



# 2023 NURSING *Annual Report*



**RWJBarnabas  
HEALTH**

**Robert Wood Johnson  
University Hospital  
Rahway**

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# FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



## Message from the Chief Nursing Officer

2023 was the first year since the COVID-19 outbreak that we worked with a sense of normalcy and the first year we reconnected meaningfully with the community. After 15 years at RWJUH Rahway, this was also my first year as CNO. During this transition in leadership, I've worked to empower and support nurses in their professional journeys. I care about our people and want to ensure that everyone has a voice, feels they have what they need to perform well, and is recognized and appreciated every day.

### Our Accomplishments

As a department, we recommitted to making the patient the center of care and creating an environment that delivers on that promise. The foundation for a remarkable year of growth began with the stabilization of our leadership team and our continued engagement with frontline clinical staff. We converted several agency nurses to our team and continue to move toward our goal of zero agency support. We have the highest employee engagement scores in the system, which is also reflected in our high retention rates.

Happy employees are high-performing employees. In fact, fall 2023 marked our fifth consecutive Leapfrog A rating. In addition, our Emergency Department team earned top quartile patient experience scores and saw a near 0% left without being seen rate. Because patients and their families feel comfortable coming here for acute health issues, we've been able to transfer or refer 88% of those patients to other providers in the system when a higher level of care was needed. We also successfully achieved the Joint Commission's Primary Stroke designation, attained the Bariatric Center of Excellence designation, were the Gold recipient of the New Jersey Department of Health Antimicrobial Stewardship Recognition Program and were named a Leader in LGBTQ+ Health Care Equality by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. These achievements speak volumes about our nurses' expertise and dedication.

To continue to arm new nurses with the tools they need to succeed, we transitioned from Vizient's national Nurse Residency Program to the RWJBarnabas program. We've also adopted the system's Nursing Orientation Unit for RN Integration, Support & Health (NOURISH™), a unique model for orienting newly licensed RNs on a dedicated orientation unit to promote competence, confidence and comfort.

## NURSING LEADERSHIP



**Tara Cullen, BSN, RN, MBA**  
Senior Director



**Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC**  
Senior Director



**Sheri Cleaves, MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI**  
Director, Clinical Excellence, Magnet



**Marcia Nettingham, DNP, RN-BC, NE-BC**  
Director, Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research



**Christine Meo, MSN, APN, RN-BC**  
Director, Medical Unit, 2A

We also restructured several committees this year, including the Nursing Quality Patient Care, Nursing Assistant Council, Falls Committee, Pressure Injury Surveillance Committee and the Nursing Workplace Environment and Staffing Council, and launched a Workplace Violence Committee offering weekly de-escalation training.

We also continued to grow our services in 2023, completing more than 200 urologic and general robotic surgery procedures. Through our collaboration with our hospital system, our cardiac service line brings world-class cardiologists to the Rahway community. We upgraded to a digital X-ray room and added a new mini C-arm in the OR. Our nurses participated in several community health events in 2023, including Paint Rahway Pink, L'Oréal Health Fair, multiple stroke education programs, a men's health webinar, food drives and several collections for local schools.

### Future Forward

Many of our initiatives in 2023 have helped us to develop a strong plan for developing our staff and Nursing Councilor Structure as we continue on our Magnet Journey. Realizing that our culture is changing we are bringing pride and accountability to uphold the best practices all the way to the front line. The components of the Magnet model empower change and hardwire quality improvement into our everyday processes. Earning this recognition also helps rebuild and strengthen our bond with the community. To fuel this journey, we're actively building a culture of shared governance with room for everyone to grow. We plan to file our pre-intent application for Magnet with the American Nurses Credentialing Center this year. We're looking for engaged nurses who aren't afraid of a challenge to lead the charge.

As we have built our team this past year we have set goals for improving our patient perception of our service as reported in the HCAPS surveys. As part of this effort, we will add a patient care coordinator and a clinical administration coordinator. This will dramatically change the roles of our nursing directors, freeing them up to be more strategic with their time and round on patients more often. We'll also work with the chief medical officer to enhance teamwork through the nurse-physician dyad and develop a process for succession planning to increase accountability and mitigate the impact of turnover.

It takes a village to deliver care. I am so appreciative of your hard work and dedication to our patients. I'm excited about the future of RWJUH Rahway—and I hope you are, too.

**Eric Kleinert, MSN, RN**

Chief Nursing Officer

**RWJBarnabas**  
HEALTH

**Robert Wood Johnson**  
**University Hospital**  
**Rahway**



**Rose Caleen, BA, RN**  
Director, Medical Surgical  
Unit - 3East



**Lorraine Martino, MSN,  
RN, NE-BC**  
Director, Critical Care Unit



**Jimmy Sobrera Jr.,  
DNP, RN**  
Director, Emergency  
Department



**Kristy O'Connor BSN, RN**  
Director, Post Intensive  
Care Unit - 2East



**Rhonda Wade, BSN, RN**  
Director, Telemetry  
Unit - 3 Central



**Dawn Schanz, MSN,  
RN, GNP, CNOR**  
Nurse Manager,  
Perioperative Services



# TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP



## Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leaders transforms their organization's values, beliefs, and behaviors. This requires vision, influence, clinical knowledge, and a strong expertise relating to professional nursing practice.

Characteristics:

- Open communication
- Encouraging initiatives and innovation
- Inspirational and effective
- Empowering others through shared decision-making.
- Enthusiasm and supporting positive change

Transformational leaders motivate and engage team members to achieve unit and/or organizational goals. The nurse leader would set goals to improve customer service, collaboratively develop an initiative or initiatives, and measure results engaging staff along the way. Transformational leadership occurs at all nursing levels and help to transform the clinical environment and care models to provide best clinical outcomes. A Transformational leader is a visionary advocate who influences and empowers team members towards progressive and improved change.

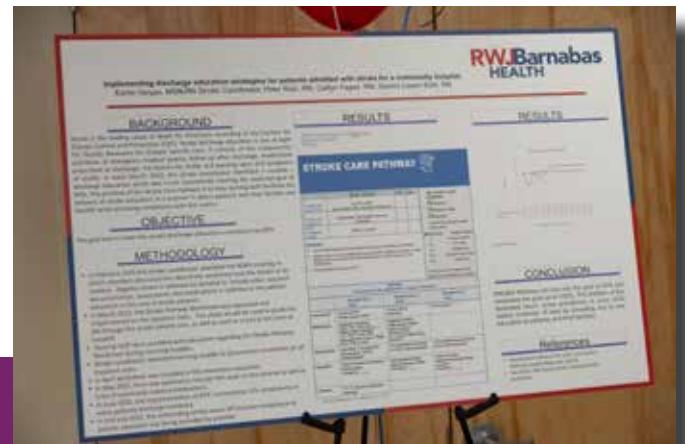
## Nursing Leaders on the **MOVE...**

Sheri Cleaves MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI  
Director of Clinical Excellence, Magnet

Member of the ONL-NJ Education Committee  
Member of the ONL-NJ Advocacy Committee  
Co-Founding Member of the Nightingale Nurses  
Honor Guard of New Jersey  
Member of the Kean University Advisory Board

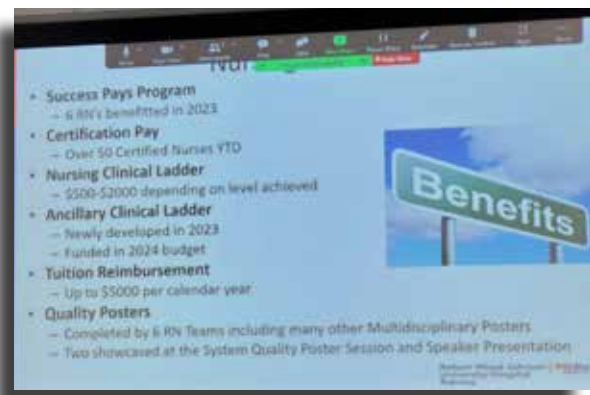
Vittoria Pontieri-Lewis, MSN, RN,  
ACNS-BC, CWOCN  
Clinical Educator, CPDIR

Advanced Practice Nurse, Wound Ostomy  
Continence  
Current President Elect, National Wound  
Ostomy Continence Society  
Will be inducted as President in June 2023



## CNO CHAT Engages Nurses towards Clinical Excellence

Eric Kleinert MSN, RN provided the “CNO Chat” to provide updates and a state of the state of our 2023 Nursing Mission, Vision, Goals and Accomplishments. Highlighting the yearlong activities, accolades and accomplishments, many staff were recognized for their contributions and efforts.



## Professional Presentations

4/26/2023	Leveraging Stay Interviews	NWESC- Quarterly Meeting	Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC
5/11/2023	Rediscovering the joy in nursing -in the post pandemic period	Mathaney Nurses week	Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC
September 2023	Preventing Falls at Home	Brain Injury Alliance	Sheri Cleaves, MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI

# EXEMPLARY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

## RWJUH RAHWAY NURSING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MODEL



### What is a Nursing Professional Practice Model (PPM)?

Professional Practice Models provide a visual representation of nursing's contribution in an organization. Developed by RWJUH Rahway nurses, our model includes values and goals that define the professional nursing identity. It captures the professional elements and relationships that define the complex role of the nurse.

### The RWJUH Rahway Nursing Professional Practice Model

Identifying and developing a philosophy to guide care and their practice was important to the nurses at RWJUH Rahway. Nursing councils researched and chose the models of Madeleine Leininger and Florence Nightingale on which to base their philosophy. Integrating the two models dovetailed with the department's mission and vision.

For us who nurse, our nursing is a thing, which, unless in it we are making progress every year, every month, every week, take my word for it, we are going back.

- Florence Nightingale

Care is the essence of nursing and the central, dominant, and unifying focus of nursing.

- Madeleine Leininger

### Nursing Mission

To provide exceptional care and improve the health of our community with excellence in quality, service and access through compassionate care, education and community service.

### Nursing Vision

Continuously strive for excellence in clinical quality, safety and service. Consistently provide patient-focused care in a family-oriented environment. We work to be trusted by patients, a valued partner in the community, and creators of positive change.

#### 2023 Professional Nurse Quality and Practice Council Membership

**Chair:** Anne Vag, RN

**Co-Facilitators:**

Sheri Cleaves, MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI, NE-BC  
Eileen Parks, MSN, RN

**Members:**

Theresa Gorringe, RN | Ashley Austria, RN  
Kendal Vazac, RN | Rebecca Florczak, BSN, RN, CEN  
Dona Roglieri, BSN, RN | Helene Leonard, MSN, RN  
Razel Abuan, BSN, RN | Kaitlyn Malcolm, MSN, RN  
Beverly Ochia, BSN, RN

**Adjunct Members:**

Mary Jackson, MBA  
Theresa Dobbin, RN, APN-BC, CCRN, WCC



# STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT

## AMERICAN NURSES CREDENTIALING CENTER CELEBRATE CERTIFIED NURSES

Helping our Nurses become Nationally Certified continues to be a main priority for our Nursing staff. As members of the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Success Pays Program our nurses are able to seek certification when eligible with support from the hospital.



### 2A

Diana Hopper, BSN, RN-BC  
Yashi Patel, BSN, RN-BC  
Peter Ruiz, BSN, RN-BC  
Michelle Uchin, BSN, RN-BC  
Adriana Zamora, BSN, RN-BC

### CDI

Meagan Rueda, BSN, RN, CCRN

### 2E

Susan Gelowitz, RN-BC  
Drupatie Ramlakhan, BSN, RN-BC

### 3C

Arlene Turner, RN, ONC  
Earnestine Washington, RN, CCM

### 3E

Maria Catalon, BSN, RN-BC

### Bariatrics

Dianne Errichetti, MSN, RN, CBN

### Cardiac Cath Lab

Luna Black BSN, RN-BC  
Rolando Cenizia, MSN, RN, CCRN

### Critical Care Unit

Adrianna Gomez, BSN, RN-BC

### Emergency Room

Rebecca Florczak, BSN, RN, CEN

### Education

Theresa Dobbin, MSN, RN,  
APN-BC, CCRN, WCC  
Vittoria Pontieri-Lewis, MA,  
RN, ACNS-BC, CWOCN  
Cindy Lowenstein, MA, MSN,  
APN-BC, NPD-BC, CCRN-K, APN  
Diane Strickland, MSN, RN, APN-BC

### Endoscopy

Heasun Lee, BSN, RN, CGRN

### Case Management

Bernie Valenzuela, MSN, MBA,  
RN, CCM

### Interventional Radiology

Rose Tarantino, MSN, RN, CNOR

### Operating Room

Leonilo Delacruz, BSN, RN,  
CNOR, CRFNA  
Beverly Focht, BSN, RN, CNOR-E  
Viktoriya Hourihan, BSN, RN, CNOR  
Leila Palaganas, BSN, RN, CNOR

### PACU

Racquel Bisda, BSN, RN, CCRN  
Marlene Gamo, BSN, RN, CCRN  
Lois Sancho, BSN, RN, CCRN

### Psychiatric Liaison

Ugochi Abazie, DNP, RN, PMHNP-BC

### Nursing Leadership

Shonte' C Adams, MSN, RN, NE-BC  
Elvera Baez, DNP, RN, APN-BC  
Sheri Cleaves, MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI  
Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC  
Lorraine Martino, MSN, RN, NE-BC  
Christine Meo, MSN, APN, RN-BC  
Marcia Nettingham, DNP, RN, NE-BC  
Dawn Schanz, MSN, RN, GNP, CNOR

### Quality

Deborah Gandy, MSN, MSA, RN, CPHQ



2A Nursing Unit recognizes their Certified Nurses with a plaque on the “Wall of Honor.” Pictured here Peter Ruiz RN, Yashi Patel RN, Michelle Ubin RN, Adriana Zamora RN are proud of their accomplishments.

We are happy to annually recognize our Certified Nurses at a reception.



Rahway Nurses can participate in the ANCC Success Pays Program to obtain their certification. Our Nursing staff have been supported to attend one of the many Certification Review classes in the RWJBH System. A number of staff that have attended local organizational review courses as a group to become certified. Once certified our nurses are also eligible for a financial incentive.



# The DAISY Award

## FOR EXTRAORDINARY NURSES

IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES

Established by The DAISY Foundation, The DAISY Award® is an international recognition program that celebrates the extraordinary compassion nurses provide for their patients and families every day. Any RWJUH Rahway nurse who exhibits outstanding kindness may be nominated by anyone who experiences or observes their exceptional level of care. This includes patients, family members, colleagues, physicians and staff.

Examples of The DAISY Award criteria include:

- Exhibiting extraordinary compassion and kindness to patients and their families every day as an essential part of the healing process.
- Communicating in a calm, focused and caring way when patients and families may be experiencing the most difficult situation of their lives.
- Going above and beyond what is expected of nurses.

Rahway nurses are proud of their DAISY Award recipients for 2023.

## 2023 DAISY AWARD RECOGNITION



### Anne Vag RN 2East

A patient's family stated, "My mom was hospitalized at Rahway Hospital the week of December 12 for pneumonia. I live in North Carolina, so, of course living so far away I was very worried about her, not knowing how she was and what was going on."

When I asked to speak to my mom's nurse, I was greeted by Anne's very sweet and calming voice. She was very calming and able to answer all my questions confidently, professionally and knowledgeably.

Whenever I spoke with Anne, she was able to give me updates, which made sense. She knew my mom's condition very well.

She acted as our liaison with the various providers caring for my mom. She gave me a synopsis of their plans so we knew what to expect as the next steps for her care. What I liked most about Anne was that she was always willing to take my calls and I did not even get the sense she was too busy to speak to me or sound inconvenienced or flustered that she had to take the time from her busy schedule to let me know what was happening with my mom.

I myself am a physician and so I am, of course, very familiar with the hospital environment and the great demands put upon the nursing staff in a busy hospital. So, compared to nurses who I have known through the years, Anne is an exemplary and outstanding nurse who works selflessly and is a strong advocate for her patients.

I did not get to meet Anne when I flew in to see my mom, as she was not working that day, but if she were, I would give her a big hug and tell her what a great nurse she is.



## Nursing Recipients of the STAR AWARDS for 2023

The STAR Award is an Employee Recognition Award that is given to an employee who has gone above and beyond the standards of being **Courteous, Respectful and Professional**. The following Nurses have been formally recognized by their peers or patients in 2023.

Name	Unit
Caitlin Fagan, RN	Clinical Resource RN - Feb 2023
Phoebe Araujo-Misitichi, RN	Emergency Department RN - April 2023
Marion Romero, RN	3E RN - July 2023
Liam Quat, RN	Critical Care RN - Dec 2023
Donna Roglieri, RN	Healthy Heart and Stress Testing RN - Feb 2023
Rose Tarantino, RN	Radiology RN - April 2023
Cynthia Bianchi, RN	Healthy Heart and Stress Testing RN - Aug 2023
Fiordaliz Gomez, RN	Nurse Navigator - Oct 2023
Manbhawan Singh, RN	2A - March 2023
Lisa Loria, RN	Critical Care RN - April 2023
Theresa Bocco, RN	Healthy Heart and Stress Testing RN - Oct 2023
Emily De La Torre, RN	Critical Care RN - April 2023
Ashley Austria, RN	Critical Care RN - July 2023
Adrianna Gomez, RN	Critical Care RN - Nov 2023





## 2023 NURSING AWARDS

These peer-nominated awards are based on the Magnet principles of transformational leadership, structural empowerment, exemplary professional practice and new knowledge, innovations and improvements.



Transformational Leadership Award

**Christine Meo, MSN, RN, APN, RN-BC**

Transformational leaders transform their organization's values, beliefs and behaviors. This requires vision, influence, clinical knowledge and strong expertise. Transformational leaders motivate and inspire others to take ownership for their roles, embrace the organization's vision and foster positive change.



Structural Empowerment Award

**Caroline Drubelis, RN, 3C with Tara Cullen BSN, RN, MBA, Senior Director, Operations**

Recognizing a committee or council or staff member that improves nursing practice, this award focuses on efforts to empower nurses to practice in a professional and autonomous manner to achieve the highest degree of clinical excellence and professional fulfillment.



Exemplary Professional Practice Award

**Stephanie Persaud, RN, PACU, Recipient and Kendall Vazac, RN, Emergency Room**

This individual focuses on excellence, collaboration, quality, safety and best practices to realize extraordinary results through evidence-based care. The awardee provides respectful and compassionate evidence-based care through a comprehensive understanding of the role of nursing with patients, families, communities and the interdisciplinary team to continuously drive practice forward.



New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements Award

**Sandra Roman, BSN, RN with Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC  
Senior Director, Perioperative Area**

This individual focuses on innovative practices, developing evidence-based care models to lead the organization in making changes that result in improved outcomes for our patients, their families and the communities we serve.



Friend of Nursing Award

**Manpreet Kaur, EVS**

This award recognizes an individual or department that demonstrates a commitment to the ideals, mission and vision of nursing and contributes to the long-term significance of nursing practice. This person or department is integral and supportive to nursing professional practice, maintains accountability for patient safety and produces positive interprofessional workflow that affects nursing in a significant way.



Unit Administrator Award

**Kathy Diaz, Unit Administrator**

This award recognizes Unit Administrators who maintain a seamless flow of the unit and are essential in keeping the unit centered and in sync with the organization. This team member exhibits leadership characteristics that amplify and strengthen the unit's goals and produce positive interprofessional workflow.



Congratulations to our Clinical Ladder Recipients for 2023	
Level 1	
Laura Calvano, RN, 2A	Yashi Patel, RN, 2A
Level 2	
Raquel Bisda, RN, PACU	
Gina Checo, RN, SDS	
Komal Patel, RN, SDS	
Level 3	
Sandra Roman, RN, SDS	Rose Tarantino, RN, IR





Focusing on serving our community of patients and staff many of our nurses have participated in educational programs displaying our services as well as information on improving the health of our community.

Pictured above Eileen Parks, MSN, RN (left, and Sandra Roman, BSN, RN as well as Jen Davila, RN and Helene Leonard, RN display information on preventing falls. Linking our Mission of improving our patient safety initiatives the staff enjoy interacting with visitors and staff in the lobby.





## Employee Art Wall

Many of our nurses have taken the advantage of showcasing their many talents. This is a brief example of the few nurses who have been recognized on the Wall of Fame Art Wall.

**Steven Pineda, Emergency Department Nurse Manager**, is an amateur photographer born and raised in New Jersey. For the past three years, he has immersed himself in the captivating world of wildlife photography, where he skillfully captures breathtaking moments in nature. Armed with a Sony A7RIV Camera body and a powerful 200-600 mm lens, Steven's lens acts as a gateway to his passion for birds, merging his two beloved hobbies of birding and photography. Although he focuses on birds as his preferred subject, he sometimes takes pictures of other species when the opportunity presents itself. Steven dedicates himself to documenting the intricate beauty and captivating behaviors of various avian species, showcasing their overlooked beauty through his lens.



**Eileen Parks, MSN, RN**, our featured exhibitor on the Employee Art Wall for October is Eileen Parks, from Quality. Eileen is sharing with us some of the poetry she has written over the years.

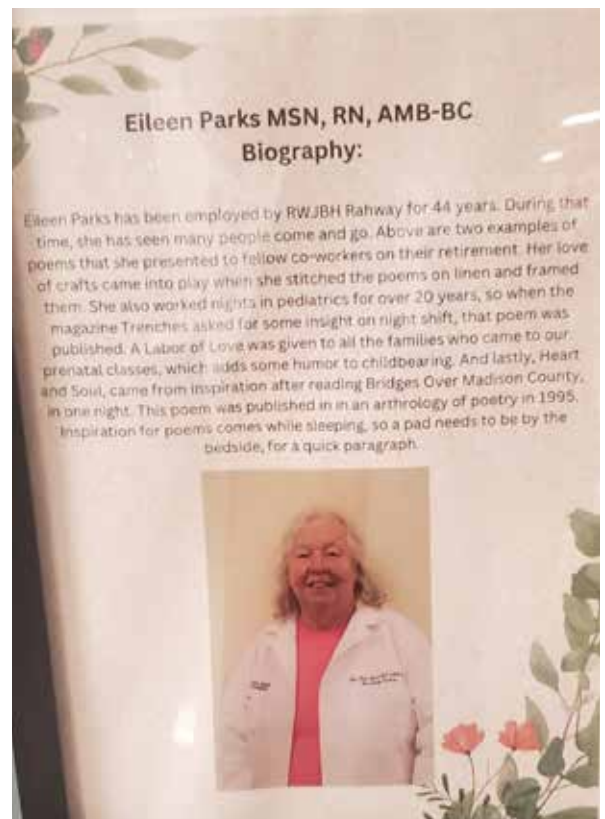
Eileen has been employed by RWJBH Rahway for 44 years. During that time she has seen many people come and go. The exhibit includes examples of poems she has written and presented to co-workers on their retirement.

Her love of crafts came into play when she stitched the poems on linen and framed them.

Eileen had worked nights in Pediatrics for over 20 years. When the magazine Trenches asked for some insight on working the night shift she submitted a poem about it.

The poem Labor of Love was given to all the families that came to our prenatal classes, adding some humour to childbearing.

Another poem, Heart and Soul, was inspired after reading Bridges Over Madison County in one night. This poem was published in in an anthology of poetry in 1995. Inspiration for poems usually comes while sleeping, so a pad is kept by the bedside for a quick paragraph.





As part of the System Initiatives RWJUH Rahway has been recognized for participation in the Business Resource Groups. Marchelle Boyd, RN, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Nurse Manager has served as the leader supporting our Nursing staff to become members in our BRG's.

## Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway

# Business Resource Groups

**Business Resource Groups (BRGs)**, also known as employee resource groups, affinity groups, or employee networks, are groups of employees who join together in their workplace based on shared characteristics or life experiences. In general, BRGs provide support for colleagues, foster career development, and contribute to cultural sensitivity in the work environment. **But, at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway, they have proven to be so much more.** Below are RWJUH Rahway's current Business Resource Groups and their Co-Chairs' contact information.

aware

ADVANCING WOMEN THROUGH  
ADVOCACY, RECOGNITION AND  
EMPOWERMENT •

The mission of the **Advancing Women through Advocacy, Recognition, and Empowerment (AWARE)** Business Resource Group is to foster a stimulating, equitable, and nurturing culture for all women through networking, education, and community.

**Contact:**

Sheri Cleaves, Sheri.Cleaves@rwjbh.org  
Nora Grillo, Nora.Grillo@rwjbh.org

proud

PROMOTING  
RESPECT, OUTREACH,  
UNDERSTANDING, AND DIGNITY



**Promoting Respect, Outreach, Understanding, and Dignity (PROUD)** Business Resource Group is an employee-based group focused on fostering a safe, accepting, respectful, supportive, and inclusive gender-loving workplace among the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Allies (LGBTQ+).

**Contact:**

Luis Maldonado, Luis.Maldonado@rwjbh.org  
Michael Sanacore, Michael.Sanacore@rwjbh.org

bpn

BLACK  
PROFESSIONALS  
NETWORK •

The mission of the **Black Professionals Network (BPN)** Business Resource Group is to actively contribute to the professional growth and personal development of Black employees of RWJUH Rahway, RWJBarnabas Health System affiliates, and local communities

**Contact:**

Wilbur McCullars, Wilbur.McCullars@rwjbh.org  
Jasmine Dilbert, Jasmine.Dilbert@rwjbh.org

salud

SERVICE AND ADVOCACY  
FOR LATINOS UNITED  
FOR DEVELOPMENT •

**Service and Advocacy for Latinos United for Development (SALUD)** is an employee-led group providing equal opportunities for Latinos for professional and personal growth. Their mission is to foster and encourage progression, betterment, gain, growth, and breakthroughs that result in advancement and equal recognition for all Latinos and Hispanics.

**Contact:**

Kevin Gonzalez, Kevin.Gonzalez2@rwjbh.org  
Fiordaliza Gomez, Fiordaliza.Gomez@rwjbh.org

## Mens Health Webinar

Presented by the BRG Bernie Valenzuela, RN and Mike Sanacore, RN, Educator, CPDIR presented topics as part of a webinar to support Mens health.

Many programs have been supported by our Nursing Staff in the Community. Here the Emergency Room staff enjoy a day helping each other through a recent "Rugged Mania" event. It is no wonder their employee satisfaction has been so satisfactory!

Having fun while providing education to our clients and staff on sepsis, the Emergency Room staff Matt Gallo, RN, Samantha Lansis, RN, and Jimmy Sobrera, DNP, RN, Director of the Emergency Room focus on common topics to improve awareness on sepsis management.



## New Graduate RN Residency Program Guide

### *Let's Shape the Future of Nursing Together!*

Rahway University Hospital / RWJBarnabas Health is dedicated to the successful transition into practice of all new graduate registered nurses. With a notable trend in limitations of undergraduate practicum experiences and rigorous nursing requirements, transition into practice programs have been developed to provide new nurses at RWJBH a successful start to their nursing career and nursing excellence within the healthcare system. The new graduate nurse resident receives a highly structured curriculum which allows for an overview of the organization, nursing foundations, didactic, stimulation and role development specific to the practice setting in which the nurse is hired to work.

### Organizational Enculturation

Enculturation begins on day 1 of the nurse residency. The mission, vision, and values of the organization and system are shared with new hires and integrated in their orientation. The nurse residents are given High Reliability Training (HRO) and taught the importance of a culture of safety and employee engagement. Nursing professional practice is intertwined in many of the onboarding presentations. The goals and vision of the New Graduate RN Residency Program are introduced to the nurses from the initiation of the onboarding process.

### Residency Mission & Vision:

- RWJBarnabas Health – as the leading academic health system in New Jersey – is advancing innovative strategies in high quality patient care, education and research to address both the clinical and social determinants of health
- To transform the new graduate nurse into competent and professional clinicians and leaders in a mentored and supported atmosphere

### Program Goals:

- To successfully assimilate graduate nurses into the organization by utilizing a comprehensive onboarding program that facilitates transition from the academic to clinical setting
- To provide a supportive and collaborative learning setting that enables nurses to successfully progress from entry-level to advanced beginner to competent
- To provide an environment that encourages professional development, engagement, organizational enculturation, and fosters lifelong learning

### Program Development and Design:

- Developed and designed based on the criteria from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, Practice Transition Accreditation Program™
- Collaborative interviewing process for candidate selection to help to ensure a successful transition into practice.
- The Education team in collaboration with feedback from key stakeholders in administration and nursing leadership, nurse preceptors, staff nurses, and new graduate residents are continuously monitoring the program structure and adjusting based on the needs of the staff and the patients that we serve
- Progression of nursing skills is based off of Benner's theory from novice to expert
- Program competencies are developed to reflect professional practice standards

Sophia Lami, RN, from the Emergency Department, is one of RWJBH Rahway's first participant in the PTAP program. Sophia reflects on her experience in the PTAP program by stating, "When I was first onboarded as a new graduate nurse, I was terrified! There was so much to know! Everyone was so welcoming from coworkers, to Education, to Management, to the wonderful preceptors I had, they made me feel that it was okay to ask questions and that I was in a safe environment. Having the support that I had, made all the difference in the world and has shaped my practice as a nurse. I use everything they taught me when I help teach nursing students or new graduate nurses."





## New Graduate RN Residency Program

RWJBarnabas Health is dedicated to the successful transition into practice of all new graduate registered nurses. Transition into practice programs have been developed to provide our new nurses:

- A successful start to their nursing career
- Nursing excellence & professional development
- The New Graduate RN Resident, receives a highly structured curriculum allowing them to assimilate into their nursing role and enhance their development of skills specific to their practice setting. We have partnered with The Vizient / AACN Nurse Residency program to assist our nurses in gaining confidence and increasing competence during the 12 month program.

Pictured left is Mary Koch, RN, addressing the new RN Residents at their graduation program.

## Nurse Residency Programs Vizient Program

### First Cohort:

Phoebe Araujo-Misitichi	Christian Pirozzoli
Jacqueline Carpio	Manbhawan Singh
Mardell Jean-Pierre	

### Second Cohort:

Caroline Drubulis	Riya Patel
Nicole Gabayeron	Joshua Restauero
Grace Kinyanjui-Gaff	Domonique Yates
John Ranier, Pastor	

### Third Cohort:

Belina De Jesus	Jasmine Ore
Neil Mervin Gonzalez	Erika Pego Valencia
Sihana Limanovska	Priscilla Ribeiro De Sousa
Theoniki Makras	Ashley Rubio
Ashley Miscia	





# NEW KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS



## New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements

The Registered Nurse Clinical Ladder Program provides opportunities for professional development as well as improved, safe and cost-effective quality care for patients. This concept is based on the belief that the art and science of nursing are practiced at various levels of expertise ranging from novice to expert. Based on Dr. Patricia Benner's Novice to Expert theory, advancing up the ladder enables nurses to gain skills and an understanding of patient care over time through a combination of a strong educational foundation and personal experiences.

Developed by the clinical nursing staff and education team of nurses, the RWJUH Rahway's Nursing Clinical Ladder Program supports organizational goals, advances the nursing profession and fosters the development of nurses. The program helps create and support a lifelong culture of learning that promotes role development, academic achievement and career advancement. From novice to expert, the nurse is able to grow and advance in the clinical ladder program which then fosters improved job satisfaction and staff retention.



## CONGRATULATIONS to the many Rahway Nursing GRADUATES OF 2023!!!!

It was an amazing year of accomplishments for Rahway Nurses in 2023. Fifteen nurses or Nursing Assistants became nurses or graduated from a Nursing Program. The reimbursement program has supported the staff to participate in higher education.

### GRADUATES OF 2023

Cedrick Dagdagan, RN, 2East  
BSN - Rutgers University

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Dimitry Eremtchouk, RN, Operating Room  
BSN - Thomas Edison University

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Michelle Ejiofor, RN, Emergency Department  
DNP - Specialty: Family Nurse Practitioner,  
Rutgers University

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Adrianna Gomez, RN, 2 East  
BSN - Saint Elizabeth University

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Victoriya Hourihan, RN, Operating Room  
BSN - Thomas Edison State University

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Nataliya Lizanets, RN, Operating Room  
MSN - APN Monmouth University

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Theoniki Makras, 3C, RN,  
BSN - Felician University

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Kaitlyn Malcolm, RN, Center for Professional Development  
MSN - Saint Elizabeth University

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Harpreet Mann, RN, CCU  
MSN - Monmouth University

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Maria Orellana, RN, 2A,  
AS - Trinitas School of Nursing

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Priscilla Ribiero DeSousa, 3C  
RN - Associates in Nursing, Trinitas Nursing School

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Marelvís Rosales, RN, PAT,  
BSN - Kean University

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Rose Tarantino, RN, Interventional Lab  
MSN - Rutgers University School of Nursing

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Robin Coughlin, RN, Center for Professional Development  
MSN - William Patterson University

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Grace Kinyanjui-Gaffey, 2 East,  
BSN - Capella University

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## NWESC Provides Forum for Nurses Share Ideas for Improvement

The key to improving the work environment for clinical caregivers at RWJUH Rahway lies with the input of staff nurses. The hospital's Nursing Workplace Environment and Staffing Council (NWESC) gives staff nurses a voice in developing safe practice environments.

"The council aims to actively engage and educate clinical nurses at the direct care level, fostering the establishment and maintenance of a healthy work environment," explains council co-chair Matthew Gallo, BSN, RN, a staff nurse in the Emergency Department.

More specifically, the council's goals include:

- Creating a forum for participative leadership
- Giving nurses input into human resource allocation
- Supporting nurses' participation in staffing decisions in collaboration with management
- Developing formal, evidence-based staffing policies and processes that match the competencies of nurses with patients' needs for care
- Cultivating respect between caregivers and hospital administrators

Its areas of focus include:

- Legislative and public policy issues related to nursing and patient care issues
- Evidence-based practices and research
- Staff development and educational programs
- Leadership development
- Mentorship for aspiring nurse leaders at all levels
- Patient care initiatives that improve quality

### For Nurses, By Nurses

The council meets monthly and strives to maintain a membership of at least 51 percent bedside RNs who spend at least 50 percent of their work time delivering direct patient care.

"The council is primarily driven by nurses, with most members being staff nurses," Gallo adds. "However, nursing leaders also participate to hear our thoughts. They can consider implementing changes based on the discussions they've heard."

Chief Nursing Officer Eric Kleinert, MSN, RN, co-chairs the council, helping connect staff nurses with the hospital's decision-makers.

"It's important that we foster bidirectional communication in support of a healthy work environment," explains Kleinert, who co-chairs the New Jersey Central Region NWESC, which meets quarterly. "More staff isn't always the answer. We need to connect with the nurses who are motivated and interested in making changes. Sharing ideas and collaborating to enhance the environment benefits everyone."

## 2023 Accomplishments

Last year, the council focused on recruiting members and exploring environment-related initiatives that support Magnet's principles. One such initiative focused on ensuring all nurses receive meal breaks.

"Ensuring nurses have 30 minutes to step away from the floor to eat and relax helps reduce errors during 12-hour shifts," Gallo says.

In addition, the council improved a workflow to reduce the time between bed assignments and patient arrivals in inpatient units.

### Looking Ahead

In 2024, the council's goals include educating staff about the impact of bad habits, such as sleep deprivation and unhealthy eating, on their personal and professional lives. A related initiative includes adding a "Farmer Fresh" vending machine, giving night shift nurses access to healthy food options when the cafeteria is closed. Through a mobile app, staff can reserve and pay for healthy salads, bowls and sandwiches that will be ready during their shifts. The council will also work to implement a new, more efficient call bell system and "panic alarms" in all units to alert Security.

"Currently, panic alarms are only in the ED and few other locations. Having them on every unit in strategic places would ensure a safer work environment," Gallo says.

### Members:

#### Chair:

Eric Kleinert, MSN, RN,  
Chief Nursing Officer

#### Co-Chair:

Matthew Gallo, BSN, RN – ED

Caitlin Fagan, BSN, RN,  
Clinical Resource Nurse

Samantha Lamsis, RN – ED

Helene Leonard, MSN, RN – PACU

Yashi Patel, BSN, RN – 2A

Adrianna Gomez, BSN, RN – CCU

Theresa Gorringer, BSN, RN – 3E

Sheri Cleaves, MSN, RN, CCRN,  
CRNI – Magnet Program Director

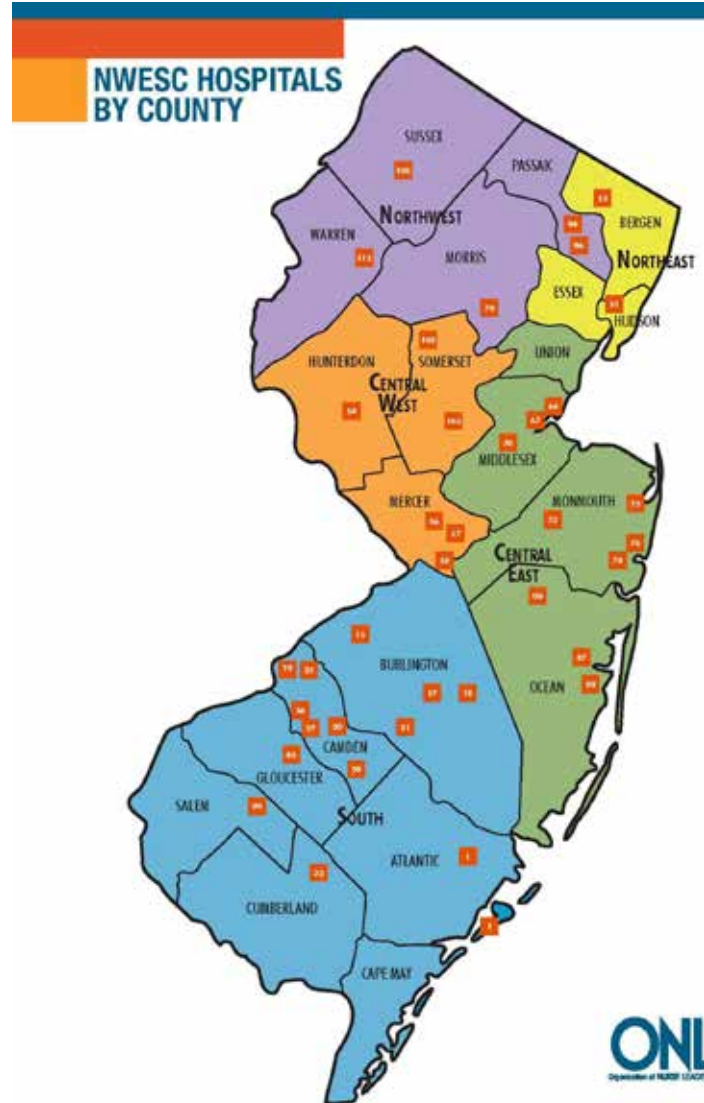
Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR,  
NE-BC – Senior Director Peri-Op

## ONL

- To give a respected voice to staff nurses in the establishment of safe practice environments
- To create a forum of participative leadership
- To give nurse care providers a voice in human resource allocation
- To support equal participation of staffing decision in collaboration with management
- To develop staffing policies that are:
- Evidence-based
- Match competencies of individual RN' s with patient needs for care
- Formal based processes
- Cultivate participative respect between caregivers and hospital administrators

## Our Focus

- Legislative/public policy issues related to nursing and patient care issues
- Evidence based practices and research
- Staff development and education programs
- Leadership development
- Mentorship for aspiring nurse leaders at all levels
- Quality patient care initiatives







## Implementation of the Stress First Aid Program

The nationally recognized program, Stress First Aid was implemented in 2023 as a Peer Support and Self-Care Model to assist nursing staff during difficult or stressful situations. It is an evidence-based set of knowledge and skills tools to manage stress at an individual, unit and organizational level. Included are proactive actions to promote individual and unit well-being and resilience. Stress First Aid facilitates early recognition and management of stress injury.

Currently nursing staff in the Perioperative Units, new nursing Residents and staff, and many of the Nursing Councils have participated in the training and embraced the approach to recognizing levels of stress and reducing workplace and personal stress. As a presenter and trainer, Sheri Cleaves MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI, NE-BC has recognized that everyone perceives stress and stressors differently and it is important to help others recognize workplace stress early to prevent injury, mentally or physically. Frequently we are the last people to recognize when things are stressful and that the program is a way of promoting support in times of stress. As the evidence has suggested individuals are more likely to seek help from peers, to listen to peers as they acknowledge that their peers have a shared experience with them. (Jones et al, 2002, Brailey et al 2007)

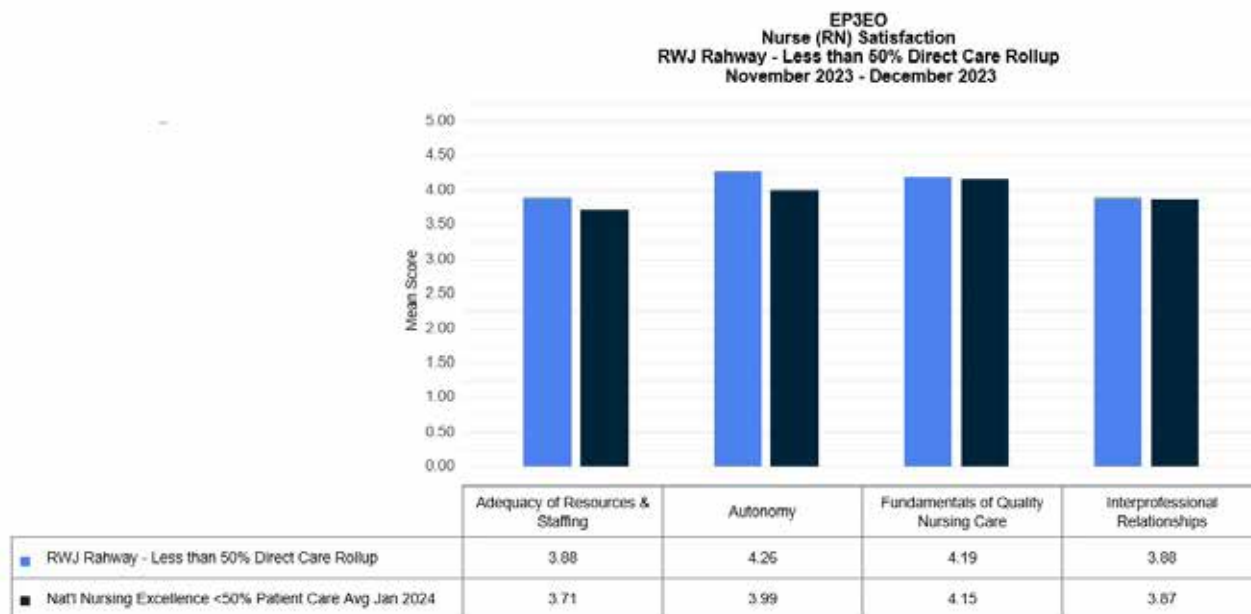
Improving our workforce environment has been a priority for our Nursing staff and Leaders. By teaching our staff about the warning signs of stress reactions and helping our peers reduce that stress can be something as simple as assuring hydration, helping others with tasks, delegation or changing of assignments. The peer to peer support is what makes this program successful and helps to provide support and a caring environment for staff to work.



## Nursing 2023 Engagement Scores

So many accomplishments have been celebrated in the Nursing Department in 2023. Nursing Satisfaction reflected the level of engagement from our nursing staff and leadership teams. Ranking the best amongst our peers, Rahway Nursing Engagement scores improved from 2022-2023.

Engaging all nursing staff in activities to support the nursing teams was the key to our success. Leadership rounding and staff inclusion in decision making at the bedside on the unit or department level demonstrated the commitment to being the best. Having that “can do” attitude to problem solving and improving clinical outcomes identified the level of pride Rahway Nurses have for their peers and their patients.



## RWJHR Quality Day Posters

Quality Fair Presentations from the Emergency “Decreasing Fall Incidence in the Emergency Department,” demonstrated over a 50% reduction in Falls as result of teamwork and an intense focus on prevention of falls. Above Matt Kearns, RN and Director Jim Sobrera, DNP, RN presented their approach to reducing fall in the Emergency Department by 50%.







## Rahway Hospital has successfully obtained the Joint Commission Accreditation for Stroke

Stroke Coordinator Karen Vargas, MSN, RN tirelessly led the Nursing and Hospital Teams to a successful survey. Karen and the stroke team provided many education programs in the hospital, as well as, participated in many community education programs on Stroke Recognition, Prevention and Risk factors associated.

1. MLK Day of Service" Love your Heart" Health Fair 1/19/23  
Rahway Housing Authority, Rahway, NJ
2. Stroke Education-What is your Risk for Stroke 3/13/2023  
Westfield Senior Center, Westfield, NJ
3. Stroke Education-Additional Risk Factors 4/19/2023  
What is your Risk?  
Linden Public Library, Linden, NJ
4. L'Oréal USA Environmental Health & Safety 6/15/2023  
(EHS) Festival-Stroke Risk Factors  
L'Oréal R&I, Clark, NJ
5. Mind Your Wellness 9/12/2023  
Rahway Recreation Center, Rahway, NJ



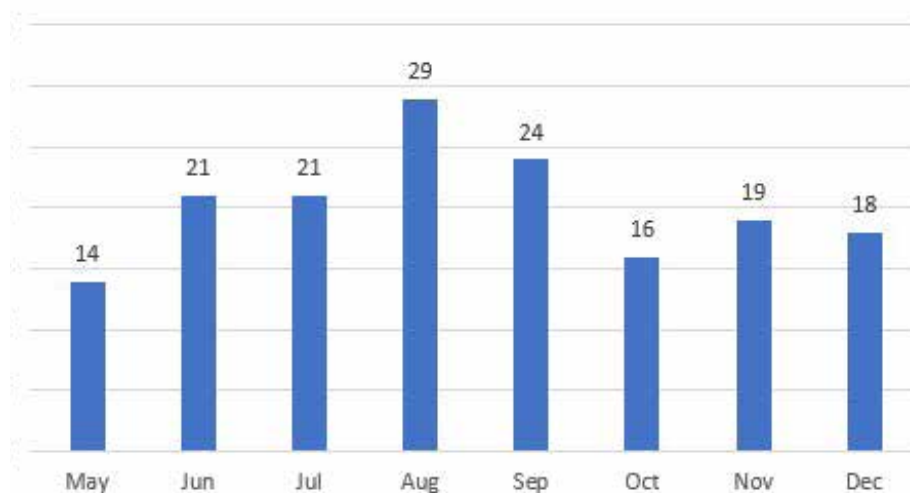




### Implementation of the NEW ROBOTIC System in the Operating Room

In early January 2023 the Nursing and Physician Leadership team were engaged in providing this cutting-edge technology to meet the needs of the community that could potentially increase volume and productivity in the Operating Room. Many nurses and surgeons already had experience in this technology and were competent in providing this service. The Nursing initiatives were led by our Senior Director of Perioperative Services, Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC. Nursing and tech staff were very engaged in this process and quickly became competent to work on the robot cases. Within 5 months robot cases were being done for add on cases. There were no safety issues or scope repairs needed during this time.

Robot Volume Year 1 RWJUH Rahway 2023



Successfully working together as a team has been the focus of the Perioperative Nursing team as they have also developed a Joint Nursing Clinical Practice Council. Co-chairs Gina Checco, RN and Stephanie Persaud, RN facilitate the council to best meet the needs of the Nursing staff as well as the service line.



## RWJUH Rahway Earns Fifth Straight Leapfrog A for Quality and Safety

Congratulations on achieving our 5th consecutive 'A' from The Leapfrog Group.

As we maintain our journey as a High Reliability Organization, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway (RWJUH Rahway), an RWJBarnabas Health facility earned its 5th straight 'A' from The Leapfrog Group for quality and safety.

Earning this Leapfrog recognition is a tremendous accomplishment that reflects hard-wired processes and dedication from every team member at RWJUH Rahway. Safety is a core value and our top priority. Receiving an 'A' grade reflects our commitment to providing the safest quality care to our patients and their families.

We want to recognize and thank our physicians, nurses, healthcare professionals, residents, physicians-in-training, volunteers and all who work at RWJUH Rahway for your diligence, passion and focus on delivering the best care to our patients and their families.

An achievement of this magnitude is only possible with the collaboration and cooperation that exists across our medical center every day.

Congratulations on this exciting milestone and thank you for your contributions



## On Our Journey to Magnet

Members of our Nursing staff have been working to achieve the level of distinction of a Magnet Organization.

Educating staff through the unit Magnet Boards has been fun and educational. Members of each Champion Council has developed their own theme for their unit. The board serves to recognize the unit's accomplishments as well as educate others on the Magnet components.

Here the Cardiac Rehabilitation Department designed their Magnet board to illustrate all of their accomplishments, highlights and goals for their unit.



## RWJUH Rahway Nursing Councils Goals and Accomplishments

The Perioperative Nursing Council was reorganized to have a more improved collaboration with all of the Perioperative clinical areas to become one Nursing Shared Governance Council. As the council started their charter they focused on collaboration and improvement of the Perioperative service line for patients and staff.

### Accomplishments of the Perioperative Council

1. Implemented a 10 hour shift staffing pattern to improve workflow and work life balance in the SDS Unit.
2. Began an inaugural Perioperative Nursing Council with membership from all areas.
3. Presented a poster board presentation for the Quality Fair.
4. Participated in many community service activities.
5. Implemented a foley catheter cleansing kit for patient's post-operative urological surgery.
6. A new collaborative Professional Practice Council was started in the third quarter of 2023 including all areas of the Perioperative Division. Nurses are represented from the Same Day Surgery, PAT, OR, and PACU.
7. Updated Pre-op call checklist to include medications and current patient issues.
8. Collaborated with Anesthesia team to improve the incidence of nausea for all patients post operatively.
9. Reduced unnecessary linen in all units.
10. Implemented a "Fall Awareness Strategy" in all Perioperative areas.

### 2024 Perioperative Professional Nursing Council Members

**Chair:** Stephanie Persaud, RN (PACU)

**Co-Chair:** Gina Checo, RN (Same Day Surgery)

Heasun Lee, BSN, RN (Endoscopy)

Marissa Soriano, RN ( Operating Room)

Komal Patel, BSN, RN

Helene Leonard, MSN, RN (PACU)

Cindy Lowenstein, MA, MSN, APN-BC, NPD-BC, CCRN-K, Clinical Nurse Educator

Dawn Schanz, MSN, RN, GNP, CNOR, Perioperative Nurse Director

#### Executive Sponsor:

Caroline Kornutik, MSN, RN, CNOR, NE-BC, Senior Director Perioperative Services

Sheri Cleaves, MSN, RN, CCRN, CRNI, NE-BC



## Nursing Advocacy

Nursing Advocacy has been an important element in our Magnet Journey as our staff are identifying the needs of the units and staff. Our hospital foundation provided an opportunity for the Department of Nursing and other departments to acquire funding for unit improvements or funding for training to support the staff. Through this opportunity we have had a number of nursing staff and nursing leaders successfully apply and obtain grant funding.

Department	Grant Funding Item
Center for Professional Development	Provide funding for the Wound Care Nurse to become Nationally Certified in Ostomy Care
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Provided Inclusive Hair Products and Personal Hygiene Products at the Bedside that meet the needs of a diverse patient population.
Same Day Surgery	Bridging the Gap Interpreter Training for Bi-lingual Nurse



### Sandra Roman, BSN, RN, Same Day Surgery

With support of the foundation grant, Sandra was instrumental in obtaining her certification in Medical Interpretation for Spanish. Helping to meet the needs of her diverse patient population Sandra certification allows for improved communication between her patients and the physicians and other care givers in the Perioperative Division. Sandra states, “the professional medical interpreter training certificate has allowed me to facilitate provider-patient communication, which in turn promotes trust and compliance with the plan of care in the perioperative setting.” In addition, patient safety can be achieved when communicating in the patient’s own language, which can potentially prevent medical errors or misunderstandings that can arise from the use of unqualified interpreters. It is an honor to be able to serve the limited English-proficient Hispanic/Latino American population and provide proper medical care in their own language.”

## Nursing Sensitive Indicators Continue to perform better than National benchmarks

The Emergency Room has significantly reduced Falls in 2023. With a 50% reduction in falls from 2022 they have changed the culture and the way they care for at risk patients. The team has successfully submitted a quality poster showcasing their actions and accomplishments.

### 2023 Members of Skin Care Committee

Preventing Pressure Injuries has been a priority on all nursing units. The Skin care Committee as well as a focus group overseeing the many facets of prevention meet weekly or monthly to evaluate strategies as well as impact on patient outcomes. The team has improved usage of preventative treatments, provided ongoing education for all nursing and ancillary staff.

Theresa Dobbin, RN

Jeanneth Malicay, RN, 3A

Manbhawan Singh, RN

Olga Levytska, RN, 2E

Dominique Yates, RN, 2E

Gerda Morisseau

Theresa Gorringer, RN

Razel Abuan, RN

Caroline Drubulis, RN

Carolina Perez, RN

Lisa Loria, RN

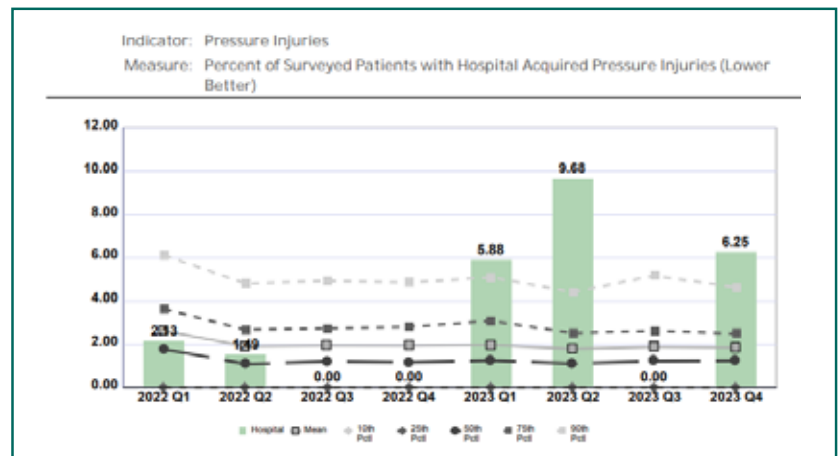
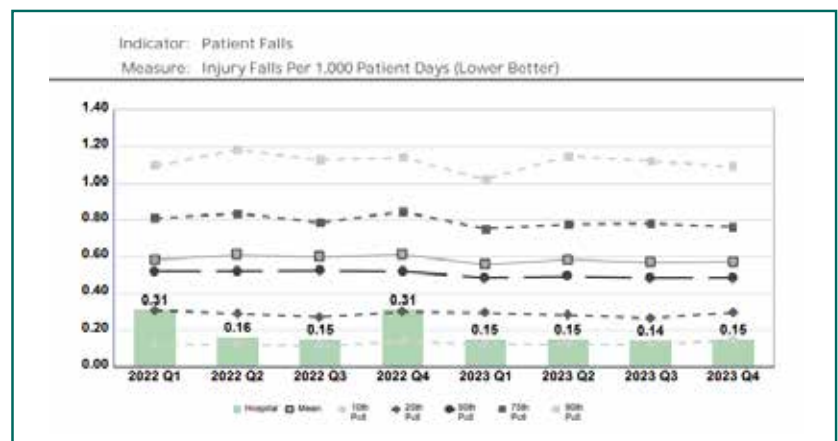
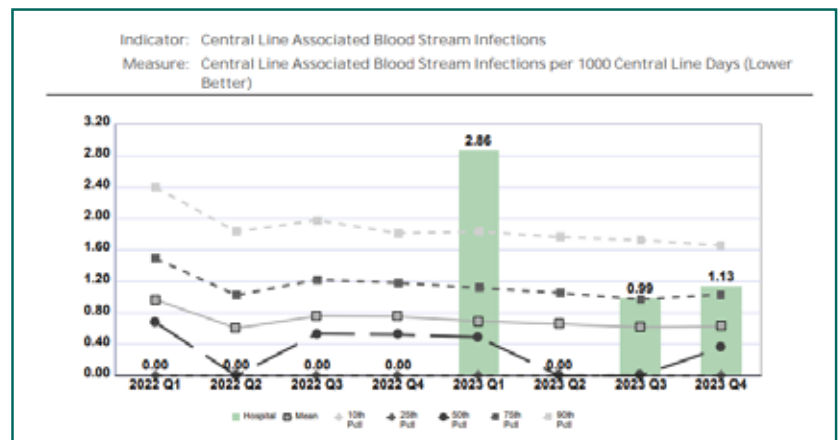
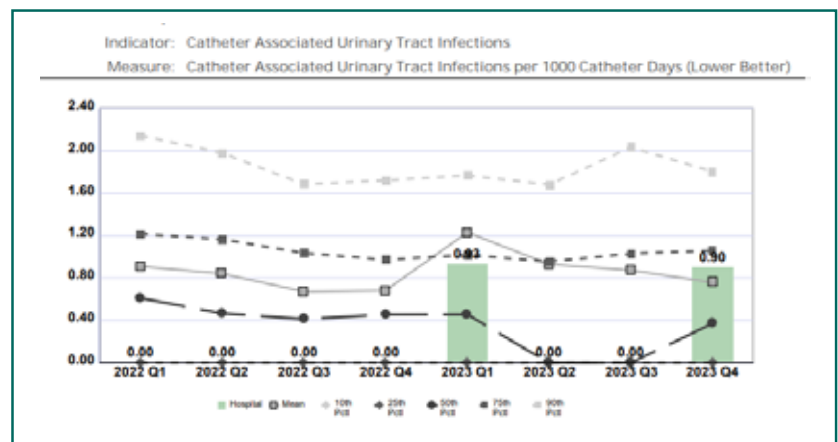
Nathalie Aupont, RN, CCU

Harpreet Mann, RN

Rebecca Joseph

Christine Meo, RN

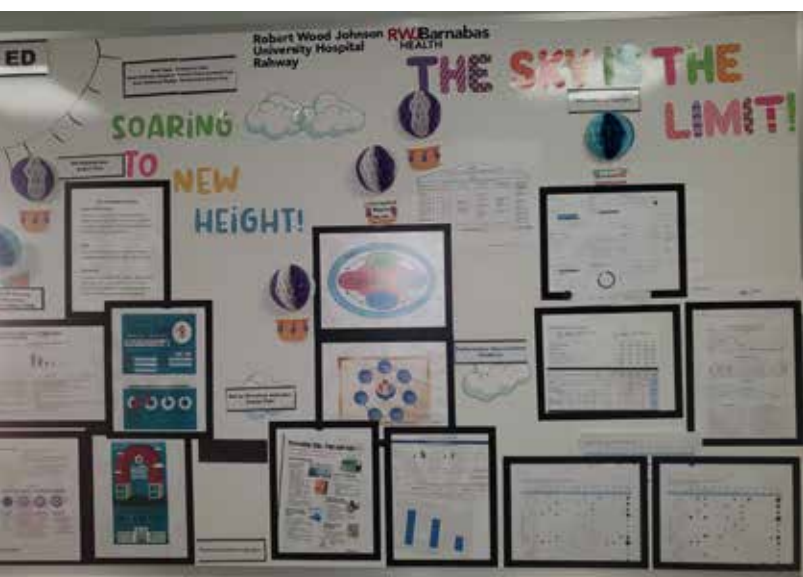
Eileen Parks, RN













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***Our mission:*** We are an academic health system, partnering with our communities to build and sustain a healthier New Jersey.