

**UPMC**  
*Nursing*

# Student Nurse Pathways



## Message from the Chief Nursing Officer

Everywhere you turn someone is talking about health care. Be it health care reform, health insurance coverage, or the cost of health care, the common theme through all the debate is that we need a new patient-care-delivery model for tomorrow. We will need the best and the brightest nurses designing and delivering the patient-care model for the future. There seems to be an overall agreement that this model will include the expanding role of the nurse, expanded focus on preventative care, and the management of the chronically ill patients. Health care providers and employers will be seeking out nursing students that are the best prepared for entering this ever changing environment. With my position expanding from the role of UPMC Presbyterian CNO to also include the responsibility as UPMC's chief nursing officer, I recognize how well my experience as a bedside nurse and nurse leader has allowed me to adapt to the changes in health care. Having a solid clinical foundation has supported and guided me through trends in health care, and specifically changes within our nursing professional practice. My unsolicited tips for today's future nurses would be to develop a career path. Begin your nursing career in a place that will provide you with a solid clinical foundation, as well as, an environment in which you will grow emotionally, intellectually, and professionally; be challenged, stimulated, and be fostered continued learning. Also, stay informed and current in your profession by reading all that you can in the news and the nursing literature. My hope is that you will find this newsletter as a great resource to assist you with your transition from nursing student into the rewarding and lifetime role of professional nurse.

**Holly Lorenz, RN, MSN**  
UPMC Chief Nursing Officer

## Finding Graduate Nurse Positions: Where Are They?

In the year 2000, nursing recruitment experts projected a stunning nursing shortage of approximately 760,000 nurses by the year 2020. In 2007, due to many forces, most notably people entering the nursing profession later in life, the nursing shortage was predicted to be far less by 2020 at approximately 220,000 nurses. Here we are in 2009 and everyone is asking "Where has the nursing shortage gone?" The answer is, no where!

No one should be lulled into a false sense of security by an excess of graduate nurses. Though available positions are limited, with the current national vacancy rate around four to six percent, this tight job market won't last for long. Why? The economy has sent a lot of nurses back to work to support spouses who lost jobs. Nurses who worked part time or casual for years returned to full time. Senior nurses have delayed retirement, for economic reasons. The national nursing workforce is aging with the bulk of practicing nurses (more than 500,000) near age 50. When the economy improves and full time nurses return to home, casual, or part time, and those who delayed retirement retire, there will be a large vacuum to fill. On the heels of that, hundreds of thousands of nurses will be considering retirement in the next few years. Another difficult shortage is on the horizon.

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### UPMC Nursing Vision

UPMC Nursing will create the best patient experience, nationally and internationally, through the selection, development, retention, and reward of the highest-performing nurses, while creating systems and programs that create consistency and excellence in patient care.

**Finding Graduate Nurse Positions** *continued*

What does this mean for those of you graduating right now in this tight market? Jobs are available for saavy grads who follow these tips:

- Keep your mind open to all positions. If you have your heart set on the ICU, pediatrics, or any number of specialties, you should not limit your applications to only those. All positions offer you a chance to learn and grow in the first year or two of your profession. Visit our website (<http://www.upmc.com/careersatUPMC/Pages/default.aspx>) and be open to possibilities. Check for available positions often and apply often. Do not assume that by applying to one job someone will seek you out for a different job.
- Remember that recruitment does not start when you graduate. How you performed and how you presented yourself while doing clinicals, may impact your chances of landing a job. If you worked while in school, especially where you are applying, a stellar work record or attendance record can give you an advantage when applying.
- When contacting recruiters, text messaging and informal communication styles are off-putting. Stand apart by properly greeting and introducing yourself in e-mails and phone messages. Don't send an e-mail asking "Hey, do you have jobs?" (yes, students do that!). Be careful of e-mail addresses that are unprofessional such as smileystudent@xyz.com. Be very aware of what you post in online forums such as nursing discussion boards and Facebook. No matter how private you think it is, it often has a way of getting out.
- Resumes count! Sloppy, poorly formatted resumes speak volumes. Spend time making yours stand out with a clean and professional presentation. Omit unusual formatting, it is distracting at best.
- Although we are in a digital online application world, it does not make networking and introducing yourself in person while on clinicals obsolete. Those who are courteous and professional and make personal connections while in school and while job hunting have a greater chance of being selected for a position.

Most of all, be patient. Job hunting in today's market requires patience and persistence. ■

did you  
*know?*

## 2010 Summer Student Nurse Internship Program

Starting Monday, Dec. 7, applications will be accepted for the 2010 UPMC Summer Student Nurse Internship Program.

Qualified candidates must:

- ***Be enrolled in a bachelor's degree or associate's degree nursing program.***
- ***Complete their junior year or equivalent by spring 2010.***
- ***Hold a preferred minimum grade point average of 3.25.***

The 11-week paid internship will begin Sunday, May 23 and end on Saturday, Aug. 7, 2010.

Stay tuned. More details will be available online at [www.upmcnurses.com](http://www.upmcnurses.com).

## UPMC Passavant and Robert Morris University Create Dedicated Education Unit Pilot

A collaborative project between nursing leaders at Robert Morris University (RMU) and UPMC has resulted in the launch of a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU) at UPMC Passavant. By utilizing the staff nurses on the DEU as instructor and preceptors, the students have the opportunity to apply their knowledge in the clinical setting with a professional nurse who is competent and comfortable in the hospital environment. Utilizing a consistent staff nurse for a student's undergraduate clinical experiences provides the student with continuity in their educational process. The staff nurse understands the unique learning needs of their student and can seek growth opportunities for them in the clinical setting. By using familiar clinical settings, errors may be reduced, thus maximizing patient safety. Providing a positive clinical learning environment enables new hires who have had several clinical experiences on the unit as a student an easier time transitioning into the role of a professional nurse upon graduation. For more information, please contact Dr. Valerie Howard at [howardv@rmu.edu](mailto:howardv@rmu.edu) or Sarah Ziccardi at [ziccardisl@ph.upmc.edu](mailto:ziccardisl@ph.upmc.edu). ■

did you  
*know?*

## Journey to Excellence

Did you know there are various paths for hospitals to mark their journey toward excellence? The most familiar is the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) designation of Magnet status to recognize health care organizations that provide nursing excellence. This year UPMC was honored to celebrate UPMC St. Margaret's Magnet status designation. This five year journey for all UPMC St. Margaret employees was led by David Martin, president, and Susan Hoolahan, chief nursing officer and vice president of operations. Through this period of time, they demonstrated their values and dedication for excellence. Another ANCC designation is the Pathways to Excellence, ideally for small- to medium-sized health care organizations. Pathways to Excellence is earned by health care organizations that create work environments where nurses flourish by having professional satisfaction. This award recognizes the organization as a best place to work. The third path is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, which is awarded by the President of the United States to an organization for being outstanding in seven areas:

- *leadership*
- *strategic planning*
- *customer and market focus*
- *measurement, analysis, and knowledge management*
- *workforce focus*
- *process management*
- *results*

Congress created this award to recognize organizations' achievements and raise the awareness about the importance of quality and performance excellence. The common theme with all of these programs is the emphasis on developing a culture that has a well-developed workforce (thus receives rewards and recognition) as well as developing systems that support and promote innovation and quality patient care. Nursing students should be knowledgeable about their potential places of employment's journey toward excellence. The journey does not happen overnight, it could take years receive an award. Knowing that a plan exists gives you an idea about the values of the organization and its leaders.

Go to the following links to read more about these designations

<http://www.nursecredentialing.org/Magnet.aspx>

<http://www.nursecredentialing.org/Pathway.aspx>

<http://www.baldrige.nist.gov>

## Surveys to Evaluate Student Experience

The UPMC Center for Nursing Excellence and Innovation (CNEI) is committed to ensuring that both nursing students and faculty have a positive clinical experience at UPMC hospitals. To evaluate the student clinical experience and ensure a robust clinical learning environment among the more than 2,500 students per semester, unit nurses, and faculty, a 360° Student Evaluation Survey was developed.

The purpose of the 360° Student Evaluation Survey is to quantify the student experience consistently and encompass the perspective of all constituents leading to improvements in the clinical learning environment. A system-wide assessment tool was developed in partnership with academic and hospital nursing leaders. Key stakeholders had significant input to ensure that the needs of both the academic and the service constituents were met.

Surveys created in SurveyMonkey were sent to students, faculty, and nursing staff via e-mail during the fall 2009 clinical rotations. We asked all students and faculty to complete the survey of their clinical experience within one week upon receiving the survey email. Your feedback is important to us. We want the clinical learning environment to be positive for students, faculty, and unit nurses. For more information please contact Renee Thompson, director of Academic Service Partnership (CNEI) at [thomra@upmc.edu](mailto:thomra@upmc.edu) or 412-647-7917. ■



## Transitioning Between Care Providers: One of the Riskiest Places in Health Care

Studies have shown that a significant number of medical errors occur when a patient transitions from one care provider, or focus of care, to another. Hospital hand-offs occur when a patient is admitted, before and after medical procedures, when staff turns over at shift change, when patients are transferred between units, and at discharge (either to another care facility or home). “Communication problems are the number one cause of sentinel events,” according to the Joint Commission’s Sentinel Event Advisory Committee.

Hand-offs are high-risk events. Critical information that is incomplete, omitted, or misunderstood can lead to less than optimal care and patient harm. Improved communication during hand-off is a Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goal (NPSG #2E).

To address the need for improved patient communication during intra-hospital transport, UPMC implemented the Ticket to Ride program, rooted in the principles of crew resource management:

- *standardized communication*
- *coordinated teamwork*
- *problem-solving and decision-making*
- *situational awareness.*

A literal ticket, designed as a checklist, accompanies patients from in-patient units to testing areas and back.

The hallmark of any improved process is evidence that it helps caregivers do the right thing. The Ticket to Ride initiative resulted in a 43 percent reduction in the number of Condition A’s (cardiac arrest) and Condition C’s (crisis) during transport and in testing areas.

Safe hand-off is the focus of a new initiative for transitions from acute care to the post-acute setting. A rapid improvement event is scheduled this fall where cross-setting and cross-functional teams will collaborate on process changes to improve the safety of hospital discharge. ■

## Student Nurse Internship Program Awards

UPMC’s Summer Student Nurse Internship (SNI) Program took place between May 24 and Aug. 8, 2009. Students from the Pittsburgh region and from across the country participated in this prestigious program at UPMC facilities across the system. Renee Thompson, MSN, RN, director of Academic Service Partnerships, UPMC Center for Nursing Excellence and Innovation, is the director of this program.

The 11-week paid student nurse internship program is for nursing students who are serious about their education and want a meaningful internship experience. The 129 students partnered with a professional nurse as they provided evidence-based care to patients at UPMC. The supervised clinical experience enabled students to improve their organizational, time management, prioritization, and critical thinking skills while continuing to enhance their clinical competence. Student intern workshops enabled the interns to focus on their professional growth and development skills. Additionally, the program provided interns the opportunity to practice their interviewing and communication skills, and to network with their peers and nursing leaders at UPMC beyond the traditional clinical care learning environment.



*SNI Caring and Compassion Award essay winners: Pictured with Holly Lorenz and Renee Thompson on the far left and right, are, from left: Carol Struck, Lauren Daniels, Adrienne Domenico, and Vance Kaloz. Missing from the photo is Kyle Bahnson*

*continued >>*

*Internship Program Awards continued*

**SNI Caring and Compassion Award**

As part of the program, each participant had the opportunity to write an essay about a particular experience during their internship signifying his or her commitment to providing caring and compassionate patient care. Nursing leaders from several UPMC hospitals reviewed the essays and selected five essay winners. The caliber of stories recounting their experiences at UPMC was very impressive. Here is an excerpt from one of the caring and compassion winning essays:

**Kyle Bahnsen:**

*Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC*

By week two of the internship, I was becoming more confident in the fact that I had absolutely no idea what the human mind was capable of. One of the biggest things I struggled with this summer was maintaining the “personal space” rule. At WPIC neither patient nor staff was allowed to touch each other, which I found most difficult to follow, especially after reading these kids social histories.

Although picking favorites is obviously frowned upon, there was one patient in particular that I was particularly drawn to, patient X. Patient X was an 11 y/o girl with an awful hereditary disease that affected nearly every organ and system of her body. Her psychiatric symptoms were directly related to her deteriorating medical condition. Patient X had been at WPIC for months, and had been expected to pass quite some time ago. Needless to say, she was still kicking and screaming, biting, spitting, and driving staff crazy. Staff had a short fuse for patient X, and often resorted to 4-point’s as a means to regain some sanity. As horrible as patient X could be, I still had this incredible soft spot for her. I don’t know if it was her antics, her nuances, or perhaps the fact that she had led a most dreadful life for so long, but from the day I met her I began to search for how I could make her days special. Each morning I came in, I would come in with a plan for how I was going to entertain her. We did word searches together, played countless games of “I declare war,” and made special concoctions of pudding and saltine crackers for a snack. Every bath time was “spa time” as I would massage her head with shampoo, and lather her up with lotion from head-to-toe as she would direct me to scratch “a little to the left, a little to the right.”

I still wish I could have swooped in to WPIC and saved all these children’s lives like Superwoman, but it is simply not possible. I never found that one magical thing that would help change patient X’s life forever, before I realized that it was all the little things that counted. Every smile, every laugh, every joke, every high five, helped to make patient X’s day a little bit brighter. This is our job as nurses, we do it every day. ■

# Promoting Dignity and Respect in the Workplace

In November of 2008, the Center for Inclusion in Health Care introduced the Dignity and Respect campaign, in an effort to promote dignity and respect in the workplace. The campaign began with the launch of a pledge, followed by employee focus groups, which were conducted to engage employees and gather their thoughts around inclusion, dignity, and respect. In response to the feedback received, the Center for Inclusion in Health Care created 30 Tips of Dignity and Respect, which can be practiced each day.

**Promote Dignity and Respect.**

Visit [www.dignityandrespectcampaign.com](http://www.dignityandrespectcampaign.com) to find out how you can promote a culture of dignity and respect by taking the Dignity and Respect Pledge or downloading a copy of the 30 Tips of Dignity and Respect poster or brochure.

**Tip of the Day**

*Tip #5 – Say thank you.*

Gratitude is a gift that’s never too small to give.

**Get involved!**

Below are ways in which you can demonstrate your personal commitment to inclusion by supporting the Dignity and Respect campaign:

- *Encourage others to take the pledge.*
- *Pick a tip each day to promote within your organization.*
- *Print the 30 Tips of Dignity and Respect poster and/or brochure and display them in a visible location for everyone to view.*
- *Incorporate the dignity and respect tips and pledge into existing events and activities.*
- *Select a tip to be a theme for a team meeting or event.*
- *Introduce others to the dignity and respect campaign.*
- *Encourage others to add a dignity and respect footer to their email messages (i.e. “Inclusion begins with a core belief that everyone deserves dignity and respect” or one of the tips).*
- *When you witness acts of dignity and respect, acknowledge them.*
- *Start using the phrase “dignity and respect” in your day-to-day interactions. When you say it, mean it.* ■

## Continuous Learning

"Enhancing Patient Safety During Hand-Offs: Standardized communication and teamwork using the 'SBAR' method"

*American Journal of Nursing, AJN,*

S. Hohenhaus, S. Powell, & J. Hohenhaus,

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Inc., Aug. 2006

**The Future of the Nursing Workforce in the United States: Data, Trends and Implications**

P. Buerhaus, D. Staiger, D. Auerbach

Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2009

"Roadmap for Creating a Magnet Work Environment"

*The Journal of Nursing Administration's, JONA*

G. Wolf & P. Greenhouse, Oct. 2006

"Ticket to Ride: Reducing Handoff Risk during Hospital Patient Transport"

*Journal of Nursing Care Quality*

D. Pesanka, P. Greenhouse, L. Rack, G. Delucia, R. Perret,

C. Scholle, M. Johnson, & C. Janov

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Inc, April/June 2009

**The American Assembly for Men in Nursing:** [www.aamn.org](http://www.aamn.org)

**National Black Nurses Association:** [www.nbna.org](http://www.nbna.org)

**Pennsylvania State Nurses' Association:** [www.panurses.org](http://www.panurses.org)

**Sigma Theta Tau:** [www.nursingsociety.org](http://www.nursingsociety.org)

**Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania:** [www.snap-online.org](http://www.snap-online.org)

## Calendar of Events

### 2009 Career Development Sessions

These sessions will teach participants career search strategies and techniques, how to navigate the UPMC website easily, and how to apply for UPMC jobs online. Attendees also will learn how to write a resume that gets noticed and how to prepare for a successful interview.

Sessions will take place in Forbes Plaza, Conference Room.

### *Forbes Plaza, Conference Room*

3600 Sennott St. at Meyran

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

### *December 2009*

Tuesday, Dec. 15, noon to 1 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 17, 5 to 6 p.m.

Call 412-647-3290, option 0, to register

### Additional Events

- *Youngstown State University: Monday, Feb. 1, 2010*

- *2010 National Student Nurses Association Convention: Orlando, FL April 7 to 11, 2010*

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