

Introducing the 2020-2021 RN Residents

Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency (PB-RNR) Trainee Program

Sponsored by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations

Introducing the RN graduates selected to be the 2020-2021 PB-RNR Program Residents:

- ◆ Julia Arms, Salve Regina University
- ◆ Kiley Baltazar, MCPHS
- ◆ Audrey Basler, Boston College
- ◆ Shyra Carter, Curry College
- ◆ Julia DeSisto, Boston College
- ◆ Isabel Desroches, Boston College
- ◆ Sophia Doerr, Quinnipiac University
- ◆ Rosiany Gomes, UMass Dartmouth
- ◆ Hannah Hoeg, Westfield State
- ◆ Wenyu Hu, Boston College
- ◆ Cheuk-Lam Lo, Boston College
- ◆ Owen MacDonald, Westfield State
- ◆ Melissa MacWilliam, Westfield State
- ◆ Claire Mazzola, UMass Lowell
- ◆ Micaela Mitchell, Regis College
- ◆ Joselee Pontes, UMass Dartmouth



RN Transition to Practice (RNTTP) Residency Program

Sponsored by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations

Introducing the VA Boston RNs enrolled in the 2020-2021 RNTTP Program:

- ◆ Sophia Adrien, A2
- ◆ Sabrina Andrews, 23C
- ◆ Sandra Carbone, IV
- ◆ Michele Casale, Specialty Clinics
- ◆ Katie Castillo, 81B
- ◆ Rachel Ciobotaru, 3N
- ◆ Farah Dalexis, 22C
- ◆ Tressa Ellis, 2S
- ◆ Talia Forte, A2
- ◆ Michael Friedman, A2
- ◆ Elizabeth Gustin, 3N
- ◆ Nadeje Jean, 81B
- ◆ Taylor Johnson, AG
- ◆ Emma Ledwell, A2
- ◆ Jennifer Leonard, 81B
- ◆ Stephanie Lopes, 2-2 C
- ◆ Samantha Mandell, AG
- ◆ Monique Njontu, Primary Care
- ◆ Ebony Price, Methadone Clinic
- ◆ Kevin Terrio, Dialysis
- ◆ Cailin White, 3N
- ◆ William Whitney, AG



Not pictured: Farah Dalexis, 2-2 C



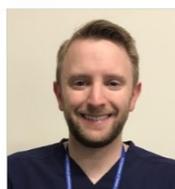
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
2019-2020 VA BOSTON HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
Entry To Practice RN Residency Program
Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency (PBNR) Trainees



Danielle Bostick
2 North



Joseph Bradstreet
2-3-C



Daniel Coyne
2-3-B



Breanna Devine
Private Employment



Hannah Dingley
Private Employment



Karen Gonzalez
A2



Edvania Greeley
Outpatient Clinics



Shannon King
AG



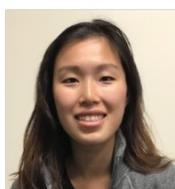
Thomas Langevin
Albany VA



Emily Mason
AG



Emily Matthews
2N



Cindy Mei
Private Employment



Abi Newell
West Palm Beach VA



Tara O'Hanlon
AG



Bruna Robalo
2N



Ting Vuong
3N

The VABHS developed and implemented RN Residency Program in 2012. Guidance and support is provided by the NERVANA partners to ensure a comprehensive program. There are three distinct tracts of the RN Residency program: the PBNR trainee, the employee Transition to Practice (TTP)BSN and the employee Transition to Practice (TTP)ADN.

The PBNR trainee cohort is a highly competitive 12 month training program for BSN RNs. This training program is funded by the Office of Academic Affiliations. Upon completion, graduates are encouraged to apply for VA positions.

The VA Boston RN Residency program includes comprehensive curriculum components (didactic, clinical, experiential learning & evidence based practice). Supervision in the clinical area is provided by a qualified preceptor. A mentor is also matched with the RN Resident.

The RN Residency Program has two cohorts: the PBNR trainee and the RNTTP employee entry to practice. Both cohorts of the RN Residency programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

NERVANA:

In 2007, the Northeast Region VA Nursing Alliance (NERVANA) was created as an Practice-Academic partnership between the VA Boston HCS, Bedford VA and six schools of nursing. Goals for NERVANA include: Maintain and refine the infrastructure for sustaining the mission, and supportive activities of NERVANA.

Increase the number VA Staff nurses to serve in the role of faculty to teach in nursing programs and NERVANA.

Create novel clinical rotations including intra-disciplinary and interdisciplinary Dedicated Education Units for BSN programs, APN rotations for MSN and DNP students.

Establish a culture EBP/research opportunities for students and staff interested in the care of veterans within the academic practice partnerships.

Educate students, faculty, and the community regarding the uniqueness of the health needs of the veteran population.

Expand programs at partnering schools to address healthcare issues related to the Veteran (i.e., Care of the American Veteran Colloquia series).

Translate knowledge to develop best practices for veterans in all healthcare settings.

NERVANA Nursing Partners Include:

- ◆ VA Boston Healthcare System (BHS)
- ◆ VA Edith Nourse Memorial Hospital - Bedford, MA
- ◆ Boston College
- ◆ Northeastern University
- ◆ Regis College
- ◆ Simmons College

- ◆ UMass Boston
- ◆ UMass Lowell





Tips For Caring For Veterans With Covid-19 & Cognitive Impairment

By Anna Etchin, PhD, RN

Use technology (the VA has iPads, music players, etc.)

- iPads/phones can virtually connect them with family (be sure to clean properly between veterans). Since long-term memory is usually the last to go, seeing/hearing a familiar face could be so helpful. If the family can't do a video connection, maybe they can just send photos or record themselves saying something to the vet.
- Music can trigger positive feelings and memories, and can be a positive distraction without overstimulation. If you can get a boombox or cd player (likely from recreation therapy), you can leave music on as much as the vet wants. If the vet is having a hard time with care, consider playing music from their era or asking them to sing something for you while you provide care.
- *Fun story:* when I worked evenings (and often mandated night shifts) at the Bedford VA, I had a vet with severe dementia who sun-downed in the evening and become hostile, aggressive, resistive to care/meds, etc. The ONLY thing that calmed him was sitting near me at the nurses station while I played jazz music on my phone- that was his favorite genre from his younger days. He remembered every lyric and sang along while I documented on the computer (maintaining HIPPA, of course). After a couple songs, he'd close his eyes while singing. Within 30 minutes, he was ready to take his meds and go to bed (and he'd sleep all night).
- Find old movies from their younger days to play on their TV (again, this gets at long-term memory)

Non-pharmacological interventions

- Rec therapy should have diffusers & essential oils that may have a calming effect (i.e. lavender). At the least, it'll make the room smell nice and less like a hospital.
- If possible, utilize virtual chaplains/spiritual resources. The VA should also have an internal channel for spiritual guidance.
- Give the vet something to do if they're fidgeting (e.g. fold simple things that can be washed, puzzles, etc.)

Other considerations:

- There may be a way to have virtual volunteers to ensure "no Veteran dies alone" initiative.
- Vets at end of life may have re-emerging posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms related to prior traumas, such as wartime experiences. The fear and increased stress inherent to pandemics may exacerbate these symptoms.

- Consider how scary it can be to someone who believes/knows they may die in their sleep. Letting them know that nurses do hourly checks, even at night, can be very reassuring.
- Pandemics can trigger memories of war (i.e. panic, disarray, lack of equipment, fast pace, face masks, etc.). To help, reassure the vet that he/she is safe and in capable hands.
- It's possible that covid-19 may exacerbate cognitive impairment and related behavioral symptoms- my colleagues at the Bedford VA are seeing this. It's always best to intervene before behavioral symptoms become difficult to manage.
- Be mindful of safety risk. Vets with cognitive impairment are at increased risk for falls. While every veteran has the "right to fall," consider extra precautions to reduce the risk for falls & serious injury (i.e. ultra low bed, fall mats if they won't become trip hazards, bed alarms, call lights, etc.).
- Monitor for skin breakdown, especially if the person is bedbound or isolated to their room. But prioritize health and safety needs (remember hierarchy of patient needs).
- Consider fluid balance. Vets with cognitive impairment may have poor PO intake- consider the balance between fluid needs and overload.
- Vets with cognitive impairment may have difficulty expressing emotions- remember that being confused is already a scary state to be in.
- Don't forget to wash veterans' hands frequently (esp. if they have cognitive impairment)

Words of wisdom:

- Empathy goes a long way. Continue to provide *VETERAN-CENTERED CARE*, not covid-centered care.
- You have the RN education and knowledge, your judgment will go a long way. Use your skills of assessment and always consider the veterans "norm" for any possible change in status. You can also question any order if it doesn't seem right.
- This time is pandemic mentality and while everything is an emergency, YOUR HEALTH is also top priority. Just like you wouldn't run into an Ebola + room without protection, you need protection before treating someone with covid-19. You can't help anyone if you get sick.



Congratulations to the 2019-2020 Post-Baccalaureate RN Residency Program and Transition to Practice RN Residency Program Graduates!



Applying for 2021-2022 VA Boston HCS Post-Baccalaureate RN Resident Positions

The Boston VA Healthcare System is pleased to announce that applications for the 2020-2021 Post-Baccalaureate RN Residency (PBNR) program are being requested and accepted beginning **December 1, 2020**. The VA Boston Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency program has been developed to improve the quality of patient care by providing additional training and support to new BSN graduates. This is a 12 month in length training program which incorporates a clinical, didactic, experiential learning and evidence based practice curriculum. This is a wonderful opportunity to make nursing history!

REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be U.S. Citizen.
- Graduated from a CCNE, CNEA, or ACEN accredited program with a BSN or Direct Entry MSN, between **08/2020 and 06/2021**.
- Proficient in written and spoken English.
- Background & Security Investigation are required.
- Pass pre-trainee physical examination.
- Random Drug Testing is required.
- Obtain current, unrestricted RN license no later than August 1, 2021.

APPLYING:

If you meet the stated requirements above and are interested in this 12-month New Graduate BSN training program, please submit the following:

1. **RESUME:** no more than 2 pages.
2. **PERSONAL STATEMENT:** 400 words "Why I Wish to be Selected for the VA Boston HCS RN Residency Program".
3. **THREE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATIONS:** TWO from school faculty (one must be a clinical faculty) and **ONE** from Nurse Manager/Assistant Nurse Manager of Unit of Senior Capstone Experience (or if you are employed as NA or PCA- your current immediate Nurse supervisor) place sealed envelope or e-mailed directly from School Faculty/Nurse Manager to Nurse Recruiter at: BostonVANurse@va.gov.
4. **TRANSCRIPTS:** Official from school, sealed envelope.
5. **DD-214:** submit if applicant is a Veteran.

COMPLETE APPLICATION MATERIALS MUST BE POSTMARKED OR EMAILED BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS (COB)

April 15, 2021.

Submit to: NURSE RECRUITER, VA Boston HCS, 940 Belmont Street (118), Brockton, MA 02301

Fax: 774-826-1115 E-mail: BostonVANurse@va.gov Program is expected to begin **August 2021**