

Bringing Evidence to Life Through Clinical Narratives

By Kenneth Oja, PhD, RN

At Denver Health, our new graduate nurse residency program is taking a fresh approach to teaching evidence-based practice (EBP). Instead of the traditional model, where new grads search the literature, design a practice change project, and present it with little chance of implementation, our residency coordinator, Kary Lundy, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, is helping nurses connect EBP directly to their day-to-day patient care.

The innovation is simple but powerful: clinical narratives. Denver Health began using this approach after learning about the practice from Mass General Brigham. With their permission, Kary introduced the idea here at Denver Health. As she ex-

plains, *"We wanted to focus on two things: EBP use in the moment and the use of reflection to solidify learning, evolving, and critical thinking."*

Each new graduate writes a short story drawn from their own clinical experience. In the narrative, they describe a specific patient encounter and illustrate how their nursing actions reflected the best available evidence. The narrative does not end with personal reflection. It is anchored with citations from the research that support their care.

This method has two key benefits. First, it grounds evidence-based practice in reality. Rather than being an abstract academic exercise, EBP becomes part of the

nurse's developing professional identity. New grads see that evidence is not something "out there" in journals or projects, but a resource woven into the choices they make with patients every day. Second, the stories make learning stick. By framing practice in the form of a narrative, nurses connect evidence with meaning, memory, and professional pride.

Clinical narratives are also shareable, highlighting how new nurses are growing into evidence-based practitioners. In this way, Denver Health's approach not only builds individual competence but strengthens our nursing culture of inquiry and evidence-based care. ■

Self-Care in Troubled Times: A Necessary Act of Resilience

Donna Strickland, Colorado Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses (CAPPN)

We are living in troubled times. The pace of change, ongoing uncertainty, and the weight of division in our communities create a constant undercurrent of stress. As Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses, we know the toll this takes on mental health—our patients', our colleagues', and our own. In moments like these, self-care is not indulgence; it is survival.

Self-care can look different for each of us: taking a quiet walk, practicing mindfulness, setting healthy boundaries, or finding joy in connection with others. These small but intentional acts help us stay grounded when the world feels overwhelming. They also strengthen our capacity for compassion, empathy, and presence in the lives of those we serve.

By caring for ourselves, we are better able to care for others. We model resilience for our patients, reminding them that tending to one's own well-being is not selfish but essential. In choosing self-care, we affirm hope in troubled times and create space for healing—both individually and collectively. ■

GAPP Update

Mary Satre, MSN, MBA, RN; Co-Chair of CNA GAPP Committee

Governor Polis called the Colorado State Legislature to a Special Session from August 21st to 26th. Focus was on resolution of the state budget deficit and the implementation of the AI Bill passed by the 2024 Session (the latter has been delayed until 2026). GAPP took a position of "Support" on two of the

bills that were clearly in line with CNA's Social Determinants of Health Action Statement:

- SB 25B-002 on state funding for Planned Parenthood, in the absence of federal funding;
- SB 25B-003 on the provision of Healthy School Meals for All.

Both bills were passed.

With health care insurance for many Coloradans expected to rise by at least 30%, HB 25B-1006 addressed health insurance affordability. But the Session left many questions

unanswered about the federal budget cuts and their effects in Colorado. Contract Lobbyist Gil Romero spoke to GAPP members at the meeting on August 27th, saying: "The big problems are going to be before us in January and GAPP will play a role in informing legislators."

In addition to analysis of the Special Session, GAPP has begun looking at the Sunset of the Nurse Practice Act, scheduled for 2026. All members are urged to read the Nurse Practice Act and join one of the small groups that have formed to discuss details of its pro-