

MERCY'S ANATOMY

The TV show “Grey’s Anatomy” may have surgeons McSteamy and McDreamy who stir up matters of the heart at Seattle Grace, but at Mercy we have Chad Ware and the heart of the matter for him is continually improving patient care.

Chad, 39, is a caring, dedicated Mercy nurse who has earned many accolades, like Nurse of the Year at the October 2010 Iowa Nurses Association Annual Convention. But he says his greatest reward is making a difference in the quality of a patient’s care.

“Taking care of patients means a lot to me. It’s an amazing opportunity to help someone in need,” says Chad, assistant clinical director for inpatient services.

He relates one special patient story that exemplifies why he loves his job: “I remember

walking into a patient’s room. The woman in the hospital bed recognized me and said, ‘You took care of my husband about a year ago, before he died – that hug you gave me before you left meant the world to me.’ Then we sat and talked for a bit. It’s those patient moments when you can make a difference.

“That’s what the culture of Mercy is all about. That’s why I’ve fallen in love with it and found the place I want to be.”

Chad has been caring for patients and supporting families since coming to Mercy in

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Iowa “Nurse of the Year”
Chad Ware delivers patient care
with a personal touch.

1996 as a Certified Nursing Assistant. He was a phlebotomist in the Laboratory and, later, a tech in the Emergency Department. He now oversees the Emergency Management program for Mercy and its affiliates, collaborating with administration and organizational leaders for all mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities.

On the state and national level, Chad is a member of the Iowa Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT), an arm of the National Disaster Medical System. He was part of the team deployed to Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina where he took care of injured storm victims as part of an emergency medical team treating patients at a field hospital. He also helped staff a similar field hospital in Port Arthur, TX, after Hurricane Rita.

While Chad’s first love is taking care of people, he sees a real need for forward-thinking nurses to participate in making changes in patient care by getting involved in hospital committees and management. For example, Chad is a co-chair of Mercy’s Code Blue Committee, which evaluates quality of care and determines avenues to deliver care in the safest, most efficient way.

Chad credits Laura Reed, operations director of inpatient services, and Beth Houlahan, senior vice president of patient care services, as his mentors. “It’s an amazing opportunity to now work for Beth and Laura, because they are driven to ensure we are providing the best patient care, while also taking care of the staff that provides that care. It’s great knowing that is their fundamental belief and drive.”

Keeping more Iowa nurses working in their home state is one of Chad’s objectives. “Iowa graduates a lot of nurses and we want to attract them to Mercy with our high quality, evidence-based practice and patient-centered focus. We want to be the best and have everyone want to be here.

“The Institute for Healthcare Improvement has recognized this community for high-quality care that is setting the stage nationally, like emergency rooms with certifications in chest pain. We need to get the word out,” he says.

Chad adds the second part of attracting nurses to the hospital is offering a positive environment that promotes teamwork with encouraging leadership. “You may have a great team, but if the coach is always yelling at you, you don’t want to be there. We want nurses to be here not only because they provide the best patient care, but also because they enjoy the team.”

Mercy is lucky to have Chad on its team.