



Vacaville Medical Center

Message from Chief Nurse Executive Cherie Stagg, DNP, RN, NEA-BC

It has been my honor to serve as Chief Nurse Executive at Kaiser Permanente Vacaville Medical Center during one of history's most challenging and unprecedented periods.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, Vacaville Medical Center was one of the first hospitals to care for patients arriving from overseas and soon from our local communities.

Our nursing staff was at the frontlines of the pandemic, and I could not be prouder of how they have cared for our patients, each other, and the community over the past few years.

During the protracted COVID-19 pandemic, our nursing team continued to provide high-quality care. They also continued their education, received additional clinical certifications, and dedicated themselves to the practice of nursing.

I am pleased to share many of their significant accomplishments from the past year with you:

- 17 nurses have received their MSN or DNP degree.
- 15 Nurses have received advanced certification training.
- We recognized 11 nurses with DAISY Awards for going above and beyond.

- Increased our RN Communication scores to 91.2 – the highest in Northern California.
- Maintained our Summary Star rating of 3.2–3.3 throughout the pandemic.
- Sent a team of our Unit Practice Council RNs to the National Magnet Conference in Philadelphia.
- Reduced our RN vacancy rate to below 6%.
- Welcomed ten new graduates, new RNs, and RN leaders to our Kaiser Permanente Vacaville Medical Center family.
- Continued to grow our Professional Nursing Excellence Council, led by frontline RN and Assistant Nurse Managers.
- Celebrated and inspired our staff through a frontline RN-led, grassroots staff recognition program.

Our nursing teams have weathered significant fluctuations in census as flu and RSV, in addition to COVID-19, spiked at the end of the year, all while improving our RN communication scores and continuing to work cohesively and collaboratively as a team.

As we embark on a new year, I look forward to taking our journey to excellence with our nursing team to achieve the well-deserved Magnet designation.

Transformational Leadership

Reduction of clinical nurse burnout by promoting self-care

By Joycelyn McDonald, Ed.D, MSN



During the pandemic, many clinical nurses were experiencing significant burnout. During the pandemic, observed and reported, clinical nurses were not taking care of themselves. There was a need to help clinical nurses reduce burnout. The Caring Council, developed in 2012, was reinvigorated by a team of clinical nurses who used this opportunity to support other nurses by offering different things each month to help them get their minds off the daily day-to-day.

Strategies to help clinical nurses with self-care include offering tea, positive messages, and quiet time while someone covers for them. The Care Council was created by two nurse executives, Michelle Bushong and Elizabeth Bigby, who completed the Caritas Coach Education program. During their journey through the program, they developed the Caring Council. This council is nurse-led and meets monthly to discuss how they will offer self-care to the clinical nurses for the following month.

Hospital accolades

- Earned The Joint Commission Gold Seal of Approval® for hospital accreditation
- Primary Stroke Center certified by The Joint Commission
- Commission on Cancer – Accredited Community Cancer Program
- National Cancer Institute Community Oncology Research Program, a program of the National Institutes of Health

Exemplary Professional Practice

Clinical nurse peer education in the Intensive Care Unit

By Amy Engrahm, BSN, RN, and Victoria Grant, MSN, RN, CNS

The Clinical Nurse Specialist's (CNS) core competencies include facilitating career opportunities for clinical nurses to acquire new skills that foster professional development. The intensive care unit-based council nurses identified a strategy to enable clinical nurses to maintain their staff nurse III and IV status using a peer-to-peer model. This would offer peer-to-peer mentorship, just-in-time quality training, and annual skills updates to the clinical nursing staff.

Clinical nurse III- and IV-level nurses assessed skills, reviewed policies, and determined which skills would benefit from refreshment. The CNS then created a sign-up sheet for these staff nurses to volunteer to create an education plan and present a skills update.

This was an opportunity for the advanced clinical staff nurse to engage in reflective practice activities promoting self-awareness, mentoring clinical nurses to analyze policy & procedure and impact patient outcomes.

Enhancing the care experience

IMPROVED PATIENT CARE EXPERIENCE THROUGH A NURSING FOCUS ON QUALITY, PATIENT EDUCATION, AND PATIENT SATISFACTION

By Melodie Martin, MSN, RN, and Alison Landis, MSN, RN



Improved Patient Care Experience through Nursing Focus is on the Kaiser Permanente Vacaville Strategic Plan. The plan identifies the goal of Quality and Patient Education. It reinforces our commitment to aid in nurses' ability to speak to performance and current strategies to improve their units and patients' outcomes.

The Circuit initiative took place in the family birth and newborn center when an opportunity was identified to

assist patients out of bed during labor to reduce the number of cesarian section deliveries.

The test of change during early labor involved sitting on the comfortable upright birth (CUB) support or birthing ball, alternating forward lunges with a stepping stool, dancing with a partner, and/or resting in a bed or chair. The test of change for active labor was to continue the circuit and to change positions in bed.

Structural Empowerment

DAISY Award recipients

Linda Reardon, BSN, RN
Rekha Jones, BSN, RN
Susan Block, RN
Lisa Ramirez RN
Janelle Grindle BSN, RNC-OB
Ana Morger BSN, RN
Jocelyn Decker, RN
Stephanie Nikas, BSN, RN
Irma Garcia, BSN, RN

Certification and degree recipients

Leslie Anderson, MSN, RN, CEN
Amanda Saint-Louis, BSN, RN, CCRN
Francis King, BSN, RN, AACN
Arlene Santos, BSN, RN, CCRN
Rosanna Suen, RN, CCRN
Jennifer Seifert, MSN, RN, CNL
Melissa Gay, BSN, RN, AACN -BC
Raquel, Aguirre, MSN, MBA, RN, CCRN
Theresa Uzodinma, BSN, RN, CCRN
Leigha Banderas, BSN, CCRN
Richard Miralles, MSN, RN, CNOR
Amanda Swetland, MSN, RN, CEN
Grace Hardy, BSN, RN, GERO-BC
Jason Hebert, MSN, RN, FNP-BC