

Blazing

THE TRAIL

Nancy Morris, PA, recently celebrated 35 years of practice and was a local pioneer as the first certified physician assistant in the Cedar Rapids area.

The profession was so new that even other medical professionals asked about her background and training. "I feel incredibly blessed to have been introduced to this profession right out of college and be a trail-blazer in this community," says Morris, who has

been a part of MercyCare Community Physicians since 1995 and now practices at MercyCare Marion. Her supervising physician is Dr. Sharon Bertroche. "PAs work in a partnership relationship with physicians. I enjoy that association to provide the best possible patient care we can," she explains.

In addition to practicing at MercyCare Marion, Morris formerly served on the board and cares for patients at His Hands Free Medical Clinic, which provides care to those in the Cedar Rapids community without medical insurance. She also has served on the Iowa Physician Assistant Society Legislative subcommittee for more than 25 years and received the honor of Iowa Physician Assistant of the Year, awarded by the Iowa Physician Assistant Society, in September 2010. Morris says, "Originally I

planned to go into social work. But I had a personal experience where I was called into medicine by God. I had a degree in sociology with concentration in social welfare and was planning to get a master's in social work. I was aware of the PA program, so I went back to school to get some prerequisites I needed and applied to the program."

She graduated in the fourth class of physician assistants from the University of Texas, Galveston.

Morris also has a passion for mentoring young people interested in a career in healthcare.

"I've had students job shadow me, from high school to college age. I've also had college students do a rotation with me during PA training," she says.

"I like the teaching part of medicine, whether in a clinical setting or with kids. I love medicine," she continues. "Every once in a while I wonder if there is something else I'd like to do, and I can't come up with anything else. As a physician assistant, I can have a positive impact on people's lives. I treat newborns when they come home from the hospital and I think my oldest nursing home patient is in her 90s.

"I have some families where I see several generations as patients," she says. "Medicine is not only about biological science, it's also a social science. I enjoy treating the whole person. People share a lot about their personal lives and I am privileged to guide and direct them with a whole person approach."

Nancy Morris, PA, volunteers each year at the Open Minds, Open Doors conference to help foster an interest in health science careers in middle school girls.

The Mercy Touch® magazine is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of Mercy Medical Center, 701 10th St. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, (319) 398-6011.

Mercy Medical Center provides healthcare services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, regardless of race, creed, sex, national origin, disability, age or ability to pay.

Tim Charles
President and CEO

Kelly DeGroot
Art Direction/Design

Sharon Konchar
Managing Editor
Lead Writer

Sherry Crawford
Karen Vander Sanden
Contributing Writers

Mike Schlotterback
Photography

The information contained in this magazine is not intended to constitute individual medical advice. It is given for general informational purposes only. You should consult your healthcare provider to determine the applicability of such information to your situation.



Copyright © 2011
Mercy Medical Center



KEEP IN touch

The Mercy Touch® magazine features insightful and practical medical information, warm human interest stories, medical triumphs, medical breakthroughs and new technologies at Mercy Medical Center.

- 2 **FIRST P.A. IN C.R.**
Celebrating 35 years
- 4-5 **AND THE SURVEY SAYS...**
- 6-7 **EMPLOYEE HEALTH CENTER**
Improving health at the workplace
- 8-9 **STATE REP. OLSON'S FAMILY**
In session at Mercy's NICU
- 10-11 **FOUR TIMES THE FUN**
Two sets of twins
- 12-13 **THE FIRST IN IOWA**
Molecular Breast Imaging (MBI)
- 14-15 **HIPPO THERAPY**
Physical therapy in the saddle
- 16-17 **JUST THE RIGHT TIME**
- 18-19 **EFY® FUND MAKES A DIFFERENCE**
"Huge relief" for woman in need
- 20-22 **A CHANGE OF HEART**
Making heart-healthy choices
- 23-25 **SOLUTION-FOCUSED COUNSELING**
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- 26-27 **TOP CANCER CARE CLOSE TO HOME**
Facing lymphoma with a positive attitude
- 28-29 **PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER**
Palliative Care
- 30-31 **OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT**
75 years with insulin

