



# The Value of a Nursing Annual Report

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ▶ Nursing annual reports have been increasingly published by acute care facilities and provide a record of accomplishments for the year.
- ▶ Nursing annual reports provide yearly documentation of accomplishments.
- ▶ As future goals are set, they provide value as a record of past accomplishments.
- ▶ A community hospital reports on the content and timeline for a nursing annual report along with the advantages.



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**R**EMEMBER RECEIVING REPORT cards at the end of each school year charting accomplishments, strengths, and areas for improvement? A nursing annual report can be compared to a report card for the nursing division and provides a public forum for recognizing achievement of goals.

In the past 10 years, nursing annual reports have been increasingly published by nursing divisions in acute care facilities primarily to have a record of the work accomplished by nursing in the past year. These nursing annual reports, which are needed when seeking the American Nurses Credentialing Center Magnet® designation, provide a mechanism to inform other hospital staff, physicians, hospital board members, and the community about the work of the nursing division (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2009).

Saint Clare's Health System, a multi-campus community hospital in northern New Jersey, published an annual report for the first time last year. The visionary chief nursing officer (CNO) was the inspiration

behind the report, stating, "We need to inform our audience, the nursing staff, the medical staff, the board of directors and our community about the great accomplishments we achieved last year. An annual report shows that we are accountable for demonstrable results that improve the care of our patients and their families and the work environment for our staff."

## Getting Started

Funding for this first annual report, including hiring a photographer and printing the report, was obtained in part from the hospital foundation. The CNO also determined the time period for this report: it would reflect the nursing accomplishments in the past calendar year. The marketing department was involved from the onset to set the timeline, select a publisher, and determine the style or look of the report.

Nursing annual reports from other hospitals in the United States were reviewed and studied. These reports generally contained a letter from the CNO, a listing of nurses who have received awards, and those who presented oral or poster sessions at conferences or published in scholarly journals and other publications. After reviewing these reports, the two nurse leaders who were charged with preparing the report commenced with selecting a theme and creating an outline of contents. The nurse leaders chose to follow a theme of the hospital's strategic pillars: best people, clinical quality, resource stewardship, and strategic growth (see Table 1). These pillars outline the work of nursing: to uphold the promise to serve patients and provide high-quality compassionate care. The nurses responsible for the related projects, which included staff nurses and nursing directors, wrote the content for each of the pillars.

A pictorial organizational chart, which contained pictures of the nursing department leaders, was designed for inclusion in the report, which proved to be a valuable reference throughout the year. A section of the report was also devoted to National Nurses Week events, including the Annual Distinguished Nurse Lectureship, Nurse Excellence Awards, and Spend a Day with a Nurse program. Review of the fiscal outcomes as well as the patient care outcomes was highlighted in the stewardship and excellence sections, respectively. The annual report concluded with nurses who received awards or honors, along with those who contributed to national publications and poster presentations. The hospital's nursing newsletter provided a resource, particularly for this section,

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**Table 1.**  
**Strategic Pillars**

Pillar	Content
Best People	Nurse residency program, nurse recruitment and retention, and listing of all nurses who attained national certification
Clinical Quality	Code Ice and Sepsis Team along with a listing of the outcomes of the evidence-based project teams such as Falls and Heart Failure
Resource Stewardship	Productivity, national benchmarking along with supply chain savings
Strategic Growth	Professional development pathways (management, education, and clinical), differentiated practice, and the new system for staffing, scheduling, and acuity

because the “Kudos” sections of the newsletter regularly listed these achievements. When this section was completed, there was amazement at how much was accomplished by nurses at our facility.

After the copy was written, a photographer was hired to take photos of the nurses and nurse managers. A nurse manager brought the photographer to the nursing units and helped catch action shots, such as a nurse pushing a crash cart, a nurse and physician discussing a patient scenario, and a nurse charting on the computer. The marketing department prepared the rough draft of the report, and it was edited and revised by the nurse leaders prior to publication.

### The Value

After the nursing annual report was published, it was distributed to all hospital departments and mailed to all nursing staff, hospital board members, physicians, and community leaders. This report was also placed on the hospital web site for the community, prospective employees, and all to view. The com-

**Table 2.**  
**Steps to Creating a Nursing Annual Report**

1. Designate editor of nursing annual report.
2. Create an outline, select a theme, and choose time period (fiscal or calendar year).
3. Obtain funding and publisher.
4. Set timeline for copy submission, editing of draft, and submission of report to printer.
5. Send out assignments for nurses to write sections of the report with deadlines.
6. Set date with a photographer to obtain action photos of nurses and photos of nurse managers.
7. Create distribution list.
8. Celebrate! Mail and distribute nursing annual report.

ments from this report were overwhelmingly positive and summed up the value: “This report really highlights the accomplishments of nursing,” “This is a great historical reference,” “It is great to recognize the nursing staff and see them in the photos,” and “This report instills a sense of pride in nursing.”

As preparation begins for the next annual report, outlining the steps and adhering to the timeline are critical (see Table 2). In next year’s report, we plan to include patients in the photographs; the first annual report had many action shots of nurses but none with nurses and patients.

Nursing annual reports, just like report cards from school days, provide yearly documentation of accomplishments. As future goals are set, the nursing annual reports provide value as a record of past accomplishments. \$

### REFERENCE

American Nurses Credentialing Center. (2009). *Application manual: Magnet recognition program*. Silver Spring, MD: Author.