

NURSING

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER

Transforming patient care through professional practice

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A newsletter
from the office
of the Executive
Chief Nursing
Officer

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IN THIS ISSUE

Nurse research brings noise-dampening curtains

Security labels in Outlook replace Accellion

Nominations sought for Nurses Week Awards and Recognition

APRN GRAND ROUNDS KICKS OFF FOR 2021

Advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, and hospital leaders from around Vanderbilt University Medical Center gathered over Zoom on Jan. 19 for the kickoff of Advanced Practice Grand Rounds, the monthly educational series organized by the Office of Advanced Practice.

The session featured the keynote presentation, “Swimming with Alligators: Finding Well-Being in Turbulent Waters,” from Jim Kendall, LCSW, CEAP, manager of VUMC Work-Life Connections-EAP (the Employee Assistance Program).

Kendall knows all about the challenges of the workplace. For more than 20 years, he and his colleagues have offered confidential counseling to Vanderbilt faculty and staff as part of Work-Life Connections-EAP. He talked about how COVID-19 has been his biggest challenge yet and offered tools for people to build resilience in one of the hardest times they will ever face. He said one of his biggest fears during the pandemic is burnout.

Burnout is different than depression, he said. It’s the accumulated stress of caring that results in the caregiver feeling depleted.

“It’s when you feel that mental distance from your job,” he said, “when we don’t feel that we are efficient and we’ve lost our efficacy.”

The last year provided plenty of fodder for burnout — a global pan-

continued on page 2

Advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants have essential roles in Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and our APRN Grand Rounds is an excellent monthly educational series. Now meeting online, the 2021 series kicked off with a wonderful presentation from Jim Kendall, LCSW, CEAP, manager of VUMC-Work-Life Connections/EAP. I encourage you to read his advice about well-being and resiliency. These topics are very important to all of us.

Also in this issue, we spotlight nurse research that resulted in noise-dampening

curtains in the post-anesthesia care unit (PACU) at Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt. Kudos to all involved in this project.

Lastly, our Nurses Week is around the corner and I encourage you to nominate your colleagues for our Awards & Recognition ceremony. Please see details inside.

Enjoy this issue,

demic, of course, but also a major tornado in March, high-profile incidents of racial injustice and inequity, and the Christmas Day bombing on Nashville's Second Avenue.

The arrival of the first COVID-19 vaccine in December provides a glimmer of hope, he said. But he acknowledged that a long winter remains ahead.

So, how to cope? The first step is to acknowledge the situation, to talk it out and share personal experiences with others. Take in simple pleasures. Express gratitude.

Kendall dedicated his presentation to Kate Payne, JD, RN, NC-BC, a bioethicist, attorney and beloved nurse leader at VUMC and Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, who died Jan. 6 after a brief and unexpected illness. Kendall had worked closely with Payne, including on the very presentation he was giving.

"Life is fleeting," he said. "Appreciate little things and thank each other... This very fact that we are together through virtual means is pretty incredible."

Being grounded in reality is important. If you're not feeling well, it's important to acknowledge that. "It's OK to not be OK," he said.

For employees dealing with personal and workplace

issues, Work/Life Connections -EAP is always available. Call 615-936-1327 for a confidential appointment. Sessions are available virtually or socially-distanced in person.

One thing Kendall learned this year was the value of providing counseling on the TeleHealth platform. "I know we'll continue this because we want to be as accessible as possible," he said.

Finding out what works to build resilience and well-being is different in each person, he said. It could be reading, music, more sleep. Kendall encouraged setting attainable goals – even just setting aside 10 minutes somewhere in the day to do something you really like.

"We need to set boundaries between work and home... especially if you're working remotely from home," he said.

Limiting media and social media, especially in the divisive political environment of today, is also helpful. And remember, this time of hardship will pass.

"There are still some choppy waters ahead but we're going to make it through this," Kendall said. "We know how to navigate this. It's about self-care and it's about paying attention to our own well-being needs, our colleagues and supporting them. There is hope."

April Kapu, DNP, RN, ACNP-BC, associate nursing officer for VUMC Advanced Practice and director of the Office of Advanced Practice, thanked Kendall for his contribution to the 2021 Grand Rounds series.

"It was a very welcome and warm presentation," she said. "It was just what we all needed in the midst of some very turbulent times. Jim's presence and delivery of his presentation were very comforting and he gave us some excellent advice for self-care and well-being moving forward."

During the kickoff session, the 2021 Advanced Practice Ambassador Award was presented to Liza Weavind, MBBCh, MMHC, medical co-director of the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU). The award honors non-advanced practice nurses for their contributions to the profession.

Kapu said this year's lineup of presentations are thanks to the Advanced Practice Professional Development Committee — Chair Amanda Dickert, DNP, APRN, CRNA; Director of Advanced Practice Professional Development Buffy Krauser-Lupear, DNP, APRN, CRNA; and the staff within the Office of Advanced Practice.

NURSE RESEARCH BRINGS NOISE-DAMPENING CURTAINS

At Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, the post-anesthesia care unit, or PACU, is a hive of activity as patients are awakened from their operating room procedures. Given that each patient's awakening is meant to be gentle, the general noise level in the PACU prompted concern from staff nurse Savannah Ramsey, RN.

"A survey of the literature indicates not only that higher noise levels contribute to medical errors, but that PACU patients require more analgesia when noise levels are higher," Ramsey said. "Noise also tends to raise stress levels — not optimal for patients, nor, for that matter, for health care workers. I thought there might be an opportunity to bring down the sound level without disrupting unit operations."

With the help of a small group of colleagues and some strategically placed sound-level measuring devices (noise dosimeters), Ramsey studied the effectiveness of a set of measures intended to quiet down the PACU. Interventions included installation of noise dampening curtains around selected patient bays; nurse education concerning the appropriate adjustment of alarm parameters for each new patient; lowering the volume of certain audible automated

team reminders; and a visual cue — a traffic-signal-type display triggered by a built-in noise-level meter — when staff conversations got too loud.

"Based on weeks of sound-



Savannah Ramsey, RN, demonstrates noise-dampening curtains.

level measurement pre- and post-intervention, the resulting reduction in noise levels was quantifiable and statistically significant," Ramsey said, "and large enough to warrant leadership approval to roll these interventions out throughout the PACU.

"I would definitely recommend these noise-quelling interventions to other patient care areas that might have similar issues with noisiness."

The study was published in a recent issue of *The Empowered Nurse* (employee login-in required), an in-house peer-reviewed journal devoted to VUMC nursing research. Joining Ramsey in the study were Elizabeth Card, MSN, RN, APRN, FNP-BC, Summer Fitts, RN, CPAN, and Leighann Chadwell, MSN, RN, NE-BC.

Earlier nursing research in the operating room at Vanderbilt University Adult Hospital, presented in 2019, demonstrated that noise negatively affects individuals and patient safety.

In 2019, Card and Glendyle Levinskas, RN, CNOR, presented "Operating room (OR) noise is a health and safety risk: A real time measurement of noise level during critical times of surgery and multidisciplinary staff's noise perception in Vanderbilt adult OR" at the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses National Conference.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of noise and noise reduction strategies on individual and patient safety and to assess OR noise levels during critical times. It found that the OR operating room is one of the noisiest clinical areas due to information sharing among the clinical team, devices and surgical equipment.

In addition to Levinskas and Card, other participants in the research in the adult hospital were Cynthia Kildgore, MSHA, RN, CNOR; Oscar Guillamondegui, MD; Steve Hyman, MD; Matthew Fosnot, MSN, APRN, CRNA; Buffy Krauser Lupear, DNP, APRN, CRNA; and Diane Johnson, MSN, RN.

SECURITY LABELS IN OUTLOOK REPLACE ACCELLION

VUMC employees who want to send content securely in email have the ability to use Sensitivity Labels within Microsoft Outlook. Sensitivity Labels are designed to help secure content (both email language & attachments) in email and include General, Private, and Restricted.

Here's how they work:

- Find the Sensitivity Labels in your Outlook toolbar.
- VUMC General is the default data category, and there are no access restrictions for sending or sharing these emails. Use the default General category for non-sensitive content.
- Choose Private to encrypt content that includes VUMC business-related and/or internal data information that is being sent outside of VUMC. Private data is

potentially sensitive and is not intended to be disclosed outside of the organization without an appropriate business reason.

- Use the Private label for sending emails containing information like VUMC policies, clinical protocols, market research, or budget information to recipients external to VUMC. External recipients without Microsoft Outlook will receive a link to authenticate and open.

- Choose Restricted to encrypt content that VUMC has a contractual, legal/regulatory obligation to safeguard in the most stringent manner. Unauthorized disclosure or loss of this data would require the organization to notify the affected individual and state or federal authorities. The Restricted label can be used as

a secure replacement for Accellion.

- Use the Restricted label for sensitive content like PHI, PII, data covered by non-disclosure agreements, or Research Health Information.

Recipients of email with a Restricted label cannot forward or edit content. External recipients without Microsoft Outlook will receive a link to authenticate and open the message.

Get training and information:

- Find the training module in the Learning Exchange by searching "Sensitivity Labels."
- Find out more about Sensitivity Labels by visiting Enterprise Cybersecurity: <https://www.vumc.org/enterprise-cybersecurity/sensitivity-labels>.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR NURSES WEEK AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Vanderbilt nurses are invited to nominate an outstanding colleague for recognition during the 2021 Nurses Week Awards and Recognitions, to be held in May.

Nominations may be made in nine categories, with 12 total awards. The Rosamond Gabrielson Staff Nurse of the Year will be awarded to a recipient in each entity — Vanderbilt University Adult Hospital, Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital and Vanderbilt Adult Ambulatory Clinics.

The other eight award categories are: Rebecca Clark Culpepper Education and Mentorship, Jerita Payne Advanced Practice Registered Nurse of the Year, Licensed Practical Nurse of the Year, Nursing Professional Development, Nancy Wells Nursing Research & Evidence-

Based Practice, Team, Adrienne Ames Transformational Leader, and Friend of Nursing.

A group or an individual may make nominations and individuals may nominate themselves. The nominator does not have to be a nurse; anyone can nominate.

The nominator will be asked to describe and demonstrate the excellence of the person being nominated using key criteria. The more examples provided, the stronger the nomination.

The deadline for nominations is midnight Feb. 15. Award criteria and nomination forms can be found at <https://www.vumc.org/vanderbilt-nursing/nurses-week-celebrations>. Nominations may only be made by VUMC staff and login is required.