

FIRST
EDITION

NURSCAPE

UGMC NURSES MAGAZINE





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Hurray

The maiden edition of the UGMC Nurses magazine is here. It contains beautiful articles by our nurses, the journey so far, beautiful pictures and many more.

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Foreword

By the Chief Executive Officer, UGMC

Dr. Abdul - Samed Tanko, MD, Pg. Dip, Msc, MACC, MESC, Cert. (HF)



It is both an honour and a privilege to pen this foreword for the maiden edition of the UGMC Nurses' Magazine, especially as I step into this role as the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer of this esteemed institution.

Though my time at UGMC has just begun, I have already come to admire the strength, resilience, and professionalism that define our nursing workforce. Nurses form the backbone of patient care, steadfast, knowledgeable, and indispensable to the healing process.

This magazine marks a significant milestone. It is more than a publication, it is a voice, a platform, and a celebration of the remarkable work that our nurses do every single day. It captures your stories, your challenges, your innovations, and your unwavering commitment to patient care.

As we chart the future of UGMC together, I am committed to supporting and championing our nursing community. Your leadership at the bedside and beyond will continue to be pivotal to the success of this institution.

Congratulations to the editorial team and all contributors for bringing this visionary project to life. I look forward to many more editions as we grow stronger together.

Goodwill Message

By the Director of Medical Affairs, UGMC

Dr. Baffoe Gyan, M.D., FGCS, FWCS



Congratulations, my amazing nurses on your day. We appreciate your dedication and sacrifice.

You are the backbone, the spine that keeps our health system standing straight and tall. We honor your unwavering commitment and selflessness in giving your best for our patients.

We, as management, stand with you in your struggle, and we will provide the necessary support for your well-being and financial needs.

Profile Of The First Director Of Nursing

University Of Ghana Medical Centre, 2018



Mrs Judith Naa-Klorkor Asiamah, the inaugural Director of Nursing at University of Ghana Medical Centre, brought visionary leadership, deep clinical expertise, and a passion for compassionate care to the institution. Appointed in [2018], she

became a trailblazer not only as the hospital's first nursing director but also as a mentor and role model for future generations of nurses.

Originally trained in Ghana, she began her career as a staff nurse and steadily rose through the ranks due to her excellence in patient care, leadership abilities, and commitment to professional development. Her experience in the USA, UK and Israel healthcare system enriched her understanding of multicultural care and systems leadership.

As Director of Nursing, she established foundational policies in clinical governance, patient safety, and nursing education.

Her initiatives significantly improved staff retention, patient satisfaction, and clinical outcomes, particularly in areas such as pressure sore prevention and workforce development.

Her legacy includes the implementation of evidence-based nursing practices, the creation of mentorship programs, and active involvement in national nursing forums. Her leadership style, firm yet empathetic helped elevate the status and voice of nurses within the hospital's executive team.

Beyond her administrative achievements, she remains a passionate advocate for equity in healthcare and continues to mentor young nurses, inspiring them to lead with integrity, knowledge, and heart. Due to her dedication and good leadership she has received many awards. As a visionary leader she is the first Nursing Director to integrate supply chain management into Nursing.

Her commitment to quality care and patient satisfaction is unwavering, grounded in the belief that excellence must be upheld from the first to the final point of care. In recognition of her dedication and contributions, she was inducted as a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Supply Chain Management.

She is also a Fellow of the Ghana College of Nurses and Midwives and the Faculty Chair for Perioperative Nursing.



Watch out for the full story!!!!

The Nursing Journey So Far



A Special Feature of Mrs. Rita Momo Sika-Nartey



Mrs. Rita Momo Sika-Nartey is a highly respected nurse leader with more than three decades of experience in clinical practice, nephrology, and healthcare administration. Her professional journey is defined by excellence, mentorship, advocacy, and a deep commitment.

Her nursing career began in 1988 when she enrolled at the Korle-Bu Nurses' Training College. Initially intending to pursue secretarial studies, she was encouraged by her uncle—who served as a father figure after the early loss of her father—to consider nursing, a path more aligned with her compassionate and caring nature. She graduated in 1991 with a certificate in General Nursing.

She continued to advance her clinical knowledge, completing a Midwifery program from 1994 to 1995 and studying Critical Care Nursing in 2002–2003. In pursuit of academic growth, she earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Sociology from 2009 to 2012.

In 1999, Mrs. Sika-Nartey began her journey in nephrology nursing at the Renal Dialysis Unit of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. In 2007, she received advanced training in Dialysis Nursing and Unit Management through clinical attachments at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, United Kingdom, and in Israel.

After returning to Ghana, she made a transformative impact by expanding the dialysis unit at Korle-Bu from 5 to 19 dialysis machines. From 2005 to 2019, she led the unit and was instrumental in training dialysis nurses from several healthcare institutions including the Police Hospital, Cape Coast Hospital, International Maritime Hospital, Winneba Dialysis unit, Effia-Nkwanta Hospital, and numerous private dialysis centers.

She also pioneered the establishment of Ghana's first isolation dialysis unit at Korle-Bu, addressing a critical gap in infection control for renal care. In recognition of her clinical excellence, she was named Best Nurse in Internal Medicine in 2004

The Nursing Journey So Far



A Special Feature of Mrs. Rita Momo Sika-Nartey

Her contributions extended into education and policy. She co-founded the Annual Renal Nurses Forum, bringing together nephrology nurses from across Africa to engage in knowledge sharing and professional development. She played a vital role in the development of Ghana's nephrology nursing curriculum at the Ghana College of Nursing and Midwifery and served as a Board Member of the National Association of Kidney (NAKid) and Vice Chairperson of the PrimeTime Kidney Foundation (PKF).

Mrs. Rita Momo Sika-Nartey has represented Ghana at multiple international dialysis conferences, including those held in the Ghana, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Belgium, United States (San Diego), Kenya, Israel, and South Africa.

In 2019, she was appointed Deputy Director of Nursing at the University of Ghana Medical Centre (UGMC), where she continued to demonstrate exemplary leadership. Then in 2024, through the abundant grace, divine favor, and unflinching faithfulness of God, she was divinely elevated to the position of Chief Nursing Officer, becoming the first person to ever hold this prestigious role at UGMC.

She sees this appointment not merely as a professional achievement, but as a testimony to God's hand upon her life and career.

In her current role, she supports the Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services at the Nursing Administration and oversees the Internal Medicine and the Dialysis Unit, steadfastly upholding the highest standards of patient care and nursing leadership to the glory of God, where she continued to demonstrate exemplary leadership.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Rita Momo Sika-Nartey has mentored numerous nurses, many of whom now serve in leadership positions. Her leadership style is inclusive, value-driven, and rooted in respect, fairness and compassion. She believes that true leadership involves uplifting others and ensuring that opportunities are shared equitably.

She remains a strong advocate for nursing advancement in Ghana and emphasizes the need for improved salary structures to retain skilled nurses. She encourages young nurses and midwives to aim high, engage in policy-making, and pursue academic and professional excellence.

A devout Christian, she serves as a Lady Pastor at Lighthouse Chapel International. She is married and a proud mother of three children, one of whom has followed in her footsteps into the nursing profession. To her, nursing is not just a career—it is a calling. If given the chance to choose again, she affirms she would proudly choose the nursing path once more. To God be the glory.



Articles 1

Breaking Stereotypes: Redefining the Image of Modern Nurses

Submitted By: DDNS Rita Odonkor

Nursing has long been enveloped in stereotypes that misrepresent the profession's depth and diversity. These misconceptions not only undermine the critical role nurses play in healthcare but also deter potential talent from entering the field. It's imperative to challenge and redefine these outdated notions to reflect the true essence of modern nursing.

Challenging Outdated Perceptions

1. Gender Roles in Nursing

The belief that nursing is a female-only profession persists, despite the increasing number of men entering the field. Globally, men constitute approximately 10% of the nursing workforce, with efforts underway to boost this representation. Men bring unique perspectives and skills, enriching patient care and promoting gender diversity in healthcare settings.

2. Intellectual Demands of Nursing

The notion that nursing lacks intellectual rigor is a misconception. In reality, nursing is a profession that demands substantial cognitive engagement, critical thinking, and continuous learning. Nurses are integral to patient assessment, care planning, and the implementation of complex interventions, requiring not only a deep understanding of medical procedures but also the ability to make swift, informed decisions in dynamic clinical environments.

The intellectual demands of nursing are evident across various educational levels and professional roles:

1. Diploma Nursing
2. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN),
3. Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
4. Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD): A research-focused doctoral degree etc.

Each of these educational levels equips nurses with specific knowledge and skills, enabling them to undertake roles that match their qualifications. As nurses advance academically, they are prepared for positions ranging from direct patient care to specialized clinical roles, research, education, and leadership within healthcare systems. This progression underscores the intellectual rigor and diverse opportunities inherent in the nursing profession.

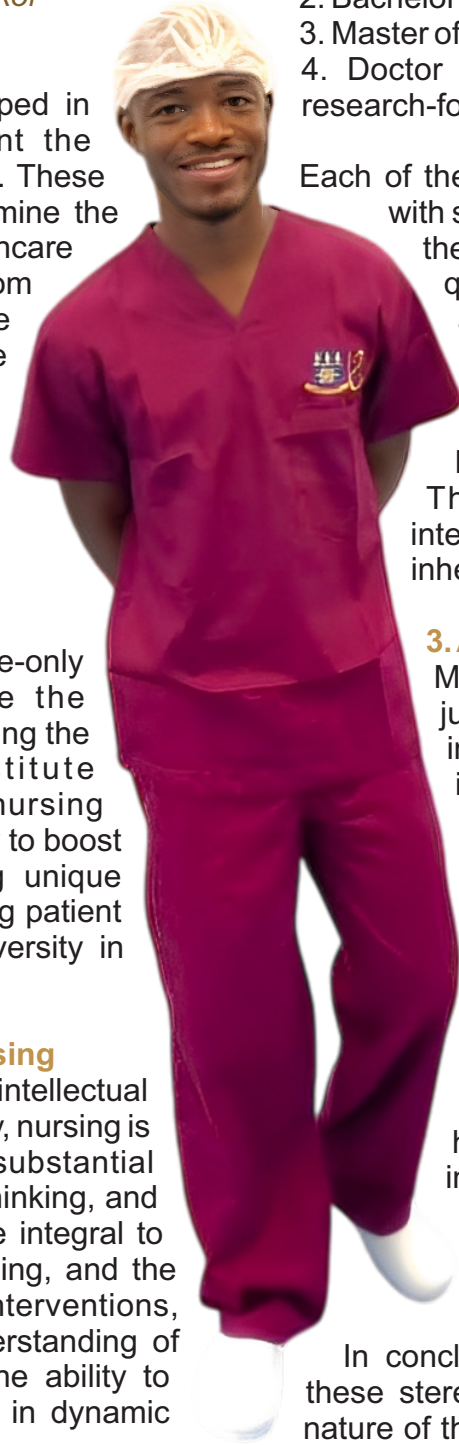
3. Autonomy and Decision-Making

Modern nursing involves independent judgment, patient advocacy, leadership in care coordination and collaborative involvement with medical Doctors and other multidisciplinary teams. Nurses often serve as the primary point of contact for patients, making crucial decisions that impact outcomes.

4. Diverse Work Environments

Contrary to the belief that all nurses work in hospitals, they also practice in various settings, including community health centers, schools, research institutions, and patients' homes. This diversity allows nurses to address a wide range of health needs across different populations.

In conclusion, by confronting and dispelling these stereotypes, we not only honor the true nature of the nursing profession but also ensure that it continues to attract and retain individuals committed to delivering exceptional care. It's time to recognize and celebrate the multifaceted roles nurses play in advancing global health.





Impact Of “on-the-job” Training On Employee Satisfaction And Performance

Author: Judith N. K. Asiamah (Mrs)

Director, Nursing and Midwifery Services, UGMC

Paper presented at 5th Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation (CNMF) Conference in London, UK, 2020

Introduction

Training has traditionally been known as the manner by which individuals change their understanding, abilities, behaviors and attitudes. The importance of training cannot be overemphasized. However, it is unclear what kind of training and experience would produce maximum results and improve productivity.

Objectives

This study aimed at investigating the overall impact of “on-the-job” training on job performance, scrutinize differences in gender with regards to training and performance among the participants as well as discover the influence of training on the job satisfaction.

Methods

Convenience sampling was utilized among hundred (100) nurses from the 37 Military Hospital (in Accra, Ghana) using the Kirkpatrick Training Evaluation Questionnaire as well as the Overall Job Satisfaction Scale for data collection. Data was analysed using SPSS version 16.0 and results were displayed via frequency and tables. Further tests conducted include Pearson's r-test as well as Independent t-test.

Results

Majority (about 70 percent) of the respondents benefited from their training session which led to improvement in job performance. Also, more than half of the respondents (52 percent) were female. 88 percent of respondents suggested that trainings should be more interactive and practical rather than instructive and theoretical.

Recommendation: This study recommended that descriptive research should be utilised in subsequent studies. Also, future studies should include variables other than experience and gender which also have effects on the job performance of employees.

Keywords

job performance, on-the-job training



Abstracts Research



Evaluating Family Involvement In The Care Of Critically ill Patients At A Quaternary Hospital: A Study At University Of Ghana Medical Centre

Author: Jenneh Yankey, Nurse Specialist, PICU

Background:

Family involvement in critical care is essential for optimizing patient outcomes and addressing healthcare disparities. Despite growing recognition of its importance, challenges persist in effectively integrating families into care delivery. Effective family involvement in critical care settings is crucial for optimizing patient outcomes, addressing healthcare disparities, and ensuring patient-centered care. Hence, the need for this study.

Aim:

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of family involvement on the care of critically ill patients in the General Intensive Care Unit (GICU) of a quaternary hospital.



Methods:

A cross-sectional study with a quantitative research approach was conducted among healthcare providers and family members in the UGMC GICU. A consecutive sampling method was employed to select 38 healthcare workers and 94 patients' family members. Data was gathered using structured questionnaires administered via electronic tablets and smartphones.

Results:

The overall satisfaction of family members with the services rendered regarding the patient's care in the Intensive Care Unit was 91%. The aspect of care most important to family members was their involvement in decision making (34%) and communication with healthcare staff (34%). However, several barriers hinder family involvement, including inadequate information about patient conditions, language barriers, and balancing personal responsibilities.

Financial and logistical constraints also limited family presence. Family involvement was seen as highly beneficial, improving patient emotional well-being, quality of care, and pain management. Key areas for improvement include better support services for families, such as counselling and accommodation, and improved communication protocols.



Surgical Safety Checklist

Author:s Judith N. K. Asiamah(Mrs) and Yvonne Agyare
Director, Nursing and Midwifery Services, UGMC
Paper presented at 6th Commonwealth Nurses and
Midwives Federation (CNMF) Conference in Malta.
UK, 2022

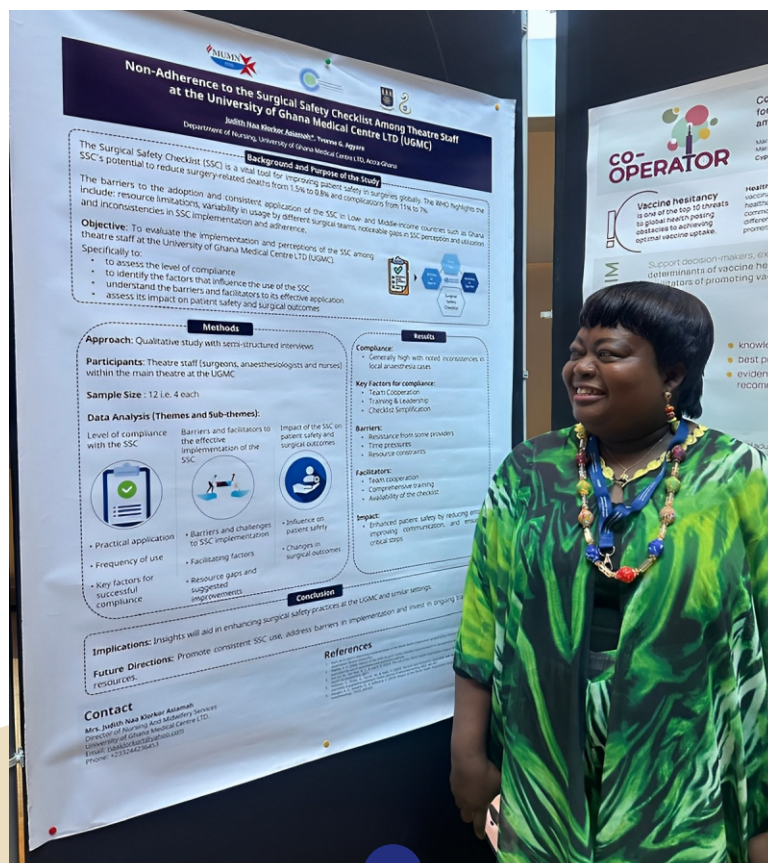
This study explored the Surgical Safety Checklist (SSC) implementation and perceptions among surgical providers at the University of Ghana Medical Centre (UGMC).

Using a qualitative approach, the research assessed the level of compliance with the SSC, identified barriers and facilitators to its effective implementation, and evaluated its perceived impact on patient safety and surgical outcomes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 healthcare professionals, including surgeons, anesthesiologists, and nurses, from UGMC's main theatre.

Findings revealed generally high compliance with the SSC, though inconsistencies were noted, particularly in cases involving local anaesthesia. Key barriers to implementation included resistance from some healthcare professionals, time pressures, and resource constraints. Facilitators included cooperation among team members, comprehensive training, and the availability of the checklist.

The SSC was perceived to significantly enhance patient safety by reducing errors, improving communication, and ensuring critical safety steps were followed.

The study highlights the need for ongoing efforts to promote consistent use of the SSC, including comprehensive training, adequate staffing, and improved checklist accessibility. These findings can inform strategies to enhance surgical safety practices in similar healthcare settings.



Nursing Audit Our Compass To Quality Care

By Ms. Gifty Atampugbire (SNO-PH, MPH, MHFA, PSS, TIC, BSc.PH, RN) Clinical Nursing Auditor, UGMC

As we celebrate International Nurses Week and launch UGMC's first-ever Nurses' Magazine, we spotlight one of the most transformative tools in nursing practice, Nursing Audit.

In every great institution, there is a pulse that keeps quality alive. At UGMC, one such heartbeat is the **Clinical Nursing Audit Office**.

The Clinical Nursing Audit Office at UGMC was conceived by our visionary Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, Mrs. Judith Asiamah, to be a spotlight illuminating hidden gaps in care, sharpening our focus on patient safety, and driving the relentless pursuit of excellence.

From the very beginning, she boldly redefined what audits mean in nursing; not as intimidating inspections, but as empowering opportunities where data meets compassion and every insight translates into safer, kinder, world-class nursing. Thanks to her foresight, the Clinical Nursing Audit has become a powerful engine of progress, helping us uncover system gaps, highlight best practices, and nurture a culture of accountability across every ward and department.

Under her guidance, I have honed critical skills in implementing safety measures, conducting rigorous audits, and leading quality-improvement initiatives. This experience has not only deepened my own expertise but has also instilled a renewed sense of responsibility and accountability across our entire nursing workforce.

Today, the Clinical Nursing Audit Office stands as both a compass and a catalyst helping every nurse at UGMC transform good practice into great practices and awakened a deep sense of ownership, and reminded us all that excellence is not a destination, it is a daily decision!

Nursing Audit...What Exactly Is It?

It is a structured process that evaluates nursing care delivery against established standards. It helps us reflect on our practice, identify gaps, celebrate best practices that fit our local context and resources and continuously improve the quality of care we provide. Think of it as a clinical mirror that reflects our practice back to us; objectively, compassionately, and in real time.

Why talk about audit during International Nurses Week?

Because every pulse we count, every wound we dress, and every word of comfort we offer is a data point in the story of patient care. A nursing audit simply asks: Are those data points aligning to create the safest, kindest, and most effective journey for our patients? When the answer is "yes," we celebrate; when it's "not yet," we innovate.

Far from being a clipboard-wielding fault-finder as Director Nursing and Midwifery Services would always say; an audit is our collaborative GPS; re-routing us to excellence whenever we drift.

Benefits of Clinical Audits

- One of the key benefits is improved patient safety, as audits uncover potential risks and promote the implementation of preventive measures, ultimately reducing errors.
- It also plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of healthcare by ensuring that patient care aligns with established evidence-based standards.
- They help identify discrepancies between current practices and best practices, allowing health professionals to make informed improvements.
- Clinical audits foster a culture of accountability and professionalism among staff, encouraging reflective practice and adherence to ethical standards.
- By driving continuous quality improvement, audits empower healthcare teams to monitor progress, adapt strategies, and innovate in service delivery.

Articles

- f. They also strengthen communication and collaboration across departments by creating opportunities for shared learning and teamwork.
- g. Clinical audits provide valuable data that supports evidence-based decision-making at both clinical and administrative levels, ensuring that resources are used effectively.
- h. They encourage the sharing of best practices by identifying effective strategies that can be replicated across units. This leads to enhanced patient experiences, where care becomes safer, more respectful, and more effective.
- i. Ultimately, audits help build a culture of excellence by fostering a learning health system rooted in accountability, patient-centered and continuous progress.

In essence, clinical audits will empower UGMC to remain a leading health facility in Ghana by continuously improving care delivery, building staff capacity, and reinforcing its reputation for clinical excellence and innovation.

The Monthly “Last-Friday Audit Rounds”

As started last year, every last Friday of the month transforms into a campus-wide Quality Showcase:

1. Ward or Unit Audit: Each area completes a rapid audit on a rotating theme: medication safety, infection prevention, patient education, etc.
2. 10-Minute Spotlight Presentation: Highlight one issue, one challenge, or one “brilliant practice” that others can replicate.
3. Cross-Pollination: Q&A, idea boards, and quick-fire solutions from colleagues across departments. e is not a destination, it is a daily decision!

Call to Action

Be audit-ready, not audit-afraid: Good practice should be visible; excellent practice should be viral.

► **Document clearly:** If it's not written, it never happened.

► **Learn, share, and grow:** See a system that works? Borrow it, brand it, and broadcast it to the next unit.

► **Celebrate every win:** Small improvements lead to big change.

“Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses... we must be learning all of our lives.”
Florence Nightingale

As we celebrate International Nurses Week and unveil the inaugural UGMC Nurses' Magazine, let's make every audit a Nightingale lamp, shedding light on what we do brilliantly and revealing where we can shine even brighter. After all, quality isn't a destination; it's the journey we walk together, clipboard in one hand, compassion in the other.

Mark your calendars. **Your voice is the curriculum!**

See you on the last Friday. Your ward, Your story, Your stage!

Articles 3

Career Tips For Nurses

*Credit: DDNS Rita Odonkor.
Mentorship focal person, UGMC.*

Lift As You Climb: Mentorship Builds Great Nurses

In the world of nursing, no one should walk the path alone. The stethoscope may hang around your neck, but it's the wisdom of those who came before you that strengthens your shoulders. A mentor isn't just someone who answers your questions, they are a steady hand during your toughest shifts, a voice of reason when doubt creeps in, and a mirror reflecting the nurse you're becoming.

Behind every confident, compassionate nurse is someone who once whispered, "I believe in you." Mentorship isn't a cliché, it's the heartbeat of growth in our profession. It turns confusion into clarity, fear into focus, and ordinary practice into excellence. It gives you courage when patients' cries shake your soul and strength when exhaustion weighs down your spirit.

Whether you're fresh from school or years into practice, having a mentor can elevate your confidence, clinical judgment, and leadership skills. And when you become perfect, become that mentor for someone else. In the world of nursing, mentorship isn't optional, it's a lifeline.

Remember: Behind every great nurse is another who said, 'You've got this, now go save lives.'

A Series On Compassionate Care

*Credit: Judith N. K. Asiamah(Mrs)
Director, Nursing and Midwifery Services.*

Compassionate Care is a holistic approach to healthcare. It prioritizes not only physical wellbeing but also the emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing of people receiving medical attention. As an essential principle of person centered care, Compassionate Care refers to the way nurses relate to others as human beings.

It involves "noticing another person's vulnerability, experiencing an emotional reaction to this and acting in a way that is meaningful towards people".

Compassionate Care is **interrelated with other concepts such as caring, empathy and respect** and is also closely associated with patient satisfaction.

By recognizing each person's humanity, Compassionate Care may enhance health outcomes. It can also help build trust between people looking for care and the healthcare professionals providing it.

At UGMC, our nurses and midwives believe in and offer Compassionate Care to our clients.

Look out for the next part of this series in subsequent issues of the Nurscape Magazine of UGMC



Financial Literacy For Nurses

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry
Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

Taking Control of Your Financial Health

As nurses, we dedicate our lives to caring for others, often putting our patient's needs before our own. However, neglecting our financial well-being can seriously affect our personal and professional lives. In this article, we'll explore the importance of financial literacy for nurses and provide practical tips for taking control of your financial health.

Why Financial Literacy Matters for Nurses

Nursing is a rewarding yet demanding profession, both emotionally and financially. With increasing educational debt, high-stress work environment and fluctuating schedules, it's easy to neglect our financial planning. However, having a solid grasp of personal finance can:

1. Reduce stress and anxiety
2. Improve work-life balance
3. Increase financial security and stability
4. Enhance career flexibility and autonomy

Key Components of Financial Literacy for Nurses

1. Budgeting: Track your income and expenses to create a realistic budget that accounts for your needs, wants and debt repayment.
2. Saving: Prioritize saving for short-term goals (e.g., emergency fund), long-term goals (e.g., retirement), and unexpected expenses.
3. Investing: Consider investing in a diversified portfolio to grow your wealth over time.
4. Debt management: Develop a plan to manage and pay off high-interest debt such as credit cards, mobile money loans as well as student loans.
5. Financial goal-setting: Establish clear and achievable financial goals such as buying a home, starting a family or pursuing further education.

Practical Tips for Nurses

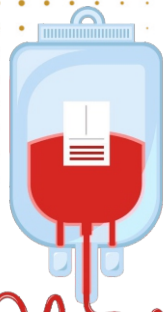
1. Automate your savings: Set up automatic transfers from your salary account to your savings or investment accounts.
2. Take advantage of employer-matched retirement accounts: Contribute to tax-advantaged retirement accounts such as the Axis pension plan for nurses and the University of Ghana Credit Union (UGCU) to maximise employer matching.
3. Prioritize needs over wants: Distinguish between essential expenses (needs) such as rent and utility bills and discretionary spending (wants) such as dining out, entertainment and impulse buying.
4. Consider a side hustle: Supplement your income with a part-time job, freelancing or entrepreneurship to accelerate debt repayment or savings.
5. Seek professional guidance: Consult with a financial advisor or planner to create a personalized financial plan.

Conclusion

Financial literacy is an essential skill for nurses to master as it enables us to take control of our financial health, reduce stress and achieve our goals. By understanding the key components of financial literacy and implementing practical strategies, we can secure a brighter financial future and focus on what matters most: providing exceptional patient care.

Resources

- National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE)
- American Nurses Association (ANA) Financial Wellness Resources –
- Financial Planning Association (FPA)



Articles 5

Red Alert: Critical Blood Transfusion Tips Every Nurse and Midwife Must Know

Submitted By: DDNS Rita Odonkor



Blood transfusion is a fundamental component of modern clinical care. The safety and efficacy of each transfusion depend significantly on the nurse at the bedside. While most of us are familiar with the basics, it's the nuanced details, often overlooked, that distinguishes good practice from excellent, life-saving care.

1. Know When Calcium Gluconate Is Needed

When more than 4 units (pints) of blood are transfused rapidly, the patient may begin to show signs of hypocalcemia due to the citrate used as a preservative in stored blood. Citrate binds to calcium, potentially leading to dangerous drops in serum calcium levels, especially in massive transfusion protocols (Boudreaux et al., 2019).

What to watch for:

Nurses should be alert for early and visible signs of hypocalcemia at the bedside, including:

Facial twitching or a grimace when the facial nerve is tapped (Chvostek's sign).

Carpal spasm when a blood pressure cuff is inflated above systolic pressure for 3 minutes (Trousseau's sign).

Muscle cramps or spasms, particularly in the hands and feet.

Tingling or numbness, especially around the mouth and in the fingers.

Restlessness or irritability.

Hypotension or low blood pressure.

Prolonged QT interval on ECG (if monitored).

In severe cases, laryngospasm or stridor.

These signs are indicative of neuromuscular irritability and cardiovascular effects associated with hypocalcemia.

What to do:

Administer prescribed 2 grams of calcium gluconate IV slowly after every 2–4 units of red blood cells transfused (Yeh et al., 2022).

Rationale:

Prevention of hypocalcemia reduces the risk of cardiac arrhythmias, muscle twitching, and hypotension in high-volume transfusions.

2. Avoid Ringer's Lactate After a Transfusion

It might seem harmless to flush a line with fluids, but Ringer's Lactate (RL) is contraindicated immediately after or during transfusion.

Why?

RL contains calcium, which can react with the citrate in stored blood, causing clot formation in the IV line or transfusion set (Smith & Callum, 1991).

Safe Alternative:

Use normal saline (0.9% NaCl) as the flush fluid before, during, and immediately after a transfusion.

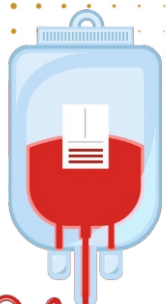
3. Frozen Blood Products: Thaw Only When Ready to Transfuse

Fresh Frozen Plasma (FFP) and cryoprecipitate are stored frozen and must be thawed before transfusion. However, the timing of thawing is critical.

Do not thaw unless transfusion is imminent:

FFP must be used within 24 hours if kept at 1–6°C (StatPearls, 2023).

Cryoprecipitate must be used within 6 hours (or within 4 hours if pooled) (PathLab, 2021).



Red Alert: Critical Blood

Transfusion Tips Every Nurse and Midwife Must Know

Important:

These products are thawed using a temperature-controlled water bath or blood warmer. Do not manually thaw them outside protocols as this compromises sterility and effectiveness.

Why this matters:

Improper handling leads to loss of clotting factors or increased risk of bacterial contamination, especially dangerous in coagulopathic patients.

4. Transfusion Time Matters

Every unit of whole blood or red blood cells should be transfused within 4 hours of removal from the blood bank.

Why?

Exceeding 4 hours increases the risk of bacterial contamination at room temperature (Blumberg et al., 2011).

Tip:

Set alarms or document the start and end time. If transfusion is delayed, return the unit or discard per policy.

5. Choose the Right Cannula Size for an Average Adult

The size of the cannula can make or break the flow and safety of your transfusion.

14G–18G cannulas are ideal for rapid or trauma transfusion.

Avoid <22G unless necessary; they increase hemolysis and slow flow (Versiti, 2023; IVCannula, 2023).

6. Documentation: Your Legal and Clinical Responsibility

Accurate documentation is not a formality; it's a safeguard.

What to document:

Time transfusion started and ended.

Type and unit number of product.

Volume transfused.

Vital signs before, during, and after.

Observed reactions and interventions.

Nurse's name and signature.

Tip:

Document patient tolerance clearly. This guides future care and protects all parties legally and clinically (Canadian Blood Services, 2023).

7. Monitor, Monitor, Monitor

Don't hang the bag and leave.

Check vitals every 15 minutes for the first hour, then hourly.

Educate the patient to report fever, chills, itching, chest pain, or back pain.

Why?

A well-informed patient helps detect reactions early, making transfusion safer.

Conclusion: Small Details, Big Impact

Blood transfusion is not just a technical procedure; it's a life-saving ritual that demands precision, vigilance, and care. As nurses and midwives, we hold the front line. These tidbits, though simple, are what elevate our practice, protect our patients, and reinforce our leadership in safe healthcare delivery.

Let's remain sharp, compassionate, and always committed to excellence, one unit at a time.

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Articles 6



Professional Development in Nursing: Advancing Skills and Expertise

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry

Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

Nursing is a dynamic and evolving profession that requires continuous learning and adaptation. Professional development in nursing goes beyond formal education, it involves acquiring new skills, staying updated with medical advancements, and improving patient care through lifelong learning. Whether through advanced certifications, leadership training, or technological proficiency, nurses must remain proactive in their professional growth.

1. Continuous Education and Specialisation

Ongoing education is vital for nurses to enhance their expertise. Many pursue advanced degrees or certifications in specialised fields such as critical care, pediatric nursing, gerontology, or informatics. Specialised training enables nurses to provide high-quality care in complex medical situations.

2. Leadership and Career Advancement

Nurses who seek leadership roles benefit from management training, mentorship programs, and experience in healthcare administration. Strong leadership is essential for shaping hospital policies, advocating for patient safety, and improving healthcare delivery.

3. Technological Adaptation

As healthcare technology rapidly advances, nurses must keep up with innovations such as electronic health records, telehealth platforms, and AI-assisted diagnostics. Professional development in nursing includes training in these technologies to optimise patient care and streamline healthcare processes.

4. Mentorship and Networking

Building relationships with experienced professionals fosters career growth. Mentorship programs allow nurses to learn from seasoned practitioners, while networking events provide opportunities to collaborate with peers and stay informed about industry trends.

5. Evidence-Based Practice and Research

The integration of research into nursing practice is a key component of professional development. Nurses engage in evidence-based practice by analysing medical studies, applying clinical guidelines, and participating in research projects to improve patient outcomes.

6. Personal Well-Being and Ethical Practice

Developing professional skills also involves self-care and ethical decision-making. Nurses who prioritise mental health, work-life balance, and ethical principles maintain resilience and provide compassionate, patient-centred care.

Conclusion

Professional development in nursing is an ongoing journey that strengthens skills, enhances career opportunities, and improves healthcare outcomes. By embracing new challenges, continuing education, and leadership opportunities, nurses contribute significantly to advancing the healthcare industry.

Articles 7

Jaundice Awareness Month: Understanding Neonatal Jaundice and Its Types

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry
Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

As we celebrate Nurses Week in May, we would also like to bring awareness to Neonatal jaundice as May is recognised as Jaundice Awareness Month. It is a time dedicated to educating the public about jaundice, its causes,

symptoms, and prevention strategies.

Neonatal jaundice, a common condition in newborns, occurs due to elevated bilirubin levels in the blood, leading to yellowing of the skin and eyes.

Understanding the different types of neonatal jaundice is crucial for early detection and effective management.



c. Breast Milk Jaundice

- Caused by substances in breast milk that affect bilirubin metabolism.
- Appears after the first week and may persist for several weeks.
- While harmless, monitoring bilirubin levels is essential.

d. Pathological Jaundice

- Develops within the first 24 hours of life and requires urgent medical attention.
- Causes include blood type incompatibility, hemolysis, infection, and liver disorders.
- Can lead to severe complications such as kernicterus, a form of brain damage.

e. Hemolytic Jaundice

- Occurs due to excessive breakdown of red blood cells, leading to high bilirubin levels.
- Common causes include Rh incompatibility and G6PD deficiency.
- Requires medical intervention, including phototherapy or blood transfusion.

1. Types of Neonatal Jaundice

Neonatal jaundice can be classified into several types based on its cause and severity:

a. Physiological Jaundice

- The most common type, affecting up to 60% of full-term newborns.
- Occurs due to immature liver function, which slows bilirubin processing.
- Typically appears 2-3 days after birth and resolves within two weeks without treatment.

b. Breastfeeding Jaundice

- Occurs when a newborn does not receive enough breast milk, leading to dehydration and reduced bilirubin excretion.
- Often seen in the first week of life.
- Can be managed by increasing breastfeeding frequency and ensuring proper latch (correct position of the breast in the baby's mouth)

2. Symptoms and Diagnosis

The primary symptom of neonatal jaundice is yellowing of the skin and eyes. Other signs include:

- - Dark urine
- - Pale stools
- - Lethargy and poor feeding
- - High-pitched crying (in severe cases)

Diagnosis involves bilirubin level testing, blood group compatibility checks, and liver function assessments.

Some Photos From Our 2024 Dinner and Awards Ceremony



SCAN TO HAVE A FULL GLIMPSE OF THE
2024 NURSES DINNER AND AWARDS NIGHT









Some Nurse Specialists We Have At UGMC





The DAISY Award-Ghana 2025 For Extraordinary Nurses



NOMINEE - Judith Naa Klorkor Asiamah
University of Ghana Medical Center, Greater Accra
Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services

Award Category: DAISY Nursing Leadership Excellence Award

She is an outstanding role model and exceptional leader in the nursing field in Ghana. As an outstanding Nurse manager, she was entrusted with the responsibility of leading and organizing the nursing and midwifery services at the University of Ghana Medical Center (UGMC), the nation's only quaternary health facility, after its inauguration since ned in 2018.

Her leadership and extraordinary managerial qualities has helped transform nursing and midwifery practices and services at the UGMC. Her dedication and high sense for quality care, is what informs her supervisory and training updates for her staff to enable them consistently provide compassionate, patient-centered and evidence-based care to patients.

She played a key role in setting up the Premium Ward, designed to provide high-profile patients with the privacy and comfort they need during their time at the facility.

As the national facilitator of infection prevention and control practices, she has ensured that UGMC boasts of excellent adherence to the IPC standards under her guidance.

In addition to being a leader by title, Judith is also a leader by example. She practices compassionate nursing care and uses her position to demonstrate therapeutic communication and emotional intelligence to her team. She also regularly organizes training and professional development programs for staff, inviting expert facilitators to share knowledge and skills.

Her dedication extends to personally training and orienting rotational nurses, new recruits, and all categories of staff—including doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, porters, and orderlies—ensuring they are familiar with the operations of the facility and infection prevention protocols.

What stands out about Judith is her constant smile, her organizational capacity, and her exceptional mentoring skills. She works diligently to foster leadership practices across all areas of the facility, ensuring that staff are not only trained but also empowered to lead and make a difference in their roles.



Articles 8

Jaundice Awareness Month: Understanding Neonatal Jaundice and Its Types

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry
Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

3. Prevention and Treatment

Preventing neonatal jaundice involves:

- Early breastfeeding initiation to promote bilirubin excretion.
- Regular newborn check-ups to monitor bilirubin levels.
- Phototherapy for moderate cases, using blue light to break down bilirubin.
- Exchange transfusion for severe cases to replace high-bilirubin blood.



4. WHO Updates on Jaundice Awareness

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasises neonatal jaundice awareness and early intervention. Recent studies highlight the high incidence of severe neonatal jaundice in Africa and Southeast Asia, with 667.8 cases per 10,000 live births in Africa. WHO continues to advocate for better screening programs, public health education, and improved neonatal care.

Conclusion

Jaundice Awareness Month serves as a reminder to prioritise neonatal health and seek medical attention for symptoms. By understanding the different types of neonatal jaundice, parents and healthcare providers can take proactive steps to ensure newborns receive timely and effective care.



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Articles 9

Leadership Strategies in Nursing: Driving Excellence in Healthcare

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry
Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

Effective leadership in nursing is essential for ensuring high-quality patient care, fostering a positive work environment, and navigating the challenges of modern healthcare systems. Strong nursing leaders inspire their teams, advocate for policy changes, and drive innovation in practice.

Here are key strategies that help nurses develop and refine their leadership skills.

1. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their teams by fostering a culture of collaboration, continuous learning, and shared vision. This style encourages nurses to embrace new challenges, improve patient care, and take initiative in professional growth.

2. Effective Communication and Collaboration

Clear, empathetic communication is crucial in nursing leadership. Strong leaders actively listen to their teams, address concerns, and ensure seamless coordination among healthcare providers. Open communication enhances teamwork, reduces errors, and strengthens patient advocacy.

3. Decision-Making and Critical Thinking

Nurses in leadership roles must be skilled in decision-making, especially in high-pressure situations. Critical thinking helps leaders analyze problems, develop solutions, and make informed choices that optimize patient outcomes and resource management.

4. Mentorship and Professional Development

Guiding and mentoring junior nurses fosters skill development and builds confidence within the team. Strong leaders support continuing education, encourage specialization, and provide opportunities for career advancement.

5. Resilience and Adaptability

Healthcare is constantly evolving, requiring leaders who are flexible and open to change. Resilient nursing leaders navigate challenges such as staffing shortages, technological advancements, and policy shifts with a positive and proactive mindset.

6. Ethical Leadership and Advocacy

Nursing leaders must uphold ethical principles, advocate for patient rights, and ensure equitable healthcare access. They play a critical role in shaping policies that improve working conditions, address health disparities, and promote ethical care standards.

Conclusion

Leadership in nursing is not just about holding managerial positions, it is about inspiring excellence, driving innovation, and championing patient-centred care. By embracing transformational leadership, effective communication, and ethical advocacy, nurses can shape a healthcare system that is both efficient and compassionate.

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Well Woman Health: A Holistic Approach to Women's Wellness

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry

Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

The majority of the nursing workforce are women, and as such, in this edition, more light will be shed on the health of women.

Women's health is a broad field encompassing physical, mental, and reproductive well-being. A well-woman approach to health prioritises preventive care, early detection of medical conditions, and lifestyle choices that enhance overall wellness.

By focusing on proactive healthcare, women can achieve optimal health throughout different stages of life.

1. Preventive Care and Routine Screenings

Regular check-ups and screenings are essential components of well-woman care.

These include:

a. Annual gynaecological exams: Pap smears, HPV testing, and pelvic exams help detect cervical and reproductive health issues early.

b. Breast cancer screenings: Mammograms and self-examinations assist in the early detection of breast abnormalities.

c. Bone health assessments: Osteoporosis screenings are vital, especially for postmenopausal women.

d. Heart health evaluations: Blood pressure checks, cholesterol testing, and cardiovascular risk assessments are crucial for preventing heart disease, a leading cause of mortality in women.

2. Reproductive and Hormonal Health

Reproductive health includes menstrual wellness, pregnancy care, and menopause management. Women should have access to contraception, prenatal care, and hormonal treatments that support different reproductive stages.

4. Lifestyle Choices and Nutrition

A well-balanced diet rich in nutrients supports hormonal and overall health. Nutritional choices should focus on:

- a. Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables for essential vitamins
- b. Lean proteins for muscle and tissue repair
- c. Calcium and vitamin D for bone health
- d. Hydration for overall body function

Regular physical activity improves cardiovascular health, strengthens bones, and reduces stress. A well-woman strategy encourages exercise routines tailored to individual needs and fitness levels.

5. Sexual Health and Wellness

Safe sexual practices, sexually transmitted infection (STI) screenings, and education on intimate health contribute to well-woman care. Open conversations with healthcare providers enable women to make informed decisions regarding their sexual well-being.

6. Aging and Long-Term Wellness

Aging-related health concerns, such as osteoporosis, heart disease, and cognitive decline, require proactive management. Women should explore strategies for healthy aging, including brain exercises, social engagement, and preventive medical interventions.

Conclusion

A well-woman health approach is comprehensive, emphasising preventive care, reproductive health, mental wellness, lifestyle choices, and aging strategies. Regular medical check-ups, health education, and personalised wellness plans empower women to lead healthier, fulfilling lives.

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The Importance of Specialisation in Nursing and Midwifery

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry

Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

Specialisation in nursing and midwifery is crucial for delivering high-quality patient care and advancing the healthcare industry. With the global healthcare landscape evolving rapidly, nurses and midwives are expected to possess specialised skills and knowledge to address complex health issues.

Benefits of Specialisation

- **Improved Patient Outcomes:** Specialised nurses and midwives can provide targeted care, leading to better patient outcomes and increased satisfaction.

- **Enhanced Professional Development:** Specialisation enables nurses and midwives to stay updated with the latest research, technologies, and best practices, promoting continuous learning and professional growth.

- **Increased Job Satisfaction:** Pursuing a specialisation can lead to increased job satisfaction, as nurses and midwives work in areas that align with their interests and skills.

- **Addressing Healthcare Shortages:** Specialised nurses and midwives can help address specific healthcare shortages, such as in critical care, oncology, or maternal health.

Top Nursing Specialisations

- 1. Nurse Practitioner (NP):** This specialization is mostly found in the USA. They provide primary and speciality healthcare services, with subfields like Family Nurse Practitioner, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, and Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner.

- 2. Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS):** Focuses on improving patient outcomes through evidence-based practice, research, and education.

These include:

- **Critical Care Nurse** who provide care for critically ill patients, managing post operative recovery whiles using sophisticated machines.
- **Cardiovascular Health Nurse** who provide care for patients with cardiovascular diseases, assisting with post-surgery recovery and preventive care for patients with heart conditions.
- **Oncology Nurses** who specializes in cancer care, supporting patients undergoing chemotherapy, radiation, and other treatments.
- **Pediatric Nurse**, specializes in caring for infants, children, and adolescents, focusing on preventive care and treating childhood illnesses.

- 3. Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA):** Specializes in anesthesia care for patients undergoing surgical procedures.

- 4. Nurse Midwife (CNM):** Provides care for pregnant women, new mothers, and newborns, focusing on reproductive health and holistic care approaches.

Why Nurses Should Pursue Specialisation

Growing Demand: The demand for specialised nurses and midwives is increasing globally, driven by the need for high-quality patient care and advancements in healthcare technology.

Career Advancement: Specialisation can lead to career advancement opportunities, including leadership roles, education, and research.

Personal Fulfilment: Pursuing a specialisation can lead to increased job satisfaction and personal fulfilment, as nurses and midwives work in areas that align with their passions and interests.

Contribution to Healthcare: Specialised nurses and midwives play a critical role in shaping healthcare policies, improving patient outcomes, and advancing the nursing profession.

Conclusion

In conclusion, specialisation in nursing and midwifery is essential for delivering high-quality patient care and advancing the healthcare industry. By pursuing specialisation, nurses and midwives can improve patient outcomes, enhance their professional development, and contribute to the growth and development of the nursing profession.

From Ugmc To The Uk: A Nurse's Journey Of Growth, Innovation, And Impact



Hello, my name is *Margaret Seyram Geli*, and I am currently a registered nurse in the United Kingdom. As the firstborn in my family, caregiving has always come naturally to me. Growing up, I aspired to find myself in a role where I could provide care to others, helping them feel safe and well. With the support of my parents, I chose the nursing profession, a path that has enabled me to fulfill this dream.

My Journey at UGMC

Working at the University of Ghana Medical Centre (UGMC) provided me with the necessary exposure to advance my nursing career. UGMC stands out for its excellent human resources, cutting-edge technology, and modern equipment, making it a unique facility in our part of the world. Being part of such an environment made me feel valued and gave me confidence that I was building the right foundation for future opportunities.

During my time at UGMC, I worked primarily in the Internal Medicine Department, a dynamic unit that catered to patients with a wide range of medical conditions, including respiratory, vascular, cardiac, and neurological issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic further enhanced my experience, providing a challenging platform to grow in areas such as empathy, time management, and leadership. Collaborating with my colleagues during this period helped me build strong teamwork skills and a deeper understanding of the complexities of healthcare.

Skill Development at UGMC

The complexity of my role allowed me to integrate evidence-based practice into patient care. I gained hands-on experience using advanced equipment such as cardiac monitors and infusion devices, and I further refined my skills in venepuncture and peripheral intravenous cannulation, which became the focus of my final dissertation. Additionally, working with the emergency team exposed me to procedures like central intravenous catheterization.

These experiences not only broadened my knowledge but also built my confidence, enabling me to prepare for global healthcare challenges and opportunities.

Transition to the United Kingdom

During my time at UGMC, I successfully applied for a master's degree in the UK. Upon receiving my admission, the leadership at UGMC supported my transition, ensuring a smooth process. When I arrived in the UK, I balanced my studies with clinical work.

Interestingly, I found the clinical environment in the UK similar to what I had experienced at UGMC. This familiarity, coupled with the solid foundation UGMC had given me, enabled me to adapt quickly to the new environment. I am deeply grateful for the comprehensive training and exposure UGMC provided, which prepared me for this transition.

Comparing Nursing Practices Ghana and the UK

The primary difference I observed between nursing in Ghana and the UK is in the implementation and monitoring of policies.

From Ugmc To The Uk:

A Nurse's Journey Of Growth, Innovation, And Impact

The UK places significant emphasis on structured policies and accountability. In contrast, nursing training in Ghana is highly intentional, disciplined, and holistic, preparing nurses to handle various aspects of patient care effectively.

Both systems aim to uphold high standards of care, and I firmly believe that the advanced healthcare solutions in the UK can inspire similar developments in Ghana, further improving patient outcomes.

Focus on Pressure Ulcer Prevention

While working at UGMC, pressure ulcer prevention became a significant area of concern. During my master's program in the UK, I chose to focus on this issue as part of a patient safety module. Drawing on global and West African perspectives, I researched preventive measures such as diet management, skincare, frequent repositioning, and the use of pressure-relief mattresses. My research also explored effective wound management strategies, emphasizing holistic assessment from admission to discharge. I was inspired to consider how these methods could be adapted to Ghanaian healthcare settings, potentially reducing the incidence of pressure ulcers and improving overall patient care.

Advocating for Primary Prevention

I firmly believe that primary prevention is a critical component of nursing care, particularly in the case of pressure ulcers. Preserving skin integrity allows healthcare providers to focus on treating patients' primary medical conditions, reducing complications, pain, and financial burdens.

As nurses, we must stay updated on evidence-based practices and work collaboratively to implement preventive measures. By fostering situational awareness and leveraging teamwork, we can create a significant impact on patient outcomes.

International Experience and Future Aspirations

My international experience has centered on patient safety and risk management, emphasizing holistic care. From admission to discharge, identifying problems, developing SMART care plans, and evaluating outcomes remain essential components of effective healthcare.

UGMC's mission to inspire hope and promote health through advanced clinical practice, education, and research resonates deeply with me. I commend the nursing team for their dedication and encourage them to continue striving toward this goal. Together, we can achieve remarkable progress in patient care and healthcare delivery.



Cancer Awareness: The Role of Nurses in Prevention and Early Detection

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry

Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

Cancer remains one of the leading causes of mortality worldwide, affecting millions of lives each year. Nurses play a crucial role in cancer awareness, prevention, early detection, and patient support. By educating communities, advocating for screenings, and providing compassionate care, nurses contribute significantly to reducing cancer-related deaths.

1. Understanding Cancer and Its Impact

Cancer is a group of diseases characterised by uncontrolled cell growth, which can spread to different parts of the body. Common types include breast cancer, lung cancer, colorectal cancer, and cervical cancer. Early detection and timely intervention improve survival rates, making awareness campaigns essential.

2. The Role of Nurses in Cancer Prevention

Nurses are at the forefront of cancer prevention efforts, promoting healthy lifestyles and risk reduction strategies.

Key preventive measures include:

- Encouraging smoking cessation to reduce lung cancer risk.
- Advocating for balanced nutrition and physical activity to lower obesity-related cancer risks.
- Educating patients on sun protection to prevent skin cancer.
- Supporting vaccination programs, such as HPV vaccines for cervical cancer prevention.

3. Early Detection and Screening

Regular screenings help detect cancer at an early stage when treatment is most effective. Nurses play a vital role in:

- Conducting breast self-exam education and mammogram referrals.
- Promoting Pap smears for cervical cancer screening.
- Encouraging colonoscopy and stool tests for colorectal cancer detection.
- Assisting in prostate cancer screenings for at-risk populations.

4. Patient Advocacy and Support

Cancer patients require emotional, psychological, and medical support throughout their journey.

Nurses provide:

- Counseling and education on treatment options.
- Pain management and palliative care for advanced cases.
- Support groups and mental health resources for coping strategies.
- Guidance on financial and social services for cancer care accessibility.

5. WHO Updates on Cancer Awareness

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes cancer prevention and early detection as global health priorities. WHO advocates for universal access to cancer screenings, improved treatment options, and enhanced public health education. Recent initiatives focus on reducing disparities in cancer care, particularly in low-income regions.

Conclusion

Nurses are essential in the fight against cancer, from prevention and early detection to patient advocacy and support. By raising awareness, promoting screenings, and providing compassionate care, nurses help improve cancer outcomes and enhance the quality of life for patients.

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[Cancer Prevention: Oncology Nurses Save Lives by Raising Awareness](#)

[The Critical Role of Nurses in Cancer Prevention: Making a Difference Through Early Detection and Education](#)

[Cancer Prevention: Why, Who, When, Where, How - Oncology Nursing News](#)



Articles 13

The Nurse's Sanctuary: Why Safe Spaces Matter In the Fight Against Burnout

By Ms. Gifty Atampugbire (SNO-PH, MPH, MHFA, PSS, TIC, BSc.PH, RN) Clinical Nursing Auditor, UGMC

In the high-stakes world of healthcare, nurses are the heartbeat of patient care providing critical, compassionate, and continuous support across every clinical setting. Yet, the rising tide of burnout threatens not only their well-being but also the quality of care patients receives. As we strive to build a resilient healthcare system, it is imperative to shift the conversation beyond clinical performance to institutional support particularly in the creation of safe spaces and mental wellness infrastructure.

Burnout among nurses, often characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced sense of personal achievement, is now a public health concern. The relentless pace, emotional labor, and systemic pressures have led many skilled professionals to exit the profession prematurely, creating a ripple effect that worsens staffing shortages and compromises care delivery.

At the University of Ghana Medical Centre (UGMC), we must begin to actively evaluate the role of the institution in mitigating this crises. This includes investing in designated break rooms not just for rest, but as psychologically safe environments where staff can decompress, reflect, and access peer or professional mental health support.

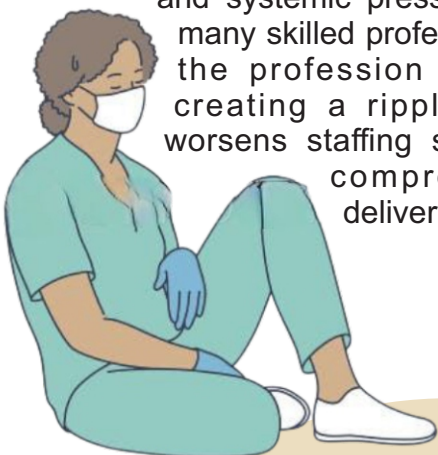
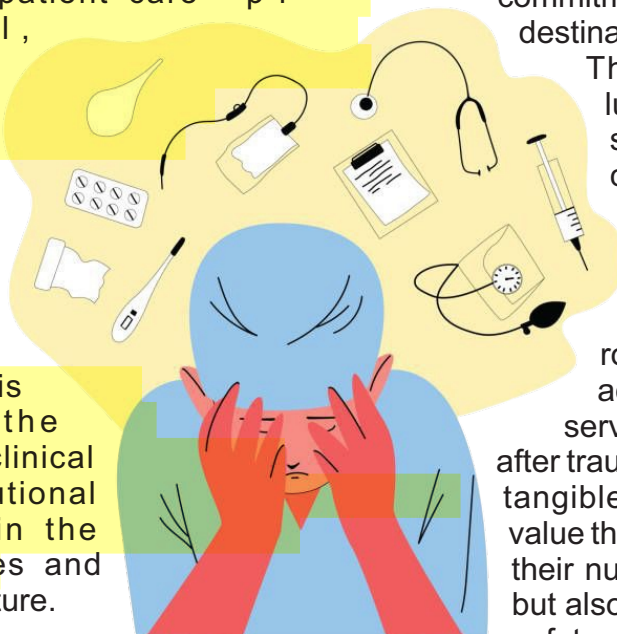
These spaces are more than luxuries; they are necessities that symbolize an organizational commitment to staff wellness. It is not a destination, it is a daily decision!

These spaces are more than luxuries; they are necessities that symbolize an organizational commitment to staff wellness. It is not a destination, it is a daily decision!

Furthermore, integrating routine mental health check-ins, access to confidential counseling services, and debriefing sessions after traumatic clinical events can make a tangible difference. Institutions that value the mental and emotional health of their nursing staff not only retain talent but also foster a culture of compassion, safety, and sustainability.

In moving forward, nurse retention must be seen not just as a matter of recruitment and compensation, but also as a reflection of the workplace environment. By creating supportive ecosystems within our hospitals beyond the bedside, we protect our most valuable resource: the people who care for others.

Let's advocate for a future where healing extends not only to our patients but also to our caregivers.



Emotional Intelligence in Nursing Leadership: A Key to Effective Care

Submitted by: Abigail Otu Parry

Critical Care Nurse Specialist, Neuro Intensive Care Unit

As the healthcare industry continues to evolve, the role of nursing leaders has become increasingly complex. Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial component of effective nursing leadership, enabling leaders to motivate and inspire their teams, manage conflicts, and create a supportive work environment.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and understand emotions in oneself and others. It involves being able to regulate one's own emotions and respond to the emotions of others in an empathetic and effective manner.

EI comprises five domains:

Self-Awareness: Recognising one's emotions and strengths

Self-Regulation: Managing one's emotions and behaviours

Motivation: Driving team performance and productivity

Empathy: Understanding and relating to others' emotions

Social Skills: Communicating effectively and building relationships

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Nursing Leadership

Nursing leaders with high EI tend to have better job performance, lower burnout rates, and improved patient care skills.

They can:

- Motivate and Inspire Teams: EI enables leaders to understand and respond to the emotional needs of their team members, fostering a positive and productive work environment.

- Manage Conflicts: EI helps leaders to recognise and manage conflicts effectively, reducing stress and improving teamwork.

- Improve Patient Care: EI enables leaders to understand and respond to the emotional needs of patients, improving patient satisfaction and outcomes.

Developing Emotional Intelligence

Developing EI requires practice, self-reflection, and a willingness to learn.

Nursing leaders can develop EI through:

-Training Programs: Participating in EI training programs can help leaders develop their EI skills.

- Reflective Practices: Engaging in reflective practices, such as journaling or meditation, can help leaders develop self-awareness and self-regulation.

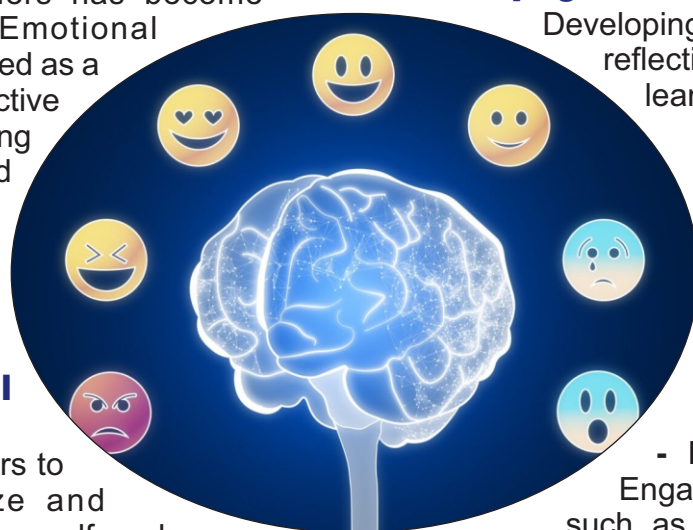
- Mentorship: Working with a mentor who has high EI can provide leaders with guidance and support.

Conclusion:

Emotional intelligence is a critical component of effective nursing leadership. By developing EI, nursing leaders can improve their relationships with team members, manage conflicts, and provide high-quality patient care. As the healthcare industry continues to evolve, the importance of EI in nursing leadership will only continue to grow.

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Awardees



Fati Tafawu

Best Midwife of UGMC
For The Year 2023

I am honoured to share that I, Fati Tafawu, Senior Midwifery Officer, was awarded the Best Practising Midwife for the University of Ghana Medical Centre in 2023. This prestigious award was presented to me by the Ministry of Health, Ghana, at the 32nd International Day of the Midwife and award ceremony held in Cape Coast, Ghana.

My work focuses on promoting evidence-based midwifery practices, particularly the use of alternative birth positions during delivery. I have successfully implemented this innovation, allowing mothers to choose positions that make them more comfortable and empowered during childbirth. This approach has led to improved outcomes and increased patient satisfaction.

This award is a testament to my dedication and passion for midwifery. It signifies that my work has made a positive impact on the lives of mothers and newborns. Professionally, it motivates me to continue innovating and advocating for best practices in midwifery. Personally, it reinforces my commitment to providing compassionate and individualised care.

I want to express my gratitude to the Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, Judith Asiamah, DDNS, Vida Ocloo, DDNS, Cynthia Dzokoto, my team, mentors, and patients who have supported me throughout my journey.

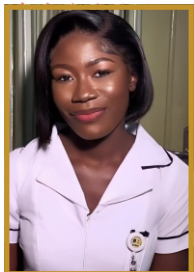
Their trust, collaboration, and feedback have been invaluable in shaping my practice. I also appreciate the Ministry of Health Ghana and the University of Ghana Medical Centre for recognizing my work.

This award serves as a catalyst for my future endeavours. It motivates me to continue innovating, leading, and mentoring in midwifery practice. I aim to build on this achievement by pursuing further education, contributing to policy development, and advocating for improved maternal and child health outcomes. I am excited to see the impact that this recognition will have on my career and the lives of those I serve.

Thank you to everyone who has supported me on this journey!



Awardees



**Rukia Yaa
Nyarkoah Tsabab**

**Best Midwife of UGMC
For The Year 2024**

The award was a national one for the best practicing midwife for UGMC, 2024 at the quaternary level. It was presented to me at Koforidua in the Eastern Region of Ghana by the Ministry of health in collaboration with Ghana Health Service and the International Confederation of Midwives.

My actions of professionalism towards our clients and their newborns especially were obvious in the sight of my in-charges, colleagues and the clients alike. I would say, perhaps, that I was fortunate to be nominated out of several other competent colleagues to receive the prestigious award. I achieved this due to the collective support of a hardworking team which enabled me to put in a lot of effort to resuscitate newborns who were asphyxiated at birth while making further follow ups at the NICU (Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit) to know the newborns' progressions.

Astounding as the award was, it was on the sight of many in UGMC. Among all my colleagues at the OBGYN though very competent, I was honored as the best of them. This award as part of many feats I have achieved means the world to me. It reminds me of my progression, also of how people notice, the care and attention you render to them and remember you for it, be it good or bad. This always motivates me to go above and beyond to give assistance where needed. Some clients whom I cared for and forgotten about, message me, telling me I deserved it.

My colleagues, some staff in UGMC as well as neighboring medical facilities have congratulated me and have acknowledged that I deserved it.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Director for Nursing Services, DNMS Mrs. Judith Asiamah. She made all these possible. She saw potential in me and gave me the pedestal to strive. Also, I want to Acknowledge DDNS Mrs. Vida Ocloo, SMO Fati Tafawu, SMO Hilda Nyamekye, the OBGYN team and the rest of my colleagues at the department for the great support. The love shown is much appreciated and I do not take that for granted at all.

Although my innovation is limited to the birthing Centre, my aim is to extend it to the other units especially NICU. God being my helper, and with the aid of my team, I hope to put in a lot of effort to come up with several innovations to help in the care of the clients in the institution and beyond.

THANK YOU!



Awardees



Mavis Sapor

Best Nurse of UGMC
For The Year 2024

I am honored to have received two distinguished awards: the DAISY Award from the Ghanaian Diaspora Nursing Alliance (GDNA) and the Best Nurse Award from the Nursing Directorate at the University of Ghana Medical Centre (UGMC). These recognitions highlight both personal dedication and the collective spirit of compassionate, innovative nursing care.

My commitment to empathetic, patient-centered care led a patient to nominate me for the DAISY Award. In addition, I developed the VINIPA-F acronym as a clinical guide for managing post-operative patients.

This tool supports the prevention of post-surgical complications by focusing on;

1. Vital signs
2. Inspection of the surgical site
3. Neurological status
4. Intake and output
5. Pain assessment
6. Appearance
7. First oral intake

This comprehensive assessment framework helps improve patient outcomes and ensures early detection of complications.

These awards affirm the importance of empathy, leadership, and continuous improvement in nursing. They serve as a personal reminder that even small acts of care can create lasting impact, inspiring me to continue serving with purpose and integrity.

I extend my deepest gratitude to God for His grace, and to our Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, DNMS. Mrs. Judith Asiamah, the mother and mentor UGMC gave me, for seeing my potential and nurturing it to become a reality. Special thanks also go to CNO Rita Sika Momo, DDNS Vida Ocloo, the Nursing Directorate, my supportive colleagues, friends and the patients and families I've cared for.

I am especially thankful to Mrs. Tracy Asare for her heartfelt recommendation.

These recognitions fuel my drive to pursue advanced clinical training and lead initiatives that foster innovation and equity in healthcare. I hope my journey inspires others to dream big and lead with compassion.

Let us continue lighting the way together.



Awardees



Stella Fenteng

Best Midwife of UGMC
For The Year 2025

The award I received was Best Midwife for University of Ghana Medical Centre presented by Ghana Health Service and the Ministry of Health on 6th May, 2025 at the launch of the International Day of the Midwife.

Discharge education is crucial part of patient care. More important is patient's ability to recall and follow instructions given on discharge. Although there is an existing discharge form, a discharge education checklist was unavailable. So patients did not have any written instructions to send home to facilitate their home care after discharge.

Delayed initiation of discharge planning led to rushed education. This impeded effective home care leading to preventable readmissions. Patient and Newborn Discharge Education Checklists was designed for discharged patients in the Obstetric and Gynaecology department that provide written instructions for them to manage their own care at home. The discharge education commences right on admission so that Midwives do not rush through the education topics on discharge. The topics discussed with the patient is ticked, signed, date written and and given to patient on discharge. The checklist is used consistently and tailored to the individual patient needs.

I thought I was doing something that was unrecognisable in my own corner to improve patient outcome so I was pleasantly surprised when I was nominated and informed to apply for this award and eventually received it. This recognition has motivated me a lot and boosted my self confidence. It has inspired me to continue looking out for any opportunities to innovate directives to improve clinical care and train fellow colleagues.

I would like to appreciate some individuals who inspired me and helped with my innovation. Firstly, I want to thank DDNS Vida Ocloo for her insights when I was designing this checklist. I also acknowledge SMO Fati Tafawu who was my ward in charge for the mentorship she gave me.

Lastly, I acknowledge Mr. Nicholas Akakpo, Data Entry Officer, who through his expertise in information technology assisted to design this checklist. I am grateful to every Midwife, Doctor and Specialist I have worked with because I learnt something from them.

My goal is to continuously improve my clinical knowledge and skills and be a preceptor/mentor for other Midwives and this award has highly motivated me to reach that goal. Continuous innovation is also a goal of mine and this award has increased my drive to achieve that.

Thank you.



Awardees



Ivy Tawiah Addo

Best Nurse of UGMC
For The Year 2025

I am deeply honored to have been named the Best Nurse for the Year 2025, an award proudly presented by the University of Ghana Medical Center (UGMC). This prestigious recognition marks a significant milestone in my nursing journey and affirms the values of commitment, compassion, and innovation in healthcare.

This award was conferred in recognition of my dedication, innovation, and diligence in nursing practice. Through consistent hard work and a passion for delivering high-quality patient care, I have sought to bring positive change to my unit and ensure that each patient encounter is met with excellence, empathy, and professionalism. Receiving this award brings me immense personal and professional fulfillment. It reminds me that even the quiet, behind-the-scenes efforts are seen and appreciated.

As the Bible says, "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing... then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:3-4 (NIV). This recognition fuels my motivation to continue striving for excellence and to pursue higher heights in the nursing profession. It is a testament that our labor is never in vain.

This achievement would not have been possible without the incredible support system around me. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to DDNS Rita Odonkor, whose leadership and unwavering mentorship has been a guiding light, and PNO Sarah Damalie, my in-charge, for her steadfast guidance and support.

I am especially thankful to all the dedicated staff of the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Your teamwork, support, and encouragement have played an instrumental role in my journey, and I share this award with each of you.

This recognition inspires me to aim even higher within the nursing profession. I am committed to mentoring others, fostering a spirit of excellence, and encouraging every nurse to give their best, not for immediate applause, but in faith that their impact will one day speak for itself. I urge my colleagues to work with integrity, hold no grudges, envy no one, and trust that the Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." Exodus 14:14 (NIV). And remember, "No one can receive anything unless it has been given to them from heaven." John 3:27 (NIV) who sees our labor in secret will reward us openly. What is meant for you will find its way to you, no one can take it away.

Let us continue to uplift one another and let our stories be beacons of hope, purpose, and passion in the nursing and midwifery profession



Awardees



Isaac Affum

Best Innovative Nurse of UGMC
For The Year 2025

I am honored to be recognized as the best innovative nurse. Innovation is at the heart of healthcare, and as nurses and midwives, we play a vital role in driving positive change and improving patient outcomes.

Why Innovation Matters in Nursing

Innovation in nursing is crucial for several reasons:

- **Improved Patient Care:** Innovation helps us deliver high-quality, patient-centered care that meets the evolving needs of our patients.
- **Enhanced Efficiency:** Innovative solutions streamline processes, reduce errors, and optimize resource utilization.
- **Professional Development:** Innovation fosters a culture of continuous learning, professional growth, and collaboration among healthcare professionals.



My Innovations

1. Digital Library using QR Codes: I created a digital library using QR codes that provide encrypted access to digital educational books, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of my unit, and videos.

2. Handwashing QR Code Campaign: As an IPC Focal Person, I designed a QR code campaign to promote proper handwashing techniques. This initiative raises awareness, encourages behavior change, and contributes to a reduction in healthcare-associated infections.

3. Block Duty Manager QR code: A QR code encrypted with the phone numbers of block duty nurse managers was created to enhance communication.

Collaboration and Sharing

I am passionate about sharing my innovations with other units and departments at UGMC. I am open to collaborating with colleagues who would like to create digital libraries for their units, and I believe that together, we can drive meaningful change and improve patient care.



Tracheostomy Care

Demystified:

Empowering Nurses for Life-Saving Care

Submitted By: DDNS Rita Odonkor

Many general nurses often hesitate when it comes to managing patients with tracheostomies. This hesitation, rooted in fear or lack of exposure, can delay life-saving interventions. But the truth is simple and powerful: tracheostomy care is a vital nursing responsibility. With the right knowledge and skills, every nurse can provide safe, timely, and competent care that preserves the airway and protects lives.

Why Tracheostomy Care Matters

A tracheostomy creates a direct airway through an opening in the neck, helping patients breathe when their upper airway is compromised. However, this artificial airway also bypasses the body's natural mechanisms for clearing mucus, making patients vulnerable to blockages, infections, and respiratory distress. Routine care and monitoring by nurses are essential for safety and recovery.

Core Components of Tracheostomy Care

1. Airway Monitoring

Be alert for:

- - Noisy breathing
- - Drop in oxygen saturation
- - Increased work of breathing
- - Coughing without clearance
- - Visible secretions

These are signs the airway may be obstructed and immediate suctioning or intervention is needed.

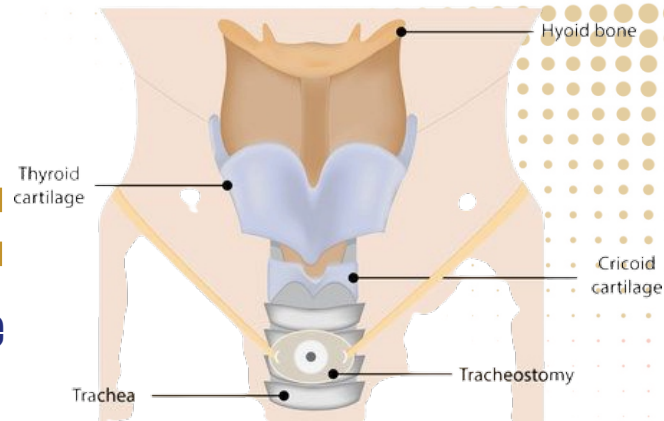
2. Tracheostomy Suctioning Simplified

Suctioning saves lives. Here's how to do it safely:

Prepare: Wear PPE, set up suction machine (80–120 mmHg), and use a sterile catheter.

Insert: Advance the catheter gently without applying suction.

Suction: Withdraw the catheter while applying suction and rotating it. Limit each pass to under 10 seconds.



Repeat if needed, allowing rest in between, and monitor oxygen saturation.

3. Stoma Site Care

- a. Clean the area with sterile saline.
- b. Check for infection (redness, swelling, or discharge).
- c. Change dressings and secure the tracheostomy ties to prevent dislodgement.

4. Always Be Prepared

Keep these at the bedside:

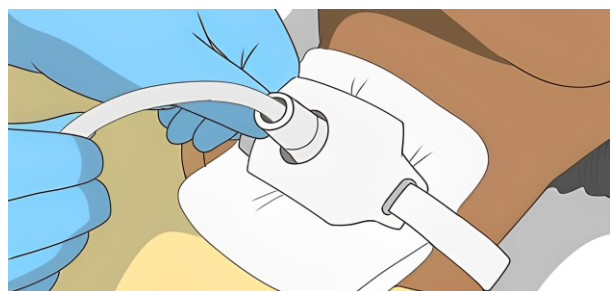
- a. A spare tracheostomy tube and inner cannula
- b. Working suction equipment
- c. An emergency tracheostomy kit

Changing the Narrative: You Are Capable

Tracheostomy care is not just a technical task. It is a life-saving intervention that every nurse can master. Patients rely on our confidence and care. With regular practice, teamwork, and a willingness to learn, any nurse can deliver expert-level tracheostomy care.

Quick Mnemonic: "CARE SAFE" for Tracheostomy Care

- C** – Clean the stoma site
- A** – Assess for respiratory distress
- R** – Replace and secure ties if loose
- E** – Ensure suction is ready and working
- S** – Suction secretions when necessary
- A** – Avoid infection with sterile technique
- F** – Fix the tube in place securely
- E** – Educate patient and family on care



References

- Cleveland Clinic. Tracheostomy Suctioning: Purpose, Steps & Care (2023)
- Nursing Times. Caring for Patients with a Tracheostomy (2016)
- Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. Tracheostomy Management Guidelines
- WHO. Postoperative Airway Management Guidelines (2021)

Articles 2

Understanding the Role of the Bed Bureau in Efficient Patient Care

By Abigail Naa Ayeley Aryee, FGCNM, MSc, PON, RN
Bed bureau and Quality Improvement Manager, UGMC

In every well-functioning hospital, bed management is an essential part of ensuring patients receive timely and appropriate care. At the heart of this process is the Bed Bureau, a critical yet often underappreciated unit responsible for coordinating hospital admissions, transfers, and discharges to ensure optimal use of bed space across departments.

What is the Bed Bureau?

The Bed Bureau serves as a central coordinating office that oversees the availability, allocation, and movement of beds within the healthcare facility. It acts as a liaison between various departments including emergency, wards, outpatient services, theatre, and intensive care units. The primary goal is to reduce waiting times for patients while maximizing the efficiency of hospital resources.

Key Responsibilities

1. Bed Allocation:

The Bed Bureau ensures that patients are assigned to appropriate wards based on their clinical needs, level of care, and infection control considerations.

2. Monitoring Bed Status:

Real-time tracking of bed occupancy, discharges, and expected admissions helps the bed bureau make informed decisions that prevent overcrowding or underutilization.

3. Communication Hub:

The team maintains continuous communication with unit managers, emergency departments, and administrative staff to streamline patient flow.

4. Supporting Emergency Admissions:

In cases where immediate admissions are required, such as during mass casualty incidents or medical emergencies, the Bed Bureau coordinates urgent bed availability to facilitate swift care delivery.

The Nurse's Role in Bed Bureau Operations

Nurses play a vital role in supporting the operations of the Bed Bureau. Their input regarding patient readiness for discharge, clinical priorities, and ward capacity ensures accurate planning. In some institutions, nurses are even appointed as bed managers, applying their clinical judgment and coordination skills to align patient needs with available resources.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its importance, the Bed Bureau faces challenges such as:

- Delays in discharges
- Limited communication across departments
- Incomplete data on patient movement

Conclusion

The Bed Bureau may not always be visible to patients, but its work significantly affects patient experience, safety, and the hospital's overall efficiency. As frontline professionals, nurses must remain actively engaged in this process, recognizing that effective bed management is not only an administrative task but a cornerstone of quality patient care.



By Abigail Naa Ayeley Aryee, FGCNM, MSc, PON, RN
Bed bureau and Quality Improvement Manager, UGMC

Riddle! Riddle!



1 I tell a tale of your past and present health journey. I provide vital information. What am I?

Patient's Chart

2 I aid in attending to nature's call for those who can't walk. What am I?

Bed Pan

3 I bring tears to the brave, silence to the loud and peace to the restless through my content. What am I?

Injection

4 I am a sticky strip with a healing might. What am I?

Adhesive Band

6 I am tiny but mighty. I might not be tasty but I help you to recover from your ailment. What am I?

Tablet

JOOKES

By DDNS Rita Odonkor

Nurse: "Did you take your medicine this morning?"

Patient: "Not yet. I was waiting for it to go viral on TikTok first."

Patient 1: These nurses are strange. My nurse keeps asking me what day it is and who the president is

Patient 2: Hmmm, Mine asked me to squeeze her fingers. Is she not flirting with me, ?

Patient 3: Aw! It's called a neuro check, not speed dating!

Person 1: Ei, the rate at which nurses are leaving this country is so outrageous.

Person 2: Ah! But why are the rest still here.

Person 1: Oh, you don't know, those women who can not leave their husbands for a second?

Person 3: it is called patriotism, or their agent collected money and vanished.

The Husband's Prayer

Husband praying: "Dear Lord, I know my wife is a nurse... but please don't let her hear about the UK shortage!"

Voice from heaven: "Too late... she just printed her IELTS form!"

The Confused Relative

Relative: "Nurse, what do you mean 'monitor vitals'?"

Nurse: "Check breathing, pulse, pressure, etc."

Relative: "Ohh... so you're not monitoring my aunt's attitude?"

Nurse: "That one needs security, not a stethoscope!"

The Nurse's Love Life

Friend: "So, dating as a nurse must be romantic, right?"

Nurse: "Romantic? I've had longer conversations with a vein than with my boyfriend!"

UGMC

NURSES ANTHEM

HANDS THAT HEAL

Verse One

In the quiet hours, when hope feels lost
You carry the weight, no matter the cost.
With every heartbeat, with every tear,
You stand with courage, year after year

Chorus

Hands that heal, hearts so pure,
In your care, we find our cure.
Through the darkest night,
You light the way,
Nurses of UGMC, we honor you today.

Verse Two

Your strength unshaken, your spirit bright,
A guiding star through the longest night.
With love and grace, you ease our pain,
In every struggle, you remain.

Verse Three

With every step, you lift the weak,
In every word, it's peace you speak.
No task too small, no load too great,
In your hands, we trust our fate.

Composer

Rita Odonkor (Mrs)
Deputy Director of Nursing Services (DDNS)
Post Anaesthesia Care Unit (PACU)



