



## Greetings from Your Chief Nursing Officer



**Herta Muller**

St. John's Riverside Hospital  
Chief Nursing Officer

As we celebrate Nurses Week, I want to recognize something extraordinary—the heart, strength, and dedication you bring to this profession every day. It is an honor to work alongside such a compassionate and committed team. You are not only caregivers—you are advocates, leaders, and a constant source of comfort and healing for our patients and for one another.

This year's Nurses Week focuses on wellness and professional growth, reflecting our commitment to supporting you as whole individuals. You give so much of yourselves, and it's essential that we create space for you to recharge and thrive. After a long and challenging winter, your resilience stood out—showing up in difficult conditions, supporting one another, and ensuring our community never went without exceptional care.

Our Year One Report Out and Celebration was a testament to what's possible when a team is united by purpose. In a short time, you've driven meaningful progress and built momentum that will shape the future of nursing here. It was especially meaningful to share this with the Mother Cabrini Foundation, whose representatives were deeply moved by your work.

Creating space for your voice remains a priority. Our first Nursing Town Hall, in collaboration with the CNO Advisory Board, strengthened connection, transparency, and trust. As our core councils and Unit Practice Councils establish their goals, we continue building a shared governance model where leadership is a collective responsibility.

I look forward to continuing these conversations through upcoming Town Halls and shadowing opportunities.

Thank you for the compassion you show, the excellence you deliver, and the difference you make—every day. You are the foundation of our success.

*Herta*

## SPRING 2026 HIGHLIGHTS

**Nurse  
Appreciation  
Week**

**May 4 - 8**

**Shared  
Governance Day  
May 13**

# Partnering With Herta

Our journey toward Pathway to Excellence—improving patient care and enhancing nurse satisfaction—begins at the bedside. Staying grounded in both the why and the how is essential to advancing our nursing mission. In support of this, the CNO Advisory Board is proud to introduce Partnering with Herta.

This initiative is designed to strengthen connections between leadership and staff while deepening nursing engagement. As part of the program, Herta will conduct regular CNO shadowing sessions across units. These experiences will allow her to observe frontline workflows, better understand staff challenges, and support professional practice more effectively.

During these sessions, she will focus on patient care workflows, communication patterns, resource availability, safety practices, the care environment, and opportunities to remove barriers—while also recognizing moments of excellence in nursing practice.

The goals of this initiative are clear: to build trust and transparency between leadership and staff, increase engagement and alignment with organizational priorities, and strengthen our connection to Pathway to Excellence standards. These insights will also inform strategic decision-making and drive meaningful improvements across the organization.

By working directly alongside clinical nurses, Herta will gain a deeper understanding of practice across all care settings. This perspective will help shape policy, improve the work environment, and support nurses in practicing at the top of their license.

Shadowing began in early April on 6S (day shift) and 4W (night shift), and will continue across all units, shifts, and service lines.

And a reminder—while she carries the title of CNO, Herta remains a nurse at heart. She will be right alongside you, supporting our shared mission to deliver excellent, evidence-based, comprehensive patient care.



-Vivian Wong, Registered Nurse, 6 South

“Having the opportunity to be shadowed by Herta was both an honor and a meaningful experience. This gave us valuable time to gain insight into the workflow and barriers that nurses come across daily. Hopefully this collaboration will bridge leadership perspectives with frontline realities.”

## Message from Herta

Shadowing RNs on 6 South—across both day and night shifts—provided valuable insight into the rhythm and complexity of care throughout a 24-hour cycle. I witnessed exceptional clinical skill, adaptability, and a deep commitment to patient-centered care.

This experience reinforced the importance of leadership staying connected to frontline practice. I extend my sincere thanks to the 6 South team, especially the nurses who welcomed me into their shifts.

While the experience was overwhelmingly positive, it also highlighted opportunities to strengthen peer-to-peer collaboration and interdisciplinary communication—particularly around shared care planning. Enhancing these connections will support smoother workflows and better patient outcomes.

If you are interested in participating in Partnering with Herta, please contact Billy DuRoss or your department’s CNO Advisory Board representative.

# All Things Wound Care

## ANDRUS WOUND NURSE

Alice Scimia is a Registered Nurse with 18 years of experience. She earned both her Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Binghamton University, and later completed her Master of Science in Nursing with a focus on administration from Chamberlain University.

Alice began her career in acute care on a telemetry/step-down unit. While working in home care, she developed a passion for wound care, becoming a certified wound care nurse in 2016 and earning ostomy care certification in 2017.

Driven by her strong connection to acute care, Alice transitioned to inpatient wound care, where she partnered with staff and leadership to achieve a 40% reduction in hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPI) from 2021 to 2022 at a previous organization, with continued improvements in subsequent years.

Alice joined St. John's Riverside Hospital in June 2025 as Clinical Resource Manager. In this role, she collaborates with inpatient units, administration, and ancillary departments to reduce HAPI rates and elevate the standard of wound and ostomy care. Please feel free to reach out to Alice as needed.



Alice Scimia, RN, MSN

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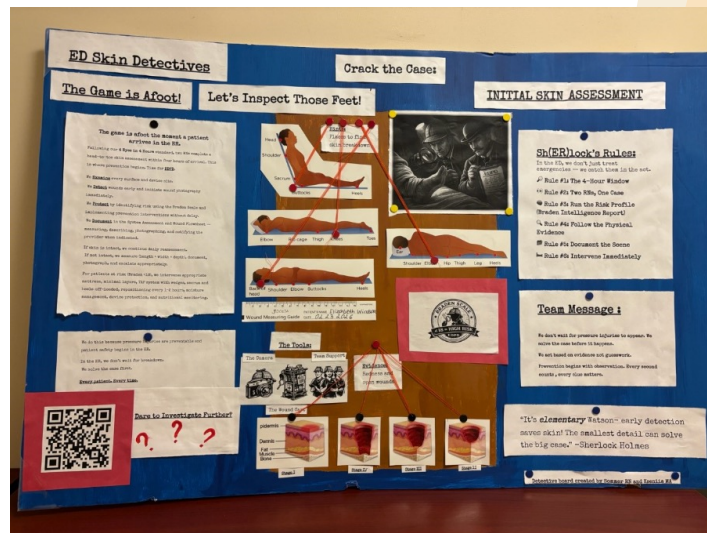
## JULIETTE LOWE, BSN, RN, CWOCN, CLSSWB



Julie Lowe, BSN, RN, CWOCN, CLSSWB, is the Clinical Coordinator for Wound Care at TIRR Memorial Hermann, a nationally recognized rehabilitation hospital known for its leadership in complex rehabilitation and interdisciplinary patient care. TIRR Memorial Hermann was recently recognized with Magnet® with Distinction, the highest recognition awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, reflecting the organization's commitment to nursing excellence and exceptional patient care. Julie supports innovative approaches to pressure injury prevention and wound care education, focusing on helping clinicians understand the underlying pathology of pressure injuries and translating that knowledge into practical bedside prevention strategies. She also serves on the System HAPI Committee for Memorial Hermann Health System, collaborating with teams across the system to improve patient safety and outcomes. She frequently presents at national conferences and is passionate about supporting frontline nurses through education, collaboration, and evidence-based practice.

## WOUND POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

Sommer Quealy RN and  
Kseniia Chebykina MA



# SJRH Shared Governance

## Retreat Day

On February 11, nurses participating in Shared Governance gathered for a retreat at the Andrus Cafeteria. While some councils had been meeting regularly, others connected for the first time.

Facilitated by Tipton Consulting and the Nursing Excellence Team, the session focused on the purpose of Shared Governance and expectations moving forward. Monthly Shared Governance Days will provide dedicated time for all councils to collaborate and advance their work.



## Town Hall Highlights

The recent Town Hall emphasized professional growth, safety, and clinical operations across all sites.

Key updates included:

- Expansion of RN advancement opportunities and encouragement of internal leadership development
- Continued rollout of shared governance at Andrus, Dobbs Ferry, and Park Care
- Enhanced security measures, including increased rounding and visitor screening
- Clinical improvements in wound care and education programs
- Recognition of staff attending national conferences
- Planning for the 2027 Nurse Residency Program
- Clarification of Mother Cabrini Grant funding
- Ongoing collaboration with union partners on staffing

Additional highlights:

- Nursing huddles will continue to begin with recognition of team successes
- The Well-Being Council is developing action plans based on assessment results
- Expanded CPI training initiatives
- ED leadership exploring strategies to improve communication during holdovers
- Pharmacy improvements to ensure timely medication availability, including earlier deliveries and optimized Pyxis levels

Overall, the Town Hall reflected a unified commitment to supporting staff, improving patient care, and fostering a collaborative, growth-focused environment.

**We look forward to seeing everyone at the next Town Hall in June (date TBD). Please submit questions using the QR code above.**

Submit Your Town Hall Questions  
Here



# Education Corner

## Why Get Certified? Let Your Expertise Shine!

Nursing certification is a formal recognition of your knowledge, skills, and clinical judgment—and a powerful way to elevate the professional image of nursing. It supports lifelong learning, builds credibility, and demonstrates your commitment to delivering exceptional patient care.

Certification can also open doors to new opportunities, career advancement, and increased earning potential, while adding value to both your workplace and the community you serve.

Below are some of the many organizations offering nursing certifications:

- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)  
– general and specialty certifications
- American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)
- Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC)
- Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board (WOCNCB)
- Certified Perioperative Nurse (CNOR)
- Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN)

If you have two to three years (or more) of nursing experience, now is a great time to consider certification. Earn it, show it off, and be proud to call yourself a certified nurse in your specialty!

### Learning Needs Assessment

Look for the Learning Needs Assessment QR code—coming via email and posted throughout the organization in May. The survey takes about five minutes, and your confidential input will help prioritize education that supports your practice and professional growth.

## CERTIFICATION PAYS!



ADVANCE  
YOUR  
CAREER.

### AT ST. JOHNS, WE SUPPORT YOUR GROWTH AND CAREER SUCCESS.

#### HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD GET CERTIFIED:

- **Higher Earning Potential:** Nurses with certifications earn more on average!
- **Improved Job Satisfaction:** Certification leads to greater job satisfaction and recognition.
- **Increased Career Opportunities:** Certified nurses are often considered for advanced roles and leadership positions.
- **Enhanced Patient Care:** Certification ensures you have specialized knowledge and skills to provide the best care.

**DON'T MISS OUT ON THE OPPORTUNITY TO ELEVATE YOUR CAREER AND PATIENT CARE. START YOUR CERTIFICATION JOURNEY TODAY!**

### HERE'S HOW WE'RE MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU:

- **Access to Financial Support:** We provide funding options to cover certification exam costs.
- **Study Resources:** Access to study materials, practice exams, and workshops to help you prepare.
- **Flexible Scheduling:** We offer flexible scheduling to accommodate your study and exam needs.
- **Mentorship and Guidance:** Get personalized support from nurses experienced in your certification of interest to guide you through the process!

#### READY TO START?



FOR MORE INFO PLEASE REACH OUT TO EMILY JAEGER, MICHELLE WEBB, NAOMI SANTONI  
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See what a newly certified nurse has to say about the process:

*"Through encouragement from my peers and leadership, resources that Laura and Dawn made available in the Emergency Department, and a lot of trepidation I decided to commit myself on obtaining my CEN. Late last year I attended an online 2-day review course which was packed full of review, learning and re-learning critical care. I would listen to Mark Boswell to and from work, I used pocket prep for test questions, and I mean A LOT of questions! So, I booked the test and passed! Felt amazing! So, take the test. It feels great and it's amazing what you learn about critical care and yourself."*

-Patty Moran, ADN, RN, CEN

# DAISY Award



Congratulations to our DAISY Foundation Award winner, Debbi-Ann Dixon, RN.

Debbi-Ann exemplifies what it means to provide truly compassionate care. Known for her calming presence and genuine kindness, she goes above and beyond to ensure every patient feels heard, comforted, and respected. In moments that matter most, she brings not only clinical excellence, but a level of empathy that leaves a lasting impact on patients and their families.

Her dedication reminds us that nursing is more than a profession, it is a calling rooted in connection, compassion, and humanity.

Thank you, Debbi-Ann, for the difference you make every day in the lives of our community.



## PPM Award Nomination

In celebration of Nurses Week 2026, help us recognize a nurse who embodies our Professional Practice Model—demonstrating compassion, collaboration, respect, and trust in every interaction. This individual exemplifies evidence-based practice, innovation, and lifelong learning while delivering safe, patient-centered care.

In 2–3 sentences, share why this nurse deserves recognition. The honoree will be announced in an upcoming newsletter.

NURSING PROFESSIONAL  
PRACTICE MODEL AWARD   
NOMINATION



# Updates!

## Pathway to Excellence

This May marks one year since receiving the Mother Cabrini Grant and launching our partnership with Tipton Consulting to support our Pathway to Excellence® journey. Over the past year, we have successfully implemented a comprehensive shared governance structure at Andrus, including four core councils, a Coordinating Council, and Unit/Service Practice Councils. These groups meet regularly with the support of nursing leadership and educators, strengthening collaboration and empowering frontline staff.

Looking ahead, we will expand our efforts by establishing workgroups focused on advancing the nursing strategic plan, conducting a learning needs assessment, and developing a nurse leader orientation and transition program. We also remain committed to supporting clinical nurses in pursuing specialty certifications and continued education.

Together, these initiatives are building a strong foundation for nursing excellence and a culture where nurses can thrive.

## Shared Governance

### Nurse Well-Being

Over the past year, nurses across the hospital established the Nursing Well-Being Council. As part of this work, the ANCC Healthy Work Environment Assessment Tool was distributed hospital-wide, giving nurses an opportunity to share their experiences and perspectives.

Based on the results, the council is prioritizing key areas for improvement identified by staff. Planned initiatives focus on strengthening communication, enhancing collaboration, improving patient and family care, and increasing recognition—beginning with Nurses Week.

### CNO Advisory Board

In addition to producing this newsletter, the CNO Advisory Board is working to increase visibility and accessibility of our CNO through Town Halls and a new initiative, Partnering with Herta.

Launched in April, this initiative brings Herta to the bedside to better understand workflows, barriers, and staff experiences. The Advisory Board continues to share frontline feedback and solutions, ensuring strong, bidirectional communication between nursing staff and leadership.

### Nursing Practice Council

The Nursing Practice Council has made strong progress by organizing into focused subgroups: Policy Development/Revision, Certification, and Policy Accessibility. Each group has established SMART goals aligned with Pathway to Excellence standards.

Key initiatives include:

- Evidence-based review of priority policies (e.g., blood transfusion, Levophed administration, pre-operative testing, and patient transfer workflows)
- Expanding awareness and participation in specialty certification
- Improving policy accessibility through quick-reference tools
- This month, the council will continue advancing policy revisions, strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration, and partnering with IT and leadership to improve access and workflow efficiency.

### Quality & Safety Council

The Quality & Safety Council held its inaugural meeting and quickly identified its first priority: reducing hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPIs).

The team developed the Skin Integrity Assessment Alert, a tool to support safer patient handoffs. This process requires the primary RN to complete a skin assessment prior to transfer, with the receiving RN reviewing and confirming the findings.

This initiative aims to close communication gaps during transitions and reduce HAPI rates. The council is currently refining the tool in preparation for implementation and go-live.



## Reach Out With Any Questions

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