



The Scope of Practice for Nurses

An Interview with **Launette Woolforde, EdD, DNP, RN-BC,**
Vice President - Nursing Education and Professional Development,
Northwell Health

Connecting Ambulatory to the Hospital

An Interview with **Emily Kao,**
Vice President, Surgical Services/Urology, Northwell Health



Launette Woolforde

EDITORS' NOTE *Launette Woolforde also serves as an assistant professor at the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell. Woolforde has also been a nurse educator, orientation coordinator, corporate director for nursing education and senior administrative director for patient care services. She holds a B.S.N., M.S.N. and post master's certificate in nursing education. She earned a doctor of nursing practice (DNP) from Case Western Reserve University and a doctor of education (EdD) from Columbia University.*

Will you discuss your area of focus at Northwell Health?

My focus is on nursing and using nursing professional development to create a highly engaged, professional environment to deliver top-quality care and enable nurses to achieve their personal and professional goals. Developing others is my passion and I'm fortunate to be able to do what I love. I focus on making sure nursing is at the table in conversations from the early stages with our interprofessional colleagues – physicians being one of our primary partners. I leverage the Northwell infrastructure and processes to help the health system achieve and exceed goals through nursing education and interprofessional relationships.

For example, 11 years ago we started a centralized orientation program for nurses across the health system under the leadership of our senior vice president and chief nurse executive, Maureen White. I was able to grow that program into an interprofessional orientation program, which was one of the first of its kind. This program brings nurses at all levels of practice together with physician assistants. We recognized early on that, although we expect them to work together, these team members knew little about each other's roles and they never learned together. From the first time they began learning together, we never looked back. There have been over 10,000 participants in this program since its inception in 2007.

I am also an assistant professor at the Zucker School of Medicine and, in collaboration with physician faculty partners at the medical school, we revised a transitions course so that it now partners medical students with staff nurses for an experience on the clinical unit. The staff nurses provide education and competency validation for the medical students on some basic skills, nursing unit operations, coordination of care, etc.

Is the nursing profession getting the talent it needs for the future and do young people understand how dynamic the profession is?

The talent is definitely there. However, so is the reality shock for aspiring nurses, so we're still on the journey. We have made progress in terms of the public's understanding of the role and scope of nursing, and nursing organizations are working to promote a clearer understanding of the scope of nurses' work. By and large, people are not aware of the knowledge nurses possess, the complexities they manage and just how integral they are to not just providing care, but coordinating the team on a unit, department and hospital level.

The Hofstra Northwell School of Graduate Nursing and Physician Assistant Studies has really helped to shape the talent needed for advanced practice nursing. Our nursing school is truly way ahead of the curve. Additionally, through the many academic-practice partnerships we have across the country, Northwell is able to represent the realities of professional practice, thus helping people understand how dynamic this profession is.

We help to ensure that our academic partners are aware of the changing landscape of healthcare, as the goal today is to keep patients out of the hospital whenever possible. ●



Emily Kao

EDITORS' NOTE *Emily Kao has held her current post since 2014. Prior to this, she held the roles of Vice President Business Development, Associate Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director for North Shore University Hospital/Long Island Jewish Medical Center. She received her master's degree in clinical pharmacy from St. John's University and her M.B.A. in health service management from Hofstra University.*

Having joined what is now Northwell Health in 1985, what has made it a place where you have wanted to spend your career?

I felt the health system was very progressive and innovative. They were always doing new things, stretching our capabilities and giving us diverse opportunities.

Will you discuss your role and how you focus your efforts?

As the VP for Service Line, I oversee surgery and urology. My primary responsibility is to collaborate with the chairs of surgery and urology to build and expand programs, gain market shares and build physician relationships so it will be a more integrated group. We have over 150 faculty surgeons and 30 urologists.

How close is the coordination from hospital to hospital and how important is it to have a collaborative culture?

It's one of the key focuses of my job: connecting our ambulatory practices to our hospitals across the health system. The outpatient care we deliver is the foundation to drive volume to the hospitals and we work closely with the executive directors of our hospitals and our regional executive directors to align what is important to them. We help each other succeed by growing specific programs in the different regions that differentiates us from the other health systems. An example of this is our system's commitment in developing the heart and liver transplant in addition to our kidney transplant program at North Shore University Hospital.

How critical is innovation for the health system?

Innovation is part of the DNA of our healthcare system. We don't settle for how we've run things in the past, even if we've been successful. We're always trying to stretch our limits and think outside the box. We are always looking at our operations differently and finding new solutions to improve patient outcomes. Recently, our surgeons performed the first robotic nipple-sparing mastectomy and breast reconstruction in the US. This surgery is performed as an investigational study under straight protocols. This groundbreaking procedure allows patients to have less scarring and shorter hospital stays. This kind of work will help many patients in the future.

How important is it to maintain the doctor/patient relationship?

Patients are and should be the center of care. Although we can focus on adapting new technologies that are available, we need to make sure that our patients still feel that personal touch.

At day's end, doctors have to treat patients like family if we expect them to return for future services. We are getting better but still have room for improvement.

What advice do you give to young people interested in a career in this industry?

Working in healthcare is a privilege. It's up to each individual to always try their best, be compassionate with their patients and colleagues, have integrity, and be motivated by values that always put the patient's best interests first. The patient must always be at the center of all that we do. Our mission as a health system is to promote better outcomes for patients and improve the health of the communities we serve. ●