

# Niagara Health Center accredited by JCAHO

## Center surveyed for third time and receives score of 100 percent

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**THE NURSING STAFF** at the Niagara Health Center, includes in the first row from bottom to top, Melinda Griesman, Dana Carison, Kelly VanOss, Richelle Sullivan and Deb Vargo. In the second row from bottom to top are Tara Downrick, Tara Millan, Danya Scott and Amanda Mauro. In the third row from bottom to top is Donna Collins, Heidi Morgan, Jessica Faught, Rosanna Glodich and Rita martin.

**NIAGARA, Wis.** - The Niagara Health Center has been surveyed by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) three times since opening in January 1997.

Each time, the three separate surveyors gave a score that was 98 percent, 98 percent and 100 percent. The physician surveyors said that they were amazed that there was such a facility in a small town. They also commented that the practice model needs to become a model for other institutions and practices in the country.

JCAHO is made up of representatives of physicians, nursing and other healthcare professionals. When it began, JCAHO's goal was to focus on developing standards that deal with the quality and safety of care in health care facilities throughout the country and at that time they only surveyed hospitals.

Over the years, JCAHO has become a well recognized authority in providing accreditation to many types of

Healthcare institutions in addition to hospitals. Surgery centers are one of many facilities which are now being surveyed. It is voluntary and expensive to be accredited, but these institutions want someone to come and look at them and assure them that they meet the standards for delivery of quality patient care.

A spokesperson for the Niagara Health Center noted that being surveyed and accredited by JCAHO also boosts the morale of the employees who are proud and confident to be working in a place that meets the standards and in some cases exceeds the standards.

"No matter how many times you have gone through the survey. One is always anxious. But for some reason. I did not feel worried at all. Maybe we are getting used to it," noted Vijay Singh, MD.

Deborah Vargo, RN, director of nursing at the Niagara Health Center agrees. "We always welcome them because we know our standard of care matches any other place in the country and in many ways we do things better. We may be small, but our standards are tops."

The last surveyor at the Niagara Health Center was a physician from California who had been in practice and came with extensive credentials and experience. They noted that he sat down towards the need of the first day and spend more than an hour to discuss his findings.

"He repeated stated how impressed he was and cited this place was a center of excellence. He said that we should be very proud we have such a center. He congratulated everyone and again the score he gave was perfect. During the survey, he spoke to many employees and his feedback to the employees and the institutions was definitely a morale booster," Singh and Vargo said.

This year the Niagara Health Center was surveyed and awarded accreditation with no follow-up requirements to the requirements to the Joint commission.

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