



2023  
**NURSING  
 ANNUAL  
 REPORT**



**UR**  
 MEDICINE

**THOMPSON**  
 HEALTH

# 2023 Nursing Practice Council

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3 West

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2 West

Frances Erickson, RN  
Diagnostic Imaging

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Practice Management

Mary Freeman, PharmD  
Pharmacy

Tammy Giamei, RN  
3 East

Stacey Gibbs, BSN, RN  
Infection Prevention

Wendy Hurley, BSN, RN  
Informatics

Erica Iversen, RN  
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Patricia James, MS, RN, CNOR  
Perioperative Services

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2 West, 3 East & 3 West

Charlene Mathes, MSN, RN  
Observation

Kimberly Mayo, BSN, RN, CWOCN  
Nursing Administration

Shannon McCarthy-Leone, MSN,  
RN, C-EFM  
Obstetrics

Dana Mitchell, MSN, RN, CCRN  
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Diane Hayton, BSN, RN  
M.M. Ewing Continuing Care Center

Justin Neidig, BSN, RN, CEN  
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Ken Nesbitt, BSN, RN  
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Anesthesia Care Unit

Aileen O'Kelly, BSN, RN  
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Roni Potter, MSN, RN, CMSRN  
Nursing Administration

Hazel Robertshaw, PhD, RN, CENP  
Nursing Administration

Emily Roth, BSN, RN, IBCLC  
Canandaigua Medical Group  
Administration

Sonia Russell, RN  
3 West

Courtney Sander, MSN, RN  
Perioperative Services

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Emergency Department

Victoria Shively, BSN, RN  
2 West

Khristi Sproul, BSN, RN, CEN  
Emergency Department

Brittany Tapscott, MSN, RN  
Emergency Department

Peter Taylor, BSN RN  
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# STARTING NOW...



This year, the theme chosen by the Nursing Practice Council was “Starting Now,” which helped us to reflect upon what we have been through over the past three years, acknowledging the challenges we have faced and the grief we have shared as we move forward towards a brighter future.

We do this by following the advice of Florence Nightingale, who encouraged us as nurses to make more progress every year. As we continue learning and gaining more experience, we demonstrate our dedication to her instruction to “ignite the mind’s spark to rise the sun in you.”

Just as we did during Nurses Week, we came together throughout the year to commit to the same theme.

Starting now, we re-ignite the passion for our profession. Starting now, we recognize and support each other as we build a better tomorrow. Starting now, we break new ground and re-invent our future, embracing technology along with our caring science.

We do this by supporting one another with our words and with our actions. The words of our patients propel us, as well. They let us know, time and again, that we chose this profession for a reason. That is why their words – from actual comments received in 2023 – are featured on the cover of this report. They speak to who we are and who we will become.

Indeed, starting now, we are amazing, inspiring one another to be ever better and achieve things we never thought possible. The future is bright because it will be what we make it, and we are more determined than ever to make it the best it can be.

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "H Robertshaw".

**Hazel Robertshaw, PhD, RN, CENP**

Vice President of Patient Care Services/CNO  
F.F. Thompson Hospital





## Schmeer Named Nurse of the Year



Julia Schmeer of 3 West started her new career as a nurse resident mid-pandemic, with rules continually changing as we learned more about COVID-19. Nevertheless, she still managed to excel. In fact, she was named the hospital's 2023 Nurse of the Year during the May 11 Nurses Week ceremony, where Vice President

of Patient Care Services/CNO Hazel Robertshaw said Julia cares deeply about the patients entrusted to her care.

"She takes whatever extra time she may have in a given shift and spends it with her patients, providing education or just sitting with a patient who hasn't had visitors and is feeling down and alone," Hazel said, noting Julia goes above and beyond to meet the needs of families as well.

Also honored at the May 11 ceremony were: Hospital Nurses of Distinction Dedeve Booth, Tammy Howard, Barbara Manning, and Amy Martin. The recipient of the Preceptor/Mentor Nurse of Distinction was Brittany Burke, while Victoria "Tori" Verschage was named the Rising Star Nurse of Distinction.

## Structured Support

To reflect changing needs among our nurses and ensure everyone is receiving the support they require, the hospital revamped its nursing leadership structure in 2023.

The new structure means each nurse has a close connection to a direct-line manager and that nursing directors have more time to develop strategies for the service lines they oversee. To achieve this, nurse manager positions were created on each of the medical/surgical floors and in both the ICU and OR, with these

individuals serving as the main point of contact for nurses and techs. Nurse leaders on those units continue to provide support to designated individuals. At the same time, both the Observation Unit and The Birthing Center now have additional nurse leaders.

The change took place in part through upgrading existing positions and promoting from within, with future nurses also standing to benefit from a more comprehensive career path.

## Stars Among Us

Each year, the group of Thompson associates presented with the health system's esteemed Shining Star Awards includes several nurses, and 2023 was no exception.

With their families and friends waiting in the wings to surprise them during the ceremony held under a festival tent just outside the hospital, the following RNs were honored: Angela Bashford of the ICU, Dedeve Booth of Obstetrics, Elyse Catlin of 3 East, Ashley Flicker of the Canandaigua Medical Group OB/GYN office, Mindi Lewis of 3 East, Justin Neidig of the ED, Aimee Nesbitt of the ED, Victoria Perrin of Associate Services, and Kathleen Trainor of 3 West.

These awards go to the top 2 percent of Thompson associates and are based on nominations from peers, so it's no wonder they're held in high regard!



Kathleen Trainor gets a hug from Vice President of Patient Care Services/CNO Hazel Robertshaw upon receiving her Shining Star Award.

## Dollars for Scholars



PCT Makenna Bluett learned in December she could join an accelerated BSN program at the University of Rochester.

A patient care technician in our ICU since October 2022, Makenna Bluett is the first Thompson associate to take part in the University of Rochester School of Nursing's Scholars Program, a fast-track to a BSN degree. A 12-month program for candidates with a bachelor's degree in another field of study, it includes 49 credits over three full semesters, plus more than 650

hours of clinical training.

Makenna, who has a bachelor's in biomedical sciences, found out in December of 2023 that she had been chosen for the prestigious program, with her classes to start in May of 2024. Like all participants in the Scholars Program, she was given a choice of three hospitals at which to work upon graduation, and she chose Thompson! In exchange for a three-year commitment to us, we will reimburse her – one-third at a time – for the entire cost of her tuition.

"I am planning on hopefully joining the ICU residency program once I graduate and spending my three years (if not more) there!" she said.

## Appreciating Excellence

Each quarter, the health system's Service Excellence Team reviews compliments from patients, families, and coworkers that are submitted by system leaders in consideration for Service Excellence Awards.

All associates are eligible for this award, and in 2023, six of the recipients were nurses and two were certified nurse-midwives. Honored for going above and beyond were Thomas Bonfiglio of the ED, Anastasia Fedele of the ICU, Stephanie Friel of Quality & Safety, Erica Iversen of the ICU, Bridget LaGro of our OB/GYN practice, Jessica Schock of our OB/GYN practice, Audry Wasnock of Diagnostic Imaging, and Shaylan Watts of the ED.



**Cuff Stuff** Thompson nurses and techs – including RN Emma Smithers, left, and PCT Niel Saxton – offered free blood pressure checks to over 100 people at the 180th annual Ontario County Fair.

## Nurse-Led Community Class Maxes Out

As an outreach initiative of the Nursing Practice Council, ICU Nurse Manager Angela Bashford collaborated with the Canandaigua Emergency Squad to host an American Heart Association "Heartsaver" CPR/AED class open to the public on September 16.

The class was open to anyone 12 and up, although anyone under 16 needed to be accompanied by an adult. The cost was only \$6, to cover the certification card. Held in the hospital's ground floor Thompson Conference Center, the class could accommodate up to 30 people and quickly filled up with community members eager to learn these potentially life-saving skills.



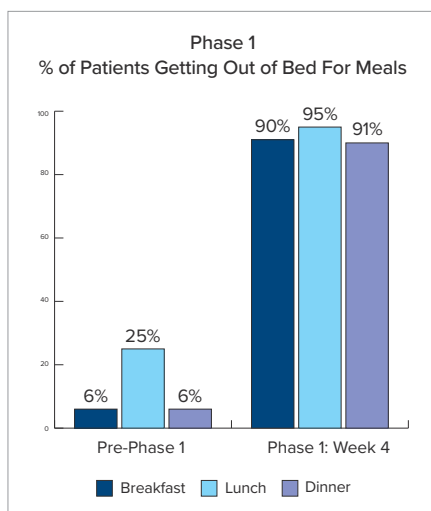
**Our Heroes** When the *Rochester Business Journal* chose six Thompson-nominated individuals to honor as 2023 Health Care Heroes, RN Caitlin Bonanni of Nursing Floats and ICU Nurse Practitioner Dana Rojek – second and fourth from left, respectively – were among them. They were honored during an awards breakfast at the Hyatt Regency Rochester with their husbands, fellow honorees, and executive team members on hand.

## Initiative Decreases Incidence of Pressure Injuries

A 2023 mobility initiative implemented on 3 East served as a prime example of nurses and nursing leadership working together to successfully guide change.

Driven by an increase in hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPIs), the initiative was spearheaded by Director of Medical-Surgical Nursing Johnelle Keck, who worked with clinical nurses Elyse Catlin, Cassandra Massa, and Mindi Lewis. Together, they engaged the entire staff in choosing “increased mobility” to tackle the issue.

First, they collected a base set of data. It found that 6% of patients were getting out of bed for breakfast, 25% were getting out of bed for lunch, and 6% were getting out of bed for dinner, so the aim of Phase 1 was to get every



patient (who was physically and medically able) to get out of bed for all meals.

The “go live” date was March 15, with data audited daily and the weekly mean communicated by nursing leadership. Daily huddles kept the momentum going, and by week four, 90% of patients were out of bed for breakfast, 95% for lunch, and 91% for dinner.

Phase 2 focused on turning and repositioning bed-bound patients every two hours, and Phase 3

involved ambulating mobile patients three times daily in the halls. Education, visual cues, and documentation remained vital to success.

It all paid off: In both Q3 and Q4, zero HAPIs were identified.

## A Colleague Becomes A Mentor

More than 30 years into her nursing career, Vice President of Patient Care Services/CNO still identifies ways to enhance her skills, and in 2023, she decided she wanted to know more about development and management of contracts. With encouragement from President/CEO Michael F. Stapleton, Jr., she sought out VP of Legal and Regulatory Affairs/General Counsel Elizabeth Talia to develop the structure for the mentoring plan.

At the time, a number of advanced practice providers were being hired for the ICU, so over a series of meetings, Hazel and Beth developed and reviewed templates for both nurse practitioners and physician assistants. These were ultimately shared with the new director of APPs as a guidepost for future hires as Hazel moved forward with a sense of confidence in her new abilities.

## Pride Blooms as DAISY Program Takes Hold



A surprised Erica Iversen holds the sculpture called A Healer's Touch after receiving her DAISY Award.

In our hospital's first full year of participating in The DAISY Foundation's award program, we added four more DAISYs to our garden.

Dedevie Booth of The Birthing Center was the first-quarter recipient, nominated by a young couple grateful for how caring and helpful she was during the birth of their daughter. The second-quarter winner was Samantha Peters of 3 East, with the patient who

nominated her writing, “I feel her gentle spirit has made such a difference in my wellness.” For the third quarter, Erica Iversen, of the ICU was the recipient, thanks to a nomination from a man who greatly appreciated the care she provided to his wife, with compassion, enthusiasm for her job, and humor. We closed out the year with fourth-quarter winner Lindsey VanKeuren. Although she was a new addition to The Birthing Center by the time her award was presented, Lindsay's nomination came when she was in the RN Residency Program on 3 East and took care of a woman with cancer who said she “made a world of difference in my recovery.”





## Nursing and Nourishing



Nursing Director of Infection Prevention Stacey Gibbs took over when plans for an on-site food pantry were at risk of going nowhere.

When the head of Social Work stepped away to accept a job elsewhere, one of Thompson's nurses stepped up to shepherd an important team project to completion.

Nursing Director of Infection Prevention Stacey Gibbs had been a member of the Do It Group investigating the possibility of a pantry for inpatients whose pre-discharge screening indicates food insecurity. She knew the

project had the possibility of dying on the vine following the colleague's departure and was determined to not let that happen.

Despite being new to her role in the hospital – having transferred from a position in the health system's nursing home – Stacey soon began organizing the team meetings and communicating with the project's external stakeholders. This included the Health Equity Program Support Office at the University of Rochester Medical Center, of which Thompson is an affiliate.

By the end of the year, the pantry was well on its way to becoming a reality and was announced to all associates in the system-wide internal newsletter!



**Finding Our Zen** Created by nursing leaders and representatives of the Wellness Department during the pandemic, the hospital's Zen Room got a facelift in early 2023. Additional wall art and new greenery now compliments the room's sound machine, aromatherapy supplies and a chaise lounge with massage functions, providing nurses and other staff members a quiet place to renew and recharge. In 2023 alone, the room saw nearly 500 visits!

## A Change for the Better

The team in the ED couldn't help but notice some room for improvement when it came to the area just outside the entrance: There was a ramp for a wheelchair, but often, it would be blocked by a parked car, and this resulted in falls on the part of arriving patients.

Under the leadership of Director of Emergency Nursing Justin Neidig, personnel were asked in 2023 to remind family/visitors to move personal vehicles away from the ramp, while nurses and patient care technicians were requested to assist all recently discharged patients using wheelchairs until they were in their vehicles. In the meantime, Justin approached our Facility Services Department to advocate for the ramp to be extended. He also brought his concerns to the Executive Team, seeking funding.

The result was a completely sloped walkway with no curbing, allowing for three vehicles to be loading or unloading patients at any given time without blocking wheelchairs. Concrete planters on either side of the sloped area are rated to deter any vehicles from accidentally entering the ED waiting room.



## Something to Celebrate

Within our hospital, we have a longstanding tradition of Recognizing Associates Now through the Socialization Action Committee, otherwise known as RANSACs. Here's how it works: A team of hospital executives and other leaders surprises a department when they least expect it, literally singing their praises while passing out M&Ms and letting them know why they're being recognized.

Several 2023 RANSACs celebrated nurse-led achievements and chief among them was a RANSAC after a rigorous two-day site visit resulted in The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for Advanced Certification in Perinatal Care. Our Executive Vice President/COO Kurt Koczent is a nurse who put it this way: "This survey is a great validation of what we do every day."

## Here We Grow Again

Within a span of three months beginning in August, the hospital opened three new offsite locations with nurses at the forefront of each.

First to cut the ribbon was the Farmington Medical Group, bringing our Farmington OB/GYN practice and Farmington Family Medicine under one roof. The following month, two new internal medicine physicians and their staff opened the doors just up the road in a new office called

The whirlwind of openings concluded in October when three providers moved from Canandaigua Family Practice to a 5,400-square-foot space located at the new Sands Family YMCA, which had recently opened on North Street. This space was built with expansion in mind, able to house one additional physician and one advanced practice provider in the future.



## Thompson Takes the Pressure Off

With overcrowding in Rochester hospitals, Thompson was asked in 2023 to help by accepting patients – in need of an inpatient or observation stay – from the outpatient free-standing Emergency Department at Strong West, 50 miles away in the suburb of Brockport.

Our CEO tasked Vice President of Patient Care Services/CNO Hazel Robertshaw with gathering key stakeholders to develop a way forward. During June and July, the

team met to design a process map, which was approved by a core group before being presented to the Medical Executive Committee meeting and Department of Medicine meetings for review and approval.

CNO roundtables served as the setting for nursing education detailing each team's responsibility for ensuring good care coordination. By September, the first patient was transferred during the waive-in process!

## At the Center of Centers for Excellence

Already designated by Surgical Review Corporation (SRC) as a Center of Excellence for both Hernia Surgery and Robotic Surgery, Thompson Hospital received a new SRC distinction in 2023: Center of Excellence for Minimally Invasive Surgery. Serving as the point person for these three Centers of Excellence is RN Brenna Long of the hospital's Advanced Surgical Services office.

As the Center of Excellence Coordinator, it's Brenna's responsibility to maintain the accreditations as well as the designations – for two of the surgeons and soon, a third – as SRC

Master Surgeons. She creates highly detailed monthly data reports and, to ensure seamless communication between all the disciplines involved, conducts education and holds quarterly meetings.

With SRC doing an on-site facility survey every three years as well as a yearly Zoom annual review, Brenna is preparing continuously.

It's a tall order. In fact, in heralding the latest achievement, the COO noted the SRC's standards are "incredibly high." "We have built a strong reputation for surgical excellence at Thompson over the years," he said, "but it's just as it says on SRC's website: Excellence is not simply an achievement – it is a culture that must be sustained."

RN Brenna Long serves as the coordinator for the Surgical Review Corporation quality designations held by our Advanced Surgical Services.





# Exemplary Professional Practice

## THOMPSON MEDICAL GROUP



Nurses helped cut the ribbon when the Farmington Medical Group opened its doors.

## A Win for Patient Safety



Clinical Nurse Amber Fulmer

Headed by Clinical Nurse Amber Fulmer, the nursing team on the 3 West set out in 2023 to decrease the number of falls on their unit, where the numbers were double that of other units.

They examined the data to see if falls were more likely to occur during certain hours

and discovered that causes of falls included – but were not limited to – patients reaching for items as well as the patient care techs who were serving as Medsitters failing to alert the staff when risk presented themselves and bed alarms not being engaged.

The team then focused on “the four Ps” of pain, potty, positioning and possessions. They put an emphasis on purposeful rounding and enhanced communication, instituting a number of adjustments including a change in the routine for taking vital signs.

In an email with the subject line “Happy News,” Amber shared with Director of Medical/Surgical Nursing Johnelle Keck that they had seen a 25% reduction in falls between the third and fourth quarters of 2024!

## Catching Some Zs, and Some Awards

After implementing several initiatives to improve patients’ sleep, the Sleep Hygiene Guidelines DIG was announced in early 2023 as our Do It Group (DIG) of the Year.

Co-chaired by ICU/Observation Unit/Diagnostic Imaging Nursing Director Mary Kate Corey and ICU Lead Advanced Practice Provider Anne Finch,

the group set out to promote healing and wellness as well as improve patient satisfaction by ensuring a minimum of four hours of uninterrupted sleep for patients.

Their approach included, but was not limited to, reducing the taking of vital signs overnight, delaying morning lab draws, avoiding overnight medication passes whenever possible, promoting a wakeful daytime environment, and providing patients with items including ear plugs and eye masks. In addition, group members created formal guidelines within the hospital’s policy system and cues within its electronic health record system prompting staff to incorporate the guidelines in care.

Survey results showed improvements, including the time it takes patients to fall asleep, how deeply they are sleeping, and their ability to fall back asleep if awakened.

Fellow nurses on the DIG included Stephanie Friel of Quality & Safety as well as the ICU’s Erica Iversen, Shelby Valenti, and Jill Wilson. In October, their group claimed the gold in the “Team Excellence” category at the Greater Rochester Quality Council’s 2023 Annual Showcase & Performance Excellence Awards!



Co-chairs Mary Kate Corey, left, and Anne Finch were on hand to receive the award from the Greater Rochester Quality Council.

## A Bridge to Independent Practice



Emma Smithers spoke about her experience in our RN Residency Program at the Thompson Health Guild Fashion Show, which raised money for a scholarship fund from which she benefited as a high school senior.

Those with a brand-new nursing degree have an opportunity to join Thompson for a two-phase residency program designed to help RN graduates bridge the gap between school and independent practice.

It all begins with a 12- to 14-week medical/surgical orientation to help develop a solid clinical foundation by building confidence, knowledge, and skills under the mentorship of Thompson's experienced nursing staff. Highlights include a dedicated preceptor, biweekly meetings with the educational staff to identify personalized needs, and telemetry certification as well as ACLS

certification if applicable to the unit.

These nurses find opportunities in the Medical/Surgical area, the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit/Surgical Care Center, Emergency Department, ICU and the Operating Room (based on unit staffing needs). Their orientation is followed by a year-long residency which includes touch-base meetings with the CNO, hands-on instruction for identifying and creating an evidence-based project for the unit, and support in continuing to pursue personal educational goals.

To top it off, the residency program helps participants transition into our Professional Advancement System!

## Taking a Proactive Role

Post-code ED debriefings that included input from clinical nurses led to the successful implementation of an evidence-based intraosseous (IO) insertion training program in 2023, highlighting our commitment to advancing patient care.

This initiative was driven by the identification of a critical need for improved emergency vascular access, particularly in situations where traditional intravenous access is challenging. To set the initiative in motion, Director of Emergency Nursing Justin Neidig reached out to a representative of Teleflex, with Clinical Nurse Jon Fulmer undergoing specialized training directly from the vendor. In turn, Jon then trained Nurse Educator Dana Mitchell, who developed a structured training program that charged clinical nurses with providing hands-on training to their peers.

Scheduled drop-in times were established to accommodate all nursing staff, ensuring every nurse had the opportunity to receive training regardless of their shift.

In the end, these nurses significantly enhanced the department's capability to provide rapid and effective vascular access in emergency situations, improving patient care.

## Acquiring Expertise

Because our hospital is an affiliate of the University of Rochester (URMC), our nurses are eligible to participate in the annual research scholarship practicums offered by URMC in conjunction with faculty from the University of Rochester School of Nursing.

Clinical nurse Jillian Joy from our 3 West medical/surgical unit set out to do just that following completion of her new graduate residency in June 2023.

This paid practicum experience is 24 weeks in duration and covers topics including: the role of nursing in generating new knowledge; the difference between QI, EBP and research; the team science research method for scientific inquiry; how to complete a literature search; critical appraisal of the literature; approaches to collect and analyze data; and how to prepare a scholarly publication.

Jillian's aim? It's to join the active nursing researchers right here at Thompson.



# New Knowledge, Innovations & Improvements

## Every Patient. Every Time.

During Sara Weigert's orientation, the new graduate nurse struggled to know whether she had included all the required elements of the time-out process in alignment with the organization policy and quickly identified a need to standardize the process in the OR and OB surgical suites.

She decided to make this her project for her RN residency and through her research, identified that a time-out whiteboard would make time outs consistent



### On the Dotted Line

Several new healthcare professionals who chose to begin their careers at Thompson were celebrated May 22 during our first ever Signing Day! We welcomed RN residents like Ryland Turner (pictured), radiology techs, respiratory therapists, and sonographers.

the ED, ED Nursing Director Justin Neidig and Critical Care Educator Dana Mitchell spearheaded a detailed educational initiative to enhance the nursing staff's proficiency in intraosseous (IO) vascular access.

This initiative, supported by the expertise of IO trainers Khristeen Sproul, Brittany Tapscott, Chet Eldridge, and

for all team members, decrease the risk of wrong-site, wrong-procedure, and wrong-patient surgery, and improve communication between all team members. In a PowerPoint presentation citing Association of periOperative Registered Nurses' standards as well as the findings of other entities including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, she advocated for boards that would be visible to all team members and checked off prior to a procedure.

Sara's work paid off, leading to successful implementation of the time-out boards she'd envisioned.

## Lining Up for Safety

After a root cause analysis of ICU central line-associated bloodstream infections revealed a trend related to emergency insertion of central lines during resuscitation in

Tom Bonfiglio, aimed to equip the nursing team with the critical skills necessary for effective IO application.

The team started meeting in April 2023 and by November, online education was ready and hands-on skills assessments began. The program's structure included an array of training methodologies, ranging from hands-on simulation, competency assessments, and online didactic education, ensuring a comprehensive understanding and adept application of IO technology across varied clinical scenarios.

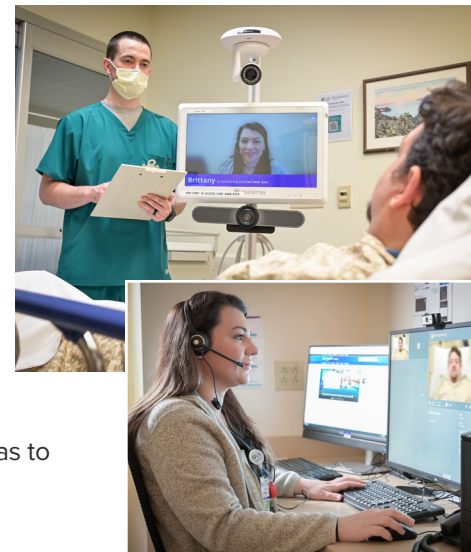
The "go live" date was scheduled for December 31, and the staff was clearly ready: Thompson experienced a reduction in CLABSIs in the ICU associated with emergency insertion while in the ED.

## A Virtual Solution for an Actual Challenge

Something big was brewing at Thompson in September 2023. That was when discussions regarding the use of virtual nursing for discharges during peak times in the ED began between the informatics team, nursing directors, and Vice President of Patient Care Services/CNO Hazel Robertshaw.

The thought was that by focusing on the ED patients who are the most stable and who sometimes must wait extended periods of time to be discharged because nurses are focusing on the sickest patients, the virtual approach – from nurses who are on site – could enhance both patient and associate satisfaction.

Support from informatics and from the University of Rochester Medical Center – of which we are an affiliate – was confirmed in October, and in November, those involved secured vendor support, as well. That same month, weekly project team meetings began for what was to become one of the most innovative initiatives taking place at our hospital in 2024.



Patient Care Technician Zach Pierret demonstrates how new technology in the ED allows nurses like Brittany Swift to discharge patients efficiently.



