Connecticut Hospitals Honor Nurses for National Nurses Week

Connecticut hospitals are honoring nurses during National Nurses Week, for the courageous work they do each day caring for patients. National Nurses Week is celebrated each year, from May 6 to May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale. The presentation of the Nightingale Awards is being celebrated in four ceremonies across Connecticut this week and next. CHA extends congratulations to all Nightingale Award winners, and will be publishing a story in next week’s Update.

At St. Vincent's Medical Center, nursing managers popped popcorn for nurses, while others crammed into a special photo booth. The hospital’s nurses are known for their camaraderie, which helped them recently earn Magnet designation. The week also included a snack and gift distribution, special prayers and blessing of the hands, a lecture by Mohegan Chief Lynn Malerba, healing touch massage sessions, special night shift treats, a recognition ceremony, bouquets from WEBE 108, and a special talk by Channel 3 Eyewitness News personality Scot Haney.

MidState Medical Center celebrated the week with numerous events for nurses including massages and a sundae bar, and it held a screening of “Nurses, If Florence Could See Us Now,” a film that explores the complex world of being a nurse. The week culminates in the Nightingale awards, to be presented tomorrow in Hartford. At Stamford Hospital, nurses created posters demonstrating the advancements in the nursing practice and their continuous commitment to excellence. Nurses participated in luncheon receptions held all week. The week culminated in the Nightingale Awards Ceremony, and the presentation of honors and awards to outstanding members of the nursing staff. John Dempsey Hospital honored its nurses this week with a full schedule of daily offerings. Read more about its Nightingale winners by clicking here.

On May 8, Greenwich Hospital held its annual Ceremony for Excellence in Nursing to recognize the dedication, professionalism, and accomplishments of nurses throughout the hospital. At this year’s event, three members of the hospital staff won special awards. Priscilla Colet, RN, PACU, received The Helen Meehan Award for Excellence in Nursing. Tom Anderson, Radiology, was recognized with the Partner in Care Award, and Donna Coletti, MD, Palliative Care Program, was given the Physician Partner in Care Award. Nurses who earned promotions, new degrees, and certifications during the year were also recognized.

During a National Nurses Week ceremony on Tuesday at The William W. Backus Hospital, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer Mary Bylone, RN, challenged her fellow nurses to take time to thank their mentors for the roles they played in their nursing careers. “Use Nurses Week as an opportunity to reach out to that person and say ‘thank you,’” said Ms. Bylone. Approximately 75 people gathered for the ceremony, which included a plaque dedication in honor of Dorothy L. Miller, RN, MA, a Backus icon who dedicated her life to the nursing profession — and Backus. Before she passed away, Ms. Miller was president of the Backus School of Nursing Alumnae Association and a longtime volunteer. Known as an educator, mentor, leader, role model, and advocate, Ms. Miller received a Nightingale Award posthumously at the Nightingale Awards Ceremony on Thursday, May 9, at the Mystic Marriott in Groton, joining 11 other Backus nurses achieving the honor. To read their bios, click here. To view a video celebrating Backus nurses, click here.

At Middlesex Hospital, Hospital Chaplain Dennis McCann blessed the hands of hospital caregivers at a special “Blessing of the Hands” ceremony on May 7. In addition, a dedication ceremony for a new Healing Garden, located on the outdoor patio of the Critical Care Unit, was held. Nurses were also treated to a special breakfast and raffle. Festivities culminated with the annual dinner meeting of the Department of Nursing and awards ceremony. At Windham Hospital, Director of Pastoral Services Mary Horan offered a “Blessing of the Hands” throughout the week. The hospital administration sent a check on behalf of the nursing staff to One Fund Boston to help those affected by the tragic events at the Boston Marathon. Nurse managers at Windham Hospital made the rounds on Monday, May 6, passing out homemade baked goods to show their appreciation to nurses throughout the hospital and in the hospital’s school-based health clinics. The week culminated with a celebration breakfast on Wednesday, May 8, to honor Nicole Gavis, PCT-3, and Stephanie McBride, RN, recipients of the 2013 Jane M. Desmarais Award and Nursing Director of the hospital’s Emergency Department MaryAnn Duchene, RN, MSN, and Kathy Galinat, RN, Windham Hospital’s recipients of the 2013 Nightingale Award.

Throughout Nurse Week, Yale-New Haven Hospital thanked its more than 4,300 nurses for the exceptional care they provide to patients and their families. Each nurse received a personal gift, nurses were honored at recognition receptions, members of the Spiritual Care Department blessed the hands of nurses and staff, and Care for the Caregivers events include de-stressing, energy-increasing events and stretches. The week culminates tomorrow at noon with the hospital’s first Unity Walk, in which nurses from the York Street Campus will walk north and nurses from the Saint Raphael Campus will walk east. They will meet in a nearby field where they will participate in invigorating stretches led by hospital fitness center staff.
Bridgeport Hospital celebrated Nurses Week with a series of events and activities, including information sessions about its nursing patient- and family-centered care professional practice model and standards of performance; a May 7 lecture by Chief of Palliative Care Mariel Harris, MD, JD; a May 8 nursing awards ceremony; complimentary chair massages; gift distribution to patient care staff; and delivery of donated clothing and toiletries to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission. On May 3, the Adult Psychiatry Unit’s Kathy Pontes, RN, received the hospital’s Nurse Manager of the Year award from the medical staff for her outstanding leadership. In addition, 14 Bridgeport Hospital nurses will be among those honored for receiving regional Nightingale Awards for Nursing Excellence.

The Hospital of Central Connecticut celebrated Nurses Week with sweet treats for nurses at its New Britain General and Bradley Memorial campuses, including an ice cream social, special ice cream deliveries to nurses on the night shift, and sheet cakes delivered to each nursing unit. On May 16, the hospital will present its Excellence in Patient Safety and Viola Larson Memorial awards. The Viola Larson award, named for the hospital’s former vice president of nursing, recognizes a nurse who demonstrates clinical expertise, leadership, professional development, and compassion and respect for patients and co-workers. The patient safety award honors a nurse whose efforts have helped improve patient safety at the hospital.

2013 Legislative Session in Final Weeks

The Connecticut House of Representatives and the State Senate met in the session this week. With less than a month remaining in the 2013 Legislative Session, both chambers of the General Assembly are spending long days meeting, debating, and voting on bills. Numerous legislative proposals impacting hospitals are still awaiting action on the calendars of the House and Senate. The FY 2014-2015 budget has begun to be negotiated by legislative leaders and the administration’s budget office. All matters not acted upon prior to the end of session on June 5 will need to be considered again in a future legislative session.

Hospitals Take Part in Safety Coach and High Reliability Training Sessions

On April 29, CHA held an educational session for hospitals participating in CHA’s statewide initiative to eliminate preventable harm through high reliability science. Participants joined Healthcare Performance Improvement (HPI) for a webinar on Building a Safety Coach Program. Safety Coaches are team members who are trained to observe employee work behaviors and provide real-time feedback about practice and compliance with safety behaviors to prevent harm.
The program was led by CHA and HPI Consultant Steve Kreiser, CDR, USN Ret., MBA, MS. Mr. Kreiser also facilitated two sessions of high reliability training developed for medical staff. Open to hospital- or non-hospital-based medical staff, the training was offered as an additional opportunity for physicians.

The statewide program to eliminate all cause preventable harm in Connecticut, the first of its kind in the nation, launched last March.

**Hospitals Participate in Partnership for Patients Program on Preventing CAUTIs in the Acute Care Setting**

Infection prevention is a key focus area of the Partnership for Patients initiative, which is aimed at reducing patient harm by 20 percent and readmissions by 40 percent. On Tuesday, April 30, CHA and Qualidigm hosted a program on catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI) prevention. CAUTI, the most common healthcare-associated infection, is deemed preventable by CMS if guidelines are followed.

Session experts included Wendy Furniss, Branch Chief, Health Care Quality and Safety Branch, Connecticut Department of Public Health; Richard Rodriguez, Epidemiologist, Healthcare-Associated Infections Program, Connecticut State Department of Health; Diane Dumigan, Infection Preventionist, Yale-New Haven Hospital; Carol Dietz, Qualidigm; and Deborah Bohr, Senior Director, Health Research & Educational Trust.

The keynote address was given by Diane Dumigan, who shared the inter-professional approach taken by Yale-New Haven Hospital to identify and improve patient care processes. The hospital's method was so successful, it was recognized by the Department of Health and Human Services and awarded the first Partnership in Prevention award for achieving sustainable improvements in 2012.

Also during the session, nine hospital teams were recognized for completing the Stop CAUTI initiative that began 18 months ago.

**CHA Takes Part in National CAUTI Program**

On May 2, Alison Hong, MD, CHA’s Director of Quality and Patient Safety, participated in the Stop CAUTI: Interdisciplinary Academy for Coaching and Teamwork (I-ACT) program, held in Chicago.

Hosted by the Health Research & Educational Trust, the program brought together leaders in research, quality and patient safety, infection prevention, medicine, surgery, and pediatrics to discuss complex CAUTI issues and barriers to prevention.

Presenters included David Pegues MD, Mohamad Fakih MD, Sanjay Saint MD, Russ Olmsted, Linda Greene, and Barb Edson. Participants engaged in case discussions and shared best practices and solutions on challenging issues.

**Hospitals Participate in Briefing on Restraint and Seclusion Laws**

On May 2, 130 CHA members attended a briefing on restraint and seclusion practices in hospitals. These practices are conducted as a safety intervention to prevent injury to the patient or others, and there are numerous federal and state guidelines involved.

Donna Ortelle, Public Health Services Manager, Department of Public Health, reviewed the state law requirements. Attorney Jennifer Cox of Cox & Osowiecki, LLC, provided an overview of the federal requirements.

Mary Reich Cooper, MD, CHA’s Chief Quality Officer, provided a review of The Joint Commission requirements and discussed using high reliability science to prevent the need for restraint and seclusion. Connecticut hospitals are engaged in a first-of-its-kind statewide initiative to eliminate all cause preventable harm using high reliability science to create a culture of safety.

The program concluded with a hospital panel discussion on best practices. Panel members included Lesvia Jackson, Director, Regulatory Compliance, Norwalk Hospital; Linda Stuermer, Manager, Quality Improvement, Eastern Connecticut Health Network; and Nancy Tommasini, Psychiatric Consultation Liaison Nurse, Yale-New Haven Hospital.

**Education Updates**

**Partnership for Patients - Prevention of Perinatal Harm**
Tuesday, May 21, 2013
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Please join us for this full-day session with national and local subject matter experts who will share the latest scientific research and standards related to the prevention and management of pregnancy-related complications. Participants will learn strategies and practices that can assist them in improving maternal unit readiness, recognition, and response to pregnancy-related complications and obstetrical emergencies.

Session faculty: Institute for Healthcare Improvement; Cynosure Health; American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG); Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nursing (AWHONN); and experts from Connecticut hospitals.

Event Registration

Partnership for Patients - Prevention of Venous Thromboembolic Events
Wednesday, May 22, 2013
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality calls thromboprophylaxis against Venous Thromboembolic Event (VTE) the number one patient safety practice.

Please join us for this half-day session with subject matter experts who will share with participants a package of change strategies that highlight risk stratification, standardizing care, decision support, and use of technology.

Event Registration

CHA Nurse Preceptorship Program
Thursday, May 23, 2013
8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Supporting and strengthening the work of nurse preceptors is critical to the development of new nurses and retention of the highly skilled staff registered nurses who teach them at the bedside. Curriculum for the Nurse Preceptorship Program was developed by a team of educators from area hospitals and schools of nursing and is designed to provide core content that is foundational for the role of nurse preceptor. The program includes presentations and interactive sessions that cover topics such as roles and responsibilities, characteristics of a professional role model, basics of teaching and learning, tools and strategies for effective communication, principles of constructive feedback delivery, evaluating competence, delegating effectively, and more. The Nurse Preceptorship Program will serve to start new nurse preceptors off with critical information and also may be of interest to nurse preceptors that have not had this content, or would like to be refreshed on these concepts.

Continuing education credits will be awarded. Please see the brochure for details.

View Brochure | Event Registration

Partnership for Patients - Overview of the New Ventilator-Associated Event Definition for Quality and Patient Safety Professionals
Thursday, May 30, 2013
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Live Webinar, Presented at your Facility

The National Healthcare Safety Network has changed the surveillance definition from Ventilator Associated Pneumonia to Ventilator-Associated Events. Data indicate that streamlined, objective algorithms to detect Ventilator-Associated Events (VAE) are easily implemented, can make use of electronic health record systems to automate event detection, and identify events that are clinically important and associated with outcomes such as length of stay and mortality.

Join us for a webinar with Lauren Backman, Epidemiologist III, Healthcare Associated Infections Program, Connecticut Department of Health, who will provide an overview of the new VAE definition and algorithm that can assist quality and patient safety professionals in designing reliable processes to detect ventilator-associated complications.

Event Registration