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Bethesda Hospital School of Nursing
Class of 1976

As a native of Greater Cincinnati, I grew up in North College Hill and graduated from McAuley High School in 1973. That August, I entered Bethesda Hospital School of Nursing on Reading Road and Oak Street in Walnut Hills. Bethesda Hospital opened in 1896 and added The School of Nursing in 1914. During most of the 20th century, a hospital affiliated three year RN diploma program was the norm. In fact, there were five such hospital programs in Cincinnati. At faith based hospitals, nursing was considered a calling to serve, as well as a profession. Bethesda Hospital was affiliated with the United Methodist Church but accepted students of all faiths. A letter of recommendation from a pastor or clergyman was a part of the admission application. In 1973, Bethesda began an affiliation with Edgely College on Victory Parkway for the science, sociology and psychology classes. The student nurses received college credits for those classes which would carry over if a Bachelor of Science degree was pursued at a later date. This led me to choose Bethesda.

Many of the student nurses were recent high school graduates who lived at the dorm across the street from the hospital. Some students lived at their homes, including married students and male students. The course of study was very intense and followed a full time three year schedule. In addition to the classes at Edgely College we studied nursing with lecture and lab classes at Bethesda Hospital School of Nursing and had clinical experiences for sixteen hours each week. Clinicals were held at Bethesda Hospital, Children's Hospital, Longview State Psychiatric Hospital and Cincinnati Health Department, based on the area of study at the time. Technology was evolving and we were the first class to use electronic fetal monitoring in the labor rooms at Bethesda. Many student nurses also worked on the weekend as nurse aides, gaining experience and being mentored by RNs at the hospital.

The day after graduation I began my nursing career on the night shift at a new suburban hospital. I missed the people and the busy varied environment of

Bethesda Hospital and returned there one year later. While working full time as a staff nurse, I pursued my bachelor of science in nursing degree (BSN) at Edgecliff College which became part of Xavier University before my graduation in 1982.

After earning a BSN I accepted a job as the night shift charge nurse in the gynecology/oncology unit at Bethesda. My interest in caring for patients with cancer led me to join the Oncology Nursing Society and become an Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN).

Health care and hospital inpatient care began to change rapidly in the 1980's and 1990's. More outpatient departments opened and fewer services required an inpatient hospitalization. Units in the hospital began to close. I then went to work as a staff nurse for the float pool. This was a very exciting and rewarding job. I was able to learn critical nursing to work in the ICU and emergency department, and floated to any unit in the hospital including maternity, special care nursery, psychiatry, medical surgical nursing, and oncology. My involvement with ONS continued and I became active in Bethesda's nursing quality improvement committee.

Good Samaritan Hospital joined Bethesda Oak, Bethesda North, and their outlying centers to form TriHealth in 1995. A new department, Care Coordination, was formed and included utilization management and discharge planning. For twenty one years I served as an RN Care Coordinator at Bethesda North Hospital. During the COVID-19 pandemic I worked from home as a utilization manager. When the day of my retirement arrived I was greeted at my home by a parade of fifteen cars driven by my co-workers, a police car, and a fire engine.