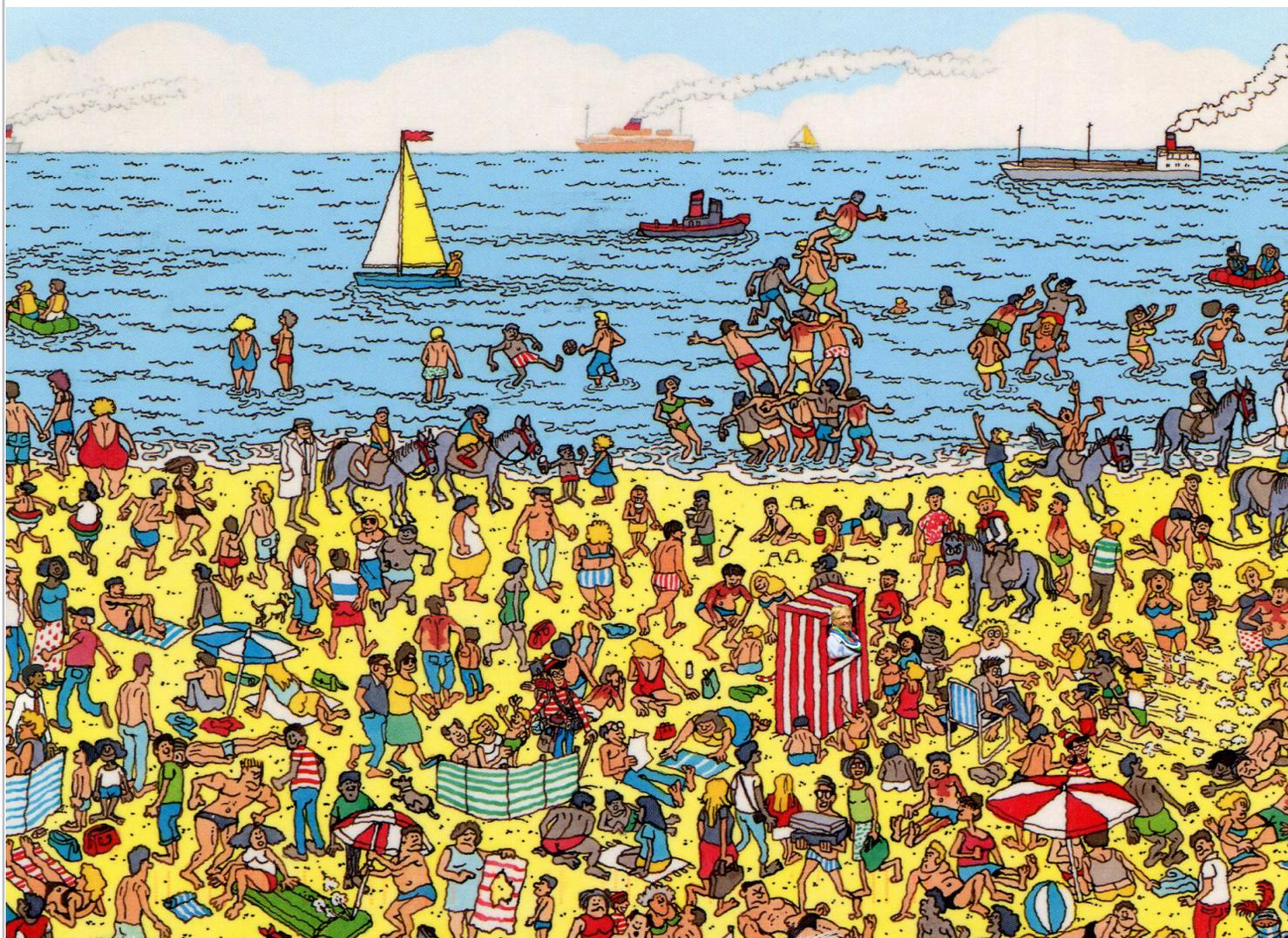




Spring 2014

Where's Shella?



I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of being at another VA. Especially, when that VA is in the Pacific Islands (Hawaii). I have learned so much from the people and I will cherish the opportunity I have had to serve Veterans in another place. Naturally, my activities outside of the VA are amazing! Some of the beach activities I have enjoyed are: snorkeling, kayaking, and paddling in an outrigger canoe. I still want to try stand up paddle boarding, but for me, it will possibly be more like lying flat on my belly and trying to stay on the paddle board. But, it will be fun trying. I attended my first PGA tournament, the Sony Open at the Waialae Country Club. I will attend my first NFL pro bowl game in "Aloha" Stadium while I am here. Speaking of Aloha, I have learned that there are three meanings of Aloha. The first meaning of "aloha" is "hello". The second meaning of "aloha" is "good bye." The third meaning, that I think is the most important, is "love", but the meaning I want to mention is the "good bye" to.....Hawaii. But, "hello" to Salt Lake City. I plan to return to Salt Lake City by the end of January. There are many things I will miss, but none more than I have missed my team in Salt Lake City. Eileen has done a great job serving you and I thank her for her leadership. I have also learned the term "A hui Hou".....See you soon!

- Shella

The Stress is Killing Me! 11 Tips to Cope at Work

By LeAnn Thieman – Nursetogehter.com

In these challenging times, nurses have to do more with less and often feel frazzled and frantic, instead of calm and efficient. Excessive stress can interfere with your productivity and deplete you physically, mentally and spiritually.

It's good to remember that some stress is normal and healthy. Eustress is the "good" stress that every living biological life form has. It allows us to be productive when everything around us is changing. But the U.S. Surgeon General claimed 80% of non-traumatic deaths are stress related.

Stress is literally killing us.

Breathe. The best stress reducer is slow deep easy breathing. Rhythmic activities, like breathing, laughing, walking, etc release endorphins in our brains and make us feel calmer. No matter where you are you can take 3 minutes to breathe through your nose In-2-3-4 and Out-2-3-4, slow and deep, from your abdomen. Doing this 4 or more times a day and during

stressful situations is the easiest and most effective way to reduce stress.

Leave early. How many, like me, race to get dressed, gobble or omit a meal, drop kids at daycare, drive too fast to work, stop for coffee- stop! Try to add ten minutes to your schedule to begin your day with ease, not stress.

Eat. Our stamina, patience, and efficiency are depleted when we aren't nourished. Eat a meal before your shift. Eat nutritiously and timely during your work time. We know this. We teach it. Eat.

Run! Or walk, or take the stairs. A great stress buster is exercise. Take a few minutes to jog up and down the stairs. Many facilities have exercise rooms or walking tracks. Take a ten minute break to do a rhythmic exercise to reduce stress and increase endorphin release.

Sleep and rest. Studies show the human body requires 8 hours of sleep per night. Stress and

worry can interrupt sleep and the resulting fatigue contributes to stress. It's a vicious circle. Shut off the technology at bedtime. Get more sleep. Take ten minutes during your shift and find a quiet place to close your eyes and rest to reduce tension and boost energy.

Laugh! Science proves it really is the best medicine. Laughter reduces tension, lifts spirits, and bonds us with others. In our stressful, sometimes painful work, nurses need permission to laugh. Create a laughter bulletin board for funny cartoon, jokes or old prom pictures! Smile...its contagious, making people and situations more pleasant.

Think Positive. We usually get what we expect in life, what we think about, what we visualize. Avoid negative people; they pull you down. Make a "Grumpy Jar" at work. (Have a contest to name it. That will make you laugh!) Require all naysayers and stinking-thinkers to put a quarter in the jar for each negative statement made. Then have a Positivity Party with the

We Want to Hear

From You!

We encourage you to contribute to the Nightingale Newsletter. We want to hear about you, your co-workers, or your department. Tell us about an outstanding staff member, a unique experience, or whatever you want to share with your fellow nursing staff.

E-mail Ismael.Quiroz@va.gov or call ext. 4399

The Stress is Killing Me! 11 Tips to Cope at Work

-Continued

proceeds!

Meditate. Take a few minutes in the break room or bathroom (some days they're the same thing!) to breath deeply and pray and/or meditate. Handing things over to your Higher Power takes the stress off your shoulders. Take a few minutes to stop by the chapel...that's why it's there.

Talk to someone (but not a stinking-thinker.) Pick a positive coworker to share your thoughts and stressors. Often verbalizing the problem helps put it in perspective and reduces its stress. Be sure to use "I" statements ("I feel, I think..."), not blameful "They" statements ("They do, they always...")

Take a break. I still remember how hard it is to leave needy patients and pressing duties to take a break, causing more stress! Yet taking 10 minutes to do some of these healthy strategies is a great investment of time. You'll return

to your job calmer, more efficient, and in better spirits, re-energized to give even better care.

Don't worry, be happy. Some things are not worth worrying about. Realize the things you can change, the things you can't, and have the courage to know the difference.

Often you cannot control the situations in your life, but you can control you. When you are healthy and strong in mind, body and spirit you're more resilient to stress. Your calmness and ability to cope will be contagious and positively affect those around you. Copy these 11 tips, put them on your bulletin board and make a pact with your coworkers to support one another in implementing these stress busters. Together you can reduce the worry and be happy...and give compassionate, competent, cheerful care.



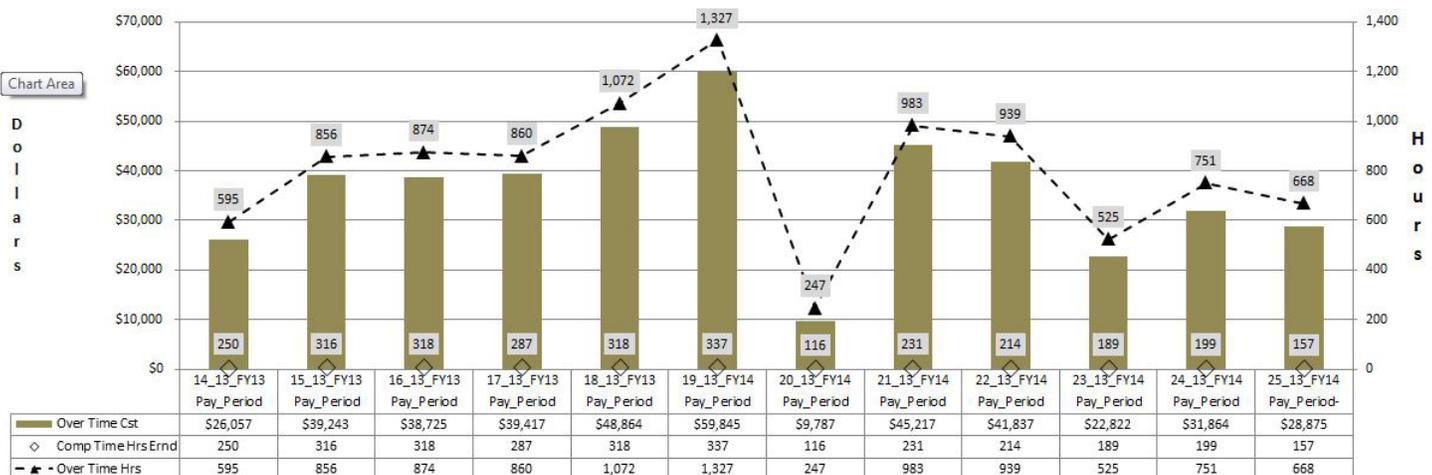
I WANT YOU!

to join us in the
**EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE
PATHWAY**

- Education/Sharing of ideas on the Evidence Based Practice Council SharePoint
- Creation of the PICO question for your literature review
- Helping you with your literature review

Sessions Planned for:
March 11, 2014
7:30am - 9:30am
10:00am - 12:00pm
1:00pm - 3:00pm
Info: Laurie Stoneburner x4234

NURSING OVER TIME AT A GLANCE



New Years Resolution: Day 10



Monique, HT 2 East
Resolution: Not let people take my photo

Day 10: The paparazzi is hot on my trail!



Sean, RN 2 East
Resolution: Do more ice skating

Day 10: Going on 4 days of ice skating this year!



Mary, RN AMU
Resolution: To be healthy

Day 10: No surgeries yet!



Sean, RN AMU
Resolution: End indentured servitude by March

Day 10: All is going according to plan!



Richard, MSA AMU
Resolution: I had one but I'm still at the VA! ..j/k

Day 10: All is good.



Linda, RN Pri Care
Resolution: Get back into working out

Day 10: Three gym days this year!



Lynda, RN AMU
Resolution: To get to work on time

Day 10: I already blew that one!



Kathy, RN Pri Care
Resolution: I'm just trying to live!

Day 10: It's not going well... cough! cough!



P..J. Pri Care
Resolution: To get more fit!

Day 10: Four exercise days this year!



Kim, LPN Blue Clinic
Resolution: To lose weight

Day 10: I injured myself on the way to the gym!

20 Health and Safety Tips for Frazzled Nurses!

By Scrubsmag.com

As a nurse, you face a great deal of situations that can cause you and your patients harm—a daily fact that can fry your nerves! A hectic schedule that includes crazy drivers on your morning commute, a five minute lunch and extra heavy patient loads, hazards to you and those around you seem right around the corner. What's a nurse to do when he is beset by threats from all sides? Well, make a list, of course!

That's right. If you're looking for ways to make your life safer and healthier, both at work and at home, we have 20 ways for you to put your anxieties to rest. Don't ignore these powerful tips that could end up saving a life (including yours), today and 10 years down the road.

"What Are 10 Things I Can Do to Stay Safe at Work?"

1. To prevent needlesticks, make

sure you use the safe technology that has been developed in recent years to cover over sharps. Don't try to circumvent the safety features for the sake of time or convenience. If your facility doesn't use safe needles, petition to get them to switch to the type that has a cap to protect you from inadvertent sticks.

2. When lifting patients, push—don't pull—to protect your back. Get as close to the bed as possible to prevent strain and don't extend your arms very far from your core.

3. If you're lifting something from the ground, always lift with your knees. Get down into a squat position, pull the weight close to you and push off with your legs to lift. This can save your back from the constant ache so familiar to nurses.

4. Violence in the workplace is not uncommon for nurses,

unfortunately. Whether it's an amorous drunk or an old lady with dementia who takes a swing at you, you need to be on your guard when dealing with patients. Always bring a coworker along if you think a situation might get out of hand.

5. Continuing with personal safety with patients, don't let the patient come between you and the door so that you have an easy exit route. Consider putting your ID lanyard and stethoscope in your pocket to discourage grabbing.

6. Latex allergies are increasingly common, and you can do a few things to help protect yourself from becoming another number. Use gloves made from synthetic materials and without powder, which can cause allergies if your facility doesn't already take these precautions, petition them to do so, because latex allergies can develop even if you've shown no signs of it.

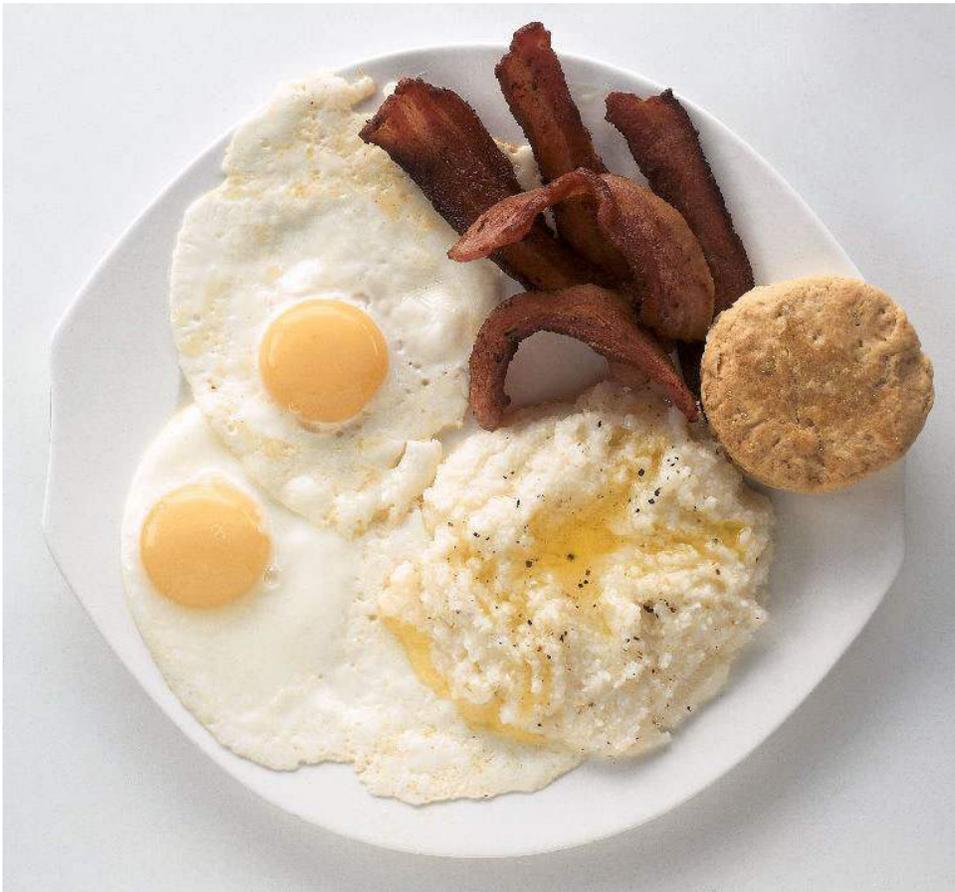
7. Medication safety is important for both patients and nurses. You learned it in nursing school, but it bears repeating: Always check the five rights. Check that it's the right medication, right dose, right time, right route and right patient. Only with focused attention to these rules will you safely administer medications.

8. If at all possible, don't let yourself get distracted during med pass. Studies have shown that nurses who get distracted make more errors. If you happen to get distracted, come back to



20 Health and Safety Tips for Frazzled Nurses!

- Continued



and double-check everything to prevent an error.

9. Patients who are at risk for falls should be clearly communicated to ancillary staff. Use the bed alarms that are built into bed or freestanding alarms that you can connect to a bed or a seat to alert you if the patient decides to get up. Only with this technology can you prevent falls.

10. Make it a habit to round on your patients at least every two hours. If you buddy up with the nursing assistant on your shift, she can check on the patients on the odd hours and you can check on them during the even hours.

“What Are 10 Things I Can Do to Stay Safe at Home?”

1. Nurses who work all shifts should try to eat breakfast before their shift begins. This is true even for nurses who work evenings or nights, as eating “breakfast” is a way to give you the energy you need to get through the shift. It doesn’t have to be breakfast food, but it should be something light that won’t overtax your digestive system.

2. You’re on your feet much of the day, and that might make you think you don’t need to exercise. The opposite is actually true. You need to increase your heart rate

for at least 30 minutes per day, five days per week. This will help keep obesity at bay and decrease your risk for heart disease and Diabetes.

3. When you’re on shift, it’s so easy to hit the vending machine for a quick snack, but this will derail any weight loss or healthful eating plan you’re trying to maintain. Instead, pack some nutritious snacks to take to work. Bring an apple or a banana, both of which are quick to eat on a short break, to keep you from getting hungry.

4. Limit the amount of alcohol you consume. Sometimes nurses like to cut loose at the end of the day, but drinking to excess can cause personal problems, difficulty at work and chronic health conditions. In addition, it will add on the pounds and can lead to poor decision making. If you want to imbibe, do so in moderation.

5. As a nurse, you’re accustomed to living on the go. It’s easy to call for a pizza, order some hamburgers or microwave-cook. However, if you want to eat healthfully and encourage your family to do the same, focus on whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Shop in the fresh fruit and vegetable areas of your grocery store for maximum health benefits.

6. You need fun and relaxation! That’s an order! Consider taking a yoga class to get the added benefit of relaxation to go along with some physical activity. It may seem like too much to add another commitment to your schedule,

20 Health and Safety Tips for Frazzled Nurses!

- Continued

but a class could be valuable time that you take just for yourself. Plus, you never know what interesting people you can meet. Cultivating activities and friendships outside of work are key for keeping burn out at a bay.

7. When you're off duty—be off duty! Finding a way to forget about nursing when you're not in your scrubs will ensure that when you're back on shift you're focused and energized. Make time to plan ahead for your "weekend" to ensure that time spent with your loved ones is quality time that everyone will enjoy and remember fondly. Nursing is an important job, but remember it's your job. It's not your life!

8. Sleep is often something that nurses take for granted. If you work night shift, sleep becomes an even more pressing issue. Adults need seven to nine hours of sleep per day. Don't laugh! You need to make sure that you get this amount, even when working off shifts, to keep yourself healthy. Sleep and fatigue can make even simple tasks difficult, like dodging other half-asleep drivers on your morning commute!

9. Nurses are horrible patients, as a general rule. You lecture your patients on the importance of seeing the doctor, but many nurses avoid the routine care that could keep them healthy. Make sure to see your doctor at least once a year to keep up to date on your blood work and to discuss any health issues you may have. Ignoring your body is a sure way to wind up a patient in your own

hospital. Do you really want that?

10. Sometimes the stress of nursing can bring you down, but you need to realize that you're helping people and making a difference. Do what you have to do to maintain an overall positive attitude. If you feel yourself getting dragged down in negative thoughts, consider seeing a counselor to help you find your way through your feelings. It could make all the difference on the floor and in your life.

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Thank You PCS Leadership Staff!

During the holidays, the Patient Care Services Leadership staff donated nearly \$450 to the 4th Street Clinic in Downtown Salt Lake City. This donation will help the clinic continue to provide health care to the homeless, including Veterans.

We appreciate your donations and your spirit of giving.

News From the Home Front

Anticoagulation Clinic

The anticoagulation clinic has undergone a significant amount of transition in the past year. Some significant accomplishments of the group includes the addition of a clinical coordinator, Anne Marie Campbell. Anne Marie is an LPN staff member with many years of outpatient clinic experience. She has stepped into this new role and elevated the practice of the entire clinic as she single-handedly manages critical aspects of information management within the clinic. She has been an amazing addition and we wonder how the clinic functioned without her in the past. We have added David Sorric, a clinical Pharm-D to the clinic. He is an excellent resource and provides expertise and oversight in areas related to bridging and the use of Novel Oral Anticoagulants (NOAC's). Throughout this transition we have relied upon the hard work and team support of our intermittent staff member, David Partridge who has stepped up and stepped in at a moment's notice to assist with mission essential patient care. All of the nurse's in the ACC clinic to **include Gerry Bennett, Faye Anderson, Jan Haug, Laurel Young, Rilla Lilles, Jill Henry, Leisa Baldis and Sharon Ward have sustained this effort through some challenging times.**

Jill Koeven
Nurse Manager

News for NP's

Nursing Service received a request from the NP group to remove Mandatory Nursing Skills Fair from their annual training requirements. After receiving your feedback and further consideration of things such as cancellation of clinics and credentialed and privileged status it has been decided that as of FY 14 NPs are no longer required to attend Mandatory Nursing Skills Fair.

All APRNs are welcome to continue visiting The Skills Fair. It provides an excellent opportunity for everyone to ask questions and have discussion on topics such as Patient Safety and Pain Management with the subject matter experts. You will also continue to have an opportunity to attend part 2 of the BLS renewal process. We have enjoyed seeing you throughout the years and hope to continue to do so.

Nina Morris, MSNEd, RN
Manager, Center for Learning
Excellence

2014 Pay Increase and Federal Pay Freeze Information

The President signed Executive Order 13655 on December 23, 2013 which provides an across-the-board increase of 1.0 percent in the rates of basic pay for certain statutory pay systems. The Executive Order states that the 2014 pay rates for the civilian employee pay schedules covered by the Executive Order will be effective on the first day of the first pay period beginning on/after January 1, 2014; this means the pay adjustments made to the applicable VA pay schedules will be effective January 12, 2014. The 2014 pay charts will be updated and made available in the near future. The new pay charts will be made available and posted on the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) Compensation and Classification website in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format. Below is a summary of information on the 2014 pay raise:

Title 5 General Schedule: Will receive a 1.0 percent base pay increase. The GS locality pay percentages will remain at the 2013 levels (no increase is authorized for GS locality pay).

Title 5 Special Rates (OPM Approved): As a result of the 2013 annual review of special rates, all Title 5 special rate tables will be adjusted by the 1.0 percent increase.

Senior Executive Service: Questions regarding SES or SL pay should be referred to the Corporate Senior Executive Management Office (CSEMO) at Perform2@va.gov. Guidance will be forthcoming.

Title 38 Regular Schedule: Physicians and dentists will receive the 1.0 percent increase in base pay (Physician and Dentist Base and Longevity Pay Schedule). Optometrists, podiatrists, chiropractors, physician assistants and expanded function dental auxiliary (EFDAs) will receive the 1.0 percent increase in base pay. No increase will be made to the applicable locality adjustment.

Title 38 Section 7306 Schedule: Will receive the 1.0 percent base pay increase, subject to the \$147,200 cap. No locality adjustment will be made.

Title 38 Special Rates (VA Approved): Special rate schedules will receive the 1.0 percent base pay increase unless the Facility Director certifies it is not necessary as part of the Title 38 Annual Review of Special Rates. Information will be forthcoming regarding the annual review of VA Title 38 special rate schedules.

Title 38 Nurse Locality Pay Schedules: All nurse schedules will be increased by the 1.0 percent increase.



"As a nurse, we have the opportunity to heal the heart, mind, soul and body of our patients, their families and ourselves. They may forget your name, but they will never forget how you made them feel!"
- Maya Angelou