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12. What is a Nurse Engagement & Retention Program Manager

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What is a Nurse Engagement & Retention Program Manager?

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The Nurse Engagement & Retention Program Manager role is unique to UC San Diego Health (UCSDH) and is responsible for creating and maintaining initiatives to improve and sustain the engagement and retention of our nursing staff. Rather than reporting to Human Resources like other engagement roles might, this position reports to the Nursing Education, Development and Research (EDR) Department.

The EDR Department is home to the UC San Diego Health Magnet Program which supports initiatives designed to empower, educate, recognize and, ultimately, retain our nursing staff.

The role often serves as a liaison between nursing staff and leadership, and other inter-organization departments such as Human Resources, Learning & Organization Effectiveness, The Office of Experience, The Healer Education Assessment and Referral (HEAR) Program and others committed to successfully achieving goals of the UC San Diego Health Strategic Framework and the Nursing Strategic Plan (2021-2025). Both plans include goals to increase engagement, investment in our culture and a reduction of turn-over.

The Nursing Strategic Plan and Magnet Mission are reinforced by the work of this role through the promotion and facilitation of programs, resources and activities designed to

elevate our nurses' overall commitment and connection to UC San Diego Health.

Engagement and recognition programs are created and improved based on feedback and data obtained from nurses and nurse leaders from one on one interviews, Shared Governance committee participation, focus groups and employee surveys.

An important aspect of the role is that it provides a safe, confidential environment for nurses who may seek to discuss sensitive topics regarding their role, team, leadership and surroundings. As the Nurse Engagement & Retention Program Manager, I provide a listening ear to our nurses and, when suitable, can offer advice on how to approach an uncomfortable situation through different communication techniques. If appropriate, I provide necessary resources to a nurse to help escalate their concerns as needed, however usually all that is required is a supportive conversation.

Nurses often reach out for my assistance when seeking information regarding the plethora of resources, programs, perks and benefits available at UC San Diego Health. One of my top responsibilities is promoting the professional development opportunities provide to our nurses, such as the Nurses in Transition Mentoring program, Bridges to Nursing



Laura Rossi is the UC San Diego Health's Nurse Engagement and Retention Specialist With a Bachelors from the School of Communication at Michigan State University, Laura has worked for the Nursing Education, Development and Research Department since 2017. Laura refers to herself as a "Nurse Concierge", taking great pride in providing multi-level support, resources and recognition to all nurses at UC San Diego Health. Feel free to reach out to her with questions Inrossi@health.ucsd.edu.



2022 Nurse's Day Celebration



2022 Nurse's Night at Petco Park

Excellence, and the UCSD Professional Track Series program.

My goal is to continuously improve UCSDH nurses' experience- which can mean something different to each of our nurses. I am a resource for non-clinical questions or issues related to topics such as: basic orientation, inter-professional relationship concerns, career development interests, or to simply offer direction on where to find resources within the UC San Diego Health websites and services.

A big (and very rewarding!) part of my role is nurse recognition! I am lucky enough to be a part of the Image of Nursing Committee, a nurse-led Shared Governance committee designed to elevate recognition of the nursing profession through award programs and appreciation events.

These events and awards honor our incredible UC San Diego Health nurses for their dedication, outstanding performance and commitment to quality patient care and nursing excellence. A few examples include:

- 6-month Milestone Magnet lapel pins and handwritten notecards sent out to welcome and celebrate the completion of the mandatory probation period.
- Rookie of the Year Awards, presented to ten new hires a year. We celebrate by bringing "Rookie Cookies" to the

unit along with a certificate signed by our Chief Nursing Officer, Margarita Baggett and a gift card.

- *The DAISY Award is a national award which honors twelve nurses per year, who have demonstrated exemplary acts of compassion to a patient and their family.*
- *Certified Nurses Day Celebration is a morning event held in March to show appreciation to our exceptional Certified Nurses dedicated to advanced education through specialty certification. We provide sweet treats and personal gratitude by way of posters and verbal connection.*
- *Nurse Appreciation Week is recognized annually, May 6-12, and is filled with fun events and gifts designed to celebrate and appreciate the incredible work our nurses accomplish every day!*
- *The Excellence of Nursing Awards recognize the inspiring, innovative and world class care demonstrated by the UC San Diego Health Nursing Department.*

I am grateful UC San Diego Health has invested in this unique program devoted to nurse engagement, recognition and retention. The Nurse Engagement and Retention Program Manager role would not be a success

without the active support and partnership of nursing leadership and all of the interprofessional colleagues, in multiple departments, who provide the opportunity to positively impact our nurses' experience by caring for them the way they care for their patients, our community and one another.