

## **FOR DISTRIBUTION**

Sept. 17, 2019

### **Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association reveals winners of annual Patient Safety Awards, Alaska's patient safety champions**

In honor of the first-ever World Patient Safety Day on 17 September 2019, the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association (ASHNHA) is announcing the winners of its annual Quality and Patient Safety Awards. The winners will be honored for their exemplary work at ASHNHA's annual conference on September 26. Patient safety is a priority for Alaska's hospitals & long-term care facilities.

"We're thrilled to recognize these hardworking and talented health care professionals and organizations for the critical work they perform day in and day out," said Becky Hultberg, CEO. "These awardees go above and beyond to deliver world-class care to our Alaska communities, and for that we're incredibly grateful."

The Golden Stethoscope awards are given to a healthcare provider and a health care team that demonstrate extraordinary commitment to safe patient care. Alaska Native Medical Center's Dr. Frank Sacco, MD received the award for his commitment and hands-on work to create, maintain and continuously improve trauma systems throughout the state of Alaska. Also recognized are clinicians Dr. Burt, DO; Dr. Hess, MD; Dr. Hyer, MD; Dr. Tuccillo, DO & Mr. Sessa LCSW of Petersburg Medical Center/Joy Janssen Clinic for their collaborative work in developing integrated therapies to address substance use disorders.

Ms. Cathy Gross RHIT, an exemplary employee of Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC). Cathy is awarded the Frontline staff award for her years of dedication to patient safety improvements at Wrangell Medical Center.

Two Innovation in Transformation Awards are given. The hospital recipient is Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) Surgery Clinic led by Dr. Francis Wilson for their ongoing commitment to the National Surgery Quality Improvement Program resulting in increased patient safety and a reduction in harm. The long-term care recipient is Providence Extended Care & Providence Transitional Care Center for their multiyear efforts to reduce facility acquired infections resulting in improved patient safety and health.

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center is the winner of the High Reliability, the Pursuit of Zero Patient Harm Award, recognizing their commitment to high reliability, including the development of practices and systems that lead to safer and more reliable health care.

The ASHNHA Staff Choice Award is given to Southeast Alaska Regional Healthcare Consortium (SEARHC) for the dedication of multiple teams working to enhance workplace safety, suicide prevention, and consortium-wide sterilization procedures.

New this year, is the Beacon Award, recognizing the patient lifesaving intervention provided by Kathleen Sullivan a housekeeper at Alaska Regional Hospital. Kathleen's intervention assisted the clinical staff to respond quickly to a patient in need. Her attentiveness to patients in her care exemplifies safety as a key responsibility of all personnel working within Alaskan hospitals, clinics and long-term care facilities.

The Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association represents over 65 hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare organizations, spanning across the state from Ketchikan to Utqiagvik. ASHNHA has worked to improve health care in Alaska for over 60 years, working with policymakers to maintain a sustainable health care system.

World Patient Safety Day is sponsored by the World Health Organization to promote patient safety as a global health priority. The campaign launched on September 17, 2019 seeks to create awareness of patient safety and urge people to show their commitment to making healthcare safer.

**Media Contact:**

Lynn Van Vactor, Director of Quality and Performance Improvement  
Alaska State Nursing Home and Hospital Association  
[Lynn@ashnha.com](mailto:Lynn@ashnha.com)  
907-279-6453

**Complete award winners list:**

- Golden Stethoscope/Individual
  - Dr. Frank Sacco, MD (Alaska Native Medical Center/ Alaska Trauma System)
- Golden Stethoscope/Team
  - Clinicians Dr. Burt DO, Dr. Hess MD, Dr. Hyer MD, Dr.Tuccillo DO & Mr. Sessa LCSW (Petersburg Medical Center & Joy Janssen Clinic)
- Front-Line Staff Outstanding Performance
  - Cathy Gross RHIT (SEARHC, Wrangell Medical Center)
- Innovation in Transformation Award (Nursing Home/Long Term Care)
  - Providence Extended Care & Providence Transitional Care Center
- Innovation in Transformation Award (Hospital)
  - Alaska Native Medical Center
- High Reliability
  - Mat-Su Regional Medical Center
- Staff Choice Award Outstanding Patient Safety
  - SEARHC-Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium