

PCICS Bedside Nurse Award Selection Committee
June 26th, 2022

Dear Committee Members,

It is my distinct privilege to recommend Sonia Almeida Santos for The Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society (PCICS) Bedside Nurses Award. I currently have the pleasure of working closely with Sonia both in the clinical arena and on many large projects within the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CICU) at Boston Children's Hospital. Professionally, Sonia is bright, articulate and determined to meet any challenge with a sense of deep responsibility. Through exceptional ability, she promoted quickly to the Charge Nurse role and as a clinical expert Staff Nurse III. Additionally, Sonia is involved with many important unit-based initiatives including CICU Chairperson for National Data Base of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI), Skin Care Subject Matter Expert Group lead for the CICU, Co-Chairperson for CICU Family Advisory Council and serves as Faculty for CICU Crisis Resource Management simulation training. On an institutional level, Sonia is a CICU Representative for the Professional Advancement Committee and instructor for the Level II and Level III Advancement Curriculum. Currently, she is also a CICU representative for the expansion of the Cardiovascular Program to a new state of the art building opening June 2022.

Despite the many roles she serves, it is Sonia's profound sense of accountability to the staff she mentors, patients she impacts and families she supports at the bedside that truly mark her as a leader. Sonia's dedication to providing a healthy work environment and ensuring that patients, families, and all staff have a voice is evident within her practice. Formally, she serves as Chairperson for the Healthy Work Environment Initiative and leads a monthly meeting titled CSI (Clinician Support Initiative) which focuses specifically on addressing job stress and staff concerns in real time to bring forth possible solutions. In addition to this impactful work, she has co-developed a high-stakes, 1-hour interdisciplinary communication training course utilizing actors to mentor staff navigating difficult conversations at end of life and through conflict resolution. Sonia is passionate about this work, and it is clear through the many nominations and awards that she has received over the years, including the Daisy Award, Boston Globe "Salute to Nurses" award and the Exceptional Care Service Award that she exemplifies the characteristics of an exceptionally gifted bedside clinician.

In the clinical setting, Sonia's work with families truly captures her proficiency as a compassionate, dedicated nurse. One of her most memorable patient care experiences was with an infant diagnosed with severe heart disease and a poor prognosis. This child's family was primarily Portuguese speaking and received a devastating diagnosis following multiple medical interventions. Sonia is fluent in both Portuguese and Spanish and formed an incredible bond with the parents that provided tremendous comfort and support during their child's stay. The goal of this family was to get their child home, to have time together before he died. With Sonia acting as his Continuity of Care Nurse and through incredible teamwork, these parents were able to have several months with their son at home creating memories. The trusting relationship that was formed with Sonia, linked through language and empathy, made all the difference.

It is without hesitation that I recommend Sonia for the PCICS Bedside Nursing Award. Sonia is exceptional and I can think of no one more deserving of such a highly regarded honor.

Sincerely,

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