

UPMC  
Nursing

# Pathways to Excellence



## Message from the Chief Nursing Officer

In 2006, Stephen Covey wrote a book called *The Speed of Trust*. As we focus this issue of *Pathways to Excellence* on caring, it seems important to talk about trust as the essential bridge that connects us with patients, families, and colleagues. Trust begins with respect. Respect opens the door to understanding and acceptance by suspending judgment. Respect allows us to develop a deeper understanding of the human experience and transcends socioeconomic groups, culture, education, religion, values, and experience. Respect is the foundation of inclusion. If we don't have respect, there is no possibility for trust. And without trust, there is no relationship through which healing and growth can occur. If you reflect on the most joyful, bonding experiences with patients or colleagues, you will remember that they had a solid foundation of trust.

Symptoms of low trust may include turnover, low staff and patient satisfaction, poor nurse-physician relationships, errors, re-work, or politics. A few of the "deadly sins" that impact trust include withholding information, pretending, not investing in self-improvement, disengaging from work, not mending relationships, not listening, and taking credit when it should be shared with others. Each of us can probably remember a time when we slipped and may have fostered low trust.

But there are wonderful ways to build and repair relationships. First, talk straight and create transparency. Second, admit mistakes, right the wrongs, and take accountability. And finally, listen to understand. Respect and trust require action. Every interaction should be an opportunity to care for and about one another.

*Pamela Klauer Triolo*

**Pamela Klauer Triolo, PhD, RN, FAAN**  
UPMC Chief Nursing Officer

## Caring and compassion

{ car-ing (kâr'ing)<sup>1</sup> feeling and exhibiting concern and empathy for others or self  
com-pas-sion (kəm-'lpa-shən)<sup>2</sup> sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it

This edition of *Pathways to Excellence* focuses on two significant characteristics that UPMC nurses possess: caring and compassion.

"Caring involves acts and attitudes of critical thinking, clinical competency, compassion, respect, listening, and acceptance. Caring is critical in helping people maintain health, promote healing, adapt to stressful experiences, and in supporting dignified death."<sup>3</sup>

Nurses are most satisfied when their daily practices align with their personal and professional values and goals and when they know that they are making a positive difference in the lives of their patients, families, and colleagues.

The act of caring moves in concentric circles — from self, to others, to community, to environment, to earth and universe — affecting all life.

<sup>1</sup> WordNet, <http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn>

<sup>2</sup> Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

<sup>3</sup> Abbott Northwestern Department of Nursing, [www.allina.com/abslanw.nsf/page/nurses](http://www.allina.com/abslanw.nsf/page/nurses)

### did you know?

In 2007, 126 UPMC nurses demonstrated their commitment to excellence in patient care and personal career development by earning additional degrees.

A study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, which included 168 Pennsylvania adult nongovernment hospitals, suggested that, "In hospitals with higher proportions of nurses educated at the baccalaureate level or higher, surgical patients experienced lower mortality and failure-to-rescue rates."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aiken, Clarke, Cheung, Sloane, & Silber, 2003, p.1617  
<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/290/12/1617>

### what's inside:

Caring for Patients  
Page 2

Caring for Self  
Page 4

Continuous Learning  
Page 5

### UPMC Nursing Vision

UPMC Nursing will create the best patient experience, nationally and internationally, through the selection, development, retention, and reward of the highest-performing nurses, while creating systems and programs that create consistency and excellence in patient care.

## Profile of caring



**Michal Sawicki, RN, was presented with the 2008 Rising Star Award during UPMC Nurses Week activities. Following is Michal's award nomination, which illustrates his commitment to the profession of nursing.**

Michal Sawicki is an exemplary professional staff nurse and advocate of relationship-based care in nursing. He is a driving force on Unit 8G at UPMC Presbyterian in both quality of patient care and quality of workplace life among staff.

He brings a positive, productive energy to all relationships on the floor, going above and beyond for patients and co-workers alike.

His plan for monthly Heart-to-Heart discussions among staff addresses the need for a co-supportive environment in professional nursing. He is a leader in soliciting positive teamwork and in promoting systems that improve the quality, flow, and efficiency of nursing practice on his unit. His innovative thinking as an advocate of hand hygiene addresses one of our most vital core quality measures.

Michal is a natural leader and mentor for nursing students on his unit, offering insights, explanations, and on-the-job education for the next generation of nurses. He exemplifies an eagerness for learning and sharing of knowledge necessary for the advancement of the nursing profession. He brings those insights to the bedside with the highest degree of commitment to and compassion for his patients, offering expert care and emotional support through kindness and humor.

Michal's natural optimism and good will are in sharp contrast to the struggles of his past in war-torn Poland and his difficult life as an émigré on the move through several countries in flight for freedom. He worked his way from Europe to Canada, where he became an industrial designer, met his wife, and started a family. Living in New York after coming to America, his wife, who worked in lower Manhattan, was shaken by the September 11 disaster. Relocating to Pittsburgh, Michal entered nursing as part of a process of healing.

To the profession of nursing, Michal brings a depth of understanding and experience of hardship and the overcoming of hardship. His work is informed by profoundly human qualities that enhance both the quality of care he brings to patients and the dynamic he brings to the nursing profession. Michal Sawicki is a rising star on Unit 8G, a resource to patients and staff, and a gift to us all.

## Caring for patients

UPMC is committed to building the health care system of the future, where the right patient gets the right care at the right time in the right way, every time. The essence of health care is caring for the patient.

### The nurse-patient relationship

“The nurse-patient relationship is at the heart of professional nursing practice and a fundamental element of relationship-based care, our philosophy of patient care delivery. There is universal agreement among nurses that our relationship with patients and patient families is a sacred, privileged trust. Nurses voice a fierce commitment to the values of caring, advocacy, collaboration, safety, and seeking what is in the best interest of the patients and families they serve, according to Mary Koloroutis, editor of *Relationship-Based Care: A Model for Transforming Practice*.<sup>1</sup>”

Nursing is both an art and a science based on years of theoretical and scientific research. To provide the highest level of patient care, we use evidence-based practice, employ best practices from centers of excellence and professional organizations, and apply the latest technology and innovation.

However, nursing also is based on compassion and sacrifice. The finest nurses think critically and apply evidence-based practices to create the best patient outcomes while simultaneously holding the patient's hand offering reassurance. Spending a few extra minutes with the frightened young woman about to undergo a hysterectomy, or spending more time with the family of a child receiving emergency treatment after a bicycle accident are some of the small, but meaningful, things nurses do that make the greatest impact. These elements of patient care exemplify the caring component of the nursing profession.

### Nursing values

Nursing core values are embedded in the relationships we have with our patients and their families. Dr. Jean Watson's Theory of Human Caring emphasizes that caring is central to nursing practice. It is an interpersonal process that results in the satisfaction of human needs. Major elements of her human caring theory include cherishing, donating love, and caring as the language and structure of professional caring. She notes that caring is universal and timeless at the human level, transcending societies, religions, belief systems, and geographic boundaries. Using Dr. Watson's caring approach inspires nurses to see their role beyond the technology and innovation to the true heart of nursing — caring for patients.

UPMC nurses promote caring as an important component of the profession by sharing stories of caring and compassion. Our stories are symbols of practice that celebrate nursing and the vital role we play.

<sup>1</sup> Koloroutis, M. (2004). *Relationship-Based Care: A Model for Transforming Practice* (p. 117). Minneapolis, Minn.: Creative Health Care Management Inc.

continued >>

Caring for patients, continued

## Nurse vignettes of caring and compassion

### Not just a patient

Submitted by:  
*Heather Herzog, RN, BSN, CCRN*  
*Trauma ICU, Unit 4G*  
*UPMC Presbyterian*

As a newer nurse, I cared for a patient who had undergone a splenectomy with life-threatening complications. While I was not equipped to fully handle her care during the first difficult days, I watched and learned. She was placed in a chemically induced coma, and I was assigned to her care team.

I took the approach that my patient was aware of her surroundings even in her current comatose state. I cared for her as I would wish to be cared for if roles were reversed. Because we were close in age, I talked with her about things of interest to my peers, about television shows she liked to watch, interests we might have shared, and played her favorite music. I brushed her hair and also shaved her legs and underarms — things that would have been important to me.

After three months in ICU, her trach was removed, and her first words were “thank you, Heather.” In the days ahead, she told me that she heard the music I played, enjoyed and appreciated my conversation, and the personal care I provided. She felt like “a real person and not just a patient.” I had cared for her as a person, beyond the routine patient and caregiver relationship.



did you  
*know?*

Last year, residents from western Pennsylvania and beyond came to UPMC for outpatient services more than 4 million times.



### Gaining trust

Submitted by:  
*Cindy Shaffer, RN, BSN, OCN*  
*Inpatient Oncology, Unit 2800*  
*Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC*

I had the privilege of caring for a patient over one-and-a-half years, from her cancer diagnosis until she passed away.

Early in our relationship, she and her family were overwhelmed with the diagnosis, had questions about her treatment, and struggled trusting our team with the care of their loved one. During a treatment, I noticed that my patient was particularly upset and nervous. I asked if I could sing her a song to brighten her mood. She consented. I chose “Delta Dawn,” which evoked a smile from ear-to-ear. From that moment on, an immediate bond was formed, not only with my patient, but also with her family.

Another time, when she was particularly ill, a medical treatment was needed. While I was not her assigned nurse that day, her family asked if I might be able to perform the treatment accompanied by “our” song. While the request was somewhat unusual, I willingly agreed.

Days later, the patient passed away. I visited the funeral home to pay my respects and offer condolences to her family. Her daughter greeted me by singing “Delta Dawn.” She expressed thanks to me from her family for “always making her mom and family feel safe during the hardest days of their lives.”

## Caring for self

As nurses, we are devoted to the health and well-being of others. While this deep sense of commitment to our patients is a part of who we are, it also is essential to learn to care for ourselves.

Often we are more aware of our weaknesses than our strengths and focus on our liabilities instead of our assets. Instead, a balance of both, along with a desire to learn, grow, and improve, is what is needed in our lives. If we first care for and respect ourselves, we are better equipped to care for others with an equal level of respect and compassion.

“Caring for yourself is about achieving what is most important to you. It is about looking back at your life and liking what you see. Liking how you handled your family and your career. Liking the reputation you gained with people you worked with and for, how you treated your friends and yourself. Liking how you contributed to your community. It is about liking the differences you made. With your time and money. With your health and spiritual quest. With your talents and professional skills,” said Mark Samuel and Sophie Chiche, authors of *The Power of*

*Personal Accountability: Achieve What Matters to You.*<sup>1</sup>

To effectively care for ourselves, we need to obtain the skills to manage stress, articulate personal needs and values, and balance time and commitment demands. Additionally, it is essential to be comfortable identifying boundaries on our time and energy, so that we can remain focused on achieving what is important to us.

### Healthy Workforce initiative

UPMC Nursing has developed a Healthy Workforce initiative through the nursing professional practice shared governance structure. The activities of this initiative are the focus of the Professional Practice Council and Unit Director Council. The mission of this initiative is to encourage UPMC nurses to become part of a highly engaged workforce that is physically, emotionally, and spiritually at peak performance at every age in their career lifetime.

The next edition of *Pathways to Excellence* will offer an in-depth look at the Healthy Workforce initiative at UPMC. The issue will feature information about healthy lifestyle opportunities to enhance your health, career, finances, and environment.

<sup>1</sup> Samuel, M., & Chiche, S. (2004). *The Power of Personal Accountability: Achieve What Matters To You.* (p. xv). Xephor Press.

**what's new** EAP

UPMC's Employee and Family Assistance Program can help you learn to balance your life and work. For more information about this confidential program, visit the EAP section of Infonet (<http://eap.infonet.upmc.com>).



## Caring for colleagues and community

There are many ways to care for our colleagues and our UPMC community. Caring occurs at the department level when we show compassion for a colleague who recently lost a loved one. Caring also occurs on a broader level, such as when UPMC hospitals hold collection drives to support the needy members of our community.

While we can participate in a variety of giving opportunities to care for our communities within or beyond UPMC, there are many other ways to support our colleagues.

### Guiding the next generation

Generativity is a concern for others and a need to nurture and guide the next generation.<sup>1</sup> By developing a culture of generativity, we are able to create continuity and grant independence to new and future nurses. Nurses do this every day when mentoring a colleague or serving as a preceptor to a student. Grand rounds and other presentations also are examples of how we can share our nursing expertise with colleagues.

*continued >>*

#### did you know?

The 2008 UPMC Scouting for Food Campaign was a shining example of UPMC employees giving back to our community. Through food and monetary contributions, the campaign resulted in the collection of the equivalent of 520,000 meals. For each dollar donated, the food banks are able to purchase \$15 in food products. These donations will be distributed to local food banks in the communities UPMC serves. Because of your efforts, many people throughout our area will receive the help they desperately need.



*Caring for colleagues and community, continued*

### Stopping horizontal violence

Have you witnessed colleagues gossiping, blaming, or making fun of another co-worker? Have you taken part in such actions? One of the most powerful ways for us to care for ourselves and our colleagues is to avoid these negative behaviors, and to help others see their detrimental effects. These behaviors, which are known as horizontal violence, create anxiety, stifle learning, and create a dysfunctional work environment. National research indicates that horizontal violence impacted 60 percent of new nursing graduates who chose to leave their first position within six months.<sup>2</sup>

Let's work together to stop this type of psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually damaging behavior by doing our part. Don't participate, and take on the challenge to point it out to others.

### Green activities

Caring for our larger community is represented in many ways from "green" workplace and community activities to charitable contributions.

"At UPMC, we strive to enhance the quality of life for our patients and the communities in which we live and work," says Allison Robinson, PhD, director, UPMC Environmental Initiatives.

Watch future issues of *Pathways to Excellence* for information about what can be done at work and at home to care for our colleagues and our world.

<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster Online

<sup>2</sup> Schaffner et al 2005

*what's*  
new

## Performance evaluation update

As UPMC Nursing continues the journey to create and sustain a culture of excellence, we value the commitment to enhancing our community through service. Many UPMC nurses participate in community activities locally, nationally, and internationally, ranging from Girls Scouts of the USA to service on community boards and commissions. Starting July 1, 2008, job descriptions and performance evaluations will include community participation for all levels of nursing up to and including chief nursing officers.

## Continuous learning

One example of how UPMC nurses demonstrate their commitment to excellence in patient care is through continuous learning. The books below are recommended reading for nurses.

### *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything*

By Stephen M.R. Covey with Rebecca R. Merrill  
Published 2006 by The Free Press

### *Encouraging the Heart: A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others*

By James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner  
Published 2003 by John Wiley & Sons Inc.

### *The Power of Personal Accountability: Achieve What Matters to You*

By Mark Samuel and Sophie Chiche  
Published 2004 by Xephor Press

### *Spirituality in Patient Care: Why, How, When, and What*

By Harold G. Koenig, MD  
Published 2007 by Templeton Foundation Press

### *Joy at Work: A Revolutionary Approach to Fun on the Job*

By Dennis W. Bakke  
Published 2006 by PVG

### *Relationship-Based Care: A Model for Transforming Practice*

Mary Koloroutis, Editor  
Published 2004 by Springer Publishing Company Inc.

### *Caring Science as Sacred Science*

By Jean Watson  
Published 2004 by F.A. Davis

### *Nursing: The Philosophy and Science of Caring (Revised Edition)*

By Jean Watson  
Published 2008 by University Press of Colorado

## Editorial Advisory Board

**Editor and Chief Nursing Officer**  
Pamela Klauer Triolo, PhD, RN, FAAN

**Designer**  
Jennifer Lash

**Editor**  
Kim Hester

**Have a story idea?**  
Contact Kim Hester at 412-647-4863  
or hesterkr@upmc.edu.

**Contributors**  
Kristin Beaver  
Lorraine Brock, RN, MSN  
Yasmin Kazzaz, MHA  
Alice Serenyi, RN, BSN  
Renee Thompson, RN, MSN

# UPMC

UPMC is an equal opportunity employer. Policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status. Further, UPMC will continue to support and promote equal employment opportunity, human dignity, and racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in UPMC programs and activities. This commitment is made by UPMC in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.