Once upon a time, there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.

He came closer still and called out, "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied, "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man.

To this, the young man replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But, young man, do you not realize that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "It made a difference for that one."

– Loren Eiseley
# Table of Contents

A Letter from the Chief Nursing Officer ................................................................. 2
About AtlantiCare .................................................................................................. 3
Transformational Leadership .............................................................................. 4
Structural Empowerment ................................................................................... 7
Professional Recognitions .................................................................................. 9
Community Awards and Recognitions ............................................................. 11
Professional Growth and Development ............................................................ 12
Community Care .................................................................................................. 14
Exemplary Professional Practice ....................................................................... 16
New Knowledge Innovation and Improvements ............................................. 21
Dissemination of Practice .................................................................................. 24
Nurses throughout AtlantiCare play vital roles in providing quality, compassionate care to our patients and customers. As leaders and as members of healthcare teams, we continually experience the importance of working together across the spectrum of healthcare services.

AtlantiCare nurses are integral members and leaders of professional teams, councils, and committees within the healthcare industry. Participation in research, in professional organizations, and in professional development has brought new initiatives to AtlantiCare and provided opportunities to identify and expand excellence in the delivery of nursing services.

Actively engaging with diverse populations across many communities as members and leaders of community organizations, AtlantiCare nurses contribute to the advancement of healthier, stronger communities. These individuals extend the impact of the nursing profession through expertise, education, and outreach, and help realize AtlantiCare’s vision of building healthy communities.

The synergies created through these experiences allow us to continually pursue excellence in our own work while sharing our successes and best practices with others. Through professional development and continuing education, AtlantiCare provides a wide range of opportunities for nurses to work with others—fellow nurses as well as all members of the interprofessional team.

“Caring Collaboration” goes beyond working together. It is the heart of AtlantiCare nursing: the dedication and excellence that we bring to our work; the drive to pursue and achieve optimal outcomes; the spirit of cooperation; and the passion for providing exceptional patient care and outstanding, personalized customer service.

At AtlantiCare, we believe that everyone can make a difference through caring collaboration. Many of our efforts are reflected in the pages that follow; many others live in a private moment with a patient or visitor or in an exchange of ideas or information between colleagues. These moments and these relationships matter. Thank you to each and every AtlantiCare nurse who is making a difference every day.

Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA-BC
Chief Nursing Officer, AtlantiCare
ABOUT ATLANTICARE

AtlantiCare, a member of Geisinger Health System, is an integrated system of services designed to help people achieve optimal health. It does so by focusing on customer needs and expectations to provide accessible, comprehensive services of superior quality and value. AtlantiCare is comprised of AtlantiCare Regional Health Services, including AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center with three locations, ambulatory services, and AtlantiCare Physician Group; the AtlantiCare Foundation; and AtlantiCare Health Solutions, an accountable care organization.

AtlantiCare’s more than 5,500 employees and 900 physicians and providers serve the community in more than 90 locations throughout six counties in New Jersey. A 2009 Malcolm Baldrige Award winner, AtlantiCare was also included in Modern Healthcare’s Best Places to Work in Healthcare in 2010. ARMC became the 105th hospital in the nation to attain status as a Magnet® designated hospital in March of 2004 and was redesignated a Magnet® hospital in 2008 and 2013.

AtlantiCare nurses share AtlantiCare’s vision, mission, and values.

**Vision:** AtlantiCare builds healthy communities.

**Mission:** We make a difference in health and healing, one person at a time, through trusting relationships.

**Values:** Safety, Teamwork, Integrity, Respect, Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Teamwork</th>
<th>Integrity</th>
<th>Respect</th>
<th>Service</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety for everyone is our top priority.</td>
<td>We work together to achieve our goals.</td>
<td>Our behaviors consistently reflect the highest ethical standards.</td>
<td>We treat each individual with dignity and compassion.</td>
<td>Kindness in the service of others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AtlantiCare has identified Performance Excellence Commitments–its “5Bs”–as dimensions that guide the organization to achieve strategic priorities.

| Best People and Workplace | Best Customer Experience | Best Financial Performance | Best Growth | Best Quality |

Nurses in all roles and settings collaborate with AtlantiCare colleagues in contributing to organizational strategic priorities through personal goals and project work.
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Fostering trusting relationships is the heart of AtlantiCare’s mission and an essential element in living the organization’s values. In an ever-changing healthcare landscape, collaborating with industry leaders and community groups representative of diverse populations is vitally important. AtlantiCare nurses are transformational leaders making a difference each and every day.

AtlantiCare nurses at all levels support organizational strategic priorities. Their talents, knowledge, passions, and service contribute to the advancement of strategic goals.

As a Magnet® designated organization, nurses embrace their professional responsibility and are empowered to transform care.

Robyn Begley, Chief Nursing Officer, is an influential leader who advocates for professional nursing practice and quality patient care. She creates an environment where communication is open and respect is palpable. Robyn nurtures an environment where evidence-based practice and innovations are the foundation for change. Under her leadership, nurses are valued, well-informed, and continuously strive to perform at the highest level.

One example of her advocacy and influence resulted in the procurement of additional resources to ensure nurses had the necessary resources and equipment to provide seamless care when infusion pumps being used were “sunsetted” by the vendor. She obtained feedback from numerous nurses caring for diverse populations. Using this feedback, she procured the best equipment to meet the needs of our patients while providing for an improved workflow. The addition of equipment control techs, a collaborative initiative with the Procurement Services and Logistics departments, has been instrumental in ensuring the right equipment is available in the right location for nurses to provide the best care without additional wait times for our patients. Pharmacists collaborate in maintaining the safety features of this equipment through continuous updating of the electronic medication library.

Providing a safe work environment and optimum workflow is important for all members of the healthcare team. Robyn collaborates with leaders and staff to improve workplace safety and enhance workflow design. The enhanced visibility of security officers and development of respectful collaborative relationships in our behavioral health settings have demonstrated a decrease in personnel injuries and improved quality outcomes.

Outside of work, AtlantiCare nurses contribute to the health and well-being through numerous activities. Nurses volunteer with many local and national organizations addressing basic and advanced needs. Housing, nutrition, education, financial support, addiction, mental health services, and safety are additional factors influencing health and wellness. Nurses’ service in the community exemplifies their professional commitment to improve health and wellness. Below is a small sample of the contributions being made by AtlantiCare nurses.
Janine Begasse, BSN, RN, CPHQ, Quality Manager, and Dianne Bottino, Customer Relations Manager, collaborate in the organization and coordination of AtlantiCare’s meal preparation and support volunteer program at Gift of Life Family House. Under their leadership, AtlantiCare employees prepared over 1,140 dinners for Gift of Life’s “Home Cook Heroes” program over the last two years.

Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, was elected in 2016 to the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) as the region 2 board representative (New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania). In this role, Robyn collaborates with nurse executives for public policy, research, professional advancement, and nursing leadership development at the national level. Robyn has been involved with ONL/NJ at the state level, previously serving as its president, chairing the Informatics Committee, and serving on the Advocacy Committee. Locally, one of Robyn’s contributions to the health of the community is serving as an active member of the Community Food Bank of South Jersey, where she serves on the advisory board. Its mission is to fight hunger and poverty by assisting those in need with long-term solutions.

Jeanne Edwards, BSN, RN-CEN, Emergency Room Clinical Nurse, Team Leader, and unit-based forum chair, has volunteered as a Big Sister for 15 years. This work enables her to build trusting relationships by mentoring young girls and fundraising for the program. Jeanne also volunteers with People/Animals = Companions Together (PACT), an organization fostering pets for deployed military personnel.

Lori Herndon, MBA, BSN, RN, President and CEO, AtlantiCare. As CEO and in previous executive roles, Lori has been instrumental in AtlantiCare’s strategic growth over the last decades. Lori contributes to community health as an advocate on several boards, including the American College of Healthcare Executives and the Ruth Newman Shapiro Cancer and Heart Fund.

Veronica McEvoy, MSN, RN, CCRN, SCRN, Professional Practice and Development Specialist, holds a mayorally-appointed position with the Municipal Alliance of Brigantine. As such, she provides education about drug and alcohol abuse to the community.

Donna Howell, MBA, BSN, RN, Assistant Vice President, Surgical Services, serves on the board of directors for Gilda’s Club. One of her important functions is to provide insight into the organization’s events, ensuring members continue to receive cancer support services without fees. She was also instrumental in the Gilda’s Club identification of a new CEO.

Tracey Reighard, BSN, RNC-OB, Clinical Director of Maternal Child Health, is a committee member for the Council of Young Children. In this role, Tracey utilizes her expertise to educate parents, caregivers, and community members about health and wellness, improving outcomes for infants and children up to eight years of age.

Throughout AtlantiCare, nurses contribute to advancing our profession and promoting health and wellness through our actions within our roles in AtlantiCare, in our personal communities, and beyond. Every day, wherever we go and whatever we do, we strive to make a difference.
Transforming Customer Experience

In early spring of 2016, AtlantiCare adopted Geisinger’s C.I.CARE customer experience standards. C.I.CARE guides all employees in facilitating meaningful, caring connections with colleagues, patients, and customers.

This framework aligns with the nursing theorist Jean Watson's Theory of Human Caring, which AtlantiCare nursing has adopted. Watson's theory is foundational to AtlantiCare's nursing practice and the provision of a caring, therapeutic environment for patients, nurses, and colleagues.

Implementation of a bundled approach to C.I.CARE strengthens communication, embellishes care coordination, and enhances patient-centered care. C.I.CARE is synergistic with AtlantiCare’s PACE (patients are the center of everything) approach to care delivery and exemplifies how patients are integral members of the care team.

The bundle encompasses hourly rounding by members of the unit care team; clinical nurse manager rounding; nurse bedside shift-to-shift reporting; and updating of the patient’s in-room whiteboard to enrich communication, foster collaborative care, and enhance care coordination.

Patient care rounding and proactive communication aids nurses in anticipating and addressing patient needs and engages the patients and families in their care.

Over the course of implementing and integrating C.I.CARE into daily customer experience care standards, AtlantiCare's customer experience index measures have improved.
STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT

AtlantiCare nurses demonstrate their commitment to the profession by taking advantage of many opportunities for professional growth, development, and career advancement. Committed to attracting and retaining exemplary talent and to empowering its employees, AtlantiCare offers a variety of continuing education opportunities, including structured programs for career growth; tuition reimbursement; national and advanced certification courses and trainings; and involvement in the development and implementation of specialized programs, among many other opportunities. Through personal and professional development, nurses incorporate best practices for patient care delivery and enhance their professional environment.

Career Advancements

During 2015 and 2016, nurses throughout the organization earned promotions and expanded their job responsibilities. A selection of nursing promotions highlights AtlantiCare’s commitment to professional development and recognition of service through the career advancement of its nurses.

**Kim Allen, MBA, BSN, RN-BC,** Clinical Director of the Center for Perioperative Medicine, Musculoskeletal Services

Kim joined AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center in 1998 as a staff nurse. She is a certified in orthopedic nursing and is a member of the National Association of Orthopedic Nurses. Kim has been instrumental in process improvement programs for AtlantiCare’s joint replacement patients, as well as the redesign and implementation of our Center for Perioperative Medicine.

**Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA-BC,** Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer of AtlantiCare Health System

Robyn joined AtlantiCare in 1985 and has held a variety of leadership roles throughout her nursing career. Her advocacy for nursing and enhancing the quality of healthcare has been recognized through her numerous awards and recognitions within AtlantiCare and by other professional organizations. Robyn volunteers on a variety of community and professional boards and community initiatives. She has disseminated her work through national, regional, and local forums. As chief nursing officer, Robyn oversees the standardization of nursing practice, ensuring the highest quality of professional practice across the system.

**Margaret Belfield, MSN, RN,** Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Clinical Services, AtlantiCare Health System

Margaret joined AtlantiCare as City Campus Administrator in 1999. She has been instrumental in expanding both clinical programs and care delivery locations to meet the healthcare needs of our diverse community. Margaret is a member of the New Jersey Hospital Association Policy Development Committee. She serves on the advisory board of the Gift of Life Program.

**Antomie (Tom) Blanco, BSN, RN, ONC,** Clinical Manager, 4 Harmony, ARMC City Campus

Tom joined AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center in 2008. His professional journey as a staff nurse/team leader and interim clinical manager prepared him for his current leadership responsibilities. He serves as the co-chair of the clinical nurse manager forum and is a member of the Geisinger System Nursing Council.
Larisa Goganzer, MSN, MBA, RN, Assistant Vice President, Support Services, ARMC, and ARMC Mainland Campus Administrator

Larisa has served in diverse roles within AtlantiCare. She began her career here as a staff nurse in the Child Birth Center in 1991. She has held a variety of nursing roles in Women’s Services, including Clinical Nurse Specialist, Manager, and Director. In 2005, Larisa accepted the role of Director of Special Projects where she oversaw the construction of the Harmony Tower at City Campus. She continues to oversee construction projects throughout both campuses along with her many additional responsibilities.

Mary Law, MSN, RN, Assistant Vice President, Quality and Accreditation

Mary began her career as a staff nurse in the telemetry unit at Mainland Campus in 1986. She subsequently joined the quality management team and led quality and accreditation activities for several business units. Her responsibilities include oversight of an integrated continuous quality improvement program focused on performance excellence. Mary is a member of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services Quality Improvement Advisory Council.

Other Notable Promotions:

Theresa Dunford, MSN, RN, APN, accepted the position of Cardiovascular Program Manager in April 2015 and was appointed to Acting Director of Cardiac Disease Management in November 2016.

Rachael Galego, BSN, RN, accepted the position of Department Director of Trauma in January 2015.

Mary Beth Kelly, MS, BSN, RN-CIC, accepted the position of Corporate Director, Patient Safety Officer Infection Prevention, in August 2016.

Roseann Kobialka, MBA, BSN, RN, accepted the position of Assistant Vice President, Organization Development, in August 2016.

Tracy Reighard, BSN, RNC-OB, accepted the position of Clinical Director for the Center of Childbirth in May 2016.

Nancy O’Connell, MBA, BSN, RN, accepted the position of Assistant Vice President of Physician Services in April 2016.

Ellen Wolownik, MBA, RN, accepted the position of Assistant Vice President of Home Care and Post-Acute Network.
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITIONS

AtlantiCare Nursing iCARE Awards
Each year, the AtlantiCare Nurse Executive Council recognizes nurses who exemplify excellence through its iCARE awards. Nurses are nominated for their contributions to nursing practice and professionalism. These nurses embody the AtlantiCare Nursing Professional Practice Model and enrich AtlantiCare’s Magnet® culture.

AtlantiCare Nursing Services also recognizes nursing colleagues with the AtlantiCare “Partners in Caring Excellence” awards. Both clinical and non-clinical employees are nominated for excellence in the provision of patient care, treatment, and services. These individuals provide compassionate patient care and are role models for collaboration.

iCARE Nursing Awards 2015–2016

**Transformational Leader Award**
Kathleen Borgard
Marlon Migioia
Janice Quay
Sharon Repko
Christina Reynolds
Ginny Rohan

**Exemplary Professional Practice Award**
Katherine Cosimi
Chet Dovidio
Jeanne Edwards
Kathy Fowler
Jean Guanchez
Valerie Hudson
Kathy Kirtland
Althea McCay

**Structural Empowerment Award**
Karen Bready
Patricia McCarthy
Molly McCloy
Jennifer Serback

Robyn Begley with Althea McCay
Robyn Begley with Molly McCloy
New Knowledge, Innovations, and Improvements Award
Brian Gershuny
Shannon Patel
Rocky Ricapito
Jamie Rosenthal
Edward Shulde Jr.
Summer Tinkcom

Caritas Nurse of the Year Award
Janet Adams
Doris Chen
Apple Luong
Shaye Springle

Virginia Laning Nursing Support Award
Elizabeth Minton
Charles Douglas-Ocasio
Samantha O’Brien

iCARE Partners In Caring Excellence Award (Clinical)
Cyndy Aker
Lisa Derer
Rose Ricapito
CarolAnn Gardler
Kimberly Turner
Tamara Karcheski
Josephine Norcross
Barbara Moyer

iCARE Partners In Caring Excellence Award (Non-Clinical)
Carol Ann Freeman
Lee O’Leary
Jose Segara
Alice Lewis
John Hunt
Wayne Brown

In 2016, AtlantiCare Nursing honored Lori Herndon, then executive vice president of AtlantiCare and president and CEO of AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center (ARMC), with an award in her name. The Lori S. Herndon ‘Make a Difference’ Award celebrates a nurse’s dedication to the advancement of health in all aspects of the AtlantiCare community. Lori’s tremendous accomplishments are an inspiration to AtlantiCare nurses, and the award will be conferred annually to recognize a nurse who systematically enhances the quality and effectiveness of nursing practice; exemplifies serving leadership; has made a significant contribution to promote the profession of nursing and nursing leadership within the organization and the community; and has demonstrated a commitment to continuous learning and self-development through formal education, certification, or continuing education.
COMMUNITY AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

AtlantiCare nurses are frequently honored for their work by community organizations. Highlights of these community-based recognitions for 2015–2016 include:

The Philippine Nurses Association of America recognized Rachel Baldomar, RN, BSN, CCRN, CNRN, SCRN, with its Community Service of the Year award in 2015.

The Southern Jersey Shore Chapter of ONS awarded Karen Brady, RN, OCN, its Service Award in 2015.

Cumberland County Community College named Sandra Dietrich, RN, MSN, MHA, as a Distinguished Alumni in 2016.

The Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey honored Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, with its Nurse Excellence Award in 2016.

Amanda Scholarship

Funded by the Cortopassi family in memory of nursing student Amanda Cortopassi, the Amanda Scholarship supports AtlantiCare employees and their family members early in their careers as they pursue a nursing education.

Established in 2005, the scholarship was presented to two recipients in 2016 to mark its ten-year anniversary.

2015 - Joshua DeLeon

2016 - Alexander Nieves and Beverly Staub

The DAISY Foundation™ Award

Founded by the Barnes family in memory of their son, Patrick, the DAISY Award™ recognizes the extraordinary efforts of nurses across the globe. The AtlantiCare Cancer Care Institute, a Fox Chase Cancer Center partner, names a DAISY honoree each year to recognize nurses’ clinical skill, leadership, exemplary patient care, and compassion.

2015 - Victoria Nicolicchia, RN, OCN

2016 - Evelyn Daretta, RN, BSN, OCN
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

AtlantiCare is dedicated to providing safe, quality care for patients and is committed to fostering a professional and engaging work environment for its employees. In line with these goals and with the Institute of Medicine's 2010 Future of Nursing report, AtlantiCare encourages its nurses to pursue specialty training, continuing education, academic advancement, and certifications to develop knowledge and skills benefitting patient care and our work environment.

In 2015, AtlantiCare provided $674,372 in tuition assistance to 281 registered nurses pursuing BSN degrees, 97 pursuing MSN degrees, and 23 doctoral candidates.

In 2016, AtlantiCare provided $960,132 in tuition assistance to 302 registered nurses pursuing BSN degrees, 120 pursuing MSN degrees, and 35 doctoral candidates.

Nursing Certifications
The AtlantiCare Nurse Memorial Fund, established in 2007, honors deceased AtlantiCare nurses and celebrates the spirit of nursing professionalism and life-long learning exemplified by those nurses whom it commemorates. Led by Chet Dovidio, RN-CMS, Diana Gillespie, MSN, RN-BC, and Kim Schunk, BSN, RN-C, and championed by Robyn Begley, the fund joined forces with the AtlantiCare Foundation in 2016. It provides financial support for nurses to pursue certification in a specialty field and to attend and disseminate work at educational programs and conferences.
In 2016, the AtlantiCare Cancer Center celebrated the completion of a multiyear-long goal of achieving 100% Oncology Certification Nurse (OCN) certification for all eligible nurses.

In 2015–2016, the following nurses completed specialty certification:

**2015 Certified Nurses**
- Michael Almendras
- Eileen Ball
- Jennifer Brandenberger
- Julia Brown
- Kristin Clarkson
- Cori Coane
- Theresa Cola
- Caitlin Doughtery
- Regina Edwards
- Holly Fittipaldi
- Bridget Foley
- Brigid Gallagher
- Brian Gershuny
- Cynthia Hasenbein
- Diana Henry
- Jennifer Kupp
- Alpha Lee
- Abigail Lenhart
- Stacey Meers
- Mary Migone
- Jacqueline Mizerek
- Bernadette Mooney
- Rose Moschella
- Kristin Mull
- Sara Neyers
- Ngocmy Nguyen
- Opalyn Nicholson
- Christina Petruskas
- Lorraine Quirk
- Christina Reich
- Emily Saganiec
- Katherine Sandberg
- Sara Scates
- Virginia Sprague
- Virginia Tullio
- Pamela Walch
- Danielle Weston

**2016 Certified Nurses**
- Loriann Adams
- Benedicta Arce
- Cheryl Barton
- Maureen Boyce
- Deborah Burke
- Stephanie Champion
- John Defrancisco
- Joseph Drogo
- Michael Farreny
- Roseann Foxx
- Editha Giannini
- Charlene Hauck
- Nicole Hudson
- Donna Kurtz
- Cristeta Manahan
- Colleen Manely
- Molly McCloy
- Mary Ann Michelfelder
- Bernadette Migioli
- Bethanne Miller
- Jennifer Miller
- Diane Morgenweck
- Matthew Parsell
- Payal Patel
- Laurie Paxton
- Casi Petit
- Sarah Pineda
- Beth Poinsett
- Andretta Randall
- Steven Ruhf
- Kimberly Rogers
- Lauren Rizzotte
- Jill Ryan
- Jennifer Serback
- Michael Simpson
- Laura Tabone
- Robert Washburn
- Krystine Wolf
- Gregory Wolownik

**ARMC Professional Nursing Certification 2014–2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent Certified</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>52%</td>
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</table>
COMMUNITY CARE

AtlantiCare nurses partner with community members through many programs and activities. They provide care, comfort, education, services, and hope through AtlantiCare’s many community programs and support groups assisting patients and community members in achieving and maintaining optimal health. These programs connect, coach, and assist patients and community members with basic needs, care coordination, and condition management.

Gift of Life Donor Program

The Philadelphia-based Gift of Life Donor Program serves eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware as the region’s organ and tissue transplant network. Gift of Life partnered with AtlantiCare’s critical care units to provide 64 life-saving organs and 75 bone and tissue donations in 2016. This special act of caring provides transplant recipients a second chance at life.

To honor and recognize the donor gift, family members, friends, and AtlantiCare staff sign a Gift of Life flag to commemorate their loved one and his or her act of kindness. AtlantiCare raises the signed flag for 24 hours, signaling to all how a member of our community made a life-saving donation. Once the flag is lowered, an AtlantiCare team member sends it to the family with a note.

AtlantiCare nurses and employees collaborate with the Gift of Life in other ways, including participation in the Gift of Life Donor Dash 5K and through volunteering as “Home Cook Heroes,” preparing meals for donor recipients and their families at the Gift of Life Family House in Philadelphia.

Ostomy Support Group

AtlantiCare clinical nurses Nancy Fonte, BSN, RN, CWOCN, AtlantiCare HomeCare, and Cathy Henry, BSN, RN, WOCN, AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, established the AtlantiCare Ostomy Support group in 2011. They saw a need and volunteered their time and experience to meet the needs of the patients in our community. Both nurses were supported in their efforts by organizational leaders. Over time, Kate Robbins, BSN, RN, WON, joined the team and the three now provide support, education, and advocacy in a healing environment where patients join peers for support and education, and exchange personal experiences and advice.

Through participation in this group, many members have become ostomy awareness advocates in the community. Feedback from this group has enhanced AtlantiCare’s approach to ostomy care in the acute care, ambulatory, and outpatient settings.
Stroke Education for the Professional Community

The AtlantiCare Neuroscience department sponsors an annual regional education symposium, AtlantiCare’s Stroke Summit, to provide continuing education about advances and best practices in stroke and neurosciences care for all healthcare providers. Summits held in 2015 and 2016 saw more than 350 attendees. Additionally, stroke team members and nurse volunteers educate the community at various health fairs and educational sessions throughout the region.

In addition, AtlantiCare nurses provide caring attention to our community members through their participation in many of AtlantiCare’s community programs:

- Trauma Prevention education
- Breast Cancer Support Groups
- Childbirth, Breastfeeding, and Baby Basics programs
- Perinatal Loss Group
- Preparing for Chemotherapy
- Preparing for Radiation Therapy
- Joint Replacement Pre-Surgery education

Joe Drogo at AtlantiCare’s 2016 Stroke Summit
EXEMPLARY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

AtlantiCare nursing is guided by the organization’s mission, vision, and values. Nurses collaborate with colleagues to implement best practices and ensure delivery of safe, ethical, patient-centered care.

A Tree Grows at AtlantiCare – AtlantiCare Nursing Philosophy

The Nursing Professional Practice Model represents AtlantiCare nurses’ philosophy for practice. Conceptualized with input from clinical nursing staff and leaders, our tree has evolved over the years to reflect the many complex and changing principles of professional nursing.

Patients, family, and community are at the center of nursing. Our tree depicts AtlantiCare nursing as rooted in our organization’s mission, vision, and values. The trunk of the tree represents our embrace of exemplary nursing practice, accountability, and caring, which lies at the heart of nursing.

The branches represent our standards of practice, code of ethics, and expectations for practice. Our customer experience communication approach, C.I.CARE, is represented as the sun, which nurtures caring interactions that form trusting relationships.

AtlantiCare nursing embraces Watson’s Theory of Human Caring, which encourages protecting and enhancing human dignity; inclusive caring; and authenticity in all interactions. These guiding principles empower all nurses to deliver exemplary professional nursing care through evidence-based practice leading to sustained quality outcomes in a culture of safety. Nurses are engaged in decision making through our shared governance model of councils, unit-based forums, and committees.

Professional Practice and Development Department

Established in 2015 to address the changing needs of nursing, the Professional Practice and Development (PPD) Department brings together interdisciplinary clinical nurse specialists, nursing practice coordinators, and nursing educators. PPD staff collaborate with colleagues in establishing and carrying out evidence-based practice; deploying education and resources to clinical nursing staff; establishing and maintaining nursing competencies; leading nursing orientation; and promoting professional development of AtlantiCare’s nursing staff.

Using the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Scope and Standards for Professional Practice and Development, this model creates synergy between nursing practice and nursing informatics. These two groups meet regularly through AtlantiCare's newly formed Practice, Education and Technology Council (PETC).

Over the past two years, the PPD team revised nursing orientation, patient care associate orientation, and AtlantiCare’s preceptor class to the benefit of employees. Simulation opportunities have been expanded and have enhanced collaboration with members of the clinical teams. Simulation technology enriches education through real-life situations in a safe practice environment.
Established in 2015, AtlantiCare’s Rising Stars Nurse Residency Program is designed to assist nurses new to acute care in cultivating and enhancing the knowledge and skills required to provide safe, quality nursing care. The program supports nurse residents as they adapt to a new environment and gain experience. This six-month program guides and mentors nurses. It builds confidence, skill sets, and relationships to provide safe, quality, patient-centered care.

Using a rolling schedule, the core content focuses on competencies identified by the Institute of Medicine, including:

- Patient-centered care
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Evidence-based practice
- Quality improvement
- Safety
- Informatics

Each session is taught by AtlantiCare clinical experts. Over the past two years, more than 60 nurse residents completed the program under the direction of Brenda Schmitt, BSN, RN, CCRN, and Angel Migliaccio, BSN, RN.


AtlantiCare PPD conducted orientation for more than 400 registered nurses and 200 unlicensed assistive personnel.

As a member of the New Jersey State Nurses Association, AtlantiCare awarded over 20,000 NJSNA contact hours to 3,616 participants throughout the state through AtlantiCare programs, conferences, and symposiums.

On-boarded 60 new-to-acute-care nurse residents through a newly revised AtlantiCare Rising Stars Nurse Residency Program. In 2016, the program was revised to reflect the QSEN-quality and safety competency components for nurses.

Over two years, 60 registered nurses completed the preceptor training program.

Provided clinical placements for over 800 nursing students from multiple academic colleges and universities.

Trained more than 75 participants in neonatal resuscitation.
AtlantiCare President’s Awards

Each year, AtlantiCare acknowledges the outstanding specialized work performed by teams across the organization. As collaborative partners, nurses are integral members pursuing work to implement best practices, address institutional opportunities, and find new and innovative methods to achieve AtlantiCare’s mission of building healthy communities. In 2016, the following teams were recognized as AtlantiCare President’s Award winners:

BEST GROWTH: Orthopedics Bundled Payments

Using the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) value-based payment guidelines, this team built processes including the Post-Op Day 1, where nurses and physical therapists collaborate to achieve patient ambulation within the first day for appropriate patient and discharge on day two. Within one year of implementation, this led to decreased length of stay, decreased costs, and maintained quality.

BEST PEOPLE, BEST WORKPLACE: Care of the Behavioral Patient in the Medical Setting

In an effort to provide quality care for medical patients with behavioral health needs, an interprofessional team developed a new, innovative care model to create a safe and secure environment where both medical and behavioral health conditions could be simultaneously addressed. The model is based on combining standardized evidence-based care protocols through a multidisciplinary team approach among behavioral healthcare experts, healthcare providers, the nursing team, and security personnel. The addition of in-unit security presence, video monitoring capabilities, and enhanced training for staff led to an increase in patient and staff satisfaction throughout City Campus.

BEST QUALITY: Got Milk? NICU Feeding Protocol

This team implemented infant feeding protocols designed to maximize nutrition for premature babies while minimizing the incidence of gastrointestinal inflammatory responses. The goal was also to decrease the use of central lines and avoid central line infections. Over the span of a year since implementation, central line days decreased by 20%; parenteral nutritional supplement (PNS) days decreased by almost 30%; and days to full oral feeding decreased by 25%.

INNOVATION: Sepsis Mortality Initiative

A multidisciplinary team established a goal for decreasing sepsis mortality by 20%. Utilizing electronic medical record technology, the team implemented an early recognition treatment bundle and fine-tuned coding and documentation of care to more accurately reflect impending sepsis. They also created an early warning support system activating the care delivery team members into the early evaluation and implementation of life-saving care actions. Outcomes included a decrease in sepsis days from 8.87 to 6.23; improved compliance with bundle measures; and a mortality rate decrease of 23%.
Nurse-Sensitive Indicators and Quality Outcomes

AtlantiCare nurses provide quality excellence through a culture of safety. Using nurse-sensitive quality indicator data, AtlantiCare regularly establishes interdisciplinary groups to address opportunities for improvements on quality measures. Nurse champions, comprising unit-based volunteers, advance quality improvement projects collaborating with colleagues, content experts, and leaders to improve outcomes. Through their collaborative actions, they formulate best practices and implement change. This integrative approach has created a culture of ownership, producing positive patient outcomes and increased staff satisfaction.

As a result of the concentrated efforts by nurse champions and AtlantiCare teams addressing quality initiatives, AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center has seen improved metrics in several areas, including:

Patient Falls and Hospital-Acquired Pressure Ulcers

AtlantiCare units have largely outperformed national benchmarks for patient falls with injury and hospital-acquired pressure ulcer results as compared to like units over the last two years. The National Database for Nursing Quality Indicators provides criteria for unit eligibility and submission elements. Each unit meeting eligibility requirements is compared to units across the county with similar patient populations. Aggregate results for all units outperforming like unit benchmarks are provided.

Aggregate Results – Inpatient Units

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Hospital-Acquired Infections

AtlantiCare’s Infection Prevention and Control team, led by Mary Beth Kelly, MA, BSN, RN, CIC, Corporate Director, Patient Safety and Infection Prevention and Control, established AtlantiCare’s healthcare-associated infection subcommittee. Comprising nurses at all levels across AtlantiCare, the committee collaborates with clinical partners to improve patient care, enhance safety, and achieve the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) performance thresholds.

Using a multimodal, evidence-based approach, the committee implemented strategies for improving catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI) and central line-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI) rates. Methods included unit and organizational defect analysis, heightened staff competencies for insertion, care and maintenance for catheters, and nurse-driven protocols.

Protocols established by the committee remain in place, and assessment to ensure proper procedure is an ongoing collaborative effort.
NEW KNOWLEDGE INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS

AtlantiCare’s Nursing Evidence-Based Practice and Research Council is responsible for promoting the conduct and evaluation of nursing research and the translation of new knowledge into practice. Nurse council members serve as leaders, consultants, educators, and mentors in research and evidence-based practice methods, creating a culture of inquiry, new knowledge, and innovation. Nurses from the council also serve as voting members of the Geisinger institutional review board, and ensure the safe conduct of research is carried out. Nursing leadership and AtlantiCare’s senior leaders encourage the dissemination of research and evidence-based practice.

New Nursing Professional Community Collaborative

Two nurse research council members were integral in the formation of the South Jersey Nursing Research and Evidence-Base Practice Consortium in 2015. Rose Scaffidi, DRNP, CNM, and Mary Jean Burke, MS, BSN, RN-BC, ARMC, Nurse Research Council chair and co-chair, led this collaborative along with faculty from Stockton University and nurses from Kennedy Health System and Inspira Health Network. The group held the inaugural research day, “Cracking the Code: Ethics in Research and Nursing Practice,” on November 4, 2015. Nine podium presentations and 25 posters were disseminated. In 2016, the consortium doubled its membership with four additional practice partners and one additional academic affiliate. The next research day is scheduled for the spring of 2017.

Research and Evidence-Based Practice 2015–2016 Highlights

Implementing infrared technology for early identification of ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke patients in the pre-hospital setting partnered neurosciences nurses and emergency medical response team members with Dr. Brett Greenfield, DO FACOEP/CAQ-EMS, FAEMS, Emergency Room Physician. The project is investigating a protocol to enhance field assessment and improve patient access to care. Rob Szapor, BSN, RN, is collaborating with Dr. Greenfield in leading this innovative work for 2017.

Identification of the hemorrhage stroke patient in the pre-hospital setting can result in more efficient triaging for hospital transfer determination, door to emergency department CT scan time reduction, and emergency severity index (ESI) triaging upon emergency department arrival. Use of this technology as a pre-hospital tool to enhance EMS stroke severity-adjusted triaging research continues. Initial findings were accepted for dissemination at the American Heart Association International Stroke Conference State-of-the-Science Stroke Nursing Symposium 2017 in Houston, TX.
Innovative Technology and Evidence-Based Collaborative Practice: Sepsis Mortality Reduction Initiative

AtlantiCare’s Sepsis Mortality Reduction Initiative facilitated the early recognition of sepsis and streamlined the evidence-based treatment of sepsis to improve patient outcomes and meet new CMS regulatory guidelines. Utilizing and enhancing clinical decision support tools in the electronic record, interdisciplinary team members, led by Sandy Dietrich, MSN, MHA, RN, and Edward Hamaty Jr., DO, collaborated in identifying staff education, enhanced documentation, clinical support decision-making tools, and communication as key strategies to reduce sepsis.

Team members designed support technology to enhance clinical workflow. Cloud server storage and data retrieval, including vital signs and laboratory findings, notified clinicians in real time about possible signs of systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS) and sepsis. Standardized language and forms guided clinicians in patient assessment and hand-off communication. Nurses and providers received electronic alerts to active prompt response to patient needs. Additionally, the team developed a multiphased order set, bundling orders together based on time-sensitive sequencing of clinical events.

This innovative use of technology based on evidence-based findings supports caring collaboration and resulted in a substantial improvement of the early identification of sepsis and SIRS, leading to a significant decrease in mortality.
Zero Suicide Initiative

In alignment with the Joint Commission’s National Patient Safety Goals regarding suicide prevention, AtlantiCare established a Suicide Prevention PI team in late 2014. During 2015, AtlantiCare joined the Zero Suicide Academy, a national initiative providing suicide education and prevention with the ultimate goal of reducing patient suicide to zero. Zero Suicide provides guidelines to identify potential suicide risks and offers protocols for intervention. These tools can be embedded into the nursing assessment, care coordination, and transition of care post-discharge. The work spans across our continuum of care, and integrates clinical and nonclinical providers across the AtlantiCare system.

Initial Impact

This interprofessional team, including physicians, nurses, social workers, behavioral health, and informatics, accomplished several goals in 2016, including: Zero Suicide education through a formal, eight-hour workshop for all AtlantiCare leaders; identification and dissemination of an education module deployed to all employees as a component of their annual education; redesign of electronic documentation supporting initial and ongoing assessments related to suicide; and the presence of a safety plan upon discharge for all inpatient behavioral health patients with a past history or attempt of suicide. This work is continuing into 2017. Nursing competency and ongoing assessment is integral to the success of our organizational goal for zero suicides.
DISSEMINATION OF PRACTICE

During 2015–2016, many AtlantiCare nurses shared best practices and clinical expertise throughout the United States and abroad.

2015–2016 Publications


Jennifer DeFelice, BSN, RN, CRNP, published “Atrial Fibrillation in Older Adults: What role should apixaban play in preventing thromboembolic disease?” in Advanced Healthcare Network, June 22, 2015.


Presentations

Ruth Agbowu, BSN, RN, CMS, CBN, PCCN; Beth Poinsett, MSN, RN-ONC; Marianne Michelfelder, BSN, RN; and Estrella Mijares, BSN, RN, CCRN, presented a poster, Surgical Skeletal Pin Site Infection Control: Translating Evidence-Implementing Change, at the National Association of Orthopedic Nurses Conference, June 2016 in Lake Buena Vista, FL; at the 2015 South Jersey Research Conference, at Stockton University; and at the Sigma Theta Tau International Conference in Puerto Rico.

Janine Begasse, BSN, RN, CPHQ, and Rachel Bohs, BSN, RN, presented Implement Sepsis Early Recognition Screening and Standardized Sepsis Treatment Protocols, Quest and partnership for Patients National Meeting, National Harbor, MD, June 20, 2016.

Joan Brennan, DNP, RN, CPPS, and Mary Law, MSN, RN, presented a podium presentation, Comprehensive Approach to Healthcare System Readmission Reduction, Premier Breakthrough National Conference, June 25, 2015.

Mary Jean Burke, MS, BSN, RN-BC, presented a podium presentation, The Power of Change, The Future of Nursing From Novice to Expert Education Day May 18, 2016, Freehold, NJ.

Joseph Drogo, MSN, RN, APN, AGA, CNP, CN, presented a podium presentation, Being on the Other Side: A Neuro Critical Care Provider’s Survivor’s Story, at the 2016 6th Annual Regional Neurosciences Conference and State of the Art Stroke Summit.

Kelly Heiler, BSN, RN, CNRN, and Veronica McEvoy, RN, MSN, CCRN, SCRN, presented a poster presentation on Our Journey to Zero CAUTI at the 2015 South Jersey Research Conference at Stockton University.

Rebecca Johnson, BSN, RN, CNRN, provided a podium presentation on Our Journey to Zero CAUTI at the 2015 TRENDS, SEPA Chapter AACN conference at King of Prussia, PA; as well as a poster presentation for the 2016 NJHA Learning Collaborative, Princeton, NJ.

Mary Beth Kelly, MS, BSN, RN-CIC, presented a podium presentation, Tag Team to Drop Kick Device Infections, at Premier Breakthrough National Conference, June 23, 2016.

Veronica McEvoy, MSN, RN, CCRN, SCRN, presented a poster on A Nurse-Led Intra-Collaborative Team to Decrease Sepsis Mortality at the November 11, 2016, NJCOMO conference in Princeton, NJ, and at the Geisinger Research Day in Danville, PA, October 2016.

Veronica McEvoy, MSN, RN, CCRN, SCRN, presented a poster on Preventing Harm to Newly Diagnosed Stroke Patients at the 2016 NJCOMO conference in Princeton, NJ.


Nancy Powell, PhD, MSN, CNM, RNC-OB, presented the keynote Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Preventing Moral Distress in Healthcare, 2015 AtlantiCare iCARE awards.

Ginny Rohan, BSN, RN, and Jennifer Serback, MSN, RN, presented a poster presentation on Medication-Assisted Treatment for Opiate Dependence: A Community-Based Program for the Care of Opiate-Dependent Patients at the 2016 National Magnet® Conference in Orlando, FL.

Jennifer Serback, MSN, RN, presented a podium presentation on Medication Assisted Treatment for Opiate Dependence: A Community Based Program for the Care of Opiate Dependent Patients at the 2016 Geisinger Research Day in Danville, PA.

Judi Snable, MSN, RN-BC, and Jaime Rosenthal, RN, presented a podium presentation titled One Click Away from Your EHR Update at the 2016 Geisinger Research Day in Danville, PA.

Rob Szapor, BSN, RN, and Veronica McEvoy, MSN, CCRN, SCRN, presented a podium presentation titled Preventing Harm to Newly Diagnosed Stroke Patients at the 2016 Geisinger Research Day in Danville, PA.

Kathryn A. Thomas, BSN, RN-OCN, coauthored poster Using Technology to Improve Patient-Provider Communication and Delivery of Quality Care at the 2016 American Society of Clinical Oncology Quality Care Symposium in Phoenix, AZ.

AtlantiCare’s Current Tides conference of 2015 brought together over 225 registered nurses. AtlantiCare nurses from across the organization gave presentations, including: Elizabeth Hendricks, MSN, APN-PCNP-BC, who presented a podium presentation titled Diabetes Care Across the Continuum—Unique Aspects of Care in Children with Type 1 Diabetes; and Denise Gallagher, MSN, APRN-BC, CDE, who presented a podium presentation titled Challenges in Glycemic Control in Adult and Geriatric Patients.