

MARIA ACOSTA, RN, BSN

Assistant Director of Nursing

NYC Health + Hospitals | Seaview



Focusing on patients and their families is a top priority for Maria Acosta, who prides herself on being a positive influence on individuals and on the community. "I had never had a job where I actually felt useful to other people, where it really seemed to me that the more effort I put into my performance, the more it directly affected someone else," she remarks. "Working hard and seeing the impact it has on patients and their families is truly rewarding.

"I worked in a dementia unit for nearly four years, and at that time in my life I didn't know what direction I should take," she adds. "But as months progressed and I received additional training and learning on the job, I realized how much I deeply cared for the well-being of all the patients and their families and loved how the

feeling of providing care, support, comfort and compassion to each patient was like receiving a personal reward on a daily basis."

Her work with NYC Health + Hospitals/Seaview has "helped me realize and reach that milestone with its inspiration, support, teaching and motivation," she reports. "It has broadened my skills, expanded my knowledge and allowed me to continue my career in person-centered care.

"The healthcare field is so wide and varied, there are options for everyone," she continues. "Nursing has many career opportunities. You can have the action of the emergency department or the quiet of a private family practice clinic. You can care for patients in a facility or in their own homes. Working for the City's health system offers a wide range of high quality and affordable health care services to keep patients healthy and to serve the needs of New York City's diverse populations."

Acosta points out that she is constantly learning and growing. "As a nurse we are always looking ahead for new skills to meet the demands of the job," she notes. "One has to keep up with the changes, especially in nursing, since it is always changing. As a nurse you have to stay current to deal with many aspects of patient care, using evidence-based practice in order to benefit the patients. I enjoy the variety and want my career to make a difference in people's lives, especially since patient care is a priority."

Nursing embodies many values, according to Acosta, who says one of her core principles is integrity. "As a nurse dealing with many patients and family members, one has to be honest and fair," she explains. "Integrity leads to respect, which in turn leads to understanding and agreement. One is faced with challenges as a nurse that

you need to be consistent with what you do and know that's the right thing to do. One has to adhere to principles of professionalism, even when it is not easy to do so. Being morally accountable and responsible for one's judgment and actions is central to being a nurse."

Acosta notes that being a nurse gives her a greater appreciation for the importance of health and wellness. "To wake up each morning and be able to take on the day's challenges is nothing short of amazing," she asserts. "There are thousands of ways that our health can go sideways each and every day. Every day I'm thankful not only for my own health, but for the health and well-being of everyone I love."