

June 2020 Client Corner: The Lifetime Journey of a Nurse

In her fifty years of being a nurse Ann thought she had “seen it all.” From working with newborns to hospice care, she has LOTS of experience with the full spectrum of responsibilities that encompass being an RN. Then 2020 came along.

Ann is currently the Medical Program Advisor at Rowntree Gardens where she creates programs for improving residents' quality of life, implementing palliative care, and dementia care. She works closely with the staff to equip them to teach and execute these programs with the residents. A few months ago however she added another item to her resume...COVID screener.

At Rowntree every single resident and staff member is screened every day. There are deliveries all day every day; mail, food, and medications, just to name a few. Each person associated with these deliveries needs to be screened as well. Ann signed up to do these screenings in 2-4 hour shifts, one per week, and has been happy for the excuse to get out of the house and be helpful.

In addition to the screening at Rowntree, Ann implemented a “Coping with COVID” training with the staff. She wanted to ensure that during this stressful time they were taking care of themselves. As care givers their most powerful tool is themselves, and they need be taking care of their emotional and physical needs first, before they can care for others.

It was Ann's heart's desire from early childhood to become a nurse. She started her career in nursing right here at St. Jude working with mothers and babies, assisting in implementing family centered care in the 70s and 80s. She continued working in that field until the 90s when a friend from her Health Ministry Bible Study asked her about starting a Hospice Program. After praying about it for some time she felt this was where she was meant to be. She considers it an absolute privilege to walk with families through the end of life journey. To have the opportunity to create programs that may improve End of Life Care for patients and families has been her greatest joy and blessing as an RN. Ann sits on the board of Rowntree Gardens, the UCI Medical Research Board, the NCEA (National Alliance on Elder Abuse), and FIS (Friends of International Students Ministry). For Ann nursing truly is a ministry. It is an opportunity for her to show God's love by caring for others. Her patients/families have been her greatest teachers. They have taught her love, compassion, commitment, courage, dedication, and how to live!