OVERVIEW:
- A community medical center and baccalaureate school of nursing created a partnership in 2007 using a Relationship Based Care Nursing Model (RBC).
- This partnership implemented caring behaviors connecting practice, education and evidence-based research which increased the quality of patient care and improved outcomes.
- This approach to caring distinguishes these educators and nursing students from other health care settings and baccalaureate schools of nursing.
- RBC enhances the profession by modeling national leadership in education and clinical practice for the medical center staff, nursing students, and educators.
- The overall culture encompasses and excellence in Caring theme focusing on the characteristics of compassion, accountability, respect, integrity, neighborly, and growth.

VISION:
- The hospital selected Relationship-Based Care Nursing Model to guide their nursing practice.
- Their vision was to embark on a collaborate partnership with the School of Nursing to enhance clinical practice through a creative integrative approach.
- The focus was to build a foundation for nursing students to deliver care using a scientific model of practice.
- The hospital and the school of nursing wanted to have their nurses and graduates practice from a caring model which emphasized strong relationships built on trust.
- The university felt this would also benefit the faculty to enhance team building concepts and stress the importance of interpersonal relationships.

INSPIRATION:
- The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) at the hospital and Dean of the School of Nursing were the inspiration for the RBC Model.
- Both wanted to prepare future nurses by focusing on the basic values of caring and strong interpersonal relationships.
- They wanted to strengthen the link between theory and clinical practice by educating nursing students to recognize the influence caring practice has on the health status of the patient, family and the community.
- Lastly, they wanted to prepare this cohort of nursing students to fit within the culture of this community hospital for future employment.

INFRASTRUCTURE:
- This innovative design selects up to twenty-four nursing students from a class of over 100 to form a cohort each year. To date five cohorts have been selected.
- By a cohort, we mean that the students have all their clinical experiences together, most being at this hospital.
- Students apply for the cohort and are selected based on their application, caring abilities inventory, caring essay and hospital behavioral based interviews.
- The key initiatives for the collaborative working relationship are:
  - 1) to encourage a strong partnership between a university and a hospital that integrates undergraduate education with RBC theoretical model of care
  - 2) enhance education of both students and staff nurses through formal mentoring program as each student is paired with a mentor (staff nurse) at the hospital

EDUCATION:
- Students and faculty are offered the opportunity to participate in the Re-igniting the Spirit of Caring off-site 3-day workshop that gives the foundational structure for RBC practice.
- The education staff at the hospital works closely with the students to ensure RBC training is integrated into their clinical expectations.
- Key RBC initiatives and concepts are threaded throughout the sophomore year in didactic content. The clinical faculty who oversee the cohorts encourages the students to practice using the RBC Model.
- During the sophomore year students discuss the concepts of caring, compare and contrast theories of caring, and examine ways caring is expressed in the nurse-client relationship.
- A therapeutic communication assignment for the theory course revolves around the nurse – client clinical scenario.
  - Students discuss phases of the relationship including verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors, and discuss bridges and barriers to the nurse-client relationship.
  - During the scenario the group demonstrates and discusses a theoretical view on caring expressed in a role play DVD video taped production of the scenario.
  - For a clinical assignment the students describe therapeutic communication skills including principles and elements from the theoretical views on Caring (Benner, Koloroutis, Leininger, Swanson or Watson) used during the child health history and physical assessment.

EVIDENCE:
- The impact of the cohorts is most evident in that the students are highly sought to be hired by the hospital.
- Once hired, both the new graduate and the hospital staff are very pleased with how quickly the new graduates perform, progress, and become immersed into the hospital’s culture.
- These new graduates hired from this cohort program have remained in their roles which decreased attrition at the hospital.
- These graduates express high satisfaction with the experience as they understand RBC and the importance of this delivery model for patient care.
- Through this initiative, a strong collaborative partnership has emerged between the hospital and school of nursing.
- Most importantly, this partnership has helped to reshape the educational landscape which better prepares nursing students on their journey to becoming caring novice nurses.