

Congratulations to Our 2017 Nightingale Award Nurse: Maria Svitkova

Maria Svitkova, LPN, played “nurse” when she was a child in Slovakia but when she grew up, she earned her degree in engineering. Her focus changed when her son was born with medical challenges and they spent much time in the hospital. Even though her son was sick, “I felt so comfortable there,” she recalled.



After moving to the U.S., Svitkova switched careers, returning to her first love: nursing. Her excellence has now earned her recognition with the 2017 Nightingale Nurse Award at Jerome Home, located at 975 Corbin Ave. There she is a charge nurse primarily in short-term rehab during the overnight hours. “I like the busy-ness, the challenges, the acuity. There is always something new,” Svitkova explained. She and other award recipients were celebrated at a reception held May 11 in Hartford.

Svitkova’s hands-on approach, knowledge and discretionary effort are just a few reasons why Susann Pavano, RN, director of nurses, nominated Svitkova for the Nightingale Award. “Maria is always willing to learn and share ideas to help improve work flow to be more efficient without compromising quality. Residents recognize her for her hands-on delivery of service and understanding, offering them peace of mind in their healing process,” Pavano said.

Svitkova, a Burlington resident, is now marking her 10th year at Jerome Home. She noted that there is no typical night. One of the reasons she enjoys her work as a charge nurse is because she is able to be hands-on. Changes that she has seen include the switch from paper records to electronic medical records, a Hartford

HealthCare project on which she served as a Super User. She notes that in the past decade, the acuity of patients has become more complex and challenging, which she readily addresses, applying her knowledge and expertise to ensure an optimum recovery.

Svitkova seeks no recognition but she was pleased when she had a surprise visitor one night. A young woman in her 20s, who had recovered from a serious car accident at Jerome Home, returned – pushed in her wheelchair by her boyfriend - to say thank you. “Maria builds a relationship and trust with her patients and co-workers,” Pavano said.

“Maria’s legacy at Jerome Home is her positive style - coaching, teaching and mentoring her peers and nurses aide staff,” Pavano remarked. “She is always willing to listen and help no matter what the task.”

In spite of her full, long nights working, Svitkova and her husband worked four years to build a log home in New Hampshire and they are now enjoying their efforts to the fullest. She is now pursuing her BSN degree and takes pride in the fact that she is the first person in her family to work in the medical field.

“We are so fortunate to have Maria on our team being a true leader,” Pavano said.

