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About the Conference

As nurses comprise the largest workforce in healthcare with unique capacity to drive meaningful change, nursing leadership has emerged as a critical element of professional development and organizational success. Today's nursing leaders must navigate complex challenges including multi-generational workforces, technological transformation, financial constraints, workforce sustainability and evolving care delivery models while maintaining unwavering focus on clinical quality and patient outcomes.

Business Research Intelligence Network's Nursing Leadership Summit brings together chief nursing officers, nursing directors, nurse managers and aspiring nurse leaders to explore evidence-based strategies for developing leadership capabilities that inspire teams, influence organizational direction and elevate the nursing profession.

The summit provides nursing leaders with practical knowledge to enhance their leadership skills, build resilient teams and drive strategic initiatives that deliver measurable results. Join us to explore how strong nursing leadership creates workplaces where nurses thrive, patients receive exceptional care and organizations achieve their most ambitious goals.

Agenda

Day One – Monday, April 27, 2026

7:15am – 8:00am
Conference Registration & Networking Breakfast

8:00am – 8:10am
Chairperson's Opening Remarks

8:10am – 8:50am
Leadership Fundamentals: Core Qualities That Define Exceptional Nurse Leaders
What separates good nurse leaders from truly exceptional ones? This session cuts to the heart of nursing leadership by examining the essential qualities that enable leaders to inspire followership, drive results and create lasting impact. Drawing from leadership research and nursing-specific contexts, you'll explore the critical importance of motivation and passion for the profession,

integrity in clinical and business decisions, self-confidence grounded in clinical competence and servant leadership mindset. We'll tackle how these foundational traits translate into daily leadership behaviors including decisive decision-making during crises, teaching and developing others, and uniting diverse teams around common goals. You'll walk away with a clear framework for assessing and strengthening your own leadership foundation.

Charmaine Xina Charles- Hudson RN, MSN, NEA-BC
CNO Vibra Healthcare Systems
Rehabilitation and Critical Care Hospital

8:50am – 9:30am
Empowering Nurse Leaders to be Fierce Advocates
The speaker will explain “why” and “how” advocacy impacts changes to regulations, care delivery and health policy. The audience will hear the many ways to advocate, firsthand experiences, lessons learned and how to maximize social media platforms to bring light to nursing advocacy priorities. This session will inspire nurse leaders to become advocates find their voice and use their expertise to influence policy.

Dr. Rachel Culpepper RN, CENP
Director of Clinical Operations
IU Health Wealth Hospital

9:30am – 10:00am
Networking & Refreshments Break

10:00am – 10:40am
Care Delivery Innovation: From Bedside to Build: How Nurse Feedback Drives Healthcare Innovation.
Nurse feedback drives healthcare innovation by identifying real problems at the bedside and ensuring solutions align with daily clinical workflows. Their insights help improve usability, increase adoption, and enhance patient safety, turning innovation into practical, sustainable improvements in care delivery.

- Empowering Nurse Voices to Drive Digital Transformation
- From Feedback to Impact: How Nurse Leaders Shape Technology Outcomes
- Championing Continuous Improvement in Clinical Technology
- Building Adoption Through Trust, Transparency, and Nurse Engagement
- Leadership Accountability in Advancing Digital Healthcare Solutions

Heather Steele, MSN, RN, C-EFM
Clinical Manager, Innovation Location Operations
Transformation Operations
Digital Transformation and Innovation
HCA Healthcare

Carl Balcom, DNP, MBA, RN, LSSBB, NEA-BC, FACHE
Assistant Vice President, Innovation Locations
Transformation Operations
Digital Transformation and Innovation
HCA Healthcare

Chelsea Kau, BSN, RN
Clinical Manager, Innovation Location Operations
Transformation Operations
Digital Transformation and Innovation
HCA Healthcare

Davis Jahns
Director of Product Design
Digital Transformation & Innovation
HCA Healthcare

10:40am – 11:20am
Building Psychological Safety: Creating Cultures Where Nurses Speak Up
Psychological safety—where team members feel safe providing honest feedback without fear of punishment or humiliation—is fundamental to high-performing nursing units and essential for quality improvement and safety. Yet many nursing environments struggle with hierarchies, power dynamics and cultures that discourage speaking up. This session provides actionable strategies for building psychological safety including modeling vulnerability as a leader by admitting mistakes and uncertainties, responding non-defensively when nurses raise concerns or challenge decisions, actively soliciting diverse perspectives before finalizing plans, and separating person from performance when addressing issues. Learn how psychologically safe environments lead to better patient safety event reporting, increased innovation, reduced burnout and higher retention while discovering practical techniques for shifting ingrained cultural patterns.

Annie Clayton-Orrison, MBA, BSN, RN, CNML
Director of Patient Care Services
Health First

11:20am – 12:00pm
Safe to Stay: Creating Environments Where Nurses Thrive — Not Just Survive
The strongest nurse retention strategy isn't pay — it's culture. Leadership presence, psychological safety, and real opportunities for growth are what truly keep nurses committed.
Nurses don't leave hospitals. They leave environments where they feel unseen, unsupported, and professionally stagnant.
Retention improves when organizations intentionally create spaces where nurses feel respected, protected, and empowered to build lasting careers.

Jacqueline Becerra MSN, RN
Director of Nursing (HCA)
Methodist Metropolitan Hospital

12:00pm – 12:30pm
Tucuvi Session (Sponsored)

12:30pm – 1:30pm
Luncheon

1:30pm – 2:15pm
The Power of Intentionality in Nursing Leadership
This session empowers nurse leaders to embrace intentionality as one of their most essential leadership competency. Drawing on Donabedian's quality framework, James Reason's work on system reliability, and W. Edwards Deming's improvement philosophy, Shayla Williamson and Courtney Skinner discuss how leaders can shift from reactive problem-solving to proactive, purpose-driven system design.

Attendees will explore how intentional leadership drives quality, strengthen safety culture, and reduce variability in frontline practice. Using a guided worksheet and real-world tools, participants will learn practical strategies to align structure, behavior, and outcomes — and return to their organizations equipped to lead with clarity, consistency, and impact.

Shayla Williamson, MSN, RN, NE-BC, CPHG
President and Administrator
St. Jude Home Care

Courtney Skinner, MSN, RN, NE-BC
Clinical Manager
St. Jude Home Care

2:15pm – 3:15pm
Panel: Developing Future Nurse Leaders—Mentorship, Succession Planning and Career Pathways
Topics to be discussed will include:

- Identifying high-potential nurses early and providing stretch assignments that build leadership capabilities without overwhelming them
- Structuring formal mentorship programs that pair emerging leaders with experienced executives for guidance and career navigation
- Creating clear leadership development pathways from charge nurse through director levels with defined competencies and support at each stage
- Succession planning approaches that ensure leadership continuity and prevent talent loss when key leaders retire or leave
- Measuring the effectiveness of leadership development investments through retention, promotion rates and organizational culture indicators

Heather Steele, MSN, RN, C-EFM
Clinical Manager, Innovation Location Operations
Transformation Operations
Digital Transformation and Innovation
HCA Healthcare

Chelsea Kau, BSN, RN
Clinical Manager, Innovation Location Operations
Transformation Operations
Digital Transformation and Innovation
HCA Healthcare

Isaac Slaughter III, MBA, BSN, RN, NE-BC, CPHQ, CPXP | Clinical Operations, Quality & Patient Experience

Nurse Leader
Kaiser Permanente

3:15pm – 3:45pm
Networking & Refreshments Break

3:45pm – 4:30pm
From Admission to Home: How Nursing Innovation Drives Better Outcomes Through Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) Integration
Across Duke Health, nursing and patient care services teams are strengthening the safety net for patients by integrating health-related social needs (HRSN) identification and response across multiple transition points in care. This session shares outcomes from our Meals on Wheels post-discharge meals analysis and its association with reduced readmissions. We will follow the patient journey from Virtual Nursing–led screening at admission, to Transitional Care Management support after discharge, to automated Care Companion surveys for moderate-risk patients. Finally, we'll explore our new AI/LLM-enabled HRSN discharge summary tool that synthesizes chart information to accelerate and enhance hospital follow-up outreach.

Tara Kinard, DNP, MSN, MBA, RN, CCM, ACM-RN, CENP
Associate Chief Nursing Officer
Duke Population Health Management Office

4:30pm – 5:15pm
Workforce Resilience: Practical Strategies for Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development
Workforce sustainability keeps nursing leaders awake at night, but some organizations are cracking the code. This session shares what's actually working to attract, keep and grow nursing talent including creative recruitment approaches beyond traditional job postings and sign-on bonuses, flexible staffing models that improve work-life integration without compromising coverage, career advancement pathways that give nurses reasons to stay and grow, meaningful recognition programs that celebrate contributions and build pride, and data-driven approaches to predicting and preventing burnout before nurses leave. You'll hear about programs producing measurable retention improvements and walk away with specific tactics you can adapt to your organization's unique challenges and culture.

Cristina Rivera Carpenter, PhD, MSN, RN, NE-BC, CEPN
Nurse Executive
Fort Defiance Indian Health Board Inc.

5:15pm
End of Day One

Day Two – Tuesday, April 28, 2026

7:15am – 8:00am
Networking Breakfast

8:00am – 8:15am
Chairperson's Recap

8:15am – 9:00am

Financial Acumen for Nurse Leaders: Understanding Budgets, Productivity and Value

Many nurses enter leadership roles with limited financial training, yet budget management and productivity oversight are critical responsibilities. This session demystifies healthcare finance for nurse leaders by explaining key financial concepts including operating budgets, capital requests and variance analysis, productivity metrics like hours per patient day, skill mix and labor costs as a percentage of revenue, cost-benefit analysis frameworks for evaluating new programs or technology investments, and value-based payment models that are shifting how nursing services generate revenue. You'll gain confidence discussing financial performance with CFOs and developing business cases that secure funding for nursing priorities while learning to balance financial stewardship with clinical quality imperatives.

John Kellerman RN, MBA/HCM, ACHE
Chief Nursing Officer
Lakeland Behavioral Health System
Acadia Healthcare

9:00am – 9:45am

Leading Through Crisis: Lessons from COVID-19 and Emergency Preparedness

Recent years tested nursing leadership like never before, revealing both strengths and gaps in crisis response capabilities. What separates leaders who successfully navigate emergencies from those who struggle? This session distills hard-won lessons about crisis leadership including maintaining clear, frequent communication when information is incomplete and changing rapidly, making rapid decisions with imperfect information while preserving staff trust, flexibly reallocating resources and restructuring workflows to meet urgent needs, supporting team resilience and preventing moral injury during sustained high-stress periods, and conducting after-action reviews that capture learnings for future preparedness. Whether facing pandemics, natural disasters, cyberattacks or other emergencies, these principles help nursing leaders guide their teams through the storm.

Julie Mirkin
Chief Nursing Officer
Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center

9:45am – 10:15am
Networking & Refreshments Break

10:15am – 11:00am

The Nurse Leader as Strategic Influencer: Expanding Your Impact Beyond Clinical Operations

Today's most effective CNOs and nursing directors are recognized as indispensable strategic partners who shape organizational direction, not just nursing operations. How do you make this leap? This session reveals how nurse leaders are expanding their influence by developing business and financial acumen that allows them to speak the language of executives and boards, building relationships across departments to understand competing priorities and find collaboration opportunities, articulating nursing's value in terms of organizational goals like growth, margin and competitive positioning, and positioning themselves for executive roles through visibility, credibility and demonstrated strategic thinking. You'll discover practical tactics for getting invited to strategic planning discussions, contributing meaningfully to business decisions outside

traditional nursing scope and becoming a trusted advisor to your CEO and board.

Roseanne C. Niese, MSN, MBA, RN, NEA-BC
Former Chief Nursing Officer
Advocate Health

11:00am – 11:45am
Hiring and Onboarding Excellence: Building Your Team From Day One
Your team's success starts with who you hire and how you integrate them. This session explores strategies for attracting top talent and setting new nurses up for success including structured interview techniques that assess both clinical competence and cultural fit, efficient credentialing and onboarding processes that get nurses working quickly while ensuring readiness, comprehensive orientation programs that build confidence and reduce early turnover, preceptor development and pairing strategies that create positive first impressions, and 30-60-90 day check-ins that identify and address concerns before new nurses decide to leave.

Isaac Slaughter III, MBA, BSN, RN, NE-BC, CPHQ, CPXP | Clinical Operations, Quality & Patient Experience
Nurse Leader
Kaiser Permanente

11:45am – 12:30pm
Staffing Guidelines and Evidence-Based Models: Right Nurse, Right Skills, Right Time
This session explores current nursing liability and claims trends, drawing on real-world experience and data to highlight critical lessons for today's nursing professionals. Attendees will examine closed claims and litigation involving nurses, with a focus on top risk issues, indemnity payments, and patterns revealed through claims data analytics.

Through real-world case studies, the session will outline the practical implications of these claims for nurses across practice settings, while emphasizing effective risk management strategies and best practices to reduce exposure and improve outcomes. Participants will also gain a clearer understanding of the medical malpractice process, including how claims evolve over time and the circumstances under which state nursing boards may become involved.

Designed to be both informative and actionable, this session equips nursing leaders and frontline clinicians with insights to strengthen professional practice, mitigate risk, and navigate the increasingly complex liability landscape.

Arlene Luu RN, BSN, JD, CPHRM, CHC
Lead Sr. Risk Solutions Consultant
MedPro Group

12:45pm – 2:45pm
Workshop: Leading Through Change: Rebuilding Trust and Stability in Uncertain Times
In an era marked by rapid transformation, workforce pressures, and shifting care delivery demands, nurse leaders are being called to guide their teams through uncertainty with clarity, purpose, and compassion. Join Patti Artley, CNO of Medical Solutions, as she shares practical strategies for rebuilding trust, strengthening team stability, and leading with resilience during times of organizational and industry-wide change.

Learning Objectives:

· Understand core leadership behaviors that cultivate trust and psychological safety amid change.
· Explore strategies to support stability, communication, and engagement across nursing teams.
· Identify actionable approaches for leading through uncertainty with confidence and authenticity.

Patti Artley
Chief Nursing Officer, DNP, RN, NEA-BC
Medical Solutions

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