



## **University of Maryland eCare's COR 54: The New Kids in the Box**

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Six rural hospitals with 7 intensive care units, 77 patient care beds total, and almost 200 clinical staff with previous familiarity with Tele-ICU practice. Twelve bedside ICU nurses and 6 support staff with zero experience with Telemedicine and untrained on the use of new highly-sophisticated monitoring and communications equipment within the Central Operations Room (COR). These were the seemingly insurmountable challenges faced by the University of Maryland eCare management a few weeks before the launch of the program on April 30, 2013 as the 54th Telemedicine facility in the country and as the first and only Tele-ICU service in the state. With hands-on training provided by peer-respected experts in the field, bedside ICU nurse clinicians were transitioned into Tele-ICU practitioners. Nurses from eCare were introduced to a new care delivery model which emphasizes expertise in clinical practice, skilled communication, collaborative relationships, and optimizing technology use, ideals derived from the "AACN Tele-ICU Nursing Practice Guidelines". These guidelines also served as a framework for the formation of a staff governance structure which enabled nurses to partake in crucial decision-making in defining their roles and designing their work processes. The presentation will demonstrate a nurse's perspective on the challenges of establishing a new Tele-ICU program and how the involvement and contributions of an engaged nursing staff helped overcome such hurdles.