

Unity Health Toronto Nursing

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



ST. JOSEPH'S • ST. MICHAEL'S • PROVIDENCE

UNITY HEALTH
TORONTO

A message from Sonya Canzian & Alex Harris



Sonya Canzian

*Executive Vice President,
Clinical Programs, People and Chief
Nursing & Health Disciplines Officer*



Alex Harris

*Senior Director,
Nursing Practice and Education*

We are excited to share the launch of our first Unity-wide Nursing Annual Report, recognizing the contributions of nurses through excellence and innovation in clinical practice, education, research and leadership.

As we reflect on the past year, we are struck by the unwavering commitment, compassion, and expertise that Unity nurses bring to our patients, residents, families, and communities every day. It is this dedication that lies at the very heart of Unity Health Toronto's mission and history — to provide the best care experiences, inspired by our values of compassion, human dignity, inclusivity, excellence, and community.

Whether it's through delivering expert care at the bedside, fostering innovations in teaching and learning,

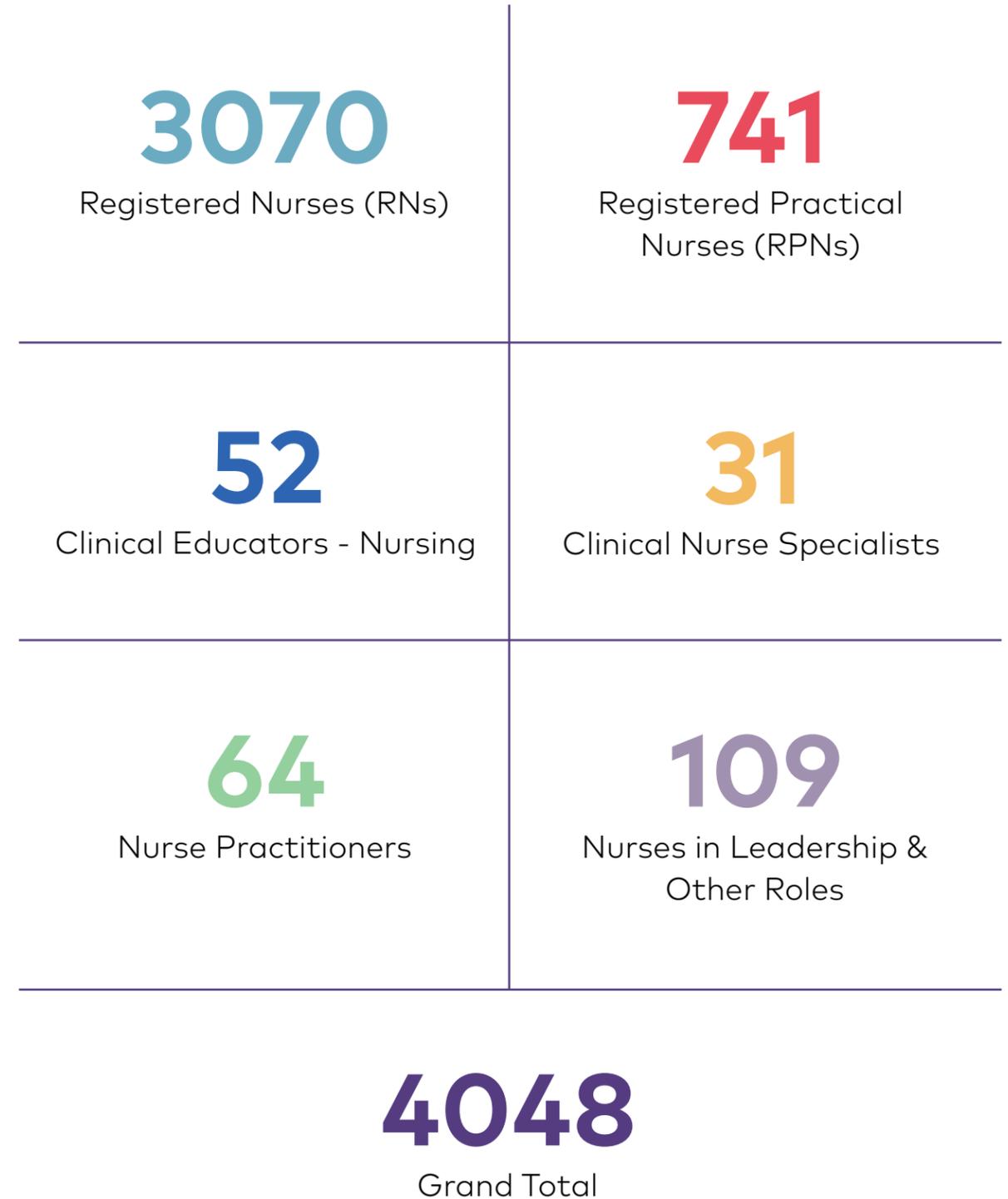
advocating for just and healing environments, or leading local and system changes, we are united as one nursing community. Our 2024-25 Unity Health's Nursing Annual report showcases the different ways in which nurses are upholding a legacy of excellence and caring that defines our organization and our profession.

As we present this annual report, we not only celebrate nurses' individual and collective accomplishments — we honor the invaluable role of nurses in building a stronger, more compassionate health systems.

Please take a moment to learn more about the ways in which we are advancing nursing together, and thank you to everyone who continues to contribute and support this important work.

UNITY HEALTH TORONTO NURSING BY THE NUMBERS

Data from March 31, 2025



Our year in review

2024



April

- Unity Health members featured their work at the Nursing Leadership Network Conference through 6 presentations.

May

- National Nursing Week (May 6-12) was celebrated at UHT with the theme "Changing Lives. Shaping Tomorrow". Nursing Week celebrations showcased unique nursing roles, chronicled a history of nursing education at UHT, and recognized nursing excellence locally and abroad.

- The Unity Health Toronto Clinical Educator-Nursing Network (CENN) was launched to foster collaboration across our clinical sites.

June

- Providence Healthcare, one of the eight founding partners of the East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP), achieved designation as a BPSO Ontario Health Team (BPSO OHT).



November

- Our new electronic patient record, Epic, went live on November 30. Unity received exemplary recognition for its successful implementation.

October

- Practice Readiness activities begin, to help prepare clinicians for how to practice in an Epic-enabled environment. A variety of topics were presented and labs hosted to engage and support nursing staff throughout the fall.

September

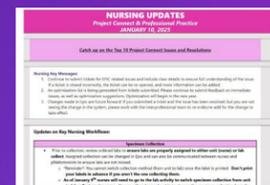
- Mandana Vahabi was appointed the Professor at the University of Toronto's Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing and Women's Health Research Chair at Unity Health Toronto.

August

- Elsevier Clinical Skills, an electronic clinical resource for nurses, was launched across the three sites.



2025



December

- Unity Health profiled the Nurse Career Navigator role and shared findings from their Professional Models of Care Project at the Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network (TAHSN) Nurse Retention Summit. The summit brought nurse leaders from across Toronto together to share progress related to the federal Nurse Retention Toolkit.

January

- *Nursing Updates* is launched to highlight key EPR updates & tips as nurses become familiar with Epic.

February

- Over 400 attendees joined a UHT career fair, highlighting opportunities for nurses' development and growth.

March

- In March 2025, 44 Charge Nurses met to learn & collaborate through the newly-harmonized Charge Nurse Leadership Workshop.

Practice Readiness

Readying Teams to Practice in an Epic-Enabled Environment



Photo: Nursing Practice team at the launch of the scanning workflow train the trainer session.
Location: SMH Simulation Center

In preparation for the launch of Unity's new Electronic Patient Record (EPR), Epic, the Interprofessional Practice Team launched "Practice Readiness" - an approach aimed to prepare clinicians for significant practices changes and increase their confidence in using the new EPR. Activities included:

- **Practice Readiness Forums:** Key topics were discussed to review best practices, highlight policy changes and discuss EPR-related considerations.
- **Practice Labs:** Over 300 clinicians and point-of-care leaders received hands-on practice with new devices to familiarize themselves with core scanning workflows, including medication & blood administration and specimen collection.
- **Practice Stations:** Local stations were set up on units to give staff additional opportunities to play and practice in the system before go-live. Train-the-trainer sessions were held with 50+ Clinical Educators to help build local capacity and support on-unit stations.

Launch of New Senior Director, Practice Informatics and Chief Practice Information Officer

Kaitlyn Vingoe



Advancing clinical informatics across Unity, Kaitlyn Vingoe assumed the role of Senior Director, Practice Informatics and inaugural Chief Practice Information Officer within the Interprofessional Practice Team. As a key member of the EPR go-live Project Connect team, Kaitlyn chairs the Nursing Working Group, Health Disciplines Work Group and Clinical Advisory Committee; helping to embed nursing and other health professional perspectives throughout the decision-making process. After go-live on November 30th, 2024, the Nursing Working Group and Nursing Advisory Council have continued to review and provide input on key decisions to continuously improve the system to enable nursing practice.

Advancing Best Practices at the Point of Care

Providence Healthcare Receives BPSO-OHT Designation



Photo: Presentation of Best Practice Spotlight Designation to Ontario Health Teams' East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP); Location: Registered Nurses of Ontario Annual General Meeting, 2024

Providence Healthcare, one of the eight founding partners of the East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP), achieved designation as a BPSO Ontario Health Team (BPSO OHT) in June 2024. The BPSO OHT designation reflects Unity Health Toronto's vision to drive sustainable improvements in clinical practice and strengthen health outcomes across the system. It also reinforces PHC's leadership in healthcare innovation and its capacity to implement complex, evidence-informed care strategies in partnership with ETHP. For more information see the [ETHP CEO Report \(November 2024\)](#).

Best Practice Guideline (BPG) Nurse Champions

Anchored to this the RNAO Best Practice Guidelines (BPGs), the 2024 program mobilized 29 Nurse Champions at SMH and 7 Nurse Champions at PHC to lead projects fostering clinical excellence across Unity. Leveraging the Knowledge to Action framework and integrating Quality Improvement principles, projects sought to improve patient quality and safety, drive clinical efficiencies and improve health worker engagement. The BPG champions engaged in a series of Community of Practice meetings, which served as a dynamic platform for cross-site collaboration, problem-solving, iterative learning, and knowledge sharing.

Please find more information [here](#) about our BPG Champions and Publications.

Nursing Education & Professional Development

New Unity Clinical Educator Nursing Network (CENN)

In May 2024, the Unity Health Toronto Clinical Educator-Nursing Network (CENN) was launched to foster collaboration across our clinical sites, to optimize the role of Clinical Educators – Nursing (CE-N) and others involved in clinical nursing education, and to advise stakeholders on matters related to best practices in nursing. Over this past year, the CENN has strengthened Unity's clinical educator network through mentorship, knowledge sharing, collaboration and relationship building among programs and sites, as well as facilitate harmonization and alignment on corporate nursing practice and education initiatives.

Expansion of Elsevier Clinical Skills

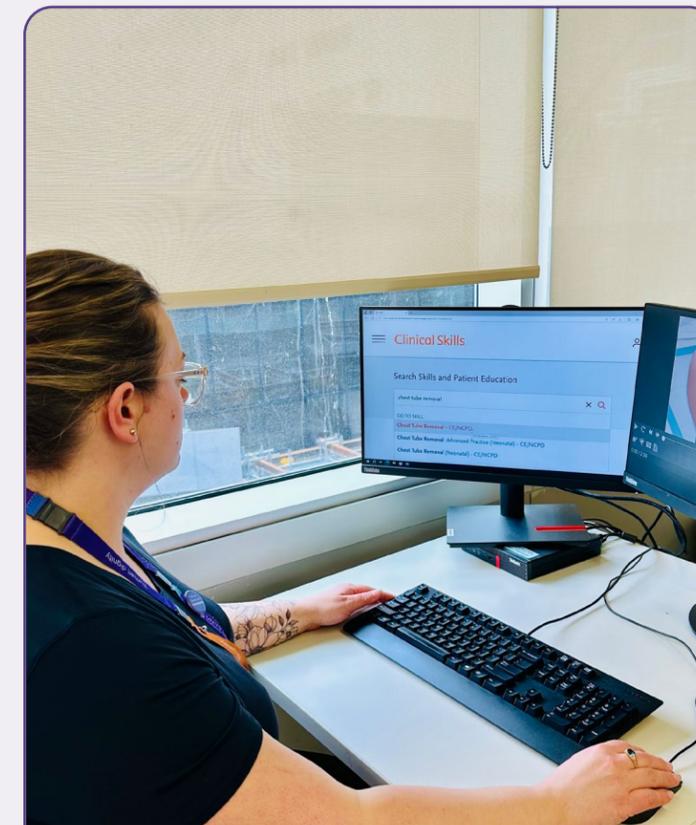


Photo: Cassandra Paluch, Clinical Educator-Nursing accessing the Elsevier Clinical Skills system.

Unity Health has taken our clinical resources to the next level with the organization-wide expansion of Elsevier Clinical Skills, an electronic resource of education materials for use at the point-of-care.

Clinical staff have access to:

- More than 1600 evidence-based skills and procedures to learn and refresh knowledge to safely perform skills with confidence
- Step-by-step instructions along with videos, images and animations
- Comprehensive extended text with references
- Skills and equipment checklists
- Patient and family education

Elsevier Clinical Skills are regularly updated based on the latest evidence to ensure clinical staff are empowered to continue to deliver high quality patient care. The resource is accessible on UnityNet through the Quick Links list or [Digital Tools](#), the UHT Library websites, all clinical workstation desktops and through Epic.

Investing in Clinical Teachers and Mentors



Photo: Judy Pararajasingham, Nursing Education Manager, SMH teaches at the IP Preceptorship workshop

The Interprofessional Preceptorship Workshop

The newly-launched Interprofessional Preceptorship Workshop at Unity equips nurses and health discipline clinicians with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to function effectively in a preceptor role. As preceptors, nurses and health discipline clinicians support the transition and integration of new healthcare professionals and learners into the organization and practice setting.

They support the development of clinical competence and confidence, through the sharing of knowledge and skills, while acting as role models, teachers and coaches. Evidence reveals that when clinicians take on the role of preceptors, the entire organization and profession benefits. For more information about upcoming workshops, please visit [Elevate](#).

The Clinical Scholar Program

Launched in 2023 by the Government of Ontario, the Clinical Scholar Program enables novice nurses to learn from experienced nurses – also known as Clinical Scholars – right at the bedside, in real-time. Clinical Scholars are dedicated to mentoring newly graduated nurses, internationally educated nurses (IENs), nursing learners or any nurses wanting to upskill. They also benefit from the program by honing their coaching, mentorship and leadership skills.

Through this project, Unity Health Toronto has provided Clinical Scholar support to hundreds of novice nurses, IENs, and those upskilling in the Interprofessional Resource Team (IRT), Critical Care & PACU, the Emergency Department and the Medicine Program. To learn more about the impact of this program, see [UHT's recent feature](#).



Photo: Rosaline Lai (L) is the Clinical Scholar for the Interprofessional Resource Team at St. Joseph's Health Centre, working with novice nurses like Jenna De Leon (R) as they start their careers.

Photo by Eduardo Lima.

A History of Nursing Education at UHT



In celebration of Nursing Week 2024, the library team curated a virtual exhibition exploring the history of nursing education at UHT, including photographs and textual documents from the archives collections of St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Michael's Hospital and Providence Healthcare. [Check it out!](#)

Photo courtesy of the St. Michael's Hospital Archives, Unity Health Toronto

Charge Nurse Leadership Workshop

Charge Nurses are integral members of unit and departmental teams as they help to lead the coordination, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the provision of health services and quality patient care.

To help support and advance local nursing leadership, a newly-harmonized Charge Nurse Workshop was launched in March 2025. The first cohort of 44 Charge Nurses from our St. Joseph's and St. Michael's sites participated in 2 days of learning and collaboration, with support from Nursing Practice & Education, Learning & Organizational Development, Patient & Family Partners, Patient Safety, Access & Flow and Clinical Managers. Anchored to the LEADs framework, the training focused on key skills for charge nurses, including:

- Completing nurse-to-patient assignments
- Coordinating patient flow and bed management
- Communicating key information during transfer of accountability and escalation of care
- Building inter-unit partnerships
- Supporting workforce initiatives
- Responding to emergencies
- Supporting unit-based quality initiatives
- Coaching at the bedside
- Partnering with patients and families
- Promoting team building and team work
- Leading with emotional intelligence and resilience
- Enabling constructive conversations

Nursing Research & Scholarly Practice

The Interprofessional Practice-Based Research (IPBR) program assists nurses and health disciplines professionals at Unity Health Toronto to engage in the identification, implementation, and evaluation of best practices through research.

WeRPN Grants

In 2024, IPBR worked closely with the Registered Practical Nurses of Association of Ontario (WeRPN) and was recognized for several research milestones including:

- Receipt of a \$25,000 grant for a qualitative study examining the lived experience of RPNs and interprofessional collaboration in an inpatient rehabilitation hospital.

We RPN presentations:

- Presentation at the WeRPN 2024 Research Symposium: Shaping Practice and Innovation on "Development and Implementation of a Novel Nursing Shift Assignment Toolkit".
- Presentation at the Fall 2024 WeRPN Webinar on "Building Research Capacity: A Case Study of a Registered Practical Nurse's Research Fellowship".

We RPN Publications:

- Weiser, N., Topolovec-Vranic, J., Dissanayake, M., Harrington, F., & Canzian, S. (2024). Building Research Capacity: A Case Study of a Registered Practical Nurse's Research Fellowship. *Nursing leadership (Toronto, Ont.)*, 37(1), 52– 63. <https://doi.org/10.12927/cjnl.2024.27356Weiser>
- Weiser, Natalie, Dissanayake, Melanie, Santiago, Cecilia, Harrington, Fiona, Benny Gerard, Nichelle, Dimmock, Sarah, Canzian, Sonya, Topolovec-Vranic, Jane, The Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) Role in an Academic Acute Care Hospital: A Mixed Method Study of the Barriers and Facilitators to Practice, *Journal of Nursing Management*, 2024, 7309242, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2024/7309242>

Nurses in Research

New Nursing & Women's Health Research Chair



Photo: Mandana Vahabi, Nursing and Women's Health Research Chair

Mandana Vahabi was appointed Professor at the University of Toronto's Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing and Women's Health Research Chair at Unity Health Toronto as of September 1, 2024. UHT is thrilled to welcome Dr. Vahabi, as someone who is dedicated to advancing health equity and improving access to reproductive health care. Mandana's research includes advocating for HPV self-sampling tests to enhance cervical cancer screening. She aims to translate research into policies and mentor emerging scholars to foster a diverse and inclusive research environment. To learn more about Dr. Vahabi, click [here](#).

Nursing Practice Based Researchers

The Practice-Based Researcher Li Ka Shing appointments seek to recognize clinicians engaged in research activity while reducing barriers to supporting nursing and health disciplines in research.



Photo: St. Joseph's Oncology team in Newfoundland to present at CANO

There are currently 15 nursing practice-based researchers across UHT:

1. Cecilia Santiago, Nursing Practice Manager, SMH
2. Donna Romano, Mission and Values Manager, UHT
3. Janny Lee, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Regional Geriatric Program
4. Jenna Richards, Clinical Nurse Specialist (RN), Mental Health Program
5. Julie McShane, Manager, Nursing Innovation & Development
6. Michelle Gabriel, Clinical Manager KMP Transplant Home Dialysis MCKC
7. Rosalyn Espiritu, Manager, Nursing Practice & Education Nursing Practice
8. Stephanie Lucchese, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Mental Health
9. Sandee Westell, Staff Nurse, Respiriology

Nurse Practitioners (NPs)

1. Alison Thomas, Nurse Practitioner, Kidney and Metabolism
2. Anastasia Korosteliov, Nurse Practitioner, Medicine
3. Samiksha Singh, Nurse Practitioner, Kidney and Metabolism
4. Tess Montada-Atin, Nurse Practitioner, Kidney and Metabolism
5. Leora Wanounou,, Nurse Practitioner, Kidney and Metabolism
6. Christina Zeglinski, Nurse Practitioner, Cancer Care, Oncology & Endoscopy

Research Involvement by Nurses with Practice Based Researcher Status Appointments
[Click here](#) for to view publications and conference presentations

Spotlight on Nurse Retention

Advancing Nursing Growth – Meet the Nurse Career Navigator!



Photo: Attendees at the Unity Health Toronto Job Fair held on March 4, 2025
Location : Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, St Michael's Hospital.

To support retention and recruitment initiatives, based on the national Nursing Retention Toolkit (2024) recommendations, UHT introduced a Nurse Career Navigator. This role, held by a senior nurse, engages with multiple programs, involving the active participation of Human Resources, Nursing Practice, Leadership and Organizational Development, and Clinical Education to increase recruitment and retention of nurses across Unity.

Since starting in 2024, the Nurse Career Navigator has held over 100 meetings with individual staff members to discuss growth, professional development & career opportunities at Unity. Through collaboration with Human Resources, a recent career fair was also held with over 400 attendees, highlighting opportunities for nurses' development and growth. Work this year will focus on further socializing and evaluating the impacts of the role to support nurses' professional development, as well as planning panel discussions with nurses across UHT to illustrate the diverse range of career opportunities in nursing.

Supporting Nurses' Transition to Practice

Several education sessions and workshops were developed in 2024 and embedded within UHT's workforce programs, to support new nurse transition to practice, including:

- "How to do a Learning Plan," to support newly-graduated nurses;
- "Introduction to the Canadian Health Care System," to support internationally- educated nurses' (IENs) integration into the Canadian practice environment;
- "Best Practices in Medication Administration and Understanding your Obligation as a Member of College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO)" to highlight key professional practice requirements for nurses working in Ontario.
- Focused workshops for Clinical Educators Supporting IENs, drawing on current research and recommendations to facilitate successful transition

Workforce Programs by the numbers:

160 

Clinical Externs –
Unity Health Toronto
employs an average
of 160 Clinical Externs
–Nursing at any given
time.

120 

Nursing Graduate
Guarantee (NGG)
Program Participants
– 120 (24/25 FY)

29 

Supervised Practice
Experience Program
(SPEP) Participants –
29 (24/25 FY)



In Memoriam

Gail Wilson, Senior Director Practice Informatics, passed in May 2024. A longstanding clinician and nurse leader at Unity, Gail joined St. Michael's Hospital in 1998 and held many different roles, always with an aim to improve nursing practice and clinical care through education and development. Gail's life was one of hard work, dedication and kindness and her memory will live on in the lives of all those who met her.

Celebrating UHT Nurses

Nursing Week 2024

As part of National Nursing Week's 2024 theme: "Changing Lives. Shaping Tomorrow", nurses from across UHT came together to celebrate locally and collectively the importance of nursing in leading a healthier future. Throughout the week, nurses had a chance to connect with dynamic nurse leaders and supporters of nursing.



Photo: PHC Nurses participating in Lunch with Sonya, during Nursing Week 2024

Highlights include:

- Keynote speakers, the [Gritty Nurses](#), spoke about the wisdom of nurses, calling for a unified vision for nursing
- UHT's Chief Nursing Officer, Sonya Canzian, engaged with staff during local rounding and 'Lunches with Sonya'
- MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam rounded during the night shift to hear the perspectives of nurses, as part of the RNAO's 'Take Your MPP to Work' initiative

Meet Some of our Amazing UHT nurses!

A variety of nurses were profiled during Nursing Week 2024 to highlight the breadth and depth of nursing expertise at UHT.



Brandon Parent

*RN, BScN, Clinical Scholar –
Emergency Department, SJHC*



Cecilia Yeung

*RN, BScN, MN, NSWOC,
WOCC(C), GNC(C),
Clinical Nurse Specialist, Wound
Prevention and Care, PHC*



Donna Romano

*RN, BSc, MSc, PhD,
CPMHN(C), Manager,
Mission & Values, UHT*



Hristina Hristovska

*RN, BScN, Registered Nurse,
Orthopedic and Amputee
Rehabilitation, PHC*



Jenna Richards

*RN, BScN, MScN, CPMHN(C),
Clinical Nurse Specialist,
Consult Liaison Psychiatry and
BERT Lead, SMH*



Julie McShane

*RN, BScN, MN, Manager,
Nursing Innovation &
Development, UHT*



Kelsang Choeden

*RN, MScN, PHCNP,
Nurse Practitioner – Nurse Led
Outreach Team, SJHC*



Kendra Bokma

*RN, BScN, MScN, PNC(C),
Clinical Nurse Specialist,
Family Birthing Centre, SJHC*



Lisa Manswell

*RN, MN, PANC(C), CHE,
Registered Nurse, Labs –
Transfusion Safety, SMH*



Margarita Biassonava

*RN, BScN, Nurse Counsellor,
Diabetes Education, SJHC*



Parul Verma

*RN, BScN, CPMHN(C),
Registered Nurse, Mental Health
Emergency Services, SMH*



Zahra Mohamed

*RPN, Registered Practical Nurse,
Stroke/Neuro Rehabilitation, PHC*

2024/25 Nursing Award Recipients – Providence Healthcare



Arnel Baricaua

*RPN, Ortho/Amp Program
**The Rehabilitation Nursing
Award***



Lisa Ross

*RPN, Geriatric and Medical
Rehabilitation Program
**The Rehabilitation Nursing
Award***



Maria Luz Salera

*RN, B2 Outpatient Clinics
The Nursing Legacy Award*



Seeta Green

*RPN, Houses of Providence
The Nursing Advocacy Award*



**Zahra Mohamed &
Dana Tomas**

*RPN & RN, Stroke/Neuro
Program
The Nursing Innovation Award*



Raquel Russell

*RPN, Stroke/Neuro Program
**The Nursing Preceptorship
Award***

Annual Nursing Awards

Each year nurses are recognized during the Nursing Week Award ceremonies, held at each site. Here are the recipients for 2024/25, awarded during the May 2024 Nursing Week:

2024/25 Nursing Award Recipients – St Michael's Hospital



Janeth Velandia

*Nurse Practitioner, Wound Care
The C. William and Ruth Daniel
Innovation in Nursing (Nursing
Excellence)*



Daniela Gaeta

*Clinical Nurse Specialist
The Elizabeth Crawford
Clinical Scholarship (Nursing
Excellence)*



Andrew Broadfield

*Staff Nurse, Family Health Team
Louise M. Killackey Culture of
Discovery (Nursing Excellence)*



Nnenna Anagor

*RN, Orthopaedics
Louise M. Killackey Culture of
Caring (Nursing Excellence)*



Charlene Chan

*Clinical Nurse Specialist,
Wound Care
Mark & Ann Curry Healthy
Work Environment (Nursing
Excellence)*



Alia Maulgue

*RN, Orthopaedics
Parthenia Maria Wilson
Nursing Education Grant*



Ruth Mega

*Clinical Educator - Nursing,
General Surgery Inpatient
Chuckie Shevlen Scholarship*



Lee Barratt

*Nurse Practitioner,
Medicine Program
Mehramat & Satwant Gill
Nursing Scholarship*



Syron Graduate Nursing Fellowship Recipients:

Alexandra Kusnierczyk , Alia Maulgue , Allison Grant, Ansu George , Ben Le, Daniela Gaeta, Danniella Battagin, Francis Calixto, Jeannelle Nichol, Joel Persaud, Jordan Shell, Karah Bruce , Karlie DeAngelis, Katherine (Katie) Jedemann, Ken Fox, Les Porter, Luwieth Bolt, Mary Grace Guiyab , Mary Saegh, Mikaela Allan, Nicole Baker, Nicole Demers, Nnenna Anagor, Rose Bishenden, Ruth Mega, Sabrina Parker, Simone Stothers, Thomas Sawyer, Yasmin Tarrant. Also in Photo : Donor, Mildred Syron

2024/25 Nursing Award Recipients – St Joseph's Health Centre



The Nursing Innovation Award - 6 g Transitional Team



Sarah Robbins

RN, 5M Palliative Care
The Academic Achievement Award in Nursing



Hasti Jahangir

RPN, Emergency Department
The Community Builder in Nursing Award



Clarice John

RN, RCC
The Nursing Preceptorship Award



Stefanie Filion

RN, 5M Palliative Care
Sisters of St. Joseph's Patient and Family Centered Nursing Care Award

References

Biason, R. (2024, September 5). Mandana Vahabi joins Bloomberg Nursing and Unity Health Toronto as Women's Health Research Chair - Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing. Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing. <https://bloomberg.nursing.utoronto.ca/media/in-the-news/mandana-vahabi-joins-bloomberg-nursing-and-unity-health-toronto-as-womens-health-research-chair/>

Gajic, A (2024, July). How a provincial program is empowering new and experienced nurses at Unity Health. <https://unityhealth.to/2024/07/clinical-scholar-program/>

Skills. (n.d.). <https://point-of-care.elsevierperformancemanager.com/skills?virtualname=uht>

St. Michael's Hospital Archives, Unity Health Toronto (n.d.). The Nursing Schools · Unity Health Toronto Archives Digital Collections · UHT Poster Research Repository. <http://olmeca/s/uhtdigitalarchives/page/earlyyears>

The Gritty Nurse Podcast. (n.d.). The Gritty Nurse Podcast. <https://www.grittynurse.com/>

Cover

Left: Patrick Cuaresma, Clinical Educator-Nursing, Oncology & Endoscopy, SJHC

Centre: Ruth Mega, Clinical Manager, General Surgery/Gastroenterology, SMH

Right: Zahra Mohamed, Registered Practical Nurse, A3, Rehab/Stroke, PHC

