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2019
HAPPY NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

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just isn’t enough... but it’s a start!

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
Celebrating 2019 National Nurses Week
May 6-12
Nursing numbers to know

By Melissa Erickson

On the list of most in-demand jobs for 2019 from jobs site CareerCast, registered nurse ranked third, behind application software engineer and medical service manager. Right now is a great time to be or to become a nurse. Look at these statistics:

1.6 million
With an aging population and exciting advances in medical care, the country is in great need of more healthcare professionals. Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce projects that the economy will create 1.6 million openings for nurses through 2020.

200,000
The nursing workforce is facing a projected shortfall of about 200,000 by 2020, according to the Center on Education and the Workforce.

Of the job openings, 700,000 will be newly created opportunities, and 880,000 will result from retirements.

$68,450
The median wage for registered nurses is $68,450, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Earning potential rises with specialization and experience and varies by location and other factors. For example, the median wage of a nurse practitioner is $107,460.

15 percent
Rising faster than the average, registered nurse employment is expected to grow at 15 percent through 2026, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

No. 1
For the 17th consecutive year, Americans named nursing as the most trusted profession, according to Gallup Poll. More than four out of five people rated the honesty and ethical standards of nurses as high or very high.

61 percent
While hospitals employ the largest number of registered nurses, 61 percent, other opportunities for employment include nursing and residential care facilities (7 percent) and doctors’ offices (7 percent).

Top 5
Physician assistant was ranked No. 3 on U.S. News & World Report’s list of Best Jobs of 2019. Nurse anesthetist tied for fifth place with orthodontist.
There’s a misconception that burnout, which is widespread in nursing, is an individual’s responsibility. Many experts say that when demands grow too large, changes must be made at both the personal and organizational levels.

“Burnout occurs along a continuum. There’s a very strong element of emotional exhaustion, lack of personal accomplishment, lack of meaning that occurs over time. You don’t just wake up one day feeling it. It’s an insidious process,” said Cynda Rushton, professor of clinical ethics at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing.

At the most severe is burnout syndrome. “Burnout syndrome consists of three primary components: exhaustion — both emotion and physical — depersonalization and reduced feeling of accomplishment,” said Vicki S. Good, chief quality officer at Mercy health system in Springfield, Missouri, and a past president of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.

Severe burnout is identified when clinicians experience all three components. About 30 percent of clinicians are experiencing severe burnout syndrome and up to 60 percent of clinicians are experiencing mild to moderate burnout syndrome, with one to two symptoms, Good said.

Burnout occurs because of a whole range of factors, from an individual’s coping style to unrelenting stress in the workplace and outside of it, Good said. Moral distress can also play a part if a clinician’s sense of integrity is compromised, Rushton said. Sometimes there is a restraint against what a clinician knows she ought to be doing (for example, spending more time with a patient) and so she can’t be the nurse she wants to be, Rushton said.

It’s not a matter of simply becoming more resilient, although building up personal resilience is beneficial. “Clinicians must be able to meet the challenges without so much cost to ourselves,” Rushton said.

When a clinician is headed toward burnout, the first steps are prevention and awareness so that interventions can be taken, Good said.

Seek resources

Many facilities have programs for employees primarily focused on the physical health of their coworkers, such as mindfulness and exercise programs. “While these programs have clear benefits for physical health, there is a clear impact to the emotional health of the nurse as well. Seek out opportunities to seek guidance from Employee Assistance Programs, peer mentors or other networking/support groups,” Good said.

Get your rest

“It is essential for the human brain to have breaks in performance. How many shifts are you working in a row? During your shift, are you taking your scheduled break time? When was your last ‘vacation’ or time off the unit?” Good said.

Develop resiliency

“Resilience skills are different for every individual. Some nurses will respond well to mindfulness activities such as meditation, others prefer physical exercise and others prefer to engage in outside hobbies,” Good said. “It is important to identify how you best respond and bounce back from stressful situations and know that it is critically important to build in recovery and resilience time.”

Beating burnout is not on the backs of clinicians alone. “Individual responsibility is important, but organizations also have to commit to removing the barriers that make burnout happen,” Rushton said. “Burnout is not a failing. The demands have exceeded capacity.”
HAPPY NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

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Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

Celebrating 2019 National Nurses Week
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Jennifer Hugho, RN, PCCN
Clinical Manager Med-Surg / ICU

When I was a senior in High School, I had no idea of what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Knowing I would have to find a way to earn a living, I went to my High School counsellor who suggested enrolling in the Community College’s Licensed Vocational Nursing program. I did that, not thinking that this would be a life-long career, but once in class, I was inspired by a particularly dynamic instructor who changed my life. I knew that Nursing was something I was called to do.

After graduating as an LVN in 1973, I began to take prerequisites for the Bachelor of Nursing program at the University of Hawaii, and continued to work as an LVN. It was a slow process as I could only take 2 classes at a time. In 1985, after being accepted into the BSN program at the University, life got in the way, and I moved to Ridgecrest with my husband who had started his dream job at China Lake. I worked as an LVN on all floors of the hospital for the next 15 years and thanks to the cooperation of Ridgecrest Regional Hospital and Bakersfield Community College, I was able to continue my nursing studies, graduating from Bakersfield Community College and become a Registered Nurse.

I worked in the Intensive Care Unit for the next 8 years, and when the position of Interim Manager of Med/Surg and ICU became available, I was asked to apply and was promoted to Manager. It was never my intent to be in management, but after 6 months on the job, I knew I could do the job, and applied for the permanent position as Manager of Med/Surg and ICU. I have been in this position for the past 9 years.

After 46 years in Healthcare, I am now preparing for retirement, and I am grateful for this rewarding career. I have had both wonderful and challenging experiences while caring for patients, and have grown immeasurably from that 17 year old who didn’t know what to do with her life. Nursing changed my life.
Nursing Profiles | Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

Kerrie Patrick, RN, BA

Born and raised in rural Alberta, Canada, I attended the University of Calgary where I majored in History and minored in Microbiology. After receiving my Bachelor’s Degree, I was swept off my feet and whisked away to the United States by my now husband of 19 years. Following in the footsteps of my mom and sister, I received my nursing degree in 2003 from a college in Kentucky. I started in Emergency Nursing, and have since worked in Medical Surgical, Obstetrics, and Clinical Informatics before returning to my true passion, the ER. Through the next 16 years, I was blessed to have worked with amazing people in Kentucky, Illinois, and Vermont. In 2017, my husband, our son and I, moved to California where we can indulge our love for sunshine and Disney. Working in the Emergency Department at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital has truly been an exceptional experience.

Christina Murphy, RN, ADN

I was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. I was raised in Lake Isabella, California where I attended Kern Valley High School. During high school I obtained my CNA certificate. After graduation I was fortunate enough to work at Kern Valley Skilled Nursing facility for 7 years. During those 7 years I attended Santa Barbara Business College where I obtained my LVN certificate. I stayed at Kern Valley Hospital as an LVN for 7 years and during those 7 years I obtained my Registered Nursing degree at Bakersfield College. I worked at Kern Valley Hospital’s ER for a year before transferring to Ridgecrest Hospital’s ER where I am currently working. I thoroughly enjoy being a nurse and working in the ER where I am able to help attend to the health needs of this amazing community.

Tayler Jaeger, LVN

I was born and raised here in Ridgecrest and I knew from when I was in grade school that I wanted to be a nurse. I began schooling up at Cerro Coso and graduated with my LVN in 2016. I started my nursing career here at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital in 2017 and currently have applications in for continuing my education to become an RN, but I am undecided on what field. I currently work at the Rural Health Primary Care Clinic and the best part of working there are my amazing coworkers and being able to make connections with my patients. Witnessing how they progress in their health throughout the year keeps my motivation going. A big highlight in my day is being able to see them smile and feel more optimistic about their health after a visit. I will always try to get one smile out of them before I leave the room.
Jennifer Melchor, RN, MSN

I am one of RRH’s home grown nurses. I started here as a unit secretary in 2004 on the Med-Surg. After seeing the difference my coworkers were making in our patient’s lives, I decided I wanted to be a nurse as well. I earned my LVN in 2009, and worked on the Med-Surg floor while I continued to work towards my RN. I earned my RN in 201. In 2014, I transferred to the case management department. During this time, I earned my Master’s Degree in Nursing. Currently I am the Clinical Supervisor of the Case Management, Social Services and Utilization Review department. Although I am not in bedside nursing anymore, the work that myself and my staff does really makes a difference. We help patients transition back into the community safely. I love working for RRH and very grateful for the support they have given me to help me achieve my dreams. But most of all I love being a nurse and it is a privilege to serve our community. I hope to continue for many years to come.

Laurie Hewlett, RN-ADN

I knew at a very early age that I was going to be a nurse and I have had that privilege in this community for 30 years now! I graduated the LVN program at CCCC in 1989, and still work with some of those nurses in this community. I worked as an LVN for 14 years, before the opportunity became available to go back to school and get my RN, through CCCC/Bakersfield College Bridge program in 2002.

I have been employed at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital for 31 years now. This career is everything I ever imagined it would be. I still love my job and would never even dream of doing anything else. I work with some amazing people at this hospital and feel very fortunate to have been a part of this facility for so many years. I have encountered all manner of patients, and would like to think that I continue to learn and grow from every patient I meet.

I have been a part of birth, death and everything in between. I have been influenced, changed, humbled, grown, educated and enlightened by my patients, in this career. I have laughed, cried, consoled and been consoled by these same patients. I hope that I have touched them in a positive and rewarding way, by caring for them, as their nurse.

It has been a wonderful career and I am thankful for being able to still do it today.
I have always looked up to my mom and the work that she has done over the years as a nurse. I guess you could say that becoming a nurse was in my blood. No matter what path I followed, it always led me towards being in the medical field. I had this internal drive that seemed to always push me in that direction.

I graduated from Bakersfield College with my RN in 2012 and started working at Ridgecrest Hospital only a month later. I have worked in multiple areas ranging from Med-Surg, Emergency and now our Outpatient/Ambulatory Surgery department. I hope to further my education and career in the future but right now I am enjoying life as a working mother of two beautiful boys that are my whole world. Motherhood and being a nurse are two of my greatest passions that I hold very close to my heart.
Nursing Profiles | Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

Jesse Allande, RN

I was born and raised in eastern Tennessee. I graduated from Roane State Community College with my RN in 2006 and have furthered my education at East Tennessee State University and University of Phoenix. I have always had a passion for helping others and knew I wanted to become a nurse from a young age. I came to Ridgecrest in 2012 as a traveling nurse in the home health and hospice department but quickly took a permanent position at RRH. Ridgecrest is a unique and wonderful community and the hospital is a great place to learn, grow and make a difference. I continued to work within the home health and hospice department for a few years before becoming the hospice supervisor. In 2016 I transferred into the outpatient setting. In 2018 I began facilitating diabetes education empowerment classes for the community. I am blessed to be able to not only provide nursing services but also empower people in the health and wellness while also helping to lead and develop other nurses. I enjoy seeing the impact that RRH has on our community.

Stephanie Hall, RN, BSN, MSN

Stephanie Hall RN, BSN, MSN Edu, works as a Charge Nurse in the Medical-Surgical (Med-Surg) Department at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital. She has 22 years of experience in Med-Surg, Emergency and Critical Care Nursing and is a member of the American Nurses Association. After graduating she worked in various positions at the Kingston Public Hospital in Kingston, Jamaica, where she gained a thorough understanding of how to be a nurse that a patient can rely on in their time of need.

Stephanie later shifted her focus to educating students working to become nurses themselves. She gained additional experience and perspective by spending time at Jackson Memorial Hospital’s Critical Care Department in Florida. She participated in a collaboration program with the Centre for Nursing Studies in St. Johns, Canada to facilitate LPN coursework for nurses in Jamaica wishing to migrate to Canada.

In 2011, she migrated to Ridgecrest, completed her California State Board of Nursing examination and later became an employee of the hospital. Her nursing career has been dedicated to creating high quality, reliable systems of care and developing the next generation of nurses and health care professionals to lead in these ever-changing times.

More about
Jesse Allande, RN
Clinical Manager, Primary Care Clinic, Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
HOMETOWN
Kingston, TN
EDUCATION
Roane State Community College, RN

More about
Stephanie Hall, RN, BSN, MSN
Clinical Nurse III, Med-Surg, Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
HOMETOWN
Montego Bay, Jamaica
Migrated to USA in 2011
EDUCATION
University of the West Indies, Jamaica, Master of Science in Nursing Education
University of the West Indies, Jamaica, Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing
Critical Care Training Program, Kingston Public Hospital, Jamaica, Certificate in Critical Care Nursing
Kingston School of Nursing, Jamaica, Registered Nurse Certificate
Becoming a nurse was always a life-long aspiration for me, and I finally achieved it in 2007 when I graduated from the ADN program at Bakersfield College. My first nursing job was at Kern Medical in the ER in Bakersfield, CA, which I fell in love with and cannot imagine doing anything else. I returned to Ridgecrest in 2009 to be closer to my family and to serve my community in the ER at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital bringing with me a foundation of trauma and critical care experience. Although I have had many obstacles to hurdle, I decided to go back to school to receive my BSN, and I will graduate in May! Although working in the emergency department can be demanding and grueling, this is where my heart is and I love it!
Ridgecrest Regional Hospital honors our diverse and incredible nurses that make a difference everyday.

Thank you to our amazing nursing team for your tireless work and dedication!

We rely on nurses in our clinics and departments to provide care to our patients. From infants to the elderly, our nurses impact the lives of their patients at every stage. We thank our nurses from all the departments and clinics at RRH.

Bella Sera  
Cancer Center  
Cardiac Rehab  
Cardiovascular  
Dental  
Dermatology  
Emergency Care  
Gastroenterology  
Home Health  
Hospice  
Intensive Care Unit  
Laboratory  
Mountain View  
Occupational  
Medical Clinic  
Orthopedics & Sports Medicine  
Outpatient  
Rehabilitation  
Perinatal  
Personal Care  
Podiatry  
Radiology  
Respiratory  
Therapy & Sleep Lab  
Rural Health Clinic  
Southern Sierra Medical Clinic  
Surgery & Outpatient  
Transitional Care & Rehab Unit  
Trona Clinic  
Urgent Care Clinic  
Women’s Health

From all of us to all of you  
THANK YOU!
‘GIVE HOPE’

Tips for communicating with elderly patients

By Melissa Erickson

learning how to communicate effectively with aging health-care consumers is a fundamental skill for the nurses who treat them.

Laura Reyher, instructor of nursing at West Texas A&M University, has dedicated almost her entire career to providing care to and teaching others how best to care for geriatric patients.

“Nurses can make a big difference in their geriatric patients’ lives with the right communication skills,” she said. “We can help prevent complications, reduce the likelihood of being readmitted, promote recovery, improve their ability to care for themselves and help keep them independent as long as possible.”

One of the challenges is that geriatric patients may be experiencing a variety of issues, including pain, chronic illness, disability, sleeplessness or fear of becoming dependent, Reyher said.

Don’t assume these issues will make them unable to comprehend what a nurse is saying. If they don’t have cognitive problems, “geriatric patients can always learn new information, but they usually need a little extra time to process everything,” Reyher said.

Recognize that an older patient might have sensory challenges. If he’s lying in bed, he may have taken off his glasses or hearing aids, Reyher said.

Make sure patients are in a good state to listen to your directions. Check to see if they got enough sleep the night before. If a patient was up most of the night, she may need a nap before you talk with her, Reyher said.

“Speak slowly; do not shout,” Reyher said. Many women have higher-pitched voices, which can be more difficult to hear. Use a lower tone of voice and add extra breath-force in voice when speaking, Reyher said.

Remember that medications can cause drowsiness, foggy thinking and confusion, and that anesthesia can have prolonged effects on a patient’s thinking abilities, Reyher said.

A few more of Reyher’s tips to communicate effectively with geriatric patients:

• Ask if they would like to go to the restroom before your talk.
• Be sure there is good lighting in the room with light on the nurse’s face. Don’t sit with your back to the window. Turn down the television or close the door to limit background noise.
• Always sit down at eye-level where they can easily see you.
• Use plain language with no abbreviations or acronyms.
• Provide all handouts with large print and include only necessary information written at about a fifth-grade level. Make sure there is plenty of white space with bullet-point information in order of importance. “Health-care information can be like a foreign language regardless of their educational level,” Reyher said.
• Tell them to ask their pharmacist to put large print on medicine bottles.

“Medication errors are the leading cause of emergency room visits for geriatric patients,” Reyher said.

• Use the “show me, tell me” technique after sharing important information to help with understanding and to spot gaps in knowledge. For example, after demonstrating how to change a wound dressing, ask the patient to show you how to do it.
• Watch for signs of anxiety, depression and/or hopelessness.
• Take your time. The tone of your voice and the look on your face and in your eyes can demonstrate to a patient that you care about him.
• Always ask patients whether they have family nearby and if they would like their family to be present when you share information. They can be the extra set of eyes and ears to help absorb the information.

“As a nurse, it’s helpful to recall a senior adult in your life who was special to you and think about how you would want them treated,” Reyher said. Ask a few questions about their lives, such as where they grew up, what they did for a living or if they have grandchildren.

“Never forget the power of touch. Geriatric patients often feel untouchable and that no one cares for them. The nurse’s gentle touch on their hand or shoulder can tell a patient that they really care about them,” Reyher said.

“Lastly, give hope. Be encouraging and positive. Put a smile in your voice.”

Including social workers, pharmacists, doctors, physical therapists and home health aides, she said.
Honor
Your Favorite Nurse
During National Nurses Week

The Development Foundation welcomes you to join us in honoring your FAVORITE NURSE.

The Grateful Patient Program at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Development Foundation is a thoughtful way to show your gratitude to your favorite nurse for the exceptional care that you or a loved one has received.

When you make a gift of $35 or more in honor of someone who has provided you or a family member with outstanding care, the person you are honoring will be sent an acknowledgement of your appreciation, along with an angel charm to wear on their badge.

Every gift – regardless of size – makes a difference and is truly an investment in the health of our community...

For more information, please contact Kim Metcalf at (760) 499-3955 or email us at kimberly.metcalf@rrh.org.
You can also find information or make at www.rrh.org.
Any day is a good day to celebrate America’s nurses. After all, every day patients enter medical offices and facilities and spend more time with nurses than any other health care provider. Since 1993, the American Nurses Association has set aside a week to celebrate and elevate the nursing profession. This year, National Nursing Week is set for May 6-12 and features a host of events to honor the four million nurses across the country for the work they do.

A special day set aside to honor nurses began in 1965 with Nurse’s Day, with the intent of raising public awareness of the important role and contributions nurses make to society, according to Nurses.com. An unofficial Nurses Week stretches back a decade earlier in 1954 to mark the 100th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s mission to Crimea.

Then, as now, nurses are on the front lines of a caring profession. On-duty around the clock 24/7, nurses are the caregivers we most rely on in almost any health care environment.

“One of my favorite sayings about nursing is our ordinary is actually extraordinary. We provide an amazing service to the public, whether in hospitals, clinics, long-term care or in the community,” said Jennifer Mensik, a nurse who wrote about how she celebrates her calling in an article on Nurse.com.

“Being a nurse is not something we turn off completely at any time. It doesn’t stop at the end of our shift like many other professions,” Mensik wrote. “We are there to help at a moment’s notice because we care. That perspective of caring is always with us and we believe we are doing what any other person might do in the same situation — that it was our job.”

Unfortunately, there’s a nursing shortage. According to a report in the American Journal of Medical Quality, a shortage of registered nurses is projected to spread across the nation through 2030, with the South and West being most affected.

On the upside, registered nursing is listed among the top occupations for growth opportunity into the next decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In other words, there’s never been a better time to enter this challenging and rewarding career field.

Nurses are truly the unsung heroes of the health care profession. They are dedicated to healing, compassionate care and touch the lives of millions with their devotion and skills. So if you encounter a special event in your community during National Nursing Week, don’t hesitate to attend and thank them.

Take time to THANK A NURSE

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We Salute You

CELEBRATING 2019 NATIONAL NURSES WEEK
MAY 6-12