UTMB’s Nursing RN to BSN Program Offers Educational Advancement

UTMB’s RN-BSN program offers current registered nurses an opportunity to advance their education by earning a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, a prerequisite for graduate degree nursing programs.

The program was originally introduced in the 1980’s as a face-to-face multi-semester weekend course that took place on a satellite campus of Lee University in Baytown. In 2010, when the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Future of Nursing Initiative recommended that organizations strive to achieve an 80 percent BSN degreed nursing workforce by 2020, Dr. Carol Wiggs, associate professor and track administrator for the RN-BSN program, and her colleagues quickly began gathering information and best practice methods from other institutions around the country to develop the important program.

The result of the team’s efforts was curriculum that focused on leadership skills, evidence-based practice and patient safety outcomes. Dr. Wiggs and her team also felt it was important that the program incorporated requirements of Magnet Recognition by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Today, the program consists of a 30-hour, two-semester online program with courses focused on four principles: Professionalism, Nursing Theory, Community Health and Leadership.

continued on page 2
The first course provides the foundations for evidence-based practice. Each of the following courses—Contemporary Professional Nursing, Clinical Reasoning Health Assessment, Evidence-based Practice and Research, and Legal and Ethical Issues in Healthcare—are designed and scheduled to build on the skills and knowledge from the previous and concurrent classes. The second semester builds on the same principles, with an emphasis on analysis and leadership. The program culminates in a capstone course and 50 precepted clinical hours, designed to train students in management.

To qualify for the program, candidates must have a current, unencumbered Texas RN license. The program receives participation from nurses statewide—Dr. Wiggs even once had a student participate from Germany, whose family was in the military. Recent graduates are allowed to apply without work experience, but they must have their license by the time the orientation begins.

Dr. Wiggs says the benefits of continued education for both the individual and UTMB come down to the patient. “For individuals, they get a deeper knowledge of leadership and a better ability to critically and clinically reason. I’ve had students start the program thinking it was going to just be a stamp on a paper, and afterwards they tell me their eyes were completely opened to new way of thinking about patient care. That’s what we’re here to do—elevate patient outcomes.”

For information on the RN-BSN program, visit http://nursing.utmb.edu/academics/BSN/rnbsn/Default.cshtml

---

Submit Your Clinical Value Analysis Ideas and Win!

Clinical Value Analysis at UTMB is an integral part of assuring the Health System carries the best products and implements the most efficient processes across all units, departments and clinics. The value analysis process considers financial, clinical and process improvement implications for the tools that help us provide the highest quality and most efficient patient care.

Many of the ideas that have been implemented so far have come from our own staff members, and we’re looking for more great ideas. To help incentivize teams and individuals to share their ideas, the Clinical Value Analysis Executive Oversight Committee has created an easy-to-use webpage to submit your ideas. The ideas will be reviewed by the oversight committee on a bi-monthly basis, and the most innovative ideas chosen for implementation will also be rewarded! On a quarterly basis, one iPad Mini will be awarded to the person that submits the best idea and on a bi-monthly basis, one unit or department will be awarded a pizza party.

To submit your idea, please visit http://intranet.utmb.edu/healthsystem/CVA.

For more information, please contact Clinical Value Analysis Manager, Johann Ramirez at joaramir@utmb.edu.
Employee Assistance Program: 
Relax! 10 Steps to Reduce Stress

Below are some tips to keep in mind to help you reduce stress and relax this summer, brought to you by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

EAP provides professional, confidential counseling and assistance to employees and their eligible dependents and retirees. EAP is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. More information is available at http://hr.utmb.edu/eap. Schedule an appointment at 409.772.2485.

**Eat a balanced diet**

**Exercise** more often

**Enjoy** sports and activities

Sleep better

Walk slower

Deeply **breathe** often

Be easier on yourself – **nobody's perfect**!

Get up and stretch often

**Laugh!** Laughter is the best medicine

**Seek & follow good medical advice**

---

Annual Enrollment: It Will Be Here Before You Know It

Annual Enrollment is just around the corner. Watch for July’s special Annual Enrollment editions of the employee and retiree newsletters to be distributed via email by Wednesday, July 2, 2014.

During early July, the UT System Office of Employee Benefits (OEB) website will be updated with this year’s Annual Enrollment information, including video presentations from OEB and the UT Benefits insurance vendors.

**KEEP THESE IMPORTANT DATES IN MIND**

- Annual Enrollment period: **July 15, 2014 through July 31, 2014**;
- UT Benefits Enrollment Options Letter: Receive via email by **July 15, 2014**;
- Deadline for submitting Evidence of Insurability (EOI) forms for Life, Disability, and Long-Term Care insurance: **August 15, 2014**; and,
- Effective date for coverage elected and approved during Annual Enrollment: **September 1, 2014**.

It is especially important for employees and retirees to keep your contact information (particularly email addresses) up to date during the Annual Enrollment season. If you know of any employees or retirees who are not receiving this newsletter electronically, please encourage them to contact the **HR or Benefits office at their institution** to update their email address.

Stay tuned for more information about Annual Enrollment from the Office of Employee Benefits as well as from all UT institutions’ benefits offices.

---

To schedule an appointment at a UTMB clinic call the UTMB Access Center at (409) 772-2222 or toll free (800) 917-8906.
The Employee Advisory Council (EAC) offers employees a channel of communication and dialog between leadership and all Classified, Administrative & Professional, and Non-Teaching employees, excluding residents. The council, endorsed by the Office of the President, recently met with UTMB Executive Leadership in May to recognize their newly elected officers and recognize outgoing members. They also announced their goals for the next fiscal year. In FY15, EAC will strive to:

- **Continue to improve communication between EAC and stakeholders.** Last year EAC received 32 concerns via its blog page, [https://blog.utmb.edu/EAC](https://blog.utmb.edu/EAC). In addition, representatives actively keep UTMB President Dr. David Callender and Health System leadership informed of employee feedback by meeting on a quarterly basis, or more frequently as needed. EAC also launched a survey in early June to gather feedback from employees.

- **Increase accessibility of EAC representatives to be utilized institutionally for focus groups, beta testing, and process improvements.** EAC regularly holds “Engage and Chat” sessions with employees. They visited CMC Rusk, Skyview and Hodge units (February 2014), the Nursing Nightshift Council (October 2013), CMC Richmond, Jester III and Jester IV units (May 2013) and CMC Huntsville, Eastham and Estelle units (June 2014). Upcoming visits will include mainland clinics. EAC assists Dr. Callender with “Open Access” and “What’s on Your Mind” sessions.

- **Develop and implement programs and/or initiatives to improve employee morale.**

- **Collaborate with UTMB Leadership to define the process and procedure for triage and resolution of issues.** EAC helps gather feedback on initiatives such as the You Count! Pulse Survey, ePerformance, Marketing & Communications Internal Communications Survey, and strategic priorities

- **EAC works closely with UTMB groups and departments to work together to work wonders.** They also assist with events around campus such as Town Hall meetings, Mondays in March, Earth Day, Employee Service Awards and Nurses Week.

The EAC Survey

In order to better serve you, the EAC has developed a brief [Employee Advisory Council Feedback Survey](http://feedbackfarm.com/surveyengine/s.php?i=6s0). This survey should only take about five minutes to complete. Your answers will be anonymous, unless you decide to include your name and contact information. Any questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer in order to progress through the survey. Your feedback is important!

UTMB Nurses have been busy lately writing about the important work going on at UTMB and sharing it with others in their field. The following are some of their recent publications and achievements:

**CCAP 1 Year Later: Challenges and Accomplishments**

*Nurse Leader*

Patricia D. Davis, RN, DNP, Sharon L. Hensley, RN, BSN, Lila L. Muzik, RN, MSN  
Amy R. Carroll, RN, MSN, Veronica Kwarteng-Amaning, RN, MHA  
Christine Wade, RN, MSN, and Scott Woodby, RN, BSN

UTMB implemented the Clinical Competency and Advancement Program (CCAP) in January 2011. The program, built upon American Nurse Association (ANA) standards, is a professional development tool for competency assessment, performance evaluation, and career advancement for nurse clinicians from levels Nurse Clinician (NC) I to NC V. UTMB requires each nurse clinician to complete and submit CCAP program documents annually to the manager. In CCAP, nurse clinicians have required and elective (self-selected) criteria that must be demonstrated through performance, activity, or documentation. Nurses earn points, weighted by complexity, for accomplishments. Eligibility criteria and point requirements are progressively higher for each NC Level I to V. Elective criteria include a wide range of professional activities from which the nurse clinician may select, whereas required criteria reflect the expected nursing practice and performance for every nurse. Implementing CCAP meets the definition of “innovation” as a core group of nurse clinicians and leaders constructed, created, and implemented a totally new visionary process. CCAP reflects a stronger UTMB culture of professional practice and personal accountability, with an overarching outcome of higher levels of professional performance in patient care delivery. CCAP changes the way nurses view their practice. In June of 2012, UTMB submitted an initial CCAP article that was published in AONE’s Nurse Leader.2

Read the full article: [https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-7192576_1](https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-7192576_1)

**Teamwork: An essential for leading and launching innovation**

*Nursing Administration Quarterly*

Patricia D. Davis, DNP, RN-BC, NEA-BC, CNL  
David R. Marshall, JD, DNP, RN, CENP, NEA-BC

Teamwork and innovation require a merging of special skills sets to produce the best outcomes. Collaboration and innovation have become core competencies for effectiveness in every industry. The capacity to collaborate and innovate has never been more important, especially in health care, with the regulatory and quality mandates to evaluate every aspect of service to ensure that we add value for patients and families. The examination of teamwork and innovation, which are inextricably linked, are described and discussed. The art of building teams, steps for leading change, and an approach to innovation in health care are described. The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas, shares one approach and experience called Innovation Forerunners—nurses from all levels and areas—to embed the tools and concepts of teamwork and innovation across patient care areas.

Read the full article: [https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-7192578_1](https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-7192578_1)
Achieving Added Value in a Knowledge-Intense Organization: One Hospital’s Journey

Nurse Leader

David R. Marshall, JD, DNP, RN, CENP, NEA-BC, Patricia Davis, DNP, RN-BC, MS, NEA-BC, CNL
Tammy Cupit, PhD, RN-BC, Timothy Hilt, MSN, RN-BC, Jennifer Baer, MS, RN, CPHQ
Barbara Bonificio, MS, RN-BC

Fifteen years have passed since Sorrells-Jones and Weaver1–3 authored a series of articles describing knowledge workers and knowledge-intense organizations. The series explored, among other things, the notion of nurses as knowledge workers, the requirements of leaders of knowledge workers, and system changes necessary to support knowledge workers. During the intervening years, progress has been made at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB Health). During this time, there have also been technological advances that make information and knowledge accessible to the clinician at the point of care, often via the use of hand-held devices, and there has been widespread adoption of electronic health records. This article describes 1 hospital’s journey toward the knowledge-intense future envisioned by Sorrells-Jones and Weaver that may prove useful to other organizations.

Read the full article: https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-7192575_1

Rising to the Challenge: Transforming an Adult ICU into an Adult and Pediatric ICU

Critical Care Nursing Quarterly

Odette Y. Comeau, MS, RN, CNS, CCRN
Jamie M. Heffernan, BSN, RN, CCRN
Jason L. Sheaffer, BSN, RN, CCRN; Foster M. Sayles, II, RN, CCRN

Published literature on natural disasters describes lessons learned in preparing for disasters, evacuating patients, and caring for patients in the immediate aftermath. Some disasters, however, require longer-term solutions to best meet the health needs of the community during the recovery from the disaster. This article presents an account of one academic medical center’s experience in transforming an existing adult burn intensive care unit into an adult and pediatric burn intensive care unit to meet the needs of a community following a hurricane. The process of training 2 groups of specialty nurses and the success of expanding an adult unit are described.

Read the full article: https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-7192577_1

Houston Press Club’s Lone Star Award

UTMB Nursing Services is a finalist for the Houston Press Club’s Lone Star Award for their entry of the 2013 Nursing Annual Report. The Houston Press Club is a non-profit organization that actively promotes and provides professional development and networking opportunities for communications specialists. The 2014 Lone Star Awards Banquet will be held on Friday, July 18. Congratulations to Jennifer Baer, Barbara Bonificio, John Carstens, Amber Clayton, Mai Hoang, Tim Razkani and Holly Rocha!

The report can be viewed at http://www.utmb.edu/nursing/AnnualReport/AnnualReport.asp.
Congratulations to the first Always Award winners, Surgery (8C) and Internal Medicine (Primary Care Pavilion)!

On June 26, the two areas received the first quarterly Always Award banner and trophy for achieving benchmark HCAHPS / CGCAHPS scores in all domains.

The goal of the “Always Award” is to improve patient satisfaction by promoting positive outcomes. It also encourages friendly competition across units and practice areas. Inpatient winners are chosen by Chief Nursing and Patient Services Officer David Marshall using patient satisfaction and quality data; ambulatory winners are chosen by Vice President for Ambulatory Operations Ann O’Connell, using over all doctor rating, office staff quality and physician communication as well as Press Ganey factors. The Always Award will be given quarterly to the inpatient unit and ambulatory location with the highest or most improved scores.

At the close of each quarter, the Always Award banner and trophy will be presented by leadership during the Health System Leadership Team monthly meeting. The banner and trophy will be displayed near the entrance or reception area of the winning units and practice areas for patients and visitors to demonstrate that at UTMB, we care about their experience, the quality of care we provide, and we believe in sharing our quality performance information with them.

Ann O’Connell says that she wants the award to signify a culture of reliability within the hospital and clinics. “We want to become a highly reliable organization. When someone pushes the call button, someone will always be there to answer. We want to always be there to meet patients’ needs.”

Units and practice areas may win a maximum of two times during the same year. Quarterly winners will assist Unit-Based Clinical Leadership with the development and recognition of best practices. The next Always Awards will be presented in September.
You Count! Pulse Survey Update

Last year marked the third consecutive time that UTMB has partnered with Morehead Associates, an employee and physician engagement firm, to ask employees how engaged and satisfied they feel at UTMB. More than 3,200 Health System employees participated in the most recent Pulse Survey to share their feedback.

Results of the survey showed that most UTMB employees feel highly satisfied and/or engaged in the work they do and would like to be working at UTMB three years from now. Most employees also feel that their work unit provides high-quality patient care and/or customer service and that their supervisor treats them with respect. Most employees feel proud to tell others that they work for UTMB. Areas most improved since the previous survey included having up-to-date technology and equipment in the department or unit and having a feeling that one’s ideas and suggestions are seriously considered.

Opportunities identified in the survey for improvement included adequate staffing on work units. Many employees also expressed a need for more effective communication at all levels (i.e. front-line staff, mid-management and senior management) and reported that there was a feeling of high stress during their day-to-day work. Many also felt the work environment could be improved to create an atmosphere in which people want to go above and beyond what is expected of them. Fair pay in comparison to other healthcare employers in the area was also identified.

Responding to the Results

Since the results were released, UTMB leadership has worked to improve overall employee satisfaction and engagement by developing action plans and gathering employee feedback to address specific areas for improvement.

In October, an employee appreciation initiative was rolled out. Managers and directors within the Health System and Correctional Managed Care were trained in ways they could demonstrate employee appreciation, such as hand-written thank you notes.

In December, Marketing & Communications began working on an internal communication plan to determine the most effective means of targeted communication to employees. Unit-Based Clinical Leadership (UBCL) teams, a partnership initiative between nursing and medical staff designed to improve interdisciplinary communication, quality of care, and patient safety, was also launched.

In January, leadership conducted an assessment of staffing models and then communicated the outcomes of the assessment with staff. Both inpatient and ambulatory employee comments reflected the need for transparency around staffing benchmarks.

In February, a leadership visibility plan was developed, and many areas have already implemented informal rounds, emphasized attendance at staff meetings and practice shadowing of employees in various roles.

A new “Health System Q&A” webpage was also launched via the Health System Intranet page to provide employees an opportunity to ask questions, offer suggestions and share accomplishments, with an option to do so anonymously. Individuals submitting questions can opt to receive an answer via their personal email or request that it be posted on the blog page to ensure anonymity and/or to share the question/answer with others. Visit the new page at https://blogs.utmb.edu/healthsystemqa/whats-on-your-mind/.

Finally, beginning quarterly in June, the “Always Award” was initiated to recognize units and ambulatory locations for both outstanding patient satisfaction and quality scores. The first Always Awards was presented at this month’s Health System Leadership Meeting on June 26. (See the story on page 7.)

Leadership is making progress in resolving many of the issues identified for improvement in the survey, but would like to emphasize that employee participation and engagement is the key to UTMB’s success as efforts are continued. If you have questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to bring them up to your managers and directors or using the “Health System Q&A” webpage. To find the full You Count! Pulse Survey results, visit the UTMB You Count! webpage: http://www.utmb.edu/youcount/.
A Visit with Wellness Champions at CMC Units Pack, Luther, Hamilton and Hutchins State Jail

Last month, Wellness Program Coordinator Julie Dial traveled to Bryan-College Station and Navasota to visit the Luther, Pack and Hamilton Units, followed by a visit to Hutchins State Jail in Dallas. During her visit, Julie met wellness Champions Daniel Udoh, Sarah Abke, Kimberly Toney, Lisa Silva, and Donna Viets, who are enthusiastically working to create a healthier culture within the units, alongside many of their fellow employees. Below are photos Julie shared with Friday Focus from her visit.

**Hutchins Unit, Dallas** - Mr. Daniel Udoh, LVN, Wellness Champion

**Pack Unit, Navasota** - Left to right bottom row: Janet Myers, Julie Dial, Becky Snow, Kim Peterson Left to right top row: Sharon Lockridge, Fausto Avila, Monica Suarez, Ashton Smith, Damian Idjagboro, Lisa Silva (Wellness Champion), Diana Thomas

**Hamilton Unit, Bryan** - Relaxation activities are offered daily on the unit (left to right) Victoria Henderson, DDS and Kimberly Toney, CCA, wellness champion.

**Hamilton Unit, Bryan** (Bottom) Julie Dial, Lisa Ford (Top) Victoria Henderson, Rhonda Wade, and Kimberly Toney
RN Open House

Join us for the annual RN Career Open House on Friday, June 27 and Saturday, June 28 to learn about UTMB’s rewarding career opportunities.

UTMB staff members will be conducting on-site interviews and available to answer your questions about joining our patient care family. Interested RNs should bring their CV or resume.

The open house will also feature two complimentary CNE presentations for one free CNE credit: Nurses as Role Models for Healthy Behaviors: Discussing BMI on Friday and Nurse Fatigue on Saturday. Seating is limited, and registration is required.

To sign up for the open house and one of the CNE presentations, visit http://www.utmb.rsvp-nurse.com/

Friday, June 27, 3:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, June 28, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Victory Lakes Specialty Care Center
2240 Gulf Freeway South, League City

Check out the Patient Safety Net News!


UTMB nurses recognized for excellence

The Good Samaritan Foundation each year honors Excellence in Nursing in six categories, awarding gold and silver medals to the profession’s “best and brightest.” This year, nursing professionals at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston were recognized with two gold medals and one silver.

Linda Rounds, the Betty Lee Evans Professor of Nursing at the UTMB School of Nursing, received the gold medal for faculty. In the nursing administration category, Jaime Heffernan, nurse manager of the Blocker Burn Unit, received the gold medal, while Charles Machner, nurse manager of the Medical Intensive Care Unit brought home the silver medal.

“The UTMB School of Nursing is beyond proud to have Linda Rounds on faculty,” said Pamela G. Watson, dean of UTMB’s School of Nursing. “She is a truly exceptional leader in nursing education. Rounds is the third School of Nursing faculty member to become a Good Samaritan Foundation Gold medal award winner. How wonderful for her and for UTMB students.”

This year’s Excellence in Nursing winners will be honored Sept. 3 at a luncheon at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Houston. For more information, go to www.gsftx.org.

Shout Outs continued on page 11
My husband was admitted to the Emergency Room at UTMB when a rattlesnake bit him. After the ER, we were transferred to the SICU, where he spent about a day and half before being moved to a regular room. During the course this most painful and scary time, two SICU nurses, Rachel Murphy and Hector Garcia stood out as being so caring, compassionate and competent that they have earned stars in our hearts and permanent status on our “good guy” roster. They both worked very hard to control my husband's pain and monitored his symptoms. Most importantly, they took the time to answer all of our questions with flawless professionalism and a smile. Thank you!

A UTMB patient recently wrote to Patient Services to express his thanks for the care and services provided during his May 13 visit to the Neurosurgery Clinic. The patient wrote, “I give UTMB Health an A+. Thank you for the outstanding care and service your team provide to patients and for your commitment to providing a quality patient experience.”

My doctor exceeded my expectations and made more time for me than I thought she would be able to make. I was very pleased with Dr. Virginia Lynn Rauth and plan to use her again. (Obstetrics)

UTMB is fortunate to have such an excellent physician in Dr. Sidney Worsham. (Urology/Renal)

Dr. Charles Dreyer has been my daughter’s neurologist for 3 years and has always been understanding, quality, humane, and an all-around excellent doctor. (Bay Colony Pediatric Specialty, Child Neurology)

Parminder Chauhan works in the lab at Victory Lakes Town Center, and he is excellent at drawing blood. He always gets it on the first try. I love him!

Dr. Nitza Cintron takes time to ask and answer all of my questions, personal and medical. She is an asset to your clinics. (PCP Harborside Medical Group, Internal Medicine)

Dr. Myers Hurt was referred to me by my Primary Care Physician, Dr. Barbara Thompson for a knee injection for pain in right leg. The injection worked very fast for my pain - I’m walking pain free now, thanks to Dr. Hurt. (Stewart Road Family Medicine)

Dr. Tristi Muir’s nurse practitioner, Eleanor Forbes (Women’s Healthcare Specialist), is a warm, highly efficient and talented woman. She always takes time to listen, explain and teach. (Obstetrics/Gynecology)

The entire orthopedic team were super impressive, very friendly and efficient. Ortho is doing it right! (Orthopedic Surgery)

Dr. Thomas Blackwell has cared for me for over 20 years with great success! (Internal Medicine)

Drs. Joel Patterson and Achal Patel couldn’t have been any better, in my estimation, before and after Laminectomy surgery. Not only the physicians, but each and every person on the 9th floor of John Sealy Hospital that I had contact with during my recovery exceeded all of my expectations. Thank you, Dr. Patterson.