



OREGON CENTER FOR NURSING

Our Year In Review

2024 WORKFORCE IMPACT REPORT

A Note From OCN's Leadership

As we reflect on the past year, the Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) is proud to share the accomplishments that continue to strengthen and support our state's nursing workforce. With the challenges our healthcare system faces, OCN has been steadfast in its commitment to elevating the role of nurses in Oregon and advocating for solutions that enhance well-being and retention across the profession.

One of the highlights of our year was our work with 17 grant projects across the state, representing over \$800,000 allocated to prioritizing nurse well-being and reducing occupational hazards. This effort is critical to retaining nurses and ensuring they have the support needed to thrive.

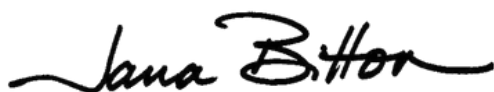
Additionally, we embarked on a significant new journey, backed by the Oregon state legislature through HB 3396 (2023), to explore innovative ways to support and sustain nurse faculty in Oregon. This legislative mandate reinforces the importance of those who train the next generation of nurses, and OCN is proud to lead this vital work.

In our ongoing commitment to fostering collaboration and professional development, we hosted a statewide conference focusing on Transition to Practice, welcoming 140 attendees. This conference highlighted successful residency and transition programs across Oregon, providing a platform for sharing best practices and driving excellence in nurse education.

We also continued to provide high-quality, groundbreaking research on the issues affecting Oregon's nurses. This year, our research focused on salary trends and an in-depth analysis of how the state navigated the evolving nursing shortage, or as we are reframing it, the "vacancy crisis."

Finally, we would be remiss not to emphasize how our Friday Huddle has evolved into a truly valuable resource for Oregon's nursing community. Each week, nurses, administrators, and other stakeholders come together to discuss challenges, share solutions, and foster a sense of solidarity. This platform has not only strengthened connections across the state but has become a critical space for identifying emerging issues and creating real-time solutions that make Oregon's nursing workforce stronger and more resilient.

These accomplishments, along with many others, are a testament to the collective efforts of our staff, partners, and the nursing community at large. We are deeply grateful for your continued support as we strive to make a lasting impact on Oregon's nursing workforce.



Jana Bitton, MPA
Executive Director
Oregon Center for Nursing



Pam Fifer, EdD, MSN, RN, CNE
President, Board of Directors
Oregon Center for Nursing



Connection and Education

Connecting and Educating the Nursing Community



Friday Huddle

The weekly Friday Huddle series provided nursing professionals—from nurse managers and bedside nurses to nurse educators and students—with a platform for discussion and peer support, addressing workplace well-being and emerging nursing challenges. Each community call inspired meaningful conversation and fostered collaboration, addressing trending topics such as nursing education, emergency preparedness, the Nurse Practice Act, and more.



Oregon's Outstanding Preceptor Recognition Awards

Hosted annually since 2020, the Oregon Outstanding Nurse Preceptor Awards is a statewide effort to honor and celebrate the critical work of nurse preceptors as they support and mentor new nurses and transitioning professionals. In addition to organizational nominations, the “Impact Award” category invites peers to recognize a nursing professional who personally touched their career. The 2024 award cycle honored 20 nurses from across the state.



The State of Wellness Podcast

Bringing a voice to Oregon's nursing community, the State of Wellness podcast launched its first season in 2024. The show featured interviews with nursing leaders from the Oregon State Board of Nursing and OCN's thought leaders, hosted by OCN Executive Director Jana Bitton. With more than 100 downloads in its first season, the State of Wellness will return in 2025 for even more conversation.



Programming and Resources

Developing Nurse-Centric Programming and Resources



The RN Well-Being (RNWB) Project

Caring for the emotional and mental well-being of Oregon's nursing professionals is essential for workforce wellness and the overall health of our nursing workforce. The RN Well-Being Project is a collaborative initiative to raise awareness of mental and emotional health within the profession, promote positive change in healthcare workplaces, and empower nursing leaders to support their teams holistically. To date, the RNWB Project has funded more than \$846,143 in grant money for nursing-focused mental and emotional wellness across the state. Funding was made possible by the generous support of the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS).



The RENEW Initiative

Retaining and Elevating the Nurse Education Workforce (RENEW) is a statewide initiative to enhance faculty retention, improve faculty recruitment, and bolster Oregon's nursing pipeline to meet industry needs. Funded by a \$5 million investment in the nurse educator workforce made possible by House Bill 3396, the program focuses on public nursing programs and community colleges. RENEW work kicked off in 2024 and will continue through 2028 through research, grants, resource development, and more.



The Nursing Practice Transitions Conference

The two-day event brought together nearly 140 nursing professionals, educators, and leaders in Springfield, Oregon, for an exchange of diverse strategies and innovative approaches to setting both new nurses and seasoned professionals up for success at each career transition. Keynote speakers included Dr. Patricia Benner and Dr. Dan Weberg, and engaging breakout sessions featured nursing professionals from across the state who shared their real-world experiences in supporting employees in career moves.

A photograph of a nurse in a light blue uniform and a white surgical mask, looking down at a clipboard. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter. The text 'Nursing Data and Research' is centered in white, bold, serif font.

Nursing Data and Research

Garnering Nursing Workforce Insights Through Research



Oregon's Nurse Vacancy Crisis

For decades, Oregon has faced persistent nursing workforce shortages, with efforts to solve the problem yielding limited success. OCN has conducted pioneering research highlighting that these shortages are most acute in rural areas and in non-acute care settings. In 2024, OCN introduced its “Nurse Vacancy Crisis” theory, reframing workforce challenges to provide new context that could inspire more effective solutions.



The 2023 Oregon Wage Study

OCN's landmark report, How Much Do Oregon's Registered Nurses Earn? The 2023 Oregon Wage Study, provided the first look into the economic well-being of Oregon's nursing workforce. Comparing reported wages of registered nurses (RNs) against a comprehensive set of state-specific criteria, the report compiled feedback from more than 1,800 RNs living and working in the state. Previously available data from the Oregon Employment Department or the U.S. Bureau of Labor provide only generalized salary rates, leaving out key considerations such as practice setting, longevity, education, and living costs. OCN's study filled these data gaps, allowing stakeholders to make informed decisions about Oregon's nursing workforce.



Nursing Workforce Infographic

OCN published infographics summarizing critical data and insights on our state's nurses, including nursing education, demographics, and workforce projections. These visual tools provide accessible insights for both policymakers and the healthcare community.

About the Oregon Center for Nursing



Founded as a non-profit by nursing leaders in 2002, the Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) is the state advisor for nursing workforce issues. OCN supports and promotes exceptional nursing professionals, conducts and disseminates research, and builds partnerships with diverse stakeholders to advance nursing.

OCN works across the state to support a wide spectrum of nursing professionals, from new graduates to senior leaders working in diverse healthcare settings. The organization is regarded by nurse leaders, educators, and state legislature as a leader and advisor for nursing workforce issues, including well-being, job satisfaction, and retention.

OCN Board of Directors

The Oregon Center for Nursing is guided by a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors. These nursing professionals and leaders represent a diverse range of nursing specialties, practice areas, and geographic areas across Oregon. Learn more about the OCN Board of Directors.

Acknowledgments

The Oregon Center for Nursing is proudly supported by the Oregon Nursing Advancement Fund, a legislated program that designates a portion of each Oregon nursing license fee to OCN's mission. We are grateful to our organization partners, including the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) and the Oregon Nurses Association, who worked to make this fund a reality and are strong partners year after year. Through these collaborations, we are building a stronger future for nursing in Oregon.



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N U R S I N G

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