

When Words are All You Have: A Tribute to the Nurses at UCLA Health

by Karen A. Grimley

Thank you, I really appreciate all you are doing for our patients.

I so appreciate you staying with your patient during his last hours.

Thank you for helping your patient video visit with his family.

Thank you for helping your colleagues tonight,

Thank you for caring for our patients...

I appreciate your support with this family- you made all the difference to them.

Thank you for finding 6 people to prone our patients several times each day.

Thank you for your continued engagement and great ideas for improving care.

Thank you for finding time to make 3 successful Beacon submission

Thank you for the wonderful job you did during our virtual Magnet appraisal visits.

My gratitude and thanks can and should fill a book and then some. As a nurse leader, I have watched our nurses come to work every day and live our mission, “healing humankind, one patient at a time by promoting health, alleviating suffering and delivering acts of kindness.” Our nurses have continuously put their patients ahead of themselves. The work our nurses do is awe-inspiring; but accolades, donor recognition, and praise, even in normal times, never feels like enough, let alone now as we wrangle with COVID-19.

The phrase that keeps rattling around in my brain is “I can’t thank you enough!” but I continue to try. This past year, which was ironically the Year of the Nurse, nurses have stepped up and have done the unimaginable. Time after time, they put themselves in harm’s way for others; not just for their colleagues, but for their patients- complete strangers. How many people do you know who would do that for you or me? This is nursing’s best gift: living our social contract between our professional practice and the communities we serve. A higher calling, beyond the walls of the hospitals and the organization, as we meet the needs of the individuals we serve.

I challenge all of us to take a moment to reflect. How can I, how can WE, show our gratitude for these humble professionals? The ones who keep showing up. The ones who alleviate suffering not only with life-saving technology but with compassion and kindness. The ones who support and love humankind enough to ensure our family members didn't die alone.

***This higher calling is nursing's best gift:
living our social contract between our professional
practice and the communities we serve.***

The enormity of the work each nurse does every day cannot be overstated. Each day, nurses do extraordinary things as part of his or her normal assignment. Who else among us can make that statement?



I am proud, humbled, and forever inspired by the work our nurses do every day. To each of you, thank you for your presence, your authenticity, and your compassionate care. Our patients, our colleagues, our communities, and I are eternally grateful for you and all you have done to truly care for those in need.

In the end, there are no words...

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