

Extra: Lives Outside the Hospital

NICCU Nurse by Night, Award-Winning Author by Day

By Vicki Cho Estrada

Twenty years ago, Victoria Pniel, RNC-NIC, Newborn Infant and Critical Care Unit (NICCU), began her literary career writing two novels—a contemporary retelling of a Greek myth set in West Hollywood, and a love story about two childhood sweethearts as they come of age in Israel.

After several stops and starts, she self-published both novels last year. To Pniel's surprise, both works received acclaim from literary groups that celebrate outstanding work in lesbian literature and LGBT fiction and nonfiction.

Her first novel, "The Art of Peeling an Orange," was nominated for Lambda, Golden Crown Literary Society and Rainbow awards, and her second, "A Small Country About to Vanish," won Golden Crown's 2016 Goldie Award in the dramatic/general fiction category.

"Receiving the Goldie was such a magical moment in my life," says Pniel, who received the award in July at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. "There were 33 books nominated in my category and some of my co-finalists are big stars who have won awards before. It's nice to be recognized for something you love to do."

Pniel, whose pen name is Victoria Avilan—a combination of her two brothers' names, Aviram and Ilan—took an early interest in writing, which stems from her lifelong love for reading.

"I write what I want to read. My style is experimental—I don't follow a particular genre, but a mix of genres. I put together stories that feel completely original," says Pniel, who is working on her third book, a psychological thriller.



Victoria Pniel, RNC-NIC

Writing offers her many rewards, including a relief from working nights with critically ill children in the NICCU. "Nursing takes everything out of you, but you get so much back. When I have days off, I write. It makes me happy and keeps me alive."

Despite her literary success, she has no plans to give up her 31-year nursing career. "I love to write and I also love being a nurse. I'm very lucky—I have the best of both worlds." ■

Nurses in Action

Friendship, Fitness and Community

By Elena Epstein



The CHLA Adventure Club at Mt. Wilson

It was over coffee at Mary's Market, a local Sierra Madre hangout, that Sue Martinez, RN (5 East), and Ani Yeremian, RN (CV Acute), first got to know each other. The two nurses have worked at CHLA for years, but didn't realize they lived in the same neighborhood. Nor did they know how much they had in common.

Martinez had recently lost both her parents and Yeremian had lost an aunt, who was like a mother to her. They were both grieving and feeling vulnerable. They found strength in each other and discovered the therapeutic power of hiking together.

"We just hit it off right away and really understood each other's ups and downs," says Yeremian. "It felt like I was talking to my mirror image."

The two nurses would talk and hike. While listening to birds chirping and the sounds of their footsteps in nature, they shared their most intimate feelings of loss and sadness, as well as the joys of raising their children, friends and work. With each hike, they felt more whole and happier.

"Our hikes are so good for our mind and our soul," says Martinez. "That's why we wanted to expand it to our CHLA family."

Since that first meeting a little over a year ago, the two colleagues have become close friends and collaborators on creating the CHLA Adventure Club, to share their love of the outdoors. The group, which has grown to over 300 members including nurses, physicians and other care partners, welcomes all levels of hikers.

Since its inception, the main participants have done over 60 hikes—and lost over 100 pounds among them. They not only do this for their physical and mental well-being, but they are also improving the environment by cleaning the trails on every hike.

"We have members from all different units and it's so amazing to get to know each other on a whole different level," says Martinez. "This has been life-changing for me."

For more information, search for the CHLA Adventure Club on Facebook. ■

A Different Way of Caring

Nurses across CHLA are exper

by Candace Pearson



Maria Gannon, RN

Maria Gannon, RN, has always been “hands-on and geeky,” she says. If a monitor breaks in the Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit (NICCU), she’s the kind of nurse who wishes she could get out a screwdriver and fix it.

So, when the 35-year employee at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles hit an unfamiliar period of burnout at year 22, she looked for ways to fix that, too. She found it in the form of a new job, off the beaten track.

First, she volunteered to work on a new nursing documentation system in the intensive care units, a precursor to the KIDS system, and started teaching herself about computers. She made an important discovery: “I love everything about them.” Soon she was splitting her time in the NICCU with working as a KIDS analyst.

Today Gannon is manager of Clinical Information Systems, committed to developing and refining a system that “minimizes the time nurses spend away from the bedside.”

Gannon is an example of nurses across CHLA who hold unusual jobs—atypical or even one-of-a-kind positions that allow them to step into emerging specialties, influence the hospital environment and shape the nursing profession. What these frontrunners share is a willingness to embrace change and take charge.

Mission: Knowledge

Rebecca Dahl, PhD, RN, CIP, was an operating room nurse for many years when she got bitten by

the research bug. After earning her doctorate, she became a research specialist, then site director, of a nationwide Medicare study based in Tucson, Arizona. The job came with membership on an Institutional Review Board (IRB), which protects the rights and welfare of human research subjects. The first time she attended an IRB meeting, she thought, “This would be my ideal job.”

Later, Dahl became the director of Human Subject Protection at the University of Arizona, a post she held for eight years. In 2009, she decided to move to Los Angeles, when CHLA recruited her to head up its Human Subjects Protection Program. As director, she ensures efficient management of CHLA’s IRB, known as the Children’s Hospital Los Angeles Institutional Review Board.

She has developed an Investigators Manual to guide researchers—CHLA has more than 1,500 open investigations at any one time—and holds a monthly “Tea With the IRB” for the research community. The work gives her a front-row seat to bold ideas. “It’s exciting to see so much cutting-edge research that could improve children’s lives,” says Dahl, who hasn’t yet met any other nurse in her position.

Continual Improvement

Karen Prommer, MS, RN, CPHRM, holds a rare dual role as chief risk manager for both CHLA and the CHLA Medical Group. The separation is collegial, she says of the program she built from the ground up. She maintains a clear division between her two employers, complete with two sets of records.

Working with collaborators hospital-wide, Prommer evaluates any safety issues or concerns in the effort to, ultimately, mitigate human and financial loss. “Miracles happen here every day,” she notes. “Our role is to continually improve the system and ensure the best environment for staff and patients.”

Her nursing skills in organization, prioritizing and judgment aid her in “knowing when to ‘stop the line’ and ask questions,” she says.

Big-Picture View

David Davis, MN, RN, chief quality officer for CHLA, also calls on his clinical perspective—29 years in general pediatrics and bone marrow transplant nursing—as vice president for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety. Among his tasks is providing leadership for 37 ambulatory care clinics and for clinical information systems.

Davis sees his main job as stepping back and looking at the big picture—“to strategize and connect the dots for staff about why the hospital is undertaking certain initiatives.”

He’s proud of implementing CHLA’s Patient “Safe and Sound” Curriculum and educating 2,000-plus staff, to consistently positive reviews. “If people understand why they’re doing something,” says Davis, “they’re much more likely to engage in the process.”

Focus on Wellness

Alan Hermanson, MSN, FNP, also takes a holistic view of the health of his patients—in his case,



Karen Prommer, MS, RN, CPHRM, and David Davis, MN, RN

Expanding the definition of nursing as they take on atypical jobs.



Alan Hermanson, MSN, FNP

fellow employees. Hermanson is manager of Employee Health and Workers' Compensation, and under his charge is the Employee Health Services (EHS) clinic, which logs over 14,000 patient visits annually at CHLA's Sunset Boulevard campus. He also directs the hospital's successful annual flu clinic.

Hermanson's two-plus decades of experience as an emergency room nurse practitioner comes in handy. On-the-job injuries and illnesses can include anything from rare skin diseases to heart attacks and seizure disorders.

He's passionate about total worker health—on the job and off. Illness and wellness are 24/7, says Hermanson, who wants to improve employee well-being and reduce hospital costs. "Studies show if you can control just one chronic illness, you can achieve up to a 77 percent reduction in the likelihood of that person having a work-related injury or illness."

Sky's No Limit

Judy Sherif, MNA, RN, CPN, program administrator for the Alan Purwin Emergency Transport Program, is one of a select few employees whose job comes with wheels and wings. She has managed to combine her love of flying—she earned her pilot's license in 1978—with her love of emergency critical care.

Emergency Transport nurses have advanced critical-care skills and they call on them in a constantly moving environment. "In the air or going lights and sirens down the street, you need astute observation skills," says Sherif. "And you have to be able to MacGyver things together when something stops working midflight."

She has MacGyvered a unique career, adding research to a busy to-do list, including such topics as cerebral oxygenation monitoring in transport and the impact of noise and vibration, which led to the use of aviation headsets for neonates in the air.

International Impact

Cecily Betz, PhD, RN, FAAN, has gone global. She's an expert in health care transition planning for youth with special care needs and co-chairs the international Health Care Transition Research Consortium. In her "day job," she serves as director of Nursing Training and Research at the USC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at CHLA.

Betz also heads a task force drafting guidelines for standards of care in "Pediatric Nursing for Children, Adolescents and Families," collaborating with 16 nursing organizations. And she is founder and editor in chief of the *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, official publication of the Society of Pediatric Nurses and the Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society. "This is a different way of approaching care," she says, "and having an influence on a much broader audience."

She can trace the inspiration for her singular job to CHLA nurses in the 1970s, who began writing about family-centered care. "That was great role modeling for me," Betz says. She knew then that this was the nursing she wanted to do. "I ask myself, 'What can I do to make things better?' That's what drives me." ■



Judy Sherif, MNA, RN, CPN

A Conversation With ...

Bobby Hett, BSN, RN,
Unit Lead NICCU



Bobby Hett, BSN, RN

Best life advice: Long-term plans are helpful, but go with the flow. Sometimes life leads you to opportunities you can't imagine in your early years.

Favorite movie: "Parenthood"

Best #hashtag to describe you: #whatsahashtag?

Favorite day-off spot: Zuma Beach

Favorite part of your job: Solving problems and surmounting technical challenges posed by really tiny patients.

Your personal motto: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

Favorite comfort food: Meatloaf and mashed potatoes

Guilty pleasure: Good India pale ale

The best worst decision of your life: Agreeing to have another child who will be 17 years old when I hit 67! So far it's been fun, but ask me again in 15 years.

Tell us something that would surprise your coworkers: My first job was mowing grass in a cemetery.

What sets your heart on fire? My wife

What makes working at CHLA special? Coworkers and friends. Our unit is unique in terms of neonatal patient populations, and having supportive, caring people around has been a key factor in my decision to stay at CHLA.

Best advice for nurses just starting their careers: Ask lots of "dumb" questions in your first two years. No one expects you to know much early on, so be curious and learn from the experiences of older RNs. Say "yes" as often as you can to assignments and roles that provide opportunities for growth.

If you weren't a nurse, what would you be? In advertising and public relations

What do you do when not working? I'm a lousy gardener, but I enjoy tending tomatoes when I have the time. I follow the Green Bay Packers obsessively. Mostly, I enjoy my role as the family handyman and just hanging around the house with my wife and kids.

FloSheet Chronicles

Celebrating the accomplishments and milestones of CHLA nurses

Presentations

Paula Belson and **Judy Koempel** (Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine): "Ambulatory Pediatric Anesthesia," California Association of Nurse Anesthetists Fall Meeting, Rancho Mirage, CA, October 2016.

Erin Benekos (Hematology-Oncology): "Navigating Uncharted Waters: Embracing the Tides of Transition," Fifth Annual West Coast Sickle Cell Nurse's Conference, CHLA, September 2016.

Desirae Clark (Radiation Oncology): "Pilot Study to Implement a Quality of Life Survey as a Clinical Tool in an Underserved Pediatric Cancer Population," poster, American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO) National Conference, Boston, MA, September 2016.

Allan Cresencia (Post-Anesthesia Care Unit): "Pediatric Syndromes and Their Conundrums," poster presentation, nominated by UCLA School of Nursing as a Rising Star of Research and Scholarship Invited Student Poster, Sigma Theta Tau, Inc. 27th International Research Congress, Cape Town, South Africa, July 2016; "Pediatric Anesthesia: Basic and Advanced," PeriAnesthesia Nurses Association of California 37th Annual Meeting and Seminar, San Diego, CA, October 2016.

Debbie Jury (Pain Service): "Effective Pain Management," "Interventional Therapies for Pain Management," Versant™ RN Residency Program; "RN Transition Program: Understanding Pain Management and Regional Therapies in the Pediatric Population," RN Transition Program, CHLA, September 2016.

Sheila Kun (Pediatric Pulmonology): "Altitude Testing for Children: Who Is at Risk for Hypoxia at High Altitudes?" poster presentation, 15th International Congress on Pediatric Pulmonary (CIPP SV), Naples, Italy, June 2016; "Ensuring Safe Transition to Home for Children on Home Mechanical Ventilation," oral presentation, CHEST 2016 Conference, American College of Chest Physicians, Los Angeles, CA, October 2016.

Ruth E. Lemus (Cardiac Rehabilitation): "Aorta Case Studies" and "Worst Coded Scenarios," Advances in Quality Outcomes: A Data Managers Meeting, Society of Thoracic Surgeons, September 2016.

Mary McCulley (Pain Service): "Alternatives in Pain Management for Critically Ill Children: More Than Just Pain Meds," lecture, Contemporary Forums Pediatric Critical Care & Emergency Nursing Conference, San Diego, CA, October 2016.

Susanne Matich (Interventional Radiology): "Advanced Practice Nurse and Physician Assistant Credentialing in California," Society for Interventional Radiology, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, April 2016; with **Amy Lohmann** (Interventional Radiology): "A Cystic Fibrosis Update and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit Management of the Cystic Fibrosis Patient Undergoing Bronchial Artery Embolization," radiology nursing staff monthly education and staff meeting, CHLA, March 2016.

Johanna Navia (4 East), **Diane Altounji** (4 West) and **Liberty Garcia** (4 West): "Back to Basics: Implementation and Compliance of a Daily Hygiene Bundle," poster presentation, Association of Pediatric Hematology Oncology Nurses (APHON) Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN, September 2016.

Mary Baron Nelson (Hematology-Oncology): "Brain Imaging Findings After Cancer Treatment in Childhood—State of the Science" and "Evidence-Based Practice: Beyond the Basics," APHON Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN, September 2016.

Tina Quintana, **Mary Moses**, **Shannon Arredondo**, **Swati Saibe** and **Kerry Vancura** (Hematology-Oncology): "Safety and Chemotherapy: Utilizing Technology to Improve and Standardize

Our Practice," poster presentation, APHON Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN, September 2016.

DeRynn Thompson (Transfusion Medicine), **David Davis** (Quality Improvement) and **Linda Weeks** (Information Systems): "Barriers in Blood Transfusion Documentation in Electronic Medical Records," poster presentation, American Association of Blood Banks, Orlando, FL, and CHLA Education Fair, October 2016.

Kirsten Triemstra, **Kristyn Richards** and **Shannon Snow** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit): "STEP in the Right Direction: An EBP Approach to Conflict Resolution," poster presentation, Society of Pediatric Nurses Los Angeles Chapter Conference, Los Angeles, CA, November 2016.

Kelsey Wong (Float Team): "Nurse Fatigue: Causes of and Strategies to Minimize Fatigue," poster presentation, first place for research posters, UCLA Health's 15th Annual Research and Evidence-Based Practice Conference, September 2016.

Publications

Sheila Kun (Pediatric Pulmonology): "Congenital Central Hypoventilation Syndrome: Diagnostic and Management Challenges," Dove Medical Press, August 2016.

Susanne Matich (Interventional Radiology): "Just Pediatrics: Pediatric Minor Head Injury, CT Imaging, and Evidence-Based Practice in Emergency Departments," Journal of Radiology Nursing, June 2016.

Professional Achievements

Anna Evans (Neuro-Oncology): Dianne Fochtman New Author Award, for "Pregnancy in a Patient With a Malignant Brain Tumor Taking Temozolomide: Case Report and Review of the Literature," manuscript published in the Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing, APHON Conference, Indianapolis, IN, September 2016.

Pik Lin Choy (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit): GEM Award, Nurse.com, July 2016.

Susanne Matich (Interventional Radiology): Selected and featured as the pediatric nurse practitioner for online roundtable instructional sessions, USC MSN Nursing Course, "Clinical Management of Childbearing/Childrearing Family Master Plan."

DAISY Award: **Paul Jennings** (Bone Marrow Transplant Unit), July 2016; **Laura Klee** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit), September 2016; **Nora Delgado** (5 East), October 2016; **Shushana Sargsyan Arusyak** (6 East), November 2016; **Reneta Jones** (4 West), December 2016.

Academic Achievements

BSN: **Veronica Wallace** (Radiology).

MSN: **Sandy Hall** (Versant RN Residency), in education, along with nurse executive certification; **Feri Kiani** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Sandra Lee** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit), in nursing administration; **Sandy Salinas** (4 East), family nurse practitioner; **Kelsey Wong** (Float Team), in education; **Andrea Zaballero** (6 West), pediatric nurse practitioner.

Certifications

CCRN: **Angela Romack** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit).

CNP: **Jane Bergantz** (6 West); **Leah Carrillo** (6 West); **Marita Gethers** (Radiology); **Jenny Kim** (Cardiovascular Acute); **Helen Kim** (6 East); **Cindy Lee** (6 West); **Andrea Muller** (6 West); **Irma Quijano** (6 East); **Laura Riojas** (5 West); **Emily Takayama-Shin** (5 East); **Andrea Tim** (Rehab).

CPHON: **Kaitlin O'Rourke** (4 East).

CRRN: **Margaret Lisa Atmodjo**, **Phan Leopando**, **Amy Nguyen**, **Mae Beline Santos** (Rehabilitation).

RNC-NIC: **Lauren Britowich**, **Katie Cusick**, **Hilary Sibilia** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit).

RN III: **Christi Avella** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit); **Kari Gleason** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Michelle Machado** and **Sarah Velasco** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit).

Promotions

Maria Theresa Alquiros (Cardiovascular Acute): nurse care manager, Cardiothoracic Surgery Interstage Clinic.

Brenda Gallardo (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit): NICCU education manager.

Maria Gannon (Clinical Information Systems): manager, KIDS.

DeRynn Thompson (Transfusion Medicine): lead, Patient Blood Management.

Life Celebrations

Marriages

Terrie Ballard (Vascular Access Team); **Alexandra Kasioiumis** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Emily LaNovara** (Cardiovascular Acute); **Jennifer Lee** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Renita Olsen** (4 West); **Shinny Thomas** (Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine); **April Punsal** (Quality Improvement and Patient Safety).

Births

Boys: **Brooke Camplin** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Genevée Del Rosario** (Rehabilitation); **Amanda Grove** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Jennifer Herrmann** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Alisa Nelson** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Amanda Price** (Rehabilitation); **Grace Sekayan** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit); **Judy Ulloa** (Bone Marrow Transplant); **Cindy Varela** (Rehabilitation); **Rose Wolf** (Bone Marrow Transplant).

Girls: **Lisa Buckley** (4 East); **Ashley Dunser** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit); **Cherry Altobar** (Heart Institute); **Stephanie Gill** (5 East); **Hoo Lynn Everson** (5 East); **Ellen McCoy** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Swati Saiben** (4 West).

Twins: **Jamie Lin** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit), boy and girl.

Community

Athletics—Malibu Nautica Triathlon: **Jesi Bernardo**, **Mary Duffy**, **Erin Grade**, **Cindy Lee**, **Rosanna Preall**, **Tamara Sibala**, **Stephanie Webb** (6 West); **Kriselle Farrales**, **Julie Hoss**, **Joey Manzo**, **Marites Narciso** (5 West); **Brittney Foldvary**, **Courtney Mount**, **Lauren Paz**, **Miki Satto** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Danielle Ganes** and **Alvin Rocha** (Cardiovascular Acute); **Razelle Talle** (Emergency Department), September 2016; Fifth Annual Shoreline Half Marathon, 5K, 10K, July 2016. Team Mercedes, named for a CHLA nurse who is fighting cancer, winners, first place, 5K—**Rhodora Fernandez**, **Julie Hines**, **Jennifer Meyers**, **Elizabeth Nakamura**, **Jace Vargaf-Weisser** (Post-Anesthesia Care Unit), **Cheryl Camacho** (Access Center), **Margaux Chan** (Magnet Program), Ventura, CA, July 2016; Mt. Whitney Climb: **Sonja Alli-Casella** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit), September 2016.

Volunteering—Seventh Annual Disaster Olympix: **Justin Armour**, **Rosina Garcia**, **Megan Frew**, **Artressa Ng** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit), first place; **Lupe Hernandez**, **Kathryne Martinez**, **Lauren Miller**, **Erica Ramirez** (5 West); **Lisa Buckley**, **David Chavez**, **Diane Grade**, **Johanna Navia**, **Kaitlin O'Rourke** (4 East).

FloSheet is compiled with the assistance of **Karen Lampert** (Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine). In addition, we would like to thank **Debbie Jury** (Pain Service) for her invaluable contributions. Thanks, as well, to all the nurses who share items about their activities and accomplishments.

Transforming Lives for Transgender Youth

By Vicki Cho Estrada



Nancy Lee, RN, MSN, NEA-BC,
Senior Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer

Every year, I take a weekend trip with my sisters and we talk about everything. Well, during this year's trip, there was one thing I couldn't stop talking about—how much I'm enjoying my new job. Being here for the past six months has proved that Children's Hospital Los Angeles' reputation is absolutely true—this is a very special place.

It didn't take much time for me to realize just how unique this hospital is. And I'm reminded of it every single day. CHLA President and CEO Paul Viviano and I do rounds together each month, and in every single unit we see a consistent pattern of professionalism, compassion, clinical knowledge and collaboration. I'm so impressed with our nursing staff and their level of expertise and commitment to the patients and families.

I was in the Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit a couple of weeks ago and I watched one of our nurses lead the interdisciplinary team in rounds. Seeing how well everyone comes together and shares ideas to create the best course of treatment for each patient is extraordinary.

I have not seen this level of support and respect for nurses from physicians and other care partners anywhere else. We have advocates everywhere in this hospital. I know families feel this sense of unity when they walk through the doors.

I was recently chatting with one of our parking attendants in the HBO Café and he knew many of the moms by first name. He truly values his role in making life a little easier for a family during a very difficult time. You just don't see this level of commitment in other hospitals.

Spending my first holiday season at CHLA was another reminder of the magic that happens here. There are potlucks, therapy dogs, decorations, toys, singing—just so much camaraderie, bonding and joy that our staff creates not only for the patients and families, but also for each other.

I'm very grateful to be a part of this team and I look forward to a terrific new year together. Happy 2017! ■



Bianca Salvetti, MSN, CNS, CPNP

The first time transgender patients walk through the doors of the Center for Transyouth Health and Development at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Bianca Salvetti, MSN, CNS, CPNP, is already familiar with many of their stories and struggles. They're anxious, sometimes suicidal, and uncomfortable in their own skin.

But a few months later, she begins to see their lives transformed—both physically and mentally—and their worlds open to new possibilities.

Salvetti is part of a team that treats patients who have an internal gender identity that differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Through the Center, which is part of the hospital's Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, transgender patients receive hormonal intervention, mental health, health education, peer support and advocacy services.

The Division has been providing information and medical intervention to assist transgender youth in their transition process for nearly 20 years. In 2012, the Center was created in response to the growing number of patients—now numbering about 700—and the need for a separate identity.

As the only nurse dedicated to the center, which is down the street from the main hospital on Sunset Boulevard, Salvetti has far-ranging duties, including assessing transyouth patients at the Teen and Young Adult Health Center, administering hormone injections and teaching patients how to administer them at home, dealing with insurance companies for treatment inquiries and approvals, and more.

"The transitioning process is unique to each patient. Some want hormone injections and surgical procedures; some want puberty blocker implants or gender confirmation surgery. Others may not want

anything, but are exploring their options," says Salvetti, noting Children's Hospital surgeons can perform puberty blocker implants and removals, but inquiries regarding gender confirmation surgeries are referred to outside clinics.

She joined the Transyouth Center in 2012, following a period in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), and underwent training to better understand transgender terminology and sensitivities, including calling patients by their affirmed name.

Salvetti has found she now fills a larger role providing support for patients and their families. "There's a lot of feelings and emotions. Some parents have a really hard time dealing with their child's identity," she says.

One of the biggest challenges is helping these families through the transition process, adds Tony Blanco, RN, who works at the Teen and Young Adult Health Center.

"Parents are losing the image of the child they birthed; a picture of who they thought their child would become is being taken away, not realizing that is who their child has been all along," he says. "Many have gone through issues before they're here. We try and help them understand the changes and process."

The greatest reward is seeing the instant these patients feel "like they're being set free," he says. "The moment I see in their eyes that they are being seen the way they want to be seen ... that's a magical moment."

Salvetti echoes his comments and adds, "It's rewarding to see these young people blossom." ■

FloSheet

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Bedside's Best

Pain, Pain, Go Away

By Vicki Cho Estrada



Robin Goodman, RN, MSN, CPEN, and Laura DuFour, RN, BSN, CPN, CEN, with Buzzy

Nurses in the Emergency Department (ED) at Children's Hospital Los Angeles have been using a bee and a lady bug with cold pack wings and vibrating power to help keep patients more comfortable during such prickly procedures as inserting IVs, finger sticks and blood draws.

The device, known as Buzzy, is a drug-free pain blocker that provides natural pain relief in seconds when placed near the procedure site. Disguised

as colorful, kid-friendly insects, ice wings cool and provide a numbing sensation while vibration desensitizes the area.

Used at hospitals and clinics nationwide, Buzzy takes a "gate control" approach, shutting down the common pathway for sharp pain to the brain by overwhelming the body's pain nerves with cold and stimulating vibration (e.g., placing a burned finger under cold water).

A former ED nurse learned about the device at a conference in 2014 and presented its uses and benefits to the hospital's Clinical Practice Council. Soon after, Robin Goodman, RN, MSN, CPEN, prepared a departmental policy on Buzzy's usage, and Laura DuFour, RN, BSN, CPN, CEN, provided training and education to staff.

"Buzzy is a great distraction and gives us another tool for pain management," says Goodman, noting the department started with one handheld, battery-operated device, but it kept getting lost on the unit.

That's when Judy Demello, RN, MSN, came up with the idea last year to create bright orange "pain caddies" to house not only Buzzy, but other pain-numbing treatments, including an oral solution and cold spray.

"Before the caddies, we'd have to walk to different areas, such as the medicine room and closet, to get pain treatment. But now, all these items are in one location at each nurse's station, so they're at the front and more easily accessible and within reach," says DuFour.

Since the Buzzy devices found their home in the pain caddies, they have become more visible and more widely used. They have been well-received by both patients and nurses, with some staff members buying Buzzy for their own children.

"Buzzy gives us another tool to enhance a patient's experience," adds DuFour. ■