

Official Publication of the

# Nevada State Board of NURSING

Saying  
Thank You  
For Your  
Years of  
Service to  
Patty Towler



Celebrating  
30 Wonderful  
Years

# Nevada Nursing News

*Summer 2024*

## To Our Dearest Patty,

Grateful does not begin to cover how lucky we all feel to have worked with you. Thank you for your knowledge, your kindness, and your warm presence. You will be missed! Enjoy your retirement and adventures to come!

# WORDS

From the Executive Director

**Cathy Dinauer,  
MSN, RN, FRE**



As the Executive Director of the Nevada State Board of Nursing (NSBN), I am often faced with challenging issues regarding decisions that must be made in keeping with our mission to protect the public through effective regulation. Sometimes, there is a ray of sunshine that appears through the clouds and this, I would like to share with all of you.

It is not often that I have the honor to work with an employee who has been in the workplace thirty years. Patty Towler, “Patty T” is that person. Patty, our lead licensure staff has been awarded the Exceptional Contribution Award by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). Patty is retiring this year and while we are sad, we are so happy for her achievements and acknowledgements. Patty will receive her award in August at the annual meeting of NCSBN.

Patty started her career with the NSBN in 1994 doing endorsement applications. She was quickly promoted to the CNA application processing department with oversight of Nevada’s CNA programs. Patty has since taken on the role of processing all APRN applications. Patty’s contributions to nursing regulation are significant as she embraces the core values of the NSBN and NCSBN.

When Patty started at the NSBN, technology was not leading the agency, so she had to use her knowledge, skills, and pure thinking outside the box to make changes in our state. In the early 90’s, she took it upon herself to develop a streamlined tracking system for our licensees and certificate holders at a time when everything was tracked in a paper system.

When APRNs achieved full practice authority in the state in 2014, Patty was right next to leadership figuring out how to update each record, notify the APRNs of that change and revise current processes.

Patty has worked for 4 Executive Directors, many governors, and countless legislative sessions.

We are so fortunate to have Patty working for us and I appreciate beyond words her dedication and loyalty to the agency. Without her knowledge and experience of nursing regulation and historical expertise, I would not be able to meet the demands of the job. Congratulations Patty on your retirement.

# Pearls for Nurse Practitioner Transition to Practice

By Susan S. VanBeuge, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN



Transition to practice happens at any time a professional nurse moves from one place to another, gains new knowledge or additional education and credentials, or moves into a new role. For new advanced practice registered nurses (APRN), the transition from registered nurse (RN) to APRN is a big move as scope of practice changes.

When I moved from my role as RN to APRN back in 2003, it was a big move from working in pre-op to moving into the role of family nurse practitioner. My first job was to complete the application for licensure and to sit for certification. At the time of my graduation, certification was not a requirement of licensure but it was important to do this for my professional status, billing, and credentialing. I soon found myself looking for work in my new role and landed working with a general surgeon. This led to more school to learn the skills to be a first-assist in the operating room.

The first year of practice was not easy! I struggled to find my place between being an RN and APRN – as I didn't feel like I fit in anywhere. At the time, there were fewer than 800 APRNs in Nevada and none in the organization I had chosen to work. While I was learning my new role, I was also teaching my role to the physicians and administrators. This gave me the opportunity to learn my role more clearly, the regulatory aspects of the role in Nevada, and the professional aspects of being an APRN from the national professional organization.

Here are some of the reflections I have looking back on my 21 years as an APRN. As a new NP, the learning curve is high. First and foremost, take time to understand the regulatory processes that governs your license. There are different requirements for APRNs than RNs in Nevada. First you need to meet RN licensure, then you must also fulfill the APRN regulatory requirements. The requirements for licensure are always changing, especially after a legislative session. Why? Our licensure is regulated by the state and legislature. Therefore, changes may occur for continuing education, specific licensure requirements for prescribing, scope of practice in your clinical area, and anything that has to do with the laws governing practice. Therefore, it is important to check in at regular intervals with the board of nursing to see if changes have taken place. Any changes will be reported on the website and may also be sent to your email on record. In the end, it is the responsibility of the licensee to keep updated on any changes at any time. If you move, there is governance mandating to change your address within 30 days. This is required, so make this a priority when you move.

Here are some other pearls to help as you transition:

-Keep learning: you may think school is over and you are ready to move forward to practice. The reality is that your learning curve is steep and you have much more to learn. This is a time to keep your nose in the books, read/review/apply clinical practice guidelines, review current literature, and study new diagnoses' you may be seeing in practice. Ask questions and always keep learning.

-Stay humble: humility in practice is important. You have a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience but you will always have an opportunity to learn more from the people who are entrusted to your care. Don't forget that you are human and should be humble in your approach to others. The job you have to care for others is an honor and privilege, so be respectful of this always and keep your humility and grace towards others and to the practice.

-Be diligent – stay diligent on your learning, but also on your license. You worked hard to get through school, pass certification, and gain licensure so your job is to stay keen and diligent in all aspects of your practice from this perspective. As an APRN you will have several licenses to manage – RN, APRN, prescribing (state and DEA), and national certification. These are just the basics as you may go on to have specialty certificates. In summary of all this, keep your eye on these as they are lot to manage. Make sure YOU are the one managing all of this. Your license is not up to your practice or manager maintain, it is you. When it comes to renewal, you need to be in charge of this.

-Mentor others: mentoring others is an important part of practice. We have all been mentored by having preceptors and others who have encouraged us, listened at the good and bad times, and given us the boost to keep moving forward. As an APRN you should also do this for others coming up to the profession. Learn about mentoring in your organization or in your professional group to be this for another APRN. It is both rewarding and satisfying as you grow in your career.

-Support each other: it is important to have a good support system around you. Just like when you were in school, those around you help bolster you along the way. Find those who will be your guides, confidant, friends, and voice of reason. And be that for others. As nurses, we are in a profession known to “eat their young”. Don't be that APRN. Be the one who changes this culture and is kind and supportive of one another. It is up to us to change this script and be one voice to promote professional cohesiveness and a supportive environment for each other.

-Stay active in health policy: health policy is not always the favorite topic for practicing APRNs but it is in every aspect of our practice from being paid a fair reimbursement to patients have access to safe, effective care. Your voice is important and should be heard. Be engaged, get involved, and be proactive to support both your practice, the profession, and your patients.

-Take care of you: it is important to employ self-care. This means taking care of your physical

and mental health so that you are well to take care of others. Be mindful of your limits and keep your boundaries to stay healthy. Eat well, drink lots of water, get enough sleep, and do things that make you happy. This aspect of self-care is so vital to health care providers and should be a priority throughout your career. In order to care for others, you must care for yourself first.

Last, but certainly not least - ask questions: ask lots of questions. If you don't know an answer utilize those resources around you to increase your knowledge. Don't be afraid to ask because the dumb questions are the ones you don't ask. 😊 There are great resources for your use in practice, but you may need an extra boost. Ask. Inquire. Be curious.

Transition to practice is challenging at any juncture. Being methodical, thoughtful, humble, employing self-care, and inquisitive will serve you well to make this transition from new APRN to a confident clinician.

## Nevada Nursing Assistant Training Programs and the Regulatory Agencies Working Together

By Tamara Pachak, MSN, RN, iCNA  
NSBN CNA Training Program Specialist

Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) are at the forefront of caring for our residents and patients in skilled nursing and long-term care facilities. They are among the most crucial and valuable roles in these facilities. We start with having regulated and approved Nursing Assistant Training Programs (NATPs) to train and prepare people to become CNAs to promote quality, safe, and effective care of those residents. It is a joint, dedicated effort between regulatory agencies.

The Department of Health and Human Services, Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health's Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance (HCQC) contracts with the Nevada State Board of Nursing (NSBN) to maintain the registry and oversee the NATPs. Although they have separate roles, the two regulatory agencies work together to protect the public by promoting its safety and welfare through effective regulation.

Many NATP students conduct their clinical training at these facilities, allowing them to gain exposure to their future role of working as a CNA. The HCQC licenses and certifies the facilities where NATP students conduct their clinicals. Nevada also has three facility-based NATPs. The facility must first be eligible to have a NATP or host as a NATP clinical site. The HCQC provides a monthly list of eligible facilities to the NSBN CNA Training Program Specialist to ensure programs conduct clinical activities at eligible facilities.





As the NSBN CNA Training Program Specialist, I oversee all the NATPs and instructors to ensure compliance with the state and federal regulations. I conduct biennial surveys, including a comprehensive review of the programs and a review of the clinical facility, to ensure students can meet their learning objectives and outcomes. The survey goes before the Board for ongoing program approval, including approval of the site survey findings, and subsequently, a copy is submitted to the HCQC.

The HCQC licenses all Nevada medical facilities (including skilled and long-term care). The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is a federal agency that works with HCQC to ensure the facilities comply with federal and state regulations. Surveys are conducted annually (nine to 15 months) on behalf of CMS by the HCQC to ensure the facilities meet the set standards and that the quality of care is being met. Federal Regulations stipulate that long-term care facilities that receive “findings” for noncompliance (substandard quality of care) at the time of the state survey shall not be permitted to provide or host NATPs for two years following the survey.

I was given the opportunity to go with the HCQC survey team during an annual licensing/certification survey. It provided insight into other regulatory agencies and their survey process. These surveys are unannounced and conducted over three days. Each member of the HCQC team has assigned tasks to review, observe, and document compliance or noncompliance with the regulatory requirement.

During the site visit, the team lead quickly analyzed the facility data and provided directions for each team member with their specific role for the survey. The HCQC team members went from the kitchen to the laundry room, interviewing residents and staff, making observations, asking questions, and documenting all their findings. The various details in their survey reinforced why we have the required curriculum for the NATPs to ensure quality, safe, and effective care of the residents and their environment.

During the survey, if there is noncompliance with a regulatory requirement, the facility will receive a citation, also called a “tag”. Each tag is determined following the States Operating Manual (SOM) procedures. The level of scope and severity will depend on the extent of the deficient practice and its impact on the health and safety of the residents. Each tag will include documented evidence to support the finding. At the end of the survey, an exit interview is conducted with the survey findings, including any tags found with the administrative team, and to discuss opportunities for improvement. The facility will later receive a formal copy of the survey findings. The facility can take the findings noted in the exit interview and start working on a plan of correction (POC).

Having the results of the survey to be in substantial compliance, the facility will remain eligible to host NATP students as a clinical site, as well as the facility could apply to have their own facility-based NATP. With the dedication of the regulatory agencies, we can continue to provide quality educational opportunities at these skilled and long-term care facilities while providing quality, safe, and effective care to our Nevada residents.

I would like to thank the HCQC staff for allowing me the opportunity to gain more insight and expand my knowledge base on their regulatory process. It was a tremendous experience, seeing firsthand the dedication to upholding their mission of promoting the safety and welfare of the public through regulation, licensing, enforcement, education, and advocacy of quality health care.

If you have more questions or would like to know more about the HCQC survey process, you can visit their website at [Health Facilities Home \(nv.gov\)](https://healthfacilities.nv.gov).

If you have more questions or would like to know more about NSBN approved NATPs, you can visit the NSBN website at <https://nevadanursingboard.org>.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Saying goodbye is never easy. The Nevada State Board of Nursing has had the privilege of having an employee for 30 years. In this time and age, that is unheard of. Patty Towler has faithfully served the Nevada State Board of Nursing since March of 1994. Last year, the Nevada State Board of Nursing celebrated its 100th year of being in existence. As part of our celebration, we published a magazine. Ms. Towler had a featured spotlight in that magazine. As she prepares to embark on the next phase of her life, retirement, we would like to reflect on the words that she shared with us and wish her a fond fair well. You truly will be missed.

– Dr. Michelle Johnson

**M**y name is Patty Towler and my first day with the Nevada State Board of Nursing was on March 7, 1994. When I started with the Board of Nursing I never, in my wildest dreams, would have imaged that I was beginning a 30-year career with the agency in the licensing and certification department. I am considered the historian since I have been with the Board so long and it's not unusual to receive calls from my coworkers asking "why do we do it this way?" or "what did we used to do?" As we celebrate the Board's one hundredth-year anniversary of the Board, I can't help but reflect on all the changes and advances that I have been fortunate to be a part of with the Nevada State Board of Nursing.

Thinking back to 1994 there are many changes that come to mind when compared to our current processes. Most notably is how the Board would correspond to our licensees and certificate holders; yes, we were still using typewriters and sending hard copy letters. In addition, each day staff would print licenses or certificates that were issued during the day and place them in the mail for USPS delivery. Staff were also required to send all licensees and certificate holders renewal applications for anyone that was expiring within the subsequent 60 days. This process alone would take two days to complete. Luckily, time and technology significantly progressed, and we have made many process improvements since the beginning of my tenure.

Fast forward to today, we now offer many paperless online options including online verifications for licensees and certificate holders, online initial and renewal applications, and secure instant messaging to and from applicants and licensees. In 2018, the Board upgraded its operating system for the third time since my employment began and although change is

never fun it's always for the best. Implementing and adopting to a new system was an extremely difficult process but we worked together and accomplished this challenge as a team. The nursing board and nursing practice has come a long way since I began and will continue to evolve to meet the needs of Nevada's citizens.

During my time at the Board, I have been lucky to work with 4 executive directors, 6 Governors for the State of Nevada, and navigated through 15 legislative sessions and countless regulation changes. We've gone from scantrons, various test vendors, to the next generation NCLEX. I've helped train multiple new hires and assisted thousands of applicants; some through their entire nursing careers. For all these changes and many others over the last 28 years, I have been grateful to be part of such an incredible agency.

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**WITH SINCEREST LOVE AND APPRECIATION...**



**NSBN Staff Photo, 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, April 2023**

<p>Patty, Thank you for all of your support over the years. You are a shining example of what it means to be an “exceptional person”. You will be missed greatly. I wish you all the best. -Elaine</p>	<p>From the whole discipline team, we are forever indebted to Patty and her ability to help us sort out every challenging licensure question we ever needed help with. Over the years I’m certain we have asked her the same questions over and over and she answered like it was the first time. Patty has always been there for us. We will miss her dearly. -Sam</p>		
<p>I have worked with Patty for 8 years. Her institutional knowledge of the Board has been invaluable to me. She is always willing to help. I will miss her sparkle and her laugh. Even though she lost the bet, I hereby release Patty T from her 1-million-dollar debt to me so she can fully enjoy her retirement. (Yes, this is legally binding.) We will miss you!! Keep in touch! -Kim</p>		<p>Patty, you are irreplaceable and will be greatly missed! -Kerry</p>	<p>Patty has a smile that lights up any room! -Amanda</p>
<p>Thank you for making me feel welcome and for all your help. I wish you the very best in your future endeavors, and you will be missed. -Christina</p>	<p>"Patty T" has been such a tremendous asset to the Nevada State Board of Nursing! I became acquainted with her back in 1997 when I was teaching CNA training programs. Patty T was my "go-to person" for many years in that capacity, and now for the past 13 years, as colleagues, I've found her to be the most reliable resource imaginable! She has always been such a great communicator, she has a memory like no other, and she is so incredibly knowledgeable. She will be sorely missed. Patty, congratulations! Well done! You've been an inspiration to me, and I wish you the very best in your retirement and future endeavors! Yours truly, Ry</p>		
<p>Patty, Thank you for your commitment and years of service to the Nevada State Board of Nursing. I wish you nothing but the best during your retirement. -Ray</p>	<p>Happy retirement Patty, I will miss you. You were my go-to person you knew everything! -Cindy</p>	<p>I wish you a happy, loving, and healthy retirement. Best wishes as you embark on this new journey! Thank you for always being so kind and sharing your wealth of knowledge, you will be missed! -Cydnee</p>	
<p>PT! I cherish the times we get to catch up on life, the IT shenanigans, and our favorite annual stats. You've been nothing but helpful, patient, understanding, optimistic every time we talk. I'm genuinely excited for you as you begin this new journey. May your retirement be filled with joy, relaxation, and all the awesome experiences you've been dreaming of. Thank you for everything and I'm going to miss you! Wishing you the best in your retirement! -Rhoda</p>		<p>I would like to wish you a Happy Retirement. <b>Thank you so much</b> for taking the time to teach me just a fraction of what you have learned over 30 years, I can never fill your shoes but I will give it one heck of a try. -LaShaun</p>	
<p>Patty, Thank you for all of your support over the years. You are a shining example of what it means to be an “exceptional person”. You will be missed greatly. I wish you all the best. -Elaine</p>	<p>I have been so fortunate to know Patty for a few years and our work friendship has created a work environment like no other. Patty brings so many things to our work environment, but the best thing about Patty T. is her optimistic attitude. She always finds the good in every situation. The one thing I will most about Patty is our great lunch time conversations. We will miss you PT! Happy Retirement! Love always, CJ</p>		

<p>Patty, I have had the honor of working with you for 3 years now. I have enjoyed learning from you and working with you. You have always been a kind, warm, presence and that will be greatly missed. Thank you for sharing your wealth of knowledge, your smiles, and your laughs. I wish you a happy retirement, filled with adventure and love. Congratulations, and enjoy your next chapter! Don't miss us too much!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Hannah</p>	<p>I met Patty in 2007, from day one she was friendly and welcoming, always offering her help to everyone, she had been working for NSBN for 13 years and at the time I didn't think anything of it, now 17 years later I can say it has been a pleasure to have her as a coworker and friend. I am proud of you PT, I wish you the best on your adventures and I hope to reach that goal one day!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Love you, Yana</p>
<p>Patty- even though I may have asked the same questions multiple times you never made me feel like I wasn't learning fast enough! You have become someone I know I could count on no matter what position I held at the board. Your expertise, knowledge, kindness, and friendship will truly be missed! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- Christie</p>	<p>Patty Towler has been a pleasure to work with and a treasure trove of information to learn from. I hope she has a fantastic retirement and that she knows that everyone here will miss her dearly.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Madison</p>
<p>I just want you to know that I admire and respect the hard work you've done for NSBN for the last 30 years. I was lucky to have worked with you and will always be grateful for the time we spent together figuring out new systems, application requirements or just sharing a laugh. Wishing you a whole new kind of life ahead that is full of good books, long naps, and everything else that brings you joy!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Gail</p>	<p>Patty has always been such a valuable resource with her wealth of knowledge and experience. She is an incredible person who is always willing to help and share her expertise with others. It has been an absolute privilege to work with her. Although she will be greatly missed, I congratulate her success and well-deserved upcoming retirement.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Tamara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Patty,</p> <p>I am beyond grateful to have crossed paths with you and gained knowledge from you. Your presence, your intelligence and your great sense of humor will truly be missed here at the Nursing board. I wish you the best in life may God bless you always in all you do.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thank you for always being there for me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Gabriela</p>



2024 Board Members



Richelle O'Driscoll, MA, Consumer Member,  
Board President



Cheryl Maes, PH.D., APRN, FNP-BC,  
Vice President



Elizabeth Trilops, RN, MBA/HCM  
Board Secretary



Ovidia McGuinness, LPN



Susan S. VanBeuge, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC,  
FAANP, FAAN



Elizabeth de Leon-Gamboa, MSN Ed., RN,  
CPHQ, CCM, CMCN



Tyler Johnson, BS, CNA

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<https://nevadanursingboard.org/>

**Cathy Dinauer, MSN, RN, FRE**

*Executive Director*

Statewide Liaison and Spokesperson,  
 Organizational and Public Management,  
 Fiscal and Human Resource Management

*Legislative and Governmental Relations*

**Fred Olmstead, Esq.**

*General Counsel*

**Kimberly A. Arguello, Esq.**

*General Counsel*

Information Technology Operations

**Sam McCord, BSN, RN**

*Director of Investigations and Discipline*

Case Review, Investigation and Settlement  
 Oversight for application review/compliance, Nursing  
 Practice Advisory and LPN Advisory Committee  
 Chair, APRN Advisory Committee Co-Chair

**Michelle Johnson, EdD, MS, APRN, CPNP-PC**

*Director of Nursing Education and Editor*

Nursing Education Programs, CNA Training  
 Programs, Education Advisory Committee Chair,  
 NSBN Nursing News Editor

**Gail Trujillo, MS, CPM, SHRM-CP**

*Director of Licensure & Certification, Human Resources*

Program Management, RN/LPN/APRN Licensure,  
 CNA/CRNA/EMS-RN Certification

**Corina Jimenez**

*Executive Assistant*

**INVESTIGATION & MONITORING****Christie Daliposon**

*Investigator*

**Brandi Harkey, RN**

*Investigator*

**Ray Martinez**

*Investigator*

**Kerry Palakanis, DNP, FNP-C**

*APRN Consultant & Investigator*

APRN Advisory Committee Co-Chair

**Cydnee Perez**

*Audit Investigator*

**Cynthia Peterson, RN, CLNC, CHCQM**

*Investigator*

**Elaine Ralph, MSN, RN, FN-CSp**

*Monitoring and Probation Investigator*

Disability Advisory Committee Chair

**Madison Webb**

*Management Assistant*

**LICENSURE & CERTIFICATION****Patty Towler**

*Licensure & Certification Lead*

**Ariadna Ramos Zavala**

*Licensing & Certification Specialist*

**Sandy Webb**

*Licensing & Certification Specialist*

**Gabriela Hernandez-Aguilar**

*Licensing & Certification Technician*

**Amanda Russell**

*Licensing & Certification Technician*

**Christina Sahlin**

*Licensing & Certification Technician*

**Lashaun Thompson**

*Licensing & Certification Technician*

**Courteney Baccei**

*Fingerprint Specialist*

**C. Ryan Mann, MSN, RN**

*Application Eligibility Specialist*

**EDUCATION****Tamara Pachak, MSN, RN, iCNA**

*CNA Training Program Specialist*

CNA Advisory Committee Chair

**Hannah Boll-Matulis**

*Management Assistant*

**IT & ACCOUNTING****Rhoda Hernandez**

*Technology & Computer Systems Specialist*

**Kristie Neuhauser, MBA**

*Accountant*



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## Board Meeting Dates

All dates and locations are subject to change

\*Virtual/teleconference options available

**\*September 18-20, 2024**

NSBN Conference Room  
6005 Plumas Street Ste. 101  
Reno, NV 89519

**\*March 19-20, 2025**

Doubletree by Hilton  
Las Vegas Airport  
7250 Pollock Dr  
Las Vegas, NV 89119

**\*September 17-18, 2025**

NSBN Conference Room  
6005 Plumas Street Ste. 101  
Reno, NV 89519

**\*November 13-15, 2024**

Location TBD

**\*May 14-15, 2025**

NSBN Conference Room  
6005 Plumas Street Ste. 101  
Reno, NV 89519

**\*November 12-13, 2025**

Doubletree by Hilton  
Las Vegas Airport  
7250 Pollock Dr  
Las Vegas, NV 89119

**\*January 15-16, 2025**

NSBN Conference Room  
6005 Plumas Street Ste. 101  
Reno, NV 89519

**July 16-18, 2025**

Zephyr Point Presbyterian  
Conference Center  
660 Hwy 50  
Zephyr Cove, Nevada 89448

## Committee Meetings and Openings

**Advanced Practice  
Advisory Committee:**  
August 13, 2024  
November 19, 2024

**CNA Advisory  
Committee:**  
August 1, 2024  
October 3, 2024

**Disability Advisory  
Committee:**  
July 11, 2024  
October 10, 2024

**Education Advisory  
Committee:**  
August 9, 2024  
October 11, 2024

**LPN Advisory  
Committee:**  
August 15, 2024  
November 21, 2024

**Nurse Practice Advisory  
Committee:**  
August 6, 2024  
November 5, 2024

**Advanced Practice Registered**

**Nurse Advisory Committee:** 1 open position in September 2024

**CNA Advisory Committee:** 1 medication aides-certified,  
1 open CNA position in September 2024

**\*Disability Advisory Committee:** 1 open position in September 2024

**Education Advisory Committee:** 2 open positions in September 2024

**\*LPN Advisory Committee:** 2 open positions in September 2024

**Nursing Practice Advisory Committee:** 3 open positions in May 2025

\*Applications encouraged