



FROM THE MONA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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As the HOLIDAY SEASON is upon us and a new year will begin soon, many of us pause to reflect, reset, and set intentions for the months ahead. For nurses, that often means recommitting to professional growth — updating skills, expanding knowledge, and finding ways to better serve our patients and communities.

One of the benefits the association offers is access to high-quality continuing education. Webinars, especially those offered at no cost by associations, employers, or sponsors, make it easier than ever to learn without leaving home. But while these events are free for participants, they are far from free to produce. Behind every webinar are staff hours, speaker preparation, and technology costs.

Across the nursing profession, online learning has become a vital way to stay current, earn contact hours, and expand skills. Associations and employers invest considerable time and money in developing webinars, often offering them at no cost to nurses as a member benefit. Yet a troubling pattern is emerging: large numbers of registrants never actually attend.

On the surface, signing up for a free webinar may seem harmless even if you later skip it. But behind the scenes, every registration includes planning, technology costs, staff time, and speaker preparation. When nurses register but don't attend, seats are left unused, engagement data becomes unreliable, and organizers may hesitate to offer similar free programs in the future.

Nursing is rooted in accountability — to our patients, our colleagues, and our own professional growth. That accountability does not stop when the shift ends. Committing to a continuing education event and not showing up can be viewed as a lapse in professional responsibility, even if

unintentionally.

Continuing education is an ethical obligation to remain competent, informed, and prepared to deliver the best care possible.

Steps Nurses Can Take

- Register thoughtfully. Only sign up for sessions you genuinely plan to attend.
- Prioritize it on your calendar. Treat free webinars the same way you would treat a paid course or in-person seminar.
- Communicate cancellations. If something comes up, let organizers know so they can adjust resources or open a spot for another nurse.
- Be present. Show up on time, participate actively, and complete post-session evaluations to help improve future offerings.

Professional nursing thrives on shared learning. When nurses take responsibility for their continuing education, everyone benefits — patients, colleagues, and the profession as a whole. Respecting educational opportunities, even when they're free, demonstrates the integrity and reliability that define nursing at its best.

As we move into this new year together, let's make the most of every learning opportunity and show up for each other as much as we show up for our patients. 💡