Mount Sinai Health System has been designated by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo as one of eight centers statewide to treat patients with the Ebola virus. To care for such patients and to meet the expectations that the Governor has set, Mount Sinai Hospital has built a Bio Containment Unit (BCU) in Ross Park, behind the Annenberg building. The BCU consists of four rooms: two patient rooms, a laboratory, and a supply room, all of which have negative pressure.

The BCU can treat a maximum of two patients, and for each patient there are five nurses and two physicians. The goals are safety and teamwork. The BCU is staffed by a team of physicians, MICU/SICU/PICU nurses and support personnel who are fully trained and equipped with specialized personal protective equipment (PPE). The unit adheres to strict health care protocols and standards set by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the World Health Organization. The presence of this dedicated unit does not pose any risk to other hospitalized patients, visitors, care providers, or non-clinical employees.

Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday, BCU physicians, nurses and support personnel participate in simulations under the guidance of the anesthesiology department. These simulations run from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Excellence in Nursing Leadership

By Carla Alves, RN, MS

Ms. Maura Fran Carpo, RN, MS, CNOR & Ms. Maureen Leahy, RN, BSN, MHA, CHPN have received the 2014 AAS Award for Excellence in Nursing Leadership.

This award is based on the legacy of Ms. Ellen Fuller Zweifach and generations of nurse leaders at Mount Sinai and celebrates a tradition of excellence. It is a joint collaboration between the Association of the Attending Staff and the Department of Nursing and honors two exceptional nurses each year.

“I am beside myself. It’s pretty special,” said Ms. Leahy, a Clinical Nurse Manager at the Wiener Family Palliative Care Unit (PCU). “It really is an award for our unit. Each one of the PCU staff makes my job a delight and a reward.”

“I cannot describe to you how excited I have been since I learned that I won this award,” said Ms. Carpo, a Clinical Nurse Manager in Perioperative Services – Orthopaedics Cluster. “This award inspires me to work even harder and to make the OR better for the patients and my team.”

Nominations for this award were open to Mount Sinai Hospital clinical nurse managers, nursing administrators, and RN program managers.

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Ebola Preparation

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During the on-site training sessions, frontline workers receive guidance on donning and doffing (i.e., putting on and removing) PPE when entering and leaving the room of a patient hospitalized with known or suspected Ebola. Furthermore, they are taught how to admit patients to BCU, handle laboratory specimens, and provide post-mortem care.

“The more we practice, the more we learn what works and what doesn’t. This helps us to write appropriate protocols with our Emergency Management, Infection Prevention and Anesthesiology teams that will help identify, isolate and treat patients,” said Camille Davis, RN, BSN, who is currently training frontline workers along with Merly Saballa, RN, BSN and Candice Carr, RN, BSN.

Ms. Davis said that these stimulations have also helped them to obtain improved PPE.

“In the beginning we would put on goggles, N95 mask, Tyvek hood, face shield, and within 30 minutes we were drenched in sweat and needed to doff. Thanks to these stimulations, we have learned that using hoods connected to powered air purifying respirators (PAPR) is better. Filtered air travels throughout the cover suit. There is no more sweating and we can wear them up to three hours before doffing.”

As a health system, MSHS is committed to educating staff, patients, visitors and the public with accurate information about Ebola. You can find a fact sheet entitled: “Accurate Information about Ebola” to help you communicate with staff and patients at: http://mshs.co/lsufKyk1 or on the intranet at http://intranet1.mountsinai.org/ebola/

Additional information can be found at www.cdc.gov

Message from the Editor

Dear Readers:

Happy New Year! If you are in the mood to make some holiday resolutions, I have a suggestion for you: Enlarge your vision. Too many people feel they are stuck in a rut because their vision is limited. Everyone has a vision of something. But the question is: What does your picture look like? Do you see yourself rising higher? Living an abundant life? Accomplishing your dreams? Or has your vision become limited by circumstances or your environment?

Your vision determines what type of life you are going to live. You need to cultivate, enhance and protect your vision. If your vision is limited, your life will be limited. Before your dreams come to pass, you must see yourself accomplishing those dreams. Your vision is what is going to keep you motivated and moving forward. If your vision is negative, then your life may follow in that same direction.

Life may not always deal you the best cards, but you have to shake off any disappointments and develop a fresh new vision. Go out and find a place where you can dream. Go to the park and watch the sunset. Find some special place that inspires you. If you are going to enlarge your vision, you also need to gather around people that will inspire you to rise higher.

In 2015, I encourage you to see yourself as blessed, prosperous, strong, healthy, talented, successful, and accomplishing your dreams. You may have been through a rough patch of disappointments, but this is a NEW year. Dream big, enlarge your vision. When your vision changes in the right direction, your life will change, too.

With my best wishes for you and those you love,

Carla Alves, RN, MS

New Editor-in-Chief

Ms. Carla Alves, RN, MS

About 8,400 nurses, nursing executives, and healthcare professionals from around the world attended the conference.

Takeaways from 2014 ANCC Magnet Conference

By Melody Cubas, RN-BC, BSN

This past October, I attended the ANCC Magnet Conference in Dallas, TX. This was the first time I attended a big conference like this. It was indeed a wonderful professional opportunity as well as a fun-filled and educational experience About 8,400 nurses, nursing executives, and healthcare professionals from around the world attended the conference. Meeting and sharing experiences with the best of the best nurses was priceless! I am grateful to Mount Sinai Hospital for this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Being a nurse is not only a profession or career for me, it is also truly a calling. Twenty-eight years ago when I chose nursing as my career, it was the best decision I have ever made in my entire life. I have always been proud to be a nurse, especially a “Magnet Nurse!”

At the conference, Ms. Jean Watson, an American nurse theorist who is best known for her Theory of Human Caring, reminded us that caring is just as valuable and essential to our patients as curing. A person can have caring without curing but cannot have true curing without caring. This was one of my first takeaways from the conference. She mentioned how the theory of caring focuses on love as the primary healing tool in nursing. One has to personally experience it in order to provide a true caring. She encouraged us to “fall in love three times a day.”

My second memorable takeaway came from Mr. Jack Uldrich, a renowned global futurist and scholar. He talked about the need to learn to unlearn old ways of thinking in order to learn to embrace new opportunities and future trends in healthcare. He told us to think about the unthinkable and to understand that being aware of one’s ignorance is the key component of true wisdom. He talked about how he envisions the future which includes an “internet of things” --social media, robotics, emerging technologies, innovations, and other innovative healthcare trends.

Mr. Uldrich also discussed Google Glass, which is a type of wearable technology with an optical head-mounted display. It was developed by Google with the mission of producing a ubiquitous, mass-market computer. He said the use of Google Glass is currently being piloted in five hospitals in the United States.

Mr. Uldrich also told us about a tiny implant chip, about 14 mm in size that can be implanted just below the skin to monitor for a heart attack. The chip can detect a molecule tied to heart attacks 3 to 4 hours before an attack. A battery patch on the skin receives chips’ radio signals of information and transmits to a cell phone, which then helps send the data to a doctor. There is also an App with a special heart attack ring tone.

Ms. Carla Alves, RN, MS will be replacing Ms. Sylvie Jacobs, RN, BSN, CPAN who has been editor-in-chief of the Magnet Newsletter for over two years. Ms. Alves is a Palliative Care nurse on KP6. Prior to taking care of terminally ill patients, she worked on 8 West Neuroscience. In addition to her nursing degree, she has a Masters of Science in Journalism and is currently working on her Masters of Science in Nursing Education. Her goal is to write educational articles for nursing journals.

She believes that by writing nursing articles, she can be a strong advocate for patient-centered quality care, and help highlight the importance of work in today’s health care system.

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From left: Carol Porter, DNP, RN; Maura Fran Carpo, RN, MS; David L. Reich, MD; Maureen Leahy, RN, MHA; and Eric Neibart, MD

"I am beside myself. It's pretty special...It really is an award for our unit. Each one of the PCU staff makes my job a delight and a reward." - Maureen Leahy

"I cannot describe to you how excited I have been since I learned that I won this award... This award inspires me to work even harder and to make the OR better for the patients and my team." - Maura Carpo

Suggested nomination criteria included: compassion, motivation, clinical expertise, outstanding relationships with co-workers, patients and medical staff, communication skills, continuing education, and overall talents and abilities to lead as a mentor and role model to others.

Chief Nursing Officer Carol Porter, DNP, RN, FAAN and President of the Association of the Attending Staff Eric Neibart, MD hosted the 30th Excellence in Nursing Leadership Award.

Excerpt from Ms. Carpo’s Speech:
I simply love Mount Sinai. Winter of 1980, I was a new grad who just arrived from the Philippines. My first plane ride, which I did not know would be 24 hours long, brought me to the cold, snowy NYC. Desperately needing a place to work and stay, I turned to the Yellow Pages book, under letter H – for hospitals. I took the first 5 hospitals with a big ad (I thought bigger the ad, the bigger the hospital). I called all 5 and Mount Sinai seemed to be the one with the easiest instructions on how to get there by bus. I had my first job interview the next day, got hired on the spot and started 2 weeks later. My game plan was to work hard and pass my boards and after a year, hope that with stronger wings I could explore nursing opportunities in NYC. Well, I never left so here I am today, 34 years later. This is because Mount Sinai provides all the opportunities for nurses to grow professionally regardless of their role in patient care. No surprise that we just got our 3rd Magnet re-designation this year. It is an excellent workplace for nurses.

Excerpt from Ms. Leahy’s Speech:
Palliative care and hospice work has always been where my heart felt most full to serve as a nurse, and a nursing leader. It has always felt like the most significant part of my life, and in my life, success has been demonstrated over and over to me, as patients and their families have breathed perhaps just a little easier, and the ones who have gone, have done so, perhaps a little more gently. I find the work that we do in Palliative Care to be supremely important – the very quivering of my heart in the face of another’s suffering keeps me firmly in the world. It has been my privilege and my honor to be the nurse manager. I feel like a shepherd, a teacher, a mentor, a counselor, a friend. Watching nurses grow and learn, and then apply new knowledge for meaningful service to patients and their families are one of the delights of my life.

Physician of the Year Awards

The Physician of the Year Awards recognize physicians in health care whose dedication, talents and skills have improved the lives of countless thousands of patients in the hospital.

This year the Mount Sinai Medical Center Department of Nursing gave awards to four physicians for their excellence in patient care and strong collaborative relationships with nurses. The winners were nominated by their nurse colleagues.

Associate Director of Nursing Nancy Lamberson BSN, RN, Chief Nursing Officer Carol Porter DNP, RN, FAAN and President and CEO David Reich, MD hosted the 27th Physician of the Year Awards.

The following Physician of the Year Award winners are true partners in caring for our patients, and have earned the respect and appreciation of the Mount Sinai community of nurses.

Physician of the Year Awardees:

House Officer Award
Jeremy Steinberger, MD, PGY-3
Department of Neurosurgery

Fellow Award
Nicholas Sikalas, MD
Department of Vascular Surgery

Attending Award
Annapoorna Kini, MD, MRCP
Professor of Cardiology and Director of the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory

Special Recognition Award
Audrey Chun, MD
Associate Professor of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine
Catch a Star

By Sylvie Jacobs, RN, BSN, CPAN

This past November, Mount Sinai Hospital held its first Catch a Star breakfast at the Hess Center for Science and Medicine building. Along with over 25 employees from different areas of the hospital, I attended this breakfast with the hospital’s president, Dr. David Reich. At the breakfast, we shared our ideas about what it means to be a star employee when it comes to providing an excellent patient experience. We were asked to describe our role as Mount Sinai employees and to feel free to suggest ideas for improvements. We also got a cute little teal / pink star pin to ‘proudly’ wear.

As Dr. Reich listened carefully to each person, he heard a common theme of gratitude and a sense of pride as an employee of Mount Sinai. Suggestions were presented on how to improve patient satisfaction, efficiency and safety. Dr. Reich absorbed the comments and clarified the specific details in order to help make the proposed changes become a reality.

“This breakfast is a great way to say, ‘Thank You’ and to tell you how much I value the work you do. We need to recognize our employees.” - Dr. Reich.

Different Hearts Dancing to the Same Beat

By Christine Seidler, RN, BSN-BC

Guggenheim Pavilion 1 Center is home of the Lauder Family Cardiovascular Ambulatory Center. This innovative center is the “brain-child” of Dr. Valentin Fuster, who envisioned a place that would encompass all cardiovascular services for ambulatory patients under one roof. There was no Genie to make this wish come true, but rather a tremendous amount of work, two years of planning, and plenty of financial resources that were required to create this state of the art area for patient care. The dream officially became a reality when the center opened its doors to patients on December 1, 2014. The new center logs 200 to 250 patient visits per day. Integration of physical space for cardiac services was only one goal of the new center. Additionally, the utilization of technological systems such as EPIC, Cerner, Softlink, and patient-tracking will streamline processes for patients.

The rollout of the center will occur in three phases. Phase One, brought primary cardiac care visits and vascular procedures to the new area. Phase Two, scheduled to take place in the spring of 2015, will add Echocardiography and Nuclear Cardiology services. The final phase, to be completed in the summer of 2015, will bring the Cardiac Computed Tomography and Radiology services to the cardiovascular family.

With this new center comes new leadership guiding the way for a successful transition. Ms. Haydee Garcia, MSN, RN, ACNP-BC, CRN-CMC, Nursing Director, and Dr. Joseph Sweeney, Medical Director, have accepted the challenge of incorporating multiple modalities of cardiovascular care under one large umbrella. Together, they will devise the methods to prepare staff for this new venture.
To meet the challenges of bringing together multiple areas that had previously functioned independently, Ms. Garcia has developed a method to engage staff in a smooth transition. Her leadership style involves meeting with the individual staff members rather than just issuing a list of changes. She takes time to acknowledge how the unit has worked before and then evaluates how to help the staff adjust to her leadership. She takes time to listen to staff and welcomes comments and feedback from all. By meeting with each group individually, she understands first-hand what it is that drives and motivates them. This process is extremely important to Ms. Garcia because, as she points out, we need “high staff satisfaction to achieve patient satisfaction.”

Nursing collaboration has also been integral to the successful development of the Lauder Family Cardiovascular Ambulatory Center. Ms. Garcia, working with Ms. Frances Williams, RN, CCRN (the first clinical nurse involved in Phase One), reviewed the layouts and plans and suggested modifications as needed. Together they suggested a patient tracking system and a pre-registration process to help improve the patient experience upon arriving to the center. The pre-registration process includes asking the patient to complete a questionnaire upon scheduling a visit. The nurse verifies this information with the patient prior to the patient’s arrival in the center (usually 72 hours before the visit). Ms. Williams said patients were very receptive to receiving calls at home to review their health history prior to arrival to the center. By gathering the information prior to a patient’s visit, time required for completing paperwork is minimized and the focus is on direct care.

One of the unique features of the preparation for opening the center was a live “walk-through” in which employees volunteered to be ‘patients.’ This was the first time this concept had been used to test out a new unit at Mount Sinai.

As the breakfast came to a close, we were encouraged to continue to communicate with Dr. Reich, sending ideas and suggestions to him by email. This Catch a Star event was a wonderful moment of being acknowledged, heard and appreciated as employees.

Speaking for myself, it left me feeling that I wanted to do more, contribute more and support my co-workers more. Most importantly, it helped me feel that maybe what I do each and every day matters after all.

In my opinion, this new recognition program will be an important factor in employee retention, engagement, and motivation. Public recognition in the workplace is a motivating force that will provide Mount Sinai employees with increased job satisfaction and encouragement to perform their jobs more effectively.
The Importance of Self-Care, Self-Love, & Self-Preservation

By Morgan Meinel, RN, BSN

This past November, the Garrison Institute and New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care held the second Buddhist Contemplative Care Symposium. This four-day conference gave palliative and hospice health care practitioners many tools and insights to help provide the most effective palliative and end-of-life care possible. The focus of the conference centered on utilizing mindfulness and other contemplative techniques in order to become more present for patients and loved ones during their illness and especially as they cope with the difficult emotions of the dying process. “Breathe in and keep an open heart,” was a quote I heard often from Ira Byock, one of the keynote speakers and a leader in the field of Palliative Care. I believe his advice not only applies to helping our patients cope with difficulties, but can also be a useful tool when we are having our own personal problems in life.

Perhaps what surprised me the most was the key emphasis so many keynote speakers placed on self-care, self-love, and self-preservation as determining factors in the quality of care we offer to others.

I was surprised in the best possible way by the realization that in order to care for others, we must care for ourselves first. And not only care for ourselves, but truly love ourselves. The compassion and heartfelt love and care that we extend to others must come from an endless reservoir of love we have for ourselves.

Another inspirational keynote speaker was holistic care physician Tieraona Low Dog, who defined “true healing” as “healing that can only be found in the way we live our lives, which includes our relationships, thoughts, and beliefs.” I believe that our ability to help others depends on our own abilities to heal and love from within.

I returned home from the Buddhist Contemplative Care Symposium with the following take-away message: Let us enhance our positive qualities and help those around us to do the same. The world has the potential to be such an incredible place if we just allow ourselves to become more present for patients and loved ones during their illness and especially as they cope with the difficult emotions of the dying process.

New Graduate Nursing Transitions Program

By Maureen Leahy, RN, BSN, MHA, CHPN

A transition is a process or period in which something undergoes a change and passes from one state, stage, form, or activity to another. Guiding nurses in their transition from graduation to practice has always been a challenge for institutions. In 2010, the Institute of Medicine made strong recommendations that “state boards of nursing, accrediting bodies, the federal government, and health care organizations should take actions to support nurses’ completion of a transitions-to-practice program.”

The New Graduate Nursing Transitions program at Mount Sinai is a 12 month program for new graduate nurses that provide a seamless transition into their new role as registered professional. A quarterly Transitions meeting addresses the knowledge, skills, and attitude component of learning with a curriculum that is adapted to the educational needs of the individual nurses, provides effective mentorship, and promotes nursing clinical leadership at the bedside.

The leadership of each graduate nurse cohort is made up of volunteer nursing leaders from all areas of the hospital. This is a group of dedicated nurses whose delight and privilege it is to shepherd new nurses and help them navigate their way through the first year of nursing practice. The cohort leaders meets with the participants collectively and also in individual sessions on a monthly basis, according to the needs of the participants.

Guided reflection and debriefing about any and all concerns were some of the most rewarding and meaningful moments in our meetings. It was quickly evident that if one new nurse was struggling with a certain thing, chances were that others had some of the same challenges. We all grew. We all learned. We all helped one another. That small cohort built friendships and relationships that are so important to the success of a new nurse, in a new job, facing so many unknowns.

In Erickson’s theory of psychosocial development the 7th Stage is Generativity vs. Stagnation. Care is the virtue identified when this stage is handled correctly. Caring for a new generation is what gives a senior nurse a sense of joy and pride in their own work. Being a mentor, a role model and a shepherd did make me feel older (and a bit wiser), but it also gave me a renewed sense of purpose and accomplishment.

It has become one of my highlights in my work at Mount Sinai, and an absolute privilege to pour into the life of a young nurse.