

## Sharp Hospital Focuses on the Art of Healing

This is a copy of an article which appeared in the January 20, 2012 issue of The Mission Valley News (missionvalleynews.com) on page 3 and page 15. It is an interview with Cindy Murphy and describes the Sharp approach to providing healthcare while creating a caring environment and experience for their patients. It also includes a description of the Integrated Healing Program, including our Reiki activities.



### Sharp Hospital focuses on the *Art of Healing*

Look at the picture on the left; what does it look like to you? A posh hotel or fashion mall? Actually this is the lounge at the remodeled Sharp hospital. A concerted effort was made to make Sharp hospital a comforting place to be for both patients and family members. I had the pleasure of touring Sharp with Director Cindy S. Murphy who gave me a behind the scenes tour of the facility. She explained to me that Sharp took the initiative to take the dread out of hospital visits by creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The first stop on the tour was the emergency room which has a separate discreet entrance for ambulance patients. This ensures privacy and dignity for the patient. She noted that the first person you meet upon entering the emergency room is not a clerk, but instead a registered nurse at the counter. There is no registration, forms to fill out or waiting for hours as in the past. Patients are accepted immediately and processed for treatment. As we spoke, a patient entered and was on her way to treatment in under 20 seconds.

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Cindy explained to me that Sharp has adopted a "on-stage/off-stage" philosophy to ensure maximum privacy for the patients. "On-stage" is the lounge, hallways, and public areas where family members are free to walk about. "Off-stage" is the term for the patient entry area which has it's own halls and private elevators, that way,visitors will not bump into patients who are being wheeled down the halls or elevators. Cindy noted with a smile that the only time a patient uses the "on-stage" elevator is on the way out after being released which is always a happy occasion.

Sharp's rooms are all private one-patient rooms so you will never share a room. These rooms are laid out with three designated areas. The first is for family members who can relax on a couch which converts to a bed if a family member wishes to stay overnight with a loved one. Family members are encouraged to act as a team member for the caregivers which comforts the patients and reduces stress. The second zone is for the patient, and the third is for the caregiver. This set-up helps avoid any awkwardness of family members and caregivers bumping into each other. The rooms have TVs where you can access regular broadcasts, feature movies and the internet. You also have access to an iPod that the staff will program with your favorite songs.

Sharp is what Cindy referred to as a "level 2" trauma center. This means that it can handle all trauma except for major burns. The emergency room is equipped with a 64 slice CT scanner which is absolutely top-of-the-line and helps caregivers plan treatment immediately. Cindy says that the focus of Sharp is to promote healing and keeping the patient calm and relaxed is paramount to this goal.

Sharp also offers alternative treatments to the patients if wanted. One treatment offered is called "Reiki" which is an Ancient Japanese treatment for stress reduction and relaxation. I met with Kathy Cueva, RN and Robert D. Bowen who are Reiki practitioners who volunteer their time once a week for patients who request treatment. They explained to me that Reiki is the art of restoring spiritually life force energy by gently laying on hands and channeling energy. Bowen says that the treatment is so effective at reducing stress and relaxing the patient that they usually fall to sleep by the end of the session.

"Being relaxed and calm is the key to healing and promoting healing the top priority at Sharp" says Director Murphy. "From the alternative treatments and family involvement, to the 700 pieces of art displayed throughout the grounds, we strive to create a warm and healing environment for our visitors. Hopefully this takes a lot of the stress out of a trip to the hospital and promotes a swift recovery".



(above) Reiki practitioners Kathy Cueva, RN and Robert D. Bowen pose for a photo in the meditative Jade Garden. (bottom left) Pianist James Forston provides live music for the visitors at Sharp. James also performs at clubs such as Turquoise and Felix. (bottom right) A nurse brings a patient's beloved pet up for an inspirational visit.