

Great River Medical Center Earns Quality Respiratory Care Recognition

Great River Medical Center has earned Quality Respiratory Care Recognition under a national program aimed at helping patients and families make informed decisions about the quality of the respiratory-care services available in hospitals. About 10 percent of the hospitals in the United States receive this award, which is offered by the American Association for Respiratory Care.

Hospitals earning this designation ensure patient safety by agreeing to adhere to a strict set of criteria governing their respiratory-care services. Great River Medical Center provided documentation that it meets the following criteria:

- A physician is designated as medical director of respiratory care services.
- All respiratory therapists that deliver bedside respiratory-care services are either legally recognized by the state as competent to provide respiratory-care services or hold the certified respiratory therapist or registered respiratory therapist credential.
- Other personnel qualified to perform specific respiratory procedures and the amount of supervision required for personnel to carry out specific procedures must be designated in writing.
- Respiratory therapists are available 24 hours.

Valerie Velho, M.D., is the medical director. Kermit Dieterich, R.R.T., is the director of the Respiratory Care Services Department.

Respiratory therapists are specially trained health-care professionals who work under physicians' orders to provide a wide range of breathing treatments and other services to people with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis, lung cancer, AIDS, and other lung and lung-related conditions. They also care for premature infants and are key members of lifesaving response teams charged with handling medical emergencies.