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Community Caregivers: Stepping Out

Local caregiver agency visits Washington Hospital in Fremont for valuable training regarding patients recovering from hip and knee replacement surgery

MONTEREY, CALIF - Community Caregivers, Inc. recently went on the road to provide training programs for the company's in-home caregiver staff. Manager Kookie Morson arranged a field trip to Washington Hospital in Fremont. Four caregivers – Maria Gariby, Camilia Torres, Mirna Salazar and Teresa Cantu – were selected to receive specific training in appropriate care protocols for patients recovering from hip and knee replacement surgery.

The two-hour training session was provided by orthopedic nurses Vicky Feng, MSPT and Alisa Curry, PT, DPT who work directly with orthopedic surgeon, Dr. John Dearborn, at The Center for Joint Replacement at Washington Hospital. In 2009 alone, the Center served 394 hip joint replacement patients, 884 knee joint replacement patients. By the end of 2010, it is estimated that the Center will complete more than 1300 joint replacements.

The caregivers were taken step by step through the hip and knee replacement procedures in order to more fully understand what the patients' post surgery and recovery issues. They were instructed in the correct ways to assist the patient in a safe manner to prevent injury - how to sit and stand appropriately, and types of movement to avoid. Some of the topics included walking guidelines, swelling and bruising, incision care, and red flags that could signal possible infections. Also covered were the safest techniques for stairs, sleeping positions, tub and shower transfers, car transfers, and exercise tips. They were also provided with take-home materials that could use for review and reference.

Community Caregivers, a Monterey-based, locally owned and operated company has been in business in the county for more than 16 years and maintains an average of 60 to 80 available caregivers. In-home staffing can include from 1 hour up to 24 hours, 7 days a week. According to CEO Margarite Alvarez, on-going training is critically important.

“When a family entrusts their loved one to our care it is a responsibility we take very seriously. We are a bonded agency, and all of our caregivers are employed directly by us, only after they have passed criminal and background checks and have provided references. Our training program adds the second element that assures clients of the best companion care and daily living assistance that allows them to maintain their independent living lifestyle,” said Alvarez.

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