. Bernard Deerhake

KATHE DIBERT
Juergen and Evelyn Lenski
Andrea Drexler
Alice Drexler

DUANE DUNAHAY
Carolyn Dunahay

LIZ DUNLAP
Mickey & Bob Ryan

ADELE AND WALTER EISELE
Dr. and Mrs. John Liggett

LEOLA ELEY
Jon and Lisa Barrett
and Family
Friends and Family of Leola Eley
Dan and Marjorie Henry
Lynda Jay
Rosie Tobias
Ellie Zuber

RICH ELLERBROCK
Rosemary Ellerbrock

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Robert and Lily Ensign

CLEM AND HILDA FISHER
Pam Fisher and Family

DON FISHER
Pam Fisher and Family

MARILYN FISHER
Leslie and Jochen Bachmann

JUDY FLANERY
Mark J. Doorley, Sr.

TOM FRANCIS
Jean Francis

JUDY FRONCZAK
Mr. and Mrs. James Hummer

SHARON GEIER
CIAO, Charitable Italian-American Organization
Family and Friends of Sharon Geier
Larry and Regina McClure

VERGENE GILBERT
Cathy Snider

ROBERT GOOD
Ginnie Hellman

JAMES B. GOSSARD
Rita Gossard, Cathy Ray,
Janet Pierson, and
Anna Wolf

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Gerald and Ronda Lehman

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Mike Arnett
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Paul and Sherry Kenchette
Charles and Phyllis LaGrande
Larry H. and Judy A. Miller
Pleasant Precision, Inc.
Roger See
Shawnee Boosters
Shawnee High School Staff
Shawnee Middle School Staff
Mary L. and Roy W. Shawver,
Jr. & Family
Bernard and Norma Sweeney

SHIRLEY A. HEFNER
Danny Hefner, Brian Hefner,
Melissa and Danielle Blakeley

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Rosanne Babiuch
Judy Hanes
Friends of Myrtle (Jean) Hoffman
Francine and Dal Lawrence
Joe Nannamaker, CPA & Staff
Robert Romanello
Maria Ucelli

MARY ANN HOHLEBEIN
Greg and Jean Hohlebein

SARAH HOHLBEIN
Greg and Jean Hohlebein

OUR SON RICK
Harry and Gretchen Hooks

BOBBY HUDDLESTON
Robert and Agnes Huddleston

MARIE E. HUGHES
Judith K. Nickles

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Judith K. Nickles

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MARGE HUMMER
Mr. and Mrs. James Hummer
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Jean Cummings
JOHN T. KOHLER
Cheryl Kohler
RALPH KOHLRIESER (MY FATHER)
Judy Steinke
Hazel Kraft
Dean and Betty Place
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Beverly Krouskop
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Lifeline of Ohio’s first-ever Lima Torch Run for Life

St. Rita’s was honored to take our partnership with Lifeline of Ohio to the next level by helping to host the first ever Lima Torch Run for Life! This event helped to bring awareness to the need for more registered organ, eye and tissue donors and to celebrate with those who have received a second chance at life.
Tim Mosher, CNP leads effort to send ambulance to Haiti

Certified Nurse Practitioner Tim Mosher worked with several community partners to donate an ambulance to Haiti. Mercy Health and St. Rita’s provided support for Tim’s mission and several local EMS agencies came together to donate equipment for the truck, including members of the Bath Township Fire Department. In April, the ambulance was transported to New Jersey, and then the Air Force flew the unit to Haiti. Tim said he can’t wait to see what an impact it will make. “Hopefully hundreds of patients will be served, and hundreds of lives saved as well.” This is what we were meant to do—at home and abroad!
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Putnam County Farm Safety Program

St. Rita’s was proud to play a part in the 17th Annual Putnam County Farm Safety Program this spring. More than 500 third graders in Putnam County were invited to learn about safety topics including pond safety and tractor safety. Putnam County EMS helped to stage a mock ATV accident, showing the students how police, fire and ambulance arrive when 911 is called. Marge Kohls, nurse at the Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center, also taught the students about sun protection and household materials that can be harmful and poisonous. This is a great annual event that helps to keep our kids healthy and safe!
The Mercy Club was established in 1978 by the Annual Support Committee of St. Rita’s Medical Center’s Health Care (SRHC) Foundation to recognize friends and supporters of the Medical Center.

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Unverferth Manufacturing, Inc.

BRONZE MEDALLION
Businesses that contribute $1,000 - $4,999 or more annually to St. Rita’s Medical Center Development Program

BRONZE MEDALLION RENEWAL
Muhlenkamp Bldg. Corp.  
Gasdorf Tool and Machine, Co.  
Fidelity Builders Supply, Inc.  
Lock Sixteen Catering, Inc.  
Kalida Manufacturing, Inc.  
Chiles-Laman Funeral Homes  
HCF Management, Inc.  
General Dynamics Land Systems, Div.

Mercy Association Covenant Ceremony

Vice President of Mission and Values Integration Amy Marcum, Sister Noel Fry and other Sisters of Mercy hosted a Covenant Ceremony at St. Rita’s Medical Center in April. Seven women were commissioned as new Mercy Associates (Brenda Stechschulte, Ruby Clark, Carla Eilerman, Joy Fishpaw, June Eisert, Kim Point and Kathy Verhoff) and five women were re-commissioned (Vicki Carter, Kathy Herold, Kathy Lamoreau, Barb Markward and Sheila Miller). Mercy Associates respond to the Gospel invitation of Jesus to minister to those who are poor, sick and uneducated, and they actively engage in a commitment to mercy. These women are a shining example of our Mission and Promise!
Our Mission
We extend the healing ministry of Jesus by improving the health of our communities with emphasis on people who are poor and under-served.

Our Values
Compassion, Excellence, Human Dignity, Justice, Sacredness of Life and Service.

Our Promise
To make lives better—mind, body and spirit.
To genuinely enjoy being of service.
To make healthcare easier.

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