

ED Heroes

PROFILES



Everyday EDHero

Mary Lee Blow

REGISTERED NURSE

SAN ANTONIO REGIONAL HOSPITAL

“Mary Lee Blow’s core is the ED,” says Deborah Poore, ED Nursing Director. “She loves emergency medicine. She loves taking care of a variety of patients. And most importantly, she loves being collaborative – not just in the ED or with patients, but with outside teams as well.”



EDHeroes Profile: Mary Lee Blow

Translating data into a medical language

If Deborah Poore, emergency department nursing director at San Antonio Regional Hospital, had to put one emergency department nurse by her side, she wouldn't hesitate to choose Mary Lee Blow. "Mary Lee is your go-to girl," Poore shared. "In a hospital with over 270 beds and 80,000 ED patients a year, you need someone like her to keep your emergency department moving."

Mary Lee is exactly as you may expect – a pure bundle of positive energy. And she has spent years developing her medical experience, starting as a flight nurse for five years and then moving to her current position as an emergency department staff RN at San Antonio. This journey has helped Mary Lee become a global thinker, an advocate who does so much more than one might expect of anyone in health care. She'll step to the front and take the lead to serve as a clinical mentor, as well as coach new grads and experienced new employees. She is also very clinically strong and a great patient advocate, often sought out when other staff members have questions.

However, where Mary Lee has truly shined beyond all of that is in her intricate role with IT projects.

Connecting her clinical expertise with technology projects enriches the results to help make the entire emergency department smarter. Through her support of the hospital's growth for over 15 years – and the care provided to southern California's inland empire region – Mary Lee has applied her own experience and dedication on every IT project she sees to better streamline and provide high-quality patient care.

"She not only gives excellent clinical care to her patients, she really treats each individual patient as a person. She goes that extra mile. She's the kind of person that just doesn't hand them a piece of paper – she sits down and explains it."

Putting in work with both teams

Known for her years of experience, Mary Lee understands the importance of using a powerful voice to encourage discussion. Her work experience does the same thing in the ED. She speaks up because it can help make new solutions more usable for the staff. She believes that looking at every project the right way and dedicating the time it needs can create value for years to come.

Building from that viewpoint, Mary Lee is the first to spot a gap in how the clinical staff speaks one language while IT speaks another.

Poore explained how valuable this is. "When we look at documentation in the ED, it has to be clean. It has to be easy to access. And it has to be intuitive to use. Mary Lee is the one who comes in and says, 'Let's step back and see how much we can do. Where is the compromise here?'"

This approach moves beyond quick meetings to spending countless hours with the IT team picking apart the coding process. "If the patient units are focused on an item that's a real issue for the inpatient side, Mary Lee's the first person to sit back and say, 'What

does our template look like? Even if the information doesn't flow exactly into the document, what information should we be gathering so the patient's not asked the same questions multiple times?'"



"Mary Lee's constant dedication and commitment to our emergency department contributes to San Antonio being able to serve our region so efficiently with high quality care."

– Deborah Poore



Ongoing improvement

In the emergency department, you move so quickly and see so many patients; you cannot be burdened by too much documentation. Mary Lee, who is known for spending those extra few minutes with the patient, knows this better than anyone.

As San Antonio grows, and the emergency department takes on larger patient populations, the staff can take on new challenges as well. With that, the ED will often shift

templates or viewing formations for staff, and it is key to identify issues early – Mary Lee is always looking. Oftentimes, this is where Mary Lee will spend time with the coders and speak with them just like she speaks with patients, to ensure everyone understands the expectations. She spends hours upon hours finding the solution with both sides, rather than hoping they stumble onto it by chance. "It's her attitude to go and get the results that makes Mary Lee so valuable to our staff," Poore said.

Creating real results

To make a difference you have to listen, and Mary Lee spends her days in the heat of the moment in the ED, listening to the specific needs of staff. "She'll take on any assignment, any challenging patient. She'll do triage. She'll do radio. She'll do any assignment in any department to help the patient. That's the type of person she is," says Poore.

It's no surprise then that Mary Lee was the point person for ED PulseCheck. With the new solution, if someone had an important need, or if a new procedure was desired or a new protocol takes place, Mary Lee was the first one to say, "How is the order going to look? Where does it feed? What should it say?" Mary Lee was the staff sounding board. And for the management team, she gives back information, saying, "How can we change it? What can we do better?" She's truly the San Antonio ED go-to person.

"From the coding success story, I can tell you clearly that they are having much more success. We had a pretty good success rate with documentation, but the way Mary Lee helped build some of the templates has made the coders' lives immensely easier. And it helped our turnaround times for getting our billing cycles improved dramatically," said Poore. In the end, having an EDHero like Mary Lee Blow can be the difference between small successes and large ones.



"She loves ED PulseCheck. We all love it, and Mary Lee's passion to make it work for us right away was part of the reason the rest of us fell in love with it so quickly."