



Patients who have been to the Chase County Clinic recently have likely seen a new face. Megan Schliefert is a student at UNMC in Omaha and is studying to become a Physician's Assistant.

She is getting a taste of rural medical practice at Chase County Community Hospital and Clinic, as she began a three-month rotation in mid-September and will be with CCCH until mid-December.

When asked what she has liked best about being at CCCH, Schliefert said, "I really enjoy the opportunity to be involved in a wide variety of medical experiences. Often in larger facilities, you focus on a more specialized area. Here you deal with patients from pediatrics to elderly and have the opportunity to diagnose and treat many different ailments. It has been a really good experience so far," she said.

Schliefert will graduate from UNMC in December 2013. Until then, she will participate in 15 more rotations of one month each in Grand Island, Omaha, Papillion, Hastings and one in Texas.

Schliefert grew up in Kearney and has one younger sister who is also enrolled in UNMC at the Kearney campus and is studying nursing. Her parents have now moved to Grand Island where her father operates the Texas Roadhouse restaurant.

When asked about the pros and cons of living in a small, rural community, Schliefert said she learned the first week you have to plan ahead.

"The grocery stores aren't open at 5 p.m. on Sundays like they are in Omaha," she said.

She is impressed with the friendliness of the people and how the medical staff gets to know their patients. She also likes the quick and easy travel time to work compared to dealing with the traffic in Omaha.

The most challenging thing for Schliefert has been being away from family and not having some of the social amenities found in larger communities. She is surprised with the number of community events and has participated in some, such as the recent Cancer Walk which took place in Imperial.

"I stay pretty busy most of the time with work at the hospital and clinic, being on-call one day a week plus I am still required to study and take exams during my rotation," stated Schliefert.

When asked what her plans were after graduation next December, Schliefert wasn't sure yet. She hopes that her experiences with the different rotations might help her with that decision.

Chase County Community Hospital has been serving as a training site for UNMC for the past year. Jodi Spady, PA-C at CCCH, is overseeing Schliefert's training and experience during this rotation.