

## INSTITUTE FOR NURSING EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION

When you or a loved one falls ill or injured, you want the best nursing available at your bedside. Indeed, nurses are at the center of care that each patient receives. Nurses administer medications, serve as a link between the physician and the patient, and provide the hands-on attention that is critical to each patient's health ... and in some cases survival. Put simply, excellent patient care requires excellent nurses.

*Our vision is to advance Sentara RMH's tradition of nursing excellence. Through this effort we aim to improve patient care, accelerate clinical leadership, and make a marked improvement in our community's health.*

*The Institute for Nursing Excellence and Innovation will realize this vision and strengthen our dedication to our patients, our nurses, and our community.*

The Institute for Nursing Excellence and Innovation is grounded in evidenced-based practices that will improve the care delivered at Sentara RMH. The three focal points of the Institute are:

- 1 ACADEMIC ADVANCEMENT** – A growing body of evidence over the last 15 years has demonstrated that in order to improve patient outcomes and reduce patient mortality, registered nurses should be educated at the baccalaureate level. Our goal is to have 80% of our nurses trained at the baccalaureate level. And, we are well on our way to our 80% goal – 12.9% of nurses have committed to receiving their BSN within 5 years of their hire date.
- 2 LEARNING LAB** – The hands-on nature of nursing care requires that for skills to be fully developed, they must first be put in to practice. The Learning Lab at Sentara RMH provides a safe, hands-on environment for nurses to practice their area-specific competencies and emerging technologies.
- 3 SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS AND ONGOING EDUCATION** – There are few industries where highly specialized, ongoing education is more important than in healthcare. The technology, medicines, and methods available for treating patients evolve constantly. Through specialty certifications and targeted professional development, we can bring cutting-edge healthcare to our community.



*I would like to thank the scholarship donors for making it possible for people like me to continue their education. We are fortunate to live in a community where there are so many kind people that are willing to help others. It is a relief to know that I can focus on my coursework, be present with my patients, and have a healthy work/life balance, without having to over-work or worry about making school payments each month. The patients will benefit by having a more attentive, educated nurse who is eager to continue to make a difference in their lives.*

*Amber Minnick, RN Hahn Cancer Center*

The community's generosity has fueled the RMH Foundation's Institute for Nursing Excellence and Innovation since its establishment in 2015. Just consider what our donors' philanthropic investment has helped accomplish:

- **SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT** | Since the inception of the Institute for Nursing Excellence and Innovation, 209 scholarships for a combined total of \$745,000 have been awarded to nurses working at Sentara RMH who are simultaneously obtaining a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN).
- **EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT** | At the end of 2020, 71.5% of Sentara RMH nurses held a BSN or higher. Before we began the Institute for Nursing Excellence and Innovation, we had 56.5% of our nurses trained at the BSN level or higher.
- **BEST IN CLASS OUTCOMES**
  - o **Magnet** | The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet® designation is the highest and most prestigious credential a healthcare organization can achieve for nursing excellence and quality patient care.

In fact, only 8% of hospitals in the United States are able to achieve this designation. Sentara RMH first achieved Magnet designation in December 2014 and was recertified in 2019.

- o **Quality Care** | Our nursing units are sustaining outperformance of their national peers in the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI) database for the following quality indicators: Falls w/ injury, Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries (HAPI), central line associated blood stream infection (CLABSI), and catheter associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI).
- o **Nursing turnover** | National trends show an annual turnover rate for nurses of more than 17%. At Sentara RMH, nursing turnover in 2020 was 10.7%. Not only does a low turnover rate result in lower costs to the organization, but importantly it helps build continuity with the team of caregivers charged with caring for our patients.

## EVOLVING IMPACT OF THE NURSING INSTITUTE

As healthcare continues to change, so too does the impact made through the Nursing Institute. For example, more entry-level nurses are needed than ever before<sup>i</sup>. With a growing nursing shortage and a historically tight labor market, our community's access to quality healthcare requires that we "grow our own" expert nurses from the earliest stages. Specifically, hiring new employees and training them to be Nursing Care Partners ("NCP's," or what has historically been referred to as a "nurse's aide") through a 16-week course of study will set new nurses on a path to providing better care to our patients.

NCP's are a cornerstone to good nursing care. It is these individuals who are responsible for everything from monitoring vital signs to phlebotomy (i.e. checking blood sugar levels) to inserting foley catheters and more. Having an NCP responsible for these tasks enables RN's to work at the highest level of their license, focusing on more complex tasks.

Sharing the workload like this also results in more focused attention given to each patient, thereby increasing patient safety and satisfaction.

It is also worth noting that at a high level, employing NCP's helps control overall healthcare costs as NCP's fulfill duties that would otherwise be completed by higher-paid RN's. As a point of context, the market rate for a NCP is just over \$14/hour where the market rate for a RN is more than \$31/hour. For a community concerned about the rising costs of healthcare, this is a tangible way to invest in lowering the overall cost of care while improving quality.

Good NCP's are hard to come by, though. Throughout Sentara RMH, we typically have a vacancy rate (meaning we have open spots but no one to fill them) of more than 15% for these positions. It is hard to find NCP's because while it is technically an entry level position<sup>ii</sup>, it is special work that is both physically and emotionally exhausting. That is why donor support is so important. By providing a \$2,000 scholarship to the 16-week course of study that is required before someone can begin work as an NCP, donors will be incentivizing these good people to take on this much needed and difficult work. That investment will also result in building loyalty to the community and a desire to stay with Sentara RMH for years to come<sup>iii</sup>. So even as these individuals progress in their careers, they are likely to stay with Sentara RMH but advance to become RN's. In that way, donor support is also part of a long-term solution to the nursing shortage that will help provide the skilled, compassionate workers required to meet our community's healthcare needs.

<sup>i</sup>For example, Nursing Solutions, Inc., recently found that the average time to fill a nursing vacancy is 86 days. In other words, it takes close to three months to recruit and hire a new RN. Combine this with the fact that nursing turnover across the country averages above 17%, and it is clear that the nursing shortage is having real and consequential effects. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the nursing labor shortage will reach 1.13 million by 2024.

<sup>ii</sup>As a point of context, each scholarship recipient will first be vetted and interviewed as a potential employee. We will only offer scholarships to individuals who we want to hire, and for whom we have an open position. The minimum requirements for application are a high school diploma or GED and that the applicant is at least 18 years old by the first day of class.

<sup>iii</sup>As a part of the scholarship agreement, each scholarship recipient will be agreeing to work at Sentara RMH for a minimum of 1 year to "work back" the scholarship.

## OUR 100% PROMISE

### 100% of your gift

- Stays local
- Is put to your desired purpose
- Strengthens the care you and your loved ones receive

