

Professional Development

Nursing Professional Development Opportunities

A hospital cannot continue the growth of excellence in nursing practice and patient care without a strong system of support for professional development. Exceptional onboarding, continuing education and programs and resources that support professional and career growth are readily available to Froedtert nurses.

Onboarding for transition to practice includes formal orientation, nurse residency, preceptors and specialty fellowships, such as the critical care fellowship. A clinical nursing mentor program is available following orientation. Continuing education offerings include Nursing Grand Rounds, specialty education and online modules. Skills fairs and inservices assure nurses are competent and receive the training they need for their role. Centralized and decentralized nurse educators provide support for the vast quantity of available offerings.

Many Froedtert nurses seek to further their education through advanced degrees. The tuition reimbursement available to nurses is very generous, with multiple nursing scholarship opportunities as well. A Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree completion program has been offered on-site for more than a dozen years. Recently, an on-site Master of Science in Nursing degree program was added in response to information gleaned from surveying nurses regarding graduate education needs and preferences.

Froedtert Hospital nurses hold more than 600 specialty certifications in over 50 nursing specialties. Board certification is highly valued and validates specialty expertise. A variety of resources support nurses in obtaining and sustaining this credential. Online and on-site review courses, as well as study groups are available. The hospital also contracts with several certification boards to participate in programs that provide two important features: the ability to take the exam a second time, if needed, without penalty and billing of the hospital directly, after the nurse successfully passes the exam. Both features have improved the nurses' experience with the certification process.

There are many resources for nursing research, evidence-based practice and quality improvement. An annual Nursing Research Conference provides opportunities for clinical nurses to share their activities and outcomes.

A monthly Nursing Journal Club and Virtual Journal Club also engage nurses in reviewing the latest evidence to support practice. Medical College of Wisconsin library resources, including a dedicated librarian, are readily available. Nurse scientists, clinical nurse leaders, clinical nurse specialists, nurse educators, and patient safety and process improvement specialists all support nurses and teams as they pursue and participate in projects.

Another opportunity for Froedtert nurses is the Nursing Professional Development Pathway (PDP). The PDP promotes nursing professional development, with Level 3 and 4 nurses recognized and rewarded for their achievement.

The Career Mobility Center is a resource that provides coaching, mock interviews, resume review and guidance as nurses seek to grow their careers. A Nursing Professional and Career Development Fair and college fairs are also provided. Opportunities for leadership growth are many, such as emerging leader educational offerings and serving as the leader of a committee, shared governance council or work group. Nurse participation in nursing and interprofessional decision-making groups is extensive. Along with nurses being involved in decisions that affect their practice, these

opportunities provide for additional engagement, growth and development.

A significant professional development resource is the Simulation Center at Froedtert Hospital. The Center supports the implementation of best clinical practices while fostering teamwork, enhancing communication and building confidence in clinical judgment. In the last two years, over 4,000 hours and 100 courses of simulation-based learning have transpired. The Center has gone well beyond the traditional simulations offered, such as the highly valued medical emergencies simulations in RN orientation. A wide variety of interprofessional simulations are developed to meet unique needs, such as the Behavioral Emergency Response Team and the Labor and Delivery patient safety team communication skills simulations. Simulations are also provided throughout the Nurse Residency program. With state-of-the-art simulation-based learning, along with all of the other resources and programs that support Froedtert nurses' professional development, the opportunities are endless. ■

A wealth of professional development opportunities assures nurses can achieve the highest levels of competence and career growth.