

STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT

It's no secret that knowledge is power...

Creating an environment where individuals have the ability to contribute to collective decision making is ideal. We are providing an outlet for nurses to influence outcomes that drive their practice.

Over the years MUSC has built a strong foundation for structural empowerment through the promotion of professional development and by fostering a commitment to community involvement. Seeds for cultivating autonomy and mastery were planted in 1834 when the Medical College of South Carolina established an infirmary specifically for teaching purposes.

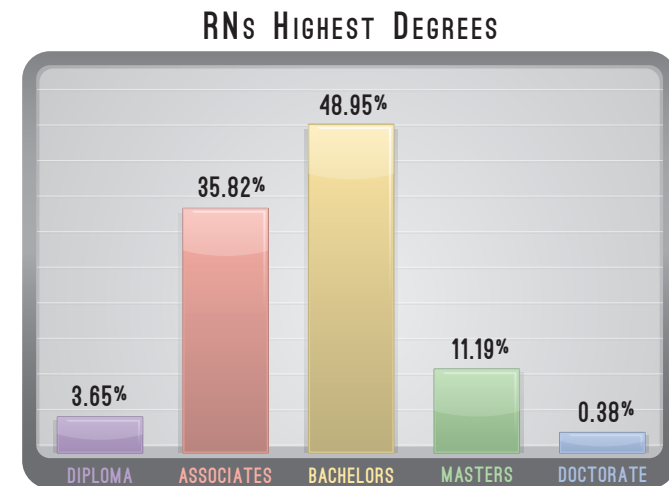
This tradition flourishes today with Carla Pascoe MA, RN, Children's Hospital Nurse Manager, and Lisa Langdale, MSN, RN, Center for Education and Best Practice Manager, leading efforts for Magnet's Structural Empowerment initiative.

Providing support to nurses who plan on earning specialized certifications and advanced degrees will optimize conditions for quality patient care. Thirteen percent of MUSC's nurses are certified. Our goal is to achieve a 5 percent increase annually due to our new endeavors. We're also anticipating that 20 nurses will further their education by earning their BSN, MSN or Ph.D. in the next couple of years.

Advocating for professional engagement through the establishment of unit based councils is another pivotal component. Pascoe emphasized that a more effective impact will be made with direct caregivers identifying best practice and being able to make those changes happen by having a strong voice in the decision-making process.

Objectives for this initiative are being met by providing nurses with the following resources:

1. Providing tuition assistance of \$5,250 a year to promote continued education.
2. Offering advance reimbursement of \$750 as an incentive for certification.



“For us, the ultimate goal is to have staff who are going to want to provide the best care for their patient, who are truly vested in our quality outcomes of being an academic medical center and aligning with the enterprise strategic plan,” Langdale said. “We want staff to have as much as they can in their professional development within the shared governance model to make decisions that drive and change patient care to get those quality outcomes. I know for us that’s what’s really important. We’re moving our staff to feel empowered.”