

News Briefs

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Discover touching stories from present-day clinicians, nurses' experiences during World War II, and the critical relationship between philanthropy and health care in one of our new books. *Making a Difference: Stories from the Point of Care*, *Cadet Nurse Stories*, and *Nursing & Philanthropy* are available by calling 1.888.634.7575.

An online chat featuring *Making a Difference: Stories from the Point of Care* is scheduled for January 19 at 1 p.m. EST. Log on to share your stories and discuss the book with author Sharon Hudacek.

Contest to feature evidence-based practice

Nurses using evidence-based practice not only leverage better outcomes for patients but also save themselves time and stress. Sigma Theta Tau International and Nursing Spectrum are sponsoring Innovations in Clinical Excellence, a contest designed to recognize successful evidence-based projects. Details will be posted at www.nursingsociety.org.

"Nurses" premiere

On January 28 at 8 p.m., the Discovery Health Channel premieres its documentary titled "Nurses." Filmed at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, the documentary is divided into five one-hour segments. Different types of nursing will be featured, including oncology, pediatric, neonatal, psychiatric and ED/ICU.

International awards deadline approaches

April 15 is the deadline for the international awards to be presented during the biennial convention in November. For details, visit www.nursingsociety.org.

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Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

EXCELLENCE

in Nursing Administration

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Back to basics: Retention of high-quality nurses

By Pamela Klauer Triolo, Paula Hansen and Ann Scanlon-McGinity

Retention of high-quality nurses is front and center on the radar screen of every nurse administrator. The quantifiable cost of replacing a nurse ranges from \$40,000 to well over \$60,000 and does not include the hidden costs of job stress for those remaining; the risk of agency or temporary staff who do not know the units or patients well; lack of continuity of care; decreases in patient and physician satisfaction; increases in the cycle of turnover; and the potential increase in occupational health injuries. Compounded by the overall nursing shortage, retention needs to play a much more active role than recruitment.



As the shortage of nurses continues, retention remains the key to high-quality staff.

Retention can be viewed from two different perspectives. From the 30,000-foot nurse executive role, there are many factors to contemplate. First, we consider sources of information. Is the compensation and benefits package competitive? How many, when and why are nurses leaving the institution? At The Methodist Hospital in the Texas Medical Center, for example, we are most vulnerable to lose nurses during the first three years of their employment. What do the exit interviews tell you? Are there trends in the exit interviews or are the issues unit specific? Exit interviews are a must but are merely a bandage—and a much-too-late source of information. Nationally, The Advisory Board research tells us that nurses depart for three

primary reasons: compensation, scheduling options and intensity of work¹. Proactive nurse executives periodically take the pulse of their nursing staff through satisfaction surveys. Methodist uses a combination of unit-based scorecards and research-validated instruments.

Focal point is patient care unit

The focal point for nursing retention is the patient care unit. Each unit and each shift has a distinct culture, including professional and personal norms. It is the nurse manager who sets the tone and builds the relationships with new and seasoned staff. The Center for Creative Leadership's research on critical variables for success found that the number one success factor was relationships with subordinates². It is the unit manager who tucks the new nurse under his or her wing, sets the culture of mentoring and development, encourages continuous learning, runs interference between seasoned staff and the new person, and tunes a caring ear to the needs of the new nurse.

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Palliative care: One vision, one voice

By Cynda Hylton Rushton and Kathleen Hartman Sabatier

As members of the nursing profession, we seek ways to improve the quality of life for our patients throughout their life spans, whether that life is just beginning or entering its last phase. One of the ways that nursing can accomplish this end is by taking the lead in advocating for quality palliative care.

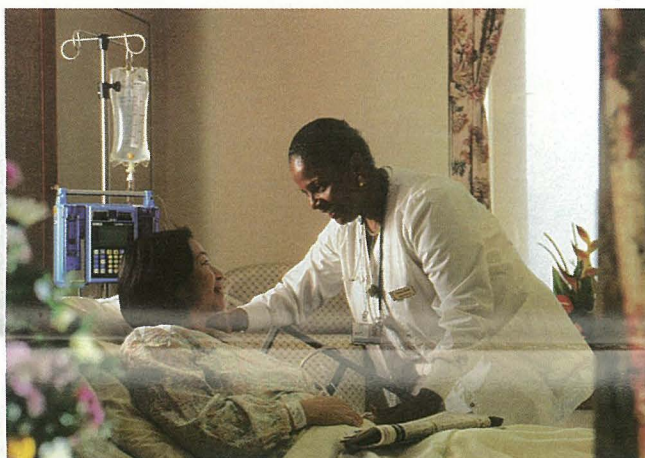
Traditionally, palliative care has been associated with the alleviation of suffering in anticipation of imminent death. It is care that encompasses all ages, from infancy to seniority, and includes hospice care. The graying of America, however, has created the need to expand this definition and examine ways in which the principles of palliative care can be applied to patients with not only terminal but also life-limiting conditions that affect their lives for years, even decades, before death.

In December 1997, the *Last Acts* Palliative Care Task Force, made up of nurses, doctors, social workers, ethicists and others, published this definition of palliative care:

Palliative care refers to the comprehensive management of the physical, psychological, social, spiritual and existential needs of patients. It is especially suited to the care of people with incurable, progressive illnesses.... The goal of palliative care is to achieve the best possible quality of life through relief of suffering, control of symptoms and restoration of functional capacity while remaining sensitive to personal, cultural and religious values, beliefs and practices.¹

If this seems like a tall order, nurses need only recall the essence of their profession, a commitment to provide comprehensive, humane, compassionate care and support to patients and their families across the life span. If we, as nurses, become diligent in emphasizing

the need for quality palliative care, we can change the culture of health care. First, however, we must educate ourselves, unite, organize and help build an infrastructure that will focus on patient- and family-centered care, pain and symptom management, and the art of humane caring.



Palliative care seeks to improve the quality of life for patients.

To that end, the Institute for Johns Hopkins Nursing created the Nursing Leadership Academy in End-of-Life Care to carry forward the nursing agenda set out by the Nursing Leadership Consortium on End-of-Life Care. Last September, leaders from 22 organizations, including Sigma Theta Tau International, immersed themselves in a five-day effort to develop plans to advance the field of palliative care. Together, these organizations represent more than 463,000 nurses. By the end of the five days,

participants saw clearly that if nurses spoke with one voice on this critical issue, palliative care could be transformed.

Academy participants took these plans back to their organizations, which responded by committing time, money and expertise to galvanizing their memberships and informing the public about the options for minimizing

the symptoms that accompany chronic illness and maximizing opportunities to live the last phase of life with greater peace and independence.

Nurses are powerful messengers—if we embody one vision and speak with one voice, we can bring palliative care out of the shadows and into the light. And when the time comes, as it will for all of us, the care we give—and will eventually receive—will affirm life through to its completion.

¹ The Task Force on Palliative Care, *Last Acts: Precepts of Palliative Care*. Chicago: Stewart Communications, December 1997 (www.lastacts.org).

Cynda Hylton Rushton, RN, DNSc, FAAN, is Assistant Professor of Nursing, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Ethics and Coordinator of the Pediatric Palliative Care Program at Johns Hopkins University and Children's Center.

Kathleen Hartman Sabatier, RN, MS, is Director of the Institute for Johns Hopkins Nursing.



Sigma Theta Tau International
Honor Society of Nursing

Connecting nurses worldwide

www.nursingsociety.org

In rapidly increasing numbers, nurses are turning to the Internet for information on careers, education and research. Recently, Nursing Spectrum sponsored a survey of 3,000 RNs and uncovered that 78 percent have Internet access—a nine percent increase from the previous year.

Sigma Theta Tau International has also seen Internet use on the rise through its Web site. Record numbers of nurses are logging on to www.nursingsociety.org for information vital to their careers and practices. In an online survey conducted between September 1999 and October 2000, a majority of members recorded their desire to have a membership directory, online journals and research, and a career center available on the Web site.

In response to the burgeoning demand for convenient, useful online information, Sigma Theta Tau International has developed these new offerings on its Web site.

The member community of nurses



In January 2001, Sigma Theta Tau International premieres the Member Community—a group of services designed to promote interaction among members. Included in the community is the Directory of Nurse Leaders, a listing

of all active members. It allows members to search password-protected contact information by name and state and network with colleagues. The Directory of Nurse Experts, a catalog of distinguished lecturers, writers and health care experts, is also available to all Web site visitors.

Other services available through the Member Community include e-forum, which enables members to establish private news and discussion groups, and a chat service that provides a convenient opportunity for members to exchange ideas and research knowledge. A calendar is also included in the Member Community, featuring future Sigma Theta Tau International events.

Research a click away

In an effort to support nursing knowledge worldwide, Sigma Theta Tau International now provides the *Registry of Nursing Research* as a complimentary resource to both members and non-members, thanks to a generous grant from Indianapolis philanthropist Ruth Lilly. Located on the library page of Sigma Theta Tau International's Web site, the *Registry of Nursing Research* is an electronic, searchable database containing more than 13,000 studies. All nurse researchers, including both members and nonmembers, are encouraged to register their research with the *Registry*. The process has recently been updated making it easier to use.

Beginning in March, members will also be able to access the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* online. Members may opt to discontinue the printed version and review the online version exclusively, which will be available on the Web site two weeks earlier than the printed version's delivery. E-mail member services at memserv@stti.iupui.edu if you would like

to take advantage of this new service.

Want to use the library to research a topic but don't know where to start? To help visitors discover all of the online information available through the library, the Library Search has been created. Now members and non-members are able to use one search function to pull information from several different library resources, including the *Registry of Nursing Research*, the Literature Indexes and the *Online Journal of Knowledge Synthesis for Nursing*.

Mapping out your career

CAREER MAP



Managing your Career with Purpose

Sigma Theta Tau International has expanded CareerMap, its nursing career resource, in response to member requests for career information and job searches. A unique job search program will be added in early 2001, providing a candidate-focused and easy-to-use format at no charge to its users. Candidates will be able to search for jobs in a particular setting, such as a hospital or office, and by location with information as specific as a ZIP code or as broad as an entire state. E-mails will be sent to candidates when a new job is posted, and useful links, such as salary and moving calculators, are included on the site.

CareerMap continues to feature information helpful to nurses at any stage in their career. Whether it's learning how to become a nurse, discovering how to change career paths within nursing, deciding on advanced education or

planning a rewarding, active retirement, the CareerMap section of the Web site offers all nurses easy access to information vital to their careers.

Members profiled on the CareerMap Web page are also available to address specific career questions or concerns. Questions and responses may be published on the Web site or in a future issue of *Excellence*.

Education online

Continuing education credit for the busy professional is easy to earn with one of the peer-reviewed case studies found on the Sigma Theta Tau International Web site. Created to advance the clinical reasoning, decision-making and judgment of practicing nurses around the world, each case study is based on a real-life situation, the latest practice information and current research. Authors and reviewers are members of Sigma Theta Tau International. Topics in development include breastfeeding, case management, delegation, infectious disease, end of life issues, women's health, genetics and more.

For the learner, the case study format provides an interactive learning experience with the opportunity to link to relevant Web sites. By participating in scheduled online chats or forums, authors and learners are brought together. These tools are available to both members and nonmembers.

For information about the online continuing education program, contact Ruth Soper at 1.888.634.7575 or visit Continuing Education on the Web site, www.nursingsociety.org.

For more information about any of these new online services, contact Sandy Fledderjohann at 1.888.634.7575.

Nurse experts answer career questions

In response to member requests for career advice, five Sigma Theta Tau International staff members have stepped forward to share their experiences and knowledge. Linda Finke, Jeanne Floyd, Marge Pike, Barbara Robinette and Sue Wheeler, are available to answer your career questions by calling 1.888.634.7575 or via e-mail.

Linda Finke, RN, PhD

Member since 1979
Current position: Director of Professional Development Services.

Previous positions include professor and associate dean for graduate programs, clinical nurse specialist in child psychiatric nursing, editor and president of national organizations.
E-mail: lindaf@stti.iupui.edu

Jeanne Floyd, RN, PhD, CAE

Member since 1984
Current position: Director of Strategic Development
Previous positions include executive director of a nursing organization, grant recipient and project director, consultant in strategic planning, community



Ask experienced nurse professionals your career questions. Back row from left to right: Sue Wheeler, RN, MSEd; Jeanne Floyd, RN, PhD, CAE; Linda Finke, RN, PhD; Marge Pike, RN, EdD, CPNP, and in front: Barbara Robinette, RN, MSN.

and elder care, faculty member, and clinical nurse specialist in geropsychiatry.

E-mail: floyd@stti.iupui.edu

Marge Pike, RN, EdD, CPNP

Member since 1973
Current position: Director of Organizational Services.
Previous positions include president of Grief Limited, Inc., associate dean for administration, hospice director, professor and nurse practitioner.
E-mail: pike@stti.iupui.edu

Barbara Robinette, RN, MSN

Member since 1987
Current position: Director of Constituent Services.
Previous positions include nurse educator, head nurse, staff nurse and office nurse.
E-mail: barbara@stti.iupui.edu

Sue Wheeler, RN, MSEd

Member since 1981
Current position: Education and Research Coordinator.
Previous positions include clinical nurse specialist, associate director of medical-surgical department, nurse educator and staff nurse.
E-mail: swheeler@stti.iupui.edu

Recognition opportunities online

Looking for a way to build name recognition? Help support the future of nursing!

Sigma Theta Tau offers exclusive Web page sponsorships that feature sponsors' corporate name, logo and hot link in an uncluttered environment. This opportunity is being extended to organizations that help fulfill the society's mission and vision.

The society's Web site, www.nursingsociety.org, averages more than 110,000 views per month. It has become a focal point for our 125,000 active members, as well as for chapters and other health care professionals seeking excellence in nursing practice, education, administration and research.

Exclusive Web page sponsorships are available in monthly blocks beginning January 1, 2001. Sponsors can choose a specific page to feature their information, including the highly visible catalog of products & services, careers, education, chapters and what's new pages of the Web site.

If your organization is interested in sponsoring a Web page, please contact Kathy Bennison via marketing@stti.iupui.edu, 1.888.634.7575 (U.S. and Canada) or +800.634.7575.1 (International) for more information.

www.nursingsociety.org



new connections

Discover the new opportunities at www.nursingsociety.org

In the high-speed world of health care, connecting nurses with valuable, timely information is critical. That's why Sigma Theta Tau International is offering its members expanded online opportunities in 2001.

Beginning with the premiere of the online Member Community in January, www.nursingsociety.org allows members to uncover a directory for networking; chat and forum features to share ideas with experts; and a calendar to view upcoming events.

New online features also make research more accessible to nurses through the Web site. The *Registry of Nursing Research* is now available to all nurses worldwide, and the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* can be delivered to a member's inbox.

Members will also enjoy expanded career-building information that includes job search capabilities, resource materials and articles, and answers to specific career questions by nurse leaders.

To learn more about these new opportunities, visit us online at www.nursingsociety.org.



Sigma Theta Tau International
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Kansas City Best Practices projects advance nursing education

In the fast-paced world of health care, nursing schools are faced with the challenge of preparing graduates for rapidly changing roles. To help meet the needs of nurse educators, four projects were launched in the spring of 1999 to develop national nursing teaching models.

The Kansas City Best Practices initiative was funded by Health Midwest, Hoechst Marion Roussel (now Aventis Pharmaceutical Foundation) and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City. Awarded a total of \$125,000, the projects are led by three education institutions. Sigma Theta Tau serves as the project coordinator.



The Case Manager Course Demonstration Project is designed to instruct nurses new to the case manager role. From left are Elizabeth Clark, RN, BSN, Jeanne Schott, RN, MS, Kathy Fletcher, RN, PhD, and David Martin, RN, MN.

Case Manager Course Demonstration Project

“Case management is going to be part of our systems; there’s no doubt about that,” said Kathy Fletcher, RN, PhD, of the University of Kansas Medical Center School of Nursing. “Our educational tool will help nurses practice the case manager role in a safe situation. It will also introduce them to resources that can help them—and their patients—in the future.”

Led by Fletcher, the Case Manager Course Demonstration Project is an online, interactive tool designed to instruct nurses new to the case manager role.

The practical, real-life case scenarios and resource management allow clinicians to learn valuable information and administrators to provide new staff the flexibility to learn at a convenient time.

The Med ID Demonstration Project

The Med ID Demonstration Project, led by Kim Tankel, RN, MSN, ARNP, partnered TMC-Behavioral Health Network with Central Missouri State University School of Nursing. Working closely with clients and many other

sources, students recorded health information about clients. The information obtained was recorded in a database and used to create a Med ID card that displayed a personal photo, demographic information, health care

contacts, medications, and mental and physical disorders.

“The process of creating the Med ID card enables clients to gain understanding about medications and mental illness,” said Tankel. “It also develops staff, faculty and students’ abilities to utilize computerized teaching tools for client education.”

The Med ID project emphasizes the necessity of client education at the level of client understanding for clinicians and demonstrates how administrators can efficiently store and retrieve important information to improve collaboration and coordination of services.

Clinical Outcomes Demonstration Project

The University of Kansas School of Nursing and four clinical agencies partnered to educate nursing students in clinical outcomes research.

Led by Ann Kuckelman Cobb, RN, PhD, and Kristine Williams, RN, MS, students investigated information about the quality of health care services.

“Our project helps nurses evaluate the care they provide. It is instrumental in helping them identify strengths, weaknesses and areas to improve in

achieving healthier clients,” said Williams.

“Clinicians were excited about participating with the students and many were gratified to find that the outcomes of the services they provide to at-risk populations resulted in positive client outcomes,” Williams continued.

Collaborative Orientation

Now in the evaluation phase, the Collaborative Orientation Demonstration Project is led by Susan Fetsch, RN, PhD, of Avila College. After regulatory standards from JCAHO, OSHA and Medicare were analyzed, an orientation curriculum model was developed for use by students, faculty and staff in a variety of health care settings.

“After the comparative review, issues that had not previously been addressed were consolidated into two new sections of the orientation manual: a Patient’s Rights and Professional Ethics section as well as a Policies and Procedures section,” said Fetsch. The purpose was to provide guidance to nursing students in a clinical setting and encourage them to explore their institution’s policies on these issues.

This project equips students to be better prepared as employees, spend less time in agency orientation and use more time learning bedside nursing skills.

For more information about these projects, please contact Sue Wheeler at 1.888.634.7575.

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BACK TO BASICS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The unit manager also sustains this environment with the seasoned staff. The best unit manager knows and understands the staff; is up to date on family issues and events; gives feedback continuously—both constructive and positive; sets clear, high standards; communicates using a variety of mechanisms; and is highly visible. The Advisory Board reports in “Reversing the Flight of Talent” that nurse executives expect that nurse managers spend 29 percent of their time on the clinical unit and 41 percent of the time coaching and mentoring staff, but in fact, that is not always done. Nurse managers report that off-the-unit activities consume 45 percent of their time, and they spend only 24 percent coaching and mentoring staff. One nurse manager recently said, “I used to make daily patient rounds, giving my business card to patients and asking them to contact me for questions or concerns. I don’t have time for that anymore.” It is time to refocus our priorities.

Paying attention to staff, maintaining high visibility in the clinical areas, providing encouragement and lots of positive feedback, assessing data from exit interviews and market compensation surveys, and going back to the basics will go a long way in reducing turnover and improving the overall quality of the environment and the quality of patient care. Effective nurse leaders make this a priority.

¹ “Reversing the Flight of Talent,” The Advisory Board, 2000.

² Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2000). Encouraging the Heart: A Leader’s Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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· Back to basics: Retention of high-quality nurses

Excellence in Clinical Practice:

· Nursing’s untapped source

Excellence in Nursing Education:

· Excellence in nursing begins with the educator



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