

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

Join us in celebrating our nurses!

Why demand remains high

Mental health resources

Meet 13 amazing nurses

How is the profession changing?





Nurses at Shriners Children's Spokane work with a patient.

Courtesy Shriners Children's Spokane

Local medical providers turn obstacles into opportunities for better growth

Greater effort toward actual support, not just 'heroic' words

BY CASSY BENEFIELD
Marketing Correspondent

COVID-19 was a challenge for area health care professionals, but it wasn't the only factor that made things difficult at times for Spokane-area nurses in the last few years.

Maintaining workplace safety, staying abreast of technological advances, especially in electronic record keeping, paying attention to self-care and working in strained and short-staffed environments are some of the areas nurses and their leadership teams are trying to navigate well.

Nursing leaders at Shriners Children's Hospital and MultiCare Health Systems admit that being short-staffed has been a difficulty that has only been exacerbated by the pandemic. Each system has taken different approaches to fill in the gaps.

"We are doing everything we can to improve the pipeline of nurses," said June Altaras, MultiCare's senior vice president and chief quality, safety and nursing officer. "In fact, over the next two years, MultiCare will double the number of new graduate nurses we hire."

In addition, Altaras said management is offering bonuses to new nurses and providing student loan forgiveness and annual tuition reimbursements "to foster a culture of career growth without financial barriers."

Recently, MultiCare also started a new nurse tech program, a paid position, to provide nursing students real-life practice while they are still in training.

Shriners' Inpatient Nurse Manager Debbie Cameron says its human resources department spent the last four to five months aggressively recruiting and on-boarding new staff to fill in the shortages that COVID intensified. One way managers did that was to extend job openings to alternative job platforms such as Indeed.com.

"Shriners is a smaller hospital and was hit pretty hard with the COVID," said Cameron. "Everyone pulled together and supported each other as well as other departments."

As a result, surgeries are ramping back up and hospital operations have increased, said Cameron.

Another aspect of nursing that has created hurdles has been the technology used to create and maintain Electronic Health Records. Cameron says that what many employees find challenging are the system updates, which can create both large and small changes. In addition, some nurses aren't as technologically savvy as others.

"Thankfully our IT department has been very helpful with these issues, by sending out emails regarding changes and where in the system items moved to as well as giving pictures with directions," said Cameron.

Shriners is currently using the Cerner electronic records systems but will be transitioning to EPIC in 2023.

"Staff are eager and optimistic for this change to come, especially the staff who utilize EPIC outside of Shriners," said Cameron.

Finally, mental health self-care and creating safe spaces for staff in the medical field is as important as workplace safety and protecting oneself from on-the-job hazards, say leadership at both MultiCare and Shriners.

"We are currently in the middle of listening sessions with our nurses to understand how do we as an organization create these psychologically safe work environments as well as an environment of caring," said Altaras of MultiCare. "We will prioritize the themes we hear in these sessions into our strategic plan as a top priority."

Along with these listening sessions, MultiCare created a "Code Lavender" system to help employees cope with and heal from professional and personal challenges to increase their overall satisfaction. This is done via counseling or online presentations through a speaker's

bureau that can help facilitate group setting discussions on various topics.

Shriners takes a more collegial approach to elevate their nurses' self-care thereby making their environments safe for themselves and their patients.

"I would say lack of self-care is one of the things nurses across the board are guilty of," said Cameron. "Many times nurses do not take time for themselves, but companies are moving toward a culture to help with that."

Discounted gym memberships, discounted movie tickets, free counseling sessions, and fun monthly events, activities and themed dress-up days are ways Shriners tries to encourage a healthy work environment. As a result, Cameron says many staff have developed good friendships with one another that extend beyond the workplace.

Despite these and other challenges to the nursing field, Altaras says she is proud of how her nurses have cared for their patients even through the pandemic.

"Our staff has been caring deeply and conscientiously for our patients through the fear and uncertainty of the past two+ years," says Altaras. "We have so much gratitude for the amazing skills and the caring with kindness that our nursing staff has shown."



June Altaras, RN MultiCare senior vice president and chief quality, safety, and nursing officer. Courtesy MultiCare

Richard Olson, MSN, RN Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center Pulmonology Medicine/Medical Oncology Nurse Manager

How long have you worked here?
33 years

What do you like about where you work?
I appreciate the team approach to caring for our patients at Providence. It's a true collaborative effort.

How long have you been a nurse?
About 35 years. I was a licensed practical nurse (LPN) prior to becoming a registered nurse (RN). I was nursing assistant certified (NAC) for about nine years prior to that.

Where did you study?
Spokane Community College for my associate degree, then University of Phoenix for my bachelor's degree, and Western Governors University for my master's degree.

What do you like most about being a nurse?
My favorite part of being a nurse is forming connections to our community. The patients we care for provide that connection.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
I became a nurse to serve others.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?
Being a nurse is hard and satisfying work. With each sacred encounter, we create a connection, whether it's someone's worst day or their best day.

Anything else you want readers to know?
Nursing offers so many opportunities to grow and expand your knowledge. It is an ideal profession for those who want to build a long-standing career. Reflecting on more than three decades in nursing, the biggest satisfaction is when a patient or family tells you that you have made a difference in their life. It is an honor to be a nurse.



**SPOTLIGHT
ON NURSES**



Amy Uplinger, RN, works in the Pediatric Emergency Room at Providence Sacred Heart, one of many specialty positions available for nurses.

Courtesy Providence Health Care

Specialty nurses in demand in the Northwest

Plenty of career options available

BY TRACY DAMON
Marketing Correspondent

Nurses are always in great demand, even more so during the past few years as COVID-19 pushed both health care professionals and health care facilities to the breaking point.

All nurses were appreciated but some specialty areas of the profession were – and still are – in higher demand than others.

With the right training and credentials, nurses can work in a variety of settings, from hospitals to doctor offices to schools, and in a variety of specialty areas including pediatrics, hospice, mental health, and many more.

According to employment website Indeed.com, some of the most sought-after nursing positions include:

- Home health nurses who visit patients' homes to provide medical care. They provide all-around care such as taking vitals, assessing patients, and working with families.
- Hospice nurses who assist and care for terminally ill patients to make the end of life as comfortable as possible.
- Intensive care unit nurses whose role is to evaluate, monitor, and administer care to patients in ICUs.
- Travel nurses who fill in temporarily at hospitals, clinics, and other medical facilities where local nurses are in short supply and high demand.

At Spokane's MultiCare Deaconess Hospital, Chief Nursing Officer Jennifer Graham concurs that travel nurses remain highly sought after.

"Traveler positions are in demand because of the changes in the landscape of the nursing workforce," Graham wrote in an email. "We are reliant on traveler nurses to augment staffing in all of our hospitals at this time. Washington State is No. 5 in the nation for traveler

demand because of our shortages in nurses to hire."

Even more than traveling nurses, Graham says MultiCare's top recruiting challenge is for medical and/or surgery nurses.

"These nurses take care of hospitalized patients who do not need critical, emergency, or obstetric care. We are not struggling nearly as acutely with nurses in ER, ICU, NICU or Labor and Delivery."

The limited number of medical and/or surgery nurses could potentially be due, at least in part, to the training required for this specialty area.

"For a med/surg nurse, this is a 14-week period of intense didactic and clinical precepting, preparing them to take care of patients independently... This is paid time and the start of professional practice that requires lots of learning on behalf of the new nurse and significant resources from a health system," Graham wrote.

At Providence Sacred Heart Children's Hospital, Amy Uplinger is a registered nurse in the Pediatric Emergency Department. Because Providence has the only emergency department designed to serve children in the Spokane area, this is an extremely in-demand and specialized position.

"It is a very specific area because pediatrics are very different from treating adults," said Uplinger. "We treat all kinds of different situations, and we have all kinds of special certifications to do our jobs. We are a very big asset to our community."

Sacred Heart's Pediatric Emergency Department offers 24-hour care 365 days a year to provide both physical and emotional care for children.

Uplinger says that while doing this work is extremely rewarding, it can be more difficult to find people to work in this department than others.

"It's harder to recruit for pediatric emergency. People come from the "adult world" (of healthcare) sometimes. It's a totally different game in the emergency department," said Uplinger. "It's a different flow, it's a different stress level at any given hour, any given minute. You're treating very sick children or injured children very quickly and then you have to switch gears and move on and treat the next patient with the same level of care."

Working in a pediatric emergency department requires training and certifications that most nurses don't have, including a Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Certification. Many other nursing specialties also require very specific education.

Jennifer Graham, of MultiCare, says this organization is actively working to increase the number of nurses available in specialty areas by offering sign-on bonuses and student loan forgiveness.

"We are also starting up a Nurse Tech program at our Inland Northwest hospitals starting with our first cohort in June," Graham said. "This allows nursing students to take limited nursing roles in areas that hold their interest as they complete their education. We will offer tech roles in critical care, med/surg and women's services."

Many of the most in-demand nursing positions are also the most stressful and fast-paced. While that appeals to some people, others prefer a slower pace and more flexible schedules, particularly if they have been in the field for several years and want to avoid burnout.

Accredited nursing school Nightingale College says the following nursing specialties are some of the least stressful, which for some can mean the least in-demand.

- Nurse educators that provide training to nursing students at universities, colleges, or hospitals.
- School nurse/summer camp nurse. Schools and children's camps are required to have medically trained professionals on staff. They provide basic care for minor injuries and administer daily medications while working more predictable and stable hours.
- Nurse administrators work in hospital settings, focusing on administrative duties such as organizing patient and employee records, coordinating medical services, creating schedules, conducting performance reviews, and planning budgets.
- Public health nurses work to improve community health and assure access to care. Professional duties include educating people on the spread, prevention, and treatment of disease, designing and implementing health education campaigns, and monitoring health trends and pinpointing health risk factors specific to individual communities.
- Nurse researchers who work in universities, colleges, or research facilities studying diseases, healthy lifestyles, and different outcomes of medical treatments.

While the above positions may be less sought-after by the nursing industry, they generally have a high number of applicants when a position comes open.

For those who may be new to nursing, or even still in nursing school, and aren't sure what area of nursing will be the best fit, MultiCare's Graham says there are a few ways to test the waters before committing.

"There are always opportunities to volunteer at the hospital. In addition to that, we have a wonderful program at Deaconess and Valley Hospitals called COPES healthcare scholars. Health care scholars are students who enroll in a program and are trained to provide hands-on care to patients. They not only provide care (bathing, feeding, turning, vital signs) they also offer support and assistance to patients with their caring presence and engagement around the patient experience."



Mental health outlook for Inland Northwest nurses

Burnout rising but retention high as well

BY KATE A. MINER

Marketing Correspondent

Even before the pandemic, there was a significant shortage of nurses nationwide. Nurses were already struggling with burnout and depression. There were high levels of job-related complaints, anxiety, and even suicide. COVID only exacerbated these profession-wide issues.

Therefore, many leaders in the healthcare industry see the pandemic as a catalyst for institutional change, with an obligation to provide the necessary resources to promote healthy coping mechanisms throughout the industry. This is particularly true for nurses.

In 2021 a poll of the members from three unions representing more than 71,000 nurses and other healthcare workers in Washington (SEIU Healthcare 1199, UFCW 21, and WSNA) found that 84% of healthcare workers felt burned out by their jobs and 49% were likely to leave the healthcare profession in the next few years.

A 2021 Washington Center for Nursing study showed that 27% of RN respondents had left the workforce temporarily and 34% had left the workforce indefinitely due to a stressful work environment, lack of good management, burnout, inadequate staffing, and better pay/benefits.

“The entire world is having an effect on nursing,” says Jennifer Graves, RN, Vice President, Quality and Safety and Regional Chief Nursing Executive for Kaiser Permanente Washington, “it’s not just the pandemic. Social and polit-

ical unrest, weather events - these are stressful times, but there has never been a better opportunity to pause, assess, and begin to lead forward with trauma-informed care. It could take years to change, but the last few years have made a significant difference in how leadership approaches nursing.”

In the past, mental health issues and stress in the nursing profession were seen as an individual problem, not a systemic one. According to a recent study by the International Council of Nurses, The Global Nursing Workforce and the COVID-19 Pandemic, pre-existing nurse understaffing and resource limitations were not only exposed but amplified by the pandemic, adding to the stress and workload of the nurses, causing a higher than average incidence of mental burnout, illness, and mortality rates.

The WA Safe + Healthy campaign, supported by UFCW 21, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW, and the Washington State Nurses Association, is asking the Washington Legislature to pass safe staffing standards for the health and safety of everyone in Washington, and the World Health Organization, the agency that guides many health providers and organizations, recently added “burnout” to its International Classification of Diseases Handbook.

Throughout the state health organizations are now promoting wellness cultures, addressing system problems, and providing evidence-based interventions to improve nurses’ mental and physical health. Kelly Dallmann, RN, Nurse Care

Manager for Shriners Children’s Spokane, provides great examples.

“We have an excellent mental health program and employee assistance program for personal and emotional support, for not only the nurses but their families too,” she said. “There are hotlines and no shortage of assistance. More importantly, we maintain a 1-4 patient ratio and help one another. Together we advocate for nurse safety and a positive work environment.”

Working together is key, and nurses have never been more united in their commitment to change. As the pandemic heightened issues, it became more evident that nurses were going to have to help other nurses. We cannot forget what the nursing profession is about – care. If the nurses are caring for everyone else, who is looking out for them?

Over the past two years, nurses have created many systems for sharing the burden. They communicate by WhatsApp and through social media platforms. From student cohorts to specialist nursing forums, nurses are using different modes of communication to speak to one another and share insights. They are also watching out for one another. Several nurses interviewed described how they watch for signs of burnout amongst their co-workers, encourage and support fellow nurses to take time to be with their family, and advocate for nurse safety whenever possible.

“At Kaiser, we have made significant investments in our nursing staff so they

can take the time they need to recharge and be with their families, which has become increasingly important,” explains Graves. “In 2022 we created float pools so people can get access to the time off they need.”

Kaiser Permanente has a strong relationship with its labor union partners in Washington. Members consider it a positive and productive relationship.

“It helps us create our programs and environments at Kaiser Permanente, to make sure our nurses’ needs are addressed,” explains Graves. “The bigger question is, how do we address them together? The idea of work and home life have blurred due to the pandemic. So, if we are supporting an employee’s well-being, we also need to support family wellness. It’s a bigger picture that goes beyond health care.”

In other words, nurses have always been there for us, it’s time we start being there for them. If someone you know in the nursing industry is struggling with mental health issues, burnout, or simply feels alone in their struggle to cope, there is help.

If you or a nurse you know needs resources, here are some places to get more

WA Safe + Healthy
www.wasafeandhealthy.com/
The WA State Nursing Association
www.wsna.org



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MultiCare



May 6-12 | **Nurses Week**

May 8-14 | **Hospital Week**

This week, and every week,
THANK YOU!

The MultiCare Inland Northwest team is grateful for everything our nursing and hospital teams do to care for our patients and community – particularly during these last two incredibly challenging years.

Thank you for your dedication, your compassion and your resilience. We could not care for our communities without you.



multicare.org



North Idaho College students Megan Rauvola, front (in white), and Abbey Leon share notes in a classroom.

Courtesy North Idaho College

Local nursing programs help students find the right fit

More grads still won't solve current shortage

BY NINA CULVER
Marketing Correspondent

More people are interested in becoming nurses than ever before, but full nursing programs don't mean that all the nurses that have quit during the last two years can be easily replaced.

Many nurses quit or retired early, some of them simply burned out after all the added stress of a worldwide pandemic, said Susan Edwards, bachelor's in nursing program director at Gonzaga University.

"We were already an aging population of nurses," Edwards said. "We anticipated this was coming. We have more nurses over the age of 50 than we do those coming in. The pandemic just accelerated that."

It's not as simple as just accepting more students, Edwards said. Spaces are limited and any expansion of a nursing program requires approval from the State of Washington. Gonzaga's nursing program has students grouped in cohorts of 40, with 160 students in their upper division nursing classes. The university recently petitioned for a temporary increase to 55 students in one cohort to accommodate a larger incoming class, Edwards said.

"We've had vigorous interest and enrollment," she said. "We have way more people interested in being nurses than we can accommodate."

The nursing program at Washington State University, which also includes students enrolled at Eastern Washington University and Whitworth University, is also full at 520. Students appear to be very interested in nursing, said Anne Mason, WSU Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. "Nationally, there's actually an uptick," Mason said. "It seems the interest in nursing is really strong. We've not seen any drop in interest."

State rules aren't the only size limitation nursing schools have, Edwards said. There's also a shortage of nursing educators. Larger classes of students would require more teachers, more space and more equipment.

"We require a lot of equipment," she said. "Nursing, obviously, is very hands on." Because so many older nurses have quit, nursing students are increasingly training with nurses with only a few years of experience instead of nurses with decades of experience, Edwards said.

"That's the biggest challenge, to find experienced bedside nurses for them to train with," she said. "We need an experienced workforce to support that." That's why Gonzaga has only requested a temporary increase in the number of nursing students, Edwards said. "We really don't have the resources to keep that as a consistent level," she said.

Nursing school expansions are typically small. Edwards said too many experienced nurses have left the profession and shortages will be common. "We're not going to keep up," she said. "We can't put out enough nurses to fill the gap."

Mason said WSU considered expanding its nursing program and sought support for that in the last legislative session, but did not get it. "We don't have a way to expand our prelicensure program," she said.

Nursing programs are also offered at Spokane Community College and North Idaho College. Edwards said SCC just got approval to increase its number of nursing students by eight.

What the students are learning hasn't changed much despite the recent pandemic, Mason said. Communicable diseases have always been a part of the curriculum, though there are now chances to study a recent pandemic in classes that look at past pandemics in history, she said.

While classes aren't virtual anymore, both Gonzaga and WSU have retained elements of virtual learning. Mason said that virtual classes held during the pandemic included students from all over the state.

"We suddenly had the ability to put small groups of students in breakout rooms with students across the state, not just local students," she said. "It's really been an opportunity to enrich students and make things more equitable. We're hopeful that we can do that going forward."

Edwards said one bonus is that students who have to miss a class because of an illness or other reason can easily attend via Zoom.

"Our ability to deliver remote education is highly improved and we're highly adoptable," she said. "Once we've learned this technology, we're not putting it away. Also, our students kind of expect it now."

Edwards said she's glad that interest in becoming a nurse is strong. "I still think we have students who want to be nurses," she said. "As many trials and tribulations nurses have gone through in the last two years, it hasn't scared anyone off."

Bottom left, North Idaho College graduate Liliyana Cavalin waits backstage with her fellow nursing graduates before a pinning ceremony. Bottom right, spring 2019 nursing graduates from NIC.

Courtesy North Idaho College





The Children's Emergency Room at Providence Sacred Heart is one example of new offerings for patients.

Courtesy Providence Health Care

How are we rewarding nurses?

More money, staffing, support are common requests

BY KATE A. MINER
Marketing Correspondent

There is a large talent pool of licensed Registered Nurses in Washington. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the latest employment count (active or pending) of RNs in the Evergreen State was 120,069 as of November 2021, and expands to 144,001 when you add Licensed Practical Nurses and Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners.

Yet, a recent study by the Washington State Hospital Association found that 6,100 registered nurses are still needed to fill vacancies in hospitals across the state.

“There’s a workforce and staffing crisis at all levels of talent,” said Staci Taylor, Chief Human Resources Officer for Providence. “It’s been really scarce in health care for 10 years, and honestly, it’s just getting worse.”

While the pandemic exacerbated these issues, it didn’t create the shortage. Many are leaving to become travel nurses, moving from one hospital to another, retiring early, or leaving the profession altogether.

Washington hospitals are working hard to retain nurses and provide the level of patient care that Washingtonians deserve by creating safe staffing levels to reduce burnout, attract more people to join—or return to—the profession, and create a work environment that rewards nurses for their dedication and hard work.

Monetary incentives have often been used in healthcare to encourage nurses and staff to fill gaps in the schedule. It is not uncommon for hospitals to accrue millions in incentive costs over a year to

reduce vacancy rates and keep their staff happy, but with the ever-increasing shortage of nurses and the increased burnout caused by the pandemic, healthcare institutions are looking for other ways to reward nurses, whether it’s tangible rewards or forms of general gratitude.

“Nurses Week and Hospital Week have become more rewarding each year,” says Kelly Dallmann, RN, Nurse Care Manager for Shriners Children’s Spokane. “The community has been amazing. Such as free coffee trucks and local restaurants donating meals.”

A local coffee chain, Wake Up Call, offered free coffee to honor healthcare workers and first responders in the Spokane and North Idaho communities this January, and you can often find “Random Cups of Kindness” posted throughout the community asking you to “leave a note and buy a drink for our health care heroes.”

Is it enough? One nurse I spoke to said, “I follow several nursing pages on social

media where these types of questions have been addressed. Many nurses share stories of receiving a free lunch or a gift card as a thank-you for their hard work. While this is appreciated, nurses are also expressing the desperate need for safe staffing, appropriate wages, and supportive work environments.”

According to the American Nursing Association, nurses across the nation are reporting a dramatic increase in the use of mandatory overtime as a staffing tool.

“This is dangerous staffing practice,” reports ANA. “The nursing shortage is having a negative impact on patient care, fostering medical errors, and driving nurses away from the bedside.”

A study published in the Journal of Nursing Administration found that too much overtime inhibits collaboration, which is why the nursing industry recommends minimizing overtime hours in lieu of fatigue management training, education, and fostering self-care.

“Care for yourself so you can care for others’ ... an age-old adage that is easily forgotten in our jam-packed personal and professional lives. As caregivers, nurses have been socialized to care for others and thus often prioritize their needs as second,” writes Margo Halm, RN, PhD, NEA-BC, in an article published in the American Journal of Critical Care. “Self-care remains vital for nurses to ease the detrimental effects of stress in the constantly and rapidly changing health care environment and to prevent progression of those effects to burnout, which can have devastating consequences for nurses and those under their care.”

“At Shiners, our own nurse manager has an open-door policy,” Dallman relates, “if you are upset, or something is really affecting you, they are always there for you. Additionally, hospitals are offering better roles for nurses, tuition reimbursement, and opportunities to advance your career. Personally, I am going back to school to be a teacher. I want to guide other nurses. I’ve been through a pandemic – it’s huge and will change the future of nursing going forward.”

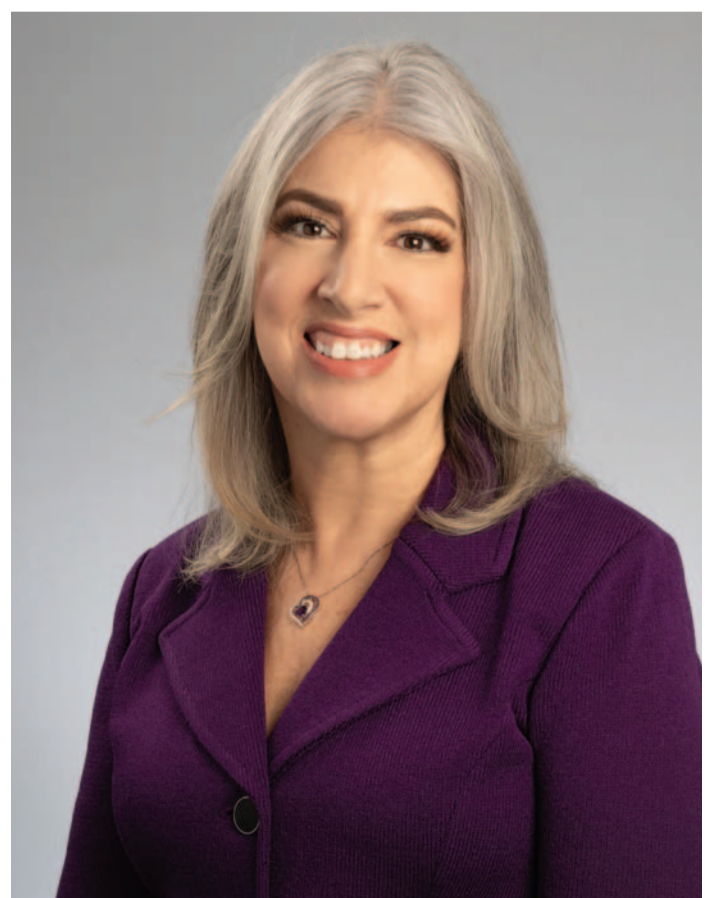
The United States will need to produce 1.1 million new registered nurses in 2022 to fill jobs and replace retirees, according to an announcement from the American Nurses Association. To deal with the aging population, increased access to care after healthcare reform and the new value-based health care model, the ANA recommends focusing on nurse education and hiring practices to make sure the industry meets demand and focuses on quality. Paying for nurses is no longer enough.

“We offer support to our nurses year-round,” says Jennifer Graves, RN, Vice President, Quality and Safety and

Regional Chief Nursing Executive for Kaiser Permanente Washington. “But more importantly, nurses need to remember we’re in this together. We need to practice resilience and encourage self-care. We need to work together to create an environment that allows nurses to thrive. They should never feel alone.”

Ways You Can Support a Healthcare Hero

- Get vaccinated
- Follow CDC guidelines and state protocols
- Say thank you and be understanding – remember, everything takes time
- Avoid making them an outlet for your own fear and anxiety
- Deliver food to healthcare workers and their families
- Give a gift in whatever way you can



Top, Hunter Davis, RN, Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center Cardiac Intensive Care Unit.

Below, Jennifer Graves, RN, Vice President, Quality and Safety, Regional Chief Nursing Executive, Kaiser Permanente Washington.



The Random Cups of Kindness board at Kootenai Health invites coffee customers to buy a drink and put up an inspirational message.



SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Zoey DeLeon BSN, RN Care Team Registered Nurse, CHAS Health

How long have you worked here?
I have worked for CHAS Health for three years.

What do you like about where you work?

Community health is a unique and fulfilling area to work as a nurse. I am excited to go to the clinic every day recognizing the impact of the work we do. CHAS Health as an organization is dedicated to serving our patients and community, while also providing incredible support to its employees.

CHAS Health offers holistic care through the multitude of services we offer, and I love the team-based approach. I also enjoy working for an organization that frequently extends its efforts beyond the clinic walls. I welcomed the opportunity to help with COVID-19 testing and vaccination efforts at the Spokane Arena. I am thankful to be a part of the team at CHAS Health where I am equally challenged as I am supported.

How long have you been a nurse?
I have been a nurse for almost four years.

Where did you study?

I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Washington State University. I am currently working toward my Master of Science in Nursing/Family Nurse Practitioner degree through Gonzaga University.

What do you like most about being a nurse?

Providing health care is truly a team effort, and I love being part of a hardworking and compassionate team. I am constantly learning and growing my skillset as CHAS Health expands ways nurses are utilized to provide care to our patients. I enjoy continuing to learn as medicine advances and allows us to provide the best possible care. I

love working in primary care where I can work closely with the care team to optimize our care. I especially enjoy building relationships with patients and helping them meet their goals. In community health a lot of time is spent connecting patients with resources, and we are fortunate to have excellent community partners who help patients in many ways.

Why did you want to be a nurse?

I spent quite a bit of time in and out of hospitals growing up due to having childhood leukemia. The members of the care team who supported my family along this journey influenced my desire to choose a career centered around helping others. As a child you could find almost all my stuffed animals covered in bandages or ace wraps, so becoming a nurse was not a surprise for those who knew me.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?

Community health is not the most straightforward pathway directly out of nursing school. I encourage any new or aspiring nurses who are passionate about community health to know there are opportunities outside of acute care if it is not your passion. Nurses are incredible assets in all areas of healthcare, and we are never "just" nurses!

Anything else you want readers to know?

It is a pleasure to share my nursing journey and experience working with CHAS Health. I want to extend a sincere "thank you" to all healthcare workers for your hard work and dedication. Our community is a better place because of your commitment and care.



SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Hailey Heilman BSN-RN Care Team Registered Nurse, CHAS Health

How long have you worked here?
A little over two years

What do you like about where you work?

I love how community and patient focused CHAS Health is. We are constantly looking for ways to help patients and the community. They support me in all that I want to do for patients and allow me to be a true patient advocate. I have never worked somewhere that was so passionate about helping others.

How long have you been a nurse?
About 4 years now, time flies.

Where did you study? Washington State University: College of Nursing for my Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

What do you like most about being a nurse?

Getting to know my patients. I have worked in various health care settings and was never allowed the time to get to know who my patients are and how I can help them in every facet of their life. As a nurse not only do you help solve someone's physical ailments but you truly get to know them, their life, and sometimes end up playing a huge role in their lives.

Why did you want to be a nurse?

I always knew I wanted to go into a field that allowed me to help others. Nursing seemed like a good fit because I loved learning about science and how the human body functioned as a kid. Plus

it allowed me to help others. Nursing also has so many different areas that you can specialize in so there are endless possibilities of what you can do with just one degree.

What do you wish people could know more about your profession?

I am sure people already know this but just how hard we work to care for our patients. We truly want the best for others and work very hard to make sure that you get what you need whether you know what you need or not.

Anything else you want readers to know?

Over the two years that I have worked at CHAS I have gotten to know a lot of the homeless population here in Spokane. Most of them are extremely kind and thoughtful people that purely have been dealt a bad hand in the game of life. I have seen many of them give all that they have (literally) to those around them or to those that somehow happen to be worse off than they are. Treating those you encounter on the street with kindness is huge. Working at CHAS Health in Spokane has really shown me that until you meet people's basic needs such as food, water, access to bathrooms, and housing it is so much harder to help them better themselves. We all need the basic things in life before we can work on improving on our situation in life. Without the basics, it is so much harder to start making any sort of change.



SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Billi Jo Coy Registered Nurse Certified in Inpatient Obstetrics MultiCare Deaconess Hospital

How long have you worked here?
have been working in this unit for 31 years.

What do you like about where you work?

Being a part of someone's birthing experience and having a positive impact on their story. I love this unit of people because we all work together and are able to offer our laboring patients many different options to make the birth of their child their own story. We have a great manager who supports us and make me feel valued.

How long have you been a nurse?
34 years

Where did you study?

I graduated from Spokane Community College School of Nursing in 1988.

What do you like most about being a nurse?

I like to be able to provide comfort and support to people experiencing life-changing events. I want my patients to feel well-cared for safe and important.

Why did you want to be a nurse?

I survived cancer at age 15. It made me want to be able to help others in times of joy or stress.

What's something you wish people could know more about the role of nurses?

Nurses take a piece of each experience they have with their patients and carry it with them forever, it can bring joy along with sadness. I cannot imagine doing anything different.



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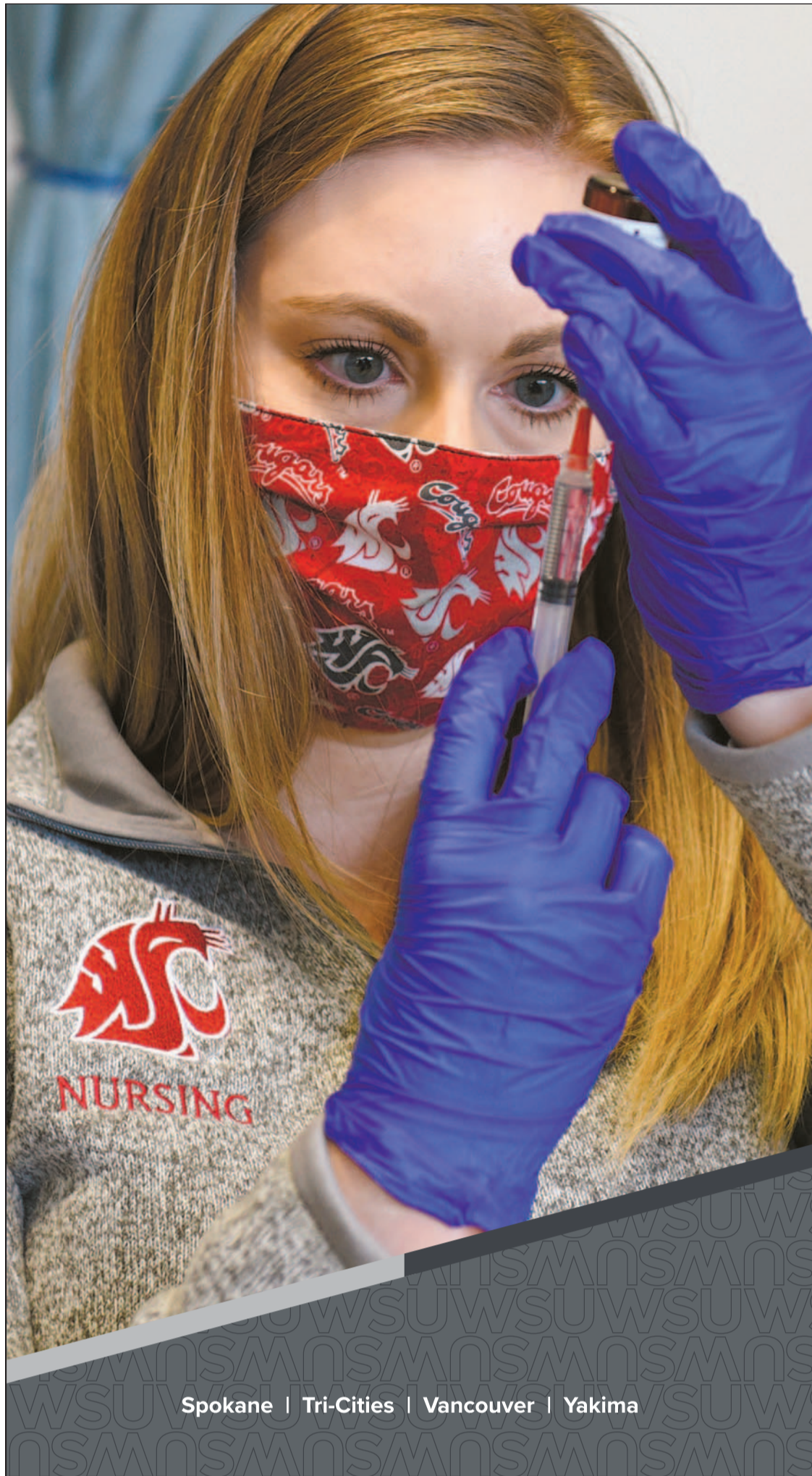
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Amanda, an RN at Providence Holy Family ICU, looks at a thank-you poster.

Courtesy Providence Health Care

Providing support to those who support us

Caring community helps prop up nurses

BY TRACY DAMON

Marketing Correspondent

It takes a village, as the saying goes. Which is especially true in health care, where, traditionally, nurses play a critical role in supporting the doctors who help the rest of us stay well.

But who's there to support our nurses?

Fortunately, there is a community -- that works both in healthcare facilities and outside -- who can help shoulder the burden of keeping a nursing community healthy, from administrative professionals to industry organizations, plus students and mental health experts.

With the COVID pandemic having taken a big toll on both the mental and physical health of nurses, taking steps to prevent members of this profession from experiencing burnout and leaving the industry has been extremely important.

As in any industry, good management plays a major role. Nurse managers oversee patient care, make budgetary decisions, set work schedules, coordinate meetings, and make personnel decisions. They can directly impact nurses' morale and performance by advocating for balanced nurse-to-patient ratios, including nurses in policy discussions, reducing non-clinical tasks, and implementing support programs.

Specific to pediatric specialties, another position that helps lighten the load somewhat for nurses is Child Life Specialists. They work with children and families in hospitals to help them cope with hospitalization, illness, and pain management.

"They are essential to our jobs. They are the liaisons between the families and our staff," said Amy Uplinger, an RN in the Pediatric Emergency Department at Providence Sacred Heart Children's Hospital.

Child Life Specialists can be found in all areas of pediatrics, including surgery, ICU, hematology and oncology, and the neonatal support care team.

"If you have never been to our emergency department you would be surprised at the level of care they (patients) get. Again Child Life (Specialists) plays a big role in that," Uplinger said.

Another big role is filled by nursing students. Washington State University's Nurse Tech program lets nursing students work in area hospitals after they've completed their first semester in upper-level nursing courses.

"Our students love it and (medical) facilities are seeing this as a rich source of support," said Susan Edwards, director of the Resource and Simulation Center for the School of Nursing and Physiology at Gonzaga University. "Long-term facilities are finding this is a gold mine. It's not a permanent solution (to fill nursing positions) because students only stay in the program one-and-a-half to two years, but it is beneficial to both students and employers."

Students benefit by gaining hands-on experience they couldn't get in a classroom, being paid to do it, having valuable experience to put on a resume, and an increased chance of being hired permanently at the facility where they participated in the program.

Healthcare facilities that participate in the program get extra help during a nursing shortage, have the advantage of training a potential future employee to their specifications, and can provide help for their full-time nurses.

"They can work under an RN, supporting an RN, but get skills that they can't gain in school," said Edwards.

The Nurse Tech program is available to all nursing students in Washington but not yet available at all healthcare facilities. Providence is one of the first facilities in Spokane to make it available, and MultiCare Health Systems is preparing to bring on its first group of student nurses at Inland Northwest hospitals in June.

Some long-term care facilities, such as Touchmark, are also participating.

Some groups that play major supporting roles to the nursing industry aren't even located inside a hospital or other healthcare facility, such as the Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA).

"We are both a union and we are also the professional organization for nurses in the state," said Jayson Dick, WSNA Director of Labor Advocacy.

WSNA represents around 18,000 members across the state. Dick says nurses have been leaving the profession in large numbers as a result of a nursing shortage compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As far as the amount of nurses at the bedside, we do have a shortage and a lot of it is burnout," he said. "We have been facing staffing issues for years now and the pandemic has really brought that to the forefront. As a result, what we're seeing is a shortage of nurses willing to work at the bedside."

He added "We've been working short staffed, working mandatory overtime, and working in a lot of other untenable situations."

WSNA helps nurses improve these conditions and situations. Dick says the number of "objection forms" the union helps members fill out has spiked astronomically over the past couple years, into the first quarter of 2022 even.

WSNA also offers representation on various state

commissions and boards; lobbyist representation in Olympia and Washington, D.C.; training and discounts on certification fees and educational events; and advocacy for nurses in general. The group negotiates contracts and makes sure nurses are treated equally and professionally by their employers, which Dick says was a challenge the past few years.

"Before the pandemic we filed some Department of Health complaints, but once the pandemic hit we were constantly advocating for nurses to get appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) and filing complaints with the Department of Health and Labor and Industries."

Nurses in Washington aren't required to join a union, but Dick says the numbers speak for themselves.

"I think a quick Google search will show you some disparity between nurses in union facilities vs. right to work states. Some of our best leaders and advocates came to Washington State from other parts of our nation and become very strong advocates when they saw what that's like," he said. "Even facilities in Washington State that are not unionized -- their wages, their duties -- are elevated because the facilities have to compete with unionized shops to get and keep nurses."

In addition to protecting physical health, mental health support is some of the most important help nurses can receive. The National Association for Mental Illness has a page on their website nami.org specific to health care workers.

The group reminds nurses that, while they are used to taking care of everyone else, there comes a time when it is necessary to take care of oneself. The alliance offers free services for frontline care providers including therapy and counseling, a free and confidential video conference group where nurses can connect and process issues related to COVID-19, and provides strategies for dealing with stress, fatigue, and burnout.

Below, Christa Arguinchona, RN, administers a shot. Courtesy Providence Health Care.



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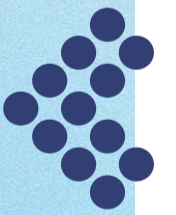
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SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Amanda Gliko, Registered Nurse Kaiser Permanente Washington

How long have you worked here?
I have been with Kaiser Permanente since January of 2021.

What do you like about where you work?

I love that Kaiser Permanente is a collaborative organization that offers our patients a wide variety of services so they can have consistency of care in meeting their various health care needs. I also enjoy working in an interdisciplinary team with a common goal of patient-centered care. I think it is helpful to patients that they can have their appointments, laboratory services, pharmacy, and 24-hour nurse line in one location so their care can be more streamlined, and their records are easily accessible to everyone in their care team.

How long have you been a nurse?
I have been a Registered Nurse for 4 1/2 years.

Where did you study?
I took my nursing prerequisites at the University of Nevada, Reno, but completed my nursing degree locally here at Spokane Community College.

What do you like most about being a nurse?

I most enjoy building relationships and rapport with patients over time. Working in an ambulatory care setting allows me to get to know the same patients and establish a trusted nurse-patient relationship. I love when patients call and ask for me by name, as that tells me that I have made an impression on them, and they value and trust my work and expertise. One example is an elderly endocrinology patient who often calls the clinic for advice due to medication dosing concerns and diabetes management. This patient has two adult children who are very involved in their care, and they are also present during phone calls and at appointments to discuss care changes. Recently one of the adult children called and asked to speak with me specifically

as we have spoken several times before, and I'm familiar with their family's case. I'm happy that I have made enough of an impact on this family during our encounters that they remember and trust me as their nurse.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
I've had a chronic illness since childhood, so I am familiar with frequent medical visits as a patient. I understand first-hand how important it is to be treated like a person and not like your disease. I have had several great nurses care for me throughout my life, and they inspired me to become a nurse so I can help patients have this same great experience when they are receiving medical care. Great nurses not only care for, but also about their patients. These are the nurses who truly make a difference in people's lives and inspire others. This is why I became a nurse and is the kind of nurse I strive to be.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?

Nursing is so much more than just "hospital" nursing. Within nursing there is such a wide variety of job opportunities and care settings so that nurses can really find their niche—whether it be in a hospital, clinic, school, or home health. Nurses help patients wherever they need to be helped. People have health care needs throughout their lifetime, and it is wonderful that nurses can help provide that support and care in a multitude of settings and situations.

Anything else you want readers to know?

Nurses care. If there are roadblocks in patient care, we are just as frustrated as our patients. We work hard to help patients get the care they need whether it be authorizations for necessary medications, special procedures, or referrals to specialists. Our goal is always to get patients the care they need.



SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Ruth Martha, RN Kaiser Permanente Washington

How long have you worked here?
21 years

What do you like about where you work?

The things I enjoy best about my work are my coworkers and the variety of patients I get to help and support. I get to see patients ranging in age from newborns to 100+. At our clinic, we see everything from minor illness to life-threatening medical situations. One minute I can help a patient with a preventive health concern, and the next minute I can be involved in a medical emergency. In family medicine, I get to see patients over the course of time. I have known many patients since I started with the organization 21 years ago.

How long have you been a nurse?

I graduated from nursing school in 1978 and have been working in nursing as a RN for 44 years. My first job at age 20 was in a neonatal intensive care unit in Pasadena, California. This job was followed by NICUs in North Dakota, Arizona, then Sacred Heart in Spokane. After a break to have my third baby, I returned to work at Shriners Hospital followed by Family Home Care before starting work at Group Health, now Kaiser Permanente, in 2001. I am still an old-school nurse. When I went to school, learning to make a bed with hospital corners and give back massages at bedtime was still an important part of the curriculum. Wearing a white dress and nurse cap was required. Things have changed dramatically for nursing over the years. I still have my notebooks from nursing school and get a laugh when I look at them now, since nursing is such a different job now than it was when I first started.

Where did you study?

I received my Associate Degree in nursing from a community college in Rochester, Minnesota. I later received my Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Seattle Pacific University in 2013.

What do you like most about being a nurse?

One of my favorite patient stories

involves a patient I first met as a First Steps nurse, a state-run program for pregnant women and their babies. I met this patient at her home and followed her through her pregnancy and through the first year of the child's life offering medical and social assistance as needed. She went through many hardships including medical complications for both herself and the baby, domestic violence, poverty, and homelessness to name a few. I tried to assist in whatever ways I could to assure that the patient and her child would have what they needed for a healthy start in life, and that relationship has continued for more than 25 years.

Why did you want to be a nurse?

I made the decision to become a nurse in the seventh grade and never considered another option. I took middle school and high school courses to help me meet my goal. Being a nurse just seemed like the right decision for me back in the '70s when there were fewer options for women. I knew as an RN, I would always be able to work and support myself. I wanted to be a part of an exciting and rewarding profession.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?

Nursing is not an easy career choice. Nurses work hard and under difficult circumstances, especially since the recent pandemic. Please be respectful of nurses, as they are there to help you.

Anything else you want readers to know?

Even though nursing is a challenging career, I would encourage those interested to pursue nursing as a career choice. I love working in health care and cannot imagine ever doing anything else. I find health care interesting as every patient is unique with their own set of concerns. Every day offers new challenges, and I enjoy being an important part of the health care system. I feel very lucky and privileged to have had such a long and happy career in nursing.



Lisa Jones Structural Heart Coordinator/Registered Nurse MultiCare Pulse

How long have you worked here?
Not quite sure how to answer this question. I have worked for Inland Cardiology, Rockwood, CHS, and MultiCare Pulse since 1999. A group of us have worked together through all these companies = 23 years.

What do you like about where you work?

The people: my co-workers, and seeing my patients living their best life. This makes it all worthwhile.

How long have you been a nurse?
30 years

Where did you study?
St. Johns School of Nursing. (one of the last diploma nurses)

What do you like most about being a nurse?

Knowing that the work I'm doing is changing lives.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
It was always something that interested me and as I grew as a nurse. I realized this was my passion not just a job.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?

How much dedication each one of us have for our patients. Sometimes it is difficult for patients to see the hard work being done behind the scenes.

Anything else you want readers to know?

As difficult as it has been during COVID, not only are we resilient, but our caring never has wavered. Hopefully this is evident in the care our patients receive.



SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Tristina Krakenberg Bermingham Registered Nurse MultiCare Valley Hospital

How long have you worked here?
3 Years

What do you like about where you work?

I love being able to work in the hospital that serves the community I grew up in. MultiCare Valley Hospital still maintains a smaller-town feel, with many of my co-workers working at the hospital for decades. Many of them act more like family than coworkers.

How long have you been a nurse?
Going on 6 years now.

Where did you study?
Montana State University

What do you like most about being a nurse?

I love not being stuck behind a computer all day and having the opportunity to work with a variety of people -- both coworkers and patients. There are also a ton of different opportunities within nursing to keep your career fresh and interesting.

Why did you want to be a nurse?

I took a break from school and ended up working in a nursing home for a steady source of income. I found I really enjoyed working on my feet and connecting with others as a job. At the time, I loved the idea of having an opportunity to make a difference in people's lives.

SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES



Amanda
Providence Holy Family Hospital
Intensive Care Unit Registered Nurse

How long have you worked here?
 Seven years

What do you like about where you work?
 Holy Family is a family of amazing people I truly enjoy working with. We were able to persevere through the last two years of challenges and continue to do so because of the team we have at Holy Family Hospital.

How long have you been a nurse?
 Seven years. Nursing is a second career for me. I was formerly in information security.

Where did you study?
 North Idaho College and Lewis Clark State College

What do you like most about being a nurse?
 While sometimes this job is physically and emotionally taxing, there are many more moments where this is a humbling and rewarding position. We get to see the difference we make in people's lives, whether we're comforting them in their final days or easing their way through an intensive recovery. This job also keeps us mentally nimble and hones our critical thinking skills.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
 About a decade ago, I reached a turning point in my career and life. Having my first child changed my perspective and inspired me to want to make a bigger impact on the world. Nursing called to me because it was a way to make that impact. Even after the last few years of the pandemic, I still feel there is no other job for me where I could do this much good.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?
 It sounds cliché, but nursing is more than just a job. For many of us at Providence, it is a large part of our identity. To say that someone is "just a nurse" is to largely understate the amount of education, experience, and critical thinking, in addition to caring and compassion, that go into this profession.

Many people don't see the sacred moments we share with our patients. We think about the people we care for long after they leave the hospital.

SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES



Debbie Cameron
Inpatient Nurse Manager
Shriners Children's Spokane

How long have you worked here?
 I have been a nurse for 20 years come this June.

Where did you study?
 I went to school in California at Napa Valley College while my husband was stationed at Travis Air Force Base. We were there long enough for me to complete the LPN program graduating in June 2002 and passing my boards in July 2002. We came back to Spokane and I finally went back to school at Spokane Community College doing what was called the "Upward Mobility Program." It was a program designed for people who had an LPN license and wanted to go back to school to get an RN License. I graduated in December 2007. I went back to school online through Western Governors University starting in January 2015 to get my bachelor's degree. Partly through the program, I changed tracks to go straight for my master's degree. I was able to finish and graduate with my master's degree in Nursing Management and Leadership in July 2019. I was able to walk across the stage earning my degree in September 2019.

What do you like most about being a nurse?
 I love being able to help people. I am there to help people heal sometimes at the worst times of their lives and what I do matters. I love watching how the little things make all the difference.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
 I wanted to become a nurse to be just like my mom. Anytime we were sick my mom knew just how to care for us and I wanted to be just like that. Mom went to Purdue University studying medicine to become

a doctor. A patient came into the ER where my mom was during a rotation, this patient was very sick and they could not save her. Her 12-year-old son was with her pleading to my mom, "Please don't let my mommy die, please don't let my mommy die." There was nothing they could do and my mom could not handle the trauma and sadness of that situation and so she stopped going to class. She did not want to tell her parents that she wanted to drop out so instead she only showed up on test days and failed out of school. I wanted to be able to help people, and being a bedside nurse is so fulfilling and rewarding, I have truly loved the work I do.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?
 Being a nurse is not just a job or a profession, it truly is a calling. You wear many different hats during your one shift; you're not only the nurse, but you're the patient's friend, the shoulder for them to cry on, their motivator, the peacekeeper with the family, the social worker, the interpreter, the therapist, the patient's advocate, the janitor, the housekeeper, the maintenance person, and more. Sometimes you're doing all of this while you're afraid yourself or you are new and don't necessarily know what you're doing, but you have a great poker face, you bounce ideas off your co-workers and ask questions and in a way you fake it till you make it!

Anything else you want readers to know? Nurses have to be ready to think fast and adapt/react to changes quickly. We learn to MacGyver things like you would not believe. Medicine is always changing and we have to change with it.

Nurses,
we see you
for the heroes
you are.

Thank you!





SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES



SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES

Kelly Dallmann Nurse Care Manager Shriners Children's Spokane

How long have you been a nurse?
Eight years.

Where did you study?
Spokane Community College

What do you like most about being a nurse?
Helping people and educating patients and family so they have a true understanding.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
I felt like it was actually helping people heal and advocating for patient needs.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?
We do what we do because we care. Whether outcomes are good or bad, they affect us too. We just can't always show it.

Anything else you want readers to know?
The last few years have been especially hard for healthcare workers. I also do bedside nursing at another hospital. Please have understanding and grace. We try our hardest to give our patients the best care that we can.

Tami Cavanaugh, Clinic Nurse, Opioid Treatment Program Spokane Regional Health District

How long have you worked here?
Over 6 years

What do you like about where you work?
Watching our clients get better and seeing the progress they make. It is so rewarding when they come in and say they are getting their children back or are now getting a job. Seeing their excitement for their recovery is so rewarding. I love cheering them on and celebrating their successes!

How long have you been a nurse?
Almost 29 years.

Where did you study?
University of Colorado

What do you like most about being a nurse?
I like the flexibility of the profession. There are so many different specialties and areas to work in. There really is a niche for everyone and their unique areas of interest.

Why did you want to be a nurse?
My mother was hospitalized with cancer and after spending time with her in ICU and watching the care she received, I realized I wanted to give back.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?
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SPOTLIGHT ON NURSES



Kimberly R. Parkey, RN, BSN, PHN2 Spokane Regional Health District

How long have you worked here?

Just shy of 14 years.

What do you like about where you work?

Working for Spokane Regional Health District's Nurse Family Partnership Program allows me, as a health care professional, to be an integral part of SRHD's mission, to strive for health equity among marginalized, underserved, and unrepresented populations in our community, who are encountering barriers in accessing equitable public health as well as healthcare goods and services.

SRHD's values align with the philosophy of NFP, which transcribes into how I deliver health care to my own case load. Integrity, compassion, respect, equity, innovation, and collaboration are all core concepts that SRHD focuses on while delivering high quality, effective services to our unique and diverse Pacific Northwest community. As a team member of NFP, I am respected and valued for my experience, education, and work ethic.

As a Public Health Nurse, I have the resounding support from my agency, NFP's National Service Organization and my supervision team, that allows me autonomy, extensive training, and educational opportunities to continually grow in my practice, to help serve the community I love, while working currently, in the maternal and child health field.

How long have you been a nurse?

I have been a RN for almost 15 years.

Where did you study?

I graduated Magna Cum Laude from Washington State University's Intercollegiate College of Nursing, now known as Washington State University College of Nursing.

What do you like most about being a nurse?

Nursing is a diverse field, there are endless possibilities to where your career can lead you. From research to public health to acute care, the possibilities are never

ending. The science of nursing is ever-changing, leading to a lifetime of fascinating education and increased knowledge. The act of servitude to others is as gratifying to oneself, as it is integral to the community or population nurses serve.

Why did you want to be a nurse?

Early in my career I became a retail manager, eventually working myself up to a District Sales Manager for the entire West Coast, for a large corporation. I realized after several years that I was in a career solely for the high compensation. I did not find meaning, reward, or gratitude in my career choice. After having a family, I knew it was time for a drastic change. I needed a career that fed my soul, not just my pocketbook. I decided to return to college, graduated with a BSN in Nursing Science and have never looked back. I will always be an RN, even long after I retire.

What's something you wish people could know more about your profession?

When you become a RN, it is much more than a career choice. It literally becomes part of who you are to the core. For anybody considering a career in nursing, you will never regret it, because no matter how stressful, difficult, mentally challenging or tiring being a nurse can be at times, the rewards will always far outweigh your distress.

Anything else you want readers to know?

Public Health Nursing only represents a small population of nurses in our community. If you have ever considered changing nursing pathways, please consider being a Public Health Nurse, it is an extremely rewarding career choice. I personally, kind of landed here by default, but it was everything I never knew I wanted in a career. Seeking the highest pay in the nursing field does not always equate to the perfect work life balance. So please take into consideration all fields of nursing when making a career choice or changing your field of nursing.

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WSNA WASHINGTON STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION

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Ebonee Givens, RN

Honoring our nurses

The last 2 years have changed us. We mourn those we've lost to this pandemic, including the nurses who selflessly cared for those battling COVID-19. We see and feel things differently because of what we've experienced together – in health care and in our country.

Through it all, the 65,000 Kaiser Permanente nurses and more than 4 million nurses across our nation have reminded us what it means to **heal**, the importance of **dignity and grace**, and the power of **hope**.

This National Nurses Month we recognize and celebrate our nurses – leaders, clinicians, researchers, innovators, and scientists. We see your long hours, deep compassion, and true humanity.

Thank you for choosing to be a nurse, and for leading us through the last 2 years with your heart and professionalism. You honor those who came before you – and provide an example for those who will follow in your footsteps.

With deep gratitude,

Greg A. Adams
Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Kaiser Permanente