Finish line approaches in bid for fourth designation

Crunch Time in the Magnet Command Center

By Tyler Smith

It’s a late Friday morning in a windowless first-floor room in the Critical Care Wing at University of Colorado Hospital. Figures sit hunched over computer keyboards, typing. Stacks of paper and folders sit nearby office supplies and drink cups. Walls and bulletin boards are covered with messages, graphs and other information.

Missing is the sound of a clock ticking, but time hangs heavy. One large square of yellow paper sums it up: “Jet Marketing Days to Go: 7. ANCC Days to Go: 39.”

Welcome to the Magnet Command Center, ground zero for UCH’s bid for a fourth consecutive designation as a Magnet nursing facility, a distinction held by only a about a dozen of the more than 6,000 hospitals in the United States, including University of Colorado Health’s Poudre Valley Hospital.

Climbing the mountain. Since October, the space has served as the clearinghouse for the mountain of documentation the hospital must submit to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (the ANCC scrawled on the yellow paper), the organization responsible for conferring the Magnet designation, to show it meets the highest standards of nursing care.

This year is the first time the hospital will make its submission electronically, which means sending the documentation to Fort Collins-based Jet Marketing to assemble according to ANCC standards and put on a USB flash drive. The group is inching closer to that goal, but the big one comes later: the April 1 deadline for submitting the electronic materials to the ANCC. Then it’s another round of waiting: after reviewing the hospital’s submission, the ANCC will either grant and set a date for a site visit or ask for additional information.

By any measure, earning Magnet designation is a daunting task. For this submission, the hospital must compile evidence that it met 89 Magnet standards in six sections spanning nurse satisfaction, quality, evidence-based practice, safety, patient satisfaction and much more. It includes a lengthy narrative, stitched together from

Yellow paper serves as a reminder of approaching deadlines for the hospital’s attempt at a fourth Magnet designation.

Hand at work are (clockwise from left) Chief Nursing Officer Carolyn Sanders, Inpatient Projects Manager Jamie LeLazar, SICU nurse Lindsay Knorr, Patient Services Director Deborah DeVine, and Magnet Steering Committee Co-Chair Terry Rendler.

Finish line approaches in bid for fourth designation

Crunch Time in the Magnet Command Center

By Tyler Smith

It’s a late Friday morning in a windowless first-floor room in the Critical Care Wing at University of Colorado Hospital. Figures sit hunched over computer keyboards, typing. Stacks of paper and folders sit nearby office supplies and drink cups. Walls and bulletin boards are covered with messages, graphs and other information.

Missing is the sound of a clock ticking, but time hangs heavy. One large square of yellow paper sums it up: “Jet Marketing Days to Go: 7. ANCC Days to Go: 39.”

Welcome to the Magnet Command Center, ground zero for UCH’s bid for a fourth consecutive designation as a Magnet nursing facility, a distinction held by only a about a dozen of the more than 6,000 hospitals in the United States, including University of Colorado Health’s Poudre Valley Hospital.

Climbing the mountain. Since October, the space has served as the clearinghouse for the mountain of documentation the hospital must submit to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (the ANCC scrawled on the yellow paper), the organization responsible for conferring the Magnet designation, to show it meets the highest standards of nursing care.

This year is the first time the hospital will make its submission electronically, which means sending the documentation to Fort Collins-based Jet Marketing to assemble according to ANCC standards and put on a USB flash drive. The group is inching closer to that goal, but the big one comes later: the April 1 deadline for submitting the electronic materials to the ANCC. Then it’s another round of waiting: after reviewing the hospital’s submission, the ANCC will either grant and set a date for a site visit or ask for additional information.

By any measure, earning Magnet designation is a daunting task. For this submission, the hospital must compile evidence that it met 89 Magnet standards in six sections spanning nurse satisfaction, quality, evidence-based practice, safety, patient satisfaction and much more. It includes a lengthy narrative, stitched together from

Yellow paper serves as a reminder of approaching deadlines for the hospital’s attempt at a fourth Magnet designation.

Hand at work are (clockwise from left) Chief Nursing Officer Carolyn Sanders, Inpatient Projects Manager Jamie LeLazar, SICU nurse Lindsay Knorr, Patient Services Director Deborah DeVine, and Magnet Steering Committee Co-Chair Terry Rendler.

Finish line approaches in bid for fourth designation

Crunch Time in the Magnet Command Center

By Tyler Smith

It’s a late Friday morning in a windowless first-floor room in the Critical Care Wing at University of Colorado Hospital. Figures sit hunched over computer keyboards, typing. Stacks of paper and folders sit nearby office supplies and drink cups. Walls and bulletin boards are covered with messages, graphs and other information.

Missing is the sound of a clock ticking, but time hangs heavy. One large square of yellow paper sums it up: “Jet Marketing Days to Go: 7. ANCC Days to Go: 39.”

Welcome to the Magnet Command Center, ground zero for UCH’s bid for a fourth consecutive designation as a Magnet nursing facility, a distinction held by only a about a dozen of the more than 6,000 hospitals in the United States, including University of Colorado Health’s Poudre Valley Hospital.

Climbing the mountain. Since October, the space has served as the clearinghouse for the mountain of documentation the hospital must submit to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (the ANCC scrawled on the yellow paper), the organization responsible for conferring the Magnet designation, to show it meets the highest standards of nursing care.

This year is the first time the hospital will make its submission electronically, which means sending the documentation to Fort Collins-based Jet Marketing to assemble according to ANCC standards and put on a USB flash drive. The group is inching closer to that goal, but the big one comes later: the April 1 deadline for submitting the electronic materials to the ANCC. Then it’s another round of waiting: after reviewing the hospital’s submission, the ANCC will either grant and set a date for a site visit or ask for additional information.

By any measure, earning Magnet designation is a daunting task. For this submission, the hospital must compile evidence that it met 89 Magnet standards in six sections spanning nurse satisfaction, quality, evidence-based practice, safety, patient satisfaction and much more. It includes a lengthy narrative, stitched together from

Yellow paper serves as a reminder of approaching deadlines for the hospital’s attempt at a fourth Magnet designation.

Hand at work are (clockwise from left) Chief Nursing Officer Carolyn Sanders, Inpatient Projects Manager Jamie LeLazar, SICU nurse Lindsay Knorr, Patient Services Director Deborah DeVine, and Magnet Steering Committee Co-Chair Terry Rendler.

Finish line approaches in bid for fourth designation

Crunch Time in the Magnet Command Center

By Tyler Smith

It’s a late Friday morning in a windowless first-floor room in the Critical Care Wing at University of Colorado Hospital. Figures sit hunched over computer keyboards, typing. Stacks of paper and folders sit nearby office supplies and drink cups. Walls and bulletin boards are covered with messages, graphs and other information.

Missing is the sound of a clock ticking, but time hangs heavy. One large square of yellow paper sums it up: “Jet Marketing Days to Go: 7. ANCC Days to Go: 39.”

Welcome to the Magnet Command Center, ground zero for UCH’s bid for a fourth consecutive designation as a Magnet nursing facility, a distinction held by only a about a dozen of the more than 6,000 hospitals in the United States, including University of Colorado Health’s Poudre Valley Hospital.

Climbing the mountain. Since October, the space has served as the clearinghouse for the mountain of documentation the hospital must submit to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (the ANCC scrawled on the yellow paper), the organization responsible for conferring the Magnet designation, to show it meets the highest standards of nursing care.

This year is the first time the hospital will make its submission electronically, which means sending the documentation to Fort Collins-based Jet Marketing to assemble according to ANCC standards and put on a USB flash drive. The group is inching closer to that goal, but the big one comes later: the April 1 deadline for submitting the electronic materials to the ANCC. Then it’s another round of waiting: after reviewing the hospital’s submission, the ANCC will either grant and set a date for a site visit or ask for additional information.

By any measure, earning Magnet designation is a daunting task. For this submission, the hospital must compile evidence that it met 89 Magnet standards in six sections spanning nurse satisfaction, quality, evidence-based practice, safety, patient satisfaction and much more. It includes a lengthy narrative, stitched together from

Yellow paper serves as a reminder of approaching deadlines for the hospital’s attempt at a fourth Magnet designation.

Hand at work are (clockwise from left) Chief Nursing Officer Carolyn Sanders, Inpatient Projects Manager Jamie LeLazar, SICU nurse Lindsay Knorr, Patient Services Director Deborah DeVine, and Magnet Steering Committee Co-Chair Terry Rendler.
many sources, and hundreds of supporting graphs, all of which must be linked to the underlying data in the electronic submission.

A-Team. It's an all-organization effort, as the work reflects the wide array of clinical and professional work done by the hospital's nursing staff since the last Magnet redesignation in March 2010. But a three-person team has spearheaded the drive: Magnet Program Director Danielle Schloffman, RN, MSN; Magnet Steering Committee Co-Chair Terry Rendler, RN, MSN; and Administrative Assistant Shelly Collings, MSHA, MBA.

The trio has put in “hundreds of extra hours,” said Chief Nursing Officer Carolyn Sanders, RN, PhD, as she sat at her laptop in the command center that busy Friday. “They’ve had no days off in over a month and have worked into the wee hours because of their commitment to earning this redesignation.”

Sanders wrote the “Transformational Leadership” section of the submission and serves as final editor. The work can rightfully be called a family affair: Schloffman’s mother, a retired orthopedic nurse, volunteered as a document reviewer with Jeanette Bowman, RN, who retired recently after 30 years as a charge nurse at UCH.

Schloffman said her mother lent an objective eye to the submission, an important way to guard against the “group think” that can creep into any large project. But she confessed she had an ulterior motive. “I got tired of her scolding me for working so hard,” Schloffman said. “Now she volunteers to bring us lunch.”

The reviewers are the last line in a long, collaborative effort designed to paint a coherent picture of the hospital’s nursing care. Deborah DeVine, RN, MS, director of Patient Services, sat at a computer with Rendler, going through the “Exemplary Professional Practice” section of the document. The Magnet Steering Committee had written drafts of this and other sections over the past year. DeVine was helping Rendler pull data and evidence to support the section and updating the narrative.

“First order of business after the submission in April will be celebrating, but a long wait for approval for a site visit will follow.”

“We’re all working to pull together the sections, find gaps, clarify, and write with one voice,” Schloffman said.

There is no room for sloppiness, Rendler said. The submission must have an overview that “tees up” for the ANCC appraisers the information to come. “If they don’t see everything in the overview that is required, they won’t move forward,” she said, and months of work will be lost.

Worthy endeavor. Even today, some question the thousands of hours required to earn Magnet designation, but it’s amply justified, DeVine said, noting its value as a recruitment tool. "Nurses will
find Magnet hospitals to work in because they want to be part of top nursing institutions,” she said.

The designation even has financial impact, Sanders added, explaining that because Magnet hospitals tend to have lower turnover rates and better patient outcomes, bond-rating agencies look at them more favorably.

It’s true the effort required to earn redesignation increases each year — but that’s the point, Sanders said. “You don’t expect a master’s class to be the same amount of work as a bachelor’s,” she said. “Magnet forces us as a staff and as leaders to look at how we do things and have a constant eye on how we can improve.”

The redesignation process also serves as a way station of sorts, a place to look back on the clinical work, education, research and professional advancement that nurses have accomplished the past three-plus years, Schloffman said.

“I’m proud when we read about what staff have been doing and that we can highlight their work,” she said. “These stories help to keep us going.”

Lindsay Knorr, RN, a nurse in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, was also in the Command Center on this day, pitching in as the clock ticked toward the deadline. She once took the Magnet designation for granted, she admitted, but no longer.

“I’m beyond impressed with what these ladies are doing,” Knorr said. “I’m honored to be working on helping us get Magnet instead of just waiting for the bumper sticker to come out.”