Summary: This position, Advanced Practice Nurse (APN), will play an essential role in the implementation of the Indiana University Geriatrics OPTIMISTIC (Optimizing Patient Transfers, Impacting Medical quality, and Improving Symptoms: Transforming Institutional Care) initiative, funded by a 4 year grant from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS). OPTIMISTIC is an innovative intervention designed to reduce hospitalizations of long stay nursing home residents through the use of established collaborative care models, implementation of care protocols and improved communication. The ideal candidate will have a strong interest in Geriatrics and/or Palliative Care and in caring for nursing home residents. The APN will work with project RNs, who are based in each nursing home, and be available to provide on-site clinical care to nursing home residents with an acute change in status. The APN will cover up to 4 nursing homes in central Indiana. Multiple positions (6) are available; part-time positions may be possible.

Key Aspects:

- Assesses health status through obtainment of relevant health history and comprehensive physical exam, preventive screening, and identification of medical risk factors. Develops treatment plan to maximize the health potential of the individual, family, and/or community. May conduct patient care conferences, facilitate discharge planning, and develop policies and procedures.
- Orders and adjusts medications per collaborative written agreement and prescriptive authority in accordance with the Indiana Nurse Practice Act; or in consultation, and with the signature of a physician. Responsible for showing proof of review of prescribing practices by collaborating physician. Directs the development, implementation, and evaluation of standards for nursing practice.
- Serves as a clinical resource for the nursing staff, physicians, hospital and other health care providers. Serves as an advocate for patients, staff, and management. Assists in the assessment of the clinical nurse’s performance and validates clinical competencies.
- Will cover a group of 4 facilities and be available to see residents as needed to fill in gaps in usual medical coverage.
- Available shifts are 1pm-9pm Monday-Friday and 8-noon Saturday and Sunday. The APN will evaluate residents at the nursing homes on an as-needed basis. Following patient assessment, the APN will document findings and make recommendations using established protocols, and communicate directly with the usual provider at the time of evaluation. If the patient needs to be transferred to the hospital, the APN will communicate with the next provider of care in the hospital.
- Transitional care will include discussing warning signs that might necessitate more emergent medical evaluation, working with staff to prepare the caregiver and resident for the transition, and planning for follow-up with the receiving physician.
• The APN may also conduct a “transition visit” for long stay residents who return from the hospital if their providers are unable to see them within 48 hours.
• Assisting project RNs with education and training programs will be an important element of the position.
• Assists staff in the acquisition of clinical skills and knowledge by providing advanced staff development programs.
• Collaborates with other departments to assess learning needs and plan staff education programs.
• Develops and implements educational materials and discharge planning programs. Emphasizes wellness and self-care by sharing information needed to make healthy lifestyle choices and health care decisions to patients, family and the community.
• The APN will complete the Respecting Choices® POLST Facilitator training (www.respectingchoices.org).
• The APN will be trained using the ELNEC-Geriatric Program. This specialized curriculum uses a train-the-trainers model to provide comprehensive education focused on geriatric palliative care.
• The APNs will also receive training and then be expected to educate facility providers, medical directors, directors of nursing, and administrators using standardized educational modules (www.eperc.org).
• APNs will keep a log of time spent on activities, using a structured tracking form, to help with ongoing assessment that will provide insight into position demands and allow revisions as necessary.