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Letter: Support nurses, backbone of health care system



From Dr. Don Kahle Mount Vernon Court, Dubuque Nov 18, 2016 (1)

Having seen several references to a nursing shortage, most recently a letter from Ms. Mancl (Telegraph Herald, Nov. 1), I want to give my input.

My story is that my first involvement in health care was as a night orderly at the former Xavier Hospital, beginning in the late 1950s. My pay was a grandiose 90 cents an hour. Tough to cover tuition, books, etc., since I was also a pre-med student at Loras College at the time, but I made it!

Full circle, forward to the 1980s, when, now as a much-better-compensated physician, I served on the governing board for Stonehill Nursing Home (tough to get away from those Franciscans!).

In that capacity I promoted the obvious primary mission to provide compassionate support to our elderly residents. But I also promoted a secondary mission, that being to take good care of our employees.

My observation, through many years and in different capacities, is that the backbone of health care in our country is, in many ways, the nursing profession: RNs, CNAs, etc.

They deserve to be treated well. A shortage of their numbers has serious implications.

