PCNA

Pierce County Nurses Association

SUPPORT + ENCOURAGE + EMPOWER + ENGAGE

PIERCECOUNTYNURSES.COM

Spring 2013

On April 20th, Sally Watkins, PhD, MS, RN will speak to PCNA members about **Compassion Fatigue**, a secondary traumatic stress disorder that can affect anyone in a helping profession, including nurses. Although every individual responds to stress and trauma uniquely, take note of common symptoms related to Compassion Fatigue:

Work-related symptoms: avoidance or dread of working with certain patients; reduced ability to feel empathy toward patients or families; frequent use of sick days; unusual number of complaints from others.

Emotional symptoms: mood swings; restlessness; irritability; oversensitivity; anxiety; excessive use of nicotine, alcohol or illicit drugs; depression; anger and resentment; loss of objectivity; memory issues; poor concentration; poor judgment; compulsive behaviors (e.g., overspending, overeating, gambling, sexual addictions); poor self-care (i.e., hygiene or grooming).

Physical symptoms: headaches; digestive problems (diarrhea, constipation, upset stomach); muscle tension; sleep disturbances; fatigue; cardiac symptoms (angina, palpitations, tachycardia).

Tips for Coping

1. **Assess your self-care strategies:** What do you do to manage stress? If you can't come up with any ideas, start asking friends. Consider what has worked for others.
2. **Make sure to have balance in your life:** Find ways to take mini breaks—even if it's just five minutes of deep breathing. (If uninterrupted breaks are a rarity for you at work, you might want to explore supporting the Real Rest Breaks Keep Patients Safe Bill.)
3. **Ask for help:** Delegate. You are not able to do it all!
4. **Assess your limits and set boundaries, but be open to new opportunities:** When you're feeling overwhelmed, say NO to extra responsibilities, but say YES to fun activities and time with friends.
5. **Assess your trauma inputs:** Do you work with clients who have experienced trauma? Are you exposed to difficult stories and images at work? Outside of work, how many difficult stories do you hear (including the news)? Create a **"trauma filter"** to protect yourself from extraneous sources of stress.
6. **Exercise:** Even short walks; find ways to move and stretch your body several times a day; set a reminder on your smartphone to take a short movement break every day.
7. **Eat a healthy, balanced diet:** Do you find yourself rushing from one activity to another, grabbing fast food on a regular basis? Try to fill your refrigerator and lunch box with healthier alternatives.

SOURCE: Lombardo, B., Eyre, C., (Jan 31, 2011) "Compassion Fatigue: A Nurse's Primer" OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing, Vol. 16, No. 1, Manuscript 3.

Learn More

The Compassion Fatigue Project website provides three tests that may help you recognize symptoms of Compassion Fatigue in your life. These tests could help you determine if you need to seek further assistance. Go to *compassionfatigue.org.*

Compassion Fatigue: A Nurse's Primer, by Barbara Lombardo, RN, MSN, PMHCNS-BC and Caryl Eyre, RN, MSN. This article provides a clinical description of compassion fatigue including a case study of a nurse. Visit

nursingworld.org/OJIN

and search for "compassion fatigue." Finally, here are two more resources:

compassionfatigue.ca
healthycaregiving.com

April 20th Cont.Ed.

For more information about Compassion Fatigue, attend our April 20th Continuing Education event at Jackson Hall, across from the Tacoma General main entrance on MLK Jr. Way.

See our "ad" on page 3, and register at *piercecountynurses.com*.

Nurse Legislative Day

Pictured with Senator Steve Conway are (left to right) Carol Daly, Sue Jacobson and Phyllis Deccio. Their mutual impression: "Nurse Legislative day was a great learning experience. We felt a sense of pride working at the grassroots level to influence Senators and congressmen to change laws that will promote safety in the care we give our patients. We learned that we are not without power if we stand up together and make our voices heard. Let's each get involved and drive the future of nursing!"

Letters from Camp

Legislative Advocacy Camp (I call it Nurse Camp), was held on January 17th in Olympia. About 50 nurses and nursing students attended. We were given the tools to bring our stories to life, to share "What We Need" and how to approach legislators. Guest speaker **Rep. Tami Green** told us, "Come with your A+ game not your C game." So, after writing and practicing our stories, at the reception we each sought out our Senators and Representatives and told them our stories. We had something to say that was vital to our life work, and we got to say it! How powerful is that!

Sue Jacobsen

Camp was a real learning experience on how to voice our opinions to legislators. We were taught how to use our own nursing experiences to emphasize the need for safe and adequate staffing and rest breaks so nurses can take better care of their patients. When we met with state representatives to advocate for the bills on **Patient Safety Reform**, it was empowering to talk with these politicians—I felt I could actually influence their vote so these bills could become law.

There was a large turnout that night; I felt supported to stand up for patient safety rights and our rights as health care professionals for correct staffing ratios and adequate rest breaks.

Let's stand up for ourselves and our patients' safety by speaking to our state representatives—personally and directly—about Patient Safety Reform.

Sandra Shovlain, RNC

Don't Miss the Premier Nursing Event of the Year!
May 1-2, 2013

WASHINGTON STATE NURSES CONVENTION

Featuring Nationally-recognized Speakers; Nursing Sim Lab; Poster Sessions; a year's required continuing education in one event!

LOCATION

Tulalip Resort

• Shopping • Spa • Rrestaurants
• Casino • Nightlife • Golf/Skiing

THIS EVENT IS FOR

All Nurses

• Staff Nurses • Advanced Practice
• Educators • Managers • Students
• Community Health
• WSNA Members & Non-Members

REGISTER AT

RNconvention.com

Legislation Endorsed by PCNA

Patient Safety Standard Bill (HB 1095)

We need a standard to hold hospital CEOs accountable for having enough nurses per shift. This bill sets a statewide standard and allows the standard to be locally customized so staffing committees at each hospital, including nurses and managers, have the final say on what works for their patients.

Real Rest Breaks Keep Patients Safe Bill (HB 1152)

Nurses are heroes and we seem to always find a little more to give when our patients need us. But it's not healthy for us or our patients when we are forced to work 10, 12 or even more hours without breaks. This bill requires hospitals to give nurses the uninterrupted breaks they need for the safety and care of our patients.

On-Call Nurses are for Emergencies Bill (HB 1153)

It used to be that on-call nurses were a back-up plan, the ones called in when a major accident swamped the ER. But on-call nurses have become band-aids, filling in for chronic staffing shortages. The Result: too few overworked nurses and no back-up plan in an emergency. This bill says that on-call nurses are to be...On Call: For Emergencies Only!

Partnering for Dental Health

PCNA hosts two free education events each year to help members achieve the 15 CEUs per year mandated by the State in 2011. This year we're asking you to donate **DENTAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS** *(e.g., toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss)* in original sealed containers. We are partnering with Pierce County Dental Society to support the Pierce County Dentists Care Program.

In 2012 PCDC donated over a one million dollars in dentistry to the underserved. Their program runs year-round and serves low income residents of Pierce County. PCDC's goal is to take their patients out of pain and teach them proper dental hygiene.

The dental hygiene products we collect will be distributed when PCDC volunteers venture throughout Pierce County offering free oral screening for children and adults.

Please help by donating items when you attend your next education event (right) on **April 20th**. Don't forget to RSVP at *piercecountynurses.com*.

Upcoming Conferences & Events

October 10-13 2013

Washington State Council of Perioperative Nurses Mini Congress. Save the date for this event, held at Lake Chelan with a theme of **Patient Advocacy**.

Continuing Ed Online

WSNA offers several **online continuing education** courses that are **free to WSNA members**. Courses cover a wide range of topics including:

- Guidelines for the Registered Nurse in Giving, Accepting or Rejecting an Assignment
- Violence in the Workplace
- Practical De-escalation Techniques for Nurses
- and many more!

You can access these courses by going through the WSNA website or directly at *cne.wsna.org/ets/welcome.aspx*.

Continuing Ed Reimbursement

PCNA members can be reimbursed up to $50 a year* for continuing education. Simply send a letter with your name, address, title and date of the conference attended, and proof of payment and attendance to: PCNA 223 Tacoma Avenue South Tacoma, WA 98402.

**NOTE: the PCNA fiscal year runs July 1-June 30*

Continuing Education

3 Free Contact Hours!

Saturday, April 20 • 8am - Noon

Compassion Fatigue

Sally Watkins, PhD, RN

Caring too much can hurt. When caregivers focus on others without practicing self-care, a secondary traumatic stress disorder now labeled "Compassion Fatigue" can surface. Dr. Watkins will help us recognize signs and symptoms, and will discuss effective interventions—a first step towards healing.

Social Media . . . Employee Beware

Hanna Welander, BSN, RN

Is your job in peril over your next Facebook status update? Your employer is watching! This session will include an update on types of postings, actions taken by employers, and ways to protect your personal information.

Future of Nursing Report

...Legal and Regulatory Implications

Margaret C. Holm, JD, RN

Margaret Cunniff Holm has been an RN and an attorney for over 30 years. Her nursing experience includes medical-surgical, critical care, psychiatric, discharge planning and forensic nursing. After obtaining her law degree, she practiced in the fields of professional malpractice, personal injury, health care law and adoption, as well as serving as a health law judge.

Jackson Hall, 314 Marin Luther King Jr. Way
REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 am.
Please be on time, as no one will be admitted after 8:40 am. Light snacks provided. To help us plan seating and snacks, PLEASE RSVP TO *office@piercecountynurses.com*

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2012/2013 PCNA Board:

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President's Message

Another winter is behind us and before us looms Spring. Spring , with the promise of sun and fresh blooms and new life rising from the cold hard earth of winter, creating a new cycle of life. The cycle of life of plants and trees and flowers. There is another new life which is always looming ahead of us; the new life of our careers as nurses. As nurses, we should always seek new knowledge and new ways to expand our nursing skills. With new knowledge comes a new and improved way to care for our patients. Isn't that what nursing is all about—taking care of patients?

Well, nursing can also be about nurturing the careers of new nurses. We all know what it's like to be a student, learning new skills, the trepidation of starting out in another new place with new co-workers. Just as a gardener nurtures a seedling, experienced nurses have an obligation to nurture new nurses so they too may one day pass their knowledge and skills on to others.

Those we have nurtured may one day serve as **OUR** nurses. This, my fellow nurses, is the true circle of life.

Evelyn

*P.S. **NOW** is always a great time to become certified in your specialty!*

March of Dimes Nurse of the Year

The Western Washington Nurse of the Year Awards was held on November 15, 2012 at the Meydenbauer Conference Center. In its 10th year, this celebration of nursing excellence continues to grow in popularity.

March of Dimes and 500 guests honored nearly 100 nominated nurse caregivers and awarded 14 of these nurses for their constant care and compassion toward patients (see photo below).

Nurse of the Year has become a highlight for medical professionals in our area. This event is a meaningful way to honor our outstanding nurses for the support they provide on a daily basis. St. Clare Hospital celebrated this event with their Franciscan brethren.

march of dimes celebrates 75 YEARS

May 18, 2013
Wilson High School
1202 N Orchard St., Tacoma
Walk Distance: 3.5 miles
8AM Registration • 9AM Start
Register at *marchforbabies.org*

Pictured from left to right, back row: Angilee Luarka, Kathy Bressler, Connie Luu, Maylynn Bennett, nominee Jackie McMath, Amanda Mackey, Patricia Spencer, Sue Jacobson, nominee Sarah Johnson; front row: nominee Victor Sandoval, nominee Jennifer Lim, nominee Maria Pastores, nominee Michelle Spencer.