We Are One.

Nursing Vision:
KentuckyOne nurses are leaders distinguished by evidence-based practice, exquisite service to others, and safe, effective care. Nationally renowned for our innovative practice environment, our nurses will achieve the highest level of outcomes by partnering with patients, their families, other care providers and our communities.
Dear KentuckyOne Nurses,

Ever since I could remember, I wanted to be a nurse. Although my parents were very supportive of my desire to pursue nursing, they were secretly worried that I had no idea about what it meant to be a nurse. When I was a senior in high school, my dad arranged for me to shadow a nurse who was the wife of one of his staff members.

On the appointed day, I arrived nervously at the neonatal ICU where Grey Thomason, RN, worked. I spent half a day following her and watching a “real” nurse in action. She was treated as a colleague by the physician on the unit, and contributed to the overall plan of care for her patients. She was family focused – even at a time when this concept was never discussed. Most of all, she was an advocate for her patients – the smallest and most fragile babies were entrusted to her care. The experience of shadowing her was overwhelming and inspiring.

I have often thought about Grey and that day I spent with her 36 years ago. She was truly my first mentor in nursing, and I have been fortunate to have had many more over the years. These mentors guided me, taught me, pushed me, and helped me to learn from both my successes and my failures. They helped me to find direction in my career and to set high expectations for myself.

All too often in nursing, there are not enough mentors. Some experienced nurses have gained a reputation for making the lives of new graduates miserable by finding fault with all they do. Others openly speak about nursing in very negative tones – never encouraging bright young minds to pursue this incredible profession.

As you read this, I challenge you to think about the role you will play as a mentor. Will you be like Grey—or something less? Do you shy away from precepting students or other nurses and cringe when you get yet another request to have a high school student shadow you? For myself, I plan on refocusing my efforts in order to become a better mentor to a new generation of nurses and other health care professionals. After all, we have so much to offer.

Sincerely,

Velinda J. Block, DNP, RN, NEA-BC
Reflecting on the Role of the Preceptor

By Katherine Tummers, BSN, RN; Sts. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital

Throughout our nursing careers, certain individuals stand out as having a significant impact, both on our nursing practice, and on our patient care. These are our preceptors. A preceptor is often the first person we try to emulate in our professional practice. They are more than just individuals chosen to show us the day-to-day skills needed to function on a particular unit; rather, they are mentors and role models who have tremendous impact on us throughout our professional nursing careers.

At KentuckyOne Health, the preceptor role is both valued and supported. The interaction between the new employee and the preceptor can significantly impact attitudes towards our job, unit and facility. This is true for both the new nursing school graduate, and for the experienced nurse who is simply new to KentuckyOne. During orientation, a positive relationship between the new employee and the preceptor is vital to creating a truly rewarding experience for both individuals. The new employee is encouraged to develop both confidence and competence in a supportive environment where safe, high-quality patient care is the goal of every interaction. Meanwhile, the preceptor feels a sense of pride and accomplishment in helping to mold new nurses or orient experienced nurses. Structured orientation programs are a valuable contributor to increased nurse retention and satisfaction. The Clinical Education Office, nursing leadership and nurse preceptors at Sts. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital have partnered to improve this process and foster a more positive experience for all parties.

As the “Phases of Orientee Development” describes (see purple box), preceptors and their new employees must have a sense of humor. In addition, nursing preceptors must have patience, kindness, expertise and a clear understanding of what it takes to become an excellent nurse. Preceptors receive training in order to learn how to be a good mentor; and understand their role as a preceptor. They are equipped with the resources needed to support them both through the process. Preceptors have the opportunity to have a positive impact not just on the new KentuckyOne nurses they mentor, but on the organization as a whole. This is no small accomplishment. To get involved in a preceptor program at your facility, talk to your nurse manager.

PHASES OF ORIENTEE DEVELOPMENT

The process of becoming an independent, productive employee is a journey through a series of predictable stages:

MONTHS ONE AND TWO
HYSTERIA! New employees may feel overwhelmed, especially if this is their first job. They may be inundated with new information and feel pressured to understand all functions of the job. They may ask themselves, “What have I gotten myself into?”

MONTHS TWO AND THREE
DISBELIEF! At this point, the new employee may feel like he or she is catching on. Instead of rushing around in a panic, they’re getting organized and developing a routine.

MONTHS THREE TO SIX
SELF ASSURANCE! Now they are beginning to see beyond the tasks. They feel a sense of belonging and connection with their co-workers, and realize they can do this job!

MONTHS SIX TO NINE
MANIA! The new employees may say, “Hey, I’m really coming along here and actually know more than most of the people around here!” They may start pointing out mistakes to their co-workers. They think, “I’m really on top of things,” but wonder why no one asks them to go on break anymore.

MONTHS NINE TO TWELVE
GRATIFICATION! Finally, they realize that their knowledge level is only the tip of the iceberg, and there’s still so much to learn. They also have come to appreciate their co-workers and preceptor and feel a part of the team.

(Adapted from “Metamorphosis of a Critical Care Nurse: The First Year” by Deborah Tuggle, RN, MD, Critical Care Nurse).
KentuckyOne Health offers state-of-the-art training through its Simulation Centers at Saint Joseph Hospital, Saint Joseph London and University of Louisville Hospital. These centers allow our new graduate nurses to experience patient conditions and interventions in a controlled, safe environment. The direct interaction and lifelike experience enhance their learning and educational retention. In the end, these experiences can help our newest nurses save lives.

Saint Joseph Hospital’s Simulation Center contains two high-fidelity simulation mannequins: an adult female birthing simulator, “Noelle,” and a newborn, “Baby Hal.” Noelle and Baby Hal can simulate a real-life response as the clinical educator speaks through them. In addition, graduate nurses can read cardiac and other vital signs through the corresponding monitors.

The Simulation Center offers the following patient case scenarios: cardiac arrest, congestive heart failure, hip surgery requiring a blood transfusion and an end of life scenario. This training supports the transition from nurse graduate to practicing nurse.

“The simulation lab is an invaluable tool for nurses who want hands-on learning outside of a clinical setting,” said Cameron Durham, RN, ICU nurse participant in the AACN Essentials of Critical Care Orientation. “Being able to simulate events in a controlled setting allows for nurses to assess, critically think and intervene in situations they may not have previously experienced.”

The Simulation Center also trains nursing assistants on equipment use, and provides the Emergency Department’s annual training. ED nurses and techs can come to the lab and experience four emergency care simulations.

These Simulation Centers are another example of KentuckyOne Health’s commitment to excellence in health care. By investing in this state-of-the-art training and technology for our nurses, we are able to provide the best care to our patients. The next step for Saint Joseph Hospital’s Simulation Center includes training opportunities in the field of oncology, since cancer care is a critical health concern for many Kentuckians.
We all play a role in ensuring that our patients and their loved ones have an exceptional experience in our facilities. Nurses are critical to providing the environment in which our patients and their families can have a great experience.

Achieving best in class patient satisfaction scores requires that all of us—not just nurses—work to provide a positive experience and clearly communicate with our patients.

To achieve our goal of improving patient satisfaction scores and enhancing the patient experience, we use a patient-centered approach in our daily work. Here are some ways that Saint Joseph Mount Sterling (SJMS) uses this approach:

- **Communicate and listen actively.** At SJMS, we use the white boards in the patients’ rooms to communicate information regarding their goals and daily progress. We make sure we not only communicate what they need to know, but also actively listen to their concerns. In doing so, patients take an active role in their care, which may lead to a quicker recovery. We also utilize the whiteboard during hourly rounding to update information such as pain status and new test and procedures that may have been ordered.

- **Work as a team.** Our patients go through registration and may receive services from other departments before coming to a unit. Therefore, communication between departments must be seamless. We achieve this by performing read-backs to ensure each hand-off is clear and contains all of the relevant information.

- **Provide resources.** Patients and their families need to feel comfortable about taking their next care steps when leaving our facilities. By reviewing discharge instructions and answering questions, we help them gain the confidence they need to continue their recovery.

- **Ask patients about their experience.** Our leadership team performs Rounding for Outcomes, visiting 100 percent of the patients each day. This contact allows us to conduct service recovery in the moment, which helps us provide a positive patient experience while the patients are still in our care.

Providing service excellence is not one single event, but the compilation of many touch points. It takes the efforts of every team member to ensure that the experience of our patients is seamless in our facilities. As we work to improve the patient experience at Saint Joseph Mount Sterling, we are not only implementing the approaches noted above, we’re keeping all of our work centered on the patients we serve. No matter our role in health care, centering our work on patients will always help us to provide an exceptional patient experience.
We recognize the value of our nursing staff, and in anticipation of significant growth in patient volume, we must ensure recruitment and retention of a competent workforce in order to live out our mission. Strategic growth initiatives and a competitive health care marketplace are increasing the pressure to attract the very best to our organization. KentuckyOne Health nurses are the most talented professionals in the region. With your support, we can continue to recruit and retain a workforce dedicated to excellence.

In the Fall, we launched our We Are One campaign, which began with a “90-day sprint” to create a sense of urgency across the organization related to our staffing needs. An organizational “sprint” is an aggressive approach to competing for top talent over a short period of time. It also creates a sustainable process for us to be highly responsive, proactive and best-in-class in retention activities.

Our campaign includes many facets: social media, public relations, testimonials, and TV and print advertising. We also have an “on-the-ground” aspect to the campaign which encourages all staff to recruit qualified nurses to join the KentuckyOne Health team. Robust recruitment packages have been developed along with cash rewards for employee referrals.

We have an expert leadership team leading the campaign with representation from web development, public relations, nurse operations, and human resources. This team meets regularly to ensure the campaign moves forward successfully.

Our vision is to be 100 percent staffed, with a waiting list of talented nurses. We want to be known for best-in-class recruitment and retention practices which position us as the employer of choice for the region. Why shouldn’t we be? After all, we are KentuckyOne Health!

**Nursing Certification**

Have you ever thought about earning a professional nursing certification in your clinical specialty? KentuckyOne Health can help! Nurses can receive up to $500 ($250 for part-time employees) to offset the cost of one professional nursing certification examination or renewal. Also, certification preparation study materials and classes are available through the Clinical Education Office for several of the most common certifications. Added benefit: Professional Nursing Certification provides points in the Nursing Professional Development Program. Talk with your manager today about your desire to advance your career and become certified in your specialty!
Nurses possess a very distinct set of skills. They practice efficiency, flexibility and compassion each and every day they come to work. They are charged with caring for patients, families and providers. Just as important—they are charged with caring for one another.

Certain traits define the role of a nurse, and are an important aspect of staff retention. Nurses must be mindful of their presence and extend their compassion to those who serve. Staff retention is a collective process that promotes employee engagement. Likewise, employee engagement links to patient safety and patient satisfaction. Keeping a nursing unit intact depends upon anticipating the needs of your peers, sharing the experiences of others, and offering the same empathy to co-workers that is given to those we serve.

Every nurse has experienced “the shift without end.” It’s a day when it seems nothing has been done, everything must be clarified, and you are always needed elsewhere. During these times, nurses must extend their service to each other and help “right the ship.” A great nurse identifies when peers are experiencing these issues—and reacts accordingly—with a great deal of support. Great nurses assist; they do not ask if there is a need. Retention of new nurses and current staff relies on mentoring and support. Building community and relationships within the confines of the employment setting, as well as on the social scene, provides that culture of support.

These relationships facilitate development of a strong unit culture and retention. Identification of official and unofficial leaders, mentors and resources provides nurses with experts who can answer even the most difficult questions. Great nurses help a newer nurse to hone skills and develop from the novice to the expert. Each nurse has a role to play, no matter the stage of his or her career. The seasoned nurse helps to guide the new graduate. The relationship is built upon trust. The proper development of these relationships strengthens a unit and promotes accountability.

So how do nurses help to retain their co-workers? Nurses share accountability for unit processes, patient outcomes, and team satisfaction. They support the efforts of their peers. They identify both strengths and weaknesses, and are willing to change. They accept the challenges of the day and create a culture of inclusion. They anticipate the needs of all who have chosen to serve. Together they form a team. Together everyone is better.
Nurse Perspectives
Views from Both Sides of Precepting

JESSICA DEMORAN, RN
Q.: What made you decide to become a preceptor?
A.: I like training the new nurses. If they don’t get trained properly, then they can’t function in the role of a registered nurse.

Q.: How many different orientees have you precepted?
A.: Six in the ER, and maybe 30 or 40 more in other settings in which I have worked.

Q.: In your opinion, what are the benefits of being a preceptor?
A.: I am able to help nurses be their best. Additionally, I learn from them. It’s good to have another set of eyes on your work. It helps you elevate your game! And not only are the new nurses my preceptees—they become my friends.

Q.: What’s challenging about the role?
A.: It takes a while for me to develop trust with either new grads or experienced nurses. I watch everything they do. While this slows you down a bit, especially in an environment like the ER, I help them develop that ‘inner gut’ – to pick up on things before a patient’s condition deteriorates.

Q.: What advice do you have for new KentuckyOne nurses?
A.: There are thousands of opportunities for nurses. Find something you love. The money part is good, but if you love nursing, it will show with your colleagues and patients. It’s a wonderful profession!

KIM MAXEY, RN
Q.: Describe your experience being a new KentuckyOne nurse in the Preceptor Program.
A.: You hear that old nurses can get frustrated with new grads. I was really nervous about this. But the other nurses welcomed me into their world. It’s such a great group of people to work with.

Q.: Can you describe your relationship with your preceptor?
A.: Jessica was absolutely the greatest. She taught me so many skills. She never, never put me down for something I couldn’t do. She was so completely understanding. I wish there was something I could do to let her know how great a nurse she is!

Q.: What knowledge did you gain during your time in the program?
A.: I knew where my weaknesses were. One of those was heart rhythms. When we put people on a heart monitor, you have to recognize an abnormal heart rhythm. We have to recognize—is this a true emergency? I can’t even explain how much Jessica taught me. She made me a safer nurse.

Q.: What advice do you have for new KentuckyOne Health nurses?
A.: Don’t be afraid to ask questions. I was never made to feel inadequate because of a question I asked. And I’m still not!

KentuckyOne Nurse

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KentuckyOne Nurse is a quarterly publication produced by the KentuckyOne Health clinical communications team.

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