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visions

NCAL NURSING NEWSLETTER

A place for news, insight, and connection into the heart of the Kaiser Permanente Northern California nursing community



Vallejo nurses gather July 24 to celebrate achieving Magnet Recognition

Vallejo front-line nurses lead journey to Magnet Recognition®

The Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center received the highly-sought after [American Nurses Credentialing Center \(ANCC\) Magnet Recognition®](#) – the first Kaiser Permanente Northern California hospital to receive this prestigious designation.

“Magnet Recognition really is a designation of hospital excellence and it involves everyone,” said Kaiser Permanente Vallejo’s Chief Nurse Executive **Juanita Jularbal-Walton, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC**. “Our Vallejo nurses took the lead to ensure we met the criteria and qualification, and wrote the majority of sources of evidence. They truly led our journey to achieving Magnet designation!”

In this issue

- 2 A message from Toby Marsh, Regional Chief Nurse Executive
- 3 Roseville team provides specialized care to critical pediatric patients
- 4 When minutes matter, the Telestroke Program is there
- 4 Profile in Care: Mary Ann Pagsolingan, RN
- 5 Professional Governance in Action at KP Richmond
- 6 ED team fights opioid overdose in Solano County communities
- 7 Research project leads to regionwide donor human milk initiative
- 8 Caring Science Academy helps connect to purpose
- 8 Resources for you
- 9 From Team Huddle to Team Cuddle

Their journey to Magnet began in 2019, following a trip to the annual ANCC National Magnet Conference. It was there that registered nurses **Gene Ventura** and **Jeanette Ferrer-Valladares** realized the work that was being presented from other Magnet recognized hospitals was work they were already doing in Vallejo.

“That really motivated us to get involved,” explained Gene. And soon after, leaders transferred ownership of the Voice of Nursing (VON) council to the front-line staff.

Continued on Page 2



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Leader Message from Toby Marsh, Regional CNE and VP, Clinical Intergration

Earlier this summer, I was honored to join the nursing team in Vallejo as they learned they had achieved Magnet Recognition®. After years of teamwork and collaboration, they were now nationally recognized for their nursing excellence, quality care, and innovations in nursing practice. What an inspiring moment!

I hope you feel inspired, too, reading about how Vallejo's front-line nurses led the successful Magnet journey; the work of our specialty-trained pediatric transport nurses in Roseville; a peer who wouldn't let personal life hurdles stop her from finishing her master's degree; and by Vacaville emergency department nurses going into their communities to help fight opioid overdoses.

The stories highlighted in this edition of Visions are just a glimpse inside nursing in Northern California, yet a reflection of our entire nursing community, and your commitment to providing extraordinary nursing care, every patient, every time.

Our members, patients, and communities are better because of you. Thank you for leading with love and compassion every day.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Toby Marsh".

From front page Vallejo front-line nurses lead journey to Magnet Recognition®

With VON and Unit Based Councils meeting regularly to share ideas, projects, discuss quality and safety measures, and other Magnet-related criteria, they began to see many more nurses get involved.

"Despite the challenging time we were in during the pandemic, we remained focused and positive," added Jeanette. "We would round on all units to promote the work we were doing to achieve Magnet, and that positive energy and excitement around our work really started to spread." In the end, more than 200 Vallejo nurses got involved.

Nestle "Twinkle" Vitug, RN, said because the front-line nurses were directly involved with the application

to become a Magnet recognized hospital, she not only saw professional growth in herself but also in her colleagues.

"I didn't really even know that this would have such an impact on all of us," Twinkle said.

During the 4 years of preparation, the number of Vallejo nurses who advanced to bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in nursing rose from 25% in 2019 to 81% in 2022.

"Vallejo nurses put their heart and soul into this work from the application to our site visit, and everything in between. I am so proud we were able to achieve this milestone together - and lead the way in Northern California," said Juanita.



BEST IN CLASS

Roseville Pediatric Transport Unit registered nurses (Left to right) Brian Mestressat, Melissa Lathuras, and Elyssa Lakich.

Roseville team provides specialized care to critical pediatric patients

On any given day, the Roseville Pediatric Care Transport rig can be seen traveling any freeway in Northern California to pick up our youngest Kaiser Permanente members in need of a higher level of care.

“An ICU on wheels” as **Melissa Lathuras, RN**, refers to the unit, which has been in service since the fall of 2019.

Between January and July, the Roseville Pediatric Transport team ran 166 calls – which can range from near drownings, cardiac or neurologic events to respiratory viruses.

In partnership with a local ambulance company, the unit has 24-hour coverage with a specialty-trained registered nurse and respiratory therapist onboard during each shift and a supporting physician partner at the Roseville Medical Center.

“We have maintained consistent “out the door” times, meaning from the time the patient is accepted to the team leaving the building, in under 45 minutes,” said **Elyssa Lakich, MSN, RN**, Assistant Nurse Manager.

The nurses, who are all experienced PICU nurses and have received specialized transport-specific training through Kaiser Permanente’s Transport Academy, get to work as soon as they get the call, explained **Brian Mestressat, RN**. “We review vitals and what’s been done so far so that we can jump in to provide care as quickly as possible.”

They take over care to stabilize critical patients for transport, many of which are on constant intravenous medication, cardiac monitors, or even intubated. When they arrive back in Roseville, they hand-off care to the awaiting PICU team. When they aren’t caring for a patient in transport, the team ensures all their equipment is ready for the next call, and also provide support in the PICU and ED.

“It takes a special team to do this work,” said **Debbie Reitter, DNP, RN, CNS, NEA-BC**, Roseville’s Chief Nurse Executive. “You can sense the love they have for nursing through the outstanding care they provide under some of the most challenging circumstances to our young patients and their families.”

When minutes matter, the Telestroke Program is there

Kaiser Permanente Northern California (KPNC) Regional Telestroke Program, also known as the KPNC Stroke Express, emergently responds not just to patients who present to the Emergency Department with suspected stroke but also to inpatient stroke alerts.

The program remotely enables a stroke neurologist to be at the patient's bedside within minutes using the Care Agility Carts or the remote Tele-Critical Care monitors, virtual computerized platforms with high-quality audio and visual features allowing for two-way communication.

Nurses are essential in ensuring timely treatment, starting with the initial communications with Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Department triage, and pivotal in treating inpatient stroke alerts.

With a stroke, time is of the essence. For each minute during an ischemic stroke, approximately 1.9 million neurons are permanently lost. The two primary emergent treatments, intravenous thrombolytics and mechanical thrombectomy are time-limited, with earlier treatment associated with better patient outcomes.

Over the past year, the team treated 3,207 stroke alerts, of which 978 people received IV thrombolytics and 443 received mechanical thrombectomy.

According to **Elizabeth Scruth, PhD, RN, CCNS, FCCM**, Regional Executive Director, "Our program is nationally recognized for providing high-quality care, ensuring stroke patients receive timely and specialized care around the clock regardless of location. We are proud that 79% of all patients who receive IV thrombolytics are treated within 30 minutes of ED arrival. This helps to ensure that our members have the best chance of having good functional outcomes."

Stroke coordinators and stroke champions at our medical centers also participate in numerous community events each year to educate our members and others to recognize signs and symptoms of a stroke, and the need to call 911.



Santa Rosa's Marvin Tamayo, BSN, RN, and Carlyna Deragisch, BSN, RN, perform the stroke assessment for the teleneurologist who is on screen. Marvin is the manager of the medical center's designated stroke unit, and Carlyna is a stroke champion.

DEFINING CARE EXCELLENCE

Profile in Care: Mary Ann Pagsolingan, RN

Manteca Medical Center, Med/Surg



Manteca registered nurse Mary Ann Pagsolingan receives a DAISY award.

Professional Governance in action at KP Richmond

The Kaiser Permanente Richmond Medical Center has implemented a new model of professional governance with Unit Practice Councils (UPCs). UPCs are made up of front-line nurses who meet regularly to discuss and make decisions about patient care, quality improvement, and professional development.

The UPCs have been successful in improving patient outcomes and the work environment for nurses. For example, one UPC developed a study that showed the benefits of having more nurses trained in Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) line insertion. As a result of this study, additional nurses received PICC line training, and the hospital now has coverage for vascular access 5 days a week. This new Vascular Access Team will be presenting their work at the National Nursing Conference in September.



The Richmond Intensive Care Unit's new Vascular Access Team is led by Jovie Jabla, RN, Staff Nurse IV. From left to right: Colin Fosgate, RN, BSN, CCRN, PHN; Vanessa A. Martinez, DNP, MHA, RN, CPHQ; Jovie Jabla, MSN, RN, CCRN VA-BC; Dechen Palmo, RN; Eriverto Galvan, RN, VA-BC

"There's also been some good work in collaboration with Infection Prevention around the prevention of catheter-associated urinary tract infections," stated **Nicole Barnett, DHSc, MBA, RN, CNL, NEA-BC**, and Chief Nurse Executive at Kaiser Permanente Richmond Medical Center. "It's been great."

Morale and job satisfaction of nurses are also improved by UPCs. One nurse who participates in a UPC said that she was inspired to go back to school and finish her bachelor's degree.

The councils are a success because they give nurses a voice in decision-making and allow them to take ownership of their work. They also provide a forum for nurses to learn from each other and to collaborate on projects that improve patient care.

From page 4

Profile in Care: Mary Ann Pagsolingan, RN

Nurses are trained to provide care to patients at all levels of acuity, but sometimes it's the little things that a patient remembers the most. For one recent Manteca hospital patient, it was a non-clinical deed from Med/Surg registered nurse **Mary Ann Pagsolingan** which resonated with him and prompted him to fill out a DAISY Award nomination.

The patient commended Mary Ann for her patience and understanding, as he was on a ventilator, a little disoriented, and couldn't communicate clearly. The patient said he was

confused about where he had left his clothing, wallet, and keys, and it made him agitated.

Mary Ann realized the patient wouldn't relax until he knew where his things were, so she went and retrieved the items for him. That calmed him down, allowing him to heal up and go home to recover. Small gesture, big impact.

"Mary Ann is a shining example of a skilled, compassionate nurse who goes out of her way to create an exceptional care experience for our patients," said **Karen Descent, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CEN** Chief Nurse Executive in the Central Valley.



Vacaville Emergency Department nurses during National Overdose Awareness Day on Aug. 31, 2023.

ED team fights opioid overdose in Solano County communities

With the opioid overdose crisis escalating in communities across the country, nurses in the Vacaville emergency department set out with a project to not only help Kaiser Permanente members, but also people in Solano County communities.

As part of a statewide effort, the Vacaville emergency department has successfully provided free Naloxone devices, which is a nasal spray used to reverse the effects of an overdose, to anyone coming into the emergency department. Despite their efforts, staff realized that to truly impact deaths related to opioid overdoses, distribution was needed in the community.

The most recent county data shows in 2021, 58 people in Solano County died from an opioid overdose, a nearly 500% increase since 2017.

“We looked at county data for overdose related emergency room visits and deaths, and that showed us the ones that needed this free life-saving device the most weren’t necessarily

coming to us, until it was too late, so we wanted to focus our efforts out in the community,” said **Michael Williams, MBA, MSN, RN**, Emergency Department Director, Vacaville Medical Center.

A grant was received from CA-Bridge Naloxone Distribution Program, which allowed the Vacaville team to implement their project in a meaningful way. The first event they attended at Hope Resource Fair, the team provided 500 devices to unhoused individuals along with resources and hands-on education about how to administer the drug.

Since the inaugural event in March of this year, ED staff have had booths at fairs and events throughout Solano County, and have distributed 2,800 Naloxone devices.

“We know that our outreach has led to the successful use of Naloxone in 19 cases,” added Michael. “We hope our work will continue to have a positive impact in our communities.”



Modesto Director, Lorena Acevedo, MSN, RN, NE-BC, at center with MCH nurses and managers

Research project leads to regionwide donor human milk initiative

It is well documented that breast milk is the best source of nutrients for a newborn baby, and Kaiser Permanente has long supported our new moms on their breastfeeding journey. However, alternative resources are needed to support the most vulnerable newborn patients in some cases.

According to published research, when there is a need for human milk that cannot be completed through breastfeeding or using the milk from the mother, utilizing donor human milk that is screened and is safe is a valid alternative.

Looking to expand a donor human milk program outside the NICU and into the newborn space, a team at the Modesto Medical Center began an evidence-based research project to discover whether implementing a human donor milk program would increase exclusive breastfeeding rates at discharge.

“Our primary outcome measure was Perinatal Core Measure-05 (PC-05), which assesses the number of newborns exclusively fed breast milk during the newborn’s entire hospitalization,” said **Christine Pierce, RN**, Maternal Child Health, Nurse Manager, Modesto Medical Center.

Within the initial pilot, an increase of PC-05 was observed from an average of 72% to greater than 80%, which has held steady for more than a year since the pilot and continues in an upward trend.

“While this data is outstanding, one of the most impactful results from this work was a 19% increase in the exclusive breast milk feeding rates among our Black and Hispanic members,” added Christine.

Based on the success in Modesto, the initiative was expanded to Antioch, San Francisco, and Vallejo, and is expected at all medical centers by the end of 2024. A poster of this work will be presented at the 2023 KP National Nursing Conference.



Sarah Brown, RN (L) and Victoria Pacheco, RN (R) prep donor human milk for a new mom.



South Sacramento Caritas Coaches and HeartMath Trainers who developed the Caring Science Academy. Left to right: Pamela Emmert Spain, MA; Malia La Vallee, DNP, RN, PHN, CCRN, CHSE; Milanelle (Lanie) Guiao-Tranchina, BSN, RN, CMSRN; Charlene Johnson, MSN, RN

Caring Science Academy helps connect to purpose

The Caring Science Academy (CSA) is a new program designed to help nurses increase resilience, promote inner balance, and connect with what is most important in their lives.

The pilot program was developed by 4 Kaiser Permanente South Sacramento Caritas Coaches and HeartMath Trainers in response to widespread burnout, physical exhaustion, and compassion fatigue among health care workers during the pandemic.

“We did a research study with our first cohort to see if Caring Science can truly help reduce burnout and we proved that it does,” said **Rachel Wyatt, DNP, MHA, RN, NEA-BC**, Chief Nurse Executive, South Sacramento Medical Center. This was the first nurse research study conducted by her team.

They opened the program to staff who have been with the organization for at least 6 months

and provide direct patient care, even providing continuing education credits. Participants can benefit from a transformational experience that aims to build resilience and provide participants with tools that help them connect back to purpose and ultimately improve patient outcomes.

“The focus is on resilience and caring for self, and how that connects you back to your purpose as a nurse. Hearing from the staff who were in the course, and what it did for them personally and professionally... It’s truly transformative. For me personally, it’s been a cup-filler to see what it does for our nurses,” Rachel continued.

The enhanced Caring Science Academy modules and program plan will be offered across the region.

To learn more about the Caring Science Academy and how to get involved in this work, please contact kpnursescholars@kp.org.

RESOURCES FOR YOU

Supporting your professional growth



We are committed to professional excellence through lifelong learning and have a variety of programs and resources to support you as you pursue next level degrees and national certification. Learn more on the new NursingNCAL.kp.org website or scan the QR code.

From Team Huddle to Team Cuddle

Amerizza Quemada, MSN, RN, is a single mom who persevered through many personal challenges to complete her master's degree in nursing. She faced the challenges of separating from her husband, her son's autism diagnosis, and the pandemic, but she never gave up.

"I had support from the Kaiser Permanente Nurse Scholars Academy team and my professors, and Caring Science and HeartMath practices helped me build resilience and thrive even in the midst of difficult circumstances," said Amerizza.

She took those practices to create a "Team Cuddle" program to help her team members connect with each other and reduce stress. The program had such a positive impact on the team's performance, it has even helped to improve employee survey scores.

Now an RN Clinical Specialist with Kaiser Permanente Northern California's Health Plan Utilization Management Department, she continues to grow and learn, and is currently working on a stretch assignment.

To others who are facing challenges in their educational or professional journeys, Amerizza shows that it is possible to overcome any obstacle with hard work, determination, and the support of others.



KP nurse Amerizza Quemada earned her MSN degree and CNL certification while working and raising her young son.

OF NOTE

Recognition:

Congratulations to our DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award winners **Marilyn Chow** and **Delores Jones**. Read more about this honor at NursingNCAL.KP.org

Upcoming events:

- [Virtual HeartMath Sessions](#)
[Inner Ease](#) Sept. 19, Sept. 27
[Depletion and Renewal](#) Oct. 17, Oct. 25
[Sustaining Resilience](#) Nov. 21, Nov. 29
[Relational Energetics](#) Dec. 5, Dec. 20
- [Research & Innovation Academy Grand Rounds](#), Oct. 30
- [National Nursing Conference](#)
Sept. 21-22

To view all events, visit the Scholars Academy website at: nursescholars.kaiserpermanente.org/events/

Recent published articles:

[Reinvigorating Critical Care Nurses Post-Pandemic Through a Critical Care Certification Pilot Program](#), *International Journal of Critical Care*

Authors: **Stacy Hull, MS, RN, CCNS**; **Benson Yeung, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, CHSE**; **Janet Sohal, DNP, RN, NEA-BC**; **Jim D'Alfonso, DNP, PhD(h), RN, NEA-BC, FAAN**; **Luis Perez, MNA**

[Effects of Leader Empowerment: Implementing a Frontline Nurse Leadership Council](#), *Nurse Leader*

Authors: **Cherie Stagg, DNP, RN, NEA-BC**; **Barbara Turner, PhD, RN, FAAN**; **Elizabeth Bigby, DNP, RN, CENP**; and **Jan Jensen, MEd**

[Improving Clinical Communication and Collaboration Through Technology: A Benefits Analysis for Nurse Leaders](#) - *ScienceDirect, Nurse Leader*

Authors: **Michelle Machon, MSN, RN, CPHIMSS**; **Mary Lynne Knighten; DNP, RN, NEA-BC**; **Janet Sohal, DNP, RN, NEA-BC**