

Nursing

at Truman State University

Spring 2009
Nursing
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Tales of a Transplant Nurse

By Amanda Peacock '07

Transplant nursing is undeniably unique. Not only is it a chance for patients to have a fresh start and a new life, but it is also a specialty where lifelong relationships begin. As a transplant nurse, you have the opportunity to be an instrumental part of pre-operative preparation, post-operative care and teaching, and you are one of the first people patients see if complications arise.

It was my first week off orientation. I had four patients to take care of, one with a post-operative kidney and pancreas transplant. We quickly developed that ever-important helping-trusting relationship and I cared for him the three days prior to his discharge. His wife and son were present every evening and were involved in the discharge education I provided. I hugged them and smiled as they rolled out to the elevators.

Two weeks later I was handed an admission. My patient was being readmitted for a fever of unknown origin. When I entered his room, he smiled and said, "not you again." I wrote my name on the board and replied, "They must not like you too much if you're stuck with me." Of course when I took his temperature it was a perfect 98.6 degrees (which is always a very interesting clinical finding), and he was sent home a couple of days later with antibiotics.

I can't possibly remember all of the times this patient was admitted for complications post-transplant. I just recall that it was several times over a period of 5 months. The other nurses knew that if I was working, he was on my assignment list as an unspoken rule. Everyone considered him to be "my" patient, I had his history memorized, and I always knew him better than the attending physician or resident on duty for that month.

One admission for this particular patient was very different. I came to work



Amanda Peacock ('07) transplant nurse, works to give patients a fresh start and a new life.

one day to find out he had been admitted two nights before for confusion, weakness, and a hemoglobin of 4.0. He was sent to the ICU immediately, but he returned to the floor on my shift. I ended up trading admissions with one of the other nurses so that I could transfer him. This time when I walked into the room he smiled, but gave me no smart comment. It was extremely hard for me to complete my assessment. He had gone from a mostly healthy, witty forty something year-old to an ashen and fragile man. He said he recalled nothing before his second day in the ICU, but his wife had told him that he was extremely confused and had to be restrained. For the next several months, he would remain in the hospital with diagnoses of heparin induced thrombocytopenia, sepsis and ultimately, graft-versus-host disease, which occurs in less than 1% of transplant patients.

I came in one day to find his name did not appear on the assignment sheet. I immediately ran to the night charge nurse who knew exactly what I was going to ask (she was this particular patient's "night nurse" and was equally attached). She told me that he had been transferred to the hematology/oncology floor the preceding day. I completed my morning tasks and headed to the heme/onc floor to see him. He was in strict isolation with a WBC of 0.1, so I talked to him from the doorway. I constantly asked the transplant coordinator about his progress, to which she usually replied, "he's doing ok, but it's not a good prognosis."

It was complete coincidence that my last day at the hospital was the day he was supposed to take a "leave" to go home to his family for two days. I went down to his room after work and talked to him for about 45 minutes. We talked about my future plans, his family, and how he didn't have any "favorite nurses" on this floor. I left with an empty and

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News In Nursing



Despite the economic turmoil of the last six months, plans for moving nursing to Pershing Building are continuing. We are looking at paint samples! If you have been able to follow the discussion, the funding has been touch and go with the move to the new wing roughly two years away. We have received periodic reports of funding which is comparable to the current year; however, Truman probably won't know the budget for the upcoming fiscal year until May 2009.

In the nursing lab, we are increasing the use of simulation. Students' experiences are recorded followed by debriefing sessions with faculty. Simulation puts the students in a realistic practice environment prior to working with patients. Additionally, we are adding to our simulation family with a computerized baby manikin on order. A fund was opened to support enhancements to the nursing lab. If you have been considering making a contribution to the Department, we would welcome your support of this fund to help the program keep up with these technologies.

Applications to Truman's nursing major have continued to increase. A statewide initiative, "Caring for Missourians," would increase funding to public universities for health professions, including nursing, if approved. We have a search underway for a new full-time nursing faculty position. Please keep us in mind for both faculty and student recruitment. We continue to admit high ability students who become well-prepared graduates with a state board pass rate at 94.44% (as compared to 87.43 for MO and 86.79 for the US).

The 9th Annual Nursing Capstones will be held on April 30, 2009. Our keynote speaker will be Martha Gragg, RN, BSN, MSN (Class of 1981), Vice-President for Program for Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH). The nursing recognition ceremony will be on May 8 followed by graduation the next day. We would welcome your attendance at these events.

The Department has recently opened a facebook group, Alumni and Friends of the Department of Nursing. This social network has been very helpful in connecting faculty and alumni. We also have Homecoming 2009 listed as an event which provides useful information and enables alumni to indicate that they are planning to attend. We welcome you to join this group and stay connected!

Hope to see you at Homecoming on Oct. 10, 2009. We will host an informal reception (usually at the Student Union Building) following the parade, and Sarah Delaware will offer a tour of the nursing lab to those who are interested.

Best wishes,
Dr. Stephanie Powelson
Chair, Department of Nursing

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unfinished feeling. I knew that as nurses we were supposed to have an impact on our patients, but I never knew that my patients would have such a lasting impact on me. I'll never forget that patient I spent my first year of nursing with, and I will always wonder if he is ok. He was my first discharge, my first transplant, and my first solid cry; not to mention he was the only patient I knew better than his physicians.

I feel this patient is the ultimate example in transplant nursing. For the most part it is a happy field, where people get new organs and a new lease on life. In the best case scenario, you send the patient home and don't see them for a long time—unless they happen to visit you after a scheduled clinic appointment. Patients like the one in this story are the reason nurses specialize in this field. You have to be there for the discharge hugs; but you also have to be there during the long and frustrating roads to recovery and, at times, the unfortunate ends. For these reasons, my experience in transplant nursing has helped shape me as a nurse and to impact me as a person.

***After spending a year working on the transplant floor at KU, Mandy has relocated to Iowa City and is working in the SICU at the University of Iowa. She hopes to attend the MSN/ NP program at the University of Iowa in the fall of 2009. amanda-peacock@uiowa.edu*



Congratulations to Teak Nelson as the recipient of the 2009 Golden Apple Award, given by the Theta Kappa Chapter of the Order of Omega. Teak has also been recognized as a semi-finalist for Truman Educator of the Year for both 2008 and 2009. She is pursuing doctoral study in nursing and is currently working on dissertation research.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR HOMECOMING: OCTOBER 10, 2009!

Class of '89: Please contact Michelle Murphy Cadice about your 20 year class reunion this fall. cadicefamily@sbcglobal.net

Student Life



L-R: Erin Randall, Emily Newsham, and Bobby Massop practice filling home medications for a simulation experience in Rural Public Health Nursing.



Pam Melvin (center) takes time for a picture during NRMCI/ATSU Heart Healthy Fitness Fair on February 20 with seniors Amy Taggart and Kristen Fanger.



Sophomore students raise their stethoscopes toward the speakers in the ceilings listening to heart sounds in Pam Gardner's Nursing Therapeutics II class.



L-R: Sophomore nursing students Holly Cooper, Jessie Reynolds, Katie Hansen, and Karrie Evens, unload the truck at the Salvation Army Food Bank as part of a service learning recipe project for their human nutrition course with Teak Nelson.



Pam Melvin (far Right) debriefs senior students after a home health simulation learning experience. L-R: Ashley Sternquist, Kristen Fanger, Meagan Batson, and Trish Kreikemeier.



Katie Cleaveland '09 assists the Adair County Public Health Department with the administration of flu shots during the Drive-Through Flu Shot Clinic.

Geriatric Nursing Education Consortium (GNEC) Faculty Development Institute

Faculty members Kit Hadwiger (left) and Brenda Wheeler (right), attended a GNEC Faculty Development Institute enhancing gerontology content in baccalaureate nursing curricula October 14-16, 2008, in St. Louis, Missouri. They conducted a course mapping of the nursing curriculum prior to the conference to assess where gerontology concepts were covered in the nursing curriculum at Truman State University. Both faculty learned innovative and creative ways to include geriatric concepts in the nursing curriculum and are sharing the information with the nursing faculty. Kit and Brenda's participation in the conference was funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation.



Celia Hagan '00

Celia Hagan '00 wears two hats. She is the project coordinator for both the NEMO Telehealth Network and the Interdisciplinary Clinical Education Enhanced (ICEE) program).

The NEMO Telehealth Network was established in 2005 with grant money in part from the Missouri Foundation for Health. This grant funded program of A.T. Still University is led by Dr. John Heard, project director, and Dr. Philip Slocum, medical director. It was established to improve access to health care through the use of telehealth technology for the residents of northeast Missouri. Telehealth is the use of video conferencing equipment to deliver healthcare services over a distance. This is beneficial for patients who, by using a local telehealth site, can have a face to face appointment with a specialist in another community. It saves patients the time and expense of traveling. The project spans 12 counties and has 19 telehealth sites. Celia enjoys the variety of activities that this position allows "on a daily basis, multiple tasks are completed that may range from public presentations, to equipment testing, to coordinator support, and training." She enjoys working with clinicians, administrative staff, and community members. "I especially appreciate the opportunity to help get people connected to the care that they need." For more information you may visit the website at www.atsu.edu/nemotelehealth.

ICEE offers the opportunity to learn skills that will enhance patient care, for health care profession students in clinical rotations. It utilizes TeamSTEPS (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety) which is an evidence-based comprehen-

sive teamwork training system. This is a collaborative effort of the Missouri Area Health Education Center Program and Celia works under the direction of Dr. Janet Head and with manager Robin Lukefahr. "As a nurse, I have had multiple experiences working with teams in a variety of settings and I realize the value of teamwork. I'm glad to support and encourage nursing and other health profession students to participate in this course to learn more about teamwork strategies and how they can improve the quality of patient care."

When Celia is not working, she can be found supporting Kirksville High School sports (basketball, track, etc.) where her children have been active participants. Contact Celia at cahagan@hotmail.com.



Ways to keep in Touch... Browse our Website

1. Visit our Website at <http://nursing.truman.edu>
2. Become our friend on Facebook and join our group: Friends and Alumni of the Department of Nursing at Truman State University.
3. Read the Newsletters cover to cover.
4. Come see us at Barnett Hall.

Yes, that is right. Several faculty members have joined facebook and we have developed an alumni group. By joining this group you can maintain contact with fellow alumni and faculty. It also provides us a way of communicating with members quickly and easily regarding future events. For example, you might read about Homecoming and learn who is planning to attend. Please consider joining our group so that you can keep in touch and invite others to join. If you are not yet on Facebook it is simple to sign up. Just go to facebook.com and follow the sign up instructions.

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IN THE Spotlight...



Who's Who among Students in American Universities and Colleges

Seven seniors from the class of 2009 were recognized for outstanding academic achievement, character, leadership and service at a luncheon on February 14, 2009. *Left to Right:* Brenda Wheeler, Andrea Showalter, Erin Randall, Caitlin Cummings, Pam Gardner, and Stephanie Powelson. Not pictured: Julie Finazzo, Lauren Hohnstein, Katherine Hunter, and Robert Massop.



Erin Randall '09 (Outstanding Nursing Student 2008-2009) prepares to present *The Lived Experience of Primary Caregivers of Older Adults with Alzheimer's Disease* at the 22nd Annual Student Research Conference with faculty mentor Steve Hadwiger (Outstanding Research Mentor 2008-2009).



Rho Omega Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau

International Fall Dinner Series Keynote speaker Brenda Higgins (below), EdD, FNP, BC presented "Nursing Faculty Perceptions of Job Satisfaction and the Leadership Effectiveness of their Administrators." for Rho Omega Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International. Dr. Higgins is not only an alumnus of the Truman State University Department of Nursing but is also a former faculty member.



On Oct. 25, 2008, 12 senior nursing students from Truman and one nursing community leader were inducted into Rho Omega Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. *First Row, L-R:* Patricia Kreikemeier, Erin Randall, Lisa Saubert, Caitlin Cummings, Andrea Showalter, Samantha Leone. *Second Row:* Vanessa Lincoln, Cori Van Aken, Kristi Fanger, Emily Tobias, Ben Snyders, Emily Greenwood. (Not pictured Lindsey Fraticola)

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Thank you for your generous support—your help does make a difference!

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Alumni News And Notes

Share with us your news, accomplishments, plans, travels, marriage, births, etc. Don't forget address changes so the newsletter can keep up with you. Please send updates and notes to **Shirley Riley**, sriley@truman.edu, or to **nursing@truman.edu**, or by postal mail.

Sharon Davis Smith '86 "I have a certification in Infusion nursing (CRNI) and currently work in Vascular Access at BJH in St. Louis, where I have been for the past 22 years. I recently got married to Steven Smith and I am now the stepmom to 2 wonderful boys, Steven and Justin." sherrydivrn@charter.net

Leanna Leake '89 has a new address in Vandalia, MO. Lrleake71@sbcglobal.net

Julie Foster '93 has been employed by Spheris Operations for the past nine years. She is able to work remotely from home via internet and intranet connections. She supervises and mentors a team of 78 medical transcriptionists all over the U.S., providing transcription for large hospitals and clinics. jafoster60@windstream.net

Paige Staes Whitney '98 has taken a new position as Instructor at Methodist College of Nursing in Peoria, IL and is preparing an online summer class on Aging for RN to BSN students. pwhitney@mcon.edu

Katie (Blevins) Lohmeyer '07 married Andy in November and bought a house in Webster Groves, MO. She works in labor and delivery at St. Johns Mercy. Katie_blevins@hotmail.com

Jamey Johnston '06 is part of a specialized team at an emergency shelter for women in crisis pregnancy called Our Lady's Inn. She completed her certification to teach natural family planning through Creighton Model Fertility Care. She is considering applying for a masters program at Pontifical John Paul II Institute in Washington D.C. in Biotechnology and Ethics. jameyjohnston@gmail.com

Twink Pham '07 reported to Ft. Lewis, Washington in October as is working on a medical oncology floor. She is also part of a pilot class for the Army Nurse Residency Program which is designed to produce well-rounded nurse corps officers that are prepared for deployment. "I've been on quite a few adventures --skydiving, bungee jumping, climbing mountains, hitting every national park along the way, sight seeing, and went on a cruise! Things are great!" Twink.pham@gmail.com

Kindra Rickman '08 is in the Mother/Baby fellowship at St. John's. kindrah1985@gmail.com

Story Peterson '08 is working at Boone in Columbia, Mo on the orthopedic floor. She still feels postpartum is her calling.

Kim Young '05 and husband, Jared, welcomed first born Gavin Lee Young into their family. Gavin was born October 11, 2008 at the Mayo Clinic. "He was well worth the wait!" oncurnurse_77@yahoo.com

Thanks for your e-mails and notes.