MATERIALS & METHODS
This project was designed to develop a weekly dog therapy program in the MICU tranquility room adjacent to the unit to improve mood and increase staff resilience measured by using a developed survey tool with specific resilience questions post-intervention.

INTRODUCTION
Nurse-related stress and burnout threaten nurses’ mental well-being and contribute to turnover. Workload and nurse resilience are the focus of our frontline intensive care unit nurses. The project aimed to improve resilience among nurses and the healthcare team in an inpatient Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) and implement an evidence-based strategy to enhance resilience.

ABSTRACT
Nurses are consistently in high-stress working conditions and exposed to direct insults caring for the critically ill. Nurse-related stress and burnout threaten nurses’ mental well-being and contribute to turnover. Workload and nurse resilience are the focus of our frontline intensive care unit nurses. The project aimed to improve resilience among nurses and the healthcare team in an inpatient Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) and implement an evidence-based strategy to enhance resilience.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES
• A pre-survey was offered before the implementation of the pet therapy sessions, and the responses showed higher resilience scores in males and staff with less than one year of service.
• The staff mood scores increased after each pet therapy visit, supporting this project’s findings that pet therapy positively impacts employee well-being and increases resilience.
• The post-implementation survey tool results showed higher resilience scores overall, except in 3 of the 5 resilience questions for the staff in the 5-10 years of service category.
• Although attendance in pet therapy was lower on the days that the MICU census was higher (22-24 patients), the after-pet therapy mood scores remained positive.
• Note: Survey responses that did not have unique identifiers, did not work in MICU, and did not participate in pet therapy were removed from the total number of responses collected.

REFERENCES

CONCLUSION
• Organizational activities promote healthy work conditions, maximize the integration for well-being and building moral resiliency.
• Pet therapy is one of many strategies to promote a healthy work environment and improve resilience.
• This project was deemed a success by the Registered Nurses working the Medical Intensive Care Unit.
• There is a need to extend this program throughout the health care system with the development of a program designed specifically for forward facing staff.

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