

Dear WOCNCB,

It is my great honor to be able to nominate my organization for the 2020 Employer Recognition Award. This Nominee is unique in that it is the only Medical Center covering a 32,000 square mile region of our state. The main campus includes a Trauma Level 2 hospital and several outpatient centers, including the Wound & Ostomy Outpatient Clinic. There are three outlying hospitals, two of which are Trauma Level 4 critical access hospitals, and one Trauma Level 3 Type B Rural hospital. The hospital system is accredited by the Joint Commission.

The Wound & Ostomy Department was started in the 1980s with one nurse providing mostly ostomy care in a small patient room. In the early 1990s, another nurse who specialized in wound care was added to the department. Over the years, the Nominee has supported the expansion and enrichment of the department. At this time, our team consists of 14 CWOCNs, which is the largest number of wound and ostomy nurses working under one hospital in our state. Our team provides care to referred patients in the outpatient clinic, and inpatient as a consult-based service. The consults from the inpatient setting extend not only to the main campus hospital, but to all outlying hospitals as well. Our department also provides wound and ostomy care to contracted skilled nursing facilities and hospice organizations in our community.

The Nominee's vision is to "create America's healthiest community, together" using the values of "accountability, caring, and teamwork." While wound care specialists are uniquely qualified to manage acute and chronic wounds, our department fully utilizes and is supported by the Nominee's multidisciplinary teams, with communication and referrals to specialists in vascular health, lymphedema, infectious disease, diabetic education and nutrition, and surgery. We also partner with surgeons who have patients scheduled for ostomy creation, providing stoma-site marking, education, and continuing ostomy care after the procedure.

Job openings in the Wound & Ostomy Department are advertised with the requirement of CWOCN certification; in rare cases this requirement has been waived, but only because the highest qualified candidate was in the process of becoming certified. The Nominee supports this high standard of required certification in order to maintain the quality of evidence-based care that board-certified wound and ostomy nurses are able to provide. In order to ensure the continuation of this high quality care, the Nominee provides our team members financial reimbursement for recertification, not only covering exam fees but for ample study time as well.

Nominee leadership acknowledges our team's certification accomplishments by providing identification cards with CWOCN credentials listed prominently, announcements of certification and re-certification successes at bi-weekly huddles, poster board sessions during the yearly Nurse's Week celebrations, and a tiered salary jump for each certification gained. Nominee leadership also supported the Wound & Ostomy department in creating and celebrating their own mission and vision statements.

The Nominee encourages our CWONs to provide wide-reaching wound and ostomy education, and not only to new caregivers at bimonthly orientation presentations. Our department provides clinical in-service presentations to inpatient nursing units on a variety of subjects, including appropriate dressing selection, pressure injury assessment and interventions, nutritional needs for wound healing, surgical site infection control, and management of wound dehiscence. The Nominee's bedside nurses are also able to access the 37+ Wound and Ostomy Department policies and procedures in the organization's Document Library. The Nominee supports the Wound & Ostomy department team in providing clinical education to caregivers in outlying clinics within the hospital system, in-services to area skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospice organizations, and prison medical staff; this community outreach and clinical teaching is important in our large rural environment, as some patients may not be able to travel to reach the main campus for outpatient wound and ostomy care.

Nominee leadership also supports outreach activities that are wider-reaching than our immediate community. Our CWOCNs have participated in international mission projects, providing wound and ostomy education and equipment to countries who have serious deficits in wound and ostomy care and knowledge. This expert education helps countless people who need help in this often overlooked and misunderstood specialty of medicine.

In order to support and promote our next generation of CWOCN RNs, the Nominee also provides opportunities to our local nursing school by scheduling second-year nursing students to be part of a shadow or preceptorship program in the Wound & Ostomy department. Nurses from other patient care units employed by the Nominee who express an interest in wound and ostomy care are also encouraged to shadow CWOCNs.

Within the Wound and Ostomy department, the Nominee encourages continuing education in the form of webinars, nursing grand rounds, skills days, and attendance at local and national Wound & Ostomy conferences. In the past four months, the Nominee provided financial assistance and time within the department's busy schedule to send members of our team to the ' Region of the WOCN Society Annual Conference and the Boswick Burn & Wound Symposium in Hawaii. The team also attends monthly competency courses; topics are presented by team members as well as industry specialists. Our sharp debridement competency is led by a plastic surgeon who works closely with our clinic. We also partner frequently with our vascular department for ongoing education related to performing ABI/TBI screening, ensuring that our patients are receiving the best and most accurate testing and follow up.

An Ostomy Support Group is sponsored by the Nominee, providing meeting space four times a year to ostomates in our community. This group is free-of-charge for the members, who drive the choice of speakers and topics in their written evaluations and conversations with Wound & Ostomy Team members. Providing this outreach to the ostomate community has provided the opportunity for these individuals to receive personal education, advice from other ostomates, and support in their time of healing. In other ostomy-related

improvements, CWOCN team members are helping to optimize ostomy product selection in the OR and on nursing units; this change will provide our ostomy patients with the most up-to-date and clinically superior products, improving comfort and healing outcomes.

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The members of this Wound & Ostomy Department sincerely appreciate the commitment to exceptional patient care and employee satisfaction that the Nominee provides by maintaining the requirement for board certified wound and ostomy nurses, promotion of continuing education, and support of the numerous programs authored by members of the Wound & Ostomy team.