

NCA NEWSFAX

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

02/04/2010

Emmett Messenger Index, Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2010

Robot makes rounds at Walter Knox

These days, a new "face" can be seen at Walter Knox Memorial Hospital — a new version of the RP-7 (Remote Presence) robot that has been roaming around the halls of the hospital for the past few years.

The improved RP Lite robot has high-tech wireless capabilities, high-definition optics, high-resolution zoom, a telephone for private conversations and added mobility. The robotic system allows physicians at other locations to receive a real-time view of the patient, live electrocardiograms, ultrasound images, as well as data transfer.

The RP Lite can be useful in surgical or emergency situations to allow specialists to participate with the care of the patient, when they are not always available. General surgeon Dr. Ralph Macha uses the robot at WKMH to check up on his postoperative patients through a laptop connection when he is miles away.

A successful psychiatric consultant program was piloted in 2009 at WKMH using the robot. It doesn't take long to realize that there is a real person behind the scenes. After several minutes, most patients feel pretty comfortable talking to the robot screen, which looks similar to a computer Web cam.

Medical robots are not meant to replace live physicians, but rather to improve to the delivery of health care. The WKMH robot is being provided for use from a grant through St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center.

WKMH press release



WKMH photograph

WKMH staff review the capabilities of the RP Lite robot. From left are Patrick Willis, emergency room; Doug Middlebrook, information systems manager; and Steven Spicer, information systems.

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New airway equipment at hospital



Surgical staff from Walter Knox Memorial Hospital are pleased with the Glide Scope advanced technology, as they practice airway placement on a mannequin. From left to right are Beverly Heitz, LPN; Purie Shane RN; and Alan Benson, CRNA, certified registered nurse anesthetist.

Submitted photograph

Walter Knox Memorial Hospital is pleased to announce the purchase of an important piece of equipment to assist in the airway management and advanced breathing of more difficult patient cases.

Thanks to the forward thinking of the hospital board and management, this potentially life-saving tool, called the Glide Scope, will add

another layer of safety for patients visiting the operating and emergency rooms at WKMH.

"It is not uncommon to find these more advanced pieces of equipment in larger hospitals, but not necessarily in smaller community hospitals like ours. We can rest easier knowing that this equipment is available at our local hospital," Alan Benson, CRNA said.