



NurseConnect | July 31, 2025 | 10th Edition

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## ADVANCED PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Measure What Matters: ABI  
Quick Reference for Better  
Vascular Assessment



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## A New Era for Nursing in Connecticut: Our Shared Responsibility

*With the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill, our healthcare landscape is poised for significant shifts—particularly in nursing education, workforce development, and patient care delivery. Regardless of perspectives, this moment calls on those with influence, privilege, and resources to support Connecticut's nursing infrastructure.*

Medicaid funding, provider taxes, and long-term care coverage may reshape clinical education pipelines, clinical placement availability, and facility staffing norms. We are proactively working with state leaders and partners to amplify the nursing voice, ensuring

## LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Virtual Nursing: A Data-Driven Workforce Solution

## CT NURSING EVENTS & NEWS

Level Up Your Leadership: Join the NEMNLC Inaugural Executive Nurse Leadership Institute

## "I AM A CT NURSE" CAMPAIGN

Call for CT Nurses to share about themselves

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that critical needs—from faculty development and student support to simulation resources—remain priorities in the implementation of this law.

Now more than ever, CCNW and the nursing community need allies. We invite those with influence, privilege, and resources—educators, employers, philanthropists, and policymakers—to join forces with us. Whether through advocacy, strategic investment, or mentorship, your support will help sustain nursing education pipelines, enhance clinical training opportunities, and safeguard the resilience of our workforce. Together, we can ensure Connecticut emerges from this period with a stronger, more prepared, and more equitable nursing profession.

## PATHWAYS TO NURSING

### Next Steps, Your Way: Navigating Life After HS Graduation

After high school or GED completion, some students head straight to college, while others explore job training, apprenticeships, or community service. Connecticut offers free, flexible programs like Career ConneCT, which helps graduates find training and job opportunities in growing industries like healthcare, tech, and manufacturing. Students can also take advantage of free tuition at CT State Community Colleges, or enroll in local adult education programs to build additional skills at their own pace.

For families and supporters, the key is to stay curious, patient, and open-minded. Your graduate's journey may include pauses, pivots, or nontraditional steps—and that's okay. Whether your student chooses to pursue college now, later, or not at all, there are free resources like 2-1-1 InfoLine and Job Corps to help guide the way. The important thing is moving forward—with support, confidence, and the knowledge that success can take many forms.



*Graduating high school or earning a GED is a major milestone—congratulations!*

*Whether you're a recent graduate or a proud supporter of one, you might be wondering, "What now?" The good news is there's no one-size-fits-all path forward. There are many routes to success, and the journey doesn't have to be linear.*

## STUDENT SUCCESS CORNER

### Strike While the Iron Is Hot: Why You Should Take the NCLEX Soon After Graduation

Research indicates that first-time, U.S.-educated NCLEX-RN candidates testing in the first quarter of 2025 passed at a rate of approximately 88.4%, down from 94% the year before—an expected adjustment following the Next Generation NCLEX update. Similarly, Kaplan reports a 2024 pass rate of 91.2% for first-time U.S. graduates. However, delaying the exam can reduce familiarity with clinical judgment concepts and exam strategies, contributing to lower scores among repeat test-takers.

In Connecticut, performance across RN programs has remained strong. From the May 2023–April 2024 reporting period, average NCLEX-RN pass rates ranged from 94%–97% across associate, baccalaureate, and accelerated programs. Schools like Gateway Community College even achieved a 100% first-time pass rate in 2024. These numbers reflect curricula aligned to NCLEX content—and they underscore the importance of maintaining momentum after graduation to capitalize on the retention of your clinical knowledge.



*Registering for and taking the NCLEX promptly after graduating is one of the best decisions you can make. Data show that pass rates are highest when grads test within months of completing their nursing education—before knowledge fades and test-taking skills wane.*

## LAUNCHING YOUR CAREER

### Health Policy Unlocked: Understanding Connecticut's System from the Inside Out

This course will cut through Connecticut's confusing health policy landscape with an overview of health policy structures impacting state residents. Students will have the opportunity to critically analyze basic concepts, principles, and consequences of health delivery and payment in the state.

At the conclusion of this course, students will have accomplished three goals. First, students will have a comprehensive understanding of the primary stakeholders, interactions, and routes to effective health policy and the obstacles hindering further growth. Second, students will be able to think about healthcare policy in critical and nuanced ways. Finally, students will be able to chart a path for healthcare policy improvement.



*Connecticut Health Policy Project is sponsoring a Guided Study: Foundations of Connecticut Health Policy*

More information is available at

<https://cthealthpolicy.org/resources-2/advocacy-tool-box/health-policy-class-resources/>

VIEW HEALTHCARE POLICY IMPROVEMENT

## ADVANCED PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

### Measure What Matters: ABI Quick Reference for Better Vascular Assessment

Lower extremity arterial disease (LEAD) affects millions, particularly the elderly and those with diabetes mellitus. The Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) compares systolic pressures in the ankle and brachial arteries to assess lower extremity arterial perfusion. Despite its benefits, the ABI has limitations like low sensitivity in asymptomatic patients and inaccuracies due to arterial calcification. An ABI is beneficial for screening for LEAD in individuals with lower extremity wounds, assessing arterial blood flow before compression therapy, and evaluating wound healing potential. Understanding ABI's limitations and proper use ensures accurate diagnosis when evaluating and managing LEAD. It is crucial that clinicians are well-versed and knowledgeable in the proper use of ABI in the assessment of LEAD and recognize when to refer patients to a vascular specialist.

Reference:

- J Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse 52(4):p 271-278, July/August 2025. | DOI: 10.1097/WON.0000000000001188



*WOCN Society Ankle Brachial Task Force recently published Ankle Brachial Index Quick Reference Guide*

## LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

### Virtual Nursing: A Data-Driven Workforce Solution

Virtual nursing is gaining ground as a sustainable strategy to address nurse burnout, staffing shortages, and patient throughput challenges. Nationally, approximately 34% of hospitals have implemented some form of virtual nursing, with reported outcomes including a 60% reduction in RN turnover and a 46% decrease in vacancy rates across major systems such as Advocate Health (Verywell Health, 2024; Becker's Hospital Review, 2024).



In Connecticut, Bridgeport Hospital, part of Yale New Haven Health, launched its virtual nursing program in April 2023. Since then, over 3,000 video visits have been conducted, with virtual nurses handling admissions, discharge instructions, and documentation remotely. The program has extended the careers of experienced nurses while reducing the administrative burden on bedside staff (Yale New Haven Health, 2024; CT Public, 2024).

*Virtual nursing is rapidly expanding as an innovative response to nursing shortages, burnout, and rising patient complexity. By enabling experienced nurses to provide remote support, this model enhances bedside care, improves operational efficiency, and strengthens workforce resilience.*

Looking ahead, 74% of hospital executives surveyed expect virtual nursing to become a standard component of inpatient care by 2025, though only 10% have fully scaled programs as of now (AvaSure, 2024). As adoption increases, virtual nursing is proving to be a measurable, technology-enabled workforce solution.

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## NURSING EVENTS & NEWS

### Level Up Your Leadership: Join the NEMNLC Inaugural Executive Nurse Leadership Institute

This day-long, interactive workshop is tailored for nurse leaders who are ready to elevate their leadership through strength-based strategies, emotional intelligence, and deepened self-awareness.

Participants will engage with evidence-based practices designed to promote psychological safety, cultivate high-performing teams, and overcome internal challenges like imposter syndrome. Through reflective activities, group dialogue, and real-world scenarios, attendees will gain practical tools for leading with confidence, equity, and emotional insight.

More information available at <https://nemnlc.org/>



*connecticut nursing*  
**NEWS & EVENTS**

*Mark your calendar for Friday, October 24, 2025! The Executive Nurse Leadership Institute is launching its first-ever interactive workshop at the Marriott Conference Center in Springfield, MA—and you're invited.*

CLICK TO VIEW | JOIN THE NEMNLC

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

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#### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

#### NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Like our newsletter? Share with your colleagues

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/s1/ZSzi4fe/newslettersignup>

#### RECOMMENDED HASHTAGS

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

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