

Pathway to Excellence® Case Study: Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital

Since opening its doors in 1948, Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital (HMSJ) in Baytown Texas, has provided the residents of Baytown, East Houston, and surrounding counties, with high quality medical care and services. The hospital has kept pace with community growth and now offers comprehensive care for patients at every stage of life.

With a vision to provide unparalleled safety, quality, service, and innovation, HMSJ continually seeks new ways to enhance quality and safety, improve the workplace environment, and engage staff. The American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) Pathway to Excellence® program provided the roadmap to achieve these goals. HMSJ received its first Pathway designation in 2011 and was re-designated three years later, in 2014.

The journey produced positive improvements throughout the hospital that set the stage for even greater achievements. The establishment of an interprofessional shared governance council empowered HMSJ nurses to find their voice, take control of their practice, and participate in shared decision-making at the bedside and beyond. Nurse involvement in hospital policymaking groups not only improved nursing practice, but also nurse satisfaction. Scores were above the national mean in all 11 subscales of the RN Survey. In addition, Pathway designation sets the hospital apart to attract the best and brightest new nurses and nurture employee loyalty.

Interprofessional teamwork improved, as well. Staff from departments throughout the hospital worked together to implement a Transforming Care at the Bedside initiative to improve the practice environment. Transforming Care at the Bedside focuses on safe and reliable care; vitality and teamwork; patient-centered care; and value-added care processes, all hallmarks of a Pathway workplace.

Among nurses, the journey spurred a significant increase in specialty certification. With support and resources from the hospital, certification rates steadily increased from 20% to 28%. Likewise, support for educational advancement led to improvements in the number of BSN-prepared nurses, increasing from 43% to 59%.

These achievements and more validated HMSJ's exceptional nurses and nursing care and instilled confidence among all staff to take the next step: pursuit of ANCC's Magnet Recognition. In 2016, HMSJ became one of just two hospitals nationwide to earn both the coveted Pathway and Magnet recognitions.

“Without a doubt, Pathway to Excellence provided the firm foundation upon which to strengthen our structures and processes within the Magnet® Model,” says Kathy Arthurs PhD, MSN, RN, RN-BC, RNC-OB, Magnet Program Director, HMSJ. “In fact, ANCC recognized our hospital with exemplars in the areas of nurse satisfaction, organizational autonomy, nurse-sensitive clinical

indicators for stroke education and post-operative pain relief, and nursing research. We could not have achieved this level of excellence without our Pathway designation. It was an essential building block for our continued success.”

About Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital

HMSJ is an acute-care hospital located in Baytown, Texas, serves patients and their families, employees, medical staff and community in a spiritual manner that is consistent with ICARE Values of Integrity, Compassion, Accountability, Respect and Excellence. Recognized locally and nationally, HMSJ holds to its vision to provide unparalleled safety, quality, service, and innovation.

About the Pathway to Excellence® Program

The Pathway to Excellence® Program recognizes a healthcare organization’s commitment to creating a positive nursing practice environment. The Pathway to Excellence in Long Term Care® program is the first to recognize this type of supportive work setting specifically in long-term care facilities. Pathway organizations focus on collaboration, career development, and accountable leadership to empower nurses.

