

Note from the editors

We would like to reflect on the legacy of Linda Wells, our departing vice president for nursing and patient care services. Linda was our visionary leader for the past five years. During this time, we experienced tremendous growth within nursing and an increase in respect for the contributions of nursing at Emerson Hospital.

Always an advocate for both patient and nurse, Linda led us through JCAHO and DPH surveys and the implementation of the clinical advancement program, unit councils and shared decision-making structures. She was a strong advocate of the importance of Magnet for nursing. In short, Linda worked to make the Emerson nursing department known throughout the state as one of the best places to practice nursing.

In her farewell to the nursing leadership coordinating council, she challenged us to continue to build upon her work and vision. We invite all of you to join us in the journey.

We wish Linda the very best.



Nursing newsletter goes electronic!

The nursing newsletter is electronic! Starting with this issue, the newsletter will be distributed electronically via your Outlook mailbox. Questions? Contact Patti at ext. 3365 or Mary at ext. 3051.

Congratulations!

The following nurses have achieved personal goals in advancing their commitment to the practice of nursing.

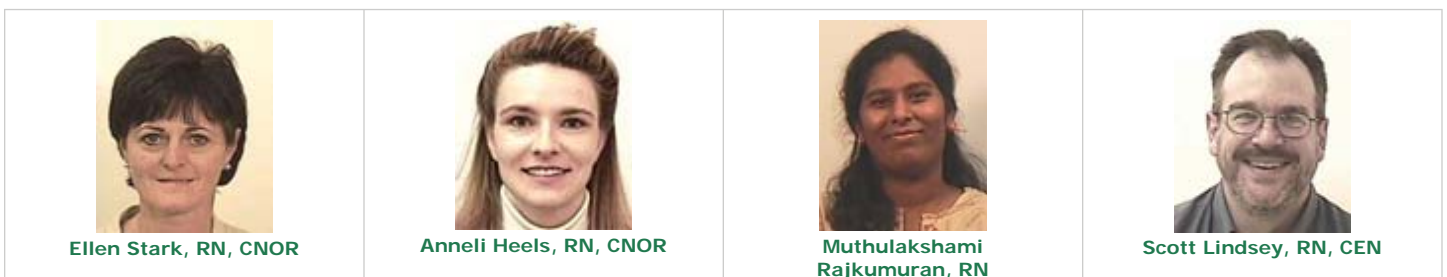
Gwen Hotaling, APRN, BC, North 5, completed a Master of Science in Nursing and was certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a psychiatric and mental health practitioner.

Karen Robinson, RN, and Ellen Stark, RN, CNOR, completed the Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) program at Northeastern University.

Anneli Heels, RN, CNOR, Margie O'Brien, RN, CNOR, and Jane Ruf, MSN, RN, CNOR, RNFA, (intern), passed the certification exam for perioperative nursing.

Muthulakshami Rajkumaran, RN, Grace Adrole, RN, and Wendy Van Horne, RN, recently passed their telemetry competency exam.

Scott Lindsey, RN, CEN, passed his certification for emergency nursing.



Recognition

We offer special congratulations to the **cardiac rehabilitation program**, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary. To mark this anniversary, there was a reception and guest speaker at the Holiday Inn in Boxborough on October 10. More than 120 past graduates of the program attended. Dr. Harvey Zarren, an internationally known speaker, spoke on "Healing Your Heart."

The **continuing care department** celebrated National Case Management Week October 8-14. In a letter recognizing her colleagues, **Mary Lou Cunningham, RN, MS, CCM, director of social work and care coordination** stated, "As a casemanager, I want to recognize my manycolleagues who work everyday to bring health care services topeople and their families and friends. Navigating the healthcare system can be difficult and, of course, everyone's needs are different."



Our **emergency department** nurses also celebrated Emergency Nurses Week October 8-14. The theme for this year's celebration was always ready, always caring.

As one of our patients recently said in a patient satisfaction survey, "The finest emergency department I have ever been in (and I've been in quite a few at my age)." A round of applause for our colleagues in the ED!

Welcome to Emerson!

The nursing department would like to welcome the following nurses to Emerson Hospital:

Cheryl Laundry, RN, BSN, CDE, the new diabetes educator, will be involved in the development of a diabetes center of excellence and will help to fulfill the educational needs of Emerson's patients. "This is an exciting time for the diabetes education program at Emerson Hospital," said Mary Seymour, RN, BSN, BC, director of education. "Cheryl is experienced, enthusiastic and excited about working with patients and staff on diabetes education." Cheryl has a bachelor's degree in nursing from UMass Lowell. She has taught diabetes self-management education for the past four years at Lowell Community Health Center and New England Rehabilitation Center/HealthSouth. Cheryl will be available full-time for outpatient education and inpatient staff consultation. Kelly Fisher, PhD, RN, will continue to support the diabetes education program on Friday mornings. Cheryl and Kelly can be reached at ext. 3054.



**Cheryl Laundry,
RN, BSN, CDE**

Mary Kelley, RN, BSN, CCRN, joins Wheeler 5 as the nursing staff educator. Mary has her bachelor's degree in nursing from UMass Boston, and she is currently pursuing her Master of Nursing degree at Northeastern University. She most recently worked at Concord Hospital in Nashua, N.H., for more than 19 years. In addition to serving as a nurse educator, her work included implementing quality initiatives and developing policies, procedures and competencies.

"Wheeler 5 is fortunate to have recruited Mary to join the Wheeler 5 team as their educator," said Ann Swillo, RN, MBA. "The Wheeler 5 and Wheeler 4 staff and educators were instrumental in the interview process."



**Mary Kelley,
RN, BSN, CCRN**

Up and down the halls of Emerson

Did everyone notice the bulletin board outside of the coffee shop during the month of September? The **nursing research committee** displayed their work, including pictures of many of the nurses involved in this very active group of dedicated Emerson nurses. The creative, informative board was the work of **Peg Bitter, RN, Wheeler 5**. Peg is the co-chair of the committee and is doing an excellent job of raising awareness of the value of nursing research at Emerson.



Have you heard the chimes in the hallways? The staff of **West 3** has begun a wonderful program to greet our new babies. Each time a new baby is born, we will all be able to acknowledge the birth with a smile when we hear the chimes over the loudspeaker. Great idea!

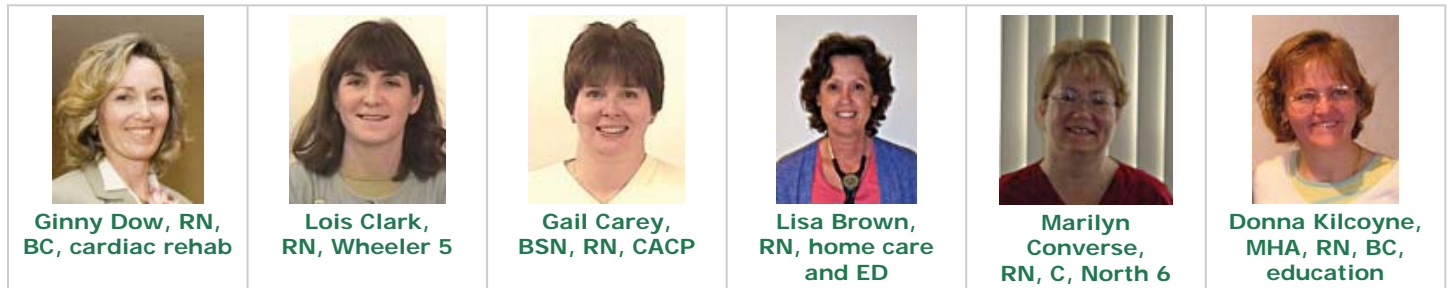


**Peg Bitter,
RN, Wheeler 5**

Emerson nursing in the news

As mentioned in the September issue of Everything Emerson, the TCU was recognized by Consumer Reports magazine for excellence in providing skilled nursing care. The TCU was also recognized in the September edition of the Patients First newsletter, which publicly acknowledges best practices to all Massachusetts Hospital Association members. We would like to congratulate our TCU nursing staff.

In a recent issue of Advance for Nurses, Emerson nurses got a chance to “speak out” on the rewards of their specialties. The following nurses contributed inspiring thoughts about their specific practice area: **Ginny Dow, RN, BC, cardiac rehab; Lois Clark, RN, Wheeler 5; Gail Carey, BSN, RN, CACP, anticoagulation clinic; Lisa Brown, RN, home care and ED; Marilyn Converse, RN, C, North 6, and Donna Kilcoyne, MHA, RN, BC, education.**



Patient satisfaction with nursing care

Recent Press Ganey survey results included the following comments from our patients:

“The nurses are incredibly helpful and nurturing, especially **Mary Peterson**, who helped me deliver my baby.” - West 3 patient

“Only good experiences with the nurses. They were all of the highest caliber...would like to give them a 10.” - CCU patient

“My father was a patient [on **North 6**] much of this past week. He died yesterday. My family and I want you to know how impressed we were by your staff’s kindnesses, sympathy, and support. It has been a terrible week for us, and your staff made it easier. You should be very proud of them.” - Received via the Internet

“I love Emerson’s nursing staff.” - Wheeler 5 patient

“I spent three days in the hospital and several more in the rehab on the 6th floor. Overall it was a very positive experience. **TCU staff** was terrific.” - TCU patient

“**Barbara in coag clinic** (on my routine visit) wheeled me over to emergency after learning I had two dizzy spells on my ride over that morning. Many thanks to her for recognizing the need.” - Anticoagulation clinic patient

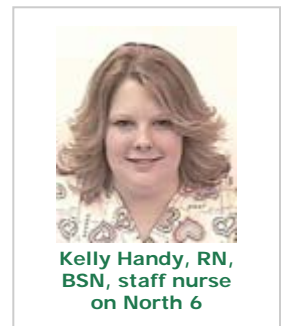
“**Nurse K [Karen] Stone** is a credit to your hospital. Her dedication to duty inspires all who observe her. I have been blessed with her service and professionalism. She works beyond expectations, mostly [through] her personal touch. I shall never forget her.” – North 6 patient, received via Internet

Living the Magnet Forces: Stories of clinical excellence

The Emerson nursing philosophy says that “each day we recognize our mission to make a difference, to touch, to guide our patients through their journey.”



Kelly Handy, RN, BSN, staff nurse on North 6, offered the following story and photo that demonstrates how we live our philosophy. It also offers a perfect “Magnet moment” in terms of “living” a culture of caring. Kelly says, “We on North 6 have a few patients that become part of the N6 family. Susan was one of those patients. She had just been discharged home and then was readmitted that evening to CCU. After she was stabilized, she was transferred back to N6. When we heard she was coming back, we took the opportunity to make her a sign, and all of us wrote notes on the sign along with gathering the balloons from the leadership meeting and placing them in her room. If we had had streamers we would have hung them, too. It was a floor effort to make her environment warm, since her disease had progressed so quickly. Her family was very grateful and she was elated when she came to the floor, thanking us and with the biggest smile.”



Highlights from the leadership coordinating council meeting

This quarter's meeting began with a big thank you from Linda Wells. She wished us well in our journey to Magnet.

Kevin Whitney, RN, MA, CNAA, director of nursing, updated the group on the following nursing initiatives:

- PCD is being revamped with changes scheduled for introduction in January '07
- The 2007 nursing budget was finalized
- A second PCT position has been added to the night shift
- ANSOS, the nursing scheduling software program, went live on September 24. Schedules will be made out four weeks in advance. This system is linked with the census and will make predicting staffing needs easier.
- The nursing page on the Emerson Web site is being designed and will include the mission, vision and values, shared decision-making structure, leadership structure, information for students and instructors, etc.
- Kevin addressed staff concerns regarding updating conference rooms. These rooms are used by the hospital Board and members of the public, for interviews of potential physicians and staff as well as for nursing's own needs. First impressions make lasting impressions. Plans are being made to make changes to inpatient areas while a long-range, more comprehensive master space plan is being developed to address needs such as single patient rooms, equipment space, etc.

Linda Johnson, RN, service excellence coordinator, discussed Phase I of the service excellence program, which includes greeting people within 10 seconds with a smile, assisting people to their destinations when giving directions and identifying yourself and your department when answering the phone.

Barbara Sager, RN, anticoagulation clinic, reported that the clinic continues to grow in volume of patients. During her report, she also recommended www.vegsource.com as a good resource for staff and patients on Vitamin K interactions.

Home care nurse Eileen Asoian, RN, shared that the unit council continues to work on cell phone reimbursement. After researching footwear in the home, it was determined that OSHA guidelines dictate policy. This initiative was explored in an effort to respect cultural differences in home care patients.

Donna Zimmerman, RN, reported that the [emergency department council](#) and EMS are involved in a blind study involving the administration of Insulin, Glucose and Potassium in the field and in the emergency department, with a goal of better cardiac patient outcomes. The Dysphagia Screen Protocol is approved for implementation on stroke patients.

Kelly Handy, RN, North 6, updated the council on a project that staff are working on to develop guidelines for floating rotations.

Claire McNamara, RN, obstetrics, told the council that **West 3** is working on the return rate for their patient satisfaction questionnaires. Chimes are now sounding throughout the hospital to mark the birth of a baby.

Christine Mallette, RN, discussed a project that TCU staff are working on to identify opportunities to streamline their computer documentation process.

Leslie Strong, RN, reported that 90% of the LPNs on **Wheeler 4** have completed the IV Push competency. This has been satisfying to both staff and patients. Staff are working on patient information packets specific to the unit. Guidelines for PCT rotation for "one to one/sitter" care and float guidelines for the unit are being investigated.

Kay Liebmann, RN, reported that PIT received more than \$15,000 from Verrill Farm's Harvest Festival on October 7. Funds will be donated to the pediatric coping kits. In addition, PIT received a \$10,000 grant from the Stow Community Chest to support the project. PIT and [interventional radiology](#) have implemented the use of Versed with children undergoing VCUGs. This has been very successful.

Linda Daley, RN, reported that twelve-hour shifts have been implemented on **Wheeler 5** to help strengthen the staffing on evenings and nights.

Ginny Caples, RN, representing [surgical services](#), updated the group on the progress of Project SCORE. New surgeons are introducing new surgeries and equipment, such as the new spinal surgeries to be performed at Emerson.

Mary Beth McKinney, RN, critical care unit, reported that a shift report has been implemented to facilitate hand-off communication. CCU council is also working on alcohol withdrawal patient care guidelines.

Maureen Canava, RN, representing the [nursing practice council](#) said that the following were recently approved: Narcan protocol, rapid response, PPN, IVSA MD form, CCU care of peritoneal dialysis patients and medication administration.

Karen Viscariello, RN, introduced removable IV labels for solutions without medications. The label should be removed upon disposal of the bag to comply with HIPAA regulations. The council is currently reviewing Epidural, Intrathecal policies and orders, CCU and interventional radiology thrombolysis, float and ostomy and wound care policies.

Judy LeSage, RN, reported for the [quality council](#). Pneumonia vaccination, a statewide quality initiative, continues to have a low compliance rate. Fact sheets have been distributed to help increase staff awareness. A dashboard report on nursing quality indicators will be introduced in the future.

Sue Holman, RN, reported that the Care of the Elderly HealthStream learning module has been launched for all direct care providers. This supports the goal of addressing the care needs of the elderly through the [professional practice council](#). In addition, information on the new standards for BLS/ACLS/PALS is being implemented.



The [nursing research committee](#) is busy planning a research day on November 16. **Peg Bitter, RN**, representing the committee, discussed plans for the first research day. She also reported that CINAHL access is available on the Intranet under clinical resources.

(Left) Leadership coordinating council participants celebrate another successful meeting.

Staff representation is needed on all nursing councils from all nursing areas, especially North 5. If you are interested, please contact a council chair or member.