APRNs MARK 50 YEARS OF PRACTICE

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) have practiced at Vanderbilt University Medical Center for more than 50 years, a landmark achievement for an institution that now has more than 780 APRNs.

More than 100 people celebrated the milestone on Aug. 26 at The Vanderbilt Clinic during the kickoff of the 2015-16 season of Clinical Practice Grand Rounds.

“The Grand Rounds committee orchestrated a tremendous celebration of the past, present and future of Advanced Practice,” said April Kapu, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, Associate Nursing Officer and VUMC advanced practice director in the Office of Advanced Practice.

An APRN is someone with a post-graduate education in nursing and a specialized field of knowledge. There are four main categories: Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesiologists, Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives and Clinical Nurse Specialists. Each specialty area is licensed and board certified.

“The event’s theme to recognize advanced practice was initially inspired by the American Association of Nurse Practitioner’s national recognition and celebration of the nurse practitioner role,” said Janet

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We have many things of which to be proud as nurses at Vanderbilt, but one achievement you will read in this issue particularly stands out. We celebrated more than 50 years of Advanced Practice Nursing during our Clinical Practice Grand Rounds kickoff in August.

During the celebration, we honored those advanced practice nurses who were among the pioneers of the field. C. Wright Pinson, MBA, M.D., deputy vice chancellor for Health Affairs and CEO of the Vanderbilt Health System, gave an inspiring keynote address.

Vanderbilt has become known as a national leader in advanced practice nursing, with more than 780 advanced practice nurses. We recently welcomed more than 250 nurse practitioners and physician assistants from 41 states to the Critical Care ACNP/PA Boot Camp. These health care professionals learned from our evidence-based practice and collaborative colleagues. Thank you to those who organized such a successful event.

Lastly, I would like to invite everyone to participate in this year’s Octoberfest, which will be held from Tuesday, Oct. 27 to Thursday, Oct. 29. It is a yearly opportunity to grow in our knowledge and enthusiasm for the work that we do.

Enjoy this issue,

Marilyn Dubree

Myers, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, GNP-BC, ADM-BC, CDE, CLNC, NE-BC, director of Professional Development.

She said the Office of Advanced Practice not only wanted to recognize and celebrate the NP role, but also the other APRN roles.

The celebration featured a panel discussion from three pioneer APRNs at Vanderbilt who recalled their experiences – Leslie Higgins, PhD, FNP-BC; Beth Colvin Huff, MSN, NP; and Joan King, Ph.D, RNC, ACNP-BC, ANP-BC.

“We literally are standing on their shoulders because they forged that path for us,” Myers said.

Higgins, who graduated with a Master of Science in Nursing degree in 1975 and took a position in the General Internal Medicine Clinic, recalled those early days.

“I didn't have a real sense of being anything in the way of a pioneer at that time, but I can remember it was a role that immediately felt right to me,” she said. “I enjoyed having the education and experience to unravel diagnostic puzzles, and to have a group of patients that looked to me as their primary care provider.”

Higgins went on to join the faculty at Belmont University, where she has taught for 21 years and is the Graduate Program director at the Belmont University School of Nursing.

King recalled starting out having a dual appointment as a Clinical Nurse Specialist in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit in August 1975 and as a VUSN faculty member, barely a decade since the first CRNA was hired at Vanderbilt.

She went on to become an Adult Nurse Practitioner, then an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, and is now professor of Nursing at the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing and program director for the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP) program, and maintains an active clinical practice.

King spoke about the importance of APRNs today.

“As APRNs, we expand the quality and the type of care that patients can receive,” she said. “By allowing us to practice to the full extent of our scope of practice, we are able to address patient and family problems quickly and develop appropriate plans of care that help to meet our patients’ needs.

“In many clinical areas my colleagues are writing prescriptions, doing invasive procedures that either need to be done in a very timely manner or that need to be done as part of the plan of care. All of this allows us to address issues and problems that improve patient care outcome.”

Colvin Huff said there were only about 30 APRNs when she was hired in 1980 as a nurse clinician. The term APRN was not yet in use.

“We sought each other out as colleagues and mentors and it was a great support system,” she said.

“We helped new APRN hires get introduced around and shared ideas for patient care and staff support. Because we were scattered throughout many areas of the Medical Center, we were also able to use each other as referral sources for patients.”

Colvin Huff went on to become an assistant professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and worked for many years as the clinical nurse specialist in Gynecologic Oncology.

Roxelyn Baumgartner, MS, RN, ANP-BC, who has been an APRN since 1982, moderated the panel discussion at the 50th anniversary event. When she started, all the APRNs knew each other. With more than 780 now, she feels like she’s made a difference and that APRNs will continue to make that difference.

“Research/data will drive our evolution and push the boundaries of our practice,” she said.

“Healthcare provided using a team approach to meeting the needs of patients and APRN’s is a major presence in this changing paradigm.”

In her remarks, Marilyn
**NDNQI SURVEY PARTICIPATION STRONG**

Vanderbilt nurses have excelled in their participation in the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI) nursing satisfaction survey, which began Sept. 14 and runs through Oct. 4.

The average unit response was 70 percent as of Oct. 1, a significantly higher response than peer institutions.

NDNQI is the body through which Vanderbilt reports unit-specific nurse-sensitive quality indicator data; such as falls and hospital-acquired pressure ulcers.

Due to the large number of organizations that participate in the database, VUMC is able to compare its data with other hospitals nationwide.

In addition to quality indicators, NDNQI administers a nursing satisfaction survey that evaluates whether the measures VUMC has in place create a good environment for the practice of professional nursing.

The NDNQI nursing satisfaction survey measures Vanderbilt’s work in teams and the support nurses receive to deliver care.

The NDNQI survey is open to RNs only, who spend at least 50 percent of their time providing patient care.

Dubree, MSN, R.N., NE-BC, executive chief nursing officer, celebrated the past and future of advanced practice nursing.

“We have long treasured the legacy given to us and felt accountability to honor the work and clinical practice that preceded us,” she said.

“The future is bright for your contributions to the ever-evolving health care system. You represent access and care not only across Vanderbilt, but beyond. Your contributions well extend beyond the care you provide to the new knowledge you create, new models of care you implement and the standard you are establishing for APRN practice across the U.S.”

Finally, in the keynote address of the Grand Rounds, C. Wright Pinson, MBA, M.D., deputy vice chancellor for Health Affairs and CEO of the Vanderbilt Health System, said, “The APN role in my opinion has been the hub of care teams for a long time. I have always said they were the glue in the center of the multidisciplinary team. I experienced this in transplantation beginning in the eighties and continuing through out my practice career. That is but one example of the importance of APNs in primary care . . . and multiple specialty care over the last 50 years.

“Going forward, APNs have a huge role to play in population health. They will increasingly become the backbone of the primary care workforce, given the sheer demand for primary care providers. They will have big roles in care management and care coordination and not just as physician extenders. The demand for better provision of mental health services, school health services, long-term care, and palliative care (including end-of-life care) is increasing as well.

“Care management will become kind of a mini-profession of its own. APNs have key roles to play as team members and leaders for a reformed and better-integrated, patient-centered health care system,” Pinson said.
‘BOOT CAMP’ HELPS SHARPEN CRITICAL CARE SKILLS

More than 250 critical care nurse practitioners and physician assistants from 41 states gathered at Vanderbilt from Sept. 20 to 22 for the fourth-annual ACNP/PA Critical Care Boot Camp.

The event, spread over three days between the Student Life Center and the Center for Experiential Learning and Assessment (CELA) Lab in Light Hall, was an opportunity for nurse practitioners and physician assistants to sharpen critical care skills that they could immediately apply when they return to their medical facilities at home.

“The conference delivers current evidence in the practice of critical care,” said April Kapu, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, Associate Nursing Officer and VUMC advanced practice director in the Office of Advanced Practice. “What can you take back next week and implement in your practice?”

The acute care nurse practitioners (ACNPs) and physician assistants (PAs) at the boot camp are part of an emerging field of advanced practice providers who work in intensive care units.

“At Vanderbilt, we encourage our nurses to practice at the top of their licenses, and we are pleased to be able to share our work with a national audience,” said Marilyn Dubree, MSN, R.N., NE-BC, executive chief nursing officer. “We are excited to showcase our excellent interdisciplinary processes and honored to have such collaborative colleagues.”

More than 30 faculty members, from multiple departments, participated in lectures, panel discussions and hands-on activities. Topics included ventilator management, ultrasound, critical care pharmacology, ECMO, trauma, arrhythmia, neurological emergencies and much more.

This is the fourth year for the boot camp, the idea for which came from event co-chair Janna Landsperger, MSN, APRN, ACNP-BC, a nurse practitioner in the Medical Intensive Care Unit and Arthur Wheeler, M.D., medical director of the Medical Intensive Care Unit. The event has grown quickly, from about 50 attendees at the first conference to about 250 this year.

Landsperger said the event takes a full year to plan, but that it’s very rewarding to see the knowledge that the participants take away from the conference.

“It’s wonderful,” she said. “It has been a great, great experience.”

More than 780 advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) practice at Vanderbilt, a sevenfold increase over the last 10 years. The number includes Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesiologists, Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives and Clinical Nurse Specialists.

“The contribution of ACNPs and PAs in the world of critical care is unquestionable and continues to expand,” said Lee Parmley, M.D., J.D., chief of staff of Vanderbilt University Hospital. “Vanderbilt is honored to be a leader in this field, both in the deployment of this workforce and it’s training. This boot camp, with its capacity enrollment and great acceptance, highlights the outstanding collaborative work going on at Vanderbilt.”