Introduction: Resulting from the affiliation with Creative Health Care Management (CHCM), and the implementation of Relationship Based Care (RBC), Munson Medical Center (MMC) adopted Jean Watson as their Nurse Theorist. Jean Watson’s theory is used by CHCM as the theoretical foundation for RBC. A thorough understanding of Watson’s theory was lacking amongst MMC’s nursing leadership and the Registered Nurses at the bedside. Nursing leadership embraced the idea of caring conveyed by the name, the Theory of Human Caring, and leadership intrinsically knew the theory supported the practice of nursing at Munson, but there was a need to be able to articulate the theory and understand how to bring it to life at the bedside.

Significance: Nurses at MMC are in various stages of implementing RBC in their practice. Implementation of RBC embraces mastery of three critical relationships, self, colleagues, and patients/family. Primary Nursing is used as a care delivery model, which addresses the latter two relationships. The Theory of Human Caring supports the three relationships, and serves as a means to address relationship with self in a profound manner.

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to assist nursing at Munson Medical Center to understand caring more intensely and make subtle changes in the way they deliver care to patients. Ultimately, the goal is to cultivate an environment that nurtures and encourages the development of Caritas Nurses practicing within a Caritas Consciousness.

Setting and Participants: The project took place at Munson Medical Center and included nurses from all levels of practice.

Project Description/Process: The project began with a presentation to the Nurse Practice Council (NPC). This group is comprised of staff nurses, educators, clinical nurse specialists, nurse managers, and the Chief Nursing Officer. Input was sought from this group to determine if they found the information beneficial, and how best to disseminate the content to all nurses at Munson.

Project Outcome(s)/Projected Outcomes: Those participating in “learning” sessions for The Theory of Human Caring have expressed excitement and appreciation for the theory, and its use in daily practice. Participants have conveyed a feeling of pleasure for the opportunity to learn spiritual practices, as well as the opportunity to share practices they already utilize. It is anticipated that there will be a core constituent in each area that delivers nursing care that will practice with a Caritas consciousness.

Future Directions: Presentations to Shared Governance Committees and other opportunities to learn the Theory of Human Caring will continue. A plan to develop “department champion” will
be created. These individuals will have the opportunity to help unit peers learn about the theory, apply it to the work they are doing with RBC, and work at developing a Caritas Consciousness in which to deliver care. A video to support those less confident with the material and to augment the information will be created.

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