I heard another radio story pointing out that healthcare reform will elevate demands for primary care (PC) – just when the PC physician workforce is shrinking. Scary thought – but never mentioned was that nurse practitioners (NPs) are increasingly delivering PC. Shouldn’t there be concern about their numbers growing fast enough? Looking around I see a steady stream of ads for NPs and major clinics have multiple NPs per MD. Often NPs are marginally visible in the marketing of clinical services to patients – making them more under-appreciated and under-valued than should be – perhaps dampening attention to growing this workforce. While publicly, we still hear that PC is of lesser quality or less safe with NP-led delivery – evidence says otherwise. E.g., Newhouse and team published a systematic review of studies (1990-2008) that compared NPs to MDs on patient outcomes (Nursing Economics, Sept-Oct. 2011). Based on 37 quality studies (14 randomized clinical trials and 23 observational), for functional status, glucose control, lipid control, blood pressure, ED/urgent care visits, hospitalizations, perceived health, satisfaction, length of stay and mortality rates; they found high evidence for equal outcomes. I do see signs of newfound attention to the value of NPs. A major national health insurance company nurse executive contacted me. Already with a NP workforce approaching 1000, in looking at growth plans, they see needing two – three times as many NPs and are pondering how to help grow the pool. So will we be able to meet the need? One rate-limiting step is finding clinical training sites/preceptors and qualified faculty. Many clinicians have difficulty agreeing to mentor students and venues employing many NPs, such as urgent care chains or retail clinics, have yet to embrace responsibility for ensuring the "next generation."

With this in mind, I have exciting news to share: over the next 4 years UA Nursing will receive nearly $3.7 million from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to expand NP Clinical Learning for Primary Care. Chosen as one of five demonstration projects (across the U.S.) and led by Scottsdale Healthcare, we are participating in an Arizona Collaborative to expand clinical sites and increase the number of PC NP graduates. Thanks to this award, we now have access to novel capacity-building resources to address the growing need for NP leadership in primary care. Such government support, along with making visible the proven NP competence and convincing a variety of practice stakeholders to collaborate in NP education holds outstanding promise for invigorating PC and appreciating the unique role that NPs bring to health care.

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Meet Agnes Ronstadt Poore, Class of 1972, patient services director at Casa de la Luz Hospice, and a Wildcat Nurse celebrating her 40th BSN anniversary. Agnes was recently honored with a lasting one-of-a-kind tribute from Casa de la Luz Hospice. Executive Director Lynette E. Jaramillo surprised Agnes by presenting her with The Agnes Ronstadt Poore Scholarship Endowment at the University of Arizona College of Nursing. The endowment gift was given to recognize her 40 years of service to the community, the extraordinary patient care she and her nursing staff provide at the hospice, and the inspiration she always gives to patients, families, friends and colleagues. In perpetuity, this scholarship will memorialize Agnes’ lifelong contributions to nursing and support nursing students who strive to deliver the highest standard of compassionate care.

Time to honor someone you think is extraordinary? There are many options. Contact Judith Brown at jbrown@nursing.arizona.edu or (520) 626-6233.
Answering the Call

When Latina women seek health care, especially those in Tucson, they tend to be sicker, more likely to die from cancer and have fewer services available to them. Determined to impact these issues and enhance quality of life for Latinas receiving medical treatment for breast cancer and those close to them, Terry Badger, PhD, PMHCNS-BC, RN, FAAN, professor and division director of community and systems health science, recently received a five-year, $1.3 million grant from the American Cancer Society. Provided in either English or Spanish, Dr. Badger and her team will test a convenient eight-week telephone intervention with supportive counseling and health education. "It makes total sense that we would develop interventions that are appropriate for our vulnerable and large Hispanic population right here in Tucson," Dr. Badger said.

Contact Dr. Badger at tbadger@nursing.arizona.edu for more information.

Filling a Gap: Novel Option

Knowing that estimated 96 percent of counties across the country have an unmet need for behavioral health professionals, the opening of a new advanced practice specialty option comes just in time." There is a critical shortage of mental health providers in America, especially in rural areas and among underserved populations," says Kate Sheppard, PhD, FNP, PMHNP-BC, FAANP, head of the new Family Psychiatric & Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) specialty option within the College’s Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program (or taken as a post-masters certificate). In this high demand field, graduates will be well prepared to treat individuals with mental health challenges in the context of their overall health and be highly functioning members of behavioral health and primary care teams.

To learn more about the PMHNP program, contact Dr. Sheppard at kgsheppard@nursing.arizona.edu.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Names New Nurse Faculty Scholar

Matt J. Gallek, PhD, RN, CNRN, assistant professor, has been named a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nurse Faculty Scholar. This prestigious honor comes with a three-year $350,000 research grant for his study Improving Stroke Outcomes: Influence of Genes on Functional Outcomes Following Subarachnoid Hemorrhage. Dr. Gallek intends to identify genetic risks for brain vessel spasm, which can hinder recovery among individuals who have a stroke (in this case a sudden bleeding into the spaces between brain tissue and the skull). As our society ages, more people will suffer a stroke, making the prevention of complications paramount for faster recovery. Leslie Ritter, PhD, RN, FAAN, professor, and a named mentor for this award, said "Matt's research has significant potential for identifying a novel variable that may affect recovery after a stroke and could serve as a critical first step in the development of new therapies to aid recovery."

To send notes of congratulations or learn about Dr. Gallek’s research, please e-mail him at mgallek@nursing.arizona.edu.
Connecting Tucson and Phoenix

Joining the UA Health Sciences Phoenix campus, UA Nursing Faculty and 18 students have launched the Masters Entry into the Profession of Nursing (MEPN) program in Phoenix. Students will access clinical simulated learning through the UA Health Sciences Education building, newly built on the Phoenix campus; and clinical field learning through our clinical agency partners, particularly Maricopa Integrated Health System. Already holding university degrees outside of nursing, students in the accelerated 15-month MEPN program are exemplified by Jenny Lubben, who has held positions in public administration and regulation for the state of Arizona. When Lubben’s father was diagnosed with end-stage liver cirrhosis a year ago, it spurred her to pursue a nursing career. “I hope to use my education to not only help my family understand and cope with the struggles we face, but to help the underserved who face similar battles and stresses every day,” she said.

For information on MEPN, please contact entry@nursing.arizona.edu.

RISE-ing to the Challenge

The Resident Intensive Summer Experience (RISE) just welcomed 234 PhD and DNP students from around the country for a week long program at the College of Nursing. Dawn Goldstein is in her final year in the DNP program and, due to her recommendation, Danelle Onate (BSN class of 2008), just started. Both Goldstein and Onate serve in the United States Army Reserves and in the same detachment. Upon graduation, Goldstein plans to teach and Onate intends to continue serving and caring for her fellow soldiers.

For information on our doctoral programs, please contact advanced@nursing.arizona.edu.

Pinning With Pride

Faculty and staff all gathered to welcome the newest BSN class of students this August. After receiving their official College of Nursing pins, the student cohort, which consists of 49 females and five (5) males, spent the day learning about the ins-and-outs of what their next four semesters will demand of them.

To learn more about the BSN program, please email entry@nursing.arizona.edu.

Caring for the Military and Their Families

Whether it is a wound suffered in battle, or one that encroaches on the minds of our soldiers, the need for specialized military care is growing. This year, the College has committed to the Joining Forces Program, a White House initiative to educate nurses to meet the unique health needs of service members, veterans and their families. Specifically focused on meeting unique health needs affecting military families is PhD student Pedro Oblea. Having been deployed overseas as a medical-surgical, critical care, flight and brigade nurse and currently serving as a clinical officer in charge (OIC) nurse for the United States Army, Major Oblea has unique ‘inside’ insights. He recently attended a week-long TriService Nursing Research Program Grant Camp which prepared him to specifically target his ‘Wildcat’ nurse research on the needs of military officers and their families.

Major Pedro Oblea, PhD Student

RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

Getting a Head Start

Helping faculty to generate pilot data and compete for outside grants, four awards of up to $20,000 each were made from the College Emmons Research Endowment Fund:

- Carrie Merkle, PhD, RN, FAAN, and Shu-Fen Wung, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN, associate professors, are pursuing how to help women incorporate lifestyle changes that will reduce their risks for breast cancer.
- Kimberly Shea, PhD, RN, assistant professor, by developing an effective and accessible self-care management system, is studying how to improve symptoms and the overall quality of life in heart-failure patients.
- Rebecca Ross, PhD, RN, PMHNP-BC, assistant professor, is doing a pilot study that will help to more quickly diagnose patients with fibromyalgia.
- Kate Sheppard, PhD, RN, PMHNP-BC, FAANP, clinical assistant professor, is focused on better understanding of compassion fatigue among registered nurses and how to lessen it over time.

www.nursing.arizona.edu
SAVE THE DATE!

Family Weekend
'Under the Big Top'
October 19 – 21, 2012

Ever wanted to know what a nursing student goes through, day-in and day-out? Here's your chance to see how to start an IV or interact with a life-size, robotic mannequin with any symptom you choose to give her/him. Join us at the UA's Family Weekend 'Under the Big Top.'

Details and registration available at: familyweekend.arizona.edu

The University of Arizona College of Nursing
Invites you to a memorial service to honor the ten-year legacy of:

Cheryl M. McGaffic
Barbara S. Monroe
Robin E. Rogers

Sunday, October 28, 2012 • 3:00 PM
College of Nursing Courtyard

Details will be posted in early October at www.nursing.arizona.edu.

Homecoming 2012
November 9 – 10, 2012

Join us and many other alumni for the 2012 Homecoming festivities, including the 'Wildcat' College Rapturous Reception on Friday and the 'Wildcat' Alumni Brilliance Breakfast on Saturday.

Graduate in a year ending in '2' or '7'? It's your anniversary year!

Details and registration available at:
www.nursing.arizona.edu/Homecoming.asp

RN Patient Advocates
October 9 – 16, 2012
C.O.D. Ranch • Oracle, AZ

Exclusively for experienced RNs, RN Patient Advocates, PLLC, in association with the UA College of Nursing, offers the opportunity to participate in a four-week online, eight-day residential immersion course to become an independent RN Patient Advocate.

For information and registration go to www.patientadvocates.com