

## UNITED MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER LAYS OFF 16



When a hospital chooses to let go off staff they do not just put people out of a job. After all the clinical staff at a hospital provides a valuable community service. Every nurse that is let go on a unit means that all of the other nurses will have to divide their attentions further to care for the same number of patients on a unit. While many of the facilities that have been looking to get rid of staff in order to save some money, as state and federal governments are looking to reduce their costs by cutting charity care programs, Medicaid budgets and subsidies to medical facilities as a way to get their bloated budgets under control, all of them have given vigorous verbal assurances that the job cuts will not affect the quality of care that their patients will receive when they come to the facility. United Memorial Medical Center can make no such claims. After all, they are not just getting rid of staff, they are closing two departments in the hospital in order to stay solvent, the Cardiac Rehab Department and the Byron Family Care Center. In a release put out by the medical center the reasons behind the cuts were explained, "The Cardiac Rehab Department and the Byron Family Care Center will close by March 1, 2012 due to unsustainable patient volumes. Cardiac Rehab will not accept new referrals and current patients will have the opportunity to complete their 90- day program. Patients of Byron Family Care were mailed letters informing them of the closure and information on transferring their medical records. The primary care provider at Byron Family Care, Dr. Stanley Ambis, will continue with United Memorial's Family Care Centers in LeRoy and Batavia. Patients will be encouraged to remain with Dr. Ambis at one of the other sites. United Memorial Medical Center has filed its' intent to close the Byron Family Care Center with the NYS Department of Health and will work through the appropriate steps in the next 90 days to complete this process." Currently the layoff is expected to affect only 16 employees and the medical center was surprisingly forthcoming about the details of what jobs would be cut, and how much of the hospitals overall staff the cuts represented. According to the release, "Discontinuing the two services and realignment of job functions in other departments will result in the elimination of 16 positions, with the equivalent hours of approximately 14 full time employees, slightly less than 2% of United Memorial's 795 member workforce. The eliminated positions include two Allied Health Professionals, four Registered Nurses, four Technicians, one Licensed Practical Nurse, one Patient Access Specialist, an administrative secretary and three salaried positions." They also mentioned in the release that the employees, should they be qualified, would be eligible to apply for other jobs at the facility as they become open. The medical center was, on the whole, quick to point out that it has been a good year for the facility citing, "tremendous growth in the past year."

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