

## NURSING IS PART OF HER NATURE



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**My Role:** I came to Metropolitan in September to start my first job as a nurse working in the ICU providing and advocating for the best care to patients. I look at and monitor their plan of care and consult doctors if anything needs to be changed. I also support my patients' families by helping them understand more about medical care.

**Tough Moments:** I had a few months of critical care experience before the COVID-19 pandemic began. At first, I didn't think it would be so bad because a few patients suspected of COVID-19 turned out to have the flu. Then I had my first COVID-19 patient, a nurse, who was rapidly declining

faster than I could imagine.

She was really nervous when doctors assessed her, but I could tell she trusted me. I told her I would do everything I could to help. She asked me to use a cellphone in her bag to call her family, but she couldn't finish her sentences without struggling to breathe. Within an hour, she had to be intubated.

My next shift, I saw her on a ventilator. She was still awake and wrote on my hand, "Home." I asked if she wanted me to have the doctors call her family, and she nodded yes. She was later transferred to another facility, and that's the last I saw her. I still think of her to this day.

After her, it seemed like the ICU began to fill with patients almost overnight and every single one

needed a ventilator. It was mind boggling. There were old and young, and I couldn't help but think that some came to the hospital without knowing that they would not return home. It was something I never thought I would see.

**Impact of COVID-19:** When we increased to four ICUs at Metropolitan, we needed more staff, so I had to function independently and train the additional nurses who came to help. I showed them tasks like titration medication and suctioning patients. I was nervous in the beginning, but I knew the charge nurse was nearby for help.

I become more of a leader and a resource to everyone on my team, as I consulted with doctors and other ICU nurses. Barriers between doctors and nurses faded away as we all helped one another carry out treatment plans. Doctors even helped me clean patients. There was mutual respect.

### Why I'm on the frontlines:

Being a nurse is all about helping people. It brings me joy, and makes me happy. I know it's part of my nature. Though it has been difficult at times, this experience made me realize how much I love being in critical care, and I can't imagine doing anything else. I'm focused on continuing to evolve.