

Langlade Hospital – An Aspirus Partner, Antigo

Community Care story

For a homeless person, obstacles abound and help may seem nearly impossible to find especially when it comes to accessing health care. Often, even the most basic medical care is very difficult to get. Homelessness and health care are tightly interwoven and is often the result of a downward spiral that begins with a health problem. Unfortunately, many homeless people who are sick and need treatment do not ever receive medical care.

This was not the case for a young homeless man that happened to be passing through Antigo during the summer of 2010. A bicycle accident sent the young man to the emergency room at Langlade Hospital and subsequently to the Intensive Care Unit for several days. The young man was traveling with nothing more than the clothes on his back and his bicycle. While he was in the hospital, the staff reached out to him and cared for him beyond his medical needs. His clothes were taken home by the med/surg nurse supervisor to be washed and mended. The inpatient nurse manager brought clothing and other items from home for him as he had so few personal belongings.

When the young man was well enough to be discharged from the hospital, concern grew among staff as to where he would recuperate. He was well enough to be discharged from the hospital but certainly not strong enough to travel or be out in the elements. Times like this are when the hospital's mission and the commitment of staff to live out that mission become crystal clear. Langlade Hospital Social Services sprung into action making arrangements to assist the patient after he was discharged. Langlade Hospital owns and operates an assisted living facility which happened to have a vacant apartment. The manager of adult services was contacted and agreed that the vacant apartment would be the best place for him to recuperate. Since the apartment was unfurnished, the hospital maintenance staff pulled together and moved furniture and a bed into the apartment. Comfortable bedding and other amenities were brought in to make sure that he was comfortable. He moved into the apartment and the manager of the complex went to the pharmacy and purchased recommended over-the-counter pain medication for him. Hot meals were provided by the hospital's nutritional services department as well. He was truly being cared for.

Within days, a nurse from Langlade Hospital Social Services visited the man in the apartment and after talking with him, she had concerns that he may be experiencing some complications. She talked with him and transported him back to the hospital where he was readmitted for pain management.

When he was well enough to be discharged, he needed accommodations for one night. He decided to stay in a hotel until his mother arrived the next morning. Again, Langlade Hospital Social Services made a pre-paid reservation, arranged transportation for him, provided gift cards and money to cover food and delivered prescription medications to him to ensure that he would heal and be well until his mother could travel from another state to Antigo to pick him up. The compassion that was extended to this young man was incredible and a shining example of living out the Langlade Hospital mission.

In conclusion, the man's hospital bills totaled well over \$60,000 and were covered 100% through the Langlade Hospital Community Care Program.

The Langlade Hospital Mission is to Heal, Promote Health and Enrich Lives.