About Us

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is a not-for-profit, 378-bed, community teaching hospital located in the White Marsh section of eastern Baltimore County, Maryland. MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center provides many medical and healthcare services, including a broad range of healthcare specialties, advanced technologies and treatments not traditionally found at community hospitals. The hospital is ranked third in the number of admissions among all Maryland hospitals and is first in emergency department visits with more than 108,000 visits annually.

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s staff of 3,800 healthcare professionals includes more than 1,000 RNs, LPNs, care associates, and multifunctional technicians who provide care across the continuum for our patients in the Emergency room, Critical Care, Intermediate Care, Inpatient, Outpatient/Clinics, and Outreach programs. We also employ nursing professional development specialists, clinical nurse specialists, nurse practitioners, and nurse midwives to provide consultation and resources to the clinical nurses. The philosophy of the professional nursing staff organization at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is centered on the belief that each professional nurse accepts accountability for the quality of care he or she provides, for continued professional development and for the ethical and legal responsibilities involved in his or her practice. Each professional nurse accepts responsibility for participating in decisions regarding nursing practice and commits to uphold the standards set by this organization, the nursing profession and those bodies that regulate the practice of nursing in the state of Maryland.
Our Mission, Vision and Values

MISSION
MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, a member of MedStar Health, provides safe, high-quality care, excellent service, and education to improve the health of our community.

VISION
To be a trusted leader in caring for people and advancing health.

VALUES
• Service: We strive to anticipate and meet the needs of our patients, physicians and coworkers.
• Patient First: We strive to deliver the best to every patient every day. The patient is the first priority in everything we do.
• Integrity: We communicate openly and honestly, build trust and conduct ourselves according to the highest ethical standards.
• Respect: We treat each individual, those we serve and those with whom we work, with the highest professionalism and dignity.
• Innovation: We embrace change and work to improve all we do in a fiscally responsible manner.
• Teamwork: System effectiveness is built on the collective strength and cultural diversity of everyone, working with open communication and mutual respect.

NURSING VISION
MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s nurses will be seen across the organization as leaders from the bedside to the boardroom, as well as patient advocates and expert clinicians. MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center will be known in the community as the employer of choice for nurse leaders, recognized for its commitment to the profession of nursing and the delivery of high-quality service to patients. From day-to-day decisions to large, department-wide policy, nursing will champion the mission to meet the needs of our patients, families and the communities we serve.

• We will create a culture of leadership through continuous development opportunities targeted to meet the strategic needs of the organization and the personal growth desires of our nurses.
• We will assist and support each nurse to develop and implement an individualized career plan.
• We are committed to a highly-developed and unique orientation for nurses at all levels, reinforcing the philosophy of shared governance, professional accountability, and key concepts and strategies for nurse retention.
• We will continue to develop a professional practice culture using research and evidence-based studies to guide clinical and administrative practices.
• We will provide the resources, tools and technology to support nurses as they manage patient care in their unit(s).
• We will recognize and celebrate creativity and innovation in leadership throughout the organization.
• We will measure targeted outcomes to assure ongoing success of nurses and identify opportunities for continued improvement.
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MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is proud to be a Magnet-designated hospital. The four-year designation for excellence in nursing services from the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program® was first achieved in November 2008. MedStar Franklin Square joined an elite group: at the time, just five percent of U.S. hospitals had achieved this honor. Most recently, on July 15, 2013, MedStar Franklin Square was re-designated as a Magnet hospital! We are the first community hospital in the state of Maryland to receive re-designation.

The Magnet Recognition Program recognizes healthcare organizations that demonstrate excellence in nursing practice and adherence to national standards for the organization and delivery of nursing services. Applicant hospitals undergo a rigorous evaluation that includes written documentation demonstrating excellence in nursing practice and clinical outcomes, as well as an extensive interview and on-site review of nursing services validating organizational excellence.

Research shows there are clear benefits to hospitals that are awarded Magnet designation and to the communities they serve, including:

• Clinical outcomes and patient experience scores are better in Magnet-designated hospitals.

• Healthcare consumers have more confidence in the overall quality of a Magnet-designated hospital.

• Magnet-designated facilities consistently outperform others in recruiting and retaining nurses, resulting in increased stability in patient care and patient satisfaction. Because quality nursing helps enlist high-caliber physicians and specialists, Magnet status becomes an attractive force that extends to the entire facility.
As you read through the pages of MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s 2015 Nursing Annual Report, one thing is very clear: our nurses are making a lot of positive things happen, contributing greatly to not only our growth as an organization, but also to the impact we are having on our patients and their families, and their overall experience when they turn to us for care.

It’s common knowledge that the people who live in our community have many choices when it comes to health care. In light of that, I am often asked what I believe sets MedStar Franklin Square Hospital Center apart from the other hospitals that span the Baltimore metropolitan area. What is it that we offer here that is unique, different or special?

I could easily come up with a long list of differentiators—reasons why I believe this hospital truly IS the best place to come when a medical issue presents. I could talk about our comprehensive and diverse clinical service offerings, or the investments we have made as an organization in facility expansions and upgrades, as well as technology. And sometimes, I do. But most often, I answer this “million dollar question” with focus on our people, and how our nursing staff comes together day after day to deliver not only top-notch medical care, but also top-notch customer service, too. I find myself telling stories—real accounts of how our team steps up to the line, and then goes above and beyond to help our patients feel better, and ultimately get better. Because of the exceptional work our nurses do each day, I never have a shortage of positive, powerful and inspirational stories to tell.

So, as we look back at 2015 and all we accomplished as an organization, I want each member of our nursing staff to know how much I appreciate your commitment to MedStar Franklin Square. I am so proud of the phenomenal work you do each day, and all the stories our patients are able to experience and share, as a result of your compassion. It is an honor to serve as your chief nursing officer.

Warm regards,

Larry Strassner, PHD, FACHE, RN
Senior Vice President, Operations
and Chief Nursing Officer
When a patient reflects back on the time he or she spent at a hospital, they think about much more than the actual medical care they received and ultimately what the outcomes were. Of equal importance is how the people who provided their care made them feel. The little things we do really can go a long way, and have tremendous impact on the overall patient experience.

Eager to implement new strategies to improve the patient experience, as well as patient satisfaction ratings, MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s Senior Vice President of Operations and Chief Nursing Officer, Larry Strassner, PhD, FACHE, RN, NEA-BC, began investigating best practices at other Maryland hospitals. Through his research,

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he learned about the Language of Caring (LOC) program, which acknowledges that most associates in health care are caring people who truly want the best for their patients, but sometimes struggle to show how much they care as they are multi-tasking and managing the day-to-day demands of their jobs. One year ago, Dr. Strassner launched the LOC program at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center to provide staff with a new set of tools to help patients understand just how much we care.

The LOC Standards committee is led by Debbie Kisner, PhD, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC, executive sponsor, and Co-Chairs Debbie Biewer, BSN, RN, and Victoria Harrison. In collaboration with a multidisciplinary team of nine associates, the committee is working to fully integrate our SPIRIT values as well as setting new behavioral expectations for staff through application of 10 key learning modules. To date, six of the modules have been completed, including the Heart-Head-Heart principle, which has been especially well received.

“The Heart-Head-Heart module asks staff to think about how they can literally wrap care and concern around a fact as they are interacting with patients and each other,” said Biewer. “The goal is to make others feel like we are empathetic to what they are going through and are fully committed to helping them come up with the best possible solution.”

Clearly, the concept is being embraced. Employees have been overheard making statements to each other along the lines of “Hey! Where is the heart in that?” or “I had to rewrite this email because I forgot to start and end with the heart!” Others have reported that the Heart-Head-Heart concept has been helpful in situations where they had to deliver difficult news to a patient or family, or in cases when they were communicating with challenging co-workers.

“LOC encourages us to develop new habits that really create a positive environment of care for both patients and our staff,” said Biewer. “Over time, these behaviors are being engrained into our culture, and you can feel the change.”
New Patient Portal Provides Instant Access to Health Information

Committed to meeting the requirements for Meaningful Use Stage 2 in calendar year 2015, MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center launched a new informatics project in December 2014, with the intent of giving patients a new tool to access and review their health records. The goal was to create a secure, electronic portal that would engage patients and their family members in care coordination, with a benchmark rate of participation of at least five percent.

The portal allows patients to make appointments, request prescription refills and communicate electronically with their healthcare providers. It also provides a detailed summary of medical records and laboratory results from both physician office visits and inpatient hospital stays.

Getting the patient portal up and running, and also achieving the five percent compliance rate required for Meaningful Use, has been a true team effort. Sharon Bonner, MSN, RN-BC, director of Clinical Informatics, and Dr. Mimi Novello have led the project, with support from Stephanie Dawson, BSN, RN, who has assisted with electronic medical record modifications, along with an intern and two part-time patient portal concierges who have focused on education and training.

“We have invested a lot of time into educating patients, bedside providers and patient registrars on the benefits of using the portal,” said Bonner. “Patients are excited and grateful as they learn about this new tool and how easy the portal makes it for them to view their health information and communicate with their care team.”

Moving forward, the portal team will continue to encourage emergency room patients as well as those who seek treatment through MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s outpatient providers to access medical data using this new tool. Through ongoing education and sharing of best practices with other MedStar hospitals, the goal is to register at least ten percent of patients as portal users by 2017.
Niche designation is acknowledgement that we provide nursing care that is sensitive and unique to the needs of our older adult population.

Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) provides support in developing and utilizing geriatric best practices to strengthen the skills and education of our healthcare staff in caring for our older patients. Last year at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, we had an average inpatient daily census of 112 patients who were older than 64. This translates to about 40 percent of our patients every day are older than 64 and require age-specific care. NICHE has four designation levels. MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is currently at the level of “Senior Friendly” with a goal to achieve the highest level of “Exemplary.”

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center has an interdisciplinary NICHE steering committee which meets monthly. Lynn Petty, MA, RN, NE-BC, is the coordinator and Donna Miller, RN, is the chair.

“We talk about fall reduction, mobility, delirium, and other topics and trends that are of high concern for the aging population,” said Miller. “We are learning from the evidence and each other as we gain greater awareness of what our patients need from us.”

The team currently has 14 bedside nurses from various units, who have completed 20 contact hours to be a Geriatric Resource Nurse (GRN) with a plan to increase our participation. In addition, we are recruiting the care associates to be Geriatric Patient Care Associates (GPCA). Our team participates on committees and councils to ensure the older adult is included in patient outcomes, patient experience, staff, and patient satisfaction. We utilize the data and information as well as geriatric best practices to share and guide our nursing care.
Patient safety is a key priority at almost every hospital, but MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s nursing teams are going the extra mile to earn High Reliability Organization (HRO) status. Simply put, our nursing teams are committed to putting the right systems in place to catch and prevent errors, and maximize patient safety. As mistakes are identified, they are documented, learned from and, perhaps most importantly, celebrated!

“We are trying to create a prevention mindset,” said Jacqueline Spielman, JD, RN, CPHRM, director of Risk Management for MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center. “Who made the mistake isn’t important. Instead, it’s about learning from an error and holding people accountable for fixing the issue, so it doesn’t happen again.”

Natalie Elliott, RN, made an important safety catch when one of her patients, with an allergy to red dye, was prescribed Zantac tablets, which are orange in color. She contacted the pharmacy to verify and, sure enough, the medication she was about to administer to her patient did in fact contain red dye, which could have resulted in a serious allergic reaction. Noting the error, the medication was changed to Zantac liquid, which is colorless, and the Medication Safety office created a listing of allergy alerts for dyes contained in medications, for reference by the pharmacists moving forward.

“I had the medicine in my hand and was about to administer it, and just knew that I needed to take a few extra minutes to double check to make sure that it was safe for my patient,” said Elliott. “My instincts were right, and helped us put a new system in place to prevent that same mistake from happening, or ‘almost’ happening, again.”

Similarly, Perlita Chin, RN, was initiating orders for a Heparin drip for a patient when she noted that Anti-Xa was not part of the lab orders. Chin requested an order for this additional test, and quickly learned that the patient’s Anti-Xa was critically high, leading to the cancellation of the Heparin drip. A few days later, this “lesson learned” was shared at a staff meeting that was attended by Katie Eigenbrode, RN. Finding herself in a similar situation with a patient a short while later, Eigenbrode remembered what she had heard, and followed her colleague’s lead, requesting an order for a baseline Anti-Xa blood draw. Her instincts were correct, with the patient’s lab report producing a critically high Anti-Xa level.

“As members of our nursing team catch these potential errors and share their experiences, we start to see the trickle effect. A safety catch prevents harm to one patient, and then also leads to positive changes that prevent harm to future patients,” said Debbie Kisner, PhD, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC, vice president of Nursing Operations. “We are committed to implementing these systems to assure safety before the risk reaches the patient.”

Natalie Elliott, RN, is one of many nurses who made an important safety catch this year.
Making a Greater Impact on the Community We Serve

MAGNET NURSING IN ACTION

As a Magnet-designated hospital, MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center participates in a series of community outreach projects and initiatives each year. Through engaging our nursing teams and encouraging their partnership in programs designed to improve and support the community, the hospital is able to create an even greater positive impact on the people it serves.

“This year, our team focused on three key community outreach initiatives,” said Holly Chattin, director of Emergency Nursing for MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center. “Our backpacks project provided school supplies to children who attend a local public elementary school, the toiletry collection stocked essential hygiene items for a nearby homeless shelter and our community flu drive made free vaccinations available.”

The Backpack project was led by Brenda Prettyman, RN, CPAN, and Mary Bylen, RN, CPAN, who coordinated the collection and delivery of 600 backpacks filled with assorted school supplies for every child at a local elementary school. The backpacks were presented at Back to School night in August 2015.

This year’s Toiletry drive benefited the Eastern Family Resource Center, which strives to provide support to homeless individuals and families. This project was also led by Prettyman, along with Tammy Dease, RN. Items were collected and packaged throughout the year, and donated to the center in December.

In collaboration with the Community College of Baltimore, Essex Campus, the Baltimore County Health Department, Baltimore County Police, Fire and EMS teams, and the Baltimore County Office of Public Works, MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center offered a drive-thru flu shot clinic to members of the public. Coordinated by Christina Hughes, MS, BSN, RN, NRP, CHEP, director of Healthcare System Preparedness for MedStar Health, this program reached more than 1,800 community citizens in the fall. In tandem with the community flu drive, the hospital also offered a multi-day associate flu drive, making it convenient for all hospital staff members to receive a flu shot. Over 2,100 MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center team members were vaccinated.

“These projects bring our nursing team together in a positive way,” said Chattin. “We have so many positive stories to share about the Magnet program that demonstrate our commitment to giving back to our community.”
New Tools Designed to Educate Nurses on the Benefits of Bedside Shift Reporting

In an ongoing effort to improve Bedside Shift Reporting (BSR) from an operational perspective, the MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center nursing team got creative in fiscal year 2015, developing an evidence-based toolkit to educate staff about best practices for everything from patient and family engagement to decision tree documentation, equipment accessibility and cleaning procedures. In the spring of 2015, more than 25 nurses, nursing assistants, unit secretaries and physicians took part in a two-day filming project. The result was a 30-minute training video, focused on a new and improved BSR module, accessible in SiTEL.

“The video was developed to educate staff about the BSR process, and includes testimonial interviews with our nurses and interdisciplinary staff who talked about the benefits of applying a standardized BSR,” said Carol Esche, DNP, MA, RN, NE-BC, clinical nurse research specialist at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center. “Our staff watched the video and then participated in simulation training to fully understand how these principles apply to their day-to-day work.”

Other key notable accomplishments of the BSR team this year include:

- The BSR toolkit was developed and implemented, accessible under the Nursing Resources page on StarPort. Within the toolkit is a process map and “tips card” to guide nurses in the use of BSR, incorporating Language of Caring.
- The Cleaning and Disinfection policy was updated to include WOW cleaning protocols during BSR on noninfectious patients.
- Nursing and patient satisfaction surveys were conducted in the fall of 2014.
- A process was implemented to document fidelity checks and assess nursing compliance with BSR on an ongoing basis.

- Our poster, “Development of an Electronic Bedside Shift Report Tool,” was presented at the Maryland Organization of Nurse Executives Annual meeting, and was awarded a first place prize in the evidence-based practice category!

“The BSR team developed a slogan to help keep everyone focused during implementation: ‘Bedside reporting...it takes all of us, all of the time!’ said Esche. “This is a way of reminding all healthcare providers that a standardized approach to BSR leads to improved patient safety, satisfaction and outcomes.”

BEDSIDE SHIFT REPORTING TEAM MEMBERS:
Erica Axilrod, BSN, BA, RN; Alan Baumgardner, RN; Courtney Beardsley; LeeAnn Goodson, RN, BSN; Beverly James, BSN, CPAN, CAPA; R. Rebecca La, MS, BSN, RN; Rebecca Landreth, MS, BSN, RN; Janet Limmer, BSN, RN; Charity Ogunbo, BA, RN; Debbie Rouse, RN-BC, VA-BC; Carol Esche, DNP, MA, RN, NE-BC; Melissa Sciabarrasi, BSN, RN; Joan Warren, PhD, RN-BC, NEA-BC; Stephen A. Malm, BS
Proud to be Designated “Baby Friendly”

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center was the first hospital in Baltimore to earn designation by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) as “Baby Friendly.” The five-year designation was officially awarded to the organization on April 6, 2015.

Committed to providing new moms with the information, resources and tools they need to successfully nurse their newborns, the hospital promotes and practices UNICEF’s Ten Steps of Breastfeeding. In addition to making prenatal education a key priority, this program encourages skin-to-skin contact immediately after delivery, breastfeeding within one hour of delivery, and that moms and babies room together 24 hours per day, with newborn assessments, medication administration, lab work, and bathing all occurring as a joint effort between the nursing team and the new parents.

Rest and bonding time are also key priorities, with two hours of quiet time designated per shift, to minimize disruptions in patient rooms.

“Our physicians, along with mother and baby, Labor and Delivery and NICU nurses, have undergone extensive training, as caregivers needed to make significant changes in the delivery of care process as we worked together to earn this important designation,” said Cheryl Wood, MSN, CRNP, NE-BC, director of Women’s and Children’s Services for MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center. “We want the most positive outcomes possible for babies that are born here and have made a commitment as an organization to endorse and actively promote the benefits associated with breastfeeding for both moms and babies.”

3,000+ Babies Brought Into the World, Right Here at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center

The Women’s Pavilion at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, home to the Birthplace at MedStar Franklin Square, recently celebrated a record-breaking milestone. The number of babies delivered in the past year topped the charts at more than 3,000. Congratulations and many thanks to our nurses who are working hard and giving so many soon-to-be moms good reasons to choose MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center for the start of their baby’s life!
Tele-bed Expansion Improves Patient Flow Issues

Flu season can be tricky for hospitals. As patient volumes increase during the winter months, so does the demand for inpatient beds. In some cases, patients end up being assigned to a bed in a unit that provides a level of care that is outside of their scope of need, which creates challenging patient flow and operational issues for the hospital. This describes precisely what was happening on MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s Telemetry Care unit, prompting the development of a new, comprehensive plan to expand the number of tele-beds during times of patient overflow.

“We were seeing an influx of patients boarding for the Telemetry Care unit after being treated in the Emergency room, simply because a bed was not available on the unit when that patient was ready to move,” said Christina Hupka, BSN, RN, CMSRN, nurse manager on Tower 5. “Many of these patients needed monitoring but didn’t necessarily require telemetry care, which was creating a true patient flow issue. It created problems when patients would present a short while later who really required care on the Telemetry unit, but there was not an available bed.”

Several operational changes were implemented to resolve this challenge, starting with the purchase of 12 additional monitors for stroke and noncardiac telemetry patients. Nurses and techs on the Telemetry unit underwent training and completed a new competency, demonstrating an increased knowledge of cardiac rhythms and monitoring. This allowed the team to prioritize even further which 24 patients should be connected to monitors at any given time.

“This process has significantly reduced the patient flow issues we were experiencing and, at the same time, really brought our team together,” said Hupka. “Our nurses love to learn new skills and I think they appreciated that we spent a lot of time educating them, as part of our problem-solving strategy.”
Specialty Clinical Designations

BARIATRICS

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s Bariatrics program is recognized as a Comprehensive Center of Accreditation through the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP). Since its initial credentialing in 2011, the program has continued to grow and thrive, leading to the opening of a brand new, 5,000-square-foot suite, located in the White Square building, in August 2014. Additionally, a quality improvement initiative centered on hydration education, as well as the creation of a long-term patient communication strategy, were key priorities for the practice in fiscal year 2015.

“Our patients continue to see us for five years post-operatively and we are committed to providing ongoing communication and support throughout that time,” said Ginny Andreasik, RN, BSN, CBN, bariatric nurse coordinator for the practice. “Along with implementing a new system to educate patients about the importance of hydration, we also formalized a communication plan that includes two phone calls and one letter, per interval, to connect patients with our exercise physiologist, nurse practitioner and dietitian. It’s about staying with patients on their long-term journey.”

STROKE

In 2015, MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s Stroke Center of Excellence launched a “Stroke Club” to provide ongoing support and education for recovering patients and their families, in collaboration with MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital. Monthly support group meetings offer answers to frequently asked questions, while also bringing people together who face similar challenges and goals.

“The key concept we want to promote is that patients are not alone,” said Julie Irvine, stroke program coordinator for MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center. “We often invite in guest speakers to lead conversations about the recovery process, insurance questions, medication and other issues. We can help patients and their families make connections and tap into local resources, when they need help.”

Additionally, the program earned the Gold Plus Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite award this year, through the American Heart Association. This award, the highest of its kind, recognizes stroke programs that meet or exceed all core and quality measures.

PEDIATRIC ASTHMA

The Pediatric Asthma program at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center established a number of performance improvement goals in fiscal year 2015, all geared toward standardizing care for patients age 2 to 17, with a principle diagnosis of asthma. The goals are categorized by four core measures, addressing patients who can benefit from use of Inhaled Corticosteroids (ICS), those with a pediatric ED home management plan of care or inpatient plan of care, and those who are identified as high-risk for asthma-related death. Collectively, these measures support the Department of Pediatrics’ mission and goals and work to improve the process by which our team delivers care to young asthma patients.

“We have developed a framework that calls for standardized delivery of care in the pediatric emergency department, inpatient unit and ambulatory centers,” said Cheryl May, RN, FNE-P. “We are developing new resources to better educate patients and our staff, all with focus on achievement of a 90 percent or higher compliance rate for each of our core measures. We are making great progress as we work to improve pediatric asthma treatment and management protocols for our patients.”
What Would Happen if an Ebola Patient Presented?

We’re Prepared …

The first case of Ebola was confirmed in the United States in September 2014. Quickly, hospitals across the country began implementing training and action plans, all centered on the possibility that a patient may present with the virus, threatening not only his or her life, but also anyone who were to come in contact with them. MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center has been no exception, making Ebola readiness a key emergency preparedness priority in fiscal year 2015.

Areas of the hospital that are most likely to be affected were identified first and foremost, with the highest risk units being the emergency department, intensive care and labor and delivery. A comprehensive training program was then implemented to provide staff with clear guidelines on how to respond, if and when a patient with Ebola signs and symptoms presents.

“We launched a detailed refresher training program so that our staff would know how to respond and how to protect themselves in that scenario,” said Christina Hughes, MS, BSN, RN, NRP, CHEP, director of Healthcare System Preparedness for MedStar Health. “There are very specific instructions for how to don (put on) and doff (take off) protective equipment in cases of Ebola, which was a key part of our training process.”

Staff from various other hospital departments and units have participated in Ebola preparedness training, from respiratory therapy and infection control, the lab teams, imaging, environmental services, supply chain and EMS. Brenda Kitchen, RN, CIC, infection preventionist, and Debbie Biewer, RN, BSN, director of Patient Care Services, have played an instrumental role in not only rolling out MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s training program, but also identifying infrastructure changes that are necessary to create an environment of care that is conducive to treating cases of Ebola and other similar, life-threatening viruses.

“We are making some structural changes in the emergency department and intensive care unit based on what we have learned,” said Hughes. “We are hearing less in the media about Ebola these days, but the reality is that there is always something happening in the world that we need to be prepared to respond to as an organization. This is why we maintain a constant focus on emergency preparedness.”
Committed to Caring for the Patient as a Whole

As health care evolves and changes, gone are the days when physicians and nurses could focus only on the issues a patient is facing, at the time he or she seeks medical attention. Instead, clinical providers must factor in the patient’s overall health history, as well as personal lifestyle dynamics that may impact the patient’s access to health care over time. It’s consideration for the “big picture” that is allowing MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s team to truly care for the patient as a whole.

“This is an evolving concept, but what we know is that providing good care goes beyond medical need,” said Cheryl Wood, MSN, CRNP, NE-BC, director of Women’s and Children’s Services for MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center. “As we discharge patients, we must think about each patient’s living arrangements and transportation needs, if they will be caring for themselves or will have support from a family member or caregiver. Then we take the steps necessary to equip them with tools, resources and support to get well and stay well at home. We are learning from every patient experience and making great strides in our focus to care for not only the medical issue at hand, but for the patient as a whole.”

Hip Surgery Infection Rate of Zero Maintained

Patients who choose to undergo hip surgery at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center often ask about the likeliness that they will develop an infection post-operatively. Joe Bunker, BSN, RN, assistant nurse manager in the operating room, would tell them not to worry about acquiring an infection, simply because it hasn’t happened at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center since May 2011.

Dedicated to reducing infection rates for patients undergoing prosthetic hip implant procedures, five major practices were implemented, including the implementation of a new antibiotic protocol, the implementation of new surgical preps, limiting traffic into the surgical suite, application of chemical ice packs, and the use of CHG presurgical baths.

“Our achievement is the result of a true team effort,” said Bunker. “Everyone has been willing to work hard and embrace change. And because of that, we are seeing great results. Patients go into surgery confident that our team is doing everything possible to prevent an infection from occurring and we have the data to prove it.”
Patient Advisory Council Works to Optimize Quality and Safety

In May 2014, MedStar Franklin Square established a Patient and Family Advisory Council for Quality & Safety (PFACQS). The council was established with a goal to collect valuable input and perspectives from members of our staff and the community about issues that impact health care, and steps that can be taken to improve the care experience in order to optimize quality and safety for patients.

Since its establishment, the council has made recommendations in an effort to improve our hand hygiene compliance rates. Recognizing that a number of hand hygiene dispensers were broken or empty, the PFACQS council recommended development of a sticker for all dispensers, to make it easy for staff, patients and visitors to notify the appropriate person when a refill or repair is required. The council also identified a need for some modifications in the bathrooms located in the Sleep center, to make them safer.

“Sometimes small changes can make a big difference,” said Jacqueline Spielman, JD, RN, CPHRM, facilitator of the council. “Having the perspectives of patients and families we serve is so valuable as we continue to make quality care and patient safety a top priority, organization-wide.”

PATIENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS
Jacqueline Spielman, facilitator
Bryan Meehan, Sr., vice-chair, community member
Pat Hodges, vice-chair, hospital volunteer
Colleen LoPresto, co-chair, board member
Bill Hodges, co-chair, hospital volunteer
Charles Allan, community member
Barbara Czajkowski, community member
Jeanine Jackson, pharmacist
Shelly Piccinini, community member
Lisa Plitt, secretary
Anna Renault, community member
Dr. Roger Leonard, medstar consultant
Charles Sullivan, community member
Rose Mary Tallon, community member
Anna Wilsman, nurse manager
Lisa Wilson-Young, supply chain manager
Bridge Clinic Provides Resources to Reduce Hospital Readmissions

Not all patients who seek medical attention at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center have an established relationship with a primary care physician. And because primary care physicians often play a key role in a patient’s transition from hospital to outpatient-based care, the likelihood for hospital readmission significantly increases for these individuals.

In July 2014, MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center opened its Bridge clinic to provide a solution for these patients in need. The clinic, managed by Elizabeth Chandler, CRNP, gives patients an on-site resource for follow-up care. Chandler typically schedules appointments for one week post-discharge so that ongoing issues can be managed, and questions answered, before a hospital re-admission becomes necessary.

“I spend a good amount of time with each patient, providing guidance to help them manage their illnesses or disease,” said Chandler. “We are finding that people who have some help through the transition process, once they are discharged from the hospital, are less likely to be readmitted because they have a better understanding of how to take care of themselves, both short and long term. We are getting a lot of positive feedback and are working hard to continuously grow and improve this service for patients who don’t have a primary care physician or who aren’t able to easily access their primary care physician.”
Minimizing Staff Injuries Through Safe Patient Handling

Healthcare workers know better than anyone else that, sometimes, moving a patient from point A to point B is a task that isn’t quite as easy as it sounds. In fact, a few years back, as many as 60 to 80 injuries were reported per year by nurses, physical therapists, care associates, transporters, and other healthcare personnel who hurt themselves simply trying to transport patients to and from stretchers and in and out of wheelchairs and personal vehicles.

The launch of MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s comprehensive Safe Patient Handling program in 2008 aimed to change those statistics through a series of investments in new equipment and training, designed to make the transport process safer and simpler for patients and staff alike. The organization has invested over $700,000 in equipment since that time, with the most recent purchases being six Sara Stedy devices for use by patients house-wide, and a Hover Sling for use in the intensive care unit, in 2015.

“The Sara Stedy functions like a walker with a seat that flips down, allowing nurses to literally roll patients to where they need to be,” said Justin Dusza, MS, BS, RN, ANM, NAO, assistant nurse manager, coordinator of MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s Safe Patient Handling program. “The Hover Sling is an inflatable mattress that also serves as a lift for patients who need to move up and down, and between stretchers and beds.”

Collectively, safe patient handling equipment is making it not only easier, but also significantly safer, for MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center staff to do their jobs.

“We measure the total number of injuries that occur on the job, the total number of light duty days and the total number of missed days of work as we evaluate the impact of this program,” said Dusza. “In fiscal year 2015, just 11 staff injuries were reported, a drastic decrease from the statistics reported years prior. So it’s clear that we are making a positive impact.”

More than 50 members of the organization’s staff serve as transfer mobility coaches. Their charter is to train others on how to properly use new equipment and to assist in more difficult patient transfer situations.

“Taking care of the caregivers is a priority here,” said Dusza. “Our program is viewed as a best practice within MedStar Health. We feel good about the fact that we are setting a standard for others to follow.”
BHERT Intervenes When Urgent Calls Come In

When a nurse (or any staff member) at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is communicating or working with someone that is angry, conflicted or becomes threatening or destructive, he or she knows that they can call on the Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT) for assistance. This team of clinicians is trained to respond quickly when social or behavioral crises occur, involving patients, family members or co-workers.

“One of our goals was to increase training efforts so that staff would know how to better handle challenging situations,” said Rebecca Landreth, MS, BSN, RN, manager of Patient Care Services for Inpatient Behavioral Health. “In doing so, we were able to reduce the number of calls coming in the BHERT line, which in turn reduced the total amount of time our staff spent off their units throughout the year.”

In fiscal year 2014, 99 calls came through the BHERT line. In fiscal year 2015, that number was reduced to 63. When a BHERT call does come in, a team of three to four trained clinicians responds to the situation, moving in to serve as a neutral party and attempt to deescalate tension or disagreement.

“Not every hospital has a system like this in place,” said Landreth. “Our intervention plan has been shared through the Maryland State Behavioral Health Collaborative as a model that other organizations can adopt.”
We began utilizing the University Health System Consortium (UHC) Nurse Residency program in 2012. The program is designed for new-to-practice nurses seeking a professional experience in a supportive environment to jumpstart their nursing career. Since that time we have hired 175 new-to-practice nurses who participated in this program. The retention rate after one year of nursing practice is 93 percent.

In 2015, the Nurse Residency program enrolled a total of 40 new to practice nurses, with 70 percent completing BSN nursing programs and 30 percent completing associate degree programs. This cohort has a 98 percent retention rate after one year of nursing practice.

NURSE LEADERSHIP RESIDENCY PROGRAM

The Nurse Leadership Residency program is a professional development program for nurses new to a leadership role and those looking to gain leadership skills and experiences. In 2015 we had a group of eight participate in this program. The group spent six months learning about MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s leadership roles and gaining skills to improve leadership competence, including the completion of a special project focused on unit culture and lateral violence. Seven participants completed the program in June, bringing our total number of graduates to 29. Of those graduates, 35 percent have been promoted to leadership positions within the hospital.

Tower 1 Utilizes Lean Six Sigma to Decrease Patient Falls

Oftentimes, when patients are admitted to the hospital, they are weak and experience problems associated with balance and stability. Committed to reducing the number of falls occurring on clinical units, the Tower 1 team implemented a new strategy in fiscal year 2015 using Lean Six Sigma tools.

“We spent time analyzing why, where and when falls were occurring and made some process changes during shift changes and meal times,” said Amy Alsante, MS, RN, CHEP, nurse manager on Tower 1. “We added more techs to the floor during this critical time and changed the way shift change reports are handed off, to create a safer environment of care for patients at higher risk for falling.”

Part of the team’s success can be attributed to a more proactive approach in understanding patient needs.

“We realize that more mobility can mean more falls, so we are working with our nursing team to evaluate our patients using a sit-to-stand assessment,” said Alsante. “We are also being more proactive about helping our patients get up to use the bathroom, through hourly rounding, rather than waiting for them to ask for assistance.”

Additionally, the Tower 1 team is in the process of identifying ways to increase patient mobility and activity, while continuing to decrease the occurrence of falls. Based on suggestions from patients and families, plans are in place to create a unique space on the unit where patients can congregate for arts, crafts, activities, and socialization.
Alysia Barber Earns Annual Innovation Award

Alysia Barber, BSN, RN, CPEN, was presented MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center’s Annual Innovation award in fiscal year 2015, in recognition of her efforts to implement a new, safety-based system for administering medication to pediatric patients.

Through a rigorous literature review and surveying other local pediatric units to learn about best practices for safe and accurate medication administration, Barber led the implementation of a quiet zone around the Pyxis system on various hospital units. The zone was established using signage, red tape and a red towel that nurses and physicians place on their shoulders, indicating that they are initiating the medication administration process and must remain focused and uninterrupted. The system was initially introduced in the Pediatric Emergency department, and since then has been adopted by the adult Emergency department, with hopes of eventually expanding it to all clinical areas.

“Medication errors in hospitals are a reality, and many of them are preventable,” said Barber. “As I conducted research and learned about the positive impact this was having at other hospitals, I became very passionate about the idea. It feels good to be recognized, but even better to know that this is improving patient safety here at MedStar Franklin Square.”

Alysia Barber earned the Annual Innovation award for her work in implementing Medication Safety zones in the pediatric and adult emergency departments.
DAISY Awards Recognize Excellence in Nursing

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is one of more than 2,000 healthcare organizations nationwide that present DAISY Awards, in recognition of nurses who demonstrate skillful, compassionate care, and go above and beyond to deliver an outstanding experience for patients and their families. We congratulate our fiscal year 2015 winners!

WINNERS

Jennifer Lowry, ICU
August 2014

Cathy Young, PACU
October 2014

Carol Michalski-McGill, ASC
January 2015

Holly Dempsey, 5T
February 2015

Sarah Claypoole, 5T
February 2015

Crystal Fuller, ED
March 2015

Steve Christenbury, ICU
May 2015

Karen Black, IR
June 2015
Joan Warren Appointed to Fellow of American Academy of Nursing

Congratulations to Joan Warren, PhD, RN-BC, NEA-BC, director of Nursing Research and Magnet at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, who was selected as a 2015 Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN)—one of the highest honors in the field of nursing. Dr. Warren joins approximately 2,200 professionals in the Academy’s prestigious fellowship. Working with the State of Maryland, she has established programs and partnerships with other hospitals and schools to help fellow nurses engage in education and research, leading to funding of a 10-year, $125 million grant to promote educational development to increase the number and quality of nurses prepared to practice in acute care hospitals.

Carol Esche Receives GEM Award for Excellence in Nursing Education and Mentorship

Kudos to Carol Esche, DNP, MA, RN, NE-BC, CNS, for her selection as one of this year’s Nurse.com GEM (Giving Excellence Meaning) award recipients. Esche was recognized within the Education and Mentorship Category for her exemplary teaching and mentoring skills for more than 1,200 acute care nurses at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, as the organization has implemented and adopted policies and programs ranging from hand hygiene and patient equipment cleaning compliance, to the Baby Friendly initiative and nurse residency programs. She is one of thirty nurses to receive this annual award across Maryland, Virginia and Washington DC.
Amy Alsante Wins Josie King Hero Award

In November 2014, Amy Alsante was presented The Josie King Hero Award, in recognition for her work as part of the MedStar Quality and Safety Corporate council. This monthly award is presented by the Josie King Foundation to a healthcare associate who inspires colleagues through their focus on patient safety. Alsante was recognized as a champion for the integration of tools and cultural change at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center.

Janet Limmer and Donna Bryant Lead the Way to Minogue Award

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center was issued a Minogue Circle of Honor award by the Maryland Patient Safety Center for presentation of “Sustaining Hand Hygiene and Patient Equipment Cleaning with a Staff Accountability model.” The project, led by Janet Limmer, BSN, RN, CAPA, and Donna Bryant, BSN, RN, CAPA, engaged staff in identifying barriers and facilitators to handwashing and equipment cleaning processes. Numerous leadership and education strategies were implemented to increase compliance from 45 to 60 percent to 90 to 100 percent.
Regina Straw Wins AORN Blue Ribbon Award

In March 2015, Regina Straw, MSN, MS, RN, CNOR, clinical nurse specialist at MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, won an AORN (Association of periOperative Registered Nurses) Blue Ribbon award for her poster presentation “Perceptions in Teamwork and Communication Among Operating Room Personnel.” Abstracts were presented by healthcare organizations from around the globe at the 2015 AORN Annual Congress, with the top 10 percent earning the award and publication in the June 2015 issue of the Journal of AORN.

Seven of Baltimore’s Best Nurses Hail from MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center

In 2015, Baltimore Magazine conducted a new survey, with a goal to identify the region’s top nurses. The magazine solicited initial nominations from peers, supervisors and patients, then relied on a panel of RN advisors appointed by the Maryland Nurses Association and major local hospitals to select the winners. We are very proud of the fact that, of the 50 recognized, seven hail from MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center! Congratulations to the following members of our nursing team who have earned this prestigious honor:

- Natalie Droski, RN
  Cardiovascular

- Carol Esche, DNP, MA, RN
  Nurse Educator

- Susan Haskell, RN
  Community Care/Ambulatory Care

- Nicole Henninger, RN, BSN
  Intensive Care

- Joan Warren, PhD, RN-BC, NEA-BC
  Research

- Betheen Weed, MSN, RN-BC
  Cardiovascular

- Ashley Wells, BSN, RN, CMSRN
  Medical-Surgical Nursing
Our Year in Numbers

**TOTAL RNs: 1,152**
- Total direct care RNs: 1,067
- Total advanced practice RNs (NP, Midwife, CRNA): 62

**Percent BSN:** 61 percent
**Percent MS/MSN:** 7 percent
**Percent PhD/DNP:** .3 percent

**Percent certified (all):** 26 percent
**CE direct contact hours:** 4,967

**MEASURE CLABSI**
- Progress Since 2014
- Below Goal
- **0.4 increase (House)**
- **0.3 improvement**

**MEASURE CAUTI**
- Progress Since 2014
- **0.8 improvement**

**MEASURE C diff**
- Progress Since 2014
- **2.0 improvement**

**MEASURE Falls**
- Progress Since 2014
- **0.05 improvement (Overall)**
- **0.04 improvement (Unassisted)**

**MEASURE Hand Hygiene**
- Progress Since 2014
- **9% improvement (Overall)**
- **2% improvement (Ambulatory)**

**MEASURE HAPU**
- Progress Since 2014
- **0.44 increase**

**MEASURE HAPU Reportable**
- Progress Since 2014
- **Decrease of 6**

**MEASURE Falls With Harm**
- Progress Since 2014
- **Decrease of 1**

**MEASURE Lifting Injuries**
- Progress Since 2014
- **Decrease of 2**

**MEASURE Serious Safety Events**
- Progress Since 2014
- **Decrease of 2**
Posters, Podium Presentations and Publications

POSTER PRESENTATIONS
FISCAL YEAR 2015


Herster, M. & Brady, B. (2015, June). Development of an ICU multi-modality learning center to enhance patient safety and staff satisfaction. Poster session presented at Institute for Educators in Nursing and Health Professions, University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD.


PODIUM PRESENTATIONS
FISCAL YEAR 2015


Bunting, K., Smith, S., & Hamilton, E. (2014, July). Successful IT initiative to reduce the rate of excessive uterine contractions during labor. Podium session at the 2014 Summer Institute in Nursing Informatics, Baltimore, Maryland. Sharon Coleman Memorial Award


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(continued on next page)
Nursing Leadership
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