Structural Empowerment: Commitment to Community Involvement

SE9 The organization supports nurses’ participation in community healthcare outreach.

SE9b: Provide one example, with supporting evidence of organizational support for nurse leader involvement in community healthcare outreach.

Introduction

“When in distress, every man becomes our neighbor.” Drs. Jackson and Warren wrote these words in 1810 in a letter asking for donations to fund the establishment of the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). The sentiment of those words continue to be reflected in the MGH mission statement, “Guided by the needs of our patients and their families, we aim to deliver the very best health care in a safe, compassionate environment; to advance that care through innovative research and education; and to improve the health and well-being of the diverse communities we serve” and in our community outreach efforts to promote health and wellness.

The Institute for Patient Care, housed within MGH Nursing and Patient Care Services (N&PCS), represents a first-of-its-kind, innovative model for advancing interdisciplinary healthcare. The Institute is comprised of four separate centers (The Norman Knight Nursing Center for Clinical and Professional Development; The Yvonne L. Munn Center for Nursing Research; The Maxwell & Eleanor Blum Patient & Family Learning Center; and The Center for Innovations in Care Delivery), and interprofessional programs, one of which is Collaborative Governance. Gaurdia Banister, RN, PhD, NEA-BC, FAAN, is the Executive Director Institute for Patient Care and thus is accountable for Collaborative Governance.

Collaborative Governance (CG) is the decision-making process that places the authority, responsibility and accountability for patient care with practicing clinicians and is a critical element of MGH’s Professional Practice Model. Every year, CG champions (members are called Champions to better describe their role on the committee and throughout the organization) on the eight Collaborative Governance committees (Diversity, Ethics in Clinical Practice, Informatics, Patient Education, Patient Experience, Policy, Procedure and Products, Quality and Safety, and Research and Evidence-based Practice) hold a “SAFER Fair” to educate and inform patients, families, members of our community and the hospital community on their work and efforts to improve health, quality and safety. Mary Ellin Smith, RN, MS, Professional Development Program Manager, in the MGH Institute for Patient Care, coordinates collaborative governance meetings and activities including the annual SAFER Fair.

In the past, the SAFER Fair focused on those members of the community who were either being cared for or visiting MGH on the day of the event. This year, nurse leaders recognized an opportunity to be more intentional in our outreach to the community
through communication as well as engaging with other hospital departments to address specific health needs of our community.

**MGH Communities’ Concerns**

Beginning in 1995, the MGH Center for Community Health Improvement (CCHI) began to identify local communities’ health needs and to identify priorities and strategies to address those needs through community partnerships. The 2015 Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy report (OOD 3) provided a clear roadmap as nurse leaders and staff developed their plan for the 2016 SAFER Fair. The report found that “substance abuse and public safety/crime and violence remain the top two health issues for our communities, with 80% respondents choosing substance use as their top health concern, up from 70% in 2012.” Nurse leaders, Collaborative Governance leaders and champions saw in these findings an opportunity to further support and partner with our community on addressing these as well as other healthcare issues at the October 19, 2016 SAFER Fair.

**Nurse Leaders Support from the Organization and Outreach to our Community**

To that end, nurse leader Banister and nurse leader Brian French, RN-BC, PhD (c), Director of the Blum Patient and Family Center Learning Center contacted their colleagues in Police and Security to participate in the SAFER Fair (attachment SE9b.a). Banister contacted Bonnie Michelman, Director of MGH Police and Security to participate in the SAFER Fair and address issues related to safety and violence and ways to stay safe and Michelman readily agreed. French who had been working with Karen Ryle, RPh, from the Pharmacy Department, on addressing issues related to the Opioid crisis, asked Ryle to participate in the SAFER Fair. Ryle readily agreed to participate and bring educational materials as well as receptacle for prescription drug returns. To publicize the Fair, an advertisement was placed in two local papers, The Boston Sun and the Charlestown Patriot Bridge (attachment SE9b.b) and a poster was hung in the main corridors throughout the MGH campus and health centers.

As has been true in past years, the success of the 2016 SAFER Fair depends upon strong organizational support. That support is evident through the organization’s approval of space utilization, budget approval of over $3,000 used to purchase banners, posters and refreshments, support in celebrating the fair in Caring Headlines, the Nursing & Patient Care Services bi-weekly magazine as well as Nursing Directors supporting staff who are collaborative governance champions with indirect time to staff the committee tables (attachment SE9b.c). In addition to supporting the event financially, nurse leaders Banister and French shared their, and the MGH organization enthusiasm and support for the event, at the May 9, 2016 Collaborative Governance Committee Leaders meeting and the May 11, 2016 Collaborative Governance Patient Education meeting (attachment SE9c.d).

On Wednesday October 19, 2016 members of the MGH community, patients, visitors and staff enjoyed an event that educated, inspired and engaged them in the work of
Collaborative Governance champions and MGH departments are doing to keep them safe and healthy, whether inpatient, outpatient or in their community. The activities by committee/department included:

**Diversity Committee:** champions distributed information cards, printed in multiple languages, which described how staff and members of our community can gain easy access to interpreter services.

**Ethics in Clinical Practice Committee:** champions collected donations of new socks which will be distributed at homeless shelters. The champions also distributed advanced directive materials designed to improve knowledge regarding the process and ideally, action in completing a form which identified a health care agent who would make health decisions in the event a person could no longer make those decisions for him/herself.

**Informatics Committee:** champions registered MGH patients to Patient Gateway, which gives them access to their medical information and also continued their efforts to educate staff on Epic, the system used to document in the electronic patient health record.

**Patient Education Committee:** champions provided education and distributed information on the safe use of opioid medications and educational resources on improving communication with providers and health literacy to inform our community and staff.

**Patient Experience Committee:** included a member of the MGH Patient Family Advisory Council to share how community members can get involved in these councils, a key initiative to ensure our patients’ and families’ voices are used to improve our systems of care and to allow staff to hear what they can do to support patients who are cared for at MGH.

**Pharmacy Department:** answered questions and provided educational materials on medication safety including Opioids and also accepted returns of unused prescription medications so that they could be properly destroyed.

**Policy, Procedure and Products Committee:** using a Jeopardy format, champions tested their colleagues on updates on policies and procedures that have been approved in 2016 as well as where they can find resources to assist them in providing current, safe and evidence-based practice to our patients.

**Police and Security Department:** shared information and resources for victims of domestic violence, strategies for personal and property safety to decrease crime rates, and strategies for managing aggressive behaviors of individuals both in and outside of the hospital.
Quality and Safety Committee: discussed ways that MGH staff are working to keep patients and staff safe including information on fall prevention, safe handling of patients, and what patients can do to stay safe and informed in the hospital.

Research and Evidence-based Practice Committee: provided information on evidence-based practice on oral care as well as strategies for reducing opioid-related overdose deaths.

Our Community’s Response

In the past, staff, patients, families and community members who attended the SAFER Fair received a “passport” as they entered. The passport would be stamped by each committee they visited and those with completed passports would be entered into a raffle. This year, Banister and French recommended changes to the process to determine the effectiveness of our community outreach efforts including asking the individual to identify themselves as either MGH staff or a community member and adding questions to gather information on participants’ perceptions of how information received at the fair could improve their health. The questions asked were “What was the most important thing you learned today?” and “How will you use this information to improve your health?” The revised passports would also help with identifying the number of staff and community members that attended the fair.

The 2-hour event was attended by 220 people and 95 identified themselves as members of the community. Of the 123 passports collected, 47 were completed by members of the community. The comments made by community member Melissa Jones (attachment SE9b.e) are an example of how the SAFER fair provided her with knowledge and empowered her to become more active in her health care. The public and MGH community were further informed about the fair through an article published in the November 17, 2016 issue of Caring Headlines, the Nursing and Patient Care Services magazine bi-monthly magazine.

Banister, French and the Collaborative Governance Committee leaders have determined that the 2016 SAFER Fair was a successful community outreach initiative. Using data from the CCHI helped to target important health information needs of our community and participant feedback was very positive. Planning will begin in the Spring of 2017 for the next SAFER Fair and the committees will continue to look for ways to engage the hospital and improve our outreach to the community.