

Planetree Blossoms

By Alex W. Langan

South Coast Medical Center's new program is personalizing healthcare

South Coast Medical Center (SCMC) is pleased to be the first hospital in Orange County to introduce Planetree to its patients, staff and community.

Planetree is a nonprofit organization dedicated to personalizing the healthcare experience for patients and families around the world. SCMC's affiliation with Planetree further enhances the hospital's philosophy of making the patient's health and well-being top priority.

Two new Planetree initiatives recently introduced by SCMC include the Family Care Services and Comfort Care programs, both of which operate through the support of the hospital's volunteers.

Family Care Services

"Welcome to South Coast Medical Center! Is there anything that I may do for you?" Warm and sincere salutations such as these are what patients and visitors hear from volunteers in the same-day surgery department at SCMC.

These "surgical liaisons," who are easily recognized by their royal blue jackets and inviting smiles, interface with the same-day surgery staff, physicians, patients, family members and friends to

help create and ensure a warm and friendly environment for everyone involved.

The same-day surgery hospitality provided to the patients is extended through the volunteers who offer visitors an assortment of books, magazines and television programs to enjoy and to reduce tension and anxiety while they wait. There is also a vast supply of children's books, crayons and drawing materials for children who accompany the adults in the waiting room.

One of the special individuals affiliated with the Family Care program is volunteer Andrée Hory. "The Family Care volunteers create a less stressful environment for the friends and family members who wait for their loved ones," she says. "We do whatever is necessary to set their minds at ease; whether providing conversation or offering various amenities while they wait."

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are needed for the many new Planetree programs at South Coast Medical Center. There are numerous opportunities available for participation. If you are interested in learning more, please call the SCMC volunteer office at **(949) 499-7175**.

Comforting Care Eases Families' Nerves During Trying Times

The new Comfort Care program was designed to provide patients in the ICU and medical/surgical units with extra TLC. June Suderman, wife of visiting ICU patient Herm Suderman, acknowledges how comforting it was to have the presence of volunteer and former nurse Nancy Jenness during such difficult times. Herm was living in the last stages of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). "It was a real pleasure having her there," says June. "Nancy added great warmth and comfort to our experience at South Coast Medical Center." Nancy provided a listening ear, a warm touch and words of comfort to the Sudermans.

There are many compassionate individuals at South Coast Medical Center who embrace the Planetree philosophy of "human beings caring for other human beings," and they are eager to further the rapid progress of these newly implemented Planetree programs. ❖



Volunteer Nancy Jenness (middle) and ICU Director Danyce Mills (second from right) offer the Suderman family a caring and comforting touch as patient Herm Suderman faces a terminal illness.