

LIVEWELL NURSING

Gratitude & Kindness

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

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**COUNTY OF
SAN DIEGO**



**LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO**

A note from your CNO

by: Angela Mitchell, CNO

Dear HHSA Nursing Team,

As we approach the season of gratitude and reflection, I want to take a moment to express my deepest appreciation for each of you. Your dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of those we serve truly embody the spirit of kindness and care that makes our agency so special.

This year, as we focus on embracing all the things we love and prioritizing self-care, I am reminded of how essential it is for us to nurture ourselves and others. Your tireless efforts and resilience inspire me daily, and I hope you find moments of joy, rest, and renewal amidst your busy routines.

Thank you for your extraordinary work, your heartfelt empathy, and your continued pursuit of excellence. You are the heart of our organization, and I am incredibly grateful for each of you.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful, safe, and restful Thanksgiving.



Angela Mitchell



THIS EDITION

- 2 **A note from your CNO** By: Angela “Angi” Mitchell
- 3 **EBSCO/ HEART**
- 4 **Practicing Gratitude and Kindness** By: Rebekah Huppe
- 5-6 **Gratitude and Kindness in Public Health Nursing During Times of Crisis** By: Jessica Watson
- 7 **Gratitude in Action: Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention in Our Community** By: Ashley McKay and Monica Lopez
- 8 **Gratitude and Kindness: The Heart of Public Health** By: Veronica Pelayo
- 9 **2025 Topics**



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HELPFULNESS
EXPERTISE
ATTENTIVENESS
RESPECT
TIMELINESS

Practicing Gratitude and Kindness

By: Rebekah Huppe, Quality Assurance Specialist, Office of Nursing Excellence

In public health nursing, our days can be unpredictable and emotionally heavy at times. Because of this, I've found that simple practices like gratitude and kindness can make a real difference not just for the people we serve, but for our own wellbeing. Whether we're doing home visits, community outreach, or coordinating services, taking a moment to notice something positive can help ground us in the middle of a chaotic and busy day.

A study published in the Online Journal of Issues in Nursing (Tully, et al., 2023) looked at a 21-day gratitude journaling activity for healthcare professionals. The group that practiced gratitude reported lower stress and burnout, and those benefits lasted for months. Another review of several gratitude studies found that even small, regular gratitude habits were linked with better mental health overall.

For us in public health, that doesn't have to mean writing in a journal every night. It can be as simple as pausing after a visit to remind ourselves of one thing that went well or offering a sincere thank you or words of kindness to a client or coworker. These small acts help build trust, strengthen relationships, and improve our overall well-being as well.

Gratitude and kindness won't fix every challenge in our work, but they can make the tough days feel a little lighter—and help us show up with the kind of positive attitude our communities deserve.



References:

- Tully, S., Tao, H., Johnson, M., Lebron, M., Land, T., & Armendariz, L. (2023). Gratitude practice to decrease stress and burnout in acute-care health professionals. OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing, 28 (3). <https://doi.org/10.3912/OJIN.Vol28No03PPT75b>

Gratitude and Kindness in Public Health Nursing During Times of Crisis

By Jessica Watson, PHN at North Coastal Public Health Center



Within our HFA nursing team, the emotional weight of supporting our most vulnerable communities, combined with ongoing crises and political uncertainty, can strain even the strongest relationships. Many of us experience compassion fatigue, burnout, or moral distress. In these moments, intentional kindness becomes a protective factor.

We feel this kindness deeply during our reflective meetings with Dr. Pradeep Gidwani. Having the space and time to vent, process our emotions, and hear that our coworkers are feeling the same way has been very meaningful. The shared honesty and empathy remind us that we are not alone.

In our Coastal/Inland HFA meetings, we begin each gathering with “Thank Yous” and “Successes.” I genuinely look forward to hearing everyone’s wins or hopes for a win, big and small, and I’m grateful for what I learn from each one. Also, being able to thank each other out loud and face-to-face carries so much meaning, even when it’s something as simple as, “Thank you for listening to me vent the other day.”

After taking time off last year for cancer treatment and continued cancer care, the support shown by my coworkers (near and far) - with meals, gifts, calls, emails, texts, and now those who still ask how I’m doing touches me deeply. Their kindness even when they can’t do anything to fix the health crisis, makes me feel seen, heard, and supported. These are the feelings that keep our clients wanting us to show back up for 3 years!

Also, this kindness is what keeps us afloat during times of crisis. Our care, compassion, and kindness are the foundation of our collective strength in Public Health Nursing. Simple acts such as acknowledging a colleague's hard work or checking in with, "How are you holding up today?" can transform the tone of our workplace. Expressing gratitude, whether in team meetings or casual conversations, reinforces our shared mission. And when PHNs feel supported and effective together, we are better able to show up for families during moments when it feels like we can't change the crises they face. Even when solutions are limited, we can offer an open heart. We can show up with kindness. I am beyond grateful for my North Coastal PHC team every single day.



LEAD WITH KINDNESS
Live with gratitude

Gratitude in Action: Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention in Our Community

By Ashley McKay, MPH and Monica Lopez, BSN RN PHN

Each year, Lead Week reminds us that protecting children from lead exposure is more than prevention- it's an act of care and community kindness. The County of San Diego's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) extends heartfelt gratitude to the families, community partners, and health care providers who work alongside us to keep San Diego's children safe and healthy.

This year's Lead Week, observed October 19–25, carried the theme “Nutrition as Prevention.” CLPPP celebrated by sharing educational resources, webinars, and even family-friendly recipes through a dedicated Lead Week webpage. Transit shelter ads across the county helped raise awareness for the cause, while outreach events and giveaway bags reminded families that everyday habits such as washing hands, eating nutritious foods, checking older homes for peeling paint can help protect their little ones.

Throughout the year Public Health Nurses (PHNs), alongside the Outreach and Administrative members of CLPPP, provide reassurance and support to families experiencing lead poisoning. Through information, care, and kindness, PHNs help families see that reducing and preventing lead poisoning is possible.

CLPPP is thankful to everyone who helps create a safer environment for children to grow, learn, and thrive. Together, we continue to build a future free from the dangers of lead exposure!

References:

- [Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program -CLPPP](#)
- [National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week](#)



Gratitude and Kindness: The Heart of Public Health

By: Veronica Pelayo, BSN, RN, PHN, East Public Health Center

The public health nursing profession is very fast paced- home visits, community outreach, screenings, and health education- too many times I have found myself and have overheard colleagues become focused on all that still needs to get done. For our health and general perspective, it is important for us to slow down and take some time to recognize the good in our surroundings. In doing so this can ultimately change how we show up each day for ourselves and others. Gratitude is much more than emotions; it is a choice, a skill, that if practiced improves mental health, fosters resiliency and connection (Hahn et al., 2024). By leading with gratitude and kindness we nurture ourselves, help colleagues and build stronger healthier communities. If this is something that you do not practice regularly, let me help you start your gratitude journey by posing a question. Ask yourself the following: What made me smile today?



References:

- Hahn, N., Brzoska, P., & Kiessling, C. (2024). On the correlation between gratitude and resilience in medical students. *GMS Journal for Medical Education*, 41(1), 8. <https://doi.org/10.3205/zma001663>

LIVEWELL NURSING



December: Systems & Technology



Please e-mail submission (ideas, photos, articles, trainings, dates, accolades, local or national news, etc.) to

Araceli.Casas@sdcounty.ca.gov



For consideration in next issue, please submit entries by close of business on **December 19, 2025**. Submission limits: 125-275 words



2025 Topics

January: New Beginnings/Resolutions

February: Sustainability

March: Workplace Engagement

April: Community Engagement

May: Nurses Week posters

June: Equity

July: Service Delivery Coordination

August: Immunization Awareness

September: Preparedness Month (shelters/wildfires, etc.)

October: Domestic Violence Awareness Month

November: Gratitude & Kindness

December: Systems & Technology