



## Fresno Medical Center

Message from Chief Nurse Executive

Wendy A Gospodnetich, MSN, RN, CNS, NE-BC

As I reflect on 2023, I am so proud of the Kaiser Permanente Fresno Nursing Team.

We persevered through the highs and lows of census surges, construction disruption, facility enhancements, regulatory events, and leadership evolutions. The nursing teams continued to focus on excellence in care delivery and patient advocacy. Our unit councils sharpened their presentation skills and celebrated successful projects that resulted in improved patient outcomes and care experience.

We awarded our first DAISY team award and celebrated the Med-Surg workplace safety team receiving national recognition! Our NQF team hosted a quality fair with full engagement from

our nursing teams, physicians, and members. The Kaiser Permanente Fresno Medical Center earned recognition as a NICHE Age-Friendly facility, and we saw an increase in our nationally geriatric-certified nursing workforce.

We look forward to 2024 as we prepare for the next step in our Magnet journey: Applying for Magnet designation. I am grateful to work in partnership with you. Thank you for your ongoing commitment and dedication.

# Transformational Leadership

## Community Health



KP Fresno nurses promote health and wellness at multiple community events in the Fresno Service Area. In 2023, KP Fresno nurses participated in the following community events:

- More than 300 toiletry kit donations to Breaking the Chains.
- Clovis Trail Festival – May 2023, Medical-surgical/ Telemetry and Critical Care Nurses provided education on healthy lifestyles to reduce the risk of stroke.
- End Alzheimer’s Walk October 2023
- Heart and Stroke Walk – October 2023: Telemetry and Critical Care Nurses raised donations to support the American Heart Association while promoting healthy lifestyles that decrease the risk of coronary heart disease.
- 15th Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Walk and Celebration August 2023
- Hinds Hospice Angel Babies Walk/Run May 2023
- Central California Food Bank volunteer nights, November and December 2023

## Structural Empowerment

### Voice of Nursing Council Elevates Nurse Voices and Innovations

Kaiser Permanente Fresno inpatient nurses, along with nurse leadership, are working together to review, discuss, create, and implement innovations and best practices to improve patient care and the work environment as part of the Voice of the Nursing Council. The committee is comprised of unit council representatives from the Birthing Center, Critical Care Unit, Emergency Department, Med-Surg, Operating Room, PACU, and Telemetry.

Staff Nurse IV Beverly Curry, Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), co-chairs the council.

"This council promotes a framework of autonomy for nurses and elevates the frontline workers. It gives us the platform where we can bring our innovations and ideas to support quality care for our patients," Curry said.

"It provides an opportunity to improve care and voice concerns. We can discuss it as a group and whatever change is needed, team members can take the ideas back to their unit councils and implement them."

Flyers with a QR code are on each unit asking all frontline workers - not just nurses - to submit ideas for improving patient outcomes, finding solutions for daily challenges, or enhancing the nurse practice environment.



*Beverly Curry, BSN, RN, Staff Nurse IV, PACU Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), co-chairs the Voice of Nursing Council.*

### KAISER PERMANENTE FRESNO MEDICAL CENTER Percentages of Nurses with BSN+ Degrees and Certifications

**62%** BSN  
prepared  
as of Dec. 2023

**21%** ANCC  
certified  
as of Dec. 2023

"We have timelines for our projects," Curry said. "Some recent enhancements include restructuring and updating the count board policy [for surgical instruments] during surgeries or creating a flyer so our family members know what to expect while a loved one is in surgery. We've looked at par levels for equipment and supplies and restructured areas to make them more ergonomically safe to prevent accidents and injuries."

"The Voice of Nursing Council provides a foundational structure for active engagement of our clinical nurses, empowering them as the driving force for professional nurse process improvement, facilitation, and decision-making authority," Chief Nurse Executive Wendy Gospodnetich, MSN, CNS, said.

"We strive for exceptional care, every patient, every time," Curry said. "I am grateful to be a part of the change we want to see. I'm also proud that I get to collaborate with my colleagues to make patient care safer and better for patients and their families."

## KP Fresno Voice of the Nursing Council members include:

Susie Alday, BSN, MA, BS, RN, RNC  
Nurse Manager  
Maternal Child Health

Cindy Aniag, RN  
Staff Nurse III  
Telemetry

Chad Battenburg, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, CEN  
Assistant Nurse Manager  
Emergency Department

Jaspreet Bhangoo, MSN, RN  
Staff Nurse III  
Med-Surg

Ann Bindra, DNP, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, CCRN-K  
Magnet Program Director  
Nursing Professional Development Services

Shelly Bressoud, DNP, MSN, BSN, RN  
Nurse Manager  
Perioperative Services

Sheila Brillante, BSN, RN  
Nurse Manager  
Utilization Management

Beverly Curry, BSN, RN  
Staff Nurse IV  
PACU

Merredith Flores, BSN, RN, CCRN  
Assistant Nurse Manager  
Critical Care Unit

Wendy Gospodnetich, MSN, RN, CNS, NE-BC  
Chief Nurse Executive  
Administration

Lindsey Halstead, MSN, RN  
Nurse Manager  
Med-Surg

JoAnn Heizenrader, MSN, BSN, RN, CNOR  
Staff Nurse IV  
Operating Room

Cathy Hensley, BSN, RN, NE-BC  
Nurse Manager  
Telemetry

Paul Laygo, BSN, RN, CCRN  
Staff Nurse III  
Critical Care Unit

Chris Rooney, BSN, RN  
Nurse Manager  
PACU

Kelley Sato, BSN, RN  
Patient Care Coordinator Case Manager III  
Utilization Management

Phyllis Stark, DNP, MSN, RN, CENP  
Chief Operating Officer and Chief Nurse  
Executive  
Administration

Edina Williams, RN  
Staff Nurse II  
Emergency Department

Bridgette Wilson, BSN, RN  
Nurse Manager  
Critical Care Unit

Jennifer Wong, BSN, RN  
Staff Nurse IV  
Maternal Child Health

## Healthy Workforce – Everyday Respect Program in Critical Care Unit

In partnership with local leadership, Critical Care Unit (CCU) management and team members worked with the Healthy Workforce Institute® to develop a professional, supportive, and healthy place to work.

Assistant Nurse Manager Kiran Virk, RN, CCU, said the CCU Healthy Workforce committee developed unit norms that all staff – including physician partners – strive to model daily.

This includes recognizing and appreciating others; being professional; generating positive encounters; and communicating with openness and a lens toward diversity.

“If there is a disagreement or disrespect, team members are encouraged to call it out at the moment to respectfully have a conversation,” Virk said.

“The committee meets monthly with team members rotating to take the lead. Ongoing communication and work towards maintaining the unit norms are key. Team building outside of work hours has also contributed to healthy and positive relationships,” said Staff Nurse III Kristen Watkins, RN, Patient Care Services.

The main goals are ensuring all roles are valued and everyone’s voice is heard.

“Ultimately, if you have a better attitude, it translates into better care and compassion for the patient,” Interim CCU Nurse Manager Merredith Flores, RN, MSN, said.

The CCU Healthy Workforce – Everyday Respect project was highlighted at the 46th Annual Association of California Nurse Leaders conference. Interim Nursing Operations Director Bridgette Wilson, BSN, RN, and Watkins presented the team’s findings and recommendations.

## Congratulations to our KP Fresno nurses who chose to become nationally certified in 2023!

Shelly Burkett, RN II, Float, CCRN

Juliana Day, RN IV, Telemetry, PCCN

Camille Joseph, ANM, Med-Surg CMSRN, GERO-BC, NE-BC

Vanessa Matcham, RN III, Telemetry, PCCN, GERO-BC

Justin McLane, RN III, Telemetry GERO-BC,

Valerie Tcha, ANM, Telemetry, ACNPC-AG

Chris Porte, RN II, Emergency Department, CEN

## Kaiser Permanente Nurse Scholars Academy / UCSF Leadership Institute Program Participants

### Foundations of Evidence-Based Practice Workshop

Krystal Pombo

Tom Carrillo

Jennifer Wong

Susan Alday

### Middle Management Institute – Assistant Nurse Managers

Jessica Lira

Kelly Day

### Middle Management Institute – Nurse Managers

George Nan

Lindsey Halstead



## Congratulations to our nurses who pursued and achieved academic progression in 2023:

Shelly Bressoud  
Nurse Manager, Periop-OR  
Doctor of Nursing Practice

Chris Rooney  
Nurse Manager, Periop-PACU  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Claudia Godinez, RN II  
PACU  
MSN/NP

Valeri Tcha, ANM  
Telemetry  
Master of Science, Nurse Practitioner

Chad Battenburg, ANM,  
ED  
MSN/NP

Elain Eye-Ergin  
LDRP-UA  
MSN/NP

Tom Carillo, RN II  
Telemetry  
Master of Science Nursing

Denise Chatman, RN III  
Telemetry  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Juliana Day, RN IV  
Telemetry  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Kathy Cervantes, RN II  
GI-Endoscopy  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Thalia Cordova, RN II  
Med/Surg  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Emilia Jimenez, RN II  
GI-Endoscopy  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Tere Marquez RN IV  
Population Mgmt-Diabetes  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Alexander Guerrero, RN II  
Emergency  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Adeyinka Sangokoya, RN IV  
Amb. Infusion Center  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Katrue Yang, MA  
Subspecialties  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Jerry Pollard  
Adult Services - PCT  
Licensed Vocational Nurse

Daniella Ramirez  
Telemetry-PCT  
Licensed Vocational Nurse

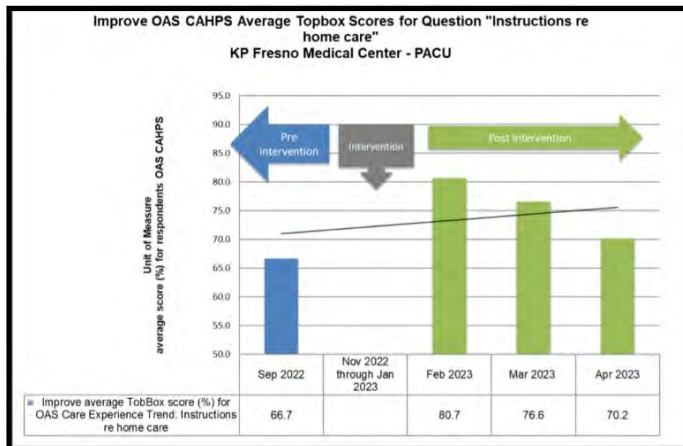
## Exemplary Professional Practice

### Perioperative Services Focuses on Discharge Education and Increases Patient Experience.

In 2023, the Perioperative Services unit-based council (UBC) set a goal to improve the bedside nurse utilization of educational materials during the discharge process. As a visual reminder of this practice, the UBC implemented brightly colored checklists to patient charts in January 2023. The bright colors served as a reminder for staff to review specific educational materials on specific post-op care.



Following all the interventions, the team reviewed the OAS average Topbox scores for January 2023 and noted there was an improvement in patient satisfaction with an average Topbox score of 87.3 (95th percentile). The team recognized their interventions were working and set out to hardwire these interventions with staff and streamline discharge teaching.

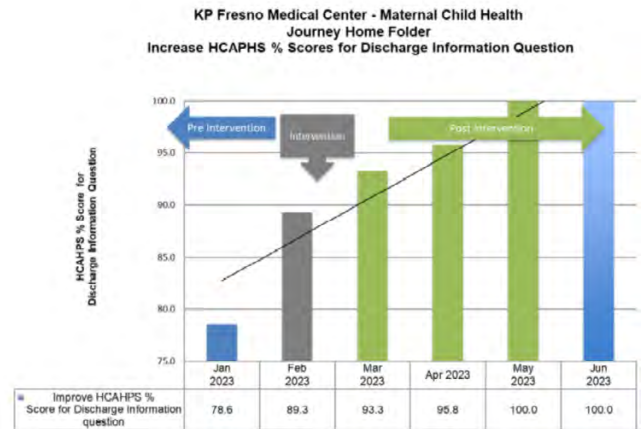


### MCH Nurses leverage technology, implement QR codes for patient education, and improve the patient experience.

Caring for yourself and your newborn after giving birth can be difficult and complex. Maternal Child Health (MCH) nurses and practitioners noticed new moms struggled to focus and retain pertinent information about caring for themselves and their newborns on the road to recovery.

MCH nurses also noticed an inconsistent distribution of infant care discharge instructions and patient education resources between the Intermediate Care Nurses (IMN) and the postpartum nurses.

The MCH Nursing Unit Council wanted to better support new moms and babies and increase patient experience scores. In February 2023, the team developed and piloted the "Your Journey Home" Roadmap Resource. This one-page document with QR codes provides multiple helpful resources for new moms and babies.



This document is now used throughout the Birthing Center. It helps standardize infant care discharge instructions and streamlines patient education to enhance the care experience. All MCH nurses and providers were provided supplemental information to support the implementation of this resource as part of the Journey Home folders.

The pre-intervention HCAHPS baseline was 78.6 percentile in January 2023. After implementing "Your Journey Home," the care experience discharge information question metric increased to 100 percent in May 2023.

## ED Nurses collaborate to help urine cultures “fly” to the lab, decreasing contamination.

During peak times in the Fresno Emergency Department (ED), patient urine samples had the potential to sit in their designated place for 45 minutes to an hour before staff walked them to the lab.

“When samples sit for longer duration at room temperature, exponential growth of normal flora is highly likely, and it can be one of the triggers to perform culture along with other established criteria,” said Nurse Manager Reza Beheshti, DNP, RN, CCRN. “Urine culture contamination was higher in the ED than in any other department.”

By using a pneumatic tube system that was already in place, the team significantly reduced the amount of time it takes for urine samples to travel to the lab for analysis, resulting in a 30-40-minute reduction in turnaround time.

“We wanted to expedite the process of getting samples to the lab to reduce the risk of contamination,” said Lab Director Jatinder Kataria, PhD, CLS. “This allows nurses and other colleagues more time with our patients and reduced turnaround time for laboratory results. Both things improve the patient care experience.”



*Nurse Educator Christopher Davis, BSN, RN, CEN, and Assistant Nurse Manager Ramon Flores, BSN, RN, CCRN, CEN, CFRN, CPEN, CTRN, TRCN, stand near the Pneumatic tube area in KP Fresno’s Emergency Department.*

*Process improvement team members not shown include Lab Director Jatinder Kataria; Nurse Manager Reza Beheshti, DNP, RN, CCRN; Jabeen Mehar, Assistant Laboratory Director; Nurse Manager Dayna Worthan, MSN, MHA, RN, CEN; and Mark Lindon, Service Unit Non-RN Manager II.*

The team was already using the Pneumatic tube system to transport blood samples. “Those are 8 to 10 ml,” said Kataria, while urine samples can be 100 to 120 ml. “There was concern about the potential for a spill in the tube system due to greater volume, therefore, a risk assessment was performed, and a process was developed to mitigate those risks.”

The team created tests using water in the containers and used double bags to put them in. “During the process, we also found the collection containers did not have the best seal and switched to a container with a better, tighter seal,” said Beheshti.

The team also switched collection cups and increased education for both staff and patients about how to properly collect the samples. Beheshti and Kataria partnered with several other project managers on the process improvement project. The team is pleased with the new process and anticipates a decrease in contamination levels.