

Nurse Supply Czars ensure frontline health care workers are protected

Washington Hospital is committed to ensuring frontline staff always have the right supplies, in the right place, at the right time to protect themselves while delivering high-quality patient care. During the pandemic, this includes critical supplies like disinfectant wipes, gloves, gowns, masks and face shields.

COVID-19 has caused a significant strain on the supply chain and timely distribution of all types of personal protective equipment (PPE). It has become common for expected supplies to be suddenly unavailable in the quantities ordered or not available at all.

Despite daily monitoring of PPE and expected usage, maintaining an adequate supply and providing them to frontline health care workers in a timely and organized way presented a complex challenge. Chief Nursing Officer Stephanie Williams recognized the need for point-of-care coordination and delivery of supplies so frontline nurses could be confident they could keep patients and themselves safe. To this end, she implemented the role of Nurse Supply Czar.

Nurse Supply Czars made it a priority to understand the amount and types of PPE that needed to be appropriated for each unit to ensure nurse safety and quality patient care. Supported



(From left) Storekeeper Stacey Winterholler works with nurse supply czar Christine Mikkelsen, BSN, RN, RNBCM, to ensure everyone has the necessary PPE.

by nursing leadership, the czars worked closely with the storeroom to design a supply matrix that enabled them to distribute sufficient PPE while preventing waste. Each shift huddled with the supply storeroom to discuss any new issues and changes in required supplies.

The role of Nurse Supply Czars has been pivotal during the pandemic and having them readily available around-the-clock made our frontline staff feel safe, confident and protected. Washington Hospital will continue to adhere to our transformational leadership strategy by empowering our nurses, as frontline staff, to ensure their patients' safety, while at the same time realizing the importance of their role and its impact on the wider community.