

## **It's raining babies!**

### **Women's Health Unit: A case study in managing the ebb and flow of patient care**

On Friday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, baby Alyssa Rain Dudley was born in our women's health unit. This was the same day Faribault was declared to have the most rainfall in the state. In fact, 7 inches fell that day. Have you ever worked a day when it seems to be "raining" babies or patients? How do we manage the ebb and flow of patient care?

Wouldn't it be nice if we had the same luxury as the hospitality industry – hotels require reservations; if you don't have one you may not have a pillow to rest your head. Many restaurants offer reservations – you do not have to wait hours to be seated, they are expecting you and can staff accordingly. In our world, no patient plans for a health crisis or really knows when their baby will decide to come.

"The biggest challenge of managing a nursing unit is that you never know what day will be the busy day or even the slow day" said Jeanne Campbell, Women's Health Unit Leader. All District One Hospital patient care departments maintain minimum staffing levels and as additional patient care providers are needed our Department Leaders, Supervisors and Staffing Coordinators (Birgit Van Raam and Rhonda Norgaard) start making phone calls.

On the Women's Health Unit, "our staff is very flexible, they know how important it is to have someone with each mother during the delivery. We rely on each other to work longer hours and at unexpected times. Night shift nurses occasionally work days and day shift nurses come in during the middle of the night. Our team has a true sense of ownership in what is right for the patient"

During the last week in June there were up to 8 babies on the unit at one time and on June 29<sup>th</sup>, nurses and OB providers delivered 5 babies. All without reservations.