



Northwestern Medicine  
Academic Medical Center

Fiscal Year 2023

# Nursing Annual Report



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# A Message From the Wood-Prince Family Chief Nurse Executive

I am honored to share with you the Northwestern Medicine Academic Medical Center 2023 Nursing Annual Report. In this report, you will see just a few examples of the countless ways our clinical nurses at Northwestern Medical Group (NMG) and Northwestern Memorial Hospital (NMH) are living out the principles of our NM Interprofessional Relationship-Based Care practice model. These examples demonstrate how our nurses care for patients, their families and the community; collaborate with their colleagues; and take advantage of professional development opportunities, such as the systemwide Lead, Excel and Develop (LEAD) Program. In these ways, clinical nurses are making a far-reaching impact through the care we provide here.

I am proud to say that NMH has been recognized as a Magnet® organization for 17 years, and we continue our journey with an ongoing commitment to our patients. The Magnet model provides a framework for the care we provide focusing on Transformational Leadership; Structural Empowerment; Exemplary Professional Practice; and New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements, which leads to improved Empirical Outcomes.

Grounded in the core principles of Magnet, our nurses are in a unique position to support our Patients First mission and demonstrate the NM values: Patients First, Integrity, Teamwork and Excellence. This culture of excellence can be seen in our nurses every single day, not only in the work they do, but in the passion that drives every interaction.

I am excited for our upcoming year as we work toward our fifth Magnet designation. I am proud and honored to recognize and share all the work of our exceptional nurses at the AMC through this 2023 Nursing Annual Report.

Kristin Ramsey, MSN, MPPM, RN, NE-BC, Senior Vice President, Quality, Northwestern Memorial HealthCare Wood-Prince Family Chief Nurse Executive, NMH and NMG



# Transformational Leadership

## Supporting Clinician Well-being With a Targeted Podcast: Better, RN

Alyssa Saklak, BSN, RN, CMSRN, a program manager in the Office of Professional Practice, had an idea for a podcast that would promote the health and well-being of nurses. She found a collaborator in Laurin Masnari, BSN, RN, CMSRN, a patient care manager in General Medicine, who helped guide the vision for the podcast: reflecting on the effect the COVID-19 pandemic had on burnout in nursing. The project received support from one of the Eleanor Wood-Prince grants that are awarded annually by the Woman's Board of Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

In their podcast description, Saklak and Masnari explained to nurses that they could “learn new ways to show up better, not only for your patients and your colleagues, but also for your family and – most importantly – yourself. You’ll get real talk from real nurses with real strategies to live better.” During May and June of 2023, they released seven episodes to match the seven domains of well-being: spiritual, financial, intellectual, physical, social, environmental and emotional.



**Alyssa Saklak, BSN, RN, CMSRN**  
**Laurin Masnari, BSN, RN, CMSR**

## AONL Fellowships Help Nurse Leaders Develop Skills Unique to Their Role

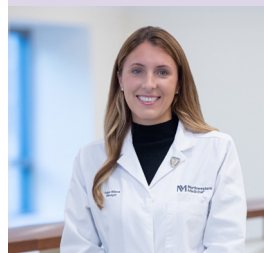
In 2023, two NM AMC nurse leaders were supported by our generous donors to participate in a competitive leadership development program offered by the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL). Tricia O'Sullivan, MSN, RN, ACNS-BC, NE-BC, was accepted into the 2023 AONL Nurse Director fellowship program, and Paige Wilson, MSN, RN, CMSRN, NE-BC, was accepted into the 2023 AONL Nurse Manager fellowship program. Both fellowships are year-long professional development programs targeting the unique leadership development needs of nursing leaders.

These programs invite nurses to go in depth within a learning environment and incorporate the AONL nurse executive competencies or the nurse manager learning domain framework. The Nurse Director fellowship is for individuals accountable for planning, directing and coordinating the operations of multiple units, departments, or service lines, while the Nurse Manager fellowship targets those responsible for leading change to advance health. Part of each nurse's application is a proposal for a capstone project that will enhance their leadership competencies.



**2023 AONL Nurse Director Fellow**  
**Tricia O'Sullivan, MSN, RN,**  
**ACNS-BC, NE-BC**

Patient Care Director, Emergency  
Department  
Proposal: "NMH Boarder Care Unit"



**2023 AONL Nurse Manager Fellow**  
**Paige Wilson, MSN, RN, CMSRN,**  
**NE-BC**

Patient Care Manager, Emergency  
Department  
Proposal: "Reducing Falls on an  
Inpatient Medical Unit"



# Structural Empowerment

## How Excellence Is Built Into Daily Nursing Practice

Clinical nurses at Northwestern Medicine continuously strive to be better through professional development. It is how they participate in the mission of being a premier integrated academic health system where the patient comes first. Both Northwestern Medical Group (NMG) and Northwestern Memorial Hospital (NMH) offer programs called Transition Into Practice where baccalaureate-prepared and specialty-certified nurses demonstrate their knowledge and professionalism in support of clinical excellence.

The year-long NMH RN Residency Transition Into Practice program is offered to nurses with less than 12 months of professional practice experience. This program, nationally accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a Practice Transition Accreditation Program (PTAP), is available in all six NMH pavilions and spans 17 practice settings. RN Residency competencies are based on the American Nurses Association scope and standards of practice. Nurse residents have regular, structured transition-into-practice meetings with leadership, and a dedicated curriculum that includes Nurse Residency Professional Development Days during the 12-month program.

### NMH nurses onboarded in FY23: 768

NMH education:



1.8%	Diploma or associate degree in Nursing
89%	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
9%	Master of Science in Nursing
0.2%	Doctor of Nursing Practice

The NMG Ambulatory Transition Into Practice Fellowship Program was launched in August 2023, with 18 nurses in the first cohort across 13 practice settings. The five-month program was developed for nurses to ensure a successful transition into ambulatory care at the AMC. The fellowship curriculum focuses on knowledge, skills and attitudes, including five components:



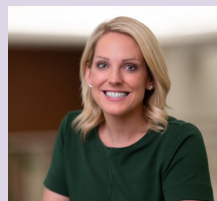
- Basic orientation classes
- Transition Into Practice classes
- Structured touchpoints
- Specialty-specific competencies
- A preceptor program

Clinical nurses at the NM AMC participate in shared leadership committees that enable nurses from all settings and roles to actively participate in organizational decision making, interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership development activities. Our nursing shared leadership structure is designed to foster horizontal and vertical communication, inspire nursing excellence and promote autonomy and accountability among nurses throughout the organization.



**Jill Trzaska, MSN, RN, BMTCN, OCN, CNL**  
Clinical Coordinator, 16 Prentice  
FY23 Vicki Maurer Clinical Cancer Center  
Nursing Award recipient  
Chair, Nursing Professional  
Practice Committee

"Being involved in nursing shared leadership as chair of the Nursing Professional Practice Committee has been instrumental in my development because I have the opportunity to advocate as the voice of the bedside nurse. Participating in shared leadership is important for nurses because it encourages networking with nurses throughout the hospital. We gain an understanding of what drives our nursing practice as well as ways to make improvements for our patients and bedside nurses."



**Beth Whippo, MSN, RN-BC**  
Aortic Dissection Program Coordinator  
Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute  
Chair, NMG Nursing Professional  
Practice Committee

"As chair of the NMG Nursing Professional Practice Committee, my favorite thing about shared leadership is the platform it provides for idea sharing and innovation. I am proud to have contributed to initiatives that promote nursing research, certification and wellness. In 2024, we will be merging the NMH and NMG committees, and this unified structure will advance the collaboration of NM nurses in delivering quality care in inpatient and outpatient settings."

# Exemplary Professional Practice



## Professional Development and Career Growth Through the LEAD Program

Northwestern Medicine started the Lead, Excel, and Develop (LEAD) program to foster professional development and career growth. Each year, clinicians participating in LEAD advance clinical practice and care delivery through innovation, research and quality improvement. They do so by launching DMAIC (define, measure, analyze, improve and control), evidence-based practice or research projects.

The objectives of the LEAD program are to:

- Empower clinicians to identify opportunities to positively impact relationships, reliability, efficiency and growth
- Advance NM strategic priorities and promote its local and national reputation
- Recognize and reward clinicians with compensation who go above and beyond to advance clinical practice, care delivery and outcomes while enhancing professional growth and development.

In addition, nurses complete professional development activities based on different program levels. An incentive bonus is paid at the end of the year once all requirements are completed.

FY23 LEAD by the numbers	NMH	NMG
 projects	33	5
 clinical nurse participants	88	9



## Eliminating Rectal Tube Pressure Injuries From the MICU

Clinical nurses are well-known for noticing opportunities to enhance the care they provide. Quality Coordinators Samantha Matson, BSN, RN, CCRN; Kristi Harworth, BSN, RN, CCRN; and Clinical Coordinator Claire Liskay, BSN, RN, CCRN, saw an opportunity to decrease rectal tube injuries in the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU). The LEAD Program offered the support and resources these nurses needed to complete an project.

October 2022 saw the implementation in the MICU of a set of interventions designed to improve rectal tube care and reduce the number of pressure injuries. These interventions were identified through literature review, approved by the Pressure Injury Steering Committee and then implemented with the support of Certified Wound Ostomy Nurse, Christina E. Roembke, BSN, RN, CWON, and a number of skin resource clinical nurses.

The MICU quality coordinators continued to track patients who had rectal tubes and ensure that best practices were followed. From the launch of these interventions through the end of fiscal year 2023, the MICU reported zero rectal tube-related pressure injuries.

## Improving Outcomes for Patients With Painful Oral Lesions

Treatment options are limited for oral lesions due to graft-versus-host disease and lichen planus. Patients often find the treatments available to them are prohibitively expensive or not covered by their insurance. The opportunity for a LEAD project to address this issue was spotted by Dermatology Clinic Nurse Clinician Annie Froelich, BSN, RN, DNC; Ambulatory Clinical Nurse Educator Elizabeth Centanni, MSN, RNC, and other multidisciplinary team members.

One treatment possibility is a common form of phototherapy called narrowband ultraviolet B therapy (NBUBV). The team used their LEAD project to create a workflow whereby a patient with oral lesions is assessed and screened by a physician and nurse clinician to determine whether they are a candidate for NBUBV. After the implementation of this workflow, nurses can provide the NBUBV treatment.

As a result, 100% of patients reported both decreased pain and erythema and 86% of patients reported decreased edema. Some patients reported regaining their sense of taste and saliva production. This LEAD project may continue to benefit even more patients because of these indications the treatment could carry over to other conditions that are similarly hard to treat.

# Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements

## Supplying the Infrastructure That Supports Nursing Research

The vision of the Northwestern Medicine Nurse Scholar Program is to integrate evidence-based practice and translational research in the everyday world of professional nursing practice at the NM AMC.

The ability to articulate the science of nursing allows nurses to deliver exceptional care and improve nursing practice based on clinical evidence. Each year, the Office of Professional Practice and Development sponsors an incoming cohort of NM AMC Nurse Scholars.

The goals of the NM Nurse Scholar Program are to:

- Increase knowledge of issues pertinent to professional nursing
- Improve patient care
- Disseminate that knowledge to NM clinical nurses and at local, regional or national conference

Every year the Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Committee plans and hosts the Northwestern Medicine Academic Medical Center and Brinson Foundation Research Symposium.

NM Nurse Scholars are invited to present their studies in the form of a poster or podium presentation or participate in the Nurse Scholar panel discussion, which has become a highlight for symposium attendees.

### **Zoe Gardziola, BSN, RN, ONC**

Clinical Nurse, 14 West

Northwestern Memorial Hospital

Project: "Supporting Resilience Among Nursing Staff on 14 West"

### **Rachel Ward, BSN, RN, SCRNP**

Nurse Clinician, Neurosurgery Clinic

Northwestern Medical Group

Project: "Awake Craniotomy Patient Experience and Recollection: Understanding Patients' Perception of Control, Anxiety, Fear, and Pain"

**Lauren Fogle, BSN, RN** (not pictured below)

Clinical Nurse, Neuro Spine Intensive Care Unit  
Northwestern Memorial Hospital  
Project: "Second Victim Trauma in Nurses"

**Lydia Koepke, MS, APRN, RN-BC, CWON**

Wound Ostomy Nurse Clinician, General Surgery Operations  
Northwestern Memorial Hospital  
Project: "Use of Infrared Thermography in Identifying Wound Etiology and Identification of Wounds Present on Admission to an Acute Care Hospital"

**Christina E. Roembke, BSN, RN, CWON**

Wound Ostomy Nurse Clinician, General Surgery Operations  
Northwestern Memorial Hospital  
Project: "Use of Infrared Thermography in Identifying Wound Etiology and Identification of Wounds Present on Admission to an Acute Care Hospital"



## World-Class Leadership for Advancing Nursing Research



In 2023, dedicated Nurse Scientist Angela Maeder, PhD, RNC-OB, was hired to support the advancement of nursing research and evidence-based practice at the NM AMC consistent with organizational and nursing strategic roadmaps.

Strategies include the development of an individual and collaborative program of research focused on quality and patient safety and collaboration with nurses, physicians and others to advance nursing research outcomes more broadly.

The nurse scientist will be instrumental in identifying funding sources for research and submitting grant applications to advance nursing research, foster clinical inquiry and mentor nursing staff in proposal development and completion of research. The nurse scientist also serves on the Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Committee and oversees the NM Nurse Scholar Program.

# Empirical Outcomes

## Fiscal Year 2023 Nursing Accomplishments

Wound and ostomy care received a boost from the addition of certified wound ostomy nurses. Each certified wound ostomy nurse was assigned to a critical care unit, where they addressed prevention and treatment and collaborated with their clinical teams. In addition, these nurses provide annual education and competencies for their units and consistently share their skills and education with clinical staff and skin resource nurses.

Certified wound ostomy nurses are clinical experts for all skin-related issues, consulted about any patients with wounds or skin breakdown concerns. They provide at-the-elbow support for pressure injury prevention, assessment and treatment. After this model of care was implemented in the intensive care units (ICUs), work has continued to expand into medical-surgical units.

### The FY23 results for ICU measures showed:

↓ A **31%** reduction in pressure injuries coded as PSI-03

↓ A decrease in prevalence rate from **8.42% to 3.83%**



Lydia Koepke, MS, APRN, RN-BC, CWON

Kristi Meredith, BSN, RN, CWOCN

Kirby Mathe, BSN, RN, CWON

Valerie L. McClenahan, BSN, RN, CWON

Christina E. Roembke, BSN, RN, CWON

Akta Patel, BSN, RN, CWON

Sarah Hartrick, BSN, RN, CCRN, CWOCN

Northwestern Memorial Hospital nurses use evidence-based practice to outperform national benchmarks for quality indicators.

In FY23, Northwestern Memorial Hospital showed improvement in clinical quality indicators:



↓35%

in hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPI)



↓13%

in catheter associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI)



↓26%

in falls

In FY23, ambulatory nurses outperformed national benchmarks in the majority of quarters for the following quality metrics:



Emergency Department fall rate: injury falls per 1,000 patient visits or cases (total number of visits is >80,000 annually)

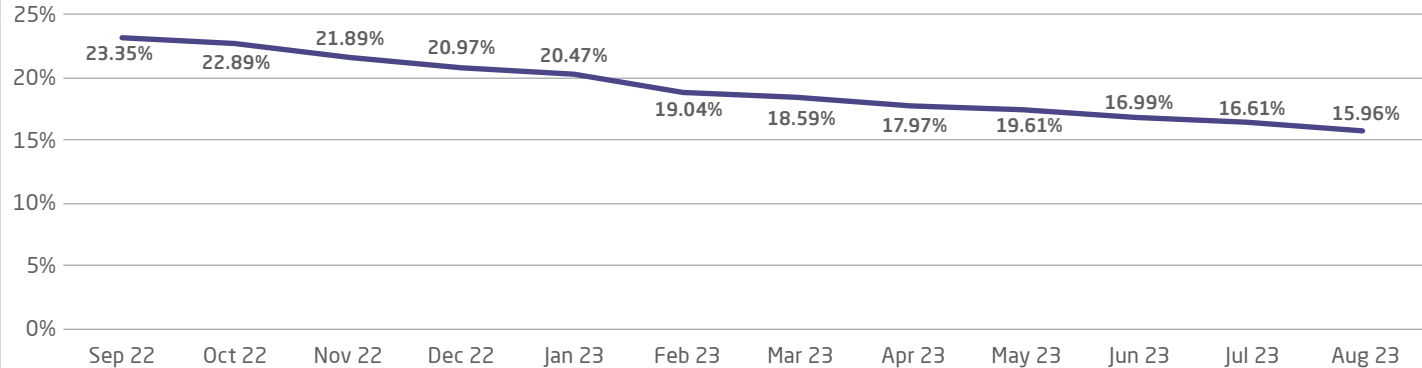


Dysphagia screen compliance in the Emergency Department



Stroke 4 Thrombolytic Therapy in the Emergency Department

FY23 AMC Combined Nurse Turnover Rate



# Fiscal Year 2023 NM AMC Nursing Excellence Award Recipients



Emily Hill, BSN, RN, CEN, CCRN  
Ambulatory and Procedural Care Nursing

Elizabeth Messina, MSN, RN, CCRN  
Float Pool

Chad Richardson, DNP, RN-BC  
Cardiac Nursing

Maureen Athern, MSN, RN, CMSRN  
Inpatient Surgical Nursing

David Sowers, BSN, RN, MS, CCDS  
Clinical Documentation and Quality  
Utilization

Mary Claire Houlihan, MS, RN, CCRN  
Medicine Nursing

Elizabeth Byrne, BSN, RN, CEN  
Emergency/Trauma Department

Caryl Brato, BSN, RN, CNRN  
Neuro/Ortho Nursing

Shaunie Walker, BSN, RNC-OB  
General OB-GYN Clinic

Maleka Suleiman, MSN, RN, CNL  
Stone Institute of Psychiatry

Chris Sabastian, BSN, RN, MSCN  
Lavin 19 Neurology

Katie Calomino, BSN, RN, CNOR  
Surgical Services

Megan Masterson, BSN, RN, OCN  
Oncology Nursing

Leanne Morrison, BS, RN, RNC-OB, C-EFM  
Women's Health





# Northwestern Medicine Nurse Attributes

*Collaborative*

*Compassionate*

*Knowledgeable*

*Patient Advocate*

*Professional*



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