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MEMBER PROFILE - JUNE 2004

Sheryl Hongsermeier

As a nurse for 28 years, Sheryl worked with mothers, children, and individuals recovering from sports injuries or trying to get back in shape. When she became interested in acupuncture, she expanded her nursing background to a different level. Now one of three members of Acumedicine Associates, Sheryl deals primarily with women's health problems and offers support to women undergoing cancer therapies, helping them to have a better quality of life before surgery and after surgery with wound healing and pain management, as well as coping with decreased body functions.

Sheryl's patients often compare her office to being at a retreat. They say the office ambiance makes them feel safe and better able to verbalize emotions during these physical changes. Sheryl believes that acupuncture helps make people stronger while going through their cancer treatments and also aids in subsequent recuperation. She calls acupuncture "a preventive therapy," describing it as "complementary" to western medicine and notes that both NIH and the World Health Organization have recognized acupuncture as having an important role in the care of patients undergoing cancer treatment, decreasing side effects to chemotherapy and radiation, and helping maintain energy.

"People come to Acumedicine Associates out of desperation," says Sheryl. "They have gone to physicians who have offered medication but have not solved deeper problems. Even people who have seizures, asthma, migraines, etc., can be helped by acupuncture," she says, noting that benefits include less medication after acupuncture. Sheryl's patients come to her concerned about PMS, OB/GYN and lactation issues, infertility, sports injuries, muscular pain, arthritis, joint pain and inflammation, and many other problems. She believes that acupuncture actually helps the body to heal itself and alleviates much of the stress that may accompany physical problems. She believes that regular acupuncture helps people stay healthy, strengthens their immune system and relieves physiological stress and musculoskeletal injuries.

A WBO member for approximately two years, Sheryl notes that despite being in health care for years, she never had to deal with the business part of her work. "I enjoy this organization because I'm still new to business. I like the classes and events that WBO offers and I like the people. It's good to connect with other women going through what I'm going through," she says.

A native of Nebraska, Sheryl grew up on a farm. She sees our area as "highly stressful," but enjoys our community's "international flavor." When she is not working, she likes reading, exercising, swimming and biking. She also works part-time as a neonatal intensive care nurse at Holy Cross Hospital.