

Sustaining innovation

An update from the 2021 ANA Innovation Award winners

THE American Nurses Association (ANA) Innovation Awards—bestowed annually—highlight, recognize, and celebrate nurse-led innovation that improves patient safety outcomes. The recipients—announced in February 2021 for the Individual Nurse Award and the Nurse-led Team Award—have spent the past year further developing their programs and services.

Their successes show the potential and promise of nurse-led creativity and design initiatives, according to Oriana Beaudet, DNP, RN, PHN, vice president of nursing innovation at ANA. “In the midst of an evolving and ongoing pandemic, nurses are taking initiative and using their science-based training, technical skills, and experience to navigate complex situations,” she said. “Whether nurses are making process improvements or leading system change to transform health, the collective impact of our profession is without question.”

An update on the 2021 ANA Innovation Award winners’ activities follows.

TrachTrail™

The 2021 Individual Award recipient, Rebecca Cherney, BSN, BS, RN, developed a comprehensive standardized adult tracheostomy care education program that trains nurses, patients, and caregivers. Since receiving the award, Cherney has transformed basic education materials into a multimedia training guide for patients and nurse educators, complete with photos. Using medical illustrations and other visual tools, TrachTrail enhances education about tracheostomy care for both patients and caregivers.

Cherney used the \$25,000 award sponsored by BD to enhance TrachTrail’s resources. She hired a graphic designer to make the patient education materials accessible. In addition, she contracted with a videographer to create a series of 3- to 5-minute vignette training companion videos. Also, Cherney is exploring the possibility of translating some TrachTrail materials into Spanish and Arabic to better serve the communities in her region. Her innovation helps ensure people can live a safer life after returning home with a tracheostomy.

Lavender

The 2021 Nurse-led Team Award winners, Brigid Gannon, DNP, PMHNP-BC, and Pritma Dhillon Chattha, DNP, MHA, RN, created Lavender, an online psychiatry and therapy office, to make mental healthcare more accessible and affordable. This practice model, which combines medication management and therapy, has experienced exponential growth, climbing to more than 1,000 visits monthly. Lavender’s staff has quadrupled, and revenues have increased tenfold. Gannon and Dhillon Chattha used the \$50,000 award sponsored by BD to purchase software to improve customer service and automate manual workflows, thereby making these processes scalable. Lavender has grown substantially in the New York market, expanded into Washington state, and increased brand awareness to generate new leads.

Gannon and Dhillon Chattha plan to expand Lavender into states that support independent practice for nurse practitioners. These nurse innovators strive to ensure that growth occurs at a sustainable pace, which puts quality and ethical client care first. “We’re immensely grateful for the ANA Innovation Award and certainly wouldn’t be where we are today without it,” Dhillon Chattha said. “Lavender started from a small idea and a few risks. If you have an idea, the ANA Innovation Award should be your first step. Like us, you have nothing to lose but much to gain!”

In February, ANA announced the winners of the 2022 Innovation Awards sponsored by Stryker. Watch the awards presentation in a Navigate Nursing webinar at bit.ly/3uORVEz. Learn about 2022 award winners in an upcoming issue and at nursingworld.org/innovation. Applications for the 2023 Innovation Awards will be accepted from June 1 to November 4, 2022.

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