



BEYOND BEDSIDE NURSING



Sandy S. Weiss, MBA, RN, LHRM, CPHQ, CPPS

Nursing is a career path that many misunderstand. While preparing to embark on this nursing journey, I recall many friends could not envision me being a nurse. What did this mean? I love people, I want to better the community, and I want to give back. How could one not see me as a

nurse? In that moment, I realized that their image of nursing differed from mine.

My mother was my inspiration; she worked in home health care marketing in my formative years. My vision of a nurse was calling on physicians and other referral sources to ensure patients had the care they needed upon discharge. That image of what a nurse could do further evolved when we started a family business in 2009. My undergraduate studies focused on Psychology, and my plan was to attend law school. However, after helping with the family business, my eyes were opened. At that point I realized, nurses could do anything!

Testing the waters, I started as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). I quickly moved on to an Associated of Science in Nursing (ASN) program and obtained my license as a Registered Nurse (RN). Shortly after passing boards, I was recruited to work in marketing for an acute inpatient rehabilitation hospital. About a year later, I was recruited to do a similar job for a much larger hospital system. The role within the acute care setting opened my eyes to administrative roles available to nurses. Upon

completion of a Masters of Business Administration in Healthcare Management (MBA-HCM), my career shifted into the realm of quality, risk and safety. Currently, I work as a project manager for a quality measurement developer.

There are over 3.3 million active Registered Nurses in the United States and over 238,000 in the state of Florida (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2017). Demand for RNs is expected to grow 15% from 2016-2026 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). An aging population, baby boomer nurses retiring, and an increase in prevalence of certain chronic diseases contribute to the need of RNs.

Clearly, not all of these nurses work in the hospital setting, which is frequently envisioned when pondering the profession. As of May 2016, only about 30% of nurses worked in general medical surgical hospitals (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). From my own observations, most nurses do start out in the acute care setting, but can move around after a year or two of practice. Insurance companies hire nurses to help monitor their patients' care, and also assist in the authorization process to move through the care continuum. Case Managers help assist patients and their families through their hospitalization, and work with insurance companies to monitor the patients' care. They also function as discharge planners to help ensure patients understand their needs upon discharge. Nurses are needed throughout various industries in sales and marketing. Having the ability to articulate a product to physicians and other decision makers to inform and educate them regarding a device or medication is a needed skill. Nurses are frequently sought for medical or scientific writer positions in public and private sectors. Academia is another option for

nurses. Teaching and research are important fields to educate the next generation of nurses. Nurses can also be legal nurse consultants, risk managers, or patient safety directors. Many of these nurses also attend law school! Nurses can start and run their own companies, from small consulting practices to home health care companies. Business and nursing degree combinations are ideal for running operations in the acute and ambulatory care setting. The last hospital I worked for even had an RN as the Chief Executive Officer!

Next time you talk to someone about nursing and they have trouble seeing past working as a bedside nurse in the acute care setting, please remind them that the career possibilities are truly endless!

Sandy S. Weiss is an inductee into the 2017 Florida Nurses Leadership Academy (FNLA). FNLA is a partnership program of the Florida Nurses Association and the Florida Nurses Foundation with the purpose of developing future nursing leaders. The goal is to provide tools, education and opportunities to registered nurses to assist them in becoming active members and skillful leaders in the Florida Nurses Association.

References

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Nurse-Family Partnership Start First-Time Moms on a Lifetime of Success



Alain Glen, BSN

In our over-connected world, we hear endless debate about affordable healthcare and the politics surrounding it. As nurses, we see the challenges through a different lens, through the eyes of our clients. We never tire of exploring ways to ensure better outcomes for them, find ways to work more efficiently and invest our talents wisely to meet their increasing needs.

Fortunately, a national program called Nurse-Family Partnership that is currently available in Florida is changing the way we serve and support expectant moms. First-time moms in poverty who participate in the program get a personal nurse assigned to them, at no cost —by their side—through every challenging and exciting moment of pregnancy and their baby's first two years of life.

Imagine how that positively impacts the odds for babies born into poverty. This long-term relationship with a young mom earns her trust to give her support she can count on to help her be the best mom she can be. Nurses see a young woman grow as a mother and accomplish her goals.

Florida has the third largest number of Medicaid births nationwide. The typical mom that is enrolled in NFP in Florida is 20-years-old, unmarried (89 percent) and receives Medicaid (65 percent). Since 2008, Nurse-Family Partnership has served over 3,100 families in poverty in 16 Florida counties.

Data bears out the program's potential for economic success. According to Dr. Ted Miller of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, using the average cost of care for a family in Florida at \$8,961, he predicts that by a child's 18th birthday:

- State and federal cost savings will average \$22,126 per family; and
- Broader societal savings (like potential gains in work, wages and quality of life) along with

resource cost savings (out-of-pocket payments including savings on medical care, child welfare, special education and criminal justice) boosting the savings to \$58,721 per family.

This investment in a child's early life yields continued savings long after the program ends at age 2.

Unlike other programs that may look good on paper or sound good politically, Nurse-Family Partnership cultivates a true bond between mom and nurse. The nurse doesn't come in with his or her own agenda, rather the nurse is there for the mom at critical decision points. Our nurses get to know each mom intimately—what both motivates her and inhibits her progress. It's a shared agenda of "yes, you can," and "yes, you will!"

The therapeutic trust cultivated with the mom and her Nurse-Family Partnership nurse builds her confidence to relate what's happening with other professionals. Practitioners will see this as a continuum of care that builds self-efficacy for young moms to communicate and advocate more confidently with caregivers and family members.

To learn more or share this information with other providers call or text (954) 900-9957 or visit www.nursefamilypartnership.org.

Alain Glen, BSN is the Nurse Consultant Southeast Region of Nurse-Family Partnership and a member of the Florida Nurses Association.

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