Transformational Leadership: Advocacy and Influence

**TL6:** The CNO advocates for organizational support of ongoing leadership development for all nurses, with a focus on mentoring and succession planning.

**TL6a:** Provide one example, with supporting evidence, of mentoring or succession planning activities for clinical nurses.

**Introduction**

The origin of the concept of mentorship is said to have originated from Homer's Odyssey, in which Mentor, a wise and trusted friend, took on the rearing of Odysseus' son in his absence. Over the centuries, the concept of mentorship has come to mean a long term relationship with the focus on supporting the growth and development of the mentee. The mentor is the source of wisdom, teaching, and support who encourages and guides, but does not tell the mentee what to do. Rather the mentor helps guide the mentee to make the best decision.

The following story describes how Barbara Cashavelly, RN, MSN, NE-BC, OCN, Nursing Director (ND), Hematology/Oncology Unit (Lunder 9) mentored Bethany Groleau, RN, BSN, CHPN, a clinical nurse on Lunder 9, as a nurse fellow in the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Global Nursing Fellowship.

![Massachusetts General Hospital](https://example.com/mgh-global-nursing.png)

**The Global Nursing Program**

Founded in 2006, the MGH Center for Global Health (Center) builds on the hospital's rich history of leadership in clinical care, medical education, and humanitarian aid while crafting innovative solutions to some of the most intractable challenges facing our global community. The Center has partnered with Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda to enhance patient care for a diverse range of medical conditions and support local clinicians.

The Global Nursing Program, a program within the Center, provides nursing education and promotes nursing leadership to increase the capacity of nurses and midwives across the globe to improve clinical outcomes for the populations they serve. The Global Nursing Fellowship Program offers short-term fellowships to address requests for specific clinical expertise from partner organizations across the globe. Fellows foster a sense of commitment to the global nursing community, elevate the role of nurses in delivering clinical care, and provide fundamental nursing education to advance nursing practice. In 2016, the Global Nursing Program launched the MGH Global Health Oncology Nursing Fellowship Program. This fellowship offered an oncology clinical
nurse the opportunity to teach, mentor, and work with oncology nurses at Mbarara University to foster both professional development and excellence in clinical practice.

In March 2016, Patricia Daoust, RN, MSN, FAAN, Director of Nursing for Global Health and Mary Sebert, RN, MPH, International Nurse Program Manager, forwarded a call for applications to the Nursing Directors (ND) of the MGH Oncology Units. Cashavelly forwarded the application to her staff on March 18, 2016. Groleau reviewed the email and application and emailed Cashavelly on March 21, 2016 and indicated her interest in applying for the fellowship (attachment TL6a.a). Responding to Groleau’s obvious enthusiasm (“If you think I could be a candidate I will start the essay and application process today!”) Cashavelly responded in kind with an enthusiastic “That is great! Let’s talk about it and definitely complete the application.”

Groleau joined the Lunder 9 clinical nursing staff in March 2014 after having practiced on a surgical/oncology unit for 1 ½ years. Groleau had achieved certification in chemotherapy administration and in Hospice and Palliative Care. Cashavelly viewed her as a respected clinician who developed therapeutic relationships with her patients and had positive relationships with the interprofessional team. Cashavelly felt that Groleau would be an impressive candidate for the fellowship but wanted to learn more about Groleau’s interest and how she could mentor her in the application process and, if she was successful, during the fellowship.

Following that email, Cashavelly and Groleau met to discuss the fellowship. Groleau shared with Cashavelly her commitment for teaching and mentoring less experienced nurses as well as her desire to help the underserved. Groleau spoke of her community service including volunteering at a soup kitchen and with the Boston Serve Empowering People for Inclusive Communities (EPIC) which prepares young people with disabilities to be actively engaged community leaders through education, leadership development and community service. Cashavelly recognized Groleau’s passion as well as her concern that she had never practiced in a setting similar to the setting in Uganda. Cashavelly asked her to consider situations where she had to deal with minimal resources and educational barriers. This question allowed Groleau to recognize her strengths in teaching, working with patients with limited resources, and how she could use these past experiences not only in her application essay, but in her work in Uganda. Cashavelly’s ability to have Groleau reflect on her own strengths and potential is a key attribute of a mentor—to see in the mentee what they might not yet see in themselves.

Cashavelly also shared with Groleau her own experiences consulting on nursing practice around the world (i.e. China, Kazakhstan, Qatar) and the impact of culture, societal norms, the role of nursing, and other factors had on how one taught and what could be achieved. By sharing her own experiences, Cashavelly allowed Groleau to more fully understand the experience she would be facing in Uganda and the challenges she would face – specifically, how to respect the culture of the country as well as to teach the nursing staff to improve patient care. Following their conversation, Cashavelly enthusiastically supported Groleau’s application for the fellowship and
offered to assist Groleau on writing her essay, which Groleau gratefully accepted. Groleau submitted her application on April 11, 2016 (attachment TL6a. b).

Cashavelly’s role of mentor can be seen in her letter of support as she identifies Groleau’s clinical knowledge and ability to seek out resources:

“I would describe Bethany as a dedicated professional nurse that has a very solid nursing practice. She demonstrates a spirit of clinical inquiry that supports her clinical knowledge and decision-making expertise. She is reflective and thoughtful. With her intuition and nursing experience, she is able to identify subtle changes in her patients. She seeks out resources and information when needed to understand her patient’s diagnosis, treatment or clinical condition.”

Cashavelly directly addresses that while Groleau does not have global health experience, she has reflected on the experience, and what she needs to fully commit to it:

“Bethany is extremely interested in this Global Health opportunity. She has thought a lot about the fellowship experience and the commitment. This opportunity is very exciting for her and she feels she will be able to contribute to this program in a very meaningful way. Although she has not participated in Global Health/international projects, I do think she would be a strong candidate. I highly support Bethany Groleau for this Global Health Fellowship program.”

Cashavelly is a highly respected ND at MGH and her past experience consulting around the world gives her organizational credibility to not only assess Groleau’s skill and knowledge as a clinical nurse and educator, but also her ability to be successful in a foreign country with limited resources. As a mentor, Cashavelly is telling the leaders of the program that Groleau has her full support. The following announcement was posted on the MGH Global Nursing web site:

**Global Nursing Fellowship Program**

**Nursing Fellow: Bethany Groleau, RN**

Bethany Groleau, RN from the Lunder 9 oncology unit at MGH was awarded the first Global Nursing Fellowship in 2016. On being awarded her Fellowship, Groleau said, “I am so excited for this opportunity, I feel like this was an extension of my nursing, a way to give to others and something that was so much greater than myself.”
Preparing to Leave

As her mentor, Cashavelly provided emotional support to assist Groleau in preparing for the experience. In an email exchange on May 3, 2016 (attachment TL6a.c), Cashavelly addresses not only Groleau’s concerns about her schedule, but also offers to provide any needed resources:

“Let me know if you need anything before you leave this weekend and remember I can send you anything - this is happening really quickly! I am so happy you will be having this opportunity; you are going to have such an impact on the nurses, their practice and all those patients.”

Staying Connected

Groleau left for Uganda on May 11, 2016, but despite being half a world away, Cashavelly continued to provide encouragement and support to Groleau (attachment TL6a.d). The email exchange illustrates that mentorship can occur in many ways as Cashavelly is “thinking of her, and sending her positive thoughts.” Cashavelly also cheers Groleau on, as well encouraging her to explore and enjoy the experience, writing, that “They are so lucky to have you. I am sure you have had a great week! Hope you are relaxing and exploring on the weekend.”

Coming Home

On June 19, 2016, Groleau left Uganda and returned to her position on Lunder 9 deeply grateful for the experience. Cashavelly knew from her global work, that transitioning back to an environment of great resources can be quite jolting. She met with Groleau frequently upon her return to debrief and process her experience in Uganda. Groleau was excited and grateful for the experience and was appreciative of Cashavelly’s support for her application and during her stay. Cashavelly encouraged Groleau to share her experience by co-writing an article for Caring Headlines with Kara Oliver, RN, MSN, ACNP-BC, a Nurse Practitioner who was also a Fellow, and Daoust (attachment TL6a.e).

In her article, “The MGH Global Nursing Fellowship: Spotlighting the Importance of Nursing Mentorship” Groleau wrote of how she “worked with Cashavelly and the MGH Global Health nursing team to better understand the needs of nurses and patients in resource-limited settings.” Groleau wrote that during her six-week deployment, she “continued to reach out to Cashavelly and colleagues back home for clinical information to help the Mbarara team.”

Since her return to Lunder 9, Cashavelly has asked, and Groleau has enthusiastically agreed to, to precept nurses visiting from other countries (i.e. China). Cashavelly
believes that Groleau’s time in Uganda has given Groleau insight on how visitors from one country can transfer nursing practice and new learning from a foreign country back to their home country. Groleau has also approached Cashavelly to orient to the resource nurse role on the unit as well as to precept more students and newly-hired clinical nurses.

The pride and respect her colleagues on Lunder 9 have for Groleau is evident when Rebecca Loh, RN, BSN, OCN, nominated Groleau in February 2017 for the Brian M. McEachern Extraordinary Care Award (attachment TL6a.e). This award recognizes Patient Care Services staff whose passion and tenacity exceeds the expectations of peers and colleagues. Loh wrote that Groleau’s time in Uganda teaching and influencing nursing practice was “a transformative experience for all involved.” In the narrative she wrote for the award portfolio Groleau wrote of her experience “I gave six weeks to Africa, I was given the world.” Groleau received the Brian M. McEachern Extraordinary Care Award in May 2017.

Throughout this life-changing experience, Cashavelly served as Groleau’s mentor by creating opportunities, ensuring resources were easily available, and most of all showing care, concern, and unwavering encouragement and faith in Groleau.