



Healthcare remains one of the strongholds of circle use in the professional world. Our circle tale this month takes us to a moderately-sized community hospital in Denver, Colorado. Three years ago Susie Law, Vice President of Patient Care Services, introduced the use of circle into her patient care leadership group.

## Circle Tale #19, April 2001 Circles in Healthcare

"The circle has empowered me to empower other people to step forward and take leadership," Susie said. "It has released me both personally and professionally from holding all of the responsibility. I am thrilled with the leadership and cooperation it has brought forth in our hospital."

Susie, who is responsible for 350 people at the hospital, speaks mostly of the leadership of others when asked how the circle has come into such common usage at her hospital. The twenty-plus leaders in her patient care leadership group include such diverse disciplines as physical therapy, emergency services, nursing and quality care. The composition of that original group has changed over the past three years. "At first it was difficult when someone left the group," said Susie. "It seemed like we had to start the circle over. But now we're really good at having new people come in. And the best part is that I don't have to explain anything to the new people. The rest of the circle does that."

One of the ways the use of circle has spread organically in this Denver hospital is that members of the original group have taken its use back to their respective departments. These second tier circles have had their own learning curves and successes. These new stories then spread to other departments who in turn come forward to learn more.

Susie is now also using it with her professional nurse advisory group. "They have just taken it and run with it," said Susie. "They have really gotten into centering and using the center. The first reading has become a coveted spot." Susie has used our booklet, **PeerSpirit Council Management in Businesses, Corporations and Organizations** as a way of helping her introduce the structure of circle, but adds that once they have a taste of circle they like to read Christina's whole book (**Calling the Circle**).

Last summer Susie did a presentation on the use of circle to an all-hospital meeting. It prompted a lot of interest from their CEO who is now contemplating using it in her big department meeting. "People see how much more productive their meetings are in circle and they like the feeling of respect for one another," Susie explained. "One of my male nurses is the most adamant staff I have about us meeting in circle. He feels it keeps us on track."

One of Susie's staff who has moved on to another hospital has asked for advice on how to bring circle there. She shared with Susie how much fun she had in circle and what a difference it made in her ability to work effectively in her job. She and Susie have sent a proposal to the American Organization of Room Nurses to do an introductory session on the use of circle in staff meetings. Susie herself learned about the use of circle by reading Christina's book because it was required reading for her Center for Nursing Leadership class several years ago. It seems a wonderful sense of coming full circle that she is the leader in bringing it into so many new arenas.

*If you have a tale to tell, contact the PeerSpirit office and we'll help you share it.*

*For more information on many applications of circle, visit our web site at [www.peerspirit.com](http://www.peerspirit.com) and subscribe to our monthly Circle Tale newsletter using the subscription mechanism at the top right of the page. Your e-mail address will not be shared or used by anyone other than PeerSpirit, and you can unsubscribe yourself at any time.*