



St. Andrew's Health Center

SMP Health System

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SAHC Celebrates PT, OT and Swingbed

Jacquie Robertson knows a thing or two about depending on others. In December of 2008, she had a long and major surgery on her right foot – six hours, to be exact. Her surgery, performed by Dr. Tyson Williams, a podiatrist at Trinity Health in Minot, was overall very successful. However, after the surgery, she was not able to live independently at her home in Souris. With no one to help her at home, she was transferred to St. Andrew's Health Center (SAHC) in Bottineau for recovery, where she stayed in its Swingbed Unit for 7 weeks. St. Andrew's is taking time this month to celebrate their Swingbed Unit, along with their Occupational and Physical Therapy programs.

After surgery, Jacquie was instructed to not put any weight on her right foot. So with only one good foot, she needed some assistance on an everyday basis. In the Swingbed Unit at St. Andrew's, Jacquie had round-the-clock help if needed. She also had access to Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT), a key part in being able to stay at SAHC for her recovery. Without the PT and OT programs available at St. Andrew's, it is doubtful Jacquie would have been able to stay, and probably would have spent her recovery in Minot.

In her daily Physical Therapy sessions, Physical Therapist Assistant Pete Peterson worked on general strengthening, gait training, increasing mobility, and teaching her various exercises to use on her own. "What they trained me to do and the exercises they taught me, I have definitely used when I got home. At first, I thought there was no way I could do the exercises they gave me, but it was unbelievable the strength I gained in Physical Therapy," says Jacquie.

When Jacquie arrived at St. Andrew's, Keith Pritchard, Director of Physical Therapy, decided to use a Knee Walker with her recovery. This assistive device helps with mobility in cases like Jacquie's where she could only put weight on one foot. Patients put one knee on a platform and use the other leg to push themselves along. Although it was tough at first, Jacquie was eventually able to achieve functional mobility in the halls at St. Andrew's using the Knee Walker, an accomplishment she is still proud of.

During her 7 week stay in the Swingbed Unit, Jacquie got to know the other Swingbed patients and staff well, and cannot say enough about her service there. "The staff was wonderful, and I enjoyed the other Swingbed patients tremendously. Sr. Mary Jane [in Pastoral Care] always had time to stop and visit with me. The nurses were also great." When not in PT or OT, Jacquie spent her days at St. Andrew's visiting with other Swingbed patients, helping with bingo, and attending the weekly church service. She says she had coffee every morning with other Swingbed patients while they talked about the day ahead and read the paper.

As she neared the end of her recovery at SAHC, Occupational Therapist Alli Hager made sure to help Jacquie in her transition home. Alli went to Jacquie's house to make sure a wheelchair would fit through the front door, and checked the openings and spacing in the bathroom, laundry room and kitchen. She ensured that Jacquie had the necessary strength and skills to complete her recovery at home.

Jacquie is now doing very well completing her recovering at home. She is able to drive herself and is walking better each day. It is a slow recovery, but she is able to live mostly independently now. She doesn't hesitate to praise Dr. Williams, St. Andrew's Health Center, and the Swingbed Unit and staff. She recommends to others that if you need the help and a room is available, it is worth it, saying "It was great; my room was like having my own little apartment. There is no way I could have recovered on my own after surgery. It was the best decision I've ever made."