

# Helping patients heal is a fine reward

Jackie Williams is an administrative assistant in the cardiovascular intensive care unit at Bethesda Hospital East in Boynton Beach, Florida. “We’re the ones that answer the telephone when you call, and we assist the nurses, doctors and anyone else,” she says. “We’re also the ones who fix all the equipment, and if we can’t, then we will find out who can. We’re the most important people there.”

Williams says she enjoys being able to help people at her job, and she is happy when a patient is transferred to another floor because that means they’re getting better. “I’m most satisfied with helping people when the families, who were once scared and fearful, thank you over and over again for taking care of their loved ones,” she says.

If patients need water, want their bed raised or want the television channel changed, she’s there. She assists doctors who need forms or orders put in the computer, and if nurses need someone to run to the blood bank or put on a pot of coffee, she’s there.

She says one of her frustrations is people assuming she has the easiest job because she sits behind a desk most of the day. Work can get piled on because people know she can do it and don’t realize how much she already has on her plate, she says.

Williams has written a book about her job, *Steps to Becoming a Medical Secretary: A Step by Step Guide to Working in a Hospital*. She says she decided to write it as a way to help her fellow admins. “A lot of them today are hired with little to no medical experience,” she says.

Williams says she wasn’t seeking to work in the medical field, but when she got a job offer at a hospital while she was in college for journalism, her mother, a nurse, encouraged her to take the position. “What I love most about the medical field is the ability to help people get better,” she says.