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In my 36 years as a registered nurse at The Valley Hospital, I never thought I would witness a pandemic as challenging as COVID-19. The situation was evolving rapidly and recommendations for protection and safe practices were changing daily. As an oncology nurse, my patients are a vulnerable population and the nurses who care for them need to practice safe and current preventative measures. For those oncology patients who have COVID-19, we need to be vigilant with monitoring symptoms and ensuring that their treatment regimens continue safely.

We are inspired each and every day with the love and support from family, friends, the community, and hospital administration. "Thank you" means so much but I feel the real heroes are the patients who are fighting hard not to fall to this disease. I look forward to going to work every day as the rewards are great when you can make a difference. I truly believe we have all come together to be safe, have faith, and stay strong.

Ani Sahagian
Nurse, Bergen County

I have been working as a Registered Nurse for a decade in a hospital setting in Bergen County. One of the most rewarding aspects of my career is to connect with my patients and play an important role in their lives during their difficult time.

Our daily lives have undoubtedly changed. The pandemic has brought a sense of uncertainty, but the resiliency of all nurses has certainly not. The World Health Organization (WHO) has designated 2020 as the "Year of the Nurse." This designation was announced prior to COVID-19's presence amongst us. The flexibility of nurses and their commitment to their jobs, facing the challenges during this pandemic; this cannot come a better time to honor and recognize all nurses for responsibility to their profession.

Caring for the patients have become another challenge to the nurses as no visitors are allowed, and patients rely on staff to be their advocate for their needs. Nurses must help them contact their loved ones via phone/FaceTime or nurses call family members daily to give report on patients' conditions. Being trilingual makes me connect with patients who have difficulty in communicating in English. They often feel uplifted when you express in their own language.

It's an emotional roller coaster to function during COVID-19. Humanity will get us through these difficult times. There has been elevated camaraderie amongst the nurses. Through collective efforts, we will come out stronger and winners as humans on the other side of this pandemic.