



NurseConnect | August 28, 2025 | 11th Edition

UPCOMING EVENTS

See what's happening this month

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Pathways to Nursing: The Power of Mentorship

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Scope & Standards Pulse — CT Legislative & Scope Update (Aug 2025)

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Labor of Love: Designing Work That Loves Nurses Back



Tina Loarte-Rodriguez, DNP, RN, CPPS, CPHRM, Executive Director, The Connecticut Center for Nursing Workforce, Inc.

Shaping the Future of Nursing in Connecticut

Nursing in Connecticut is evolving faster than ever—AI in the classroom, new clinical pathways, and growing roles beyond hospital walls. These shifts are opportunities for us to lead, innovate, and shape the future of care together.

As we step into a new academic year, one truth is clear: nursing in Connecticut is on the move. Change is happening fast—whether it's the rise of AI, the need for more preceptors, or the growing demand for care beyond the hospital walls. And yet, these challenges bring incredible opportunities to lead, innovate, and redefine what nursing can be.

CT NURSING EVENTS & NEWS

Because Nurses Belong at Every Table

"I AM A CT NURSE" CAMPAIGN

Call for CT Nurses to share about themselves

STAY CONNECTED

Find links to the CCNW website and social media pages. Also, share feedback or submit ideas for newsletter

Across our state, educators are expanding pathways, employers are reimagining onboarding, and nurses are stepping into new roles in behavioral health, community care, and digital-first practice. Together, we are not just preparing for the future—we are creating it.

At the CT Center for Nursing Workforce, our mission is to connect the dots, amplify solutions, and ensure that every nurse, student, and educator feels supported and ready to thrive. This moment calls for vision and collaboration—and Connecticut nurses have both in abundance.

The future is ours to shape. Let's build it boldly, together.

PATHWAYS TO NURSING

Pathways to Nursing: The Power of Mentorship

Every nurse has a story—and often, there's a mentor woven into it. Whether it's the professor who encouraged you through your first clinical, the preceptor who showed you how to turn nerves into confidence, or the seasoned nurse who reminded you why compassion matters most, mentorship is one of the strongest lifelines in nursing.

Why Mentorship Matters

Nursing isn't just about mastering skills—it's about learning to navigate challenges, embrace leadership, and carry the weight of responsibility with integrity. A mentor helps translate textbooks into practice, setbacks into lessons, and aspirations into action.

How to Find a Mentor

- Through your program: Many schools offer formal mentorship pairings between students and faculty or practicing nurses.
- Professional organizations: State and national nursing associations often host mentorship initiatives or networking events.
- The Connecticut Center for Nursing Workforce (CCNW): CCNW is dedicated to connecting students with mentors, resources, and opportunities to help you succeed. From networking to guidance, CCNW is a statewide hub where you can build relationships that last well beyond graduation.
- Workplace connections: As a student nurse tech or CNA, you'll often meet RNs eager to invest in future colleagues.

Stories That Inspire

"During my first semester, I doubted if I belonged in nursing. My mentor reminded me that confidence comes with time—and she was



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right. Now, I mentor others who feel just like I did.” — Jasmine, ADN Student, Hartford

Your Path Forward

If you're exploring nursing as a career, seek out mentors early. They will open doors to resources, scholarships, and opportunities you may not find on your own. Most importantly, they'll remind you that you don't have to walk this path alone.

Pro Tip: One day, you'll be the mentor. Nursing is a profession built on passing knowledge forward—because the future of healthcare depends on it.

STUDENT SUCCESS CORNER

AI: Friend, Foe, or Final Exam Question?

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a sci-fi buzzword—it's sitting right next to you in class, ready to answer questions faster than you can say "ChatGPT." But here's the catch: every nursing program, professor, and course has its own rules of engagement when it comes to AI.

Think of AI like a new clinical tool: amazing when used correctly, but risky if you don't follow protocol. Some instructors may welcome it for brainstorming and practice, while others may have firm boundaries (no AI-generated work allowed!). Just like you wouldn't walk into a patient room without checking the chart, don't walk into class without knowing your program's AI policies.

Pro tip: When in doubt, ask your professor before you type your essay prompt into a chatbot. Respecting the "rules of AI" isn't just about avoiding plagiarism—it's about showing integrity, professionalism, and the ability to adapt to new technologies responsibly.

Because in nursing, whether it's caring for patients or learning with new tools, success always comes down to judgment, accountability, and ethics. And that, future nurse leaders, is a skill no algorithm can replace.



One thing's for sure: ignoring AI is not an option. The real challenge? Learning how to use it ethically, responsibly, and within the rules of your program. Consider it your newest professional skill.

LAUNCHING YOUR CAREER

Starting Strong: Orientation, Competency, and Growth as a New Nurse

Embrace Orientation

Think of orientation as your bridge from student to professional. Take it seriously—ask questions, take notes, and seek feedback. Your orientation is where you learn the culture of your workplace and fine-tune the skills that keep patients safe.

Confidence with Curiosity

You've worked hard to earn your place at the bedside. Be confident in your training and the skills you bring. But remember: confidence doesn't mean knowing everything—it means knowing when to ask for



assistance. Patient safety always comes first, and no one expects you to have all the answers on day one.

Keep Learning

Healthcare is constantly evolving. Competency today doesn't guarantee competency tomorrow, which is why continuing education, professional development, and lifelong learning are essential. Transition-to-practice programs and nurse residencies can provide structured support as you strengthen your expertise.

Advice from Those Who've Been There

"Treat every orientation shift as an investment in your future practice."

"Asking for help is not weakness—it's professionalism."

"Growth comes from balancing what you know with what you're willing to learn."

Final Thought

Your career is just beginning. Use orientation as your launchpad, let competency guide your confidence, and commit to being both a lifelong learner and a safe, collaborative professional. The future of nursing depends on your readiness, resilience, and willingness to grow.

Graduation is just the beginning. Orientation and competency are your foundation—more than learning routines, these weeks are about building judgment, teamwork, and confidence to thrive.

ADVANCED PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Scope & Standards Pulse — CT Legislative & Scope Update (Aug 2025)

APRN scope: SB 1064 died in committee; existing CT rules still apply.

The 2025 proposal (SB 1064) to expand APRN scope did not advance (status: Introduced – Dead), so current law remains: an APRN must practice in collaboration with a CT-licensed physician for at least 3 years and 2,000 hours before practicing independently.

APRN independence files: keep your documentation tight. If you're crossing the 3-year/2,000-hour threshold, retain documentation of your collaborative practice and be prepared to furnish it to DPH on request (the DPH "Independent Practice Notification" form spells out what to keep and for how long).



What didn't change for APRN scope this session and the paperwork you'll want squared away before apple fritter season.

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Labor of Love: Designing Work That Loves Nurses Back

Stand up a “Nursing Innovation Unit”

Unit-level innovation programs that empower bedside nurses to identify pain points, run small tests, and scale what works report better engagement and hiring pull (“vacancy rates ... dramatically improved”). Treat retention as a design outcome, not a quarterly wish.



This Labor Day, skip the candy-stripe cupcakes and give your team the real treat: workflows built with them, not at them. Human-centered design (HCD) = listening to nurses, co-creating fixes, testing fast, keeping what works

[Click to View J&J Case Story](#)

NURSING EVENTS & NEWS

Because Nurses Belong at Every Table

Event Spotlight: Staying Covered—Responding to Federal Cuts to Healthcare

On September 4, 2025, the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health and Health Equity Solutions are hosting a timely forum, Staying Covered: Responding to Federal Cuts to Healthcare. This event will explore the impact of federal reductions on Medicaid and the health insurance exchange.

The program will feature presentations from the Department of Social Services (DSS), Access Health CT, and a policy expert panel who will unpack the implications for Connecticut residents. For nurses, this is a critical opportunity to stay informed and add our voices to the conversation—because the nursing perspective is essential in shaping equitable healthcare solutions.

Location: Committee Room 2C, Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT

Time: 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Breakfast and lunch will be served

Register here: <https://bit.ly/Sep4forum>



connecticut nursing
NEWS & EVENTS

Nurses belong at every table where healthcare decisions are made—especially when those decisions involve cuts that impact access, equity, and patient care.

[REGISTER FOR SEPTEMBER FORUM](#)

[VIEW ALL CCNW UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

I AM A CT NURSE

Call for CT Nurses to share about themselves

CCNW is proud to launch the “I Am a CT Nurse” campaign to recognize and celebrate the highly skilled nurses serving Connecticut communities every day. We invite all CT nurses to submit a short, 45–60 second video sharing your name, school and or organization, license, and what you love most about being a CT nurse. By participating, you’ll help shine a spotlight on the dedication, compassion, and expertise that define our state’s nursing profession.



To learn more about how to submit your video, visit our [website](#).

LEARN HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR VIDEO



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Please take a few moments and share your feedback with us.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

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RECOMMENDED HASHTAGS

- #CTNursingWorkforce
- #NursingExcellenceCT
- #ConnecticutNurses
- #CTNurseLeaders
- #CTNursingCommunity
- #HealthCareWorkforceCT

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The Connecticut Center for Nursing Workforce, Inc. | 110 Washington Avenue Lower Level | North Haven, CT 06473
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