

## **Northeast Wisconsin Initiatives to Attract, Recruit and Retain Workforce**

### **Agnesian HealthCare: No-Lift Program Proactive Approach to Employee Safety**

During the early months of 2006 the Agnesian HealthCare Environment of Care Committee recommended the implementation of a pilot *No Lift Program*, in response to injury experience associated with patient lifting and transfers.

An interdisciplinary team was formed. We chose our long-term care ministry, the St. Francis Home, as the care environment for the program.

The team visited and researched locations that had successfully implemented programs.

Equipment Vendors were invited to demonstrate equipment. Equipment purchases were subsequently made to ensure that the right piece of equipment was readily available.

Policies, procedures, and training followed. Sessions were held to develop a *Culture of Safety*, so that employees understood that the *no lift* concept would be the cultural expectation. Small group training sessions convened. St. Francis Home was successful in securing a *Department of Workforce Development* grant, which was used to offset training expenses.

With program implementation, St. Francis Home has been able to sustain a positive lost time accident/injury rate. The pilot program is viewed by those involved as a proactive approach to employee safety. Preventable lifting associated injuries are closely examined.

At this time we are determining the best method of developing the successful pilot program system-wide.

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### **Aurora BayCare Medical Center: Youth Apprentice Program**

Aurora BayCare Medical Center in Green Bay participates in two programs that help high school students explore careers in the health industry. The first is a youth apprentice program in which area high school juniors and seniors are selected to become an employee. They experience different areas of the hospital including work in the nursing area, rehabilitation and diagnostics. It's a hands-on program that allows students to learn more about the field before graduation. The second program is a career explorers program. Also for high school students, there are a series of five to seven health-care-related sessions throughout the year. Aurora BayCare providers and staff are the keynote speakers and they share practical information about their areas with the students. In many sessions, there are also hands-on activities such as suturing practice.

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### **Aurora Medical Center in Two Rivers: Career Explorers Program**

Aurora Medical Center in Two Rivers participates in a program that helps to build tomorrow's workforce. The career explorers program allows high school students to explore various jobs in health care. There are a series of presentations that are planned in a course of a year. Providers or employees at the hospital give each of the presentations. They provide practical information about their careers to students and there are hands-on activities students can participate in, such as giving ultrasounds

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### **Bellin Health: Magnet Program Improves Nurse Recruitment, Retention Efforts**

A renewed emphasis on recruitment, retention and training of Bellin Health's registered nurses has been part of the health system's pursuit of Magnet™ status, a national designation illustrating a facility's dedication to providing quality health care service.

Our Clinical Advancement Program, implemented in 2007 as part of our Magnet efforts, recognizes nurses for their continued education, professional growth and development and contributions to their work areas, Bellin Health and the community. The CAP started with 46 participants. It was designed to give RNs increased satisfaction while improving recruitment and retention. The program also was designed to create more opportunities for collaboration with physicians, therapists and other disciplines, promote professionalism among RNs and ultimately, help Bellin Health create more positive patient outcomes.

The CAP uses developmental concepts espoused by renowned nursing expert Patricia Benner. Her globally recognized philosophies provide the foundation for the CAP.

When a nurse achieves a higher CAP clinician level, it triggers additional dollars for the nurse that can be used for education, certification, professional organization membership, etc. The goal is to promote further professional and educational development.

Bellin Health's CAP is one measure instituted to ensure positive results related to the recruitment, retention and training of RNs. Initial studies show many successes with program.

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### **Shawano Medical Center: Nursing, said Donna Shapiro, "gets in your blood."**

That's why after retiring with more than 30 years of experience, Shapiro came back to nursing at Shawano Medical Center (SMC).

Shapiro is a Registered Nurse, working evenings in the SMC Special Care Unit. In this area, patients receive ongoing monitoring and intensive nursing care.

She called her flexible part-time schedule and the hospital's benefit package "very advantageous." But it isn't the schedule that keeps her at SMC. Both co-workers and hospital administration are "kind and understanding" about what she needs.

"They're receptive to problems you bring up," she explained. "You have to understand the limitations of everybody."

There are physical limitations now that she didn't experience as a new nurse. It is more difficult to move patients, but over-bed lifts make it possible to move patients without lifting. "Then there's unscrewing caps," she said. "I discovered that a tourniquet helps a lot so I put one in the storage room and marked it with a magic marker."

But these are minor considerations, Shapiro said. On a day-to-day basis, it is the blending of young and old staff that makes the work enjoyable.

"Younger nurses feel more confident if an older person is working. They know you have experience behind you. I tell them that they bring new ways of doing things, like their computer savvy... It would be too bad if a place only had new grads or seasoned employees. It is really the blending that is beneficial to all," Shapiro said.

Mark Gabavics, Human Resources Director at SMC, agreed. "There is the opportunity for education and training, flexible schedule—but these are benefits across the board. You have to have a workplace that doesn't treat older employees better or worse than anyone else," Gabavics said.

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### **St. Vincent Hospital: Graduate Nurse Program Helps Retain RNs**

To improve retention of its registered nurses, Green Bay's St. Vincent Hospital is helping new nursing graduates transition more smoothly into the profession through a special year-long program. Initially started as part of the Wisconsin Nurse Residency Program, that was made possible by a federal grant from the Health Resources

Services Administration awarded to Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, St. Vincent's Graduate Nurse Program provides positive peer support to improve the orientation and enculturation processes. The program is based on facilitated monthly sessions where new nurses meet to discuss relevant topics and receive continuing education. Subjects range from time management and delegation . . . to review of body systems . . . to patient care responsibilities.

The special sessions -- which begin after new nurses have completed their initial, precepted orientation -- include time for reflection on practice as well as opportunities to grow their critical thinking skills through case studies and discussion. Experienced clinical "coaches" work alongside the nurse residents and support them throughout the program. The coaches are available to discuss situations as they arise on the unit as well as guide the new nurses as they reflect upon their individual practices.

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### **St. Nicholas Hospital: Hospital Strives to Become Clinical Site of Choice**

One of our initiatives was to become the clinical site of choice for local students/schools. We recognized that this not only was a good recruiting tool for us, but also was good for public relations. Some of the accomplishments of the task force include:

- Identified one liaison (HR Rep/Staff Development Specialist) at the facility to serve as a contact for all schools/students. This ensures everything is in place prior to the students starting.
- Developed a St. Nicholas Hospital Student Evaluation form that specifically addresses service excellence at our facility and asks questions pertinent to our hospital's performance improvement goals.
- Provided dedicated lockers for students in the Ground Floor locker rooms.
- Provided a room for large student groups to use for pre- and post-clinical meetings.
- Developed a welcome packet that is sent to all students beginning their clinical experience at our facility which includes a welcome letter, information about our facility, cafeteria and gift shop coupons, and a job application.
- Initiated "thank you" receptions for large clinical groups on their last day at the facility. This includes light refreshments, a thank you poster, and informational packets about our facility.
- Continued to host semi-annual luncheons for instructors from nursing schools that assign students to our facility.
- Currently working toward purchasing a thermometer and pulse oximeter dedicated for student use through the Friends Foundation.

As a result of these Student Task Force initiatives, we have experienced the number of students double at the facility and recruited students from outlying counties and states.

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