

CHRISTOPHER WALSH, PA Saint Joseph's Hospital of Atlanta

Two years ago, Christopher Walsh became the first physician assistant to join the Saint Joseph's Hospital staff as coordinator of the new Heart Failure Center. His ability to connect with others quickly earned him the trust and respect of the patients' families as well as the medical staff. He develops close relationships with his patients, who, in turn want to meet his high expectations for their treatment and rehabilitation program. Walsh bonds with his patients' family members and involves them in all aspects of the program. He established a family center where patients' loved ones could eat meals together, talk, and find comfort and support with the families of others being treated. As testament to his dedication, one family even asked Walsh to speak at their loved one's funeral. He has also developed a remarkable bond with the center's physicians. They actively support his programs, including a Heart Failure Support Group and a Heart Failure University, a six-week education and behavior modification program for heart failure patients. The University has resulted in improved patient involvement and better outcomes – a 56 percent reduction in re-hospitalization and a



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23 percent reduction in emergency room visits. Because of Walsh's commitment and the compassionate community he has created at Saint Joseph's Heart Failure Clinic, many more patients are living happier, healthier lives.