



August 19, 2021

Thank you for completing your 2021 Community Star Individual Nominee Questionnaire!

Overview

Here is a copy of your answers for your records. All nominations will be reviewed and evaluated by members of NOSORH's Community Star Selection Committee. One Community Star will be selected per state. If you are selected as your state's Community Star, I will work with you to schedule an interview so that we can develop your outstanding story to share in our annual book of Community Stars released on Thursday, November 18, 2021.

If you have any questions, please reach out to NRHD Community Star Project Coordinator, Brea Corsaro at bcorsaro@powerofrural.org.

Your Information

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Have Questions? Contact:

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Organization or Project Website

<https://www.pmhnet.com>

Please describe in as much detail as possible, your role within your organization and the nature of your work in rural health?

I have been a registered nurse for 38 years and I currently hold the Chief Nursing Officer position at Pulaski Memorial Hospital in Winamac, IN. Pulaski Memorial Hospital is a non-for profit Critical Access Hospital and was recognized by National Rural Health Association (NRHA) for its quality as one of the top 20 hospitals. I have worked at the hospital for 41 years, starting when I was a senior in high school as a nurse technician. Advancing through the organization, I have been the Chief Nursing Officer for 26 years.

I hold an ASN and BSN from Indiana University, an MBA from Indiana Wesleyan University and am Nurse Executive Advanced board certified. Additional quality and safety trainings include Yellow, Green and Black Belt Lean Healthcare certification and have completed TeamSTEPPS training. Other professional certifications include Certificate in Effective Nonprofit Governance through Indiana University and Management Institute through Indiana Hospital Association and IUPUI.

I have been a board member of Indiana Organizations of Nurse Executives, holding several offices including the office of president in 2008. I serve as chairman of the West Central Patient Safety Coalition in Indiana and have been an active member since the inception of the coalition. The Coalition's focus is to address both statewide and region-specific patient safety initiatives. I served as Pulaski Memorial Hospital's lead for the American Hospital Association/Health Research and Education Trust's HEN, HEN 2.0, HIIN and HQIC quality improvement programs. As the lead for the AHA/HRET



initiatives on reducing patient harm, I have had several opportunities to show case Pulaski Memorial Hospital's work at national conferences, such as AHA's Rural Health Care Leadership Conference and National Rural Health Association Conference as a break-out speaker. I have served on many panel discussions for Indiana Organization of Nursing Leaders, Indiana Rural Health Association and AHA's Rural Healthcare Leadership Conference on quality and leadership. I have been honored to share Pulaski Memorial Hospital's quality story through interviews and videos at a national and state level and have been featured in AHA's Health Forum publication on Hospital Engagement Networks participants make big strides in reducing patient harm and readmissions in November 2014.

Other memberships include American Organization of Nursing Leadership, American Nurses' Association, Indiana Nurses' Association, Indian Rural Health Association, Indiana Organization of Nursing Leadership and Sigma Theta Tau. Serve on Four County Counseling Center, board as board president. I am an active member of Pulaski County Drug Free Council and St. Peter's Catholic Church.

I understands the challenges and rewards of rural healthcare. Rural nursing is a passion for me and a way to give back to the community through involvement in developing patient care programs that focus on quality, safety and customer satisfaction.

In a small rural hospital we all wear many hats and prioritizing the work can be a challenge especially when there are many initiatives competing for your time. Finding champions for projects not just in nursing but in the medical staff and pharmacy has been a successful strategy.

Data is very important to see where to prioritize the work and to have a baseline to show progress toward the improvement plan. I have found that providing individual feedback to nurses and doctors has a significant impact on effecting change. Blood administration safety is not only a patient safety focus, but is part of a regulatory requirement for HFAP. I have found that in giving the nurses individual feedback through a report card has proven to be help nurses focus on their individual practices and improve patient safety. This type of individual feedback not only effects change, but is also used to demonstrate a nurse's competency in blood administration. We have used individual feedback report cards for inter-hospital transfer compliance, sepsis, stroke and STEMI care. Nurses and especially physicians tend to be a little competitive so posting de-identified data allows them to see how they compare to others. This also gives us an opportunity to learn best practices from each other to effect change and improve quality.

As my bio indicates, I have been at Pulaski Memorial Hospital for 41 years. I say that this is my strength and my weakness. My strength is that I know Pulaski Memorial Hospital, its staff and community served very well. My weakness is Pulaski Memorial Hospital is all I know. With that being said, I pride myself in becoming involved in regional, state and national organizations and quality initiatives. I find value in learning best practice from others and incorporating ideas, process and protocols at Pulaski Memorial Hospital to provide safe and high quality care to those we serve.

Transparency and accountability are important in improving quality. Pulaski Memorial Hospital participates in many quality initiatives by sharing data with outside organizations, such as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Care Compare, National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN),

Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP), Anthem Score Card, Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) Hospital Survey on Patient Safety Culture every two years. Pulaski Memorial Hospital was awarded the Inspire Hospital of Distinction in 2020 for initiatives to reduce infant mortality.

Despite dealing with a pandemic in 2020-21, I have taken the lead or had oversight on several quality initiatives to improve the care to our community through our involvement in: Tobacco prevention and cessation health systems change partnerships grant, a FLEX grant from HRSA and Indiana State Office of Rural Health (ISORH) and MBQIP with a focus on human trafficking and Substance Use Disorder; Small Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP) with a focus on mental health and suicide prevention; A Special Innovation Project (SIP) through SHIP with a focus on social determinants of health; HRET's Healthcare Improvement Collaborative (HQIC) with a focus on reducing patient harm and readmissions; Inspire with a focus on decreasing infant mortality based on five key areas of infant safe sleep, breastfeeding, tobacco prevention and cessation, perinatal substance use, and Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) Patient Safety Bundle: Obstetric Hemorrhage.

What inspired you to choose your career?

I wanted to have a career that would make a difference and challenge me. Nursing is a respected and rewarding profession. Early on in my career I had the privilege to care for my community, my neighbors, friends and family. As a nurse, you are there for the happy times as well as some of the most difficult times in people's lives. Patients and families look to you for comfort, compassion and competence. As I have grown in my career, I had the opportunity to be a leader at Pulaski Memorial Hospital, where I can effect

change and implement best practice and quality care throughout the hospital. I have never regretted my decision to become a nurse and encourage young people to join the profession.

What is the impact of your work in your community or the rural populations you serve?

The biggest success this year is providing multiple vaccine clinics every month, since January 2021, in which I coordinated with an amazing team to procure and administer thousands of vaccines to our community, schools and businesses and residence throughout the state. That was a true rapid cycle improvement event as we tweaked our process and flow until we became a well-oiled machine and experienced no patient harm or errors.

Have you accessed, benefited from, or worked directly with your State Office of Rural Health? If yes, please describe.

I have been involved with several projects of the SORH. through FLEX grants. The current project is focused on human trafficking and substance use disorder. It is projects like this that help rural hospitals make a difference in their communities through education, awareness and program development.

Are you or your organization a HRSA, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Grantee? If yes, which grant program? If yes, which one?

No