

# 2022 NURSING ANNUAL REPORT

**UConn**  
HEALTH









## Message From the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Nursing Officer

2022 brought us through two and a half years of the COVID pandemic, and as we move into post-pandemic, it is time to regroup and reset.

In this post-pandemic era, we were still challenged by staffing shortages in 2022. I saw your commitment, compassion, and determination day in and out even though I know you were tired and faced challenges of managing with less permanent staff and traveler utilization. I continue to be so proud of how you stepped up to the plate during this time, giving our patients the highest level of care and attention every day.

As we reset post-COVID, in addition to stellar patient care, permanent staffing solutions, employee engagement, shared governance, and a safer environment for our staff are our highest priorities.

We continue to work diligently to secure permanent staff and prioritize workforce engagement by finding ways to attract more staff to UConn Health. Attracting and retaining skilled health care professionals is crucial for providing quality patient care and maintaining a positive work environment.

Our relationship with the UConn School of Nursing continues to be strong and collaborative. We continue to increase our clinical student rotations throughout the year while providing preceptorships supported by our advanced practice nurse practitioner staff.

Additionally, our professional shared governance boards, Clinical Excellence, Professional Advancement, and Research, have been making great strides on initiatives critical to our patients, staff, and organization.

We continue to develop a nursing wellness program and support our nursing peer program as a resource to help deal with the demands of your job. It is essential for our nurses' well-being that we prioritize improving work/life balance needs and continue to listen to your needs and adapt accordingly as we cultivate a culture that values the well-being of our nurses.

In the post-pandemic era, we face significant challenges, such as understaffing and workplace violence. In such times, shared governance becomes even more crucial as it allows bedside nurses and nurse leaders to participate in decision-making processes actively. Nurses play a vital role in shaping the care experiences that our patients receive. Your insights and perspectives are invaluable for improving the overall quality of care. We encourage you to continue to speak to your nurse managers and complete our employee engagement survey.

Improving the nursing clinical ladder application process at UConn Health is indeed a crucial initiative that will have a positive impact on the advancement of your clinical status. The clinical ladder is a valuable program that recognizes and rewards you for your professional growth, expertise, and dedication to patient care.

In May we celebrated the many accomplishments of our staff and Nightingales during Nurses Week. However, your clinical excellence within the nursing practices is celebrated and appreciated every day. Your hard work has continued to improve patient outcomes and the quality of care administered to our patients at UConn John Dempsey Hospital.

In appreciation,

### **Caryl Ryan, MS, BSN, RN**

Chief Operating Officer,  
UConn John Dempsey Hospital  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Vice President for Quality and Patient Care Services



### **Message From the Interim Chief Executive Officer**

Whether at the start, the height, or the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency, UConn Health and its patients can always count on you — our excellent, brave nurses.

Thanks to your compassion and skilled, high-quality care, UConn Health is annually applauded for our high-caliber patient safety and patient experience.

You always put the health care and safety of our patients first and at the center of everything you do. This is the special UConn Health difference patients always feel when cared for by you.

As the UConn Health Interim CEO and a practicing physician, it is an honor to serve by your side in both the hospital and outpatient care settings. Our nursing staff is the embodiment of team players, always working together with the clinical care team to fuel the best patient outcomes and successes.

We are so proud of all our UConn Health nurses, nurse leaders, APRNs, and CRNAs on the front lines of patient care day in and day out, keeping the citizens of Connecticut healthy. You are making a difference in the lives of our state's people and patients. Your resilience and dedication to our public academic medical center and those we serve, many from underserved communities, is an inspiration.

I would like to thank Caryl Ryan, our Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Operating Officer of UConn John Dempsey Hospital, for her strong leadership and all our nurse leaders and nursing team members, including nursing students training with our talented nurses to become the next generation of providers. We appreciate you all.

Thank you! Enjoy reading the 2022 annual report.

Sincerely,

**Bruce T. Liang, M.D., FACC**

Interim Chief Executive Officer, UConn Health  
Dean, UConn School of Medicine





## Message From the Chief Medical Officer

On behalf of the medical staff, I want to extend our profound gratitude to all the nurses at UConn Health.

As we still contend with the lingering effects of COVID, the nursing staff has continued to demonstrate their resiliency in providing the best care for our patients. The pandemic highlighted the critical role nursing plays in the care of all our patients across the continuum. Whether in the inpatient or ambulatory setting, providers, patients, and their families rely on nursing to help achieve our common goal of superior care. The roles played by nurses include specialty services such as

dialysis, chemotherapy, wound and ostomy care, and palliative care. As advanced practitioners, you take care of the full range of illnesses, from primary care patients in our outpatient practices to our most critically ill ICU patients. In addition, nurses are involved in the full range of primary nursing care across our entire health system. Nursing really is a backbone to care here at UConn Health.

But, your role goes beyond direct patient care. You help fulfill our mission of being an academic medical center. You teach the next generation, ensuring a workforce for tomorrow. You contribute to scientific discovery through research and performance improvement.

Nursing has been instrumental in helping us achieve our awards and distinctions, such as a Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade “A” again and a Top 10% in the nation for patient experience. But, more importantly, patients choose to come to UConn Health for their care and want to keep coming back to UConn Health in large part because of their nursing care.

The American Nurses Association defines nursing as “the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations.” This is a tall order, but UConn Health nurses unequivocally fulfill these comprehensive, challenging, and critical roles and more.

As Assistant Dean for Education, I thank you all for your contributions to teaching. As Chief Medical Officer, I thank you for your continued excellence in clinical care. Thank you for being a nurse and, especially, a UConn Health nurse.

**Scott Allen, MD**  
Chief Medical Officer  
Assistant Dean for Education



## Message From the Dean of the University of Connecticut School of Nursing

As I step out of my deanship, it is difficult to believe that five years have passed since I had the incredible opportunity to partner with all of you at UConn Health! During this time, you have not only played a vital role in educating our students, but have done so during the most challenging of times. You gave our students your full attention, despite the almost impossible task that you faced in caring for your patients. The reason for our students' success was largely because of all of you, your clinical expertise and your leadership. Our advance practice students were motivated and inspired by you as they juggled their studies and careers. You made a difference in the lives of all the students through your generosity of spirit, your patience under the most trying of circumstances, and by showing them what it really means to be a professional nurse!

As I participated in your Excellence Awards Ceremony this year, I could not have been more impressed with your accomplishments. Your dedication to practice and clinical scholarship would have been impressive under any circumstances, but certainly in the wake of the pandemic, your successes are truly remarkable. I know that our 11th Dean, Victoria Vaughan Dickson, Ph.D., RN, FAHA, FAAN, looks forward to further building our partnership. I cannot express my gratitude and respect for all of you strongly enough. Thank you for always giving UConn School of Nursing a home and being such amazing partners as we serve the citizens of Connecticut.

**Deborah Chyun, Ph.D., RN, FAHA, FAAN**  
Professor and Dean, School of Nursing  
UConn

## Epidemiology Is Challenged by Rollout of Mandatory Vaccines, Fit Testing, and More

More than two years after this once in a generation pandemic changed everything, UConn Health's epidemiology nurses have much to be proud of.

In 2022, "We were able to maintain all our processes without biocontainment. We were able to maintain workflows without biocontainment," notes Nancy Dupont, CIC, MPH, BSN, RN, Nursing Director of Epidemiology. "We did maintain universal masking."

Mandatory COVID-19 immunizations were the main focus of our epidemiology team this year, just as COVID-19 numbers were starting to come down and less patients were admitted to the ICU with serious illness.

"The challenge that we came to face in 2022 was the onset of the flu vaccination season in conjunction with a booster shot for COVID-19 and how to market both things to staff," says Kate Falotico, RN. "Our communications department was truly on board with us helping us navigate that whole informational spread."

Epidemiology collaborated with many different disciplines to meet goals, including mobile influenza immunizers, who took on the responsibility of administering vaccines to staff in addition to their regular duties.

Erica Gomez, RN, was at the helm of another daunting challenge: getting all staffers up to date with fit testing. Her efforts helped a whopping 4,462 staffers get fit tested from April through December 31 of 2022.

"The new fit-testing database was initiated at the end of April and we got really good feedback," she says. "I still work constantly with IT to do updates based on people's feedback."

## Clinical Excellence Shared Governance Board's Work Continues to Initiate Change

The Clinical Excellence Committee is always looking for ways to improve workflow and promote a safer practice environment. In 2021, their hard work resulted in obtaining 13 HoverMatts®, which helped transport patients from bed to stretcher to CAT scans, or any other place patients needed to go.

In 2022, they were able to secure a HoverJack® for the units, an important piece of equipment that allows staff to safely lift individuals who have fallen. Throughout the year the CE Committee put their focus on new cost-saving products that continue to enhance patient safety.

Clinical nurse specialist Kara Parker, MSN, RN, along with Kristin Henry, RN, and Stephanie Krusch,



RN, who are taking over as co-chairs, took aim at the availability of hospital supplies to ease workflows, follow best practices, and comply with regulatory requirements. The implementation of some of these initiatives are still awaiting approval but the committee is hopeful to initiate change through these project improvement efforts.

### CAUTI and CLABSI Numbers Remain Low Thanks to One-on-One Education

Despite an increase in catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) and central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI) that many other facilities

experienced throughout the pandemic, UConn Health has consistently maintained low levels. In fact, hospital onset CLABSI and CAUTI have been trending down since the epidemiology nurses took aim at both by creating a specific role to combat them in 2018. The main focus of the last quarter of 2022 was having Scott Calderone, BSN, RN, come on board to assist epidemiology nurse Lisa Gentile, BSN, RN, in this effort. This team provided one-on-one education and have partnered with doctors, residents, and nurses to see where they might be able to intervene to prevent the two most common hospital-associated infections.

“Scott’s previous experience was outpatient and OR, so it was exciting exposing him to the

bedside and seeing him learn to think in terms of what we look at for our CAUTI/CLABSI surveillance,” says Gentile.

That exposure included teaching practical application for CAUTI/CLABSI in orientation by showing nurses how to apply and remove dressings in the correct fashion. “We’re also doing classes with the residents once a month,” Calderone explains. “We’re likely going to start another class with the interns and residents in ICU on how to apply dressings down there.”

Gentile and Calderone continued to identify areas to help improve surveillance and worked with the Epic team to make the flowsheets concise and accurate, so that it gives the best information for CAUTI/CLABSI surveillance.

### Stroke Center: Highest Level of State-of-the-Art Care

The UConn Health advanced thrombectomy-capable Stroke Center has continued to demonstrate state-of-the-art care for stroke patients. There was a successful turn out at the annual Emergency Stroke Care Symposium, where nurses, EMS, providers, and rehab providers, were in attendance at the Academic Rotunda to learn the most current and advanced techniques in endovascular therapy, complex stroke procedures, and the all-important acute “first hour” of stroke care. In addition, there were several well-attended May National Stroke Awareness, Community Outreach, and Survivor events.

The Stroke Center — named by U.S. News and World Report in 2022 a “high performing” hospital for care of strokes— received the “Get With The Guidelines® — Stroke Gold Plus” designation from the American Heart Association for the sixth consecutive year. This came with two distinctions: “Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite,” for meeting specific criteria that reduce the time between an

### Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections per 1000 Central Line Days

NDNQI Q1 2021 – Q4 2022



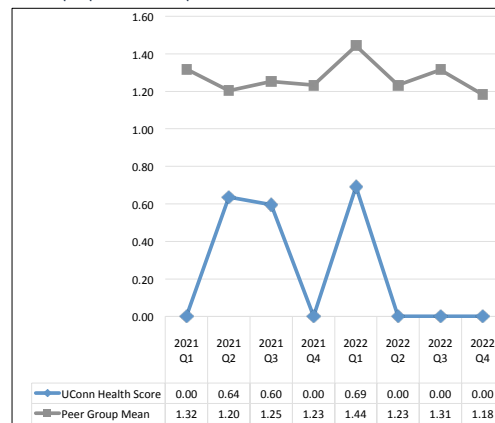
8/8 Quarters

Number of quarters unit OUT-PERFORMED the comparison peer group mean (academic medical centers)

4 to 7 quarters

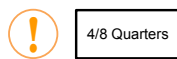
3 quarters

0 to 2 quarters



### Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infections per 1000 Catheter Days

NDNQI Q1 2021 – Q4 2022



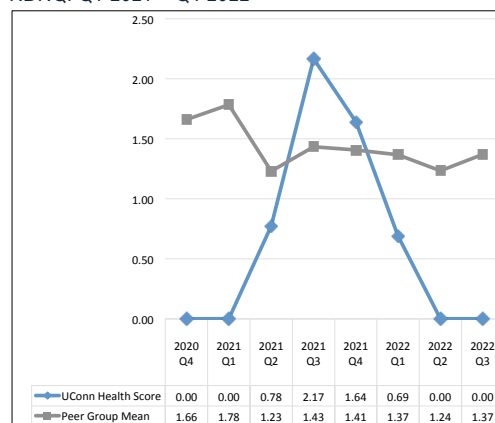
4/8 Quarters

Number of quarters unit OUT-PERFORMED the comparison peer group mean (academic medical centers)

4 to 7 quarters

3 quarters

0 to 2 quarters









**Dr. Gracia Mui performs a test on a patient in the UConn John Dempsey Hospital Emergency Department with nurse Jennifer Sposito and Dr. Sanjay Mittal.**

eligible patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster alteplase, and "Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll," which aims to ensure patients with Type 2 diabetes receive the most up-to-date, evidence-based care when hospitalized due to stroke. "Patients are able to come here directly to UConn to be cared for immediately without need to transfer to a higher level of care. We are the highest level of care," says Jennifer Sposito, RN, MSN, the UConn Health Stroke Center's clinical program coordinator.

Thank you to all the nurses working with multidisciplinary teams who assist our patients in receiving the highest quality, expert care they desperately need.

### **Nurse-Led Research Helps Improve Evaluation of Reported Penicillin Allergies**

Nursing research often begins by identifying a problem. In the case of the research project "Perceived Usefulness of a Mnemonic to Improve the Evaluation of Reported Penicillin Allergies," the issue

at hand was improving allergy assessments before surgery.

Carol Schramm, MSN, RN, CNOR, Meagan Zolla, BSN, RN, Kate Baron, APRN, ACNP-BC, Eileen J. Carter, Ph.D., RN, and David Banach, MD, began their research with the knowledge that 90 percent of individuals who report penicillin allergies are found not to have the allergy after they undergo testing.

A documented allergy to a penicillin class antibiotic can have a significant impact on perioperative antibiotic prescribing and is associated with an increased risk of postoperative adverse events. Comprehensive penicillin allergy histories also enable risk stratification to influence future antibiotic prescribing. "I don't think patients in general understand that the perpetuation of inaccurate information may have an unintended negative effect," says Schramm. "It causes all of these downstream effects that are not necessarily good for patients."

In 2022, the team designed their study by evaluating the documentation of penicillin allergies among patients

undergoing ambulatory surgery and procedures to identify opportunities to improve allergy assessments and documentation in this setting. Next, they developed in-service education and a useful mnemonic called STORY — which stands for Symptoms, Timing, Onset, Resolution, and Yet again — to facilitate surgeons' and nurses' comprehensive assessment of reported penicillin allergies. Seventy-seven clinicians completed their survey.

What they found when they introduced STORY in the clinical setting was that 96 percent of respondents strongly agreed that nurses may play an important role in penicillin allergy assessment. They also found that the perceived usefulness of STORY was high among clinicians. "The smart phrase is providing a structure with prompts so that you get more complete documentation about the reported allergy," Schramm says.

### **Falls Committee Implements Wireless Chair Alarm Initiative**

The Falls Committee championed the rollout of wireless chair alarms that help identify fall risk patients who try to get up from their chairs without calling for assistance. It was the goal of the committee to acquire and implement these alarms in every patient room to increase accessibility and availability of alarms, and to declutter rooms of excess cords and cables that can contribute to tripping hazards. The alarms have the capability of sending messages to a nursing team member's phone so they can intervene before it's too late.

The initiative began in early Fall of 2022 with a demonstration of the device



## Total Patient Falls Per 1,000 Patient Days

NDNQI Q1 2021 – Q4 2022



7/8 Quarters

Number of quarters unit  
**OUT-PERFORMED**  
the comparison peer group mean  
(academic medical centers)



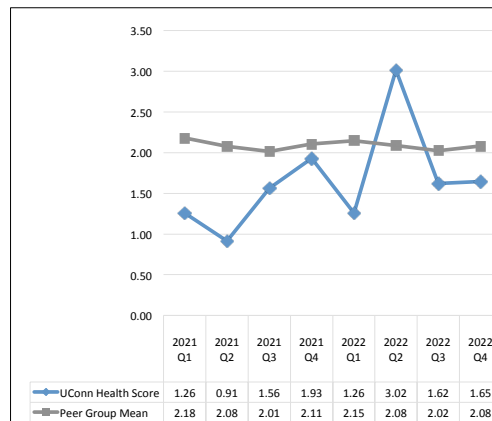
5 to 8 quarters



4 of 8 quarters



0 to 3 quarters



## Injury Falls Per 1,000 Patient Days

NDNQI Q1 2021 – Q4 2022



4/8 Quarters

Number of quarters unit  
**OUT-PERFORMED**  
the comparison peer group mean  
(academic medical centers)



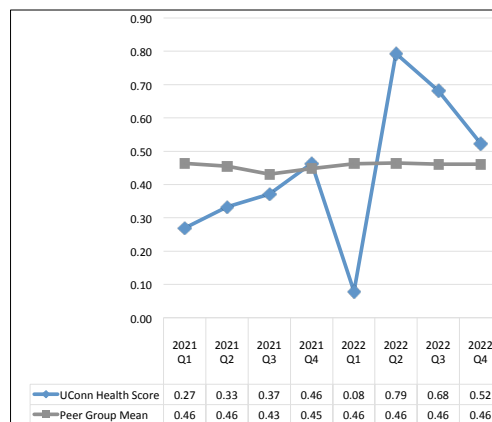
5 to 8 quarters



4 of 8 quarters



0 to 3 quarters



## Percent of Patients with Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries Stage 2+

NDNQI Q1 2021 – Q4 2022



8/8 Quarters

Number of quarters unit  
**OUT-PERFORMED**  
the comparison peer group mean  
(academic medical centers)



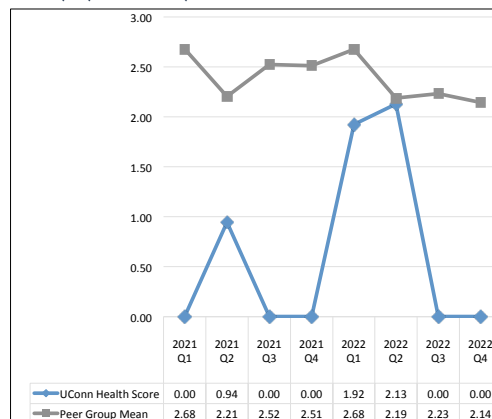
4 to 7 quarters



3 quarters



0 to 2 quarters



by the Posey sales representative and a prompt approval from nursing leadership. By December, clinical nurse specialist Debra Cratty, MSN, APRN, ACNS-BC, obtained approximately 175 devices. The rollout began in the University Tower (UT), on floors 5 and 6. Bracket and battery life issues delayed further rollout until Spring 2023, when implementation continued on UT3 and UT4.

The goal for 2023 is to complete the rollout throughout the hospital and provide ongoing education on how to use them. Thus far, the initiative has had a positive impact. “We have a lot less cords in the room with the elimination of the nurse call cable and wired chair pads,” says Cratty, adding that this translates to less tripping at the bedside.

Although the learning curve has been a little steeper than expected, feedback from staff has been extremely positive. She noted that “even staff who work on units where the wireless technology has not yet been rolled out, are looking forward to the day when the wireless alarms become available.” Having an alarm in every patient room has resulted in increased efficiency and caregiver time at the bedside because it “minimizes the amount of time staff are searching for equipment in other rooms or supply rooms.”

## Teamwork Translates to Low HAPI Numbers and More

At UConn Health, we are committed to providing excellent wound and ostomy care, with pressure injury prevention as a number one goal. In 2022, the Wound Care Department — a team headed by certified wound and ostomy nurses Tanya Paradis, MSN, RN, CWOCN, and Sarah Higley, BSN, RN, WCC, OMS — was joined by Jordan Peterson, BSN, RN, WCC, OMS, to meet the needs of a continually rising inpatient population. Together this team provided formal wound and ostomy consults, with an



average of 217 total patient visits per month in 2022, in addition to implementing numerous measures for hospital acquired pressure injury (HAPI) prevention.

In April, all content for new employee orientation was updated to include current wound care information, literature, and UConn John Dempsey Hospital Nursing Practice Manual policies. Quarterly NDNQI skin prevalence rounds were conducted throughout the year, where all admitted inpatients were surveyed with the assistance of our Skin Champion Committee to confirm the appropriate use of pressure injury prevention interventions. Following prevalence rounds, total pressure injury prevalence, community acquired pressure injury prevalence, and HAPI prevalence was calculated. Monthly HAPI incidence was tracked and statistics were distributed to the Nursing Division and Department of Hospital Quality Improvement to maintain transparency. This data was used to determine where improvements in care or education could be made.

These measures, in combination with ongoing staff education,

have kept the number of hospital acquired pressure injuries at UConn Health consistently below the national average.

### **NICHE Focuses on Sleep Enhancement for Medically Stable Patients**

We all know that sleep is vital for good health and well-being. It plays a restorative role in a patient's recuperation from illness and surgery, according to NICHE coordinator Rachel Meehan, MSN, APRN, ACNS-BC.

Unfortunately, sleep disturbances are common in hospitalized patients and these disturbances are associated with delirium and other complications. In 2022, the UConn NICHE program collaborated with the Department of Medicine in a quality improvement project to enhance sleep.

Night disruptions were evaluated on 129 medical service patients on UT3 and UT6 with a validated questionnaire called Potential Hospital Sleep Disturbances and Noises. The data showed that the greatest impact of sleep was disruptions on vital signs for 54%

of patients. A "nocturnal sleep therapy order set" was created in Epic EMR for stable medical patients. The order set included uninterrupted quiet time from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m., signage placed on designated patients' doors, eye masks, ear plugs, toileting, and adjustment of patients' room temperatures, to promote uninterrupted sleep for these patients.

NICHE's Purposeful Visitor Program continued to thrive this year with UConn Allied Health students. In fact, some students who have graduated have come back to volunteer for additional clinical experience and for the personal satisfaction of helping patients and families. The annual donation drive soliciting supplies for the Therapeutic Activity Carts was conducted in November and December and yielded many donations.

Holiday virtual piano concert by Gianluca Arianna, a medical student, and YouTube guitar holiday music by Chaplain Dan Warriner also helped brighten the spirits of our patients this year.

### **Professional Practice and Clinical Excellence by the Numbers in 2022**

**796**

Number of Clinical Operation Orientation Attendees

**52**

Number of Graduate RN Orientation Attendees

**137**

Number of RN Traveler Orientation Attendees

**144**

Number of General Nursing Orientation Attendees

**851**

NICHE Purposeful Patient Visits

## Nurse Embarks on Four Year Research Journey to Help New Grads

Of all the titles Amy Zipf, RN, holds — mother, wife, nurse, nurse educator — doctor was never one she expected to earn.



Amy Zipf, RN

For Zipf, a UConn School of Nursing 2023 doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.) graduate, nursing research was never in her purview when she became a nurse in 2011, because she never thought it was possible.

“I instantly categorized research into something I could never do because I knew I would never understand all those big words and fancy math,” she says. “I did not understand research, but I knew it was not for me.”

Ten years later she found herself pondering a research question that impacted her own practice: “How do I better serve newly graduated nurses in their transition to practice?” she recalls. “It then occurred to me that in order to serve them well I needed to know what they were missing and I could only know that by asking them.”

In 2022, her nursing research journey began by posing this question to new med surg

nurses: what information, knowledge or tools do you wish you had been told or given before you began your role?

Within weeks this Ph.D. study sent her poring over 11,000 words from nurses across the United States. “It was overwhelming to try and sort through the responses and categorize the gaps experienced, but then it was also encouraging to me in two distinct ways,” she explains.

First, she realized her own observations and questions were valid. “I recognized a gap in the nursing research and asked new grads a question no one had asked before. I conducted nursing research. I am a nursing researcher,” she says.

Second, she realized this knowledge could serve nurses of the future. “If we provide the information, knowledge, and tools to nursing students they will not experience these same gaps as they transition into hospital-based practice,” Zipf says.

While she’s learned a lot in four years, there is still much research left to do. Her hope is that learning to better facilitate the transition of newly graduated nurses into hospital-based practice will lead to an increase in professional satisfaction and retention among nurses and assist in alleviating the nursing workforce shortages hospitals face now.

The magic of her experience is that she’s no longer afraid of the journey of understanding. “Nursing research is not fueled by big words and fancy math,” she says. “Nursing research is fueled by the observations and questions of nurses and

the hope we have as nurses that there must be a better way.”

“What observations do you make in your practice as a nurse? What questions do you ask? What do you hope for? “Come find me,” she says. “I’d love to sit and listen to what could very well be the beginning of your own nursing research journey.”

## Join the Professional Advancement Board in Promoting Positive Change

The purpose of the Professional Advancement Board is the promotion of nursing professionalism through supporting the core values of our Nursing Professional Practice Model: Empowerment, Collaboration, Inspiration and Excellence. Dawn Carroll is chair of this council which is dedicated to the professional advancement of the nursing staff and is vested in the promotion of activities nurses identify as most valuable. In 2022, it continued to work with the Nursing Executive Board to make changes and updates to the clinical ladder system.

The council is focused on recruitment of nurses to participate in all committees in order to move forward with important initiatives. By participating, nurses have a voice in shared decision making between the bedside nurses and nurse leaders, Carroll notes. This participation can address the needs of the bedside nurses and further promote positive change at UConn Health. The Advanced Practice Council meets the first Monday of every month, in person and virtual at 10 a.m. Email Dawn Carroll to join.







**APRN Receives Two Awards in 2022 for Her Invaluable Work in the Sickle Cell Community**



**Genice Nelson, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC**

Genice Nelson, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, of UConn Health’s New England Sickle Cell Institute (NESCI), was recognized twice this year for her exemplary work at UConn Health. In October, Nelson received the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA) President’s Award for her hard work and immeasurable dedication to the sickle cell

community helping to advance the understanding, education, and awareness of the disease nationwide. In December, she received the Dr. Peter J. Deckers Employee Appreciation Award, which recognizes one outstanding employee who consistently demonstrates commitment and passion, strong leadership, exemplary professional skills, and commendable personal attributes all in support of the UConn Health mission. “To be acknowledged for what you just do everyday, I was just very humbled,” says Nelson. “I’m just doing the best I can to make sure we’re meeting the needs of our patients and that we’re doing it in a really impactful way. I want them to feel like they’ve been heard and that we’re meeting their needs.”

**Nursing Manager Nanette Pink Leads Rollout of MyChart Bedside**

In November, patients on the UConn John Dempsey Hospital Surgery/Orthopedics Unit were the first to try MyChart Bedside, a tablet-based, patient-facing technology that provides instant,



**Nanette Pink, BSN, RN, CN III**

real-time access to personalized information on admission and helps patients build a personal connection with their care team.

Nanette Pink, BSN, RN, CN III is the nurse manager who, along with members of UConn Health’s Information Technology staff, led the rollout of 22 MyChart Bedside tablets, allowing patient access to the patient portal within the Epic electronic health record platform.

Patients “were over-the-moon excited that they could be part of this,” says Pink. “I think that

**98**

**Rn Preceptor Class Attendees**

**44**

**Number of Graduate Students with Clinical Rotations**

**Professional Practice and Clinical Excellence by the Numbers in 2022**

**503**

**NICHE Patient Safety Rounds**

**51**

**New ACLS Certifications**

**2**

**Number of Scrub Tech Students in Clinical Rotations**

it's a real testament to how hard our Epic team worked at putting it together because it is so user friendly. They really thought out what would be best for the patients."

The system gives patients access to their daily schedule, vital signs, lab results, plan-of-care notes, nursing notes, and mini-profiles of their care team. They also have access to Elsevier, an education-based teaching platform, that can provide details on a patient's medication but also interactive games and soothing sounds.

"We've already got ideas for phase two of things we want to add, such as mindfulness and meditation," Pink says. "We really want to tailor this toward what the patient needs to make it an interactive experience." That could include additional educational videos and digitizing consent forms to reduce paper.

"IT is grateful to leadership, the nursing team, and IT team for their enthusiasm and efforts," says IT Project Manager Alka Sharma. "Together, they partnered to make the MyChart Bedside pilot a success for the patients and UConn Health!"

## Strategic Goals for 2023-2024

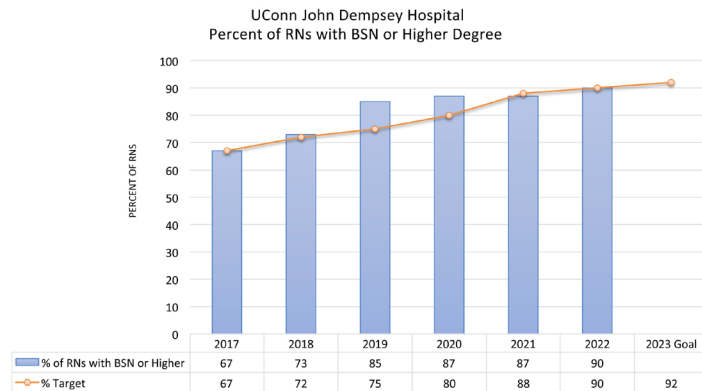
### BSN - Prepared Nurse

Initiative: Previous goal was to sustain or exceed the number of RNs with BSN or higher academic degrees in nursing to a new high of 90%.

Current: We have met our 2021-2022 goal by attaining 90% of our RNs with a BSN or higher degree in nursing. Our partnership with the UConn School of Nursing is beneficial. It allows tuition benefits to staff matriculated in a nursing program of study.

Target: Continue to sustain or exceed our number of RNs with BSN or higher academic degrees in nursing for a new high of 92% in 2023-2024.

## Percent of RNs With BSN or Higher Degree



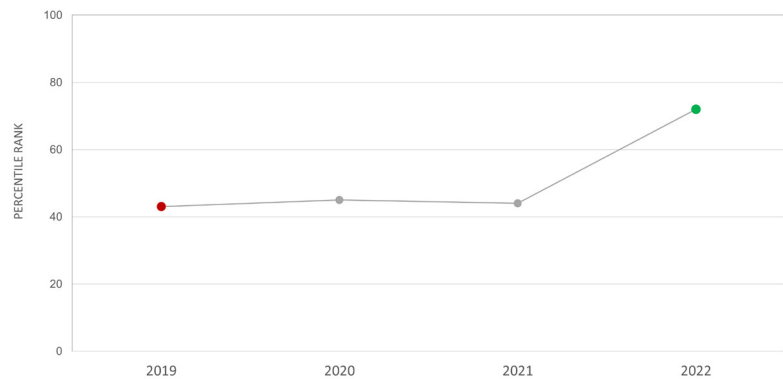
### Top Box Percentile Rank

Nurses treat with courtesy/respect

72nd ▲

Peer Group: Connecticut Hospitals  
Benchmark by: All Respondents

● High Point ● Low Point



### Patient Engagement

Initiative: At the end of 2021, our percentile ranking among CT hospitals in patient engagement scoring of nurse communication, specific to, "Nurses treat with courtesy and respect" was in the 44th percentile. Our goal for 2022 was to see increases in our CT peer group comparison percentile to greater than the 50th percentile ranking. UT3 and UT5 were designated as target units. Nursing leadership rounding was to continue.

Current: The 2022 percentile ranking for "Nurses treat with courtesy and respect (measure) exceeded our target. The top box percentile rank was 72% for all inpatient units. Additionally, UT3

exceeded the target by achieving a top box percentile rank of 51(%). UT5 also exceeded this target achieving a top target box percentile rank of 81%.

Target: Continue to see increases in our CT peer group comparison percentile to greater than the 50th percentile for all our reporting units in 2023-2024.

### Professional Governance

Initiative: 2021-2022 goal was to inaugurate the Nursing Executive Board and establish a regular meeting schedule and attendance for the Clinical Excellence, Nursing Research, Professional Advancement, Nurse Manager, APRN, and Assistant Nurse Manager Boards.



Current: Unit based councils have been implemented. Most are active. Nursing Executive Board was inaugurated and has met with chairs from the other boards. Our membership for Clinical Excellence and Professional Advancement has dwindled. With our high patient census, staff have found it difficult to get off the floors for meetings. Our staffing shortage has been improving and we have instituted a number of informational sessions to attract staff interest in joining professional governance.

Target: Work on innovative measures to allow staff off their units to attend meetings. Continue recruitment open houses to attract new members. Assure that all unit-based councils are active and meeting.

### **Nursing Research**

Initiative: Previous 2022-2023 goals were to have one manuscript accepted for publication in a professional nursing journal, continued monthly Nursing Research Board meetings with active participation and one designed, proposed and IRB approved, Nursing research study in 2023.

Current: Monthly Nursing Research Board (NRB) meetings have continued throughout the past year. Participation has been active and includes professional nurses from across outpatient and inpatient specialty areas. Board meetings and conversations have focused on nursing research education and future ideas and plans for nursing research at UConn Health. Our chair of the nursing research board is now a member of the IRB. We have not,

yet, had a manuscript accepted for publication in a professional journal.

Target: Continued active professional nurse participation in the NRB meetings among registered nurses of diverse levels of education and specialty areas. One collaboratively written publication in a professional journal, and one collaboratively designed Nursing Research study submitted to the IRB.

### **RN Specialty Certification**

Initiative: 2021-2022 goal was to increase the percentage of RNs with professional specialty certification to 30%. Resources and support are available to RNs who are interested in attending certification review courses in preparation for taking certification exams.



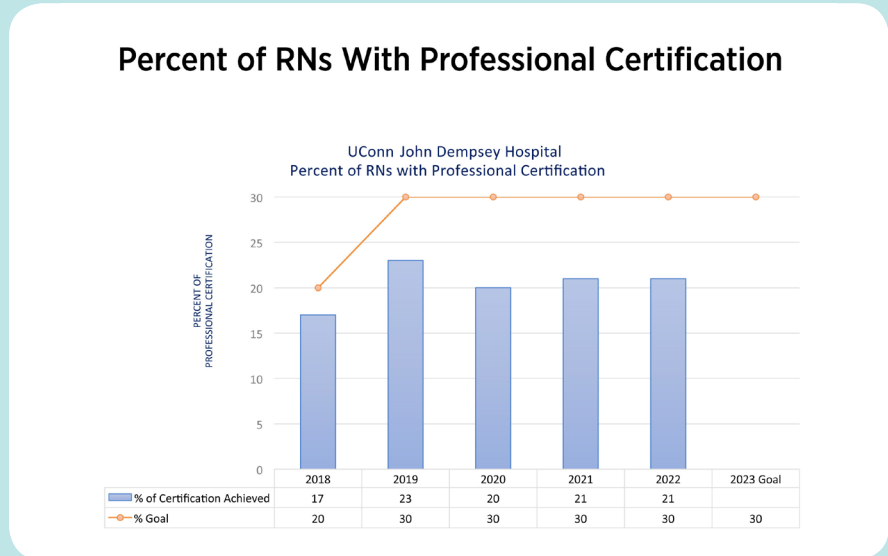
Current: We have been unable to meet our goal, however, we did increase from 20% to 21% of RNs currently with specialty certification. The Professional Advancement Board is currently considering innovative measures to increase professional specialty certification numbers.

Target: Increase the percent of RNs with professional specialty certification to 30%.

### RN Satisfaction and Engagement

Initiative: Our goal is to outperform the mean on four of seven identified measures in the next Advisory Board's Nurse Engagement Survey.

Current: Survey results using the Advisory Board's Nurse Engagement Survey showed that we failed to outperform the mean in all seven categories measured. Our plan is to convene RN staff focus groups with representatives from various inpatient units to identify opportunities for improvement in RN satisfaction and engagement.



Target: After identifying specific opportunities to improve satisfaction and engagement, nursing leadership and professional shared governance will seek to make improvements. The Advisory Board's Nurse Engagement Survey will be made available to RN staff again in 2023 or 2024. The goal will be to outperform our previous survey

specifically in those identified measures recognized and targeted by our focus groups.

### Professional Practice and Clinical Excellence by the Numbers in 2022

**110**

Number of Undergraduate and Accelerated Nursing Students in Clinical Rotations

**12**

Number of EMS Students in Clinical Rotations

### Spring 2022 Promoted to CN3

Bonnie Ferguson, BSN, RN – Endocrinology

Jodi Patrick, BSN, RN – New England Sickle Cell Institute

### Fall 2022 Promoted to CN3

Laura Glynn – Surgery/Orthopedics 5

Julie Shea – Pulmonary Clinic

Lindsey Stefens – Oncology 6

Krista Thiele – Oncology 6

# CONGRATULATIONS AND SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2022 NIGHTINGALE AWARD RECIPIENTS



**Julie Burke, BSN, RN**  
Staff Nurse CN2, Radiation  
Oncology Nursing Unit



**Elaine Cournean, MSN, APRN-BC, ACHPN**  
Movement Disorders, Neurology,  
UConn Medical Group



**Rachel Crosby, MSN, RN, CIC**  
Infection Prevention Specialist,  
Epidemiology Department



**Ryan Massicotte, BSN, RN**  
Staff Nurse CN2, Medicine 3 Unit



**Kara Parker, MSN, RN**  
Staff Nurse CN3, Clinical Nurse  
Specialist, Intermediate Unit



**Wilfreda Tilley, MSN, RN, PCCN, CN3**  
Assistant Nurse Manager,  
Intermediate Unit



A former reporter, writer, and senior editor for People magazine and CBS News, Amy Jamieson is a freelance health, lifestyle, and entertainment writer based in Collinsville, Connecticut.

# NURSING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MODEL

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