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Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center Awarded WCSI Lotus Recognition™

Vallejo honored for a living culture of Caring Science - where caring moments, self-care, and Caritas leadership shape every unit

Deerfield Beach, FL - Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center has been awarded the **Watson Caring Science Institute's (WCSI) Lotus Recognition™**, a national honor celebrating organizations that exemplify a deeply embedded culture of human caring grounded in Watson's Caring Science and the **10 Caritas Processes®**.

The **Lotus Recognition™** acknowledges more than programs or outcomes it honors how caring is lived, practiced, and felt across an organization. At **Kaiser Permanente's Vallejo Medical Center**, Caring Science is not a concept reserved for training rooms; it is woven into daily huddles, hallway conversations, leadership decisions, and the most tender moments at the bedside.

"Caring Science is more than a framework, it is the foundation of how we care for our patients, support one another, and lead with intention," says Tia Newell, interim chief nurse executive, Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center. "Given the culture our teams have worked so hard to build together, this recognition is deeply appreciated. I am incredibly proud to be part of such an amazing team whose commitment to human connection, dignity, and authentic caring continues to make a meaningful difference for our patients and one another."

At **Kaiser Permanente's Vallejo Medical Center**, sharing a Caring Moment is the first agenda item on many of the hospital's most important meetings, from the Daily Hospital Safety Briefing to the monthly Vallejo Caring Council and the Inpatient Exceptional Care Experience Steering Committee. This intentional practice ensures that the human heart of healthcare is named, honored, and celebrated before any other business begins.

These moments are felt deeply across the medical center. When a rehabilitation patient and her husband approached their 48th wedding anniversary, the team at the Kaiser Foundation Rehabilitation Center transformed the dining room into a nautical celebration, decorated by hand, with a custom cake and live music played by a respiratory therapist as the couple danced together. The family of a 30-year kidney transplant survivor was welcomed to stay at his bedside for several days at the end of his life, with nurses bringing comfort, refreshment, and presence. One even using her lunch break to brush his hair and trim his beard. A 21-year director was honored in retirement with a gathering in the garden that bears her name, where staff sang together in tribute. Across the medical center, these are not isolated stories - they are the texture of care.

Kaiser Permanente's Vallejo Medical Center's commitment to self-care is equally visible and equally intentional. Staff begin their shifts with HeartMath® Quick Coherence® practices led by frontline nurses, grounding their teams in calm and clarity before the work of the day begins. In Continuity of Care, colleagues offer one another hand and head massages. In the Inpatient Rehabilitation Department, staff practice daily HeartMath® and close the day with gratitude for the team and those they serve. In the Family Birth Center's Postpartum Caritas Room, music and coloring offer nurse's moments of creative renewal. And Bodie, the hospital's service dog, rounds the units to bring hope and comfort to patients and staff alike, reminding everyone that caring for the caregiver is essential to caring for the patient.

This culture is sustained by leadership that intentionally invests in it. **Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center** maintains eight dedicated Caritas Rooms, one on nearly every nursing unit, each decorated by the unit's own staff and most equipped with massage chairs provided, maintained, and replaced as needed by hospital leadership. The **10 Caritas Processes®** have been framed on every unit since 2017, serving as a visible daily invitation to reflect. Caring Science is woven into New Nurse Orientation, taught twice a month to nurses, patient care technicians, respiratory therapists, and unit assistants; introducing the theory, the **10 Caritas Processes®**, and the importance of self-care from day one.

Leadership also sponsors KP Cares, The Caring Science Academy, a four-module class series developed by KP Caritas Coaches and offered to staff and leaders at Vallejo since 2019. Notably, during the pandemic, Vallejo continued offering Caring Science classes, transitioning to a virtual format to ensure that staff remained connected to the heart of their practice during one of healthcare's most difficult chapters. Today, the classes are taught in collaboration with Kaiser Permanente Vacaville and offer 16 CEUs to participants.

Central to this culture is the Vallejo Caring Council, a frontline-led, leadership-sponsored team launched in April 2023 with the mission of preventing burnout through self-care and connection to Caring Science. The Caring Council circulates the Caring Cart through units, organizes Care Experience Week, integrates HeartMath® and Caring Moments into huddles, and brings live music and roses to patients throughout the hospital. In 2024, the Vallejo Caring Council was honored with the Team DAISY Award in recognition of its impact.

"The Vallejo Caring Council's heartfelt commitment to advancing Caring Science at Kaiser Permanente's Vallejo Medical Center has profoundly shaped our culture and touched the lives of both patients and caregivers", says Lisa Giusto, area experience leader, Kaiser Permanente Vallejo. "With the steadfast support of medical center leadership, our teams are inspired to lead with compassion, create spaces of healing, and build meaningful human connections that remind every person they are seen, valued, and cared for."

By honoring **Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center** with the **Lotus Recognition™**, WCSI celebrates an organization where Caring Science is not aspirational but alive. Where leaders invest in the conditions for compassion, where staff care for one another with the same tenderness they offer patients, and where every caring moment is recognized as the heart of the work. **Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center** stands as a powerful example of how Caring Science can transform environments, sustain caregivers, and shape lives at every level of care.

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About Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente is committed to helping shape the future of health care. We are recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and not-for-profit health plans. Founded in 1945, Kaiser Permanente has a mission to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We currently serve 12.9 million members in 9 states and the District of Columbia. Care for members and patients is focused on their total health and guided by their personal Permanente Medical Group physicians, specialists, and team of caregivers. Our expert and caring medical teams are empowered and supported by industry-leading technology advances and tools for health promotion, disease prevention, state-of-the-art care delivery, and world-class chronic disease management. Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to care innovations, clinical research, health education, and the support of community health. For more information, go to about.kp.org.

About Watson Caring Science Institute (WCSI)

The Watson Caring Science Institute (WCSI) is an international non-profit organization that advances the philosophies, theories, and practices of Human Caring/Caring Science, founded by Jean Watson, Ph.D., RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, LL (AAN), WCSI's Founder & Director. Focusing on research, education, praxis, leadership, and legacy, the institute aims to widen the development and understanding of Watson's Caring Science to inform our notion of quality care and healing environments through various educational programs, nurse scientific research, partnerships, events, and affiliations. For more information, please visit www.watsoncaringscience.org.

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