

## MARK WINSTON YAO, RN, BSN

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NYC Health + Hospitals | Jacobi Medical Center



Mark Winston Yao firmly believes in patient-centered care and is constantly motivated by his focus on his patients, especially those with multiple health care issues. "The patients who are admitted to my unit have underlying medical conditions in addition to mental health diagnoses," he explained, noting that society "does not provide enough resources to support mental health patients, or raise enough awareness to the public for that matter. Based on my knowledge of what I know and who I care for, I want to be able to change the way the system cares for mental health patients. My patients are my motivation."

Yao notes that he prizes his "ability to help patients improve and focus on self-care," and points out that, "Health care is moving towards a more preventative approach in disease. I want to be able to be a part in motivating patients to take better care of themselves through patient education. I am also keen on learning so going to work provides the opportunity to learn from physicians and my colleagues to improve my skill set and expand my knowledge."

Yao was inspired to become a nurse by his mother, who he describes as "a strong, independent woman who raised four children working two jobs, five days a week and still managed to remain optimistic and made time for us," he remarks. "She showed me that nurses are compassionate in what they do, patient, and are quick problem-solvers who rarely showed unease as to not alarm others."

Working in the public sector has allowed Yao to keep his attention firmly on his patients. "The city's public health system focuses on a patient-centered model compared to a private hospital health system, which is more business-like in my opinion," he points out. "I understand hospitals have to profit, however city hospitals cater to all patients and do not discriminate against the type of insurance a patient has. They focus on patient health services that are affordable to the community resulting in patients utilizing health services to maintain their health and prevent diseases."

Yao says he believes that the ability to establish trust is one of the most important qualities in a nurse. "The establishment of a trusting relationship enables nurses and the health care team to provide better care to patients and patients to be more compliant and involved in their health," he asserts. "One memorable moment that I can recently recall is my response to a psychiatric emergency, also known as a 'blue light,' where I encountered an agitated and aggressive patient who was readmitted to one of the psychiatric units," Yao elaborates. "The patient was threatening to hurt staff, however, upon my arrival, the patient recognized who I was and his response and demeanor quickly changed where the patient was able to de-escalate himself. He was compliant with medication and followed instructions from me. The patient's cooperation did not require any form of restraint on the staff's end. It was at that moment that I realized how important it is to establish a good rapport with patients."