

# 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

Marilyn Dubree,  
MSN, RN,  
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## VUMC RECEIVES NCPD REACCREDITATION

Vanderbilt University Medical Center was granted reaccreditation for nursing continuing professional development (NCPD) in February from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

With this accreditation, which is for a period of four years, VUMC is part of an influential global community of accredited organizations, said Crystal Jackson, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, senior director of Nursing Education and Professional Development.

“It helps us to continue our mission to deliver the best ongoing education and also helps with professional development for staff, especially our nurses who are seeking certifications,” Jackson said. “When our nurses complete contact hours, it will now be associated with this very prestigious accreditation. I am thankful to all the staff who helped achieve this important designation.”

The accreditation follows a rigorous process, including a detailed self-study and a site visit in December 2022. The news of the accreditation is timely — it comes just before Certified Nurses Day on March 19, a traditional day of celebration.

“The appraisers really look at your structure, process and outcomes from start to finish, how you have built out your educational programs,

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### IN THIS ISSUE

Study: Peer messaging effective in nursing

VUH nurses become Medication Safety Champions

Spring is just around the corner. It is a beautiful time to be on one of our campuses, new life and potential all around.

We have much to celebrate in this issue. First, I am excited to announce that we have received reaccreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center for nursing continuing professional development. This is the culmination of a detailed process involving many in nursing education. Congratulations on this great accomplishment.

Next, please read about important new

VUMC research showing the effectiveness of peer-to-peer messaging in addressing workplace behaviors.

Lastly, read about our colleagues at Vanderbilt University Hospital who have partnered with the Department of Pharmaceutical Services to start the Medication Safety Champions program. This is impressive work.

Enjoy this issue,

your partnership with your nurse planners,” Jackson said. “They look at how the organization is ensuring content integrity and correlating evidence-based practice to support its work.”

NCPD accreditation from ANCC elevates educational offerings that benefit Vanderbilt nurses, and the patients and communities they serve, by:

- Promoting the highest professional standards to sustain effective strategies that improve professional nursing practice.
- Improving curricula for nurses to provide evidence-based education that strengthen professional development programs.
- Increasing credibility to adhere to evidence-based, goal

standards that deliver quality, professional education.

- Expanding visibility to be included among other accredited organizations that are listed in a nationwide, searchable directory.
- Increasing demand to offer continuing professional development contact hours that are essential to building professional portfolios and maintaining certification and accreditation from ANCC and other licensing boards and regulatory bodies.

“This accreditation demonstrates Vanderbilt’s commitment to using evidence-based criteria when developing high-quality educational activities that promote the professional growth of nurses,” said Executive Chief Nursing

Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN, RN, NE-BC, FAAN. “We are thrilled to share in this prestigious accreditation.”

The ANCC Accreditation Model is based on the original Donabedian framework of structure, process and outcome measures to evaluate quality. The ANCC standards provide organizations with a structured, evidence-based framework to design and implement NCPD activities. The development of quality outcomes ensures that accredited organizations continuously evaluate processes and their impact on the professional development of nurses.

For more information on the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program, visit [www.nursing-world.org/ncpd](http://www.nursing-world.org/ncpd).

## STUDY: PEER MESSAGING EFFECTIVE IN NURSING

A tool developed at Vanderbilt University Medical Center to address disrespectful workplace behaviors through trained peer-to-peer messaging can be successfully implemented in the nursing workforce with the appropriate support, according to a new study published in the January 2023 issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*.

The first author of the article, “Implementation of Peer

Messengers to Deliver Feedback: An Observational Study to Promote Professionalism in Nursing,” is Cindy Baldwin, MS, RN, CPHRM, senior associate for the Department of Pediatrics and School of Nursing at the Vanderbilt Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy.

Prior research shows that unprofessional behaviors in health care settings lead to unhappy, less motivated workers and poorer outcomes for

patients and families, Baldwin said. She and other researchers evaluated the feasibility of implementing for staff nurses the Co-Worker Observation System (CORS), a tool developed at VUMC in 2013. Prior to the study, CORS been implemented for doctors and advanced practice providers at Vanderbilt, but not for staff nurses, Baldwin said.

“We thought this was a unique opportunity to be able to give nurses an opportunity to

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self-regulate, as shared governance models highly support this concept,” Baldwin said.

Researchers implemented CORS for staff nurses at VUMC and two other academic medical centers – Keck Medicine of the University of Southern California (including USC Verdugo Hills Hospital and Norris Cancer Center) and University of Iowa Health Care – using a project bundle with 10 essential implementation elements.

CORS promotes addressing professional behavior in the moment, but if that doesn’t happen, coworkers can use an electronic documentation system to document the observation. In the study, those reports were screened through natural language processing software, coded by trained CORS coders using the Martinez taxonomy, then referred to a trained nurse messenger who is carefully selected to be a peer, based on role and tenure. The nurse messenger shares the observation with the nurse that offended the person who reported the incident. The name of the reporter is withheld.

The study considered 590 reports from the three sites from Sept. 1, 2019, to Aug. 31, 2021. Most reports included more than one unprofessional behavior – a total of 1,367 unprofes-

sional behaviors were recorded, then mapped to existing categories in the CORS system. Most unprofessional behaviors — 48.8% — were related to issues in clear and respectful communication. Another 33.3% were related to performing duties/tasks that are part of a role. A total of 6.8% were related to appropriate medical care; 5.9% to professional integrity; and 5.2% a report of concern or possibly egregious.

Baldwin also noted that 92% of all nurses in the study’s database never received a CORS report about their behavior.

Baldwin said the beauty of the peer-reporting system is it allows a trained peer messenger to resolve the issue with the nurse that triggered the report, and the incident is not reported to nursing leadership or human resources unless required by policy or law or requires investigation. Most peer reports are delivered at face value, without investigation, realizing that there are two sides to every story.

CORS data collected over 10 years show that most people listen to peer criticism and self-correct. She noted that much unprofessional behavior is not rooted in the workplace, but rather outside life stressors.

Baldwin cautioned that

simply implementing a peer-to-peer reporting system isn’t enough; messengers must be trained, and the correct reporting infrastructure and leadership support must be in place. The study found that nurses would deliver CORS messages to their peers with the correct training.

Other VUMC authors of the paper are Alice Krumm, DNP, RN, CNOR; Heather Davidson, PhD; Lynn Webb, PhD; Thomas Doub, PhD; and William Cooper, MD, MPH.

“The findings of this study really highlight the fact that professionals will respond if we approach them in respectful, nonjudgmental ways,” said Cooper, who leads the Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy.

Executive Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN, RN, NE-BC, FAAN, noted that VUMC recently received its fourth Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, in part because of its commitment to shared governance.

“Every nurse at Vanderbilt has a voice, and CORS is an innovative peer-reporting model that strengthens that voice,” she said. “I am excited about the possibilities as we expand the use of this tool to further empower our nurses.”

## VUH NURSES BECOME MEDICATION SAFETY CHAMPIONS

Vanderbilt Nursing and the Department of Pharmaceutical Services have teamed up to create the Medication Safety Champions program, intended to improve medication safety throughout Vanderbilt University Hospital.

Dozens of nurses throughout the hospital have completed training in the program, which eventually aims to have a nurse specifically trained on medication safety in every unit, on every shift, throughout the hospital.

“We want to provide 24/7 support for our nursing staff and have that extra resource to ask questions, monitor practice, provide coaching and identify opportunities for improvement in safety,” said Jennifer Glenn, MSN, RN, NE-BC, senior associate of Nursing and an organizer of the program. “It’s really empowering staff to be a part of the solution.”

The program is the result of a series of listening sessions held during summer 2022 to hear nurses’ perceptions of medication practices and identify areas to improve safety.

“We gathered amazing feedback from the front-line nursing team to be able to take action on,” said Molly



Vanderbilt Nursing and Department of Pharmaceutical Services personnel worked together to create the Medication Safety Champions program, intended to improve medication safety throughout Vanderbilt University Hospital.

Knostman, PharmD, MHA, executive director of Inpatient Pharmacy Operations at Vanderbilt and another organizer. “One of the things that was borne out of these sessions was the need to have front-line nurses who would serve in the medication champion role to be able to serve as a resource to their peers.”

Glenn said the champions have observed medication administration and offered feedback to streamline the process for safety, keeping in mind the “five rights” of medication administration: the right patient, the right drug, the right dose, the right route, and the right time.

She said feedback gathered from the program is being recorded and discussed in monthly medication safety champion meetings, and

medication safety champions have also integrated themselves in other safety committees that already existed. In turn, the committees are empowered to implement proposed solutions and tactics.

“This has been a fantastic partnership of front-line staff and pharmacy,” she said. “It’s really been a great way to share best practices and brainstorm solutions together.”

Executive Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN, RN, NE-BC, FAAN, said, “The Medication Safety Champions program has been designed to both empower nurses and improve care for our patients and families. I would like to express my appreciation to all who have been involved in this exciting new initiative.”