

## Taking time to talk



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Samantha Albin, a registered nurse at Sheridan Memorial Hospital, chats with patient Corky Clayburgh of Sheridan in his hospital room Wednesday afternoon. Each nurse on the medical-surgical floor is participating in the Take Five Initiative, which strongly encourages nurses to spend five minutes each day talking to patients about any topics that come to mind.

### • Sheridan Memorial Hospital nurses 'giving five' to patients

**By Tom Cotton**

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The staff on the medical-surgical floor of Sheridan Memorial Hospital is literally giving five to its patients.

Each nursing staff member, from clinical registered nurses to certified nursing assistants to charge nurses and unit coordinators, is participating in a program called the Take Five Initiative — spending five minutes a day simply chatting with patients about any topic that may come to mind.

“We are letting the patients guide the conversation,” said Becky Anthony, manager of the floor. “We are not doing care tasks (during that time). We are giving them (the patients) five minutes.”

Samantha Albin, a registered nurse, said the average nurse is charged with the care of four to five patients per day, and she enjoys the extra interaction with them.

“I think it is wonderful,” she said. “It reminds me of why you go into nursing to begin with. You treat the whole patient.”

While nurses often have a busy schedule, Albin said it is not difficult to take a few minutes to interact with patients.

“You always seem to have time at some point during the day,” she said. “There are always five minutes you can take.”

Anthony said she has seen other hospitals use the technique and has attended webinars where the program has been discussed. The program is currently being used just on Memorial’s medical-

surgical floor and has been in effect four months.

Anthony said she would like to see all hospital units adopt the program. One advantage of the program, she noted, is that patients can discuss concerns.

“It gives them the opportunity for interaction,” Anthony said. “People feel isolated in the hospital, and it allows them to voice something that is of concern to them.

“Sometimes they tell the staff they are doing a great job. It is a different perspective of nursing care.”

Albin said she has had some interesting discussions with her patients.

“It opens the gate (with them),” she said. “Instead of standing over the bed, you are sitting by the bed.”