

Office of Nursing Services Achievements and Highlights

January, 2016 - September, 2017

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

“to care for him who shall have borne the battle
and for his widow, and his orphan”

— President Abraham Lincoln

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Office of Nursing Services
Achievements and Highlights

January, 2016 - September, 2017

Office of Nursing Services (10A1)
810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420

Internet: www.va.gov/Nursing
Intranet: vaww.va.gov/Nursing



Washington, DC, USA - October 10, 2009: A group of Vietnam Veterans pose in front of the Three Soldiers Vietnam War Memorial Statue on the Mall in Washington, DC.

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Mission:

To honor the Veteran through excellence in healthcare delivery

Vision:

Advancing nursing; Transforming healthcare

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Chief Nursing Officer's Remarks

Throughout my first year as Chief Nursing Officer, I heard numerous stories of Veteran experiences that represent the compassionate care VA nurses provide. It is extremely evident that VA nurses are contributing significantly to health care delivery and impacting the lives of Veterans and their families.

This report reflects the important role VA nurses play in Veteran health care and how VA nurses are leading change. As you read this publication, you will note numerous illustrations of our work to advance nursing practice. VA nurses continue in our partnerships with others to achieve notable accomplishments that impact overall efficiency and effectiveness of Veteran care. VA's continuing success relies heavily upon the talented nurses in VA and our efforts to inspire innovation!

Looking ahead, we will need to continue our work together, seeking improvements in quality and striving to make every Veteran experience the very best. Our focus remains on helping each Veteran heal and achieve optimal health and well-being. It is vital to continue the implementation of evidence-based nursing practices to create positive change. The expertise and commitment of VA nurses will be critical as we deliver on meeting the expectations of those we serve.

To meet new challenges we face this coming year, we are launching new initiatives to support our goals. We will increase focus next year on developing nursing leaders, expanding nurse residency programs, eliminating barriers to hiring nurses, strengthening evidence-based practice, expanding the use of protocols, advancing practice through dissemination of research, enhancing care coordination, enhancing skills in therapeutic communication, and improving clinical call centers. Nurses will continue in our role of leading change for modernization and implementation of a new Electronic Health Record. Our strength as a national nursing workforce will be created through our collaborative efforts, our focus on priorities and placing Veterans first.

Thank you for being a VA nurse. I am proud of your hard work and dedication to caring for Veterans. I want each VA nurse to know how much I appreciate your commitment to our mission, vision and values. Your compassion is inspiring and I am proud of the phenomenal work you accomplish each day. I look forward to hearing from you in the coming year as we demonstrate excellence and provide the best care in the nation.

Thank you,

Linda McConnell, RN

Linda McConnell, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE
Chief Nursing Officer





▲ The Nursing Executive Leadership Board (NELB) Strategic Planning Meeting, August 2nd 2017 in Washington, DC. Participants are listed from Left to Right, starting with the front row.
 Front Row: Jade Moore, Lygia Arcaro, Sheila Bryson-Eckroade, Debra Hunt, Alan Bernstein, Linda McConnell, Sabrina Adkins, Patricia Burke, Michelle Cox-Henley, Eve Broughton, Amy Lesniewski, Virginia Rayburn.
 2nd Row: Amos Mburu, Marcia Lysaght, Amy Daly, Helen Pearlman, Karen Ott, Amy Gartley, Margaret Givens, Sheila Ochylski, Angela Brothers, Christine Engstrom, Beth Taylor, Elizabeth Czekanski, Penny Kaye Jensen, Sandy Leake.
 3rd Row: Toni Phillips, Storm Morgan, Michelle Lucatorto, Lisa Jensen, Charles Silveri, Suzanne Thorne-Odem, Ila Flannigan.
 Back Row: Kathleen Barry, Matthew Rystrom, David Przestrzelski, Pam Billings, Mary Pat Couig, Sheila Cox Sullivan, Nancy Benton, Tiffany Stubbs, Linda Kurtz, Sean Campbell.

“Our collective focus on achieving the extraordinary will create an awe-inspiring journey and define the future of VA nursing”

— Linda McConnell
 Chief Nursing Officer



ILA FLANNIGAN, MHA
 Supervisory Health System Specialist
 (Executive Assistant)



AUSTIN MOORE, MS
 Financial Management Specialist



CARMEN KESTNER
 Staff Assistant

Deputy Chief Nursing Officer's Remarks

It is with great pride that I take the opportunity to present to you the Office of Nursing Services (ONS) 2016-2017 Achievements and Highlights. This is the first time in 5 years that we are publishing a report highlighting ONS achievements. In this year's issue, we highlight major milestones that the office was able to accomplish between January, 2016 and September, 2017. These achievements were as a result of the dedicated ONS staff and the support of many field representatives who have served on committees, served on details to the office, served on Field Advisory Committees and advised our office on topics while working tirelessly to further the mission of our great organization.



Within ONS, our mission is "To honor the Veteran through excellence in healthcare delivery". As the Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, it is my goal to facilitate the diffusion of this mission into the overall daily operations within ONS and VA Nursing. The remarkable achievements of the entire ONS team in 2016 and 2017 exemplify the epitome of honoring Veterans by living up to our mission. The four ONS Workstreams (Clinical Practice, Policy, Education and Legislation, Workforce & Leadership, Research, Evidence-Based Practice & Analytics) reached several major achievements over the timeframe. Just to name a few, Full Practice Authority became law for VHA Nursing; ONS continued to advocate for nurses by drafting legislative proposals that would remove barriers that negatively impact access, staffing and efficiency in care delivery; Nursing Staffing Methodology was strengthened in SCI and rolled out in the ED and OR across the medical centers; an interprofessional Evidence-Based Practice Field Advisory Committee was established to provide visionary guidance for evidence-based practice in VHA.

The above achievements and many more that you will find in this report showcase only a glimpse of the remarkable work that VA Nurses and our team does every day to honor the Veteran, improve access and deliver quality nursing care.

The Office of Nursing Services is actively engaged in VA Modernization efforts that will enhance the quality of service that is provided to our colleagues in the field. We look forward to collaborating with you on many nursing initiatives that will continue to enhance patient care.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alan Bernstein".

Alan Bernstein, MS, RN
Deputy Chief Nursing Officer



STAFF SGT. (Ret.) Shilo Harris, "The Man of Steel Will" survived severe third degree burns on 35% of his body after an improvised explosive device (IED) struck his armored truck while serving on a deployment in Iraq.

"Everything in your life is a gift. Sometimes, it may not be the gift you want, but you realize that your challenges are a new beginning." – SHILO

The Office of Nursing Services was honored to have Staff Sgt. Harris as a keynote speaker at the 2017 National Nurse Executives Conference.

“VA nurses are a dynamic group of professionals, always willing to do whatever it takes to serve the Veterans, demonstrating the highest level of professionalism to achieve superior results. I am personally proud to be a part of this exceptional group of professionals and to call them my colleagues.”

— Alan Bernstein
Deputy Chief Nursing Officer

Policy, Education and Legislation



One of the most significant ways to bring about positive change and advance the practice and impact of VA nursing is through policy, education, and legislation.



KAREN M. OTT, DNP, RN
Director for Policy, Education and Legislation

Policy Development, Review and Revision:

In partnership with stakeholders, all current VA and VHA policy is developed or reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure that nursing's role and contributions are significant and valuable.

Nursing Education:

ONS collaborates with the Office of Academic Affiliations (OOA) to develop programs that support the educational needs of nurses to advance their practice.



AMOS MBURU, MHA
Health System Specialist



DAWN BERRY, BA
Program Specialist

Legislative Proposals:

ONS achieves its mission and vision through legislation that removes barriers to access, staffing, and practice for the delivery of Veteran care. On an annual basis, ONS identifies issues that need to be addressed legislatively and drafts proposals each fiscal year. These proposals are subjected to multiple levels of VHA and VA review, revision, ranking and prioritization before final submission through the Secretary's Office and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to Congress.

The typical proposal timeline starts in late December/early January with a call for proposals sent to all VHA Program Offices. Anticipating this call for legislation, ONS begins drafting proposals in the 1st Quarter of the fiscal year to submit completed proposals by February of the following year. All final proposals that have been cleared by the Secretary's Office are submitted to OMB in the 4th Quarter for possible inclusion into the President's budget for the following fiscal year. ONS can resubmit any legislative proposal that was not enacted into law in the next legislative cycle.



Workforce and Leadership

Providing Veterans improved access to care is a top priority of ONS, but expanding access is also at the core of the Workforce and Leadership (WFL) Workstream within ONS. VA nurses are highly valued members and leaders of the healthcare team; thus, focusing on recruitment and retention, succession planning, and professional development of VA nurses creates a highly skilled, well-prepared workforce that can contribute their knowledge and expertise to the optimization of patient-driven care.



KATHLEEN BARRY MHA, RN, NEA-BC
Director Workforce and Leadership

The goal of WFL is to promote policies and national initiatives that create the necessary elements to ensure VA employs the best nursing professionals and personnel, and help to advance VA goals for improving access and providing patient-driven, safe, effective, high-quality care.

WFL focuses efforts on those programs, policies and initiatives that facilitate:

- Retention/recruitment
- Succession planning
- Healthy work environment (which encompasses wellness, professionalism, and career development)
- Staffing methodology
- Professional peer review
- Quality improvement through organizational culture change
- Shared governance and collaborative management
- Patient care delivery



LISA JENSEN, DNP, APRN
Program Manager



LYGIA LEE ARCARO, PhD, RN-BC
Program Manager



MARY PAT COUIG, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN
Program Manager



JADE MOORE, RN, MS
Acting National Staffing Methodology Coordinator



PAMELA BILLINGS, DNP, RN, APRN, FNP-BC, NEA-BC
Interim Program Analyst



TIFFANY STUBBS, MBA
Health System Specialist



YVONNE JOHNSON
Program Specialist



Clinical Practice

Clinical Practice Program (CPP)

The Clinical Practice Program (CPP) is comprised of ten Field Advisory Committees (FACs) chaired by Clinical Nurse Advisors. CPP provides guidance on clinical nursing practice and to support field-based operations and organizational priorities for specialties that impact high risk patient populations. The goals for the Clinical Practice Program include: (a) standardization of nursing practice and coordinated advisory processes for other program office initiatives; (b) spread of nursing innovations within VHA; (c) diffusion of best nursing practices aligned with strategic initiatives; (d) assistance in the development of metrics that complement national performance measures and monitors; (e) development and evaluation of nursing sensitive indicators, care paths, and evidenced based standards; and (f) proactive strategic focus on clinical nursing practice.



JUNE 11, 2017, ONS appoints new Acting Director.

SANDY C. LEAKE, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Acting Director, Clinical Practice

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Full Practice Authority (APRN FPA)

As an integrated Federal health care system with the responsibility to provide comprehensive care under 38 U.S.C. 7301, it is essential that VHA wisely manage its resources and fully utilize the skills of its health care providers. The health care services provided by an APRN under full practice authority in VA are consistent with the nursing profession's standards of practice for such roles. The FPA Regulation increases Veterans' access to VA health care by expanding the pool of qualified health care professionals who are authorized to provide primary health care and other related health care services to the full extent of their education, training, and certification, without the clinical supervision of physicians, and it permits VA to use its health care resources more effectively and in a manner that is consistent with the role of APRNs in the private sector, while maintaining the patient-centered, safe, high-quality health care that Veterans receive from VA. Standardization of APRN full practice authority, without regard for individual State practice regulations, helps to ensure a consistent delivery of health care across VHA by decreasing the variability in APRN practice that currently exists as a result of disparate State practice regulations and increases Veteran access to needed VA healthcare, particularly in medically-underserved areas.

Nursing Practice Transformation (NPT)

Shared governance structure which provides leadership, guidance, and strategic direction related to clinical nursing practice.



SUZANNE THORNE-ODEM, DNP, APRN, FNP-C
Program Manager



STORM L. MORGAN, MSN, RN, MBA
Program Manager



MICHELLE A. LUCATORTO, DNP, RN, FNP-BC
Program Manager



PENNY KAYE JENSEN, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, FAAN, FAANP
Program Manager



ELIZABETH CZEKANSKI, DNP, MS, RN-BC,
NE-BC, VHA-CM
Clinical Nurse Advisor



SEAN CAMPBELL, MHA
Health System Specialist



SHAMEKA JACKSON, MBA
Program Specialist



KELLY MORROW
Program Specialist

National Nursing Practice Council (NNPC)

Collaborates with the Clinical Practice Program (CPP) field advisory committees and workgroups to establish best practice recommendations to be reviewed by the Nursing Executive Leadership Board (NELB) and Nursing Practice Transformation (NPT) goal group. NNPC is charged to: (a) facilitate decision-making and sharing of information to and from stakeholders; (b) participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the National Nursing Strategic Plan; (c) identify issues and VHA initiatives that will impact patient care delivery or general nursing practice; (d) use scholarly data-driven approaches to meet agreed upon objectives; and (e) identify opportunities for nursing to positively impact practice.

Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)

Initiative targeted towards RNs with a Master's degree in Nursing who desire to stay in the direct care setting, but practice in an advanced generalist nursing role with a broad scope of practice and more complex level of responsibility for a specific patient care unit. The role provides clinical leadership in all microsystems health care settings. The CNL is expected to address and improve the following:

- (a) cost/financial outcomes;
- (b) patient/staff satisfaction and retention;
- (c) quality/internal process outcomes; and
- (d) practice model transformation/innovations.



Research, Evidence-Based Practice and Analytics

Nursing Research: ONS collaborates with our Field Advisory Committee to build capacity for high quality research that informs evidence-based practice and nursing science thereby promoting health and excellence for our Veterans and the nation. ONS collaborates with Health Sciences Research & Development (HSR&D) to promote the Nursing Research Initiative and with other research partners to ensure there is a career path for nursing scientists in VA. We also provide an annual grant-writing workshop for our newer nursing scientist colleagues. A major focus of our current work is creating PhD-DNP dyads to perform clinical research to guide daily nursing practice.



SHEILA COX SULLIVAN, PhD, RN, VHA-CM
Director, Research, Quality & Analytics

If you are looking for nursing research information please visit our intranet ONS Nursing Research resource center at: <http://vaww.va.gov/NURSING/nursingresearch.asp>.

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP):

This aspect of our work facilitates the development of infrastructure to ensure VA nurses consistently engage in an evidence-based practice to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes throughout the VA. We believe there are two levels of EBP: one is the scholarly endeavor of searching the literature and shaping a practice or policy to conform to the literature, while the other is the direct application of this research knowledge in conjunction with the Veteran's preferences and the practitioner's clinical expertise.

We provide education on the EBP process and curriculum annually as well as conducting consultation visits to medical centers who request a visit.

Abundant resources are available at our EBP Resource Center on the intranet. The link is:
<http://vaww.va.gov/nursing/ebprc/index.asp>.

Analytics:

In cooperation with Nursing Informatics, this pillar of our portfolio endeavors to provide valid and reliable data to the field. We are also formulating an ONS dashboard to minimize our need to survey the field for essential information.



CHRISTINE E. KASPER, PhD, RN, FAAN
Program Manager



CHRISTINE ENGSTROM, PhD, CRNP, AOCN,
FAANP
Program Manager



MATTHEW RYSTROM, MHA
Health System Specialist



DANIELLE BROWN
Program Specialist
(Photo unavailable)



PARTNER OFFICE

Office of Nursing Informatics

The Office of Nursing Informatics (ONI) engages and influences people, processes and technology to transform the delivery of health care to Veterans.

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MISSION:

Transform VA healthcare through technologies and data-driven knowledge that supports safe, quality, Veteran-centric care.

VISION:

We will be the nursing knowledge leaders at the intersection of technology and Veteran care.



SHEILA OCHYLSKI, DNP, RN-BC
Chief Nursing Informatics Officer

Through a collaborative process with internal and external stakeholders, the Office of Nursing Informatics will promote solutions that address the business and clinical needs of clinicians with the goal of advancing data driven, evidence-based clinical practice and interdisciplinary patient-care delivery by:

- Engaging the right subject-matter expertise for the integration of current and future systems analysis.
- Advocating for and representing the clinical staff through the various phases of usability, adoption, and problem resolution of Health Information Technology (HIT).
- In collaboration with the field, lead the planning, analysis, designing and implementation of clinical information systems.
- Serving as the primary liaison for Informatics with the Office of Nursing Services (ONS), and other disciplines across the VHA.

Nursing Informatics focus Areas:

- Governance
- Clinical Transformation
- Nursing Analytics

For more information, visit us at:

<https://vaww.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/OHIA/Nursing%20Informatics/default.aspx>.



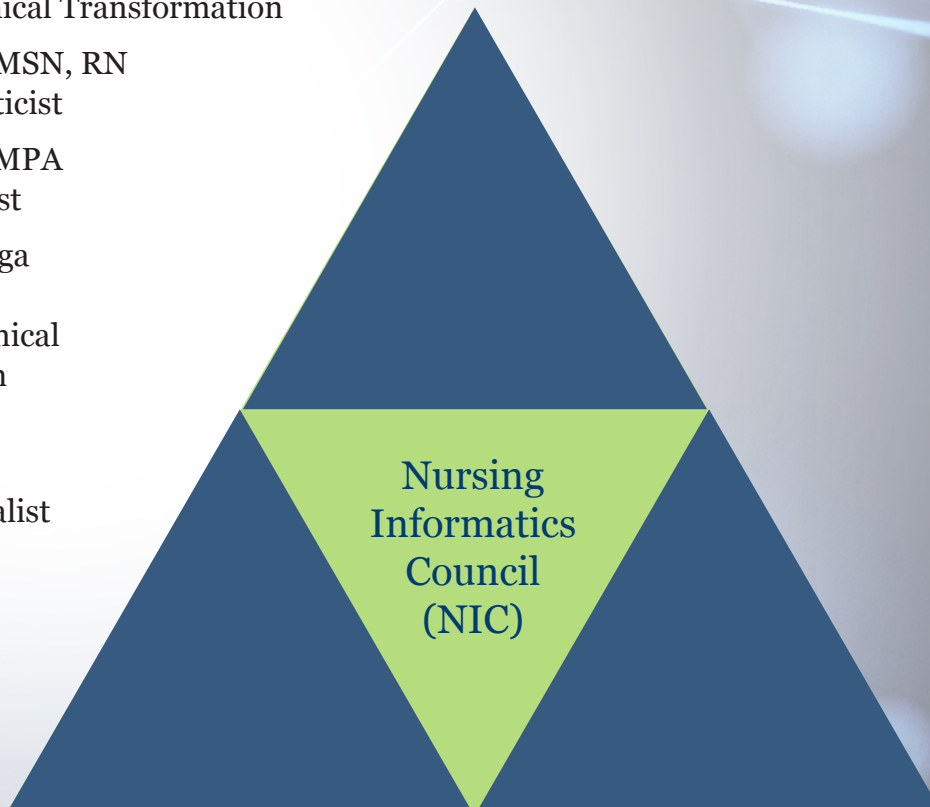
TONI PHILLIPS, MSN, RN-BC
Deputy Chief Nursing Informatics Officer



CLARK CAMPBELL, MSN, RN-BC, CPHIMS, FHIMSS
Management & Program Analyst

Office of Nursing Informatics Staff

- Murielle Beene, DNP, MBA, MPH, MS, RN-BC, PMP, FAAN
Informatics Director
- Barbara Bishop, PMP
Management & Program Analyst
- Avaretta Davis, DNP, MHS, RN
Director of Clinical Transformation
- Andrew Hehr, MSN, RN
Nurse Informaticist
- Alex G. Jones, MPA
Program Analyst
- Dianna R. Ortega
MSN, RN-BC
Manager of Clinical
Transformation
- Tisha Scott,
MBA, MPM
Program Specialist





ICT RAYMOND SEMPROCH, former army combat medic, at the entrance to a combat casualty care clinic in Afghanistan. ICT Semproch works in the Emergency Department (ED) at Louis Stokes Cleveland VAMC.

Intermediate Care Technician

In December of 2012, the VA introduced a new role, the Intermediate Care Technician (ICT). ICTs are former military medics and corpsmen with the ability to effectively use their immense training, skills, and knowledge for Veteran care without additional academic preparation, and a scope of practice that is more advanced than a traditional technician.

• New Field Advisory Committee and infrastructure established to help support VAMCs with initiating and maintaining their RNTTP programs.



ICT SCOTT GARBIN, former army combat medic, drawing blood from a patient in the Emergency Department, John D. Dingell VAMC, Detroit.

43 Intermediate Care Technicians (ICTs) onboard.

3 ICTs earn RN degree.

Collaborated with OPES and the national nursing community to develop recommendations for APRN productivity standards by medical complexity.

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2016 JANUARY

DAY
53

2.22.16



● ONS Legislative Proposals

ONS resubmits three Legislative Proposals to be considered in the FY 2018 government budget cycle.

- i. Amendment of Pay Cap for Registered Nurses.
- ii. Reimbursement of Continuing Professional Education for all full-time Board Certified Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs).
- iii. Nursing Home Reform Act (to allow VA facilities to be exempt from the requirements of the 1987 Nursing Home Reform Act in regard to Nursing Assistants certification).

The first of two Evidence-Based Practice curriculum training workshops occurred, which ensures the facility-based EBP educators/coordinators have the requisite EBP knowledge base and familiarity with the ONS curriculum to provide education on the tenets of EBP.

Central Office Nurse Professional Standards Board (CONPSB) reviewed over 1,000 board packages and launched a lean project to decrease turnaround time for CONPSB packages by ~2 weeks.

ONS developed nursing hours per patient day functional-level guidelines for Spinal Cord Injury/Disease (SCI/D) units across VHA.

Medical and nursing organizations/stakeholders met with OMB regarding FPA proposed rule.

FPA Proposed Rule: Impact Analysis Revisions submitted to OMB.



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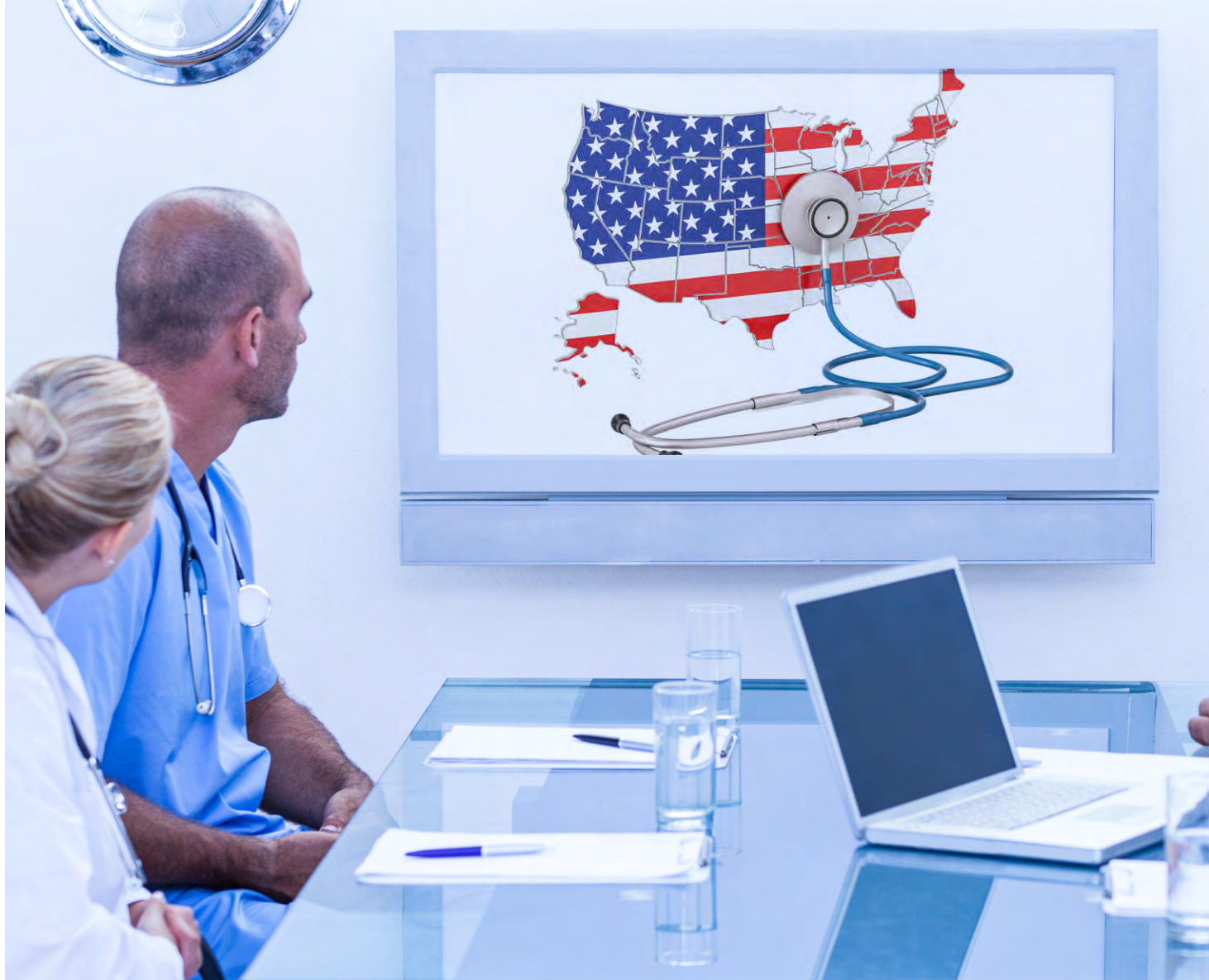
FEBRUARY



VA Press Release for FPA
Proposed Rule drafted by ONS
and Office of Communications.

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MARCH



04.03.16, ONS appoints new Deputy Chief Nursing Officer - **Alan Bernstein**.

National Staffing Methodology Conference held.

FPA Proposed Rule- Impact Analysis completed and submitted to OMB.

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APRIL



DAY
146

05.25.16



- **FPA Proposed Rule Published in the Federal Register**

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
38 CFR Part 17
RIN 2900-AP44

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is proposing to amend its medical regulations to permit full practice authority of all VA advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) when they are acting within the scope of their VA employment. This rulemaking would increase veterans' access to VA health care by expanding the pool of qualified health care professionals who are authorized to provide primary health care and other related health care services to the full extent of their education, training, and certification, without the clinical supervision of physicians.

- VA sends correspondence to Senate and House committees on Veterans Affairs to notify them the proposed rule will be published in the Federal Register for comments.

- Interview with Washington Post regarding FPA Regulation and impact on APRN practice.

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MAY

Evidence-Based Practice consultation site visit at Coatesville and Erie VA Medical Centers to assess the current structure and provide consultation/suggestions for an action plan to strengthen the EBP infrastructure.

The Nurse Executives' Perspectives project was developed to understand the perspectives of Associate Directors of Patient Care Services (ADPCS) in the promotion of EBP. This will further ONS' long term goal to facilitate a system-wide nursing culture that embraces evidence-based practice as a framework for practice that integrates evidence, clinical expertise, and patient preferences.

Phase I rollout of Staffing Methodology in inpatient nursing units across VHA complete. Phase II initiated in Specialty Care areas, such as ED and SCI/D. SM piloted at 10 MHR RTP sites. Rollout of SM in OR complete.

TMS training modules, calculator tools, data resource toolkits developed for the staffing methodology.

Total of 75 ICTs onboarded.

In conjunction with the Office of Primary Care, ONS issued an RFP to expand the Health Advocate, Scribe, and Dragon Medical Network Edition (2.3) project to examine the impact of adding health advocates, scribes, and the Dragon for dictation to Patient Aligned Care Teams. By June 2017, 15 facilities participated. The objectives are to improve patient-centeredness and clinic efficiency and decrease provider and staff burnout.

VA nurse practitioners inducted into the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Fellows:

- Jane Anderson
- Jennifer Ballard-Hernandez
- Kahlil Demonbreun
- Lisa Muirhead

Developed, in collaboration with DoD, education courses to address military culture issues for professionals in Primary Care, Chaplains and issues specific to National Guard and the Reserves.

Interview with Wall Street Journal regarding FPA Regulation.

Interview with Federal Practitioner regarding the VA FPA Regulation.

Nursing Community Press Release in support of VA FPA Regulation hits major media outlets.



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JUNE



Evidence-Based Practice consultation site visit at Lebanon VA Medical Center to assess the current structure and provide consultation/suggestions for an action plan to strengthen the EBP infrastructure.

Created, in collaboration with the Office of Mental Health, a web-based, accredited provider training available 24/7 to providers titled *Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone (OEND) Training*.

Robert Wood Johnson: Charting Nursing's Future Interview for FPA proposed rule and public comment via Federal Register.

223,000 comments received in Federal register on FPA proposed rule
*VA record validated.

NPSB VISN Consultant Workgroup revised Clinical Pathways workbooks, which provide sample language describing performance for various dimensions of Nursing Practice, to assist RNs in writing proficiencies.

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JULY

ONS sponsored Grantsmanship Workshop was given to support novice nurse scientists within VA and provide an effective tool in developing research capacity.

Annual Nursing Work Index: Practice Environment Scale Survey was a module on the All Employee Survey with analysis and reports to follow later in the year.

The Nursing Innovations Center for Evaluation (NICE) and ONS held a summit to strategize on the Doctorally Prepared Nurse survey results. NICE invited 2,403 doctorally prepared nurses to participate in a survey. The goal of the survey is to enhance the understanding of the VA doctoral workforce and their roles.

In collaboration with the Office of Mental Health (OMH), ONS co-authored a memorandum to clarify the role of registered nurses (RNs) in the same day initial screening evaluation that must occur when a Veteran is newly referred for or seeks to initiate mental health care. This memo provides clarifying guidance about the role of RNs in the initial screening evaluation.

Provided presentation on Teaching Visually Impaired Veterans to Test Blood Sugar.

RN Burn Care Competency developed and posted on ONS products page.

Provided Sexuality and Intimacy after Disability webinar.

SimLEARN reviewed two simulation scenarios for the new nurse employee. Anaphylaxis from post-op antibiotic use and blood transfusion post-op.

One ICT started medical school, four ICTs earned Associate Nursing Degrees.

FPA Final Rule drafted addressing comments from the Federal Register.



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AUGUST



- National deployment of Veteran Appointment Request (VAR) App, which allows Veterans to self schedule into Primary Care.
- Developed Heart Failure Nursing Education Toolkit.
- Completed Toxicity Screening Template.
- Provided national collaborative effort with Mental Health and Geriatrics Extended Care (GEC) Program Offices to provide ongoing training initiatives to address Veterans in CLC with dementia-related behaviors.
- Developed VHA Geriatric Mental Health Community of Practice platform for VA staff to connect and share resources with others.
- OR Nurse Manager Orientation Manual developed.
- ED Staffing Methodology (educational component) finalized.
- Developed Women's Health Residency Program for ED Providers and Nurses.

The second Evidence-Based Practice Curriculum training workshop was provided to facility staff to ensure the facility-based EBP educators/coordinators have the requisite EBP knowledge base to educate the tenets of the EBP curriculum.

CONPSB process turnaround time reduced to ~9 business days.

09.06.16:
ONS appoints new Director,
Workforce and Leadership
- **Kathy Barry**.

FPA facility site visit conducted by ONS and Office of Medical Affairs:
09.07.16: Minneapolis, MN.



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SEPTEMBER

♥ These Jonas Scholars were part of 420 Jonas Doctoral Scholars (PhD, DNP and EdD) who recently attended a two and a half day leadership conference in Washington, DC. 115 scholars out of this cohort are specifically addressing veterans healthcare needs in their doctoral work.



10.02.16, ONS appoints new Chief Nursing Officer - **Linda McConnell**.

10.31.16, ONS appoints new Director, Research and Analytics - **Dr. Sheila Cox Sullivan**.

Continuation of MOU with the QUERI and ONS partnered Evaluations centers located in Ann Arbor and Tampa. The centers assist ONS with evaluating various major nursing programs and initiatives.

Workgroup formed to explore all national/ local information related to recruitment/ retention initiatives, to include the RN Transition to Practice Program.

Workgroup established to review/updates RN Qualification Standards and develop clear/ objective standards

Provided national presentation for APRN mapping and coding.

Developed benchmarking tool for APRN productivity.

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OCTOBER



DAY
319

11.14.16



● Jonas Center for Nursing and Veterans Healthcare

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with Jonas Center for Nursing and Veterans Healthcare to work in a mutually beneficial manner to improve healthcare through nursing, advancing scholarship, leadership, and innovation.

Developed national limited use of ANNIE application, allowing nurses to send text messages to Veterans to improve self care.

New FPA Impact Analysis/ submitted to OMB.

The ICT program appoints a National Program Director.

● Communication Plan for FPA implementation developed.

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NOVEMBER

DAY
349

12.14.16



FPA Final Rule Published in the Federal Register

The final rule published in the Federal Register on December 14, 2016, and will become effective on January 14, 2017. This preemptive rule increases access to care and reduces the wait times for VA appointments utilizing the current workforce already in place. In this rulemaking, VA is exercising Federal preemption of State nursing licensure laws to the extent such State laws conflict with the full practice authority granted to VA APRNs while acting within the scope of their VA employment.



Re-designed the new Staffing Methodology SharePoint.

Developed new Staffing Methodology ED FTEE calculator.

Nursing informatics upgraded vital signs package.

FPA implementation call held with Nurse Executives.

APRN FPA Directive 1350 completed & submitted to VAIQ for concurrence.

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DECEMBER



- Developed and disseminated a national Nursing Hours Per Patient Day (NHPPD) survey to provide specific benchmark data to assist unit and facility panels as they consider direct NHPPD being delivered in nursing units across VHA.

- Developed Nursing Hours Per Patient Day functional-level guidelines for Spinal Cord Injury/Disease (SCI/D) units across VHA.

- Number of ICTs reaches 80.

- National call with NPs and CNs regarding FPA implementation.

- In collaboration with OMH, ONS implemented national training on MH RRTTP Staffing Methodology through a series of LYNC conference calls.

- Established ONS Field Advisory Committee for Pressure Injury and Prevention.

- Completed toolbox for case management.

- FPA Internal Stakeholder calls conducted.

- FPA Interprofessional Steering Committee initiated.

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JANUARY

In collaboration with DOD, OMH and EES, ONS produced the TMS training: *Military Culture in Primary Care*

VA TMS Item Number: 31310

TRACE Code: 16.EL.MA.MILCULTPCPA

The purpose of this web course is to provide specific information on the military culture and the screening tools that are available. Tools to assess: the reasons to ask new patients if they have served in the military, their pre-existing attitudes/behaviors/expectations to healthcare, the variations in Veteran presentations, their behaviors that facilitate communication and build trust, and changes to a primary care environment that demonstrate awareness/knowledge of the Veteran population.

ONS has partnered with the OMH and the Office of Geriatrics in the funding, support and training of STAR-VA nurse training consultants within the CLCs. STAR-VA is an interprofessional, behavioral approach for managing challenging behaviors among VHA Community Living Center residents with dementia. The STAR-VA training program is a competency based training program in which both Psychologist and Nurse Training Consultant provide consultation to CLC teams working to learn and implement STAR-VA at their local facility.



FPA external stakeholder meetings held.

FPA Implementation Resource Page launched.

Staffing Methodology pilot in ED implemented.

Piloted the EBC clinical narrative interview guide with nurses.

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FEBRUARY

ONS held the National Nurse Executive Conference in Leesburg Virginia (March 27-29).



EBP FAC Meeting March, 2017:
 Front row (L-R) - Leslie Rowan, Susan Shelton, Lynn Gettrust, Colleen Campbell;
 Middle row - Dennis Sullivan, Deborah Rugs*, Christine Melillo*, Kathleen Parker, Kimberly Barnes, Elizabeth Hill (NRFAC Liaison), Kathleen Rugen, Melissa Taylor, Gail Powell-Cope*;
 Back row - Sheila Sullivan, Christine Locke, Randy Moore, Melissa Hutchinson, Matthew Rystrom (ONS- DC);
 Not pictured:
 Sandra Shaw and Penelope Gorsuch.

* Tampa Evaluation Center



 Tampa Evaluation Team (NICE): Front row (L-R): Christine Melillo, Andrea M. Spehar, Peter Toyinbo;
 Back row: Karen Besterman-Dahan, Deborah Rugs, Linda Cowan, Gail Powell-Cope, Margeaux Chavez, Blake Barrett.

Establishment and kick-off meeting of the interprofessional Evidence-Based Practice Field Advisory Committee to supply a vision for EBP in the VHA.

Provided national case management model presentation at NLB. Successfully engaged Care in the Community, Mental Health and Geriatrics Extended Care (GEC) Program Offices into a national implementation for the case management road map.

Developed APRN Coding Reference Tool and disseminated to field.

Developed Gerontological Nursing Newsletter to reflect annual updates and education within the specialty.

FPA Implementation calls held with the VISNs/VAMCs.

FPA calls held with individual Program Offices and individual facilities.

FPA bylaws template developed.

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MARCH



Updated Diabetes Self-Management National Manual.

Collaborated with NCPS to review past RCAs and current literature and develop lessons learned to eliminate/prevent patients falling off of the OR table during extreme positions or during transfer.

Developed Clinical Resource Guide for new ED Employees.

Development of FPA implementation Resources

Conducted FPA calls held with Program Offices and VISN leadership.

FPA Facility site visits begin: 4.10.17
Phoenix VA Health Care System



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APRIL



In celebration of Nurses Week and the ANA's "Year of the Healthy Nurse" and to provide opportunity to have positive and inspiring conversations about mental health during Mental Health Awareness Month, ONS issued a challenge to all VA (non-management) RNs and LPNs to respond to this important question: "How will you enhance the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health for yourself and for your Veteran patients?" In response, ONS received many wonderful submissions from VA nurses demonstrating innovative and motivational content as to how they will improve their personal health and the health of their Veteran patients.

In collaboration with DOD, OMH and EES, ONS produced the TMS training: *Military Culture in the Reserve and National Guard*
 VA TMS Item Number: 32652 TRACE Code: 16.EL.MA.MILCULTNGDRES.A

The purpose of this web course is to provide knowledge regarding the Reserve Component (RC) Service members as a unique culture within the military culture that warrants awareness and understanding from health care providers. Unique stressors of RC Service members are reviewed to include common deployment-related health and mental health concerns. Empirically supported strategies to best engage RC patients will be reviewed as well as expert opinions from providers with extensive experience in working with this population in a healthcare setting.

Provided webinar *Current Perspectives on Cardiac Implanted Devices*.

Recommended Preventive Services for Women documents were updated to reflect changes to the Breast Cancer Screening guidelines.

Nursing Pain Toolkit updated.

Development of FPA implementation resources by FPA field workgroup.

Conducted FPA calls with field facilities.

FPA facility site visits:
 5/23-5/25: Nashville, TN;
 5/31: Amarillo, TX.



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MAY

Development of standardized curriculum template that provides objectives, resources and estimated time allocation for each key element/sub-element. The template was also reviewed for 508 compliance.

VA nurse practitioners inducted into the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Fellows:

- Maria Colandrea
- Michelle Knowles
- Ursula Kelly

Co-sponsored an RFP with multiple other program offices to add licensed independent providers to call centers to improve patient satisfaction through first call resolution.

Developed education sessions addressing alarm fatigue to VA staff and biomedical professional organizations.

Completed post-procedure cardiac monitoring guideline.

Provided webinar titled *Basic 12 Lead EKG Interpretation*.

Completed inventory of oncology-related education in the Veterans Health Library (VHL) and ensured publication of *Understanding Therapeutic Phlebotomy* health sheet in VHL.

Conducted final phase and roll out of the ONS RRTP Staffing Methodology collaborative between Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs and ONS.

Developed campaign in celebration of National Nurses Week theme Year of the Healthy Nurse to provide opportunity to have positive and inspiring conversations about mental health during Mental Health Awareness Month.

Developed educational webinar and video titled Decision Sim PI Prevention and Management.

Conducted FPA calls with individual Program Offices and individual facilities.

FPA Facility site visits:
6/1-6/2: Oklahoma City, OK;
6/7-6/8: Albuquerque, NM;
6/26: Philadelphia, PA;
6/27-6/28: Biloxi, MS.

NICE begins collecting bedside clinical narratives exemplifying using EBP as a clinical decision making.



ALBUQUERQUE, NM site visit

National Staffing Methodology Conference held.



PHILADELPHIA, PA site visit

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JUNE



Penny Kaye Jensen, DNP, FNP-C, FAAN, FAANP was the recipient of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners' (AANP) 2017 Loretta C. Ford Award. The Loretta C. Ford Award is presented annually to a Nurse Practitioner (NP) who demonstrates participation in health care policy development at an international, national or local level; sustained and specific contribution to clarification of the role and scope of practice of NPs; and/or creative and effective action to turn a challenge to the NP role into an effective opportunity to advanced practice and improved patient outcomes.

In addition, she was awarded the AANP 2017 Towers Pinnacle Award. Dr. Jensen has been a leader in numerous state and national NP associations, holding the office of AANP president from 2010–2012.

From left to right: Kathy Rugen, PhD, FNP-BC, FAAN, FAANP; Penny Kaye Jensen, DNP, FNP-C, FAAN, FAANP; Lenora Lorenzo DNP, APRN, BC FNP, GNP, ADM, CDE, FAANP.

Development of Future VA Nurse Scientists through grant writing skills.

Development of a business case analysis and functional statement for Nurse Researcher position.

Supporting the efficiency of nursing practice through Evidence-Based Practice.

FPA site visit: 7/27: Muskogee, OK.

DAY
196
07.15.17



● Health Professional Scholarships Program

2017 saw the first year the Health Professional Scholarships Program (HPSP) was available to non-Veterans Affairs Academic Partnerships (VANAP) nursing students. The VHA Healthcare Talent Management National Program Office (HTM) provides oversight for HPSP. The scholarships program provides financial assistance to students receiving education or training in a direct or indirect health-care services discipline (title 38 and Hybrid Title 38 occupations). Eligible applicants must be enrolled in, or accepted for enrollment in, an academic program in the United States that prepares graduates to meet the VA qualification standards for employment. ONS collaborated with HTM to select students that will be the FY2018 recipients of the scholarships. Upon completing their educational program and licensure/certification, participants work as permanent, full-time VA employees (with a service obligation) in the occupations for which the scholarship was awarded.



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JULY



▲♥ Photos on the left and top are of the Clinical Practice Program/Field Advisory Committee Clinical Nurse Advisor Face-to-Face Meeting, August 29-30, 2017, Tucson, AZ.

• NCSBN survey of State Boards of Nursing

• Cardiology SharePoint for cardiology products, functional statements, guidelines and discussion boards completed.

• Nursing Pain Toolkit completed

• The Nursing Executive Leadership Board (NELB) Strategic Planning meeting held on August 2nd in Washington, DC.

• Clinical Practice Program Field Advisor Committee (CCP FAC) Clinical Nurse Advisors meeting: 8/29-8/30.

• FPA site visit: 8/31: Prescott, AZ.



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AUGUST



● Nurse Residency Expansion Business Case Analysis

The final draft of the Nurse Residency Expansion Business Case Analysis (BCA) presented to the VHA Chief Academic Affiliations Officer. The BCA is a request for funding to create and sustain the facility infrastructure (faculty, program management and oversight) needed for the expansion of the three VHA nurse residency programs: (1) the ONS RN Transition-To-Practice program (RNTTP), (2) the OAA Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency (PBNR) program and (3) the OAA Nurse Practitioner Residency (NPR) program. The goals for nurse residency expansion are to:

1. Increase nursing recruitment and retention to meet projected nursing workforce needs;
2. Improve the academic standing of VA nurses; and
3. Ensure a pipeline of competent, practice-ready, Veteran-focused RNs and NPs



SEPTEMBER UPDATE:

Of the three legislative proposals submitted back in February, 2017, the **Amendment of Pay Cap for Registered Nurses** proposal is being considered for inclusion in legislation. The legislation would establish a higher maximum amount of basic pay for registered nurses to address the growing recruitment and retention problems. Currently, the maximum rate of basic pay for nurses for any grade may not exceed the maximum rate of basic pay established for positions at level IV of the Executive Service. The legislation would allow for basic pay for registered nurses serving as a nurse executive or a grade for the position of certified registered nurse anesthetist up to level I of the Executive Schedule. This section would allow for basic pay for all other registered nurses to be increased up to level III of the Executive Schedule.

● Using the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Standards for Entry to Practice Nurse Residency Programs, the development of sample curriculum modules for 11 key elements within the standards was coordinated. There are currently 5 completed modules posted on the ONS Transition-to-Practice intranet site; the remaining 6 modules are in various stages of development. The first three RN Transition-to-Practice sample curriculum modules completed, reviewed by peers and posted. Once all modules are completed and published on the intranet, it is expected that the modules will be adapted for publication on the internet. The sample curriculum modules are intended to provide RN Transition-to-Practice Program Directors with a “menu” of learning modalities and resources for each key element and “sub-element”. The use of any or all of the modules is not mandated; it is intended to provide Program Directors options to use at their local facility.

● VHA Under Secretary for Health FPA letter distributed to each State Board of Nursing.

● APRN template for use in states without FPA distributed to the field.

● FPA implementation evaluation (QUERI).

● VISN 22 became the first VISN to implement FPA.



● Wound and skin toolkit completed.

● Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Orientation Guide in pilot testing.

● FPA site visit:
9/14: Columbia, MO.



COLUMBIA, MO site visit

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SEPTEMBER

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2016 Secretary's Awards for Nursing Excellence

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288
10.14.16



2016 Secretary's Awards for Nursing Excellence

Every year VA Secretary Robert McDonald hosted an “Excellence in Nursing” award to recognize the outstanding work of VA staff who play a vital role in providing and supporting nursing practice and care to Veterans.

This year’s awardees are honored for compassionate care, contributions at the national level, improvements in nursing practice through education and training, and support for expanded nursing responsibilities.

**Nurse Assistant:**

Linda Gibson, NA
Illiana VA Health Care System
Danville, Illinois

**Licensed Practical Nurse:**

Arlene Imes, LPN
W.G. Heffner VA Medical Center
Salisbury, NC

**Registered Nurse:**

Gerard Hannibal, RN
Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center, Cleveland, OH

**Registered Nurse
in an Expanded Role:**

Stefanie Coffey, BNP, MVA, FNP-BC, RN-BC
Roseburg VA Medical Center
Roseburg, OR

**Nurse Executive:**

Alan Bernstein, MS, RN
North Texas VA Health Care
Dallas, Texas

**Director:**

Kaye Green, FACHE
W.G. Heffner VA Medical Center
Salisbury, NC

2017 Secretary's Awards for Nursing Excellence

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290
10.17.17



2017 Secretary's Awards for Nursing Excellence

Secretary David Shulkin hosted the “Excellence in Nursing” award to recognize the outstanding work of VA staff who play a vital role in providing and supporting nursing practice and care to Veterans.

This year’s awardees are honored for compassionate care, contributions at the national level, improvements in nursing practice through education and training, and support for expanded nursing responsibilities.



Nurse Assistant:

Francisco Avilez-Archila, NA
Tampa VA Medical Center
Tampa, FL



Licensed Practical Nurse:

Tiffany Bell, LPN
Cincinnati VA Medical Center
Cincinnati, OH



Registered Nurse:

Douglas Wubben, RN,
BSN, CMSRN
William S. Middleton
Memorial Hospital and Clinics
Madison, WI



Registered Nurse in an Expanded Role:

Colleen Walsh-Irwin, DNP,
RN, ANP
Northport VA Medical Center
Northport, NY



Nurse Executive:

Valerie Boytin, MSN, RN
Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center
Wilkes-Barre, PA



Director:

Timothy Liezert, FACHE
Orlando VA Medical Center
Orlando, FL



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration



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January/2018