

The Power of Nurses and the Strength of Involvement



Jane Nelson, CAE, ONA CEO

During Nurses Week, we pause to celebrate not only what nurses do, but the power they carry every day into patient rooms, communities, and the future of healthcare. That power lives in our knowledge, our compassion, our voices—and especially in our willingness to stand together.

Nurses possess a unique kind of power. We witness people at their most vulnerable and most resilient moments. We translate fear into understanding, complexity into clarity, and illness into healing. Our power is often found in quiet acts—recognizing a subtle change in a patient’s condition, advocating for safer care, or simply being present when someone needs to be seen and heard. Though these moments may not always be visible, they shape outcomes and save lives.

Beyond the Bedside

The power of nursing does not stop at the bedside. It extends to how we influence systems, policies, and the profession itself. When nurses come together, our collective voice becomes stronger than any single effort. This is where involvement in professional organizations, such as the **Oklahoma Nurses Association (ONA)**, becomes an extension of our professional responsibility and shared power.

Getting involved with ONA means choosing to shape the future rather than simply respond to it. ONA unites nurses to advocate for safe staffing, patient safety, professional standards, and legislation that protects both patients and those who care for them. Through engagement, nurses ensure that decisions affecting healthcare in Oklahoma reflect the perspective of those who know patient care best.

Strengthening Our Professional Identity

Participation in ONA also strengthens our professional identity. It creates opportunities for leadership development, education, mentorship, and connection across specialties and practice settings. By supporting one another, we reinforce nursing as a trusted, respected, and essential profession—both now and for generations to come.

Nurses’ power is amplified when we show up—not only for our patients, but for each other. Whether through membership, volunteering, advocacy, or leadership, involvement within ONA is an act of empowerment. It affirms that nurses deserve a seat at the table where decisions are made and that our voices truly matter.

Ways to Get Involved with ONA

ONA offers a wide range of opportunities to engage at a leadership level and make a meaningful impact on the future of healthcare. Whether mentoring the next generation of nurses or beginning your own leadership journey, here are several ways to get involved:

- Submit for a **board position or the Nominating Committee** through ONA’s Call for Leadership
- Propose a **poster or presentation** for ONA’s Annual Convention
- Participate in the **Nurse of the Day Program**
- Write an article for **The Oklahoma Nurse**
- Attend **ONA region or chapter events** to connect with nursing colleagues

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Nurses Together

This Nurses Week, let us honor the power we hold individually and collectively. Let us remember that being a nurse means more than providing care—it means shaping our profession, advocating for change, and lifting one another up. When nurses engage, lead, and unite through organizations like the Oklahoma Nurses Association, our power reaches far beyond the walls of any single healthcare facility.

Nurses are powerful. Nurses together are unstoppable. ■