**The Sun Shines on....**

**Infection Preventionists**
**MARICRIS NEE and NATALIE NEU!**

This month we shine a light on Sunshine’s Infection Prevention Team, MariCris Nee, RN, CPN, MSED, and Natalie Neu, MD, MPH, whose partnership at Sunshine began in 2016.

MariCris is Sunshine’s Director of Education and Infection Prevention and Dr. Neu works at NY-Presbyterian Hospital as a Board Certified in Pediatric Infectious Disease specialist. They both work closely with Medicine and Nursing to prevent, identify and manage potential infections at Sunshine. With the children’s safety and health as their top priority, the Infection Prevention Team’s goals are to educate and train staff in evidence-based prevention strategies, decrease the number of infectious outbreaks in the facility, collect data to monitor types of infections and any possible patterns, and provide education to parents. MariCris and Dr. Neu’s expertise in the prevention and treatment of pediatric infectious diseases has proven to be an essential tool in caring for our precious children. As Dr. Neu explains, “Infections are serious for this medically-fragile population, so new information and trends in epidemiology are very important for everyone to know about. Led by our fabulous team leader MariCris, the team makes sure that everyone is aware of what infections are occurring in the facility and how the staff can be part of diagnosing and stopping the spread of infection. In addition, MariCris is very diligent about keeping families informed about how infection control is working at Sunshine to keep their children safe and free from infection.”

This team is continuously brainstorming new ideas and looking for opportunities to improve the program in order to provide the best and most effective practices for the Sunshine children. One example of this is MariCris and Natalie’s Antibiotic Stewardship program: The goal of Antibiotic Stewardship is to ensure that the children are prescribed the right antibiotic for the right indication and for the right length of time.

Both MariCris and Dr. Neu find their work gratifying and feel that they work well as a team to support one another. MariCris shares, “One of the most rewarding parts of being on the Infection Prevention Team is the personal growth I have gained. I have learned so much and I get to see the impact of our work when an infection rate decreases and an outbreak is contained. Natalie has been a helpful resource and I know I can look to her for guidance and support.” Natalie shares MariCris’ sentiment, “MariCris has been an amazing advocate for infection control. She is always thinking about our next project and how we can lower our antibiotic use or our infection rates. Most importantly, MariCris and the staff are warm and welcoming. They are wonderful to work with due to their openness to ideas and their heartfelt desire to have the children’s experience at Sunshine be the best it can be.”

In addition, MariCris and Dr. Neu have been chosen by Heart Trust, Inc. to work as Infection Prevention consultants in Egypt.

Sunshine is lucky to have this magnificent team to keep our Sunshine family healthy.
Join Team Sunshine! is thrilled to pull our energies together to join in the March of Dimes annual fundraiser walk-a-thon. We are forming our team of staff and children and hope that some of our families will join us in supporting this organization as well. When you join March for Babies, you stand with thousands of people across the country who share a commitment to building a brighter future by raising money that can be used to expand programs and educate medical professionals to help moms and babies get the best possible care, as well as advocate for policies that prioritize their health; fund research to find solutions to the biggest health threats; and support moms through every stage of their pregnancy journey, even when everything doesn’t go according to plan.

March with us to lead the fight for the health of all moms and babies. When we come together, even the toughest problems can be solved and we all win.

Please join Sunshine on Sunday, April 26th at the March of Dimes’ March for Babies Walk! The walk will be held at Saxon Woods Pool in White Plains, NY. You can register by contacting Sara Tolomer at stolomer@sunshinechildrenshome.org or 914-333-7075.

CAREGIVERS SHOULD BE MINDFUL OF SAFETY TIPS TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE FROM POISONS

CHILDREN WHO ARE LESS THAN 6 YEARS OLD ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO BE POISONED.1

A child’s age, weight, and medical history will affect the treatment of a poisoning.

Please keep the following poisonous products away from children:
- Painkillers, such as acetaminophen and similar medications
- Cosmetics, such as perfume or nail polish, and personal care products, including deodorant and soap
- Cleaning products, such as laundry detergent and floor cleaners

To avoid the risk of poisonings when caring for children, follow these tips:
- All medicines and household cleaning products should be stored in locked cabinets and kept completely out of the reach and sight of children.
- Keep children where you can see them at all times, even when you go to answer the door or telephone.
- Never leave young children alone.
- Do not leave poisons on a counter or in an unlocked cabinet.
- Never carry something that can be poisonous, such as a medicine, in a purse where children may find it.
- Safety latches on drawers or cabinets and child-resistant caps on bottles are helpful in keeping poisons out of the hands of children.

1Reference: US Dept. Of Health & Human Services Health Resources & Services Administration

SUNSHINE CHILDREN’S HOME & REHAB CENTER
15 Spring Valley Road, Ossining, NY 10562 • 914.333.7000
sunshinechildrenshome.org + info@sunshinechildrenshome.org