



2025 NURSING

ANNUAL REPORT



NORTON
HOSPITAL



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Message from the CHIEF NURSING OFFICER



Jennifer Thornsberry,
DNP, R.N., NEA-BC
*Vice President, Patient Care
Services*
Chief Nursing Officer
Norton Hospital

Every day when I walk through Norton Hospital, I am reminded that the true strength of our organization lives not in our walls, but in you — the nurses who bring skill, compassion and courage to the bedside with every shift. In 2025, your impact was extraordinary. You lifted patients through their most vulnerable moments, steadied families through uncertainty and supported one another with a generosity of spirit that defines what nursing should be.

Countless stories revealed the power of front-line nursing: a calm voice that eased fear in the Emergency Department; a vigilant assessment that prevented harm in the intensive care unit; a thoughtful teaching moment that empowered a mother seeking care from women's services; a simple act of presence that brought comfort on a difficult day. These moments don't make headlines — but they change lives and they reflect the very essence of our mission.

Your work shows what care looks like when it is rooted in Swanson's Theory of Caring — *maintaining belief, knowing, being with, doing for* and *enabling*. I see those principles lived out in your practice every day. They are not abstract concepts; they are the way you chart, the way you advocate, the way you listen, the way you lead.

This year also marked a transformational step forward on our professional journey. In August 2025, Norton Hospital formally entered the **American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Pre-Intent Membership Program**, affirming our commitment to creating an environment where nursing excellence thrives. This milestone reflects who you already are: innovative problem solvers, trusted clinical experts and compassionate partners in healing.

Our focus remains clear after submitting our Magnet application in May: The Magnet journey is not about checking boxes — it is about telling the story of you.

Your leadership within the Magnet model's core components shines through every improvement, every council meeting, every idea brought forward to make care better:

Transformational leadership — Seen in the way you speak up, advocate and influence change

Structural empowerment — Strengthened through your active involvement in the Nursing Congress, unit-based councils and facility councils

Exemplary professional practice — Evident in your commitment to collaboration, safety and the highest standards of care

New knowledge, innovation and improvements — Reflected in the creative solutions you develop to meet evolving patient needs.

Empirical outcomes — Demonstrated through the measurable improvements your efforts continue to produce.

Our professional governance structure has never been stronger. In 2025, nurses across the hospital took ownership of practice and outcomes in ways that are reshaping the future of care here. You are designing solutions, challenging old processes, leading new initiatives and elevating the voice of nursing at every level of our organization. You are not just participating in change — you are driving it.

As you read through this report, you will see your collective work illuminated — improved quality metrics, strengthened patient experience, enhanced access and innovations aligned with the Norton Healthcare strategic plan model CARE (clinical quality and safety, access, retention and ease of use). What numbers cannot capture is the compassion behind the data, the teamwork behind the outcomes and the humanity behind every success.

To each of you: Thank you. Thank you for showing up with heart. Thank you for choosing this profession, this community and this hospital. Thank you for the countless ways you influence lives — often quietly, always profoundly.

As we move toward 2026 and the exciting step of Magnet application, I am confident in our path because I am confident in you. The way forward is bright, not because of a designation, but because of the people who make that designation possible.

Together, we are shaping a future defined by excellence, compassion and the unwavering belief that great nursing changes everything.

Nursing Professional PRACTICE MODEL



Joann Wray, DNP, MBA,
R.N., NEA-BC

Director of Patient Care and
Magnet Program
Norton Hospital

Swanson's Theory of Caring serves as Norton Hospital's Professional Practice Model and strongly aligns with the Magnet mission to promote quality patient care, nursing excellence and innovation in professional nursing practice. Through the five caring processes — *maintaining belief*, *knowing*, *being with*, *doing for* and *enabling* — nurses consistently demonstrate compassionate, evidence-based care that places patients and families at the center of decision-making. This caring framework empowers nurses to practice autonomously, collaborate effectively and drive positive clinical and experiential outcomes.

By embedding Swanson's Theory of Caring into daily practice, Norton Hospital fosters a culture that supports Magnet principles of transformational leadership, structural empowerment, exemplary professional practice and continuous improvement. This alignment reinforces our commitment to advancing nursing excellence while achieving optimal outcomes for patients, team members and the communities we serve.

Norton Healthcare Nursing Professional Practice Model



Norton Healthcare's nursing professionals live out Kristen Swanson's Theory of Caring.

Maintaining belief – A perspective of hope and belief that the patient can handle the challenges that could await

Knowing – No assumptions, but clarity and understanding the patient's point of view

Being with – Showing up and being there for the patient

Doing for – Helping the patient with tasks they normally would do for themselves

Enabling – Giving the patient room to heal

Evidence-based practice – Providing holistic quality care based on current research and knowledge

Advocacy – Safeguarding, valuing, mediating and championing social justice within provision of care

Integrity – Soundness of moral character and honesty

Empowerment – Supporting professional governance, open leadership communication and team relationships

Respect – Intentional act of showing consideration for others' interests and well-being

Equity and inclusion – Freedom from bias and ensuring a sense of belonging to all



Transformational LEADERSHIP

Empowering nurses: Implementing a new leadership role

To enhance accountability and streamline workflow in the cardiovascular intensive care unit, the unit implemented a new lead registered nurse role, providing consistent shift-level leadership and supporting a safe, organized care environment. This role was developed in response to staff-reported workload imbalances, unclear expectations and variability in day-to-day operations.

Using the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) problem-solving framework, the unit-based council led the design and launch of the role, engaging front-line nurses in task development and pilot selection. Assistant nurse managers supported implementation through structured huddles, standardized checklists and clear role descriptions.

Early outcomes from the initiative include:

- Improved workload balance
- Cleaner, more organized unit environments
- Better access to equipment and supplies
- Strengthened teamwork and communication

The lead registered nurse role reflects the principles of transformational leadership by empowering nurses to take ownership of their practice, uphold standards and collaborate more effectively. Leaders championed this work by modeling accountability, recognizing staff contributions and fostering a culture of innovation focused on patient centered care.

Initial feedback from staff interviews and surveys demonstrates improved workflow coordination and communication. Additional noted results include fairer workload distribution, increased compliance with glucometer quality checks and more effective use of hands free communication devices and unit whiteboards.

Ongoing evaluations at three and six months will continue to assess sustainability and impact on patient care outcomes. The success of the lead registered nurse role underscores the strength of shared governance and clinician leadership partnership in driving meaningful, unit level improvements.



Annette Newkirk, DNP, R.N.
*Registered Nurse, Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit
Norton Hospital
Vice President, Nursing Congress*



Top and bottom: Cardiovascular intensive care unit staff

Structural EMPOWERMENT



**MacKenzie West, R.N.,
BSN, BC-MNN**
*Registered Nurse, Mother/Baby
Unit
Norton Hospital*



**Katie White, R.N., BSN,
BC-MNN**
*Nurse Manager, Mother/Baby
Unit
Member, Magnet Steering
Committee
Norton Hospital*

Streamlining postpartum discharge via virtual nurse

In 2025, Norton Hospital launched an innovative virtual nurse model to strengthen the postpartum discharge process and support bedside nurses in delivering timely, consistent patient education. Rising health care costs and increasing patient complexity — particularly among families with language or social barriers — had contributed to prolonged discharge times and workflow strain. The new model was envisioned not only as a workflow solution, but also as a nursing led redesign of care delivery, created and implemented through shared governance.

Developed through collaboration among clinical nurses, unit-based councils, educators and nursing leadership, the virtual nurse role reflects a commitment to structural empowerment within the professional practice environment. Bedside nurses helped design the education content, define workflows and identify gaps in the discharge process. Their recommendations shaped how virtual nurses engage with patients, ensuring the model met the needs of both staff and families.

Guided by the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) management method, the virtual nurse team accomplished the following:

- Delivered structured, standardized postpartum education
- Reinforced critical discharge instructions
- Identified and documented patient specific barriers
- Provided same-day virtual support to expedite safe discharge

By shifting education tasks to a dedicated virtual nurse, the model ensured consistent, high-quality teaching and freed clinical nurses to focus on direct patient care and complex postpartum needs.

A review of discharge performance reveals significant improvements since implementation of the virtual nurse role:

- 21-minute reduction in the overall discharge process
 - » 12-minute reduction from order to printing after-visit summary
 - » 9-minute reduction from after-visit summary to patient discharge
- Average discharge time improved from 166 to 148 minutes
- More than 85% of patients discharged within two hours of order in 2025
- Early discharges before noon increased from 20.1% to 29.8%

These improvements strengthened patient flow, increased bed availability and eased operational pressures. Families experienced smoother transitions to home, and bedside nurses reported better ability to prioritize clinical care without the constraints of lengthy discharge teaching.

Advancing structural empowerment in nursing practice

The virtual nurse model is a clear example of **structural empowerment in action**, demonstrating how clinical nurses can influence care delivery, workflow design and organizational policy:

Shared decision-making: Bedside nurses played a central role in assessing the discharge process, identifying barriers and designing solutions.

Professional autonomy: Nurses determined what content needed standardization, how education should be delivered and which tasks were best shifted to virtual support.

Expanded opportunities: The creation of the virtual nurse role opened new professional pathways, allowing experienced postpartum nurses to practice at the top of their license in a remote, education-focused capacity.

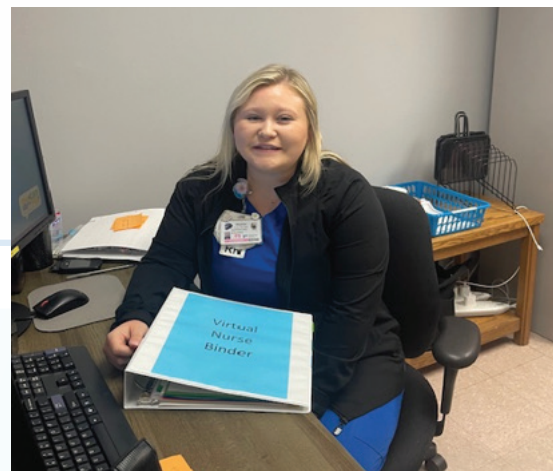
Improved practice environment: By reducing administrative burden, the model enhanced nurses' ability to focus on clinical priorities and patient advocacy.

Systems impact: Metrics and outcomes were reviewed in shared governance councils, giving front-line nurses ongoing influence over adjustments to the model.

Through this initiative, nurses not only improved discharge efficiency, but also strengthened the professional practice structure that supports autonomy, leadership and innovation across the Mother/Baby Unit.



Deidre Jordan, R.N., ADN, Mother/Baby Unit virtual nurse



Alyssa Drury, R.N., BSN, Mother/Baby Unit virtual nurse

Exemplary PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE



Stephanie Roush, R.N., BSN, SCRNP
*Nurse Manager, Behavioral Health
Norton Hospital*



*Left to right: Angela Yates, MHA; Angela Newton, R.N.; Ashley Rose, R.N.;
Joseph Hook, R.N.*

Rapid response model for behavioral health emergencies

Norton Hospital implemented a standardized rapid response model for behavioral health emergencies to enhance patient and staff safety. This initiative delivers timely, evidence based support at the bedside and strengthens our organization's capacity to prevent workplace violence.

Behavioral health crises in acute care settings continue to present significant safety challenges. Nurses frequently serve as first responders during these events, emphasizing the need for a structured approach. The new model establishes consistent practices, improves staff confidence and promotes a safer, more resilient environment for caregivers and patients.

A multidisciplinary team led the development and rollout of the rapid response structure. Key components included:

- Creation of a hospitalwide broadcast notification system
- Deployment of standardized emergency response bags
- Improved access to emergency medications
- Formalized communication pathways between clinical teams and the Security Department
- Phased education and competency training for front-line staff

Additionally, all Norton Hospital employees participated in an anonymous, third-party survey to assess perceptions of organizational support and safety responsiveness before and after the model was implemented.

Analysis of the 2024–2025 Engagement and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Safety Culture Surveys demonstrated measurable improvements:

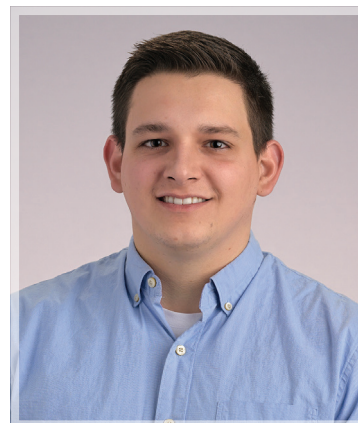
- 3% reduction in recurring patient safety issues
- 1.5% increase in leader openness to staff concerns
- 1% improvement in overall unit safety ratings
- 2.5% increase in perceptions that management prioritizes safety
- 1.9% increase in perceptions of adequate safety resources

These findings highlight stronger organizational support and improved responsiveness to behavioral emergencies, contributing to decreased workplace violence and enhanced staff well being.

This initiative advanced safety culture across the organization. Standardized tools, coordinated response processes and strengthened staff education have improved caregiver confidence and patient outcomes. The model is scalable across acute care settings and supports a safer environment for all.

New knowledge, INNOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Eric Brown, DNP, MSN-NEL, R.N., NEA-BC
Nurse Manager, 4ACJL (Acute Specialty Care Unit)
Norton Hospital



Innovating nurse communication: Electronic safety boards

The implementation of an electronic huddle board on the Acute Specialty Care Unit has transformed safety communication across our clinical teams. By providing real-time updates, improving team collaboration and ensuring visibility of patient care priorities, this innovation has driven greater efficiency and engagement in daily workflows.

Safety huddles are recognized by accrediting bodies, including The Joint Commission and DNV, as a cornerstone of high-reliability organizations. They enable proactive identification and mitigation of risk, which is essential for patient safety. Transitioning from manual boards to an electronic platform streamlined information flow, reduced administrative burden and guarantees consistent visibility of essential updates.

A multidisciplinary leadership team, including clinical nurses, the nurse manager and assistant nurse managers, led the development and integration of the electronic huddle board using the 5 Lean Principles of health care (value, value stream, flow, pull and continuous improvement). The design and function of the electronic huddle board demonstrate several core Lean principles, such as focus on reducing waste, standardizing work, improving flow and enabling real time problem-solving. The board was embedded into daily huddles, and staff received training to align functionality with workflow. Key metrics — such as safety events, staff engagement and compliance — were monitored through direct observation and electronic reporting.

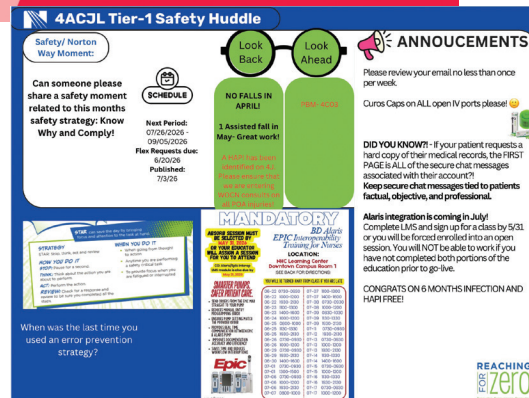
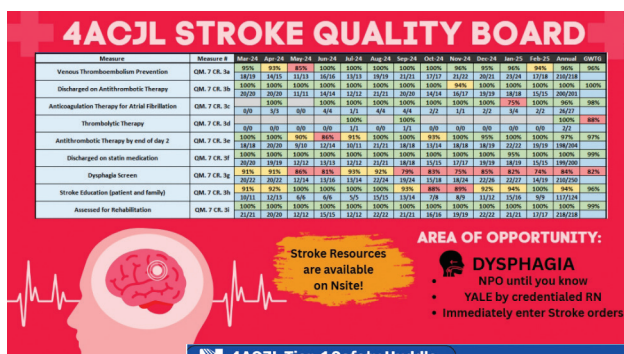
Effectiveness was evaluated using Engagement and AHRQ Safety Culture Survey data from 2024 and 2025. In 2025, 83% of department staff participated in the survey. Highlights after implementation include:

- **100% favorable response** to “My supervisor, manager or clinical leader takes action to address patient safety concerns.”
- **8.2% increase** in staff feeling informed about errors occurring in the unit.

- **21.2% improvement** in perceptions that event reporting focuses on solving problems rather than assigning blame.
- **9.5% increase** in reporting near-miss events that could have harmed patients.

This initiative demonstrates how leveraging technology can advance patient safety and operational excellence. The electronic huddle board introduced a scalable, data-driven approach to safety communication, fostering a culture of transparency and continuous improvement. By integrating real-time analytics and visual dashboards, the project set a new standard for innovation in nursing practice, aligning with the Magnet principle of new knowledge, innovation and improvement.

Following the success of the electronic huddle board in the initial pilot unit, this innovative approach is now being replicated in other areas of the hospital. This expansion demonstrates the scalability of the solution and reinforces our commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement throughout the organization.



Nursing PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE

Nursing Congress

Purpose

The Nursing Congress is a dynamic, staff–leader partnership that promotes collaboration, shared decision-making and accountability for improving quality of care and safety, and enhancing work life. It serves as a vehicle for creating and managing change and preparing for our desired future. As professionals, all employees are responsible for the outcomes of their individual work and the shared outcomes of the organization. The Norton Hospital Nursing Congress model has been the means of multidisciplinary professional governance since 2008.

Responsibilities

- Ensures the integration of Norton Healthcare's mission, vision and values, along with Swanson's Theory of Caring, which serves as the foundation for the Nursing Professional Practice Model, throughout nursing practice areas
- Defines, communicates, implements, monitors and evaluates clinical nursing practice based on evidence-based standards
- Applies a framework for nursing professional practice decisions that includes the Kentucky and Indiana Nurse Practice Acts, the Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice, the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses, the ANA Nurses Bill of Rights, and Norton Healthcare's mission, vision and values, along with the nursing strategic plan and goals
- Ensures patient safety and quality outcomes through interprofessional collaboration and performance improvement
- Promotes the professional development of employees
- Facilitates nursing research and evidence-based practices to enhance care and advance the nursing profession
- Provides an integrating network to coordinate the activities of unit nursing councils and patient care-centered interdisciplinary teams
- Contributes to strengthening the professional nursing work environment
- Applies consistent and equitable decision-making at the Nursing Congress level regarding council and/or chair tenure if a person moves into a leadership position

Leaders



Stacia Coker, BSN, R.N., CNOR

*Registered Nurse, Surgical Services
President, Nursing Congress
Norton Hospital*



Annette Newkirk, DNP, R.N.

*Registered Nurse, Cardiac Intensive
Care Unit
Vice President, Nursing Congress
Norton Hospital*

Accomplishments

- Displayed professional governance work at the Nurses Week Celebration Fair
- Selected and sent four staff members to the American Organization for Nursing Leadership Professional Governance Conference in San Antonio, Texas, in August 2025
- Selected and sent four staff members to the American Nurses Credentialing Center National Magnet and Pathway to Excellence Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, in October 2025
- Presented professional governance education to leaders (directors and managers) and Nursing Congress members
- Incorporated more evidence-based practice to unit-based council projects

Professional governance poster day 2025



Facility-level COUNCILS

Professional Development & Engagement Council

Purpose

- Support and enhance professional achievement and roles, including promotion of the Norton Healthcare Center for Nursing Practice Clinical Advancement Program
- Promote a culture of participation, engagement, accountability, ownership, recognition and appreciation
- Explore and implement strategies that continuously improve the nursing practice environment
- Promote nurses attaining certification in their areas of practice
- Promote nurses earning advanced degrees

Responsibilities

- Develop and launch MyNorton Buddy Mentor Program, which pairs new nurse hires with experienced nurses to provide informal support through regular check-ins, guidance on resources and benefits, and support with workplace challenges
- Assist with staff recognition by educating and encouraging use of internal recognition tools such as our Great Works App, N-cards and TunedN, and earning nursing certifications

Leaders

Chair: Sarah Rumbaugh, R.N.
Labor and Delivery Unit

Co-chair: Joseph Hook, R.N.
Behavioral Health

Co-chair: Jenny Patterson, R.N.
Neurology Intensive Care Unit

Accomplishments

- Supported, reviewed and completed the final Nurse Clinical Advancement Portfolio rubric, guidance and grading
- Planned and executed the celebration and rounding activities for 2025 Certified Nurses Week
- Reviewed and voted on recognition award nominations (DAISY Award for nurses and BEE Award for ancillary staff) for 2025
- Finalized revisions and presented updated guidelines for launching the MyNorton Buddy Program in 2026



Left to right, standing: Brittany Vannis, R.N.; Mallory Kellerman, R.N.; David Parson, R.N.; Tommy Clutts, R.N.;
sitting: Jenny Patterson, R.N.; Sarah Rumbaugh, R.N.; Janna Bauer, R.N.

Quality & Practice Excellence Council

Purpose

- Monitor and review data related to patient outcomes and patient experience.
- Promote the use of evidence to address areas of concern related to organizational structures, processes or outcomes.
- Assist in implementing practice changes within the organization.

Responsibilities

- Review monthly quality metrics to identify trends and advise leadership councils for actionable interventions.
- Monitor available outcomes data, including data related to nurse-sensitive indicators.
- Review data related to patient experience, identify opportunities and escalate as needed.

Leaders

Chair: Lindsey Green, R.N.
Emergency Services

Co-chair: Karey Jones, R.N.
Emergency Services

Accomplishments

- Expanded council membership from three to eight engaged participants
- Established consistent leadership with a dedicated chair and co-chair
- Conducted a comprehensive review of quality metrics
- Advanced work on a consent process improvement project



Standing, left to right: Kelsey Mathis, R.N.; Annette Newkirk, R.N.; Monica Thompson, R.N.; Karey Jones, R.N.; sitting: Avalena Edelen, R.N.; Kaitlyn Flowers, R.N.; Lindsey Green, R.N.; Vicki Wong, R.N.; not pictured: Guinevere Broderick, R.N.; Jennifer Holston, R.N.

Education & Innovation Council

Purpose

- Collaborate with educators to complete an educational needs assessment annually.
- Assist Norton Healthcare Institute for Education & Development in the promotion of clinical competency and professional growth.
- Partner with organizational efforts to promote community education across service lines.
- Develop an annual education plan that aligns with our organization's nursing goals.
- Educate nurses on the meaning, importance and purpose of evidence-based practice.

Responsibilities

- Escalate education and competency needs to Norton Healthcare Institute for Education & Development.
- Develop nursing education using evidence-based practice literature through collaboration with the Evidence-based Practice & Research Council.
- Optimize current and future processes.
- Increase retention by enhancing the organization's onboarding process.
- Use multiple modes of communication to ensure dissemination of educational material.

Leaders

Chair: Catherine Hesselbach, R.N.
4 Giles, Intensive Care Unit

Accomplishments

- Led the Patient Belongings initiative for admission, transfer and discharge, and advanced the initiative to the system level for implementation
- Conducted an educational session for patient care associates
- Participated in competency fairs for registered nurses



Left to right, standing: Jordan Frye, Kay Dale, Aailaiyh Collins, Hannah Schumaker, Mike Holland, Amanda Northington;
sitting: Kristin Cox, Catherine Hesselbach, Samantha Marcum-Jarrell, Nicole Benkert; not pictured: Terri Cottner

Evidence-based Practice & Research Council

Purpose

Provide oversight and review of clinical quality improvement projects, evidence-based practice projects and research projects that include or impact nursing and the interprofessional team.

Responsibilities

- Identify and evaluate potential for practice changes within the organization.
- Create, support and foster a culture of inquiry that provides nurses with psychological safety to question current practices without fear of blame.
- Promote nursing and interprofessional research and evidence-based practice in everyday practice, in collaboration with the Education & Innovation Council.
- Support the Norton Hospital campus and intrafacility research and evidence-based practice projects.
- Support investigators in research and evidence-based practice processes.
- Support the dissemination of research and evidence-based practice findings locally and nationally.
- Encourage the incorporation of nursing staff in evidence-based practice research.
- Recognize nurses and interprofessional team members for their efforts in research and evidence-based practice accomplishments.

Leaders

Chair: Kasen Meek, R.N.
Surgical Services

Co-chair: Carrie DeHart, R.N.
4MRS, Acute Specialty Care Unit

Accomplishments

- Six clinical nurses actively served on the council, representing over 75% of its members.
- Four clinical nurses participated in nursing conferences.
- One clinical nurse delivered a presentation at the Kentucky Nurses Association River City Chapter monthly meeting, sharing results from the Norton Healthcare bedside handoff research project.



Left to right, standing: Anna Laferty, R.N.; Jeremy Jarmon, R.N.; Michelle Pendleton, R.N.; sitting: Carrie DeHart, R.N.; Kasen Meek, R.N.; not pictured: Joann Wray, DNP, MBA, R.N., NEA-BC; Agnes Autrey, R.N.; Brandon Duggins, R.N.

Norton Hospital

REGISTERED NURSE SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

PARTICIPATION RATE	63%
Units/areas outperforming the mean (number outperforming/total reporting units)	
Fundamentals of quality nursing care	22/27
Leadership access and responsiveness	23/27
Autonomy	22/27
Interprofessional relationships	22/27
Nurse-to-nurse teamwork and collaboration	23/27
Professional development	26/27
Adequacy of resources and staffing	15/27
2025 categories meeting benchmark	7/7

Registered nurse PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Newly certified nurses at Norton Hospital

Jessica Basham	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Brittany Beard	Certified in Infection Control (CIC)
Abby Birge	Certified Post Anesthesia Nurse (CPAN)
Michelle Blanco	Progressive Care Certified Nurse (PCCN)
Eric Brown	Nurse Executive Advanced-Board Certified (NEA-BC)
Autumn Chapman	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN); Certified Neuroscience Registered Nurse (CNRN)
Brooke Mock Contreras	Nurse Executive Advanced-Board Certified (NEA-BC)
Alyssa Drury	Registered Nurse Certified in Maternal Newborn Nursing (RNC-MNN)
Kaitlynn Flowers	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Brandon Freiburger	Certified Nurse Manager and Leader (CNML); Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC)
Jeremy Jarmon	Certified Medical-Surgical Registered Nurse (CMS-RN)
Gursimran Johal	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Karey Jones	Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC)
Kaylee Kaiser	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)
Lily Koch	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Anna Laferty	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Makayla Luckhardt	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Natalie Lytle	International Board-certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)
Staci Michels	Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR)
Charlene Natale	Certified Wound Ostomy Nurse (CWON)
Tiffany Nuzzo	Certified in Electronic Fetal Monitoring (C-EFM)
Jessica O'Donoghue	International Board-certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)
Laura Pierce	Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC)
Raevonya Richie	Certified in Electronic Fetal Monitoring (C-EFM)
April Robinson	Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN)
Daniela Rosales	Registered Nurse Certified in Maternal Newborn Nursing (RNC-MNN)
Ashley Salyers	Registered Nurse Certified in Maternal Newborn Nursing (RNC-MNN)
Hannah Schumacher	Progressive Care Certified Nurse (PCCN)
Christopher Thompson	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)
Taylor White	Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC)



Some of our newly certified nurses celebrating their achievement!

Staff awards and RECOGNITIONS



DAISY Award honorees

The DAISY Award is a nationally recognized program that honors nurses who deliver exceptional, compassionate and patient centered care. Each year, Norton Hospital celebrates the extraordinary contributions of nurses whose clinical excellence, kindness and human connection make a meaningful difference for patients and families.

In 2025, Norton Hospital proudly recognized 12 DAISY Award honorees — one each month — representing diverse specialties, including critical care, labor and delivery, acute specialty care, neurology intensive care unit and cardiac services. These nurses were selected by the Professional Development & Engagement Council for consistently going above and beyond in their practice, and demonstrating exemplary patient advocacy, clinical skill, teamwork and compassion. Their dedication reflects the highest standards of nursing excellence and embodies the values that guide our care every day.

January

C.J. Corsiglia, R.N.

5BF, Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

What set him apart for me was the personal interest he took in our family as we spoke over the next two weeks. He learned that my son had just graduated from nursing school and was following in his mother's footsteps. He began talking to him like a colleague and not just a family member. Even on the days he was not assigned to my wife, he would make time to stop by and check on her as well as all the rest of us. Even if he was just walking down a hallway or heading to his car, he would take a minute to see how she was doing and how we were doing.



February

Richard LaRock, R.N.

3 Giles, Acute Specialty Care Unit

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for the outstanding care and support that Richard LaRock provided during a particularly stressful time for my family. His compassion, professionalism and dedication were truly a breath of fresh air. His warm smile as he enters the room reminds you that he is not only providing a tremendous source of comfort and that he genuinely cares about the well-being of those he assists. It is not every day that you come across someone like Richard that is as dedicated and compassionate. His commitment to excellence reflects highly on your team and I believe he deserves to be recognized for the positive impact he has on those he helps. Thank you for fostering a team that prioritizes kindness, compassion and professionalism. Please extend my deepest appreciation to Richard LaRock for his exceptional service.



March

Esther Murphy, R.N.

5BF, Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

I knew that I was very sick. It was a shock when the doctor told me that I was going to the ICU. Very alarming. Nurse Murphy was one of my nurses. She was very informative, and she took time to explain things to me. She is very competent, has a great personality, and was able to calm me as she took time out of her busy schedule to talk with me.



April

MaryAnn Blanchard, R.N.

4 Giles, Intensive Care Unit

My brother was in her unit and she was his nurse. The care she gave him was nothing short of amazing, compassionate and loving. MaryAnn truly is an outstanding nurse. Our brother did not survive all that he faced with his cancer, and the care in his final days was nothing short of true love for our brother. MaryAnn is truly an asset to Norton, and she will forever be in our hearts for all the love she showed our family in a very heartbroken time. So we thank you, MaryAnn, and we truly love you.



Staff awards and RECOGNITIONS

May

Tessa McLamb, R.N.

Labor and Delivery Unit

She was absolutely amazing to me. I apologized many times for different things, and she just kept saying don't apologize for anything, you're in pain, I understand. She let me make my own decisions regarding my labor and never judged any of them. She held my hand when she could; I needed someone to. My grandmother was late and missed the birth by minutes, but Tessa was there every step of the way. I could tell she was a newer nurse but the most amazing nurse I've ever received care from. She made me feel safe and cared for. She made sure to let me know how strong I was, that I could do this! I had trouble with my epidural and she made sure it was taken care of. Also, while getting the epidural, she talked me through it completely and made me feel less afraid. I am tearing up writing this because words can't describe how caring and pure her heart is. She is the definition of an exceptional nurse, and she deserved more than any thanks I could ever give her.



June

Melissa Hopf, R.N.

4ACJL Acute Specialty Care Unit

Dear, sweet Melissa. One of the best needle-stickers ever. Don't take that lightly. She was very attentive to my situation and checked on me often. So very compassionate and really listened to my concerns dealing with my mini stroke and all it entailed. She was also very informative with a lot I didn't understand. She worked so well with the other girls working that day. All of the staff on my stay were amazing. Even the guys who took me back and forth to tests.



July

Jessica Simmons, R.N.

Labor and Delivery Unit

This nurse is deserving of a DAISY Award due to their remarkable patience and consistent willingness to exceed expectations in every aspect of their work. Throughout my experience, I have never observed any signs of frustration from this nurse, nor have I noticed the wear and tear that typically comes with the demanding nature of their workday. Even during moments when I appeared to be in a less than favorable mood waiting to see a doctor, or me dealing with a less favorable family member, this nurse maintained a calm demeanor, responding to my needs with understanding empathy. Their ability to remain composed under pressure is commendable and reflects a deep commitment to patient care. This unwavering professionalism and compassionate approach not only elevate the standard of care, but also foster a healing environment that benefits everyone involved. It is this level of dedication and compassion that truly sets them apart and makes them a prime candidate for such prestigious recognition.



August

Karen Mercer, R.N.

4MRS, Renal Care/Diabetic Unit

This hospitalization was unexpected and scary. I'm an hour away from my family, and physical support was few and far between. Karen was my daytime nurse quite a bit of my stay. This trip was full of lots of questions and doctors. Karen was always a certainty, as was her positive and caring attitude. During an unpleasant visit with a doctor, Karen had my back, stayed in the room and asked the questions I didn't know to ask. To my family, I referred to Karen as my "hospital mom." Everyone deserves a hospital mom, aka Karen. The epitome of what a nurse should be.



Staff awards and RECOGNITIONS

September

Aaliyah Stiles, R.N.

5LMRS, Cardiac Care Unit

Aaliyah radiates a smile and spirit that is truly infectious. She approaches each interaction with an open heart, offering a nonjudgmental ear to her patients as they share their health concerns and life's challenges. As a nurse, she empowers her patients with unwavering encouragement, guiding them through their recovery with compassion. Her kindness extends to everyone she meets, making each encounter a bright spot in their day. Many patients have expressed their gratitude for having her by their side during difficult times, feeling fortunate to receive her care. Aaliyah's steadfast commitment to her patients' well-being is a remarkable asset to Norton Hospital, enhancing the quality of care we strive to provide.



October

Vickie Dickerson, R.N.

5LMRS, Cardiac Care Unit

I have never had a more caring person to take care of me. The hospital gets me so down, but it's people like her that brings sunshine to a world so dark. She listens to every problem I have with concern. Most nurses, you can tell this is just a job to pay bills for them. Ms. Vickie is here to make a difference, and she does with her big heart and caring personality. She makes not only Norton Hospital, but the world, a better place. The DAISY Award was created for nurses like her. I'm nominating her because if not the best nurse, one of the best nurses in Norton Hospital. She has earned this award. You will not find a more caring or more dedicated or deserving nurse than Ms. Vickie. Thank you, Ms. Vickie, for being the light in the darkest room.



November

Kristen Smith, R.N.

Neurology Intensive Care Unit

I am nominating Kristen for her extraordinary compassion and dedication while caring for my mother in the ICU postsurgery. At a time when our family felt frightened and helpless, she made sure my mom was not only medically cared for, but also emotionally supported the entire shift. She spent time brushing and braiding my mom's hair when she was too weak to do it herself — a small act on the surface, but one that helped my mom feel more herself. Kristen offered encouragement, telling my mom repeatedly, "I'm so proud of you" and "You are making such amazing progress; keep going." Those words lifted her spirits more than any medication ever could. Kristen also created a personal connection with us, sharing that her own mother had faced health issues as well recently.



December

Daja Moody, R.N.

Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

We are proud to recognize Daja. Her nominator shared how deeply Daja impacted their stay, describing her as a nurse who is caring, compassionate and truly unforgettable. Daja is one of those nurses who is always smiling, no matter what the day brings. She has genuine compassion for both her patients and her peers. She never meets a stranger and has a remarkable gift for making everyone around her feel comfortable, welcomed and supported.



Staff awards and RECOGNITIONS

Good Catch Awards

Each month, our organization recognizes a Good Catch Award winner. These team members demonstrate exceptional commitment to patient safety by identifying potential risks before they reach the bedside. These individuals exemplify our culture of 200% accountability, which means taking responsibility not only for their own actions, but also for supporting and safeguarding one another.

Throughout the year, good catch submissions have highlighted the powerful impact of vigilance, communication and teamwork in preventing harm. Each story reinforces that patient safety is not a single initiative, but a continuous journey — everyday practice grounded in awareness, courage and a shared dedication to doing what is right. Even small interventions can create meaningful, lasting improvements in care delivery.

Collectively, these good catches move us closer to our Reaching for Zero goal, strengthening a culture where safety is embedded in every decision, every action and every patient interaction. **Listed here are the Norton Hospital nurses who won the Good Catch Award throughout the year.**

January

Esther Murphy, R.N.

5BF, Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

Error-prevention strategies used: STAR, know why and comply, stop and resolve

Esther identified a medication order that posed a potentially dangerous side effect, given her patient's current condition. She promptly notified the provider, resulting in the medication being discontinued and not administered to the patient.

February

Emma Koehler, R.N.

Surgical Services

Error-prevention strategies used: Stop and resolve, QVV

While caring for a patient, Emma noticed that a medication documented in the chart did not match the medication that had been ordered. Wanting to ensure complete accuracy, she double checked the active order and confirmed that a different medication was required. When she went to return the unused medication to the Pyxis dispensing system, she discovered that the storage bin contained a mix of correct and incorrect items. She immediately notified the pharmacy so the issue could be corrected, and the bin properly stocked. Her attention to detail, commitment to verifying orders and quick action in escalating the discrepancy prevented a potential medication error and protected patient safety. Her diligence and willingness to speak up exemplify what it means to be a true safety champion.

August

Megan Campbell, R.N.

Labor and Delivery Unit

Error-prevention strategies used: STAR, stop and resolve, know why and comply

During leader rounding, a patient's husband mentioned noticing "wet hair" near the scalp incision site. Acting on this observation, Megan assessed the area and identified a loose staple. This nurse knew the patient had an MRI scheduled later that day. Recognizing there could be a potential risk, she immediately notified the primary registered nurse and neurosurgery. The MRI was appropriately delayed until after the patient's staple removal, preventing a possible safety event.

Megan demonstrated strong use of several of our error-prevention strategies. Her attention to detail and commitment to safety prevented patient harm and promoted a highly reliable environment.



Staff awards and RECOGNITIONS

September

Liz Zeller, R.N.

4BF Neurology Intensive Care Unit

Error-prevention strategies used: STAR, stop and resolve, QWV

Liz received a medication from the pharmacy that was labeled with her patient's name and the medication information. Liz noticed the IV bag was a 150mL, but the medication label stated it was supposed to be in a 250mL bag. Liz contacted the pharmacy, and the pharmacist came to the unit. It was noted that the medication was a different medication and not the intended one. The pharmacist immediately corrected the medication, and it was safely administered to the patient. Liz used our error-prevention strategies to carefully assess the situation before proceeding.



October

Judith Abadia, R.N.

4GHK Acute Specialty Care Unit

Error-prevention strategies used: Stop and resolve

While preparing to administer a medication, Judith noticed a potential medication error involving the dosage. Instead of proceeding with the medication, she paused, double-checked the order and questioned whether it was correct. After further review, Judith made the decision not to administer the medication until it could be reviewed by the provider and the pharmacy. By using our error-prevention strategy, this nurse prevented potential harm and reinforced that speaking up is a high-reliability expectation.



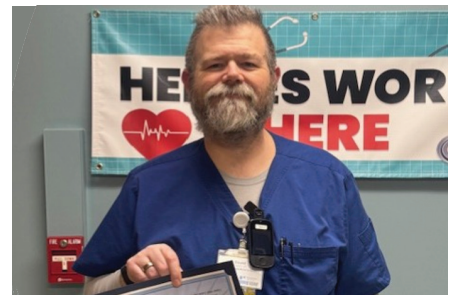
December

David Traylor, R.N.

4GHK Acute Specialty Care Unit

Error-prevention strategies used: STAR, stop and resolve

David demonstrated exceptional attention to detail and a strong commitment to patient safety during a routine medication preparation. When a medication was delivered for administration, he carefully reviewed it prior to use. During this safety check, he recognized that the item received did not match the medication that had been ordered for the patient. Acting promptly, David halted the preparation process and immediately contacted the pharmacy for clarification. Upon review, the pharmacy confirmed that the medication needed to be returned, and they arranged to send the correct medication without delay. David's diligence, adherence to the medication verification process and willingness to speak up prevented a potential error and ensured the patient received the appropriate therapy. His actions exemplify a strong safety culture and a steadfast commitment to high-quality patient care.



Neurology Specialty Certification Class

In 2013, a significant knowledge gap regarding neuroscience patients was identified among nursing staff. In response, the neurosurgery program coordinator and the senior neurosurgeon approached the chief nursing officer with a proposed solution: Establish a six-month course designed for registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants who are involved in neuroscience care. This course continues today. It convenes for two hours each week, and covers advanced topics aligned with the American Board of Neuroscience Nursing's blueprint for the certified neuroscience registered nurse (CNRN) exam. Instruction is provided by neurosurgeons and neurology nurse practitioners. The administration compensates nurses for their attendance, supplies textbooks and covers exam fees. Participants commit to attending all classes, preparing through assigned readings and taking the exam upon course completion. To date, 123 registered nurses, 25 nurse practitioners and six physician assistants have successfully completed the program, with 74 nurses achieving certification. While the pass rate for the CNRN exam is lower than anticipated, this is largely due to the inclusion of less-experienced nurses, as the program encourages participation from all nursing staff, including those in medical/surgical roles. Nonetheless, pre- and post-test results indicated that significant learning occurred throughout the course.

2025 Neurology Specialty Certification Class



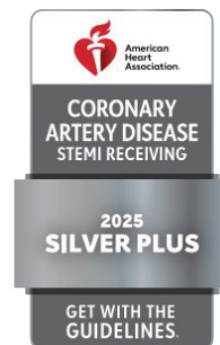
Left to right, back row: George H. Raque, M.D.; Allison Fruge, R.N.; Carter Kannapell, R.N.; Emily Alvey, R.N.; Kristal Hunt, R.N.; Lisa Clark, R.N.; Alexis Herbert, R.N.; middle row: Jessica Gabbard, R.N.; Paribhasa Adhikari, R.N.; Dee Cook, R.N.; Hannah Love, R.N.; kneeling: Lindsey Doyle, R.N.; Chrystal Eddins, R.N.

Facility awards and RECOGNITIONS

Heart care

In 2025, our organization earned the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines – Coronary Artery Disease STEMI Receiving Silver Plus Award. This national recognition reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering timely, evidence-based care for patients experiencing ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI).

Achieving Silver Plus level demonstrates consistent adherence to rigorous, research-driven clinical benchmarks and highlights the dedication of our multidisciplinary care teams. Through coordinated protocols, rapid response practices and continuous quality improvement, we remain focused on improving cardiovascular outcomes for the communities we serve.



Norton Hospital earned the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines –Stroke Gold Plus Award, recognizing sustained excellence in delivering evidence-based, high-quality stroke care. This designation reflects our ongoing success in meeting rigorous national performance benchmarks and maintaining strong clinical reliability across multiple stroke quality measures. In addition, recognition on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite and the Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll highlights our commitment to rapid, coordinated stroke response and optimal care for patients with Type 2 diabetes. Together, these distinctions underscore our dedication to improving patient outcomes and advancing best practice stroke care within our community.



The American College of Cardiology awarded Norton Hospital with Chest Pain Center – Primary PCI accreditation, recognizing our sustained commitment to delivering rapid, evidence-based care for patients experiencing chest pain and heart attacks. This accreditation reflects our 24/7 capability to provide emergency percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) procedures and highlights the strength of our multidisciplinary teams, standardized clinical pathways and continuous quality improvement efforts that enhance cardiac outcomes across our organization.



Heartsaver Hero Award

The Heartsaver Hero Award recognizes individuals who perform CPR or take action in the chain of survival during an emergency. This honor is given to anyone, whether clinically trained or not, who steps in to help save a life.

In 2025, Destany Balata, R.N., nurse manager of Norton Hospital's 2 Giles Acute Specialty Care Unit, was honored with this award. While off duty, Destany responded as a bystander when someone collapsed during a basketball game. Her rapid assessment and lifesaving CPR directly contributed to that individual's survival.

Destany's quick thinking, clinical expertise and unwavering commitment to helping others exemplify the true spirit of this award and reflect the highest standards of nursing leadership at Norton Hospital.



Destany Balata, R.N.

Advanced technology

- Norton Hospital achieved a key clinical milestone in 2025 with its first use of the CathWorks FFRangio System, reinforcing its commitment to innovative, patient focused cardiac care. This noninvasive technology analyzes standard angiography images to deliver real time assessments of coronary artery disease without pressure wires or hyperemic agents. The system enables faster, more accurate decisions on whether interventions are needed, improving efficiency, patient comfort and overall clinical decision making.



Left to right, back row: Alexa Turner, RT-R (CI); Laura Greg, R.N., BSN; Bobby Coolidge, RT-R (CI); Holly Hargett, Medtronic representative; Matthew J. Sousa, M.D. interventional cardiologist; front row: Ariez Baldon, RT-R; Regan Judd, Medtronic representative

- In 2025, Norton Heart & Vascular Institute, our organization's cardiovascular service line, became the first provider in Kentucky and Southern Indiana to offer renal denervation using the FDA-approved Medtronic Symplicity Spyral system. This minimally invasive, same day procedure uses radiofrequency energy to calm overactive renal nerves in patients with uncontrolled hypertension. By adopting this technology early, Norton Heart & Vascular Institute strengthened its leadership in cardiovascular innovation and expanded treatment options for patients with difficult to manage high blood pressure.



Mohammad F. Mathbout, M.D., interventional cardiologist, Norton Heart & Vascular Institute; Holly Hargett, Medtronic representative; Gena Thurston, R.N., BSN; Emily Wise, RT-R VI; Stephen Croninger, R.N., BSN; April Sutton, R.N., BSN; D. Sean Stewart, M.D., interventional cardiologist, Norton Heart & Vascular Institute; Matthew J. Sousa, M.D., interventional cardiologist, Norton Heart & Vascular Institute; Robert Coolidge, RT-R CI, Regan Judd, Medtronic representative; Deborah Davis, R.N., BSN, catheterization lab manager

Projects, publications and PRESENTATIONS

Kentucky Hospital Association Quality Conference

Poster presentation

Implementing Structured Postpartum Discharge Education via Virtual Nurse: A Qualitative Review of the Impact on Length of Stay

Presenters

Alyssa Drury, R.N., BSN
Deidre Jordan, R.N., ADN
Barbara Smith, R.N., BSN
Taylor Thompson, MSN, RNC-MNN
Mackenzie West, BSN, RNC-MNN
Katie White, BSN, RNC-MNN
Joann Wray, DNP, MBA, R.N., NEA-BC

Poster presentation

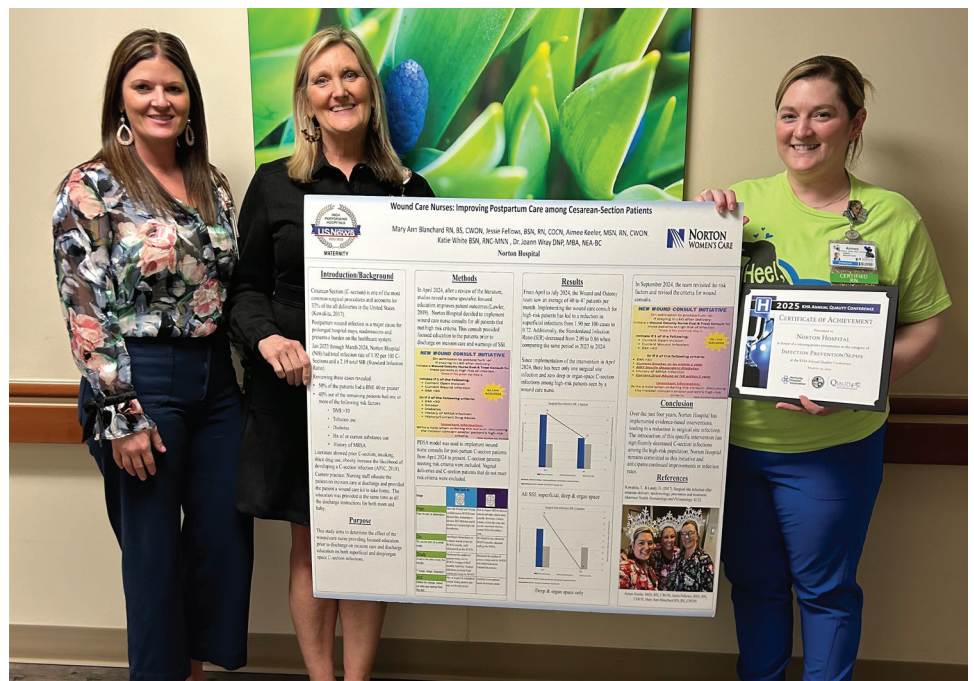
Wound Care Nurses: Improving Postpartum Care Among Cesarean-section Patients

Presenters

MaryAnn Blanchard, R.N., B.S., CWON
Jessie Fellows, BSN, R.N., COCN
Aimee Keeler, MSN, R.N., CWON
Katie White, BSN, RNC-MNN
Joann Wray, DNP, MBA, R.N., NEA-BC



From left, Joann Wray, DNP, MBA, R.N., NEA-BC; Katie White, BSN, RNC-MNN



From left, Katie White, BSN, RNC-MNN; Joann Wray, DNP, MBA, R.N., NEA-BC; and Aimee Keeler, MSN, R.N., CWON.

Projects, publications and PRESENTATIONS

Kentucky Symposium for Maternal and Infant Outcome

Podium presentation

Enhancing Anesthesia Choices for Cesarean Delivery:
The ELEVATE Project

Presenter

Sarah Rumbaugh, BSN, R.N., C-EFM



Stroke Care Network Summit

Poster presentation

Reducing Aspiration Pneumonia in Stroke Patients
Through Oral Care

Presenter

Eric Brown, DNP, MSN-NEL, R.N., CCR.N.-K
Karen Laufenburg, M.A., BSN, R.N., ASC-BC



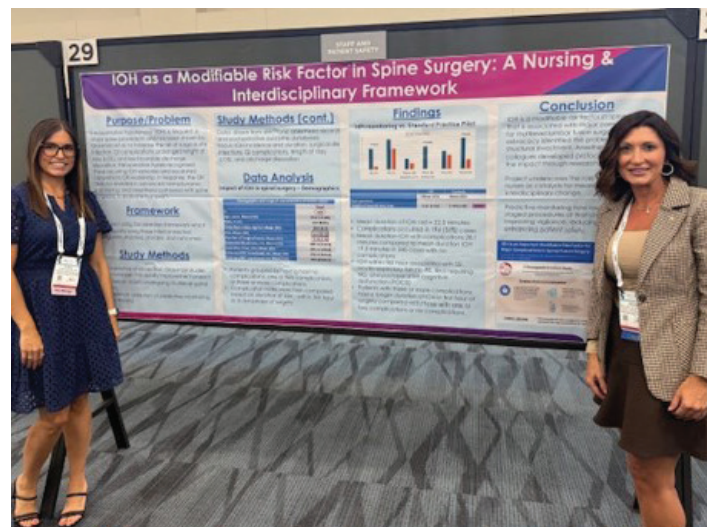
OR Manager Conference

Poster presentation

Intraoperative Hypotension (IOH) as a Modifiable Risk
Factor in Spine Surgery:
A Nursing and Interdisciplinary Framework

Presenters

Heather Smith, MSN, R.N., CNOR, NEA-BC
Patricia Thomas, BSN, R.N., CPAN



Norton Hospital GRANTS

Norton Hospital has been awarded over \$2.4 million in direct and indirect supporting grants, significantly enhancing the quality of care we provide our patients.

Child and family life

- Adult facility dog program

Emergency services

- Expansion of the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Nurse Program

Hospital administration

- Fee support for four perioperative nurse certification (CNOR credential) exams
- Geriatric safety initiative
- Perioperative nurse certification (CNOR) review course for 37 operating room nurses
- Shirley Powers Nursing Education Fund
- Norton Hospital Clinical Ancillary Fund

Medical library

- Library updates
- Orthopedic resources

Operating room

- Spine Tumor Program

Pastoral care

- Chaplain residency program

Pharmacy

- Pharmacy leadership retreat

Surgical services

- Optimization of care for preoperative patients

Women's services

- Infant loss/fetal bereavement memory-making supplies
- Maternal-fetal medicine fellowship development and continuing education, jointly with the University of Louisville School of Medicine
- Norton Doula Services 2025
- Virtual reality pilot for obstetric services