

The Magnet Recognition Program was developed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center to recognize health care organizations that provide the very best in nursing care and uphold the tradition within nursing of professional nursing practice. The program also provides a vehicle for disseminating successful nursing practices, outcomes and strategies among nurses.

The Magnet Recognition Program is based on quality indicators and standards of nursing practice as defined by the American Nurses Association in the *Scope and Standards for Nurse Administrators* (2003). The Magnet process includes the appraisal of both qualitative and quantitative factors in nursing.

Because it recognizes quality patient care and nursing excellence, the Magnet Recognition Program provides consumers and employees with the ultimate benchmark to measure quality of care.

- Recognize nursing services that use the *Scope and Standards for Nurse Administrators* to build programs of nursing excellence for the delivery of nursing care to patients.
- Promote quality in a milieu that supports professional nursing practice.
- Provide a vehicle for the dissemination of successful nursing practices and strategies among health care organizations using the services of registered professional nurses.
- Promote positive patient outcomes.

Linda Aiken, PhD, RN, FAAN conducted independent research on Magnet facilities. This research indicated Magnet Status promoted:

- A significant positive impact on nursing recruitment and retention
- A competitive advantage for luring both patients and nurses to Magnet facilities
- A positive recruitment/retention of physicians and specialists
- A collaborative relationship among all staff members
- Improved patient outcomes and improved JACHO summary scores

Health care facilities pursuing Magnet status follow a prescribed series of steps during the application. One segment is a self-assessment of Magnet Recognition. This survey would, at a minimum, be sent to each Registered Nurse. The data gathered from this process alone would be valuable for any VA facility. The maximum benefit is to survey all staff; achieving Magnet Status embraces all employees.

There are costs associated with VA facilities pursuing Magnet Status. The application fee is \$2500 in addition to other fees, such as site visits and appraiser fees are added to the cost. Plus, there are internal costs to the local facility.

Magnet status recognizes professional nursing practice at the heart of "Putting Patients First". If VHA is going to retain the excellent nurses we have, recruit new nursing graduates, attract new veteran patients, and honor the patients we already serve, NOVA believes achieving Magnet Status will facilitate these goals.

Vincent Van Gogh said: "Your profession is not what brings home your paycheck. Your profession is what you were put on earth to do with such passion and such intensity that it becomes spiritual in calling." VA nurses believe this; attaining Magnet Status confirms this belief; aligning VHA for the future propels us to pursue Magnet Status or, at a minimum, for facilities to adopt a "Culture of Magnetism". Magnet facilities demonstrate core values such as empowerment, pride, mentoring,

nurturing, respect, integrity and teamwork. Magnet reinforces positive collaborative working relationships and fosters respect and caring for the individual (patients and staff), and actively brings out the best in people.

The "Magnet Culture" is holistic in creating a dynamic and positive milieu for professional nurses and enhances the NOVA mission of "Shaping and Influencing Health Care within the Department of Veterans Affairs."