

## Extra: Lives Outside the Hospital

# From Cancer Survivor to Health Coach

By Candace Pearson

The trip to Tejon Pass was supposed to be a care-free camping and dirt biking Easter getaway for Amy Lohmann and her family. Then, sitting around a campfire one night, she scratched an itch on her chest and felt a lump.

Lohmann, DNP, RN, CRN, CNS, CPNP, the Advanced Practice Provider Lead in Interventional Radiology at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, had just gotten an "all-clear" on her annual mammogram a month earlier, so she didn't worry.

A few months later, during a checkup in July 2019, Lohmann heard the words she never anticipated: stage 3 breast cancer. Eventually, she would undergo four surgeries, 16 rounds of chemotherapy and 25 rounds of radiation, her spirits buoyed by her husband, Jeff; son, Ryan; daughter, Allie; mom, Peggy; and sister-in-law, Beth.

Lohmann stayed on her post at CHLA throughout treatment. "Keeping my mind healthy was

important to keeping my body healthy," she says. But with the stress of battling cancer, coupled with steroids she was taking, Lohmann's weight shot up. By July 2021, her normal 140 pounds had become 180. She explored various weight-loss strategies, settling on OPTAVIA, which emphasizes healthy habits and lifelong transformation. "I learned how to take the focus off food and put it on the company I'm with," she says.

Meeting her own goals wasn't enough. Lohmann wanted to share her new knowledge, so she became a certified health coach by OPTAVIA in partnership with the MacDonald Center for Obesity Prevention and Education and the M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing at Villanova University. Now she has more than 110 clients across the U.S., Mexico and Canada. "I can't decide if I feel more joy when I lose a pound or when my clients do," she says. "It's exciting to see them changing their lives."



Amy Lohmann, DNP, RN, CRN, CNS, CPNP

As Lohmann dropped the weight, she upped her exercise. In September 2021, she participated along with her husband and kids in the 2XU Malibu Triathlon presented by Bank of America benefitting pediatric cancer research at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. "So many of us in the health care field take care of other people and not ourselves," says Lohmann. "It's really good to feel healthy again." ■

## Nurses in Action

# Helping Families Find Peace and Comfort

By Vicki Cho Estrada



L-R: Jennifer Lee, MSN, RN, RNC-NIC; Cara Terlep, BSN, RN, RNC-NIC; Olivia Reynolds, BSN, RN

Caring for CHLA's most critically ill infants and babies in the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit (NICCU), Jennifer Lee, MSN, RN, RNC-NIC, knows that despite valiant efforts by hospital staff, some patients don't make it home.

After an infant's death in 2020, Lee and other NICCU night shift nurses searched for personal effects to give the family to remember their child, provide comfort and help them through the grieving process.

"We wanted to help families make lasting memories from fleeting moments," says Lee. "We thought, 'Wouldn't it be great to give families a box with items their babies once touched?'"

That idea led to the creation of Tied Together Forever, a nonprofit that provides memory-making items during infant end-of-life care and supports families who have lost their children. Since its founding in 2020, the group has donated 70 bereavement boxes to CHLA and another 30 to other hospitals in Southern California.

The boxes include a receiving blanket, stuffed bear, parent/infant charm, keepsake box, journal, flower seed packet, hand/foot casting kit, candle

and a letter written by a parent who has suffered the loss of a child. It also includes a sympathy card with resources listed on the organization's website.

Tied Together Forever is led by Chief Executive Officer and President Cara Terlep, BSN, RN, RNC-NIC, a former CHLA NICCU nurse, and Lee, Chief Operating Officer and Secretary. Other NICCU nurses involved in the organization include Aubree Lin, BSN, RN, RNC-NIC; Olivia Reynolds, BSN, RN; and Elisabetta Impagliazzo, BSN, RN.

The nurses used their own money and raised funds to pay for the initial boxes, available in English and Spanish. The organization recently received a \$15,000 grant, which will help pay for another 250 bereavement boxes.

"We do hope when families go home with their boxes, they still feel connected to their babies," Lee adds. ■

## Publications

**Maria Theresa Alquiros** (Heart Institute): "Factors Impacting Long-Term Gastrostomy Tube Dependence in Infants With Congenital Heart Disease," *Journal of Surgical Research*, February 2022.

**Jennifer Baird** (Clinical Services Education and Research): *Pediatric Palliative Care: A Model for Exemplary Practice*, first edition, Routledge, December 2021; **Jennifer Baird** and **Kathleen Van Allen** (Fetal and Neonatal Institute): "Stop, look, and listen: SPN's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Progress Report," *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, November 2021.

**Noreen Clarke** (The Vision Center): "Nutrition and Feeding Infants with an Oral Cleft," chapter in e-book, *Global Cleft Care in Low-Resource Settings*, Springer Nature, 2021.

**Elizabeth Daley** (Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit): co-author, articles on "Tetralogy of Fallot with Absent Pulmonary Valve Guideline," "Care of the Patient with Temporary Pacemaker in the Neonatal and Pediatric Cardiac Patient" and "Neonatal and Pediatric Guidelines for Arrhythmia Management," in textbook, *Nurse Curriculum*, published by Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society, September 2021.

**Maria Bautista-Durand**, **Melissa Anderson** and **Catherine Goodhue** (Maurice Marciano Family Foundation Emergency Department and Trauma Center): "Variation in Radiation Dosing Among Pediatric Trauma Patients Undergoing Head Computed Tomography Scan," *Journal of Trauma Acute Care Surgery*, September 2021.

**Catherine Goodhue** (Trauma Program): "Pancreaticoduodenectomy for the Treatment of Pancreatic Neoplasms in Children," *Pediatric Blood & Cancer*, July 2020; "Thoracoscopy Versus Thoracotomy for the Management of Metastatic Osteosarcoma," *International Journal of Cancer*, August 2020; "Variation in radiation dosing among pediatric trauma patients undergoing head computed tomography scan," *Journal of Trauma Acute Care Surgery*, September 2021; with **Melissa Anderson** (Trauma Program): "Epidemiology of Pediatric Trauma During the Coronavirus Disease-2019 Pandemic," *Journal of Pediatric Surgery*, epub October 2021, print February 2022.

**Sheila Kun** (Pulmonology): "Children with Congenital Central Hypoventilation Syndrome Do Not Wake up to Ventilator Alarms," *Sleep and Breathing*, September 2021; "Outpatient Respiratory Management of Infants, Children, and Adolescents with Post-Prematurity Respiratory Disease: An Official American Thoracic Society Clinical Practice Guideline," September 2021.

**Nida Sulit Oriza** (CTICU): co-author, sections on "Cardiac Defects, Total Anomalous Pulmonary Venous Return" and "Prevention of Device-Associated Infections in Neonatal and Pediatric Cardiac Patients," in textbook, *Nurse Curriculum*, published by the Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society, September 2021.

**Lindsey Quirk** (Maurice Marciano Family Foundation Emergency Department & Trauma

Center) and **Sarah Meyer** (Ahmanson Foundation Pediatric Intensive Care Unit): "Shear Stress Causing Hemolytic Anemia and Congestive Heart Failure as an Initial Presentation of Cor Triatriatum in an Infant," *Advanced Emergency Nursing Journal*, October-December 2021.

**Hui-Wen Sato** (PICU): "Precepting: Revisiting Ground Rules with my New Grad RN," blog post, *American Journal of Nursing*, October 2021.

**Jessica Ward** (Clinical Services Education and Research): "Electronic Symptom Assessment in Children and Adolescents with Advanced Cancer Undergoing Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation," *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, July/August 2020.

## Presentations

**Sharee Anzaldo** (Surgical Admitting): "Society of Pediatric Nurses: Facilitating Professional Development," Branching Out: Nursing Society Series, pediatric nursing students, University of California, San Francisco, August 2020; "Filipino Americans and Autism Spectrum Disorder: Cultural Beliefs, Perceptions, and Parental Management of Care," poster presentation, Research and Education Conference, Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research; also, Clinical Services Grand Rounds, both at CHLA, October 2020; "Parental Management of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Filipino American Community: A Grounded Theory Study," School of Nursing, University of California, Los Angeles, November 2020; panelist, "Pre-Health Advising and Mentorship Fall Panel," virtual, Filipinos for Community Health, University of California, Los Angeles, November 2021.

**Jennifer Baldwin** (Endocrinology): "Long Term Professional Impact of COVID-19 on Diabetes Clinical Care," Mini-Symposium, Women's Interprofessional Network, American Diabetes Association 81<sup>st</sup> Scientific Sessions, virtual, June 2021; "Students Living with Diabetes and Their Legal Rights at School," Los Angeles Safe at School virtual workshop, October 2021.

**Debra Browne** (Gastroenterology): "Obesity, It Is What's Happening to Our Kids!" NAPNAP (Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Association) Fall Conference, virtual, 2021; "Diagnosis and Treatment of Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease," Association of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition Nurses Annual Meeting, virtual, December 2021.

**Maria Bautista-Durand** (Trauma Program): "Is it NAT or NOT?" Society of Trauma Nurses Annual Conference, virtual, March 2021; "Beyond the Trauma Bay: Exploring the Role of the Trauma App," 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Pediatric Trauma Society Conference, Baltimore, Maryland, November 2021.

**Catherine Goodhue** (Trauma Program): "Blunt and Penetrating Thoracic Trauma," Lecture, Western Pediatric Trauma (WPT) Virtual Conference, July 2021; "Emergency Preparedness for Individuals Requiring TPN," Lecture, Oley Foundation Virtual Conference, October 2021; Poster Contributor, "Comparison of Head Computed Tomography Radiation Delivery Between Pediatric Trauma Center and Referring Adult Hospitals," American College of Surgeons Quality and Safety Conference, virtual, and WPT Conference, July

2021, and 2021 Trauma Quality Improvement Program (TQIP) Annual Conference, American College of Surgeons, virtual, November 2021; "Pediatric Trauma Activations in Los Angeles County During the COVID-19 Pandemic," WPT Conference, July 2021, and TWIP Conference, November 2021.

**Deborah Harris** and **Anne Nord** (Hematology/Oncology): "SCD 101: Understanding your SCD," SCD Emerging Adult Transition Program: I'm Ready, virtual, Cayenne Wellness Center and Children's Foundation, January 2022.

**Sarah Heinonen** (Pulmonology): Oral presentations, "An Overview of the APP Legislative Committee," Inaugural CHLA APP Boot Camp, March 2020; "CHLA Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD) Program" and "Benefits of Joining National Collaborative," BPD National Collaborative Meeting, September 2020; "Home NG Tube Program," Pulmonology Faculty/Providers, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, December 2020.

**Ruth Lemus** (Heart Institute): "Double Outlet Right Ventricle (DORV): Case Scenarios," presentation, and panelist, "What Data Managers Want to Know," Advances in Quality & Outcomes: A Data Managers Meeting, virtual, October 2021.

**Stephanie Mai** (Helen and Max Rosenthal Cardiovascular Acute Unit): "Pivot...Pivot... Utilizing WebEx for Discharge Education," Pediatric Cardiology Intensive Care Society Conference, virtual, September 2021.

**Jennifer Pugh** (APP & Critical Care Medicine) and **Kamala Gipson-McElroy** (Advance Practice): "Initiating APP-Practice Modeling and Redesign: A Strategy for Optimizing Clinical-Practice," 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Conference, California Association for Nurse Practitioners, Pasadena, CA, April 2022.

**Hui-Wen Sato** (PICU): "How to Care for Yourself as a Caregiver," Webinar, my.happify.com, July 2021; "What can grief provide us?" Podcast, NPR TED Radio Hour, October 2021; "Grief in Healthcare: Navigating the Nuances," virtual presentation, Pediatric Grand Rounds, Presbyterian Healthcare Services, New Mexico, November 2021.

**Rita Secola** (Hematology/Oncology): "Clinical Management of Patients with Refractory or Relapsed High Risk Neuroblastoma," oral presentation, Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON) 2021 Annual Conference, virtual, October 2021.

**Jessica Ward** (Clinical Services Education and Research): "The Impact of Parent Distress on Symptoms and Quality of Life Experience by Children Undergoing Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation or Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell Therapy: An Argument for Increased Parent Support," poster presentation, American Society for Transplantation and Cellular Therapy (TCT) and the Center for Blood & Marrow Transplant Research, 2020 TCT Meetings, Orlando, Florida, February 2020; "Symptoms and Quality of Life of Children and Adolescents Receiving Cellular Therapies," oral presentation, virtual Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nursing Annual Meeting, September 2020.



### Professional Achievements

**Charissa Altobar** (Clinical Services Education and Research): Selected as a Practice Transition Accreditation Program appraiser by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, February 2021.

**Katheen Van-Allen** (Fetal and Neonatal Institute): President, National Society of Pediatric Nurses (SPN) Board of Directors, April 2022.

**Sharee Anzaldo** (Surgical Admitting): Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society, January 2020; Doctoral Dissertation Award, UCLA School of Nursing, June 2020; President, Society of Pediatric Nurses Greater Los Angeles Chapter, December 2020; Co-Chair, Clinical Services Research Council, CHLA, July 2021.

**Maria Bautista-Durand** (Trauma Program): Core Instructor, Pediatric Trauma Across the Care Continuum, pilot course at Phoenix Children's Hospital, sponsored by Society of Trauma Nurses & Pediatric Trauma Society, January 2021.

**Deborah Jury** (Pain Medicine): Videotaped a class on "Pediatric Pain Assessment and Management in the Hospital and Outpatient Setting, for Nurse Practitioner students, UCLA, Winter 2021.

**Ruth Lemus** (Heart Institute) Elected to Executive Board of The Society of Pediatric Cardiovascular Nurses (SPCN), Treasurer, November 2021

**Grace Magaling** (Clinical Services Education and Onboarding): "Versant RN Residency Giving Tree Award," CHLA, August 2021.

**Rita Secola** (Hematology/Oncology): Promotion to Associate Adjunct Professor II, UCLA School of Nursing, Fall 2021.

**Mehvish Abbasi** (Radiology), **Chelsea Balian** (Hematology/Oncology), **Lauren Britowich** (ECMO Program), **Susan Carson** (Hematology/Oncology), **Liza Coe** (Emergency Services), **Phyllis D'Ambra** (Orthopaedics), **Melissa Doyle** (Hematology/Oncology), **Tanya Gidish** (Neurology), **Catherine Goodhue** (Trauma Program), **Deborah Jury** (Pain Medicine), **Erin Messing** (Cardiovascular Surgery), **Hana Pak** (Radiology), **Andrea Pang** (Neurology), **Lindsay Quirk** (Emergency Services), **Bianca Maria Salvetti** (Adolescent Medicine), **Kathryn Ann Smith** (Developmental Disabilities), **Kylie Alec Taylor** (Emergency Services), **Ginny Kim Than** (Radiology), **Sahar Vann** (Surgical Admitting), **Mei-Ling Cadbury Wong** (Emergency Services): Appointed Volunteer Assistant Professors, UCLA School of Nursing, 2021-22 academic year.

DAISY Awards, Individual: **Tania Makover** (Cardiovascular Acute), January 2021; **Sheila Perez** (Fetal-Maternal Center), February 2021; **Courtney Reyes Dileva** (4 West), March 2021; **Kimberlei Comrie** (6 East), April 2021; **Miriam Czech** (Surgical Admitting), May 2021; **China Schmidt** (Duque 5), June 2021; **Lisa Ochoa** (Float Team), July 2021; **Rebecca Gregg** (Operating Room), August 2021; **Kathryn Vick** (6 East), September 2021; **Andrea Moore** (Cardiovascular Acute), October 2021; **Kasieh Cases-Manzon** (6 East), November 2021; **Kyla Morwood** (Cardiovascular Acute), December 2021; **Catrice Troy** (Duque 5), January 2022; **Allyssa Cayago** (Neurology), February 2022. **Melissa Acayan** (Infusion Center), March 2022; **Irene Austria-Ramos** (Ambulatory Clinic), April 2022.

### Academic Achievements

DNP: **Margaux Chan** (Clinical Services Education and Onboarding)

PhD, Nursing: **Sharee Anzaldo** (Surgical Admitting); **Paula Belson** (Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine)

MBA: **Phan Leopando** (D6Rehab)

MSN: **Melissa Stewart** (4 West); **Erika Cheung** (Emergency Management); **Elysia Weiner** (Cardiovascular Acute); **Danica Ryan** (Infusion Center); **Dorothy Low** (Float Team); **Hanna Chong** (6 West).

BSN: **Jessica Reyes** (Operating Room); **Paula Guzman** (Operating Room).

### Promotions

NP: **Hanna Chong** (6 West); **Jennifer Devera** (Pain Management).

RN III: **Megan Bowlus** (4 East); **Jillian Schuchert** (Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Monica Chea Lopez** (Float Team); **Chynna Ysidoro** (4 East).

RN IV: **Stephanie Mai** (Cardiovascular Acute); **Carley Ayers** (CTICU); **Megan Seredinski** (CTICU).

### Certifications

CAPA: **Rica Morzov** (Post-Anesthesia Care Unit).

CPNP: **Hanna Chong** (6 West).

### Transitions

**Sheila Kun** (Pulmonology): Retired after 45½ years at CHLA as a nurse care manager, researcher and educator, February 2022.

### Personal Accomplishments

#### Babies

**Rhymini Cadiz-Villareal** (CTICU), January 2021; **Stephanie Mai** (Cardiovascular Acute) March 2020; **Brittini Sanderson** (5 West), June 2021; **Christine Uddin** (Clinical Services Education and Onboarding), June 2021; **Lauren Hemmaplardh** (Patricia and John Merrill Bone Marrow Transplant Unit), August 2021; **Rachel Passantino** (5 East), August 2021.

#### Marriages

**Hanna Chong** (6 West), November 2021; **Carolynn Garcia** (6 West), August 2021.

#### Community

**Lyndee Berz** (CTICU/Cardiovascular Acute), participated in L.A. Marathon, November 2021.

**Ruth Lemus** (Heart Institute): Volunteered with CHLA Community Impact Champions Network in food drive, Rick's Produce Box Distribution in partnership with East Hollywood Neighborhood Council, Los Angeles, October-November 2021.

Thanks to **Doris Lymbertos** (Clinical Services Administration) and **Debbie Jury** (Pain Medicine) for helping to gather news items for this section. ■

## A Conversation With ...

Angela Hartley, RN, CNOR,  
Coordinator of the Cardiothoracic  
Operating Room



Angela Hartley, RN, CNOR, with her daughter Margo

**Favorite quote:** "Live every day like it's your last."

**Favorite movie:** *Argo*

**Best #hashtag to describe you:** #girlmum—I have three amazing daughters.

**Favorite day-off spot:** Just being at home.

**Who influenced you to become a nurse?** My younger brother—he had Down syndrome and underwent heart surgery as a baby.

**What makes working at CHLA special?** The level of care and the complexity of what we see makes my job interesting, but it's the amazing group of people I am fortunate enough to work with. The Heart Institute is a very special place.

**Favorite part of your job:** The babies!!

**If you weren't a nurse, what would you be?** Very bored, I'm sure.

**Advice for nurses just starting out:** Take everything in stride. It will all come together with time and experience.

**Your personal motto:** Life is short. Don't sweat the small stuff.

**Favorite comfort food:** French fries

**Guilty pleasure:** Reality TV

**Tell us something that would surprise your coworkers:** I'm actually quite shy.

**What do you love to do when not working?** Medical missions—and with that comes travelling the world. We've been to Vietnam, Ecuador, El Salvador, the Philippines, Kosova and Honduras. We are currently working on one for this fall in Jordan.

**What sets your heart on fire?** Medical mission work—it's a lot of work but so rewarding.

**What would you tell your high school self?** Relax!!

# Certification: A Journey With Multiple Rewards

Children's Hospital Los Angeles nurses reflect on those all-important initials. *By Candace Pearson*



Marilou Millares, BSN, CCRN, C-NPT, CPEN, CPN

With 32 years in intensive care nursing at Children's Hospital Los Angeles—21 of those in Emergency Transport—Marilou Millares, BSN, CCRN, C-NPT, CPEN, CPN, knows a lot about taking care of children in critical care situations. But she was “a total nerd as a kid,” she says, “and I still am. I love studying.”

Through the years she has satisfied her appetite for knowledge by pursuing a series of certifications. She now has four, including Certified Critical Care Nurse (CCRN). “Passing that first exam gave me more confidence,” she says. “I learned a lot just from studying and taking the test.”

Millares enjoys keeping up to date—“whether that means current events, procedures, anything medical that will help me provide better patient care for our kids.”

## Mark of Excellence

An American Board of Nursing Specialties study showed that nearly 100% of certified nurses gained personal satisfaction from the achievement and 90% reported feeling more confident on the job.

CHLA's nursing leadership encourages certification as a mark of excellence and skill, and nearly 60% of its nurses now hold at least one specialty certification. The hospital offers certification prep classes and helps to underwrite the cost of initial exams and renewals. In addition, nurses receive one-time certification bonuses.

“Certification is incredibly important for nurses, because it allows us to demonstrate our specialty knowledge to the public, families and ourselves,” says Jennifer Baird, PhD, MPH, MSW, RN, CPN, Director of Clinical Services Education and Research at CHLA.

Currently, Baird is preparing to pursue her Nursing Executive Advanced Board Certification (NEA-BC). For her, the process “fosters continuous inquiry and education,” which then translates to quality care.

## Pride Booster

Nurses at Children's Hospital say that validating their abilities gives them a well-earned sense of pride. “For me, earning certifications is another way to showcase and demonstrate my expertise,” says Melanie Guerrero, DNP, RN, NE-BC, NPD-BC, CPN, CLSSGB.

Guerrero's certification history started with a Certified Pediatric Nurse (CPN) certification in 2012, and she later obtained her Nurse Executive (NE-BC) certification after transitioning to a nurse manager role. Most recently, she achieved her Nursing Professional Development (NPD-BC) certification, as she stepped into the new role of NPD Manager in Clinical Services Education and Research.

“Studying for the NPD-BC validated my expertise, passion and love for education,” says Guerrero. “It's my journey and my job to teach others at the hospital what this specialty means and how I can help others advance in their health care careers.”

When fellow nurses ask her whether to certify, she asks them, “What do you want to do? What are you passionate about?”



Melanie Guerrero, DNP, RN, CPN, NE-BC, NPD-BC

The initials after a nurse's name “tell you the story of their passions and expertise,” agrees Margaux Chan, DNP, RN, PHN, NPD-BC, CPN, Senior NPD Specialist in Clinical Services Education and Research.

Nurses get to know their colleagues and peers by these letters. “We can relate and talk about experiences in the specialty,” Chan adds. “When I network with other nurses, I get a glimpse of their professional identity, and I know how to direct my conversation.”

Certification also encourages Chan to do things she might not otherwise do, such as join nursing organizations or attend national webinars and classes to “consume the latest and greatest information.”



Melissa Parra Doyle, MSN, CPNP-AC, CPHON

## Added Respect

After 18 years of helping young patients through cancer treatments, Melissa Parra Doyle, MSN, CPNP-AC, CPHON, decided to become a Certified Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurse. She had already double qualified as a pediatric nurse practitioner, in primary and acute care.

“Families who understand what the CPHON credential means may have more confidence in me as a result,” Doyle says.

The designation also helps boost “instant credibility” with other nurses, many of whom Doyle trains in chemotherapy procedures. “If I'm going to teach others, it makes sense to get certified,” Doyle explains.

When Millares began splitting time between intensive care and Emergency Transport, she decided to qualify in neonatal pediatric transport (C-NPT). A year and a half later, the urge to prove herself struck again, and she earned her CPEN to demonstrate her expertise as a pediatric emergency nurse.

A little anxiety after deciding to go for certification is “healthy,” Millares advises other nurses. “Keep studying. You'll get there.” ■



### Meet Robert Gutiérrez, Language and Cultural Specialist

By Elena Epstein



Robert Gutiérrez

Welcome to our new column, where we celebrate the unique teamwork between nurses and other care providers throughout the hospital.

#### Describe the connection you have with the nursing staff.

Nurses are the backbone of patient care. A big part of their job is to identify and serve the needs of their patients, and a big part of my job is to serve the language needs of the nurses. You could say that part of my job is to help nurses do their job, better. Nurses need to ask questions. They need to relay and teach medical information. For example, a patient with newly diagnosed diabetes might need three hours of education and training regarding carbohydrates, blood glucose meters, insulin and other diabetes education.

#### What does a typical day look like?

I have lots of conversations between families and providers including meetings about the road map of a standard treatment plan; medical history and evaluation of new patients; consent for a clinical trial; follow-up-visits, team visits with dietitians, NPs, attending physicians, social workers, PTs and OTs; and discharge review with RNs.

#### What is the best part of your job?

Currently, it's joining the team as they celebrate the end of chemotherapy/radiation treatment and sing a special song for patients whose treatment outcome has been successful. It is so wonderful and heartwarming.

#### Can you share a memorable CHLA story?

Nurses can be great role models. It's not uncommon for Spanish-speaking parents to tell their doctors and nurses that their child wants to become a nurse. I know a very compassionate, friendly, professional nurse who works with Hem/Onc patients. She is a survivor herself, and she was inspired by her nurses when she was an oncology patient at a children's hospital.

### Educating Families for Success

By Vicki Cho Estrada



L-R: Norma Renteria Salazar, MSNEd, RN, CPN, and Erin Schmidt, BSN, RN, CPN

Flushing and giving medications through a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC). Inserting a gastrostomy tube (G tube) in the stomach for a feeding. Placing a nasogastric tube (NG tube) to deliver medicine to the stomach through the nose.

These tasks would be scary for most people without a medical background. Yet many families and caregivers need to learn these skills before their children leave CHLA.

"Many patients have complicated medical histories and require care at home," says Erin Schmidt, BSN, RN, CPN, a Patient-Family Educator in the Helen and Bill Close Family Resource Center. "Some have been here for a year and are going home for the first time. We're the first step in their education journey. We give them information to practice new skills. We want to make sure they'll be successful before they go home."

Schmidt and her colleague, Norma Renteria Salazar, MSNEd, RN, CPN, provide hands-on training to families and caregivers on central venous catheters (CVC), PICCs, G and NG tubes, CPR and CPR for children with a tracheostomy. The classes reach 30 to 40 individuals a week and are available in English and Spanish, with additional languages available upon request. Taught at the Family Resource Center using mannequins, classes may involve other team members from multiple disciplines, such as occupational therapy, dietitians, social work and Child Life.

"As nurses, we're educators at our core," says Schmidt, who was a bedside nurse on 5 East before moving to her current role. "I love to educate and teach families at every level. We have some families who require extra support, and we have to be able to assess that and meet challenges so they can learn and be successful. I get a lot of satisfaction hearing from a family member who tells us, "I was able to do it – I could give feedings with a G tube."

Schmidt and Renteria Salazar also serve as liaisons between clinical staff and patients/families and frequently collaborate with Pediatric Surgery, the CVC Committee and CVC Nurse Practitioners to stay current with policy and evidence-based practices and update classes as needed. CHLA nurses interested in education also shadow the duo to learn, serve as resources on their units and provide consistent education to patients and families.

Renteria Salazar, who became a Patient-Family Educator in 2020 after a three-year stint on 6 West, adds, "Working at the bedside with families and seeing their struggles, we know they're frustrated and going through a lot. During class, we give them some time to share how they're feeling and provide encouragement."

She adds, "It's amazing to see these families when they're scared and nervous, and as the class progresses, they become more comfortable. They remember us for providing education during a critical time." ■

# FloSheet

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## Bedside's Best

# Supporting a Smooth Transition Into Pediatrics

By Vicki Cho Estrada



L-R: Lance Capisanan, RN, BSN, CPN, and Rhymini Cadiz-Villareal, BSN, RN, CCRN

There was a time when Rhymini Cadiz-Villareal, BSN, RN, CCRN, now a nurse in the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit (CTICU) at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, thought she'd missed her chance to become a pediatric nurse.

Cadiz-Villareal always wanted to care for children. As she worked to gain the experience and education needed to work at CHLA, she toiled toward her degree and cared for adult patients for three years, but never lost sight of her goal.

She learned about CHLA's Transition RN Fellowship in Pediatrics, a program for experienced registered nurses who are interested in transitioning to a pediatric specialty and joined the February 2018 cohort.

"I am very thankful the transition program was created because I now work in my dream job," says Cadiz-Villareal. "The adjustment was smooth. The CTICU was welcoming, and the transition team ensured we were well taken care of. The fellowship also inspired me to pursue my MSN in Education, and I graduate in December 2022."

Launched in 2015, the program is aimed at nurses with experience but not pediatric exposure. It ranges from 12 to 16 weeks, depending on the area of specialty, and includes pediatric foundational skills and unit-specific classes.

"With two cohorts per year, nearly 200 nurses have completed the program," says Nursing Professional Development Manager Melanie Guerrero, DNP, RN, NE-BC, NPD-BC, CPN, CLSSGB, noting it restarted in January 2022 after

a two-year pause due to the pandemic. "Some of these nurses are now in leadership roles in their units."

Lance Capisanan, RN, BSN, CPN, who works in the Helen and Max Rosenthal Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit, was an adult care nurse for two years before realizing he was "not utilizing my critical thinking skills, and patient-nurse interaction was minimal."

Worried he was losing his passion for nursing, Capisanan applied to the fellowship program and went through the March 2019 cohort. "I learned so many new things in a span of two years and challenged myself to teach nursing students and new grad nurses and join the Department's Collaborative Governance Council to become part of a unit governance."

He adds, "I am satisfied that I made the change because I can finally say I found my niche." ■