



Name: Debbie Hooper

Current Role: Community- focus Paediatric Care

Years in Nursing: 14 years (nursing is a second career).

Accomplishment/career highlights: Travelling nurse- accompanied Make a Wish recipient child on a cruise

"The Children's Wish Foundation is a wonderful organization and it is a privilege to be able to support this family on their Wish Trip as the opportunity to support a child's wish provides a sense of contributing, making a difference in someone's life"

The Make-A-Wish Canada is a part of the largest wish-granting organization in the world and is found in over 35 countries. The mission of Make-A-Wish® Canada is to grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. The first Make-A-Wish® Canadian Chapter was established in B.C. in 1983 and today, thousands of wishes have been granted to children across Canada including Toronto (Make a Wish Canada, 2010).

Debbie Hooper will be accompanying a child on a Make a Wish Disney Caribbean Cruise in January. She explained that when the Make a Wish Foundation approved the family for this trip, the family was able to personally select two accompanying nurses. Debbie and another RPN who will be travelling with the family, were selected as they were familiar with the child through their role current roles in the community. During the trip Debbie will be providing care during a regular 8 hour shift each of the 8 days she will be away. While Debbie is familiar with the child she is accompanying, she is preparing for new challenges such as providing care in a new unfamiliar environment of a ship, the child's first airline trip and wheelchair accessibility issues that can be encountered during travel. However, she is looking forward to working in the unique environment of a Disney cruise ship and working as a team with another nurse and the family.

Debbie is currently employed by Partners in Community Nursing in the Paediatric Division where she provides community paediatric care where the age ranges from newborns up to the age of 21. She has had been in this role for the past 10 years. Debbie enjoys her role in community and has the opportunity to support children with special needs meet their ADLs while in school or at home. Currently she is supporting children in school and on a typical day she accompanies a child to school, provides "cluster care" where she supports multiple children in different classes and at the end of the day accompany a child home. While working in the school system, she can encounter several challenges, from allergic reactions to children that could require suctioning. Debbie feels very welcomed in the school where she currently has been supporting children as the staff have been very supportive and she receives great satisfaction in supporting children have the best experience possible while in school.

Debbie became interested in nursing when she was a medical secretary for 2 years at the Whitby Psychiatric Hospital in the stenography department. She realized that she wanted to do more than type reports in health care and wanted to be in a more caring profession. Debbie graduated from Durham College in Oshawa from the Certificate in Nursing (RPN) Program in June 1995, and has been an RPN for the last 14 years with her work experience including settings such as a nursing home, psychiatric hospital, community foot care role and pediatric nursing. Debbie believes continuing education is important to providing best care and updates her knowledge through conferences on topics such as palliative care, pediatric norms and non violence crisis intervention.

Outside of nursing Debbie is a mother of 3 children and is actively involved in her church nursery. She is also planning a trip in November 2011, to Lima, Peru, to work in a kid's orphanage, with Kids Alive. Debbie states that "It is very rewarding, helping families cope with the special needs of their child/children - being an RPN is great because we are the bed-side specialists"

