



ASSOCIATION of PEDIATRIC
HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY NURSES

(In response to Dateline NBC, *Heroes of Children's Hospitals*, appeared January 31, 2010)

February 2, 2010

We appreciate your story on our very deserving physician colleagues. Caring for sick and injured children requires the combined efforts of a highly skilled, very dedicated team of professionals. Through collaboration, the healthcare team is able to provide high quality, family-centered, compassionate care to the children of this nation. We would like to salute the pediatric nurse "Heroes" of children's hospitals across the country. The knowledge, expertise, and commitment they bring to the team are invaluable. The nurse is the caregiver who is always present, always caring, providing ongoing assessment of minute to minute changes and providing critical thinking skills as they implement care. Our physician colleagues rely on these assessments and opinions of their nursing colleagues as the plan of care is developed and modified based on the needs of the child.

We would like to specifically acknowledge the contributions of the pediatric hematology/oncology nurse. Pediatric hematology/oncology nursing is a dynamic and evolving discipline that is based on knowledge derived from theory, research and practice. It is not only the knowledge that the pediatric nurse acquires but the application of this knowledge and the ability to artfully apply it to the care of a child, adolescent and/or young adult (AYA); from playfully getting a child to take their medicine to saving their life through critical thinking, to compassionately caring for a child and family as death draws near. These are the "angels" that families refer to, the one who stands by their child and their family through all circumstances. These are the "heroes", the colleagues that I am blessed to represent as President of the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON). Pediatric hematology/oncology nurses make a difference in the lives of children and their families...one child at a time.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Deborah Echtenkamp'.

Deborah Echtenkamp, MSN RN CPON®
President