

2020

Nursing Annual Report

**Robert Wood Johnson
University Hospital
Hamilton**

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Message from our President and Chief Executive Officer

Dear Nursing Colleagues:

This has been an incredible year. The COVID 19 pandemic, despite all of its pitfalls, provided an opportunity for our nurses to truly demonstrate their professionalism and dedication to our patients and this community.

Every day, I saw how our nurses advocated for their patients and their profession. I personally witnessed how all disciplines came together with resolve and conviction to support patient care during this critical time in our history. With a unifying foundation and a strength of purpose, they demonstrated their dedication to our mission — excellence through quality and service — while acting as leaders and team players in our hospital and across our health care system. I am honored to reflect on their accomplishments.

As many services and industries were shutting down due to the pandemic, our hospital and others were ramping up, and our nurses led efforts to meet the challenge head on in the safest ways possible. Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton's existing infrastructure and support system from leadership, nurses and staff allowed the hospital to redesign many of the ways we did business – all in record time – to accommodate the safety and well-being of our patients, employees and physicians.

Given my 30+ years of executive leadership, I can openly state that this nursing team excels. They are fundamentally grounded in providing evidence-based and family-centered care. They deliver equitable, culturally relevant care across the continuum and act as advocates for all individuals. They are committed to innovate and advance health care without compromise through their service.

I am proud of their efforts to innovate and improve patient care in myriad of ways, and in this difficult year, still manage to continue on our journey to achieve the highest recognition in nursing excellence: Magnet® designation.

I want to personally congratulate and thank our nurses and nursing leadership for their important contributions.

Sincerely,



Richard Freeman

President and Chief Executive Officer



Message from our Chief Nursing Officer

Dear Nursing Colleagues:

During a year unlike any other, nurses at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton continued to show their unwavering dedication in caring for our patients.

Our nurses faced uncertainty every day throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. They were inundated with ever-changing data and updates, yet they maintained a critical role in process adaptation and exhibited the true meaning of teamwork. At the bedside, they became family for our patients, holding their hands when safety protocols made family visits impossible. They took on new roles, often stepping out of their comfort zone. Through it all, they were strong and resilient. They remained steadfast in their resolve to improve the health of our patients – and they made me proud to be a nurse.

Although 2020 was full of change and uncertainty, the one constant was our nurses' dedication and commitment to providing quality care, ensuring patient safety and supporting their peers. From utilizing IV pumps outside patient rooms to implementing nanny cams and refining code processes, our nurses were ingenious in bringing forth ideas and suggestions to minimize virus exposure and maximize safety for patients and the care team. Enhanced interprofessional communication through system updates, daily unit huddles and virtual huddles ensured that vital information was shared on a timely basis to keep everyone well informed of frequent changes.

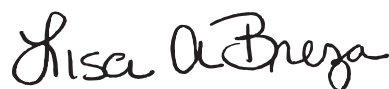
A tiered approach to staffing also contributed to effective care. We are grateful for the many nurses who were cross trained to help in various ways. Nurses from the OR, Same Day Surgery, Endoscopy, the Cardiac Catheterization

Laboratory, Cardiac Rehabilitation and other areas went to assist on patient units. Telemetry and Medical/Surgical nurses provided additional support for the tiered approach in ICU. Team members from Respiratory Therapy and Physical Therapy helped nurses with patient proning and positioning. The teamwork was palpable!

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, nurses still pursued professional development in seeking advanced degrees and improving their skills through the clinical ladder, with some achieving Clinical Nurse Level IV. Nursing research and performance improvement projects continued. In addition, our comprehensive Magnet® application was completed and submitted to the American Nurses Credentialing Center, resulting in a successful 2021 site visit.

I invite you to enjoy the meaningful stories and extraordinary milestones detailed in this Nursing Annual Report. As always, I thank each of you for all that you do to support the safety and well-being of the community we serve, and I am honored to lead this team of incredible nurses!

Sincerely,



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



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NURSING LEADERSHIP



**Lisa Breza, MSN, RN,
NEA-BC**
*Chief Nursing Officer and
Senior Vice President,
Patient Care Services*



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



**Matthew Benjamin, BSN,
MBA, RN, FACHE**
*Assistant Vice President, Peri-
Operative Support Services*



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



Tracee Bachman, BSN, RN-BC
Director, Quality



Patricia Anne Caslow, BSN, RN
*Director, Telemetry Units and
Cardiac Services*



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



**Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN,
PCCN-K**
*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

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 served approximately 6,100 inpatients in 2020, with approximately 30,000 patients visiting the Emergency Room and 77,000 patients visiting the ambulatory care areas.



Telemetry Central clinical nurses Amanda Martucci, RN and Ryan Brevogel, RN, BSN

Mission, Vision, 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](https://www.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.



Telemetry Clinical Coordinators Sarmite Catalfomo, MSN, RN-BC, and Jamie Havens, RN

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.

Continuing on the Magnet Journey

Guided by the Nursing Professional Practice Model, nurses at RWJUH Hamilton continued throughout 2020 on the journey to become one of the elite few to be designated as a Magnet® health care organization by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). During the height of the pandemic, the initial application was submitted to ANCC on April 1, with follow-up documents submitted in September.

“This extensive application process was an interprofessional effort representing all the skills and quality indicators that are deeply rooted in us as we strive for excellence every day,” says Jacqueline Ciccarelli, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, MPD, Manager of the Magnet Program and Nursing Performance Improvement. “Our nurses’ high intention and sincere efforts to deliver quality care – as showcased in this document – also helped us get through the daunting challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.”



The Nursing Professional Practice Model

Nurses Help Lead the Battle Against COVID-19

As featured throughout this report, RWJUH Hamilton nurses at all levels played an integral role in working tirelessly to provide ongoing care and education, suggest and implement new solutions, and keep peers, patients and the community safe in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout this global crisis, they have demonstrated incredible bravery and compassion while embracing the ideals that embody the nursing profession.

“We saw an unbelievable amount of innovation and leadership from our nurses, along with a remarkable level of collaboration with physicians and other team members,” says Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN, Assistant Director of the ICU, ED and RDU. “Everyone brought their ideas to the table, and we all supported each other in entirely new ways.”

Through creative collaboration, nurses helped rethink patient monitoring and access to keep everyone safer during the pandemic. Working with Clinical Engineering and other departments, they suggested moving patient beds closer to the doors and adding windows where needed for improved observation, extending IV tubing to outside the rooms, expanding capnography machine use beyond the ICU so that pulse oximetry could be regularly monitored for COVID-19 patients on other floors, and integrating donated baby monitors at the nurses’ station computers for an additional point of communication with patients. In addition, a bundled care/buddy approach to entering patient rooms in the Emergency Department and on patient floors helped streamline care and reduce staff exposure.

Nurses also stepped up to serve wherever they were needed. For example, Lakefront Tower nurses paired up with ICU nurses to become helping hands, and Same Day Surgery, Endoscopy, Cardiac Catheterization and Cardiac Rehabilitation nurses went to nursing units to help enhance care. Medical/Surgical nurses became runners between departments and facilitated communication with families. Nurses on all three Medical/Surgical units assisted their colleagues by taking turns rotating through the designated COVID-19 unit. Operating Room and PACU nurses helped teach optimal proning techniques in tandem with respiratory therapists and physical therapists. Telemetry nurses supported their

coworkers with safety equipment, including securing much-needed donations of protective equipment and even creating hand-made haircaps. Interprofessional rounding and frequent huddles ensured that perspectives from all angles were incorporated in determining solutions that worked best amid changing circumstances.



ICU staff nurses (left to right) Crystal Dixon, BSN, RN, Tasneem Nadeem, BSN, RN and Kayla Muehleisen, RN



OR nursing staff (left to right) Jennifer Perry, RN, Stacy Katz, RN, Doris Baranyay, Scrub Tech, Kelly Starling, BSN, RN, Vickie Czerna, BSN, RN and Fabian Pepe, Scrub Tech



Telemetry North nurse Teresita Ravago, BSN, RN, PCCN made protective haircaps for her coworkers during the pandemic. The nurses are Meghan Murry, BSN, RN-BC, Ryanne Pepin, RN, Anuja Jadhav, RN, Ma Teresita Ravago, BSN, RN, PCCN.



PACU nursing staff (left to right) Lori Ficarra, RN, Roseann Rovinsky, RN, Patricia Valdez, RN, Melrose Tan, BSN, RN and Patricia Marlin, RN

“We always do a great job with collaboration, but we really brought it to a new level,” says Pattie Anne Caslow, BSN, RN, Nursing Director of Telemetry/Stroke Units/Cardiovascular Service Line. “With the support of our leadership team – and our community, who helped us get through it – we made a difference for our patients. When you line up in the hallways to cheer on discharged patients who had been critically ill with COVID-19, you can understand why someone becomes a nurse.”

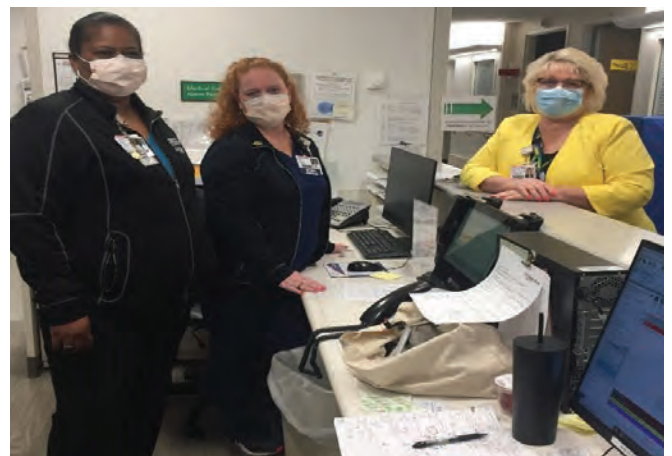
“Nurses have always been the eyes and ears for our patients,” adds Sharon Hatzelhoffer, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower-2 Clinical Coordinator. “They came together in the trenches throughout the pandemic, and the experience amplified their voices while helping them grow as leaders.”

Leadership Cultivates Transformation

In addition to being a constant presence in addressing the needs of nurses and patients, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, inspires transformational leadership across the nursing team at RWJUH Hamilton. Leading with enthusiasm and an open-door policy, Breza has worked tirelessly and collaboratively throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that nurses have been able to safely and effectively deliver the high-quality care they are committed to providing. This includes empowering nurses at all levels to voice solutions and effect positive change, which has been particularly important during this unprecedented public health crisis.

In 2020, Breza also gained input from the Nursing Professional Practice Committee to update the Nursing Strategic Plan. Together, she and the committee members perform a SWOT analysis for the nursing division within the context of the organization

to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Performing this analysis together has empowered RWJUH Hamilton nurses to address any concerns and champion solutions.



Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN, PCCN-K (left) and Lisa Nevius, BSN, RN, OCN (center) update Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC during a Lakefront Tower 1 unit huddle.

Diversity and Inclusion Council Begins Work

In 2020, a Diversity and Inclusion Council was launched at RWJUH Hamilton to provide counsel and create engagement opportunities that promote diversity and inclusion within and beyond the hospital setting. The Council is comprised of a diverse array of team members – including nurses – who bring a wide range of perspectives to the table. Coordinating uplifting events that ranged from trivia contests to cultural celebrations in 2020, the Council focuses on four core areas:

- Supporting an inclusive work environment
- Delivering exceptional culturally competent, patient-centered care
- Engaging the community in projects that support community and population health
- Educating staff to be culturally competent, which includes raising awareness about diverse patient and employee populations

“To effectively deliver patient-centered care, it’s important to understand someone’s background, experiences and who they are as a person,” explains Council member and sub-group chair Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN, PCCN-K, Nursing Director of Medical/Surgical Units and Orthopedics. “It sounds simple, but being open to this level of awareness when interacting with patients and peers can be very impactful.”

“Often, there are reasons behind someone’s outward expression that can be based in religious beliefs, culture or other aspects of identity,” adds fellow Council member and sub-group chair Sharon Hatzelhoffer, BSN, RN-BC, LFT-2 Clinical Coordinator. “When we expand our perspectives, we can enrich the patient experience.”

Members of the RWJUH Hamilton Diversity and Inclusion Committee



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.



Ken Ritter, RN, Emergency Department (front), staffs the COVID-19 testing tent with (back, left to right) with Felix Tuccillo, Security, Ryan Vetter, PCT and Ashley Ferguson, RN, Emergency Department.

Coordinating Efficient COVID-19 Testing and Emergency Department Triage

During the pandemic, the Emergency Department transformed its procedures to safely accommodate and triage patients who had or were suspected of having COVID-19. This included a separate tented area to triage these patients, extensive cleaning protocols in collaboration with Environmental Services, additional isolation carts with PPE and special stickers to indicate stat COVID-19 test specimens.

In addition, because essential workers needed safe and efficient access to COVID-19 testing and results, RWJUH Hamilton facilitated testing for Hamilton Township first responders, Mercer County municipal employees and hospital staff. In a process coordinated by Community Education Department and Occupational Health nurses and staff, those needing testing were separated into symptomatic and asymptomatic groups via a screening tool designed by Lauren Stabinsky, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, CEN, FACHE, Director of Corporate and Community Wellness. Asymptomatic testing was conducted by Community Education Department nurses in a space identified for that purpose. Symptomatic employees and essential workers received testing via a drive-through method managed by the Preadmission Testing team.

“Our process was designed to keep everyone safe,” explains Stabinsky. “It also helped get asymptomatic people who tested negative back to their critical role as quickly as possible.”

Vaccine Clinic Facilitated by Nurses

When COVID-19 vaccines were approved in December, the RWJUH Hamilton team quickly put a comprehensive process in place for vaccinating frontline staff, other employees and subsequently the community. Nurses volunteered from across the hospital to assist with the medical screening, vaccination and observation components of the process while answering questions and promoting awareness through an educational campaign about the importance of getting the vaccine.

“Nurses have been advocates for solutions throughout the entire pandemic,” says Joan Bercari, MSN, RN, Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety. “After witnessing the effects of this devastating disease on a daily basis, our team stepped up to get the vaccine and coordinate its distribution to help stop the spread and protect our community.”



Informatics nurse, Edna Cabrera, BSN, RN (front) and (left to right) Anne Dikon, BSN, RN, CIC, Director of Infection Prevention, Joan Bercari, MSN, RN, Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety and Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN, Assistant Director of the ICU, ED and RDU prepare to give ICU nurse Megan Rolston, BSN, RN (far right) the COVID-19 vaccine.



ICU nurse Meghan Rolston, BSN, RN, receives her COVID-19 vaccine from Tammy Leigh, BSN, RN, Assistant Director of the ICU, ED and RDU.



Nurses assisting with vaccinations included (left to right) Jacqueline Ciccarelli, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, Jennifer Chaiken, BSN, RN, CEN and Mary Voorhees, RN.

Professional Practice Council

The RWJUH Hamilton Professional Practice Council (PPC) encourages 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, which fosters the ability 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.



Professional Practice Council

Shared Governance Council

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.

Council chair Erica Fidali, BSN, RN, represents RWJUH Hamilton at RWJBarnabas Health 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.



Shared Governance Council

Unit-Based Practice Councils

Each nursing unit has a Unit-Based Practice Council that reports to 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 2020, many ideas related to COVID-19 prevention, safety and care stemmed from the Unit-Based Practice Councils, including Medical/Surgical nurses rotating through the COVID-19 unit to reduce the burden

Patient Safety Council

Chaired by Joan Bercari, MSN, RN, Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety, the Patient Safety Council 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 – and in 2020, COVID-19 safety considerations. on their peers.

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 and Patient Safety. The Quality and Safety 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.



(Left to right) Quality and Safety Department members Kerri Mendoza, BSN, RN, Maureen Bonner, JD, BS, RN, Tracee Bachman, BSN, RN, and Lori Huffert, BSN, RN support various councils at RWJUH Hamilton.



Nurses, hospital leadership and other team members spin a wheel of prizes in an engagement activity coordinated by the H3 committee.

Hamilton Has Heart Committee Engages the Team

Comprised of leadership, nurses and other team members, the Hamilton Has Heart (H3) Committee was reinvented in 2020 to support and engage employees throughout the hospital. The team meets monthly to plan a broad range of activities and events. Highlights of 2020 included a Healing Tree dedication ceremony in September that recognized the dedication, heroism and resilience of the hospital staff. Employees had the opportunity to write healing messages on small rocks to place around the tree, and ED Nursing Educator Jen Chaiken, BSN, RN, CEN sang “Let It Be” by the Beatles during the dedication.

The H3 Committee also conducted an employee engagement survey campaign in 2020, yielding a 90% participation rate. Results showed high levels of resilience and found that nurses and staff felt that they were given the right tools and PPE to accomplish what was needed during the COVID-19 pandemic.



2020 Nursing Award honorees included (left to right) Barbara Taubenberger, MSN, RN, CEN, Ken Ritter, RN, Iris Davila Mendez, PCT, Kelly Starling (Kruk), BSN, RN, CNOR, Leeann Ondersin, RN and Robert Field, Security. Missing from the photo were Raychelle Grooms, BSN, RN-BC, Betsy Paglaiccetti, RN-BC, Lynn Duncan and Giacomo Mangiaracina, MD.

2020 Nursing Awards

Congratulations to the following individuals, who received these distinct nursing honors in 2020.

Nurse of the Year

Leeann Ondersin, RN, Preadmission Testing

Bestowed on a staff RN who improves quality outcomes through exemplary professional practice, the Nurse of the Year Award celebrates visionary leadership, committee contributions and an unyielding commitment to obtaining and disseminating new knowledge and/or technology.

Transformational Leadership Award

Barbara Taubenberger, MSN, RN, CEN, Emergency Department, ICU and Rapid Decision Unit

The Transformational Leadership Award recognizes a visionary, committed nurse leader who transforms the organization by leading change through effective communication, passion and motivation. Transformational leaders are known for their integrity and uphold the highest standards in all they do.

Exemplary Professional Practice

Raychelle Grooms, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 2

This award recognizes a staff RN who delivers exemplary evidence-based care to patients and families through the framework of the RWJ Professional Practice Model. Exemplary Professional Practice nurses accomplish improved workplace advocacy and self-reflection.

New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements

Kelly Starling (Kruk), BSN, RN, CNOR, Operating Room

Recognizing a staff RN who is involved in research, evidence-based practice and/or technological innovations, this award is given to an individual who develops and implements structures and processes to integrate new knowledge into nursing practice to improve patient outcomes.

Nursing Mentor Award

Betsy Paglaiccetti, RN-BC, ICU

This award recognizes an RN who contributes to the nursing profession by guiding and supporting new team members. In imparting their knowledge and influencing nurses' career development, the awardee enhances the profession in a meaningful, measurable way.

Nursing Quality Award

Ken Ritter, RN, Emergency Department

With an ongoing focus on accuracy to ensure quality performance, this awardee meticulously manages every key detail of quality measures to render the best possible care for patients, and is a role model for understanding and executing quality standards.

PCT Award

Iris Davila Mendez, Emergency Department

This award is given to a PCT who demonstrates keen knowledge in their role and communicates clearly, effectively and in a timely manner. The awardee displays a passion for patients through strong values along with the culture and commitment of RWJUH Hamilton.

Unit Secretary Award

Lynn Duncan, Emergency Department

Awarded to a Unit Secretary who demonstrates keen knowledge of their position, the recipient of this award displays a passion for their role and a stellar commitment to RWJUH Hamilton.

Physician/LIP Collaboration

Giacomo Mangiaracina, MD

The recipient of this award is a physician/LIP who collaborates with nurses in a professional and positive manner to achieve a common goal of excellence in patient care.

Friend of Nursing

Security Department

This award recognizes an employee or department that provides exemplary support of nursing services in an effort to advance RWJUH Hamilton's overall mission.

DAISY Awards Recognize Extraordinary Nursing Care

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 2020, the following 31 RWJUH Hamilton nursing were nominated for the Daisy Award.

Gordon Anyango, RN, Rapid Decision Unit

Kameko Astaphan, RN, Telemetry North

Caitlyn Barden, BSN, RN, Telemetry Central

Helen Bilanes, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1

Ryan Brevogel, RN, Telemetry Central

Portia Cuffe, BSN, RN, Telemetry Central

Grace Dienes, BSN, RN, Emergency Department

Caren Dubell, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 1

Candice Duckett, BSN, RN, Rapid Decision Unit

Tara Dunfree, RN, Telemetry Central

Lisa Dunn, EdD, RN, CCRN, ICU

Brittany Durand, BSN, RN, Emergency Department

Lauren Dyott, BSN, RN, CEN, Emergency Department

Nicole Ehnstrom, RN, Emergency Department

Ashlee Ferguson, BSN, RN, ICU

Erica Fidali, BSN, RN, Emergency Department

Liz Forcellini, BSN, RN, Telemetry Central

Zulekha Harmon, BSN, RN, Emergency Department

Joe Johnson, RN, Emergency Department

Alisha Lasko, RN, Emergency Department

Gurmit Mann, BSN, RN, ONC, NAON, Lakefront Tower 1

Noah Meares, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1

Kari Nickels, BSN, RN, Emergency Department

Emmanuel Omeni, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1

Rebecca Peters, BSN, RN, Rapid Decision Unit

Lashelle Pittman, BSN, RN, OCN, Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Chantal Prime, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 2

Ken Ritter, RN, Emergency Department

Zoequi Witherspoon, BSN, RN-C, Lakefront Tower 2

Jennifer Wong, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront 1/Ortho

Of these outstanding nurses, three awardees were selected.
Congratulations to these 2020 Daisy Award honorees:

Kameko Astaphan, RN, Telemetry North

Helen Bilanes, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1

Candice Duckett, BSN, RN, Rapid Decision Unit



Kameko Astaphan, RN (right) with Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CNO, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services



Candice Duckett, BSN, RN (center) with (left to right) **Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN**, Clinical Educator for the ICU, **Jennifer Chaiken, BSN, RN, CEN, ED** Nursing Educator, **Barbara Taubenberger, MSN, RN, CEN**, Director of the ICU, ED, RDU and **Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CNO**, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services



Helen Bilanes, BSN, RN (right) with Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CNO, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services

In the words of patients...

Kameko “demonstrated from the first moment that she was going to be my advocate no matter what...super bedside manner, superb care, empathetic, competent, professional, and meticulous.”

Helen “It’s hard to have a family member in the hospital, but with this wonderful nurse they made me feel better with their support and care.”

Candice “is very professional, knowledgeable, kind and compassionate...she exemplifies the qualities of a good nurse, and I would hope to have her as my nurse every time I come here.”



Congratulations to Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Clinical Educator for the ICU, who received the 2020 Dr. Maureen Sullivan Foley Memorial Scholarship Award in the amount of \$10,000 from the New Jersey League of Nursing, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion and advancement of nurse education.

Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN

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. Outreach took on a particularly significant role in 2020 given the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Health Outreach

Despite pandemic-related visitor restrictions and the deployment of the Community Education Department – which includes four nurses – to assist with COVID-19 needs, community outreach events and classes in 2020 reached more than 3,500 people.

Greenwood Elementary School Video

With coordination assistance from Dawn Hutchinson, BSN, RN, PCCN-K, Nursing Director of Medical/Surgical Units and Orthopedics, nurses on Lakefront Tower 1 and 2 facilitated a video exchange with students at Greenwood Elementary School in Hamilton. Students created a video thanking RWJUH Hamilton essential workers for their efforts in keeping the community safe. In return, Emmanuel Omeni, BSN, RN, and Katlyn Laba, RN helped design an uplifting, diverse educational video for the students, focusing on how wearing masks and washing hands are signs of respect for others. According to school principal Dr. Nicole Dickens-Simon, this mutual outreach effort went beyond expectations.

MLK Week of Service

RWJBarnabas Health's Social Impact and Community Investment (SICI) practice, in partnership with JerseyCares, hosted its annual MLK Week of Service in January 2020. Throughout the week, RWJUH Hamilton nurses and staff participated in education-focused volunteer activities.

Feeding the Hungry

In February 2020, RWJUH Hamilton coordinated a food drive with Mercer Street Friends (MSF) to help address hunger in the surrounding our community. This effort helped feed school children who participate in MSF's Send Hunger Packing program. Together, nurses and staff supported the local food bank by collecting more than 125 pounds of food.

Running with the Devils Honors Frontline Workers

Nurses and staff at all levels of RWJBarnabas Health, including RWJUH Hamilton, collaborated with the New Jersey Devils to transition the annual RWJBarnabas Health Running with the Devils 5K Run and Walk to a virtual format that recognized the heroic efforts of frontline health care staff and featured multiple creative opportunities to participate throughout October. Proceeds from the event benefited RWJBarnabas Health's Emergency Response Fund, which has provided necessary resources to help treat the most critical patients; ensure the safety of all caregivers, frontline workers and staff; and protect surrounding communities from the potential resurgence of the COVID-19 virus or other emergencies. With 768 total participants, the event raised \$70,000.

Helping Patients with Heart Failure

The Healthy Lives Hamilton Program is a recently opened outpatient program that provides collaborative, comprehensive care to heart failure patients recently discharged from the hospital or referred by a provider. Led by Director Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C and CHF Coordinator Ann Mancuso, MSN, RN, CHFRN, the program continued to coordinate comprehensive care for those with heart failure during 2020, including insight from physicians, nurses, a nutritionist and physical, occupational and respiratory therapists.

Patients enrolled in the program have had a decrease in heart failure readmissions to the hospital to a mere 3% while maintaining appointments and follow-up care. Participants and their families have also appreciated nurses taking time to listen to their needs and concerns, assisting with referrals for other therapies and helping facilitate reduced costs for medications. The Healthy Lives initiative may serve as a model for other disease specific programs in the future.



Community Education nurses
Marguerite O'Donnell, BSN, RN, CDE,
Patricia McDougall, BSN, RN and
Marie Marzan, MSN, RN



Emmanuel Omeni, BSN, RN



Ann Mancuso, MSN, RN, CHFRN
Connie Mocerri, MSN, AGNP-C and CHF

EXEMPLARY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Exemplary practice at RWJUH Hamilton centers on 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. The RWJUH Hamilton Professional Practice Model is the overarching framework for nurses, nursing care and interprofessional patient care, describing how nurses practice, collaborate with others and develop professionally to provide high-quality care.

ANCC Accredits Nursing Residency Program

The Nursing Residency Program at RWJUH Hamilton is designed to help nurses with BSN degrees and less than one year of acute care experience develop their clinical and leadership skills while acquiring a higher level of training and experience. In 2020, this program was accredited as a Practice Transition Program by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Commission on Accreditation in Practice Transition Programs. The program is structured to incorporate three graduate level credits from the Rutgers University School of Nursing and features a unit-based quality improvement project.

“This accreditation speaks to the high quality of our Nursing Residency Program,” says Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Director of the Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research. “Much of nursing is learned through experience beyond the classroom. Eligible nurses who participate can be assured that the program will help lead them down a leadership path.”

Fit Testing Helps Ensure Safety

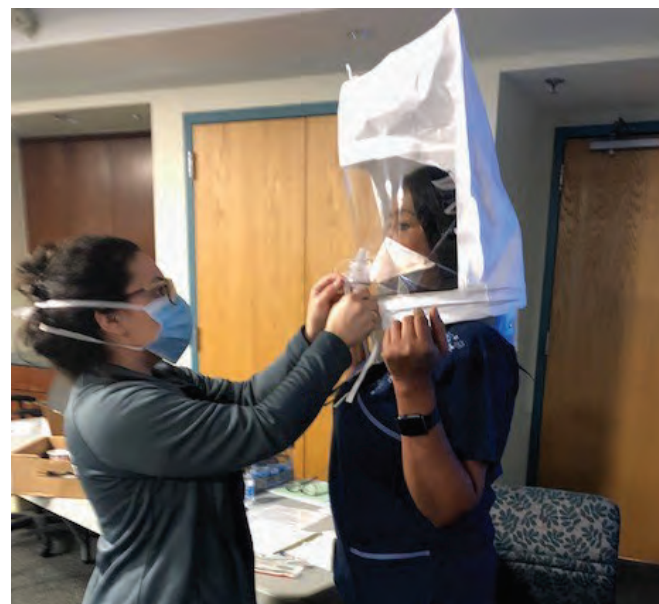
As hospitals across the country struggled to keep up with the demand for N95 masks and other PPE for caregivers, the RWJUH Hamilton team was thankful to receive donations from individuals and organizations throughout the community. Because the mask donations included multiple brands and styles, they required rigorous fit testing to ensure that they would appropriately protect team members from the airborne virus.

RWJUH Hamilton nurse educators and several staff nurses – including those from the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, Telemetry, Lakefront Tower and the Emergency Department – were trained by Occupational Health to perform fit testing. Within a few days, they tested numerous mask styles on 250 nurses, staff and physicians. The process ensured that each person received a supply of masks that fit appropriately for them.

“Our robust fit-testing process contributed to the fact that RWJUH Hamilton had one of the lowest incidences of staff COVID-19 infections in the system,” says Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Director of the Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research.

If mask testing did not reveal a good fit for a frontline caregiver, they were provided with capers for more extensive protection. Nurses collaborated with the Security Department to ensure they were properly trained on the use of these items.

Elizabeth Restuccia, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 2, performs fit testing for Mary Intuk, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 2.





Lakefront Tower 2 nursing staff

A Team Approach to COVID-19 Infection Prevention

In addition to working to prevent all the usual health care-associated infections, RWJUH Hamilton nurses and the infection prevention team focused heavily on keeping staff and patients safe from COVID-19. Nurse clinical educators provided just-in-time skills training and validation across departments to ensure the effective use of PPE. Nurses minimized the duration and number of times they went into patient rooms by standardizing mealtimes and creating a “buddy system” in which they paired up a nurse or technician to help each other. From proper donning and doffing to ensuring supply needs within patient rooms, everyone cross-checked each other while facilitating the needs of patients.

“Donning and doffing so much PPE could take four to five minutes each time, and it was more stressful than other isolation precautions we’ve had in the past,” says Brianna Morris, RN, BSN, RN-BC, medical-surgical nurse on Lakefront Tower 2. “To reduce exposure and conserve PPE, we handled medications, vitals and meal service in one trip into the room. Having someone outside the door to get any additional items that were needed provided peace of mind.”

Nurses on Lakefront Tower 2 also suggested and helped implement a system for securely storing and tracking PPE on the unit. Still in use today, this more efficient system eliminated the need to go to another area of the hospital each time PPE was needed.

VAP and CAUTI-Free Despite Pandemic Challenges

By embracing a commitment to patient safety and following evidence-practices to prevent ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP), RWJUH Hamilton ICU/critical care nurses and respiratory therapists have maintained a remarkable record of zero VAPs over nine years. In addition, nurses and other caregivers ensured that there were no catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs) in 2020. Many critically ill patients with COVID-19 required ventilator and catheter care, yet the team was able to maintain these safety standards throughout the year.

“More patients needed these modalities for longer periods of time during the pandemic, but our safety standards are hard-wired into our culture and are reflected in these outcomes,” explains Anne Dikon, BSN, RN, CIC, Director of Infection Prevention. “We examine preventive measures on a regular basis, so it’s almost second nature – even during periods of crisis. We’re very proud of the team for their efforts.”



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

Quality Fair Highlights Initiatives Virtually

RWJUH Hamilton held its annual Quality Fair in a virtual format in 2020, with nurses and other staff members showcasing their quality improvement projects for a panel of judges. The following nurse projects were selected for presentation at the RWJUH Hamilton virtual Quality Fair:

Critical Medication Administration Times

Jacqueline Ciccarelli, MSN, RN, CCRN-K

Katlyn Laba, RN

Marcia Chamberlain, BSN, RN, CCRN,

Sharon Hatzelhoffer, BSN, RN-BC

Linda Palad, BSN, RN-BC,

Teresita Ravago, BSN, PCCN

Using Available Technology to Connect Patients and Loved Ones During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN

Nick Maglione, MHA

Tedford Taylor, MDiv, BCCC, FHPC

The presentation on Critical Medication Administration Times was also selected for presentation at the RWJBarnabas Health Quality Fair.



Kathy LemMon, BSN, RN and
Jorge Gomez-Diaz, MSN, RN, CNOR

Achieving Full Compliance in Tissue Tracking

When tissues are used in the hospital setting, adherence to best practices is critical. This set of parameters includes bi-directional tracking and considerations regarding proper temperature, storage, reconstitution and patient placement. To improve adherence to these standards, Operating Room Clinical Coordinator Kathy LemMon, RN, BSN, developed skills refresher information that Surgical Services Clinical Nurse Educator Jorge Gomez-Diaz, MSN, RN, CNOR, used to help create a net learning module. OR nurses who participate in the tissue documentation process then completed one-on-one training, and RWJUH Hamilton achieved 100% compliance during 2020.

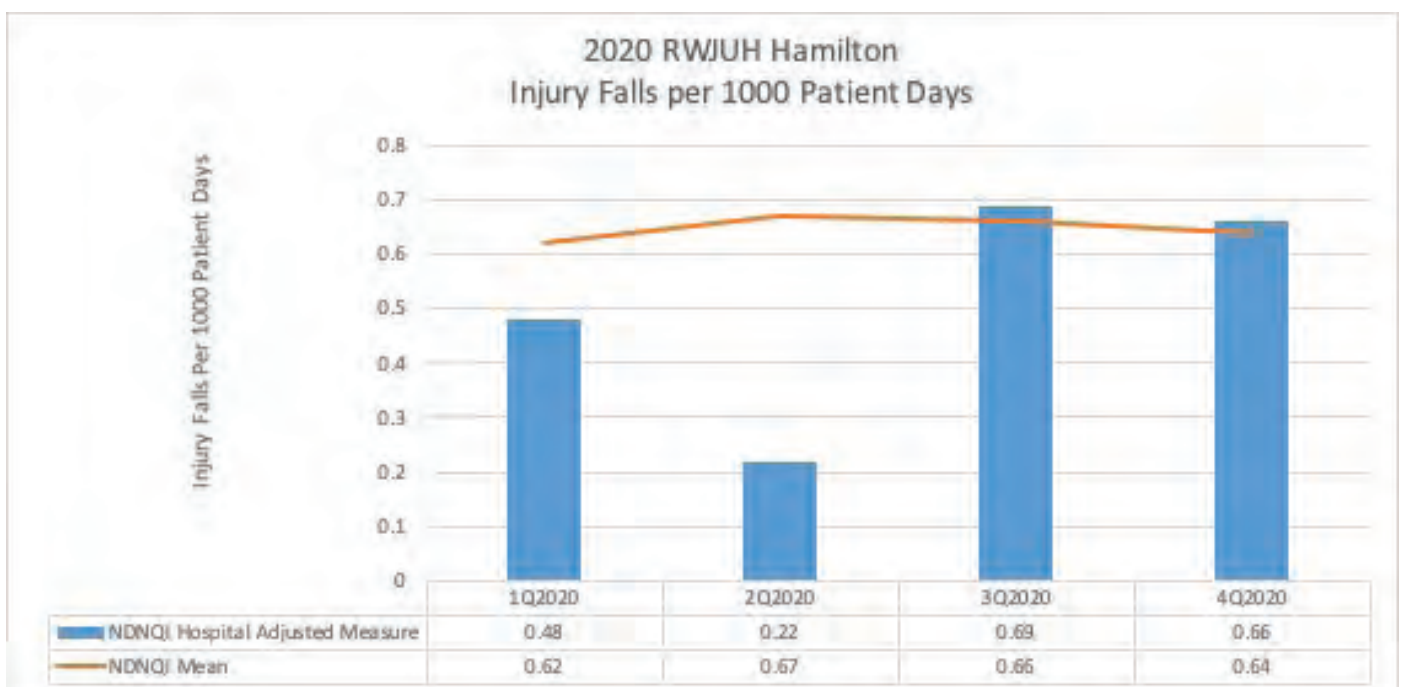
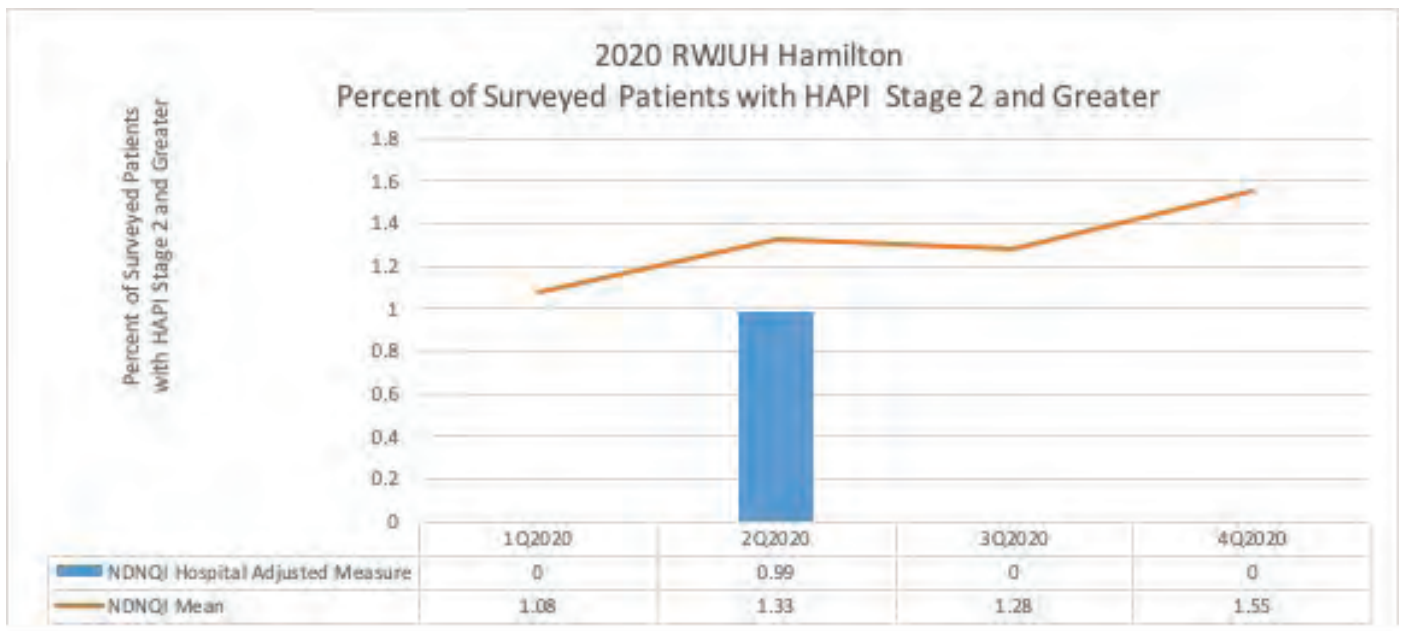
“Our main objective is patient safety,” says LemMon. “If a patient ever has an issue with tissue they received, we want to ensure that all parameters can be tracked. We’re very stringent with these standards, and I’m proud of our nurses for being committed to this process.”

Nurse-Sensitive Quality Indicators

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 were falls with injury, hospital-acquired pressure injuries stage 2 or greater, catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) and central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI).

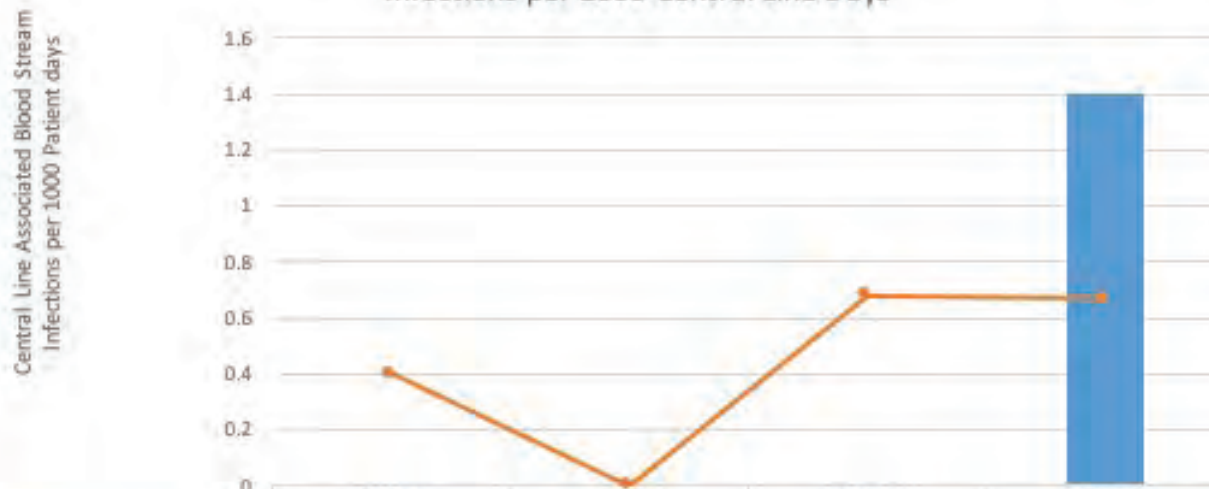
In 2020, RWJUH Hamilton achieved results that were superior to benchmarks in most cases. The 2020 results are represented in the following four graphs.

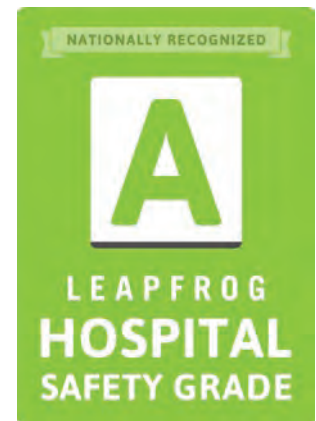


2020 RWJUH Hamilton
Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infections per 1000 Catheter Days



2020 RWJUH Hamilton
Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections per 1000 Central Line Days





Ten “A” Grades for Patient Safety

In spring and fall 2020, RWJUH Hamilton was awarded a Grade “A” Hospital Safety Score rating by the Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit run by employers and other large purchasers of health benefits. The hospital has earned this “A” safety grade for seven consecutive rating periods, with the fall 2020 grade marking the 10th “A” grade over the 12 years the Leapfrog Group has been issuing safety grades. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. acute care hospitals twice per year.

“The Leapfrog Safety Grade A validates our high level of patient care, and it’s especially significant given the challenges health care providers encountered during the pandemic,” says Joan Bercari, MSN, RN, Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety. “This is a true testament to our hospital and our staff.”

Additional Initiative Aims to Address Burnout

As part of her DNP research project, Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Clinical Educator for the ICU, Cath Lab, Cardiology and Interventional Radiology, has initiated a project to examine whether identifying a communication-based solution to address the daily stress that has been particularly high during the pandemic can reduce the risk for burnout and improve morale for RWJUH Hamilton ICU nurses. Through a partnership with AIMeCast and a grant from the Beryl Institute, Jones secured a smart TV for the ICU breakroom that will stream ongoing updates, education and policies relevant to nursing care. Baseline and post-project surveys will inform data assessment.

Professional Nursing Certifications

Congratulations to the following nurses for achieving certifications in their specialties in 2020:

Raychelle Grooms, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 2

Gabriella Hahn, RN, PCCN, Telemetry North

Brianna Morris, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 2

Catherine Mucyn, RN, CNOR, OR

Gwendolyn Pownall, BSN, RN-BC, Cardiac Catheterization Lab

Orville Samuels, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 2

Educational Achievements

Congratulations to the following nurses, who earned degrees in 2020:

MSN

Ann Mancuso, MSN, RN, CHFN, Chamberlain University

Bethany Milano, MSN, RN, AGNP-C, La Salle University

BSN

Gordon Anyango, BSN, RN, Grand Canyon University

David Baldwin, BSN, RN, Thomas Edison State University

Donna Lewbart, BSN, RN, CCDS, The College of New Jersey

Brianna Morris, BSN, RN, Drexel University

Michele Pietrifesa, BSN, RN, Thomas Edison State University

Lashelle Pittman, BSN, RN, The College of New Jersey

Carol Schengrund, BSN, RN-BC, University of Phoenix

Professional Advancement

RWJUH Hamilton's Professional Advancement System gives clinical nurses an opportunity to progress in their careers based on expertise and professional development. Achieving Clinical Nurse Level III and Level IV requires experience, extensive knowledge, clinical insight and strong mentorship abilities. Qualification includes numerous prerequisites, such as participating on a hospital committee and submitting a portfolio that shows how they meet the established criteria. Congratulations to the following nurses, who achieved these distinctions in 2020 in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.

Clinical Nurse Level III

Nancy Baeza, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 2

Denise Berdecia, BSN, RN, ONC, Orthopedics

Stephanie Caduhada, BSN, RN, CCRN, ICU

Kelly Eppolito, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1

Raychelle Grooms, BSN, RN-BC, Lakefront Tower 2

Sandra Haas, BSN, RN, Bariatrics

Ivan Logarta, BSN, RN, CCRN, ICU

Ann Mancuso, MSN, RN, CHF, Disease Management Congestive Heart Failure

Laura McCue, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1/Ortho

Colleen Petitt, BSN, RN, Cardiac Catheterization Lab

Elizabeth Restuccia, BSN, RN, Lakefront Tower 1

Clinical Nurse Level IV

Tasneem Nadeem, BSN, RN, PCCN, ICU

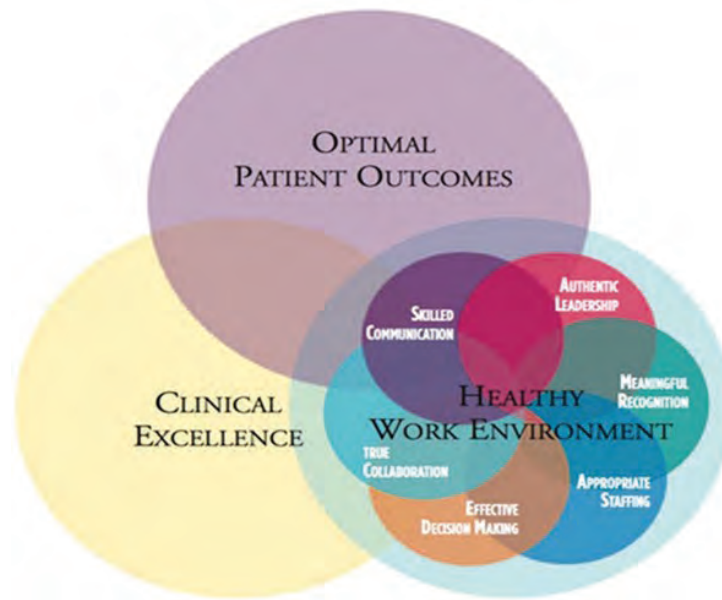
Gwen Pownall, BSN, RN-BC, Cardiac Catheterization Lab



Tasneem Nadeem, BSN, RN, PCCN, ICU



Gwen Pownall, BSN, RN-BC, Cardiac Catheterization Lab



NWESC Council Promotes Workday Breaks

As participants in the Nursing Workplace Environment and Staffing Council (NWESC) – a program sponsored by the Organization of Nurse Leaders of NJ (ONL) – a council of RWJUH Hamilton clinical nurses and nurse leaders across all units meets monthly to examine ways to promote a healthy workplace environment. These efforts focus on the six pillars of the ACCN standards, which include skilled communication, true collaboration, effective decision-making, appropriate staffing, meaningful recognition and authentic leadership.

In 2020, the Council surveyed nurses to assess the reasons why many were not taking breaks during the workday. The Council then used opportunities like morning huddles and a Nurses Week presentation to raise awareness about the importance of breaks, and began working to ensure that every RWJUH Hamilton nurse has the opportunity to take a 30-minute uninterrupted break during their shift. For many, this means recharging over lunch or taking a mindfulness break in RWJUH Hamilton’s new Serenity Room.

“Breaks are so important to the mindset of caregivers, especially in light of the ongoing stressors of the pandemic,” says Council co-chair Ryan Brevogel, RN, BSN, clinical nurse on Telemetry Central. “Not only do we foster collaboration by covering each other during breaks, but these opportunities help us perform better and reduce burnout, all of which directly ties in to the six ACCN pillars.”



NWESC Council members (left to right) ICU clinical nurse Georgene Vacciana, BSN, RN, Medical/Surgical clinical nurse Elizabeth Restuccia, BSN, RN, and Telemetry Central clinical nurse Ryan Brevogel, RN, BSN

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.

Technology Solution Connects Patients and Families

Given the visitor restrictions during the pandemic, the RWJUH Hamilton team quickly recognized the need to provide communication between patients and families as part of the mission to provide patient- and family-centered care. An interprofessional team collaborated to bridge the communication gap through technology.

As part of this effort, Patient Representatives and Nurse Liaisons served as points of contact to assess family member perceptions of their involvement in their loved ones' care, with any concerns brought to the nursing staff and unit leadership. In the ICU, a Nurse Liaison observed ICU rounds and scheduled appointments for videoconferencing family meetings. Utilizing iPads available at the hospital and through a grant, nurses and members of the Pastoral Care and Patient Relations departments coordinated bedside virtual family meetings to facilitate care updates and maintain important connections between patients and their families.

"Having family members present is a key element of our patient- and family-centered model for providing holistic care, so their absence was distressing for nurses," says Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN, Clinical Educator for the ICU, Cath Lab, Cardiology and Interventional Radiology. "Our nurses worked collaboratively to address this issue through the creative use of technology. Virtual communication also helped reduce the call load and stress among our clinicians."

"This was an emotional role for our nurses, as it sometimes involved heartache," says Lauren Stabinsky, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, CEN, FACHE, Director of Corporate and Community Wellness, whose team volunteered as Nurse Liaisons in the ICU. "But it is a nurse's calling to be present wherever they are needed."

Nurses Contribute to Research Knowledge

Nurses Can Increase Clinical Trial Enrollment

According to Lynn Glenn, RN, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR, The Cancer Center at RWJUH Hamilton; Stacey Alphas, BSN, RN, OCN, Steeplechase Cancer Center at RWJUH Somerset; and Siby Varughese, MA, MBA, BSN, RN, OCN, CCRP, Manager of Oncology Clinical Research, increased awareness, institutional commitment and nurse champions are critical to expanding access to clinical trials in the community setting. In 2020, this trio of colleagues had their research work, "Community-Based Clinical Trials: The Role of Nurses in Increasing Enrollment," published in the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*. They found that nursing leadership in clinical research can affect accrual and retention in research studies, and even with limited infrastructure and personnel in the community setting, there is a unique opportunity for nurses to lead clinical research engagement.

Lynn Glenn, RN, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR
Stacey Alphas, BSN, RN, OCN
Siby Varughese, MA, MBA, BSN, RN, OCN, CCRP

Community-based clinical trials: The role of nurses in increasing enrollment
Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing, 24(2), 205-207.



Lynn Glenn, RN, MSN, MBA, OCN, CBCN, NE-BC, CTR

Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President, Patient Care Services and Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Director of the Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research



Research Study Focuses on Geriatric Sensitivity

As the older adult population continues to grow, health care providers must deliver care that is grounded in awareness, empathy and reflection. With oversight by RWJUH Hamilton and RWJUH New Brunswick nurses, a 2020 study examined the degree of empathy reported by 100 nurses and patient care technicians toward geriatric patients prior to and after participation in an activity that simulated the type of loss often experienced by this population.

“Pre- and post-survey results for RN staff did not show a statistically significant difference, validating that our team is comprised of highly empathetic nurses,” says project co-chair Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN,

NEA-BC, Director of the Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research. “The results did identify a statistically significant difference for patient care technicians, and nurses are well-positioned to help further educate PCTs about geriatric sensitivity. Aging is a complex process, and sometimes we need reminders about the special needs of this population.”

Lisa Breza, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Cheryl Prall, MSN, RN NEA-BC
Donna Prete, MSN, RN-BC, NE-BC

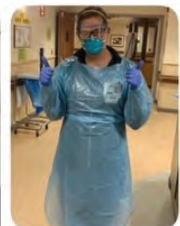
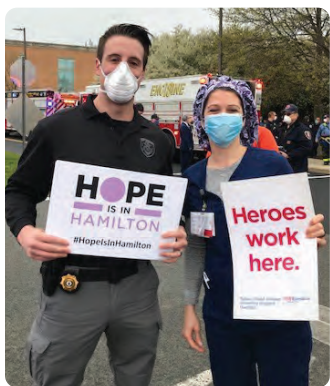
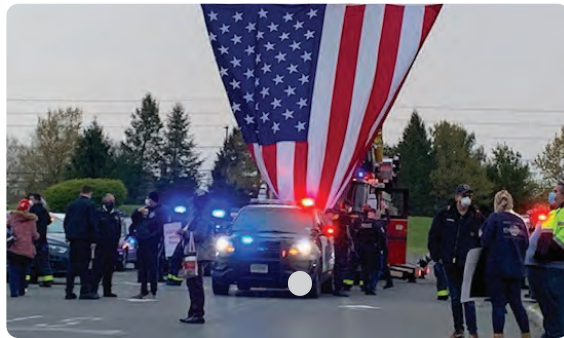
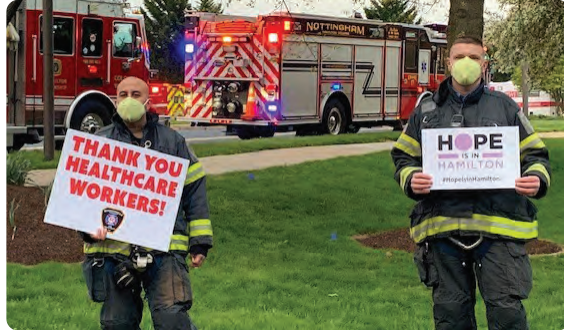
Use of simulation to enhance healthcare providers’ empathy and understanding of geriatric loss

RWJBarnabas Health Annual Research Symposium

In November, nurses across RWJBarnabas Health participated in the 15th Annual Research Symposium, held in collaboration with the Rutgers University School of Nursing. The theme for this virtual 2020 symposium, which featured 21 presentations, was “Rockstar Researchers: A Virtual Concert.” Presentations were organized according to the Magnet principles. RWJUH Hamilton presentations included:

Supporting a Patient and Family-Centered Care Model in an ICU During COVID-19

Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN
Nick Maglione, MHA
Tedford Taylor, MDiv, BCCC, FHPC



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