Central Resource System Developed for Senior Care Center

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The Southeast Georgia Health System (SGHS) and the University of Georgia Archway Partnership recently announced the completion of a new centralized resource and information system for the Senior Care Center in Brunswick.

The new system was a four-month long project undertaken by UGA’s College of Public Health (CPH) graduate student Morgan Bishop and was overseen by Senior Care Center administrator Tom Cronemeyer.

As Morgan entered her final semester at CPH, she sought out an internship near her hometown in Bryan County. Morgan turned to the Archway Partnership, who facilitated discussions between the College of Public Health, health officials at the Southeast Georgia Health System and herself. These discussions led to finding a need for SGHS’s recently-expanded Senior Care Center in Glynn County.

Established in 2008, the Senior Care Center is a branch of the SGHS that works with seniors throughout Glynn County and the surrounding areas to offer care, for both in- and out-patient treatment. Recently, the 200-bed center added a 32-room wing designated for Alzheimer’s care. However, the new wing lacked a centralized resource system for staff training, research information and tips on patient activities. It became Morgan’s task to create this central system of resources and teach center officials how to use it properly.

“I came into this not really knowing what to expect, but knowing that I had the skills to do the task,” said Morgan, referring to her previous work teaching and conducting research projects at the university. “This was, however, a whole new demographic, and I found that I really learned a lot about myself and my own abilities. This project was so rewarding.”

With the complete, centralized resource system of information now in place at the Senior Care Center, thoroughly training new staff and meeting high expectations of patient satisfaction will be that much easier, SGHS Administrator Tom Cronemeyer said.

“Morgan was instrumental in researching many different sources and collecting vital information that has been used to develop the infrastructure for our new Alzheimer’s Disease and other dementias Memory Care Center,” he said. “The Archway Partnership provided resources in time and effort that would have been very difficult for us to free up for this purpose. It was very advantageous to our operation to have Morgan here doing this work.”

Beginning in May and working until August, Morgan conducted months of interviews and research, both on the Internet and in the field, to supply the information held within the new system of resources. Beyond creating the information resource system, Morgan also worked to train the staff on how to implement the new resources. She then presented her work to the SGHS Advisory Council and the local Archway Professional, and was met with overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Morgan’s work, however, has not stopped now that the project is complete. “I go back often to volunteer and meet with patients,” Morgan said. “Every time I go back, I am greeted with smiling faces. The system is working well for the staff.” **Advancing Community Priorities:** The Glynn County Archway Partnership has identified a variety of needs in the community, with addressing health issues of aging in its elderly population as one of its key community priorities. The student internship project created a hub of information and resources for the Southeast Georgia Health System and its Senior Care Center, which will help future health care professionals and patients better understand aging issues such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia.