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BETH ISRAEL NURSE GIVES AWAY FREE APP TO HELP COLLEAGUES

January 26, 2012 -- Robert Freeman, RN, is a nurse with strong computer skills and a good heart.

With money that he received from winning the 2011 Novice Nurse of the Year -- Beth Israel Medical Center's Beatrice Renfield Circle of Excellence and 1199/SEIU League awards, he has developed a new app, Nurse-Net, to help student nurses and nurses in all specialties to improve their professional practice. And he is giving it away for free!

Nurse-Net provides three interactive tools -- News Reader, Abbreviation Assistant and Credentialer. It is available on the iTunes app store -- completely free and can be used with the iPhone, iPad and iPod touch.

The News Reader, which aggregates the latest news articles sorted by specialty, is an easy way for RNs to stay current with the latest research and trends. Users have the option to email articles to friends and colleagues and will soon be able to share articles on Facebook and Twitter.

The Abbreviation Assistant facilitates a search of Nurse-Net's database of 10,000+ medical abbreviations. "We abbreviate so many words in health care and not knowing their precise meaning can lead to subpar patient care or even worse!"

The Credentialer provides a comprehensive list of nursing credentials and their associated initials. "I often look at the alphabet soup that follows nurses names on their ID card and I'm unsure of what many of those initials mean. With the Credentialer you enter those initials and it will tell you what they stand for," explained Freeman, who works in Beth Israel's 3 Dazian med-surg unit.

"I wanted the app to be free because if you charge even a dollar for an app, less people are going to use it. Besides, student nurses are already saddled with tuition and textbook expenses," said Freeman, a 2009 graduate of Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing.

He spent most of last summer talking with Beth Israel colleagues and brainstorming on ideas they would like to be developed. And two months more working with his friend Dan Delphin, an IT expert, on Nurse-Net's coding and app submission. "I compiled the databases, worked on filters, icons and layouts. I wanted to give back to the nursing community and especially the next generation of RNs," he added.

Nurse-Net has been downloaded over 12,000 times by nurses from over 100 countries including the U.K, Australia, China and Saudi Arabia, roughly 1,000 downloads a week since the app's release. Majority of users -- more than 90 percent -- are from the United States.

Robert Freeman, aka Robbie, had a circuitous route to nursing. In high school at Great Neck South, he was a track and field star who broke long distance records and ranked

among the nation's top athletes. He earned a scholarship to NY State's University at Albany, where he broke more records.

“Running initially sparked my interest in how the human body works,” said Freeman, who now resides in Brooklyn. “I had an internship at a hospital where the nurses made a huge impression on me. After receiving a degree in biology, I enrolled at Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing.”

He is very happy working in med-surg and gaining valuable experience at Beth Israel. He has helped develop a model for shared governance in Nursing and even managed to participate in medical missions to Kenya and Honduras.

Not one to let grass grow under his feet, he is working currently on his Master of Science in Nursing with specialization in Clinical Systems Management at Excelsior College.

“My main goal is to make contributions to the nursing/health care community. I think pursuing Nursing Leadership is one way I could do that,” said the highly motivated nurse.