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Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Receives 6th Consecutive Magnet[®] Designation

A New Vision from the Chief Nursing Officer



In February 2022, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) New Brunswick named Courtney Vose, DNP, MBA, RN, APRN, NEA-BC, FAAN Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer.

A proven leader and expert in driving nursing excellence and research, Dr. Vose brings more than two decades of clinical, C-suite, academic and management experience to the organization. Her experience in overseeing nursing and patient care at nationally distinguished academic medical centers will benefit RWJUH New Brunswick in many ways.

Dr. Vose joins RWJUH New Brunswick from NewYork-Presbyterian (NYP)/Columbia University Irving Medical Center, NYP/Allen Hospital and NYP/Ambulatory Care Network-West, where she served as Vice President and CNO since 2014. She also served as Assistant Professor of Clinical Nursing at the Columbia University School of Nursing and has held leadership roles at Lehigh Valley Health Network.

As Dr. Vose engages nurses at all levels and elevates the role of nursing, the RWJUH New Brunswick team has a growing enthusiasm for what the future holds.

In the words of Dr. Vose...

From initial meetings to rounding on the floors, I have been extremely impressed with the energy of the team and pride in the work at RWJUH New Brunswick. All the right ingredients are here to make this hospital #1 in New Jersey to both receive and deliver care and a premier academic medical center. One of my roles is to help develop that unified vision with the support of the entire team, identify strategies to achieve it and ensure that everyone is rowing in the same direction toward those goals.

Becoming the #1 hospital in New Jersey goes beyond providing the very best care for patients and families. It also means taking better care of our staff so they in turn can take better care of patients. This includes providing all the necessary tools and time to empower nurses to make decisions regarding their practice and their practice environments. When we focus our energy on that, amazing things will happen.

RWJUH New Brunswick's status as one of the longest-standing Magnet® organizations in the country gives us a tremendous starting point. Our next steps include a retreat involving nurses at all levels and nursing staff to help set our vision and prioritize strategies and tactics. Through forums like town halls and Coffee with Courtney, I want to ensure that all voices are heard. I believe in a high level of leadership transparency and visibility, particularly where the work is being done, helping to anchor our efforts in reality.

In addition, interdisciplinary collaboration and partnerships will be vital to our strategic plan. Physicians, advanced practice providers and departments ranging from Environmental Services and Patient Transport to Respiratory Therapy and the Pharmacy will join us at the table. We'll also work to expand our mutually beneficial relationship with Rutgers School of Nursing.

We have the right people, the right resources and the right drive to build on RWJUH New Brunswick's remarkable legacy and achieve a care setting and culture unmatched in the state. I'm so thankful for the warm welcome, and I'm incredibly excited to be part of a team that believes in infinite possibilities.

Sincerely,

Courtney Vose, DNP, MBA, RN, APRN, NEA-BC, FAAN Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer



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Courtney Vose, DNP, MBA, RN, APRN, NEA-BC, FAAN Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Nursing



Judith Lane, MHA, BSN, RN, SCRN Vice President, Clinical Operations



Arlex Matulac, MSN, BSN, RN Vice President, Perioperative Services



Suzanne Spernal, DNP, APN-BC, RNC-OB, CBC Vice President, Women's Services



Lydia Weber, DNP, RN, ANP-BC, HNP Vice President, Center of Clinical Effectiveness and Patient Safety



Kathleen Arcidiacono, MSN, RN, OCN
Assistant Vice President,
Oncology Services,
Robert Wood Johnson
University Hospital &
Associate Chief Nursing Officer,
Cancer Institute of New Jersey



Kathy Easter, MSN, RN, CCRN-K Assistant Vice President, Nursing Excellence



Georgia Harrison, DNP, RN, CCRN Assistant Vice President, Intensive Care Neuro, Trauma, Medical & Ortho Services



Patricia James, MS, RN, CCRN, NE-BC Assistant Vice President, Inpatient Cardiovascular Services



Jennifer Silva, DNP, RNC-NICU, NE-BC Assistant Vice President The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital



Frank Soldo, MHA, BSN, RN Assistant Vice President, Cardiovascular Service Line



Brooke Zacheis, MBA, MSN, RN, NE-BC Assistant Vice President, Clinical Operations



Claudia Pagani MSN, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC Director, Center for Professional Development, Innovation & Research



Nurse leaders of the Magnet4Europe team at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, London, United Kingdom. Pictured left to right, Aibhin Burke, Christine Adamson, Stephanie Stevenson-Shand, and Cathy Hill.

International Magnet4Europe Partnership Cultivates Magnet Principles and More

RWJUH New Brunswick is honored to participate in Magnet4Europe, an initiative that pairs some of America's best hospitals with European hospitals to introduce Magnet® principles. The overarching goals are to improve patient care outcomes and the nurse practice environment through nursing research and adoption of evidence-based practices. The initiative also promotes the health and wellbeing of health professionals.

"We can no longer look at nursing and health care delivery in isolation," explains Kathy Easter, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, Assistant Vice President, Nursing Excellence. "We live in a global community and the pandemic has highlighted this fact. When we strive to improve health care at the local, regional, national and international levels, it benefits all of us." Led by KU Leuven in Belgium and the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research (CHOPR) at University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, Magnet4Europe aims to implement and evaluate the Magnet model in more than 60 hospitals in six European countries. Hospitals involved in the project also participated in a U.S. Clinical Wellbeing Study led by the University of Pennsylvania. Data analysis has been completed and is currently being reviewed.

With its six Magnet accreditations and 25-year Magnet legacy, RWJUH New Brunswick was invited by CHOPR Founding Director Linda Aiken, PhD, FAAN, FRCN, to establish a "twinning" partnership with Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, a hospital trust with two main hospital sites in the United Kingdom (UK). In June 2021, Easter began weekly virtual meetings with Christine Adamson, RN, RM, MSc, Magnet4Europe Project Lead & Lead Research Nurse, and her team to begin their journey to become a Magnet hospital.

"It's been such an enlightening experience to connect with the international community," says Easter. "We have different health care delivery systems, but the structures and processes supporting nursing practice are inherently the same."

Working together, the team completed a comprehensive gap analysis to identify existing nursing practice structures at the UK-based hospital trust and prioritize next steps on the path to Magnet Recognition based on their best cultural fit. This gap analysis demonstrated the need to develop a shared governance structure. To better understand how this structure operates, Adamson and her team virtually attended a recent RWJUH Nursing Shared Governance Practice Council meeting.

"This twinning experience has renewed our excitement for how special Magnet Recognition truly is," says Easter. "Magnet provides a strong framework to improve outcomes for our patients, families, nurses, interprofessional colleagues and the communities we serve. It's a wonderful legacy to uphold for all those who came before us."

"We're excited to host our UK friends here one day," she adds. "I'm certain that this relationship and its collaborative benefits will extend far beyond Magnet4Europe."







Interprofessional Collaboration Enables 29K COVID-19 Vaccinations

When the New Jersey Department of Health chose RWJUH New Brunswick as a pilot site to distribute COVID-19 vaccines, it took interprofessional collaboration and attention to detail to safely operationalize the clinic and orchestrate a process that provided tens of thousands of vaccines.

With oversight by Judy Lane, MHA, BSN, RN, SCRN, Vice President of Operations, in cooperation with RWJBarnabas Health and the New Jersey Department of Health, the clinic's development required coordination among many departments, including Nursing, Pharmacy, Information Technology, Operations, Security, Facilities, Patient Access, Supply Chain and Marketing. Through careful planning, the team transformed the hospital's atrium into a mini medical clinic and quickly determined how to accommodate vaccinations for staff from all shifts.

Since the clinic's opening on December 16, 2020, team members from across the hospital and Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School have volunteered to staff it in various capacities, including registering and checking in patients, collecting medical histories, explaining the vaccine and its possible side effects, administering the vaccine and observing patients after vaccination. Once most of the staff were vaccinated, the clinic was opened to the community.

"The community was so grateful to have access to the vaccine," explains Lane." After living in fear and in some cases not leaving their homes in more than a year, many people cried happy tears. These were truly heartfelt moments."

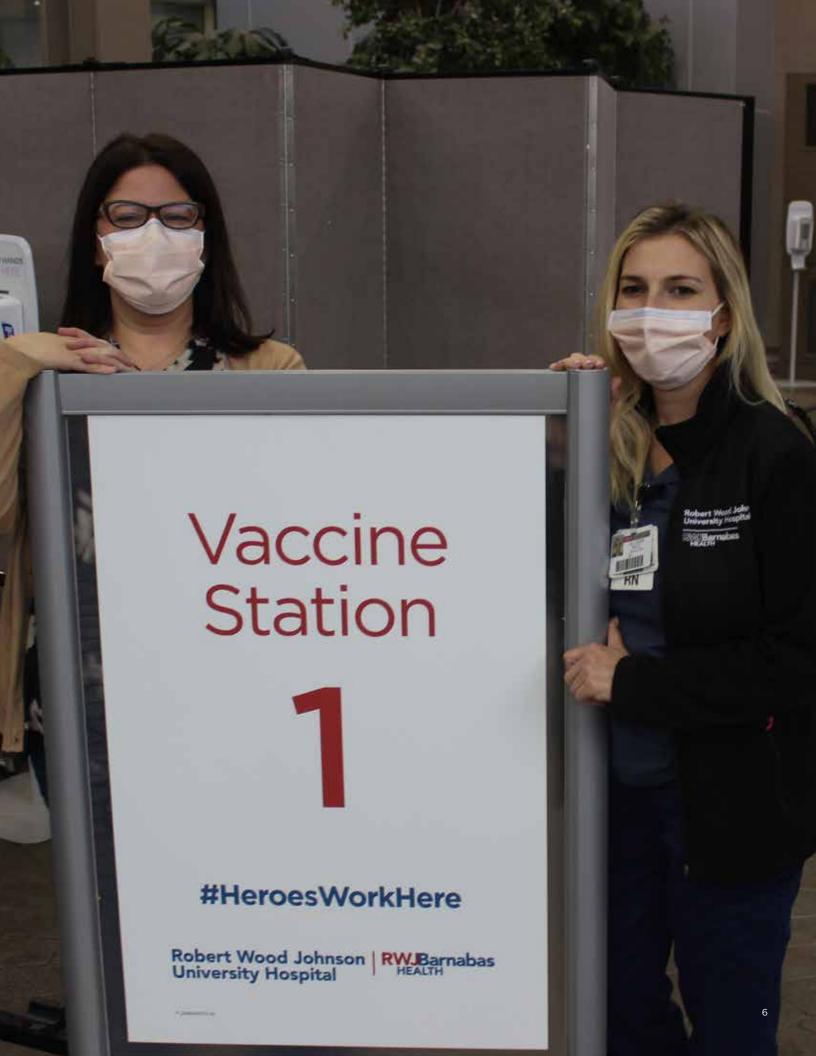
Outside of the hospital walls, nurses worked with Mariam Merced, MA, Director of Community Health Promotions at RWJUH New Brunswick, to reach the city's Latino population. Armed with megaphones, staff members canvassed the streets of New Brunswick to promote the vaccine. As a result, approximately 1,600 community members received the vaccine, increasing the vaccination rate among New Brunswick's Latino population from 9% to 47%. Once pediatric doses of the vaccine were available, the team also conducted a clinic at A.C. Redshaw Elementary School in New Brunswick to reach students and their families.

In total, more than 29,000 COVID-19 vaccines were administered in 2021 by 510 staff volunteers, including about 200 nurses. Medical school students, residents, pharmacists and physicians also contributed to the effort.

Allison Paul, BSN, RN, a float pool nurse who volunteered at the clinic two or three days a week, performed a variety of tasks, including checking in patients, administering the vaccine and monitoring patients post-vaccination.

"The clinic was well-organized and people were just so happy to get vaccinated," Paul explains. "It was a positive experience for volunteers and patients."

"The nurses involved with the clinic have been very compassionate and willing to volunteer their time," Lane says. "With good processes and great teamwork, we've been able to keep our staff, patients and community better protected against the virus."





Fostering Change Through Unit-Based Practice Councils

As part of the shared governance structure at RWJUH New Brunswick, Unit-Based Practice Councils meet regularly to discuss ways to improve quality and address needs at the unit level. With support and bidirectional communication from the broader Nursing Shared Governance Practice Council, this structure empowers nurses at all levels to enhance nursing practice and patient outcomes.

Improving Pediatric First Case On-Time Rates

With a precisely planned daily pediatric surgery schedule that has many moving parts, any delay in starting the first case on time creates a ripple effect that impacts overall efficiency, wait times, parent frustration, patient anxiety, staff overtime, and nurse and patient satisfaction scores. Because first case on-time rates were low, nursing leadership, the Surgical and Anesthesia departments and the Unit-Based Practice Council – chaired by pediatric perioperative clinical nurse Racel Villarica, MSN, RN-BC – worked collaboratively to address the issue. Together, they implemented the following changes, which helped achieve an increase in on-time rates greater than 10 percentage points by the fourth quarter of 2021.

An anxiety protocol. Registration now alerts the charge nurse and members of the Child Life Specialist team about any child with special needs who is experiencing anxiety. These patients are brought directly to the unit for registration and pre-procedure care, expediting the process and promoting a calmer environment.

Consent form software. Delays caused by incomplete health history and consent forms have been reduced thanks to the implementation of software that enables digital uploading in advance. Communication with physician and surgeon offices has helped promote this feature.

Family safety huddles. A preoperative safety huddle with the patient, family and interdisciplinary team puts everyone on the same page and provides the opportunity to resolve any questions.

Preoperative scripting. Updating preoperative call scripts with clear language covering details such as parking locations and COVID-19 visitor restrictions has also helped first cases start on time.

"The Unit-Based Practice Councils are a powerful tool for nurses to express what really matters in their practice," says Villarica. "By examining the processes of a complex pediatric unit, we've been able to reduce delays and ease stress for patients, families and each other."





Cardiovascular ICU Nurse Mentors

In her role as Unit-Based Practice Council Chair for the Cardiovascular ICU, clinical nurse Nicolle Black, BSN, RN, proposed examining how to reduce nurse turnover on this high-acuity unit by creating a more welcoming environment. The council identified nurses willing to serve as mentors and included these details in an orientation packet letter encouraging new nurses to establish a personal connection with a mentor of their choice through informal monthly meetings. The letter established a reassuring tone in welcoming new nurses to their Cardiovascular ICU "home."

"With our constantly evolving, fast-paced environment, it's even more important for new nurses to have someone to lean on for questions and concerns," says Black, who now chairs the Nursing Shared Governance Practice Council at RWJUH New Brunswick. "Through this initiative, we've provided an extra layer of confidence and the knowledge that we want them to succeed. As a result, we're seeing more connections and camaraderie on the unit and a greater focus on cultivating a supportive culture."

Informal Mentoring Leads to a Career in Nursing

For many seasoned nurses, encouraging and mentoring the next generation of clinicians is one of the highlights of the job. Sometimes, however, the unexpected relationship between a young clinician and established nurses changes the course of a young life.

Cara Parra, BSN, RN, clinical nurse in the Neurocritical Care Unit (NCU), and Steve Dominiecki, RN, clinical nurse on SICU-East, both worked as clinical care technicians (CCTs) before becoming nurses at RWJUH New Brunswick. They have formally precepted and mentored nurses throughout their careers, but when they met CCT Kayla Coughlin, both saw a natural nurse in the making and worked informally to provide support and encouragement.

After Coughlin earned an undergraduate degree, she knew she wanted to be in the medical field but wasn't sure in what capacity. She was considering becoming a physician assistant, so she first became a CCT to gain experience in the medical field. Coughlin started in the NCU, where she met Parra.



"Kayla was one of the first techs in our unit when it opened," says Parra. "She was reliable, hardworking and open to learning, so we exposed her to procedures like trachs and placing PEGs."

Parra and Coughlin formed a close bond, and as Coughlin's confidence grew, so did her drive to take her career to the next level. "When I saw how nurses interacted one-on-one with patients and the effect they had on patient outcomes, I knew I wanted to be part of that, too," Coughlin says.

With Parra's encouragement, Coughlin applied and was accepted to an accelerated nursing program. During that time, she transferred to SICU-East, where she met Dominiecki. He also became an informal mentor, helping her study for her nursing exams and providing real-life context for some of the concepts she was learning in school.

"Kayla was willing to learn new procedures even if she was nervous," says Dominiecki. "As a more senior nurse, you gravitate toward the people who want to learn, and Kayla has always been open to broadening her knowledge."

As Coughlin approached graduation, both Dominiecki and Parra urged her to apply for a nursing job in the Neurocritical Care Unit.

"Being a nurse comes naturally to Kayla," Parra explains. "She isn't afraid to ask questions or ask for help."

"I'm so thankful for the support I received," says Coughlin, now a clinical nurse in the NCU. "I would never be where I am today without the positive encouragement I received from the staff. Working in the NCU is exciting and rewarding. I see people come back from extensive injuries and thank us. It's life-changing work, and I love it. I hope I can be as influential to young CCTs as Steve and Cara were to me."



DAISY Award Recipients



Lauren Baldi, Neurocritical Care Unit



Junerose Gambito, 2 Core



Kathleen Garbarino, Critical Care Float Pool



Alexandria Lindower, Operating Room



Franchesca Mendoza, South Building Medical Unit



Catia Quintela, 2 Core



Lindsey Setaro, 2 East Orthopedics



Kortni Zhivotinsky, Adolescents

2021 Nurse Excellence Awards Recipients



Transformational Leadership

Tuesday Rowan, MSN, RN-BC 5 Tower and Telemetry Services



Structural Empowerment

CAUTI Task Force



Exemplary Professional Practice

Sweet Jessica Galvarole, BSN, RN, OCN 5 North



New Knowledge, Innovations, and Improvements

April Giron, ASN, RN, CCRN SICU-East



Magnet Nurse of the Year

Marianelda Santos, BSN, RNC-NCC Neonatal ICU



Virginia H. Joseph Award (Community Service)

Jackie Baras, MSN, MBA, RN PROUD Gender Center



Friend of Nursing

Tiffany Horton 4 North / BMTU



Advanced Practice Provider

Sue Anne Corsentino, MS, RN, APN, ACNP-BC Cardiac Surgery Advanced Practice Providers



Nursing Technician/Technologist

Maria Mercado Operating Room

Nurse Residency Graduates

Lesley Aguiar, BSN, RN Caroline Babis, BSN, RN Amber Bartol, BSN, RN Janna Brogan, BSN, RN Brooke Brussiere, BSN, RN Nicole Colossi, BSN, RN Heather De Bari, BSN, RN Marlene Fernandez, BSN, RN Theresa Fineza, BSN, RN Julia Jordan, BSN, RN Anthonyette Karyczak, BSN, RN Allison Lyles, BSN, RN Emily McVerry, BSN, RN Francesca Mendoza, BSN, RN Deanna Mercurio, BSN, RN Kinara Patel, BSN, RN Alicja Pawelec, BSN, RN Lorraine Rocha, BSN, RN Jasleen Sevilla, BSN, RN Kimberly Szilagyi, BSN, RN Samantha Valdez, BSN, RN Melissa Wachino, BSN, RN



Advanced Practice Provider Fellowship Graduates

James Pimentel, MS, PA-C Sara Owen, DNP, AGACNP-BC Wen Liu, MSN, AGACNP-BC





Educational Achievements

The following nurses obtained a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree in 2021

Name	College	_
Achsah Abraham, BSN, RN	American Sentinel University	
Martha Asare, BSN, RN	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	
Nicole Belton, BSN, RN	Grand Canyon University	
Alexis Churley, BSN, RN	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	
Christopher Clergy, BSN, RN-BC	New Jersey City University	
Kayla Coughlin, BSN, RN	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	
Andrea DeLucia, BSN, RN	Seton Hall University	
Jennifer Hinojosa, BSN, RN	Chamberlain University	
Yvonne Lajide, BSN, RN-BC	Grand Canyon University	
Carolina Llanos-Cramer, BSN, RN	Southern New Hampshire University	
Alisha Lewis, BSN, RN	Western Governors University	
Irina Littman, BSN, RN	Felician University	
Tara Lopez, BSN, RN	Chamberlain University	
Madonna Malek, BSN, RN	Chamberlain University	
Patrick Miller, BSN, RN	Ottawa University	
Sophia Moccio, BSN, RN	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	
Scott Peters, BSN, RN	Grand Canyon University	
Hiba Saleem, BSN, RN	Thomas Edison State University	
Todd Smith, BSN, RN	University of Phoenix	
Joseph Stahley III, BSN, RN	Felician University	
Gabriela Stajek, BSN, RN	Chamberlain University	
Christina Swiderski, BSN, RN, CEN, CCRN	Thomas Edison State University	
Hummad Syed, BSN, RN	Grand Canyon University	

The following nurses obtained a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree in 2021

Name	College
Kaitlyn Angley, MSN, RN, CCRN, CSC	Rowan University
Marivic Bautista, MSN, RN	Capella University
Adwoa Eshun, MSN, RN, FNP	Walden University
Komalpreet Kaur, MSN, RN	Grand Canyon University
Caitlin Lundberg, MSN, RN	Chamberlain University
Brittany Muhlgheir, MSN, RN	Monmouth University
Natalia Pawlowska, MSN, RN	Chamberlain University
Shivani Patel, MSN, RN	Chamberlain University

The following nurses obtained a Doctor in Nursing Practice (DNP) degree in 2021

Name	College	
Ruhi Brys, DNP, RN	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	
Lindsay Horvath, DNP, AGACNP	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	
Patricia James, DNP, RN, CCRN, NE-BC	Seton Hall University	
Adeola Obayanju, DNP, APN, AGPNP-BC	Rutgers, The State University of NJ	









Appointments

Dixie Alexander, MSN, RN, AGACNP-BC, CEN	Clinical Faculty	Rutgers School of Nursing, New Brunswick
Marvella Cephas, MSN, RN, CEN	Secretary	New Jersey Emergency Nurses Association
Kathy Easter, MSN, RN, CCRN-K	Reviewer	2021 ANCC National Magnet Nurse of the Year Review Panel
Kathy Easter, MSN, RN, CCRN-K	Treasurer / Board of Directors	New Jersey Council of Magnet Organizations
Lisa Falcon, MSN, RN, TCRN, NE-BC	Chairperson	AACN Certification Corporation Board of Directors
Timothy Murphy, MSN, RN, TCRN, CEN, FAEN	Chairperson, Trauma Education Committee	Trauma Center Association of America
Timothy Murphy, MSN, RN, TCRN, CEN, FAEN	Society of Trauma Nurses Representative	American College of Surgeons Committee for the Revision of Resources for the Optimal Care of the Trauma Patient Committee
Myrna Young, MSN, RN, CNOR	Vice President	Philippine Independence Day Parade, Inc.

Community Outreach

Dixie Alexander, MSN, RN, AGACNP-BC, CEN

Volunteer, provision of school supplies, Saint Baselious Gregorious Orthodox Church

Florence Chukwuneke, MSN, RN, AGPCNP-BC, CNRN

Developed virtual community education series for Stroke Awareness Month, RWJBH Community Outreach

Cristina Demone, BSN, RN

Volunteer and fundraiser co-organizer, Mama Maer Breast Cancer Foundation

Cristina Demone, BSN, RN

Volunteer, Monmouth County Emergency Housing and Advocacy Program

Lisa Falcon, MSN, RN, TCRN, NE-BC

Project Sponsor, Rutgers School of Public Health Lean Six Sigma Green Belt class fall semester 2021

Catherine Fillipelli, MSN, RN, ACNP

Presentation, From Combat to Calm, Serenity Stables

Ursula Gowran, BSN, RN, CCRN

Volunteer, American Red Cross -Services to Armed Forces

Kimberly Hollender, MSN, ACNP-BC, CCRN, ANVP

Developed virtual community education series for Stroke Awareness Month, RWJBH Community Outreach

Sandra Matuska, DNP, CCRN, AGACNP, FNP

Volunteer, RWJUH Vaccine Clinic

Timothy Murphy, MSN, RN, TCRN, CEN, FAEN

Volunteer, GBSCIDP International Foundation (Guillan Barre Chronic Inflammatory Demylinating Polyneuropothy)

Timothy Murphy, MSN, RN, TCRN, CEN, FAEN

Nursing Representative, New Jersey Trauma Systems Committee

Patricia Petrelli, BSN, RN, CCRN

Volunteer, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Church

Rebecca Ramos, MS, RN-BC

Volunteer Camp Nurse, Camp Star Pediatric Amputee Camp

Rebecca Ramos, MS, RN-BC

Volunteer, Reading Railroad Heritage Museum

Linda Tamburri, MS, APN, RN, CCRN-K

Volunteer Tutor, Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County

Jessa Torres-Manalastas, MSN, RN, CCRN

Organized event for Philippines Typhoon Relief, Philippine Nurses Association



RWJUH New Brunswick Achieves Elite Sixth Magnet Recognition

As one of the original members of RWJUH New Brunswick's Magnet Ambassador Council, Joanne Mercurio, MSN, RN, APN, CRNFA, RN First Assistant in the Operating Room, has served as a lead escort for three separate site visits by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program®. But 2021 was different. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the hospital's sixth site visit was conducted virtually – requiring a unique level of preparation.

"I knew what to expect during a normal Magnet site visit, but this one had a significant technical twist," says Mercurio.

About six months prior to the visit, the nursing team began collaborating with Information Technology and Services (IT) so that the virtual components would be flawless. This included ensuring that audiovisual equipment was configured properly, WiFi worked throughout the hospital, iPads on wheels were ready to roll and nurse escorts knew exactly how the technology functioned.

At the same time, Linda Tamburri, MS, RN, APN, CCRN-K, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Magnet/Quality, and Kathy Easter, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, Assistant Vice President, Nursing Excellence, began planning a complex room and participant schedule to accommodate three meetings an hour for four days while keeping social distancing in mind. Through regular communication and mock tours, the team also ensured that nurses and staff were prepared and comfortable prior to the visit.

Appraisal team findings highlighted in the Executive Summary Report included the following.

- Clinical nurses and nursing leaders were highly engaged and committed to quality patient care.
- Visibility and support from leadership was a consistent theme.
- Clinical nurses articulated involvement in committees, knowledge of quality initiatives and opportunities for professional development.
- Interprofessional teams were characterized by strong collaborative teamwork.
- Clinical nurses showed professionalism, engagement, and pride and enthusiasm in their work.
- Nurses have grown their careers at RWJUH New Brunswick.

The report also identified four exemplars:

- Nursing at the organizational level has achieved greater than 51% in professional nursing certification with a certification rate of 56.68%.
- The unit-level or setting-level data for three clinical indicators - Peripheral Intravenous Infiltrations (inpatient setting), Ambulatory Falls with Injury, and Left Without Being Seen (ambulatory setting) outperformed national benchmarks for the majority of eight quarters on 100% of the units.



The Virtual Site Visit

In April 2021, during a four-day visit that averaged 10 hours per day, three ANCC appraisers met with 575 individuals in meetings alone, including clinical nurses, the leadership team, council and committee members, physicians, advanced practice providers, community partners and key stakeholders. The appraisers met with additional staff during unit tours.

Throughout the visit, staff sanitized rooms between meetings and Food and Nutrition Services coordinated grab-and-go meals.

Each appraiser was paired with a nurse escort from the Magnet Ambassador Council who managed schedule details and an IT team member for any necessary technical assistance. The trios toured specific areas of the hospital, where appraisers interacted with nurses and staff on the floors while the leadership team helped provide patient coverage. Despite its technical complexity, the virtual format had an added benefit: it enabled greater access to areas of the hospital like the Operating Room since this no longer presented the time constraint of requiring appraisers to change into scrubs.

"The preparation, attention to detail and interprofessional collaboration that went into this visit contributed significantly to our success," says Tamburri. "I'm so proud of the nurses who participated and how readily they shared the amazing work they do."

"I was extremely moved by some of the things the nurses said," adds Mercurio. "Magnet is my passion, and it was a privilege to guide the appraisers during their visit. Our nurses work incredibly hard to care for our patients and support each other – and this was our time to shine."

A Cause for Celebration

On June 24, 2021, after reviewing documentation and site visit findings, The Commission on Magnet recognized RWJUH New Brunswick's sixth designation as a Magnet organization – making the hospital one of seven in the world to achieve six consecutive Magnet designations. The RWJUH New Brunswick team came together in October for a joyous open house-style celebration that enabled staff and departments across the hospital to safely mark this accomplishment.

"We were one of the first hospitals in the country to achieve Magnet designation, and we're sustaining what's now a 25-year legacy," says Tamburri. "It's an extraordinary testament to the practice environment that exists here, and it will continue to be a motivating force as we move forward."



"I am empowered to have a voice because I am a part of a team with shared governance."

- Victoria A. Pangilinan, MSN, RN, CCRN Clinical Nurse, SICU East

"In working for a Magnet facility, I have the guidance, support and resources I need to further my career. Knowing that the protocols I utilize to provide care to my patients are backed by the best evidence gives me the confidence to provide the highest quality treatment possible."

- Kristen Dudas, BSN, RN, PNCC Clinical Nurse, Cardiovascular ICU

"I am very proud to have the privilege to be a part of this institution. It means that I get to work with highly skilled nurses, delivering high-quality patient care. I also get to work in a great environment."

- Glynis Cox, BSN, RN, OCN Clinical Nurse, 5 North

"Working in a Magnet-designated organization means that nurses have a commitment to their patients, strive for evidence-based, high-quality care and implement improvements. As a nurse who takes pride in her profession, I am happy to surround myself with like-minded colleagues who share the same vision and are making a difference in the hospital and out in the community."

- Jennifer Bernal, BSN, RN-BC Clinical Nurse, RCU "Being a Magnet-designated organization acknowledges our commitment to providing a high standard of care and producing quality outcomes for our patients. It means that I work for an organization that supports nursing practice, our work environment and our growth. It also provides me with the opportunity to foster change in our practice by being involved in committees, research and education."

- Sabriye Bright, MSN, RN, CCRN Director, 2 Core

"As a six-time Magnet-designated organization, we attract the very best nursing talent, provide opportunities for professional growth and development, and embody a collaborative culture focused on safety, quality and patient outcomes. Our shared values focus on respect, nurse satisfaction, nursing excellence and a commitment to the organization.

I am proud to be a Magnet nurse!"

Georgia Harrison, DNP, RN, CCRN
 Assistant Vice President, Intensive Care Neuro,
 Trauma, Medical & Ortho Services

RN Residency Quality Improvement Projects Help Transform Care

The RN Residency Program at RWJUH New Brunswick, accredited as a Practice Transition Program by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), helps new nurses bridge the transition from nursing school to clinical practice while providing a meaningful foundation to build clinical excellence. As part of this 11-month program, participants take a three-credit graduate-level course at Rutgers School of Nursing and develop an evidence-based quality improvement project that is shared as a poster presentation at a Transforming Care at the Bedside (TCAB) hospital event.

"We see our new nurses as future leaders, and it's exciting to provide opportunities for them to enhance nursing practice at the bedside and beyond," says Myrna Young, MSN, RN, CNOR, RN Residency Program Director and Nursing Education Specialist for the Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research at RWJUH New Brunswick. "These projects always bring something new to the organization." TCAB projects from 2021 centered on nurse-sensitive indicators, with two highlighted below.

Improving Medication Education for Patients

In selecting her TCAB project, Caroline Babis, BSN, RN, clinical nurse on 6 North Surgical Oncology, saw an opportunity to improve patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores related to understanding medication side effects. With existing printable medication information at around a dozen pages for each medication, she knew that nurses needed a practical education tool and patients needed something less intimidating.

When a pre-project survey verified nurse interest in a simpler tool, Babis worked with clinical nurse educator Sharifa Doyle, MSN, RN, FN-CSA, RN-BC, to adapt a medication education sheet used at RWJUH Rahway to suit 6 North needs. The new two-sided sheet – customizable for each patient – lists commonly used oncology medications, side effects and related safety tips for patients. After gaining approval from the Medication Side Effects Committee, the Pharmacy and Marketing, Babis promoted the tool at daily huddles and patient hand-offs. The medication education sheet is now included in the patient welcome packet and used in daily discussions with patients.

"Within a few months, the patient satisfaction top box score related to medication side effects increased from 35 to 52," says Babis. "It's been amazing to see how this simple, consistent resource changed outcomes."

Reducing Falls in the Emergency Department

RN residents and Emergency Department (ED) clinical nurses Amber Bartol, BSN, RN, and Jasleen Sevilla, BSN, RN, worked with ED clinical nurse educator Jessica Rowley, MSN, RN, CEN, to pilot the MEDFRAT fall risk assessment tool in the ED for their collaborative TCAB project, since an evidence-based study showed a reduction in falls with this tool. As part of their project, they organized and implemented fall risk bundles in triage areas and ensured the availability of fully stocked and labeled fall risk carts in designated patient areas. They also educated staff and provided printouts of the MEDFRAT assessment.

Collected data showed that MEDFRAT scored more patients under the high-risk category compared to the Johns Hopkins Fall Risk Assessment tool already in use, allowing nurses to implement fall bundles for a greater number of patients to prevent falls from occurring. Since these changes have been implemented, major fall injury rates in the ED have decreased. MEDFRAT is now being trialed at other RWJBarnabas Health hospitals and may be considered for inclusion in the Epic electronic health record build for RWJUH New Brunswick.

"It's empowering for nurses to be able to drive changes in patient care," says Sevilla. "It's not only about improving patient satisfaction – with approaches like these, we can also help prevent injuries."

"Everything needs to be done quickly in the Emergency Department, so when we make tools more accessible, our outcomes will be better," adds Bartol. "We're focused on making it easier for nurses to do their job while doing everything we can to ensure safety for patients."





Providing One-on-One Education to Decrease the Risk of VTE

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) – or a blood clot that forms in a vein – is a preventable hospital-acquired condition. It is associated with significant morbidity and mortality, increased length of stay and increased health care costs. To decrease the risk of this condition at RWJUH New Brunswick, ICU float pool nurse Lindsay Horvath, BSN, RN-BC, developed an evidence-based practice project as part of her doctor of nursing practice (DNP) program.

While there are several factors that put patients at a higher risk of developing VTEs, there are also ways of preventing blood clots. This includes anticoagulation medications, pneumatic compression devices and ambulation. Horvath worked with an interprofessional team from Rutgers School of Nursing and RWJUH New Brunswick to research why VTE rates were elevated and determine ways to change the trend.

Horvath's team members included DNP Project Chair Jeffrey Kwong, DNP, MPH, AGPCNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN, Professor, Rutgers School of Nursing; Mary Beth Russell, PhD, MA, RN, NPD-BC, NEA-BC, Vice President, Center for Professional Development, Innovation and Research (CPDIR); Claudia Pagani, MSN, RN-BC, NPD-BC, CPDIR Director; RWJUH New Brunswick's VTE Task Force; and 6 North nurses. Her research found that some high-risk patients were missing doses of prophylactic anticoagulation medication. While there are several reasons why this may occur, Horvath discovered that in approximately 50% of cases, patients had refused anticoagulation treatment.

"We found that some patients were more afraid of bleeding than developing blood clots, which can be deadly," Horvath explains. "Patients often don't understand their risk. In other cases, communication issues between providers and patients impacted VTE prevention practices." Horvath found a Johns Hopkins study that examined the use of real-time patient education to improve compliance and reduce patient hesitancy with VTE prophylaxis. Then, to replicate a similar process, she implemented a quality improvement project on 6 North. Before initiating the project, she educated nurses on 6 North about the benefits of using blood thinners to prevent VTE and the consequences of non-administration. During the intervention period, Horvath joined morning huddles and audited patient records to determine if anticoagulant doses were missed. She then provided one-on-one education to patients that had refused.

"A lot of patient education work falls on staff nurses," Horvath says. "I wanted to develop a project that supports staff nurses, rather than putting more work on their plates. I also wanted patients to feel engaged and empowered to make informed health decisions to improve outcomes."

On 6 North, 18 patients initially refused anticoagulants during the project period. Horvath spoke with 14 of those patients, and 10 of the 14 patients (71%) chose to receive anticoagulant medication after education. While there were no statistically significant results in decreasing non-administered and refused doses of anticoagulant medication or VTE events in the intervention unit when compared to a non-intervention unit (9 Tower), improved patient education and compliance were positive outcomes.

Horvath's future plans include working with the VTE Task Force to develop interventions to improve prescription and administration of VTE prophylaxis throughout the hospital.



Nurses Play Integral Role in Adding Monoclonal Antibody Treatment to ED Workflow

Beyond getting vaccinated against COVID-19, monoclonal antibodies are another method of protecting high-risk patients from getting seriously ill from the virus. For many, the treatment can make the difference between hospitalization or healing at home.

When monoclonal antibodies became available in November 2020, nurses and other staff in the Emergency Department at RWJUH New Brunswick collaborated with the New Jersey Department of Health and the hospital's Pharmacy to offer lifesaving infusions to eligible patients.

The Department of Health established the clinical criteria for infusing bamlanivimab-etesevimab, the first antibody formulation that was available. To receive treatment, patients had to test positive for the virus and have one or more of the risk factors for severe illness, which included a high body mass index, kidney disease, diabetes, immunosuppression or being age 65 or older. As additional variants of the virus emerged, the Emergency Department expanded its stock of antibodies to include casirivimab-imdevimab (Regeneron) and sotrovimab, and clinical criteria for treatment were adjusted to include high-risk positive patients under age 55.

Upon presenting to the Emergency Department, patients who tested positive for COVID-19 were separated from patients who did not have the virus. When indicated, infusions

were administered by the Emergency Department's 170 nurses, plus its team of travel nurses. Each antibody treatment took two hours to complete: one hour to infuse the drug and one hour to observe the patient for any adverse reaction.

"ED nurses were hugely involved in determining the workflow for infusing patients, providing treatment and caring for patients after infusion, all while handling their normal responsibilities in a very active ED," explains James Christie, MBA, BSN, RN, CEN, Assistant Director of the Emergency Department. "Our nurses remained flexible and accommodating as criteria and antibody products changed in response to new variants."

In 2021, nurses in the Emergency Department administered 1,143 doses of monoclonal antibodies. Through increased efficiency and collaboration, ED nurses were able to decrease infusion time for patients to 30 minutes plus one hour of observation.

"Throughout it all, our staff was understanding and handled every change that came their way," Christie says. "They have been extremely resilient."





Generous Donors Support New Nurse-Related Resources

Through the RWJUH Foundation, generous donors support the creation and expansion of various programs at RWJUH New Brunswick. In 2021, the following grants supported initiatives that will have a direct impact on nurses, particularly in helping them manage the emotional impact of the pandemic. The RWJUH New Brunswick team is incredibly grateful for this support.

Nursing Professional Development

A generous endowment from Betty Wold Johnson in 2016 established the Betty Wold Johnson Center for Nursing Education at RWJUH New Brunswick, which supports nursing professional development on many levels. In 2021, this included scholarships for eight nurses pursing either a baccalaureate or master's degree in nursing, the purchase of education materials from the Emergency Nurses Association, American Academy of Pediatrics and Rittenhouse, and support for nursing continuing education programs. Technology covered by the center included iPads to streamline nursing director rounds and staff nurse performance improvement data collection, bladder scanners to help protect patients from urinary tract infections and Vocera devices to improve workflow for Operating Room nurses – along with additional program and equipment support.

A Respite Room for Nurses

The heart-wrenching experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic were especially difficult for nurses, who spend the most time at the bedside. In measuring and managing that emotional toll, RWJUH New Brunswick's Resilient Together committee developed a proposal for a respite room: an accessible, quiet space to decompress.

Supporting construction of this room greatly appealed to the Kaplan family, whose business, Kaplan Companies, is one of the largest regional builders in the state. When owner and family patriarch Michael Kaplan became ill last fall, RWJUH New Brunswick nurses helped him recover while providing comfort for his wife, Helen. The entire family – including the couple's children, Amy Kaplan-Schafer, Lisa Kaplan and Jason Kaplan – felt it was important for nurses to have a safe haven so they can go on providing the best care possible. This unique, soothing room was constructed through a donation from the Kaplan family, with a ribbon-cutting set for Spring 2022.

A Peer Support Program

In 2021, after survey results demonstrated the value of peer counseling to address the emotional impact of the pandemic, the RWJUH Foundation developed a proposal for an RWJUH workforce support program to help sustain and retain frontline team members. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided a grant to support this initiative.

Now known as the SAFE (Support Another Fellow Employee) Peer Support Program, the initiative will provide structured peer support training to enable hospital staff to help colleagues manage emotional stress in the workplace. Training modules will be developed by the Betty Wold Johnson Center for Nursing Education in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions at Rutgers School of Health Professions, with program facilitation by a team of leaders from Nursing, Human Resources, and Pastoral Care. Peer support will be provided in a private or group setting that provides the opportunity to discuss difficult situations, express concerns and exchange viewpoints.

Nursing Leadership Resiliency Study

The results of an RWJUH New Brunswick clinical nurse research study elucidated the need for additional research on nursing leadership stress and resiliency. Through a grant from Johnson & Johnson, RWJUH New Brunswick nurse investigators will examine how participation in a structured wellness intervention program impacts perceived levels of resiliency and stress reported by 18 RWJUH New Brunswick nurse leaders. Wellness tools were provided to participants and the initial survey was completed in October 2021. Data will be gathered in three-month intervals through October 2022.

Scholarships

Academic scholarships are awarded through the support of the RWJ University Hospital Foundation. Nursing scholarships are provided for RWJUH employees pursuing a further degree in nursing practice, and Health Professional Scholarships support local high school students interested in a health care career.

Betty Wold Johnson Center for Nursing Education Scholarship Awards

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Michael Krot, RN

Master of Science

Jennifer Cruz, BSN, RN Hanna Gerke, BSN, RN Caitlin Lundburg, BSN, RN Sheenamol Nair, BSN, RN Kothai Perumal, BSN, RN Hannie Rivero, BSN, RN Jaime Sellari, BSN, RN

RWJUH Nursing Scholarship Awards

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Brittany Derkack, RN Carolina Llanos-Cramer, RN Tara Lopez Lorena Rabaya, RN Caprice Snyder, RN Jennifer Vivar

Master of Science

Cristina Demone, BSN, RN Eileen Jansson, BSN, RN Juby Kizhakkepuram, BSN, RN Alexandria Lindower, BSN, RN Cristina Lu, BSN, RN Juliana Sanchez, BSN, RN Lanlen Soriano, BSN, RN Susan Sutphen, BSN, RN

Doctor of Nursing Practice

Bola Apena, BSN, MPH, RN Anita Basenese, MA, RN, APN Sharifa Doyle, MSN, RN

Health Professional Scholarships

David B. Crabiel Scholarship

James Araiza
Marielba Ramirez Cantoran
Dulce Delacruz
J'Sean Height
Thomas Jenkins
Enmanuel Sabala Polanco
Samuel Sabala Polanco
Marcela Belen Banegas Santos

Katherine Wright Gorrie Scholarship

Aylie Cruz Kathy Lopez Brenda Hernandez Quiroz Xiomara Santos Abe Jeraldy Ramos Tufino



Podium Presentations

Staff	Project	Conference Name or Sponsor
Dixie Alexander, MSN, AGACNP-BC, RN, CEN	Stroke	New Jersey Nursing Students INC, 69th Annual Convention
Florence Chukwuneke, MSN, RN, AGPCNP-BC, CNRN	Optimizing Stroke Care: 2021 Guidelines	NJ Stroke Symposium
Lisa Falcon, MSN, RN, TCRN, NE-BC	Tiered Trauma Responses	NJ State EMS Grand Rounds
Kimberly Hollender, MSN, ACNP-BC, CCRN, ANVP	Optimizing Stroke Care: 2021 Guidelines	NJ Stroke Symposium
Lisa Laws, MSN, NNP-BC, RNC-NICU	Exploring the Scope and Influence that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had on Nursing Practice at an Academic Medical Center	RWJBH Nursing Research Symposium
Timothy Murphy, MSN, RN, TCRN, CEN, FAEN	Tiered Trauma Response	Central Jersey EMS region
Timothy Murphy, MSN, RN, TCRN, CEN, FAEN	Trauma Performance Improvement: Unplanned Intubation and Complication Definitions (Panel Member)	Trauma Center Association of America
Devon Orzano, MSN, ACNP-BC	Management of Aneurysmal SAH	RWJBH Stroke System Collaborative Stroke Symposium
Claudia Pagani, MSN, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC	Better to be Safe than Sorry: Implementation of Capnography on a Medical Surgical Unit	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
Claudia Pagani, MSN, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC	Education, Training and Competency During the Time of COVID-19	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
Alberto Rodriguez, MSN, RN, NE-BC	Education, Training and Competency During the Time of COVID-19	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
Alberto Rodriguez, MSN, RN, NE-BC	Exploring the Scope and Influence that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had on Nursing Practice at an Academic Medical Center	RWJBH Nursing Research Symposium
Teresa Savino, MS, RN	Exploring the Scope and Influence that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had on Nursing Practice at an Academic Medical Center	RWJBH Nursing Research Symposium
Jessica Rowley, MSN, RN, CEN	Exploring the Scope and Influence that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had on Nursing Practice at an Academic Medical Center	RWJBH Nursing Research Symposium
Keeba Souto, MSN, RN	Penetrating Pediatric Trauma	NJ State EMS Grand Rounds

Poster Presentations

Staff	Name of Presentation	Conference Name or Sponsor
Marvella Cephas, MSN, RN, CEN	Use of a Modified Color Coded Resuscitation Cart in a Pediatric Trauma Bay	Trauma Center Association of America
Lanlen Soriano, BSN, RN-BC	Ortho King or Queen of the Month	National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses 41st Annual Congress

2021 Research Studies

Principal Investigator/Co-Investigators	Study Title
Lisa Laws, MSN, RN, RN-C-NIC,NNP-BC Claudia Pagani, MSN, RN-BC, NPD-BC Kyala Pascual, BSN, RN, ONC, CJCP Jennifer Pirozzi, MSN, RN, CNOR Donna Prete, MSN, RN-BC, NEA-BC Nicole Rolston, MSN, RN, NPD-BC Jessica Rowley, MSN, RN, CEN Teresa Savino, MS, RN, PSLA Kathy Soriano, MS, RNC, NE-BC	Novice to Expert Frontline Nurses during the Corona Virus Pandemic: A Qualitative Study
Claudia Pagani MSN, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC The Rev. Christine Davies, MDiv, MSW	Exploring the Impact of Participation in a Structured Wellness Intervention Program on Resiliency and Stress in Leaders Working in an Academic Medical Center throughout the COVID Pandemic
Claudia Pagani MSN, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC Naomi Fox MSN, RN, NPD-BC, CCRN Mary Beth Russell PhD, MA, RN, NPD-BC, NEA-BC	The Impact of a Multimodal Education Program on Improving System-wide CAUTI Rates
Shelby Pitts DNP, RN, WHNP-BC Jessica Rowley MSN, RN, CEN	Effects of an Educational Intervention on Adherence to Triage Guidelines for the Care of Obstetric Patients in the Emergency Care Setting
Mary Beth Russell, PhD, MA, RN, NPD-BC, NEA-BC Sandra Vargas, MSN, RN, APN	The Impact of a Readmission Risk Tool for SDOH on Hospital 30-day Readmission

Evidence-Based Practice Projects

Staff	Project
Kimberly Hollender, MSN, ACNP-BC, CCRN, ANVP	Decreasing Stroke Mortality: A 3 Tier Approach
Keesha Holmes, MSN, FNP, NE-BC	Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia Bundle Compliance: A Quality Improvement Project
Lindsay Michelle Horvath BSN, RN-BC	Evaluation of a Real-time Educational Program to Improve Administration and Patient Adherence with Pharmacologic Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) Prophylaxis: Impact of a Quality Improvement Project
Traci Marcus, MSN, RN, OCN	An Evidence Based Practice Change Initiative: Monitoring Vital Signs during Blood Transfusions

Publications

Cristina Demone, BSN, RN | Stephanie Shea, BSN, RN

Esponda K., Shea S., Demone C. (Eds.) (2021). Guide to Complex Interventional Endoscopic Procedures, Switzerland, Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80949-2

Casey Panebianco, DNP, APN

Keegan P., Panebianco C. (2021) Safe Recovery after Valvular Heart Surgery. In: Hawkey M.C., Lauck S.B. (eds) Valvular Heart Disease. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-86233-6_10

Mona Williams-Gregory, PhD, DNP, ACNP

Sinacori B. & Williams-Gregory M. (2021). The effect of distance learning on knowledge acquisition in undergraduate second-degree nursing students: A systematic review. Nursing Education Perspectives, 42(3):136-141.





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