

Cheryl T. Handy, MN, RN, NE, BC, HMCT, Caritas Coach®

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Current Position

Retired Chief Nurse, Medical Specialty Services,
Department of Veteran Affairs Healthcare System, Atlanta

Caritas Coach Education Program, Faculty Associate
Watson Caring Science Institute

Education and Training

August 2022-Present
PhD Student-Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, Mercer University, Atlanta

May 2021-Present
Healing Circles Facilitator, Healing Circles Global

October 2018-Present
HeartMath Certified Trainer, HeartMath Institute, Boulder Creek, CA

October 2018- Present
Watson Caring Science Institute Faculty Associate- Caritas Coach Education Program-Online

April 2010
Caritas Coach Certification, Watson Caring Science Caritas Coach Education Program, Walnut Creek, CA

December 1994
Completed Department of Veteran Affairs On-site Chief Nurse Trainee Program, Atlanta VAMC, Decatur, GA

May 1993
Master of Nursing Degree with major in Nursing Administration,
Emory University, Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, Atlanta, GA

December 1992

Completed administrative residency preceptorship program at Grady Memorial Hospital Healthcare System under the leadership of the CEO, COO, COS, Director of Nursing and Deputy Director of Nursing. Focused in areas of organizational assessment, strategic planning, and process consultation.

May 1983

Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Dillard University, New Orleans, LA

Work Experience

2018-Present

Watson Caring Science Institute Faculty Associate- Coaches and Mentors students in Caring Science and Caritas Literacy through the Watson Caring Science Institute Caring Coach Education Program.

2018-Present

Chief Nurse, Medical Specialty Care Services and Special Projects

- Provides teaching/educational training for veterans, staff, nursing students and medical residents on a resilience methodology called HeartMath, “The Resilience Advantage Program”. This program provides education on how one can transform stress into authentic care and greater resiliency through learned self-regulating techniques.
- Serves as consultant for all Caring Science (Caritas) activities and provides presentations at multiple forums.

2003- Present

Associate Nurse Executive, Medical Specialty Care Services, Atlanta VAMC, Decatur, GA

- Directs and plans clinical and administrative operations for approximately 145 nursing and technical staff members within multiple medical sub-specialty sections with greater than 1.5 million annual outpatient visits.
- Plans, leads and develops complex projects, implementation of Cardiology Observation Unit and expansion of Cardiac Cath Interventional Lab.
- Provides oversight for healthcare core performance measures and customer service initiatives.
- Served as service line Patient Safety Goal Coordinator and was responsible for assisting with the implementation and monitoring of compliance for patient safety goals and develops reports for tracking and trending.
- Served as Joint Commission Coordinator for service line.
- Maintains high staff satisfaction scores and outstanding retention rate with consistent low overtime cost.

- Serves as Caritas Coach for the implementation of Caring Science and centering space at the Atlanta VAMC.
- Coordinator for HeartMath for Atlanta VA Healthcare System Whole Health Program.
- Facilitate weekly two-hour HeartMath classes for veterans and staff teaching self-regulating techniques for transforming stress into authentic care and greater resilience.

1996-2003

Associate Nurse Executive, Medical Specialty Care and Primary Care Services, Atlanta VAMC, Decatur, GA

- Directed and planned clinical and administrative operations for 234 nursing and technical staff members within multiple medical sub-specialty sections, primary care and community-based outpatient clinics.
- Implemented the first primary care and community-based outpatient clinic.
- Implemented the first Telephone Advice Program and led the program to a successful Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC) Accreditation.
- Developed major action plans to meet strategic goals for Medical Specialty and Primary Care Clinics.
- Promoted staff involvement in medical center wide committees i.e. Shared Governance.
- Developed “best practices” for outpatient clinic settings.
- Implemented peer-to-peer competency training for staff, model used by other VAMC facilities within the network.

1990-1996

Nurse Manager, Medical and Surgical Outpatient Clinics, Atlanta VAMC, Decatur, GA

- Provided daily operational oversight for 52 nursing and technical staff that provided care and services to veteran patients in multiple medical and surgical sub-specialty clinics with more than 100,000 annual outpatient visits.
- Maintained high retention and low staff turnover rates.
- Completed performance evaluations and competencies.
- Leader in nursing profession through consultation and membership on various task forces.
- Designed programs to improve patient education and documentation.
- Facilitated processes to enhance patient’s compliance with follow-up care i.e. Exit Interview Process.

1985-1990

Oncology Nurse Clinician, New Orleans VAMC, New Orleans, LA

- Administered chemotherapeutic agents, immunotherapy and blood products to patients diagnosed with cancer in an inpatient and outpatient setting.
- Provided in-service education and training to staff on safe handling of chemotherapeutic agents.
- Utilized as a consultant on the care and management of patients receiving chemotherapeutic agents.

1983-1985

Staff /Charge Nurse, Birmingham VAMC, Birmingham, AL

- RN clinical duties, medication, IV's, admissions, discharges, referrals and treatments in a 38-bed medical unit.
- Administered chemotherapy to patients diagnosed with cancer.
- Preceptor for newly hired RNs and LPNs.
- Developed and maintained staff competencies and orientation programs.

Licenses and Certifications

RN License, Georgia, Expires January 2025

Healing Circles Facilitator, 2021

HeartMath Certified Trainer, 2018-present

Board Certification as Nurse Executive- American Nurses Credentialing Center-
Initial Certification, November 1992, Ongoing Recertification- Currently certified through
12/2025

Watson Caring Science Institute Caritas Coach. First Caritas Coach in the State of Georgia and
first at the Atlanta VAMC, April 2010

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, October 2013

Professional Caring (Caritas) Presentations

Mindful Centering Exercise for Quality Improvement Fair, Atlanta VA Health Care System,
October 2021.

Centering Exercise for Stress Reduction, Atlanta VA Health Care System, August 2021.

Healing Circles at Atlanta Wellstar Medical Center for the Greater Atlanta Chapter of the
American Holistic Nurses Association, July 2021.

Watson Caring Science Institute celebrates Caritas Colleague, Cheryl T. Handy.
Article published in WCSI Newsletter, September 2020.

Conscious Nurse Leaders on the Edge of Evolution Telesummit, May 2020, "Evolution Requires
Courage"

24th Annual International Caritas Consciousness and 40th Anniversary Celebration in Caring
Science presentation in San Francisco, October 17-18, 2019 titled, "Self-Transformation through
Caritas Consciousness- my personal journey to enlightenment"

Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, North Carolina -presentation to DNP students titled, "Caritas Consciousness and Mindful Practice", September 25, 2019

Caring Science consultant for WellStar Atlanta Medical Center Integrative Health Program, February 13, 2019

Nurses Week Keynote Speaker, Atlanta VA Healthcare System, May 7, 2018, "Nurses Inspire, Innovate, and Influence through Caritas Consciousness"

Black History Month Speaker, Atlanta, Georgia February 2018, Buckhead Senior Facility, "Radiating Peace and Love through Caritas Consciousness"

Black History Month Speaker, Atlanta, Georgia February 2017, Buckhead Senior Facility, "Radiating Peace and Love through Caritas Consciousness"

Black History Month Speaker, Atlanta, Georgia February 2017, Georgia Nurses Association; Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Gamma Chi Chapter, "Radiating Peace through Caritas Consciousness"

Black History Month Speaker, Atlanta, Georgia February 2016, Buckhead Senior Facility, "Radiating Peace and Love through Caritas Consciousness"

Keynote Speaker, May 2014, "Nurses Leading the Way through Caritas Transformation"

Caring Conference, Tampa VA March 2014, "Atlanta VAMC Transformation to a Caring Culture"

5th Annual Celebration of Caring, Winston Salem, North Carolina (Sponsored by Wake Forest Baptist) November 2013- "Transformation of Self and Systems through Caritas Literacy"

International Caritas Consortium, "Caritas Leadership", Dearborn, Michigan, October 2013

Caring Conference, Omaha, Nebraska (Sponsored by Omaha VAMC) May 2013, "Transformation of Self and Systems through Caring Science Literacy"

International Caritas Consortium, Boulder, Colorado, April 2012- "Atlanta VAMC Journey of Transformation through Caritas Literacy"

Coordinates annual Caring Science/Caritas Literacy Skill Fairs May 2010 - Present

Transformation of Self and Systems through Caritas Literacy, November 2009- Atlanta VAMC

Professional Affiliations

International Association for Human Caring
American Holistic Nurses Association
Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society, Alpha Epsilon Chapter
Chi Eta Phi Professional Nursing Sorority, Gamma Chi Chapter
American Nurses Association (ANA)
Georgia Nurses Association (GNA)
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority

Awards

VAMC 40 Years Service Award (June 2023)
VAMC 35 Years Service Award (October 2018)
Outstanding Performance Awards (2005-2014)
Certificate of Excellence for National Black History Month 2012
 “Honoring Black Women in American Culture & History”
Nominee for Atlanta Journal Constitution 7th Annual Nursing Excellence Awards, 2012
March of Dimes Nurse of the Year Award Finalist, 2011
GNA President’s Award for Nursing Excellence (2007)
Periodic Performance Review Award (2006)
Secretary’s Hero Award for Katrina Support (2005)
Patient Health Education Outstanding Performance Award (2004)
Federal Employee of the Year- Outstanding Supervisor Finalist (2003)
Disabled American Veterans Outstanding Service Award (1996)
Marquis Who’s Who Among American Women (1989)
Outstanding Young Women of America (1985)

Volunteer Experience

Chi Eta Phi, Gamma Chi Chapter, Chairperson for Programs and Projects (2017-2018)
Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School, Boy Scout Troop Service Project Coordinator
(2008-2010)
Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School, Veterans Day Celebration Coordinator (2003-2010)
Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Mu Phi Chapter Community Health Fair Coordinator (1995-2009)
Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School, Advisory Board (2001-2005)
Medical Unit Coordinator, VAMC Stand Down for homeless veterans (1995-1997)
Emory University MN Class of ’93 Homecoming Celebration Coordinator (2009)
Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 91 Health Fair for Homeless Veterans (2010-present)
St. Pius X Catholic High School Mother’s Club Membership Chair (2010-2013)
St. Pius X Mother’s Club Prayer Group and Adoration (2010-2014)
Ladies Auxiliary Knights of Peter Claver, Court #276, Atlanta Food Bank Volunteer

Computer Skills

Microsoft Word, Power Point, Excel, Outlook, VISTA, CPRS

Professional References

Available upon request