



Cared. Compassionate.

**CARE. COMPASSION. COMMITMENT.**

2014 Sondra D. Bender Annual Nursing Report



**SUBURBAN HOSPITAL**  
JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE

# CARE. COMPASSION. COMMITMENT.

*These sentiments lie at the heart of our nurses. Whether caring for the patient or caring for the community, our nurses embody the very best of Suburban Hospital.*



Through their talents, skills and compassion, Suburban Hospital's nurses help thousands of people each year improve health—and regain hope for the future. Beyond our walls, they lend their services to prevention, early detection and educational outreach programs, keeping community members healthy, in their homes and out of the hospital.

Our nurses mold the next generation of direct care providers, sharing their experience and mentoring new colleagues in the intricacies of today's complex health care system. And through their commitment to excel, Suburban Hospital's nurse-created and nurse-led councils contribute to improved quality and safety, better practices and ever-higher levels of professionalism.

Those three simple words—care, compassion, commitment—are at the core of Suburban Hospital's Nursing Practice Model.





Barbara Jacobs, MSN,  
RN-BC, CCRN  
Senior Director,  
Chief Nurse Officer

**IT IS MY PLEASURE** to present our latest report on recent nursing activities and achievements at Suburban Hospital. Since our last publication, we have made significant advances on all fronts. The Nursing Practice Model, created and adopted in 2010, is our touchstone, guiding everything we do. And its six principles—patient-first, respectful, educated, compassionate, professional and collaborative—are the yardstick that measures our success.

A prime example is our implementation of truly patient centered care. Working with our Patient and Family Advisory Council—a volunteer group of community members, former patients and nursing leadership—we have instituted new policies and practices to ensure that our patients and their loved ones are treated as active partners in the health care team. Our progress in rolling out even more patient-centered endeavors

places us at the forefront of this movement within the region, and lets our nurses fully practice the “patient-first” element of their model.

Other nurse-driven initiatives are changing how Suburban Hospital delivers care and protects patients from inadvertent harm. Their efforts resulted in publications, presentations and awards from peers nationwide, underscoring the quality and value of our work.

Likewise, our rising ranks of nurses with national specialty certification validate the high quality and standards of our staff. Our current count of 195 places us in elite company.

The source of such achievements is a dedicated workforce, committed to the patients in their care. I am both honored and proud to call Suburban’s nurses my colleagues.



Gene E. Green, MD  
President,  
Suburban Hospital

**MY DUAL POSITION** as hospital president and a practicing physician provides a unique perspective on the many roles of nurses. After 2 years at Suburban Hospital, and a life-long career in patient care, here’s what I believe sets our nurses apart.

First, I have long admired nurses for the skills, experience and insight they bring to the clinical team—an appreciation that stems from my early days as a medical student when I gained much practical advice and knowledge from the nurses at my side. At Suburban Hospital, that tradition of teaching and nurturing others is at play every day, from giving newcomers the hands-on, bedside training they need now, to helping seasoned professionals prepare for the future.

As part of our patient-first commitment, many staff members across the ranks also participate in Suburban’s nurse-led councils. By researching and refining practices, leading the charge for ever higher levels of quality and safety, and helping to shape a patient- and family-friendly environment, the councils influence everything that goes on within our walls.

Of course, no discussion of “the caring professions” can be complete without mentioning compassion. Our nurses’ concern for their patients is promoting greater communication and improved caregiver/care-receiver relationships for better outcomes.

For these and other reasons, I applaud Suburban’s nurses and their many successes during the past year. After you review this report, I hope you share my opinion.

## NEW DIRECTIONS IN NURSING

***Clinical research into nursing practices and procedures has established a strong foothold at Suburban Hospital. It's a natural evolution, given the Nursing Practice Model's emphasis on increased professionalism and higher education.***

Toward that end, Suburban Hospital's nurses have been actively pursuing new and better ways to enhance patient care by initiating and undertaking clinical research studies. Their efforts produced publications in national, peer-reviewed journals,

presentations to national and regional professional societies, textbook contributions and—most importantly—changes in patient care practices, here and elsewhere.

The work of the hospital's Evidence Based Practice and Research Council is a good example. In the last few years, the council has focused on improving patient comfort. Studies range from evaluating the effectiveness of different pain-numbing applications before IV insertion to elderly patients, to managing nausea after surgery. One of the council's most recent initiatives was to evaluate tools that help to assess delirium in elderly medical-surgical patients. As a result, a new screening tool has been implemented. In addition, the council coordinates an annual Evidence Based Practice Day, highlighting work that has been done by nursing staff during the course of the year.

Through these and other efforts, Suburban Hospital's nurses are contributing new knowledge, changing the practice of nursing and helping to transform health care, for the benefit of patients today and tomorrow.



*Members of Suburban Hospital's Evidence Based Practice and Research Council discuss information on a new initiative. The council uses a variety of tools and resources to support their efforts.*

**EACH YEAR WE RECOGNIZE**, via a variety of special awards, those who exemplify nursing excellence through patient care and professional practice.



**2014 SUBURBAN HOSPITAL NURSES AND TECHNICIANS OF THE YEAR AWARDS, MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROSITY OF THE ARTHUR G. LAMBERT FUND FOR NURSING.**

**The Winners...** Top row from left: Freshta Rahimi, Emergency Dept.; Ronnie Morrison, Behavioral Health; Diane Harris, Pre-Op Holding; Liz Regan, Education; Chief Nurse Officer

Barbara Jacobs; and Julie Todaro-Lawser, Adult-Medical Unit. Bottom row from left: Virginia Schad, Emergency Dept.; Kingsley Koranteng, Orthopedics; and Wendy Ortiz, Operating Room.

## THE HEART OF THE MATTER

***“Take off your professional hats for a moment and remember that at some time you were, are, or will be a patient or family member of a patient,” Toby Levin tells a group of Suburban Hospital’s new hires. “That is the focus of everything we do.”***



*Suburban Hospital nurses, including Justin Bowser (left), assistant nurse manager on the adult surgical unit, have worked closely with Toby Levin (center) and other members of the Patient and Family Advisory Council to develop and enhance bedside shift reporting.*

Levin is a founding member and co-chair of the Patient and Family Advisory Council, a volunteer group devoted to ensuring patient- and family-centered care (PFCC) throughout the hospital. Comprising former Suburban patients, family members and hospital leadership, the council strives to improve policies, procedures and processes for a more satisfying patient experience and better health outcomes. The involvement of the patient/family advisors and staff at all levels helps to translate recommendations into practice changes that ultimately benefit the patient.

“In this model of care, all participants—caregivers, patients and family members—play active roles in the process,” explains Senior Director/Chief Nurse Officer (CNO) Barbara Jacobs, MSN, RN-BC, CCRN, who co-chairs the council with Levin. “It’s very much a partnership.”

It's also a change from most hospitals' standard operating procedures. Yet patient- and family-centered care is the wave of the future, with many hospitals just beginning to adopt the concept. By formally embracing PFCC in 2010, Suburban is well ahead of the curve regionally.

Bedside-shift reporting (BSR) demonstrates how patient and family centered care can have an impact. As the name suggests, the nurse going off-shift meets with the incoming nurse at the patient's bedside. There, the two nurses have a conversation, which includes the patient and any family members who are present, to review the patient's status and discuss the plan of care for the day ahead. The patient and family are encouraged to ask questions, correct misperceptions and contribute to a more complete profile.

First tested on the new Progressive Cardiac Care Unit last fall, BSR initially met some resistance.

"I was afraid it was going to be too time consuming," staff nurse Zemenay Mestesalem, BSN, RN, says of the pilot project. "But now I really like it. I feel like I connect with patients better and they have less anxiety because they know what's happening and what the plan is. It's had a big impact."

Evidence shows that BSR has a positive impact on patient satisfaction while helping to reduce errors and improve outcomes. Since its initial roll-out in the PCU, Suburban has now implemented bedside shift reporting in all areas of the hospital.

Now Johns Hopkins Medicine has adopted PFCC as a strategic priority system-wide, appointing Suburban Hospital President Gene E. Green, MD, as one of the system's accountable leaders responsible for developing and implementing goals and strategies that ensure success.

"Patient-and family-centered care is transforming the way we function," he says. "Eventually, everything we do in the hospital, at all levels, will be influenced by its principles."



## DEFINING "FAMILY"

Another council recommendation produced important changes to Suburban's existing visitation policy. Now patients can designate whom and how many persons they want as "family," or their principal partners in care, whether relationships are based upon blood or other bonds.

## HIGH EXPECTATIONS, HIGHER RESULTS

*At Suburban Hospital, nurses take great pride in providing the highest levels of quality care.*



*Members of Suburban Hospital's award-winning emergency department sepsis team.*

Take 2013's staff-led effort to combat sepsis—an insidious, fast-moving infection whose symptoms can mimic those of other illnesses, often with disastrous consequences. Research has shown that early recognition and intervention can change outcomes dramatically. So Suburban's Emergency Department (ED), point-of-entry for many of the hospital's sickest and most vulnerable patients, went toe-to-toe with this sometimes fatal foe.

Led by Andrew Markowski, MD, and Alicia Folk, BSN, RN, CEN, the ED team introduced a comprehensive, systematic protocol to detect—and, hopefully, defeat—sepsis. An accompanying “Sepsis is Serious” campaign aimed to raise hospital-wide physician and nurse awareness of the condition and its potential for harm.



The star of the campaign is a rap video, conceived and created by Folk, for nurse and physician training sessions. Backed by a chorus of fellow ED staffers, Folk chants her rhyming lyrics on sepsis' warning signs and interventions. Entertaining and effective, the endeavor hasn't just caught the attention of hospital staff, but also that of the broader Johns Hopkins Medicine family, winning first prize at the system's Fifth Annual Patient Safety Summit.

"Studies show that every hour of delayed treatment for sepsis reduces the chance of survival by nearly 8 percent," says Folk. "While it's too early to measure, anecdotal evidence suggests that our efforts are making a difference."

Another 2013 quality initiative—a collaboration throughout Johns Hopkins Medicine—encourages activity and mobility among medical patients as a means of helping them to regain or gain strength after a prolonged or serious illness. The mobility initiative extends to all medical units, including the Intensive Care Unit, (ICU).

"By the time many of these patients reach us, they're already weakened from being sick and, possibly, bedridden," says Julie Todaro-Lawser, MS, RN. "Complicating matters, many are also elderly. So our goal is to get these patients up and moving as soon as possible, three times a day, to help stimulate their systems."

Initially, the activity can be as simple as sitting on the side of the bed; ultimately, nurses hope that patients reach the point where they can walk, aided or unaided, around the unit.

"After we've treated them, we want our patients to be able to return home feeling comfortable," concludes Todaro-Lawser.



## MASTERING THE ABCs: Advanced Abilities = Better Care

“By successfully completing the challenging certification exam, you feel that you have a particular level of expertise in your area of practice.”

— Virginia Schad, BSN, RN, CEN



Suburban Hospital recognizes its certified nurses with a photo array of those achieving the accomplishment of nursing certification..

***“Every day, I witness how Suburban’s nurses are leading through shared governance, learning new skills and helping transform patient care,” says CNO Barbara Jacobs, MSN, RN-BC, CCRN. “Combined with increasing numbers of nurses with specialty certification and advanced degrees, we are raising the bar for professionalism.”***



Barbara Jacobs accepts the 2014 ABNS award for nursing certification.

That statement is both a testament to the hospital's expansive educational support and a tribute to the combined efforts of its Nursing Professional Development Council and staff members themselves. Determined to excel, 33 nurses in 2013 alone earned certification in their respective specialties, gaining professional recognition of their knowledge and expertise along the way. The increase brings the hospital's current total of nationally certified bedside nurses to 195, or 37 percent of the hospital's nursing staff—the same level held by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's most highly recognized programs.

That accomplishment hasn't gone unnoticed. In 2014, the American Board of Nursing Specialties awarded Suburban Hospital its national Award for Nursing Certification Advocacy. The hospital also received an honorable mention in 2013.

That statement is both a testament to the hospital's expansive educational support and a tribute to the combined efforts of its Nursing Professional Development Council and staff members themselves. Determined to excel, 33 nurses in 2013 alone earned certification in their

Promoting certification isn't the only avenue open to those interested in professional development. Over the years, generous donors have invested millions so staff can advance their knowledge, understanding and skills.

### Community Invests in Nursing Excellence

Through the Casey Endowment for Nursing—established with a \$3.1 million gift from the Eugene B. Casey Foundation a decade ago—more than 100 individuals to date have attained basic and advanced nursing degrees. Last year alone, 10 Casey Scholars received a total of \$63,000 to help cover the costs of pursuing their dreams of a higher education.

More recently—and often in gratitude for care received—several individuals and organizations made major investments in our nursing excellence. In 2013, the Suburban Hospital Auxiliary and the Ruth & Samuel Salzberg Family Foundation awarded grants of \$200,000 and \$100,000, respectively, to increase opportunities for clinical training and education.

In the spring of 2014, the Bender Foundation, Inc., made a monumental commitment in the form of a \$2.5 million charitable gift. The Sondra D. Bender Fund for Nursing Excellence will help to bolster and ensure Suburban's commitment to nursing excellence in the years ahead.

"It is our pleasure and duty to honor our parents' commitment to philanthropy and to help ensure that our community hospital continues on its outstanding path," said Julie Bender Silver, whose husband David is currently chair of Suburban's board of trustees.



*Above: Daily safety huddle on the Adult Medical Unit led by Kevin Pullins, MSN, RN, unit director and recent masters in nursing graduate.*



*Right: The philanthropy of the Bender Foundation, Inc., established by the late Sondra D. Bender and her husband Howard, greatly impacts nursing.*

While expanded educational and learning opportunities are a decided bonus for Suburban's nurses, patients are the ultimate beneficiaries.

"These gifts and programs help us advance nursing practice and improve patient care," says LeighAnn Sidone, MSN, RN, OCN, CENP, director of professional practice and nursing quality/associate chief nurse officer. "By exposing our nursing staff to the latest developments in clinical practice, encouraging specialty certification and supporting the pursuit of advanced degrees, we assure the best possible patient outcomes."

## COMPASSION IN ACTION



I think volunteering in the community is a natural component of nursing. With our ‘Patient-First’ mind-set, nurses want to help where needed.”

— Cathy Clark, BS, RN-BC, CH-GCN,  
*co-chair of the Professional Development Council*

***Suburban’s nurses not only apply their skills within the hospital walls, but they extend those same skills in the greater community, where their generous contribution of time and talent help to support the hospital’s health and wellness programs.***

“Their willingness to serve others, above and beyond a typical work day, expands our ability to improve health access,” says Monique L. Sanfuentes, MA, director, Community Health and Wellness. “Plus the clinical expertise each nurse volunteer brings places our programs and community service on a higher level. Their participation also broadens our capacity and reach, letting us respond to educational opportunities. It’s a win-win situation.”

Suburban Hospital actively encourages volunteering throughout its ranks as a means to further its benefits to the community. Not surprisingly, nurses comprise the largest pool of willing labor:

“I think it’s a natural component of nursing,” says Cathy Clark, BS, RN-BC, CH-GCN, co-chair of the Professional Development Council, which regularly announces volunteer

*Our nurse volunteers make a difference at many community events, including “Back to Bethesda,” where they administered flu shots and shared health education materials.*



opportunities hospital-wide to aid in recruitment. “With our ‘patient-first’ mind-set, nurses want to help where needed.”

While volunteering helps some nurses fulfill advancement requirements, others get involved “just for the joy,” says Carolee Beckford, RN, CCRN, a force behind many successful mobilization efforts and a long-time volunteer herself.

Regardless of the motivation, Suburban Hospital traces its role in several annual community health improvement programs to the commitment and dedication of its nurses.

The Johns Hopkins University/Montgomery County Baking Bread event—a hands-on health, safety and science learning initiative for fourth graders—is a prime example. Suburban Hospital’s nurses created and staffed a series of activity stations such as *Make Your Plate* to encourage healthy food choices, *Jump-Start Your Heart* which measures heart rate and oxygenation pre- and post-exercise, *Pick your Poison* to help kids identify common yet harmful substances, and the hand-cleaning exercise, *Exterm-A-Germ*. Now in its fourth year, the event reaches between 400 and 600 youth annually with its messages of health and wellness.

However, one project in particular stands out for its effectiveness. In 2012, Maryland Delegate Ana Sol-Gutierrez invited Suburban Hospital to participate in a new Latino Health Fair, debuting that year as part of Montgomery County’s annual Salvadoran American

Day Festival. Suburban’s nurses eagerly volunteered to conduct free blood pressure screenings.

Casual results revealed a disproportionate number of elevated readings, especially among females, and prompted the nursing team to return to the next fair. Their tactics worked, attracting a crowd of 500 in 2013.

Their findings, reported to the state, sparked interest and action among policymakers who responded with the Healthy Community Lifestyle Initiative to reduce obesity in Montgomery County.

The Suburban Hospital team is expanding its data collection efforts for 2014 to identify additional gaps in population health.

“Nurse volunteers bring an added level of clinical excellence, expertise and professionalism to our outreach initiatives,” says Sanfuentes. “In return, they have an opportunity to be proactive—to identify at-risk individuals and intervene early to help them steer clear of the hospital. They are the cream of our crop.”



## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

***Nurse.com honored Suburban Hospital nurses Karin Nevius, BSN, RN, CCRN, CAPA, CPAN and Elizabeth Tordella, MS, RN-BC, as regional finalists in its annual GEM Nursing Excellence award. The pair earned the honor for having an extraordinary influence on the profession and their patients.***

In addition to its own initiatives, Suburban Hospital frequently joins larger campaigns to advance quality and patient safety. In a national cardiovascular surgery study conducted by Johns Hopkins' Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality, Suburban Hospital's cardiac surgery team was deemed outstanding for achieving two full years without a single incidence of either surgical-site infection or Central Line-Associated Blood

Stream Infections (CLABSI) - a common complication nationwide. The team was also recognized for achieving 1-year without a single ventilator-associated pneumonia.. Fifteen other hospitals participated in the study.

Similarly, the Intensive Care Unit, (ICU) earned the top spot among all participating units in a Maryland Hospital Association program for achieving a zero CLABSI rate in 2013. Their success also merited the cover of the January 2013 issue of *ADVANCE for Nurses magazine*.

Through these and other efforts, Suburban Hospital once again received the Delmarva

Foundation's Excellence Award for Quality Improvement, and was voted "best" by *Bethesda Magazine* in two categories: emergency care and heart/stroke.



*Nurses Elizabeth Tordella and Karin Nevius, GEM Nursing Excellence Award regional finalists.*

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT PUBLICATIONS



## PRESENTATIONS

- **Adhering to The Joint Commission's Pneumonia Core Measure.** LeighAnn Sidone (Nursing Administration), Karen Michaels (Pharmacy). *Nursing 2014*, February.
  - **Trauma Bay to Operating Room: Management of the Severely Injured Patient in a Level II Trauma Center.** Liz Regan (Nursing Education), Voula McDonough (Emergency Room). *OR Nurse*, January 2014.
  - **Get a Leg (or Two) Up on Total Knee Arthroplasty.** Liz Regan, Fran Phillips (Nursing Education), Theresa Magri (Orthopedics). *Nursing 2013*, July.
  - **A Quality Improvement Study of Pain Score and Duration of Nerve Blocks.** Pamela, Guarin (Post-Anesthesia Critical Care Unit). *Nursing 2013*, May.
  - **Compact Clinical Guide to Cancer Pain Management: An Evidence-Based Approach for Nursing.** Yvonne D'Arcy (Nursing Education). *2013 American Journal of Nursing's Book of the Year Awards (Palliative Care and Hospice Category)*, Second place.
  - **You CAN teach Med-Surg Nursing! The Authoritative Guide and Toolkit for the Medical-Surgical Nursing Clinical Instructor.** Deborah Wirwicz, (Intensive Care), co-author.
  - **Reducing CLABSI.** *ADVANCE for Nurses*, January 2013 pages 8 - 10 (Cover and lead story).
- 
- **Does the Use of a Standardized Tool for Assessing Delirium in the Elderly Medical-Surgical Patient Help Nurses Identify Delirium?** Peggy Iraola (Cardiac Research), Ann Greenberg (Cardiac Research), Angela Giammetta (Oncology), Elizabeth Regan (Nursing Education), Sara Tomlin (Acute Medicine), Elizabeth Tordella (Behavioral Health), Liduina Ngundam (Oncology). *The Maryland Organization of Nurse Executives*. April 2014.
  - **A Quality Improvement Study on the Incidence of Urethral Catheterization in Patients with Spinal Anesthesia After Orthopedic Surgery.** Pamela Guarin, Sharon Ferguson (Post-Anesthesia Critical Care Unit). *33rd Annual American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses National Conference*, Las Vegas, Nevada.



**Suburban Hospital**, a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine, is a not-for-profit hospital in Bethesda, Maryland, serving Montgomery County and the area for more than 70 years.

Our relationship with Johns Hopkins strengthens our clinical services and brings increased opportunities for medical innovation, education and research. It also allows us to achieve our goal of assuring that our community has access to the very best health care available. We are also proud of our unique affiliation with the National Institutes of Health.

Suburban Hospital features a certified stroke center, Level II Trauma center, as well as centers of excellence in cardiac care, orthopedics & joint replacement surgery, neurosciences and oncology.

This publication was made possible through the generosity of the Sondra D. Bender Fund for Nursing Excellence.



**SUBURBAN HOSPITAL**  
JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE

8600 Old Georgetown Road | Bethesda, MD 20814  
[hopkinsmedicine.org/suburban\\_hospital](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/suburban_hospital)