



Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

# 2019 Nursing Annual Report



## Message from our President and Chief Executive Officer

Dear Nursing Colleagues:

There are many qualities that set Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton apart from other health care organizations. The one that gives me the greatest pride is the way our nurses bring their passion for nursing to our patients. Their focus is on delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. Our nursing excellence stems from working collaboratively with multidisciplinary teams to be creative and innovative, and sharing new knowledge of nursing best practices with each other.

As we have continued on our journey to becoming a Magnet®-designated facility, our nurses have worked tirelessly to create a culture of excellence. They are focused on achieving quality patient outcomes as they work together to advance nursing standards and deliver best practices for each individual patient. In 2019, our nurses played a key role in maintaining RWJUH Hamilton as a high reliability organization with outstanding nurse sensitive quality outcomes, which has resulted in a safe environment for our patients.

Our ICU nurses were honored by Planetree International, an organization noted for promoting and cultivating a culture of continuous improvement and consistently orienting care around patients, families and communities. The ICU's Lotus Program was the recipient of an award for innovation related to patient-centered care. The ICU nurses were proud to accept the award at the Planetree International Conference in Orlando, Florida in October 2019.

In addition, our nurses continue to advance their education by pursuing higher nursing degrees. They achieve national certifications in their specialty areas to confirm their high level of knowledge – an attribute that is evident in the way they provide compassionate, individualized care for their patients.

I am forever grateful to our entire caring nursing staff for the selfless dedication you demonstrate on behalf of our patients and our organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Richard Freeman**  
President and Chief Executive Officer



## Message from our Chief Nursing Officer

Dear Nursing Colleagues:

Every day, at every turn, I see our nurses working with patients to regain their health. By blending their skill and compassion with the most current evidence-based medicine and advanced technology, we are able to positively affect thousands of lives every year. Our nurses also apply what they learn to positively change our organization in ways that benefit our patients and their families. Everything we do is for the patient, and we invest energy, passion and resources to build and develop a patient-centered environment.

2019 was a year of continued growth and leadership development in our team of nurses, with a laser focus on quality measures and outcomes. Through nursing initiatives and leadership, the hospital achieved a CMS 4-Star rating and, for the eighth time, Leapfrog A recognition. We have had outstanding results for nurse sensitive quality measures. Our hospital has been VAP-free for eight consecutive years with the help of ICU nursing staff who work in coordination with the respiratory therapists to ensure this level of quality care for our patients. As part of the RWJBarnabas Health system, our nurses have the opportunity to present their performance improvement projects system-wide and participate in research projects. We value the knowledge our nurses obtain through their active involvement and appreciate those who bring new ideas back to our hospital.

Our nurses are well represented in the community and engage in wellness activities, screenings and education. They participated in the further development of an innovative Holistic Medicine program in our Cancer Center that encourages our

patients and their families to explore how music, art and reiki support healing of the body, spirit and mind.

In 2019, we continued our HRO journey and pursuit of nursing excellence. Schwartz Rounds were implemented with nurses leading discussions of critical and sensitive subjects. We also moved forward in beginning a phased implementation of an electronic medical record system, a multi-year investment across our system that will help transform the way we deliver care.

We are committed to the role research plays in treating our patients. One example I am proud to share is how our research nurses at the Cancer Center perform Internal Review Board (IRB) research projects throughout the year. These projects have been published and presented at various renowned symposiums across the country.

Lastly, I want to emphasize that every day, our nurses strive to develop new and better ways to deliver care, build and strengthen important partnerships and ensure the very best patient care experience. I am proud to lead this exceptional team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Breza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

**Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC**

Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President,  
Patient Care Services

## Nursing Leadership



Lisa Breza, MSN, RN  
Chief Nursing Officer and  
Senior Vice President,  
Patient Care Services



Joan Bercari, MSN, RN  
Vice President, Quality and  
Patient Safety Officer



Meghan McCord-Zaro, MSJ,  
BSN, RN, CPHRM  
Assistant Vice President,  
Risk Management



Tracee Bachman, BSN, RN-BC  
Director, Quality



Patricia Ann Caslow, BSN, RN  
Director, Telemetry Units and  
Cardiac Services



Anne Dikon, BSN, RN, CIC  
Director, Infection Prevention



Dawn Hutchinson, BSN,  
RN, PCCN  
Director, Medical-Surgical Units  
and Orthopedic Unit



Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C  
Director, Disease Management  
and Stroke Program



Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN, NEA-BC  
Director, Center for Professional  
Development, Innovation  
and Research



Lauren Stabinsky, MSN,  
RN, CEN, NEA-BC  
Director, Corporate and  
Community Wellness



Karen Stanton, BSN, RN  
Director, Patient Care Coordination



Barbara Taubenberger, MSN,  
RN, CEN  
Director, Emergency Services  
and Critical Care



Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN  
Assistant Director, Emergency  
Services and Critical Care



Jacqueline Ciccarelli, MSN,  
RN, CCRN-K  
Manager, Magnet Program and  
Nursing Performance Improvement



Margaret Adams, MSN,  
RN, CASC  
Manager, Operating  
Room Services



Amy German, BSN, RN, OCN  
Director, Cancer Services



Lisa Nevius, BSN, RN, OCN  
Manager, Medical-Surgical Units  
and Orthopedic Unit



Ceara Philips, BSN, RN  
Manager, Telemetry Units

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## Organizational Overview

### History and Demographics

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton is a 248-bed community general hospital located in Mercer County, New Jersey. It is a proud member of RWJBarnabas Health, the largest health care system in New Jersey.

RWJUH Hamilton has been nationally recognized for outstanding safety and quality by the Leapfrog Group as a Top General Hospital and has received an A rating nine consecutive times. The Joint Commission has awarded RWJUH Hamilton the Top Performer Award for stroke care, spine surgery and hip and knee replacements.

Specialty services at RWJUH Hamilton include cardiac services, a Healthy Lives Program for patients with congestive heart disease and a Cardiac Catheterization Lab. The hospital also has an onsite Cancer Center with an Infusion Center. RWJUH Hamilton provides total joint replacement surgery, spine surgery, general surgery and emergency services. Patients benefit from state-of-the-art robotic technology for general, orthopedic, colorectal, bariatric, gynecological and urological procedures. In addition, the hospital features an Ambulatory Surgery Center, an Endoscopy Suite and a Same Day Surgery Center for minor surgery in the Outpatient Services building.

RWJUH Hamilton is embarking on advancements in neurosurgery services, including plans to expand the Operating Room Suites and Sterile Supply areas. The hospital serves approximately 8,000 inpatients each year, with 42,000 patients visiting the Emergency Room and 125,000 patients visiting the ambulatory care areas annually.



## Mission, Vision and Values

**Mission:** RWJUH Hamilton is committed to excellence through service and quality. We exist to promote, preserve and restore the health of our community.

**Vision:** Our vision is to passionately pursue the health and well-being of our patients, employees and the community through our culture of exceptional service and commitment to quality.

**Values: SAFETY**

- Speak up for safety
- Accurately communicate
- Focus on the task
- Exercise and accept a questioning attitude
- Thoughtfully interact
- You and me together

## Nursing Website

Nurses at RWJUH Hamilton are proud to share their mission, vision for the future, values and other nursing insights with the community via a webpage describing nursing practice at Hamilton [rwjbh.org/hamiltonnursing](http://rwjbh.org/hamiltonnursing), so that residents throughout the region can learn more about the high-quality and compassionate care our nurses provide. This online resource also invites future nurses to learn more about nursing careers at RWJUH Hamilton.

# Transformational Leadership

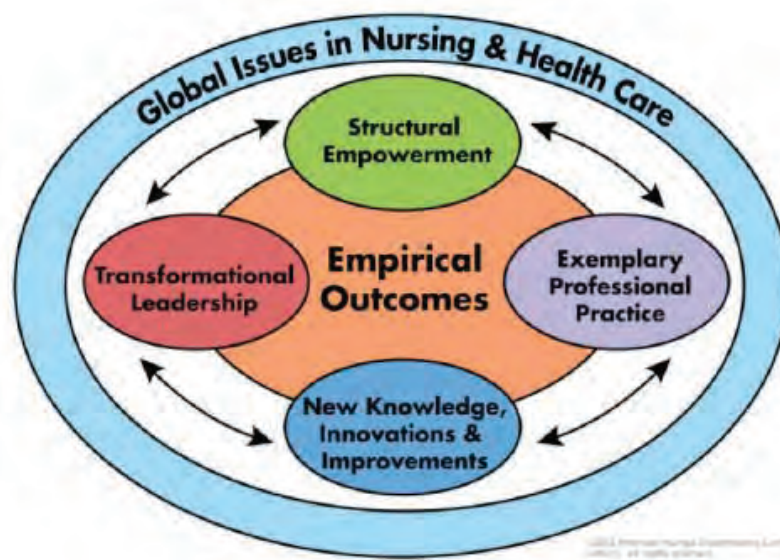
While nursing leadership at RWJUH Hamilton is truly engaged with staff, all nurses at the hospital are called upon to be transformational leaders. They have the ability to effect change through their involvement on various fronts, from committee participation to influencing policies and practices that impact all levels of care.

## The Magnet Journey

Guided by the Nursing Professional Practice Model, nurses at RWJUH Hamilton are on an exciting journey to become one of the elite few to be designated as a Magnet<sup>®</sup> health care organization by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. This journey involves:

- Guidance from the Chief Nursing Officer, who is a transformational leader
- Nurse involvement in structural empowerment through shared governance and decision-making practices
- Exemplary professional practice with the goal to deliver the highest quality care
- The constant drive to attain new knowledge, pursue innovations and implement improvements based on evidence and research

“Our nurses work to the fullest capacity on behalf of our patients,” says Jacqueline Ciccarelli, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, Magnet Program and Nursing Performance Improvement Manager. “They inspire each other to grow and succeed, and they continually seek to advance their knowledge in evidence-based practice and by achieving certifications and degrees. We are proud to submit their achievements for Magnet consideration, as they live by these ideals each day.”





## CNO Inspires Transformational Leadership

**Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC**, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services, has demonstrated exceptional leadership for RWJUH Hamilton and the nursing division. She embodies the definition of a transformational leader by inspiring positive changes in those she leads, focusing on helping all members of the team succeed for the good of the individual and the organization, and leading with energy, enthusiasm and passion.

A role model for RWJUH Hamilton nurses, Breza supports the nursing team and stands behind them as they pursue Magnet designation for nursing excellence. In addition to inspiring nurses at all levels to further their education and become nationally certified in their specialty areas, she facilitates their roles as transformational leaders by empowering them to promote best practices, suggest opportunities for improvement and influence organizational change.

For example, in 2019 Breza spearheaded an initiative to establish a Rapid Decision Unit (RDU) in the Emergency Department, engaging nurses and staff from the Emergency Department and other departments throughout the hospital in the decision-making and planning process. The initiative created a distinct space for observation patients who had previously been admitted on various units. By incorporating insight from nurses and other disciplines into the process, the RDU has enabled greater efficiency in meeting observation patient needs and ensuring timely discharge.



The RWJUH Hamilton leadership team empowers nurses to advance their knowledge and encourages them to become nationally certified in their specialties, such as the oncology nurses shown here.

# Structural Empowerment

Through supportive structures and engagement, nurses at various levels can recommend positive change and play a role in bringing those changes to fruition through the collaborative examination of evidence-based practices. Best practices derived from this process are aimed at improving nursing practice and overall outcomes.

## Nurses Contribute to Emergency Department Security Enhancements

Patients with behavioral health diagnoses such as suicidal ideation often present to the Emergency Department for medical care or a crisis event, and nursing and ancillary staff must be aware that those with thoughts of harming themselves are considered a security risk to themselves and others. Patients contemplating suicide must be placed in a safe, ligature-free room to reduce the risk for serious safety events.

In January 2019, a risk assessment of the Emergency Department was conducted by a multidisciplinary team that included Robert Field, Assistant Vice President, Support Services, Safety and Security, Brian Johnson, Director of Facilities, Lasanta Horana, MD, Medical Director of the Emergency Department, Barbara Taubenberger, MSN, RN, CEN, Director of the ICU, ED and RDU, Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN, Assistant Director of the ICU, ED and RDU, clinical nurses Roseann Baker, MSN, RN, and Sabin Morgan, MSN, RN, CEN, behavioral health social worker Kami Clothier, MSW and hospital administration.

Based on the findings, clinical nurse team members contributed several recommendations for improvement. These included a room/patient safety checklist for staff to review prior to using a room for patients with behavioral health concerns, as well as the completion of a risk assessment for each patient at admission and for each shift. These suggestions were immediately implemented by Emergency Department leadership, enhancing safety for staff and patients in the Emergency Department.

## Professional Practice Council

The Professional Practice Council (PPC) at RWJUH Hamilton allows nurses at all levels to have a voice in their practice. It enables nurses and nursing leaders to collaborate on patient care, policies and procedures and implementation of best practices. This collaboration ultimately leads to better outcomes and enhances the quality of care that nurses provide every day. The Council empowers nurses to shape nursing practice at RWJUH Hamilton, enabling us to share and celebrate successes, improve on issues that arise, facilitate change, plan for the future direction of nursing and promote continuous learning to enhance knowledge.



Emergency Department nurses celebrate National Emergency Nurses Day

## Shared Governance Council

ICU nurse and former Shared Governance Council Chair Ivan Logarta, BSN, RN, CCRN, has passed the torch to Erica Fidali, RN, ED to serve as the new Council chair. Under the Professional Practice Council, the hospital's Shared Governance Council is comprised of nursing representatives from unit-based departmental councils who meet monthly with nursing leadership to exchange ideas and information that promote quality nursing care. Staff throughout the hospital can bring issues or ideas to this Council for review. The Council takes on many of these initiatives, empowering nurses at all levels to drive nursing practice. Nursing staff also participate in unit-based Shared Governance Councils.

Fidali's role includes representing RWJUH Hamilton at system-wide Shared Governance Council monthly meetings. In addition to sharing new knowledge and best practices with council members across the system, Shared Governance Council chairs bring back insights that benefit RWJUH Hamilton nurses and lead to process improvements.

## Unit-Based Practice Councils

Each nursing unit has a Unit-Based Practice Council that reports into the Shared Governance Council. These councils work on unit-based projects and identify opportunities for evidence-based practice changes. They share their recommendations at the Shared Governance Council Meetings. In 2019, one such process improvement came from the "Say No to Low" project for improved blood sugar management in patients with diabetes as it related to their insulin coverage and meal delivery in the Lake Front Tower units.

## Performance Improvement/Risk Management Committee

The Performance Improvement/Risk Management (PIRM) Committee is the primary coordinating committee for organizational performance and is chaired by Joan Bercari, MSN, RN, Vice President of Quality. The Quality Department has the primary responsibility for supporting PIRM initiatives at RWJUH Hamilton. PIRM roles include reviewing performance measurement and assessment projects, monitoring patient-focused and organizational functions, ensuring the performance of required measurement activities, directing actions to improve performance and safety and overseeing staff competencies.

In 2019, the Nursing Performance Improvement Committee addressed the administration of critical medications within the appropriate window of time for inpatients. Data was collected in the inpatient nursing units, and committee nurses provided education on medication administration standards and guidelines set by the New Jersey Department of Health. Committee nurses worked with individual staff nurses to be autonomous and collaborate with the pharmacy to ensure timely administration. Following this initiative, compliance has been consistently greater than 90%.

## Patient Safety Council

Chaired by Joan Bercari, MSN, RN, Vice President of Quality, the Patient Safety Council meets at least six times per year and reports to the Quality and Patient Safety Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Patient Safety Council coordinates the hospital's patient safety program, conducts ongoing analysis and application of evidence-based patient safety practices to reduce the probability of adverse events, and analyzes any near misses and adverse events that occur within the facility. Each month, members discuss medication safety, infection control and patient falls as standing agenda items in addition to topics like Joint Commission patient safety goals and expectations.

## National Nurses Week Awards

The following awards were presented to RWJUH Hamilton nurses during National Nurses Week by Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services, in the Roma Cafe.

### Nurse of the Year:

Caitlyn Caporoso, BSN, RN,  
Telemetry Central

### Exemplary Professional Practice:

Jennifer Wong, BSN, RN,  
Lake Front Tower 2

### New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements:

Caitlyn Caporoso, BSN, RN,  
Telemetry Central

### Transformational Leadership:

Cynthia Russo, MSN Ed, APN,  
Center for Professional Development,  
Innovation and Research (CPDIR)

### Nursing Quality Award:

Catherine Mucyn, RN,  
Operating Room

### Nursing Mentor Award:

Jamie Havens, BSN, RN,  
Telemetry Central

### Unit Secretary Award:

Patricia Taylor,  
Lake Front Tower 2

### PCT Award:

Laureen Kollie-Keleekai,  
Telemetry North

### Friend of Nursing Award:

Wayne McClinnon and the Distribution Staff



Catherine Mucyn, RN, received the Nurse's Day Quality Award.



Michele Suarez, BSN, RN, received the Hero Award.



## DAISY Awards Recognize Nurses

An acronym for “Diseases Attacking the Immune System,” the DAISY Foundation™ was formed in 1999 by the family of J. Patrick Barnes, who passed away at age 33 due to complications of idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP). Patrick’s family was deeply moved by the kind and compassionate care that his nurses provided as he fought his battle with ITP, inspiring them to establish the DAISY Foundation.

The DAISY Awards® for Extraordinary Nurses recognize the education, training, skill and compassionate care that nurses provide to their patients. First piloted in Seattle, the program has been adopted by health care organizations across the country and around the world. In 2019, 46 outstanding nurses at RWJUH Hamilton were nominated for the Daisy Award. Of these, three awardees were selected:

**Naomi Hurley, RN, CCRN,**  
Intensive Care Unit, April 2019

**Gurmit Mann, BSN, RN, ONC, CMSRN,**  
Orthopedics, April 2019

**Tasneem Nadeem, BSN, RN, PCCN,**  
Intensive Care Unit, December 2019



Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer (right) congratulates DAISY Award recipients Naomi Hurley, RN, CCRN (left) and Gurmit Mann, BSN, RN, ONC, CMSRN (center).

## Hero Award

Cardiology nurse **Michele Suarez, BSN, RN** received the Hero Award for her ongoing efforts to coordinate a group of employees to represent RWJUH Hamilton and support heart health awareness in the annual American Heart Association Heart Walk.

## Innovation Award

**Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN,** Clinical Educator for the ICU, Cath Lab, Cardiology, and Interventional Radiology, received the Innovation Award from the International PlaneTree Association at its annual conference in Orlando for her work on the LOTUS ICU Rounding Tool.



DAISY Award recipient Tasneem Nadeem, BSN, RN, PCCN, (center) is recognized by Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Clinical Educator (left), and Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer (right).

## Nurses Promote Community Outreach

At RWJUH Hamilton, the role of nurses in improving the health and well-being of the community is undeniable. They work throughout the community to support population health and deliver preventive health care services. Outreach efforts include a focus on cultural competency that enables effective practice with diverse individuals, families and groups within the community of care.

### Community Health Programs and Screenings

More than 22,000 people attended outreach events, classes and screenings held by the Community Education Department through the efforts of four staff nurses, two dietitians and a licensed clinical professional. Health outreach efforts featured multiple classes/programs and screenings throughout the year. These included blood pressure, body fat, osteoporosis, glucose, cholesterol/lipid profile, stroke, memory, colorectal, orthopedic, hearing, falls prevention/balance and prostate screenings.

### Bringing Health Education to the Philippines

In January 2019, RWJUH Hamilton Telemetry Central nurse **Linda Palad, BSN, RN** joined an RWJBarnabas Health team for her second health mission trip to the Philippines. In this role, she served as part of an educator team to provide midwives with health care knowledge and skills, including basic life support and advanced cardiac life support. The team also presented health information to high school students.

“As a nurse for more than 25 years, I understand the impact of education and the importance of reaching out beyond our hospital walls to help those in need,” says Palad, who was born in the Philippines and helped facilitate communication with local residents. “It gave me a real sense of fulfillment to have an impact on the physical and emotional health of others.”



### Walking for Heart Health

RWJUH Hamilton nurses, staff and their family and friends proudly comprised a large team at the American Heart Association’s Central New Jersey Heart Walk at Thompson Park in Monroe Township on October 13, 2019. This annual event helps raise funds and awareness in the fight against heart disease and stroke.

RWJUH Hamilton nursing team captains included **Clare Silfies, AD, RN** from the ICU, **Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN** and **Roseanne Baker, BSN, RN** from the Emergency Department, **Michele Suarez, BSN, RN** from Cardiology and **Ceara Phillips, BSN, RN** from Telemetry. The nursing teams raised funds for the event through donations and the sale of red, silver and gold hearts. Collectively, the teams raised more than \$1,200.





### **Fighting Hunger Together**

On January 25, 2019, in honor of the work and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 20 RWJUH Hamilton nurses and staff members volunteered at the Mercer Street Friends (MSF) Impact Center to unload, sort and repack food for its Send Hunger Packing program, which provides weekend food supplies to children in Mercer County. In about two hours, the team packed 2,080 meals – weighing nearly 2,000 pounds – and unpacked about 1,100 pounds of new food donations for use in a variety of MSF’s programs. In addition, RWJUH Hamilton volunteers made 30 First Night hygiene kits and six fleece blankets to give the gift of warmth to those in need.

### **National Girls and Women in Sports Day**

**Lynn Glenn MSN, RN, OCN**, Clinical Research Coordinator in the Cancer Center, represented RWJUH Hamilton at the National Girls and Women in Sports Day in Princeton on February 9, 2019. Glenn was part of a team that offered resources about cancer prevention and heart disease at the Princeton University Tigers women’s basketball game. RWJBarnabas Health is the proud official health care system of Princeton Athletics.

### **Running with the Devils**

An estimated 2,500 people came together at the South Mountain Reservation Recreation Complex in Essex County for the Running with The Devils 5K, which RWJBarnabas Health proudly hosted on November 2, 2019. Participants included members of the New Jersey Devils hockey team along with nurses and staff at all levels across the system, including RWJUH Hamilton. This annual event supports the collective commitment of RWJBarnabas Health and the New Jersey Devils to build healthier communities by promoting healthy, active lifestyles and world-class health care.

### **Supporting Lung Health**

The annual Lung Force Walk supports the American Lung Association’s mission to combat lung cancer and other lung diseases. In 2019, Lung Force Walk chairperson and RWJUH Hamilton Cancer Center nurse **Vivian Owusu-Mensah, DNP, APN-BC, OCN, CTTS** promoted participation in the walk and helped coordinate a tent at the event with the Cancer Institute of New Jersey to provide information about lung cancer and RWJUH Hamilton’s services. RWJUH Hamilton participants in the walk included nurses, employees, a Cancer Center physician, and their family members.

In 2019, Dr. Owusu-Mensah also presented a Facebook/YouTube webinar on the dangers of vaping together with pulmonologist Kevin Law, MD. In addition, she joined oncologist Sameer Desai, MD for an interview on Health Talk about lung cancer identification and treatments.

# Exemplary Professional Practice

**Exemplary practice at RWJUH Hamilton centers around interprofessional collaboration among disciplines, along with input from our patients and families, that together support patient outcomes. Mutual respect and opinions are valued among all disciplines in the interest of achieving quality care and improving patient outcomes.**

## **Nurses and Staff STRIVE for Infection Control**

RWJUH Hamilton participates in the STRIVE (States Targeting Reductions in Infections via Engagement) program, which brings together multiple organizations at the state level to improve coordination of infection control efforts. As part of RWJUH Hamilton's ongoing emphasis on infection control, nearly 450 nurses and staff members attended the hospital's third annual STRIVE Fair, which featured educational sessions and interactive hands-on stations. Areas of focus included hand hygiene demonstrations, donning and doffing of personal protective equipment (PPE), categories of isolation, Foley care, central line care and maintenance, specimen collection, antibiotic stewardship and equipment cleaning.

"The STRIVE Fair made infection control tactics fun while reinforcing knowledge among nurses and staff, which in hindsight was tremendously important in preparing for what was to come with the COVID-19 pandemic," says Anne Dikon, BSN, RN, CIC, Director of Infection Control at RWJUH Hamilton.

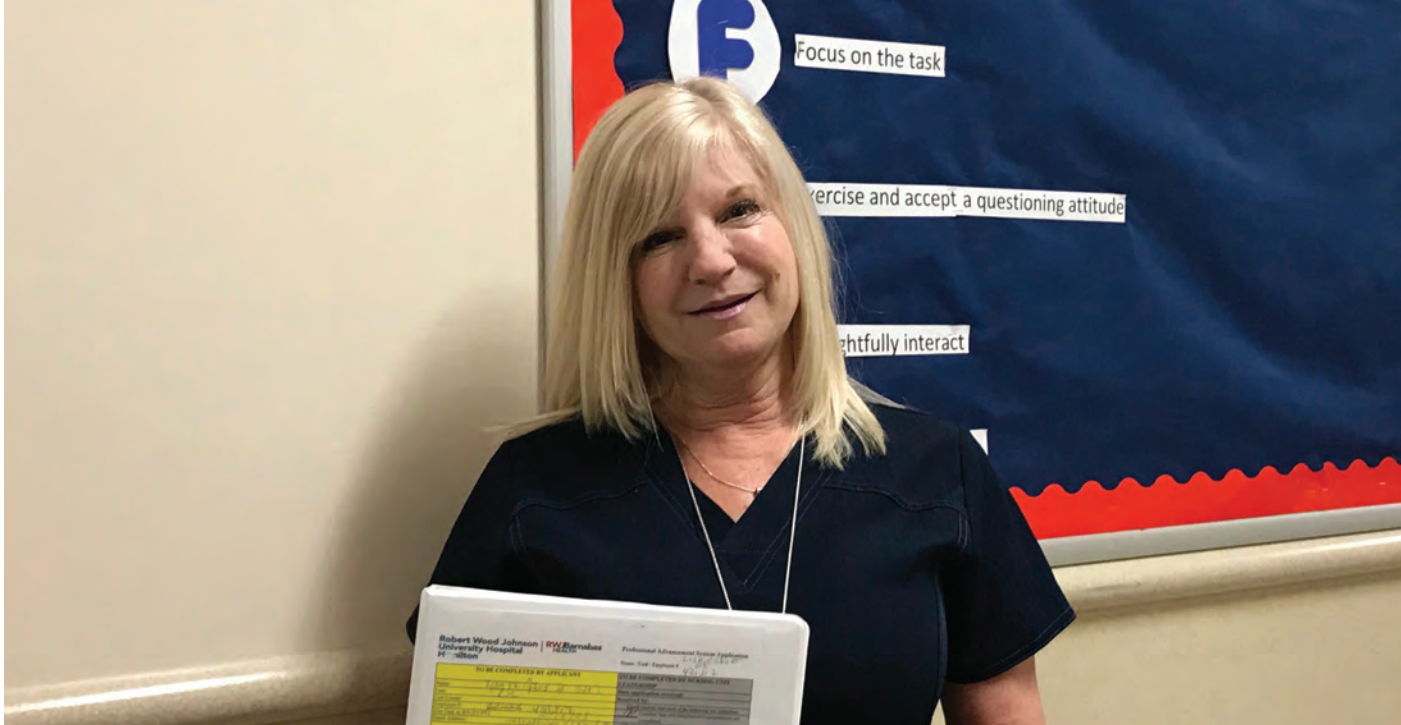
"Nurses are so important in infection control because they are with patients 24/7; they embrace a questioning attitude and examine things from every angle," she adds. "They can identify the early warning signs of an issue, because they often see it first. Our nurses are leaders in patient advocacy and safety. "



Anne Dikon, BSN, RN, CIC, Director of Infection Control (right) coordinates a STRIVE Fair exercise with Tracee Bachmann, BSN, RN-BC (left) and Lori Huffert, RN.

**Nurses and staff participated in a wide range of infection control programs throughout 2019, with attendance totaling more than 5,300.**





**Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia:  
Eight Years VAP-Free**

Nurses in the Intensive Care Unit have embraced evidence-based best practices to prevent ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP) at RWJUH Hamilton. By following VAP’s bundle of best practices and embracing a commitment to patient safety, ICU nurses in coordination with respiratory therapists have maintained a remarkable record of zero VAPs over eight years. This is a great accomplishment for the hospital, staff and patients throughout the community.

**Ensuring Hand Hygiene Compliance**

In 2019, nurses and staff throughout the hospital continued to achieve high levels of hand hygiene compliance in accordance with CDC guidelines, meeting a 97% compliance goal. Hand hygiene compliance correlated with a reduction in the nosocomial infection marker (NIM) rate. RWJUH Hamilton is also participating in a system-wide collaborative to improve hand hygiene, featuring nurse representation and monthly calls to identify opportunities for improvement and track progress.



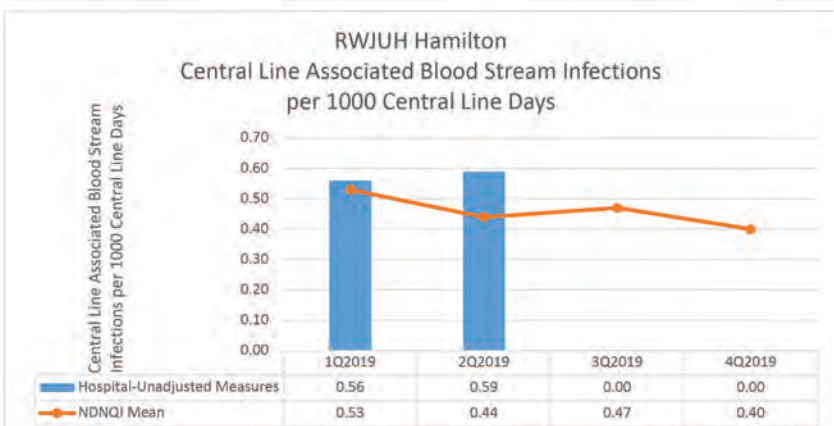
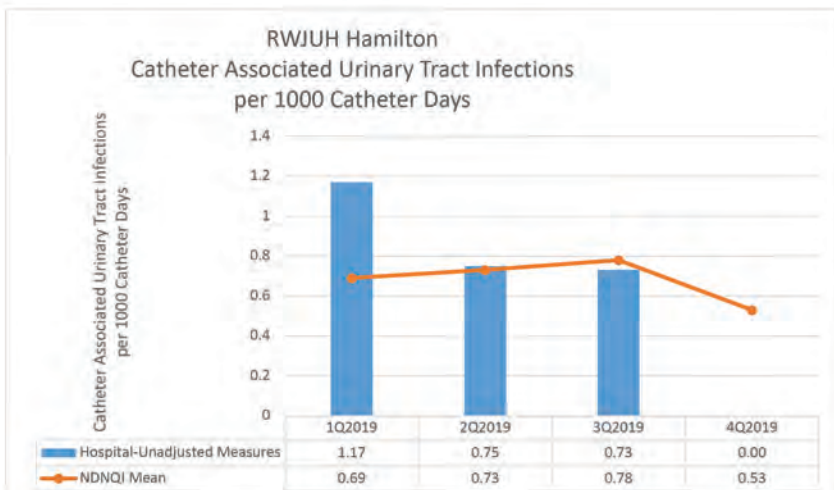
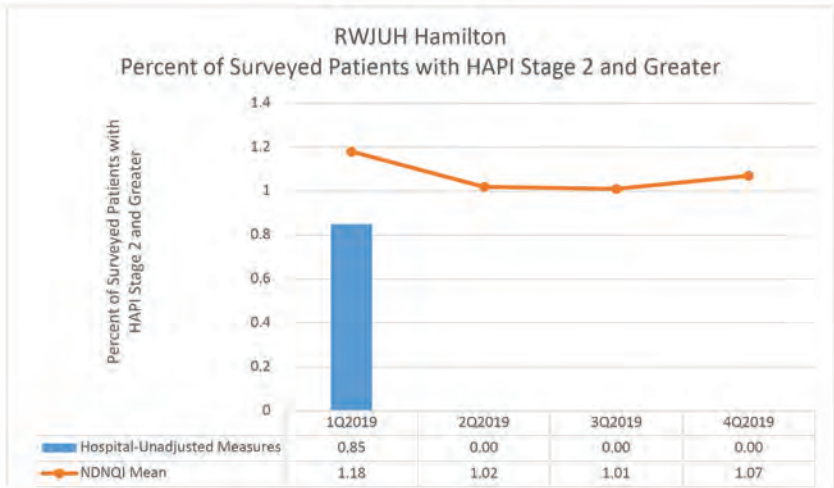
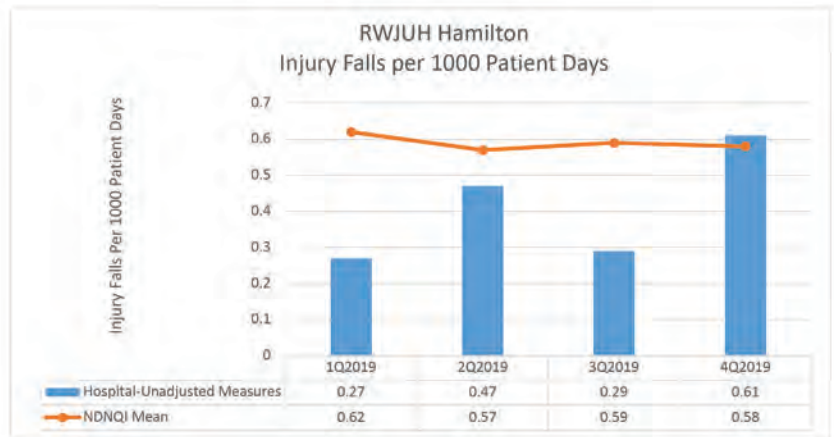
The ICU team celebrates an eight-year VAP-free record.

## Additional Quality Indicator Data

Nurse-sensitive quality indicator data includes nationally benchmarked data that is compared against similar hospitals, with the goal to achieve results below the national benchmark. The four indicators chosen to submit to the American Nurses Credentialing Center with the Magnet application are falls with injury, hospital acquired pressure injuries stage 2 and greater, catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) and central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI). These results for 2019 are shown on the right.

## Skills Fair Provides Nursing Refresher

Each year, RWJUH Hamilton holds a Skills Fair comprised of various sessions for all nurses and clinical staff to ensure that everyone is well versed in the latest clinical standards and regulatory requirements. In 2019, topics included PCA pumps, orthopedic surgery, safe patient handling, stroke, infection control/specimen collection, mock codes/BLS, care of central lines, safety and security, bariatrics, congestive heart failure, and wound and skin/ostomy care.





RWJUH Hamilton nurses are heroes who play a key role in the hospital's quality recognitions.

## Quality and Safety Awards

From their roles on the front lines of patient care and throughout the hospital, nurses have played a key role in awards and accreditations earned by RWJUH Hamilton in 2019.

### Top Hospital Recognition

For the second consecutive time, RWJUH Hamilton has been named one of the Top General Hospitals in the country by the Leapfrog Group. This award is widely acknowledged as one of the most competitive honors that can be earned by a U.S. hospital. RWJUH Hamilton was one of only 37 hospitals in the country – and one of only two in New Jersey – to be recognized as a Top General Hospital.

This honor demonstrates that RWJUH Hamilton meets rigorous standards for quality and the highest levels of patient care. Performance across many areas of hospital care is considered in establishing the qualifications for the award, including infection rates, hospital-acquired conditions and the capacity to prevent medication errors.

### Earning an “A” for Patient Safety

RWJUH Hamilton earned its seventh and eighth Leapfrog Safety Grade A in The Leapfrog Group's Spring 2019 and Fall 2019 Hospital Safety Grade rating system. This recognizes the efforts of nurses and all disciplines in protecting patients from harm and meeting the highest safety standards in the United States.

Updated twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital rating focused exclusively on hospital safety. It uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. hospitals. The Hospital Safety Grade's methodology is peer-reviewed and fully transparent, and the results are available to the public.





## Nurses Participate in Quality Fair

On October 14, 2019, RWJUH Hamilton held its annual Quality Fair, with nurses and hospital employees presenting posters depicting their quality improvement and research projects. These events provide an opportunity to disseminate information about projects that improve patient safety and quality, improve process efficiency or reduce cost or waste.

Topics presented by RWJUH Hamilton nurses included:

**Dysphagia Screening: Making it Safer for Patients at Risk for Aspiration**, by Maureen F. Bonner, JD, BS, RN, Jenna Kinter, BSN, RN, CEN, CCRN, Alexa Frederick, BSN, RN, Kerri Mendez, BSN, RN, Edna Cabrera, BSN, RN, Cynthia Russo, MSN, RN-BC, APN,C, Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN and Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C

**Improving Compliance with Bar-Coded Medication Administration**, by Donna Castillo, RN, Kavita Hayban, BSN, RN, and Maureen Tasker, RN

**Decreasing the Incidence of Hospital Onset (HO) Clostridium Difficile (C-diff)**, by Anne Dikon, BSN, RN, CIC

**Emergency Department (ED) Specimens without Orders Improvement Process**, by Graciela Coyne, Daniel Clark, Jessica Mele, Tammy Leigh BSN, RN and Joan Bercari, MSN, RN

**Growth of Hamilton Thoracic Program**, by Vivian Owusu-Mensah, DNP, APN, OCN, CTTS and Lynn Glenn, RN, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR

**Volume Based Enteral Feeding within the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)**, by Cindy Diamond Gottlieb, RDN and Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN

**Say No to Low: Multidisciplinary Collaboration to Reduce Hypoglycemic Episodes on Med Surg Units**, by Maureen F. Bonner, JD, BS, RN, Timothy J. Ryan, BSN, RN, CEN, Shirley A. Bembo, MD, FACE, ECNU, Shesha Desai, PharmD, Rph-BC-ADM, Daniel B. Clark, BS, SCT (ASCP), Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN, PCCN-K, Lisa Nevius, BSN, RN, OCN, Raychelle N. Grooms, BSN, RN and Cynthia Russo MSN, RN-BC, APN,C

**Relationship between Cancer Health Literacy and Hope in Outpatients Receiving Cancer Treatment**,

by Stacey Alphas, BSN, RN, OCN, Kimberly Cromwell-Piniella, BSN, RN, CBCN, Lenore Rogers, MSN, RN, CHPN, OCN, Marianna Szafranska, BSN, RN, OCN, Lynn Glenn, MSN, MBA, RN, CBCN, NE-BC, OCN, Siby Varughese, MA, BSN, RN, OCN, CCRP and Kathleen Zavotsky, PhD, RN, ACNS-BC, CCRN, CEN, FA

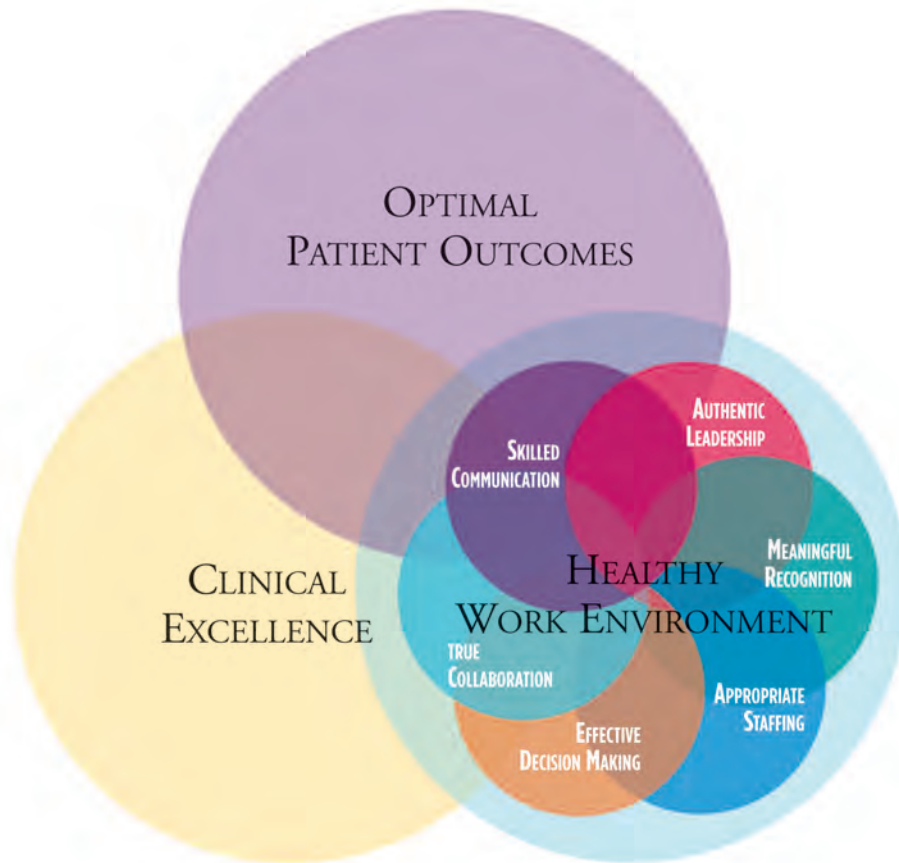
**Quality Fair presentations are judged by hospital and system quality leadership. Standout presentations are advanced to the RWJBarnabas Health system-wide Quality Fair, which was held on November 5, 2019 at the Pines Manor in Edison. The presentation, Say No to Low: Multidisciplinary Collaboration to Reduce Hypoglycemic Episodes on Med Surg Units advanced to the system-wide Quality Fair.**



Pictured left to right at the Quality Fair – Say No to Low: Donna Castillo, BSN, RN, Lisa Nevius, BSN, RN, OCN, Maureen F. Bonner, JD, BS, RN, Shesha Desai, Pharm D, Rph-BC-ADM, Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN, PCCN-K, Cynthia Russo MSN, RN-BC, APN,C, Shirley A. Bembo, MD, FACE, ECNU and Raychelle N. Grooms, BSN, RN, and Kavita Ali, BSN, RN, Not pictured: Tim Ryan, BSN, RN, CEN.



Pictured left to right at the Quality Fair - Dysphagia Screening: Making it Safer for Patients at Risk for Aspiration, by Kerri Mendez, BSN, RN, Maureen F. Bonner, JD, BS, RN, Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN, Cynthia Russo, MSN, RN-BC, APN,C, Alexa Frederick, BSN, RN, Edna Cabrera, BSN, RN, Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C, and Jenna Kinter, BSN, RN, CEN, CCRN. Not pictured: Sahithi Kokkalagadda, MS, CCC-SLP



## Healthy Work Environment Model

In October, 2019, 10 RWJUH Hamilton staff nurses and eight nurses in leadership roles were invited to participate in the Nursing Workplace Environment and Staffing Council (NWESC), a program sponsored by the Organization of Nurse Leaders of NJ (ONL) to promote healthy work environments. NWESC is based on the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments. NWESC supports equal participation of nursing staff and provides a platform for nurses to participate in a leadership role and effect change.

Council nurses attended three education sessions at the New Jersey Hospital Association in Princeton, where they learned about the six pillars of the AACN standards: skilled communication, true collaboration, effective decision-making, appropriate staffing, meaningful recognition and authentic leadership. Chaired by the Chief Nursing Officer and co-chaired by a direct care nurse, the council meets monthly to focus on legislative/public policy issues, evidence-based practice and research, furthering professional development, promoting leadership development, empowering clinical nurses, encouraging mentorship and improving outcomes through enhanced quality and services.

### Professional Nursing Certifications

Congratulations to the following nurses for achieving certifications in their specialties in 2019:

**Nancy Baeza, BSN, RN-BC**

**Sharon Hatzelhoffer, BSN, RN-BC**

**Karen Stanton, BSN, RN, CAM**

**Cody Willever, BSN, RN, CEN**

## Professional Appointments/Accomplishments

**Jacqueline Ciccarelli, MSN, RN, CCRN-K**, Magnet Program and Nursing Performance Improvement Manager, was chosen to serve as the President-Elect of the Central Jersey Chapter of the ANCC Critical Care Nurses Association for 2020.

**Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN**, Clinical Educator for the ICU, Cath Lab, Cardiology, and Interventional Radiology, was appointed to serve as a member of the advisory board for the Rutgers Business School Master's Degree Program in Healthcare Analytics & Intelligence in March, 2019.

**Lauren Stabinsky, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CEN, FACHE**, Director of Community Health, was elected Chair of the NJON Education Committee for 2019.

## Educational Achievements

Congratulations to the following nurses, who earned degrees in 2019:

### BSN Degrees

**Jennifer Chaiken, BSN, RN, CEN, CPDIR**, The College of New Jersey

**Crystal Dixon, BSN, RN**, Intensive Care Unit, Rutgers University

**Caren Dubell, BSN, RN-BC**, Lake Front Tower 2, Western Governor's University

**Sandra Haas, BSN, RN**, Disease Management, Chamberlain University

**Timothy Ryan, BSN, RN, CEN, CPDIR**, Chamberlain University

**Ewa Santiago, BSN, RN**, Operating Room, The College of New Jersey

**Cody Willever, BSN, RN, CEN**, Emergency Department, Rutgers University

### MSN Degrees

**Roseann Baker, MSN, RN**, Emergency Department, Grand Canyon University

### DNP Degrees

**Vivian Owusu-Mensah, DNP, APN, OCN, CTTS**, Cancer Center, Wilkes University

### Scholarships

**Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN** received a \$10,000 scholarship from the New Jersey League of Nursing to pursue her Doctor of Nursing Practice.

# NEW KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Nurses at RWJUH Hamilton continually seek opportunities for innovation and new knowledge. This includes an expanding focus on research aimed at improving outcomes. Whenever possible, these new findings are shared across the system, regionally and nationally.



Left to right at the ribbon cutting for the Healthy Lives Hamilton Program are

**Joan Bercari, MSN, RN**, Vice President,

**Ann Mancuso, BSN, RN, CHFRN**, CHF Coordinator,

**Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C**, Director, Disease Management & Stroke Program,

**Patricia Anne Caslow, BSN, RN**, Director of Telemetry, Stroke Units and Cardiovascular Services and

**Michele Suarez, BSN, RN**, Cardiology.

## New Heart Failure Clinic Opens

In April 2019, RWJUH Hamilton opened the Healthy Lives Hamilton Program, an outpatient program that provides collaborative, comprehensive care to heart failure patients recently discharged from the hospital or referred by a cardiologist or a licensed independent practitioner (LIP). The care team includes physicians, a heart failure-certified registered nurse, an advanced practice nurse, case management and cardiac rehabilitation nurses, a nutritionist and physical, occupational and respiratory therapists.

Core nursing team members Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C and Ann Mancuso, BSN, RN, CHFRN work closely with physicians and other health care professionals to ensure coordination of patient-centered care across the spectrum of health care services. Through nursing assessments and ongoing contact with patients and their families, they evaluate every aspect of health and wellness needs and ensure that these needs are met. This includes arranging for and coordinating care by obtaining referrals to additional health care disciplines, such as visiting nurse services, diabetes educators, wound care referrals, pharmacy collaboration, nutrition consultations and smoking cessation referrals.

Collaboration among professions also includes community rehabilitation facilities and physician offices so that patients are continually supported throughout their disease process. A plan of care is established for each patient and is reviewed by the multidisciplinary team. The Healthy Lives team meets weekly to discuss each patient's progress, opportunities and needs.



## iPad Lotus Rounding Connects with Families

The LOTUS (Leadership, Ownership, Transformations, Unity and Sustainability) Initiative was developed several years ago by an interprofessional group of RWJUH Hamilton nurses and staff working to unify members of the health care team and ultimately transform the approach to health care by placing the patient and family more prominently at the center of the care team. The initiative serves as a platform to provide patient- and family-centered care in the ICU. It features an ICU rounding process that engages the patient, family and care team members so that all perspectives are incorporated into treatment planning.

In 2019, this process was enhanced to ensure that family members were represented even when they couldn't be present in person through the addition of a HIPAA-compliant iPad video connection during daily rounding. The ICU team also created a patient and family education brochure in collaboration with the Patient and Family Advisory Committee to ensure that it covered information that patients and families felt was important.

"Families play an integral role in the care we provide, especially in the ICU when patients can't always speak for themselves," says Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Clinical Educator for the ICU, Cath Lab, Cardiology, and Interventional Radiology. "All members of our team have a shared vision to support the patient/family-centered care model. Adding a virtual component to daily rounding has been instrumental in communication, and it was a blessing to have this fully in place before the COVID-19 pandemic."



## New Call Bell System Streamlines Care

With the input of nurses from concept to installation, RWJUH Hamilton instituted a new call bell system in 2019 that standardized the system across all patient floors while adding enhanced functionality to improve care efficiency. Call lights outside patient rooms are now tiered by four different colors that flash or remain steady, so the nurses' station is aware of the type of need and who should respond before even entering a patient room. Consoles indicate the time of the patient call to further ensure a timely response, and staff assist buttons are built into the system.

After being educated on its use, nurses trained their peers on the call bell system during unit-based safety huddles, and they also provided education for all patients. To assist with the education process, staff nurses Raychelle Grooms, BSN, RN-BC and Jessica Hart, BSN, RN developed an at-a-glance flyer displaying color code meanings.

"While we always strive to meet patient needs proactively, this system has made care more efficient and communication clearer," says Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN, PCCN-K, Nursing Director of Medical-Surgical Units/Orthopedics. "In fact, our Press Ganey scores improved in this area after the implementation of the new system."



Nurses on the LFT1 floor provided input for the new call bell system.

## Nurses Engage in Research on Many Levels

Evidence-based practices are integrated into the clinical and operational practices at RWJUH Hamilton. Published research is reviewed and utilized to appropriately enhance safety and best practices. Our nurses are encouraged to explore new research topics and implement new best practices.

### Annual Symposium Showcases Nursing Research

Nurses and other team members from across RWJBarnabas Health convened at Rutgers University in November 2019 for the 14th Annual Research Symposium in collaboration with the Rutgers University School of Nursing. RWJUH Hamilton nurses participated in and presented at the event, which was focused on the theme “Constructing New Knowledge.”

### Publications

Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Meghan Rolston BSN, RN, CCRN, Melina Hughes, MSN, RN, CCRN and Joanne Pellegrino, MSW, RN (2019). The LOTUS: A Journey to Value-Based, Patient Centered Care, *Creative Nursing*, January 2019.

### Nursing Grand Rounds

On October 24, 2019, several RWJUH Hamilton nurses presented Grand Rounds on Dysphagia Screening: Making it Safer for Patients at Risk or Aspiration.

Presenters included (left to right): Sahithi Kokkalagadda, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech Therapy, Jenna Kinter, BSN, RN, CCRN, CEN, ICU and Alexa Frederick, BSN, RN, Telemetry.



### Podium Presentations

Staff	Title of Presentation	Venue
Denise Berdecia, BSN, RN Cynthia Russo, MSN Ed, APN	Effects of Aromatherapy on Pain in Total Hip and Total Knee Arthroplasty	Rutgers Nursing Research Symposium
Lynn Glenn, RN, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR	Hope and Health Literacy	Rutgers Nursing Research Symposium Oncology Nursing Society 44th Annual Congress

## Poster Presentations

Staff	Title of Presentation	Venue
Maureen F. Bonner, JD, BS, RN, Jenna Kinter, BSN, RN, CEN, CCRN, Alexa Frederick, BSN, RN, Kerri Mendez, BSN, RN, Edna Cabrera, BSN, RN, Cynthia Russo, MSN, RN-BC, APN,C, Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN, Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C	Dysphagia Screening: Making it Safer for Patients at Risk for Aspiration	RWJUH Hamilton Quality Fair System-Wide Quality Fair
Jennifer Chaiken, BSN, RN, CEN	Pajama Day! Improving Multi-Campus Education Using Online Conferencing	National Emergency Nurses Association Conference
Lynn Glenn, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR	Hope and Health Literacy	RWJUH Hamilton Quality Fair
Lynn Glenn, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR	Improvements in Clinical Trial Accrual 2015 to 2018	Oncology Nursing Society 44th Annual Congress
Lynn Glenn, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR	The Growth of the Research Program at RWJUH Hamilton	RWJUH Hamilton Quality Fair Oncology Nursing Society 44th Annual Congress
Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Ivan Logarta, BSN, RN, CCRN, Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN, NEA-BC	8 Years VAP Free	Organization of Nurse Leaders of New Jersey Annual Research Program
Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN	LOTUS ICU Rounding Tool	Planetree Conference, Orlando, Florida
Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN	Transforming Hospital Culture and Inspiring Change by Utilizing an Interdisciplinary Rounding Tool in a Community Intensive Care Unit	New Jersey Council of Magnet Organizations, Inc. Annual Symposium
Ivan Logarta, BSN, RN, CCRN	Six Years Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia Free: The Tools Needed Are as Important as Passing Meds!	New Jersey Council of Magnet Organizations, Inc. Annual Symposium
Vivian Owusu-Mensah, DNP, APN-BC, ONC, CTTS	Growth of Hamilton Thoracic Program	RWJUH Hamilton Quality Fair

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