Greetings from Andy Loehr,
Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President, Nursing

It is with great excitement that we share the 2020 Children’s of Alabama Nursing Report. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to highlight the wonderful work that we have accomplished during an unprecedented year and I am honored to champion and support the incredible work done by our nursing staff. I am always amazed at the passion and dedication that our nursing team demonstrates to each patient and one another. You are Alabama’s finest!

The weight of COVID-19 preparedness and response was a challenge for our nursing team, but one we met head on! Among a year filled with tremendous change and uncertainty, our teams were able to perform at the top of our practice and make noticeable achievements in our Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections (CLABSI) rates, our Pressure Injury (PI) events, and our Unplanned Extubation (UE) events, just to name a few.

As you can tell, I am grateful and extremely proud of the nursing staff at COA for all of their accomplishments and contributions to our patients and families. Our nurses are recognized by patients and their families for “making the difference.” Patient’s experiences are more special and their challenges less palpable because of a nurse. Families remember the kindness shown to their loved ones by a nurse entrusted with their care. I have every confidence that we will continue that great work we are doing to better the lives of the children of Alabama as we head into another exciting year.

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Nursing by the Numbers

2,066 Nurses
- 77% Full-time
- 14% Part-time
- 9% PRN/Flex
- 68% Percent of RNs reporting < 10 years in practice
- 32% Percent of RNs reporting > 10 years in practice

332 Beds
48 NICU Bassinets
856 Critical Care Transports
48,924 Emergency Department Visits
22,414 Surgeries Performed
12,334 Hospital Discharges
Children’s has faced one of its most unique challenges in its more than a century long history...combatting the COVID pandemic. In order to adapt to the rapidly evolving climate, Children’s nurses became more innovative than ever. These changes ranged from how to deliver patient care and safely communicate, to PPE utilization and learning a new door to enter the facility.

COVID was treated as an Emergency Management event. It affected the entire healthcare system, but was unique in that we had time to prepare for impact ahead of its arrival and its duration was extremely prolonged. Preparatory measures that directly affected nursing operations included:

- Limiting visitors
- Staffing density reduction which led to closing of some units
- Cancelling elective surgeries
- Delaying clinic appointments
- Creating COVID / PUI units
- Updating PPE protocols
- Re-using PPE where safe and effective
- Limiting access into the facility to certain entry points which were outfitted with screening tables
- Dramatic changes in how we communicate and educate with utilization of video conferencing
- Suspension of some community outreach programs

Children’s performed more than 10,000 COVID diagnostic tests in 2020. Almost 5% of all the tests came back positive resulting in 281 COVID admissions.

Nurses have learned many different techniques to navigate these unique times. New practices have been tested during this era that will continue to remain in place beyond COVID. Video conferencing has proven effective, convenient, and safe; and some outpatient services will use this method routinely. Supplies once thought to be single use only can be safely re-used in certain scenarios. Perhaps most significant, nurses provided care to different populations than they were accustomed to as a result of staffing adjustments, thus increasing their education and competence. We don’t know when COVID will officially “be over”, but we know COA nurses at Children’s will be well equipped to battle the next challenge.
Nurses at Children’s of Alabama may receive tiered bonus pay for working extra shifts. The bonus levels are based on staffing needs and current census. To be eligible to receive tiered bonus pay, the nurse must sign up for the shift in advance and acknowledge they are willing to work where there is a need. Assignments are made by the House Supervisor each shift and are based on the departments with greatest need and the nurse’s competencies.

Tiered bonus pay has been used on an as-needed basis at the department level in years past. The new strategy is a centralized model that looks at house wide census and staffing. The program has been successful since implementation in August, 2020 resulting in significant savings for the organization, opportunities for nurses to work outside their home unit, earn extra money, and learn new skills.
Nurses Lead Effort to Reduce Codes Outside ICU

**Urgent Transfer**
Urgent Transfer was initiated in Fall 2019. This process occurs when the PICU provider (fellow, attending, nurse practitioner) makes the decision to urgently move the patient to the PICU.

This includes bypassing placement on the front end. The sending unit gives report at the bedside in PICU, and the patient is transferred from the outside unit to PICU within minutes of the PICU provider making the decision it is needed.

The thought is that if the patient cannot wait 30 minutes to be transferred without putting them at risk for a code outside the ICU, then the PICU provider will make the urgent transfer decision.

**8/2019 to 11/2020**
Preventable codes outside the ICU have decreased by 57 percent.
Preventable codes outside the ICU per 1000 patient days have decreased by 55 percent.

**Neurodevelopment in CVICU**
An area of focus in CVICU has been neurodevelopment. We are developing neuroprotective guidelines for our unit to assist our patients with meeting age-appropriate milestones while in the hospital as well as decreasing long-term developmental delays. This includes clustering care; noise control throughout the unit; age appropriate screen time; sleep schedules; as well as parent education and involvement. This is a multi-disciplinary team, including nurses, RT, PT/OT and NPs.

**Emergency Department Sleep Related Death Video**
In children less than six months of age, sleep related deaths are the most frequent cause of mortality. Members of our nursing staff have created a safe sleep video to educate parents about safe sleep habits. This video is now routinely used for newborns coming to the emergency department. Thanks to funding from the Children’s Foundation, we are able to provide a safe sleep sack to every infant under six months of age.
The mission of Children’s of Alabama’s Nursing Professional Development Department is to design and implement high quality programs in which nurses strive to acquire and maintain competence; enhance professional nursing practice and support the achievement of personal career goals. In 2020 Inpatient nursing onboarded nearly 300 nurses, 78 percent of which are new graduates beginning their first RN role. Nursing Professional Development also maintains affiliation with 16 area Schools of Nursing; providing preceptorship experience for 187 nursing students and 107 Nursing Practitioner students. Throughout 2020 over 1000 nursing students came to Children’s for their pediatric clinical rotation.

Children’s is an approved continuing education provider through the Alabama Board of Nursing (provider # ABNP0113; exp. June 2021) and the Alabama State Nurses Association (provider # 5-173; exp. Feb. 2022).

In 2020, 263 activities/classes/programs were assigned a total of 797.1 ABN nursing contact hours and 59.4 ABN Pharmacy hours. 582 activities totaling 1351 hours of instructions were provided. 1620 nursing contact hours were provided to 8556 participants (7,173 nurses, 52 Pharmacists, 30 physicians, 1301 other learners i.e. CA, USS, BI, BA, RTT, PT and OT). Having the added option of internet courses, participants came from multiple states and areas across Alabama. The majority of participants were Children’s employees.

School Nurse Workshops

All were virtual sessions. Four summer Lecture series–School nurse Workshops—563 virtual attendees

- **August**–High Acuity Special request class–TRACH skills for MONROE County 13 learners
- **November 2nd**–High Acuity Special request class–TRACH skills for COFFEE County 4 learners
- **November 6th**–School Nurse Spotlight–Human Sex Trafficking 122 Virtual attendees
- **December 4th**–Mental Health Conference for School Staff–316 learners consisting of school nurses, counselors, teachers and social workers

Education Forum

The Education Forum, previously known as the Education Council, utilized virtual meetings throughout 2020 to continue educational collaboration and adhere to social distancing. The Education Forum ensures that all departments/staff are aware of appropriate resources and avoid duplication of services related to staff education.
Children’s of Alabama’s Shared Governance Council is an empowering forum for nurses to identify, prioritize and recommend actions related to leadership, education, practice and innovation.

**Evidence Based Practice Council**
Although 2020 presented a unique set of challenges, the Evidence Based Practice Council remained committed to our mission of promoting the acquisition of knowledge and competencies necessary to support nurses and nursing support staff in acquiring, creating, and disseminating evidence-based practice to improve the care of patients and families at Children’s of Alabama. Our council meetings were highly focused on key components of evidence-based practice including targeted education, review of available resources, and realistic means for implementing evidence based practice throughout our organization. Members were equipped with essential tools to prepare us for successful development of valuable unit-based projects in the coming year.

**Management Council**
In 2020, Management Council was responsible for planning the events and activities to celebrate National Nurses Week. Due to COVID the week looked a little different, as virtual games were added in addition to the Administrative Welcome and Ice Cream Delivery. The Excellence in Nursing Awards Ceremony was canceled; however award winners were presented with their award in their department by Andy Loehr. The council was also responsible for planning the activities associated with Support Staff Day. In addition to planning these events, Management Council worked to create float tip sheets for each unit to aid staff who are reallocated to a different unit. Management Council also focused on the barriers to scanning maintenance IV fluids and created solutions to decrease medication errors related to IV fluids not being scanned.

**Practice Council**
The Practice Council remained active reviewing 60 policies and procedures. The pandemic brought many challenges in the year 2020. While not able to meet in person, the Practice Council remained committed to the purpose of the Council to define the parameters and use of professional standards, applications of evidence-based practices, the model of care, the behaviors of the practitioner for professional practice for advancement, the goals for consistency in clinical practice, nursing research, and position descriptions of nurses. To meet the goals the Practice Council remained active reviewing 60 policies and procedures.

**Quality and Safety Council**
To emphasize to nurses and clinical staff the importance of reducing pressure related injuries, the Quality and Safety Council focused on implementing strategies and education to all units. The goal was to have a 50 percent decrease in Serious Harm Pressure Injury Events for the year 2020. Quality and Safety created a Pressure Injury Education Flyer, which was distributed to all units throughout the hospital. As a result, Stage 3,4 and Unstageable Pressure Injuries were reduced by 53 percent from the previous year.
Awards and Honors

Children’s of Alabama is proud to honor individual nurses who earned awards and recognition in 2020. Congratulations!

The 2020 DAISY Award Winners

Nurses who receive the DAISY Award personify Children’s of Alabama’s remarkable patient experience. These individuals demonstrate excellence by serving as a role model for the nursing profession, demonstrating a caring attitude in all situations, communicating and making a significant difference in the life of a patient.

- Al Bonds, 9QB
- Steven Vuong, 7 Dearth
- Makayla Stokes, 7 Dearth
- Brianna Miller, CCU
- Kristy Gray, CCU
- Victoria Gonzalez, PeriOp South

- Kasey Rice, Burn Unit
- Lacey Entrekin, 8QB
- Madison Simpson, 10 Harbert
- Mary Parker Bruno, CCU
- Emma Caitlin Pitts, NICU
- Al Bonds, 9QB

2020 Excellence in Nursing Awards

Eleven Children’s of Alabama nurses were recognized for Excellence in Nursing as part of the hospital’s National Nurses Week annual observance in May. The awards recognize and celebrate nurses for their skill, compassion and professionalism.

In addition, 70 nurses participated in the Nursing Clinical Excellence Professional Advancement Program. The program requires nurses to complete a portfolio documenting their participation in various hospital activities. Thirty-six nurses completed criteria for Level II, 26 nurses completed criteria for Level III and eight nurses completed criteria for Level IV.

- Altonce Robbins, Pediatric Practices Excellence Award, Greenvale Pediatrics Brook Highland
- Myra Waddell, Critical Care Excellence, Critical Care Transport
- Julie Stone, Specialty Care Services Excellence Award, Clinic 6–Pulmonary
- Shelley Coskery, Advanced Practice Excellence Award, Clinic 6–Pulmonary
- Emily Crowe, Rising Star Award, Special Care Unit
- Angela Shaw, Charge Nurse Excellence Award, 8QB/BMTU
- Parks Farley, Acute Care Excellence Award, 10QB
- Clinton Jones, Surgical Services Excellence Award, Operating Room
- Dannelle Paz, Educational Excellence Award, South Anesthesia
- Jenny Ross, Leadership Excellence Award, ECMO
- Allison Monaco, Excellence in Mentorship Award, 10QB

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