

How I Started at Hospice of Marion County

Joanne Mancini

I was working up in Gainesville as a Clinic Manager with Fresenius Medical Care Dialysis at the West Unit. My father became ill and was later told he had Pancreatic Cancer, so I took a leave of absence to care for him at his home. My mother was legally blind and in her 80's and could not handle all of this stress at the time. I called my brother and he and I decided to call Hospice of Marion County for assistance once we were informed there were no other options.

The admission nurse came out and did a great job and then we were so surprised to have a doctor who actually made house calls! This was Dr. Elliott and he took time not only with me because I was a nurse but because my mother had been a retired nurse. Dr. Elliot told me that if I ever got tired of being a dialysis nurse to look him up. My father died peacefully at home a week later and my brother and I had to make a lot of arrangements quickly to move my mother to live with me and my husband. My son moved up and he currently lives in my parents old home with his family.

Everyone pitched in to help and when the dust settled I went back to work. I quickly found out working in Gainesville was no longer an option, because of the long commute and leaving my mother for too many hours. She was capable of caring for herself, but I felt guilty leaving her alone so much and my husband was also working. I quit in Gainesville and found a job with Davita at TimberRidge Dialysis and worked there for a year but was not happy working there.

I was looking for something to give me purpose and to help patients and this place wasn't doing it for me; then I saw Hospice of Marion County was looking for nurses. I remembered what Dr. Elliott had said and applied. I interviewed with Joan Jackabon and she said she thought I would make a good PFCC if I felt I was up to a challenge working with Dr. Pares and starting a brand new team. And so the ACT Team was born; but I can't take all the credit, because I had an awesome crew!

I lost my mother about three years later, but she too was under the care of Hospice of Marion County. I left HMC for a brief period of time and when I returned stopped in to see my friends. Betty Davis, Celia Reyes and Tammy Summers kept saying to me, you need to come back. I did not want to work at that time, but Daneene Johnson interviewed me and offered me a job. Once again, I thought it would be a challenge. It has turned out to be a continued challenge on a daily basis, but I love my job! The Admission Team is my new home and I love everyone on my team!