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SWMC Implements 'Quiet Zone'
When entering Southwest Medical Center – enter the Quiet Zone!

“We are trying to improve on our noise level perceived by our patients at night and really all the time,” explained Surgical Floor Nurse Manager Sandy Mead of the new “Quiet Zone” committee and program at SWMC.

SWMC initiated the program to improve on the noise levels at the hospital so their patients could have a more restful experience and they have seen an improvement since implementing the program.

“We have an outside company which conducts a telephone survey of some of our patients after they are discharged from the hospital,” said SWMC Public Relations Director Nancy Kletecka. “The most recent results illustrate that our quietness levels have greatly improved. In fact, one of our latest reports showed we had improved quietness by a substantial percentage.”

The Quiet Zone Committee at the hospital has implemented many steps to make this happen:

• Visitors and staff are directed to utilize other elevators that are not in such close proximity to patient rooms during the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

• “Quiet Zone” signs have been put up in the areas of patient rooms to remind visitors and staff that patients are resting.

• Wheels are being checked regularly on equipment to decrease any noise levels emitting from them

• Staff is being encouraged to close doors on rooms whenever a patient or their guests are being a little too loud.

• Nursing students and their instructors as well as hospital staff are provided more education on quiet zone changes and possible solutions.

• The hospital patient care representative now routinely asks patients about the quietness of the environment and if a problem is identified it is to be addressed as soon as possible.

A long term goal of the committee is to implement “music therapy” – adding it to the television cable in patients’ rooms. Other possible implementations include the use of ear plugs for the patients and their family members.

“Our staff feels the use of ear plugs will be particularly important once construction begins full force on our remodeling project,” Kletecka said, adding that the Quiet Zone program is of utmost importance. “We want to make sure our patients receive the very best of care, and rest is a vital part of that equation.”

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