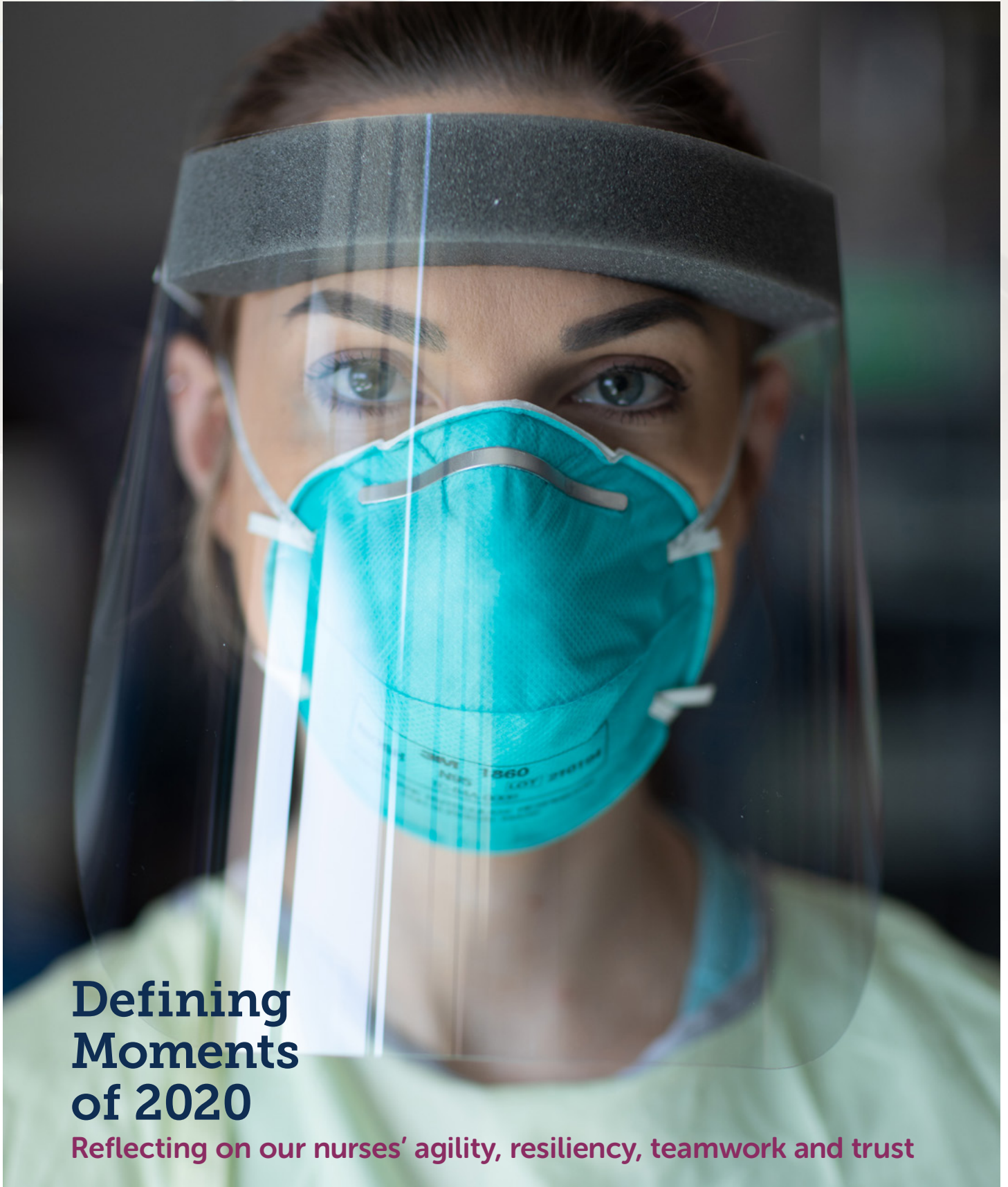




# Nursing Excellence

ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2021



**Defining  
Moments  
of 2020**

Reflecting on our nurses' agility, resiliency, teamwork and trust



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## Nursing in Extraordinary Times

By Beverly Hayden-Pugh, MOB, BSN, BHSc, RN

Senior Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Transformation Officer

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an ability to recover from or adjust to adversity or change

Merriam-Webster.com dictionary

Resiliency was in the top 1 % of words accessed in the Merriam-Webster.com dictionary this past year. (Yes, I looked it up!) I think the definition cited above provides the most relevance when I think of our epic year. Yes, there was Epic, along with the pandemic and history-making wildfires – events that required unprecedented need for our nurses, team and organization to demonstrate resiliency in order to continue to bring our best.

I see resiliency every day in the contributions we make as professional nurses in supporting our kids and families, our team, communities and each other. As nurses, we have contributed in building a COVID-19 testing center and Charlie's clinic, staffed multiple vaccine clinics and prepared for – and cared for COVID-19 patients both adults and pediatrics.

We have supported the administration of more than 20,000 vaccinations to help protect our team, families and communities.

We continue to serve in the HICS Command Center, establishing new workflows for staff working from home, creating new environments for the care of patients and providing support for screening stations - all while continuing to provide safe, quality care for the kids and families who count on us.

We supported the remote go live and implementation of a new electronic medical record, Epic. As nurses, we designed and built workflows to support the care of our

kids. We served as super users and teachers, staffed our command center, supported each other through this significant change..

Our resiliency and teamwork during this challenging year enabled us to improve our quality and safety outcomes including: 448 days since our last CLABSI, 705 days since our last CAUTI and 239 days since our last Whole System Measure Code on acute care.

When I look back, though, resiliency might have been most apparent in how we supported each other. Resiliency is a journey and a process, seldom linear, that for all of us included and often depended on the colleague working beside us.

As nurses, we stepped forward, reached out, gave back and, on our most challenging days, accepted the support of our fellow nurses. Moments are defined by the people in them.

Thank you for defining these moments with caring, professionalism and your best. I am proud and humbled to be part of this amazing nursing team.

*Beverly*



Hall of Fame

Trail of Fame

## Agility and Resilience: Foundations for Leadership

By Vicky Tilton, MSN, RN

Executive Director and Assistant Chief Nursing Officer

The key role of healthcare leaders is to create an organizational environment that optimizes safe, high-quality and effective patient-centered care. Opportunities to achieve organizational excellence typically are created through the implementation of evidence-based practices and programs along with research-informed innovations. Resiliency, agility and trust must exist within an organization's culture to support healthcare team members in the stressful work of direct patient care.



With the COVID-19 pandemic, the determination to promote safe care delivery led to decisions by leadership to ensure practice and standards were upheld and reinforced. A great amount of time was put into personal protective equipment (PPE) training, education and simulation early on in the pandemic to ensure safety for the team, along with the environment in which they practice. The unknown impact of the illness and its spread led to the creation and innovation of many best practices.

The ability to create and sustain a work environment where employees can learn and use effective coping skills, along with training and leadership presence, led to a safe

and highly satisfying care environment for patients and the team. In many healthcare environments, employees witness the suffering and challenges faced by our patients, and are not immune from personal distress. In fact, they actually faced increased risks.

In order to create and sustain a more healing and caring environment for patients, employees can learn and practice techniques that help them draw from their personal strengths and resources. These techniques can minimize the negative effects of stress and make employees more resilient, creative and effective in their many roles, personally and professionally.

**“Resilience and agility are increasingly valuable attributes.”**

Resilience and agility are increasingly valuable attributes because the healthcare environment is always changing and, especially over the last year, filled with uncertainty. The ability to adapt to life's ever-changing landscape and recover quickly from stressors is resiliency. Agility is having the ability to quickly respond to a variety of situations. With the fast-paced healthcare environment, this is quite challenging. Decision-making is very important and, at times, has been urgent. The efforts the organization has taken from the start of the pandemic have been extraordinary. From ensuring staff have needed PPE with no re-use of items, to establishing a primary and urgent care clinic of staff and their families, to unlimited access to COVID-19 testing and, most recently, COVID-19 vaccines, our efforts were implemented timely, successfully and with sustainability. This shows our commitment and dedication to our patients and their families, along with our entire healthcare team.



Throughout the last year, our teams have needed to solve ambiguous problems; respond quickly to complex, changing situations; and recover quickly from challenges and opportunities presented through the course of the pandemic. Agility is essential for continued success and survival and must focus on the entire team rather than just the individual. Investing significantly in training, communicating new expectations, and providing the resources and technology to drive higher levels of teamwork, agility and collaboration has led to positive outcomes. Managing performance in real-time, staying in tune with our quality metrics and organizational goals has been imperative. The ability to adjust with changing situations, rapidly diagnosing issues, activating opportunities and relentlessly course-correcting to alter or raise the bar all have been continuously demonstrated and are contributors of resiliency, agility and competitive success. The stability of providing a secure foundation that helps people stay focused on performance during disruptive change was vital over this past year and continues to hold high value. It has been crucial to provide role security for staff so that confidence is maintained in the organization as well as its leadership. When our healthcare team experiences successful outcomes and are able to visualize leadership's investment in ensuring that enough resources to execute current strategies as well as create new ones is a priority, it bolsters trust and fosters confidence and pride.

The impact agility and resiliency have on organizational performance is significant. Stability, rightsized teamwork and relentless course correction all have been shown to have significant direct effect on agility and resilience along with serving to mediate relationships to organizational financial performance. Our teams continue to be challenged with decreased volume of patients, however increased acuity and some changes in the patient population we are accustomed to caring for. In today's healthcare environment many competitive pressures have focused attention on what healthcare organizations need to do differently to compete and survive.



Creating new knowledge quickly, innovating and launching new strategies to achieve priorities and deliver on expectations while achieving organizational goals is what drives us. Organizationally, intelligent change leadership is less about creating better followers and ultimately about creating better change leaders. We have a moral obligation to our patients, their families and our teams to be available, transparent, approachable, supportive and offer a caring presence. Based on Jean Watson's Theory of Human Caring, the healing relationship is extended through the use of presence and puts the one being cared for in a more optimal state for well-being. This is significant not only for our patients we treat but additionally our colleagues, staff and leaders we connect with every day.

Through the many challenges we have all encountered this last year, the strength, determination, agility, resiliency and dedication have only grown more powerful and as leaders enhanced our commitment to our teams, the community we serve and our organization.



# Transformational Leadership



## Nurse of the Year 2021

Excellence in Transformational Leadership

**Christine Netzley-Morales, RN, MSN, BSB**  
 Director, Perioperative Services

Christine Netzley-Morales is the Director of Perioperative Services and an inspirational leader in support of the nursing practice, exhibiting a commitment to patient care and excellence in practice. Christine inspires confidence in her team as she prioritizes training and competency preparedness and ensures staffing assignments are equitable and safe.

Christine is instrumental in pulling together multi-disciplinary teams. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Christine's steadfast ability to remain calm, present, transparent and committed to safety was instrumental during a time of rapid changes. She ensured adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) were available, and helped to contain moments of uneasy feelings of vulnerability related to COVID-19. She was supportive of new process implementation to decrease risk. Christine led the team through elective case holds and found other opportunities outside of the perioperative unit to provide staff working hours to keep them whole. She took active measures to ensure safety through solutions, including the intubation tent, implementation of CAPR and PAPR training, and HEPPA filters in the OR suites to maintain adequate air exchanges.

Christine was also an instrumental part of the organization's build of Epic, our new electronic medical record (EMR). She spent countless hours working across multidisciplinary teams in support of Epic OpTime, an operating room management system with clinical and decision support tools. She maintains operational accountabilities in an exceptional manner and continues to support the entire perioperative multidisciplinary team.

Christine is an active member of the California Hospital Association (CHA) Perioperative Track. She attends annual meetings and actively participates in practice and process work, information sharing and engagement at the national level. She incorporates learnings into practice and leads the team through ongoing opportunity identification, stays current with practice standards and advocates for program growth and service line support.

**We congratulate Christine Netzley-Morales, Valley Children's Nurse of the Year 2021 – Excellence in Transformational Leadership.**



## Valley Children's Healthcare Frontline Nurses respond to COVID-19

The Nursing Excellence Annual Report provides an opportunity to preserve memories of the awesome work carried out by Valley Children's nurses over the previous year. Never before has telling the story of the impact of the organization's nurses held such historic significance. History will remember 2020 as the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, and this issue of Nursing Excellence documents the exemplary response of Valley Children's nurses.

Drawing from all the tools in their nursing professional practice arsenal, Valley Children's nurses provided compassionate, cutting-edge care during an unprecedented season that clouded our communities

with questions, confusion and fear. But our nurses rose and met the unwelcome challenge brought into our backyard by a world-wide pandemic. From developing a whole range of staff support to create an environment of wellness, to converting entire units in order to protect staff while providing exemplary care to COVID-19 patients, Valley Children's nurses will be remembered and admired for their heroic efforts in 2020.

This article touches on just-in-time enhancements, including the organization's onsite testing, vaccine clinic, monoclonal antibody administration and bedside care for patients hospitalized at Valley Children's with COVID-19.

# Establishing a Workforce Testing Center

Once COVID-19 reached pandemic levels, employees at Valley Children's Healthcare needed answers to many of the same questions everyone was asking.

"I've just been exposed. What should I do?"

"I'm having these symptoms. Does that mean I have COVID-19?"

"If I don't have any symptoms, can I still spread the virus?"

Nurses had additional questions.

"What kind of PPE do I need to wear?"

"Should I quarantine from my family while I'm treating COVID-19 patients?"

"I'm high risk for COVID-19 complications. Will I be safe at work?"

Leadership quickly responded by establishing a COVID-19 Hotline that soon evolved into the Workforce Testing Center and eventually led to the opening of Charlie's Clinic for Valley Children's Healthcare Families.



Charlie's Clinic opened April 6, 2020, to provide convenient healthcare access to Valley Children's staff and their families during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders. While COVID-19 patients made up the largest population at Charlie's Clinic initially, the clinic provides a wide range of services including COVID-19 testing, well visits, sick visits, point of care testing, lab draws, immunizations, imaging, medication refills, and telemedicine visits. The team at Charlie's Clinic comprises physicians, nurses, medical assistants and a licensed social worker.

"We started off with one nurse manning the COVID-19 Hotline from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily," said Nichole Hackbarth, MSN, RN, CPN, manager of the House Resource Pool at Valley Children's. "Then, as the volume of calls increased, as well as the number of people being tested for COVID-19, we added a second nurse from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Later we added a night nurse to take calls from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. and that expanded to a second nurse, as well."

The House Resource Pool is made up of nurses who float around the hospital and serve in a variety of roles. One of these versatile and flexible nurses, Alix Clarke, RN, BSN, was among the first to serve as a COVID-19 coordinator at Valley Children's.



"Initially we weren't doing a lot of testing," said Clarke. "We mostly took calls from the public looking for answers to their questions about COVID-19."

Employees began being tested for COVID-19 on March 26, 2020. Valley Children's set up a drive-by testing center, but soon needed a larger space where they could centralize all the testing. The hospital's Professional Center met the need for a centralized testing facility by housing Charlie's Clinic as well as the Workforce Testing Center.

"We started batch testing and serial testing of an entire department if several staff members in that department tested positive," said Hackbarth. "It got to the point where we were super busy, and we now have 15 nurses serving as COVID-19 coordinators."

The volume of calls and level of triage necessitated having experienced, well-trained nurses in this vital position. Logistics were constantly in flux, requiring minute-by-minute process changes. As the demand for testing increased, Hackbarth reached beyond the House Resource Pool and partnered with other departments to appoint and train qualified RNs as COVID-19 coordinators.

"We onboarded a whole new group of people," said Hackbarth. "The decrease in ED census meant we could train ED nurses for this role. In collaboration with the manager of Discovery, nurses from that acute care unit were also able to serve as COVID-19 coordinators. Between ED, Discovery and the House Resource Pool, we were able to train and move into position all the nurses we needed to handle the workload."

"Soon after we began testing employees, the floors and ED started testing all our inpatient admissions," said Clarke. "All entrance points at Valley Children's go through a health screening station, and we have separate teams to oversee these stations. If any employee entering the hospital fails the screening, the team member calls the COVID-19 coordinators and the employee is sent to get tested right then."

When an employee tests positive, the COVID-19 coordinators follow Hospital Incident Command System (HICS) protocols. COVID-19 coordinators also inform the employee of their positive diagnosis and make themselves available for lengthy calls on next steps.

"This team has done a great job from starting in a closet of an office with one nurse to becoming the streamlined program it is today," said Hackbarth. "It's been neat to watch it grow from the ground up."

Mitigation efforts at Valley Children's Healthcare have proven successful. To date, not one COVID-19 infection diagnosed in an employee was acquired while at the hospital when proper PPE and infection prevention protocols were followed.



### Total Number of COVID-19 Tests Done Since March 26, 2020:

- Workforce: 4,472
- Family Members: 3,311
- Community: 1,089

### Average Number of COVID-19 Tests Done Per Day:

- March 2020: 2-4 tests
- Oct/Nov/Dec 2020: 120-150 tests
- March 2021: 30-40 tests

### Types of COVID-19 Tests Administered:

- One-hour test: given when an employee shows up for work and fails the health screening assessment
- Four-hour test: given to symptomatic employees who request a test
- 24-hour test: given to asymptomatic employees and their family members who think they may have been exposed

# Operating an Onsite Vaccine Clinic



The primary job of any hospital is to promote the health and safety of its patients and staff. Balancing the care of patients with the needs of staff presents a unique challenge when the hospital exclusively treats pediatric patients during a pandemic that attacks adults with far greater severity than children. The necessity of mitigating the spread of COVID-19 while admitting patients infected with the highly contagious virus drove Valley Children's Healthcare to take extraordinary steps — steps that included treating adult patients.

The moment the COVID-19 vaccine became available, protecting staff through immunizations became a huge priority, and nurses at Valley Children's took action by establishing a vaccine clinic in record time.

"We implemented the whole clinic in 10 days," said Stacie Venkatesan, RNC-NIC, MSN, CNS, director of critical care at Valley Children's. An interdisciplinary team was established to address the operational

establishment of the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic. The team, led by Venkatesan and Laura Janigian, Director of Benefits and Employee Health, worked with physician dyads, pharmacy, information technology, materials management, environmental services and Labor Pool Coordinators to establish a workflow that would support administering hundreds of vaccines a day.

Operating under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic at Valley Children's Hospital would require clinical education of staff. To prepare for the arrival of the very first doses of the vaccine, Venkatesan tapped Jennifer Norgaard, RNC-NIC, MSN, ACCNS-P to manage the clinical education of nurses to serve in the clinic.

"Nurses stepped up and asked to be a part of it, even if they hadn't been in direct patient care," said Norgaard. "Some hadn't given a shot in years, but they all stepped up because they were trained and they wanted to get the job done."

"We staffed our clinic in 24 hours," said Venkatesan, who, together with Norgaard and their team, initiated the process of vaccinating Valley Children's staff by making nearly 400 phone calls.

"It was pretty labor intensive," said Venkatesan. "We made phone calls for the first 10 days to fill up the schedule." The team began by calling staff members engaged in direct patient contact, and prioritized them for their appointment by age ranking.



“Our supply shipped to us on Monday. We received it on Tuesday and started giving it on Wednesday,” said Venkatesan referring to a three-day period from December 14 to December 16.

The vaccine clinic team of nurses poured themselves into gathering data, overseeing the EUA consent process, providing education to those receiving the vaccine and administering the shots.

“At first, establishing the clinic was all about giving the vaccine to employees,” said Venkatesan. “But on January 9, 2021, we opened it up to family members. If an employee had a family member over the age of 75, we would give them a vaccine.”

The family clinics quickly became a favorite time for the nursing team. Employees who had not been in the same room with elderly family members for the better part of a year were able to stand within a few feet of their parents and grandparents. “It was very moving for a lot of the nurses,” said Norgaard. “The employees and their family members didn’t want to leave because they hadn’t seen their loved ones for so long. Watching them reunite was very touching.”

In early March 2021, Valley Children’s began offering the vaccine to select community members, including high-risk patients. To date, more than a third of the doses of COVID-19 vaccinations given in Madera County have been given at Valley Children’s Hospital, which has administered more than 16,000 shots.

The COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic at Valley Children’s has grown in sophistication over the months, and now offers a family sign-up portal and a call center open Monday–Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The operation has

a fluctuating number of stations running from day to day, depending on demand. Currently, five educators and eight administrators serve on the clinic team, and a minimum of seven nurses are onsite during clinic hours of operation.



Nurses serving on the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic team rose to the challenge, pivoting from pediatric care in order to provide healthcare to adults who make up the Valley Children’s family. Thanks to their efforts, everyone in the “family” desiring a vaccine who meets the criteria to receive one in the state of California has been immunized.



#### Total Number of COVID-19 Vaccines Given Since December 16, 2020:

- Workforce: 5,888
- Family Members: 11,943
- Community: 4,502

#### Average Number of COVID-19 Vaccines Given Per Day:

- December 2020: 180
- March 2021: 500+

# Administering Monoclonal Antibody Treatments

Receiving a positive COVID-19 diagnosis is especially concerning to high-risk adults. When the FDA approved monoclonal antibody treatments for emergency use, the pediatric nurses at Valley Children's Healthcare enlarged their circle of care provision. In addition to treating the 12- to 17- year-old COVID-19 patients entering the hospital's emergency department, nurses at Valley Children's also began administering the promising infusion to qualifying adults.

"It's a new drug that acts like an IVIg [the abbreviated term for intravenous immunoglobulin infusions]," said Cauryn Updegraff, MSN, RN, director of emergency and trauma services. "We have similar drugs that we routinely give at Valley Children's, but with the monoclonal antibodies, we have to walk patients through the process of informed consent for emergency use."

Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-made proteins that mimic the immune system's ability to fight off harmful pathogens. Administered by an infusion that requires a special filter, monoclonal antibodies are given over a period of time while nurses monitor patients for anaphylactic reactions. Nurses must also send patients home with instructions to watch for potential adverse reactions.

Recommended for COVID-19 patients with mild to moderate symptoms who are over age 12 and greater than 44 kilos with certain risk factors, monoclonal antibody treatment is intended to prevent hospitalizations and must begin within 10 days of onset of symptoms or a positive test.

"We track patients from COVID-19 test results to treatment," said Updegraff, who serves as project lead of operations for monoclonal antibody treatments at Valley Children's and also led the transition to offering this therapy in an outpatient setting. "The window is narrow, so we did an optimization." Updegraff's team set a goal of starting the infusion within 24 hours of a positive test result. "We undertook a collaborative effort to connect all the pieces for the best course for these patients. Rather than filtering them all through the ED, we send them for an extended outpatient visit."

In some cases, the process begins even before a COVID-19 test is administered. When high-risk patients come to Valley Children's to be tested, they are offered a one-hour test. The attending physician is immediately notified of a positive



result and determines whether the patient qualifies for treatment. Comorbidities such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, sickle cell disease and asthma qualify patients for this therapy.

**“We’ve created a well-oiled machine getting positive patients in for treatment.”**

— Cauryn Updegraff, MSN, RN, director of emergency and trauma services, Valley Children’s Healthcare

“We’ve created a well-oiled machine getting positive patients in for treatment,” said Updegraff. “Anytime we have a patient, we initiate a text message blast.” An order set is initiated that sends a message to the Ambulatory Treatment Center (ATC). The ATC subsequently schedules the infusion on the Apollo unit in a controlled environment. Upon receiving the order, the ED schedules the nurse who contacts the patient and directs them to a meeting place in front of the hospital.



The nurse approaches the patient in full PPE and ensures the patient has a face mask and sanitized hands. The nurse then escorts the patient directly to and from Apollo. During therapy, the nurse takes the patient through the consent forms and patient education materials.

“We started offering the therapy in mid-December 2020,” said Updegraff. “At first, we had such a limited supply we had to determine who could receive it, so the ethics committee got involved. Now, anyone who qualifies can come in and get it.”

Two to three patients per week on average receive monoclonal antibody treatment at Valley Children’s. “About 85% of the infusions we’ve given have been to the adult population as outpatients,” said Updegraff. “The ED is still giving it to our 12-to 17-year-old patients.”

**“About 85% of the infusions we’ve given have been to the adult population as outpatients.”**

Multidisciplinary collaboration between the Hospital Incident Command System (HICS), ATC, pharmacy, Charlie’s Clinic and Valley Children’s Healthcare providers, has supported Updegraff and her team in their efforts to take patients from test result to treatment within 24 hours. While continuing to provide compassionate care to pediatric patients from all over Central California who may or may not have COVID-19, Valley Children’s has also treated employees, their parents, grandparents and other family members. The streamlined process carried out by this amazing team of professionals has helped keep a unique patient population from hospitalization with COVID-19.

# Caring for COVID-19 Patients

For nearly 70 years, Valley Children's has been recognized and admired for its amazing people and incredible care. By many impressive benchmarks, including the Magnet Recognition Program® and U.S. News & World Report's Best Children's Hospitals ranking, Valley Children's has proven its ability to provide the highest levels of quality healthcare. Until now, standards of professional nursing practice could not be measured during a worldwide pandemic. More than 100 years have passed since nurses practiced their profession in such a challenging environment. But looking back over the most difficult year for the healthcare industry in our lifetimes, the amazing people at Valley Children's deserve recognition and admiration for the incredible care they provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**"We were finding out about the virus every day as we were living it."**

— Jeannette Cutner, BSN, RN, manager, neonatal intensive care unit

"We were finding out about the virus every day as we were living it," said Jeannette Cutner, BSN, RN, manager of the neonatal intensive care unit at Valley Children's Hospital. Providing compassionate, family-centered care while mitigating the spread of COVID-19 presented enormous challenges. "One of the hardest things was telling parents that they couldn't both be in the room with their baby."

Staff worked tirelessly to ensure the safest environment for patients and staff. "In the beginning we were changing things on a daily basis, but the staff just rolled with it," said Jessica Moody, BSN, RN, RN-BC, manager of Apollo, an acute care unit that traditionally treats pediatric respiratory patients, but transformed in order to care for COVID-19 positive pediatric and adult patients with a variety of comorbidities.

Initially, leadership placed all COVID-19 positive patients, except neonates, on Apollo because of its location within the hospital and because of its air handler unit. On Apollo, all COVID-19 positive patients could be treated in rooms with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters.



COVID-19 positive neonates were placed in a designated neonatal intensive care unit on Endeavor. "Staffing two NICUs was very challenging," said Cutner. "We would test the babies to see if they were negative after 10 days so that we could transfer them back into the regular NICU."

The NICU processed as many as three admissions daily. COVID-19 may have played a role in the surge of neonatal patients.

"Mothers were dropped off with difficulty breathing at various emergency rooms in our region and tested positive for COVID-19," said Cutner. "They ultimately had emergency cesarean sections, and their babies, born prematurely, were transferred here."

The emergency department at Valley Children's Hospital faced a huge burden on a daily basis. These frontline workers did not know if patients coming through their doors were COVID-19 positive or negative.

Staffing challenges mounted when nurses failed COVID-19 screening upon arriving to work at Valley Children's Hospital and would have to go home. Keeping the busiest areas staffed called for nurses to float from familiar areas to entirely new situations. We assessed our nurses' comfort level and utilized

them in various areas,” said Stacie Licon, DNP, RN, CNS, ACCNS-P, CPN, director of acute care at Valley Children’s. “The organization made a commitment to keep all staff working. When we stopped all elective surgeries, we had periop staff transfer into Apollo and undergo high-level training. The whole nation was going through this, so we had access to a lot of resources. Learning modules were being made available for free.”



Pediatric nurses were trained to treat adult patients with and without COVID-19. “We were getting positive COVID-19 cases that weren’t pediatric respiratory patients, and that called for flexibility in all the staff,” said BethAnne Ellithorpe, BSN, RN, CPN, Apollo bedside nurse. “I had a 28-year-old diabetic patient and a 22-year-old COVID-19 patient in the pediatric intensive care unit.”

Nurses with experience in adult care and familiar with comorbidities not found in the pediatric patient population helped educate fellow nurses on the unit. Thrown into an entirely different practice of nursing, the staff at Valley Children’s adapted and met each challenge.

“My staff wanted to stay in the unit, and I had no idea that would be their response,” said Moody. “At first there was a lot of fear, but I’m so proud of Apollo. We were in the hospital until about 3 a.m. getting that unit ready to open.”

“Once the plan to use Apollo got implemented, we shut our doors down to the unit completely,” said Ellithorpe. “We taped off doors because of the infrastructure put into place by the organization. Apollo was locked down in July and stayed that way for more than a month. It became a negative pressure unit, and staff were in full PPE their entire shift.”

Approximately 1,500 staff were fitted with personal protective equipment (PPE) and trained to wear it properly.

“Because the hospital prepared so well, we never reused masks or PPE,” said Emily Hunt, CNS, MSN, RN, ACCNS-P, CCRN-N, manager of pediatric intensive care at Valley Children’s. “The supply chain was challenging at times, but our staff didn’t have to sterilize and reuse N95 masks.”

“Pretty much only EVS and nursing staff were coming into the unit,” said Ellithorpe, referring to environmental services, who diligently cleaned rooms and changed linens. “Dietary wasn’t fit tested to PPE, so the simplest things like how to get food to our patients presented a challenge.”

Nursing leaders worked to establish workflows as bedside nurses took on expanded roles.



“When we were locked down, we had to do paperwork for social work and case management,” said Ellithorpe. “Staff that normally came into the unit like diabetic educators and pharmacists weren’t coming in. As bedside nurses, we were the jacks of all trades in those weeks. There were definitely adjustments for those of us with boots on the ground handling the patients.”

As an influx patients required hospitalization for COVID-19, especially those with comorbidities, leadership elected to utilize negative pressure rooms in units throughout the hospital. In addition, the organization invested in the reconstruction of PICU North to help meet the demand. By the 2020 holiday season, nurses from every unit were caring for the surge of new cases.

Time and statistics will tell which benchmarks the nurses at Valley Children’s Healthcare surpassed in 2020, but the nurses who worked through the most difficult year for the healthcare industry since the 1918 Spanish Flu already know the impact of their efforts. Valley Children’s nurses deserve the highest accolades for rising above a once-in-a-lifetime challenge, overcoming the fear of the unknown and providing high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services to children—and adults—during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**The entire Valley Children’s community is proud of you.**



# Structural Empowerment



## Nurse of the Year 2021

Excellence in Structural Empowerment

**Kim Bilskey, MSN, RN, CHS**

Simulation Program Manager

Kim Bilskey is an inspiration for excellence in nursing education, leading our organization in simulation training. Within Pediatric Emergent and Critical Care, Kim brings expertise and passion to simulation and is able to translate those experiences into exceptional curriculum for our nursing teams. Kim works alongside our Quality and Patient Safety team on identifying opportunities to use simulation to improve care delivery, and ensure nurses feel safe and confident with practicing a simulation before they encounter real patient experiences.

With more than 16 years of experience at Valley Children's Hospital, Kim has shown that growth and development of an individual's nursing practice affects the whole in so many ways. Kim started in the Emergency Department, moved into ICU education and is now Simulation Program Manager. She has successfully and skillfully taken all of her experience and made a team for simulation that is accessible, invaluable for critical learning and approachable to engage.

Amid a year filled with constant change and the need to remain flexible, Kim created a simulation for the anesthesia group moving from paper to electronic documentation in Epic, allowing them to get the feel of documenting in fast cases with the "patient" in the room. She continued with the use of simulation to practice code situations with COVID-19+ patients. Through collaboration with various leaders, she brought simulation to the forefront of thinking when implementing a new process, service or workflow.

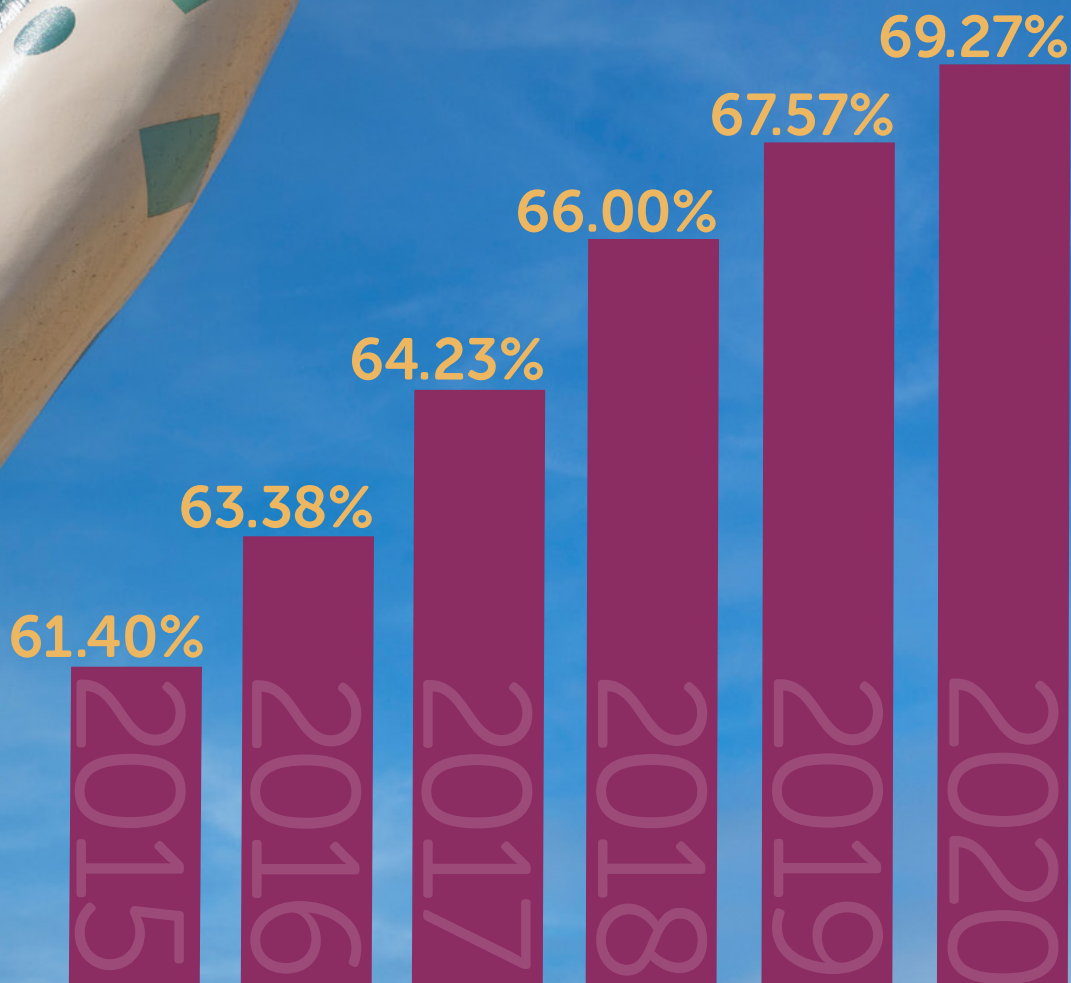
Kim's passion for nursing and education extends beyond the hospital. She works actively with the Clinical Partnership group, providing ED and simulation activities to local hospitals on topics related to pediatric emergency care. She began working with Saint Agnes Medical Center's simulation team to improve their own simulation program. Kim has published and spoken at international conferences and is highly respected in the healthcare community for her simulation expertise. She remains connected to our local nursing community, leading education with our staff and physician partners on safe clinical practice and trialing new clinical practice with the use of simulation.

**We congratulate Kim Bilskey, Valley Children's Nurse of the Year 2021 – Excellence in Education.**

## Valley Children's Healthcare Professional Development

### Percent BSN or Higher in Nursing

11.63% of nurses are enrolled in an  
academic program



# Valley Children's Healthcare Professional Development Percent National Certification



# Exemplary Professional Practice



## Nurse of the Year 2021

Excellence in Exemplary Professional Practice

**Lauren Bradley, MSN, RN, PNP-BC**  
Neurology

Lauren Bradley is an exceptional pediatric nurse practitioner in the Neuroscience Center within Valley Children's Healthcare. She devotes countless hours of work caring for complex patients with chronic conditions including epilepsy, epilepsy syndromes and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Amongst many of her accomplishments, Lauren's latest achievement has been her instrumental role in helping develop the epilepsy surgery program and monitoring unit. Along with her dyad partner, Neuroscience Medical Director Dr. Cesar Santos, she evaluated the need for services in our demographic area and reviewed other epilepsy programs to determine how we could best provide services to our pediatric population needing specialized epilepsy care. After much planning and building, Valley Children's was designated as a level 4 epilepsy center, one of only five in the entire state.

Lauren is instrumental in the work up of patients and ordering of special diagnostic tests, including EEGs, video EEGs and functional MRIs of the brain. She coordinates bimonthly epilepsy surgery case conferences for our multidisciplinary team, including neuro testing reviews and updates from specialty medication resources to maintain education for the providers in the center and staff.

Lauren was essential in the development and implementation of education provided to the inpatient nursing staff working in the epilepsy monitoring unit (EMU). In collaboration with the clinical education specialist and clinical nurse specialist responsible for the EMU, Lauren provided resources, content and review for all materials so inpatient staff would be prepared for its opening.

Lauren supports the profession of nursing practice by demonstrating a career steeped in life-long learning. As a pediatric nurse practitioner, she has advanced education in pediatric nursing and is dedicated to improving the health of children with neurological disorders. Lauren is connected through the USC epilepsy care consortium, which provides opportunities for networking and learning about best practices in care delivery. She precepts nurse practitioner students and advocates to see that they get good experiences while completing clinical hours, and has also participated as a subject matter expert for the review of clinical education programs exclusively designed for pediatric professionals.

**We congratulate Lauren Bradley, Valley Children's Nurse of the Year 2021 – Excellence in Clinical Practice.**

# Exemplary Professional Practice Model

## The 12 Components



**Nursing Professional Practice Model**

**At the core of who we are is our patients and their families.**

The image depicted to the left is our Valley Children's Nursing Professional Practice Model (NPPM).

It demonstrates the integrated, inter-related relationship of the 12 components of the model that weave around the patient and family.

As we reflect on 2020, and the many challenges faced, it was quite an extraordinary year and each of the components of our NPPM came to life in a multi-faceted approach in order to better serve our patients and their families. As a team, we were faced with extraordinary challenges in healthcare and society due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than one year from the anniversary of the onset of the pandemic we stand, together as an organization, continuing to provide exceptional care delivery to our patients and their families, upholding our professional values and operationalizing our professional practice model to achieve outstanding outcomes. It is in the moments we chose to persevere as a team that we can now say we are proud of the quality outcomes accomplished; as they have shown to be truly remarkable. Despite the unprecedented circumstances and because of our nurses' being able to pivot and shift the way we delivered care, our patients remained at the center of our professional practice. What a continuous display of excellence!



**Total Number of Valley Children's Healthcare Nurses**

**1135**

**50**  
**Nurse Practitioners**

**1085**  
**Registered Nurses**

**Includes Case Manager, Clinical Nurse, CNO, CNS, Infection Control Nurse, Informatics Nurse, Nurse Educator, Nurse Leader, Nurse Manager, Occupational Health Nurses, Quality/Risk Manager, Undefined and Wound & Ostomy**

Valley Children's Hospital  
Fiscal Year 2021

# Excellence Abounds in Extraordinary Times

## Annual Recognition

The Nurse of the Year Awards, given annually to recognize excellence in nursing, have new names this year that correspond with the Magnet® Model.

Award categories include:

- Excellence in Transformational Leadership
- Excellence in Structural Empowerment
- Excellence in Exemplary Professional Practice
- Excellence in New Knowledge, Innovation & Improvements
- Team Excellence

Individuals are nominated by staff and physicians. Representatives of the Executive Nursing Council serve as the selection committee, giving careful considerations to each nominee's practice, outcomes, innovation and contributions to the organization, community and professional practice of nursing.

Recipients of the Friend of Nursing Award demonstrate a significant contribution or support of nursing. In addition, these individuals collaborate within nursing in the provision of patient care or development of processes to enhance the professional work environment of nursing.

As we continue on our Magnet® redesignation journey, it is important to take note of several Nursing Sensitive Indicators (NSI) where we are exceeding the national benchmark:

- Catheter-associated Urinary Tract Infections (CAUTI)
- Central Line-associated Blood Stream Infection (CLABSI)
- Falls with Injury (Inpatient and Ambulatory)
- Hospital-acquired Pressure Injuries (HAPI) Stage 2 and above
- Ventilator-associated Pneumonia (VAP)
- Ventilator-associated Event (VAE)

**We could not achieve these results without the dedicated efforts from all team members, including our nurses!**

**The journey of nursing excellence continues...**

## Noteworthy Accomplishments



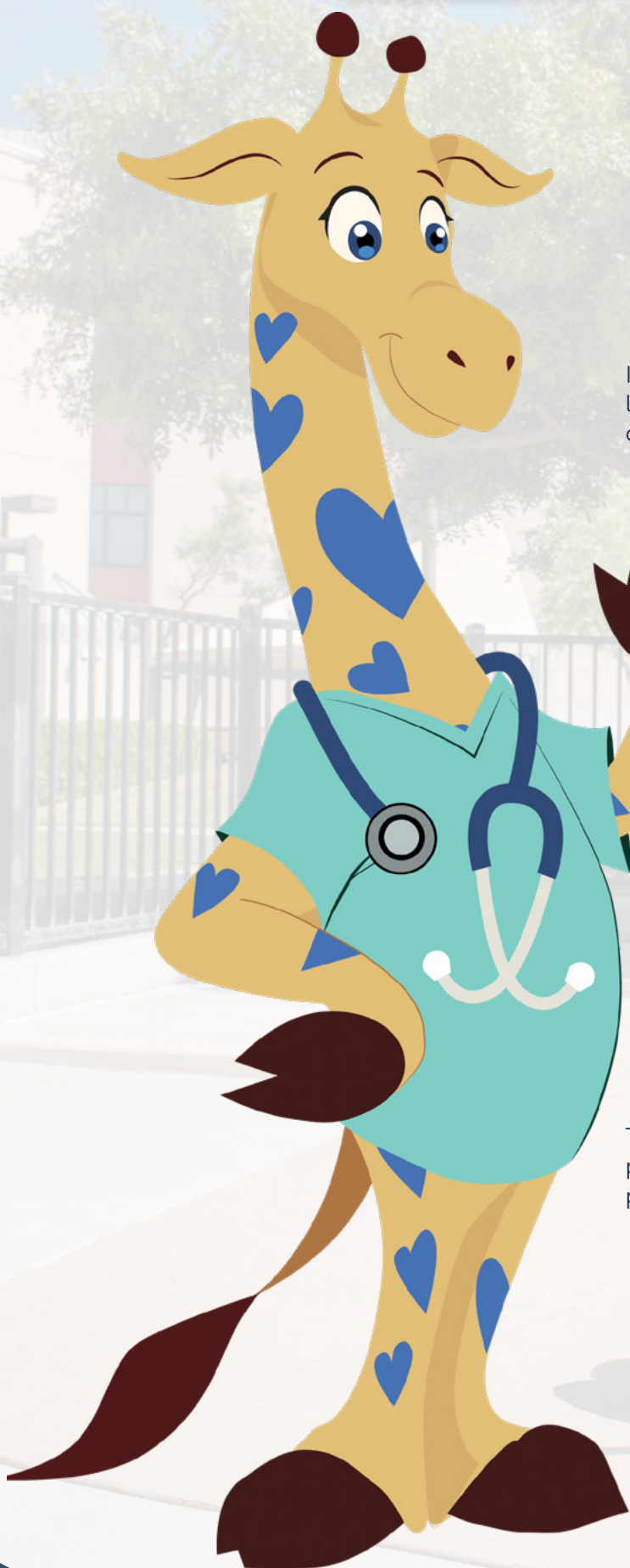
Earned the 2020 Leapfrog Top Children's Hospital Award for Outstanding Quality and Safety indicating our quality of care is in the top 5% of pediatric hospitals nationwide.



For the fifth consecutive year, Valley Children's is recognized by U.S. News & World Report, as one of the nation's best children's hospitals, nationally ranked in seven pediatric specialties. This is the highest number of rankings Valley Children's has ever received.

**Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety**  
Every patient. Every day.

Received Navigator status from Solutions for Patient Safety (SPS) for the fourth consecutive year.



## Did you know?

In survey results from our inpatient patient and families, we have learned we are exceeding the national benchmarks in several categories including:

- Patient-centered Care and Patient Engagement
- Responsiveness to Pain and Comfort
- Care Coordination
- Careful Listening
- Patient Education
- Service Recovery
- Safety
- Pain

Our patients and families in the Ambulatory care settings, Emergency Department and outpatient clinics are confident in our efforts for Care Coordination, an additional testament to our commitment to the patient experience.

In December 2020, our Nursing Excellence survey revealed some amazing results! The results of what nurses shared on the survey surpass the national benchmarks in areas of professional development, leadership access and responsiveness, interprofessional relationships and fundamentals of quality nursing care.

These results further demonstrate that the fundamentals of patient-centered care are deeply rooted in the quality and professional practice of nursing at Valley Children's.

# Valley Children's Healthcare Team Excellence 2021

## Explorer Unit



Explorer is a surgical unit in Valley Children's Hospital that cares for pre- and post-operative patients. The Explorer team cares for children with diagnoses such as tonsillitis, appendicitis, orthopaedic injuries, trauma, seizures, vehicular accidents and more. Patients and families often come to Explorer during stressful times and they are cared for by staff with smiles, kindness and incredible care. Over the past year, Explorer implemented rapid adjustments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, moving the entire unit onto Voyager, freeing up critical negative pressure rooms for surge. The team's collaborate and questioning attitude made this transition smooth and safe for patients and staff.

Explorer is a fast-paced unit that continually strives to become more efficient in order to provide the best care to our patients. The team continues to work on multiple process improvement goals. Explorer decreased PACU hold times from 62% in September 2019 to an all-time low of 15% in December 2020. Staff put in tremendous work to make this improvement, which allowed patients to comfortably settle into their rooms quicker, and improved flow in the Perioperative department. Explorer is now working closely with the Emergency Department to improve hold times in the ED.

Explorer committees and leadership, along with the bedside team, have worked collaboratively to increase morale in the unit. The happiness and joy staff members bring is shared with our kids. Patient and family satisfaction has improved, as seen through our NRC Picker scores and more compliments from families. Explorer is a caring and driven team that provides excellent and compassionate family-centered care. The Explorer team continues to work collaboratively with interdisciplinary team members in order to continue forward momentum.

**We congratulate team Explorer on Valley Children's  
2021 Team Excellence Award.**





Valley Children's Healthcare  
**Friend of Nursing 2021**

Roberta Giomi

Roberta Giomi's commitment to excellence, dedication to customer service and unwavering spirit of teamwork make her an indispensable member of our Valley Children's team. Roberta has a broad knowledge base of the inner workings of the Perioperative Department and serves as an excellent resource for leadership, nursing staff and support teams.

Roberta is a leading resource for all Perioperative departments related to our legacy systems, and her knowledge was leveraged during our implementation of Epic. As a subject matter expert, Roberta worked diligently to identify gaps in our medical record platforms during the Epic build. She continues to collaborate with our nursing educators, ITS staff and clinic teams to streamline Epic workflows for nurses and to ensure that reports are accurate and timely.

Roberta also has great understanding of compliance guidelines, safety, efficiency and fiscal impact. She assists with the auditing and billing of surgical cases, along with nursing staff charting. She is vigilant, catches errors and is prompt in finding solutions, engaging closely with our Finance and Patient Billing teams to report, investigate and explain billing and financial results.

Roberta ensures that nursing staff have equipment needed in the operating rooms, such as audio-visual equipment, computers and other supplies. Roberta is quick to help others and is always seeking solutions to issues as they arise. Anyone who reaches out to Roberta can be assured that she will do everything possible to resolve the issue, even if the matter is not her area of expertise.

**We congratulate Roberta Giomi, Valley Children's 2021 Friend of Nursing Award Recipient.**

# New Knowledge, Innovations & Improvements



## Nurse of the Year 2021

Excellence in New Knowledge, Innovations & Improvements

### Jennifferre Mancillas, BSN, RN, RNC-NIC

NICU

Jennifferre Mancillas is a nurse in our nationally ranked, level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Jennifferre's passion to encourage nurse-led innovation is evident in every aspect of her nursing journey, she has developed an exceptional ability to create innovative solutions to improve care for patients at the bedside. Jennifferre's visionary designs and projects affect interdepartmental change every day and improve efficiency and quality of care throughout the hospital. Never

being satisfied with status quo or accepting complacency, Jennifferre is always looking at ways current practices and products can be improved for practitioners and patients.

Jennifferre has spearheaded several performance improvements in the NICU and has worked to create interdepartmental change. She invented and designed swing-hinge label holders to improve compliance of intravascular line management to reduce central line-associated blood stream infections (CLABSIs). She created airway transport kits to be used during internal transports for patients with artificial airways, improving patient safety and preventing delay of care. Jennifferre also noticed in the NICU that there was no easy way for the healthcare team to identify if a patient's family had experienced the loss of a previous child. Jennifferre created the "Rainbow Baby" project, which places visual identifiers on the patient's name card and chart that acts as a visual identifier to staff of that difficult circumstance. This program has allowed for more sensitive conversations and improved communication with parents.

Jennifferre's entrepreneurial spirit and dedication to patient care led her to co-found Lumify Care, a nurse-led startup, aimed at improving the patient hospital experience. She helped design the uNight Light, the first-ever wearable LED light made specifically for the clinical setting. The novel use of colored LED lights in the clinical setting optimizes frontline healthcare workers' ability to provide safe patient care and decrease patient sleep disturbances.

Jennifferre's commitment to the nursing profession is expansive. She is a participant in the American Nurses Association's Mentorship Program, a member of the Society of Nurse Scientists, Innovators, Entrepreneurs, and Leaders (SONSIEL), and participant in departmental shared-governance committees. Jennifferre is a Johnson & Johnson Nursing Innovation Fellow. She serves as a mentor for others interested in nursing entrepreneurship.

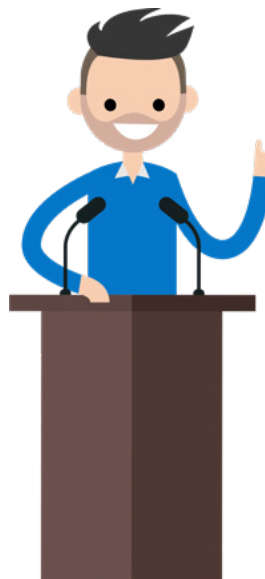
**We congratulate Jennifferre Mancillas, Valley Children's Nurse of the Year 2021 – Innovation in Professional Nursing.**

# RN Statistics

## Scholarly and Community Activities

# 6

Published  
in external  
professional  
literature



# 16

Presented  
external poster  
or podium  
presentation



# 97

Provided  
community  
service



# 24

Serve as adjunct faculty  
or clinical instructors

# 297

Involved in an external  
professional nursing  
organization





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