

# 2024 Annual Nursing Report



Children's Healthcare of Atlanta



# A Letter From the Chief Nursing Officer

---



It is with great pride and gratitude that I present our 2024 Annual Nursing Report. This report reflects the unwavering dedication, excellence and innovation demonstrated by Children's nurses throughout the past year—one marked by remarkable achievements and milestones.

The year began on an exciting note as Hughes Spalding received our second Pathway to Excellence® designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). I was proud to celebrate this accomplishment, as well as Scottish Rite's second Magnet designation, at the ANCC's Magnet and Pathway to Excellence Conference® in the fall, and I look forward to welcoming the 2025 conference to Atlanta!

As 2024 continued with high inpatient and outpatient volumes, our nursing teams rose to the occasion—publishing research, delivering life-changing patient care and leading major projects across the System.

The undeniable highlight of 2024 was a historic feat: preparing to open Arthur M. Blank Hospital and successfully transferring 202 patients from Egleston and Scottish Rite to the new, state-of-the-art facility in less than 10 hours. This monumental effort required collaboration from thousands of employees across disciplines, and Children's nurses were at the center of it all—from coordinating more than 84,000 hours of orientation and training to planning logistics for the patient move. There is no better example of our nurses' strength, resilience and teamwork in action.

Amidst this busy year, we grew our nursing team with hundreds of new hires, achieved an impressive 89.2% retention rate, and maintained meaningful connections within our community through initiatives like the Community Nurse Advocacy Fellowship and Farm Worker Family Health Program mission trip.

Looking toward 2025, I am excited about the opportunities and accomplishments that lie ahead, such as expanding our impact through our first international mission trip and ensuring safe, quality care. Powered by the incredible force of our Children's nursing community, I am confident we will continue to achieve extraordinary success together.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Linda Cole". The script is fluid and cursive.

Linda Cole, MBA, BSN, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC

Chief Nursing Officer

Senior Vice President, Arthur M. Blank Hospital Operations



# Contents

Nurses at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta maintain their commitment to delivering exceptional care to kids and practicing at the top of their profession. This Annual Nursing Report outlines our nurses’ steadfast contributions to superior outcomes and continuous self-improvement to further strengthen our focus on what matters most, the kids.

**Introduction . . . . .4**

With the most hospitals and neighborhood locations, we’re the largest healthcare provider for kids in Georgia—plus one of the largest pediatric clinical care providers in the country. Yet we succeed and progress toward our Vision *to be a unified pediatric system that does everything possible to make anything possible for kids.*

**Our Nurses . . . . .10**

Caring for kids is no easy task, yet our nurses exemplify the compassionate, caring and supportive nature that is at the heart of Children’s. Whether providing clinical care or working in specialty areas, our nurses span a wide range of roles and responsibilities, all with the same Mission of *making kids better today and healthier tomorrow.*

**Excellence in Nursing. . . . .34**

The Nursing Strategic Plan is a road map to position nursing at Children’s as a nationally recognized program through the achievement of superior outcomes. Built upon four strategic focus areas, this road map guides us to achieve our Mission and maintain our core belief that kids are at the center of everything we do.

**Professional Practice. . . . .35**

See how nurses at Children’s provide a safe, evidence-based, interprofessional practice environment that results in the highest quality and safety outcomes.

**Leadership . . . . .40**

See how nurses at Children’s inspire and develop transformational leaders who serve as change agents, role models and visionaries to promote accountability and empower their teams.

**Workforce. . . . .50**

See how nurses at Children’s help attract, grow and retain a diverse nursing workforce that is resilient and adaptive to change.

**Technology . . . . .61**

See how nurses at Children’s optimize the use of technology to support care delivery, standardize nursing practice and promote innovation and efficiency to achieve quality outcomes.

# A Mission That Makes a Difference

For more than 100 years, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta has played an essential role in our community and throughout the country by working together on clinical, teaching, research and advocacy programs that provide the highest quality of care. Children’s employees are unique in how passionate we are about kids. We are proud to be problem solvers, innovators and a trusted resource for anyone in a child’s life. Our Mission, Vision, Values and Promise manifest in each of us and serve as a constant reminder that we put kids at the center of everything.

**Mission**  
*To make kids better today and healthier tomorrow.*

**Vision**  
*To be a unified pediatric system that does everything possible to make anything possible for kids.*

**Values**

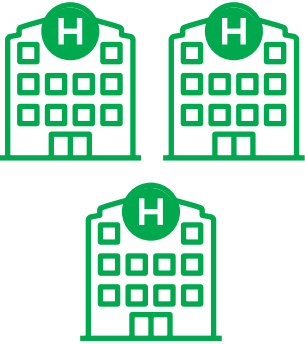
- Care about People
- Passionate about Kids
- Dedicated to Better
- Committed to Self


**Promise**  
*People First, Children Always.*


## Who We Are at Children’s


Since 1915, Children’s has made it a priority to give all kids access to the specialized care they need. We want to give every child the best chance for their lifetime. While we deliver exceptional care to kids across Georgia and beyond, we also have advanced the field of pediatrics through groundbreaking research and innovative clinical trials. As we continue to lead the way for comprehensive care, we’ll think bigger, push further and achieve more for the kids we serve.


### Today, Children’s consists of:

**Three Hospitals**  
Arthur M. Blank,  
Hughes Spalding  
and Scottish Rite Hospitals

**Center for  
Advanced  
Pediatrics**

**Marcus  
Autism  
Center**

**23  
Outpatient  
Clinics**

**Eight  
Urgent Care  
Centers**



In 2024, staff throughout our System managed:

**453,400+**  
unique patients

(from all  
159 counties  
in Georgia)

**29,000+**  
hospital  
discharges

**1,210,000+**  
outpatient visits



**238,900+**  
Emergency  
Department  
visits

**20,600+**  
primary care visits

**187,000+**  
Urgent Care  
Center visits

**45,500+**  
surgical procedures  
(including inpatient  
and outpatient)



**57,300+**  
calls to the Children's  
nurse advice line

**190,400+**  
inpatient days



**21,406**  
telemedicine  
visits

## Egleston Hospital

(Data below for Jan. 1 to  
Sept. 29, 2024)

- **242,957** patient visits
- **330** licensed beds
- **71,325** inpatient days
- **55,942** Emergency  
Department visits

## Arthur M. Blank Hospital

(Data below for Sept. 29  
to Dec. 31, 2024)

- **117,036** patient visits
- **446** licensed beds
- **30,236** inpatient days
- **24,532** Emergency  
Department visits

## Hughes Spalding Hospital

- **87,318** patient visits
- **24** licensed beds
- **2,212** inpatient days
- **56,181** Emergency  
Department visits

## Scottish Rite Hospital

- **392,830** patient visits
- **319** licensed beds
- **86,710** inpatient days
- **102,314** Emergency  
Department visits







# The Opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital

## A Monumental Move

Enthusiastic cheers, clapping and whistles filled the halls of Arthur M. Blank Hospital Sunday, Sept. 29, as Children's employees welcomed our first patient through the doors. In under 10 hours, our Children's teams transported 202 patients from Egleston Hospital and the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center at Scottish Rite as part of the grand opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital.

Leading up to this day, thousands of individuals dedicated years of their time and talents to make it all possible.



*“Move Day was a day worth remembering—for our patients and their families, who will benefit from this hospital and the care we will provide here for generations to come; for our staff, who worked so hard to design spaces, plan clinical workflows and prepare departments; and for the hundreds of planning team members who have poured their hearts and souls into this project.”*

*Kristen Cranmer, MSN, RN, CPNP, PCNS-BC, NEA-BC, Director of Hospital Planning*





## Move Day Moments

At 7 a.m. sharp, the Egleston Emergency Department (ED) closed its doors, and across town, the Arthur M. Blank Hospital ED team opened theirs for the very first time. **Linda Cole, MBA, BSN, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC**, Senior Vice President of Arthur M. Blank Hospital Operations and Chief Nursing Officer, announced the opening and the first patient on their way from Egleston.

Our nurses played a vital role in continuing the care of our patients while also safely transporting this precious cargo. Floor by floor, minute by minute, they loaded each patient onto a stretcher and brought them by ambulance or Children's Transport Truck to our new state-of-the-art facility. From the tiniest of babies to the sickest of kids, every patient received a star-worthy welcome from our nurses, other clinical staff and Move Day volunteers.

As the first patients began to settle into their new rooms, we began to see the profound impact of the beautiful, healing space. One nurse shared about a young boy who had been uncomfortable for days leading up to the move. Within hours of arriving to his new room—complete with a garden view and flooded with natural light, like most patient rooms at the hospital—the child's mood had improved greatly.

Finally, shortly after 6 p.m., the last patient rolled into the brand-new Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center at Arthur M. Blank Hospital. Staff and volunteers throughout the building let out a collective cheer—the patient move was done!





## A Team Effort

The success of the day would not have been possible without the meticulous planning and hard work of our hospital transition teams, made up of thousands of nurses and employees, some of whom had been working toward and dreaming of that moment for many years.

## A New Chapter for All

On the evening of Move Day, as day shift employees and Move Day volunteers headed out for a well-deserved rest, they left behind the buzz of a busy, working hospital.

The end of Move Day was an emotional moment for all who played a part in making the vision for the hospital a reality. The move is done and so begins the legacy of Arthur M. Blank Hospital—and the countless ways our people will *do everything possible to make anything possible for kids* within its walls.



# Our Nurses

The professional practice model (PPM) is a framework that serves as a guide for defining, overseeing and evaluating professional nursing practice to ensure and support the advancement of the nursing profession at Children's. The PPM, also referred to as our practice framework, represents nurses' professional identity through eight components that describe how nurses at Children's practice, collaborate, communicate and develop professionally to provide patient-centered care of the highest quality—collectively, it defines what it means to be a Children's nurse.

By the profession's nature, nurses are committed to lifelong learning. Children's provides critical training and development that makes learning easy and accessible for busy nurses. My Path, our nursing career advancement program, provides a way for nurses to invest in themselves and their professional growth. In 2024, more than 200 nurses advanced in My Path, increasing the amount of advancements by more than 50% from the previous year.



## Professional Nursing Practice

**4,188**

Children's nurses

**436** advanced practice registered nurses

**7.9** average years of service

**1,079** nurses hired

## Clinical Nurse Advancements by Level

**153** nurses advanced to Clinical Nurse 3

**52** nurses advanced to Clinical Nurse 4

## Clinical Nurse Advancements by Campus

**205** nurses advanced in 2024

**97** at Egleston and Arthur M. Blank Hospitals

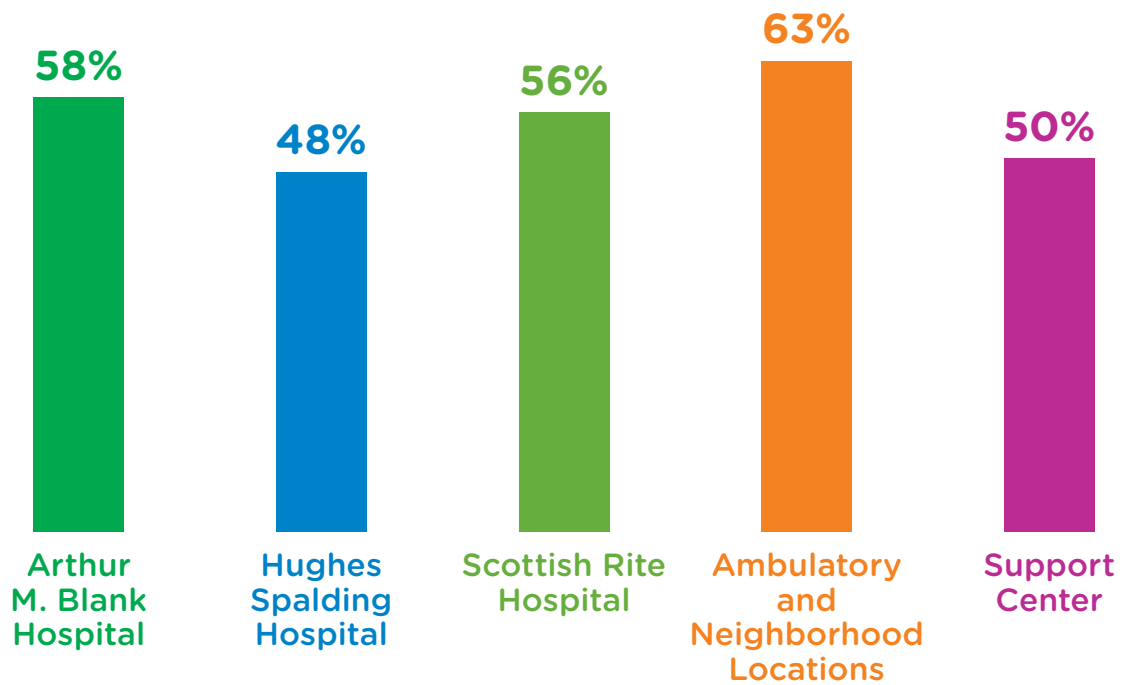
**90** at Scottish Rite Hospital

**16** at the Center for Advanced Pediatrics and Neighborhood Locations

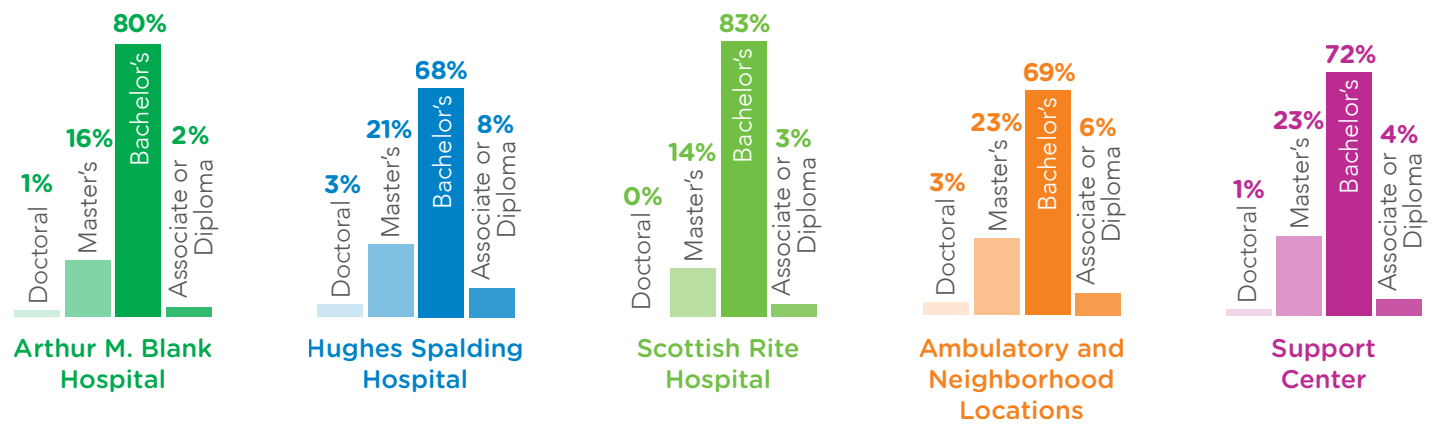
**2** at the Support Center



Clinical Nurse Certification Rates



Highest Nursing Degree by Campus

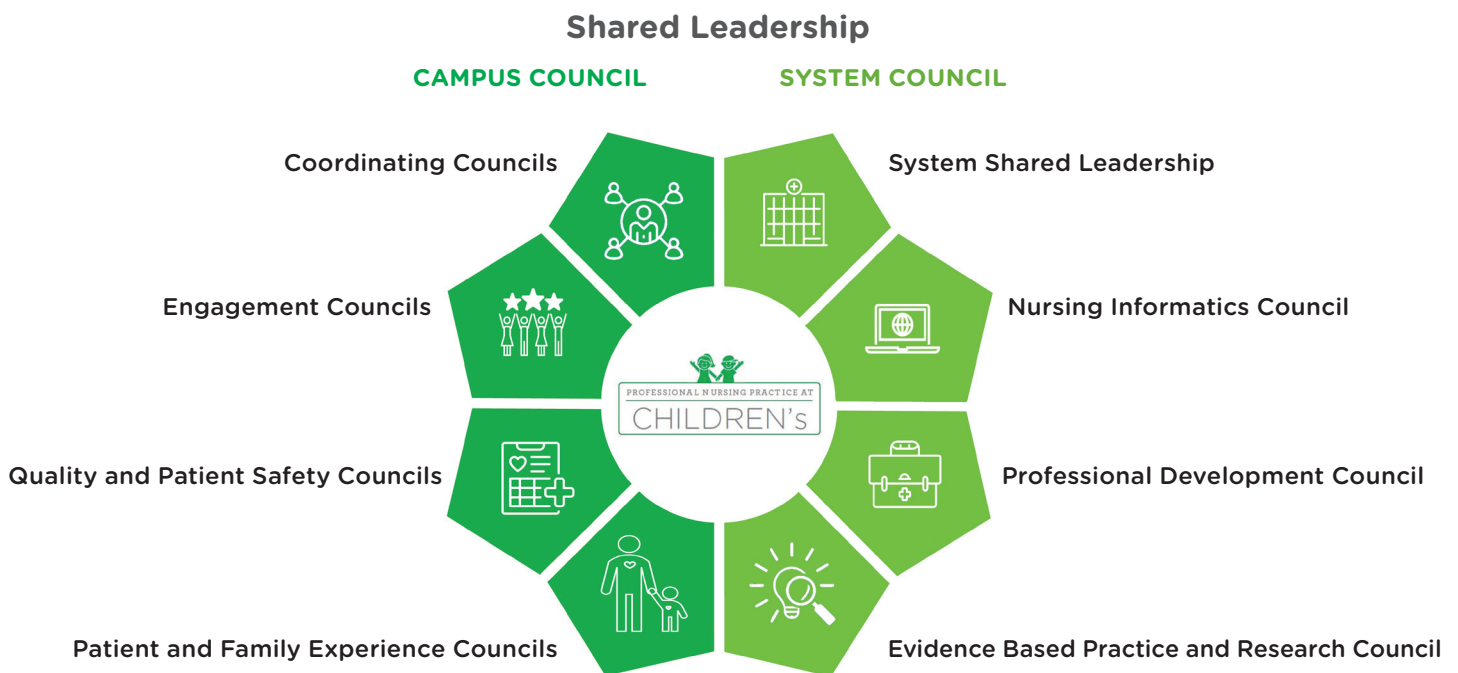


# Shared Leadership

## What is Shared Leadership?

Shared Leadership is the shared governance system at Children's. It was first implemented in 1984 and has evolved through periodic evaluations to better meet the needs of Children's nurses and reflect changes over time in pediatric healthcare. In 2016, it was formally named Shared Leadership after an interprofessional team redesigned the structure using the Donabedian framework, which is comprised of structure, process and outcome components. Now, nurses and interprofessional partners are formally organized to participate in decision-making that impacts clinical practice standards, quality improvement, professional development and research. Shared Leadership is implemented throughout Children's to engage nurses at all levels.

The purpose of Shared Leadership is to support the Children's Mission, Vision, Values and strategic plan by engaging and empowering clinical staff committed to achieving clinical excellence and demonstrating superior outcomes through the delivery of quality patient care for our families. Successful Shared Leadership relies on encouraging staff members to provide input to all councils and hold them accountable for following professional nursing practice standards.



## There are 13 councils within Shared Leadership.

- The three system councils are the Evidence-based Practice and Research Council, Professional Development Council, and Nursing Informatics Council.
- Arthur M. Blank and Scottish Rite Hospitals both have four campus councils: Coordinating Council, Engagement Council, Quality and Patient Safety Council, and Patient and Family Experience Council.
- Hughes Spalding Hospital and Ambulatory locations have Shared Leadership Councils that work as teams to cover the work of all campus councils and provide System-level council representation.

## Shared Leadership Highlights

Despite a busy year with the opening of a new hospital, high census and acuity, and historic patient volumes, Children's nurses and interprofessional partners dedicated their time to Shared Leadership councils by continuously participating in meetings and hosting multiple events.

- **More than 500 nurses participated in Pediatric Nurses Week events across all campuses with the theme "Our Nurses Are Out of This World"**
- **Three learning seminars, focused on Career Development 101, organized by the Professional Development Council**
- **More than 200% increase in DAISY nominations reviewed by the Engagement Council**
- **48 Action Requests submitted and reviewed**
- **More than 140 articles and 15 PICO questions reviewed by the Evidence-Based Practice and Research Council**
- **Celebrated National Certified Nurses' Day at all locations, recognizing all certified Children's employees**
- **Respite Room hosted for staff by Hughes Spalding Shared Leadership two weeks**
- **Rounding through multiple locations by the Ambulatory Quality and Patient Safety Council to promote using two patient identifiers**
- **Night Owls relaunched and honored nurses on "National Night Shift 'Day'" by providing night shift staff free coffee and smoothies from Mocha My Day**
- **More than 680 sandwiches made for the Sandwich Project by the Arthur M. Blank Hospital Patient and Family Experience Council**
- **Scottish Rite Quality and Patient Safety and Engagement Councils collaborated to host an ONS Education and Puppy Event, resulting in 35% increase in ONS-related confidence**





# ANCC Recognition

## Hughes Spalding Pathway to Excellence Redesignation

Hughes Spalding achieved the prestigious Pathway to Excellence® Program designation for the second consecutive time, reaffirming its commitment to fostering a healthy and empowering work environment for nurses.



The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) recognizes healthcare and long-term care organizations through the Pathway to Excellence Program for their dedication to creating positive practice environments where nurses thrive. This designation reflects the organization's unwavering focus on supporting nurses with the resources, opportunities and culture necessary for professional excellence.

In November 2023, a comprehensive 750-page document was submitted to the ANCC, detailing the organization's commitment to the Pathway to Excellence standards. The document was recognized as outstanding, professionally written, and well-organized, consistently reflecting a collaborative tone of quality and safety. The ANCC commended Hughes Spalding's document for its thoughtful descriptions, examples, narratives, and exhibits, which successfully demonstrated adherence to the six Pathway to Excellence standards—Shared Decision Making, Leadership, Safety, Quality, Well-Being and Professional Development—and their respective elements of performance.

The ANCC awarded Hughes Spalding an exemplar for implementing an evidence-based practice initiative that introduced quiet time for hospitalized children. This initiative, developed and launched in 2023, emphasized interdisciplinary collaboration and strong staff engagement to enhance the well-being of hospitalized children and their families. The ANCC highlighted the project's relevance, comprehensiveness and multidisciplinary engagement, as well as its strong potential for replication in other organizations.

The final step in the designation process was completed in February, when nurses participated in a confidential survey assessing the workplace environment and presence of the Pathway Standards. An impressive 87% of nurses completed the survey, exceeding the minimum participation requirement by 27%. The results surpassed all designation benchmarks, with at least 89% of respondents expressing agreement with all 28 questions, and 98% to 100% agreement with 12 of the survey questions.

**Valerie Morrison, DBA**, Chair of the ANCC Commission on Pathway to Excellence, noted:

*“This designation reflects the incredible culture built at this organization—one where patient safety and patient- and family-centered care are paramount, where nurses are empowered with a voice to address quality, safety and ethical care through interprofessional decision-making. Nurse leaders at all levels are accessible and meaningfully interact with the direct care team. This organization has reaffirmed its status as one of the best in the country for fostering a healthy workplace environment.”*

This achievement places Hughes Spalding among an elite group of fewer than 200 Pathway organizations nationwide, including only seven in Georgia.

The Pathway to Excellence designation demonstrates Hughes Spalding's commitment to supporting

nurses, fostering collaboration and driving innovation in healthcare. This recognition sets a standard of excellence for other organizations while ensuring the delivery of exceptional care to the community.

## 2024 ANCC Magnet and Pathway to Excellence Conference® in New Orleans

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) hosts an annual conference for nurses and leaders from Magnet® organizations, including Scottish Rite and Arthur M. Blank Hospital (previously obtained as Egleston), and Pathway to Excellence® hospitals, including Hughes Spalding, as well as those seeking these designations. In October 2024, more than 12,000 nurses from across the globe gathered in New Orleans to educate, innovate and celebrate nursing excellence.

At each annual conference, the ANCC acknowledges designations awarded since the previous year's conference by having those organizations walk across the conference stage. Forty-seven Children's nurses from across the system were able to walk, skip and dance their way across the conference stage to celebrate the immense amount of work that went into obtaining Scottish Rite's second Magnet designation (October 2023) and Hughes Spalding's second Pathway to Excellence designation (March 2024). In addition to the fun and excitement, nurses were inspired during keynote speaker sessions, learned more about the ANCC and the newly established American Nurses Enterprise (ANE), and attended innovation and best practice sessions. To add to the excitement, Children's nurse **Gina Dobrasz, MS, RN**, presented on "Creating Home Away from Home for International Nurses," moving audience members to tears and earning rave reviews. As a result of this presentation, Gina was selected to join the inaugural International Education Evaluation Nursing Advisory Board. This board is sponsored by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and will



set the national agenda on the issuance of Healthcare Worker Certificates for internationally educated nurses immigrating to the United States.

The conference provided an opportunity for attendees from Children's to meet and learn about how nurses work in various care areas throughout the System. The event allowed nurses to network with other organizations, develop professionally, learn how other organizations demonstrate nursing excellence and gather ideas about how to share the nursing work done at Children's. We are excited to be a Host Organization when the conference is in Atlanta in 2025.



# Awards and Recognition

At Children's, our nurses consistently demonstrate excellence in nursing practice, patient and family experience and dedication to the Children's Values. Their extraordinary attention to detail and the compassionate care they provide patients and staff is admirable. We recognize their hard work and achievements—both personal and professional—through a variety of celebrations and awards.



## Atlanta Journal-Constitution Nursing Excellence Awards

Each year, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC) asks the Atlanta community to share stories of exceptional nurses to feature in the AJC Nursing Excellence Awards. This year, more than 20 nominations were submitted by colleagues, supervisors, patients and families. Nominees attended a luncheon in May, organized by the AJC, to celebrate the bravery, kindness and perseverance.

## 2024 AJC Celebrating Nurses Awards Nominees

NAME/CREDENTIALS	JOB TITLE	CAMPUS
Abby Fallis, MSN, RN, NE-BC	Director, General Patient Care	Egleston Hospital
Anna Beth Daley, BSN, RN, RNC-NIC	Clinical Nurse 4	Scottish Rite NICU
Ashley Bostek, BSN, RN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse 3	Egleston CICU
Branden Delany, BSN, RN, CPN	Research Nurse	Egleston Research
Claire Taylor, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse 2	Egleston CACU
Erin Ellis, MSN, RN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Town Center Urgent Care
Glenna Kilgore, RN, CNOR	Behavioral and Mental Health Clinical Educator	Egleston BMH
Hannah Pakenham, BSN, RN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse 4	Scottish Rite PICU
Jake Moore, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse 2	Scottish Rite NICU
Kelsey Rogowski, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse 2	Egleston Transplant
Laina Latzsch, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse 3	Egleston CACU
Laura Solomon, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse 3	Egleston Transplant
Lilly Modly, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse 2	Egleston 5WE
Mackenzie Mealer, RN	Clinical Nurse 2	Scottish Rite TICU
Margaret Martin, PhD, RN, CPN, CBC	Clinical Nurse 3	Egleston 5WE
Patricia Waters, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse Coordinator	Scottish Rite Day Hospital
Portia Black-Peoples, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Central Staffing Office
Rachael Henderson, RN	Clinical Nurse 2	Egleston CICU
Trisha Whitley, RN	Clinical Nurse 3	Scottish Rite TICU
Veronica Garman, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse 3	Egleston Sedation Services



# Hope and Will Award

The Hope and Will Award is presented to Children’s employees and teams who go beyond the call of duty by demonstrating outstanding customer service, exemplary attitude and spirit, exceptional skills and a strong commitment to Children’s.

## 2024 Hope and Will Award Winners

NAME/CREDENTIALS	JOB TITLE	CAMPUS/DEPARTMENT
Shekina Wilson, BSN, RN, CPN, RN-BC	Case Management Team Lead	Egleston Hospital
Isabella DeMarco, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston HemOnc
Samantha Brown, RN, CPN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse	Critical Care Transport



### Samantha Brown, RN, CPN, CCRN

Samantha is *Passionate about Kids*—consistently demonstrated through her exceptional care for her patients at Scottish Rite. Recently, Samantha represented this dedication outside of our hospital walls when she happened upon a teen driver in grave danger.

After completing an especially challenging night shift, Samantha left Scottish Rite with the intention of going straight home to rest. On the way, however, she made a startling discovery: a vehicle was parked on the side of the road with plumes of thick black smoke rising from its hood.

Without hesitation, Samantha pulled over for a closer look and saw a scared teenage driver unsure of what to do next. Concerned about the smoke, Samantha sprang into action—rushing to get the teen out of the car and away from the potential danger.

Just moments later, the vehicle went up in flames.

Samantha, grateful to be there, calmed the frightened teen, who was a brand new driver on the way to school when the smoke began billowing from the car.

With both of them safe, Samantha called 911, while the teen called their parents. Emergency services arrived quickly, but roadblocks from the scene delayed the teen’s family’s arrival. In true Children’s fashion, Samantha volunteered to stay with the shaken teen until their parents arrived. Samantha ensured the teen felt calm, comforted and cared for after the frightening situation. She also gave the parents constant updates about their child’s well-being.

With the parents still unable to access the scene, Samantha took the teen to breakfast before dropping them off at school, demonstrating compassion well above any expectation.

*“This is just a small testament to the behavior that Samantha exudes every single day. To her, this was just another day of taking care of people,” Samantha’s nominator said. “The Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Scottish Rite and Children’s family are very lucky to have her.”*

## 2024 Hope and Will Team Award Winners

### Rehab Team Wins Hope and Will Award for Going Above and Beyond for Patient Receiving Palliative Care

In the months leading up to Patient Move Day, teams throughout Egleston were hard at work caring for kids and preparing for the transition to Arthur M. Blank Hospital. Amongst the busy schedules, staff members still made time to provide the special touches that make all the difference for patients. And one team, the Rehabilitation Team in the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, went the extra mile to bring comfort to a patient receiving end-of-life care.

The patient struggled with severe pain that made it difficult for them to move or complete tasks that would normally take minimal effort. Their most requested wish was to take a shower again and feel the relief and comfort it would bring.

While their request may seem simple, the patient's condition meant the task would require careful preparation and coordination. Still, the Rehab team was determined to make it happen. After days of planning, and with the help of multiple nurses and patient care technicians, they transported the patient via gurney to an accessible shower on a different unit and helped the child bathe with minimal added pain.

The patient was very grateful, sharing that they felt so much better afterward. Their relief made all the time and effort worth it to the team. Congrats to members of the Rehab Team: **McKenna Bange, BSN, RN; Olivia Azevedo, BSN, RN; Rachel Durante, OT; Lauren Palmer, PT; and Ana Harper, PCT.**

*“This team is truly Passionate about Kids and went above and beyond for this patient,” said Scott Burfitt, Vice President, Orthopedic and Sports Medicine, who helped present the award to the team.*

*“I am glad to work with creative problem solvers like them every day!”*



Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Rehab Team, Egleston





## Dedicated to Better: Children's Recognizes Multi-Disciplinary Team for the System's First-Ever Transport of Patients on ECMO

Our System's most prestigious honor, the Hope and Will Award, recognizes individuals and teams for exceptional contributions that go above and beyond their job duties and exemplify our Children's Values in tangible, often life-changing, ways. Recently, we added another team to this exclusive winner's circle.

Congrats to the ECMO Move Team: **Bonnie Miller, MBA, BSN, RN, CNML, CPN; Justin Young; Megan Sepanski, BSN, RN, CCRN; Heather Viamonte, MD; Brandon Lowe, RRT; Jessie Fleury, RN; Michael Fiedorek, MD; and Sarah Grant, RN.**

"How are we going to move our most critically ill patients?"

As Children's began making plans for Patient Move Day and the opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital, that question was on the minds of many in the Children's Heart Center.

Accuracy and precision are essential in every step of using an Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) machine—a medical device that mimics the work of the heart and lungs to provide oxygen for patients in critical cases. Transporting patients on ECMO, even just between units, is a big undertaking—requiring nearly a dozen people to complete safely. And until the opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital, our System had never attempted to transport a patient on ECMO between hospitals.



Members of the ECMO Move Team

To prepare for this monumental task, Children’s formed a multi-disciplinary task force of leaders, physicians and employees from the Children’s Heart Center, as well as members of the Children’s Transport Team.

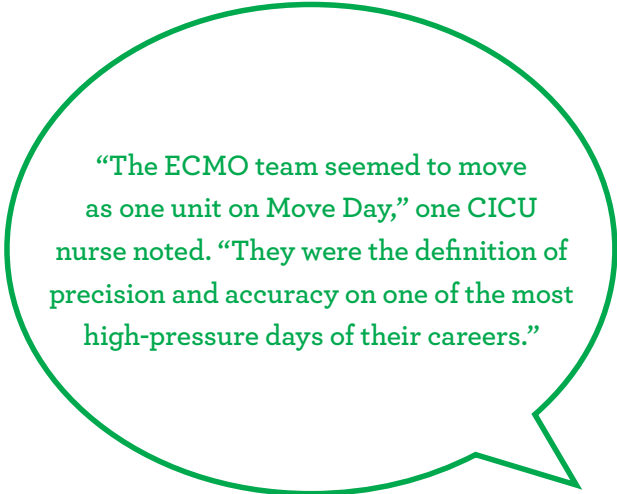
Bonnie Miller, Justin Young and Megan Sepanski kicked off the work—researching successful ECMO transports at other organizations, purchasing equipment, developing extensive checklists and scheduling many practice scenarios.

“They had to think of every possible glitch, each piece of equipment, and how to manage emergencies on the road,” said Kay Stewart-Huey, Vice President, Children’s Heart Center, who presented the team with their Hope and Will Award.

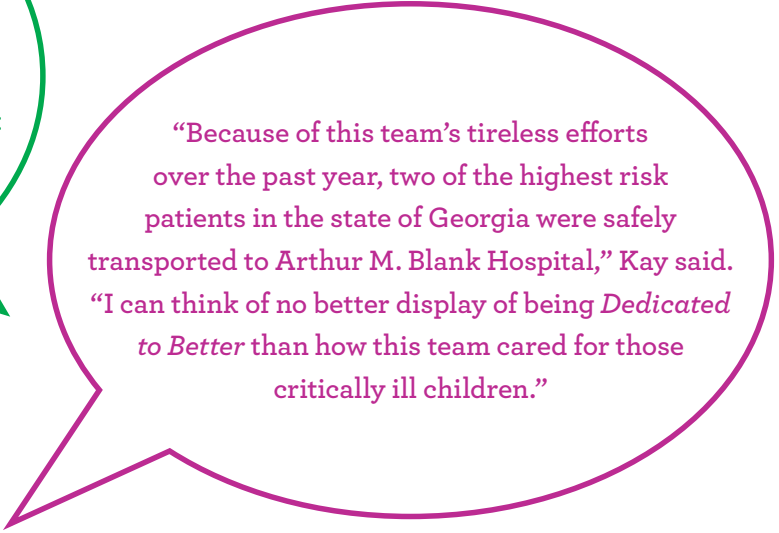
Throughout the planning and move, Dr. Viamonte and Dr. Fiedorek provided essential clinical expertise and leadership. Meanwhile, Advanced Technology Specialists Brandon Lowe, Jessie Fleury, and Sarah Grant offered insight about the ECMO machines and created contingency plans for every possible complication.

When Move Day finally arrived, the entire team was present to support their patients every step of the way.

From analyzing the ins and outs of high-risk transport to training care teams to developing best practices, each member of the ECMO task force went above and beyond to ensure their safety of their patients. Their work will also help improve future transports for kids with acute care needs.



“The ECMO team seemed to move as one unit on Move Day,” one CICU nurse noted. “They were the definition of precision and accuracy on one of the most high-pressure days of their careers.”



“Because of this team’s tireless efforts over the past year, two of the highest risk patients in the state of Georgia were safely transported to Arthur M. Blank Hospital,” Kay said. “I can think of no better display of being *Dedicated to Better* than how this team cared for those critically ill children.”



## DAISY Awards

The family of Patrick Barnes created the international DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses in his memory to recognize and thank nurses, the often “unsung heroes,” for the gifts they give their patients and families every day. Nurses at Children’s are nominated for the DAISY Award in recognition of their commitment to the highest standards of nursing excellence and for making a significant difference in the lives of the patients and families they serve.

### 2024 DAISY Award Winners

NAME/CREDENTIALS	ROLE	CAMPUS/DEPARTMENT
Kelly Alladina, BSN, RN, CDE	Diabetes Educator	Scottish Rite Diabetes Education
Kathleen Bradley, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston CACU
Kristal Bryant, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Hughes Spalding Inpatient
Tana DeLaurentis, MSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston PICU
Autumn Farah, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston CICU
Cheyenne Freeman, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PICU
Kyra Hayden, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston CICU
Kelly Jakaitis, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PCA2
Noah Johnson, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston CICU
Mary Kipp, BSN, RN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PICU
Carley Magyer, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PCA3
Mark Pennington, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite CSO
Alexis Stone, BSN, RN, CPN	Behavioral and Mental Health Nurse	Scottish Rite BMH
Margaret Thompson, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PCA2
Emily Tuck, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Center for Advanced Pediatrics Nephrology
Sophie Vestal, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston PICU
Janice Vigilia, RN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston PICU
Brigida Wharton, BSN, RN, CPEN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Cherokee Urgent Care



## Kristal Bryant, BSN, RN, CPN | Clinical Nurse, General Patient Care | Hughes Spalding

Kristal Cares about People and it shows in the way that she steps up to make Children's feel more like home for every person who walks through the door. In one instance, Kristal gave exceptional care to a non-English-speaking mother and her newborn.

Kristal, being the compassionate nurse that she is, put warm socks on the mother's feet, provided constant check-ins for her, and offered support while the mother navigated learning to breastfeed. She also advocated for translation and explanation of the baby's care plan to eliminate confusion, making sure this mother felt heard and confident during her stay. The mother was moved to tears by Kristal's detailed care, touched by how maternal and nurturing she was.

*"As a nurse and immigrant, I believe it's so meaningful to encounter care that is grounded in compassion, respect for humanity and cultural sensitivity," Kristal's nominator said. "Kristal's efforts went beyond providing medical care. She offered emotional support and was dedicated to making a genuine connection with her patient and the family. It is nurses like Kristal who make such a significant impact on their patients' lives."*

## Mark Pennington, RN | Clinical Nurse | Center Staffing Office

Mark Cares about People and makes his positive presence felt in every shift. Whether he is putting patient families at ease or lending a helping hand to a co-worker, he shows up ready to give his best for the people who count on him. Like recently, when he went out of his way to celebrate a medically complex patient who had to miss their graduation ceremony.

"Mark developed a great rapport with this patient, who ended up staying on his unit long-term," Mark's nominator said. "Every shift, Mark went above and beyond to make sure this child was comfortable."

After months in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, this patient was hoping to be discharged by graduation. Unfortunately, he wasn't well enough to do so. So, Mark made it his mission to create a special moment and worked around the patient's complex care needs to make it possible.



*"With Mark and his care team by his side, the patient got to have a graduation walk in the garden," Mark's nominator said. "You could see how happy the family and the patient were to celebrate the momentous milestone, and to be able to do it outside of a hospital room. Without Mark, it wouldn't have happened."*





## Emily Tuck, BSN, RN, CPN | Clinical Nurse, Specialty Care—Nephrology | Center for Advanced Pediatrics

Whatever arises, Emily is *Dedicated to Better*. She always has the bigger picture in mind and is willing to do what's necessary to achieve the best outcomes and fight for a better future for her patients and their families.

Emily is the go-to nurse for complex patient cases on her unit. Prompt, proactive and dedicated to quality care, she is always working to make workflow more efficient for care teams and care plans easier to grasp for patient families. Such as recently when she used quick problem solving, creativity and consistent follow-ups to communicate medications and care instructions with two patient families who did not speak English.

In one case, Emily worked tirelessly to connect a translator for a rarely spoken language in the U.S. with a patient family so they could fully understand how to care for their child. And when the patient relapsed in their condition—causing

even more confusion for the parents—Emily created a color-coded visual binder to help them track and document their child's care needs. Her persistence helped the family become equipped to provide the care their child required to achieve remission.

In a similar instance, Emily went out of her way to contact the pediatrician of a child whose mother only spoke Spanish and lived more than three hours away from Children's. Emily ensured the pediatrician would be able to administer the correct medication and teach the mother to do the same—despite her fear of needles. Thanks to Emily's consistent support and encouragement, the mother became proficient at providing the routine injections her child needed.

***"Emily is always thorough, diligent, knowledgeable and a joy to work with," Emily's nominator said. "She anticipates the needs of her patients and team members and goes above and beyond to help everyone around her. She is a bright and motivated nurse who always goes the extra mile without ever being asked. Emily consistently sets an example for high quality nursing!"***



## 2024 Team DAISY Winners

The Team DAISY Award honors groups of two or more people, led by a nurse, who identify and meet patient and patient family needs by going above and beyond the traditional role of nursing. Employees nominate groups for Team DAISY Awards across the System, and campus leaders and the Engagement Council vote on a winning team.

### Pediatric Research Unit, Center for Advanced Pediatrics

**Team Leader:** Cheryl Stone, RN, MDIV, CCRP

**Team Members:** Michelle Popler, BSN, RN, CCRP | Toby Newcomer, BSN, RN, CPN, CCRP | Shanna Poythress, BSN, RN, CCRP | Sasha Weber, BSN, RN | Christina Combs, BSN, RN, CPN | Dianne Grainger, BSN, RN, CPN | David Fancher, PMDC, PCRS

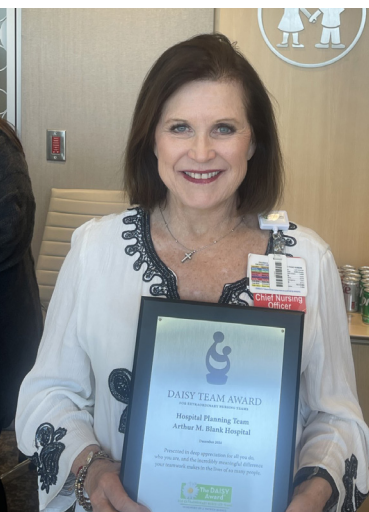




## Hospital Planning Team, Arthur M. Blank Hospital

**Team Leader:** Linda Cole, MBA, BSN, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC

**Team Members:** Kristen Cranmer, MSN, RN, CPNP, PCNS-BC, NEA-BC | Amanda Grindle, MSN, RN, CNL, CPN, CCRN | Alison Bolt, MBA, RN, NE-BC, CCRN | Kristin Bowman, MSN, RN, NPD-BC | Katie Sorice, BSN, RN, CNOR | Megan Sepanski, BSN, RN, CCRN | Linda Leblanc, BSN, RN, CCRN | Kalen Parks, MSHA, CMP | Tracy Horton | Jill Kaplan | Felicia Reynders, MBA



## Sepsis Early Recognition, Egleston/Arthur M. Blank Hospital, Hughes Spalding and Scottish Rite Hospital Emergency Departments

**Team Leader:** Mary Beth Gleeson, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, CPN, CNRN

**Team Members:** Hannah Thummel | Laura Jones, BSN, RN, NE-BC | Srikant Iyer, MD | Thuy Bui, MD | John Cheng, MD | Reena Blanco, MD | Morgan Blonde, BSN, RN, CPEN | Stephanie Talley, BSN, RN, TCRN | Sunny Jackson, BSN, RN, CEN | Denise Chauvet, BSN, RN | Bola Akinsola, MD | Chidiebere Ugwu, MD | Rebekah Carter | Gary Frank, MD | Kiran Hebbar, MD | Evan Orenstein, MD | Tal Senior, BSN, RN | Andrea McCarter | Nikolay Braykov | Natalie Tillman | Sara Holley, MSN, RN, CPN, CPPS | Luimako Dawson, MSN, RN





## DAISY Leader Winners

The DAISY Nurse Leader Award recognizes nurse leaders who have gone above and beyond in their impact on compassionate patient care.

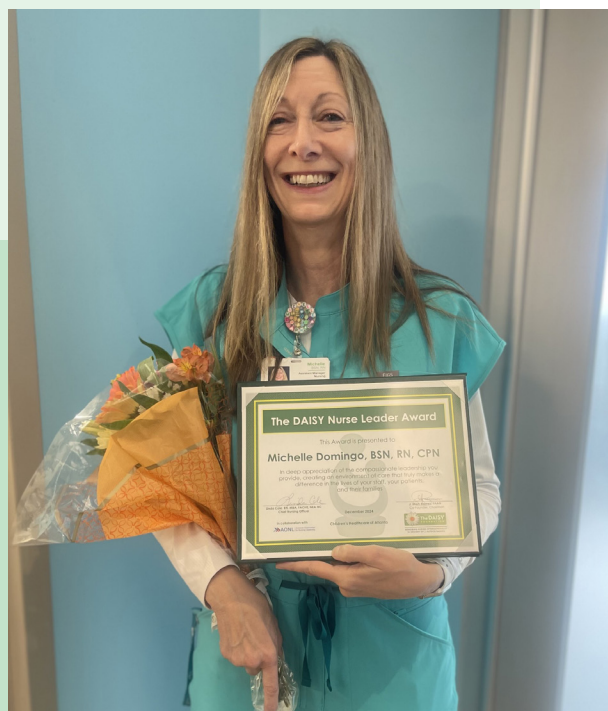
**Amy Green, BSN, RN, CPN**  
Assistant Manager Nursing |  
Central Staffing Office



**Melissa Thompson, BSN, RN**  
Assistant Manager Nursing |  
Hughes Spalding



**Michelle Domingo, BSN, RN, CPN**  
Assistant Manager Nursing |  
Center for Advanced Pediatrics





## DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award

The DAISY Foundation established the DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award to recognize nurses who have devoted their life's work to the compassionate care of others—from mentoring team members and being a role model for younger nurses to advocating for patients and upholding a positive example of nursing.

### Karla Mavity, BSN, RN Program Coordinator | Support Center

In 2024, Karla Mavity, the very nurse who helped establish the DAISY Recognition Program at Children's, became the first nurse ever within our System to receive the DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award!

Karla has held several different roles since starting at Children's as a nurse in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at Egleston. After serving as a nurse, she became our first-ever nurse recruiter, hiring many nurses for Children's—some of which are now celebrating more than 35 years at Children's! And when the merger of Egleston and Scottish Rite took place in 1998, she was tasked with bridging the cultures of the two hospitals—helping build the foundation for the unified pediatric healthcare system that Children's is today. Although she now works in Employee Recognition, she's kept her nursing license from day one, ever the advocate for CPR training and exceptional patient care.

Recently, her Work Life and Recognition team members, along with many present and former Children's leaders and employees, gathered to surprise Karla with a tea party to celebrate her 40 years of service. Linda Cole, Chief Nursing Officer, attended the event and presented Karla with the first-ever DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award at Children's.

"Most employees in our System know Karla as the one who throws the best celebrations for our people," said Linda, reflecting on the historic presentation. "It was such an honor to surprise her with a celebration for all her years of hard work and dedication and present her with this incredible award."

Karla understands recognition isn't one-size-fits-all – something her colleagues admire about her leadership. She takes time to get to know people—finding ways to make each person feel special and supported. With unmatched attention to detail and her background at the bedside, Karla celebrates employees throughout our System in the most personal, memorable ways. In fact, her role has transformed so much over the years that other hospitals are now replicating her efforts and Children's recognition programs at their facilities.



Karla Mavity and Linda Cole

***"No one is more deserving of this award," Linda said. "Over the years, Karla has personally surprised and awarded 371 individual DAISY Award winners, 17 DAISY Award Nurse Leader winners, and 20 DAISY Award team winners throughout our System. Karla is a model of lifetime dedication to Children's. She's not only had a hand in hiring and recognizing so many of our Children's nurses but still serves as a shining example of what it truly means to Care about People."***

## 2024 DAISY Luncheon

In February of 2024, Children's invited winners of the individual, team and leader DAISY award from 2020 through 2023 to celebrate their achievements and recognize all the effort they put into caring for our patients and their families throughout the years. Nearly 70 winners and leaders were in attendance, as well as the DAISY Foundation Program Director, **Julie Blonk**, who spoke to the nurses in attendance about the difference they make in the lives of our patients and families and the honor it is to be awarded by the DAISY Foundation.

Children's is proud of our partnership with the DAISY Foundation and at the time of the event had honored more than 365 Children's nurses with Individual DAISY Awards, 16 Children's nurses with Leader DAISY Awards and 20 teams of Children's nurses and allied health professionals with Team DAISY awards.

Chief Nursing Officer **Linda Cole, MBA, BSN, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC**, was in attendance and addressed the attendees, stating "Our more than 4,000 Children's nurses are skilled, committed and dedicated to delivering quality care every day. But you are anything but an 'everyday' nurse. Together, you've built a foundation that supports outstanding clinical care, making it possible for us to achieve our Mission to *make kids better today and healthier tomorrow.*"





## American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) Beacon Awards for Excellence

The Beacon Award for Excellence—a significant milestone on the path to exceptional patient care and healthy work environments—recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN's six Healthy Work Environment Standards. Units that achieve this designation meet national criteria consistent with the ANCC Magnet Recognition Program®, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award.

Congratulations to the Cardiac Acute Care Unit at Arthur M. Blank Hospital for receiving this honor in 2024!

### Cardiac Acute Care Unit (CACU) at Arthur M. Blank Hospital Receives Gold Beacon Award for Excellence

Our CACU is one of only two pediatric stepdown units in the country to receive this award, which represents our commitment to providing exceptional care for our patients and families and a positive and supportive work environment for our nurses. This is especially impressive as the team took the time to describe their work for the Beacon appraisers while they were also preparing for the move to Arthur M. Blank Hospital and taking care of a full unit at Egleston.



# Research

In 2024, Children's nurses contributed at a high level to evidence-based practice and research locally, regionally and nationally. Nurses and Nurse Practitioners were co-authors on more than 40 publications and participated in more than 35 podium and poster presentations.

## Highlights of 2024's Accomplishments Include:

### Awards

- **Christina Calamaro, PhD, PPCNP-BC, FNP-BC**—Emory University IDEA Award (Inclusion Diversion Equity Award) for the Nursing Communication App. May 2024.

### Publications

- **Chapter exemplar: Modeling teaching in difficult situations. October 2024**  
*The Nurse Preceptor Toolkit: Preparing Nurses and Advanced Practice Nurses for Clinical Practice, 1e.*  
Heuer, B. & Danford, C. (eds)  
**Author: Stacy Buchanan, DNP, CPNP-PC**
- **Use of simulation to improve team performance and utilization of a rapid sequence intubation checklist. November 2024**  
*AEM Education and Training*  
**Author(s): Kathleen M. Waters, MD, Ruth Hwu, MD, Mona Kulkarni, MD, Jeffrey Okonye, MD, Ronine Zamor, MD, MPH, Sofia Chaudhary, MD, Andrew Jergel, MPH, Scott Gillespie, MS, MSPH, Rachel Krieger, DO, MS, Claire Mathai BSN, RN, CPEN, Nandranie Goodwin BSN, RN, NPD-BC, Sherita Holmes, MD**
- **Initiation of interdisciplinary prevention rounds: decreasing CLABSI in critically ill children. May 2024**  
*Antimicrobial Stewardship & Healthcare Epidemiology*  
**Author(s): Matt Linam, MD, MS, Lisette Wannemacher, BSN, RN, CPN, Angela Hawthorne, BSN, RN, RNC-NIC, NPD-BC, Christina Calamaro, PhD, PPCNP-BC, FNP-BC, Patrick Spafford, MD, Karen Walson, MD**

- **The Scope of Practice of an Outpatient Pediatric Palliative Care Oncology Clinic. May 2024**  
*Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*  
**Author(s): Hee Su Park, Anna Lange, MSN, CPNP-PC, Katharine E. Brock, MD**
- **Evidence-Based Recommendations for Education Provided to Patients and Families Regarding the Adverse Events of ALK and MEK Inhibitors: A Systematic Review From the Children's Oncology Group. March to April 2024**  
*Journal of pediatric hematology/oncology nursing*  
**Author: Beth Fisher, MSN, CPNP-AC, CPNP-PC, CPON**
- **Development of Nurse Scientist Mentor Role to Support Clinical Scholarship of DNP Students. (In press, 2024)**  
*Journal of Nursing Administration*  
**Author(s): Margaret Gettis, DNP, CPNP-PC, Linda Cole, MBA, BSN, Christina Calamaro, PhD, PPCNP-BC, FNP-BC**
- **Microbiome and Growth in Infants with Congenital Heart Disease. November 2024**  
*The Journal of Pediatrics*  
**Author(s): Michael P. Fundora, MD, Christina Calamaro, PhD, CPNP-BC, FAAN, Amelia St. John, PNP-AC, Rachel Keiffer, MPH, RD, LD, Katie Liu, MSPH, Scott Gillespie, MS, MSPH, Patricia Wei Denning, MD, Kolby Sanders-Lewis, CCRC, Brooke Seitter, CCRC, Jinbing Bai, PhD, RN, FAAN**



- **Student-led Doctor of Nursing Practice projects in the clinical environment: Viewpoint from hospital-based nurse scientists and leaders. July 2024**  
*Nursing Outlook*  
**Author(s):** Margaret Gettis, DNP, CPNP-PC, Christina Calamaro, PhD, PPCNP-BC, FNP-BC
- **Development of a Structured Management Plan and Educational Materials for a Multidisciplinary Pediatric Menstrual Bleeding Disorder Clinic (2024, In Press)**  
*Journal of Doctoral Nursing Practice*  
**Author(s):** Kelly Tickle, DNP, CPNP-BC, Robert Sidonio, MD, Megan Brown, MD, Margaret Gettis, DNP, CPNP-PC, Brooke Cherven, PhD, MPH, RN, CPON
- **Adequate menstrual suppression in adolescents with inherited bleeding disorders often requires multiple treatment changes: Retrospective cohort study of a multidisciplinary clinic. March 2024**  
*Pediatric blood & cancer*  
**Author(s):** Megan Brown, MD, Kelly Tickle, DNP, CPNP-BC, Kalinda Woods, MD, Robert Sidonio, MD
- **Pediatric Death and Family Organ Donation: Bereavement Support Services in One Pediatric Health System. February 2024**  
*Journal of patient experience*  
**Author(s):** Margaret Gettis, DNP, CPNP-PC, Stephanie Welling, BSN, RN, Eryn Wall, BSN, RN, Christina Calamaro, PhD, CPNP-BC, FNP-BC
- **A Quality Improvement Project to Revise and Reduce Nursing Data Entry in a Pediatric Trauma Unit. January 2024**  
*The Journal of nursing administration*  
**Author(s):** Maia Routly, DNP, RN, Margaret Gettis, DNP, CPNP-PC

- **Perceived Barriers to Administration of Aromatherapy in Nurses Caring for Pediatric Patients With Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting: An Evidence-based Practice Project.**  
*Journal of pediatric health care: official publication of National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates & Practitioners*  
**Author(s):** Marissa Terry, DNP, CPNP-AC, Regena Spratling, PhD, CPNP-BC, Margaret Gettis, DNP, CPNP-PC
- **A Pilot of a Telehealth-Hospice Transition Intervention for Children and Young Adults with Cancer. July 2024**  
*Journal of pain and symptom management*  
**Author(s):** Ebonee Harris, CCRA, Anna Lange, MSN, CPNP-PC, Karen Wasilewski-Masker, MD, James Klosky, MD, Katharine Brock, MD
- **Validation of the Integrated Palliative Care Outcome Scale (IPOS) in adults with cystic fibrosis. November 2024**  
*Pediatric Pulmonology*  
**Author(s):** Rachel W. Linnemann, MD, Brandi Middour-Oxler, DNP, CPNP-BC, FNP-BC



## 2024 Annual Research Symposium

The Research and EBP Symposium is an annual event hosted by the Nursing and Allied Health Research Department. More than 198 nurses and allied health employees attended to learn about the exceptional research and evidence-based practice happening at Children's and learn from distinguished guest speakers.

The Children's Chief of Behavioral and Mental Health **John Constantino, MD**, and guest speaker **Jessica Peck, DNP, APRN, CPNP-PC, CNE, CNL, FAAN**, served as the keynote speakers. Three awards were given out to the top poster presentations:



### 2nd place

#### Ambulatory Education Series: Solving Multidisciplinary Knowledge Gaps

##### CPG Educator Team

- Jackie Peterson, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC
- Gloria Burns, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC
- Ashley Reid, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC
- Caryn Monat, BSN, RN, CPN
- Amanda Battle, MSN, RN, CPNP-PC, NPD-BC



### 1st place

#### Asking the Hard Questions for Ambulatory Suicide Screening

##### CPG Educator Team

- Annelise Bork, MSN, RN, CNOR, NPD-BC
- Ashley Reid, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC
- Gloria Burns, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC
- Amanda Battle, MSN, RN, CPNP-PC, NPD-BC



### 3rd place

#### Enhancing Safety in Intramuscular Administration of Anti-Psychotics

- Maggie Johnson BSN, RN
- Amy Foster BSN, RN
- Amanda Remillard, MS, BSN, RN, NPD-BC
- Shelby Pizzuto, BSN, RN, CCRN
- Lisa Schneider, MS, BSN, RN, PMH-BC, NEA-BC



# Excellence in Nursing

The Nursing Strategic Plan is a road map to position nursing at Children’s as a nationally preeminent workforce through the achievement of superior outcomes. The plan was developed based on the results of a comprehensive survey capturing the inspiration and priorities of more than 800 nurses at Children's.

With clinical nurses’ feedback top of mind, nursing leaders carefully crafted the Nursing Strategic Plan, built upon four focus areas that ladder up to our System strategy. This plan guides us as we achieve our Mission to make kids better today and healthier tomorrow.



**Professional Practice**

Provide a safe, evidence-based interprofessional practice environment that results in superior quality and safety outcomes.



**Leadership**

Inspire and develop transformational leaders who serve as change agents, role models and visionaries to promote accountability and empower their teams.



**Workforce**

Attract, grow and retain a diverse and flexible nursing workforce who are resilient and adaptive to change.



**Technology**

Optimize use of technology to support care delivery, standardize nursing practice, and promote innovation and efficiency to achieve quality outcomes.

# Professional Practice

Provide a safe, evidence-based, interprofessional practice environment that results in superior quality and safety outcomes.

.....

## The Unsung Heroes of Hughes Spalding: Spotlight on the Primary Care—Care Coordination Team

While frontline staff deliver direct care, the Care Coordination Team operates behind the scenes, helping ensure seamless access to services, resources and support. Comprised of **Yvette Dennison, Von Fears, MA, Melody Seng, MA, Kay Harrell, Ellen Ferrand, APRN, BSN, RN,** and **Sandra Washington, BSN, RN,** this team is a cornerstone of logistical, emotional and procedural assistance. Their efforts break down barriers that could otherwise hinder the care families need and deserve.

With an annual incoming call volume of more than 13,000 calls, the Care Coordination Team is an essential part of the healthcare journey for families. These calls range from requests for forms to be completed or information about abnormal lab results to medical advice, sick appointments and patient advocacy. Beyond phone support, families also rely on the team through email and MyChart messages, adding to their extensive workload. Nurse navigators alone manage an average of 154 new referrals annually, alongside complex cases that require ongoing monitoring and frequent intervention.

A powerful example of their impact is how they helped a family feeling overwhelmed by navigating the complex paperwork required for their child’s participation in the Special Olympics.

The nurse navigator quickly became the family’s advocate, explaining the process step by step to ease their concerns. Recognizing the task’s complexity, the nurse navigator engaged the entire team—the Referral Coordinator meticulously reviewed the paperwork to ensure compliance; and the medical assistant collaborated with healthcare providers to secure necessary medical clearances and signatures on time.

Through seamless communication and teamwork, the Care Coordination Team addressed every barrier, ensuring the family met critical deadlines. The result was the child’s successful participation in the Special Olympics—a milestone that would have been difficult to achieve without the team’s intervention. Beyond the logistical support, the team’s help enabled the family to focus on celebrating this incredible achievement.

This effort exemplifies the team’s mission to serve as a steadfast partner for families navigating the complexities of the healthcare system. Each team member brought unique expertise, but it was their collective collaboration—anchored by the nurse navigator’s leadership—that ensured success.

The Care Coordination Team’s impact is far-reaching. By managing thousands of calls, emails and messages annually, they empower families and enhance the overall healthcare experience. Their dedication transforms challenges into opportunities, helping families feel supported, valued and confident in their healthcare journey. Though much of their work may go unseen, their influence resonates deeply in the lives they touch, one family at a time.



# Emergency Response at the Center for Advanced Pediatrics— Ambulatory Rapid Response Team (ARRT)

In 2018, after the Center for Advanced Pediatrics (CAP) opened, an RN-led Ambulatory Rapid Response Team (ARRT) was developed to respond to concerns for deteriorating patients and visitors in clinics and on the CAP campus. Prior to the opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital, patients who required further evaluation and treatment were sent to the Egleston or Scottish Rite Emergency Departments via a 911 call and ambulance. Following a review of the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA), considering CAP’s proximity to Arthur M. Blank Hospital, leaders identified the need for a new emergency transport process. A new ARRT response plan was developed for patients requiring escalated care who were unable to safely transport themselves from CAP to the Arthur M. Blank Hospital Emergency Department (ED). Patients are now transported by the ED Emergency Response Team and Rescue Rover. This change required interdisciplinary and cross campus collaboration to develop an optimized process, and included representatives from Children’s Physician Group, the Emergency Department, Security, Risk and Legal, Accreditation, System Quality, and the Hospital Planning team. In its first three months, the partnership between CAP ARRT and the ED Emergency Response/ Recue Rover team has resulted in the safe transfer of 19 patients and reduced the average wait time by 18 minutes. We are proud of the incredible patient safety and quality outcomes that result from clinical partnerships.

CAP Ambulatory Rapid Response Team Data	Total 2024 Volume	Volume since Sept. 29, 2024
Volume of ARRT calls on CAP campus	65	26
Patient number transported to ED from CAP	56	24
Patient number safely discharged home from CAP	9	2
Patient number transported via EMS	30	0
Patient number to ED via private car	7	5
Patient number to ED via Rescue Rover	19	19



The ED Rapid Response Team and Rescue Rover improved the safe and timely transport of CAP patients by 64.3%, shaving 342 minutes (5.7 hours) off total wait time for all Rapid Response calls that occurred during the first three months of this partnership. WOW!

The CAP Ambulatory Rapid Response Team is currently led by **Jason Boyce, MSN, RN, CPN, Cassie Prochaska, MSN, RN, CPN, Monique Greer, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, and Brandy Williamson, MSN, RN, CPN**, with approximately 30 active RN and LPN members.

NAME/CREDENTIALS	ROLE	CAMPUS/DEPARTMENT
Alicia Small, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Gastroenterology
Anne Milkowski, RN, CPN	Assistant Manager Nursing	CPG Rheumatology
Azra Sehic, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Endocrinology
Belenda Butler, RN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse	CPG CSO
Chelsie Justice, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Physiatry
Emma Hanig, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Allergy
Eugenia Stewart, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Endocrinology
Grace Pixler, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Allergy
Julie Bellinger, RN, CPN	Assistant Manager Nursing	CPG ENT
Katherine Oliver, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG PACS
Kelly Caudell, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Judson Hawk Clinic
Lakeisha Terry, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG CSO
Lauren Eagens, BSN, RN, CPN	Manager Clinical Operations	CPG Physician Practice
Laurie Elliott, BSN, RN, CPN	Manager Clinical Operations	CPG Physician Practice
Leeann Rodgers, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Judson Hawk Clinic
Lindsay Callahan, MSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Neurology
Lisa Hensley, BSN, RN, CPN, NE-BC	Clinical Nurse	CPG Judson Hawk Clinic
Michelle Domingo, BSN, RN, CPN	Assistant Manager Nursing	CPG Pulmonology
Reginique Henderson, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	CPG CSO
Rene' Brooks, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Neurology
Sarah Mann, BSN, RN, CPN	Manager Clinical Operations	CPG Physician Practice
Sasha Weber, RN	Research Nurse	Research Outpatient Unit
Sha'Neese Fails, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	CPG Gynecology
Shanna Poythress, RN, CCRP	Senior Research Nurse	Research Outpatient Unit
Tametra Currie, LPN	CSO Practical Nurse	CPG Outreach Clinics
Toby Newcomer, RN, CPN, CCRP	Senior Research Nurse	Research Outpatient Unit



## The Inclusive Hair Journey at Children's

One afternoon, **Brandy Kasik, MMDI, RRT-NPS**, **Treva Ingram, MD**, and **Jamie Plunkett, RN, CCRN**, were talking about the quality of hair hygiene for patients leaving the unit. All three understood the value placed on hair in many communities but that we tend to focus solely on the acute health issues of our patients that their hair isn't something we often think about—but we should. Later that week, with the support of **Sharon Jordan, BSN, RN, CPN, NE-BC**, Manager of Clinical Operations at Scottish Rite PICU, the unit launched a drive that would collect more than 100 curly/coily hair care products and several hundred dollars, thanks to the support of staff from every discipline that interacts with the unit. Word of the hair equity project's success spread quickly through the Scottish Rite campus and became a priority for the Scottish Rite Patient Family Experience Council and eventually to our Chief Diversity Officer Marc Welsh, who realized the gap in patient care could make a valuable impact if implemented across the System.



In the following weeks, an interdisciplinary team of nurses, respiratory therapists, leaders, occupational therapists and Risk department representatives were brought together to talk about what hair equity gaps looked like around the System. The team quickly discovered that similar projects were underway all over Children's. They gathered information from other pediatric hospitals, along with survey data from caregivers about their perspectives on the topic. Of 1,700 caregivers surveyed, 52% agreed that hair care is important for hospitalized children (57% when asking people of color); 26% felt like our existing products did not meet their needs (39% when asking people of color); 48% think it's important that staff know how to care for various hair textures (56% when asking people of color); and

21% felt that staff were not currently knowledgeable about hair care needs (32% when asking people of color). This data confirmed the need for a formal hair care program, including new products and education about hair care for all patients, especially those with curly/coily hair types.

After a year of developing education and meeting with vendors, and even going back to the drawing board a few times, Children's formed a diverse supplier partnership with a female, queer-owned, Atlanta-based company that works to supply curly/coily hair care products specifically for hospitals. Along with that partnership, Children's developed a formal hair care training to ensure new product options—including moisturizing shampoo, conditioner, detangling spray, wide tooth combs, detangling brushes, satin bonnets, large elastics and hair wash basins—were used correctly and staff were equipped with the tools to protect the dignity of patients regarding hair and hair care. It was important to emphasize that because hair is such an important and protected part of many cultures, it can be easy to unintentionally offend people, despite well-meaning intentions.

Children's recognizes that how we best serve our patients looks different for each patient and family. For decades, studies have shown that cultural humility and awareness have clear effects on patient outcomes, and this project is a shining example of how an interdisciplinary partnership creates a space where clinicians can feel good about the care they give to patients with a specific need, while also ensuring our patients feel seen and valued.

NAME/CREDENTIALS	ROLE	CAMPUS
Anita Adair	Manager Volunteer Services	Egleston Hospital
Brandi Smith	Director, Community Engagement	Support Center
Christina Pinkney, MSN, RN, NPD-BC	Manager Quality/Project Management	Hughes Spalding Hospital
Colette Bernstein, RN, BSN, NE-BC	Magnet Program Manager	Egleston Hospital
Erica Ailes, RN, CPN	Patient Experience Learning Specialist	Support Center
Gaby Scott, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Egleston Hospital
Gioanny Davis	Diversity and Inclusion Program Coordinator	Support Center
Graceanne Dukes	Senior Program Coordinator	Egleston Hospital
Hunter Kurek, RN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite Hospital
Kristen Kight-Mayner, MHA, BSN, RN, CPN	Pathway to Excellence Program Manager	Hughes Spalding Hospital
Maddy Reyhan, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite Hospital
Marc Welsh	Chief Diversity Officer	Support Center
Mark Griffiths, MD	Medical Director, Emergency Department	Hughes Spalding Hospital
Patrick Powell	Senior Development Officer	Support Center
Sarah Graham, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC	Clinical Educator	Egleston Hospital
Shanelle Clark	Physician	Egleston Hospital
Shari Baker, BSN, RN, CNML	Director Patient Care Services	Hughes Spalding Hospital
Tomica Holmes, MSN, RN, RN-BC, CHC, CHPC	Director Compliance	Support Center



# Leadership

Inspire and develop transformational leaders who serve as change agents, role models and visionaries to promote accountability and empower teams.

.....

## Scottish Rite Master Plan Listening Sessions

As part of the Children's Vision *to do everything possible to make anything possible for kids*, we are committed to continuous growth and evolution in our practices, processes and facilities. With emphasis on the opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital, leaders worked to ensure that staff were aware of the commitment to the Scottish Rite campus through a multi-year planning effort for short term beautification and facility improvements and long-term development opportunities. In January, leaders engaged Scottish Rite staff through Scottish Rite Master Plan Listening Sessions to ensure there was an opportunity for involvement in the planning process at all levels.

All hospital staff were invited to attend an in-person, drop-in session to provide feedback on for the future of the Scottish Rite campus. **More than 2,000 pieces of feedback from 1,000-plus employees helped identify five key areas of short-term beautification and improvement opportunities to prioritize for this year.**





Beautification and improvement efforts will continue during development of the long-term master facility plan. The feedback given by staff in the Scottish Rite Master Plan Listening Sessions will continue to guide the System in prioritizing efforts.





## Nurse Resiliency Programs

Increased acuity, staffing challenges and burnout can lead to turnover and further exacerbate workplace dissatisfaction. Children's leadership recognized the need to implement programming that will equip nurses with tools to effectively cope with stress, adapt to challenges and maintain emotional well-being. The Nurse Resiliency Programs help prevent burnout and enhance job satisfaction, which ultimately contribute to the overall quality of patient care.

With the support of a generous donation, Children's was able to continue four Nurse Resiliency Programs:

### Code Lavender:

Deployment of emotional support kits following traumatic events

### Music for the Soul:

Integration of music therapy with musical instruments, speakers and choreography to reduce stress and anxiety

### Farm Worker Family Health Program:

Opportunity for nurses to participate in local mission trips to provide care to migrant farmworkers

### Community Nurse Advocacy Fellowship:

A nine-month program where nurses partner with community organizations to provide equitable care



### Community Nurse Advocacy Fellowship

The Community Nurse Advocacy Fellowship was inspired by a long-standing program at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) that allows bedside nurses to practice in the community setting. After learning about CHOP's fellowship program, Magnet Program Manager **Colette Bernstein, BSN, RN, NE-BC**, embarked on implementing a similar program at Children's as an idea to help improve nurse resiliency. With the support of generous donor funds, Colette worked with nursing leaders throughout

the System to identify four internal and external community partnerships and programs that provide bedside nurses the opportunity to work in the community while receiving compensation for their time—a day away from the bedside but still working *to make kids better today and healthier tomorrow*.

The second cohort of fellowship nurses started in August 2024.

These nurses identified their love for nursing and public health, admitted to feelings of burnout and showed signs of initiative and leadership.

NAME/CREDENTIALS	ROLE	CAMPUS
Lillian Mercado, BSN, RN, CPHON	Clinical Nurse	Egleston Heme/Onc
Ashley Pryzbek, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PCA 2
Lacey Hosley, RN	Clinical Nurse	Hughes Spalding Clinic
Solange Fernandes, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PCA 4
Lisa Palm, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Center for Advanced Pediatrics Nephrology
Kerri Anderson, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Hughes Spalding Clinic
Aline Castro, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Ambulatory CSO
Monica Goodrich, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Forsyth Urgent Care
Mary Kipp, BSN, RN, CCRN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite PICU

### Community Nurse Advocacy Fellowship Nurse (CNAF) Highlights

After a kick-off orientation meeting where the CNAF nurses learned about Child Advocacy at Children’s, they continued to meet throughout the year, focused on exploring nursing research and best practices for evidence-based practice, social determinants of health and the process for refugees moving to the United States. In October, they met at Refuge Coffee to focus on their own resiliency with Children’s Staff Support Supervisor **Jaime Hunn, LCSW**. Finally, in December, the group met off-campus to share insights and challenges related to diversity, equity and inclusion within both the hospital setting and the broader community. One of the key topics discussed with Brandy Kasik and Demetria Calhoun was the recognition of limits, where acknowledging the boundaries of one's knowledge and experience is crucial. This recognition serves as a starting point for seeking growth through continuous education, such as workshops and seminars, and by creating spaces for listening to diverse perspectives and discussing what the group has learned both at work and in the community.





## Farm Worker Family Health Program: Mission Trip to Moultrie

In 2024, Children's partnered with Emory's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing for the second time to send 14 nurses and nurse practitioners on a sponsored mission trip to Moultrie, Georgia, through the Farm Worker Family Health Program (FWFHP), offering staff an additional resiliency initiative to renew their passion and reduce burnout.

The FWFHP is an immersion experience that brings together healthcare students, faculty and staff in South Georgia to provide basic healthcare services for migrant farmworkers and their families. Through this initiative, Children's nurses and nurse practitioners provided physical, vision and hearing screenings, as well as glucose and blood pressure checks, for more than 500 children of migrant farmworkers. At night, they traveled to night clinics on local farms to provide care for more than 600 migrant adult farmworkers with health education, diabetes screening and hypertension risk assessments.

By partnering with Emory's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, the Children's nurses not only helped address healthcare needs for the community but also mentored nursing students. Children's staff provided nursing students with firsthand guidance and coaching while assisting in clinical care.

The mission trip also provided an opportunity to collaborate with fellow Children's employees and staff from other local healthcare organizations.

"My favorite part about participating was the Emory nursing students and the children who came for care."

"There are so many things that I can consider as my favorite. For starters, mentoring future nurses—helping prepare and guide them for their careers—is such a valuable experience."

"My other favorite part of this project was, of course, how much we were able to help while having fun during the day with the children at the school and at night with the adults."

"I was most surprised by how many farmworkers participated in the clinic—it was wonderful."

"Since the trip, three of the prelicensure students I met have shadowed me in CICU, and their enthusiasm makes me so happy for their future in nursing."

"This was my second year participating, and in the future, I hope we can expand the initiative to support other domestic medical trips and create more unique opportunities for staff."

# Celebrating the Impact of New Nursing Leaders at Children's

Nursing is the backbone of the healthcare system, and the leaders who guide our profession play a crucial role in shaping the future of patient care, along with the growth and development of their teams. From mentoring the next generation of nurses to advocating for systemic changes, nursing leaders are trailblazers, problem-solvers and tireless champions for both their teams and the patients in our care.

These leaders come from diverse backgrounds and specialties, yet all share something in common: they are new nursing leaders at Children's. They set out to elevate the nursing profession, improve patient care and support their colleagues through the challenges and triumphs of healthcare. Whether they are transforming nursing practice, improving patient outcomes or advocating for policies that protect our staff and families, our nursing leaders are at the forefront of healthcare innovation.

Let's take a moment to highlight just a few of the remarkable new nursing leaders whose work is already making an impact on the future of our Children's nursing family.

## Annie Boydston, BSN, RN, CPN

### Clinical Operations Manager

For as long as she can remember, Annie knew that Children's was where she belonged. For the past seven years, she has dedicated her life to serving our precious patients in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).

*"I grew up with a father, grandmother and sister who all worked at Children's, so I always tease that Children's green has been running through my veins since birth," Annie said. "But in all seriousness, throughout my childhood, I saw the tremendous impact of this work, and I knew I wanted to be a part of it!"*

Annie is the clinical operations manager in the PICU at Arthur M. Blank Hospital. She has held multiple roles in the PICU—starting as a patient care technician and progressing to become a nurse extern, clinical bedside nurse and, with her most recent promotion, clinical operations manager. She has experienced first-hand what it is like to work hard from the ground up and attributes her success to all of the supportive nurses and providers who helped pave her way into leadership.

"My decision to move into a leadership role, and more specifically a leadership role in the PICU, stemmed from my hunger to better support the staff that I work alongside," Annie said. "Being a leader is truly about finding ways to make a positive impact on those around you, while also helping to drive meaningful change. These are two things that I have always aspired to do in my career, especially for a team that I knew and had worked with directly. As a young leader, I knew that Children's would help to give me the foundation, guidance and support to be able to do just that!"





One of the things Annie finds most fulfilling in her role is the ability to form meaningful and impactful relationships with her frontline staff. Annie is a people person through and through. Her staff will tell you that she has a clear, open-door policy and prioritizes meeting whenever they need additional support or a listening ear.

"To me, allowing someone to be heard and acknowledged is such a simple and precious gift, but it is something that I aspire to give all my people in PICU each day I come into work," Annie said.

Throughout her career, Annie has experienced so many impressionable Children's memories, but the one that stands out the most was Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024, when she helped close one chapter at Egleston and start a new one at Arthur M. Blank Hospital.

"As the PICU Sending Unit Coordinator, I had the chance to watch our talented group of clinicians rally for every single patient and family, and I'll truly never forget the day," Annie said. "After our last patient made it to their new home at Arthur M. Blank Hospital, we had a chance to pop some sparkling cider and toast to the memories that were created at Egleston. It was nice to take a moment to celebrate the thousands of patients who have been touched by our PICU, acknowledge the patients who were taken too early, laugh about the memories and most importantly, smile about the connections and friendships that were built within the Egleston PICU walls."

Passed down through multiple Children's-employed generations in her family, Annie has some great advice for other Children's nurses: "Never forget what a gift it is to be able to care for a child," Annie said. "When I had first started my job as a pediatric nurse at Children's, my grandmother gave me a paper weight that stated, 'Nothing you do for children is ever wasted.' It seems so small and simple, but in the midst of the crazy work that we do as nurses, it can so easily be overlooked! I have tried to make a conscious effort to carry that message with me throughout my career and it is a little something that I like to share with others."

.....



## Katie Sorice, BSN, RN, CNOR

### Clinical Operations Manager

Katie knew at a very young age that she wanted to be a Children's nurse.

*"I came to Children's as a teenager when I was diagnosed with a blood clotting disorder," Katie said. "I interacted with staff from all different specialties, but I remember really liking my nurse and the type of work she did. It was then that I realized not only did I want to be a nurse, but I wanted to be a pediatric nurse."*

Katie's dedication to serving others and her heartfelt compassion is evident in all she does. Before becoming the clinical operations manager for the Operating Room (OR) and Special Procedures at Arthur M. Blank Hospital in 2024, Katie spent the past two years as an administrative resource nurse on the Hospital Planning Team. She helped plan for and facilitate the move for multiple departments including Surgical Services, Special Procedures, Radiology, Interventional Radiology, Sterile Processing, Pre-Op Clinic, PACU, Motility, Day Surgery and Cardiac MRI.

"Moving into Arthur M. Blank Hospital is, by far, my favorite and most impactful Children's memory," Katie said. "We worked tirelessly for many years to make the move a success. Seeing all the hard work come to fruition was a highlight of my career. Getting to work in the hospital I helped build is icing on the cake!"

When asked why Katie wanted to pursue a path in leadership, she didn't hesitate to answer, citing the inspiration of leaders who came before her.

"I have worked with some great leaders during my time at Children's, and seeing the impact they had on their teams and departments made me want to follow in their footsteps," Katie said. "I am excited to work with such an amazing team in the Operating Room and Special Procedures while also getting to know all the many great leaders at Children's."

In all her experiences, Katie has learned about a variety of nursing career paths and encourages fellow nurses to explore new opportunities.

"When I became a nurse, I thought the only path was to be a bedside nurse," Katie said. "Through my 12 years of nursing and more than eight at Children's, I have realized there are so many different routes you can take in your nursing career. If you feel bored or burnt out, try something else. There are so many options!"

.....

Karen Hill, BSN, RN, CPEN

Trauma Program Manager

Over the past 33 years, Karen has been a part of so many pieces of Children's history. She started her career as a new graduate nurse in the Emergency Department at Egleston before transitioning over to Scottish Rite—all before the two hospitals merged to become Children's Healthcare of Atlanta in 1998.

*"I always remember being interested in a career in medicine when I was growing up," Karen said. "Just after high school graduation, one of my best friends was injured in an accident, and I spent much of that summer supporting him through his rehabilitation and recovery. That is when I knew I wanted to be a nurse. And fast forward several years, we got married, and now our daughter is a nurse in the Emergency Department at Arthur M. Blank Hospital."*

Out of all the changes she has seen, her most memorable experience at Children's was a 2018 exit interview with the American College of Surgeons, following their visit for Egleston's trauma center verification.

"We learned we'd passed our first Level I Pediatric Trauma Center verification visit at Egleston with no deficiencies and many strengths listed for the program," Karen said. "Preparing for the initial verification was a tremendous amount of work and collaboration across System departments, so I'll never forget that moment of success."

As the trauma program manager, Karen is responsible for ensuring that Arthur M. Blank Hospital fulfills the American College of Surgeons' criteria to maintain Level I Pediatric Trauma Center verification. She thrives on the opportunity to improve outcomes in pediatric trauma patients.



Karen Hill (middle) and family

One of Karen's favorite aspects of being a leader at Children's is her ability to support implementation of process improvement initiatives inspired by frontline clinicians' ideas. She leads her team to focus on quality initiatives, which include creating and tracking clinical guidelines, case review for improvement opportunities, patient data entry into the trauma registry, and ensuring we have the appropriate resources and equipment.

Karen loves to pull from her experience by mentoring and supporting staff with professional development and growth opportunities. Her advice for other nurses?

"Don't be afraid to try new things or change direction with your career," Karen said. "Children's is great about encouraging and supporting career change and transfers within the organization. Take advantage of opportunities for professional growth and development while reaching your full potential and finding your best job fit."

.....



Mary Fran Petty (right) and her brother

## Mary Fran Petty, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, CPN

### Clinical Operations Manager

Mary Fran Petty has been a Children's nurse for 10 years and, like the other new nursing leaders, remembers being interested in the profession from her earliest memories.

*"I grew up as the sibling of a child with severe cerebral palsy," Mary Fran said. "From an early age, I was eager to assist my parents with my brother's tube feedings, medication administration, seizure management and physical/occupational therapies."*

The passion for care that Mary Fran showed at an early age with her brother, Drew, has led to an exciting and successful career as a nurse at Children's. As the clinical operations manager of the Scottish Rite TICU, she has the privilege of leading an amazing team and having incredible leadership support in her department.

"Honestly, if you had told me 10 years ago that I would be in my current role, I would have thought it unbelievable," Mary Fran said.

"However, during my time in the My Path, nursing's career ladder program, from clinical nurse 3 to clinical nurse 5 and clinical educator, I saw the possibilities and support at my fingertips if I chose to become a formal leader. I have also experienced the power of informal leaders that choose to remain at the bedside and know that I could not do my job without the support and teamwork of TICU staff."

Over the past decade, during her time as a clinical nurse, clinical educator, and manager, Mary Fran has been a part of numerous initiatives. Although she has many Children's memories, there are a few that really stand out.

"I have three favorite memories (in no particular order!)," Mary Fran said. "First, I'll always remember opening our TICU Family Simulation lab and having our patients and caregivers return to see in real life the room and simulation manikin we've dreamed of! It's also rewarding to see caregivers return to the hospital, able to navigate their child's clinical needs and equipment without any help. It's remarkable to see how far they have come from their initial admission to our unit. Last but not least, I love the times when I do my clinical job "one-handed" because a patient has a firm grip on my other hand. It is a reminder to me of the power of the human touch."



When hiring, onboarding and supporting new staff, Mary Fran always encourages them to just say "Yes!" Her first involvement in TICU and Shared Leadership was being "voluntold" by her ANM, who supported her growth and development, to be the co-chair of her unit's Engagement Committee.

"Although I felt ill-equipped and daunted by the task, with the support of that ANM, our leadership team and staff, I was able to dip my toes into this first leadership role," Mary Fran said. "And the world of Children's opportunities and possibilities has opened up from there."

Mary Fran is helping to lead the holistic, programmatic work for our technology-dependent population and believes this population is one of the most vulnerable and under-represented in our healthcare system and communities. Her desire is for our technology-dependent kids to go home and flourish with their caregivers, thanks to how Children's prepared them for discharge, coordinated their care in the community, and continued to support them through our outpatient resources. She looks to the future with much anticipation for the good work that we will continue to do for our technology-dependent patients.



# Workforce

Attract, grow and retain a diverse and flexible nursing workforce who are resilient and adaptive to change.

.....

## Ambulatory Transition to Practice Program



Ambulatory care nurses and medical assistants work in increasingly complex patient care environments. Most centralized education and training focuses on new graduates and inpatient nurses, so Children's Physician Group (CPG) educators identified the need to create an onboarding program more tailored to nurses and medical assistants transitioning to the ambulatory setting.

After attending the 2024 American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing (AAACN) Conference,

**Caryn Monat, BSN, RN, CPN**, and **Jackie Peterson, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC**, were inspired to work alongside their fellow members of the CPG Education Team, **Ashley Reid, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC**, **Kelsey Woods, MSN, RN, CPN**, **Arzu Demir, BSN, RN, CPN, NPD-BC**, and **Ally Wright, BSN, RN, CPN**, to finalize plans for an Ambulatory Transition to Practice Program (ATTP). ATTP is a structured program designed to improve care delivery for nurses and medical assistants who are new to the ambulatory setting—including new graduates, experienced new hires and internal transfers.

The program consists of four in-person classes over six months during the first year of hire. Employees are placed into cohorts to foster interdepartmental relationships and to build a sense of community.

The goals of the program include:

1. To provide a clear understanding of the clinical roles in the ambulatory setting.
2. To establish consistency throughout orientation from department to department.
3. To develop a sense of comradery.
4. To improve retention and staff satisfaction.
5. To improve staff confidence and competence.
6. To provide guidance on best practices regarding managing the electronic medical record.
7. To provide mentorship and support new staff throughout their transition to the ambulatory setting.
8. To provide ongoing professional development opportunities.
9. To improve patient outcomes through providing and reviewing symptom management resources.
10. To reduce unnecessary hospital admissions.

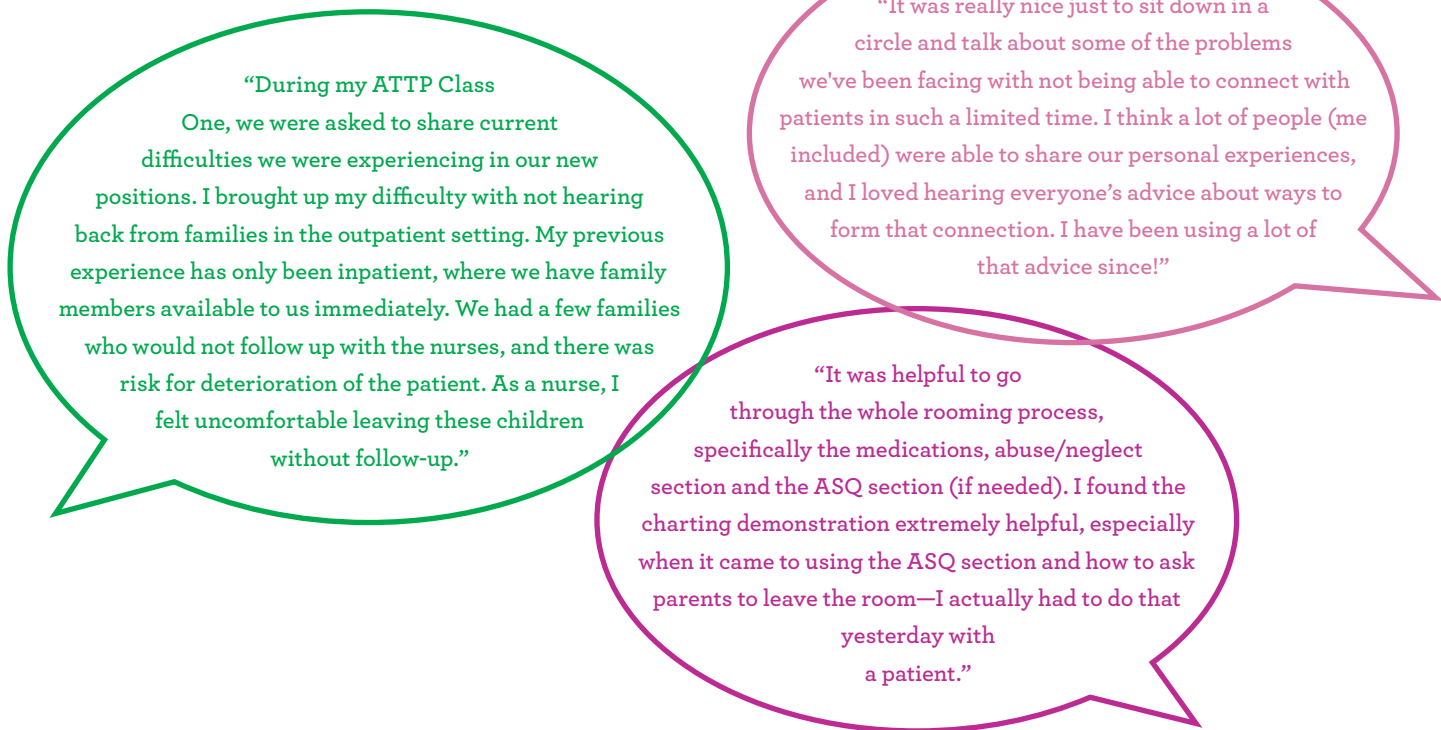
## Ambulatory Transition to Practice content includes:

The ATTP Program launched Monday, Aug. 19, 2024. By the end of the year, four cohorts, consisting of 57 nurses and medical assistants, had begun the program.

CLASS	DETAILS
CPG Orientation (1st week of hire)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current CPG Orientation presentation</li> <li>• Sign up for applicable future cohort courses</li> <li>• <b>Complete pre-survey</b></li> </ul>
In-Person Class (1 month after hire)	<p><b>Intake Process/Clinic Scenarios</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinic-specific intake</li> <li>• ASQ</li> <li>• Transfer of Care</li> <li>• Two patient identifiers</li> </ul> <p><b>Telehealth Simulation</b></p> <p><b>MyChart</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice prioritizing inbox messages</li> <li>• Seeking provider input</li> <li>• Responding via inbox</li> <li>• Practice role playing (calling back patients)</li> <li>• Practice documenting in eMR</li> <li>• Practice incorporating SBAR, telephone triage (practice telehealth call that involves triage of common, non-emergent health problems, applying standardized triage)</li> </ul>
In-Person Class (3 months after hire)	<p><b>Mentor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review mentor program</li> <li>• Pair with mentor</li> <li>• Leader roundtable</li> </ul> <p><b>Professionalism Toolkit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deescalate on the phone vs. in-person</li> <li>• Lateral Violence</li> <li>• Error Prevention Skills</li> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Peer Supporter Program</li> <li>• Quality Monitors</li> </ul>
6-Month Celebration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate 6-month mark</li> <li>• Professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– MyPath, ARRT, Charge Class, Safety Coach, Shared Leadership, CAP Education Series</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Storytelling reflection</li> <li>• <b>Complete post-survey (1 year later)</b></li> </ul>



Staff feedback:



NAME/CREDENTIALS	NAME/CREDENTIALS	NAME/CREDENTIALS
Abigail Michel, LPN	Jenna Mathis, MA	Raven Beamon, MA
Alyssa Westbrook, BSN, RN	Jennifer Cummings, BSN, RN, CPN	Ryley Key, BSN, RN
Ana Ash, MA	Kaelin Coleman, BSN, RN	Samantha Ivey, MA
Briana Addis, BSN, RN	Katrina Sutton, MA	Samantha King, MA
Bridget Koontz, BSN, RN	Khadija Hamki, MSN, RN	Sarah Orjuella, BSN, RN
Brookelle Bassie, BSN, RN	Kim Milligan, MA	Solange Quiller, BSN, RN
Cam Tracy, BSN, RN	Kris Anne Scalzi, BSN, RN	Stacy Grant, BSN, RN
Chandra Carter, MA	Kristina Williams, MSN, RN, NP-D-BC	Susan McDonald, BSN, RN, CPN
Courtney Farris, BSN, RN	Lara Barrett, BSN, RN	Valerie Price, BSN, RN
Fanta Kaba, MA	Leslie Vazquez, MA	Venetra Okoro, BSN, RN
Fleur Walker, LPN	Madison Josey-Wooten, BSN, RN	Victoria Williams, MA
Gail Moultrie, LPN	Marquita Drone, RMA	Zakaria Gary, MSN, RN
Hazel Canete, BSN, RN	Megan Phan, BSN, RN	
Jana Martin, RN	Merissa Cox, BSN, RN	
Jazmine Wilson, MSN, RN	Qiana Gamble, MA	







## Special Care Unit

As part of the Children's Vision to be a unified pediatric system that does everything possible to make anything possible for kids, Children's relocated and expanded its Special Care Unit (SCU) at Egleston to a new, state-of-the-art unit at Arthur M. Blank Hospital. Founded in 2014, the Children's SCU is a biocontainment unit designed to care for children with highly infectious pathogens that result in severe infections. The SCU is ready to be activated to provide this specialized care at any time. This readiness is made possible by a dedicated group of nurses who volunteer to join the SCU team as SCU Rostered Nurses.

SCU Rostered Nurses have positions in clinical units across Children's. The diversity of SCU Rostered Nurses ensures the SCU is ready to provide excellent care to a child of any age, no matter their clinical condition. In addition to their home unit responsibilities, these nurses receive quarterly training from the SCU on high-level personal

protective equipment (PPE) and biocontainment unit core competencies such as spill prevention and management, safe lab specimen collection and packaging, and bioburden reduction techniques. These practices are critical for providing nursing care in a biocontainment setting but also translate to everyday practice in clinical units. SCU Rostered Nurses participate in quarterly practice exercises, after which their insight and feedback are used to refine SCU Standard Operating Procedures. SCU Rostered Nurses would be called upon to care for a patient in the SCU if the unit is activated. SCU Rostered Nurses' flexibility in adapting their nursing practice to a biocontainment setting and willingness to interface with highly infectious pathogens exemplifies the Children's Values.

In preparation for the move to Arthur M. Blank Hospital, the SCU program re-oriented 41 registered nurses to the new SCU. SCU Rostered Nurses were re-oriented to SCU Core Competencies at Arthur M. Blank Hospital because SCU processes are closely tied to the physical space of the unit. In addition to training and education they received for the home department, these SCU Rostered Nurses spent an intensive training day in the SCU learning evidence-based skills from external experts, SCU leaders and SCU Super Users. Following the move to Arthur M. Blank Hospital, the SCU conducted a full-scale exercise, during which the unit activated to receive a neonate with suspected viral hemorrhagic fever infection. During the exercise, SCU Rostered Nurses set up the unit to meet the needs of the expected patient, received clinical updates from the sending facility, received the patient from the transport team, and initiated critical care interventions in the SCU.

NAME/CREDENTIALS	ROLE	CAMPUS
Rajeane Adams, MSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Sarah Alexander, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse 2	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Celine Andre, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite Hospital
Madison Brasselle, BSN, RN, CPEN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Shawna Burwell, BSN, RN, CPN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Kelsey Comeaux, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Katie Conk, RN	CSO Float Nurse FR	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Katy Cown, RN, BSN, CPN	Manager Clinical Operations	Arthur M. Blank Hospital



NAME/CREDENTIALS	ROLE	CAMPUS
Rose Custer, BSN, RN, CPN	Vascular Access Team Nurse	Scottish Rite Hospital
Marissa Dickerson, BSN, RN, CPN	Cardiac Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Kendra Dixon, BSN, RN, CPN	CSO Float Nurse FR	Scottish Rite Hospital
Samantha Drennan, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Jessica Falletta, BSN, RN, CCRN, CPN	Cardiac Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Marybeth Fazio, MSN, RN, CPN, CCRN, CIMI, CNEcl	Onboarding Specialist	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Sarah Friedenthal-Greene, BSN, RN	CSO Float Nurse	Scottish Rite Hospital
Kinley Gann, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Katy (Kathryn) Haering, MN, BS, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Nikkie (Tanika) Harris, BSN, RN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Kari Hatfield, MSN, BS, RN, CCRN, PCCN	Cardiac Clinical Nurse 2	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Rebecca Jackson, BSN, RN	CSO Float Nurse FR	Scottish Rite Hospital
Grace Knight, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Nick LaCoco, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Lisa Kowal, MBA, BSN, RN, CPN	Cardiac Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Kristy Lucarelli, MSN, RN, FNP-BC, CPPS	Clinical Patient Safety Coordinator	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Megan McDonald, BSN, RN, CCRN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Scottish Rite Hospital
LaKeisha Neely, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Support Center
Maggie Railey, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Christi Reichert, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Anna Sanford, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Nurse	Scottish Rite Hospital
Natalie Smith, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Corey Stevens, MSN, RN, CCRN, CPN, BS RCP, RRT	Cardiac Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Rebecca St-Fleur, MSN, RN, CPN	CSO Float Nurse FR	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Ryan Sullivan, BSN, RN	Clinical Nurse	Support Center
Rachel Thomas	Onboarding Specialist	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Laura Toops, BSN, RN, CCRN	Assistant Manager Nursing	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Karlie Upsahw, BSN, RN	House Supervisor/ CSO Float Nurse FR	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Rita Wilson, RN, CPHON	Clinical Nurse	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Heather Yarnell, BSN, RN, CPN, NE-BC	Assistant Manager Nursing	Scottish Rite Hospital
Diana Toney, MSHA, BSN, RN	Clinical Program Manager Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Marissa Dickerson, BSN, RN, CPN	Clinical Educator Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Sarah Friedenthal-Greene, BSN, RN	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Rebecca Jackson, BSN, RN	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Lisa Kowal, MBA, BSN, RN, CPN	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Kristy Lucarelli, MSN, RN, FNP-BC, CPPS	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
LaKeisha Neely, BSN, RN, CPN	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Ryan Sullivan, BSN, RN	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital
Laura Toops, BSN, RN, CCRN	Super User Special Care Unit	Arthur M. Blank Hospital

# The Power of Nursing Teams: Collaboration at the Heart of Quality Care

In healthcare, collaboration is key. Nowhere is this more evident than within the walls of Children's.

Our nurses' ability to communicate, support one another and collaborate with other healthcare professionals plays a pivotal role in delivering the high-quality care Children's is known for in our community.

From the frontlines of patient care to behind-the-scenes coordination, our non-traditional nursing teams are the lifeline of our healthcare setting, ensuring we *do everything possible to make anything possible for kids*. By combining their expertise and compassion, these teams are able to navigate the challenges of modern healthcare while maintaining the connection with our patients and families that makes all the difference for our pediatric patients.

## Vascular Access Team

More than 90% of patients will need a vascular access device during their hospitalization, so our Vascular Access team is a crucial asset in caring for our pediatric patients. The team is comprised of 50 registered nurses and paramedics with various ICU, ED, Flight and GPC experience. They serve as clinical experts, resources and patient advocates in all inpatient and ambulatory departments at both Arthur M. Blank and Scottish Rite Hospitals. This team partners with providers and clinical teams to help determine the best peripheral and/or central venous access device to meet desired patient treatment goals while optimizing vascular health. The team's passion and dedication helps ensure the most critical and delicate procedures are performed safely and effectively. Their goal is to limit attempts for access and reduce complications while promoting trust and comfort with our pediatric patients.

This team's impact extends far beyond technical skill—they contribute to decreased anxiety for the patients, enhanced caregiver reassurance, improved outcomes related to CLABSI and PIVIE, and reduced device failures. Our vulnerable population benefits from the knowledge, skill and proficiency of the Vascular Access team.

While many of the nurses are Vascular Access Board Certified (VA-BC), the team also stays up to date on the newest technology and patient care standards according to the Association for Vascular Access (AVA) and Infusion Nurses Society (INS). They use innovative technology for placing peripheral intravenous (PIV) and peripherally inserted central lines (PICCs) that aid in visualization including transillumination and ultrasound through completion of routine advanced competencies. In 2024, the team completed 22,188 PIV and 1,330 PICC consults between Egleston, Arthur M. Blank and Scottish Rite Hospitals.



## Wound Ostomy Team

The Children's Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse (WOCN) team is comprised of board-certified nurses who serve as an invaluable clinical resource in all inpatient areas of the organization for both patients and staff. They provide expertise and guidance on ostomy care, wound care, staging of pressure injuries, pressure injury prevention and treatment. Their knowledge of prevention, management and healing not only improves patient outcomes but also significantly enhances quality of care. This team provides compassion, skill and precision to each patient's case. They are unsung heroes in the journey toward healing.



This team receives wound ostomy certification through a one-year accredited program, which is in addition to nursing school and includes academic and hands-on applications specific to wound care. Upon completion of the program, these nurses are eligible to sit for their board certification and are responsible for re-certifying every five years.

In 2024, the WOCN team at Egleston/Arthur M. Blank and Scottish Rite Hospitals completed 7,143 consults, and their consult volume continues to increase.

---

## Behavioral and Mental Health Nursing Team

Doing *everything possible to make anything possible for kids* means not just caring for patients' physical health but their mental health, too. That is why Behavioral and Mental Health (BMH) has been an area of growing focus for Children's, culminating in the 2024 System priority to improve pediatric behavioral and mental health. Helping meet this need, our BMH nursing team works to further Whole Child Care by providing behavioral and mental health support for children in our hospitals.

BMH nurses provide trauma-informed care and support patients' emotional needs to help prevent crisis across the System. When a crisis does occur, they serve as the Code Behavioral Emergency Response Team (BERT) lead. In 2024, they led 509 Code BERTs across the three hospital campuses.

In their consultative role, BMH nurses proactively round and collaborate with primary care teams to support patients with any BMH concerns. During these rounds, BMH nurses perform mental status exams, assess for psychotropic medication side effects, develop patient-centered coping plans, evaluate environmental safety and deliver any necessary interventions such as therapeutic engagement—a patient-centered intervention that prioritizes physical, mental and emotional well-being. In 2024, the BMH nursing team served 4,295 unique patients through 27,057 touch points.





In addition to supporting patients, BMH nurses also support employees through rounding and education. In 2024, many quality and compliance metrics vastly improved from the previous year, including VSD restraint and suicide prevention metrics.

To prepare for their specialty work, BMH nurses at Children's complete extensive training, including the American Psychiatric Nurses Association's Transitions in Practice program. This training, coupled with focused onboarding and education, creates subject matter experts in providing hands-on pediatric BMH care, inclusive of principles founded in trauma-informed care, suicide prevention, crisis prevention and de-escalation.

## Nurse Case Managers

Nursing case management is a dynamic and integral part of Children's, focusing on coordinating patient care to improve outcomes while managing costs.

Our incredible team of nurse case managers contributes to patient care beyond the bedside through:

- 1. Patient-Centered Care:**  
Advocating for patients/families and helping align care with their needs, goals and preferences.
- 2. Care Coordination:**  
Collaborating with interdisciplinary teams, including physicians, therapists and social workers, to help ensure continuity of care.
- 3. Resource Management:**  
Optimizing the use of healthcare resources, help ensuring patients receive appropriate services without unnecessary duplication.
- 4. Transition of Care:**  
Facilitating smooth transitions between care settings, such as from hospital to home or other facilities.
- 5. Regulatory Compliance:**  
Ensuring adherence to healthcare regulations, policies and insurance requirements.
- 6. Outcomes Monitoring:**  
Tracking patient progress and adapting care plans as needed to achieve desired health outcomes.



Our case management team leverages successfully improved patient outcomes by utilizing core nursing skills, such as:

**1. Clinical Assessment:**

Evaluate patient needs, conditions and risk factors through a thorough assessment (initial discharge planning evaluation).

**2. Communication:**

Engage with patients, families and healthcare providers to ensure clear and effective exchange of information.

**3. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:**

Analyze complex situations, anticipate challenges and develop practical solutions.

**4. Time Management:**

Prioritize tasks, manage caseloads and balance competing demands efficiently.

**5. Empathy and Advocacy:**

Build trust, provide emotional support and advocate for patient rights and needs.

**6. Knowledge of Healthcare Systems:**

Navigate insurance processes, community resources and healthcare policies.

**7. Documentation and Record-Keeping:**

Maintain accurate and detailed patient records for care planning and compliance.

**8. Cultural Competency:**

Provide care and support that respects the cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic background of patients.

The case management team experienced a wide range of major accomplishments in 2024, including the ability for case managers to re-route prescriptions across all levels of care for inpatient, ambulatory and emergency services at our three hospitals. The case management team also led General Patient Care discharge huddle rounds at Egleston/Arthur M. Blank Hospital. The team's 2024 metrics in the inpatient setting demonstrate their instrumental role in patient care, completing:

- **203** specialty pharmacy arrangements
- **230** compounding pharmacy arrangements
- **2,599** medication prior authorizations
- **4,778** caregiver/patient calls
- **5,987** home health arrangements
- **43,760** interdisciplinary team rounds
- **138,820** chart reviews

In addition to the inpatient setting, case management partners with outpatient teams in the Transplant, Cystic Fibrosis, Medically Complex Care and Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center clinics. In 2024, the team worked to complete 2,106 medication prior authorizations, 2,126 specialty pharmacy arrangements and 1,613 home health arrangements.

Case management nursing is highly rewarding, offering the opportunity to make a significant impact on patients' lives by combining clinical expertise with care coordination and advocacy. It is a role that bridges the gap between complex healthcare systems and patient needs.



## PodTalks!

PodTalks! is a Children's podcast that features employees throughout the System to spread positivity while highlighting the shared compassion and dedication of all staff members. Through storytelling, the podcast provides a platform to showcase the ways Children's employees contribute to the well-being of patients and their families, whether directly at the bedside or behind the scenes, to create a positive and supportive environment.

By sharing these stories and perspectives, PodTalks! reminds listeners of the underlying Mission and Values that drive Children's employees. Regardless of role, every person genuinely cares about the welfare of the children and their families. The podcast aims to uplift and inspire listeners by showcasing the heartwarming stories of Children's nurses. In 2024, we highlighted seven teams at Children's with the following topics:



*Check it out! You can find the podcast on Apple or Spotify.*

*Interested in being highlighted? Reach out to Colette Bernstein, Magnet Program Manager.*



# Technology

Optimize use of technology to support care delivery, standardize nursing practice and promote innovation and efficiency to achieve quality outcomes.

## Nursing Informatics Council

The Nursing Informatics Council (NIC), a Children’s System-based Shared Leadership Council, had a banner year in 2024. With the opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital, NIC helped to pave the way for the adoption of the newest technologies for the System. NIC supports the Nursing Strategic Plan by advocating for technology options that support standardization, quality, safety and practice initiatives for nursing and clinical teams.

The council, comprised of nurse leaders, clinical nurses and clinical informatics from across the System, meets regularly to review, approve and prioritize technology projects and requests submitted through the NIC Request Form. For 2024, the council prioritized a continued effort around the following improvement areas:

- Nursing efficiency: decreasing time in documentation and improving administrative tasks
- Nurse well-being
- Patient care: reducing alert fatigue

In 2024, the council received 20 requests for review and voting. Some of the approved requests include clarifying cap and tubing intervention documentation in support of CLABSI prevention efforts and adding a GU Drain Balloon Volume row in support of CAUTI prevention efforts.

Our future is bright for 2025, as the council continues to explore how best to leverage technology to improve nurse efficiency, nurse well-being and patient care.

## Nursing Efficiency Flowsheet Macros

In May 2024, the council rolled out flowsheet macros in Epic. Flowsheet macros save clinicians time documenting. With one click, a macro can populate numerous values in a flowsheet template. Nurses can adjust entries, if needed, after a macro is applied. On average, a nurse can save seven minutes per shift when they use macros. Since the rollout in May, Children’s nurses have saved more than 1.6 million clicks by using an average of nine macros per shift, per department.

## Occurrence Notification System (ONS) in Epic

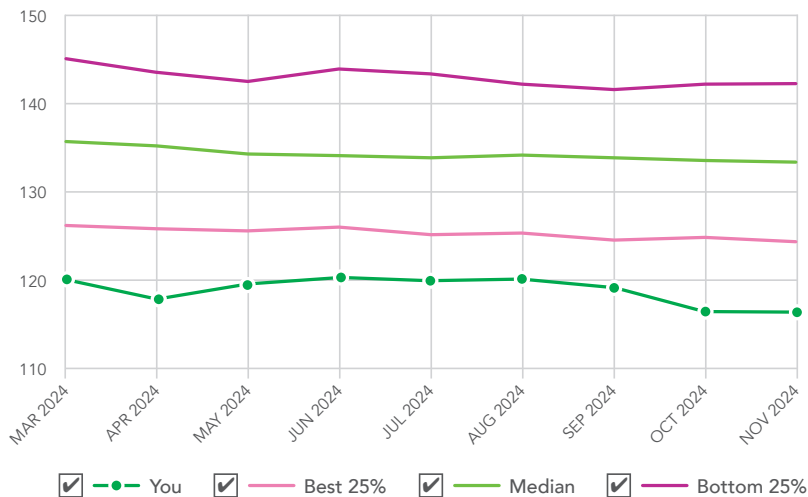
To simplify ONS submissions for clinical staff, Children’s integrated ONS into patients’ charts for all staff. This allows for specific information to auto-populate from Epic—alleviating manual entry, reducing human error and making it easier to report safety events, near misses and safety concerns.

## Expanded Device Integration

With the opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital, Children’s expanded device integration to all inpatient areas, saving nurses time by pulling data from patient monitors into Epic for validation. To further save nurses time (and steps), Children’s deployed WAVE – alarm notification to six units. WAVE – alarm notification allows nurses to view patient monitor information from their Voalte device. According to the Acute Care Nursing Report provided by Epic, active time spent in flowsheet documentation has decreased by four minutes per user per shift since March 2024 (down from 120 minutes to 116).

A focus for 2025 is expanding this technology to Scottish Rite to integrate the most up-to-date and accurate information into patient charts, which will help with effective decision making for patient care. In addition, we will expand WAVE functionality into our ICUs and EDs.

Active time per 12 and 12+ hour shift



## In-Room Digital Experience at Arthur M. Blank Hospital

Much of the new technology deployed at Arthur M. Blank Hospital aids in efficiencies for nurses. Each inpatient room has a digital display board outside the door to display pertinent patient information, such as isolation precautions or interpreter needs. In addition, leveraging our Real-Time Location System (RTLS) technology, the light around the hallway board displays color to indicate which member of the care team is in the patient room. This is a helpful visual for nurses to quickly see where providers and other clinical staff are located on the unit.

Another keystone feature is digital patient information boards inside the rooms. The board offers four views (one patient view, two clinical views and one teaching view) to update patients on their plans of care, help guide conversations and further educate patients and families. The clinical views are activated when clinical team members enter the room wearing their RTLS badge. Since opening the new hospital, technology adoption has been widespread, with nurses leading the way!

One more technology serving to improve efficiency for nurses is the GetWell TV system displayed in inpatient rooms. These “smart TVs” integrate with Epic, allowing nurses to push educational videos to patients and families from Epic. In addition, when the education is completed, this information files back into the patient chart, eliminating nurses’ required documentation in Epic.

Finally, each inpatient room is equipped with cameras that can be activated from within Epic or using the bedside remote. The cameras call virtual interpreters, which helps reduce steps when in-person services aren’t available. Patients can also use these cameras to call family members who aren’t physically present during care team conversations. In the future, Children’s will further leverage this technology for other virtual care team workflows, including virtual nursing.

# Nurse Well-Being

## Pinnacle Award for Nurse Satisfaction

In July 2024, the KLAS Arch Collaborative recognized Children’s with the first-ever Pinnacle Award for Nursing Satisfaction. Children’s was one of 15 organizations to receive this award that evaluates nursing satisfaction with the electronic health record (EHR). Our nurses were among the most satisfied EHR users, with an overall satisfaction score of 76.5 (out of 100), compared to the Systemwide overall satisfaction score of 67.7. In comparison to other healthcare organizations in the Collaborative, a score of 76.5 places Children's in the 100th percentile for nurse EHR satisfaction. In a study featured in JAMA (September 2023), high user satisfaction with the EHR is positively correlated to a strong EHR safety performance. We look forward to surveying our clinical teams in 2025 to ensure improvements not only benefit quality of care but help reduce cognitive burden—resulting in happier, more satisfied nurses.

## Staff Duress with RTLS Badge

In February 2024, RTLS badges were deployed to the Scottish Rite Emergency Department (ED) to alert the Children’s security team of staff duress incidents. Each badge features buttons that staff can press to notify security during an unsafe or threatening situation. Scottish Rite ED served as the technology’s pilot site in advance of deploying the badges to all employees at Arthur M. Blank Hospital. In 2025, Children’s will evaluate core infrastructure at Scottish Rite to support the deployment of this technology Systemwide.

# Patient Care

## Alarm Optimization Committee

In fall 2024, Children’s instituted the Alarm Optimization Committee. The cross-departmental committee includes nursing and physician leaders that review and discuss requests for alarm or alert changes—including Voalte, the Responder 5 Nurse Call system and Philips monitors. As we move into 2025, the Alarm Optimization Committee will focus on reducing alarms generated by these systems and other medical devices to help reduce alert fatigue for nurses.





# THANK YOU

---

Year after year, through unwavering dedication and tireless efforts,  
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta nurses continue building  
an indelible legacy of greatness within our community.

Thank you, Children's nurses, for your devotion to excellence in patient care, collaboration  
and innovation. Each of you is an important part of the Children's family, working together  
*to make kids better today and healthier tomorrow.*

