Letter from Jayne Willingham

Dear Nurse Resident Colleagues:

A special thank you to the nearly 400 nurses, nurse coordinators, chief nursing officers (CNOs), nurse residents and nurse resident graduates who gathered March 21-24, 2017 in San Diego for our Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program Annual Conference.

Collaborative. Thought-provoking. Reinvigorating. These are just a few of the words that underscored the conversations and energy generated by the passion that the new nurses – and everyone attending the conference, shared throughout the week-long event.

What surfaced is the creative and enthusiastic ways the new nurses and the team driving the The Vizient/American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Nurse Residency Program™ are deploying as we partner to tackle the biggest challenges and transform health care for a better future for the patients we serve.

Our keynote speaker, Kathleen Flarity, Research Nurse Scientist for UCHealth in Colorado and the Mobilization Assistant to the Chief of the Nurse Corps for the Office of the Surgeon General spoke to us about resiliency and igniting the passion in nursing. Our nurse residents who presented their evidence-based practice projects through seven dedicated podium presentations and 38 posters, brought her message to life.

One of the more touching presentations was titled, Sanctifying Sadness: Examining a Moment of Silence to Honor ICU Patients’ Deaths. This project was done by one individual, not a group. The presentation stood out because of the young nurse’s unbridled passion for the project.

“This simple yet impactful moment of silence has made a substantial difference in the critical care areas at her organization.

Another riveting presentation addressed the growing but difficult issue of identifying human trafficking victims in the emergency department.
The nurse residents presenting on this topic works in a hospital located in the mountains of northern Colorado near a main interstate highway. The statistics for human trafficking in the area are unusually high. The presentation revealed that unlike child abuse (which is somewhat easier to report), suspected human trafficking presents an entirely different set of circumstances that could threaten the safety of the supposed victim. The hospital heightened their assessment skills and looked for subtle indications that could be red flags. Since its implementation, this enhanced assessment and their interventions have saved five individuals from captivity.

After hearing this presentation, one organization from the Houston area said, ‘I have to go back to my facility and talk about this because we are in a corridor along an interstate highway that is ripe for this type of criminal activity. We need to heighten our awareness and assessment skills in the emergency department to be on alert for this.’

The commitment of the CNOs, nurse leaders and hospitals to the future of nursing also rang loud and clear that at the heart of the NRP is a desire for the participating hospitals to help the new residents grow professionally. What other great way than to have them go to a national conference and present their work.

Thank you for your commitment to nursing and to the Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program. It is greatly appreciated.

Best,

Jayne
Passion for the profession: 2017 poster winners announced

Thanks to the efforts of nurse residents across the country, who shared their passion for the nursing profession at our annual conference, March 21-23, 2017 during the most exciting part of the gathering: the presentations.

The Vizient NRP requires participants complete an evidence-based practice project at the end of the one-year residency. In preparation for the conference, residents are asked to submit an abstract of their project and the top abstracts are selected to make live podium presentations. This year, seven abstracts were selected to present.

“The presentations by the nurse residents really made me step back and say, ‘Wow,’” said Jayne Willingham, MN, RN, CPHQ, senior director, nursing leadership at Vizient.

In addition, 38 projects were selected for the poster session, where the attendees of the conference vote on the first-, second- and third-place winners.

As for those projects submitted for the poster contest, the first-place poster winner was a group who tackled the issue of removing Clostridium difficile from their facility. C. difficile is a highly contagious, debilitating GI infection to which patients on multiple antibiotics are susceptible. This group looked at the potential impact of something as simple as yogurt.

“They implemented a process where patients on antibiotic therapy got a cup of yogurt on their meal tray every day. As a result, they eliminated C. diff. in two areas of the hospital,” Willingham said. “The year prior to their project they had eight cases and after they implemented this strategy of serving yogurt (which costs next to nothing), they eliminated the problem.”

The top three winners were:

a. First Place: Reducing the Incidence of Colostridium Defficile Infections (Houston Methodist Sugarland – Lee Cantos, Elizabeth Emmanuel, Chandra Knight)

b. Second Place: Diversional Activities for Hospitalized Dementia Patients (PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center – Lindsey Helms, Hannah McKenzie)

c. Third Place (Tie): Improving Effective Communication between RNs and VMTs (University Heath System – Angie Hoermann, Felicia Garcia)

d. Third Place (Tie): Efficacy of Exercise on Patients Suffering from Mental Illness (Blessing Hospital – Michael Claus, Jim Aschemann, Jill Koch, Amber Curry)
My patient

By Heather Vanderford, nurse in the Pediatric Progressive Care Unit at Duke Hospital

There was always one patient that I was praying I wouldn’t be assigned to when I came in on my orientation days. This patient’s name was Hope. Hope had an extensive history of respiratory failure after getting a virus that attacked her neuromuscular system. She had an extensive medical history including Down syndrome and was trach tube and vent dependent.

As a new graduate, I had no experience with trachs, and Hope was known for desatting (losing oxygen). During a nightshift, after just completing orientation, Hope was my patient. About half way through my shift, she started to desat. At first, she would dip down into the 70s and would resolve with chest PT, suctioning, and increasing her FiO2. However, she then had an episode that required bagging. The charge nurse came in and helped me, and after a couple of breaths she regained her sats.

The night team then came to the bedside and was evaluating her. Within ten minutes, she started dipping down into the 60s and wasn’t responding to the increased FiO2. As they were standing there watching me, I immediately grabbed the bag, popped off her vent, and started bagging her.

After we got her back on the vent, the resident looked at me and said, “Wow, I’m so glad you knew how to do that. You did such a great job.”

That’s when it hit me. Hope was “my patient.”

I knew what to do for her, because I had been there for her time and time again. I finally felt like I was a major part of her treatment team, because I had taken ownership of her care.

That night I gained my confidence that these are “my patients,” and I know them better than I think I do. It gave me a new perspective when teaching parents how to care for their sick children at home. I can now encourage them that they too will become comfortable with caring for their sick little ones with a little time and a little practice.
And the winner of the Good Catch Award is…

Just three months on the job and having recently completed orientation, nurse resident Lauren Lindsey was working on her first shift. On that Sunday, toward the end of her shift at MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital in Leonardtown, MD, the medical/surgical/pediatrics nurse, was standing by a patient bedside when a surgeon came in to discharge a patient who had had a hip replacement.

Lauren was gathering the patient's discharge information and saw an order for outpatient physical therapy. When she asked the patient about physical therapy, the patient said she lived alone, and had no transportation to attend outpatient physical therapy sessions.

Lauren reviewed the note from physical therapy with the recommendation for home health, and having talked to the patient about her living situation, decided to approach Kelly Stanton, RN, a more experienced nurse to confirm that the patient was unsafe to be discharged home. Kelly called the surgeon, and the discharge was held so that proper therapy could be arranged and the patient would be safe.

Lauren’s actions are a great example of how following the High Reliability Organization (HRO) principles helps ensure patient safety. Lauren spoke up and sought help from her team and worked to validate and verify the patient’s needs were being met.

Nurses honored for raising awareness in human trafficking

Two Main Line Health hospital network nurses recently were lauded at the Villanova Research Symposium, “Nursing Research for Healthy Communities,” for their evidence-based practice project designed to raise the awareness on human trafficking.

Steven Donahue, Michael Schwein and Danielle LaValee from Lankenau and Paoli hospitals presented their project, which reflected their efforts to heighten emergency room providers' knowledge and identification of human trafficking, which has become an epidemic in the United States.
Points of Pride: Penn Medicine

At Penn Medicine: University of Pennsylvania Health System, there’s lots to celebrate in the nurse residency program this spring.

Oh baby

Addie Cunniff, BSN, RN, a current nurse resident in the neonatal intensive care unit at Pennsylvania Hospital, recently completed a research study that focused best practices for weaning a toddler from breastfeeding, and what role providers play in helping nursing mothers to do so. Cunniff partnered with Diane Spatz, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN, of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, to conduct research. Their findings were recently published in the March/April issue of the American Journal of Maternal Child Nursing entitled “Mothers’ Weaning Practices when Infants Breastfeed for More than One Year.”

Residents form friendships on the run

If there is any question that nurse residents at Medstar Georgetown University Hospital form close friendships during their first year on the job, consider this group of four members in the 2016 program.

Calling themselves, the “C5runners,” Shannon McCarthy, Molly Purnell, Annie Fazzio and Rachel Safferman recently completed the Cherry Blossom 10K. They thanked their manager for “picking out friends who will stick out 10 miles together!”
On March 17, 2017, Medstar Georgetown University recognized 37 nurses who recently completed the year-long nurse residency program. The three top poster winners were:

1st Place: NICU nurse Claire Lang for her poster “Examining How Probiotics Reduce the Risk of NEC in the NICU.”

2nd Place: C51 nurses Mary Margaret McCallie and Theresa Yates, for their poster “Setting a Standard: Improving Pediatric Transplant Discharge with Teach-back.”

3rd Place: C62 nurses Theodore Aronson and Traci Schultz for their poster “UnorthodOXY: Scheduling Narcotics Postoperatively.”
Outward Bound: NRP program expands to ambulatory care

Since 2002, more than 1,700 nurse residents have received their training through the Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program (NRP). In those 15 years, all of the nurse residents have been trained at the Aurora, CO-based health system’s hospitals.

But recently in an innovative strategy to meet workforce needs, the program has been expanded to include new graduates in ambulatory procedural and outpatient settings. Hospital leaders say it is a historic step considering that out of the 3,266 recently-licensed nurses across the country, only about four percent work outside acute care settings.

Terrie Rill, director of nursing and professional standards for Ambulatory Services, said the expansion also is designed to ensure nurse residents are adequately prepared for the complex world of ambulatory care.

Spotlight on evidence: Study changes surgery practice

With about 80 percent of all patients in hospital settings receiving intravenous therapy, a nurse resident at Lehigh Valley Health Network asked the question: “Are peripheral IVs the best use in medical-surgical units” for her evidence-based practice project.

The result: Not always.

Nurse resident, Jamie McCabe’s project changed the practice at hospitals in the Allentown, PA-based hospital system. The study found that: Replacing non-clinically indicated IVs increases costs, wastes time and causes patient discomfort. Through the use of an IV algorithm, RN education and daily discussions during safety huddle, staff were able to decrease the prevalence of non-clinically indicated IVs in patients.
Congratulations to UCHealth nurse residents Katelyn Petersen and Alisha Torbeck who presented through their project about Neonatal Mock Code Implementation at the 29th Annual Rocky Mountain Interprofessional Research and Evidence-Based Practice Symposium in Denver Colorado April 7, 2017. The podium presentation included the impact of these codes on neonatal nurse’s perceptions of confidence and competence regarding neonatal resuscitation.

Risky Business: Congrats to our Tampa General Hospital nurse resident team who won first prize for their evidence-based project, “Moderate to High Fall Risk Patients’ Perceptions about Falling in Acute Care Setting.” The team includes nurses: Makayla Einsmann, Showanna Ferguson, Lauren Raymond, Sylvia Sanchez with Sylvia Helms, Nurse Manager, Clinical Education.

Thanks to nurses Sara Khalili Tehrani and Lauren Maiorano from the complex medicine unit who represented Tampa General with their evidence-based practice project poster “Cuing Nurses with Color” at the Sigma Theta Tau’s Annual Research Conference March 25, 2017.