

Connecting
Educating Inspiring
53RD ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL MEETING



Virtual Meeting • April 17–20, 2021

2021 Excellence in Clinical Patient Care Award

Kelly Montgomery, BSN RN SCRNP

Nominated by Julie Fussner



I would like to nominate this nurse for the AANN Excellence in Clinical Patient Care award that recognizes excellence in clinical practice for a nurse caring for the neuroscience patient.

This individual has cared for this unique patient population for over 13 years in a large academic medical center. In 2007 she started on the neuroscience unit as a nursing assistant while attending nursing school. Once she graduated with her BSN, she transitioned to the RN role on that same unit caring for a wide variety of neurological and neurosurgical patients. During her career on that unit she was promoted to an Advanced Clinical Nurse for her demonstrated excellent patient care and leadership

skills and served as a preceptor for many new graduates. In 2014, she was promoted to her current position as a stroke coordinator. She is extremely valued in her role at this comprehensive stroke center that cares for almost 1,000 stroke patients per year.

This nurse meets all the criteria listed in the award application. She is very patient-centered, compassionate and makes it a priority to maintain patient safety. She is always professional, hardworking, and dedicated to ensuring the patient receives excellent care and the family is supported as well. This past year one of her peers described her as this, "She really embodies the spirit of the nurse – she is knowledgeable, empathetic, supportive, hard-working and a reliable team member." As she has grown in her leadership skills, she coordinates care with multiple departments and disciplines including emergency medicine, patient access, radiology, the transfer center, inpatient nursing units and educators. This success is attributed to her approachable, professional manner and excellent communication and organizational skills.

In the emergency department, she has built strong relationships with all the ED caregivers. She is prompt and amazingly helpful with brain attack / stroke alert activations often times going above and beyond to make sure the patients are assessed and treated timely. She assists in the acute phase and often stays with bedside RN to ensure a smooth transition to the next unit. She provides timely feedback to the team regarding their approach, assessments, and documentation and is thoughtful at celebrating both successes and identifying areas for improvement. One example of how she celebrates successes is through her cookie cake and team photo recognition for the ED team that achieves Alteplase in <30 minutes.

She also supports our Rapid Response Team, the nurse team responsible for responding to in-house brain attacks. She partners with the rapid response nurse to administer Alteplase or to facilitate prompt transfer to the interventional suite for mechanical thrombectomy. Recently, she remained bedside with an ICU patient who received Alteplase. She worked closely with the Stroke Team, Rapid Response nurse and the patient's direct care nurse to ensure that the patient received our standard of care for post-Alteplase monitoring as this patient needed to remain in the current non neuro ICU. She engaged in discussions with the Neuroscience ICU Nursing leadership to ensure the patient was cared for by a Neuroscience Nurse in those crucial 24 hours after Alteplase administration.

This nurse dedicates time to patients and families providing education on secondary stroke prevention. She supports patients and families in their time of greatest need by explaining the plan in a way that is easy to understand. Her empathetic approach provides a sense of calm to patients and families. During the previous example, this nurse was supportive to the patient's wife. She explained what was happening during the flurry of activity, obtaining the CT scan, administering Alteplase and frequently assessing her husband. The wife had a better understanding of what was transpiring

and what was to come in the next 24 hours because this nurse talked through this information with her in detail.

Our comprehensive stroke center is certified by the Joint Commission and she plays an integral role in the preparation and maintenance of this certification. Following our last review our hospital focused on several new initiatives. One was the development of a backup neuro unit in which this nurse led planning meetings, established stroke focused education and even held one-on-one and group educational sessions for every nurse on this new unit. In order to educate the evening and night shift nurses, she altered her work hours to meet the needs of this staff. In addition to this education, each year she develops several online stroke education courses for the 3000 nurses in our system and trains nurses on how to perform the NIHSS on their patients.

She is advocate for improving the operability of the EMR documentation for nurses. She listens intently to the needs of the bedside nurses and has developed multiple EMR enhancements for the Neuro population including development of flow sheets for post Alteplase (tPA), mechanical thrombectomy, carotid procedure documentation and plan of care. She also developed neuro specific acronym expansions to assist the bedside nurses with their documentation.

One of this nurse's greatest strengths is how successfully she can lead a performance improvement project. She is skilled at identifying opportunities, pulling together key stake holders, analyzing data, monitoring documentation and processes, and providing feedback. Some of her projects included our EMS Direct to CT process, Door to Alteplase times, now down below 30 mins, Door to groin and our stroke family assessment. One example of how she helps to celebrate the team is by presenting a patient case study which includes imaging, time targets and the team involved. This information is shared at our monthly Stroke Quality meetings to recognize the success of the full team including EMS and the team at outlying system hospitals. Because of her efforts with our AHA GWTG quality measures, we have consistently received the American Heart Association Gold Plus awards and Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus awards and in 2020 we were the only hospital in Ohio to receive the four highest awards available (Gold Plus, Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus, Target Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll and Advanced Therapy Honor Roll). She has been the foundation of true positive change when it comes to improving the workflow efficiency in a devastating disease process in which every second matters and she never hesitates to critically ask how we can improve the process even further.

She has been an active member of the Northeast Ohio AANN chapter for many years and has served on the board. She currently facilitates educational opportunities including arranging speakers, promoting the event and setting up the virtual platform. Each year our hospital hosts a Stroke Conference and Neuroscience Nursing Symposium. This nurse facilitates the last presentation of the day, a patient experience story during which we invite a past patient and family to share their story with the conference participants.

Her leadership with these activities further demonstrates her commitment to neuroscience nursing.

In summary, she is an indispensable nurse in our Neurologic Institute and one of the backbones of our stroke program. She continuously demonstrates her commitment to improving patient care and patient outcomes through her passion, dedication and contributions to neuroscience nursing.