

Unrestrained Transcription  
Episode 16: Michelle Dickerson  
Record Date: May 1, 2016  
Length: 18:27  
Host: Terry Vittone

Terry: Greetings and welcome to *Unrestrained*, the CPI podcast series. This is your host, Terry Vittone, and today I'm joined by Michelle Dickerson. Hello and welcome, Michelle.

Michelle: Thank you.

Terry: You're welcome.

Michelle: Glad to be here.

Terry: Let me tell you a little bit about our guest today. Michelle Dickerson is the Vice President of Patient Care Services and the Chief Nurse Executive for Bon Secours Richmond Community Hospital and Bon Secours Virginia Outpatient Infusion Services. She received her associate's degree in applied science from J. Sargeant Reynolds in 2004, eventually earning her bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Phoenix in 2007 and a master's degree from the University of Phoenix in 2010. A firm believer in lifelong learning, Michelle was most recently accepted into the Doctoral of Nursing Practice program at Liberty University.

In addition to her professional role, Michelle plays a significant role in community service and annual fundraising activities for the organization. She currently serves as the chair for the Nurses for Good campaign, which is the focus of our interview today. Michelle has led other organizational fund activities, such as United Way and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Junior Achievement of Central Virginia. Michelle is a native of Richmond, Virginia and currently resides in the Hanover County district.

So then Michelle, let's begin. Could you talk first of all about the history behind Nurses for Good, and maybe explain the concept of a nurses giving circle for our listeners?

Michelle: Sure. Nurses for Good evolved from what seemed a simple idea from a group of Bon Secours Virginia nurses that wanted to know if they could create a foundation fund that would donate their money to allocate funds for nursing programs within the health system. Their idea sparked the interest, and the Bon Secours Foundation worked to create a program where nurses gave money towards a fund that would be specifically used for a nursing grant.

"For nurses, by nurses" was the concept behind this idea and from it came Nurses for Good. This is the second year of the Nurses for Good giving circle. It gives nurses a unique opportunity to focus on a project that is chosen and funded by Bon Secours Virginia nurses, and it inspires innovative thinking of the nurses within our health system.

Terry: I see. Did you find as this started to gain momentum that a lot of nurses became excited about it as it started to get talked about?

Michelle: Oh, absolutely. There was nothing more exciting about them owning their practice and driving the care that they provide to their patients at the bedside.

Terry: I bet it encouraged a lot of dialog as well, just for Nurses for Good to come together.

Michelle: Certainly.

Terry: All right, and what's your role specifically for Nurses for Good?

Michelle: So currently I serve as the Chief Nurse Executive and Vice President of Patient Care Services at Richmond Community Hospital and the chair for Nurses for Good. My position as a chair for Nurses for Good affords me the privilege to be intimately involved in the promotion of this program, along with the recruitment of Bon Secours Virginia nurses. It has given me the great opportunity to meet many of our world-class nurses within our health system and to see the great work that they already do but also how strong and innovative they can be when coming together.

Terry: You must have met quite a spectrum of people, of nurses, as you've gone through your role as chair.

Michelle: Absolutely. We have well over thousands of nurses throughout Bon Secours Virginia.

Terry: So next thing, Michelle, I wanted to ask is about who can join the giving circle.

Michelle: You have to be a Bon Secours nurse. That is the whole purpose of the nurses giving circle. It is, again, for nurses, by nurses, and about nurses. What makes the Nurses for Good program such a powerful program, again, is because it's owned by our nurses. That being said, it is possible for a Bon Secours nurse to be sponsored by an employee or a physician. We've had quite a large number of nurses sponsored by executives and physicians within our organization who see the value in this program and wanted to be involved.

Terry: I see. So a nurse can be sponsored in and someone can help them achieve the hundred-

dollar entry fee that they need to join the circle.

Michelle: Yes.

Terry: Does it stop at a thousand, or is it at a cap, or could more people join if they wanted to? Or, for right now, is it a thousand and that's kind of the . . .

Michelle: No, as many people can join as we can get their engagement and involvement.

Terry: Great. Now, so you have these thousand nurses together. So how do they go about selecting and submitting a transformative project for consideration by Nurses for Good?

Michelle: The Nurses for Good established a grants committee, and that is made up of nurses from all over the Virginia market. The committee reviews all grant proposals that are submitted, and any nurses that are in the Bon Secours Virginia Health System can submit a grant proposal to the Nurses for Good grant committee. The application is on the Nurses for Good website and has step-by-step instructions on how to fill out each section.

Some of our nurses have great, inspirational ideas but have never written a grant proposal before. So we wanted to give them the guidance in order to help them get started. Additionally, if they are still having trouble getting their ideas out on paper, we offer grant-writing workshops and one-to-one mentoring to help guide them through the writing process.

Terry: Oh, that's excellent. And do a lot of nurses avail themselves to that help?

Michelle: Yes, they do.

Terry: In Nurses for Good, there are three focus areas identified about ideas for projects. Could you talk about those focus areas and why these ideas for projects have to fit into one of them?

Michelle: Sure. Well, there are three categories that were chosen by the Nurses for Good grants committee and steering committee in order to ensure that the grant proposals submitted fit into the Bon Secours Virginia strategic quality plan, mission, vision, and values. Those three categories are: Workplace, Lifelong Learning, and Community Health. Grant proposals submitted to the Workplace category are focused on enhancing the environment that (where) Bon Secours nurses practice and care for their patients. Lifelong Learning focuses on empowering the Bon Secours nurses to grow personally and professionally. And Community Health is Bon Secours nurses promoting health and wholeness for our community.

Now with that, there are focus areas as you mentioned. The Focus Area Fit is any grant submitted to the Nurses for Good grant committee must fit into the three focus areas

mentioned before: Lifelong Learning, Workplace, and Community Health. And it looks at how closely the grant meets the criteria for these focus areas.

Terry: I see. And so if someone's got an idea, and it fits in a focus area, they submit a grant review. That's accurate?

Michelle: That is accurate.

Terry: And I've seen one of these, and they have selection criteria, and there's a number of them. There's, I believe, there's eight of them. Can we talk briefly about those and how these selections have to fit the grant criteria? I think that would be of interest to our listeners.

**Host note: Here are the eight grant selection criteria:**

**1. Focus Area Fit**

**2. Serves Magnet Related Goals**

**3. Innovative Ways to Meet New Needs**

**4. Scope: Across the System**

**5. Scope Check: Realistic**

**6. Proven Method/Best Method**

**7. Nurse Appeal**

**8. Makes a Difference**

Michelle: Sure. So in order for them to fit in the focus areas, they need to serve magnet-related goals and with that, that means many of our Bon Secours hospitals are already certified as magnet facilities or are working toward magnet status. So it is understood by the committee that a grant that helps our hospitals attain magnet status or work toward magnet status would align with the Bon Secours strategic quality plan.

We want innovative ways to meet new needs. Nurses for Good's giving circle and grants process enables nurses to submit proposals on projects that could transform our Bon Secours Virginia nursing practice. It is hoped that through the creation of a nurse-led giving circle, unique issues and processes that affect nurses across the health system would be transformed with the power of nurses in one system working together toward a common goal. So we have this scope, meaning we want this to be across the system. The Nurses for Good works across the Bon Secours Virginia giving circle. And grants submitted should address a common issue or concern that would benefit nurses across Virginia, not just at a facility level.

Terry: I see.

Michelle: The scope, or reality check, which is designed to help nurses to begin thinking realistically about their project. Nurses for Good is 1000 nurses each giving \$100 to create a \$100,000 transformational grant. So any of the grants that are submitted should be implemented within a budget not to exceed that \$100,000.

Terry: And Proven Method/Best Method?

Michelle: So that's just asking, "Will the project in the grant submitted be able to be implemented using industry-wide best practices, and will it enhance and improve the Bon Secours Virginia nursing?" And it needs to have nurse appeal.

Terry: That's an interesting concept, nurse appeal.

Michelle: That's right. Bon Secours nurses represent a wide array of specialties and experiences throughout the system. Those chosen must be able to be implemented across Bon Secours Virginia facilities, and it should also have outcomes that will affect as many nurses as possible in Bon Secours Virginia. The project needs to have a universal appeal and it needs to make a difference. Once implemented, will the grant transform nursing across Bon Secours Virginia?

Terry: And that is the final criteria, is it not? Is to make a difference, correct?

Michelle: That is.

Terry: Now, thank you; that's a great overview of the selection criteria. Now a nurse understands these selection criteria. Now say that he or she says, "Well, you know, I want an idea for inspiration," and I know you've got something on your site called Ideas for Inspiration. Could you talk about those?

Michelle: Sure. So the ideas for inspiration are available to the nurses on the Nurses for Good website. And the whole intention behind that is to spark ideas for nurses who wish to submit a grant proposal but are unsure what they want to write about. Since Nurses for Good is a Bon Secours Virginia initiative, the idea is designed to help nurses think beyond their facility to develop an idea that can be implemented across the system and benefit as many nurses in Bon Secours Virginia as possible.

Terry: I see. So, something for instance from Lifelong Learning would clearly be appropriate there, because it would meet all those criteria.

Michelle: Yes it would.

Terry: I see. And so, who were the finalists for consideration this year, and may I ask how many proposals you received?

Michelle: We are currently in the grant-writing window as we speak. All proposals for 2015 must be submitted by May 15th for consideration, and at that time the grant selection process will begin.

Terry: All right, how about for last year? Could you talk about some of the former winners and the outcomes to date? I mean, I think you guys have had this one year prior to 2015; is that correct?

Michelle: That is correct. This is our second year in the Nurses for Good giving circle, and the first grants were awarded in 2014. We were able to award two grants because Bon Secours Virginia's Health System saw the engagement and excitement that this program sparked, and committed to matching the \$100,000 that the Nurses for Good raised.

The first awardee was the Bon Secours Virginia Certification University. This program provides study materials and educational opportunities for nurses to obtain national certifications, as well as pre-payment options for first-time applicants to ease the financial burden. The second, yours truly, was the awardee for the Bon Secours Virginia *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® Training Program. (The) Bon Secours Virginia and *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® training program is designed to expand and enhance CPI training in hospitals within Bon Secours Virginia systems.

The goals of the program are to reduce the risk of injury to staff, patients, and visitors; improve staff retention; minimize organization exposure to liability related to incidences; and expand the escalation training to include additional acute, outpatient, home health, and Care-A-Van personnel.

Bon Secours Virginia currently has nine trainers, two in Hampton Roads' market and seven in Richmond. With the implementation of this program it is hoped that there will be a total of 26 trainers across Virginia, with at least one trainer in each facility. The first trainer's session actually occurred this past week. Following the first training, we plan to offer two certification classes per facility per month, and one re-certification class per month per facility in 2015. In 2016 we will increase re-certification classes to two per facility per month.

There will be an expanded focus on departments trained to include labor and delivery, pediatrics, intensive care units, medical surgical units, home health, and the Bon Secours Virginia Car-A-Van—with a continued focus, of course, on behavioral health, emergency department, and security. By expanding the focus on these departments receiving training, it is hoped that there will be a decrease in disruptive, violent patients requiring a code to be called,

and employee injuries related to escalating patient behaviors. We also hope to see an improvement on national surveys with regard to workplace safety issues.

Terry: So you guys are doing this comprehensively across departments it sounds like, the training. It's not like you're targeting ED, for instance, and saying, "Well, this is the most critical." You're really offering this across the scope of Bon Secours.

Michelle: That's correct. Nurses have recognized the need for this training. And it is, again, "for nurses, by nurses." It's their idea and their grant proposal to get this training in place.

Terry: Now, of the University and the CPI, those were two proposals. How many others, I'm sure they were all fabulous, how many were there the first time around?

Michelle: There were 33 total grant proposals submitted for the Nurses for Good program.

Terry: I wonder how many you'll get this year. It'll be interesting to see. Do you have an idea?

Michelle: I don't have an idea yet, but I sure do hope we top last year.

Terry: Yes, all right. Well, what has Bon Secours done in the past with behavior management training? Have you guys gone after that before? Has it been internal or have you brought in other behavior management training in the past?

Michelle: Bon Secours Virginia offers *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*<sup>®</sup> training currently, but the training again has been focused on departments that were thought to have a higher risk for escalating situations such as the emergency department or behavioral health. Again, nurses in other departments felt that these incidents were not frequent on their units, but they did still occur, and they were not prepared or equipped to handle these situations appropriately. They felt strongly that they also could benefit from this training, and, as such, 1000 members strong voted for this proposal to be the second 2014 Nurses for Good grant winner.

Terry: I see, that kind of answers the "why now?" question, just because so many of these nurses who were so committed to participate and to donate to Nurses for Good said, "This meets one of our most pressing needs."

Michelle: Absolutely.

Terry: That's tremendous. Well, I'm sure in your role as Chief Nurse Executive you're going to be looking at a follow-up on this, and we certainly wish you great success with it.

Michelle: We are, and we're very excited to be partnering with the Crisis Prevention Institute on

this initiative and looking forward to achieving our targeted goals through our close collaboration.

Terry: Excellent, excellent. Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share today about Nurses for Good, Bon Secours, or *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® training?

Michelle: Well, as I mentioned before, certainly anybody can sponsor a nurse and you don't have to be a Bon Secours employee, so you are welcome to make any donations online at [bsvaf.org/nursesforgood](https://bsvaf.org/nursesforgood).

Terry: And that'll bring people to a page where they can learn and kind of get a recap of things that we've talked about today; is that correct?

Michelle: That is correct.

Terry: Excellent, excellent. And if I might, Michelle—this is certainly up to you—but if you wanted to take, as a last question, maybe to talk about who's been a main inspiration in your career? And maybe if you could just give a bit of a kudos to them?

Michelle: Wow, how do I answer that question? There have been so, so many people who have been instrumental personally and professionally in my career. I definitely want to thank Jill Kennedy and Peter Bernard, Sister Anne Marie Mack for fully supporting this initiative, and also the foundation. We could not make this come to fruition without the Bon Secours Foundation. I am so thankful for their help and their guidance, and just their overall support.

Terry: Well, excellent, excellent. Well, thank you. Well, my guest today has been Michelle Dickerson. She is the co-chair of Nurses for Good at Bon Secours Virginia. She's also the Chief Nurse Executive there. Thank you so much for joining us today, Michelle.

Michelle: Thank you, Terry.

Terry: You're welcome.