

Nurses administer TLC to Meredith students

by Addie Tschamler

For many, it yields a sense of security, a feeling of safety or of comfort. For some, it's a place to run to in a moment of sickness or high fever. Still for others, it's a place of reassurance, to let them know that everything's going to be okay. But few may realize the work efforts behind the Meredith infirmary.

Being a nurse in the infirmary may seem like an endlessly challenging job - caring for the sick, making accurate judgments, nourishing students back to health and reassuring them. But to the nurses it's an enjoyable job.

"I enjoy the students," said Ruth Pearce, director and nurse at the infirmary. "It's nice to be

in a part of nursing where you're not dealing with acutely ill patients."

The Meredith nurses' main responsibility, of course, is caring for the students, Nurse Loretta Pearson said. But there's more.

"Nurses usually screen the appointments and assess the patients first before they see the doctor," said Melinda McLain, a Meredith nurse. "We have to go through the symptoms to see if it's necessary for them to see the doctor. The infirmary is like a mini emergency room," she said.

The nurses work on a rotating schedule 24 hours a day, with two nurses in on Monday and Tuesday — the busiest days. So the nurses must work together to keep things running smoothly.

"We try to carry on the needs from one shift to another," said Pearson, who has been at Meredith three years. "We just follow up on certain things."

"Since we really rarely work together," Pearce said, "we just try to do things in a similar way. When treating an illness, we try to act in the same manner."

It's not always easy. There are many obligations and challenges involved. Director Pearce is responsible for scheduling hours for the nurses, get-

ting doctors, deciding on literature for the infirmary, and attending a variety of workshops.

"The greatest challenge," said Pearce, "is staying abreast of new things in medicine." Medicine is constantly changing with new technology and new discoveries. Pearce said things are never the same from one day to the next.



photo by Jan Seate

The Carroll nurses rise to the challenges of caring for our students. They are advancing into the next century by computerizing their records next year.

Another of the most difficult challenges, according to Pearce and McLain, was taking the National Board of College Health exam to obtain certification.

"That was a big challenge," said McLain.

One change that will challenge the nurses within the next year is the fact that all immunization records will be computerized. This will help in the long run because when students write in to get academic transcripts, they can also get a print out of their immunization records, said Pearce.

Although each nurse said she enjoyed her job very much, each takes time out for recreation, hobbies, and family whenever possible.

"I enjoy reading and walking too," Pearson said with a smile. "I love the sunshine." Pearson had two main jobs before coming to Meredith, including working in a dermatology office and being a mother, she said.

McLain, who has been at Meredith four years, has three grandchildren — two of which are twins whom she'll gladly talk about anytime. "I enjoy spending time with them, of course," she said, "just watching them grow. I also enjoy crafts and golf whenever I have the time."

McLain held several jobs before noticing the opening at Meredith in a newspaper ad. After graduating from Watts School of Nursing in Durham, McLain held a job as an operating room and recovery room nurse, a head nurse in a medical surgical unit, an instructor at a technical college, and a pediatrics nurse because she enjoys working with young children.

Pearce, who has been at Meredith now for 15 years, said she had always wanted to be a nurse, but there was always the question of what type of nursing to go into. For a while, Pearce held a job in a rest home but didn't fully enjoy it. Then she heard about the opening at Meredith and has

enjoyed being here ever since. Pearce loves gardening and cooking, going to the theatre, and listening to music, especially at the North Carolina Symphony. Her son, who lives in California, is in music professionally, said Pearce. "So I have to like it!"

Being a nurse at Meredith is more fast paced than some might imagine, but the nurses here enjoy the challenge.

"It's been very rewarding," Pearce said smiling. "It's just fun to work at Meredith!"

Summer Employment

Meredith College
pool manager

Qualifications: Lifeguard
training, CPR, First Aid

40 hrs./wk. for 9 wks.
afternoons and evenings

Contact Carol Brown,
ext. 8334

Career Connections

Internship Opportunity:

• Northwestern Mutual Life -- a representative will be at Meredith on Fri., Feb. 24. Interested students should sign-up in the Office of Career Services.

On Campus Recruiting:

Sign up today for these companies:

- Jefferson Pilot
 - Coastal Group
 - Lady Foot Locker
 - Health Source
 - Applied Analytical Industries
- Employer Resume Review:
- Blackbaud
 - John Hancock
 - Cache'

Employment Information Session:

• Learn how you can become a trooper with the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. Meet Sergeant W.S. Hunter—Wed., Feb. 22, Career Resource Room 10:00-10:50 a.m.

Employment Opportunities:

- Implementations/Training Coordinator positions with ATCOM
- Staff Accountants with Coastal HealthCare Group, Inc.
- Community Manager with Summit Management Company
- Entry Level Marketing Positions with Management Recruiters