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Teamwork, Retention, and Staff Morale, 3B Small but Mighty

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every day. The unit has not had a single incidence of CAUTI or CLABSI in over a year, and the nurses demonstrate a commitment to nursing excellence through tackling nursing sensitive indicators routinely. Additionally, every day on the unit, nurses find reason for celebration, whether it be a patient's birthday while they are hospitalized, a patient's recovery from even the most devastating stroke deficits, or the simple fact that a patient mastered even the most basic tasks for the first time. 5H is a strong proponent of patient-and-family centered care, with multiple on-going projects designed to bring focus back to the patient. Heather Abraham RN is working to promote personal pet visitation, Bryan Klimek RN has committed to aspiration prevention, Kristy Ames RN is passionately working to reduce shoulder subluxation, and Bree Buckshnis RN is partnering with our neuro providers to refine interdisciplinary communication across the stroke care continuum. Furthermore, 5H nurses volunteer at stroke centers in San Diego county, sharing their passion for community and wellness beyond the walls of Jacobs Medical Center.

5H nurses elevate their practice through their partnership with the Neuro ICU, nursing leadership, and stroke leadership. Daily huddles with the Neuro ICU identify potential

downgrades and ICU transfers to facilitate seamless throughput and patient flow within the stroke/neuro service line. Interdisciplinary rounds with stroke leadership, as well as active participation in Stroke Quality Council, have also proven to be valuable in the empowerment and quality of care that 5H neuro nurses deliver. 5H is a driving force in what stroke care looks like at UCSDH.

The successes of this team are not only due to the relentless spirit of the compassionate group of individuals who are proud to be a part of the 5H team; they can also be attributed to the various team building activities



that are conducted to maintain engagement and a healthy work environment. Annually, our neuro family (including both ICU/PCU nurses and all neuro providers) participates in team building retreats to maintain personal wellness, an award ceremony (3F/5H Axon Awards) during which we roll out the red carpet for our team members, and weekly debriefs to address process issues and provide an emotional 'check-in' with one another. Needless to say, the morale of our team is very important, and it is our priority to keep caregiver burnout at bay!

Stroke nursing is all-encompassing in its approach to patient care; it requires patience, a specialized knowledge and skill set, and strong collaboration with the interdisciplinary team. The 5H Neuro PCU staff is proud to lead in this growing field and has big plans to shape the future of stroke nursing. After all, 'neuro nurses have all the brains', and 5H strives to be the premier destination for stroke care at UCSDH.

## Teamwork, Retention, and Staff Morale, 3B Small but Mighty

By: Megan Hagedorn BSN, RN, PCCN and Kathleen Boughanem BSN, RN

The University of California San Diego Medical Center consists of three hospitals that operate under one license with a current combined capacity of 808 beds: UC San Diego Medical Center in Hillcrest (390 beds), Jacobs Medical Center (JMC) (364 beds) and Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center (CVC) (54 beds). This is then divided out into 26 individual nursing units ranging in bed size from JMC 4th and 6th floors, which are the largest at 36 beds each, to our 15 bed unit located in the CVC. When the CVC opened in 2011, the nurses and clinical care partners (CCP's) from Hillcrest moved into this new building that houses 3 units dedicated strictly to cardiac care. The nurses that opened the new building left the units they knew by heart to start a new type of unit in a new facility, and 3B was born.

When first opened, 3B was primarily a unit that served a patient population of patients receiving observation or procedures with overnight stays. The short length of stay resulted in a place that was fast paced with a high patient turnover. Most of the patient population stayed less than 24 hours post cardiac catheterization. Most units can claim fantastic teamwork but when you are admitting and discharging over two-thirds of your unit in a day, great teamwork isn't just helpful, it's necessary. Because patients are always coming and going, establishing a rapport with patients is sometimes difficult. On 3B the nurses have developed an expertise in this facet of care, or maybe they are so successful because of their natural abilities for relationship-building. To these nurses patients aren't a number, but instead they are treated as family. The phrase 'not my patient' is just not uttered here, just the opposite,

it's considered taboo. They say there is no 'I' in team and here on 3B that statement rings true.

Through the years the patient population has changed. There are less one night stays and more chronic congestive heart failure and post heart surgery patients, but the esprit de corps remains the same. One might say that the teamwork on this unit was born of necessity. While there may be some truth to that, the teamwork here has remained because of the highly skilled and dedicated nurses that call this floor home.

The other things that you will notice if you are ever on 3B is that there always seems to be food. We all know that nurses like to eat! Goodies from families and special treats from management help make us feel appreciated. True to form 3B makes that extra effort. The staff here are always bringing in dishes to share. Cookies, candy, and cuisine from any corner of the globe are always filling the breakroom. If there is one thing that can boost staff morale while running around discharging and admitting patients, it is snacks. So, if you're hungry swing by and grab a bite, it's guaranteed to put a smile on your face.

Fifteen; that number is not only significant because of the number of beds on this unit, it is also the average years of nursing expertise on the unit amongst the staff. With one of the lowest staff turnover rates in the hospital it's no wonder it's hard to find an open position on 3B.

When the staff were asked why they stay on this unit the common denominator is family. Everyone here is treated like family, patients and staff alike. In retrospect maybe that is why the food is so good here, food tastes better when you eat it with your family.

**Megan Hagedorn, BSN, RN, PCCN** is the Assistant Nurse Manager of the 3B Progressive Care Unit at UC San Diego Health Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center. She earned her BSN from University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Prior to working at UCSD, she started at Mission Hospitals in Asheville, NC. From there, she took on several travel assignments in Washington DC and Maui, Hawaii before finding a home here in San Diego.

**Kate Boughanem, BSN, RN** graduated from St. Louis University in 1996 with her Bachelor's in Nursing. She started her career at UC San Diego Health 17 years ago as a travel nurse at Thornton ICU. She worked as a cardiovascular and heart transplant nurse before becoming nurse manager of Sulpizio 3B.



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