



PNAMH MESSENGER

The Official Newsletter of the Philippine Nurses Association of Metropolitan Houston
Fall / Winter Issue 2011



PRESIDENT
Riza V. Mauricio



Executive Officers 2010 - 2012

PNAMH Messenger Fall/Winter Issue

President's Message

Another year is over.... Let us welcome 2011 with passion to live life to the fullest. We have accomplished much in 2010 as reported in the summer issue. It is time for us to reflect on how we can have a balanced life. This has been my challenge for many years as I juggle work, family, and professional commitments. I am certain this affects all of us. I have chosen to write about this topic to bring a fresh start to 2011 and reflect on how we balanced our lives in the past year. This will also give me a chance to share with you what I have learned along the way.

First, the only way your life will have a balance depends on what you think that balance will be. It is easy to lose track of what is important at home, work, and career when you are constantly faced with varied demands on your time. It is important to step back.....even for a few minutes and decide that for a defined period of time, the balance between your career and your personal life needs to be different from your long term goal. It is then that you need to plan for your short and long term goals. If you let things happen without thinking what you would like them to be, the tendency is you will not be pleased with the end result.

Second, think about concrete steps to achieve your goal. That could be as simple as leaving work on time, or not bringing work load at home. I tried to park my emails over the holidays so I can devote my time to my family. It was truly a refreshing feeling that I rediscovered myself.

Remaining true to what is important to you also means that you know how to say "no" to a request to lead a committee, a new opportunity, or a new career move. Identifying your priorities will make it easier to cut back on commitments and the amount of time spent on each task is proportionate to their importance.

Lastly, be sure to take care of yourself. A reasonably healthy diet and regular exercise will give you more physical and emotional energy to deal with the task ahead of you. I must confess I find it difficult to remember and apply these principles in my own life, but always feel better if I do. If you need a week-end off from it all, be sure to take it! Put your phone or iPad away, and turn off your computer. Do something invigorating and enjoyable. Do not feel guilty if you have not accomplished something as quickly as what you wanted it to be. It would be nice if we can fly like the birds, even just for a moment. However, sometimes it is enough" just to be close to the birds".... there is always a time for everything....Enjoy life!

PNAMH Leaders: Carrying the Torch of Leadership

Ampy A. de la Paz, MSN, RN
PNAMH Advisory Council

Thirty years ago, a group of visionary Filipino nursing leaders got together and took the challenge of forming a professional nursing organization now known as the Philippine Nurses of Metropolitan Houston (PNAMH). As with any organization, there were growing pains, challenges along the way, and obstacles to overcome. However, despite these barriers, the unwavering determination of our nursing leaders prevailed! Through these 30 years, many nursing leaders have taken over the helm of PNAMH and each has demonstrated their individual defining leadership traits.... *Vision, Ambition, Commitment, Courage, Determination, Integrity and Trust*...just to name a few. These exemplary traits served as PNAMH's visible emblems of leadership that fostered the organization's growth and stability, moving it forward to the national level to stand tall among other professional nursing organizations.

This year, as PNAMH celebrates its 30th anniversary, let us all call to mind the many sacrifices and challenges our predecessors met and overcame and while doing so, let us ponder on the strategies and behaviors exhibited by each of our leaders during the organization's formative years. PNAMH travelled a long and winding road in the pursuit of organizational viability and stability in order to get where PNAMH stands today! As we all know, the hallmark of a stable organization is the presence of dynamic leadership! How do we pick our leaders out of a crowd? It is a daunting task! Every election year, it is vital to consider the importance of electing into office those who exemplify the defining traits of effective leadership. PNAMH needs strong, effective and dynamic leadership to position itself for continued visibility, viability, and vitality. We need to make our votes count by electing into office those who are ready to serve in totality with their minds, body, and heart! PNAMH needs action-oriented leaders, who will transform our vision into reality. According to Knault, Bergerand & Gray "Profiles of Excellence: Achieving Success in the Non-Profit Sector", effective leadership is founded on six characteristics:

- A guiding vision instilled by long term thinking.
- Ability to convey the vision to others, to motivate and excite them.
- A firm understanding of self, integrity, candor, and maturity.
- Strong convictions and the toughness to stick by them.
- Willingness to take risks, being daring and learning from mistakes.

- Ability to master the organization and its context, not to bow to it.

These same authors above, believed in the adage that "Leaders are born, not made" however "many leaders invent themselves through self-development". One thing to remember is that no one can lead without knowing him or herself thoroughly. Good leaders must know how to capitalize on strengths and compensate for weaknesses and must be true to themselves, most especially about themselves! Leaders hold to their convictions, advancing the organization's vision and mission through ethically and morally sound decisions with the organization's best interest in mind. They believe the organization exists for the people and therefore refrain from engaging in matters that promote personal gains and self-interest. The effective leader works at shaping the organization's image in order to create a distinct and vibrant organizational culture that is in alignment with the vision & mission of the organization.

As PNAMH officers and members, we all have to put the interest of PNAMH as our top priority!

There is so much to learn and so much to accomplish! We hold the future direction of PNAMH through the votes we cast during elections and through the diligence of our leaders in the performance of our respective duties and responsibilities. As leaders, we all must forge ahead into the future guided by the Torch of Leadership in the pursuit of furthering the cause of PNAMH and PNAA..... and ultimately, making a difference in the nursing profession!



Patient Advocacy: An Essential Nursing Role

Luz M. Reyes, BSN, RN, CNOR, RNFA

Nurses were voted the most trusted profession in America in a Gallup poll by the American Nurses Association (ANA) in 2008. Most recently, an annual Gallup survey of professions' trustworthiness indicated that eighty-one percent of Americans believe nurses' honesty and ethical standards are either "high" or "very high." Our patients place the ultimate trust in us. For this reason, we must transform that trust into action, becoming "activists" for their causes and working to improve what is failing in today's modern health care delivery system.

What is nursing's role in patient advocacy?

As advocates, we have to ensure positive changes that will affect good outcomes for our patients; we need to stand up for them because their trust in us demands the best care we have to offer them.

All practicing nurses should advocate for patients on a daily basis. Regardless of the practice setting, whether you are a clinician or a nurse leader, every case—in fact, every encounter a nurse has with a patient—provides an

opportunity for that nurse to serve as a patient advocate. Because each patient is unique and requires a personalized brand of care, encouraging a patient to voice his or her wishes and desires, or speaking up for a patient when the patient cannot verbalize for himself, is one vital brand of advocacy. This information obtained from the patient serves as the foundation for the nurse's role as advocate: providing care that focuses on meeting the patient's needs.

In the perioperative setting, for example, the circulating nurse most commonly serves as the patient advocate, speaking up when the patient cannot. A nurse also must focus on ensuring that care is provided in the safest manner possible. He or she assumes a critical role in monitoring the environment of care and promoting best practices for infection control and prevention.

Although patient advocacy is discussed by nurse clinicians and educators, there is limited understanding of how to teach others about this role. Instead, nurses generally learn its intricacies by watching other nurses who are positive role models and who stand up for their patients. Nurses can and should rely upon their own and others' experiences in order to become more adept as advocates.

Being a patient advocate is not always easy. There are challenges that will be encountered along the way, but these should in no way discourage the nurse.

Some of the barriers cited are:

1. Personal barriers

- Feeling inexperienced or inadequate as an advocate for your patient.
- If you are uncertain about getting involved, a mentor or support group can guide you until you gain experience. Your nurse manager may know of someone on the ethics committee or in nursing education who would be willing to help you.

2. Barriers between nurse and patient.

- A lack of clear expectations between patient and nurse can impede one's progress.
- To clear this hurdle, foster openness by actively listening and showing your patient empathy and respect. This develops trust and the patient will likely be more willing to discuss his/her expectations.

3. Barriers between healthcare professionals.

- For example, this may involve having a difficult conversation with colleagues or other members of the healthcare team about practice issues or concerns that compromise patient care.
- Every patient advocate needs support from colleagues, so strong relationships with physicians are critical. Build good communication with other professionals as well to develop backing for your advocacy.

No matter how difficult the hurdle, though, practice patterns that place patients at risk must be recognized and addressed without hesitancy. When nurses fail to address their concerns or fail to voice a patient's preferences, they miss a critical opportunity to serve as patient advocates. Patients and their family members depend on nurses and other clinicians to detect and address potential safety issues and to protect them from preventable harm. Keeping patients safe in the OR and other clinical settings must remain a high priority, and nurses' efforts in patient advocacy are essential to achieving that goal.

Nurses play a key role in educating consumers about quality health care. By carrying out this responsibility, we are able to provide a safe environment for our patients and help them throughout their encounters with the health care system.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As a member of PNAMH, I am requesting our organization to look at different ways to reach out to the new generation of Filipino nurses in Metro Houston.

I would love to see our organization be more "visible" in the different hospitals especially at the Medical Center where many Filipino nurses are employed. This could help in the development of a more "personal" relationship, and the dissemination of information regarding the benefits of being part of this wonderful organization.

I would be willing to help in any way I can to expand our organization's reach with the newer generation of nurses in our area.

Thank you for considering this letter.

Respectfully Yours,
Amira Kristina Caparas, RN
The Methodist Hospital, Houston, Texas



2010 – 2012

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Contributors

All members of the PNAMH

Relevant information for publication as determined by the Newsletter Editorial Board

Members Achieving Excellence... KUDOS to:

Gloria Beriones – passed the ANCC Advanced Nurse Executive Certification Examination, October 2010.

Grace Diaz-Font – 2010 Spirit of Nightingale Awardee, PNA-Texas Cameron County, October 2010 and 2010 Nurse Excellence Award, TNA District 9, November 2010.

Riza Mauricio – recipient of research grants from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Gulf Coast chapter, October 2010 and the Sigma Theta Tau – Beta Beta chapter, November 2010.

Cherry Sloan-Medrano – received scholarship from American Association of Cancer Research to attend their 3rd annual conference held in Miami, Florida, September 30-October 3, 2010.

Amelia Pacardo – 2010 Nurse Excellence Awardee, TNA District 9, November 2010.

Merlita Velasquez – 2010 Top Five Outstanding Spirit of Nightingale Awardee, PNA-Texas Cameron County, October 2010.

Calendar of Events

PNAMH Activities:

January 9: Second Baptist Church Health Fair, Houston, Texas

February 5: TGT Valentines ball "A Night in Paris". A fund raising activity in Beaumont, Texas for TGT education program.

February 12: Texas Golden Triangle (sub-chapter) General membership meeting, Beaumont, Texas

February 26: Nurses on the Runway, Southwest Hilton Hotel. A Fashion Show that will benefit community outreach program

April 24: Houston Millennium Lions Health Fair, First Filipino-American United Methodist Church

April 16: Spring seminar at the Methodist Hospital

April 23: Filipino Cancer Network Survivors' Night, Southwest Hilton Hotel

May 7: Outstanding Filipino Nurse Award and Scholarship Award, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Houston, Texas

PNAMH sponsored meetings:

Every 2nd Saturday Monthly
Executive Board Meeting
Gold Ribbon Restaurant

Every 3rd Thursday Monthly – 4:45pm
General membership meeting
Gold Ribbon Restaurant

Texas Nurse Association (TNA) sponsored meetings:

Every 1st Tuesday Monthly – 5:30pm
Board Meeting TNA D9 office
2370 Rice Blvd, Suite 109,
Houston TX 77005
(713) 523-3619

Every 2nd Thursday Monthly – 5:30pm
Membership meeting:
location to be determined
(713) 523-3619

PNAA and South Central Region Activities:

March 25-27: 11th South Central Region conference- Brownsville, Texas

June 29 – July 3: 32nd PNAA annual convention- Hyatt Regency, Embarcadero Center, San Francisco, California