**EXCELLENCE in Nursing Administration**

**Caring leadership: essential during turbulence**

by Pamela Triolo, Yasmin Kazaz and Gwen Sherwood

Health care today is fraught with downsizings, re-engineering, increased management span of control, ambiguity, changing delivery models, mergers, acquisitions and layoffs. The work of today’s nurse leader is not merely the analytical structuring of the deal, mathematical calculations to achieve the budget or restructuring of the new organizational chart. The most powerful and essential work of the leader is integrating the intellect, heart and spirit to support the people affected by the changes to achieve new levels of performance in a healthy work environment. This is caring leadership.

Caring leadership is strongly correlated with performance outcomes. Participative management embraces the potential of people and the unique talents they bring to an organization. Healthy relationships promote effective interaction and understanding between individuals. An effective organization locates a professional practice framework, such as relationship-centered care, patient-focused care or transformational care, on the values that support relationships among the patient/family and the health care team. Organizations need to continuously build and rebuild relationships, especially during turbulent times.

At The Methodist Hospital, an 870-bed institution that is one of 40 in the Texas Medical Staff (nursingsociety.org)

**Compliance in nursing**

by Janet Haggett Davis and Judy A. Coy

Annual spending on health care in the United States totals more than $1 trillion, with as much as 30 percent, or $44 billion, lost to fraud, abuse and waste. The majority of nursing education programs do not include content on health care economics, so nurses may be unaware of how their services are accounted for in patient bills, putting them at risk for committing health care compliance violations. In May 1995, President Clinton announced Operation Restore Trust, a new partnership between federal and state agencies to investigate and eliminate Medicare and Medicaid fraud, abuse and waste. Other industries doing business with the federal government have had programs for the prevention of fraud, abuse and waste of federal funds for some time. Since Operation Restore Trust, the combined resources of the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, the Healthcare Financing Administration, the Administration on Aging and the Department of Justice have partnered to detect and report violations.

Patient Choice
What types of compliance violations might involve nurses? The federal Patient Right to Know requirement states patients should have choice in selecting a nursing home. The hospital discharge planner nurse who does referring to nursing homes must provide the patient with all available options. The nurse must ensure that financial arrangements between the nursing home and hospital are disclosed to the patient. Documentation should exist that demonstrates the patient was informed.

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Earn CEUs through online case studies

An innovative resource for providing a top quality, peer-reviewed continuing education model to your nursing staff and employees is available through Sigma Theta Tau International's Online Case Studies for Nursing.

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There are even opportunities to retake courses if a user isn't satisfied with their original score. As an administrator you can participate by taking an online course in a relevant nursing practice topic, writing case studies or serving as a peer reviewer for the program.

"Nurses by nature are lifelong learners and this program helps to support them in their career and personal goals," says Patricia E. Thompson, RN, EdD, president of Sigma Theta Tau. "Because nurses have busy lives with a variety of professional demands, it's exciting to offer a continuing education opportunity that can be completed at their convenience and from the privacy of their own homes."

Registered nurses at any professional level or job responsibility who take the courses will gain point-of-care knowledge to make informed decisions about health including problem assessment, needs analysis, application of interventions and planning, managing client/community health programs and evaluations.

The program includes content in that it's interactive, offers participation in chat room forums, and links to additional nursing resources for users to access in real time. Currently, neither course of the program exists.

Nurses worldwide may read case studies, answer examination questions, and contact the experts, authors and colleagues through the virtual community chat rooms. Those seeking contact hours will pay a nominal fee to service. Following the launch of the program this summer, new case studies and topics will continually be added to the site.

Those who wish to author or review case studies also have an opportunity for participation. Submissions are being sought from members for case studies in more than 20 topics that will be published online.

A template is available for writing studies, which should take about three hours to prepare. There is also a need for members to serve as peer review panels in their areas of expertise and provide evaluations of submitted case studies and feedback to the authors.

Authors and reviewers are needed in the following areas:

- End of life care
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- Forensic nursing
- Pain management – Non pharmacological interventions
- Pain management – Pharmacological update
- Nurse-practice nurse's role in case management
- Infectious diseases update
- Support nursing
- Organ transplantation issues
- Pediatric update
- Geriatric care update
- Genetics
- Delegation and clinical decision making

For more information or to receive an application to be an author or reviewer, please contact Susan Wheeler, RN, toll free at 1.888.614.7175 or e-mail onlinece@stti.iupui.edu.
Career profiles in nursing administration

Name: Carol Reinick, RN, PhD, CCRN
Title: Chief Nurse, U.S. Army Medical
Employer: U.S. Army Medical Command
Years in Current Position: 28

Three favorite aspects of job:
- Dealing with complex issues
- Working with people from all disciplines
- Learning every day

Three challenging aspects of job:
- Fast pace of change
- Limited resources
- Balancing time

Job description:
Developing resource allocation and practice in army hospitals and schools in the United States, Japan and Europe.

Education:
- BSN, 1972, Whitworth College, Nursing
- MAEd, 1976, Pepperdine University, Hawaii campus, Public Education
- MSN, 1982, University of Texas Health Sciences Center, Med Surg Nursing
- PhD, 1990, University of Maryland at Baltimore, Nursing Administration

Caring leadership

Center, caring leadership is modeled in formal and informal ways. The Nursing Executive Council developed a set of leadership expectations incorporating many aspects of caring leaders for all formal management. Management selection is based on building a culture of caring leadership. Nurse researchers at Methodist are studying the behaviors of a caring nurse. The assemblies combine building a culture of caring leadership. Nurse researchers at Methodist and executives partner in day-long development days that provide copies of her overhead materials to managers to reinforce the messages to staff.

Leaders as mentors
A leader should become a mentor to individuals while working toward developing the quality of relationships. Methodist leadership noted that when staff left the organization, 95 percent departed in the first two years of employment. This hospital environment is tertiary, providing care to patients from 80 countries, and is fast-paced. The entire orientation program was revamped to support the Benner Novice to Expert model, pairing each staff member with a specially educated nurse mentor who serves as their career partner. Staff nurse leadership development programs are held on a regular basis, a letter at home from the chief nurse executive, the leader should first be highly visible and use diverse and frequent forms of communication, constantly repeating the message, especially during times of crisis. Other communication suggestions include:

- Communicate the "why" behind the "what" of any change.
- Match the communication strategy to the intensity of the message.

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Best advice:
"Let your reach exceed your grasp!"

How Sigma Theta Tau has shaped her career:
"Sigma Theta Tau's publications in support of scholarly activity were always available to me at every assignment, worldwide, throughout my career as a military nurse. The Journal of Nursing Scholarship consistently brought thoughtful provocative articles about the health of the world's people. Reflections on Nursing Leadership kept me up-to-date on current substantive areas for nursing doctoral dissertations that allowed networking and information exchange with other scholars."

"Also, the diversity of Sigma Theta Tau membership brings scholars together from academia, practice, research, and community settings—a defining characteristic advancing the nursing profession as a critical element of worldwide health care."

Carol Reinick is one member whose career is profiled on our new Web site, Career Profiles in Nursing, at nursingsociety.org/career. This site offers society members, students and others interested in a nursing career insight into the many career opportunities—administration, clinical practice, pediatric nursing, research, education and more. It links directly with each person and leads to the universities from which they graduated. Visit the site today to ask these nurses questions through e-mail and explore the world of nursing.

Sigma Theta Tau International constitutes a professional honor society for nurses. Such principle-centered modeling, mentoring and teaching become ever more vital during times of mergers, acquisitions and downsizing. Employers must go beyond monetary incentives to attract and retain the best of the talent pool. Workers today are looking for more "soothing" workplaces where individuals are truly using their creativity, energy and passion in their work.

Modeling caring leadership
"Example" has been described as the best teacher. How do leaders model and express caring leadership? In contemporary health care, there are two primary vehicles for modeling caring leadership. One of them is communication. In times of rapid change, staff members look to leaders to guide them into the future. During transitions people also decide whether or not they want to follow. Frequent, clear communication, both verbal and written, is the first strategy to model caring leadership. The leader should first be highly visible and use diverse and frequent forms of communication, constantly repeating the message, especially during times of crisis. Other communication suggestions include:

- Communicate the "why" behind the "what" of any change.
- Match the communication strategy to the intensity of the message.

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Society Key Pins are official jewelry items of Sigma Theta Tau International. Wearing a pin identifies you as a proud member of the society, a global network of nurses.

Pamela Triolo, RN, CNM, PhD, FAAN, is senior vice president and chief nursing executive, The Methodist Hospital, Houston, Texas. Her colleagues at Methodist who co-authored this article are Yasmin Kacaz, MHA, director, organizational learning and development, and Gwen Sherwood, RN, PhD, director of research and practice development.

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The celebration of Nurses Week, beginning each year on Florence Nightingale’s birthday, is a time for reflecting on the rich sense of community that draws us into the profession and sustains us as we move from novices to experts in the practice of nursing. When nursing colleagues meet, there is an implicit understanding that we are drawn together in a common bond of service to others. Nurses Week events provide us with opportunities to make explicit how the community of nursing improves the health of the world’s people. As Sigma Theta Tau International members are living out this legacy, May 6 - 12 is an opportune time to inform the broader community of the public good performed by nurses in a variety of roles. From its earliest beginnings, nursing has been concerned with the human condition. In addition to caring for the sick, nurses assumed the social dimension of addressing problems associated with conditions that affect the health and welfare of society. Concern for overall health has linked nursing closely with social efforts of communities to provide practical and effective means to preserve health. As a result, nurses are trusted by the public to know how to care for persons who experience suffering and distress, and they are expected to partner with others to promote health and prevent disease under varying and complex conditions. The public trust is rooted in a distinguished tradition.

The work of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, provides testimony to nursing’s mission of service to humanity over a lifetime. As perhaps the greatest war nurse in history, she overcame obstacles to make significant contributions to the military health care system and hospital reform. She pioneered the use of social statistics and their graphical representation. She masterfully consulted with others to persuade governmental leaders to support large-scale reforms in public health practices. Using newly developed technology, she dramatically illustrated how death rates decreased when the spread of infection across populations was controlled through the broader community.

The Nightingale vision of service to community was validated recently by society members who guided the development of its newly crafted organizational vision. Our aim is “to create a global community of nurses who lead in using scholarship, knowledge and technology to improve the health of the world’s people.” As we collaborate with individuals and groups in the broader community to carry out this mandate, members are urged to tell their inspiring stories. As full partners, the public deserves to know of nursing’s contributions to society and to engage in dialogues about the ways in which the work of nursing might be supported now and in the future. Nurses Week provides the entree for nurturing relationships among nursing colleagues and our local communities.

By any measure, health care fraud is an enormous and severe drain on the U.S. health care system. Compliance violations weaken the public’s trust in health care providers. As a profession, nursing should not tolerate non-compliant practices. Our hope is that RNSINC will provide nurses with the education, resources and support essential for leadership roles in the field.

Author’s Note: This article is not intended to be legal advice. You should contact counsel for legal questions.

Janet Haggerty Davis, RN, BSN, MBA, PhD, is a faculty member at Widener University and principal, Advanced Practice Associates, Chicago, Ill. Jody Cop, RN, BS, MGS, is director, coding and compliance for physician practices, Advocate Health Care, Oak Brook, Ill.

Sigma Theta Tau International would like to know if you change your mailing address, telephone number, fax number or e-mail address at home or work. You may update your information by replying online at nursingsociety.org, calling 1.888.634.7575 (U.S. and Canada toll free) or +800.634.7575.1 (International) or e-mailing memserv@stti.iupui.edu.

Please include Sigma Theta Tau in your will - a bequest today benefits nurses tomorrow.