



**2023 NURSING
ANNUAL REPORT**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO

By Johnese Spisso, MPA

President, UCLA Health

CEO, UCLA Hospital System

Associate Vice Chancellor, UCLA Health Sciences



At UCLA Health, nurses are the heart of everything we do in patient care. They are often the first to engage with patients about their concerns, and they help to build a mutually trusting and respectful relationship between the patient and care team to best meet the patient's physical and emotional needs. The highly impactful nurse-patient relationships that are an essential part of care at UCLA Health ensure that we provide patients and families with outstanding care, compassion and kindness.

At the conclusion of the COVID-19 pandemic, we dedicated our efforts to developing new initiatives to provide nurses with much-needed support for their physical and mental well-being. In partnership with the Nursing Professional Governance groups, which enable our nurses to contribute collaboratively as decision-makers, we aimed to build resilience, foster wellness and help nurses continue to excel in developing trusting relationships with patients and the community.

Our success centered on improving the health and safety of the work environment. As a first step, we convened a committee dedicated to workplace safety and launched the A Safer U Toolkit. The toolkit is a collection of resources, training and guides to help UCLA Health employees feel better equipped to safely complete their work each day. These resources can be utilized with patients and/or visitors during challenging situations. A Safer U is an ever-evolving initiative that will continue to develop new protocols for UCLA Health staff into 2023 and beyond.

In the coming year, through a sustained commitment to workforce strategies, we will continue to build a safe work environment that is both stable and supportive for our nurses.

Cover Image: A nurse cares for a patient in the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit.
Photo by Aude Guerrucci/UCLA Health

Nurses' ideas and feedback will continue to be important in informing the future strategic direction of our health system. Our nurses are invaluable and integral to the UCLA Health vision to heal humankind, one patient at a time, by improving health, alleviating suffering and delivering acts of kindness. On behalf of everyone at UCLA Health, we send a thank you to our nearly 4,000 nurses for your dedication to nursing excellence, collaboration, teamwork and endless compassion. I am grateful for you and all that you do for our patients, our community and each other.

Nurses attending a professional governance recruitment fair at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center in August 2022.
Photo by Robert Hernandez/UCLA Health



A YEAR IN REVIEW

**By Karen A. Grimley, PhD, MBA, RN,
NEA-BC, FACHE, FAAN**

Chief Nursing Executive, UCLA Health
Assistant Dean, UCLA School of Nursing

Spring is a time of rebirth, and today, as I reflect back on 2022, I see a glimmer of hope. Pandemic restrictions are lifting and people are starting to gather together with intention and gratitude. Celebration and camaraderie are more noticeable, and compassion fatigue, exhaustion and feelings of despair seem to be subsiding. We truly are social beings, and this coming together is more meaningful than ever. We can see the importance of people in our lives. We can feel renewed energy, and we see hints of joy, which gives me hope for a future full of promise for UCLA and UCLA Health nursing.

Despite the challenges we have faced, we have stayed focused on the health and safety of our patients and those who care for them. Things we've done this past year have been aimed at getting ready for the day we don't have to use pandemic-related constraints and ensuring that we are responding with intention to what we have experienced this past year. The sheer number of people requiring care, and ensuring our ability to deliver care to our standard, contributed to compassion fatigue and an atmosphere of sadness for many nurses. People seemed to be more terse and demonstrated more frustration this past year, whether they were getting care or giving care. It made for hard feelings, challenges and threats to safety, and it was also a call to action.



In response, we embarked on a systemwide undertaking called A Safer U, a current-state analysis of all the initiatives, activities and programs in place that address some facet of safety for staff, patients and their families. I'm very proud to say that this nurse-led interdisciplinary team has come together to create a focused and comprehensive approach to improving the safety of our environment and the safety and well-being of the people in it. Efforts around prevention, education and remediation of workplace violence are being addressed. We've started to see wonderful results with projects like the weapons-detection systems in our emergency department entrances, wearable staff-safety buttons and other staff-safety alerts and education.

This past year, we increased the availability of our care-delivery model in-service called Relationship-Based Caring. This three-day refresher program is designed to review elements of relationship-based care with nurses. What we have learned from this work, called

Reigniting the Spirit of Caring, is that nurses found it to not only be a refresher course, but also a sort of intentional self-care retreat, which has bolstered morale and engagement with their peers and their patients.

At the relationship-based care meetings we've been hosting, many of our nurses, on their first day, described feelings of compassion fatigue, dread and sadness. They began to question why they went into nursing. Health care has been slow to realize the true devastation of COVID-19, and our question becomes, "How do we address the fatigue and disillusionment of those who stayed in a fragmented system?" Over the past year, we've spent time trying to help our nurses describe their current circumstances and what their future needs to look like.

To address some of these issues, we've invested in a comprehensive workforce strategy that has ensured we have the right number of staff to care for patients consistently. We've streamlined the onboarding process, created agreed-upon staffing measures and designed metrics and a rewards-and-recognition program to ensure we were cognizant of what was happening. The results of this past year's effort can be seen in our nursing engagement and excellence scores, which exceeded the national benchmarks in at least six of seven categories across our system.

Our nursing professional governance model is alive and well, with lots of innovative and creative activities continuing. And we strengthened our partnership with the UCLA School of Nursing.

Today we should survey our nursing landscape and celebrate all that we have seen and done this past year. We have achieved much. We not only surpassed national benchmarks, but we also partnered together for one another. And we did it because it is who we are and how we used our resources and relationships to reinvigorate our teamwork and camaraderie, which can be seen in A Safer U, improved nursing workforce strategies, new application of relationship-based care and stronger nursing and health care worker support. With strong staffing as a foundation, we can turn our attention to the future; our focus remains on our patients, the nursing teams that care for them and the health of our care environment.

A heartfelt thank you to all of those nurses and staff who traveled on this journey. Your compassion and commitment to our patients and to each other, no matter what the challenges, never cease to inspire me. Together we've come through stronger and more engaged as a team, ready for what lies ahead. Thank you for all you do.

Chief Nursing Executive Karen A. Grimley interacts with staff in Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. Photo by Aude Guerrucci/UCLA Health



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TAKE CENTER STAGE



“ I am gratified that I will be able to leave a legacy to improve conditions for nursing. ”

Quanna Batiste-Brown, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FABC
Chief Nursing Officer, Ambulatory Care

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are essential principles at UCLA Health, and these core concepts are woven into the fabric of nursing at every level. The work of EDI takes place every day and engages all aspects of UCLA Health. Here are a few examples of how this important work is helping nurses foster an environment that prioritizes equity-focused care for patients and inclusivity among colleagues and the greater UCLA Health community.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY COUNCIL

The Unity in Diversity Council (UID) launched in 2022. Born out of the COVID-19 pandemic and the social-justice movement that emerged in 2020, which together shined a light on structural racism and widespread discrimination, the council is focused on establishing an authentic environment of equity, diversity and inclusion for

patients, trainees, volunteers and staff.

Kemi Reeves, MSN, RN, GNP-BC, is among the leaders of the council. A gerontological nurse practitioner in the UCLA Alzheimer’s and Dementia Care Program, she recalls how, in the summer of 2020, many patients and their family members were requesting assistance to navigate the health system to find culturally competent care. “These requests appeared to be prompted by greater societal attention being paid to institutional racism and to cultural identity, as well as the increased rate of mortality from COVID-19 in communities of color,” Reeves says.

In response, she reached out to UCLA Health Patient Experience to see if her encounters were unique, or if they reflected a larger issue within the health system. “I learned that there had been

more requests for cultural accommodations from patients and families throughout the system,” she says. “Therefore, I decided to take a more active role in EDI efforts within the health system.”

Reeves reached out to Chief Nursing Executive Karen A. Grimley, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, FAAN, who referred her to the Professional Development Council (PDC), which had a subcommittee also looking into options to improve EDI-related nursing practices.

The idea for a council dedicated to the work of equity, diversity and inclusion arose from this group of dedicated nurses.

These nurses made a formal request to the NEC (Nurse Executive Council) for a new EDI-focused group within Professional Governance. “It was six months-to-a-year in the making — writing a charter, meeting with various stakeholders and considering what our role is within nursing, and also within the broader environment of UCLA Health,” Reeves says.



A painting created by staff artists to celebrate staff diversity and the united commitment to provide the highest-quality patient care was unveiled in newly established 3NW break room in UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center in December 2022.
Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

ONCE APPROVED, UID WAS PLACED UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF NURSING PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE AND DIVIDED INTO FIVE SUBCOMMITTEES. THE SUBCOMMITTEES ARE:

- 1. Patient Equity:** Work with Nursing Data Analytics and the Office of Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (HEDI) to create nursing-specific EDI performance metrics across service lines, and to develop standardized EDI Press Ganey patient-experience questions to be included across all service lines;
- 2. Professional Advancement in Diversity:** Work to develop pathways for professional development for nurses and staff;
- 3. Equity Awareness and Integration:** Work with UCLA Products Development and Central Supply to standardize inclusion of population-specific supplies for each nursing unit; develop pathways for professional development; in partnership with the Center for Nursing Excellence and the UCLA School of Nursing, present four-part EDI webinar series focused on the role of nurses to advance health equity, practice cultural humility, mitigate unconscious bias and foster inclusive relationships with colleagues; work with Department of Patient Safety and Quality Management to review SOFI (Safety Opportunities for Improvement), UCLA Health's event-reporting process, improve staff understanding of the process and support engagement with the SOFI system;
- 4. Healthy Practice Environment and Nurse Well-being:** In collaboration with Transformational Leadership Council and the Professional Development Council, identify spaces to create break rooms and respite areas for nurses in both Westwood and Santa Monica hospitals. In December 2022, a painting created by staff artists to celebrate staff diversity and the united commitment to provide the highest-quality patient care was unveiled in newly established 3NW break room in UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center;
- 5. Community Participation and Contribution:** Launch a quarterly UID newsletter to share work of the council and encourage others to join council activities. The newsletter is available at: tinyurl.com/UID-Newsletter. This subcommittee spearheaded the planning for the inaugural 2022 Unity and Kindness Day.

Quanna Batiste-Brown, left, chief nursing officer of ambulatory care at UCLA Health, and Kemi Reeves, a gerontological nurse practitioner in the UCLA Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program, are both involved in the Unity in Diversity Council.
Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health





The inaugural Unity and Kindness Day was held May 25, 2022.
Photo by WorldWise Productions

UNITY AND KINDNESS DAY

The inaugural Unity and Kindness Day was held May 25, 2022, on the anniversary of the murder of George Floyd. Hosted by the Unity in Diversity Council, it provided an opportunity for UCLA Health staff to honor both Nurses' Month and Mental Health Awareness Month, and connect at a community level, engage in wellness activities and learn about principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. Staff members from across the spectrum of the UCLA Health hospitals and ambulatory clinics participated in-person and remotely. Representatives from a variety of UCLA Health initiatives were present at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center to provide therapeutic services from the UCLA People-Animal Connection team; UCLA Recreation, which provided laughter yoga; and the PaUse Cart, which offered aromatherapy, soothing teas and other items to promote well-being.

Among the highlights of the day was a Random Messages activity during which attendees participated in note writing and hung kindness remarks on a golden ring to showcase their intentions for the days, weeks, months and years ahead. Attendees also participated in a letter-writing campaign, entitled Myri's List, for refugee families newly arrived to the Los Angeles area.

WORK AT THE STATE LEVEL

Quanna Batiste-Brown, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FABC, chief nursing officer of ambulatory care at UCLA Health, was a key participant in a statewide assembly of nursing leaders charged by the American Nurses Association/California (ANA/C) with developing a plan to eradicate racism in nursing.

Launched during the height of the pandemic, the 10-member task force met virtually over a one-year period. During initial focus groups, nurses discussed the current state of nursing and their personal experiences with racism. Their conversations led to development of a 50-question assessment tool for staff nurses and managers, which was piloted at UCLA Health and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. After nearly a year of research, data analysis, live forums and discussions, the task force developed a toolkit and an action plan that will be used in strategic planning in nursing departments throughout the country.

For her work, Dr. Batiste-Brown received the Public Policy Award from the ANA/C. She currently is working with the ANA/California Taskforce to create a similar assessment for nursing students and faculty. "I am gratified that I will be able to leave a legacy to improve conditions for nursing," Dr. Batiste-Brown says. "I've been a nurse for more than 20 years, and my daughter wants to be a nurse. To enable her to have a more positive experience is something I'm very proud of."

A SAFER U FOR A SAFER WORKPLACE



“I’m proud...we’re delivering useful processes that will help keep people safe.”

Patrick Loney, BSN, MBA, RN

Chief Nursing Officer, Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA

As incidences of workplace violence increase and make headlines across the country, UCLA Health leadership is taking action to keep its workforce safe. Building on the work of the prior Disruptive Behavior Taskforce, a new program called A Safer U brings together a multidisciplinary team from across the health system to enhance workplace safety and promote well-being for the workforce.

“We knew we had to look at the role of our culture, our capacity for early recognition and intervention, as well as how we respond to events and learn from them,” says Lee Galuska, PhD, RN, NE-BC, executive director of the Center for Nursing Excellence. “To advance that goal, we brought together team members with expertise in all of those areas.”

Dr. Galuska joined with Patrick Loney, BSN, MBA, RN, chief nursing officer of Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA, and Norm Lantz, director of UCLA Health General Services, to lead A Safer U. Three groups, with staff and leadership members from throughout the organization, were formed: prevention and proactive culture-building; early recognition and intervention; and current response systems, reporting and data-collection/analysis processes, post-incident staff-support processes and organizational learning.

Patrick Loney, chief nursing officer of Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA, Lee Galuska, executive director of the Center for Nursing Excellence, and Norm Lantz, director of UCLA Health General Services, led the multidisciplinary team that launched a new program called A Safer U. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health



HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

Group 1: Prevention and Proactive Culture-building

- Evaluated and revised relevant policies and management plans;
- Assessed safety committees and recommended opportunities for alignment;
- Assessed initial and ongoing training related to behavioral and cultural expectations that promote healthy work environments and made recommendations for consolidated training;
- Assessed wellness programs across the organization and made recommendations for alignment and consolidation;
- Identified data to understand baseline performance and measures of success, including incident data and staff-survey data; and
- Worked on hardwiring accountability structures and processes to ensure they meet cultural standards.

“Safer U will continue to evolve over time,” Loney says. “I’m proud of the things we’ve already started, that we’re able to deliver tangible improvements to safety and that we’re delivering useful processes that will help keep people safe.”

Group 2: Early Recognition and Intervention

- Updated and expanded Crisis Prevention Training (CPI), utilizing data from SOFI (electronic incident reports);
- Increased workplace-violence-prevention training for departments, with the potential addition of simulation similar to an innovative 3NW program at UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center;
- Expanded leadership training for addressing workplace incivility among staff;
- Launched A Safer U toolkit for managing disruptive behavior, published on intranet homepage;
- Introduced wearable duress button in high-risk units, currently undergoing proof-of-concept validation; and
- Finalizing a staff-safety alert in the electronic health record for patients with a history of violent behavior.

Group 3: Response and Follow-up Processes

- Began SOFI campaign to streamline/consolidate data on incidents and near misses to provide more accurate data;
- Established new process for closing the feedback loop on SOFI reports; and
- Developing a peer-to-peer support program to strengthen support for team members who have experienced an event.

MOBILE DURESS BUTTON

One tool in particular that Loney is excited about is the mobile duress button — also known as a panic button. When activated, the wearable electronic device instantly alerts hospital security staff to the user’s name and precise location where the emergency or threat is occurring.

The project is led by Vernon Goodwin, UCLA Health director of security, in collaboration with nursing; it is being piloted at Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA and other high-risk areas. Early results have been positive.

“The mobile duress button is part of creating emotional and psychological safety,” Dr. Galuska says. “Knowing you have something on your person to call for help is reassuring and sends a message to staff that we care about them and want to take necessary measures to keep them safe.”

The device will be rolled out in phases throughout the year.

Nurses review a poster in the UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center Medical Procedure Unit.
Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS KEY TO BETTER OUTCOMES

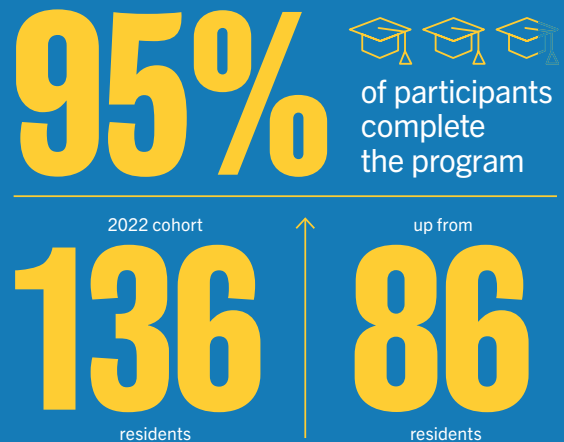
Empowering nurses to deliver safe, high-quality care that is grounded in evidence-based practice is at the core of Nursing Professional Development at UCLA Health. That work often begins with the UCLA Health Nurse Residency Program (NRP), which guides the development of new graduates from novice to competent professional nurses in the clinical environment.

In May 2022, the Commission on Accreditation in Practice Transition Programs of the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) awarded the NRP its Accreditation with Distinction, what many in the field consider to be the gold-seal of excellence for transition-to-practice programs. It is the second time the NRP has received this distinction. Six sites are included in this four-year designation. They are Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center, Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA, UCLA Westwood Outpatient Surgery Center, UCLA Santa Monica Outpatient Surgery Center and UCLA Health Santa Monica Allergy and Immunology Clinic.



Manager of Nursing Professional Development Jessica M. Phillips, RN, leads nurse resident training. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

NURSING RESIDENCY PROGRAM METRICS

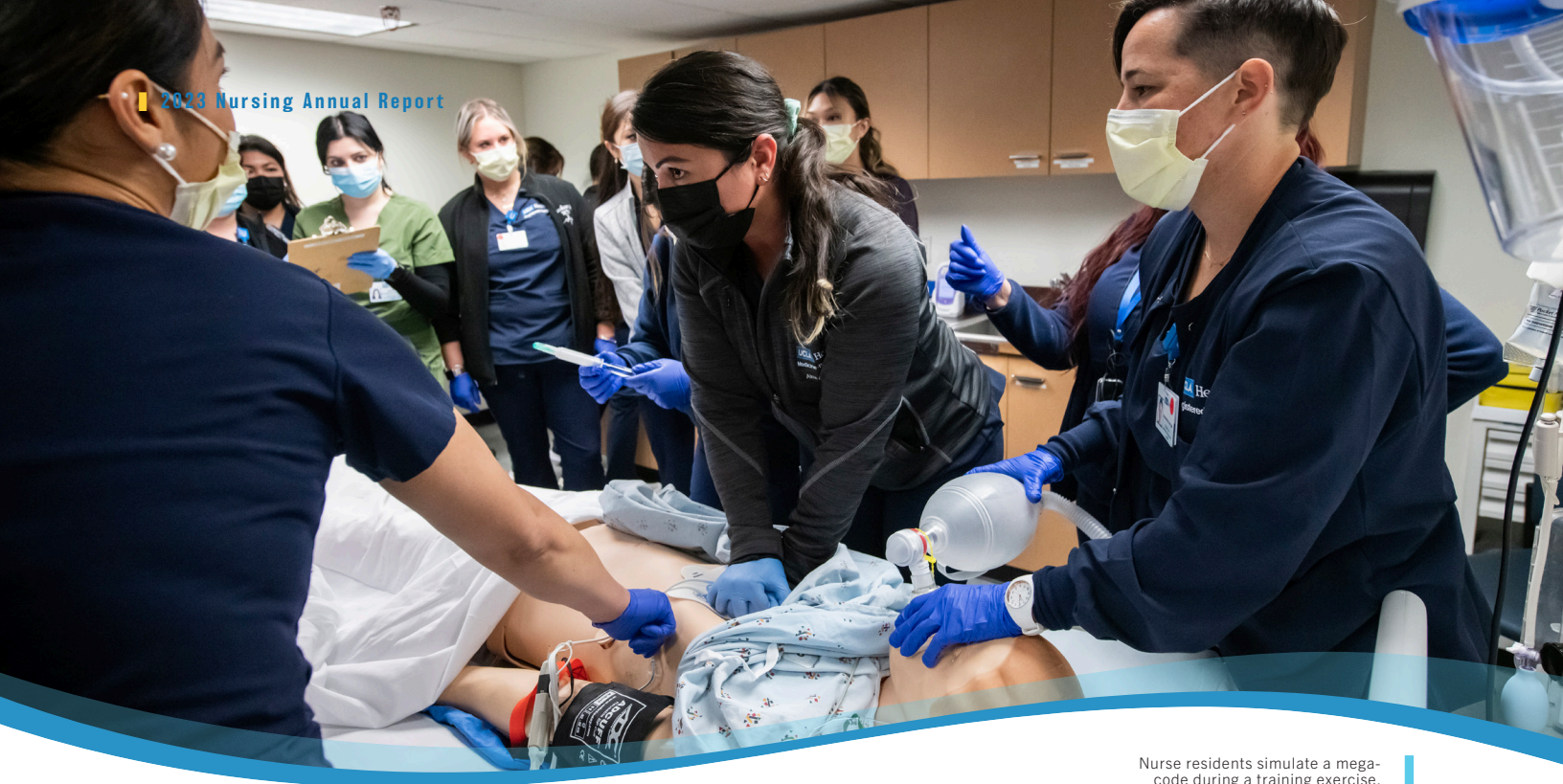


NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM STRENGTHS

In its appraisal, ANCC identified the NRP's three key strengths: strong leadership support and engagement at all levels; an evidence-based practice (EBP) program that demonstrated knowledge, skill and attitude progression among residents presenting EBP projects at national conferences; and a wellness program strategically aligned and supported by the chief nursing officers.

"The accreditation recognizes nursing excellence in programs that transition newly licensed nurses," says Jessica M. Phillips, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, manager of Nursing Professional Development at UCLA Health. "Nurse residents tell us that they feel supported in their journey."

The yearlong residency focuses on leadership, patient outcomes and professionalism. Nurse residents meet monthly to support one another and collaborate with experts from multiple populations and nursing areas.



Nurse residents simulate a mega-code during a training exercise. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM KEY METRICS

Two cohorts of residents complete the program each year. There were 136 residents in the summer 2022 cohort, up from 86 residents last spring. More than 95% of participants complete the program, according to the most recent data, which is above the national average and in line with the program's goal. Nurse resident satisfaction levels have remained stable and are above the Vizient/ANCC benchmark.

"In the current nursing climate, there are opportunities for improvement in the program to ensure residents have the support they need as they encounter new challenges post-pandemic," Phillips notes.

"Stress is a major reason nurses leave the profession," she says. "To address that, one of our goals is to strengthen our wellness and mentorship programs, which have been pivotal to retaining people, as well as helping them to process their experiences and work through difficult situations they've encountered."

SUPPORT FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

Evidence-based practice, or EBP, is a problem-solving approach that integrates the best-available research with clinician expertise/judgment and patient preferences and values. "EBP is an organizational priority at UCLA Health, and it is fundamental to nursing professional practice," says Pamela Miller, PhD, RN, ACNP, CNS, PHN, EBP(CH), senior nurse scientist in the Research, Evidence-Based Practice, and Innovation Program in the Center for Nursing Excellence.

"Everything we do for our patients, and in our leadership practices, should be based on evidence from published research and what has been demonstrated as best clinical practice. If there is insufficient evidence to implement a practice change, then nurses conduct research in partnership with PhD-prepared nurse scientists to generate evidence or innovate to create solutions that add to the body of evidence to guide our clinical and leadership practice," she adds.

Dr. Miller and her team are key players in ensuring EBP is taught throughout nursing.

HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

- **EBP immersions:** Five-day workshops for educators, nursing-professional-development specialists, clinical nurse specialists, unit directors, clinical nurse managers and quality-improvement specialists, where participants learn the EBP process and strategies for implementing EBP in the organization;
- **Leading EBP workshop:** Nurse leaders gain knowledge and skills for creating an environment where EBP can be implemented and sustained;
- **Implementation strategy session:** Participants learn evidence-based implementation strategies that facilitate the uptake of best evidence into practice using an implementation sustainability toolkit;
- **Nurse residency EBP session:** Residents are exposed to EBP principles and strategies to apply in their required EBP initiative;
- **Leadership fellowship for clinical nurse managers:** Nurse managers are oriented to their role in EBP and recommended strategies to navigate barriers to creating an environment where EBP can flourish;
- **EBP and quality-improvement seminar series with UCLA School of Nursing:** Showcases EBP and quality-improvement initiatives, conducted either by health system nurses or by Doctorate in Nursing Practice students, to illustrate EBP and quality improvement in action;
- **Library partnership:** Antonia Osuna-Garcia, UCLA Health and Life Sciences librarian, collaborates to educate nurses on how to develop PICOT (patient, intervention, comparison, outcome, time) search strategies to identify the best evidence to answer practice questions; and
- **“U Publish” mentored writing program:** Provides writing mentorship to support nurses at every level with the knowledge and skills necessary to publish studies, projects or initiatives in peer-reviewed journals that add to the body of knowledge.

In addition, the Center for Nursing Excellence recently hired Lisa Steurer, PhD, RN, CPNP-PC, an evidence-based practice specialist with the Research, Evidence-Based Practice, and Innovation Program, “to help take EBP to new heights,” Dr. Miller says. “I’m excited about UCLA Health Nursing leading the way with evidence-based practices and outcomes. Continuing to build EBP competency among nurses to support evidence translation into practice will have a significant impact on ensuring the highest quality of patient care and safety,” she adds.

“Everything we do for our patients, and in our leadership practices, should be based on evidence from published research and what has been demonstrated as best clinical practice.”

Pamela Miller, PhD, RN, ACNP, CNS, PHN, EBP(CH)
Senior nurse scientist, Research, EBP and Innovation Program in the Center for Nursing Excellence





A patient cuddles a PAC dog.
Photo by Ann Johansson

IMPROVING OUTCOMES ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs) are advanced-practice nurses with specialized expertise. In having CNSs as part of the interdisciplinary care team, UCLA Health is able to advance clinical practice using evidence in order to achieve the best-possible patient outcomes. “CNSs are the subject-matter experts when it comes to patient care,” says Theresa Kirkpatrick, MSN, RN, CCRN, CCNP, CNS, an advanced-practice manager and clinical nurse specialist in the pediatric critical care and pediatric cardiothoracic units. “They help improve the outcomes by looking at the data, looking at current research and working with units that need help with improving their numbers,” she adds.

“ CNSs are the subject-matter experts when it comes to patient care. ”



Theresa Kirkpatrick, MSN, RN, CCRN, CCNP, CNS

Advanced-practice manager and clinical nurse specialist, pediatric critical care and pediatric cardiothoracic units

HIGHLIGHTS OF CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS WORK INCLUDE:

- Reduced the number of CLABSI (catheter-associated bloodstream infections) 37% across the health care system, from a total of 73 in fiscal year 2021 to a total of 46 in fiscal year 2022;
- Reduced the number of CAUTI (catheter-associated urinary tract infections) 25% across the health care system, from a total of 75 in fiscal year 2021 to a total of 56 in fiscal year 2022;
- Formed unit-based committees in high-risk units to help prevent HAPI (hospital-acquired pressure injuries);
- Reinstated the UCLA People-Animal Connection program to bring weekly pet visits to patients at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center;
- Increased integrative therapy visits; and
- Launched an evidence-based study to determine if the CAUTI risk-stratification tool originally implemented on the pediatric units can be successfully used for adult patients. Kirkpatrick, the lead mentor on the project, says, “The tool was developed to alert physicians to the potential risk of infection based on catheter days.”

In addition, several CNSs teach classes to improve patient outcomes systemwide, “which has helped decrease our nurse-sensitive indicator rates,” Kirkpatrick says.

ADVANCING GERIATRIC CARE

In 2021, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) recognized UCLA Health with its highest designation for excellence in caring for older hospitalized patients: Age-Friendly Health System — Committed to Care Excellence. As the only University of California health system conducting comprehensive geriatric screenings for depression, mobility and function on admission, UCLA Health is continuing its commitment to provide exceptional care for patients age 65 and older.

In 2022, a team of CNSs and bedside clinicians helped launch GeroBOOST, a report that allows the patient's primary care physician to view all geriatric screenings completed while the patient was hospitalized. The aim is "to include the patient's GeroBOOST report and the discharge summary on one screen so the primary care provider can easily see both," says Tina Mamais, MSN, RN, BC-GCNS, GNP, CNS, advanced-practice manager and geriatric clinical nurse specialist at UCLA Health.

For example, under the risk category of physical limitations, if a patient scores 45 or higher on the Morse Fall Risk Screen, the record would display "high risk for falls." All positive screenings are displayed in green font to call attention to them. "This will help with continuity across the spectrum," Mamais says.

Along with Mamais, the team includes geriatric clinical nurse specialists Anila Ladak, DNP, RN, PHN; Lianna Ansryan, MSN, RN, PHN; and Matthew Rieck, MSN, RN-BC, a clinical nurse at UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center.

“I’m proud of their contributions to the Evidence-Based Practice Council and helping to put geriatric care at the forefront of UCLA Health.”

Tina Mamais, MSN, RN, BC-GCNS, GNP, CNS
Advanced practice manager and geriatric clinical nurse specialist

WORK IN GERIATRICS ALSO INCLUDED:

- UCLA Health's fourth annual observance of International Day of the Older Person on October 1, 2022. The theme was Celebrating the Resilience and Contributions of Older Women. Clinicians from the Evidence-Based Practice Council (EBPC) developed posters that were displayed at the entrances of the Westwood and Santa Monica hospitals, the Geriatric Ambulatory Clinic and the Geriatric Adult Psychiatry unit at Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA;
- A quarterly EBPC geriatric newsletter is emailed throughout the health system to raise awareness and provide education.

Mamais praises the CNSs and the bedside clinicians with whom she collaborated over the past year. "I'm proud of their contributions to the Evidence-Based Practice Council and helping to put geriatric care at the forefront of UCLA Health."





Nurses assist a patient with paperwork in Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

FOCUS ON WELL-BEING LEADS TO HEALTHIER NURSES AND BETTER PATIENT CARE

“We heard you”

This is the message of a wellness initiative launched by UCLA Health nursing that is aimed at reducing work-related stress. The proposal is based on a 2021 research study developed by a team of clinical nurse co-investigators from the Professional Development Council's Wellness Subcommittee and leaders from the Center for Nursing Excellence who conducted a current-state assessment of UCLA Health caregiver well-being and collected recommendations for interventions using validated assessment tools.

More than 1,200 nursing caregivers shared their voices through the survey, providing recommendations that have been used to drive meaningful organizational change. Validated tools were used to measure compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue, burnout, secondary traumatic stress and meaning and joy in work. Caregivers provided detailed responses to open-ended questions about what caused them stress at work and what the organization could do to help.

All members of the study team participated in an extensive review of the qualitative and quantitative data, utilizing this information to develop, implement and advocate for interventions. Top responses identified staffing, schedules and assignments, patient-care concerns and work environment as top stressors. Recommendations to manage work-related stress included help with challenging patients and families, offering massage therapy and providing respite and break spaces.

The team surpassed its goal of implementing at least three interventions in 2022. “The study was so powerful because it was driven by a partnership from executive leadership and clinical nurses to capture and hear the voices of all nursing caregivers at UCLA Health,” says Kelley Anderson, MSN-Ed, RN, nursing professional-development practitioner with the Center for Nursing Excellence.



Nurses talk in front of a black and white photograph of newborn feet in the Labor & Delivery wing of UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

WORK IN PROGRESS INCLUDES:

- A rotating massage-therapy program across units and shifts;
- Increased rounding with the PaUse cart for just-in-time stress reduction;
- Wellness resource kits for each unit;
- Increased float pool hiring;
- Additional staff to fill functional vacancies related to leaves of absence, sick calls and delays onboarding new staff;
- Creation of a nurse well-being coordinator position;
- Exploring respite spaces and break rooms at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center; and
- Launch of A Safer U initiative focused on promoting a safer, healthier work environment.

The changes are expected to make a meaningful impact, “**enabling our nurses to continue to do the work that brings them meaning and joy while making a difference in outcomes for patients, their families and our communities,**” says Lee Galuska, PhD, RN, NE-BC, executive director of the Center for Nursing Excellence.



FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIP-BASED CARE

“We’re not effective with our patients and families if we’re not taking good care of ourselves” is a mantra at the forefront of the work Anderson does in Relationship-Based Care and Nursing Professional Governance. In 2022, that work was highlighted by:

- A health-and-wellness page with resources for caregivers developed by the Nurse Wellness and Healthy Work Environment subcommittee;
- A relax-and-reset event, offered through a partnership with Inpatient Integrative Therapy, where nurses and care partners could participate in group meditation and receive reiki and aromatherapy;
- Unit Practice Council (UPC) Summit professional posters focusing on implementation of unit-based interventions to fight burnout, manage stress and improve staff morale, several of which have been invited to present at national conferences;
- UPC projects focused on improving collegiality through team-building exercises, planning events and employee recognition; and
- Expansion of the Nursing Leadership Fellowship Program to include wellness strategies.

FOCUS ON PATIENT WELLNESS

Nurse well-being and patient wellness go hand-in-hand, and the Wellness Bundle Committee continues to identify ways to enhance patients' hospital visits and improve outcomes. Highlights of these efforts include:

- **Sleep carts:** Staffed by volunteers at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, each cart has a sleep-tips card, chamomile tea, eye masks and ear plugs. UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center provides identical items at nurses' stations;
- **Ear buds:** These work with the bedside iPads in every room, allowing patients to listen to sleep-assistance and music apps;
- **Music therapy:** For patients who prefer to be lulled to sleep by live music, a music therapist will play guitar and sing. "The patients love it," says Theresa Kirkpatrick, MSN, RN, CCRN, CPNP, CNS, an advanced-practice manager in the pediatric critical care and pediatric cardiothoracic units at UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital. "They wish they could have it more often;"
- **Mobility:** Units compete to see which can mobilize its patients more often and consistently. Kirkpatrick says the friendly competition is intended to help patients heal faster. "The goal is to mobilize more often so their muscles won't be deconditioned and, hopefully, they'll get out of the hospital sooner;"
- **Upgraded menus:** Provide a broader selection of culturally diverse meals that focus on fresh fruits and vegetables from local growers. Pastries and breads are now made on campus;
- **Hygiene:** Offering culturally appropriate hygiene items including hair products, combs, brushes and lotions make it more likely for patients to ask for a soothing bath or to have their hair shampooed; and
- **Oral hygiene:** Special toothbrushes and toothpaste are available for patients with sensitive gums.

"The wellness enhancements have been well-received by staff and patients," Kirkpatrick says. "We're continuing to expand the program beyond the initial improvements."

Nurses Kelley Anderson and Ana Liezl Gelveson, and Lee Galuska, executive director of the Center for Nursing Excellence, are involved in nurse wellness efforts. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health



Nurses committed to building healthier communities

“As nurses, we value the people in our community, not just the patients in front of us.”

Kannitha Lor, BSN, RN, CCRN

Clinical nurse II, coronary care unit

UCLA Health nurses are committed to reaching beyond the walls of the hospital to provide world-class health care to those who need it most. In 2022, nursing-led programs brought food, medical care and mental health services to underserved populations throughout Los Angeles County — programs that required nurses to create, innovate and seek out new ways to meet patients where they live.

HOMELESS HEALTHCARE COLLABORATIVE

In January 2022, UCLA Health launched the Homeless Healthcare Collaborative, bringing medical and psychiatric care to unhoused populations with a fleet of medically equipped vans staffed by nurses, physicians and social workers. The mobile units roll out seven days a week, targeting geographic areas with the highest need, including West Los Angeles, South Los Angeles, downtown Los Angeles, neighborhoods near the L.A.

Convention Center and North Hollywood/San Fernando Valley. The team includes nurses Kendal Wilkie, BSN, RN; Marcia Santini, RN; Nancy Vega, RN; and Shiou Udagawa, BSN, RN.

“Nurses are essential to our program, and they consistently are the face of the program in the community,” says Brian Zunner-Keating, MS, RN, director of the UCLA Health Homeless Healthcare Collaborative. “They maintain relationships with our community partners, they get to know the patients and they keep track of appointments and any extra care patients might need.”

Wilkie has found working with the collaborative a moving experience. “We see an underserved population that desperately needs care and attention and who have been overlooked,” she says. “So many of these people have had bad experiences in the past with the health care system, and they are frightened and distrustful. Whatever we can do to make that a better, more positive experience for them is so important. We don’t judge anyone. We come to where they live to care for them no matter what their need is.”

Zunner-Keating says he’s proud of how the team has solidified over the past year. “All of them are experienced nurses, but this is a new setting, and they’ve quickly learned to adapt, work on their feet and to be flexible in the community. They’ve been a central part of improving workflows and the way we are able to care for patients.”

Janet Rimicci, MSN, RN, senior director at UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center, agrees. “The nurses are the ones who know our processes the best and they are the experts at how we’re delivering care,” she says.



The Homeless Healthcare Collaborative team is pictured with one of the mobile health vans that they use to provide care across L.A. County. Photo by Chris Flynn/UCLA Health

IN 2022, THE COLLABORATIVE:

- Helped more than 5,000 people, including 1,500 through direct-care encounters and 3,000 through outreach (dispensing snacks, water and hygiene kits);
- Dispensed more than 1,500 medications to patients, many of whom are uninsured or don't have access to a pharmacy;
- Averaged 23 encounters per van each day;
- Forged more than 20 partnerships with food banks, homeless shelters and other outreach providers;
- Organized Giving Tuesday to engage staff from Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center to package 2,000 hygiene kits and 500 blankets; and
- Was recognized with a Team Daisy Award.

DRIVING FOOD COLLECTION

Helping community members who are struggling with homelessness and food insecurity is critical to her role as a nurse, says Kannitha Lor, BSN, RN, CCRN. "As nurses, we value the people in our community, not just the patients in front of us," she says.

Lor, a clinical nurse II in the coronary care unit, headed the annual food drive sponsored by nurses at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center and Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA, in partnership with the Westside Food Bank.

The drive raised \$836 in monetary donations and collected 1,604 pounds of food to be distributed throughout the food bank's service area of Venice, Santa Monica, Culver City, West L.A. and several college campuses.

Lor, co-chair of the Professional Development Council, notes that "the needs in these communities have increased as people struggle with rising housing and food costs. Often, they must choose between paying bills and putting food on the table."

"These stressors can lead to physical and mental illness. The food drive is one way to help our neighbors who are trying to tackle these issues," she says.

FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH

In May 2022, the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Westside Los Angeles held its second annual Wellness Weekend at the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica. The two-day fundraising event, recognizing Mental Health Awareness Month in May, featured music, yoga, meditation and wellness workshops. Erick Cheung, MD, chief medical officer at the Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA (RNPH), and Patrick Loney, BSN, MBA, RN, chief nursing officer at RNPH, along with hospital staff, answered questions and led interactive games and activities.

“It was a good introduction to what NAMI does,” says Sunnie Dishman, MSN, RN-BC, an assistant nurse manager at RNPH. Dishman organized UCLA Health’s participation in Wellness Weekend, with assistance from the RNPH

Structural Empowerment Council. She has been leading fundraising efforts for NAMI Westside Los Angeles since 2008, when she and her husband organized the first fundraising walk.

In 2022, Dishman’s team raised \$2,090 by creating videos on how they cope with stress. The videos were posted on the NAMI Westside Los Angeles website. Fundraising was bolstered by an additional \$3,000 from UCLA Health through its sponsorship of the event.

Two years ago, NAMI Westside Los Angeles recognized Dishman with the Frontline Service Award for her contributions to the organization. “They were grateful that despite the COVID-19 pandemic our support didn’t stop,” she says. And she has praise for her UCLA Health nursing colleagues who support her efforts with NAMI. “I never run out of volunteers.”



A group poses at the NAMI Westside Los Angeles Wellness Weekend event in Santa Monica. Photo by Les Dishman Photography



Nurse Marcia Santini, RN, right, walks in downtown L.A. with a patient she treated as part of her work with the Homeless Healthcare Collaborative. Photo by Chris Flynn/UCLA Health

PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE EMPOWERS NURSES TO DRIVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE



Coleen Wilson, DNP, RN, NEA-BC

Senior director of adult inpatient nursing,
UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center

Professional governance is the backbone of shared decision-making in nursing practice at UCLA Health. Guided by a set of bylaws and operating under a structure of multilevel councils, the governance system empowers nurses to participate in decisions that impact their practice, patient care, work environment and professional development.

“Professional governance provides the structure and process for nurses to practice at the top of their licensure and be in control of their decisions,” says Coleen Wilson, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, senior director of adult inpatient nursing at UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center. “It ensures their voices are heard and that they actively participate in the process.”

“**Professional governance provides the structure and process for nurses to practice at the top of their licensure and be in control of their decisions.**”

When launched in 2018, the Professional Governance Model consisted of eight councils aligned across facility and system levels. Each system council had a corresponding facility council. “Over time, nursing has made structural changes to eliminate duplicity and streamline decision-making,” Dr. Wilson says.

SOME RECENT CHANGES INCLUDE:

- Merged the facility-level and system-level Exemplary Professional Practice Councils into one system-level Evidence-Based Practice Council focused on identifying ways to update practice to enhance patient safety and outcomes;
- Transformed the New Knowledge and Innovations Council from a facility-level to a system-level council called the New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements Collaborative, with representation from each unit in all three hospitals;



Nurses attending a professional governance recruitment fair at UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center in August 2022. Photo by Robert Hernandez/UCLA Health

- Integrated the facility-level Structural Empowerment Councils into the system-level Professional Development Council, with representation from each unit in all three hospitals;
- Transformed the Coordinating Council, consisting of clinical leaders and executive leaders from Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center, Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA and ambulatory care. This council recently merged with the Empirical Outcomes Council to become the Nurse Executive Council; and
- Launched the Unity in Diversity Council, a system-level council that aims to establish an environment of equity, diversity and inclusion for patients, trainees, volunteers and staff. The council hosted the first Unity in Kindness Day in May 2022 and collaborated with Press Ganey to develop questions to assess patient experience related to equity, diversity and inclusion in the care they receive.

The Professional Governance Model currently comprises one Transformational Leadership Council at each facility and seven system-level councils: Nurse Executive Council; Unity in Diversity Council; Evidence-Based Practice Council; Professional Development Council; New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements Collaborative; the Transformational Leadership Collaborative; and Research and Innovation Council. In addition, each Unit Practice Council (UPC) has representation at the facility- and system-level Transformational Leadership Council and Collaborative.

Dr. Wilson notes the nurse-driven changes in the governance structure have created a more cohesive environment. “For the first time, I look at our councils truly as a system in which the individual councils rely on one another, as opposed to operating in facility silos,” Dr. Wilson says. “Our council representatives are very engaged and making a difference. They’re working on initiatives to improve patient outcomes and putting into place new practices that will increase efficiencies and allow us to take care of more patients or broaden the scope of our services. That’s the return on investment our organization receives.”

INTEGRATING EDUCATION WITH LEADERSHIP

“Setting U Up for Success” is a leadership-development course for new council members. Designed by Kelley Anderson, MSN-Ed, RN, nursing professional-development practitioner with the Center for Nursing Excellence, the sessions help nurses understand the value they bring to the organization. “We talk not only about the exceptional clinical care that nurses provide, but also about the financial impact we

have on our organization and our communities,” Dr. Wilson says. “For example, between fiscal years 2019 and 2022, nursing eliminated about \$3 million in future expenditures from a nurse-driven reduction in hospital-acquired injuries. Likewise, identifying opportunities to improve efficiencies and workflows can bring more revenue into the organization,” she adds.

A similar course offered for new UPC chairs focuses on conducting meetings and looking at evidence-based practices organizationally. “It sets the UPC chairs up so they can mentor their teams as they work through their projects,” Dr. Wilson says. “It is very much needed and has been well-received.”

UPC SUMMIT

In 2022, nursing held the inaugural UPC Summit to showcase the work of the Unit Practice Councils systemwide. The UPCs displayed their projects and initiatives, which included posters and podium presentations. Members of the Research and Innovation Council coached the units in developing their projects, which focused on reducing hospital-acquired infections, elevating performance on key nursing-sensitive indicators and related patient outcomes.

Dr. Wilson praised the work of the UPC members, noting that the event served two purposes. “It gave us the opportunity to celebrate their exceptional work and to identify what we need to share so we have consistent clinical practices across the organization that everybody can rely on,” Dr. Wilson says. “Standardization is important to expand upon the great work that’s being done.”

FLOAT TEAMS AND CROSS-TRAINING HELP MEET STAFFING NEEDS



Elizabeth Maister, BSN, MBA, RN, NE-BC
Senior director, Nursing Business Systems

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, health care systems across the country experienced staffing crises as nurses left the profession in record numbers. That wasn't the case, however, at UCLA Health, where staffing ratios have remained stable in spite of multiple surges of the virus. "Nurses were interested in coming to work for UCLA Health, so we were able to maintain our staffing ratios throughout COVID," says Elizabeth Maister, BSN, MBA, RN, NE-BC, senior director of Nursing Business Systems at UCLA Health.

Maister credits the nursing service float team (NSFT) — a collective of per diem nurses and care partners who work as needed — as a contributing factor to the health system's ability to maintain staffing. Between fiscal years 2020 and 2021, UCLA Health increased its float team workforce from 649 to 840; there currently are 863 staff on the team.

“Nurses were interested in coming to work for UCLA Health, so we were able to maintain our staffing ratios throughout COVID.”

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Staffing-model improvement

- Nursing administrators factored operational vacancy rates due to prolonged COVID-19-related illness and extended time to hire and train new staff into the operational budget to enable the hiring of additional nurses to maintain nurse-to-patient ratios in line with state requirements and patient-care needs.

Certification & training

- 44% of NSFT nurses are certified in their specialty;
- 132 ICU nurses hold professional certification;
- 87 med-surg nurses hold professional certification;
- 12 pediatric nurses hold professional certification; and
- 134 certified nursing assistants have attended Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training.

Accomplishments

- Initiated a University of California-wide annual float-pool recognition week in September 2022;
- Introduced a new graduate nurse cohort into NSFT;



Nurses review discharge planning in the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center discharge lounge. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

- 20 NSFT nurses actively participate on Professional Governance Councils;
- NSFT RNs were cross-trained to provide care to inpatient pediatric units and patients in Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA;
- Five of seven domains exceeded national average on 2022 Press Ganey Nursing Excellence Survey;
- Newly opened UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center Discharge Lounge managed and staffed by NSFT;
- Newly initiated Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center Shared Bed Liaison Program managed and staffed by NSFT;
- NSFT facilitated staffing of newly implemented immediate care clinic; and
- 50,568 shifts filled by RN NSFT in 2022.

Cross-training in ECMO

The COVID-19 pandemic presented many unique challenges. Not only did the total number of patients requiring care increase significantly, but escalated levels of patient acuity required innovative treatment strategies such as extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO).

ECMO takes over the work of the patient's heart and lungs, giving the native organs time to heal. In late 2021, the first class of 53 advanced

ECMO nurses completed training, adding to the cohort of respiratory therapists and perfusionists trained in this highly technical and complex level of care. At the time, the ECMO center in UCLA Health's Cardiac Intensive Care Unit had an average of 12 ECMO patients a day, the majority of whom were there due to COVID-19.

"It was a different story in 2022, however," says Ida Anderson, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, ONC, director of nursing in Adult Critical Care at UCLA Health. "The surge in patients shifted across all areas of ICU."

Fortunately, Anderson and her staff were able to quickly pivot, pulling nurses from the ECMO center to work the floor and hiring an additional 300 ICU nurses to fill shortages. "We increased FTE (full-time equivalent) positions by approximately 10% per unit. That's a huge number of people to onboard," she says, adding that training for each position takes about three months.

Meanwhile, cross-training on the ECMO circuit continued. "The nurses have talked about how it has been revitalizing to have an additional skill," Anderson says.

Nurses have remained dedicated to providing high-quality care. "They've stayed focused on why they're here, which is to deliver the best care they can for every patient," Anderson says.



Nurses pose with equipment in the hallway of UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

The Brighter Nurse

Sanjeevan Atwal-Khanna

MSN, RN – Nursing System Float Team

Coming to work with
lots of knowledge
keeping up with
the demand each day

The brighter nurse
handles every situation
with courage and compassion

Days or nights, work life
brings challenges every day
the brighter nurse keeps going
assisting others with smile and calm

Holding herself up with passion
the brighter nurse accepts and completes
all tasks in a timely manner

Day starts and ends but the
brighter nurse shines
even brighter



Who Am I?

Jenny Joby

MSN, RN – SMUCLA GERIATRICS UNIT

I have lived all my life knowing things,
And how everything works.
I know where I am and who I am.
I don't need anyone to tell me,
What to do and what not to.
I have family and loved ones,
Who are embedded in my soul...
But the next moment, I feel naïve,
Of everything I see and hear.
I don't understand how things work...
And to perform simple chores.
I can't figure out where I am and
How to respond when someone calls...
I don't know who you are and
Who my family and friends are.
I am lost in my own home...
I feel helpless, hopeless, and frustrated,
As I try to find out who I am...

**Dedicated to all the patients suffering
from dementia.**





A painting created by staff artists to celebrate staff diversity and the united commitment to provide the highest-quality patient care was unveiled in newly established 3NW break room in UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center in December 2022. Photo by Josh Sudock/UCLA Health

Scan to read the full report online.



UCLA Health

2023 Nursing Annual Report