

## CLINICAL PRACTICE

# A culture of nursing excellence: A community hospital's journey from Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> to Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition

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## ABSTRACT

Creating a culture of nursing excellence requires strategic planning, transformational leadership, and effective change management. The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) provides 2 programs that recognize nursing practice. The Pathway to Excellence Program<sup>®</sup> recognizes health care organizations that provide nurses with positive and safe practice environments. The ANCC Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup>, the highest level of recognition for nursing, recognizes health care organizations that demonstrate excellence in nursing and quality patient outcomes. Both of these programs promulgate the valuable contributions of nurses to influence the practice environment and ultimately enhance patient outcomes. ANCC recognition, as either a Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> or a Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognized facility, is a significant achievement for both the nursing enterprise and the organization. The transition from achieving Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> recognition to Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition requires organizational change management through transformational leadership and employee engagement at multiple levels. This article addresses one community hospital's strategy to advance a culture of nursing excellence through integration of the Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> 12 Practice Standards and enculturation of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model to achieve Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition. The ADKAR<sup>®</sup> Model of change management was applied throughout this journey in a systematic approach that created awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement. Key strategies were implemented to engage employees and resources were provided to advance the culture of nursing excellence within the health care organization.

**Key Words:** Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey, Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup>, Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup>, Change management model, Transformational leadership

## 1. BACKGROUND

Transformational leaders set the vision for change in an organization and inspire others to follow by equipping them with the resources necessary to bring forth vision and carry out the mission of the organization. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital, a community hospital in Southeast Texas, is part of Houston Methodist, a large health system and academic med-

ical center. Houston Methodist consists of eight hospitals throughout the Greater Houston metropolitan area. The system also includes freestanding emergency care centers and outpatient facilities. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital shares the vision of Houston Methodist to provide patient- and family-centered care with unparalleled safety, quality, service, and innovation. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hos-

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pital has built a culture of nursing excellence. The hospital was first recognized as a Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> hospital in 2011 and achieved re-designation in 2014 by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Most recently, the hospital achieved the prestigious Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition from the ANCC Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup>. Transformational leaders with a commitment to excellence were an integral part of these achievements, which publicly recognize nursing excellence and quality patient outcomes.

The Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup> is used worldwide as a gold standard for nursing excellence.<sup>[1]</sup> According to the ANCC, “healthcare organizations across the world are using the Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup> to achieve excellence in nursing practice, improve patient outcomes and develop healthy work environments for nurses”. The “evidence required for Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition in the international community is the same for the United States or its territories”.<sup>[1]</sup> Achieving Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition is a comprehensive and lengthy process which requires organizational commitment. Tai and Bame<sup>[2]</sup> conducted a study of organizational and community factors associated with hospitals that achieved Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition in the United States and found that only 2.6% of the total number of community hospital across the nation achieved this prestigious recognition. Broom and Tilbury<sup>[3]</sup> report the term Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey is common throughout the nursing community. This term describes the process of advancement to a Magnet<sup>®</sup> culture which is a continuous quest for excellence. It demands a clear vision, innovation, and ongoing commitment with nurse involvement at all levels.<sup>[3]</sup>

With the ever-changing dynamic climate of health care, effective change management is a necessary skill for nurse leaders. Huston<sup>[4]</sup> predicted the need for nurse leaders to envision and be proactive to change. Setting the course for the Pathway to Excellence Program<sup>®</sup> recognition and Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital required transformational leadership by nurse leaders ready to develop and implement a plan for cultural change. Tai and Bame<sup>[2]</sup> explained that hospitals may benefit by better management of resources and quality improvements when including Magnet<sup>®</sup> concepts in their strategic planning. Therefore, nurse leaders at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital developed a nursing strategic plan which supported the hospital strategic plan and organizational commitment to advance the culture of excellence. Furthermore, the ANCC<sup>[1]</sup> identifies the steps in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Appraisal Process in the 2014 Magnet<sup>®</sup> Application Manual which include the following: 1) application; 2) submission of a written document that describes and demonstrates the sources of evidence within the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model; 3) Magnet<sup>®</sup> Site Visit; and 4) the Com-

mission on Magnet<sup>®</sup> Recognition Decision. These steps were considered in strategic planning to advance the culture of excellence within Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital. This article addresses one community hospital’s strategy to advance a culture of nursing excellence through integration of the Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> 12 Practice Standards and enculturation of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model to achieve Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

### 2.1 Pathway to excellence<sup>®</sup>

The Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> Program is a recognition program for health care organizations provided by the ANCC.<sup>[5]</sup> It recognizes health care organizations that provide nurses with positive and safe practice environments.<sup>[2]</sup> The program sets forth 12 practice standards that organizations put into place to provide a positive and safe workplace where nurses have opportunities for professional development to excel in their practice.

### 2.2 Magnet recognition program<sup>®</sup>

The ANCC’s Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup> is the highest recognition for nursing and recognizes organizations for nursing excellence, quality patient care, and innovation.<sup>[6]</sup> This program has evolved over the years and provides organizations with the opportunity to describe and demonstrate nursing excellence. Originally, organizations recognized by the Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup> demonstrated the 14 Forces of Magnetism, that is, those characteristics that would draw a nurse to an organization and create a positive practice environment where nurses can excel in nursing.<sup>[1,7]</sup> Luzzin-ski<sup>[7]</sup> explains that while the Forces of Magnetism create structures of excellence within organizations, the development of a new Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model was important for outcomes that indicate a culture of quality and innovation. In 2008, the ANCC introduced the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model. The new model focuses on empirical outcomes and integrates the original 14 Forces of Magnetism.<sup>[1]</sup> This spurred organizations seeking Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition to not only focus on the structures and processes of integrating the 14 Forces of Magnetism, but also the outcomes of such.

The new Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model provides a framework for nursing excellence. It consists of 5 domains: (1) transformational leadership; (2) structural empowerment; (3) exemplary professional practice; (4) new knowledge, innovations, and improvements; and (5) empirical outcomes.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 2.3 The ADKAR<sup>®</sup> model

The ADKAR<sup>®</sup> model is a guide for change management and includes the following 5 elements: awareness, desire,

knowledge, ability, and reinforcement.<sup>[8]</sup> The Organizational Development Department at Houston Methodist adopted the ADKAR model as the change management model to guide change within the organization.

### 3. CULTURE OF NURSING EXCELLENCE

The shared ICARE Values of Integrity, Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence are part of the culture at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital. The commitment to excellence is part of the culture and climate within the organization. According to Tsai,<sup>[9]</sup> organizational culture represents shared assumptions, values, and beliefs within an organization that influence behaviors. Tsai<sup>[9]</sup> found that a positive interaction between leaders and employees leads to collaboration in carrying out the organization's mission. Sarros et al.<sup>[10]</sup> postulated that organizational culture is essential and an important determinant of the climate of underlying cultural practices within the internal and external environments. Glisson and James as cited in Sarros et al.<sup>[10]</sup> further explained that organizational culture involves the norms within the workplace, such as behavioral expectations and beliefs, which differ from climate and which describe how the work environment is perceived by the individual. Building a culture of nursing excellence involves the entire organization.

The Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital Chief Nursing Officer and nurse leaders (directors and managers) strategically planned and implemented structures and processes to support the 12 Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> standards. Strategic actions to support nursing professional development were implemented. These included utilization of a clinical career pathway for professional advancement of clinical nurses within the organization. A tuition reimbursement program with flexible scheduling was also established to support nurses returning to school to advance their degrees. In addition, the importance of nursing certification was emphasized with certification reimbursement and participation in programs such as ANCC Success Pays<sup>™</sup>. Educational resources for certification preparation included the provision of on-site review courses and the CE Direct PearlsReview program. A Shared Governance Model set the foundation for shared decision-making for nursing within the hospital. The council structure consisted of the Clinical Practice Council, Professional Development Council, Performance Improvement Council, and Information and Technology Council and a Coordinating Council. Nurse leaders supported the councils as facilitators. The council reported to the Nursing Leadership Council. These structures and processes to support nurse autonomy, practice, and the practice environment established by nurses and confirmed by the Pathway

to Excellence<sup>®</sup> recognition, laid a firm foundation to build upon as the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey moved forward.

In 2012, the Chief Nursing Officer and nurse leaders met for strategic planning and to set goals for Magnet<sup>®</sup> designation. Nurse leaders at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital thus drew from a culture of excellence and created a climate for change as they embarked on the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. This change from a Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> culture to a Magnet<sup>®</sup> culture was an organization priority and was included in strategic plans. Executive leaders including the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nursing Officer provided organizational support for this paradigm shift.

During a nursing strategic planning retreat, a recommendation was made by the nurse leaders to hire a Magnet Coordinator to facilitate the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. The nurse leaders believed it was essential for the person filling this role to have the characteristics of a transformational leader of change. The hospital's Director of Education recognized the opportunity to lead and facilitate organizational change and transferred into this new position. This provided the organization with a Magnet Coordinator who was familiar with the Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> Program and the current structures and processes in place. It also provided one knowledgeable of the rich history of nursing at the hospital. Once the Magnet Coordinator transitioned into the new role, a preliminary gap analysis was conducted to determine opportunities to build upon the foundation laid with the Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> Program. This analysis reviewed alignment of the existing structures and processes in place with the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model and required sources of evidence. There were opportunities to develop nurse leaders' knowledge of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model, strengthen the shared governance structure at the unit level, increase the capacity for research and evidence-based practice (EBP), and fortify existing structures that support nursing excellence. Therefore, it was essential to equip the nursing leadership team with knowledge about the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model. The Chief Nursing Officer, nurse leaders, and Magnet Coordinator attended a 2-day workshop with a nationally known guest speaker who was familiar with the Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup>. This provided the nursing leadership with insights about the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model and the role of transformational leaders within Magnet<sup>®</sup> organizations.

Changing a culture does not occur easily. It requires vision, strategic planning, leadership, and commitment. The Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital was led by transformational nurse leaders and exemplary clinical nurses who were visionary and clearly articulated the direction within the nursing enterprise and the organization. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital's vision

for nursing, to lead the world of nursing in an innovative and collaborative environment of excellence in patient- and family-centered care, education, and research, provided direction for the change. The Strategic Vision for Nursing, the nursing strategic plan, was used to enhance the nursing culture of excellence. This included goals related to leadership, education, technology, innovation, research, EBP, financial stewardship, patient- and family-centered care, and workplace and community presence. Strategic actions were used to bring the vision to realization. During a leadership retreat, nurse leaders acknowledged that the achievement of Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> recognition reaffirmed to them that a culture of nursing excellence had been established. That pervasive culture created an atmosphere of professional development, a safe work environment, and the highest quality care with exceptional patient outcomes. The desire to achieve Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition inspired the transformational leaders and clinical nurse leaders to advance and strengthen the nursing culture of excellence and engage the entire organization in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey.

### 3.1 Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership style seen throughout the nursing literature. The American Nurses Association Scopes and Standards for Nursing Administration<sup>[11]</sup> identifies leadership as one of the standards of professional performance for nurse administrators. Transformational leaders garner support and involvement from those they lead. Together they share a common purpose,

responsibility, and find meaning in their work.<sup>[12]</sup> Nurse administrators are commonly seen as those in a formal role of leadership within the health care organization; however, all nurses may be leaders within their organization.<sup>[11]</sup> Nurse administrators in this context set forth to carry out the vision for nursing by creating a shared purpose aspiring achievement of a shared goal.

Transformational leadership is one of the domains in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model. The ANCC recognizes a transformational leader as one who inspires followers “to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and in the process develop their own leadership capacity”.<sup>[13]</sup> This leadership style supports others to grow professionally and be empowered to achieve goals and objectives set before them.<sup>[1]</sup> Transformational leaders have the following 4 characteristics: (1) idealized influence—a role model, ethical, trustworthy, and able to gain the respect of others; (2) inspirational motivation—the leader articulates clearly the vision in a charismatic and optimistic manner that motivates others to follow; (3) intellectual stimulation—the leader challenges followers and stimulates ideas and encourages innovative approaches to situations; and (4) individualized consideration—the leader attends to the needs of the follower acting as a mentor and coach with empathy and open communication.<sup>[1, 14]</sup> The Chief Nursing Officer, nurse leaders, and Magnet Coordinator embraced a transformational leadership style to engage the entire hospital in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. Table 1 illustrates the strategic actions implemented to address transformational leadership within nursing.

**Table 1.** Transformational leadership strategic actions

Magnet Domain	Strategic Actions
Transformational Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strategic Planning Retreat with Chief Nursing Officer and nurse leaders to align nursing with hospital strategic plan.</li> <li>● Nurse Leaders attend Magnet Boot Camp education program at Houston Methodist Hospital, a Magnet Hospital.</li> <li>● Chief Nursing Officer, nurse leaders and Magnet Coordinator attend 2-Day Magnet Workshop.</li> <li>● Nurse leader and charge nurse development including Transformational Leadership content.</li> <li>● Professional Development for nurses with attendance at ANCC National Magnet<sup>®</sup> Conference Annually—(Chief Nursing Officer, Magnet Coordinator, nurse leaders, and clinical nurses).</li> <li>● Magnet Rounding—Chief Nursing Officer rounds on nursing units to discuss Magnet Journey updates.</li> <li>● Magnet Monday Emails—Chief Nursing Officer email communications about Magnet Journey.</li> <li>● Chief Executive Officer letter and emails with quarterly hospital-wide meetings that include Magnet Journey updates.</li> <li>● Professional development for nurse leaders—Talent Management Program, Crucial Conversations Course, Change Management Course.</li> <li>● Implementation of the 360 Leadership Mirror—Peer Feedback and Professional Development Tool for Directors.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Structural empowerment

One of the domains in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model is Structural Empowerment. According to the ANCC,<sup>[1]</sup> in Magnet<sup>®</sup> environments, nurses are involved in shared decision-making and are represented in interprofessional decision-making groups. This was an established part of the culture at Hous-

ton Methodist San Jacinto Hospital. The foundation for the shared governance structure was created during the journey to Pathway to Excellence<sup>®</sup> recognition. However, during the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey advancements were made as noted in the strategic actions in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Structural empowerment strategic actions

Magnet Domain	Strategic Actions
Structural Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enlarged the Shared Governance Council structure from solely nursing to include interdisciplinary members.</li> <li>● The hospital-wide council name changed to the Interprofessional Shared Governance Council to embrace the members of the interprofessional team.</li> <li>● Focused efforts to strengthen the unit-based shared governance councils. Education events about shared governance were held to raise awareness of the councils and attract new members.</li> <li>● Contributed leadership for The Houston Methodist System Workplace Environment Council. This council developed a leadership education program for shared governance leaders. A curriculum and a teaching team of experienced faculty were prepared for this course. The course included information about how to prepare a meeting, lead a project, handle conflict, and motivate councils toward outcomes. New Shared Governance Council Chairs and Co-Chairs attended the shared governance leadership program.</li> <li>● Allocated funds and developed a curriculum for an education retreat “Building the Foundation for Shared Governance through Unit Based Councils”. This program focused on the role of unit-based council leaders and provided the necessary resources. The Chief Nursing Officer provided opening remarks to share the vision of building upon the foundation laid in shared governance as the hospital continued on the Magnet Journey.</li> <li>● Recognized shared governance council leaders with hospital provided white lab jackets on which their name, credentials, and Interprofessional Shared Governance were embroidered. This allowed these clinical leaders to be readily recognized at the bedside for their role in shared governance.</li> <li>● Developed an action plan to increase percentage of BSN prepared nurses.</li> <li>● Increased tuition reimbursement to \$4,000 annually.</li> <li>● Encouraged nurses to advance their degrees by returning to school for their Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or graduate degree. Nurse leaders supported flexible self-scheduling.</li> <li>● Developed a one-year Nurse Residency Program to support graduate nurses’ transition to practice. This program developed into a Houston Methodist System Program and achieved accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education in 2016.</li> <li>● Established goals to increase nursing certification hospital-wide.</li> <li>● Incorporated nursing certification as part of advancement for the Clinical Career Pathway, the clinical nurse advancement program at the hospital.</li> <li>● Enhanced recognition of certified nurses throughout the year including Nurses Week and at Certified Nurse Day™ where certified nurses were recognized with gift and certificate at a celebration dinner held annually.</li> <li>● Expanded opportunities for public recognition of nursing through Board of Trustee Reports, hospital newsletters, Chief Executive Officer letters and emails, Chief Nursing Officer emails and in the Houston Methodist Nurse Magazine.</li> <li>● Expanded the Nurse Practitioner Service to enhance and support the practice environment for nurses.</li> <li>● Implemented innovative strategies to enhance physician-nurse collaboration to improve the practice environment, such as the Physician Nurse Collaboration Committee.</li> <li>● Initiated RN Satisfaction Surveys and continue to conduct them annually.</li> <li>● Supported ongoing development of the Nurse Preceptor Program.</li> <li>● Expanded resources for the Simulation Lab with mid-fidelity and high-fidelity manikins.</li> <li>● Supported the ICARE in Action Program, a Houston Methodist employee program to encourage community outreach with organizational support for nurses.</li> </ul>

**3.3 Exemplary professional practice**

Another domain of the Magnet® Model is Exemplary Professional Practice. Development, implementation, and evaluation of a professional practice model for nursing is a part of exemplary professional practice.<sup>[1]</sup> Clinical nurses were involved with colleagues from Houston Methodist Hospitals in developing a professional practice model for nursing. With the development and implementation of the Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model, the ADKAR® model for change management was utilized. Table 3 outlines

the strategic actions for Exemplary Professional Practice.

**3.4 New knowledge, innovations, and improvements**

New Knowledge, Innovations, and Improvements is another domain in the Magnet® Model. This domain addresses the integration of EBP and research within an organization.<sup>[1]</sup> Furthermore, it involves innovation, that is, new ways of working to achieve improvements, such as improvements related to efficiency, patient outcomes, or costs.<sup>[1]</sup> Table 4 highlights the strategic actions associated with this domain.

**Table 3.** Exemplary professional practice strategic actions

Magnet Domain	Strategic Action
Exemplary Professional Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported representatives from the Clinical Practice Council and the Magnet Champion Group that were selected and attended system meetings to review and revise the existing professional practice model, which was initially adopted from Houston Methodist Hospital. Together the team had input, and revisions were made for the model, which was implemented at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital and other hospitals within the system.</li> <li>Raised awareness about the new professional practice model that focused on patient care delivery keeping the patient and family at the center of care. Widespread education about the professional practice model involved numerous presentations at hospital committees and councils.</li> <li>Involved members of the Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) in Magnet related projects. This council is led by a Hospital Board of Trustee member and an administrative director with a membership that includes former patients and/or community members and clinical nurse representatives, the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Nursing Officer. Together the council looks at processes and education materials through the “lens of the patient,” providing feedback for areas of improvement. The Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model was shared with this council for feedback. The members of the PFAC also participated in the Magnet Site Visit and met with Magnet Appraisers.</li> <li>Highlighted clinical nurse collaboration among system hospitals to develop the Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model. This effort was showcased in an article in the Houston Methodist Nurse Magazine to raise awareness.</li> <li>Implemented Care Coordination Rounds on nursing units.</li> <li>Implemented Peer-Feedback for nurses at all levels.</li> <li>Engaged nurses at all levels in patient satisfaction initiatives to improve the Methodist Experience.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.** New knowledge, innovation, and improvement strategic actions

Magnet Domain	Strategic Action
New Knowledge, Innovations, and Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided Nursing Grand Rounds sessions “Evidence-Based Practice in Focus”</li> <li>Implemented the Houston Methodist Clinical Scholar Program. It was designed to equip nurses and interprofessionals with knowledge and skill in developing EBP and/or nursing research projects. The program was facilitated at the hospital by the Magnet Coordinator and guest lecturers presented each week. The IOWA Model was adopted as the framework for EBP at Houston Methodist<sup>[16]</sup>.</li> <li>Established a Nursing Research and EBP Committee.</li> <li>Established a Journal Club. The Journal Club was reorganized with clinical nurse leadership in 2016 to use an online platform, rather than face-to-face meetings for discussion.</li> <li>Participated as co-host of the Houston Methodist EBP Symposium and supported clinical nurses to attend, submit abstracts, and present posters/podium presentations, as selected.</li> <li>Provided resources for nursing research.</li> <li>Allocated funds for dissemination of nursing research at local and national conferences.</li> <li>Provided support for nursing publication of EBP and quality improvement projects.</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Empirical outcomes

Empirical outcomes are reflective of the quality of care and are one of the domains in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model.<sup>[1]</sup> According to the ANCC,<sup>[1]</sup> empirical outcomes are quantitative or qualitative evidence of the structures and processes related to the nursing practice environment and patient care. Empirical outcomes are interwoven throughout the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model and consume the largest place in the center of the model. One of the empirical outcomes is nurse satisfaction. While the hospital engaged in employee opinion surveys for many years, conducting a separate RN satisfaction survey was a change. Table 5 shows strategic actions that were related to the empirical outcomes.

These strategic actions taken to support the enculturation

of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model ultimately cemented the culture of nursing excellence within the organization. The Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey was led by transformational nurse leaders and exemplary clinical nurses. Changing a culture does not occur easily.

## 4. CHANGE MANAGEMENT TO ADVANCE A CULTURE OF NURSING EXCELLENCE

Raising awareness is the first element in change management using the ADKAR<sup>®</sup> Model. It is essential to advance and develop a Magnet<sup>®</sup> culture of nursing excellence. Therefore, at all levels within the organization, the Chief Nursing Officer, the nurse leaders, and the Magnet Coordinator disseminated information about the Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup>.

Desire, the second element in establishing change management, is important. This involved the individual’s support and engagement in the change process. Through inspirational motivation, the transformational leaders at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital helped to raise the desire for the change. The Chief Nursing Officer, nurse leaders, and Magnet Coordinator were mindful of the need for desire at all levels within the organization. Therefore, they engaged

nurse leaders in the Magnet Steering Committee with representatives from each area of clinical practice. Education retreats for all nurse leaders and clinical leaders were held annually. The Magnet Champion Group was formed early in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. This group was led by the Magnet Coordinator and its membership included clinical nurses and interprofessionals from the various clinical and nursing departments.

**Table 5.** Empirical outcomes strategic actions

Magnet Domain	Strategic Action
Empirical Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conducted RN Satisfaction Survey annually.</li> <li>● Analyzed the RN Satisfaction Survey results annually.</li> <li>● Developed department based action plans to improve RN Satisfaction.</li> <li>● Raised awareness of the importance of RN Satisfaction and the annual RN Satisfaction Survey. The Chief Nursing Officer sent personalized letters about the RN Satisfaction Survey to the nurses’ homes. Promotional flyers were posted in the nursing departments and communication about the survey was given by nurse leaders.</li> <li>● Incorporated Magnet Leadership rounding during RN Satisfaction survey time period. The Chief Nursing Officer and Magnet Coordinator rounded in the nursing departments to remind nurses how to access the RN satisfaction survey.</li> <li>● Aligned nurse-sensitive indicators for inpatient and outpatient nursing departments.</li> <li>● Monitored nurse-sensitive indicator performance compared to national benchmarks as available.</li> <li>● Provided education to nurse leaders and hospital leaders regarding nurse-sensitive indicator requirements for the Magnet Recognition Program. Many councils within the hospital reviewed the nurse-sensitive indicators; however, it was essential for the clinical nurse to become familiar with using nurse-sensitive indicators to evaluate outcomes of their nursing practice.</li> <li>● Established Unit Score Cards for nursing departments to raise awareness about nurse-sensitive indicators and to engage clinical nurses in using the nurse-sensitive indicator data to measure empirical outcomes of unit-based projects.</li> </ul>

The Magnet Champion Team was an integral part of the cultural change at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital. In April 2013, nurse representatives and interprofessionals were selected with recommendations from leadership to serve as Magnet Champions. The original team included 23 members and grew to over 42 members. The initial meeting was held during nurses’ week with a theme of a “Breakfast for Champions.” The team was given information about the role of a Magnet Champion, one who supports the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey and serves as a resource for their respective department. The following month the first working meeting was held and the team established a true value contract of behavioral expectations of team members. This team was empowered and engaged in shared decision-making. During the first meeting, they determined their role would be called a Magnet Champion, a term commonly seen in the literature.<sup>[16]</sup> They also selected meeting dates and a theme for the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. The theme which became the heart of the journey was, “One Road, One Destination, A Journey Together.” Following the success from the Shared Governance recognition

initiative, the Magnet Champions received white lab jackets on which their names, credentials, and the title Magnet Champion were embroidered. This not only identified them in their departments, but also recognized their role in leading the organization to Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition.

Knowledge, the third element in change management, addresses the information and training necessary to carry out the change. This includes the skill and behavior needed for application of the components of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model throughout the organization. Knowledge was an integral part of the change management plan and was provided at multiple levels within the organization throughout the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. Table 6 outlines the education plan used to increase knowledge in the change management process.

Ability is the fourth element in the ADKAR<sup>®</sup> model and refers to the implementation of the skills and behaviors of the change. Hiatt<sup>[8]</sup> explains that many factors can influence one’s ability to implement change, such as intellectual capability, psychological blocks, physical limitations, time allotted for change, and educational resources available.

**Table 6.** Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey education plan using ADKAR<sup>®</sup>

Phase	Activities	Description
Awareness	Magnet Mixers	Hospital-wide education events where Magnet Champions showcase posters that illustrate the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model in action. Posters include the 5 domains of the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model and examples of unit-based and hospital-wide quality improvement projects, evidence-based practice projects, and nursing research.
	Magnet Champion Education and Magnet Huddles	Education regarding the components of the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model were provided with current examples of the model in action within the hospital. Goals set for the group aligned with the nursing strategic plan. The information shared in Magnet Champion meetings was also distributed as a reminder to share with the nursing and interprofessional teams for Magnet Huddles.
Desire	Meetings at all Levels	The Chief Nursing Officer and Magnet Coordinator presented information about the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model and Magnet <sup>®</sup> Recognition Program at meetings throughout the hospital. These included the Board of Trustees, Senior Leadership, Physician Committees, Nursing Committees, The Patient and Family Advisory Council, and Interprofessional Councils.
	Employee Meetings	Chief Nursing Officer Town Hall meetings followed by Chief Executive Officer All Employee Meetings included updates on the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey and emphasized the benefits and purpose of seeking Magnet <sup>®</sup> recognition.
	Newsletters	Communication about the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey was included in the “Magnet Messenger” newsletter created by the Magnet Champions. This contained information from the Chief Nursing Officer and Magnet Coordinator and showcased articles from the Magnet Champions. A weekly Chief Executive Officer letter included information about the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey and highlighted Magnet <sup>®</sup> -related events and milestones. The Chief Nursing Officer contributed to the Chief Executive Officer newsletter and recognized accomplishments of nurses such as certifications, awards, and project involvement.
Knowledge	Resources	Online learning modules that described the Magnet Recognition Program <sup>®</sup> and the benefits of Magnet <sup>®</sup> recognition were developed. An online module that explained the Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model was also developed. Magnet <sup>®</sup> Champions made scrapbooks that included the Professional Practice Model and the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model domains with examples from their nursing department. Additionally, individualized Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey resource books were prepared for each unit in preparation for the Magnet <sup>®</sup> site visit. Contents included “Common Terms for the Journey,” The Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model domains, and examples for each one. “Stories from the Road” and examples of narratives showcased in the Magnet <sup>®</sup> document were included.
		The Magnet Coordinator prepared teaching sheets for the Board of Trustees, the senior leadership team, nursing directors, managers, and the Patient and Family Advisory Council. The Magnet Coordinator also met with these groups separately to review the expectations for participation at the Magnet <sup>®</sup> site visit. Additionally, meetings were held in the departments within the hospital to highlight how the department influenced the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey. All departments had a part in creating the culture of excellence that was showcased during the Magnet <sup>®</sup> site visit.
Ability	Unit Readiness Assessments	Magnet Champions conducted unit readiness assessments throughout the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey. These assessments were also conducted during site visit preparation by the Magnet Champions. The focus of the readiness assessment included the ability to apply the professional practice model, identify nurse-sensitive indicators, relate the outcomes to practice, provide examples of shared governance projects, discuss evidence-based practice, and distinguish between quality improvement, evidence-based practice, and nursing research.
Reinforcement	Information for New Hires	During Magnet Mixers a “Passport” for the Journey, inspired by passports and the traveling theme, was provided that included stamps of the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model domains. This was a reminder of the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model. For ongoing reinforcement, newly hired nurses attended a session with the Magnet Coordinator and received a “Passport” for the Journey to review with the Magnet Champion in their nursing department.
	Magnet <sup>®</sup> Mondays	The Chief Nursing Officer developed “Magnet Monday” emails with the Magnet Coordinator and these were distributed every Monday. The topics included why Magnet <sup>®</sup> was important, the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model, and examples of events throughout the year that related to the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey or as it was referred to the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Model in Action. Articles about the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey were included in the Chief Executive Officer’s Letter and in the Houston Methodist Nurse Magazine, a publication for nurses within Houston Methodist Hospitals. The Magnet Coordinator provided timely updates and communications to the Magnet Champions throughout the Magnet <sup>®</sup> Journey to motivate and keep the team engaged.

With this consideration, the Magnet Coordinator developed a variety of educational resources and utilized principles of Knowles’s adult learning theory. These principles include the following: (1) adult learners are self-directed, (2) adult learners have experience, (3) adult learners need to be ready to learn, (4) adult learners are time/priority orientated in their learning, (5) adult learners are motivated internally rather than externally to learn, and (6) adult learners need to know why they need to learn.<sup>[17]</sup> These principles guided the educational plan and curriculum development for education programs at multiple levels within the organization. It influenced the development of resources necessary to enhance the ability to engage in change. Education programs were provided at hospital-wide events known as Magnet Mixers that showcased the Magnet® Model and unit-based projects. Online education programs were developed and provided to all employees via the hospital learning management system.

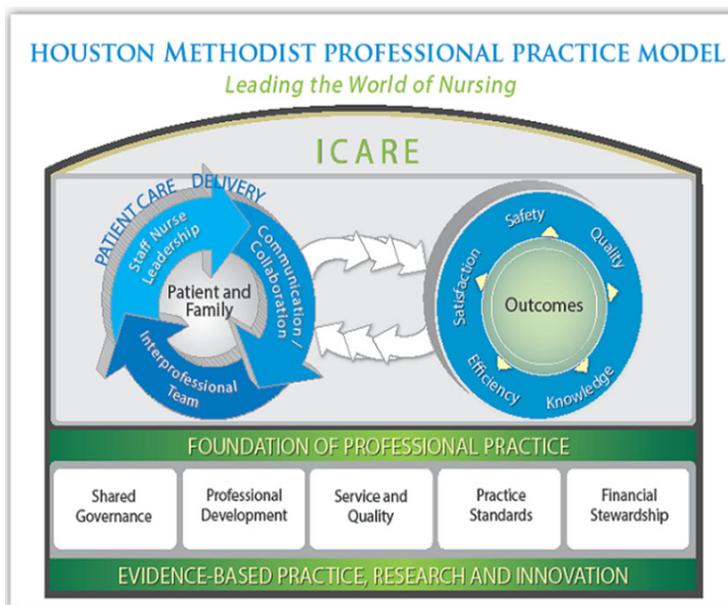
Reinforcement, the fifth element of change management, involves sustaining the change. This element was essential as each phase of the Magnet® Journey required reinforcement of the cultural change. With a shared vision toward achieving Magnet® recognition, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Nursing Officer, the nurse leaders, and the Magnet Coordinator utilized principles of change management to integrate transformational leadership, structural empowerment, exemplary professional practice, new knowledge, innovations, and

improvements, and empirical outcomes into the culture of the organization.

### 5. INTEGRATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MODEL

A significant change for nursing in the Magnet® Journey was the integration of the professional practice model. Clinical nurses were involved with colleagues from Houston Methodist Hospitals in developing a professional practice model for nursing. Using a professional practice model to guide nursing practice and a patient care delivery system that succinctly describes the practice and outcomes of nursing practice was an essential part of demonstrating Exemplary Professional Practice within a Magnet® culture of nursing excellence.

The Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model is the guiding framework for nursing practice at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital as presented in Figure 1. Hospitals throughout Houston Methodist use the Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model to guide nursing practice. The Houston Methodist ICARE Values of Integrity, Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence are the overarching beliefs and values embraced by nurses at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital. ICARE Values guide the interactions and decisions for quality patient- and family-centered care.



**Figure 1.** Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model, Houston Methodist, 2014

The patient care delivery system is central to the Houston Methodist Professional Practice Model and is embedded within the model. The wheel on the left side of the Houston

Methodist Professional Practice Model depicts the patient care delivery system. The wheel on the right side depicts the outcomes resulting from patient care delivery. The founda-

tion for professional practice is based upon the structures of shared governance, professional development, service and quality, practice standards, financial stewardship, which are grounded in evidence-based practice, research, and innovation.

Professional practice model education programs were developed. These education programs were designed with multiple instructional strategies to address learners with diverse learning styles.

The first instructional strategy was a resource handbook, the Houston Methodist Professional Nursing Practice handbook, which was distributed to all nurses. This handbook explained the Professional Practice Model and the RN Standards for Nursing. The second instructional strategy was classroom education sessions for nurse leaders and clinical nurses. Nurse leaders attended a course specifically designed for the nurse leader to share with their nursing teams about the professional practice model. Clinical nurses participated in an interactive session to apply the professional practice model. Education tools with case studies specific to clinical areas were provided to assist nurse leaders in sharing their new knowledge in department meetings and huddles for ongoing education and integration of the professional practice model within the nursing enterprise. The Patient and Family Advisory Council members participated in education sessions about the model, because they were an integral part of patient- and family-centered care at the hospital. The Magnet Champions engaged each month in education sessions and applied the professional practice model and patient care delivery system to a patient scenario. This was beneficial to both the nurses sharing and those listening to hear and visualize the patient care delivery system and professional practice model in action.

## 6. PHASES OF THE MAGNET<sup>®</sup> JOURNEY

It is important to review the phases in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey as each has its unique challenges. Guanci<sup>[16]</sup> explains the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Process as 4 distinct phases an organization goes through as they navigate the course to excellence. The initial phase involves strategic planning and a gap analysis. Following the strategic planning and gap analysis, structures and processes were developed to ensure the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Culture was pervasive throughout Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital as outlined in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. A formal application to the ANCC Magnet Recognition Program<sup>®</sup> was submitted. This signified the intent to submit a written document within 12 to 24 months. The second phase includes the documentation phase and the evaluation phase. Specifically, it involves gathering evidence to provide examples of the structures, processes, and outcomes of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model

within an organization.<sup>[16]</sup> A Magnet<sup>®</sup> document that tells the story of excellence of an organization is then submitted for evaluation to the ANCC for peer review.

The Magnet Coordinator led the Magnet Steering Committee as they gathered examples of excellence to support the sources of evidence. Later a small writing team was established to complete the written document. Throughout these phases it was essential to maintain nurse engagement. The Magnet Coordinator and Magnet Champions provided ongoing support to their nursing departments and kept their colleagues aware of the progress in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey.

In February 2016, many members of the hospital team gathered in the hospital lobby where the Magnet Champions proudly shared unit-based scrapbooks that visually displayed the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model in action through photos of their teams. Additional displays included posters from each department showing the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model in action. Together the team shared a moment of prayer as the chaplain provided a blessing of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> document. Later that week, the Magnet<sup>®</sup> document was submitted to the ANCC for peer review.

In the third phase of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey, the organization prepares a Magnet<sup>®</sup> site visit. If granted, ANCC Magnet<sup>®</sup> Appraisers conduct an onsite visit to verify, amplify, and clarify the findings in review. In March 2016, the Chief Nursing Officer received notification that a Magnet<sup>®</sup> site visit was granted. The fourth and final phase involves the Commission on Magnet-Recognition<sup>®</sup>'s decision on whether an organization has met the threshold of excellence outlined in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model.<sup>[1]</sup> Throughout each of these phases, the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nursing Officer provided ongoing support and allocated resources for the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey, which was an organization priority.

## 7. PREPARATION FOR THE MAGNET<sup>®</sup> SITE VISIT

The collaboration among all departments was most evident during preparation for the Magnet<sup>®</sup> site visit. The Magnet Coordinator prepared individualized unit-based resource guides that included "stories from the road", which were narrative examples showcased in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> document. The Magnet Coordinator met with hospital departments to prepare for the Magnet<sup>®</sup> site visit. Early in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey, a yellow car was chosen as the "Magnet Mobile" and was used as a symbol of the journey along the way. At the beginning of the journey, photos of the Chief Nursing Officer, Magnet Coordinator, and Magnet Champions were taken in front of the hospital with a yellow Dodge Charger. This photo was used in many promotional flyers about the

Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey to remind everyone of the transformational journey the hospital was making. Therefore, during the Magnet<sup>®</sup> documentation phase, a bright yellow toy car was purchased to help to continue the visual reminder and serve as a means by which to share the story of excellence in a fun way with the hospital team. Printed cards sharing “stories from the road” were included with the Magnet Mobile. This effort provided a fun and engaging way for the hospital teams to learn about examples of excellence within the hospital. The Magnet Mobile traveled to the various departments throughout the documentation phase and Magnet<sup>®</sup> site visit.

The Magnet Champions participated in leading education sessions during hospital-wide Magnet Mixers. Nurses participated in the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey: Excellence in Practice sessions where Magnet Champions led sessions about the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Model domains and provided examples of projects implemented at the hospital. The Magnet Champions and Magnet Coordinator also conducted several mock site visits to the nursing departments. In these sessions, the nursing teams were encouraged to share about their unit-based shared governance projects, current results of nurse-sensitive indicators, and how they apply the professional practice model and patient care delivery system every day.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The ADKAR<sup>®</sup> principles of change management were instrumental in achieving a Magnet<sup>®</sup> culture in the organization. During all phases of the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey, it was essential to raise awareness and engage key stakeholders in the shared vision for achieving Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition. Open communication about the benefits of creating a Magnet<sup>®</sup> culture of nursing excellence led to the desire to support the efforts. Knowledge was a priority and considered as education programs and resources were provided at the initial phase (strategic planning phase), documentation phase, and evaluation phase, which included preparation for a successful Magnet<sup>®</sup> site visit. During this visit, the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nursing Officer were highly visible and showed overwhelming support through their transformational

leadership.

Principles of adult learning theory were utilized in planning, implementing, and evaluating these education programs to support the culture of nursing excellence. A variety of instructional strategies were utilized to engage the hospital team and meet the needs of diverse learning styles. Transformational leadership was evident throughout the Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey as teams were inspired in a shared vision for “One Road, One Destination, A Journey Together” and successfully achieved first-time Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition in July 2016.

Achieving Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition demonstrates to the patients, families and the community excellence in patient care that result in quality outcomes and improved patient satisfaction. It also demonstrates the sustainability of a positive practice environment for nurses. Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital received international recognition for excellence in nursing by achieving Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition with 5 exemplars. These exemplars included nurse satisfaction, nurse autonomy and shared governance structures, organization support for advancement of nursing research, the nurse-sensitive indicator core measure stroke education during hospital stay, and for the ambulatory nurse-sensitive clinical indicator of patient post-operative pain relief. Achieving Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition and these exemplars are clear empirical outcomes that demonstrate Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital successfully advanced the culture of excellence on its initial Magnet<sup>®</sup> Journey. Sustaining Magnet<sup>®</sup> recognition will have lasting positive effects for both patients and the practice environment.

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## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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