

W. Bridgewater Native and Nurse Manager Caring for Veterans During COVID-19



Amy Hanson, RN, Nurse Manager and West Bridgewater resident was notified on a Thursday that she would lead a COVID positive unit, 72B at the Brockton Campus of VA Boston beginning the following Tuesday.

Hanson huddled with her team and explained that this would be her new journey; Hanson invited anyone interested in joining her on this trip could get with her offline. By the time she returned to her office there was a note under her door “*You know I’m in to kick some COVID butt!*” ...and the outpouring of staff volunteers continued. Hanson expected one or two nurses to join the COVID positive unit; by Friday there were 14!

“I’m trying to describe how much you help us through this every day, even if you don’t realize it.” said one staff member note. “It’s like getting on a plane, having no idea where I am going, but I am okay because I know what I packed. I remember you are the pilot and I trust your judgement; the way you handle challenges and conflict, so I feel better about taking off. You give that to us every day even if you don’t realize it, and we only see a fraction of what you do. Just know it’s appreciated.” the note read.

Hanson has a few rules to live by: lead by example, recognize others for their hard work and stay humble. It’s the constant reminder that each person in our bed could be our own family member. I say daily, “what if that was your dad, mom, sister, brother?” Fill those shoes.

“Nurse Hanson’s energy and expertise make a scary situation much easier for staff assigned to her floor unexpectedly. A few staff members have never performed bedside care before, and others have many years of training. Amy treats all her employees as equals and encourages everyone to learn as much as they can and to teach a colleague when they feel comfortable” said Casey Hightower, RN. “Amy is always visible and ready to jump in to provide patient care and staff support when it’s needed. Thanks for being an AMAZING leader, Amy,” said Hightower.

Hanson credits for those who got her to this point. “I’ll be forever grateful for my mentor who took me under her wing and molded me into the nurse I am today.”

Retired VA clinicians interested in returning to work with our Veterans email VHABHSRetireeRecallCOVID19@va.gov



VA Boston Healthcare System is the main referral center for VA in New England and has three main campuses in West Roxbury, Brockton, Jamaica Plain and five community clinics in Lowell, Framingham, Plymouth, Quincy and Causeway Street in Boston.

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