

NEWS RELEASE



For more information, contact:
Gail Wade
252 535-8111
gwade@halifaxrhc.org

**For Immediate Release
February 5, 2010**

EMPLOYEES BRAVE SNOW AT HALIFAX REGIONAL

Last Saturday morning Bruce Robistow, the Administrative Director of Clinical and Support Operations at Halifax Regional, awoke early to see the beautiful, heavy snow falling outside his Roanoke Rapids home.

While watching the snowfall, he realized that he was the Administrator-on-Call for the weekend. "I dressed and headed out the door at 5:45 a.m. and drove my wife's VW to the Medical Center," he says.

"My goal was to make certain patients and employees had safe access to the Medical Center and that we had appropriate staff to meet the needs of patients," he added.

What happened Saturday and Sunday was simply amazing, according to Robistow. Without being summoned, employees began showing up for work to replace colleagues who lived long distances from the Medical Center. Most stayed in the hospital for 48 hours, sleeping in the Medical Center or hotels.

"The community depends on us to be prepared to meet the health care needs, regardless of the circumstances, regardless of the time of day," said Will Mahone, president. "I am proud of the entire staff for demonstrating their commitment to serve patients."

The cafeteria at the Medical Center extended its operating hours until 9:30 at night to serve hot, nutritious meals to visitors and employees. Wendy Rook, an administrative assistant in the department, persuaded her husband to drive to homes of the staff and bring them to the Medical Center so meals could be prepared.

Employees came in on their days off to cover the extended hours and to work when their colleagues could not get to the Medical Center.

Wallace Parham, the manager of Food and Nutrition Department, personally delivered meals to the homes of those on the "meals on wheels"

program because the volunteers who normally deliver those meals could not make it to the Medical Center.

Bill Navarro, manager of the Imaging Department, transported physicians to and from the Medical Center in his four-wheel drive vehicle.

Stacy Wilson, an employee in Respiratory Therapy, lives 58 miles away in Bethel. On her way to work, she was in an accident, disabling her car. Fortunately, she was not injured. She called her husband, who picked her up and took her to work.

Kenny O'Quinn came from South Hill and Kashandra (Kash) Garrett drove from Rocky Mount. They spend the night in local hotels. Anthony Pitt, Chaanty Smith and LaShuna Hardy, who work nights in Respiratory Therapy, slept in the sleep analysis center when their shift was over.

Having x-rays available at all hours is essential in the hospital, so three staff members stayed in hotels in Roanoke Rapids and two others spend the night in the Medical Center so they would be available for their shifts and for emergencies.

Nurses also stayed in the hospital so they could work both Saturday and Sundays. They were flexible and moved from unit to unit within the Medical Center so all patients could be treated. Peter Rossi, RN, worked in the Emergency Care Center the entire weekend. Connie Tudor, RN, drove to 40 miles to in the snow to get to the Emergency Care Center. Other nurses stayed in local hotels so they could get to the Medical Center.

In other departments, employees who live near the Medical Center came to work, because others who lived outside of town could not make it to work.

“The spirit was tremendous,” said Robistow. “Everyone was cheerful and the teamwork was amazing.” There are many other stories of employees going above and beyond the call of duty.

Despite the snow and hazardous driving conditions, employees saw to it that their patients were served. “It made me proud to be part of this great team,” said Robistow.

###

About Halifax Regional-

Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 204 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit www.halifaxregional.us.