

**By Carolyn Lee**

***The Imperial Republican***

Occupational therapist (OT) Amy Kloess of North Platte is “looking forward to servicing” clients at the Imperial Manor and Chase County Community Hospital, as well as nursing homes in Wauneta and Benkelman. In Imperial she replaces Robert Killorin, who recently moved to North Carolina.

Kloess began working in Imperial Jan. 7. She will be in the area Sunday through Tuesday.

She is a contract therapist with her own business. Prior to contracting her services in the area, she was employed by Select Rehab at Linden Court in North Platte and around Nebraska.

The Franklin, Neb. native received her Bachelor of Arts in psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1988. She also received a certificate of human resource management and international personnel management from Syracuse University in Strasbourg, France.

Her Masters of Science in occupational therapy was from D'Youville College in Buffalo, NY in 1997.

Kloess believes that her most important job as an OT is to “restore them (patients) after an injury, sickness or mental illness to their prior level of function, to return home or to do self care they were doing before, to become independent.”

She is skilled in such therapy expertise as pain syndromes, inspiratory muscle training, cognitive treatment, sensory integration, hand therapy, trigger point release, vision treatment, home safety assessments and more.

Kloess said she's very interested in developing community OT in Imperial.

“I want to develop the profession to service the community,” she explained, in such areas as home assessment, strength programs the community can be involved with, home safety and pain management.

She is also interested in providing sensory integration for children diagnosed with ADD or ADHD.

Kloess said she's interested in mentoring students and lecturing concerning OT.

OT, physical therapy and speech therapy are wide open fields as far as employment possibilities, Kloess noted. “They are in the top 10 of needed professions.”

Kloess urges those interested in pursuing those fields to do so. In addition, a CODA certification for an occupational therapy assistant such as Crystal Darling of Benkelman, who assists Kloess, is just a two-year program for OT and physical therapy.

Kloess and husband Kevin have three grown daughters.