

Sandy Williams may be a familiar face. After all, she spent twenty years behind the counter at American Bank and Sterling Savings Bank, is deeply involved at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, and when she retired in 2006, she started her own business doing sewing and alterations. Then, in January 2007 she was presented with an unexpected opportunity to become the hospice chaplain at Livingston HealthCare.

“Jody Dowell, a caregiver at hospice, asked me if I would be interested in being the hospice chaplain,” recalls Sandy. “I hadn’t done that kind of one-on-one interaction at St. Andrews, but I had led services and group programs, and I knew I could learn along the way. It just required the ability to be compassionate and present with people wherever they were in the process of dying.” The job is only about five hours a week, but it has a huge impact. “It is so humbling to be a part of this process; I feel honored by this role,” she adds.

Recently, her role as hospice chaplain led to another unexpected opportunity doing coordination work for the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team in Park County. CISM needed an established non-profit to help manage donated funds for training and other activities. Along with financial management, they were also seeking someone to help coordinate services and trainings. Sam Pleshar, Livingston HealthCare CEO, approached Sandy and asked if she would be interested. “It’s important for Livingston HealthCare to play an active role in CISM, a group that supports our emergency staff along with all of the other emergency responders and medical staff when they need it most,” says Pleshar.



Unexpected Opportunities Lead to A Career of Caring

“The group has been around since the late 1980s,” Sandy explains. “After a critical incident such as a bad car accident, animal attack, shooting, etc., CISM team members, including a mental health professional, meet with the responders to debrief about the event and process what has happened. They may also follow up with the responders over a period of time to help prevent post traumatic stress disorder.”

Sandy was interested in the work that the team was doing. “I met with three CISM members who gave me the overview of what they do in the community,” she says. “I decided to take the position and had to get up to speed very quickly.” She organized and attended a two-day training with other team members and began coordinating their first responder debriefings.

“I feel really good about this,” Sandy proclaims. “I am playing a small part in helping to support the unsung heroes of Park County who face some very difficult things, and this is important for our community. I have an opportunity to help keep the men and women of the fire, law enforcement, hospital, and other emergency services safe and healthy.”

**Manage Expenses**

Do you need help managing your healthcare expenses? Livingston HealthCare has several options available for our patients. Contact a Patient Financial Services representative at 406-823-6414, and get information on short-term payment options, our patient loan program, and patient financial assistance.