

2025
NURSING
ANNUAL REPORT

Life of the Caregiver



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

Many Strengths.
One Mission.



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The Life of the Caregiver: Excellence in Action



A LETTER FROM HELEN STAPLES-EVANS

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

As we present this year's Nursing Annual Report, themed *Life of the Caregiver*, I want to take a moment to reflect on our shared accomplishments and highlight the extraordinary efforts made by our team throughout the year. Your dedication not only shines in your professional achievements, but also in the lives you touch every day — patients, families, and one another. I am reminded of Albert Schweitzer's words:

"Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing. So do something wonderful, people may imitate it."



Our recent Magnet redesignation is a powerful recognition of your unwavering commitment to excellence. It reflects your relentless pursuit of clinical innovation, evidence-based practice, and advancements in virtual nursing. This redesignation is a testament to the highest standards of care we uphold and the supportive, professional environment we have built together. This is what truly sets us apart as an organization.

Beyond clinical excellence, the *Life of the Caregiver* is rooted in compassion, resilience, and an unwavering spirit. Each day, you bring hope and healing, often going above and beyond while making quiet sacrifices that go unseen. Your ability to navigate the demands of your profession with the personal challenges you face is truly commendable.

Your contributions to nursing research have been nothing short of remarkable, positioning us as leaders in the field. Through your innovative studies and groundbreaking work, you have not only advanced patient care here but also helped shape best practices across the broader medical community.

Evidence-based practice remains the cornerstone of our patient care approach. Your steadfast commitment to integrating the latest research findings into our daily work ensures our patients receive the safest, most effective treatments. Your diligence has resulted in continued improved clinical outcomes, refined protocols, and the ability to stay ahead of emerging trends.

Virtual nursing and our embrace of it has revolutionized how we deliver care. Through forward-thinking ideas and adaptivity, you have helped us leverage this technology to expand access and create greater efficiencies in our system all while enhancing the patient care experience. These innovations will shape the future of nursing in the medical communities' rapidly changing landscape, and you are at the forefront of it.

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your exceptional contributions. Your talent, passion, and innovative spirit are what drive our success. It is a privilege to serve alongside such an extraordinary team. Together, we will continue to lead, inspire, and set new standards in nursing care.

Thank you for all that you do.

Helen Staples-Evans

Helen Staples-Evans, DNP, RN, NE-BC

Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services
Chief Nursing Officer, Loma Linda University Health

Compassionate Care, Lasting Impact



A LETTER FROM SHERRY NOLFE

As we reflect on this past year, I am filled with immense pride and deep gratitude for each of you who gives so selflessly to our mission of healing and wholeness. This year's theme, *Life of the Caregiver*, is a tribute to the extraordinary strength, compassion, and resilience you bring to every patient, every shift, every moment.

In maternal and pediatric care, we are entrusted with something sacred, not just the treatment of illness, but the shaping of futures. Whether welcoming a new life into the world or comforting a child through a difficult diagnosis, the heart of what we do is found in the quiet, powerful moments that often go unseen. This report seeks to illuminate those moments and honor the people behind them — you.



Throughout this year, your impact has been both profound and far-reaching. I have witnessed you hold hands through heartbreak, celebrate milestones once thought impossible, and advocate fiercely for those in your care. You have continued to innovate, educate, and lead with purpose, raising the bar of excellence on every unit, even amid unprecedented challenges. Your commitment has touched families in their most vulnerable hours and has left a lasting imprint of hope and healing, reminding families that they are not alone.

We have seen remarkable achievements in patient outcomes, interdisciplinary collaboration, and professional development across all areas. While these achievements are important, beyond the metrics and milestones, it is your humanity that defines our excellence. Your collective heart is extraordinary and shines through our traditions and programs.

Our Acute Care Pediatrics teams come together annually for the “Spirit of Christmas” to bless struggling families during the holidays, serving as a testament to the generosity and unity of our caregivers. In the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, our “Kangaroo-A-Thon” initiative is celebrated and promotes the power of skin-to-skin bonding between caregivers and their babies, reminding us that healing happens also occurs through touch, trust, and presence. With empathy and insight, “My Medical Process,” an educational series created to help children better understand what to expect before a medical procedure; it has helped reduce fear and anxiety while empowering our young patients with knowledge.

To be a caregiver is to live a life of service, but it is also a life of strength, resilience, and profound joy. Thank you for the heart you bring to your work and for the difference you make in the lives of our patients and their families every single day.

With deep appreciation and admiration,

Sherry Nolfé

Sherry Nolfé, DNP, RN

Chief Nursing Officer
Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital



With Hands That Heal and Hearts That Lead



A LETTER FROM DENISE ROBINSON

Dear Colleagues, Community Partners, and Friends,

Caregiving is not merely a role; it is a life we embrace. It transcends clinical expertise and technical skill, finding expression in quiet moments at a patient's bedside, in comforting anxious families, in mentoring the next generation, and in every thoughtful decision that protects the safety, dignity, and healing of those we care for. This life is not defined by shifts or titles; it is lived fully in every encounter, act of service and connection made, grounded in compassion.



At Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta, nursing excellence is at the heart of who we are. Each day, we build upon a legacy of compassion, innovation, and evidence-based practice. This year, that legacy was recognized nationally: together earning both Bronze and Silver Beacon Awards from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). These milestones are a testament to our extraordinary clinical expertise, cohesive teamwork, and an environment that embodies our mission to continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

Our journey forward is bold and purposeful, investing deeply in professional growth and lifelong learning. Together, we are advancing end-of-life care that upholds dignity for every individual, pioneering transformative postpartum care initiatives aligned with national priorities, and building programs that save lives, inspire trust, and empower patients and families.

As chief nursing officer, I, too, live the life of the caregiver. It is a privilege to lead with vision, courage, and faith. Like many of you, I have felt both the weight and the blessing of this calling, navigating the complexities of healthcare while never losing sight of humanity at its core. Leadership in nursing is not about position; it is about presence, purpose, and perseverance.

As we look to the future, our vision remains clear: to place your growth, development, and well-being at the heart of all we do. Here, you are not merely part of a team, but a vital partner on a journey of lifelong learning and excellence. We are here to champion you, guide you, and to celebrate your milestones every step of the way.

This annual report is more than a reflection of our achievements; it is a celebration of our identity. It is a testament to the remarkable work of every caregiver who makes this organization a place of excellence and compassion. Thank you for living this life with integrity, love, and tireless devotion. Together, we will continue to uplift our profession and honor the sacred and transformative Life of the Caregiver.

With deep admiration and respect,

Denise Robinson

Denise Robinson, DNP, MPH, WOCN, FCNLA

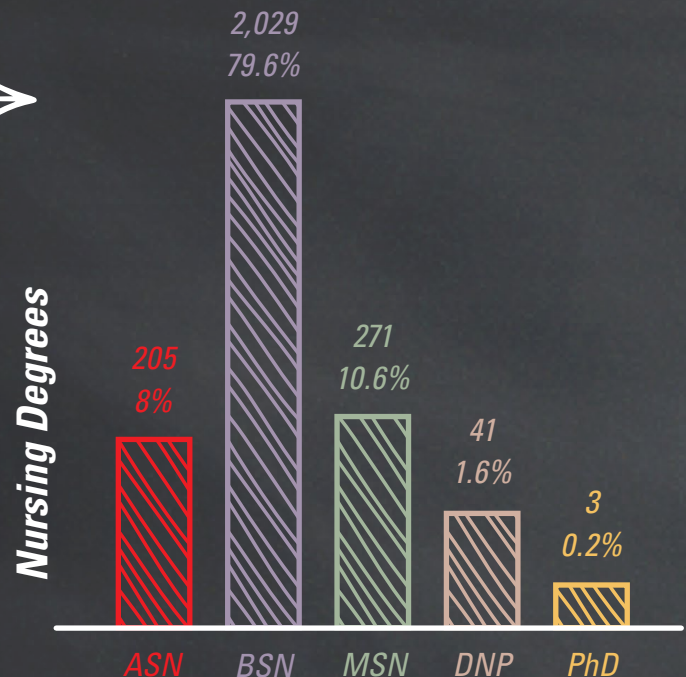
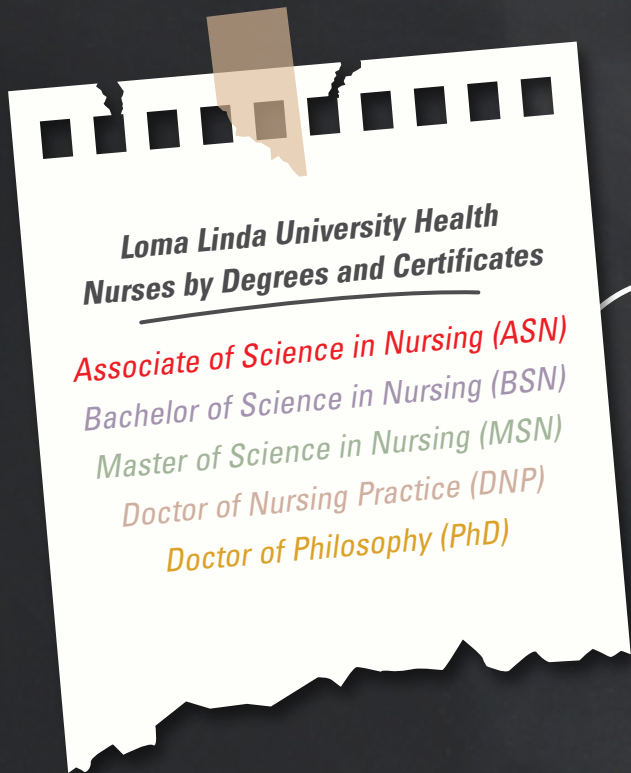
Vice President of Patient Care Services

Chief Nursing Officer, Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta

The Heartbeat of Our Work

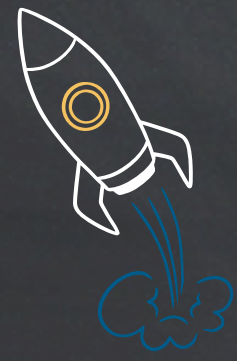


LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

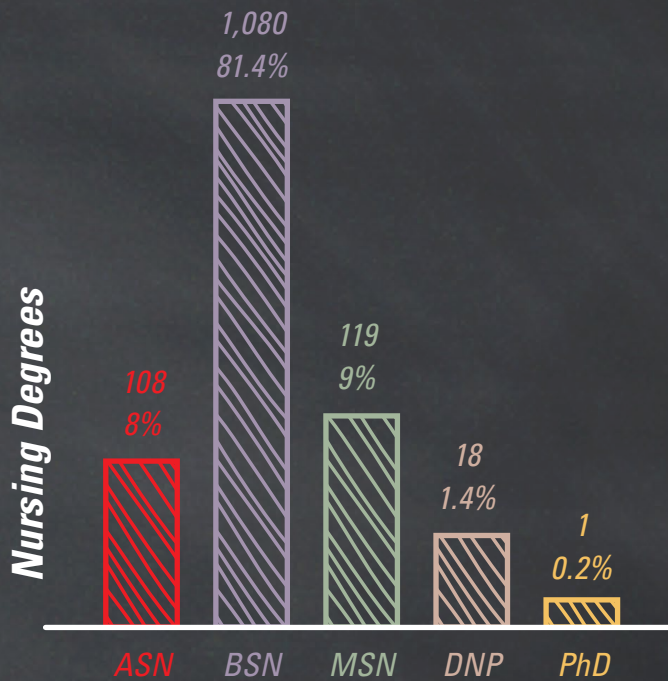


MAGNET CHAMPIONS

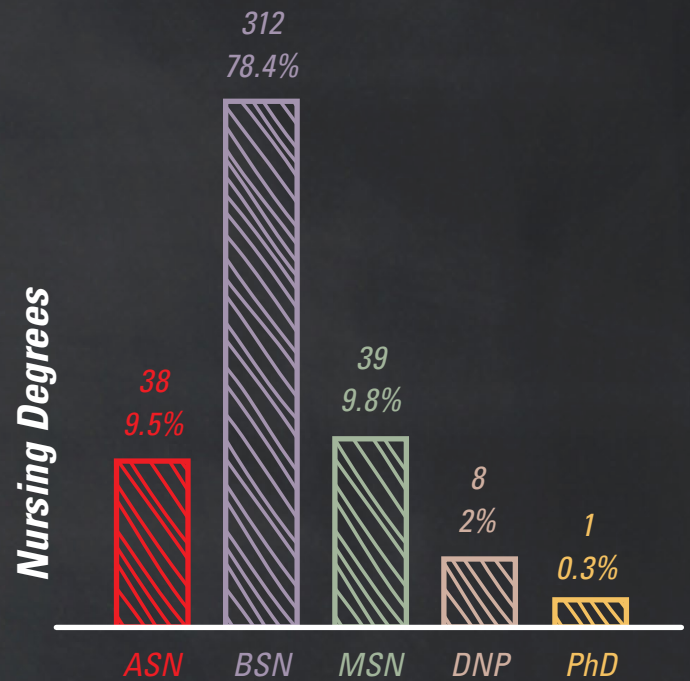
Group	Count
Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus and Hinshaw Towers	30
East Campus Hospital	9
Surgical Hospital	3
Behavioral Medicine Center	4
Loma Linda University Medical Center Total	46
Loma Linda University Children's Hospital	23



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – MURRIETA



NURSING CERTIFICATIONS

(Only counting nurses eligible for a certification.)

Group	Count	Percentage
LLU Medical Center	401	25%
LLU Children's Hospital	244	25%
LLU Medical Center – Murrieta	89	19%

PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE COUNCILS

LLU Medical Center Total: 24

- Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus and Hinshaw Towers: 15
- East Campus Hospital: 6
- Surgical Hospital: 2
- Behavioral Medicine Center: 1

LLU Children's Hospital: 12

LLU Medical Center – Murrieta: 9



A black stethoscope is draped over a wooden-framed blackboard. The blackboard has the text "AT THE HEART OF THE BEDSIDE" written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background is a solid green color.

**AT THE HEART
OF THE BEDSIDE**

Kangaroo-A-Thon:

Empowering Families Through Skin-to-Skin Care

BY: AISHA EALEY, DNP, APRN, ACCNS-N

From May 11-19, 2025, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital came alive with connection, compassion, and community during our annual Kangaroo-A-Thon. This weeklong celebration was held in honor of International Kangaroo Care Day (May 15) and kicked off on Mother's Day — a perfect way to begin a week focused on the powerful bond between parents and their babies.

The Kangaroo-A-Thon is one of several initiatives we lead in the NICU to promote skin-to-skin contact, also known as kangaroo care. This gentle practice is where the baby is held bare chest to chest with a parent, which has profound effects on both the infant and caregiver. Positive outcomes include temperature

regulation, improved gut motility, heart and respiratory regulation, improved lactation, decreased parental stress, and increased parent-baby bonding. Beyond the clinical aspects, it is a deep human experience that nurtures healing, trust, and connection.

This year's Kangaroo-A-Thon was a true team effort. Parents, bedside nurses, respiratory therapists, physical and occupational therapists, lactation consultants, dietitians, physicians, social workers, unit clerks, and more came together to support this initiative. Every discipline played a role in encouraging and facilitating skin-to-skin time while allowing us to track the total time spent in this practice. With a collective goal of 200,000 minutes, by the end of the week we logged an impressive 16,858 minutes!



We suspect the real number is even higher, as some families were discharged before logging their totals, and others may not have recorded their time on the tracking sheets.

To keep the energy going throughout the week, we hosted raffles on Kangaroo Care Day and at the end of the event. A total of 10 winners were recognized and celebrated, including three parent winners, two NICU staff winners, and five RN winners.

A huge shoutout to our entire NICU team for their enthusiasm, support, and dedication in creating such a meaningful experience. Together, we are empowering parents and giving babies the best possible start.



My Holistic Comfort Care Evidence-Based Project

By: Madeline Julianne Smith-Murdaugh, BSN, RN, PCCN

In my five years as a nurse, I have cared for many patients during their final hours. Serving patients on comfort care feels like stepping onto holy ground. It is a tremendous honor to provide dignified and compassionate care to these individuals, which necessitates a unique perspective, providing care not only to their own individual needs but caring for their family as well. My colleagues and I often became overwhelmed when juggling assignments that contained multiple critically ill patients, with only one patient who was preparing to pass peacefully. This meant while our comfort care patients had their pain controlled, due to unit demands their other needs, such as anxiety, secretion management, or emotional support, were not always well managed. This inspired my Holistic Comfort Care evidence-based practice project, which involves two tools to promote compassionate care for end-of-life patients.

I collected research articles on end-of-life care, patient and family priorities, the benefits of order sets and checklists, and effectiveness of various medications. Using this information, I developed a checklist for nurses that emphasizes interprofessional collaboration, appropriate assessments, soothing interventions and medications, bedside education, and essential documentation. The checklist itself was designed to be customized for each patient, tailoring to each patient's unique needs. The second tool contained information for nurses to give to family, such as bereavement resources and informational prompts for speaking with their loved one. Furthermore, it contained information about the medications, medical devices, soothing, and hygiene interventions they might see to help bring comfort to their loved one. I collaborated with nurses from three units to provide surveys, in-services, one-on-one education, and checklist support after introducing these items to the units.

While there was an adjustment period and learning curve in implementing these checklists, I received a great deal of positive feedback from nurses. These checklists empowered nurses in supporting and caring for their end-of-life patients. This project provided support, structure, and education to those using the tools, which positively impacted both the nurses and their patients.

Equipped with my findings, I had the honor of presenting my project at the 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference held at Loma Linda University Health. This opportunity not only allowed me to educate my colleagues regarding holistic comfort care, but to also encourage healthcare professionals as they provide compassionate and dignified end-of-life care to patients and their families. This experience has taught me how to blend passion, research, and innovation to create tools to support patients, families, and healthcare professionals alike to pursue wholeness for all.





A Journey of Hope:

How Nursing Collaboration and Innovation Saved a Life

CONTRIBUTOR: ELLYNE JAN WILLIS, BSN, RN, CCRN

At Loma Linda University Medical Center, healing is more than medicine — it is a mission of hope and wholeness. One patient’s journey embodies the power of nursing innovation, teamwork, and compassion to transform the impossible into reality.

She was young, vibrant, and active — until a severe case of influenza led to critical respiratory failure. Placed on venovenous extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (VV ECMO), a last-resort life support therapy, her condition stabilized but her lungs showed little recovery. After months in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), her only chance of survival was a lung transplant.

To be considered for a transplant, patients must demonstrate physical rehabilitation potential, specifically the ability to ambulate. After weeks confined to her bed, tethered to machines, she could not even stand. Her body was weak, and her spirit began to fade. Depression set in.

The ICU team knew something had to change and introduced an unconventional intervention: virtual reality (VR). The goal was simple, letting her mentally escape the hospital, even just for a moment. While upright in a tilt bed, she was transported not physically but virtually to Kenya, where the elephants roamed across the savannah. That seven-minute escape lit a spark.

With renewed determination and the tireless support of bedside nurses, ECMO specialists, physical and occupational therapists, our patient began engaging in mobility sessions. Over time, she progressed from tilt therapy to walking, despite while on ECMO! Two more VR sessions kept her spirits high as she swam alongside gliding manta rays and strolled along her favorite beach.

Despite the patient’s progress in mobility, one of the biggest hurdles remained, transportation. Adult ECMO patients are usually transferred by third-party critical care transport vendors. Due to her equipment’s weight, helicopter transfer was ruled out, and fixed-wing air transport required multiple handoffs and additional ground transfers, each adding risk.



The ECMO team saw an opportunity: what if they transported her themselves? Loma Linda University Medical Center's Critical Care Specialty Team (CCST), highly trained and experienced in critical care transport, stepped forward. It was a bold yet calculated decision, rooted in the belief that the team who knew her best could deliver the safest care.

Planning was meticulous. Supply lists were checked and rechecked, equipment tested, and a multi-disciplinary huddle was held to review roles, backup hospitals along the travel route, and emergency protocols.

On transfer day, the patient was accompanied by warm familiar faces — CCST nurses, an ECMO specialist, and ambulance staff. She expressed feeling much safer, knowing it was her team from Loma Linda University Medical Center by her side.

She arrived safely and underwent a successful double lung transplant. Weeks later, she sent photos and messages of gratitude to her caregivers. Today, she is home reunited with her children, breathing on her own, and back at the beach she loves so much.

This transport marked more than clinical achievement. It validated a vision of LLU Medical Center: That our adult ECMO and transport teams could lead complex interfacility transfers, expanding access to life-saving care across the region. As the only adult ECMO center in the area, LLU Medical Center is uniquely positioned to support surrounding hospitals and communities.

This journey is a powerful reminder of the many paths within nursing — bedside care, coordination, transport, education, leadership — and the extraordinary impact of collaboration across disciplines. As a result of skilled hands, compassionate hearts, and a shared vision across the spectrum, this young woman did not just survive, she began a whole new life.

At Loma Linda University Health, we do not just treat patients, we strive to make man whole.

This extraordinary achievement would not have been possible without the collaboration and expertise of:

- Cardiothoracic Surgery
ECMO Physicians
- Cardiothoracic ICU Providers
- ECMO Team
- Critical Care Specialty Team
- Cardiothoracic ICU Nurses
- Respiratory Therapy
- Physical Therapy and
Occupational Therapy
- Speech-Language Pathology
- ENT Services
- Case Management
- Emergency Department Mobile
Intensive Care Nurse and Charge Nurses
- Ambulance Transport
Partners (AMR)



From Caring Hands to Comforting Words

BY: ROSEMARY PENG, MBA, BSN, RN, MICN

There is a saying: “There’s many a slip between the cup and the lip.” In emergency medicine, we know this all too well. Life can shift in an instant, and people often arrive in the Emergency Room (ER) facing their scariest, most uncertain moments. As an ER nurse at Loma Linda University Medical Center, I have seen firsthand how fear, especially in children, can make an already difficult situation even harder.

My name is Rosemary Peng, MBA, BSN, RN, MICN, and I have spent years on the front lines of emergency care. Most of our work has to be done quickly: checking vital signs, starting IVs, and stabilizing patients. In true emergencies, every second counts. But whenever I have a moment to slow down and explain a procedure to a child or their parents, I see something shift — anxiety gives way to understanding and fear turns into cooperation.

That was when the idea struck me: What if we created a book that helps children understand medical procedures before they happen? Something visual, simple, and engaging; a tool for parents, healthcare providers, and most importantly, for kids. In late 2022, that idea began to take shape. I teamed up with Melissa Fatal, MS, CCLS, a child life specialist, and Stacey Ernest, MD, a consultant. None of us had ever published a book before, and we were still working full-time during one of the most grueling periods of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, night after night, we met over Zoom, brainstorming, researching, and learning on the fly. Slowly but surely, our first book, “What’s an IV?”, came to life.

Our goal was clear: to turn an intimidating medical experience into something familiar and less frightening. We wanted to prepare children step-by-step, to explain the tools and the process,

and to show how they can help make the experience smoother for themselves and the care team. After the success of our first book, we released our second titled, "What Are Vital Signs?"

Together, these books became the start of our educational series, "My Medical Process." Designed to support children visiting hospitals and clinics, the series empowers young patients and their families through clear, compassionate storytelling. In settings where a child life specialist may not be available, this series offers much-needed guidance and support.

I will never forget the moment that confirmed we were on the right path. An eight-year-old girl in the ER was terrified because she needed an IV before heading into surgery. Her mother was anxious, too. I pulled out our book and read it with her. She was still nervous, but she took deep breaths and held still. The IV was inserted smoothly. Watching her gain confidence through something we created made my heart smile.

I never imagined I would see my name on the cover of a book, but here we are, two books published with more to come. I am incredibly proud of our team and grateful for the impact we are making.

*Dream big. Follow through. With the right people by your side,
there is truly nothing you cannot do.*





Autism Kits at Loma Linda University Outpatient Surgery Center

BY: MEGHAN WILSON, BSN, RN, AND JESSICA HERNANDEZ

I am blessed to be in a profession where I can show Jesus' love, empathy, and compassion to those who are going through their surgical journey. While working in the Outpatient Surgery Center (OSC), we encounter many different patients, of all ages and backgrounds. As patients walk through our doors, many enter into the unknown with fear and hesitation. The children that come through our doors often do not understand why we are taking their vital signs, weighing them, or why they cannot eat. This is especially accurate for children with special needs. The time spent waiting through this process can also increase anxiety for any patient.

About two years ago, I was speaking with Jessica Hernandez, our perioperative technician, about children with autism who come through our unit for surgery and how we could better meet their needs. I told her I had seen a Facebook post in my community about the Inland Empire Autism Society donating autism kits to the Menifee Police Department. It spoke about the efficacy of using the kits when officers encounter children with autism in the community. I reached out to Beth Burt at the Inland Empire Autism Society and asked her how much one kit would cost, hoping to purchase the kits for OSC. Beth responded with a generous donation to our unit! My heart was so touched, as she dropped 20 kits off personally at the surgery center. We ran out of the kits in one month, and I reached out to her again. Without hesitation, she asked how many I would like. The Inland Empire Autism Society was able to donate them because they received a grant for the kits.

Many families who have received the kits in the Pre-Operative Unit have expressed appreciation. One mother told Jessica that she had never been to a facility that met her child's needs like this. Families with a special needs child may feel alone, isolated, or misunderstood because of the behavior of their child. The kits are our way of showing families of children with autism that we see, and care for them while they wait. This is a way to practically demonstrate the healing ministry of Jesus Christ — to help families and their children more than just survive through the process.





A Culture of Visibility and Value

BY: JACQUELINE MASQUAT, MSN, RN

Recognition is the acknowledgement of something's existence or validity. As a Charge Nurse, I have often witnessed the internal struggles my nurses faced as they balanced their professional and personal lives — two worlds that too often become one in the same. Both sides wanting to be noticed, honored, or valued. I have heard statements like, “What I do does not matter”, or “Nobody notices me anyways”, and each time, I felt a wave of sadness. Being a younger leader, I felt a responsibility to foster employee engagement and patient collaboration in a way that would positively shift the unit's culture for the next generation. I wanted to remind our team, and the patients we cared for, that we are human too, and our work does matter.


With support from leadership and collaboration with my fellow 6A West Charge Nurses, we introduced a Unit Recognition Board. For the past year, this board has been updated quarterly and has highlighted several honors such as DAISY Award Nominees, Employee of the Quarter, and Healing Hands winners. To ensure inclusivity, we also posted quarterly birthdays and featured a “Getting to Know Our Staff” section — rotating themes from a baby photo guessing game to family holiday photos.

As time has progressed, participation has grown and with anticipation, staff look forward to each new update. Remarkably, this initiative has translated into our patient care. Located at the end of the hall, the board has become a walking goal for our fresh transplant patients, encouraging early ambulation. I often see patients taking their families back to the end of the hall and proudly pointing out, “Look, that is my nurse!”

Since implementing the recognition board, our Gallup Survey recognition rates have increased from 3.16 to 3.63. The impact of this joint effort, along with other recognition avenues such as the Inspire Platform, has been felt across the unit; I hope it marks just the beginning of a lasting culture shift.

To be recognized is to be seen, and to be seen is what many of us hope for in life.





Curiosity at the Bedside: A Journey in Nurse-Led Research

By: Briana Carr, PhD, MEd, BA, RN

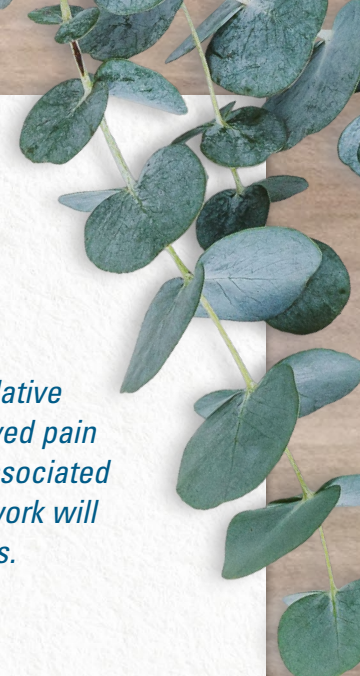
As a nurse, you do not forget the silence of mechanically ventilated patients: their eyes, their body language, their presence asking for comfort when words cannot. During the pandemic, that silence became louder. For me, it became a calling.

This past year, I completed my PhD focused on understanding pain in critically ill, nonverbal Intensive Care Unit (ICU) patients. But this was not a solo academic endeavor. It was a collaborative, nurse-driven project rooted in compassion, curiosity, and bedside expertise. Two incredible ICU nurses, Lilly Padilla, RN, and Cricketara Ramos, BSN, RN, CCRN, partnered with me in designing and conducting the study. Together, we asked: Can we better recognize pain in our most vulnerable patients, and if so, how?

Using a routine procedure, endotracheal suctioning, we evaluated behavioral pain signals using the Critical-Care Pain Observation Tool (CPOT), monitored vital signs, and examined biochemical markers like lactate and anion gap. Our goal was not only to protect patients but to test whether integrating these indicators was feasible in real-world ICU workflows.

What we found was compelling. Even with sedation and analgesia, CPOT scores rose during suctioning and declined afterward. While vital signs did not consistently reflect procedural pain, there was a possible relationship between CPOT and the anion gap in patients receiving analgesia. These findings reinforced that pain persists even when masked, and that nurse-driven, multidimensional assessment is both necessary and feasible.

And this is just the beginning.



We are now expanding the study to include real-time biomarkers of hypoxia and oxidative stress. Our goal is to better understand the biological signals that accompany observed pain responses. This next phase will examine whether levels of purines — compounds associated with tissue hypoxia — correlate with CPOT scores during suctioning. We hope this work will support more objective, ethical, and precise pain protocols for nonverbal ICU patients.

For Lilly and Cricketara, the experience was transformative. “I used to see research as something distant from the bedside,” Lilly shared, “but now I understand that nurses are involved at every stage. It made me feel proud to be part of a profession that combines compassionate care with rigorous, thoughtful science.” Cricketara added, “It was eye-opening to see how research differs from evidence-based practice. The focus on safety, protocol, and patient dignity really impacted me.”

We did not come to this study with research titles; we came with clinical expertise, compassion, and a desire to improve care. This pilot proves that benchmark science is within nursing scope, and that bedside nurses can, and should, be leaders in clinical inquiry.

This year, I graduated with my PhD, but the most meaningful part of the journey was standing beside two bedside nurses who reminded me of what this work is really about. As director of Nursing Research, my mission is to make research more accessible, more human, and more ours, because nursing research is not separate from whole person care, it is whole person care. Meaningful change begins with the heart of a nurse, and it grows when we listen deeply, ask boldly, and believe that we belong in spaces where knowledge is created.





Heart to Heart:

A Podcast-Based Research Study to Reconnect, Educate, and Engage Pediatric CTICU Nurses



BY: JENNIFER NEWCOMBE, DNP, RN, CNS-BC, CPNP-PC/AC

At the 2024 Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society (PCICS) meeting, a nurse scientist presented alarming data on pediatric cardiovascular nurse retention in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era. National turnover rates for pediatric cardiothoracic intensive care unit (CTICU) nurses had reached 18.4%, with 34% of nurses leaving within their first year, 45% between years two and five, and 67% planning to leave their current role within the next three years. These statistics struck a chord, especially for our team at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

As a nurse practitioner in the CTICU for over two decades, Jennifer Newcombe, DNP, MSN, CNS-BC, CPNP-PC/AC, had witnessed the growing strain on nurse engagement firsthand. "Our unit had one of the lowest nurse retention rates in the Children's Hospital," she shared. "It was clear we needed new tools to re-energize our team and help nurses reconnect with their professional purpose."

Inspired by the flexibility and accessibility of audio learning, the CTICU research team

launched a nurse-led study evaluating the impact of microlearning through podcasts on staff engagement, moral distress, and knowledge retention. The project, titled "Heart to Heart", was developed collaboratively by nurses, physicians, and educators, and is grounded in the belief that meaningful connection and ongoing education can be delivered in a format as accessible as a smartphone.

Baseline data was collected in early 2025 and included staff feedback on podcast topics, American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Healthy Work Environment (HWE) scores, and unit-level nurse retention metrics. In May 2025, the "Heart to Heart" podcast released monthly episodes ranging from 15 to 30 minutes, with each episode featuring members of the interprofessional CTICU team. Surgeons, educators, parents, nurses, and administrators alike shared their stories, answered clinical questions, and reflected upon the heart behind their work. Topics range from compassion fatigue, moral distress, career development, and the history of pediatric transplants at Loma Linda University Health.



Podcasts are shared with staff via QR codes and made accessible on demand, allowing nurses to listen at their own pace. To evaluate the series' impact, follow-up surveys including the Moral Distress Scale-Revised (MDS-R) and the Questionnaire for Assessing Educational Podcasts (QAEP) are administered throughout the year. Participant engagement is incentivized through quarterly gift card raffles for podcast listeners.

This innovative study not only introduces a new method for delivering continuing education but also fosters connection among team members by amplifying their voices and experiences. "We wanted to remind nurses why they chose this specialty in the first place," said Newcombe. "These stories are powerful — and sometimes healing."

"Heart to Heart" podcast exemplifies how nursing research can serve as a bridge between evidence and empathy. By combining rigorous evaluation with genuine human connection, this study represents a hopeful path forward for professional engagement, retention, and renewal in one of the most demanding clinical environments.



Momager Carla

BY: CARLA SZOKE, BSN, RN, CMSRN

My nursing journey started in San Diego as a medical assistant, and I intuitively knew I wanted to do more. I graduated from nursing school in 2001 and worked night shift on a telemetry floor for four years before moving back to the Inland Empire to be closer to family. I started at Loma Linda University Health (LLUH) in 2006 on what was then our Orthopedic, Urology, and Plastic Surgery Unit. As a bedside nurse, I developed into a preceptor, joined many committees to help improve our departments, and I eventually became a Team Leader. During this time, I used our educational benefits to obtain my bachelor's degree so that I could further my journey as a Charge Nurse for 14A West when we moved into our new hospital in 2021.

As I walk through the halls and sit in our meetings, I see many nurses that I have precepted throughout the years. Many have moved to new positions and have developed into great leaders themselves. I am even seeing the children of nurses I have precepted, joining the LLUH team. Through my journey here at Loma Linda University Health, I have made many great connections and relationships and am profoundly grateful for this organization's commitment to service. I genuinely feel like we are a family here at Loma Linda University Health and would never have thought my time here would lead me to a position in leadership.

Opening 14A West, a brand-new unit created during the new hospital build, came with many challenges. From new team members who have never worked together to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, our team found the opportunity to connect and grow together. We started each shift huddle introducing ourselves to one another, building trust and meaningful connections. It was during this time that a new manager position was created for 14A West. I was approached with the opportunity and although I never considered moving into a management position, I could not think of anyone else coming in to lead our team. Thus, I made the decision to accept the position and become the manager for 14A West. It has been a tremendous learning and growth experience for me so far, and I am grateful for every moment of it. I have had great support from my leadership team and have utilized many resources we have available to help me grow as a leader.

I am extremely proud of the growth I have witnessed and am in awe watching those same nurses who opened this unit with me, precept and mentor the next generation of nurses. I cannot help but feel like a mother figure and delightfully earned the title "Momager" by a few of them. I like to always keep candy available for them, and I recently embraced my inner barista and made coffee for my team. I have been where they are, and I know how hard their job can be. That is why I do my best to make it a little easier. 14A West is the best!



Preference Card Update System Remodel

CONTRIBUTORS: MEGAN KERSTEN, BSN, RN, AND WESLEY MEYERS BSN, RN

Megan Kersten, BSN, RN, and Wesley Myers, BSN, RN, began the process of this evidence-based practice (EBP) project due to personal experience with an abundance of inaccurate preference cards in the operating room and staff suggestions at staff meetings. The team partnered with key stakeholders from an essential interdisciplinary team, including but not limited to surgical technicians, RN circulators, perioperative technicians, surgeons, and leadership. The team also collaborated with Marga Kasim, DNP, RN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, CNML, EBP-C, from the Loma Linda University Health Nursing Research Department, who provided constant guidance and shared an Evidence-Based Quality Improvement (EBQI) Toolkit they developed. This toolkit streamlined literature review work and the EBP process for the duration of the year-long project by breaking down the Johns Hopkins Evidence-Based Practice Model into a clear, step-by-step guide, enabling nurses to confidently implement EBP projects.

Preference cards serve as a critical guide in the operating room, providing RN circulators with detailed information on each surgeon's specific preferences, including required equipment, surgical instrumentation, patient positioning, and medication needs. Accurate preference cards are essential for ensuring procedural efficiency and safety. Conversely, outdated, or inaccurate cards can contribute to increased errors, supply and equipment waste, and heightened frustration among surgical teams and providers.

To address this issue, the project focused on general surgery — the highest-volume specialty at the facility. A standardized preference card template was developed to ensure consistency across all preference cards and streamline staff workflow. Additionally, an online collaboration platform was implemented to replace updates on outdated paper forms and limited-access electronic health record (EHR) preference cards, allowing surgical technicians, perioperative staff, RN circulators, and surgeons to add update comments in real time. This enhanced interdisciplinary communication and increased surgeon ownership of their cards. Education was conducted at staff meetings and huddles, which included tutorial videos, tip sheets, and presentation updates.

The results showed an average supply cost decrease of \$976.63 per case, and employee labor for returning unused supplies dropped by 5.71 minutes per case. Of the 332 original preference cards in the sample size, 110 were left after optimization, leading to a 19.18% increase in utilization. Staff engagement with the online platform was evident, with 29 update comments submitted in December, and 31 comments submitted in January. Also, surveys administered throughout the project reflected a final staff satisfaction rating of 4.3 out of 5, with positive feedback and valuable process improvement suggestions implemented into the project.

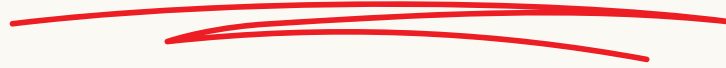
This project showed that standardizing preference card templates and utilizing an online collaboration tool can significantly enhance surgical efficiency, ensure operational consistency, reduce errors, decrease supply waste, and improve interdisciplinary communication.

The project is now being expanded in partnership with the EHR team, Operational Excellence management team, and hospital leadership to include all surgical specialties across the Loma Linda University Health system campuses. Continued progress is essential to ensure every surgical team has access to accurate, up-to-date preference cards tailored to their procedures.





Adult Acute Care Professional Pathway



Contributors:

*Jennifer Blackey, MSN, RN, CENP, OCN,
and Jordan Montgomery, MSN, RN, PCCN, CNM*

At Loma Linda University Health (LLUH), our mission, "to continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ", includes empowering nurses through structured professional development. For many newly graduated nurses, their first job after nursing school is in an acute care setting. With excitement and determination, many new nurses find themselves jumping headfirst into new areas of nursing without guidance. The Adult Acute Care Professional Pathway embodies this mission, offering new nurses not just a job, but a journey of purpose, skill development, and career clarity.

Recognizing this pattern for new registered nurses (RN) after completing the RN Residency Program, leadership in the adult acute care service line developed a multi-phase, multi-pathway initiative to support early-career nurses transition into their role as a Clinical Nurse B while developing long-term, meaningful careers — whether at the bedside, in leadership, or beyond.

This pathway is more than a retention strategy, it is a nurse-centered growth model designed to foster confidence, cultivate leadership, and prepare nurses to become contributors to the broader goals of safety, quality, innovation, and education across the health system.

*The program consists of four professional pathways — **Leadership, Quality, Clinical Expertise, and Education** — each with three key phases designed to provide a personalized, progressive roadmap for development.*

Phase One

Nurses meet one-on-one with the director of patient care to identify their goals and interests. They are introduced to valuable resources such as peer support, professional organizations, mentorship, and the Clinical Advancement Program (CAP), initiating work toward Clinical Nurse-C (CN-C) promotion.

Phase Two

Nurses engage in developmental activities such as specialty training, committee participation, or precepting. A highlight of this phase is a 12-hour paid shadow shift in a department of their choice, giving them real insight into potential career paths across LLUH entities. Shadow areas include intensive care units, pediatrics, outpatient clinics, quality, and advanced practice nursing, just to name a few.

Phase Three

A final one-on-one meeting with the patient care manager offers a chance to reflect on the year's accomplishments and plan the next steps. CAP progress is reviewed, and support is provided to complete any remaining criteria needed for advancement.

Recent participants have demonstrated:



Cohort 12 (May 2023):

Gissel Mares-Garcia (11A West) followed the Quality pathway, joining the catheter-associated urinary tract infection and central line-associated bloodstream infection taskforce, contributing to infection prevention efforts.



Cohort 13 (September 2023):

Lelilani Silalahi (12A East) followed the Clinical Expertise pathway and became Chair of Professional Governance — displaying initiative and leadership.



Cohort 14 (November 2023):

Erin Kurnia (12A West) completed her shadow shift in 8A MICU in April 2025 and transferred there in August, turning exploration into opportunity.

The Adult Acute Care Professional Pathway is beyond a transition program; it is a commitment to nurturing nurses from their first steps through each stage of their careers. By offering structure, support, and opportunity, we empower nurses to grow with purpose and stay connected to the mission and vision of Loma Linda University Health.

Walk a Mile

BY: SARA MATUS, JD, MBA

In my role as vice president of medical center operations, I have had the opportunity of reviewing data and meeting with leadership from our Interventional Radiology (IR) and Gastroenterology departments (GI). So, when the opportunity arose to observe these teams in action, I eagerly accepted.

My Walk a Mile began in the Gastroenterology Lab. I had anticipated spending time at the front desk learning about scheduling and patient flow, but within minutes, the nurse supervisor, Mary Payabyab, graciously offered me a gown and invited me into one of the procedure rooms. I was genuinely touched by this gesture of inclusion and did my best to stay out of the way. From my corner, I watched a team move with the kind of precision and harmony that only comes from deep trust and experience working together.

What began as quiet observation quickly became active engagement. The team welcomed me warmly and explained each step of their preparation process. When the patient arrived, I saw their attention shift seamlessly to providing compassionate, individualized care. Throughout, they answered my many questions and openly shared not only about their strengths but also areas they are working to improve. I followed a patient through recovery and later, at the front desk, witnessed a focused and intentional huddle as the team reviewed each day's cases, discussed clinical needs, and adjusted plans to best support their patients. I could have spent the entire day with this remarkable group, but another stop awaited.

That afternoon, I visited the Interventional Radiology team. I met the department supervisor, Heather Nourian, and she first brought me to Interventional Neuroradiology, where I was introduced to the team and shown their supply stocking process. As they prepared for the next case, I stepped over to Angiography Interventional Radiology (IR). Again, I tried to stay on the sidelines to observe, but this team quickly noted an unfamiliar face and just as quickly, warmly welcomed me in. Within minutes, they were sharing images from that morning's cases, describing current work, and previewing what was ahead. I was struck not only by their clinical expertise but by the camaraderie and generosity of spirit they extended to me.

Over the course of the afternoon, they also shared some of the challenges they were working through — developing protocols to support outpatient care, clarifying criteria for when IR is needed, and improving internal workflows. Their thoughtfulness and commitment to continuous improvement were evident in every interaction.

By the end of the day, I was exhausted, but even more so, I was inspired. A common thread throughout both experiences was a shared determination: we may have more cases than time in the day, but we will find a way to care for everyone who comes through our doors.

I remain deeply grateful to our teams in Gastroenterology and Interventional Radiology, not only for their hospitality, but for the excellence, compassion, and collaboration they bring to their work every day. It was an honor to walk alongside them, even briefly.



A LIFE
THAT EMPOWERS
THE COMMUNITY





Amplifying Voices:

Listening to Our Spanish-Speaking Families



BY: SILVI CUIZON, PHD, RN

This year, Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital took a transformative step toward advancing equitable care by launching a Spanish-speaking patient and family focus group — an initiative born from the Loma Linda University Health Healthcare Equity Community Workgroup. While our Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs) provide invaluable insight, we recognized that language barriers often silence the voices of those who cannot communicate in the dominant language, in this case, English. Given that our largest group of patients who speak another language are Spanish-speaking, we chose to focus on this community.

In two deeply moving sessions, families shared their healthcare experiences — illuminating both the healing power of compassionate care and the unintended harm that can occur when communication falters.

Many expressed heartfelt gratitude: nurses who prayed beside them, doctors who explained everything with patience, and interpreters who bridged not only language gaps but moments of fear and uncertainty.

One mother, a former nurse in her home country, shared her appreciation for providers who treated her as a partner in her child’s care. “They never knew I was a nurse, but they explained everything clearly and respectfully,” she said, tearing up. “That meant everything, because I have had experiences in this country at other hospitals where they have not.”

Alongside stories of praise came stories that challenged us to grow. One mother described bringing her autistic child to the Emergency Department, convinced something was seriously wrong. She struggled to communicate her concerns and felt

dismissed. Her son was discharged, but his condition worsened overnight. When she returned the next day, she was assigned to a Spanish-speaking doctor who listened closely, recognized signs of lung congestion, and admitted him. "I wasn't trying to overreact — I just needed someone to really hear me," she shared. "When I could speak directly to the doctor in Spanish, everything changed. He understood me — and he understood my son."

Another first-time mother with a high-risk multiple gestation pregnancy described her long, anxious waits for results after frequent ultrasounds. "You just sit there wondering if your babies are okay — if they're going to survive," she said. "The anxiety of not knowing kept building. I just needed reassurance sooner."

Families humbly reminded us: *está en los detallitos* — it is in the little things. These were not signs of neglect, but missed opportunities to offer reassurance, clarity, and comfort, small cracks in otherwise compassionate care.

Clear themes emerged: the essential role of timely, in-person interpretation; the emotional toll of navigating care in a second language, and the deep importance of culturally and spiritually responsive care. Parents consistently emphasized that when they felt understood, when their voices and values were honored, their trust deepened.

This focus group was more than an exercise in listening; it was a catalyst. The insights shared have already inspired change: we are now piloting housing an in-person interpreter in the NICU to improve response times while also laying the groundwork for a Spanish-speaking Family Council to expand representation within PFACs.

Above all, these families made one thing clear: they love this hospital. They trust our mission, and they are willing to share difficult truths because they believe we can, and will, do better.

Because healing is not only about treatment; it is about connection which begins by making sure every voice is heard, especially those we have heard too little from, until now.

está en

los detallitos

"It is in the little things."





Inspiring the Future:

A Nurse Leader's Commitment to Community and Mentorship

BY: KRISTIN BUTLER, MSN, RN

In the heart of the Inland Empire, a quiet yet powerful movement is unfolding — driven by mentorship, leadership, and a deep commitment to shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals. As a nurse leader, I have always believed that true leadership goes far beyond hospital walls. It lives in our communities, our classrooms, and in the lives of students who are beginning to uncover their purpose.

At Vista Murrieta High School, I have had the privilege of partnering with the school's Healthcare Technology Program and collaborating to create the Medical Career Symposium, a transformative event designed to expose students to the breadth and depth of the healthcare world.

The energy in the room at the symposium was palpable as a diverse panel of healthcare professionals, including nurse leaders, radiology experts, therapists, physicians, and lab specialists, shared their career journeys, challenges, and personal triumphs. I was honored to have many of these volunteers come from Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta, generously sharing their time and passion for healthcare. This symposium was not only a display of various disciplines, but rather a demonstration of compassion and perseverance found in truly serving others. It is a calling, a community, and a lifelong adventure.

In addition to the symposium, I had the privilege of serving on an interview panel for seniors applying to the school's competitive internship program. This opportunity gives students the ability to shadow, learn, and experience the magic of healthcare in real-world medical environments. Sitting across from these young hopefuls, hearing their aspirations, and helping select those ready to take the next step reminded me of just how powerful early exposure can be.

Beyond events and panels, I have also found meaning in serving as a mentor in the Healthcare Technology Program at Temescal Canyon High School. Much like our other ventures, healthcare professionals from Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta meet with students throughout the school year, and typically one professional is assigned to one student. Meeting monthly, we are able to create a consistent and personal foundation, building trust, offering guidance, and helping to shape not just academic goals, but a clear vision for their futures. We discuss everything from navigating high school and preparing for college, to the realities and rewards of a career in healthcare.

Whether it is speaking to a high school class or mentoring a student one-on-one, the work being done in local high schools is not about the isolated moments but rather the meaningful connections built. It is about showing up, being present, and planting seeds of hope and purpose. I have witnessed growth, curiosity, and a genuine passion blossom in these young minds.

Being a nurse leader in the community means investing in the future, one conversation, one student, and one opportunity at a time. At the end of the day, this is what nursing is truly about: compassion, service, and the unshakable belief that we can shape a better future together.





The Power of Prayer: Building Connection in Healthcare

By: Tamara Clare, BSN, RN, MEDSURG-BC, CMSRN

In the fast pace and heavy demands of hospital life, finding a moment for reflection, hope, and connection can feel rare. Yet every week at Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta, our hospital carves out that space through a simple but powerful act — prayer.

Each Wednesday, we gather online and in person for prayer. A standing invitation open to employees, patients, their families, and anyone else who needs encouragement, peace, or simply a moment to breathe. Overhead announcements remind everyone of the gathering, and it is not uncommon to see family members quickly making their way down to join. There is a sense of urgency, not from fear, but from a deep need to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Kevin Carrington, a steady prayer warrior and compassionate leader, faithfully guides us. Each week, he lifts up the many prayer requests we receive from staff, patients, and families. Around our hospital, wooden prayer boxes stand quietly, inviting written requests from anyone who needs support. We read these aloud during our meetings, covering needs that range from physical healing to emotional strength.

We have seen beautiful moments come from these gatherings: staff finding comfort after hard shifts, patients and families experiencing a sense of peace, and yes, even miracles of healing and protection that remind us why we do what we do.

Looking forward to the future, we are working on a small but meaningful project: a prayer card to offer patients every Wednesday. It will include a QR code, making it easy for them to join the online prayer meeting from wherever they are.

In healthcare, we often focus on what we can measure — treatments, outcomes, and data. However, in these moments of prayer we touch something immeasurable, the human spirit, and it makes all the difference.

*"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
Matthew 18:20, English Standard Version*



A Retreat with Purpose: Inspiring Wellness, Building Community

CONTRIBUTORS: AYME FRYKMAN, BSN, RN;
LISA FERNANDEZ; AND BEVERLY RIGSBY, MBA, BSN, FACHE

Here at Loma Linda University Health (LLUH) Women's Health, we are committed to giving support to women as they walk through all stages of life. "Today, women have a tremendous amount placed on their shoulders with the many things they juggle. Our goal is to give resources, support, and information to lighten that load," says Ayme Frykman, BSN, project manager for women's health.

To help women focus on their own health and aid them in making the best possible healthcare choices for themselves and their loved ones, LLUH first sponsored the Women's Health Conference in 2008. The event is now called Women's Wellness Retreat and is an annual event, with the next scheduled for April 24, 2026. The event has been designed to be both inspiring and entertaining. This past year, the morning opened with Tammy Lamberton Hilliard, MA, MS, LPCC, presenting "Unlocking the Keys to More Fulfilling Relationships." The nearly 300 women who attended were able to enjoy breakouts that included topics such as, strength training for women, weight loss, hormones, stress relief, how to have effective crucial conversations, the power of your pelvic floor, and bread-making, among others. There was an option to have a watercolor portrait created of you and your friends, a watercolor painting class, a 15-minute color analysis to identify your most flattering hues, and a personalized shopping experience.

LLUH Women's Health has also recently started a Women's Wellness Support Group, to explore key women's health topics and build a community for women. At their first meeting on June 5, April Wilson, MD, discussed strategies for managing life's demands while prioritizing self-care. The second support group focused on pelvic floor health, an often-overlooked topic many women find difficult to discuss, even with their providers. The session included a spiritual and mental health message, followed by a Q&A.

Find the Women's Wellness Support Group on social media to join their community, hear about upcoming events, and learn more about women's health.



The Spirit of Christmas: A 9C Nursing Story

BY: MINDY OLSON, BSN, RN, CPN

Every December, when Christmas lights twinkle and winter settles in, something magical begins to happen on Unit 9C – Acute Adolescent and Neurology. For years, as part of a beloved tradition, the 9C team celebrates the Spirit of Christmas by choosing two families who had spent challenging days within the unit's walls. These families, often weary from medical struggles, may not have the time or energy to prepare for the holiday season. That is when the 9C team steps in as Christmas angels, shopping for toys, winter coats, cozy pajamas, and sometimes simple comforts like socks or a favorite snack.

On delivery day at the patient's home, the true spirit of the season comes alive, thanks in part to one very special team member: Nurse Shane Roberts, BSN, RN, CPN. Year after year, Shane dons the red suit and fluffy white beard, transforming into Santa Shane. With a warm grin and a twinkle in his eye, Santa Shane delivers far more than gifts. He knocks on doors with a hearty "Ho, ho, ho!," carries bags filled with carefully wrapped surprises, and kneels to greet little ones with the gentle kindness of someone who understands their journey.

Reflecting on his role, Shane shares:

"Playing Santa at the hospital carries a profound and deeply moving significance. While the children might be facing difficult circumstances, the chance to bring a moment of pure joy and distraction into their day is incredibly rewarding. Seeing their brave smiles and the spark of hope in their eyes, even amidst their challenges, is truly humbling. It is a privilege to offer a touch of Christmas magic and a sense of normalcy during a time when it is needed most, reminding them and their families of the power of hope and the spirit of the season."

It is not about the suit or the sleigh bells, rather about the heart behind it all. Shane, like every nurse on Unit 9C, serves not only with skilled hands but with a compassionate spirit.

After the gifts are opened, the team gathers with the families to pray, sing carols, and enjoy treats. For the children and their families, it is a delight to see the familiar faces of nurses, PCAs, and secretaries who once cared for them in the hospital now standing in their living rooms, still caring in a different way.

This is Christmas on Unit 9C — not just a season, but a calling. It is a chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those who need Him most. Every year, the staff leave knowing they have not just delivered presents; they have delivered hope, light, and love. The true Spirit of Christmas is not found under a tree; it is in our Savior Jesus Christ who is the greatest gift of all.





The Power of Collaboration — Making Spirits Bright

BY: DINA CASACLANG, BSN, RN

I have been a nurse in Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital for nearly 22 years, and one thing I have always cherished is the incredible teamwork within our department. No matter the challenges we face, we consistently rise above them all together.

When asked about my most memorable experience as a pediatric nurse, one tradition stands out: “Making Sprits Bright.” For the past several years, our unit nurses, physicians, educators, child life specialists, and even Santa have joined forces to bring holiday joy to families facing financial hardships.

Each December, we collaborate to select a patient whose family may not have the means to celebrate the holidays. Our child life specialist reaches out to gather a wish list from the patient and their household. Then, with the generosity of our staff and supporters, we purchase gifts and deliver them, much to the family’s surprise and delight.

This past December 2024 was especially memorable. Our recipient was a 14-year-old who has been in and out of our care since infancy. Hospital stays have caused him to miss many school days, and his biggest wish was for a laptop to keep up with his studies, especially during hospitalizations.

When we arrived at his apartment, arms full of gifts, his astonishment was palpable. Surrounded by his family and Santa, he opened the box containing his laptop. Overcome with excitement, he clutched his chest and exclaimed, “Oh my gosh, I am going to have another heart attack!” The pure joy and gratitude on his face was something I will never forget.

Witnessing his reaction and his family’s happiness reminded me why I am so proud to be part of this team. The “Making Sprits Bright” tradition is a perfect example of how collaboration amongst the multidisciplinary team can create unforgettable moments for our patients and their families. Together, we truly make spirits bright.





Carrying Forward a Legacy of Service

BY: AMY QUISPE, BSN, RN

As a nurse in the Medical Intensive Care Unit and an alumna of Loma Linda University School of Nursing, I am grateful to serve in a place that embodies mission-focused, whole person care. From a young age, I dreamed of studying and working at Loma Linda University Health because of its unwavering commitment to service, faith, and global health.

My family's story begins in Puno, Peru, where Adventist missionaries made a life-changing impact. It was through them that my great-grandparents first received medical care and were introduced to the Adventist faith. Their influence extended to my father, who pursued an Adventist education and later immigrated to the United States in search of greater opportunities. Because of the love and care those missionaries shared, I am proud to be a first-generation college graduate, carrying forward their legacy through my nursing career and commitment to global service.

Over the years, I have been blessed to participate in 10 medical mission trips with Students for International Mission Service (SIMS), serving communities around the world. Most recently, I joined two post-graduation trips: Argentina in August 2024 and Kenya in June 2025.

In Argentina, our team provided five days of clinical care, assessing patients, administering treatments, and collaborating with local providers. We also conducted public health education in schools, teaching CPR and oral hygiene to children and adolescents. This focus on preventive care and community health reflects the heart of nursing and allows us to build meaningful relationships that promote long-term wellness.

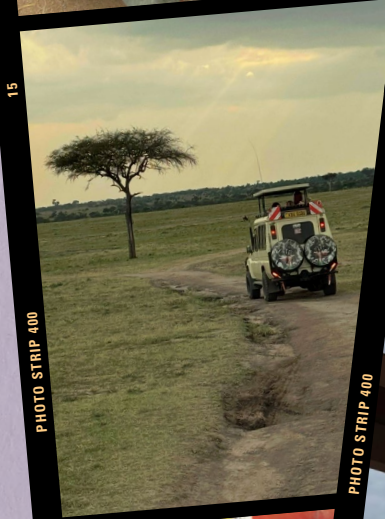
In Kenya, I served at Kendu Bay Adventist Hospital alongside a multidisciplinary team of 45 healthcare professionals. Together, we held a five-day free medical camp that served approximately 3,500

patients. Services included general check-ups, dental care, surgical procedures, and wound care. As nurses, we led triage, took vital signs, and coordinated patient care across multiple stations. Patients needing diagnostic tests, labs, ultrasounds, X-rays, or EKGs, were referred to the hospital, and prescriptions were filled on-site.

The needs in these communities were deeply moving. One evening, as we returned to our hotel, we saw dozens of people already lined up outside the clinic gates at 10 p.m., willing to wait all night for the chance to receive care. That image remains with me as a profound reminder of both the need and the resilience of those we serve. Dr. Hart's sermon during our time in Kendu Bay left a lasting impression. He reminded us that while we often come on mission trips ready to give, we return home having received even more. As Acts 20:35 states, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

These experiences have strengthened my clinical skills, deepened my cultural awareness, and reaffirmed my purpose as a nurse: to serve with compassion, lead with humility, and reflect Christ's love in every interaction.

"It is more blessed
to give than to receive"





Answering the Call: From 10A to the World

BY: STACEY DIAZ, BSN, RN, PCCN

I feel blessed to work at an organization that strives “To make man whole,” not just within our local entities, but globally as well. My name is Stacey Diaz, BSN, RN, PCCN, and I work as a clinical nurse at Loma Linda University Medical Center on unit 10A Cardiac Progressive Care. Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to volunteer in Sierra Leone and Madagascar on mission trips facilitated by the Global Health Institute (GHI).

Last September, I spent just under a month at Adventist Health System Waterloo Hospital in Sierra Leone, a 40-bed facility near the capital city. My purpose for this trip was to provide nurse education. Initially, the thought of going by myself was daunting, and I doubted whether I was qualified enough to have anything to give. God truly allayed any anxieties and gave me peace. While at Waterloo Hospital, I led lectures on various topics ranging from basic life support to blood transfusions. This forced me to research how to best implement evidence-based practice with limited funding. Outside of lecturing, I spent time working side by side with the nurses on the wards, forming strong and lasting bonds with them. The nurses at Waterloo Hospital were very eager for education while demonstrating their resilience, creativity, and hard work while caring for very sick people with scarce resources. It was incredible to see how God was working through the staff and through leadership. Once back from Sierra Leone, my Unit 10A, through Adventist Health International, was able to fundraise and send supplies to Waterloo Hospital that directly benefited the nursing staff and the patients there. It is difficult to put into words just how much this experience in Sierra Leone meant to me. I reflect on my time there every day and dream about other projects that could be beneficial to the hospital.

In June, I had the opportunity to join a team of doctors, chaplains, dentists, nurses, social workers, and more in Madagascar. Together with the Adventist Church and the Ministry of Health of Madagascar, over 3,000 people received education and specialty consultations in a health fair that took place in the country’s capital of Antananarivo. Different specialties were represented, including cardiology, OB/GYN, pulmonology, preventative medicine, and more. Participants of the fair learned about NEWSTART, which shared the importance of water, nutrition, exercise, sunlight, and others. Additionally, the health fair provided the opportunity for patients to receive free medication, eye exams, and tooth extractions. As I completed vitals and assisted in triage, I witnessed the beauty of how this program truly united us with the Malagasy people.

It is an understatement to say that I feel blessed to have had these experiences as a nurse. I pray that God will grant more opportunities to go where He would like me to go. I also pray that nurses everywhere, especially those who doubt whether they have anything to give, consider whether God is calling them, as I have no doubt that He can grant all they need and more.



NICU Team Serves at Ronald McDonald House: A Night of Purpose and Compassion

*Contributors: Jessica Holtof, MSN, RNC-NIC, NEA-BC;
Aisha Ealey, DNP, APRN, ACCNS-N; and Sandra Gonzales, MSN, RNC-NIC*

On March 19, 2025, our dedicated Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) team stepped away from their monitors, alarms, and incubators to the Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House (IERMH). Our mission was simple: to cook and serve a warm, homemade meal to the families whose children are hospitalized, approximately 80% of them having infants in our very own NICU.

The IERMH offers more than just a place to sleep, it is a sanctuary for families navigating some of the most difficult days of their lives. With accommodations for up to 54 families, the house serves as a “home away from home” and offers private rooms and shared spaces that foster community, healing, and moments of rest.

A sense of joy, peace, and gratitude filled the air upon our arrival. With open hearts and willing hands, our NICU team brought warmth, comfort, smiles, and companionship to IERMH.

“Being connected to the NICU for over 20 years, I know how isolating it can feel for families. They leave their tiny fighters behind each day, carrying the weight of worry and responsibility. This night gave us a chance to say, ‘We see you. We care. You are not alone.’”

This act of service reflected our values in motion, a moment when our calling met the needs of the community in the most human way possible. Seeing the gratitude on the families’ faces and experiencing the warmth in the facility served as a reminder that we are inspired by faith and empowered by purpose, we care not just for patients, but for people.

“I Gave Birth”:

Empowering New Mothers with Lifesaving Awareness

CONTRIBUTOR:
JENNIFER ROSS CLARKE, MSN, RN

In the months after childbirth, most new mothers expect sleepless nights, countless diaper changes, and the joys of bonding with their baby. Few anticipate life-threatening complications. Yet in the United States, postpartum issues like hemorrhage, high blood pressure, sepsis, and mental health crises remain leading causes of maternal mortality. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 33% of pregnancy-related deaths occur between one week and one year after delivery, and nearly 60% are preventable.

Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta has taken bold steps to change that with the launch of “I Gave Birth,” an initiative aimed at saving lives by raising awareness among mothers, families, and healthcare providers.

At the heart of the program is a simple purple wristband, given to every mother during discharge, emblazoned with the words “I Gave Birth.” Mothers are encouraged to wear it for the first eight weeks postpartum, serving as a visible cue for medical teams to consider recent childbirth during evaluations. Beyond eight weeks, they are advised to share their childbirth history with any provider until the 12-month mark.

Jennifer Ross Clarke, MSN, director of Perinatal Services, explains the importance of the program:

“Over the last several years, healthcare has made great strides in educating patients about issues like hemorrhage, high blood pressure, and sepsis. But the risks do not end when a mom leaves the hospital. This initiative reminds everyone that complications can arise even up to a year later.”

The initiative is part of a broader effort aligned with the CDC’s “Hear Her” campaign. It



includes educational posters in hospital bathrooms, take-home magnets, and conversations with nurses, all reinforcing the importance of recognizing warning signs.

Since its launch in November 2024, “I Gave Birth” has already proven its value. Two postpartum patients wearing the wristbands were quickly identified in the emergency department and received timely care for potentially fatal complications.

Alyssa Grant, RN, and mom of three, has seen firsthand how the program empowers women: “So many moms do not realize their symptoms could be postpartum-related. I have even heard a trauma surgeon say they were not aware all those symptoms could be linked. This campaign gives moms the confidence to speak up. I have seen it save lives.”

The next phase of the program involves strengthening partnerships with community providers to ensure postpartum care is part of routine primary care visits. By building a culture of awareness and empowering mothers to advocate for themselves, LLU Medical Center – Murrieta hopes to improve outcomes for families across the region.

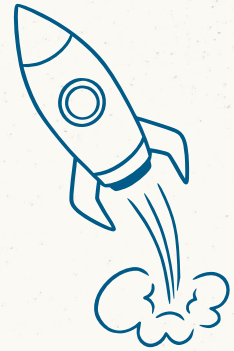
A small bracelet is making a big difference, helping mothers survive and thrive in one of the most vulnerable seasons of life.



**PILLARS
OF EXCELLENCE**



Magnet Redesignation Celebration



In 2020, Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC) and Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH) embarked on their initial journeys toward Magnet designation, making history as the first hospitals in the world to host a virtual site visit. This pioneering approach not only displays the adaptability and forward-thinking culture of both organizations but also sets a new standard for the Magnet evaluation process globally. Hospitals worldwide have since looked at Loma Linda University Health's experience, drawing valuable insights and best practices from our innovative model.

Throughout the past five years, amid the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, both LLUMC and LLUCH have demonstrated remarkable resilience and growth. Their ability to thrive during such a demanding period is a testament to the strength of their nursing teams, the effectiveness of their strategic vision, and their steadfast dedication to delivering exceptional patient care.

Loma Linda University Medical Center and Loma Linda University Children's Hospital have once again distinguished themselves as national leaders in nursing excellence, having achieved Magnet redesignation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center on May 21, 2025. This significant accomplishment reaffirms both organizations' unwavering commitment to the highest standards of nursing practice and patient care.

Magnet status is widely regarded as the pinnacle of national recognition for professional nursing practice. Awarded to fewer than 10% of hospitals across the United States, Magnet designation is reserved for organizations that demonstrate an exceptional dedication to nursing excellence, robust professional development, and consistently superior patient outcomes. It is a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's ongoing pursuit of innovation, collaboration, and evidence-based care.

The 2025 Magnet redesignation process resulted in a powerful affirmation of both organizations having submitted Magnet documentation that received zero deficiencies — an exceptional and rare accomplishment. In addition, LLUMC earned recognition with six exemplars and LLUCH with five exemplars, each highlighting areas where their practices not only met, but surpassed Magnet standards. These exemplars included outstanding performance in quality indicators, exceptional patient satisfaction outcomes, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing rate exceeding 90% at both hospitals, and impactful professional governance initiatives. These honors underscore the pivotal work, quality care, and exemplary leadership that define both organizations.

Virtual Nursing: *Addressing Nurse Burnout and Job Satisfaction*

CONTRIBUTORS:

HOLLY CRAIG-BUCKHOLTZ, MBA, BSN, RN, AND
ALLISON ONG, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CCRN-K

Workplace stress and the physically demanding nature of hospital care are major causes of nurse turnover. Research indicates that telehealth enhances job satisfaction, reduces workload, and lowers stress among nurses. In 2024, we began the journey to determine if the addition of virtual nurses (VN) in acute care areas completing admissions and discharges would improve nurse workflow, improve patient throughput, and increase staff work satisfaction. Our staffing was unique, as we partnered with our Risk Management, Workers Compensation (TWA), and pregnancy-related leaves teams, to allow for a budget neutral means of delivering support to the units, while accommodating the needs of our modified duty staff. According to the literature, we may be one of the few hospitals to utilize this care delivery model.

Our six-month VN pilot was conducted on two acute care and two observational units, where the team saw 927 virtual visits (568 admissions, 359 discharges). The VN were able to give the bedside teams a total of 353 hours, 37 minutes, and 45 seconds back to their day. Staff surveys showed reductions on the Job Stress Scale, as well as improved work shift experience related to the VN presence. Patients were also pleased with the quality of the discharge instructions, as well as their understanding of their follow-up information.

Since the pilot, we have continued to roll out this project to five additional units and have begun to put in place infrastructure to continue the development of a virtual nursing department. This pilot has been successful in opening our organization up to the use of virtual nursing and technologies to help with nursing efficiencies. The team will continue to explore the economic impact of VNs and serve in a more expanded capacity.

This project was featured at the 2024 Eisenhower Conference as a podium presentation, at the 2025 ACNL conference as a poster presentation, and featured in the 2025 Magnet Conference as a poster presentation.





A BEACON of Excellence Across the Critical Care Continuum

BY: KAREN FORHANE, DNP, APRN, ACNPC-AG, FNP-C, CCRN;
STEPHANIE SCHWARZENBACH, MSN, RN; AND
RICARDO PADILLA, PHD, RN, NEA-BC, CCRN

In 2023, the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Progressive Care Unit (PCU) departments at Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta aligned united under one critical care service line through leadership restructuring. A key shared goal was pursuing the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) Beacon Award, a recognition of clinical excellence, patient safety, and a healthy work environment. This prestigious designation serves as a benchmark for overall unit performance through evidence-based practices and a culture of continuous improvement focusing on elevating nursing as a profession and patient-centered care.

For our ICU, the Beacon Award journey was both a reflection and a motivator. It involved a comprehensive review of the nursing workforce, work environment, and patient outcomes. Highlights included our Blood Culture Timeout initiative, Safe Patient Mobilization Committee, hospital-acquired pressure injury (HAPI) prevention efforts, and preceptor development. Notably, we achieved zero central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI) in 2023 and improved outcomes through protocols like spontaneous awakening trials and spontaneous breathing trials.

Our Beacon journey highlighted the exceptional interdisciplinary collaboration found on our units. Nurses, respiratory therapists, intensivists, and other support staff all played vital roles to this success. Jointly, our Professional Governance Council (PGC) ensured staff voices were heard, while mentorship and shared decision-making fostered a strong, connected team culture. Earning the Beacon Award boosted morale and reaffirmed our commitment to patient-centered, high-quality care.

Simultaneously, the PCU began aligning with AACN's progressive care standards. This included a PCU-specific skills day covering topics like EkoSonic Endovascular System, sheath pulls, and ICU cross-training. Additional initiatives such as nurse-driven rounds and a staff recognition program, strengthened our written exemplars.

While time-intensive, the submission process was incredibly rewarding. Our PGC broke into groups to draft narratives, and the nurse manager collaborated with human resources, finance, and quality teams to gather supporting data. A dedicated work session to finalize the submission became a unifying milestone.

Key takeaways included the importance of maintaining a year-round accomplishment log and engaging early with external departments to streamline data collection. Looking ahead, our team is proactively preparing for our next submission, guided by the Beacon's three pillars: nursing workforce, work environment, and patient outcomes.

The Beacon process has refocused our efforts on key drivers of success: appropriate staffing, healthy work environments, and reducing hospital-acquired conditions which all contribute to positive patient outcomes. Already, we are seeing improved staff engagement and outcomes, and we remain committed to raising the bar as a beacon of excellence across the critical care continuum.



Loma Linda University Medical Center and East Campus Hospitals Recognized Nationally for Excellence in Diabetes Care

Loma Linda University Medical Center and East Campus Hospitals have been named among just 36 hospitals nationwide to receive the 2025 Recognized Leader in Caring for People Living with Diabetes designation. This honor is awarded by The Leapfrog Group in partnership with the American Diabetes Association (ADA), as part of a national program that acknowledges hospitals delivering exceptional, evidence-based inpatient diabetes care.

Now in its second year, the ADA/Leapfrog recognition program assesses hospitals on a comprehensive set of standards aligned with the ADA's Standards of Care in Diabetes and Leapfrog's safety metrics. These include protocols for blood glucose management, appropriate insulin use, patient and staff education, and robust discharge planning for patients at high risk of diabetes-related complications. Hospitals that meet these benchmarks are recognized for their commitment to improving outcomes and delivering safe, equitable, and high-quality care to individuals with diabetes.

At Loma Linda University Health, inpatient diabetes care is delivered by a multidisciplinary team that includes Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (CDCES), endocrinology providers, and nurses specially trained in diabetes education. These specialists offer personalized education

and guidance on diabetes self-management, including medication adherence, the use of insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors (CGMs), and nutrition and lifestyle modifications designed to prevent long-term complications.

High-risk patients benefit from close coordination and follow-up by the diabetes team, ensuring continuity of care from hospital admission to discharge and beyond. The hospital also promotes a whole person care model rooted in its Seventh-day Adventist mission, which integrates evidence-based clinical practice with a focus on plant-based nutrition, exercise, mental wellness, and spiritual support.

The Loma Linda University Health Diabetes Treatment Center, established in 1985, has long served as a hub for inpatient and outpatient diabetes care. It provides critical support not only to patients and families but also to nursing staff, residents, and educators across the organization. Through ongoing education and interprofessional collaboration, the center helps ensure that care across the organization meets and exceeds ADA standards.

This national recognition reflects Loma Linda University Health's commitment to empowering patients and advancing excellence in diabetes care.



The DAISY Award Program

The DAISY Award is a meaningful recognition program to celebrate the excellent and compassionate care that nurses provide each and every day. It was inspired by Patrick Barnes, a patient who suffered from an auto-immune disease. In his memory, the Barnes family started the DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) Foundation in 1999 to honor the extraordinary nurses who took care of their son. Today, the program has grown into more than 4,000 healthcare organizations and nursing schools in the United States and has blossomed to more than 20 countries worldwide.

At Loma Linda University Health, we proudly present the DAISY Award to our nurses in recognition of their excellent and compassionate nursing care, as well as their commitment to our organization's mission and values. We hold our DAISY Award celebrations twice a year, in May and December, honoring DAISY Award honorees from each of our hospitals, including Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus at Loma Linda University Medical Center, LLU Medical Center East Campus, LLU Surgical Hospital and Outpatient Surgery Center, LLU Behavioral Medicine Center, LLU Medical Center – Murrieta, and LLU Children's Hospital. Furthermore, every winter, we also honor advanced practice nurses with the DAISY Award for advanced practice and specialty nurses, and nurse leaders with the DAISY Nurse Leader Award to one eligible leader (e.g., nurse educator, clinical nurse specialist, house supervisor, admin charge nurse, coordinator/specialist, manager, director/executive director, assistant vice president, or chief nursing officer).

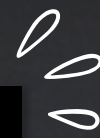
We are immensely proud of each of our DAISY honorees and are thrilled to share the names of our newest honorees from the Winter 2024 and Spring 2025 cycles.





DAISY Honorees

Winter 2024



Emma Artiga
1300 Medical Acute
LLU Medical Center
East Campus



Sherie Berkebile
GI Lab
LLU Surgical Hospital and
Outpatient Surgery Center
Surgical Hospital



Joseph Blake
Maternity Services
LLU Children's Hospital



John Clarke
1300 Medical Acute
LLU Medical Center
East Campus



Lauren Joyce
Critical Care ICU
LLU Medical
Center – Murrieta



Jaamyn Koreerat
Adult Emergency Department
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Lindy Legoh
Nurse Manager
11A Medical/Cardiac Care
Nurse Leader



Nina Pascua
15A Surgical Trauma
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Amy Pecarovich
11A Medical/Cardiac Care
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Ken "KP" Peterson
8A Medical ICU
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Lyndin Sy
Inpatient Psychiatric
Adult and Senior
LLU Behavioral
Medicine Center

Marissa Flammang
(not pictured)
Admin Charge Nurse
Adult Emergency Department
Nurse Leader

Stephanie Lloyd
(not pictured)
Pediatric Oncology and
Hematology Clinic
LLU Children's Hospital

Featured DAISY Spotlight



Christine Cullen
3700 Neonatal ICU
LLU Children's Hospital

I first met Chris Cullen last year, when my precious Aubrey stopped breathing and needed to be transported to Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). She was one of the transport nurses who arrived to transport her. From the moment she arrived she was hands on with my Angel and Aubrey showed such compassion and love to my baby. My baby was a victim of shaken baby syndrome at the hands of her own father. Chris prayed for me and Aubrey. She showed genuine love to my baby. She would come check on Aubrey even if she wasn't the nurse caring for her that shift. I grew a bond with her as well as my family.

Unfortunately, my baby was 100% dependent on the ventilator and had no brain activity. When the time came for me to have my baby blessed Chris was there and helped assist my whole family be able to hold Aubrey and pray for her. November 8th, they moved my baby to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). And November 10th, I had to make the heart wrenching decision to take my baby off life support and Chris was there. She took time from her day and came after her shift to be there with me and my baby. Knowing my baby was going to pass away was already traumatic and I was not strong enough to watch her take her last breath. Chris took my place for me and held my sweet Aubrey and loved on her and prayed for her while she took her last breath with all my other family there. She did such a selfless act that I can never thank her enough for it. It's been almost 8 months since Aubrey went to be with Jesus and Chris still checks on me and my other daughters. She will always hold a special place in my heart. She did something for me when I wasn't strong enough to do it. Her heart is pure and her love for her job is genuine. She deserves this recognition. I can never thank her enough and hope she receives this recognition as she goes above and beyond at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital NICU not only as a NICU RN but as a Transport nurse as well.

~ Patient's mother



The Coloring Story: A Story That Unfolds Patients' and Families' Lives

Emma and John pioneered the initiative during a particularly challenging time in the unit. One evening, a patient with cognitive impairment was becoming increasingly agitated. Despite various interventions, nothing seemed to calm the patient. Observing the situation, Emma remembered how much the nurses had enjoyed a coloring competition during Hospital Week and wondered if it might help the patient to refocus. She quickly retrieved a coloring page and some coloring pencils, gently offering them to the patient. To everyone's surprise, the patient began to color. Slowly, the agitation dissipated, replaced by quiet concentration. Seeing how well this worked, Emma and John shared the experience with fellow nurses and patient care assistants (PCAs) who agreed it could be beneficial not just for staff but for patients and families as well. Both Emma and John took it upon themselves to expand the project, purchasing more coloring supplies and involving patients, their families, and staff. What started as a small act of compassion quickly turned into an ongoing therapeutic tool, bringing comfort and calm to many others.

This initiative blossomed from a simple stress-relief exercise for staff into an inclusive and therapeutic tool that engaged patients in a new, meaningful way. By involving patients and families in these creative activities, they managed to turn moments of anxiety into opportunities for healing, allowing everyone to participate in something that felt both empowering and calming. The coloring activities brought joy not only to the patients but also to their families, who saw this as a moment of reprieve and emotional bonding.

Emma and John collaborated seamlessly with the healthcare team to meet the needs of both patients and their families. They recognized and shared the benefits of their coloring project with fellow nurses and PCAs. Emma and John coordinated with supervisors to secure resources, including donations for supplies, and ensured that other units were also involved in the project. By working closely with the healthcare team, these nurses fostered a supportive environment where patients, families, and staff all benefited from this stress-relief initiative.

Again, such professionalism ensured that patient care remained our top priority and will always uphold the highest standards of care.

The thoughtful and personal approach to patients, their families, and the staff's well-being by Emma and John is a remarkable display of empathy and a caring attitude. The initiation of a coloring project, with the goal of providing a creative and relaxing outlet for patients, was an explicit reflection of their deep care for their patients' well-being.

Their unwavering dedication to the project's success, notable through organizing monthly coloring contests and engaging managers and supervisors for support, underscores their true commitment to fostering emotional well-being.

Significantly, this initiative is a true reflection of the profound compassion and caring nature inherent in Emma and John, and this is undoubtedly an inevitable revelation of how they consistently go above and beyond to support everyone they encounter.

~ Nurse Manager



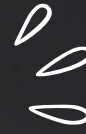
Emma Artiga and John Clarke
1300 Medical Acute
LLU Medical Center East Campus





DAISY Honorees

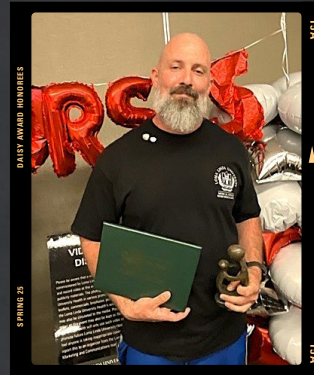
Spring 2025



Katie Baker
12A Medical
Progressive Care
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Abigail Duarte
1100 Acute Rehabilitation
LLU Medical Center
East Campus



Daryl Hill
Adult Emergency
Department
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Kevin Keepers
14A Surgical Care
LLU Medical Center
Dennis and Carol Troesh
Medical Campus



Laurie Krause
Outpatient Surgery Center
LLU Surgical Hospital

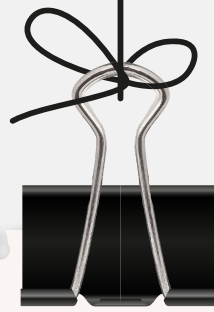


Ashley Rodriguez
4700 Intermediate
Step Down
LLU Children's Hospital



Jessica Ta
Partial Hospitalization
Program/IOP
Substance Abuse
LLU Behavioral
Medicine Center

Victor Ugaz
(not pictured)
5th Floor General Surgery
LLU Medical
Center – Murrieta



Second Annual DAISY Breakfast

This year, we proudly hosted our second annual DAISY breakfast, inviting all DAISY honorees from our hospital system to gather, network, and celebrate each other's accomplishments during our Nurses' Week festivities. This event serves as a wonderful opportunity for our organization to continue recognizing the outstanding dedication and lifelong designation that each DAISY honoree holds. Our guest speaker for this year was The DAISY Foundation's Vice President of Operations, Melissa Barnes. In her keynote address, Melissa shared the incredible impact the DAISY Award has had on nurses and hospital systems, including its contribution to a healthy work environment, improved nurse engagement, and enhanced patient and family experiences.



Clinical Nurse-D Awards and Clinical Advancement Program

As part of the 2025 Annual Nurses Week Celebration, Loma Linda University Health (LLUH) honored the newest Clinical Nurse-Ds, nurses who have demonstrated excellence in patient care, leadership, and professional growth. These nurses represent the highest level of achievement in the Clinical Advancement Program at LLUH and serve as mentors and role models within their specialties. Each honoree received a commemorative plaque, a professional photo for their portfolio, and a personalized red jacket embroidered with their name and credentials, recognizing their role as clinical leaders and their dedication to guiding and inspiring others in the nursing profession.

The Clinical Advancement Program at Loma Linda University Health is grounded in Patricia Benner's from novice to expert framework and offers a structured pathway for clinical growth across three levels. At its peak, the Clinical Nurse-D designation recognizes nurses who consistently lead with clinical expertise, support evidence-based practice, and elevate the care environment through innovation and mentorship. Celebrating their advancement not only honors individual achievement but also reinforces a culture of professional excellence across our organization.

Loma Linda University Medical Center

Alyssa McColl

Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus,
Unit 7A Intensive Care Unit

Jessica Ngo

Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus,
Unit 9A Intensive Care Unit

Michelle Merchant

Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus,
Unit 7A Intensive Care Unit

Ivan Guarin

Surgical Hospital, Unit 2100

Suzanne Wood

Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus,
Unit 8A Intensive Care Unit

Kathy Nguyen

Emergency Department

Eric Avina

Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Campus,
Unit 9A Intensive Care Unit

Taylor Gallego

Emergency Department

Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta

Josh Billings

Medical Telemetry Unit

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital

Joanne Ramirez

Unit 5800 Intensive Care Unit

Rachel McNeil

Unit 5800 Intensive Care Unit



Honoring Excellence in Shared Leadership:

The 2025 Professional Governance Awards

In May 2025, during National Nurse's Week, the Magnet Department at Loma Linda University Health (LLUH) proudly hosted its third annual Professional Governance (PG) Awards at the Nurse Recognition Ceremony event. Together with nursing administration, Magnet team representatives honored the outstanding dedication and leadership of clinical nurses and staff who serve on unit-based PG councils throughout three organizations: LLU Medical Center, LLU Children's Hospital, and LLU Medical Center – Murrieta. These individuals exemplify what it means to lead from the bedside, driving improvements that directly impact patient care, team collaboration, and nursing excellence.

Professional Governance is the foundation of the nursing voice at LLUH. It offers a structured platform for clinical nurses and staff to collaborate with unit leaders and interprofessional colleagues to shape practice and drive meaningful change. Through this shared decision-making model, PG councils continually review and improve care delivery, with a focus on patient safety, satisfaction, and overall quality.

PG councils also help shape unit-level goals aligned with the nursing strategic plan and lead initiatives that leave a lasting impact on practice

and the patient experience. This alignment ensures that everyday efforts directly contribute to systemwide goals, fostering innovation, improving outcomes, and supporting professional growth.

Award recipients were selected through a structured, rubric-based evaluation rooted in the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet components: Transformational Leadership, Structural Empowerment, Exemplary Professional Practice, and New Knowledge, Innovations, and Improvements. Submissions were also evaluated against the PG bylaws, ensuring each nomination reflected the values of shared leadership and clinical excellence.

This annual recognition is one of the many ways LLUH honors the vital contributions of our PG council members. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all who participate in Professional Governance. Your engagement fuels innovation, advances evidence-based practice, and supports our shared commitment to exceptional, compassionate care.

We look forward to celebrating your continued contributions in the years to come.



2025 PG AWARD WINNERS

LLU CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

CHAIR OF THE YEAR

Jessica White

Cardiovascular Lab/Cardiodiagnostic Lab/
Cardiac Post Anesthesia Care Unit

CO-CHAIR OF THE YEAR

Joneen Wilson

Maternity Services

RECORDER OF THE YEAR

Bethany Siefferman

Pediatric Emergency Department

PG COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

5800 Pediatric Cardiothoracic
Intensive Care Unit



LLU MEDICAL CENTER

CHAIR OF THE YEAR

Lisa Hong

Dennis and Carol Troesh Medical Center
Operating Room

CO-CHAIR OF THE YEAR

Fritzie Sala

East Campus 1300 Medical Acute

RECORDER OF THE YEAR

David-Joseph Dellica

East Campus 1300 Medical Acute

PG COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

East Campus 1300 Medical Acute



LLU MEDICAL CENTER – MURRIETA

CHAIR OF THE YEAR

Amanda Perez

Critical Care ICU

CO-CHAIR OF THE YEAR

Hunter Bruno

Surgery

RECORDER OF THE YEAR

Emily Baden

Perinatal Services

PG COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

Progressive Care Unit

Professional Governance Training Retreat

As part of Loma Linda University Health's commitment to professional growth and shared decision-making, the Magnet Department hosted its annual Nursing Professional Governance Training retreat this June. Embracing the warm summer weather with the theme "Carnival," the event brought color, energy, and connection to nurse leaders across the organization. Helen Staples-Evans, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, senior vice president of Patient Care Services and chief nursing officer for the Medical Center, and Sherry Nolfe, DNP, RN, chief nursing officer for Children's Hospital, opened the day with messages of encouragement and prayer.

More than 30 professional governance councils were represented, making this year's retreat a vibrant hub of collaboration and inspiration. Incoming council officers engaged in hands-on activities and strategic planning sessions designed to equip them for the upcoming governance term. A major focus of the training was the integration of evidence-based quality improvement into council project development. Through interactive learning, nurses explored how to translate clinical questions into actionable outcomes that drive improvement. The retreat blended professional development with team connection, building a solid foundation for another year of impactful nursing professional governance across Loma Linda University Health.



Celebrating the Life of the Caregiver Through Scholarship and Identity:

Highlights From the 26th Annual Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Conference

Each year, the Loma Linda University Health Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Conference offers a meaningful space for nurses across roles, campuses, and practice settings to come together in celebration of clinical inquiry and professional growth. This year's conference, the 26th annual event, was held in a hybrid format, welcoming over 200 participants both in-person and virtually, including our largest-ever group of external attendees. Themed "Nursing as an Art: Building Professional Identity Through Compassionate Care", the conference explored the heart of nursing: who we are, what we value, and how we make a difference.

The day opened with a warm welcome from Briana Carr, PhD, MEd, BA, RN, Director of Nursing Research, and Marga Kasim, DNP, RN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, CNML, EBP-C, Manager of Nursing Research, who reflected on the significance of the conference in shaping a shared culture of inquiry and connection across the system. They highlighted the essential role of the Nursing Research Council (NRC), a dynamic group of bedside nurses, educators, and leaders who collaboratively plan the event, review abstracts, coordinate logistics, and moderate sessions. Throughout the day, the NRC's presence was visible in every detail, from speaker introductions to award presentations, exemplifying the strength of shared governance and the collective commitment to advancing nursing excellence.

A signature feature of this year's program was the "Tree of Impact", an interactive activity that visually captured how professional identity takes root, grows, and bears fruit across nursing careers. Developed by the NRC and grounded in the International Society for Professional Identity in Nursing (ISPIN) framework, the activity invited attendees to contribute personal reflections using color-coded sticky notes. Roots symbolized foundational influences like values and mentors; the trunk captured sustaining forces such as teamwork and clinical advancement; branches illustrated growth and leadership; and leaves celebrated the outcomes of compassionate care.

As participants engaged with the tree throughout the day, a collective narrative emerged, one of resilience, meaning, and unity. Mentorship, career progression, and patient impact were recurring themes, highlighting the depth and breadth of caregiving experiences across generations. At the close of the conference, the completed tree stood as a powerful representation of the professional spirit that defines our nursing community.

The conference also showcased innovative research and EBP initiatives from across the system, including podium and poster presentations by nurses, students, and faculty. Topics ranged from mindfulness for student burnout to compassionate communication, ultraviolet disinfection, and holistic comfort care. Speakers received overwhelmingly positive evaluations, with participants noting the relevance, inspiration, and applicability of the sessions.

In a time when the nursing profession faces growing complexity and strain, this year's conference served as a reminder of what anchors and empowers us as caregivers. It was not just a showcase of projects; it was a celebration of identity, purpose, and possibility. Through meaningful dialogue, shared learning, and community reflection, we honored the life of the caregiver and reaffirmed our commitment to excellence, equity, and healing.





A Journey of Evidence and Opportunity: My Johns Hopkins Evidence-Based Practice Story

By: Marga Kasim, DNP, RN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, CNML, EBP-C

As manager of the Nursing Research Department serving Loma Linda University Health, I have the incredible privilege of collaborating with our talented and passionate clinical bedside nurses on evidence-based practice (EBP) projects. Together, we explore clinical questions, analyze the best available evidence, and implement innovative solutions that enhance patient care and strengthen our nursing practice.

Over the past few years, it has been an amazing journey to help grow and expand our EBP program across the organization. We have focused on creating resources, educational sessions, and mentorship opportunities that empower nurses at all levels to engage confidently in evidence-based improvement. It is deeply rewarding to see nurses transform their ideas and observations from the bedside into impactful projects that improve outcomes for patients, families, and our healthcare teams.

The peak of this journey came with a truly unexpected and humbling honor. Earlier this year, I was invited to write an endorsement for the newly released 5th Edition of the Johns Hopkins Evidence-Based Practice for Nurses and Healthcare Professionals guidebook. This model has been the foundation of our EBP work at Loma Linda University Health, guiding countless projects that have advanced patient care and nursing practice. To be recognized as a contributor to the conversation around EBP on a national level felt both surreal and incredibly gratifying.

This milestone represents not only a personal highlight but a reflection of the collective efforts and dedication of our entire nursing community. I am inspired every day by our nurses' curiosity, critical thinking, and commitment to excellence. I look forward to the continued growth of our EBP culture and to witness even more extraordinary contributions from our nursing teams in the years to come.



2025 Evidence-Based Practice Fellowship

*The Nursing Research Department Is Proud To Announce
Its 2025 Evidence-Based Practice Fellows*



Danielle Jonson, MSN-ed, RN, is a Clinical Nurse-C from Acute Rehabilitation Unit 1100 at Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus. Danielle is focusing her EBP Fellowship project on improving discharge outcomes by simplifying and organizing patient education materials. Creating clear, concise, and meaningful discharge content can improve patient discharge experience, support safe transitions, and reduce nurse burden.



Nelly Utebor, MSN, MBA, RN, PHN, CNML, MEDSURG-BC, MICN, is a Clinical Nurse-D from Emergency Department (ED) at Loma Linda University Medical Center. Nelly also serves as an Administrative Supervisor for Patient Placement and Transfer Center. Nelly is focusing her EBP Fellowship project on incorporating SMART goal setting into ED nurses' annual evaluations to provide a more structured approach, enhancing clarity, engagement, accountability, and professional growth.

Nurse Leadership Awards Program

Transformational Leadership:

Megan Duke, MSN, CNS, RN, MICN

The Emergency Department's (ED) services are always in high demand. Over the last few years, I have witnessed remarkable leadership from Megan. I could provide several instances where she exemplified transitional leadership, but I will focus on how she has transformed culture. There have been several times where I have seen Megan feel unsure or concerned about a proposed process change. There were potential negative impacts or added stress to the ED. But she took the time to listen and understand how this change, and how her department, could be part of the larger Loma Linda University Children's Hospital strategic plan. I am sure that she was nervous, but she demonstrated leadership to her team by clearly articulating that the leadership team did in fact support the Pediatric ED and that her team would be supported all along the way.

She handles all situations with such grace and poise. Through her leadership, she has created a culture in the Pediatric ED where staff are confident that they are heard, appreciated, and valued, and they are proud of the impact that they have made to Children's Hospital as a whole.



Exemplary Professional Practice:

Mario Calip, BSN, RN

Mario Calip is an incredible charge nurse. He is the epitome of professionalism. He never hesitates to jump in to help his teammates with hands-on patient care. He is genuine and caring. When asked to perform a task, he does so with a smile and a kind reply. He has been instrumental in rounding with physicians to ensure that nursing is clear with the plan of care. Additionally, he is patient and willing to share his knowledge and skill sets with new staff, students, and nursing residents.

Specifically, he has received recognition for coming alongside a new nursing resident during her first rapid response and being present to support the training of new tasks that fostered a safe place for learning. His diligence in ensuring that the team is supported on all fronts contributes to a positive work environment and goal to deliver safe patient care.



Evidence-Based Practice:

Cricketara Ramos, BSN, RN, CCRN

Cricketara Ramos is a clinical nurse from Unit 8A Medical ICU, and has exemplified clinical inquiry, starting with the 2021 evidence-based practice (EBP) fellowship project titled "Ultrasound-Guided Blood Specimen Collection." The purpose of this EBP project was to assess the use of ultrasound-guided venipuncture in improving success rate, minimization of attempts, and decreased time spent by clinical bedside nurses compared with the traditional venipuncture method. Cricketara was awarded the Linda University Health Small Grant Program for EBP projects and used the funds to train champions and purchase training materials.

The results showed a 41% reduction in the number of attempts and a 63% reduction in time spent for venipuncture. Cricketara presented her EBP fellowship project at the Loma Linda University Health 24th Annual EBP and Nursing Research Conference in 2023. Furthermore, Cricketara continues her journey in exemplifying clinical inquiry through mentoring the next EBP team from Unit 8A MICU working on workplace safety.



Structural Empowerment:

Ricardo Padilla, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, CCRN, LSSGB

Ricardo Padilla, PhD, demonstrates structural empowerment by setting clear unit goals and supporting professional development, reflecting Loma Linda University Health's values of excellence and teamwork. Previously, the unit followed basic life support principles, but leveraging his resuscitation expertise, Ricardo updated the advanced cardiac life support policy to include progressive care, strengthening clinical competency and emergency response. This advancement directly supports Loma Linda University Health's motto "To make man whole." Additionally, he led the development of the Clinical Excellence Award program, fostering a culture of appreciation, professional pride, and teamwork, further aligning with Loma Linda University Health's strategic goals of employee engagement and collaborative care.

Ricardo influences and drives change by advocating for clinical and professional growth which embodies Loma Linda University Health's core values of excellence. He helped establish the PCU-to-ICU Cross-Training Program, enhancing staff competency and flexibility to meet high patient acuity needs. He also actively supports advancement through the Clinical Advancement Program (CAP), resulting in a growth from five to sixteen CN-C nurses and three RNs now pursuing CN-D. These initiatives promote justice and continuous learning, directly advancing Loma Linda University Health's goal of providing high-quality, compassionate care to the community.

Innovating New Knowledge and Research:

UV Light Study – Allyson Luva, MSN, RN, PHN, CIC, FAPIC, CHESP, and Eva Ghabrial, MBBCH, MHA, MPH, CIC, HACP-CMS, CRCST

Inquisitive minds are the catalysts for questioning and seeking innovative solutions to improve current healthcare-related issues. Allyson Luva and Eva Ghabrial from the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Infection Prevention collaborated with a research team that included staff, faculty, and graduate students from Loma Linda University Medical Center, Nursing Research Department, and LLU School of Public Health. The team conducted an exploratory study to examine the use of UV light devices in the terminal cleaning of both isolation and non-isolation rooms' high-touch points.

This innovative strategy of using supplemental technology can be influential in improving patient safety and preventing the spread of multidrug-resistant organisms. The team was awarded third place for its poster presentation at the 2024 Eisenhower Hospital Nursing Research Conference. While they are waiting for the results of their abstract submissions to additional conferences, they have received an invitation for a podium presentation at Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual EBP and Nursing Research Conference in 2025.





Poster Presentation Awards

At this year's 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, the following posters were awarded prizes in the categories of Integrated Inquiry, Evidence-Based Practice, and Research.

INTEGRATED INQUIRY



FIRST PLACE

Liesel Miller, BSN, RN, CWON;
Wilson Pinto-Lima, MBA, BSN, BA, RN; and
Ann Mijares, DNP, CNS, RN, CPHQ, LSSBB
The Skin is Failing!



SECOND PLACE

Daniel Lucero, SN, RN
*SBIRT Education to Increase MAT Referrals in
The Outpatient Setting*



THIRD PLACE

Jillianne Fernando, MSN-E Student; and
Lillyan Upp, MSN-E Student
(Western University of Health Sciences)
*Catheter Care Counts: A Compliance-Boosting
Checklist for Urinary Catheter Care*

EBP AWARDS



FIRST PLACE

Megan Kersten, BSN, RN; and
Wesley Myers, BSN, RN
Preference Card Update System Remodel



SECOND PLACE

Madeline Charette, DNP-c, BSN, RN
*Noise Reduction Protocol:
An Evidence-Based Practice Project*



THIRD PLACE

Alex Castro, RN, Erick Martinez, RN;
Steve Rojas, BSN, RN; Alyssa Parsons, MSN,
RN, TNCC; and Eleanor Rose, BSN, RN,
CCRN (Eisenhower Health)
*An Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Nurse-Led
Awakening and Breathing Protocol*

RESEARCH



FIRST PLACE

Julie Mike, BSN, RN; Peggy Kalowes, PhD,
RN, CNS, FAHA; Brian Cruz, BSN, RN-BC;
and Eva Meyers, PhD, RN, NP-C
(Adventist Health White Memorial)
*Nurses Insight of Professional Governance:
Effect on Satisfaction/Intent-To-Leave*



SECOND PLACE

Jet Role, DNP, RN, LHIT, CENP
*Significance of Automation in
Nursing Workflows*



THIRD PLACE

Jennifer Newcombe, DNP; Patti Radovich,
PhD; Rebecca Dolman, DNP, RN; Sara Van
Tassell, DNP; Denise Falardeau, MSN, RN;
Sharon Fritzsche, DNP;
and Karin Colunga, DNP
*Growing a Wellness Culture for
Nurse Practitioners*



Evidence-Based Practice and Research Grant Awardees

DECEMBER 2024 EBP

Madeline Smith-Murdaugh, BSN, RN, PCCN

Holistic Comfort Care

\$604.73

SEPTEMBER 2024 EBP

Fritzie Sala, MSN, RN, PCCN

Reducing Agitation in Dementia Patients Using Sensory-Stimulating Blankets

\$750

SEPTEMBER 2024 EBP

Sarah Capalla, DNP, RN, CCRN, CNRN, VA-BC

Peripheral Intravenous Education to Increase First Stick Success
and Decrease Blood Stream Infection Rates — An Evidence-Based Practice Project

\$750

JUNE 2024 RESEARCH

Denise Falardeau, MSN, APRN, AGPCNP-BC, CHFNP and

Jennifer Newcombe, DNP, RN, CNS-BC, CPNP-PC/AC

APRNs Leading Change for Well-Being

\$4,090

JUNE 2024 EBP

Joanne Manilla, BSN, RN, CCRN

Cardiac Arrest Prevention Bundle

\$750



Publications and Presentations

PUBLICATIONS

Lee, Mikyoung Angela, Pankaj Vyas, Fabio D'Agostino, Ann Wieben, Cynthia Coviak, Margaret Mullen Fortino, Suhyun Park, et al. "Empowering Nurses through Data Literacy and Data Science Literacy." *Advances in Nursing Science* 48, no. 3 (July 2025): 211–27.
<https://doi.org/10.1097/ans.0000000000000546>.

Taylor, Elizabeth Johnston, Holly E.R. Morrell, Hazel M. Ada, Carrie Dupée, Michael Jordan, Patti Radovich, and Kendal C. Boyd. "Do Nurse Spiritual Responses to Trauma Explain Nurse Outcomes? A Correlational Observational Study." *Nursing Outlook* 72, no. 6 (November 2024): 102296.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2024.102296>.

PRESENTATIONS

Bencito, Norie, DNP, MBA, RN, CENP, "Building Manager Resilience Through Emotional Intelligence." Poster presentation, The Fourth National Summit on Promoting Well-Being and Resilience in Healthcare Professionals, Columbus, OH, October 23-25, 2024.

Bencito, Norie, DNP, MBA, RN, CENP, "Building Manager Resilience Through Emotional Intelligence." Podium presentation, 2025 Association of California Nurse Leaders Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February 10-12, 2025.

Billings, Josh, MSN, RN, CNL, and Kasim, Marga, DNP, RN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, CNML, EBP-C, "Compassionate Communication Improves Patient Hospital Experience and Outcomes." Poster presentation, 2025 Association of California Nurse Leaders Annual Conference, Anaheim, February 10-12, 2025.

Billings, Josh, MSN, RN, CNL, "Compassionate Communication – An Evidence-Based Practice Project." Podium presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.



PRESENTATIONS (continued)

Bonar, Ricky, DNP-c, BSN, RN, "Anxiety Reduction Education at Cardiac Step-Down Unit at LLUMC: An Evidence-Based Practice Project." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Cabreros, Charity, MSN, RN, "What is the Impact of CVL Repair on CLABSI Rates?" Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Capalla, Sarah, DNP-c, MSN, RN, "Peripheral Intravenous Education to Increase First Stick Success and Decrease Blood Stream Infection Rates — an Evidence-Based Practice Project." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Capalla, Sarah, DNP-c, MSN, RN, "Peripheral Intravenous Education to Increase First Stick Success and Decrease Blood Stream Infection Rates — an Evidence-Based Practice Project." Poster presentation, Memorial Care Nursing Research Conference, Long Beach, CA, May 22, 2025.

Carr, Ryan, PhD(c), BSN, MICN, RN, and Copeland, Madison, BSN, MICN, RN, "Improved ED New Graduate Nurse Resilience and Retention Through Mentorship." Podium presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Flores, Linda, MSN, "Simulation Experiences Create Practice Ready New Graduate Peri-Operative Nurses." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Forhane, Karen, DNP, APRN, ACNPC-AG, FNP-C, CCRN, and Robinson, Denise, DNP, MPH, RN, WOCN, FCNLA, "Optimizing Telemetry Monitoring Utilization Through Nursing Leadership." Poster presentation, 2025 Association of California Nurse Leaders Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February 10-12, 2025.

Hanson, Kimberly, DNP, AG-CNS, RN, CWON, "Improving Ostomy Care Confidence: A Quality Improvement Project." Poster presentation, 2025 Western Institute of Nursing Conference, Spokane, WA, April 10, 2025.

Kasim, Marga, DNP, RN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, CNML, EBP-C, "EVIDENCE + CNS = SUCCESS. The Non-Traditional CNS Role." Poster Presentation, 2025 National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists Conference, Boston, MA, March 10-13, 2025.

Kersten, Megan, BSN, RN, and Myers, Wesley, BSN, RN, "Preference Card Update System Remodel." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Knutson, Cristina, BSN, RN, CCRN, and Vickers, Kayla, BSN, RN, CCRN, "Nurse Education & Support Team." Podium presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.



PRESENTATIONS (continued)

Legoh, Lindy, DNP(c), FNP(c), MBA, BSN, RN, "Fall Prevention Education in Medical Cardiac Unit." Poster presentation, 2025 Western Institute of Nursing Conference, Spokane, WA, April 10, 2025.

Lucero, Daniel, BSN, RN, "SBIRT Education to Increase MAT Referrals in The Outpatient Setting." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Lumbantobing, Randy, DNP-c, BSN, RN, "Handling the Agitated Patient with De-Escalation for Emergency Department Staff." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Luva, Allyson, MSN, BSN, RN, PHN, CIC, CHESP, and Ghabrial, Eva, MBBCh, MHA, MPH, CIC, HACP, CRCST, "What is Left Behind? Efficacy of Ultraviolet Light Disinfection." Podium presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Manker, Rania, DNP-c, RN, BSN, MICN, "Implementation of a Falls TIPS Program to Reduce Falls in an Adult Emergency Department." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Martin, Lynne, MSN, RN, PHN, PCCN-K, Fleenor, Jeremy MSL, RN, CEN, Forhane, Karen DNP, APRN, ACNPC-AG, FNP-C, CCRN, Robinson, Denise, DNP, MPH, RN, WOCN, FCNLA, "Streamlined Cardiac Care and Enhancing Patient Flow." Poster presentation, 2025 Association of California Nurse Leaders Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February 10-12, 2025.

Miller, Liesel, BSN, RN, CWON, Pinto-Lima, Wilson, MBA, BSN, BA, RN, and Mijares, Ann, DNP, CNS, RN, CPHQ, LSSBB, "The Skin is Failing!!!" Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Newcombe, Jennifer, DNP, Radovich, Patti, PhD, Dolman, Rebecca, DNP, Van Tassell, Sara, NP, Falardeau, Denise, MSN, Fritzsche, Sharon, DNP, Colunga, Karin, DNP, "Growing a Wellness Culture for Nurse Practitioners." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Nkumba-Simwaka, Debbie, MSN, RN, CNS, "The Impact of Education to Improve Transgender Care." Podium presentation, 28th Sigma Southern California Odyssey Research Conference, San Diego, CA, October 3-4, 2024.

Radovich, Patti, PhD, CNS, FCCM, and Kasim, Marga, DNP, RN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, CNML, EBP-C, "PAWtrol: Unleashing the Healing Spirit." Poster presentation, 2024 Magnet Conference, New Orleans, LA, October 29-November 1, 2024.



PRESENTATIONS (continued)

Ramos, Cricketara, BSN, RN, CCRN, "More Than Keepsakes: Honoring Patients' Legacy with Three Wishes Project." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Role, Jet, DNP, RN, LHIT, "Significance of Workflow Automation in Nursing Practice." Poster presentation, 2025 American Organization for Nursing Leadership Conference, Boston, MA, March 30-April 2, 2025.

Role, Jet, DNP, RN, LHIT, "Significance of Workflow Automation in Nursing Practice." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Santos, Priscilla, DNP, RN, Radovich, Patti, PhD, CNS, FCCM, Burgos, Carla, BSN, RN, Fregoso, Rosie, BSN, RN, Gabriel, Merlin, BSN, RN, Montgomery, Jordan, MSN, RN, PCCN, CNML, Craig-Buckholtz, Holly, MBA, BSN, RN, Ong, Allison, DNP, RN, NE-BC, CCRN-K, "Streamlining Acute Care: Leveraging Virtual Nursing to Improve Admission & Discharge." Poster presentation, 2025 Association of California Nurse Leaders Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February 10-12, 2025.

Schwab, Michelle, CNS, RN, Ensley, Emily, BSN, RN, PCCN, and Burns, Kerry, BSN, RN, CCTN. "Unleashing "Champion" Potential: Investment in Recognition, Leadership and Quality." Poster presentation, 2025 Association of California Nurse Leaders Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, February 10-12, 2025.

Smith, Madeline, BSN, RN, PCCN, "Holistic Comfort Care." Podium presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Tenchavez, Morgan, BSN, RN, CCRN, and Lawson, Karen, MSN, RN, CNS, CCRN, TCRN, "Oral Care for Ventilated Patients." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.

Thompson, Terri, DNP, RN, "Nursing Academia Unmasked: Qualitative Perspectives on Incivility." Poster presentation, Loma Linda University Health 26th Annual Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA, May 8, 2025.



LLUH Chief Nursing Officer Named a “CNO to Know” for 2024 by Becker’s Hospital Review

Helen Staples-Evans, DNP, RN, CNO, and senior vice president for Patient Care Services at Loma Linda University Health, has been named a CNO To Know for 2024 by Becker’s Hospital Review, a leading business publication focusing on healthcare business, legal news, and industry analysis.

The publication’s 2024 list honors more than 200 chief nursing officers who demonstrate outstanding leadership and high performance of their nursing teams throughout their respective organizations.

Staples-Evans oversees LLUH’s 4,600-member nursing team, focusing on strategic leadership, professional development, retention, and engagement.

“I’m honored on behalf of our entire team to be named by Becker’s Hospital Review for this distinction,” Staples-Evans said. “This recognition speaks to our performance as a team throughout Loma Linda University Health.”

Staples-Evans has played a key role in enhancing the professional practice of nurses by developing programs such as the clinical advancement program and the new graduate nursing residency, which provides mentorship experiences to new nurses.

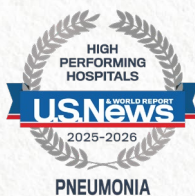
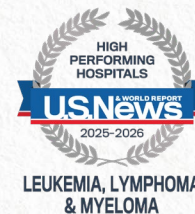
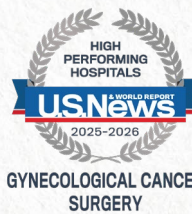
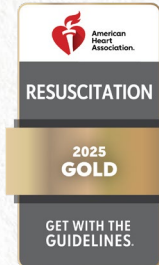
Her leadership was instrumental in Loma Linda University Health’s achievement of Magnet designation, particularly during the pandemic when she navigated the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s first-ever virtual site visit. Staples-Evans also led efforts to open two new hospitals in 2021, maintaining high patient care standards throughout.

Her 42-year tenure at LLUH has resulted in her being honored by receiving the LLUH 2024 President’s Distinguished Service Award.

Becker’s developed the list based on research and nominations, which is visible on its website.



Organizational Awards





Contributors and Editors

Nursing Annual Report Editors

- *Briana Carr, PhD, MEd, BA, RN*
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- *Jacqueline Masquat, MSN, RN*
- *Priscilla Santos, DNP, RN*

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- *Lisa Fernandez*
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- *Yesenia Ganzon, BSN, RN, CCM, CRRN*
- *Sandra Gonzales, MSN, RNC-NIC*
- *Jessica Hernandez*
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- *Carla Szoke, BSN, RN, CMSRN*
- *Ellyne Jan Wills, BSN, RN, CCRN*
- *Meghan Wilson, BSN, RN*

Our Mission, Vision, and Values



Our Mission

The mission of Loma Linda University Health is "To continue the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ," our motto "To make man whole," in a setting of advancing medical science and to provide a stimulating clinical and research environment for the education of physicians, nurses and other health professionals.

OUR VISION

Innovating excellence

in Christ-centered healthcare.

OUR VALUES



Compassion

Reflecting the love of God with respect, mercy and empathy.



Justice

Guided by Micah 6:8, we strive to act with justice, extend mercy, and walk humbly with God.



Excellence

Exceeding expectations with effectiveness, reliability and efficiency.



Teamwork

Collaborating to achieve a shared purpose.



Humility

Putting self-importance aside for the greater good of others.



Wholeness

Actively living the Physical, Relational, Intellectual, Spiritual, and Mental (PRISM) principles within a loving relationship with God and shown through service to others.



Integrity

Carrying out actions with honesty and trustworthiness.



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