

Health and Counseling Services Meet the Changing Needs of Students

In addition to a learning environment that features top faculty in a variety of disciplines, today's student at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside has access to quality health care and counseling through the Student Health & Counseling Center (SHCC).

The SHCC is staffed by highly qualified medical professionals, including two nurse practitioners, a part-time registered nurse, master's-prepared licensed counselors who are certified alcohol and other drug counselors, and, when needed, psychiatric care by referral.



EDITH ISENBERG

"The SHCC provides physical, emotional and mental health care to meet the needs of the student population, which contributes to their personal and academic success," said Sandra Leicht, SHCC director.

Quite a change from when the first students arrived on the new campus in fall 1969. Edith Isenberg had already submitted her resume, filled with nursing experience. In December, she was offered the position of counselor-specialist with the assignment of initiating the office of student health services.

The "nurse's office" was originally located in Tallent Hall, and then moved to Greenquist 332 and 334.

"Edith opened the nurse's office in a small room that barely had enough space for a scale and an examining chair," recalled John Valaske, UW-Parkside retiree.

Because of the number of people using the student health facility, a move to a larger area in the Wyllie Library and Learning Center (now Wyllie Hall) was required. What is now the SHCC also spent time in Molinaro Hall before moving to its current location in a building east of Tallent Hall in 1996. That building was originally built for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and was used by health care providers in Kenosha and Racine.

According to Leicht, the original agreement called for the MRI building to return to the university if it was no longer used for its intended purpose. As more and more hospitals and clinics installed MRI equipment, a separate location was no longer required.

Isenberg may also have been responsible for the white stripes that are painted on the steps leading from Mid Main Place to Upper and Lower Main Place. According to Valaske, Isenberg fell on the steps and broke a leg. A memo dated October 20, 1983, informed faculty, staff and students of the accident.

As you may have heard by now, Edith Isenberg fell and broke her leg in Main Place. She was transported to St. Catherine's Hospital in Kenosha by the Somers Rescue Squad, but has since been transferred to St. Mary's Hospital in Racine. Edith will have surgery on her leg this afternoon...She's in good spirits and I'm sure would appreciate your thoughts, cards, and visits.

Isenberg's daughter Dr. Lori Stargrove, added to the story. "When she broke her leg at Parkside, someone that was either there or came to the accident said, 'Call the nurse!' I remember this story being told fondly," Stargrove said. "I take that as a testimonial to the support she offered to so many."

The campus-wide concern for Isenberg was a result of her concern for others. A letter dated October 16, 1970, highlights her interaction with one patient.

I would like to commend you for the school policy of having the school nurse go to a hospital when an out of town student is admitted. So often this is a frightening experience for a person of any age and it is comforting to have someone with you.

In the case of Dave Woods, I would say Mrs. Edith Isenberg did even more than her job calls for. She was at the hospital immediately after the accident and after we arrived she stayed until the doctor had given the diagnosis. Even tho (sic) her family was at home expecting her, she did not leave us until she knew everything was going to be alright.

In this day people are so quick to criticize but seldom compliment, so please convey our thanks to Mrs. Isenberg. Our special thanks also for the concern shown by Coach Stephens and Mr. Rosendisich.

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Woods



Isenberg helped create the successful "Well Day" on campus. A story by Jean Korten in the March 23, 1979, Kenosha News reported that 1,500 to 2,000 people attended the event, which originated in 1978. Persons could receive lung capacity tests, blood pressure checks, and a computer diet analysis. New to the "Well Day" in 1979 was a method of glaucoma screening.

More than 30 years later, a primary mission of the SHCC is still helping students make healthy choices. Changes in the basic health module, as outlined by the UW System Board of Regents, were made in 2009 to reflect the changing needs of students. The current health module clarifies the guidelines for a minimum level of mental health services available at every UW System institution, recognizing mental health as a critical factor in student success.

Today, the SHCC also incorporates peer health education. The Peer Health Educators is a team of student leaders trained to educate their classmates on a variety of college health and wellness issues.

All in all, quite a change from a small "nurse's office" with barely enough room for a scale.