

TELEMONITORING staying connected



Telemonitoring connects Home Care patients and physicians.

For patients ready to go home, but not ready to be away from the watchful eyes of a health-care professional, the new Web-based in-home telemonitoring equipment at Mercy Medical Center is an ideal solution. Telemonitoring allows physicians and nurses to closely monitor patients' medical conditions while they are in the comfort of their own homes. The system is based and managed from the Mercy Home Care office, 2740 First Ave. SE, seven days a week. Mercy is the first hospital in the Cedar Rapids area to offer this new state-of-the-art equipment.

The technology is installed in the patient's home and is used to transmit vital signs such as heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, temperature, weight, blood sugars and peak flow readings. Data transmission is rapid, allowing nurses and doctors to monitor changes in vital signs almost immediately and, if necessary, take action to contact the patient or make a home visit. Patient results also may be printed or faxed to a physician's office.

"This new telemonitoring program will play an integral role in disease management, allowing early detection and prompt treatment of patients with unstable conditions," says Shawn Atay, RN, Home Care Telemonitoring Coordinator at Mercy Medical Center. "The close management of our Home Care patients should mean better outcomes for them, and fewer visits to the emergency room and re-admissions to the hospital."

Registered nurses from Mercy's Home Care program set up the monitoring systems and instruct patients in their use. Each patient has customized vital-sign parameters established prior to installation. The Web-based equipment then is programmed to verbally prompt the patient with specific questions each day to gauge any changes in the patient's condition. By proactively monitoring their health conditions, Home Care patients receive immediate and efficient care.

For more information, please call Mercy Home Care's Telemonitoring Coordinator Shawn Atay at (319) 398-6034.

