

Recognizing St. Joe's Nurses during Nursing Week 2021

Amid the pressures of the pandemic, St. Joe's nurses have gone above and beyond to answer the call to deliver compassionate care to patients, support families, and serve our community in crisis. As we celebrate National Nursing Week (May 10-14), we are proud of and grateful for all nurses in the St. Joe's community.

It's a moment to pause, offer our heartfelt thanks and reflect on the heroic efforts of our nurses. It's also the second Nursing Week that we've celebrated during the pandemic and we know that many nurses are feeling stressed, exhausted and overwhelmed. Through this sustained crisis of intense change, tremendous stress and unprecedented uncertainty, we've witnessed our community come together and rise to the challenge.

We answer the call is the Canadian Nurses Association's Nursing Week theme this year. Nurses answered the call during the pandemic's first and second waves by creating hospital capacity and processes to support COVID care, by helping with the mobilization of the COVID-19 assessment centre and screening processes, by implementing Smile Buttons to help our patients and families see the individual behind the mask, and by supporting our learners as they completed their placements during the pandemic. Some nurses were also deployed into congregate settings and long-term care homes to support vulnerable populations.

Nurses continue to answer the call during this third wave by welcoming the introduction of nursing externs to our teams, moving into new roles following internal redeployment, and shifting into team-based models of care in support of the unprecedented demand for critical care. These are but a few of the many examples of nurses helping nurses while working collaboratively to deliver our best care. Working in interprofessional teams is a long-time strength of our nursing community and we see each of you doing a phenomenal job, with tremendous resilience and unwavering courage.

In the context of the pandemic, Nursing Week festivities look different this year than previous years. On Wednesday, May 12, all staff, learners and physicians are invited to wear blue, the colour for Nursing Week in honour of Florence Nightingale. In partnership with Hamilton Health Sciences, our Foundation has engaged local businesses to post blue hearts in their windows as a signal of community support for nurses. Three St. Joe's campuses — Charlton, West 5th and King St — will be lit up in blue, as well as many buildings across the HNHBB region (including Niagara Falls)! We hope these dramatic light displays send a powerful message of honouring nurses to our community.

On behalf of our leadership team, we offer our heartfelt thanks and deep gratitude to all of our nurses for their courage, commitment, expertise and contributions to the St. Joe's community.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Williams, Executive Vice President of Clinical Operations and Chief Nursing Executive at St. Joe's

Erin Doherty, Director Nursing Practice, Acute Care, Complex Care and Rehab

Larisa Volman, Director Nursing Practice, Mental Health and Addictions Program