



Children's Hospital Boston

# NURSES

## *Dedicated to Excellence*

From Eileen Spring, MSN, RN

## Congratulations to the Nursing team



I AM THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE that Children's Hospital Boston has been awarded Magnet status, an exclusive designation developed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center to recognize health care organizations that exemplify nursing excellence. The announcement was made Jan. 14 when we got the phone call from the American Nurses

Credentialing Center, a unit of the American Nurses Association.

The process of applying for Magnet status was thorough and lengthy, and began with the completion and submission of a document that addressed every aspect of nursing at Children's. In November, three members of the Magnet Recognition Program conducted a site visit to verify the information included in the Magnet document.

Having Magnet status underscores the fact that Children's has a world-class nursing organization that combines quality patient care and nursing excellence to produce innovations that improve professional nursing practice. It also provides consumers with the ultimate benchmark to measure the quality of care that they can expect to receive.

My deepest thanks go out to the incredible nurses at Children's. From the "Magnetees" who led the effort to complete the document, to the Magnet champions, who supported the efforts in ways big and small, and to every single nurse in this wonderful hospital, you have my admiration and gratitude.

A celebration to congratulate the nursing team took place Feb. 8 at our Longwood and satellite locations. We served a beautiful 7 by 7 foot cake in the Patient Entertainment Center and sent cakes up to nurses on floors for those who couldn't come down to celebrate with us, as well as to those at satellite locations, including Waltham, Lexington, Martha Eliot Health Center and Peabody.

I hope you can join your colleagues in celebrating this momentous achievement because it is truly the superior quality of your work that has made this recognition possible.

Warm regards,

Eileen Spring, MSN, RN  
Senior Vice President, Patient Care Operations,  
Chief Nursing Officer

## Children's nursing department receives top honors with Magnet status

Children's Hospital nursing department received Magnet Certification status in January from the American Nursing Credentialing Center (ANCC). Awarded to those programs that go above and beyond in providing exemplary patient care as well as a quality working environment, Children's Hospital Boston joins the ranks of an elite group, as only about three percent of hospitals nationwide have Magnet status.

"It means that we are the best at what we do, providing the best care we can in an environment in which people are proud to work," says **Marge David, RN**, patient and family liaison for Surgical Programs.

In order to receive Magnet sta-

tus, a facility must fulfill the 14 forces of magnetism, which focus on excellent patient services and a quality workplace. Children's nursing department presented the ANCC with a 40-pound document, 15 inches thick at the end of July, 2007 that outlined how the hospital met each force. The ANCC followed up with an onsite visit in November by three appraisers: Susan Bumgarner, Patricia Messmer and Janet Urbanowicz. The road to Magnet status took about two years and consisted of a lot of hard work from nursing staff. Here are three of their stories.

**Jane Murphy, MS, APRN, BC, PNP**, clinical nurse specialist for Surgical Programs wrote on two of the forces—"Image of

*continued on page 2*



Employees at Martha Eliot Health Center celebrate Children's Magnet status.

## Children's nursing department receives top honors with Magnet status

continued from page 1

Nursing” within the organization and the community and “Interdisciplinary relationships,” the collaboration between nurses and other health care professionals—for the original Magnet document. Murphy and other writers gathered examples of “Magnet Moments” from interviewing staff.

Murphy also served as an escort for one of the appraisers, Susan Bumgarner, during the three-day visit. During the first afternoon, they covered eight units in three hours. Bumgarner asked nursing staff questions pertaining to safe patient care, professional advancement of nurses, evidence based practice and teamwork.

“It was validating for me to hear the staff articulate what I already knew was going on,” says Murphy.

**Francine Falvo-Caruso, RN, BSN**, staff level II nurse in the ED, also served as an escort and worked as a magnet champion and ambassador to help prepare the staff for the visit. Every month, two champions from each unit met on “Magnet Monday” to collect information for sources of evidence, discuss methods to teach staff about the forces and share examples of “Magnet Moments” from each unit. Falvo-Caruso sent out monthly emails explaining the forces, held informational sessions for staff to discuss Magnet, and organized mock site visits to prepare the employees for the real thing.

Falvo-Caruso toured the emergency department, 9E, 9N and 8E. She describes a moment that touched the appraiser. An oncology nurse approached her and explained the bereavement closet that she oversaw with the support from fellow staff. The closet contains items to help a family grieve, such as memory boxes and special quilts.

“The Magnet Tour exemplified all the wonderful work and dedication of the nurses at Children’s...it was a true celebration of our commitment to providing the best care to children and their families,” says Falvo-Caruso.

David served as a Magnet champion and ambassador, escorting Bumgarner to the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> floor units. At the end of the visit, Bumgarner asked her if she had learned anything during the tour. David appreciated hearing staff discuss projects and programs in other departments. The road to Magnet status built morale and collaboration among the nurses as they acknowledged and discussed what made them the best. “We knew we were Magnet, but we had to prove it.” she says. “I was glad to be a part of that.”



Children's staff dig in to the Magnet Celebration cake.

## Primary Care Center nurses focus efforts on asthma certification

Asthma is the most frequently diagnosed condition at Children's Hospital Boston. To ensure that these patients are receiving the highest quality of asthma care, Children's Hospital Primary Care Center (CHPCC) is moving toward the goal of having each of its nurses earn his or her Asthma Educator Certification (AE-C).

An AE-C is an expert in teaching, educating and counseling patients with asthma and their families in the necessary knowledge and skills to minimize the impact of their asthma and improve their quality of life. Caregivers must pass an exam testing their comprehensive knowledge of asthma pathophysiology and management, as well as their skills in teaching asthma management.

"Performing asthma education correctly in a primary care environment can be difficult because it takes a lot of time," says **Harriet Sanclemente, RNC, MS, TNP**, clinical coordinator of the Primary Care Center. "To help alleviate this challenge, we want to have a trained asthma educator available every day, from open to close. The only way to do that is to get the whole staff involved."



**Linda Haynes,  
RN, MS, CPNP**

The CHPCC is supporting each of the nurses as they go through the credentialing process. Last year, the group took a course offered by the Partners Healthcare Asthma Education Institute. Nurses also completed workshops on subjects such as pediatric and food allergies (since a child with asthma is prone to suffer from allergies) and asthma best practice. Some attended a national conference for asthma educators. The nurses will start taking the AE-C exam this spring and the CHPCC hopes that each of the nurses will be certified by the

beginning of summer.

"This process has been a tremendous benefit for the center and its patients, but it's also benefited the nurses," she says. "It's given them confidence that they have the most up-to-date skills so they can provide their patients with the best possible care. Children's is amazing about supporting nurses in their professional development—helping each become what they are capable of becoming."

The AE-C goal is part of the CHPCC's quality improvement efforts for asthma, which also include the recent hire of **Linda Haynes, RN, MS, CPNP** nurse practitioner to be a full-time asthma specialist. An important part of her role will be to focus on the most acute asthma patients, such as those with Emergency Department visits and hospitalizations. She's also providing support to the nursing staff as they prepare for the certification exam.

## Spotlight on certification

Children's Hospital Boston is focusing on nursing specialty certifications, since higher certification numbers denote staff excellence and an opportunity for advancement. "Certification validates a level of competence and knowledge of practice standards in a nursing specialty," says **Pamela Gorgone, BSN, RN, CNOR**, perioperative staff nurse III.

Children's leadership is supportive of nurses' quests for certification. Last July, 34 to 37 percent of nurses were certified in specialty areas, but the numbers rise everyday. Gorgone spearheaded a movement to increase perioperative nursing certification about two years ago when she organized a test preparation class through Staff Development. Since then, the number of classes offered have grown and now include a broader range of specialties. Children's pays for the classes and offers them onsite to make it more convenient. Since Gorgone organized the first class, the number of perioperative certified nurses has jumped about 35 percent.

Certification also helps nurses advance professionally. **Jennifer Fortin, RN BSN CPNP**, clinical coordinator for the Center of Ambulatory Treatment and Clinical Resources, joined Children's 21 years ago, planning to only stay for just one year. But she rose up the ladder as a staff I and II level nurse, educator and manager, and now she's in a position where she can encourage other nurses to advance through certification. In her clinic, the number of certifications have jumped from zero to 50

percent in the past five years. "Certification is important to the development of a professional nurse, adding another dimension," says Fortin.

In the pediatric cardiac and medical surgical ICUs, the goal is for all Level II and III nurses to become certified within the next year. On average nurses must work in an area for two years before they take the test.

Having a high number of certified nurses and Magnet certification showcase Children's commitment to providing the best patient care. "Certification validates for the nurse and the community at large our dedication to excellence in patient care and staff satisfaction," says Fortin. The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) offers certifications for nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists and 11 specialties. The American Association of Critical Care nurses certifies those working in the pediatric cardiac ICU and medical surgical ICU, while the The Competency and Credentialing Institute certifies perioperative nurses.



## Children's nurses bring their knowledge to the State House

Children's Hospital Boston nurses took their expertise and experiences to the Massachusetts State House this fall to testify at a public hearing about patient safety and the nursing profession.

**Pamela Gorgone, RN, BSN, CNOR**, staff nurse in the main operating room, **Marcie Brostoff, MS, RN**, director of staff development and education, **CeCe Waithe, RN**, staff nurse on 9 East, and **Ashley Waddell, BSN, RN**, staff nurse in the operating room, attended the hearing in October to voice opposition to House Bill 2059, "An Act Relative to Patient Safety." This bill imposes mandatory nurse-to-patient staffing ratios in Massachusetts hospitals.

"Imposing rigid staffing ratios would limit the flexibility of nurses to use their highly trained judgment to make decisions about patient safety and care," says Gorgone, who spoke on behalf of Children's nursing team at the hearing. "If nurses can't be called upon to use their expertise and knowledge, it will be detrimental for patients, nurses and supporting staff."

In 2004, California enacted a bill imposing similar nurse to patient staffing ratios. Nurses from that state came to Massachusetts to testify about the "disastrous effects" of the mandate, specifically in delays related to patient care. In addition, they talked about added stress and burden on nurses and how certain staff members were no longer being provided because of the added cost of meeting the ratio requirements. "If the hospital can't meet the ratio, then beds are closed and people are turned away," says Gorgone.

In addition to lobbying against the bill, the nurses also expressed support for Senate Bill 1244. This bill, sponsored by Senator Richard Moore, calls for a degree of transparency



Nurses gather at the State House after voicing concern with House Bill 2059.

in hospital staffing plans without mandating a specific ratio, thus maintaining the role nurses play in making staffing and patient care decisions. Hospitals would have to submit their staffing plans to the state and be accountable for them in the public eye. In addition, Senate Bill 1244 includes initiatives to support nurse recruitment and education.

"A big reason for the nursing shortage is that there isn't enough nursing faculty to teach," says Gorgone. "There need to be incentives for nurses to help them go back to school to get the qualifications to be nursing professors. We also need higher pay for nurse educators so more nurses can afford to consider this as a career path."

After the hearing, the nurses spoke directly with their state legislators about how the two bills would impact their abilities to provide quality patient care. Both bills are currently pending before the Committee on Public Health and the Committee hasn't indicated if and when it will act on the bills.

The Nursing Department, in collaboration with the Office of Child Advocacy, has created a Legislative Action Interest Group to promote involvement of nurses in health care policy. To learn more, contact Bea Lorenzo at [beatriz.lorenzo@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:beatriz.lorenzo@childrens.harvard.edu).



### Children's Hospital Boston Nurses: Dedicated to Excellence

A publication of Children's Hospital Boston Department of Nursing

#### Editorial Board

- Diane Hanley, RN, MS
- Pam Dockx, RN
- Pam Gorgone, RN
- Marge David, RN
- Deb Krepcio, RN
- Diane Stanley, RN, MS
- Pam Schubert, RN
- Lorraine Bossi, RN
- Camilla Cook, RN
- Matthew Cyr

#### Editors

- Louise Cobb
- Erin Graham
- Matthew Cyr

#### Writers

- Jennifer Gundersen
- Eric Bland

#### Designer

- Patrick Bibbins

© 2008, Children's Hospital Boston. All rights reserved.

## New brochures improve communication with patients

After a hospital-wide audit of information currently distributed to patient families, it was determined that there was a need for new inpatient materials to ensure that families receive consistent, comprehensive information about their stay at Children's Hospital Boston. This month, the new hospital-wide communication plan will roll out to all inpatient families.

All patients coming to Children's for



the first time will receive a pre-admission brochure, which will be mailed to their home about two weeks before their appointments, and will include detailed directions on how to get to Children's, accommodation information, a form documenting current medications, tips on what to bring with them and more.

The brochure is accompanied by an appointment reminder letter and a newly created map of the Children's campus

to help them find their way around.

The second component is a welcome packet that all patients will be given by their nurse once they're admitted. In addition to a floor-specific welcome letter, the packet contains information relevant to all patients and families who stay in the hospital for any period of time, including descriptions of hospital services and amenities, neighborhood activities, a who's-who glossary and a section devoted to teenage patients.

The information will be updated annually. To see both brochures online, visit [childrenshospital.org/inpatient](http://childrenshospital.org/inpatient). Questions? Call Public Affairs at ext. 4-3110.