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53<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL MEETING



Virtual Meeting • April 17–20, 2021

**2021 Excellence in Advanced Practice Nursing Award**

**Suzanne Ashworth, MSN APRN CCRN CCNS**

**Nominated by Susan Fowler**



Demonstrates development and support of neuroscience nurses through role-modeling, education, mentorship, and/or other leadership activities.

Suzanne has an inviting, informative presence in the neuroscience ICU, step-down, and med/surg units. She conducts clinical rounds engaging direct care nurses in discussions about evidence-based care. Suzanne role models advocacy for nurses and others. She advocates for our TBI patients by developing relationships with families, and following them throughout the continuum of care from the ER to rehabilitation. She advocates for best practices and resource utilization.

Suzanne is an expert in SCI and is tapped for her expertise in educating our trauma fellows and residents. She developed an 8 module online educational program for

nurses on SCI. She leads weekly multidisciplinary rounds for SCI (and TBI) patients. Her expertise was also used in developing the Rapid Response Team at one of our facilities.

As a clinical nurse specialist, Suzanne mentors many unit practice councils on quality improvement projects using the PDSA model. She is mentoring NSICU nurses on a performance improvement project targeting delirium in SAH patients and our Neuro Step Down and Neuro Med Surg nurses on improving rates of constipation in neurological patients. She provides guidance for nurses crafting abstracts and posters on their QI efforts. Her mentorship continues with precepting graduate students in evidence-based practice and education. To date, Suzanne has mentored two DNP students who are neuroscience ICU registered direct care nurses in their evidence-based practice projects.

This year, she led a corporate-wide, including all neuroscience units, evidence-based initiative through the development of a standardized patient hygiene protocol that was implemented across more than 5 adult hospital sites and 1 pediatric site. The patient hygiene included: bathing, shampoo, oral care, hygiene products, linens, and incorporated hand hygiene which aligned with the hospital system's hand hygiene initiative. Suzanne searched and created a table of evidence of 56 publications about daily patient hygiene practices. She evaluated the evidence for safety, efficacy and implementation best practices. She led a group to survey direct care nurses from all 6 hospitals about their patient hygiene practices. She also made site visits to the participating adult hospitals to speak with direct care RNs and other key stakeholders about their patient hygiene practices and products. She collaborated with the hospital's supply management department to identify and standardize hygiene products. She collaborated with the Clinical Information Services to revise nursing driven patient hygiene orders to be included in admission orders and daily nursing documentation. Using data from the evidence, direct care RNs, and other departments, she successfully facilitated the patient hygiene group to create a standardized protocol, nursing education, patient education, and standardization of hygiene products. Suzanne exemplified leadership in engaging key stakeholders throughout the process.

Demonstrates application of advanced practice knowledge and skill in the care of neuroscience patients and/or families

Suzanne's advanced expertise and, more importantly, leadership, has been used in 1) Coordinating and leading critical care product evaluation for new intracranial pressure monitors, 2) Developing a program for Therapeutic Hypothermia Post Cardiac Arrest and establishing a nursing guideline for care of the patient receiving temperature regulation, 3) Implementing a performance improvement plan to decrease rates of central line bloodstream infections within the Intensive Care Unit which resulted in a significant decrease in rates of occurrence and standardized patient hygiene across the corporation, 4) Leading a corporate performance improvement project to improve rates of heel pressure ulcer for patients at risk for foot drop in critical care, 5) developing an

evidence based guideline for adult and pediatric patients with mild traumatic brain injury/concussion, and an electronic admission screening process to identify TBI or concussion, and discharge follow up/education for these patients across the OH system, and 6) leading practice for a “Transport Bundle” for intubated patients to avoid micro-aspiration which led to a significant decrease in VAP rates in NSICU. Suzanne’s expertise is being tapped to address surgical site infections in post-operative craniotomy patients in collaboration with neurosurgeons and the infection prevention team.

Several years ago, she initiated and led a hospital-system wide “Ban the Basin” after investigating the evidence and discovering that bath basins in the central supply were already contaminated with bacteria. She also led an initiative for daily chlorhexidine (CHG) skin treatments for patients in the Neuroscience intensive care unit (NSICU) which led to the reduction of CLABSI events by 100%. The NSICU had 5 years without a CLABSI event. In the last 10 years, there were only 2 CLABSIs identified. The other hospital ICUs had 7 months without a CLABSI event. Suzanne has presented results at the Sigma Theta Tau, Theta Epsilon chapter, Annual Research Day conference in April 2011 & 2013.

Contributes to AANN at a local, regional and/or national level

Suzanne was part of the former central FL AANN chapter based out of the former Hospital. She is engaged in the application process for a chapter charter centered at our main campus. She attends and has presented at the national conference and serves as an abstract reviewer. Suzanne is also an instructor for “Stop the Bleed” which is a national awareness campaign intended to encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. She has participated in training at local high schools within the last year. Suzanne has contributed at a national level with AACN, by leading the writing for the Beacon award application in which the Neuro Med Surg unit won gold and the NSICU and Neuro Step Down which won the silver award.

Suzanne’s contributions have been recognized at all levels. She has received national awards including the NACNS 2019 Best Evidence-Based Practice Award, “Reducing Urinary Catheter Utilization and CAUTI”; the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses 2018 Best Poster Award, “Updated Glasgow Coma Scale to Decrease Unexpected Transfers to Higher Level of Care”; the American College of Surgeons, 2016 TQIP Best Abstract Award for Performance Improvement; and, numerous local and organizational awards for her QI and EBP work in the Neuroscience population

Contributes to neuroscience nursing through professional and community service activities (publishing, presenting, community service, community education)

Suzanne has authored 4 publications regarding endotracheal suctioning and secretions with Dr. MLS, who was awarded a NIH grant for this related research study.

Other publications include: 1) "Ask the Experts; Sequential Compression Devices and Clots". Critical Care Nurse, 34(6), December 2014, and 2) Novel use of a nurse-led telemedicine team in acute stroke: A retrospective review of the impact on a regional health care system. Journal of Emergency Nursing, 45(3), 242-248.

Suzanne was contacted by the editor for the Nursing Diagnosis Handbook: An Evidence Based Guide to Planning Care due to her extensive work with patient hygiene. Suzanne is currently authoring the updates for the 13th edition for self-care deficits: bathing, dressing, feeding, and toileting.

Our Quality Retreat is a competitive program open to all team members. Suzanne has been selected to present posters: 1) Out with the Old, In with the New. Innovative Practice Changes to Improve Infection Control Practices to Prevent Cross Contamination with EEG Equipment, 2) Impact of Telemedicine Utilizing Nurse Responders on Stroke Outcomes (which won second place) , and 3) Functional Outcomes for Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury Before and After the Implementation of a Specialized Care Initiative (which won first place).

Nursing excellence is highlighted at our annual Nursing Excellence Conference. Her quality abstracts have been accepted for poster presentations over the past few years including: 1) Collaboration Creates a Culture of Patient Mobility in the Neuroscience Population, 2) Implementation of an Evidence-based Guideline to prevent external ventricular device infections in the Neuroscience ICU, and 3) Multidisciplinary Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury Team to Improve Patient Outcomes and Decrease Resource Utilization (which won third place), 4) From Worst to First, A Collaborative Approach to Reduce Urinary Catheter Utilization and CAUTI (2nd place).

Suzanne has disseminated her knowledge and expertise at poster and podium presentations at the American College of Surgeons TQIP Annual Meeting and Training in Orlando, Florida: 1) Saving the Brain - Improving Compliance with Continuous EEG Monitoring for Severe Traumatic Brain Injury and 2) Collaboration Creates a Culture of Patient Mobility in the Neuroscience Population which received the award for "Best Performance Improvement Abstract."

Speaking at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) national forum is a honor and Suzanne achieved that honor with her presentation with a nursing colleague and physician on Mental Status Matters: Utilizing the Updated Glasgow Coma Scale to Decrease Unexpected Transfer to Higher Level of Care that was also presented at the AANN annual conference in San Diego, CA.

A pivotal opportunity came in 2018 when Suzanne's poster was accepted for presentation at the International Stroke Conference on the Impact of Telemedicine Utilizing Nurse Responders on Stroke Outcomes.

Suzanne partners with a Foundation, volunteering as a story teller during tours of the hospital for the community to educate how Suzanne provides exceptional care for stroke patients.