Dear Nurse Colleagues,

Every year, National Nurses Week focuses attention on the diverse ways America’s nurses work to save lives and improve the health of millions of individuals. The American Nurses Association (ANA) has selected “Culture of Safety-It Starts With YOU” as the theme for 2016. Annually, National Nurses Week begins on May 6 and ends on May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, founder of nursing as a modern profession.

Across Bellin Health System there are over 1,000 nurses providing care in a variety of settings. Each year we continue to expand the opportunities for nurses and now see them in various roles in strategic locations all across the health care continuum. The impact that Bellin nurses have on the health of our population is measurable and evidenced in Bellin’s national quality and safety awards. For the fifth consecutive year Bellin Health was recognized with a Five Star Rating in the Outstanding Patient Experience Award™ from Healthgrades®, and was also awarded with their Patient Safety Excellence Award™. These rank Bellin nationally in the top 15% and 10% respectively. Leapfrog® named Bellin Hospital one of the top Urban Hospitals in America, one of only 98 awarded in the nation. Forbes Magazine ranked Bellin 56th out of the top 250 of America’s Best Midsize Employers – this is all employers, not just healthcare! Most recently, the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality (WCHQ) rated Bellin’s Ashwaubenon and Howard Clinics statistically higher than the national average on colon cancer screenings, diabetes care, and high blood pressure control.

There is a lot to be proud of when you’re a nurse at Bellin Health. Awards and recognition should be celebrated as they validate what Bellin nurses do day in and day out – maintaining a culture of safety and patient satisfaction. Often nurses say, “I don’t need recognition – it’s what I do”. You go above and beyond for our patients and families because it has become a part of our nursing culture – it is who you are and what you do. Many of you do not view your work as anything extraordinary – it is an expectation of yourselves and your colleagues. But it is extraordinary. It isn’t proven through awards alone – it is evidenced by our quality data and the many notes and words of thanks from patients and families. During this week of recognition, I would like to thank you for what you do as a professional nurse.

We are again holding a poster contest in the hospital lobby demonstrating how Bellin nurses make a difference. I hope you get a chance to view them – they will be on display from May 9-13 and then rotated through various areas in the system this summer. Please take time to read them and see the many ways that Bellin nurses have created a culture of safety for our patients and families, as well as themselves.

THANK YOU! You are all to be commended and be sure to pause this week to reflect on one of the best professions and the impact you make on our patients, Bellin, and the community. I’m honored that you are a Bellin nurse. You truly make a difference to each life that you touch.

Sincerely,

Laura Hieb, MBA, BSN, RN, NE-BC
Chief Nursing Officer & CEO Bellin Health Oconto Hospital