Community and Chincoteague Teen Come Together to Provide Comfort to Patient Families

300 Comfort Kits were donated to Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital to help family members during unexpected hospital stays of their loved ones.

ONLEY, Va. – Imagine having a family member unexpectedly admitted to the hospital. As a loved one, you are worried, determined to stay by their side, even through the night. But that unexpected stay likely means you arrived without an overnight bag stashed in your car. You probably haven’t eaten as you don’t want to leave them.

This scenario happens every day in hospitals. While dedicated medical teams rally around the patient to help them heal, 18-year-old Chelsea Moore wanted to ensure the families were taken care of, too.

Moore completed a personal service project and rallied the support of the Eastern Shore community. She planned, packaged and delivered 300 family Comfort Kits to Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital.
"My goal was to help the family members of patients who are going into the hospital unexpectedly," Moore said. "If you go to the hospital, you don’t always expect to stay overnight and then your family members don’t have the little things they need."

Each Comfort Kit, packaged in simple plastic bags with a small note tucked inside, are given to family members free of charge and include a notepad, pen, lip balm, comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, candy, game book, shampoo, conditioner, soap, lotion, water bottle and granola bar. They complement the blankets, pillows and other comfort items provided by the hospital to family members.

“A vital component of providing care in our hospital is the patient experience,” said Nurse Executive Deb Brown. “Research has shown that making the family comfortable helps the patient relax and begin the healing process. Chelsea’s generous gift to Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital will directly impact how our patients heal and will support their family members in meaningful ways. We are so grateful for the time and dedication she took to make this happen, and for all the community partners involved in the project.”

In addition to friends and family who made monetary donations to the effort and even helped her put all 300 kits together, “businesses from the island really came together and supported the cause, donating a lot of the products we put into the kits,” Moore said, giving special thanks to Comfort Suites, Fairfield Inn and Suites, Hampton Inn and Suites, Marina Bay Hotel and Suites, Refuge Inn and Xenith Bank.

While the service project was one she undertook out of a giving spirit, she also understands firsthand the impact the Comfort Kits will have.

“I recently had a blood clot and was in the hospital for five days, four of those days in the ICU,” Moore said. “My mom didn’t have anything with her, and I felt bad. I realized through my experience how much the kits we made would mean to people.”

Had the Comfort Kits been available for Moore’s own recent hospital stay, she said, “when I checked in the nurses would have given my mom the Comfort Kit and she would have been able to brush her teeth, have a little notepad to write things down the doctors and nurses were telling her and even have a little something to eat.”

Moore, who’s grown up in a U.S. Coast Guard family and lived in Rhode Island, Delaware and on the Eastern Shore, recently graduated from Chincoteague High School and is heading to Longwood University in the fall. Ultimately, she aims to earn her post-graduate degree and become a school librarian.

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Shore Health Services and Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital are affiliated with Riverside Health System (RHS) in Newport News, Virginia. RHS is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health and saving lives. RHS is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors, as is each of the Riverside affiliates throughout the region. On the Eastern Shore, Riverside’s services are anchored by Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital, Riverside Shore Rehabilitation Center and our Riverside Medical Group Doctor’s offices. Services include: Emergency Care, Critical Care, Surgery, Newborn Care, Cancer Care, Diagnostic Imaging, Family Medicine and Specialty Physicians, Long Term Care, Physical Therapy and Home Care.

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