University Hospital

Honoring our Nurses
Honoring Outstanding Performance

I had the pleasure of taking part in a number of award ceremonies recently honoring the great work performed by University Hospital’s nurses and a number of our other employees. In this month’s issue, we highlight these winners of our DAISY, Helping Hands of Heart of UH awards.

During one of these ceremonies, I noted how much of the focus in healthcare is on the rapid change taking place in our industry. While that is true, it cannot be lost that healthcare continues to be about people taking care of people. There are many innovations we must embrace. But we must never lose sight of our fundamental mission to provide the best care to every patient, one at a time.

Whether that patient is just walking through the front door and you are a security guard, or you are a part of Environmental Services, or an administrative assistant, or an admissions clerk, we all need to encounter each patient with the understanding that while they are here, they will receive the very best service and patient care. Every hospital is now measured as never before on its performance and we are judged on the patient’s entire experience.

You have my thanks as your CEO for extending yourselves in support of our patients and their families and friends.

With Kind Regards,

John N. Kastanis, MBA, FACHE
President and CEO
University Hospital

Putting Patients First

Each month we feature news from the chief experience office. This month we look at a new partnership between Nursing and Patient Experience.

What do a Tibetan bowl and a Yacker-Tracker have in common? Both are part of a new joint initiative by the Nursing and Patient Experience departments to improve each patient’s experience during their stay at UH and, in turn, improve the hospital’s HCAHPS scores (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems). The initiative is timed as UH starting in July will set a higher bar for its HCAHPS scores which include 11 rating areas, or domains.

“What we’re doing as a team is to really collaborate in terms of putting together some of our action steps,” said Dr. Danilo Bolima, Director Patient Care Services, MedSurg. “Our scores are not meeting the higher bar for its HCAHPS scores which include 11 rating areas, or domains.

“The purpose is to help the unit staff relax and remove themselves from the stress of their jobs. The staff then read a pledge regarding their mission, discuss their goals for the day and recognize outstanding performance by their peers.

Thus far, the process has helped nursing staff identify an issue with excessive noise that has occurred on their units between the hours of 3 to 5 am. In response, Yacker-Trackers will be placed on the units to make staff aware of noise levels. Resembling stoplights, the Yacker-Trackers turn red when noise volume exceeds a certain threshold.

The post-discharge pilot initiative can yield important benefits by addressing followup issues and connecting patients with the right caregiver, said Chief Experience Officer Joan Duhaire, LCSW, MS.

“We don’t want people going into the emergency room because they don’t know how to manage their care,” she said. “It also gives that special message to the patient that we care about them.”

Duhaire said the Patient Experience office wants to replicate its partnership with Nursing with all UH departments in order to engage staff and enhance the patient and family experience.
Adding Iron To The Diet

When Kevin Moser first learned about the 140.6-mile race, he assumed it could be covered only in a car. Instead, what he discovered was the Ironman triathlon which requires athletes to swim 2.4 miles, ride a bike for 112 miles and then run 26.2 miles. Each in sequence and all in one day. A Registered Dietician, Moser has completed one full Ironman and four half triathlons. The experience not only has made him healthier, it has guided his approach in educating UH patients on nutrition and lifestyle changes.

“I want to be comfortable with feeling uncomfortable, whether that be challenging yourself academically, physically or by taking on different responsibilities,” he said. “What drew me to the race was finding out what you’re made of and if there are any limits to the human spirit or to your mind.”

Moser’s path to the Ironman began in college when he started running for exercise. He discovered the Ironman competition watching YouTube videos and decided triathlons were for him. After four half-triathlons, Moser recently completed his first full Ironman in Houston, completing the 140.6-mile challenge in just under 12 hours.

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I need to be teaching by example, I need to be making sacrifices. If I’m telling a patient or someone in the community that they need to make lifestyle changes, but I’m not making any in my own life, then it’s going to be hard for them to latch on and to be willing to make those sacrifices.”

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“It was the idea you had to be not only physically prepared, but more importantly mentally prepared,” he explained. “I set my eyes on this as something I really wanted to do.”

Moser said his job requires ensuring that patients receive the correct nutrients while being treated for their conditions.

“People come in with vastly different clinical diagnoses and a lot of these diagnoses can increase the risk of malnutrition,” he said. “It’s our job to insure that they’re receiving all the adequate nutrients that they need and to recover and that they don’t lose any weight.”

Moser said he was drawn to working at University Hospital because of the unique environment and socio-economic status of its patient population.

“What really drew me toward this is that there is a particular need for nutritional advice and recommendations,” he said. “Oftentimes in lower-income cultures, they gravitate towards the unhealthier foods because they are cheaper. Once they leave the hospital, I want them to know that, whatever their financial situation, they can make healthier choices.”
National Nurses Week once again was celebrated in style at University Hospital with a host of events, treats and honors. The theme for 2018 National Nurses Week, sponsored by the American Nurses Association, was Nurses: Inspire, Innovate, Influence.” The UH celebration was organized by Assistant Nursing Director Jennifer Smith, MSN, and her team.

The festivities got underway with a Kick Off Breakfast and reception with a welcome from Chief Nursing Officer Carl Kirton, DNE RN, MBA.

Sunil Patel, MD, presented this year’s inspirational message.

“We all know that nurses have a great ability to inspire,” said Patel. “They are role models to kids, families and students in training who look up to them. Even young physicians in training look up to nurses to inspire them.”

When he arrived at UH from Trinidad as an intern, Patel said, he was overwhelmed by the support he received from the nursing staff. “I felt like I was never alone during that whole year with the nursing staff at my side,” he recalled. “They did not judge me or question my knowledge base. They simply saw this young physician who needed help and helped me in whatever way they could.”

As a UH physician, Patel said he has come to admire the innovation and resourcefulness of nurses. Advancements in the medical field result from constant inquisitiveness, he said. “When a nurse calls me and says, ‘Doc, you have to come see this patient, something is up,’ I will always go because their 6th sense is really amazing,” he said. “They see things before it happens because they spend their whole shift taking care of the patients.”

During the reception, the DAISY and Humanitarian Awards were presented to outstanding nursing staff.

The festivities continued during the week with an Ice Cream Social and International Dinner with entertainment provided by Payroll Technician Bruno “Jazzy” Lee.
Tyra Williams  
Nursing Assistant

“Tyra is a nursing assistant on the F-Yellow unit. I have seen Ms. Williams show extraordinary acts of kindness and compassion. Ms. Williams received a patient who was vented and unresponsive; in a desperate condition. Ms. Williams spent hours caring for the patient, completely washing and moisturizing the patient. Ms. Williams has impacted patient care. Her expertise has made a significant impact on patient care by reducing the number of falls on our unit by ensuring that all patient needs are met and helping reduce pressure ulcers by turning her patients in a timely manner.”

— Merica Fowler-Davis • RN

Lucero Palacio  
Ambulatory Care Technician

“We had a very young patient pass away, her family only spoke Spanish, and Lucy had always provided translation services for them when the patient was in the clinic. Lucy was on vacation when the patient passed, she took the time to go to the wake and extend condolences to the family. I received a call from a family friend to tell me how much Lucy’s act of kindness warmed their heart. They felt their loved one was truly cared for, not just as a patient, but as a person.”

— Kathleen Ruping  
Assistant Manager • Ambulatory Care Services

Shawana Felton  
Ambulatory Care Technician

“Ms. Felton demonstrates compassion toward her patients. She has a quiet manner and so you might not notice when she is doing her best to care for her patients. A young pregnant woman was seen in our clinic. Ms. Felton took the time to console the patient who had lost her grandmother. The patient was raised by her grandmother and felt very alone. She has two children (3 and 7). The youngest is developmentally disabled and a “little person.” Ms. Felton made sure the patient was seen by a social worker so that she could be evaluated. This patient is high risk and needed someone to look after her and protect the children. Ms. Felton kept track of this patient until she was seen by the social worker.”

— Ann Nascondiglio  
Assistant Manager • Ambulatory Care Services

Ashley Attah-Mensah, RN

“I remember posing this question to Ashley, ‘Why did you become a nurse?’ She replied, ‘I became a nurse because I want to be the change agent for improvement in the quality of care that patients receive. I want to bring evidence-based practice to the bedside, and encourage all clinicians to embrace the process, which will improve and enhance positive patient outcome. I became a nurse, because nursing is my vocation.’

— Jamie Fronheiser, RN  
Trauma Services at University Hospital are among the best in the country because of the collaborative care of nurses like Jamie Fronheiser. Jamie shows up ready and proactively communicates with all team members to ensure excellent patient care outcomes. She ensures that findings from the nursing assessment are included when the team makes decisions for patient care. Her nursing care exemplifies the mission and values of University Hospital.”

The Nursing Department created the Helping Hands award in 2017 to honor nursing assistants, patient care technicians and medical technicians. The award was created to recognize their contributions to providing quality care.

This is the second year the awards have been presented. Here are the winners as presented by the staff members who nominated them.
You Give Us 15 Minutes, We’ll Get You a Gomco

Looking for a Bair Hugger, Gomco machine or Camino monitor and you’re short on time? Call the UH Equipment Handlers who not only know what those medical devices are, but can deliver one to your unit within 15 minutes. Created in 2008 in response to concerns from nursing staff over treatment delays, the unit now boasts eight members who move clean, well-functioning medical equipment where and when it is needed. Equipment that is non-functional or due for inspection is transported by the Equipment Handlers and when it is needed. Equipment Handler position is an ideal first job for employees interested in hospital work, including nursing payroll, clinical support included:

- Anthony Ordona
- Danny Ortiz
- Geoffrey Koizumi
- Syed Asim-Abbasi
- Ethel Marsh
- Nelly Marfo
- Staff Nurse
- Ethel Marsh, Senior Recreational Therapist
- Michelle Matthews, Inpatient Director of Pulmonary Services
- Sandra Karpinska, Vice President of Ambulatory Care Services
- Patricia Horton Mosely, and Karen Romano, Manager of HR System Development
- Geoffrey Koizumi, Data Systems Coordinator
- Danny Ortiz, Senior Project Manager
- Anthony Orona, User Support Specialist
- Outstanding TEAM Award nominees: Equipment Handlers, Liver Transplant Care Coordination–Utilization Review

The Heart of UH

A speech pathologist, a certified medical assistant and the Equipment Handlers team were the first recipients of the new Heart of UH awards presented by the Human Resources Department.

“The purpose of the Equipment Handler Program is to maintain an inventory of equipment in each unit/service area and respond to requests for needed machines within 15 minutes to prevent delays in treatment. The Equipment Handlers serve as a liaison between clinical areas and Clinical Engineering, enabling clinical staff to take care of patients while Clinical Engineering fixes and maintains the equipment.

Other assignments include returning unused traction-related equipment from units/service areas to the Hi-Green Ortho Equipment storage area, delivering bariatric bed (up to 500 pounds), and delivering safe patient handling equipment. They also assemble the triangle devices suspended above patient beds.

The team works in Inpatient Units, the Emergency Department, Perioperative Services, Radiology, Outpatient Oncology, DOC/ Same Day Surgery, and the Harriet Lane Clinic.

Clinical Engineering trains the handlers how to identify equipment, plug in machines, and turn them on off. They also are trained on proper cleaning and following manufacturer instructions.

Jackson said the Equipment Handler position is an ideal first job for employees interested in hospital work, and it exposes them to many areas of operations. Jackson said she encourages her employees to explore opportunities that they have moved on to other units within the hospital, including nursing payroll, clinical engineering and materials management.

The Heart of UH award was held in the Oral Health Pavilion.

Jan Ward, a speech pathologist, was awarded for Outstanding Patient Care. Patricia Horton Mosely, a certified medical assistant, was presented the award for Outstanding Service Excellence and Support.

“Leaders are not people who simply talk the talk, they walk the talk,” said Chief Human Resources Officer Jerry Garcia. “You know what you do, you do it well and you understand how what you do contributes not only to the benefit of our patients, but to the mission of this organization.”

Karen Romano, practice manager for OB/Gyn in the ACC, nominated Mosely, recalling an episode in March as a blizzard approached when she stayed long after her shift ended. Mosely contacted patients advising them not to jeopardize their safety by coming out in a storm and telling Romano she would not leave until the work was done.

“Patricia’s impact with her patients cannot be overstated,” Romano said. “She builds a relationship with her patients week after week that is genuine, honest and contributes to the overall health and welfare of the population she serves.”

Ward was nominated by Sima Farid, MSW.

“Jan has consistently gone over and above in the work that she does, the time she spends with patients to ensure that not only their needs are met, but that they have a voice,” Farid said. “Sometimes the patients Jan deals with have no voice. She gives them a voice, she advocates, and informs them of community resources that they need that they wouldn’t otherwise have been able to get.”

The nominees for Outstanding Patient Care, in addition to Ward, were:
- Donna Dante, Care Coordination Manager
- Ethel Marsh, Senior Recreational Therapist
- Michelle Matthews, Inpatient Director of Pulmonary Services
- Sandra Karpinska, Vice President of Ambulatory Care Services
- Patricia Horton Mosely, and Karen Romano, Manager of HR System Development
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- Danny Ortiz, Senior Project Manager
- Anthony Orona, User Support Specialist
- Outstanding TEAM Award nominees: Equipment Handlers, Liver Transplant Care Coordination–Utilization Review

The nominees for Outstanding Service Excellence and Support included:
- Anthony Ordona, User Support Specialist II
- Danny Ortiz, Senior Project Manager
- Anthony Orona, User Support Specialist
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Each issue we will save the last page for something that is of special interest to everyone. In late May, New Jersey Health Commissioner Shereef Elnahal, MD, MBA, and Deputy Commissioner of Health Systems, Marcela Ospina-Maziarz, MPA, toured University Hospital, visiting the trauma and emergency departments, several operating rooms and an in-patient unit.

Clockwise from top right:
Commissioner Elnahal (center) and Deputy Commissioner Ospina-Maziarz (left) met with Chief Administrative Officer Annette Hastings, President and CEO John N. Kastanis and Chief Nursing Officer Carl Kirton
Commissioner Elnahal meets with Lee Clark, Executive Director of Perioperative Services
Commissioner Elnahal discussed UH’s initiatives with LGBTQ health with Dr. Jonathan Keith
Dr. Kirton provided the Commissioner information on the E-Blue Trauma Unit and Medical/Surgical operations.