

Professional Staff Nurses Association

at Akron General Medical Center

the Pulse

August, 2006

Nursing.....the power behind the trust!

Where can you find the best patient care?
Just remember, Magnet means Excellence!

By Ann Kaser

As of July, 2006, 202 healthcare organizations have been designated as outstanding centers of NURSING excellence. The PSNA/ONA believes that the professional nursing staff at AGMC has earned Magnet status and have pledged to join the nursing administration in completing the application for this honor. We believe that the nurses have proven their dedication to the highest quality patient care, promoted a "culture of safety" for patients and staff and developed a collaborative improvement in the overall image of nursing.

Once we are rewarded Magnet designation, our goals will be to further nursing autonomy, enhance decision-making skills, improve physician/staff relationships, recruit top new grads and retain our veteran staff nurses. The value placed on experience cannot be over-appreciated, as so much of the training is not learned from study alone--but from the guidance of those who have "been in the trenches."

The Magnet Recognition Program promotes excellence in nursing by citing specific "Forces of Magnetism". There are 14 forces, but basically it all comes down to Leadership, Quality, practice and Diversity. We have committed our care to those forces. Our culture at AGMC is ever evolving and growing toward excellence. We provide opportunities to learn new techniques, based on evidence-based practice, we are constantly working toward improvements in quality care for our patients and in doing so, move to a higher level of health care. In fact, the U.S News and World Report" "100 Best Hospital" looks at NURSING as one of its determining factors.. Therefore, it is about time that the nursing staff at AGMC is awarded for our contributions.

We are all in this together. We know that we are ready for the challenge and certainly realize as well that we have work to do! Yet that shows just how committed we are to obtaining Magnet status and maintaining our pursuit of excellence in all areas of our practice. Although the standards are high and the evaluation process is lengthy, we are ready! Bring it on!!

Barb's Blurbs

*A collection of fine points and little known facts
by Barb Probert*

- ü **Elder Issues:** I'm one of the folks who regularly check the PSNA phone line, and as a card-carrying (AARP) member of the aging workforce, I have found it difficult to understand the voice mail messages. Please be nice to the elderly, and.... Speak slowly, clearly and repeat your name and number. Thanks!
- ü **Oldies but goodies:** Remember, you must work 1000 hours a year to have that year count towards your retirement pay. So if you have 18 years service toward retirement and only work 999 hours this year, you still have only 18 years service toward retirement.
- ü **Oh, that pesky contract:** Sometimes we hear "your contract says", or "we have to do such-and-such because of your contract". Please feel free to remind the manager that it's their contract as much as ours. After all (and they often forget this) they signed it too. It's *our* contract. If they don't like some contract provision, they can take it up with the management

representatives who helped negotiate it.

- ii **Q&A:** Got questions about the contract or how it affects you? Give me a call at the PSNA office 330-374-1935, and if you speak slowly and clearly I'll get back to you with an answer.
- ii **Stop, drop, and call:** If management wants to talk to you about some incident, and you feel it could potentially include disciplinary action, remember: **Stop** what you are doing. **Drop** the conversation politely, by telling the manager that you need to **call** a PSNA grievance rep. You do not have to continue the interaction until you have spoken to a rep. This is not only your right (it's the law), but it's how it's done .

Welcome to our New Members!

We are so happy to see all the wonderful new faces at AGMC. Those of us who have been doing our best to cope with short staff issues are especially glad to see you. Almost all the newly hired RN's are new grads, so we send our congratulations on your graduation, and on passing NCLEX!!

Thank you, Patty

You may have noticed that this newsletter has a new name, and for that we can thank Patty Marmaduke. What a terrific idea! She will receive a gift certificate to Outback Restaurant. Thanks to all those who submitted suggestions!

HELP!

Contract negotiations will begin next spring, and the negotiation team is already

preparing for it. **Your negotiation team speaks for you.** In order to prepare, we need opinions from all of our members. Please fill out the opinion questionnaire [here](#).

Introducing.....

Some of the folks who do the work of PSNA. This month, our co-chairs Ann and Mark.

Mark Whitehurst has been with AGMC for 14 years. His nursing experience includes 4100, ICU and Special Care Nursery.

Mark's duties with PSNA have included the 2004 Negotiating Committee, the Staffing Advisory Committee, Grievance committee, and Labor-Management committees.

Mark lives in Tallmadge, and he and his wife Julie have 2 sons and 1 daughter.

Ann Kaser began her career at AGMC 24 years ago, and her practice has included Psych, Peri-Natal, L&D, and OR. She is currently working in the Cancer Treatment Center. Ann has contributed countless hours to working for PSNA, and this is the second time she has served as co-chair.

Ann has been married for 40 years to husband John, and has 2 grown children and 2 grandchildren.

2006 Fall Sizzler

The Ohio Nurses Foundation presents a conference designed to provide information on the various ways to strengthen the impact nurses have in the healthcare field and collective bargaining. Specific topics to be addressed include FMLA and elections of local unit officers. 3.4 contact hours will be awarded. Registration will be required by September 1. If interested please contact PSNA at 330-374-1935.



mail@psnaatagmc.org

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