







Nurses EXPO 2025 “Soar to New Heights” Speaker Information and Schedule – Friday, April 25, 2025, 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM

| Type      | Time         | Presentation Title/Learning Outcome/Objectives   | Speaker/Credentials/Short bio  |
|-----------|--------------|--|--|
| KEYNOTE 1 | 8:00-9:15 am | <p>Self-Care and Compassion Fatigue</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand suicide and its risks.</li> <li>• Define resilience, self-care, and the difference between compassion fatigue and burnout.</li> <li>• Discuss ways that professionals can build resilience and prevent compassion fatigue.</li> </ul> | <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p><b>Mary Gubbe Lee, MS, LSW, LCPC</b></p> <p>Short bio: Mary provides information, training, and technical assistance to help communities respond appropriately to the needs of people with behavioral health disorders. Mary has over forty years’ experience in mental health and is certified by SAMHSA as a trauma trainer. She provides community presentations for NAMI Northern Illinois as part of their community outreach. Mary is the producer of the Stars of Light, an arts program of Stepping Stones of Rockford. Since 1995 they have staged over 300 tours shows, produced several videos, aired 6 radio shows, created a children’s book, a recovery book, produced 14 art galleries and stages a full-length play.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p><b>Jeanette Towns, Recovery Support Specialist</b></p> <p>Short bio: Jeanette Towns is a mental health advocate, activist, public speaker, as well as a published author of “When Shattered Lives Become Whole”, available on Amazon. Jeanette is employed by The National Alliance on Mental Illness in Rockford, Illinois. She is a suicide prevention instructor, teaching the QPR method and is trained in mental health first aid. She openly shares her story of having lived with the ravages of Bipolar Disorder, having achieved recovery in 2004. She facilitates support groups throughout the community and is in charge of a church-run mental wellness ministry entitled “All of Me”. She is the proud mother of two accomplished daughters and grandmother of six active grandchildren.</p> </div> </div> </div> |

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| Presentation       | 9:15-9:45 am   | Complementary/Alternative Wellness Practices  | Speaker to be announced  |
| Morning Breakout 1 | 10:15-11:30 am | <p><b>Getting a Leg Up on Your Patient’s Lower Extremity Wounds</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the phases of wound healing and at least three factors that delay the wound healing process.</li> <li>• Differentiate between commonly seen chronic lower extremity wounds (venous, arterial, neuropathic ulcers, and atypical wounds).</li> <li>• Incorporate wound management principles in a treatment plan to optimize wound healing.</li> </ul> |  <p><b>Jessica Simmons, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, CWON, DNC</b></p> <p>Short bio: Jessica Simmons is a Senior Clinical Scientist with Hollister, Inc.'s Global Clinical Affairs team. A registered nurse since 2006 and nurse practitioner since 2015, she earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice in 2021 from Purdue University Global. Her clinical background includes Internal Medicine, Wound/Ostomy/Continence, and Hyperbaric Medicine. She also serves as Adjunct Faculty for Purdue University Global's Family Nurse Practitioner program and is a past President of the Wound Ostomy Continence Certification Board. Her certifications include CWON, DNC, and FNP-C through respected credentialing boards, reflecting her expertise in wound care, dermatology, and family practice.</p> |
| Morning Breakout 2 | 10:15-11:30 am | <p><b>Opioid Epidemic: Best Practices in Pain Management</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe current state of opioid epidemic</li> <li>• Identify pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches for pain management</li> <li>• Identify best practices to alleviate opioid misuse and overdose</li> </ul>   |  <p><b>Alexa Brisard, PharmD</b></p> <p>Short bio: Alexa Brisard graduated from Ohio Northern College in pharmacy in 2018. She completed a PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency at SwedishAmerican Hospital (now UW Health Northern Illinois) and became a clinical pharmacist after graduation. Alexa’s areas of clinical expertise include medical-surgical patients and nutrition. She is board certified in pharmacotherapy and is a certified nutrition support clinician.</p>   |



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| <p>Morning Breakout 3</p>         | <p>10:15-11:30 am</p> | <p><b>Hypertensive Disorders in Obstetrics</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learner will identify different types of hypertension in obstetrics.</li> <li>• The learner will verbalize range of severe maternal hypertension.</li> <li>• The learner will assess for signs and symptoms associated with pre-eclampsia.</li> <li>• The learner will identify appropriate medication treatment and intervene appropriately.</li> </ul> |  <p><b>Natalie Parker, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, CNM</b></p> <p>Short bio: Natalie has been working in obstetric care since 2008. She received her Masters of Nursing Practice at University of Cincinnati in 2018 and her Doctorate of Nursing Practice at University of Illinois at Chicago in 2022. Natalie’s special interests include obstetric care, women’s health and gender specific care, sexual wellness, menstrual/menopause/hormone management, and empowering her patients through education. She strives to be an advocate for the populations that have been marginalized through racism, colonization, and systemic bias. She is a life-long learner and welcomes correction, feedback and challenges that help her to be a more inclusive health care provider.</p> |
| <p>First Afternoon Breakout 1</p> | <p>12:30-1:45 pm</p>  | <p><b>Come Fly with Me</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audience members will be able to state current recommendations for qualifications for flight nurses.</li> <li>• Audience members will be able to list at least 3 technology advancements, safety awareness initiatives, or training to implement better safety.</li> </ul>   |  <p><b>Zachary Baker, BSPH, BSN, RN, CCRN, CFRN</b></p> <p>Short bio: Zachary was born and raised in/at Rockford Memorial Hospital where his mother was a nurse on the floor and then in the PACU. He did not make it into nursing school on the first attempt and that’s the reason he got the BSPH. He put himself through nursing school working as a CNA in the ICU at RMH. After passing the NCLEX, he worked on the Outpatient unit for 1.5 years before going back to the ACC. He worked toward his final goal which was flight. In April of 2021, he accepted his flight nurse position and has been working his dream job since.</p>   |



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| First Afternoon Breakout 2 | 12:30-1:45 pm | <p><b>Trauma Informed Care &amp; Me</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learners will be able to identify trauma and be “trauma aware”.</li><li>• Learners will verbalize their support of patient-centered care.</li><li>• Learners will demonstrate increased understanding of vicarious trauma.</li></ul> |  <p><b>Jamie Counsell, MLS Healthcare Law, BSN, RN, Forensic Nurse Examiner</b></p> <p>Short bio: Jamie received her ADN in 2009 from Bryant and Stratton College and her BSN in 2018 from Western Governors University. In 2012, she gained training to become a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner from the Wisconsin Department of Justice. She has been a full-time coordinator at Mercy Trauma Center, Janesville, WI since 2015. She is professionally active, taking part in over 25 committees locally and state-wide. Her specialty and main focus of nursing is on Forensics which includes prevention, awareness and education on child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, drug endangered children, and human trafficking. In May of 2024, she graduated with her Masters in Legal Studies for Healthcare Law. Outside of work, she enjoys family time, crafting and self-care activities. She is a married mother of two teenage boys, 2 dogs and 2 giant rabbits.</p> |
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| <p>First Afternoon Breakout 3</p> | <p>12:30-1:45 pm</p> | <p><b>Documentation Pitfalls: Nursing Documentation and the Legal Process</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learners will verbalize the definition and make-up of a lawsuit</li><li>• Learners will articulate Dos and Don'ts of documentation</li><li>• Learners will understand how charging can translate into litigation</li></ul> |  <p><b>Elizabeth Polit, JD</b></p> <p>Short bio: Elizabeth Polit is a senior associate at Brennan Burtker LLC. She graduated from the University of Illinois College of Law in 2015. Elizabeth has dedicated her career to the defense of health care practitioners.</p>  <p><b>Lee A Williams, JD, MBA, M.Acc.</b></p> <p>Short bio: Lee A. Williams is a Partner at Brennan Burtker LLC. Ms. Williams is a trial lawyer who has focused the last 20 years of her practice in the defense of complex medical malpractice cases. She has defended hospitals, physicians, and healthcare providers throughout all phases of litigation including pre-trial, discovery and trial in complex high-stakes litigation. Before joining Brennan Burtker LLC in 2022, Ms. Williams was a partner at a large Chicagoland medical malpractice firm where she served as the head of the malpractice department. Prior to earning her Juris Doctorate from Loyola University Chicago School of Law, she worked as a Certified Public Accountant for a large accounting firm. In addition to her law degree, Ms. Williams has an MBA and Master of Accounting. Ms. Williams has been awarded for her accomplished career every year by the publication Super Lawyers since 2018, and Top Attorneys of Illinois since 2019. She is a member of the California and Illinois State Bar Associations, the Chicago Bar Association, and a past elected board member and current member of the Chicagoland Healthcare Risk Management Society (CHRMS).</p> |
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| <p>Second Afternoon Breakout 1</p> | <p>1:55-3:10 pm</p> | <p><b>The Experience of a Donor Family</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will increase their knowledge of the organ/tissue donation process.</li> <li>• Learners will have increased understanding of the experiences of families during the organ/tissue donation process.</li> </ul>                          |  <p><b>John and Joy Beach</b></p> <p>Short bio: John and Joy Beach became Donor Parents on August 1, 2014 upon the unexpected death of their son John. John was involved in a fatal motorcycle accident on the evening of his 22nd birthday that ultimately informed his family that he’d made the choice to be an Organ and Tissue Donor in the state of Illinois. Joy has been an Ambassador for the Gift of Hope since 2015, speaking for hospitals and other groups raising transplantation awareness. In addition, Joy has been an active volunteer with Eversight Illinois and serving on the advisory board for a time. In 2022, the couple was invited to travel to San Diego for the first time to participate in the Transplant Games. This event was so impactful for John Senior that he has since become a volunteer and advocate for Gift of Hope, sharing John’s story and raising grief/mental health awareness for donor and recipient families. The Beachs have met three of John’s six organ recipients and hope to meet any others living with John’s gift. They hope to continue to share John’s story and positively impact the community surrounding organ and tissue donation.</p> |
| <p>Second Afternoon Breakout 2</p> | <p>1:55-3:10 pm</p> | <p><b>Diabetes Education: A Nurse’s Perspective</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learner will have a greater understanding of normal glucose metabolism.</li> <li>• The learner will be able to compare Type 1 versus Type 2 DM.</li> <li>• The learner will understand the purpose of layered learning.</li> </ul> |  <p><b>Erin Brefeld, BSN, RN, CDCES</b></p> <p>Short bio: Erin has been in DM education for 26 years. She likes to bring both professional and personal knowledge and experience to each patient encounter.</p>  |

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| <p>Second Afternoon Breakout 3</p> | <p>1:55-3:10 pm</p> | <p><b>A Passion for Public Health</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will gain a general understanding of the implications provided by Public Health Departments</li> <li>• Learners will gain an appreciation of the joys and drawbacks of working through Public Health Departments</li> <li>• Learners will appreciate the passions of Public Health</li> </ul>  |  <p><b>Melissa New, BSN, RN, FNE, CLS</b></p> <p>Short bio: I am a single mom of three wonderful and beautiful children. My oldest is 18. She is a senior this year. I have twin 14-year-old boys. They are freshman. I am very passionate about my work, so much I work 4 part-time jobs and have a full-time job. And primarily 3 teenagers are a lot of money LOL!! I have always been passionate about taking care of people since I was little. I am always so excited to be able to talk about what I do!!</p>   |
| <p>KEYNOTE 2</p>                   | <p>3:30–4:45 pm</p> | <p><b>From Fledgling to Full Flight</b></p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners will understand the key skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to develop for a successful transition into the workforce as entry-level professionals.</li> <li>• Learners will be able to verbalize strategies that build clinical competence, resilience, and professional adaptability for their first nursing roles.</li> <li>• Learners will gain an appreciation of the impact that learning experiences make on professional development.</li> </ul> |  <p><b>Angela Delmont, MSN, RN, IL PEL CSN</b></p> <p>Short bio: With over 35 years as a registered nurse, Angela Delmont has diverse experience spanning clinical care, community health, and nursing education. She began her career in the pediatric intensive care unit at Children's Memorial Hospital (now Lurie Children's Hospital) in Chicago. For 20 years, she served as a certified school nurse in the Sycamore School District, supporting students from pre-K through 12th grade. For the past eight years, Angie has been shaping future nurses as an educator and Director of Nursing in an associate degree nursing program. Her career reflects a deep commitment to patient care, student success, and advancing the nursing profession.</p> |