Nurse retention & recruiting "Job #1" for Jodie Perry, RN

Don't let the humble nurse exterior fool you. Beneath the warm smile and the chilly stethoscope beats the heart of a true Nurse Recruiter/Retention guru.

To combat nursing shortages, Lincoln Hospital has tapped Jodie Perry, RN, to build our nursing program. Not only will she work on recruiting new nurses, but much of her focus will be on supporting current staff.

"Although recruiting is important, retention is my first priority," admits Jodie of her new duties. "It's important to know your current staff enjoys their job. That they have the tools they need for success and recognition of a job well done."

In other words, a happy nurse makes for a successful hospital!

"When people feel valued and enjoy their job, the positive word of mouth goes a long way. You can honestly tell someone, 'I love to work here and so would you.' That's the edge every hospital is looking for."

Jodie says a positive, safe work environment has a few key ingredients. "Recognition, incentives, education, competitive pay/benefits, flexibility and good equipment make nurses happy." Add to that the challenge of new programs and learning new technology and you have the makings of a great place to work.

"We have a lot of nurses who've been here a long time and really know what they're doing," says Jodie. Still, as medicine and technology evolve, even experience needs an update. "That's why education will be a big part of what I do. We'll have lots of staff in-services and educational seminars to keep us on the cutting edge."

And the education component is very personal to Jodie.

"When I was growing up in Choteau, MT, I wanted to be a teacher," she smiles. However, her first year of college changed her direction. "The education classes bored me to tears! I did some research, talked to a nurse I knew and changed my major." And she's never been bored since.

"Especially at a rural hospital like this where doctors and nurses are generalists. We get exposed to a little bit of every thing. No day is the same and anything can happen here. The variety makes nursing here fun and challenging."