

Unity in Diversity

Nursing Care Strategic
Framework 2019 - 2024



BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM

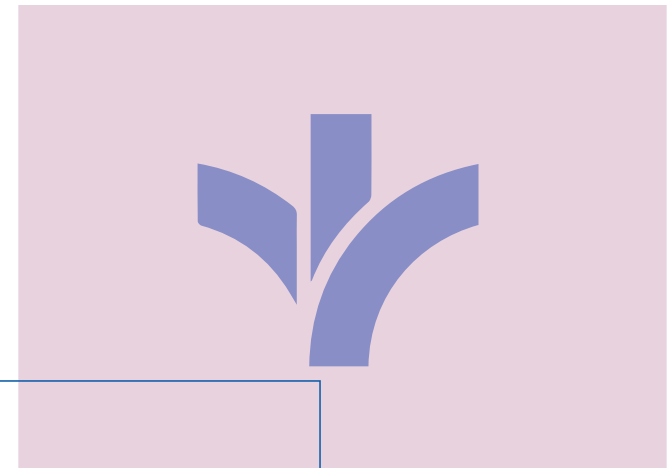
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Nursing staff reconnected with the courage, faith and resilience of the young women who founded Bon Secours reaching out to meet the needs of others, globally.



06

This focus on our inter-connections and shared values across different locations will enable us to inform and influence how we meet growing demands and achieve the best outcomes for patients.



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Inaugural Strategy Design
and Consultation Group
Meeting 4th November 2018.



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Our strategic framework will keep nurses, healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners curious about their profession and grounded in what nursing care has to offer patients, residents and the wider community.



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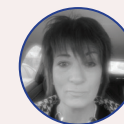
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Nursing staff

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and resilience of the young women
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As the Bon Secours Health System Director of Nursing Group, we are delighted to introduce “Unity in Diversity” our first nursing care strategic framework for the Bon Secours Health System, Ireland (BSHS). There are varying views on the value of developing a strategy in the current health environment, where the focus is more immediate and short term. However, it is exactly because of this predominance that we collaborated to explore the unique contribution of an integrated nursing workforce to the overall mission of the Bon Secours Health System, Ireland. The fusion of our collaboration and the impetus of external facilitation resulted in an ambitious agenda acknowledging the changing nature of healthcare, locally, nationally and globally. We are cognisant of the new merger arrangement with the Bon Secours Mercy Health in the US and the enriched potential of this emerging partnership. ‘Unity in Diversity’ is the first strategy with an opportunity to embrace this exciting venture for staff in Ireland. It was both fortuitous and beneficial to collectively contemplate and anticipate this new future as part of our BSHS strategy conversations.

Coming together required us to reconnect with the origins of the Bon Secours Sisters in Paris, after the French Revolution in 1824 and their arrival in Ireland in 1861. By 1951 the Sisters were building hospitals to provide for people who were seriously ill or at the end of life. In our strategy conversations,

nursing staff reconnected with the courage, faith and resilience of the young women who founded Bon Secours, reaching out to meet the needs of others, globally. This strategic framework demonstrates how our nursing teams are equally determined to hold themselves and others to account when that philosophy of empathy, innovation and kindness is undermined. The nursing profession is challenged with both rethinking its contribution and models of care in a modern health system alongside sustaining strong humanitarian values. Our collaborations reinforced the integral role that nurses, healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners play in ensuring that care and treatment allows people to flourish as human beings. Recent work (Meehan TC et al 2018) relating to a more contemporary model of nursing care informed our thinking. Nurses advocated for the rights of patients and residents emphasising the Bon Secours pledge of respect and dignity in a diverse and resource strapped world. Dr Meehan’s concept of working with ‘a contagious calm’ in challenging times was a metaphor used to capture day-to-day working as well as the essence of the nursing contribution.

We sought input from staff across all nursing care roles, grades and locations, cognisant of the inherent challenges of this endeavour. We were involved in authentic and insightful debates where nurses, healthcare assistants

and operating department practitioners proffered an influential and ambitious role on behalf of patients. Over 50% of the nursing care cohort across all locations participated in facilitated conversations. As the recognised leaders of the largest workforce in the BSHS we carry high responsibility for creative responses to skill shortages and pragmatic professional/personal development as well as ensuring healthy work environments. We committed to exploring the contribution of healthcare assistants and other similar technician-based areas and to partnering with Senior Management in the people strategy ‘Strength Through People’. We will continue our stewardship of resources by working closely with colleagues in other clinical and corporate roles. ‘Unity in Diversity’ is a practical guide, informed by our own experiences, that enables the co-ordination and management of care to make a positive difference to those in our care.

The energy and interest generated through the strategic conversations is a rich source of insight and inspiration for us as leaders. We are confident that the BSHS strategy process helped to reaffirm important values and shape an ambitious future where the nursing care team can pioneer our unique contribution in Bon Secours Health System, Ireland.

INTRODUCTION

This document “Unity in Diversity” outlines a clear direction for nursing care in the Bon Secours Health System, Ireland over the next five years. Building on our achievements and in support of the Bon Secours Health System vision and goals, this focus on our inter-connections and shared values across different locations will enable us to inform and influence how we meet growing demands and achieve the best outcomes for patients and residents within the resources available to us.

The Directors of Nursing committed to a process of direct dialogue with nurses, healthcare assistants and operational department practitioners over a three-month period. Some 50% of the nurses, healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners employed across the five different hospitals and the care village analysed the broader context for their day-to-day work. Various concerns were highlighted and suggestions for innovative nursing care solutions that could involve the whole of the team, irrespective of role or status were discussed.

The respective teams are proud of their unique identities and contribution to nursing care in a variety of contexts. They are very conscious of not working in isolation and emphasised their broader role in working alongside all professions. This ensures seamless access to services and achieves the best outcomes for patients and residents.

Nursing Care – A Lasting Legacy

The legacy of the Bon Secours Sisters addressing the health needs of Irish people dates back to 1861. Four Sisters came to Dublin, bringing their mission of ‘good help to those in need’. In facilitated conversations, members of the current nursing, healthcare assistant and operating department practitioner teams recounted how this commitment to an ethos of ‘Good Help’ brings attention to the relational aspects of care in a demanding work environment.

While that thread of dedication is evident in how the organisation gives expression to its ethos and values, it also resonates with the values of a skilled, knowledgeable, professional workforce who are determined to act in the best interests of patients and residents. This strategy is about evolving a nursing care approach that centre-stages the patient or resident in the health-enabling environments of the Bon Secours facilities.



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“Our strategy must reflect the kind of organisation that we are – the kind of values that we practice, the ambition we share for the people who use our services and the way we organise ourselves to work together as part of a team culture”

(Meeting 4th November 2018)



Inaugural Strategy Design
and Consultation Group
Meeting 4th November 2018

A ‘Strategy Consultation and Design Group’ made up of twenty colleagues met in advance of the consultations and set out their intentions for creating the strategic framework.

The ambition for this process was to create a ‘user-friendly strategy’ that would be part vision and part plan for the next five to ten years. Conversations were to be informed by the local realities of nurses, healthcare assistants and other colleagues in the Bon Secours Hospitals and Care Village. This highlighted both a staff interest in being more involved and the need for a coherent nursing care strategy across the Bon Secours Health System in Ireland.

In each location, a combined nurse and healthcare assistant team took responsibility for inviting colleagues to get involved. Along with the Director of Nursing, they worked with the external facilitators and formed part of the facilitation team for each local event. Later, the Strategy Consultation and Design Group met to review what happened. This helped in critically reflecting on what was discussed and continuing to keep in touch with the staff group in each location.

The local, large group events generated huge interest and involved lots of last minute ‘manoeuvring’ to enable staff to attend as word spread about the value of meeting colleagues from different work areas. Anxieties about the risks associated with all nursing grades, healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners sitting together as equals in a space that invited different opinions were recognised and considered.

Engaging with the future of nursing care in Bon Secours meant that any number of colleagues, might well have felt exposed or become defensive in the group conversations.

Staff used the process to create new understandings of the wider work context and got to name some uncomfortable issues with sensitivity and mutual respect. It is to everyone's credit that pride in the work of nursing care was paramount. The commitment to patients and residents and the acknowledgment of the interdependencies that make an effective inter-disciplinary team came to the fore and enriched the conversations.

All of the sessions were customised to build on emerging themes and explore new 'insights' that emerged from one facilitated event to the next. With the richness of the themes generated by such nuanced conversations, the external facilitators produced an overview of key ideas from each location. In the immediate aftermath, this provided a customised resource that helped to inform strategies for local implementation.

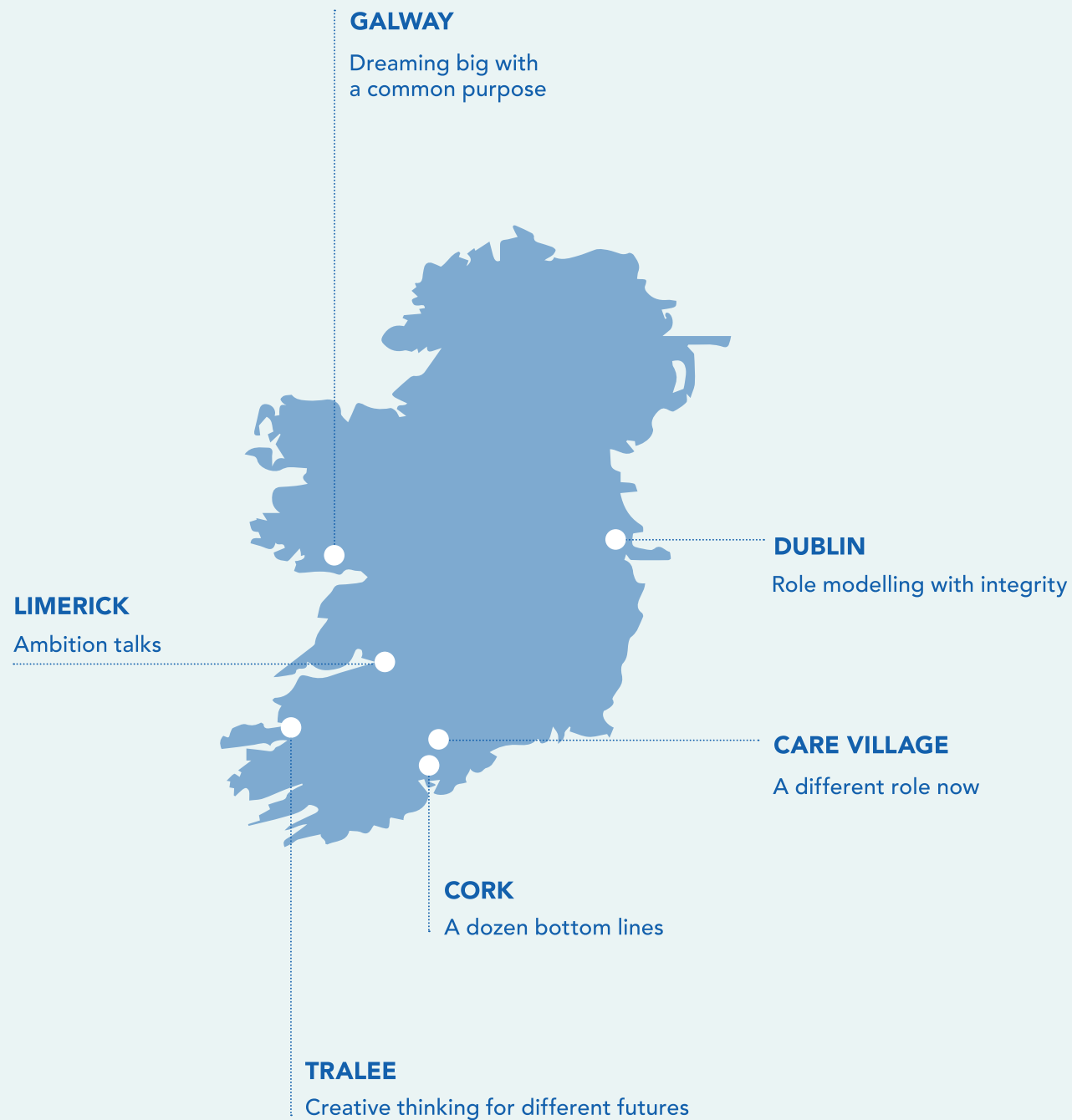
Taken together, the six local strategic reflections also served as a key source for crafting the overall nursing care strategic framework. Key insights from each reflection could equally apply in any of the other facilities. Each group revealed an ambition to play an integral role in contributing to the success of the Bon Secours Health System, Ireland and a commitment to advocating for quality patient and resident care in all circumstances.

Strategy Design



6

LOCAL STRATEGIC REFLECTIONS ARISING FROM ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS



REFLECTING ON THE NURSING CARE CONTEXT

The review of nursing care was embraced with enthusiasm in each location. Colleagues informed each other, in the moment and acknowledged concerns that the 'big picture analysis' might detract from naming the challenges currently experienced. Ultimately, the nursing care team relished the space given to reflect on a more systemic analysis and express opinions about the Bon Secours Health System and its future. The review of the nursing care context got captured as follows:



Ownership and Autonomy



Changing Health Needs



Continuity of Care



Work Life Balance



Healthcare and the Economy



Public Expectations



Finding the Appropriate Balance



Ownership and Autonomy

This strategy acknowledges the inter-dependencies and tensions that arise in a healthcare system, whose hospital income is derived from private health insurance. In Ireland, such access is usually the preserve of people who can afford to pay a premium. At the same time, the Bon Secours Health System comes from a longstanding, faith-informed mission to serve the most vulnerable citizens in a spirit of generosity and care. The five hospitals and the care village are an integral part of local communities and generate a strong sense of ownership that is valued by staff and service users alike. This strategy embraces the reality of these inter-dependencies and seeks to reach out and adapt to the changing needs of a diverse population profile in each location.

The recent merger with the US based Bon Secours Mercy Health adds to these complexities and the Irish based nursing care team are keen to engage with this major transition. Nurses and healthcare assistants acknowledge the broader challenges of ensuring financial sustainability and will continue to manage and adapt practices to better protect and enhance the quality of excellent care and the friendly approach that is a characteristic of the work.



Changing Health Needs

Lifestyle changes and chronic diseases combined with people living longer present new demands for how healthcare is resourced and organised in Ireland. Nursing care colleagues stressed the importance of supporting staff, patients,

residents and their families to adopt and promote healthier lifestyles. This was seen as key to enabling one's capacity to care for others, be involved in the community and enhance the health of future generations.



Continuity of Care

Significant workforce challenges derive from the global competition for appropriately qualified healthcare staff. Working together, this framework is about creating opportunities to enhance roles and co-ordinate rosters and team-working arrangements so the appropriate skill mix and knowledge are better organised to deliver a continuity of care and better outcomes for patients and residents. This is particularly significant for the nursing care team as they make up 48.3% of the overall staff cohort in the Bon Secours Health System, Ireland.



Work Life Balance

Nursing care teams want to be assured that nurse patient ratios will be safe and appropriate to the level of care required. Emerging national policy directions and workforce planning in the wider health service reiterate this stance. A key way to ease stress and attract and retain staff is to create the conditions so that staff are valued and respected without feeling exploited. Employees want to work in systems that proactively acknowledge life choices and changing family circumstances at all career stages. The nursing care team of the future want to protect themselves from excessive wear and tear on their physical health and mental wellbeing.

Healthcare and the Economy

The economic recession from 2008 onwards and the Irish government's programme of austerity meant cuts to public services and reduced incomes. In spite of the more recent recovery, concerns were expressed about the likely risk of a future recession and the increased levels of healthcare spending and health insurance levies. More broadly, given the new merger arrangements and the risks associated with uncertainties around the UK/EU Brexit negotiations, there may be unexpected economic challenges during the lifetime of this strategic framework.

Public Expectations

A well-respected healthcare system, coming from a faith-informed Catholic ethos and showcasing excellence in medical diagnosis and treatment is expected to deliver an empathetic and safe patient care experience. In an increasingly secular and diverse Ireland, people may be less concerned about choosing a health provider associated with a Catholic ethos. Patients and residents expect 'to get value and choice' by paying a premium for private healthcare. People want to be well informed in ways that are timely, appropriate and help to alleviate anxiety.

Finding the Appropriate Balance

A tendency towards a more centralised corporate group infrastructure led to concerns that it creates a 'distance from the patient' and risks a

scenario where financial profitability overrides the needs of patients, residents and their families. In such circumstances, this could undermine the staff capacity to do the work safely, free from the stress of worrying about errors or unintended mistakes.

In response, the nursing care strategic framework evolved a metaphor around how best to balance the ethos of Bon Secours as giving expression to Christian witness within the Catholic tradition with the reasonable expectations of running a business in a competitive healthcare landscape. The image of 'a bird in flight' emerged as a way to aid understanding of this dynamic balance. The wing of 'faith and care' gives reason to the wing of 'business and corporate systems' and must achieve an appropriate balance to sustain the organisation for future generations. However, the bird will find it difficult to fly if a wing gets injured or the wings are not balanced. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain the balance by keeping patients and residents at the centre of all decision-making at all levels of the organisation.

The symbolism represented by the bird led to further discussions about the importance of having a sense of 'belonging' and being part of an organisation that knows and enacts its values while being flexible and adaptable in its approach. If the Bon Secours mission of 'good help to those in need' is to survive another two hundred years, a tolerance for fresh thinking and innovative ideas must be encouraged in what was described as 'a learning organisation'.



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ATTITUDINAL CHANGE IN ACTION

Our strategic framing of 'Unity in Diversity' recognises the need to co-exist with competing demands and demonstrates our commitment to living the values as we deliver safe, high quality care to patients and residents. It also draws attention to the richness of connection - even when we don't always agree. This strategic framework also lays down a marker. More needs to be done to evolve practices that reach out to fellow health professionals, to better utilise diverse skills and expertise in the service of delivering treatment and care to patients and residents 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

ON-GOING
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPING
SYSTEMIC
LEADERSHIP




CONFRONTING
DIFFICULT ISSUES

ADAPTING TO
CHANGING WORK
CULTURES

CHANGING
HABITUAL
PRACTICES AND
ROUTINES

BEING DILIGENT
ABOUT
INCLUSION

Six recurring themes form the basis for the changing in mind-sets that are now required in the delivery of nursing care in a diverse and changing healthcare environment.

	FROM Analysing our day-to-day experience		TO Acknowledging the need to change mind-sets
01 Changing habitual practices and routines	<p>Familiar nursing routines allow us to deliver 'care at the bedside.' Patients, trust us to use our observations and expertise to keep them safe and well while in our care.</p>		<p>People now spend 'less time in the bed' and have to navigate a much more complex healthcare environment. We will adapt to being joint custodians in achieving the best outcomes for patients and residents.</p>
02 Adapting to changing work cultures	<p>In the past, Sisters of the Bon Secours managed nursing teams, in all but two of the current locations. As trustees/owners of the facilities, their presence gave symbolic and practical expression to enacting the ethos and mission in Bon Secours Hospitals in Ireland.</p>		<p>The recent acquisition of a new hospital with different ownership arrangements brings to attention the unique culture in each location. Acting within the Bon Secours ethos and integrating contemporary nursing values is part of our shared future.</p>
03 On-going professional development	<p>Nursing teams are familiar with building long term careers where security of tenure and familiarity of routine brings its own satisfaction. Training on 'a need-to-know' basis is sufficient in a very busy work environment.</p>		<p>While 'care' is a key driver, our career ambitions also include on-going professional development. We expect to play an integral role in the design and delivery of service transformation and the increased use of technology.</p>

	<p>FROM</p> <p>Analysing our day-to-day experience</p>	<p>TO</p> <p>Acknowledging the need to change mind-sets</p>
<p>04</p> <p>Being diligent about inclusion</p>	<p>There is a challenge in finding an appropriate balance between 'care' and 'finance' when – to an extent - a private health-insured business model impacts on the delivery of day-to-day care and developing new services.</p>	<p>The nursing care team are an un-tapped reservoir of ideas, as interactions with patients and residents allow them to see new needs and 'service development' potential. We need time to explore ideas that could lead to new services and income streams.</p>
<p>05</p> <p>Confronting difficult issues</p>	<p>Inadequate staff levels lead to frustration and worry about care quality, mistakes and safety concerns, The repercussions get 'played out' in negativity and blame and impact on colleagues, patients and residents.</p>	<p>The capacity to make 'care' authentic – when patients are initially referred, treated, discharged, and even post-discharge, is what will give the Bon Secours Health System its competitive edge.</p>
<p>06</p> <p>Developing Systemic Leadership</p>	<p>Leadership within nursing and healthcare more broadly is largely dependent on an illusion of control that insists on accountability and an expectation that senior leaders will solve issues brought to their attention by staff. This process identified many leaders and not necessarily just those people in formal leadership roles.</p>	<p>The nursing leadership team will build capacity to make decisions by promoting more opportunities for participation and inclusion at all levels of the organisation. We are committed to enacting this strategy and see it as an enabling tool to support more autonomous care practices and teamwork.</p>

Our Nursing Care Mission

Provide individualised care and support to patients and residents in a rights based service while remaining committed to a caring, compassionate, professional approach, informed by wider considerations of social, economic and community life.



OUR NURSING CARE MISSION

The professions of nursing and midwifery are steeped in traditional values that privilege the right to the fundamentals of care, compassion and commitment. The various nursing, healthcare assistant and operating department practitioner groups highlighted how a proactive focus on the Bon Secours mission complements the person-centred professional practice that is at the heart of advancing the art and science of nursing and midwifery.

The sense of pride and passion for the work of being with patients and residents in all circumstances is reflected in the on-going mission that is the keystone of our strategic framework. This will support our ambition to proactively engage beyond the day-to-day challenges and create spaces for sense-making and generating common understandings of how we can respond to the changing needs and complexities of a healthcare system that is both local and global at the same time. We are also informed by four key Bon Secours Healthcare System strategies that are currently being implemented:

1.

The Bon Secours Health System 2020 plan sets out a strategic vision that acknowledges its outstanding people and their role in building an integrated healthcare system while also being a leader in innovative, exceptional care in Ireland. Strategic initiative number 10 commits to the development and implementation of a nursing recruitment, retention and development strategy.

2.

The people strategy "Strength through People" (2017-2020) aims to create an experience that inspires people to embrace their unique talents and ambitions by promoting an inclusive, high performing culture that identifies and nurtures trust and develops and rewards success. The focus on a progressive, sustainable and healthy working environment was seen as a key enabler for this nursing care framework.

3.

The patient engagement strategy "Turning values into behaviours" published in 2018 positions the Bon Secours Health System as a recognised leader in the delivery of patient-centred care through a programme of patient and staff engagements, recognising the importance of organisational identity, the value of patient-centred care as a marker of quality and the ability to respond to changing needs when indicated. The focus on the uniqueness

of the patient experience, empowerment, organisational values and culture is seen as having a particular synergy with the Nursing Care Strategic Framework.

4.

The recent merger with Bon Secours Mercy Health (July 2019) and the current work on the next Bon Secours Healthcare System strategy "2025 Answering the Call" provides an opportunity to enlist the strategic analysis already undertaken by nursing care staff for this framework. Much of the output, including the site-specific documentation sets out the needs and ambitions of staff that engage with patients, relatives, friends and carers day-to-day. As we anticipate the next five years, this assessment of what is needed, both now and in the future, merits careful consideration.

PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE WAY WE WORK



Friendly and inclusive

We sustain friendly, safe and clean facilities so that people of all ages, genders, races and backgrounds feel welcome and safe in our hospital.



Teamwork, kindness and integrity

We ensure the wellbeing of all team members by striving to act with kindness and integrity; even at times when we are frustrated or extremely busy.



Learning and Development

We promote on-going learning and creative thinking by enabling continuous professional development, education and research for all staff at all career stages.



Progression and change

We create the conditions for inter-generational learning, encouraging leadership, and enabling staff progression by sustaining our values in a changing world.

We are challenged to get beyond traditional medical model mind-sets and hierarchies as we focus on health and wellbeing in the communities we serve.



Health and wellbeing

We welcome patients and employees from a range of different faiths and cultures as we also acknowledge our Catholic Christian heritage in a more pluralist society.



Respect and diversity

We value our capacity for collaboration while also acknowledging that each facility has a unique history that engenders local loyalties and community ownership.



Belonging and Community

We identified six priorities through our engagement with staff, aligning our strategy with the mission and ethos of Bon Secours internationally and taking cognizance of the corporate policies of the Bon Secours Health System in Ireland. These priorities guide our work and will be embedded across all facilities and key work areas.

1

Influence key nursing care policy debates and contribute knowledge, research and expertise to further support the core values of Bon Secours Health System, Ireland.

4

Develop patient pathways and introduce new initiatives that enhance the sense of autonomy and choice for patients and residents.

2

Continue to uphold our tradition of nursing excellence and compassionate care, in a diverse and inclusive work culture.

3

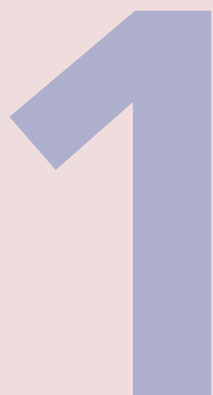
Be a recognised leader in creating the conditions for professional development, staff empowerment and autonomy.

5

Promote development/ career progression options for healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners to further consolidate their role in the nursing care team.

6

Champion the advancement of a digitally literate nursing care team and contribute to prioritising relevant technological solutions where needed.



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WHY THIS MATTERS

- The nursing profession plays a critical role in advocating for the needs of patients, residents, their carers and families. This understanding of patients' needs and desires are integral to strategic discussions and debates in healthcare.
- Nursing care is informed by evidence-based models of care and can also generate research/theoretical concepts from practice. This rich resource will inform strategic priorities in a local, national and global context.
- Ultimately members of the nursing team will be the primary constituents in developing, designing and implementing many of the forthcoming advances in care and service delivery.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 🚩 We will advocate for nursing representation and membership of relevant decision making forums both within the Bon Secours Health System and in the broader professional nursing, academic and healthcare policy arenas.
- 🚩 We will create the conditions to support practice-based and professionally grounded research that will help to combine clinical care practice and academic careers.
- 🚩 We will increase visibility and support staff to take on roles as advocates, mentors, role models and facilitators as we build collaboration and outreach in each of the Bon Secours locations.
- 🚩 We will influence policies that impact on the delivery of care throughout the Bon Secours Health System as we extend our access to evidence-based research and refine our views informed by day-to-day practice.
- 🚩 We will devise a Bon Secours health-group system portfolio of nursing care research informed by a values based approach in a changing healthcare context.

2

Continue to uphold our tradition of nursing excellence and compassionate care, in a diverse and inclusive work culture.

Continue to uphold our tradition of nursing excellence and compassionate care, in a diverse and inclusive work culture.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Population demographics in Ireland are continuously evolving; so a diverse and dynamic profile of patients, service users and employees will continue to emerge over the next decade.
- The Bon Secours mission and values are the hallmark of our healthcare practice; suspending individual judgements and 'meeting people where they are' will help to sustain a friendly, collegial environment that will benefit everyone.
- When colleagues from a variety of backgrounds and experience are encouraged to offer diverse opinions, creative solutions will emerge that enable people to do their best work and celebrate achievement.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 🚩 We will continue to integrate the Bon Secours mission and core values as we evolve and adapt to our new merger with Bon Secours Mercy Health and place a stronger focus on diversity and inclusion.
- 🚩 We will learn how to enact policies of diversity, inclusion and equality and be better informed about the impact of un-tested assumptions and 'systemic inequalities' in our nursing care practice.
- 🚩 We will commit to practices that further embed a culture of trustworthy collaboration in our day-to-day interactions and especially when working as members of inter-disciplinary teams.
- 🚩 We will partner with our consultant colleagues to ensure mutual respect for our respective roles and as we work towards standards and guidelines that improve the patient experience.
- 🚩 We will celebrate and acknowledge the contribution of colleagues who uphold the tradition of nursing care excellence by constantly seeking to innovate and test out new ideas in practice.

3

Be a recognised leader in creating the conditions for professional development, staff empowerment and autonomy.

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WHY THIS MATTERS

- Within the changing landscape of nursing and healthcare locally, nationally and internationally nurses, healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners need support and development as they transition into new and evolving roles.
- Empowered staff are more connected to their organisation, have improved staff morale and are committed to continuously improving the patient experience.
- A leadership style characterised by empowerment and collaboration will be a defining factor in organisational success.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 🚩 We will ensure that team members are educated to the level that is required for the role and function that they need to fulfil as practitioners.
- 🚩 We will introduce a robust, competence-based recruitment, appraisal and staff development model that is aligned with the delivery of our key priorities and key performance expectations.
- 🚩 We will sharpen our abilities to critically reflect and be creative in our thinking individually and collectively so that we are more adept at discovering new ways of working in an ever-changing environment.
- 🚩 We will strengthen our capacity for leadership and influence by fostering a learning organisation at all career stages and encouraging nurses, healthcare assistants and operating department practitioners to embrace leadership beyond what happens in formal management roles.
- 🚩 We will review our current approach to learning and development and undertake a needs analysis informed by the working principles and strategic priorities set out in this framework.

4

Develop patient pathways and introduce new initiatives that enhance the sense of autonomy and choice for patients and residents.

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WHY THIS MATTERS

- Patients are no longer only defining themselves according to traditional 'patient' labels associated with vulnerability and serious illness. Empowered patients engage more proactively with their healthcare provider as this enhances trust and contributes to greater collaboration between staff and patients.
- While the Bon Secours Health System and nursing care is predominantly hospital based, there is a need and an expectation that this will change and that nursing care staff will be in practice beyond the hospital walls and in more community based, care settings.
- Empowered patients or residents expect to be involved as equal partners, as this will lead to better outcomes and reducing dependencies on scarce resources while managing their own healthcare and sense of wellbeing.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 🚩 We will critically examine 'nursing' attitudes and practices and transform the way we support people to voice opinions, maintain their independence and engage in addressing their own healthcare needs.
- 🚩 We will explore the feasibility of introducing 'The Careful Nursing Philosophy and Professional Practice Model' across the Bon Secours Health System.
- 🚩 We will implement a new patient acuity assessment tool to better manage staffing and skill mix levels while maximising our collaboration with other disciplines and creating a more flexible team environment.
- 🚩 We will prioritise our role in assisting patients, their families and carers and other community supports as we re-assess the nursing role at points of admission, discharge and post discharge in collaboration with patients/residents and our inter-disciplinary team colleagues.
- 🚩 We will embed a quality improvement culture and assess the quality of our nursing care through gathering and analysing reliable data and delivering year-on-year improvements by introducing a 'Facts are Friends' initiative.

5

Promote development/career progression options for health care assistants and operating department practitioners to further consolidate their role in the nursing care team.

Promote development/career progression options for health care assistants and operating department practitioners to further consolidate their role in the nursing care team.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Globally and nationally, examples of effective models where nurses and healthcare assistants coalesce deliver the fundamentals of patient/resident care are emerging. Whilst acknowledging the legacies of hierarchical nursing structures; building on the strengths of staff in all roles and grades will enhance the quality of care provided.
- The enactment of competency-based frameworks for all nursing levels across all locations is an on-going necessity. Empowered, educated health care assistants and operating department practitioners add immense value from their interactions with patients, overall insights and observations.
- As healthcare environments becomes ever more complex, the clinical competence and practical knowledge of all clinical care staff is vital to the delivery of safe, evidence-based practice that both honours and maintains patient autonomy and encourages staff empowerment.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 🚩 We will consolidate career pathways for health care assistants and operating department practitioners by supporting and encouraging work-based learning and desirable education programmes; accredited where necessary.
- 🚩 We will compare and contrast the respective roles of health care assistants, operating department practitioners and nursing assistant roles locally, nationally and globally to better understand options for career development.
- 🚩 We will respond to changing trends in healthcare as we seek out new roles for health care assistants and encourage them to reflect on their talents and career aspirations through teamwork and our annual appraisal systems.
- 🚩 We will clarify and further define roles and streamline reporting arrangements in the context of solidifying due diligence in our clinical governance responsibilities.
- 🚩 We will partner with academic providers as we source and create professional development programmes to enable career progression for health care assistants and operating department practitioners in various care associated roles.



Champion the advancement of a digitally literate nursing care team and contribute to prioritising relevant technological solutions where needed.


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WHY THIS MATTERS

- Technologically literate and digitally enabled nursing care teams will enhance capacity to manage workloads, monitor care quality standards and use data to ensure better care, quality and outcomes for all.
- Nursing care teams want to work more directly with patients to deliver safe effective care by reducing unnecessary paperwork and having ready access to patient records and health information.
- Key decision-makers may not be as digitally enabled and resourced, as is now the norm in day-to-day-life. Future generations of nursing care staff expect to have access to technology in ways that enhance communication, learning and the sharing of information across the healthcare system.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 🚩 We will play a pivotal role as key users in the design and delivery of all healthcare system-wide initiatives that use technology to create easier access to patient records and the management of patient information.
- 🚩 We will develop and empower staff to take a pioneering approach to extending the use of information technology to communicate and achieve better outcomes for patients.
- 🚩 We will continue to use technology, and develop the skills needed to be more technologically literate so that we can be more effective in measuring patient dependency, allocating staff, adjusting skill-mix and avoiding wasteful practices.
- 🚩 We will explore ways for staff to be involved in shaping all of our services so that we are more digitally supported, better enabled and less paper based.
- 🚩 We will use digital technology to better interact with patients and residents and other professions as we improve hospital throughput and reduce delays at all stages of people's journey from the point of referral to post discharge.



Our strategic framework will keep nurses, health care assistants and operating department practitioners curious about their profession and grounded in what nursing care has to offer patients, residents and the wider community.

This strategic framework emerged from a system-wide strategic commitment to developing a nursing recruitment, retention and development strategy for the Bons Secours Health System, Ireland. It resulted in what is often avoided by individual health providers and health group structures – a genuine commitment to building trust and a pledge to exercise collaborative leadership. The Directors of Nursing from the different Bon Secours facilities made the business case for a pioneering approach to consultation and engagement at all levels of the healthcare system.

Ultimately, the whole experience of deciding on priorities by involving staff at all grades, in various configurations and with different levels of experience proved to be an exciting and risky adventure in open dialogue. Latterly, it was characterised as ‘a form of empowerment that demonstrated respect for all the complexities that it was bound to uncover.’ Communication was consistently highlighted with ‘real-time’ dialogue being seen as a vital ingredient in enabling an inclusive and respectful work culture that changes day-to-day work practices where needed.

The working ambitions, themes and priorities are woven together around ‘collaboration’ ‘nursing care excellence’ and the idea that values guide our interactions and practices. The staff involved are proud of their combined effort and several people commented on the learning that happened from working in partnership and being willing to listen to colleagues away from day-to-day roles and hierarchies. The process required huge energy for organising, creative thinking and the careful facilitation of conversations where groups enjoyed themselves and relished the atmosphere of openness, fun and respect. This is what helps to keep nurses, health care assistants and operating department practitioners curious about their profession and grounded in what nursing care has to offer patients, residents and the wider community.

We will keep this strategic framework ‘live’ by undertaking on-going reviews and evaluating and reflecting on our progress. We are committed to involving staff in an annual strategic review. We are prepared to change this framework as we respond to new needs and challenges in an increasingly complex healthcare environment. We will also be

engaging and reporting to the Executive and Board of the Bon Secours Healthcare System, Ireland and we are looking forward to further collaboration and exchange of ideas with our US nursing colleagues in Bon Secours Mercy Health.

Finally, we want to ensure that patients, residents, their relatives, carers, neighbours and friends will continue to be the best advertisement for the authentic experience of care and respect that they associate with nursing care in an ever-changing healthcare environment.

KEY READING

Bon Secours Healthcare System internal policies and strategies

2020 Strategy Plan Development of a Nurse Retention Strategy, December 2016
The People Strategy, 2017-2020 – Strength through People Quality and Patient Strategy – Turning values into behaviours
<https://www.bonsecours.ie/aboutus>

Careful Nursing Philosophy and Practice Meehan TC, Timmins F, Burke J.

Fundamental care guided by the Careful Nursing Philosophy and Professional Practice Model©. J Clin Nurs. 2018;27:2260– 2273.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.14303>

National Government Policy Ireland

Framework for Safe Nurse Staffing and Skill Mix in General and Specialist Medical and Surgical Care Settings in Ireland 2018
<https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Nursing-Taskforce-Report.pdf>

Health Information and Quality Authority, “National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare”, June 2017
<https://www.hiqa.ie/sites/default/files/2017-05/2017-HIQA-National-Standards-Healthcare-Association-Infections.pdf>

Health Service Capacity Review 2018

Executive Report -Review of health demand and capacity requirements in Ireland to 2031 – findings and recommendations
<https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Health-Service-Capacity-Review-2018-Executive-Report.pdf>

Slaintecare Report, 2017

(Irish government and Dept Health)
<https://assets.gov.ie/22609/e68786c13e1b4d7daca89b495c506bb8.pdf>

Slaintecare Implementation Strategy, 2018

<https://assets.gov.ie/22609/e68786c13e1b4d7daca89b495c506bb8.pdf>

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