



*Dr. Robert Applegate and Nurse Barbara Lang treat emergency room patient*

## Community Hospital's New Emergency Room Is Busier

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The new emergency room at Community Hospital of Santa Cruz is serving an increasing number of patients.

The weekday census is now around 40, with 60 per day on weekends, an inflow that would have severely taxed both the staff and facilities that were available to serve the patients in the former emergency room just a few weeks ago.

Now, Dr. Robert C. Amster, director of the emergency department, and his staff of physicians and nurses have a variety of rooms and equipment available to cope with the needs of patients brought in by ambulance, by friends or simply by themselves for treatment.

A big change for the better, the emergency crew reports, is that the ambulances now come to the emergency room back door to park in a covered area that leads directly into the room. No longer do patients have to be rolled on stretchers along hospital halls to be stared at by the curious in their bitter moments of illness or agony.

And once inside, the patient can be placed, as necessary into a cardiac and major trauma room, or in an observation, orthopedic, ob-gyn or in any of the three general treatment rooms.

Family or friends can now wait comfortably in a formal waiting room, with an attendant near to answer questions or to offer encouraging words.

Amster said: "Everything is new, and AMI spent a lot of money to provide fine equipment."

Amster noted that AMI sent an interior designer

to the hospital to provide an especially tranquil decor that combines a soft ocher with brown.

There's a sleeping room for the doctors who provide the 24-hour medical service required by state law from a basic emergency room. The day shift is from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and the night shift from 7 p.m. to 9 a.m.

Jeanette Applegate, R.N., heads of emergency nursing, has at least three nurses on duty during the day and two at night, but can bring in whatever number is needed by an on-call system.

A major help to the nurses is the central nurses' station from which they can see into every room to respond to needs as they arise.

In those rooms much of the equipment is built-in, such as oxygen and suction apparatus. In the cardiac and major trauma room all resuscitative materials are kept in readiness, with a "crash cart" of supplies and materials near to battle for a life if need be.

One nurse pointed out the observation room with its big sliding glass door. She said the room is especially useful to isolate screaming children from other patients while the children are being aided.

The development of the new emergency room was the first major undertaking by AMI after it bought Community Hospital from the Sundeau Foundation.

Now that the doctors and nurses in emergency have the rooms and the equipment they need to do the type of health care essential to emergency victims, the hospital is planning other major improvements, according to administrator Anthony Daigle.

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