



Atrium Health

AtriumHealth.org



Atrium Health

2019
NURSING
ANNUAL REPORT

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Atrium Health Nursing

Mission, Vision and Values



Our Mission

To improve health, elevate hope and advance healing – FOR ALL



Our Vision

To be the first and best choice for care



Nursing Vision

To be the first and best choice for nursing care and practice



Nursing Values



Caring

We provide compassionate care to our patients and families and deliver a superior patient experience.



Teamwork

We work as one team, under one system.



Integrity

We work to ensure the integration of clinical expertise, education, evidence-based practice and the pursuit of quality patient outcomes.



Commitment

We are committed to our patients and their families, our colleagues and our profession.

ATRIUM HEALTH NURSING

By the numbers



Total number of nurses

15,000+*

*This number includes joint venture and affiliated enterprises.

Number of nurse
advanced practice
providers
(NP, CNM, CRNA, CNS)

1,548



Number of nurses
recruited in 2019

**over
1,820**

8.2

Average years of
service of nurses



45%

of nurses hold
advanced degrees



**over
2,689
nurses**
promoted in 2019

**10,373
nurses**

employed in various care settings
(inpatient, outpatient, specialty)





Letter from Mauren Swick

Senior Vice President and System Nurse Executive, Atrium Health

As I write this message in 2020, we are amid a challenging time for healthcare, our nation and the world. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has changed much of the way we operate. It has also proven how integral nurses are during a global pandemic, timed impeccably as we celebrate the Year of the Nurse.

Represented throughout this report is the essential and exceptional work performed by nurses across our organization last year. In reading these stories, you'll find examples of how nurses are devoted to innovation and delivering quality care. Nurses' accomplishments in 2019 were a bit more "under-the-radar" than they are in 2020. Those accomplishments are no less significant, and I am honored to pause here, during the Year of the Nurse, to celebrate the previous year's work.

Each of the nurses featured here – and our entire nursing team – deserve our gratitude and praise for the vital work they carry out every day, not just during the Year of the Nurse. Each and every day, they put patients at the center of all we do and take care to a higher level.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen Swick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Maureen" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Swick".

MAUREEN SWICK, PhD, MSN, RN, NEA-BC

Senior Vice President
System Nurse Executive

Nurse Executives Across the System

The Nursing Executive Leadership Council at Atrium Health is made up of key nursing executives across the enterprise. These transformational leaders provide the vision, structure and strategies to accomplish organizational goals, while inspiring teammates throughout Atrium Health to achieve extraordinary patient outcomes.

Marietta K. Abernathy, MSN, MBA, RN, NEA-BC

Atrium Health Stanly

Tracey Blalock, MSN/MVA, NEA-BC

Navicent Health

Mary Ellen Bonczek, MPA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC

New Hanover Regional Medical Center

Britney Broyhill, DNP, ACNP-BC

Atrium Health, Center for Advanced Practice

Barbee Whisnant-Burgess, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CNL

Enterprise Nursing, Atrium Health

Jennifer Ziccardi-Colson, MSN/MHA, BSW, BSN, RN, NEA-BC

Behavioral Health Service Line

Colleen Hole, MHA, BSN, FACHE

Atrium Health Medical Group

Lorraine Daniel, RN, BS

Navicent Health Baldwin

Cynthia Faulkner, MHA, RN, NE-BC

Pender Memorial Hospital

Becky Fox, MSN, RN-BC

Chief Nursing Informatics Officer, Atrium Health

Kate Grew, MSN, RN

Atrium Health Cabarrus

Elaine S. Haynes, MSN, RN, NEA-BC

Atrium Health Lincoln

Rufus Harrell, BSN, RN

Medical Center of Peach County

Katherine Hefner, MSN, RN, NE-BC

St. Luke's Hospital

Cindy Hill, BSN, RN

Pine Pointe, Navicent Health

Bebe Holt, MSN, MHA, RN, NEA-BC

Scotland Health Care System

Jessica Helgersen, BSN, RN

Rehabilitation Hospital, Navicent Health

Alecia Bennett, BSN, RN

Carlyle Place, Navicent Health

Patricia J. Mook MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CAHIMS

Nursing Operations, Atrium Health

Cathy M. Moore, MSN, RN, NEA-BC

Atrium Health University City

Veronica Poole-Adams, MBA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC

Atrium Health Cleveland and Atrium Health Kings Mountain

Misti Robinson, BSN, RN

Home Health, Navicent Health

Rob Rose, MS, RN, NEA-BC

Central Division (Carolinas Medical Center, Levine Children's Hospital and CMC-Mercy)

Barry Nelson, MSN, RN, CENP

Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge - Morganton

Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge - Valdese

Cindy Sartain, MHA, BSN, RN, LNHA

Continuing Care Services, Atrium Health

Renae O. Taylor, MHA, BSN, RN, FACHE, CCRN, NEA-BC

Southeastern Health

Kathleen Tregear, MSN, MBA, RN, JD, NEA-BC

Atrium Health Pineville

Terri Veneziano, MSN, RN

Columbus Regional Healthcare System

Denise White, MSN, RNC, NEA-BC

Atrium Health Union and Atrium Health Anson

In One Day at Atrium Health



34,000

patient encounters
(**1** every **2** seconds)



21,000

physician visits



700

home health visits



480

surgeries



215

virtual care encounters



4,700

unique patient visits



70

babies delivered



3,300

ED visits



\$4.5 million

**each day in uncompensated care
and other benefits to our community**



Letter from Gene Woods

President and Chief Executive Officer, Atrium Health

From the very beginning, when we first opened our doors, and throughout the 80 years we have served our community, one thing that has always set us apart is the special touch our nurses have and their unique ability to blend compassion and innovation in the practice of medicine. As caregivers, they provide a shoulder to cry on and a hand to hold for our patients during their most unsettling and uncertain moments. And as healthcare experts – and as clinical leaders – they bring a practical, human-focused, scientific approach to quick decision making in order to save lives and help those most in need.

Throughout this report, you will see stories that illustrate how our nurses, the lifeblood of our organization, bring this compassion and innovation to their work every single day, 365 days a year.

And though this report highlights our year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever, our Atrium Health nurses have never shined brighter. From within our own facility walls to hospitals around the globe, the world is seeing firsthand what we have long known: Nurses are amazing human beings who deserve our thanks for all they give, every day, to each patient and every community.

Thus, as you flip through the pages of this report, I hope you feel this same sense of gratitude and pride for our incredible nurses and their remarkable contributions to our mission of **improving health, elevating hope and advancing healing – FOR ALL.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eugene A. Woods". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first name "Eugene" being more prominent.

EUGENE A. WOODS

PRESIDENT & CEO, ATRIUM HEALTH

Award-Winning Progress in Patient Safety

**Nursing team takes patient safety to the next level
with enhancements to fall prevention program.**

In order to ensure each patient receives the best care, our dedicated nurses are continuously seeking ways to improve quality and patient safety. The project “Preventing Falls with Injury” by the team at The Medical Center, Navicent Health (MCNH) is one example of these outstanding efforts in action.

For the project, MCNH enhanced its fall injury prevention program using the Hester Davis Falls Program, a scientific approach to predicting and preventing falls and injuries. The program is a total falls management solution comprising three evidence-based components – including a fall risk assessment, falls care plan and falls toolkit – proven to predict and prevent falls while sustaining patient safety.

Under the program, patients receive individualized care plans mapping specific intervention based on identified risk factors, and the care plan is adjusted based on the patient’s real-time condition. Through the implementation of the program, education, new technologies and supplies, and monitoring, MCNH successfully reduced falls with injury by nearly 50 percent.

Based on feedback from teammates, the program has also generated a significant culture shift. “Nurses really feel that this is not only a comprehensive tool, it’s been a culture change, says **Amy Todd, RN-BC, MBA, assistant vice president of Patient Care Services at MCNH**. “It gave our nurses a tool that is intuitive for them because it was created by a nurse leader.”

The Partnership for Health and Accountability (PHA) presented its prestigious Quality and Patient Safety Award to MCNH for the project, which won first place in the “Hospitals with Over 300 Beds” category. MCNH also won a Circle of Excellence Award, an honor given to hospitals and health systems that have demonstrated a sustained commitment to quality and patient safety as evidenced by earning three or more PHA Patient Safety Awards within the previous five years.

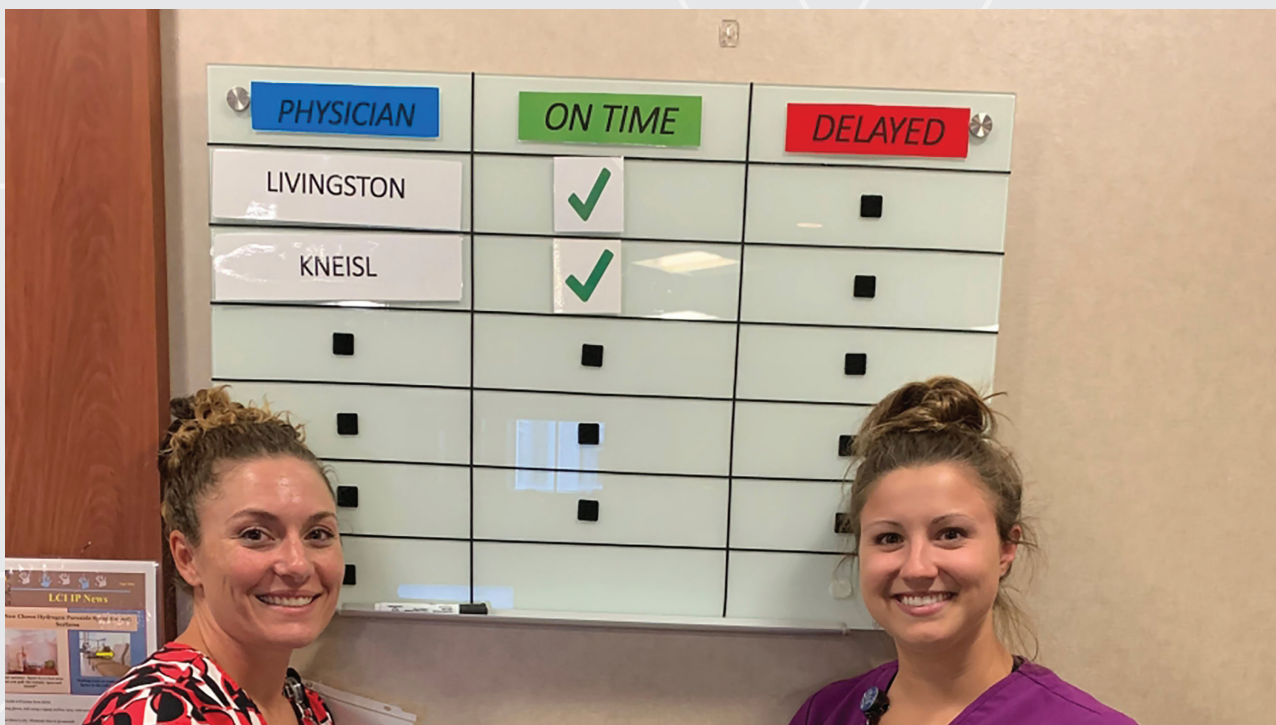
Additional nursing operational excellence achievements from 2019 include:

- Infection prevention work leading to system wide reductions in CAUTI and C. Diff.
- Implementation of staffing boards to improve communication on all 24/7 Units
- Implementation of “Code Lavender” compassion fatigue program across 45 sites
- Decreasing RN turnover
- Improvements in HCAHPS New Medication Bundle top box scores
- Expansion of virtual RN to RN handoffs from acute care settings to skilled nursing facilities
- Development and implementation of standards for RN/MD rounding with hospitalists on all applicable units
- Increases in wellness visits performed by ambulatory RNs



The team at The Medical Center, Navicent Health (MCNH)

“ Through the implementation of the program, education, new technologies and supplies, and monitoring, MCNH successfully reduced falls with injury by nearly 50 percent. ”



HEATHER PARKER, BSN, RN, AND MACKENZIE DOMSKE, RN

How a Wait Time Whiteboard Is Boosting Patient Satisfaction at Levine Cancer Institute

A group of nurses at Levine Cancer Institute wanted to find a way to provide up-to-the-minute notifications about a doctor's waiting time. They had heard about other departments who used a whiteboard with up-to-date wait times for each patient. Hearing of the whiteboard's success, they implemented the method themselves and immediately heard feedback on improved patient satisfaction, demonstrating that sometimes the most effective solutions are also the simplest.

At Levine Cancer Institute's Rare & Complex Clinic for Sarcoma and Orthopedic Oncology, patients have questions. Lots of them. "We see higher wait times because we're so specialized," explains [Mackenzie Domske, RN](#). "And a lot of the feedback from patients had to do with them not being notified of their wait time."

Each quarter, units get information about patient satisfaction from patient survey results that are benchmarked against national industry peers — and in 2016, the Rare Complex clinic scored in the 54th percentile in terms of informing patients about their wait time. For a group dedicated to patient satisfaction, this was a major blow.

The team wanted to solve this problem with something affordable and easy to use. They saw a few offices that were finding success with whiteboards that showed "real-time" wait times. Intrigued, they began adapting that idea for their department.

"We pretty much saw instant results," explains [Heather Parker, BSN, RN](#), and Unit Based Council (UBC) Chair. "Patients were actually verbalizing to the staff that they liked the board and were happy to have up-to-date wait times available." And the survey results supported this — bumping up to the 81st percentile in 2017 and then to the 94th percentile in 2019.

This simple whiteboard has made patients much happier and led to fewer questions for the front desk. Instead of being disrupted by frustrated patients, everyone in the department can instead focus solely on providing high-quality care.

For their efforts, their department won the Heart of Nursing Award for Most Improved Unit Based Council for Atrium Health's Central Division. Now they're committed to sharing these learnings so that other departments at Atrium Health can keep patients informed about their wait times.

"It was really satisfying as a department to actually see something like this come together," says Parker. "It sparked everyone's creativity and cemented the fact that whenever we have a problem, we can find a solution. It's encouraged our staff to push more new ideas and get things done."



BECKY DUNLAP, MHA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC

Big idea makes big impact

In early 2019, **Becky Dunlap, MHA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC**, assistant vice president, Patient Care Services for Atrium Health, sat in a research symposium listening to a nurse talk excitedly about Atrium Health's Patient Care Scorecard – the scorecard that Dunlap herself created. “It was so exciting that I started crying!” says Dunlap. It was the culminating moment of years of hard work.

Dunlap joined Atrium Health in 2011. She quickly noticed the need for a coordinated system for tabulating and sharing quality metrics. “Managers and nurse leaders were receiving metrics randomly,” says Dunlap. “There was no coordination. It might come to them in 25 or 30 different emails – from 25 or 30 different people.” And if they missed the email, the only option was to reach out to the many different sources individually to request the metrics. How could she improve the process? “The vision was to develop a one-stop shop for quality metrics.”

Her work began with Atrium Health Cabarrus, focusing mostly on quality and patient safety information for nurse leaders. She started by gathering the 25 or 30 emails each month and attaching the metrics to one email. “At least that got it all in one place,” she says. Then, with help from different departments, Dunlap began building a spreadsheet to organize the data, complete with color-coding for quick and easy scanning. “My goal was to create a place for all of this important information to live,” she says. “One place where nurse leaders could go, at any time, to access the data in detail or in summary.” Dunlap emails a monthly report to nurse managers, directors, assistant vice presidents, chief nurse executives and other frontline teammates, summarizing highlights as well as the areas that need improvement, and including a link to the full scorecard, currently housed on a web platform.

Dunlap and her colleagues also began sharing the scorecards with frontline teammates who attended the Quality and Practice Council. They would use the data to choose projects for process improvement. Infection Prevention soon joined in, ditching plans to create their own scorecard. Managers can access not only their own department's data, but the data of other departments as well – an excellent opportunity to share best practices. As the scorecard's reach grew, Dunlap realized the scorecard had the potential to benefit teammates system-wide.

But just Dunlap and a few others kept the metrics current. “It was a beast,” she says. “It was quite challenging to keep up. But I learned a long time ago that if you want something to be successful, it can't be dependent on one person or one role. It has to be bigger than that.” They began resourcing teammates to gather data for each facility, taking care to standardize as much as possible. And in July 2017, she put in a work request to automate these manual scorecards. It was approved within six months, but automation of such a large database has taken time to develop.

While the original spreadsheet focused on quality metrics, clinical metrics and patient safety information, the current version has grown into a true balanced scorecard, complete with patient experience, nursing finance, teammate safety and HR turnover data. It covers acute-care hospitals and is slated for expansion to include emergency departments in the future. “It's huge,” says Dunlap. “And it required a lot of folks and expertise to make it happen. I'm grateful that I had that kind of support.”



NATIONAL CONFERENCE



RN NETWORKING TRIFECTA - UNION



NURSE RECRUITMENT CENTER WITH
NEW LEADER JAKKI OPOLLO DEC 2019



NBNA CONFERENCE –
NEW ORLEANS NATIONAL
BLACK NURSES ASSOCIATION



NURSE EDUCATORS AND NEW GRAD TEAM 2019



NC EMERGENCY
NURSES ASSOCIATION
FALL 2019 CONFERENCE

Nursing the Future

The new Nurse Recruitment Center prioritizes the approach of recruiting for retention.

Atrium Health continues to strive for patient-centered care and values the teammates who make that care possible. Which is why it was so exciting to see some big ideas come to fruition in January 2019, when we officially launched the Nurse Recruitment Center.

With a dedicated team of Talent Consultants at the helm, the Nurse Recruitment Center is committed to enhancing the candidate experience by focusing on three key recruitment areas: new graduate nurses, experienced nurses and international nurses. The intent is to recruit for retention by attracting, engaging and developing nurses who remain with Atrium Health throughout their nursing career.

Through this program, Atrium Health has improved nursing wages by investing more than \$19 million into the lives of more than 15,000 nurses and nursing support staff. Additionally, a “nurse pipeline” was

created to address career development. This includes expanding the Atrium Health Loan Forgiveness program to include the RN-BSN programs at Cabarrus College of Health Sciences and Carolinas College of Health Sciences, as well as launching the CNA-to-RN Scholarship Program.

The Nurse Recruitment Center fosters a collaborative approach, with Nursing, Human Resources, teammates, hiring leaders and academic partners working in tandem. This teamwork has already contributed to several national recognitions, including Forbes 2019 Best Employer for New Grads.

As the Nurse Recruitment Center evolves, it plans to expand the number of participants in the Nurse Externship, where rising senior nursing students work closely with experienced RNs on a nursing unit.





ATRIUM HEALTH CABARRUS

There's No Place Like Home

Care teams help patients overcome barriers to prevent readmissions.

Our care teams are dedicated to identifying and implementing ways to improve readmission rates across the system. Reducing readmission rates is essential to the overall operations of the organization, but the importance of this work extends beyond our hospital walls and into the communities and homes of each patient we serve.

Readmissions often occur when patients do not have access to care. It takes each member of a care team working in concert to pinpoint challenges and overcome obstacles so patients can not only go home, but stay home.

Teammates at Atrium Health Cabarrus recently experienced an example of this strategic

collaboration. They worked with a patient who had twelve inpatient admissions resulting in a length of stay of 42 days over one year. Through various touchpoints and deliberate support efforts from the care team, the patient ultimately agreed to enroll in the NC MedAssist program, which provides prescription and over-the-counter medications to patients in need. As of May 2019, the patient had zero readmissions.

From a system-wide perspective, the progress is palpable. In 2019, Atrium Health saw a 42% reduction in inpatient visits, which equates to a 39% reduction in inpatient billed charges and a 41% reduction in bed days.



TERRI RICHARDS, BSN, RN

Nursing is Not a Career, it's a Calling

Long before there was the Internet, **Terri Richards, BSN, RN**, somehow discovered the (former) Mercy School of Nursing. She started the nursing program there in 1975. Three days after graduation on June 12, 1978, she began her journey at Charlotte Memorial Hospital -- now Atrium Health's Carolinas Medical Center -- in the neonatal intensive care unit.

"I just remember on my first day when I thought to myself, 'I can't do this,'" Richards says. "I met one of my friends also working there for lunch and started crying because I didn't like sticking babies with IVs. My friend said: 'You get back up there; you can do it. You're not a quitter and never have been.'"

Richards did push on, but in the back of her mind, she never thought she would continue nursing after three years. More than 40 years later, she's still giving that caring touch to the smallest patients at Atrium Health Levine Children's Hospital.

"It's not been a career, it's a calling for me," Richards says. "The Lord gave me a passion for these babies."

Richards recalls how much healthcare has improved over the last 40 years. Back then, babies born at 28 weeks didn't survive. "We now have babies born at 23 weeks surviving," she says. "I have a patient who will be 3 years old in May. Even with technology today, he shouldn't be alive. He had so many problems with his brain, heart and lungs. I went to his first birthday in 2017 and never thought he would walk, but he was running and talking. Parents are so grateful to the nurses. You're a part of the family while you're there."

The charge nurse hopes to retire in the fall of 2021. Although her leadership duties sometimes take her away from the patients, she still figures out a way back to them. "I care too much," she says. "That's not going to change until someone puts dirt over my face."



TAMMY REYES, CNM, MSN

Midwife Shows Exceptional Care for Healthy Delivery of High-Risk Child With Down Syndrome

“I had no idea what a midwife was.”

Lauren Dantzler isn't alone. A mother of three, Lauren had sought out Atrium Health's Piedmont GYN/OB – Rock Hill during her first pregnancy upon the advice of a friend. She's since relied on the certified nurse midwives (CNM) of Atrium Health to deliver her children, which included a high-risk pregnancy with her youngest son, Copelan.

“With a midwife, you get a personal connection and relationship that is not limited to pregnancy, conception or six weeks post-partum,” notes Lauren.

At Atrium Health's collaborative practices, the midwife works very closely with board-certified OB/GYNs. “It makes it a wonderful environment with the benefit of someone who focuses on the healthy, well and normal, but is also able to care for patients when there is an added layer of complexity or illness involved,” says **Tammy Reyes, CNM, MSN**, a midwife who worked closely with Lauren during all three of her pregnancies.

When possible genetic issues were detected with Lauren's child during her third pregnancy, it was determined she was pregnant with a baby with a high possibility

of Down Syndrome. Reyes shared the news with Lauren the moment she found out — on her day off, right at the end of a 24-hour shift. “She needed to hear from someone she trusted,” recalls Reyes.

Reyes referred Lauren to a high-risk OB/GYN on Atrium Health's maternal-fetal medicine team. After an initial appointment, her baby boy was growing perfectly. With that, rather than moving her care to a dedicated high-risk doctor, Lauren chose to continue working with her midwife alongside a physician.

At Atrium Health maternity centers, mothers receive the benefits of a birth center environment combined with the benefits of the hospital. Lauren delivered at Atrium Health Pineville, where they, along with other Atrium Health maternity centers, have a firm belief in minimal intervention, resulting in a cesarean section (C-section) rate below the national average. Jetted jacuzzi tubs, showerheads and birthing balls are available to support the delivery process, as well as handrails throughout the hallways to encourage walking. Women are encouraged to be up and out of bed, with intermittent monitoring only taking place when medically necessary.



KATHRYN CARSON, BSN, RN, CPHON, JULIE CHASNIS, BSN, RN, CPHON
ALYSON GALEK, BSN, RN, CPHON AND MANDY ANDERSON, BSN, RN

Extra Support for Pediatric Oncology and Hematology Patients and their Families

Nurse navigation program offers personal attention to patients and families facing pediatric cancer diagnoses.

Cancer comes with a learning curve. As the number of pediatric hematology and oncology treatments grows – offering patients new options and effective outcomes – so do the complexities of those protocols. With each treatment plan comes a lot to learn and a lot to manage: appointments, medications, injections and more.

It can seem as though families must take on a new job on at the worst possible time. To ease this stress, Atrium Health Levine Children's expanded its program to include pediatric nurse navigators who could help take on that job for them.

Atrium Health adapted the nurse navigation model for pediatric oncology and hematology patients at Levine Children's Hospital. To help young patients and families manage cancer treatments, as well as blood disorders like sickle cell anemia, pediatric nurse navigators became a trustworthy and consistent source of help and information.

Education has become an important aspect of the work of a pediatric nurse navigator. As decisions regarding treatments approach, long conversations with experts become crucial in order to make educated choices. Nurse navigators offer this time and expertise. To do so, they become experts in these patients – they attend meetings with their providers, they stay current on patients' progress – so they're ready with answers when questions arise.

Whatever stage of treatment and however many providers the patient sees, the nurse navigator offers a familiar face through the process. They spend time with patients in

the hospital when they're admitted, and they teach families how to give injections at home, too.

"The best part about being a navigator is the relationships that we develop with families," says **Kathryn Carson, BSN, RN, CPHON®**, Clinical Supervisor of the Pediatric Hematology, Oncology and BMT Program at Levine Children's. "We see them in their lowest moments and as they get better and go onto the survivor clinic."

Levine Children's asked patients and families which words they'd use to describe their nurse navigator. The most frequent responses were "helpful," "caring," and "kind." Other words patients and families used included, "advocate," "lifesaver," and "my everything."

The survey asked providers and nurses to identify which aspect of the nurse navigation program they found most helpful: patient education, care coordination, medication management, or serving as a direct contact for patients and their families. The results showed a nearly even split across all four.

The program at Levine Children's Hospital has grown since its beginnings in 2012. Now, nurse navigators help pediatric patients dealing with sickle cell anemia, brain tumors, leukemia, solid tumors and more.

"The growth of this program shows the satisfaction of everyone with the role of nurse navigators," says **Julie Chasnis, BSN, RN, CPHON®**, nurse navigator at Levine Children's. "It shows the value this role has, and the high need there is for it."



CAITLIN VITULLI, RN

From Nursing School to Practice: Oncology Nursing TTP

After graduating from the Carolinas College of Health Sciences (CCHS) nursing program, Caitlin Vitulli, RN, began her nursing career at Atrium Health's Levine Cancer Institute (LCI). "Starting any new job is a little unnerving. But going straight from nursing school to delivering care for cancer patients... It's intimidating."

Vitulli's experience is not unique – many nurses entering specialty nursing fields find the learning curve can be steep. And this is where a group of veteran oncology nurses at LCI stepped in to make a difference for future nurses, and, ultimately, their patients.

Together, LCI's nurses designed an experience aimed at giving newly hired oncology nurses time, resources and training to help them make the transition from general nursing to oncology.

Angela Hosking, MBA, MSN, RN, OCN, NE-BC, administrative director, Central Operations; and LCI Nursing teammates **Emily Bellard, MSN, RN, AOCNS, OCN**; **Jessica Garmon, MSN, RN, ONC**; and **Courtney Capotosta, MSN, RN, OCN**, from inpatient Oncology, were the driving forces behind turning this idea into reality. They partnered with Atrium Health's Transition to Practice Program leadership team, creating this oncology-specific experience.

"Specialty training is critical to oncology nursing, and that is not something you get in nursing school," says Bellard, oncology clinical nurse specialist at LCI. "Even the most seasoned nurses need specialized training to learn how to manage care for cancer patients. We created this program to prepare our nurses earlier on. They are even chemotherapy-certified before their orientation is complete."

The program includes a unique mix of outpatient training at LCI and inpatient training at Carolinas Medical Center, covering topics like hematology, solid tumors and bone marrow transplantation. In addition to classroom lectures, nurses participate in professional practice sessions, getting hands-on training through simulation sessions specific to oncology treatment.

The Oncology track is one of Atrium Health's many New Graduate Nurse Residency Programs, which recently received accreditation with distinction by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). An integral part of the new graduate nurse experience, all RNs with less than six months of professional nursing experience complete the Nurse Residency Program, which supports new RNs in the transition from academia to a complex practice environment.

"The facilitators are great, and they want to see us succeed," says Vitulli. "They won't put you on the floor without making sure you feel 100 percent confident. There's peace of mind with that, because chemotherapy can be very dangerous. It can get pretty complicated, and nobody wants to get it wrong."

The Oncology track of the Nurse Residency TTP accepts nurses twice a year, following summer and winter graduations. The number of participants continues to rise, with the latest cohort reaching 36 – more than double the initial cohort. Response to this track has been very positive. "The nurses get what they need to care for cancer patients," says Bellard. "I wish I had something like this in my time! The classes help them become seasoned nurses, faster."

2019 Notable Nurses



Joann Fite, LPN

Healthy@Home, Atrium Health Cleveland



Erin Perrotti, BSN, RN, CN II

Carolinas Medical Center



Lauren Medlin, RN, CN I

Atrium Health Lincoln



Samuel Abonza, RN, CN I

Atrium Health Lincoln



Dianne Annan, RN, CN I

Carolinas Medical Center



Robin Starnes, RN, CN I

Atrium Health Kannapolis



Brandon Nussbaum, RN, ASN, CN I

Atrium Health Cabarrus



Kenya Gregg, BSN, RN

Atrium Health Behavioral Health Charlotte

Atrium Health nurses are exceptional, dedicated – and yes, notable. The Notable Nurses program launched in May 2013 and features monthly stories highlighting nurses nominated by their colleagues across the enterprise and carefully selected by a multi-disciplinary committee within the organization.



Bryan Broodno, RN

Atrium Health Behavioral Health Charlotte



Dawn Middleton, RN

Carolinas Medical Center



Felicia Kaiser, RN, CN I

Carolinas Medical Center



Christen Eudy, BSN, RN, CCRN-E

Atrium Health – Virtual Critical Care



Jennifer Gardner, RN

Atrium Health's Musculoskeletal Institute



Megan Brazelton, RN, CPN,

Carolinas College of Health Sciences



Matthew Nasui, RN, CN I

Atrium Health Mercy

Pinnacle Award Honorees

The Atrium Health Pinnacle Award recognizes teammates who best exemplify our core values of caring, commitment, integrity and teamwork. The Pinnacle Award is the highest honor bestowed to teammates within the organization.

2019 Honorees



Britney Broyhill, DNP, ACNP-BC

Assistant Vice President

Advanced Practice Care Center for Advanced Clinical Practice

Care Center for Advanced Clinical Practice

Britney Broyhill is an extraordinary leader at Atrium Health and has been instrumental in the advancement of our collective thinking and approach to our Advanced Practice Provider workforce. Broyhill's work has been the foundation upon which we have built strong care teams that now include APPs as an important member. She is a trailblazer, helping to shape the way healthcare will be delivered in the future.



Kristy Houser, RN

RN/Program Coordinator, Palliative Medicine

Atrium Health Cleveland

Kristy Houser is hailed as the “quintessential nurse” by her team – the most caring, humble, graceful, dependable and empathetic nurse. She is the backbone of her team and is a source of encouragement; her work ethic and personal character inspire her teammates. It has been said that not only is she a shining light at Atrium Health, but her spark is a beacon for humanity.



Jordan Nardi, RN

RN Clinical Nurse II

Resource Team/Float Pool

Jordan Nardi is soft spoken, compassionate and tender, which in his case stands out because he was formerly a boxer.

Nardi shared an experience he had with one of his patients. They became close friends before the patient's passing. Nardi was even a pallbearer at his funeral. His type of caring serves as a role model for all of us – a reminder of the value we get when we allow ourselves to open up to our patients.



Millie Paranich, RN

Care Manager/RN, Nurse Care Management

Community Care Partners

Hearing these few words from a patient, “Your help has made my life change,” is why Millie Paranich says she is a nurse. Paranich has been a nurse for nearly 40 years. In 2017, she was recognized by a physician at one of her practices. She is a nurse who cares deeply for others, is highly engaged with her peers, patients and providers.

Great 100 Nurses in North Carolina

The Great 100 Inc., a grassroots peer recognition organization honoring nursing excellence and providing scholarships to nursing students across the state, compiles an annual list of the top 100 nurses in North Carolina.

Great 100 recognizes recipients for outstanding professional ability and contributions to improving healthcare in their communities. Nominations are submitted by peers and reviewed by a committee. The winners are selected by a board of previous Great 100 recipients.



2019

Award Recipients

Carolinas Medical Center

Heather Brown, MSN, RN, CMSRN, CNL

Tru Byrnes, DNP, RN-BC, CNL, CMSRN

Ashley Hewitt, BSN, CCE

Rebecca Noe, BSN, RN, SCRNP, CN III

Julie Pagel, MSN, RN, CCRN, SCRNP, CNE-cl

Melissa Barnes, MSN, RN, BMTCN, OCN

April Strassburger, BSN, RN, CEN, NR Paramedic

Atrium Health Kannapolis

Candance Hellard, MSN, RN-BC, CCRN, CMSRN, TCRN

Atrium Health Union

Mindy Parsons, RN-BC

Atrium Health Cabarrus

Mary Lou Bowers, DNP, MSN, ACNS-BC, RNC-MNN

Atrium Health Cleveland

Audrey Weaver, RN, BSN, CCRN CNIII

Levine Cancer Institute

Brenda Crump, MSN, RN, CRN

Levine Children's Hospital

Della Wrightson, MSN, APRN, RNC-NIC

Magnet® Presentations

The American Nurses Credentialing Center's National Magnet Conference is an annual event where more than 9,000 nurses, nurse executives and healthcare professionals from the top hospitals around the world gather to share best practices and their passion for improving patient care. Every year, they receive more than 1,500 abstracts from Magnet® designated organizations interested in presenting their work during the conference. In October 2019, Atrium Health was honored to share a poster presentation to showcase excellence in nursing at the conference held in Orlando, Fla.

ED Nurses Leading and Winning the Sepsis Battle

Mary Jo Austin, BSN, RN, CEN, TCRN and Kathleen Lawing, BSN, RN, CEN
Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte, NC

Gold Touchstone 2019 Award Winners

Each year, Atrium Health recognizes individual and group efforts that exhibit exceptional performance in the areas of patient safety, clinical outcomes, clinical efficiency and service excellence.

Carolinas Healthcare System Blue Ridge

Crestal Mosteller, BSN, RN; Meghan Boswell, BSN, RN; and Valerie Coulter, RN
Improving Patient Safety One Fall at a Time

Carolinas Healthcare System NorthEast

Emily Moser, MSN, APRN, AGCNS-BC; Shannon Morton, DNP, APRN, NEA-BC, ACNS-BC;
Jonathan Shraga, DO
Using Surveillance Monitoring as a Catalyst for Change: Decreasing Over-Utilization of Telemetry Monitoring

Levine Children's Specialty Center: Rheumatology

Anna Sherrod, BSN, RN; Lynn Kalhagen, MSN, RN-BC, CPN; Talia Buitrago, MHA, CPHQ
Cracks in Your Referral Process? Find Your Sustainable Solution Here

Carolinas Medical Center

Diamond Staton-Williams, RN, BSN, MHA; Dan Hall, MSW, BSN; Kim Sturkey, BA, CCM, ACM-SW, CMC;
Lulu Zhou, MS, MA
High ED Utilization: Collaborating Across the Continuum

Levine Children's Pediatric Specialties

Mehgan Beverley, MS, Becky Bevilacqua, PNP, Karen Emmerton, MS; and Nicole Turner, MSN, RN
Flu Fighters 2.0: Spreading Strategies to Stop the Spread of Flu

Moments of Gratitude

The passion, skill and commitment of our nurses is never as evident and appreciated as when it is seen through the eyes of our patients. Here are just a few quotes from the hundreds of stories of compassion and caring our patients share about their nurses.

“

I received compassion from my nurse – such a **sweet, comforting soul** – which always made me feel at ease.

The nurse I had spent extra time with my family to explain procedures clearly.

It was a small gesture that made us feel seen and even more comfortable.

Aside from the expert care and kindness shown to me, **my nurses did everything they could to make me smile and laugh.**

What an amazing experience from my nurse – she was **responsive, caring, kind, informative and professional.**

My nurse showed such **compassion and grace** throughout my hospital stay. She always went above and beyond. I could not thank her enough for being there for me and my family.

Our nurse always goes the extra mile to make my son laugh or smile.

The nurses and support staff **made me feel at home** and like I was among friends. It made a huge difference to me!

I'll never forget **how thoughtful my nurse was** or how his bedside manner was so genuine.

The nurse showed me incredible kindness and care.

It was wonderful knowing I was not alone. A nurse was **always there** to remind me.

The nurses that helped me were really **attentive and comforting.** I can't express enough gratitude."

Every nurse is so **sincere and kind.** They take care of you as they would their own family.

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At the time that this report is going to print, Atrium Health nurses and healthcare workers around the world are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic. We honor their dedication and excellence during 2020 — The Year of the Nurse.



