

Sasha Bella Excellence in Family Centred Care Award
April 14, 08

I would like to take this opportunity to nominate Habiba Desai for the 2008 Sasha Bella Excellence in Family Centred Care Award in Cardiac Critical Care. Habiba is well deserving of such an award. She is hard working, conscientious and highly supportive of the unique needs of families and critically ill children.

A Short Story:

One of many unique and beautiful experiences that has impacted my impression of Habiba, was her close bond with a little 2.5 yr old boy on the Berlin Heart. Habiba would visit regularly and weekly, this patient on 4D over a number of months. The little boy would light up like a Christmas tree, the moment he would spot her. A usually sad boy, stricken with anxiety and depression, he would brighten instantly. If a procedure like a dressing change were being done, he would constantly keep looking at her with anticipation, and looked like he couldn't wait till he could have a closer interaction. One could tell he looked forward to their shared moments together. At some points in his care no-one could get him to smile, except Habiba. Bringing him a cookie one day in a package that he could put icing on and multicolored sprinkles he couldn't wait to open it up and begin the process. If only one could have captured the look on his face as she helped him open the packaging it came in. Families truly appreciate the care she provides. She is a highly sought after as a nurse, both by new orientees and families. She genuinely is concerned about the well being of the whole family unit. The care of her patients is meticulous and she takes great effort to engrain this in others. She takes great pride in her work and watching her younger colleagues grow and develop.

Clinical Excellence

Undoubtedly Habiba role models clinical excellence. This is evidenced by her recent acceptance into the SickKids ECMO Specialist Training Program. Also Habiba will be transitioning into a Charge Nurse Position, bypassing the Clinical Support Role. She is meticulous in the care she provides. Safety of children is of paramount importance to her. She has a solid knowledge base and constantly is "revising" – a British term for studying to ensure her knowledge base is current.

Teaching/Educational Skills

Habiba is sought out as a preceptor by many new staff. She engages not only new learners but also experienced staff. Her teaching to families is without exception. She considers this at the forefront of her responsibilities as a front line nurse. Not only does she take this responsibility seriously, she enjoys the partnerships it brings in caring for children. She recognizes that families are experts in the care of their children. Habiba has participated in the OSCE testing of new nurses to Critical Care.

Leadership Skills

Habiba exhibits personal leadership. Family centred care has always been a focus for Habiba in Critical Care orientation – preceptorship phase. She acknowledges how stressful it might be for families to realize that their child is being cared for by novice nurses. The flip side of this, is the stressors that a new graduate nurse experiences whilst caring for critically ill patients and also their families, who themselves are under a great deal of strain. Habiba role models excellence in family centred care to all nurses.

Habiba has been an excellent preceptor to 2 new graduates over 2007/2008 a nine month commitment. She has participated in the development of 2 blooming roses. A letter from Ryerson University Associate Professor, described a students experience with Habiba as “a textbook picture of excellent leadership” and quoted Margaret Fuller “if you have knowledge let others light their candle in it” I believe Habiba does this.

Professional accomplishments

Habiba completed the Advanced Cardiac Critical Care course in 2005, which was a grueling 6 month course on cardiac critical care concepts. Her marks were good and she enjoyed the rich learning within this course. She has also written the CNA exam in paediatric critical care through the Canadian Nurses Association.

Family Centred Care:

Habiba has extensive experience in critical care nursing from England. She has continued to expand her knowledge and skills here over several years at HSC. Habiba has learned through her experience how to help families cope with the stresses that face them. Her contributions to family centered care at the bedside are significant. Walking down the corridor in or out of the unit, Habiba always stops or is stopped by families for a personal conversation. They genuinely look pleased and sometimes even relieved to see her. She has their best interests at heart. Her rapport with the families is obvious and she frequently visits patients and families on 4D, reinforcing the continuity of care and facilitating the transition. Over the years Habiba has received a number of personal letters from families, thanking her for her care and attention. These letters are evidence of her commitment to family centred care.

Exerts from Family Letters of Thanks

It is not uncommon for Habiba to receive letters of thanks from families or cards. These are 2.

“You worked with him during some of his most fragile and volatile periods and we are very grateful to you for your skill, patience, efficiency and kindness. We also greatly appreciate the time you spent talking with us, providing up to date reports and information. You helped make one of the most difficult times in our life a little less stressful. After seeing you work with _____ once, we knew you were a great nurse and were very please when we found you assigned to him again. It speaks to your talents.”

“Thank you so much for the incredible care that you gave to our sweetie _____, and to us as well. It was clear that _____ was in the very best hands, and being given the care and tender loving kindness that we ourselves would give her, that is of great comfort at such a difficult time. Thank you for giving your gifts to the children of this world (and their parents). We really felt like we were witnessing the work of angels. Have you see the painting in the far-right corner of the surgical waiting area? It is called “The Ministry of

Love” we feel like you really work from love, and it makes a difference to that. Thank you for caring for our little angel?”

Habiba is an exceptional nurse and a role model for many. Her contributions to clinical and professional expertise has been significant.

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