

NURSING

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER

Transforming patient care through professional practice

February 2022



A newsletter
from the office
of the Executive
Chief Nursing
Officer

Marilyn Dubree,
MSN, RN,
NE-BC

CLINICS MAGNET SITE VISIT ANNOUNCED

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) will bring a team of appraisers to Vanderbilt Adult Ambulatory Clinics from March 28-30 as part of the Magnet Fourth Designation process.

The site visit has been designed by the ANCC to determine the Medical Center's culture by listening to as many nursing and Medical Center staff members as possible. Appraisers are coordinating with nursing leaders to develop a schedule to visit VUMC's adult clinics during the three-day visit. Nurses will have multiple opportunities to talk to appraisers, both in their areas and in other settings.

The ANCC's Magnet designation is the highest honor an organization can receive for the provision of nursing care and interprofessional collaboration. Only about 6 to 7% of hospitals or clinics have the distinction, and no other hospital system in Middle Tennessee has achieved Magnet designation.

Magnet Recognition is typically earned for a four-year period, and the ANCC conducts annual reviews requesting updated documentation. VUMC received its first Magnet designation in November 2006, its second in April 2012 and third in July 2017.

"Vanderbilt has long been recognized as a Magnet-designated institu-

continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Nominations sought for
Nurses Week Awards

Grand Rounds explores
impact of COVID-19 on
MICU

We have exciting news to share: Our first Magnet site visit, for Vanderbilt Adult Ambulatory Clinics, has been announced for March 28-30. This is the first of four Magnet site visits we anticipate this year for our nursing entities. It is the culmination of years of hard work across our enterprise. Please stay tuned for further announcements.

Also in this issue, you will read about advanced practice providers in our MICU who shared their experiences about caring for our COVID-19 patients and families.

They continue to be inspirational, and I encourage you to read more about them.

Nominations are open for our Nurses Week Awards and Recognitions, which we hold in May. Please consider nominating a worthy colleague for an award. More information is inside.

Enjoy this issue,

tion,” said Executive Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN, RN, NE-BC. “We believe this site visit will further confirm the excellent nursing care for patients and families that is found every day in our clinics.”

Each of the previous three Magnet journeys required one site visit for VUMC. However, starting this year, separate site visits will be conducted for each of the four nursing entities — Vanderbilt Adult Ambulatory Clinics, Vanderbilt University Hospital, Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt and Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital. The dates for the other site visits will be announced later.

Hosting the site visit is the culmination of years of work by nursing staff in the journey toward a fourth designation. In

August 2021, VUMC electronically submitted four Magnet documents, one for each entity, which would total hundreds of pages if printed. The documents consist of examples from across the entities in response to questions, as well as demographic information including quality data and patient and staff satisfaction. In previous Magnet journeys, only one Magnet document was required for all of VUMC.

“The Adult Ambulatory Clinics document showcases exemplary professional nursing practice across the entity,” said Ambulatory Magnet Senior Program Manager Kimberly Burkeen, MSN, RN, NE-BC. “The crafted stories spotlight interdisciplinary teamwork and commitment to excellence that leads to improved outcomes and enculturation of the

Magnet principles.”

Following the four site visits, the Commission on Magnet Recognition is expected to announce the outcome of VUMC’s fourth Magnet designation for each of the entities before the end of the year.

“On behalf of the Vanderbilt Adult Ambulatory Clinics, I am proud and honored to host our Magnet appraisers,” said Michele Hasselblad, DNP, RN, NE-BC, vice president of Adult Ambulatory Nursing. “Our document presents only a fraction of the accomplishments of our nursing staff, both individually and as integral partners in our interprofessional teams. We are eager to share more with our appraisers about our stories and the culture that makes VUMC so special for our teams, our patients and their families.”

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR NURSES WEEK AWARDS

VUMC nurses are invited to nominate an outstanding colleague for recognition during the 2022 Nurses Week Awards and Recognitions, to be held in May.

Nominations may be made in nine categories, with 15 total awards. The Rosamond Gabrielson Staff Nurse of the Year will be awarded to a recipient in each entity — Vanderbilt University Hospital, Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt, Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital, Vanderbilt Adult Ambulatory Clinics, Vanderbilt Wilson County Hospital, Vanderbilt Tullahoma-Harton Hospital and Vanderbilt Bedford County Hospital.

The other 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, who does not have to be a nurse, will be asked to describe and demonstrate the excellence of the person being nominated using key criteria.

The deadline for nominations is midnight March 4. 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.

GRAND ROUNDS EXPLORES IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MICU

The experience of caring for COVID-19 patients for nearly two years was the focus of the kickoff presentation of the VUMC Advanced Practice Grand Rounds, the monthly educational series organized by the Office of Advanced Practice.

Advanced practice nurses, physician associates and hospital leaders from around Vanderbilt University Medical Center gathered over Zoom on Jan. 18 for the session, “Navigating a Pandemic, Our Team’s Journey,” presented by Lisa Flemmons, MSN, APRN, ACNP-BC, assistant in Medicine in the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU). She was joined by her

advanced practice team in the MICU.

The team described the uncertain early days of the pandemic, creating a COVID-specific unit, learning to care for patients with a novel disease and navigating several patient surges. As of mid-January, VUMC had cared for 1,142 patients critically ill with COVID-19, about half of whom required mechanical ventilation, Flemmons said. About 72 of them were also on ECMO, or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, a life-sustaining mechanical system that temporarily takes over for the heart and lungs of critically ill patients, allowing them to rest and recover. These ECMO patients were

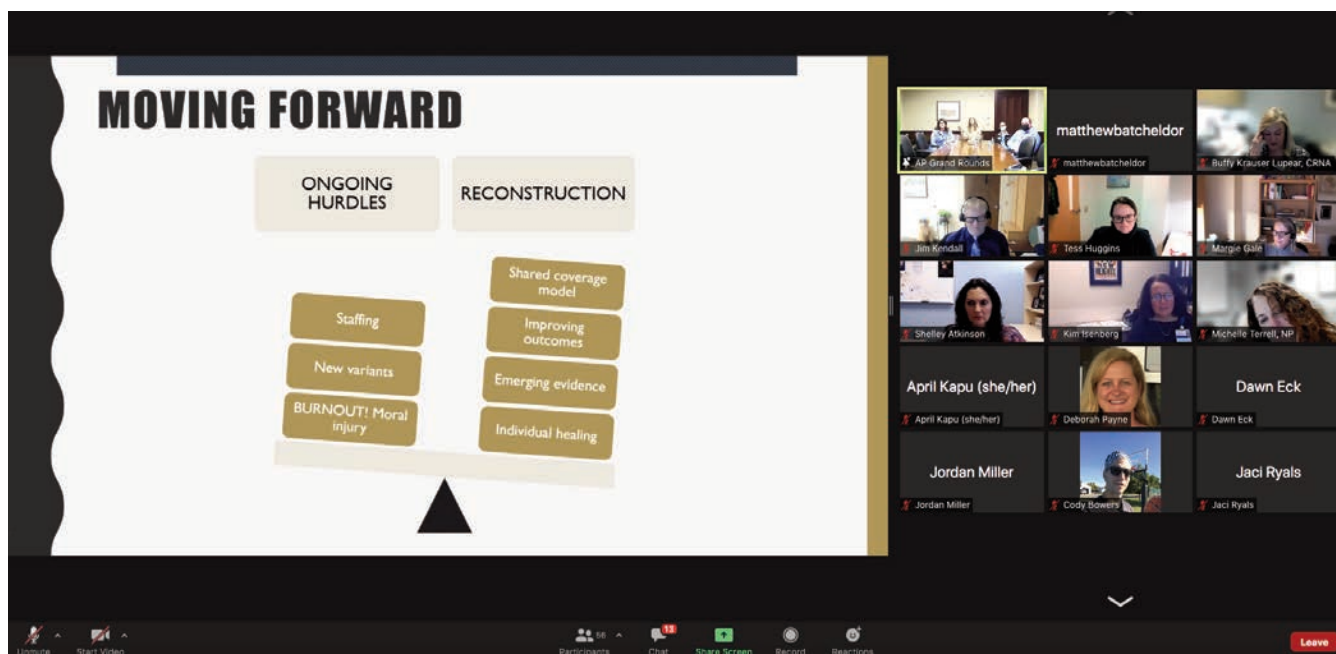
the sickest of the sick.

Flemmons described several phases of the pandemic thus far — the preparation, the honeymoon period in which the community came together, the subsequent feelings of abandonment by the community as the human toll grew, to now — the rebuilding period into a new normal.

“This is really when my team started to feel the reality of those losses and kind of began its journey to ‘this is our new life,’” Flemmons said.

Olivia Kirkpatrick, MSN, APRN, a nurse practitioner in the MICU, recalled going on maternity leave right before COVID-19 struck Tennessee,

continued on page 4



The virtual Advanced Practice Grand Rounds focused on the experience of caring for COVID-19 patients for nearly two years.

then returning to an entirely different job.

MICU Nurse Practitioner Dan Ford, MSN, APRN, recalled “the constant feeling that you weren’t able to manage patients the way that you previously had. Your whole focus was to put out fires. So, you would literally run from one room, and one... patient to another and managing that and peri-arrests and arrests.” Staff were worried about whether they would contract COVID-19.

Meanwhile, family participation in decision-making, a pillar of MICU care, was changed because visitors were initially not allowed in the COVID unit. Nurse practitioners and physician associates instead were limited to giving families a call once a day with an update, and sometimes using a video call at a patients’ bedside as they were dying.

“Our nurses were amazing in helping implement the FaceTime and Zoom calls and the family members could at least be there in some capacity and feel like they were present in someone’s passing,” said MICU Nurse Practitioner Wren Sherrill, MSN, APRN, “but talk about a complete change in the way we prac-

tice.”

Sherrill said the day-in, day-out of patient care took a toll on staff, many of whom worked overtime due to staffing shortages.

“The high acuity, high census, high mortality, on top of us having personal connections, and then feeling abandoned by our community, it hit an all-time low here, I think,” she said.

In time, nurses saw some relief. Visitor policies changed. More nurses were hired. Volunteers from other units came to staff the COVID unit. Vaccines and treatments were invented. By the middle of 2021, a plan was put into place to distribute the burden of the sickest COVID patients to other VUMC intensive care units.

“That’s when we had a breather, and I think we all sat down and could just start doing some self-reflection and dealing with the feelings that we had kind of pushed aside,” Flemmons said.

Flemmons ended the presentation with a message of hope, thanking the greater Vanderbilt community that came together during an unprecedented time.

“We’re having some improved outcomes, there’s

new emerging evidence still every single day and some treatments that are promising,” she said. Meanwhile, “we’re all kind of dealing with our own individual healing.”

Buffy Krauser-Lupear, DNP, APRN, CRNA, director of Professional Development in the Office of Advanced Practice, was among many who were moved by the MICU nurse practitioners’ stories.

“I know that you have been through a lot, and I’m so happy that you’re here to share with us today, your journey,” she said. “Just know that we love you and we are so grateful for everything you all have done. Thank you.”

During the kickoff session, the 2022 Advanced Practice Ambassador Award was presented to Jim Kendall, LCSW, CEAP, manager of VUMC Work-Life Connections-EAP (the Employee Assistance Program). The award honors non-advanced practice providers for their contributions to the profession.

For more information about the Office of Advanced Practice, go to <https://www.vumc.org/nursing-oap/>