



We Did It!

Magnet Recognition Honors Health System Excellence

At 10:30 a.m. on Aug. 18, the University of Virginia Medical Center publicly entered the ranks of nursing excellence.

American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition is the highest accolade an organization can achieve for nursing excellence, earned by only 3 percent of United States healthcare institutions.

Magnet organizations demonstrate best practices throughout the nursing profession. At Magnet institutions, nurses are empowered and supported by leadership and clinical colleagues. These institutions also play an important role in conducting high-level, evidence-based nursing research. Nationally, nurses in Magnet organizations report high morale and greater job satisfaction, and average nurse retention rates are twice as long as those in non-Magnet institutions. High-quality nurses help attract the best physicians, too.



"Magnet Champions" throughout the clinical staff served as motivators and role models. They included, left to right: Scott Singel, R.N., clinician IV, flight nurse, Pegasus; Malinda Whitlow, R.N., clinician III, 3 Central/3 West; and Deborah French, R.N., 5 East.

After taking ANCC's congratulatory call, UVa Medical Center's Chief Clinical Officer and Chief Nursing Officer Pamela F. Cipriano, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN, said, "This recognition validates years of work initiated and sustained by our nurses. This recognition also underscores that our institution has both excellence in nursing care and a organization committed to ensuring the best outcomes for patients."

According to the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, "Recognizing quality patient care and nursing excellence, the Magnet Recognition Program provides consumers with the ultimate benchmark to measure the quality of care they can expect to receive."

Magnet hospitals are more likely to have higher patient

satisfaction and better patient outcomes, more positive nurse-physician relationships and lower mortality rates than non-Magnet hospitals. According to a 1999 survey by market research firm Wirthlin Worldwide, 93 percent of the public would have more confidence in a hospital's quality if it had passed the nursing standards required for Magnet Recognition.

The Magnet Journey

Applying for Magnet Recognition is a huge undertaking for any institution, but to pull together evidence from throughout a large, diverse organization such as the University of Virginia Medical Center was extraordinary. The Magnet journey began in 1999 at the grassroots, when staff nurses presented the concept to the Professional Nursing Staff Organization (PNSO).

The following year, an exploratory committee took its recommendation to Health System executives, who, led by UVa Executive Vice

(over)

Magnet Celebration

Sept. 18

Hospital East

Dining Conference Rooms

4 a.m. to midnight

All employees are invited.

Festivities will take place periodically until midnight.

Look for details in a Help Desk announcement.



UVa Medical Center's Recognition Program application required 1,918 pages of documentation, compiled in 16 volumes.

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Magnet Recognition is the culmination of many years of work by our nurses to develop the highest standards of care, to build a culture of shared governance, and to exemplify the role of nurses as leaders. Thanks to each and every one of you who made this achievement possible.

R. Edward Howell, vice president and CEO UVa Medical Center

President and COO Leonard Sandridge, provided budgetary support for staff and space.

“Magnet Recognition is great for our Medical Center, our patients and the nurses that are essential to all that we do,” said Sandridge. “It underscores the quality and exceptional skill of the nurses that we all admire and respect. I am very proud of the entire team.”

One of the original presenters, Kathleen Rea, MSN, R.N., APRN-BC, clinician IV in surgical and digestive health; and PNSO Past President Pam Dennison, MSN, R.N., APRN-BC, an APN I in acute cardiology, were named Magnet Steering Committee co-chairs. For the next seven years, they ate, drank and slept Magnet in addition to their clinical responsibilities, eventually enlisting more than 600 nurses’ direct participation in the process.

Continuing staff and leadership commitment was critical. “Magnet Recognition requires that UVa Medical Center display ‘14 Forces of Magnetism’ that address everything from leadership to cutting-edge care to quality improvement,” said Cipriano. “Every step of the way we focused on what was required and on making sure our organization had a real commitment and put the resources behind it.”

“Mr. Howell gave us his complete trust and fully supported nurses throughout,” said Dennison.

Constant self-evaluation became a way of life. The Nursing Research Program was established to enhance clinical inquiry. “Magnet Champions,” primarily nurses but also physicians and residents, motivated

team members, promoted an optimistic mindset and served as role models for best practices in patient care. Initial document submission took place in 2003.

“I’ve known what a top-notch hospital and what excellent nurses we have my whole career here, but now people throughout the country will know about it,” said Magnet Champion Jackie Roberts, R.N., clinician III, Midlife Health at Northridge. “The reason that the UVa Health System works is teamwork, and I made that very clear to the Magnet representatives.”

Additional recognition programs were created, including Week of the Nurse, “It Takes a Team,” “Showcasing Nursing Excellence,” “Shining the Light on Patient Care” and “Say Thanks and Recognize.”

Last March, the Health System submitted a 16-volume, 1,918-page application for Magnet Recognition.

In May, the ANCC announced it would perform a site visit, a step granted few applicants. In June, Magnet Appraisers met with Health System and PNSO leaders, conducted more than 300 hours of interviews, visited every practice area, met 57 nurse escorts and spoke at length with 91 randomly selected nurses.

Official Magnet Recognition arrived on Aug. 18.

While arduous, the journey alone made a difference, said Rea: “We’ve improved the workplace, we’ve made a clear statement about how we value nurses and nursing as a profession, we can recruit more strongly and we’ve shown that the UVa Health System provides the best patient care anywhere.”

One Step At A Time

- ◆ Kathleen Rea and Jolie Crowder, acute care staff nurses in a School of Nursing graduate course, learn of Magnet Recognition Program while exploring issues of retention.
- ◆ Magnet Recognition Exploratory Committee conducts gap analysis around Magnet standards.
- ◆ Nursing Cabinet votes to seek Magnet Recognition.
- ◆ Health System executives confirm organizational and fiscal support, followed by administrators and managers.
- ◆ Magnet Recognition Steering Committee formed.
- ◆ First annual Nursing Worklife Survey.
- ◆ Magnet Recognition Application Committee formed.
- ◆ Health System joins National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators for external benchmarking.
- ◆ Nursing and interdisciplinary recognition events established.
- ◆ First *PNSO Annual Report* published.
- ◆ Magnet Champions “Training Day” keynoted by UVa Coach Al Groh.
- ◆ Initial Magnet documentation submitted to ANCC.
- ◆ PNSO and Health System leadership reaffirm commitment to Magnet Recognition.
- ◆ Nursing Research Program established involving more than 100 nurses. Studies have guided new protocols for blood pressure and temperature measurement in addition to changes in care of intravenous lines.
- ◆ Human Resources helps build an R.N. demographic database capturing education, certifications, professional memberships and community service, a Magnet requirement.
- ◆ **March 30** – 1,918 pages of documentation submitted in Magnet application.
- ◆ **May 2** – ANCC grants June site visit.
- ◆ **June 20-23** – Magnet Appraisers’ site visit involves every practice area.
- ◆ **August 18** – ANCC grants UVa Medical Center Magnet Recognition.

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Editor: Sally Ruth Bourrie Art Director: Diane Butler Contributors: Pam Dennison, Kathleen Rea Photography: Jackson Smith, cover; Health System Media Services



P.O. Box 800224
Charlottesville, VA
22908-0224

434-924-8053

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