

## Nursing Education



## Empowering the Next Generation of Oklahoma's Elite Nurses

For nearly 50 years, the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) has provided Oklahoma with well-qualified and educated nurses. Graduates of Central's nursing programs are known for being some of the best nurses in the state of Oklahoma and around the nation, and the UCO Department of Nursing is proud to continue this tradition.

Central's bachelor's and master's programs prepare tomorrow's leaders in nursing through a variety of settings, which helps the demand at all levels of nursing services needed in Oklahoma. Central offers traditional and nontraditional programs that fit the

needs of anyone wanting to pursue a career in nursing or further their nursing education. Accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, Central offers the traditional BSN program with courses offered at the conveniently-located Edmond campus; the fully online RN to B.S. in nursing track; the fast-track B.S.; and, the fully online master's degree in nursing,

See UCO Page 2

## Peace of mind *Excell Private Care Services*

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Every day there is someone who has it in their heart to care for people helping clients of Excell Private Care Services, said Crystal Warner, CEO.

Excell Private Care Services is a home care agency providing private duty, Veterans Administration Services, a Medicaid Advantage program, and case management for the state.

Certified nurse aides can provide 24-hour in-home care with bathing, cooking, cleaning, companion care, emptying a foley bag, meal prep, medication reminders, and shopping.

"We have RNs on staff. So, they would come in and do an assessment, and then we would find an aide that would work well with the family," Warner said. "We don't require a referral from a doctor. It's just anybody who would need in-home care."

Excell Private Care Services partners with home health and hospice services to help with skilled needs for an hour or two.

"Then they're gone. They're there to see them for that skilled need for a certain amount of time. Because our aides can be there for however long the family wants us there, having an aide there — they are less likely to return to the emergency room. They have someone to call. We have nurses on call 24 hours a day," Warner said.

The CNAs may stay with the patient for up to 24 hours. Private care aides only clean the house but can be prepared by a CNA to go to CNA school to earn their CAN license. There are also educational opportunities for LPNs to advance within the company.

Compassion is an indispensable element for the staff. Screening includes several different background checks to make sure the aide can provide a safe environment and has not committed a crime, Warner said.



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## UCO

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which includes two tracks.

### Traditional BSN Program

The traditional nursing program is for someone who has not yet obtained a license to practice nursing as a registered nurse. This may be a student who is attending college for their first degree or someone who has already earned a degree in another field and has decided that nursing is in their future.

### Online RN to B.S. in Nursing Track

Central's RN to B.S. track is available 100% online for registered nurses who are interested in furthering their nursing education. Upon successful completion, nurses will have earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing. Central's commitment to providing registered nurses with quality, convenient, student-focused curriculum and a cost-effective baccalaureate nursing education is the inspiration for the track.

With both part- and full-time options available and for as low as \$8,500, Central's track is designed to provide flexibility for students, with the option to complete the track in as little as 10 months.

"The RN to B.S. in nursing track at UCO takes the flexibility, affordability and convenience of an online degree with the recognized quality provided by our faculty to provide an experience students are looking for," said Barbara Arnold, Ed.D., RN, chairperson and associate professor of nursing at Central.

### Fast-Track BS

Central's Fast Track in nursing is for those students who have earned a traditional bachelor's degree in another field and would like to change to the profession of nursing. Upon successful completion, a Bachelor of Science in nursing will be awarded. The fast-track program can be completed in just 16 months and provides the flexibility of hybrid courses.

### Online M.S. in Nursing



The Master of Science in nursing degree at UCO will help to provide for the increasing global need of health care practitioners with expanded nursing knowledge. The program offers working RNs flexibility through fully online courses with both part- and full-time options available. The program can be completed in as little as 16 months, if pursued full time. Students are required to also complete 100 clinical hours. The online Master of Science in nursing can be completed for as little as \$15,000.

Nursing graduate students have the ability to choose from two tracks, the nursing education track or the specialty nursing track. A master's degree in nursing education will prepare students for academic positions in nursing education or for a position in hospital staff education. The specialty nursing track allows students to meet individual goals in areas such as leadership or administration.

### Next Generation of Nurses

All UCO nursing programs offer real-world instruction from supportive nursing faculty who are experts in their field of nursing. Graduates from UCO nursing programs are recognized within the health care community for their knowledge, professionalism and leadership potential. Central prides itself as a smart investment

for success and for preparing future leaders in an opportunity-rich environment.

"I have to thank UCO's online RN to BS program for giving me courage, skills and knowledge, I have learned so much in the program already. I have found great love and passion for evidence-based practice, quality management and nursing research," said Vicena Skelton, a current Central RN to BSN student.

"This program has fantastic faculty, staff and educators that are understanding and caring. They have helped make pandemic online learning doable and your degree achievable."

The UCO Department of Nursing has degree programs that can help you achieve your career goals, whether you are new to health care and are seeking your first degree in nursing or are a registered nurse interested in advancing your current career.

For more information about nursing programs offered at Central, visit: [www.uco.edu/nursing](http://www.uco.edu/nursing).

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## EXCELL

Continued from Page 1

"We go through CPR training, lifesaver courses," she added.

Family members can rest assured their loved one has a CNA or caregiver in the home with them if an emergency happens.

Sometimes a client does not need to go to an emergency room. It may be that they are scared during a storm or feel lonely. They may need to have somebody to ask questions to.

Having another set of eyes also helps hospitals that depend on Medicare to avoid unnecessary emergency room visits.

"We will also partner with communities and sit with the patient and do companion care," Warner continued.

Many health care providers were short on staff during the COVID pandemic. Family members knowing their loved one was at risk of a fall were thankful to have a CNA sit with their aging parent.

A lot of long-term health policies will pay for Excell Private Care Services, including VA insurance and Medicaid.

"If you have insurance that says it will pay for the service, it will take care of everything," Warner said.

The feedback that Excell Private Care Services has received has been exceptional. A recent family member wrote how much the family loves the CNA being so compatible and friendly.

"We love the conversation that we've had. 'She's helped us a lot with the house,'" Warner paraphrased a family member. "It's always nice for us to hear that because until we call around to do our checks and ask if they like the aide, we may not hear. So, it's nice when someone reaches out

and lets us know."

Patients and family members understand they can call Excell Private Care Services whenever they need a resource as simple as providing a wheelchair.

They can call Warner seven days a week at any hour of the day or night, she said. Warner has gone to be with families until an ambulance has arrived at a client's home.

The company provides services throughout the Oklahoma City metro and also has an office in Tulsa. The staff also travels to Duncan and Lawton. There are not too many counties that Excell Private Care Services does not reach, except in the panhandle and the far southeast corner of the state.

"We're going to be opening a new satellite in Chickasha," Warner said.

The need for services is growing in demand as the population of older Americans continues to grow.

Many elders have no clue that they would be able to receive such a service.

"We'll help them go through the process even if they don't choose our company and they choose someone else," she said. "We'll help them get signed up so they will have somebody come to their house under the Medicaid program."

Being able to bridge a gap by providing community services is personally enriching for Warner.

"It's being able to help the people that need the help, and also help the families get through a tough time," Warner said. "Allowing a mom to still live in her home independently, allowing a daughter to be a daughter and not a caregiver, or a son being able to be a son and not a caregiver — it's being able to help those families." For more information visit:

[www.excellcares.com](http://www.excellcares.com)



Excell Private Care Services provides families comfort in knowing their loved one is safe at home with a trained and compassionate professional, says Crystal Warner, CEO.

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# Meeting Your Needs with Dignity and Respect: Women's Health Boutique

Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Breast cancer is a type of cancer that starts in the breast. Cancer starts when cells begin to grow out of control. Breast cancer cells usually form a tumor that can often be seen on an x-ray or felt as a lump occurring almost entirely in women, but men can get breast cancer too.

Did you know that about one in eight US women will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of her lifetime?

The launch of the Women's Health Boutique in Longview followed the loss of Vicki Jones' and Crystal Jones Tipton's mother, Billie Marie Dortch, who lost her battle with breast cancer in 1987. Dortch's daughters, Vicki Jones and Crystal Jones Tipton made it their mission to create a place where women could have their special needs met with respect and sensitivity and sometimes a hug or two.

The store began as a corner store with medical equipment for women recovering from cancer in 1988, but the flagship location in Longview opened in 1992 and now has spread to a nationwide system of boutiques to serve women from coast to coast.

Breast cancer is personal, and the products you are fitted with are personal. That's why each woman is treated with dignity through every fitting. When you're there, you're the most important woman in the world, and your comfort is what matters most. They will take this journey with you, from diagnosis through treatment, and beyond.

When you face health challenges such as breast surgery, hair loss, or lymphedema you deserve a provider that understands and cares about your special needs. Whether you are visiting one of the beautiful Women's Health Boutiques or shopping online,

their goal is to meet your needs with sensitivity and respect.

Whether you have had a mastectomy, lumpectomy, implant removal, breast augmentation, breast reconstruction or reduction, the certified fitters will help determine what is best for you. They offer the most innovative products on the market, including silicone, foam, partial and custom prostheses. Products include post surgery camisoles, compression garments, breast prosthetics, mastectomy bras, custom breast forms, hats, wigs and turbans. Fashion Bras include strapless and special occasion bras and high impact sports bras.

They also offer a variety of hats, scarves and turbans, as well as synthetic wigs and accessories. Their extensive inventory includes machine-tied, monofilament (hand-tied), and lace front, as well as heat-friendly fibers. All will come in a

variety of colors and styles.

For the pregnant and nursing Moms, there are nursing bras, support bras and sleep. Women's Health Boutique may be best known for their mastectomy and lymphedema products but whether you are looking for that perfect fashion bra fit, a cute and sassy wig, or are a mother-to-be needing a maternity bra or breast pump, they are there to help you. From expecting mothers to breast cancer survivors to women with hair loss, to anyone with edema or lymphedema, professional fitters and staff will take the time to learn what you need and meet your needs with passion.

The Certified Fitters have a genuine concern about you and will treat you with the utmost respect, continuing to follow their mission:

See DIGNITY Page 5

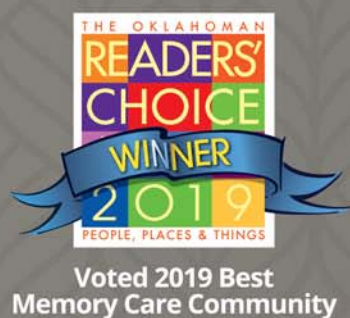


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DIGNITY

Continued from Page 4

To help meet your special health care needs by making a positive difference in the way you look and feel about yourself.

A little about the certified fitters: Rosie has owned Women's Health Boutique for sixteen years. She has a passion for helping people and is thankful to be able to invest in peoples lives.

Victoria has worked here for fifteen years and has discovered this is more than just a job, it is a ministry. "My passion is to make sure that each woman that comes through our doors is treated with kindness, compassion and empathy, that somehow we touch her life in a lasting way," she commented.

Brittany has been here for eight years. She left a career impacting children's lives to start working here to impact women's lives and to help them restore something that has been lost.

Women's Health Boutique is conveniently located at the corner of 122nd and North May Ave in Oklahoma City, in the Shoppes at Northpark.



The mission of Women's Health Boutique is to meet special health care needs by making a positive difference with respect and sensitivity.

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# Collaboration Leads to High-Tech Surgical Visualization Device at OU Health

A conversation that began at the launch party for the Oklahoma City Innovation District led to a novel collaboration between the OU Health Sciences Center and energy technology company Baker Hughes. The result, an advanced surgical visualization device now being used in craniofacial reconstruction surgeries, embodies the purpose of the district -- to convene people from Oklahoma's diverse sectors to share their expertise and, together, create something new.

Representatives from Baker Hughes and the OU Health Sciences Center started talking that day in 2018 and soon began collaborating on a prototype device. The work leveraged augmented reality/mixed reality technology that Baker Hughes developed to create 3D reconstructions of rock specimens from computed tomography (CT) scans. Such visualization is highly valuable to geologists and oil and gas companies as they determine where to drill oil wells. That capability caught the attention of OU Health plastic and reconstructive surgeon Christian El Amm, M.D., who envisioned a headset/visor that he could wear during surgery that would allow him to both see his patient as well as 3D data that was superimposed on the patient, such as CT scans and reconstruction steps he prepared for the procedure.

"Our device represents the value of collaborative spaces -- these types of innovations can only happen when you have an open forum where you can discuss and collaborate," El Amm said. "Developing a device like this requires engineering skills, computer technology skills, and a profound knowledge of what you're doing surgically."

The Innovation District encompasses about 1.3 square miles just east of downtown Oklahoma City and includes the OU Health Sciences Center campus, the city's biosciences sector and many other diverse companies. Katy Boren, CEO and President of the Innovation District, said the collaboration between the OU Health Sciences Center and Baker Hughes exemplifies the mission of the district.

"We convene and introduce people across industries who normally would not know each other, and we provide them an opportunity to advance

their discussions," she said. "From those conversations, new inventions are created, new companies are started, new patents are earned, and it grows jobs and our economy. That's what we do every day -- create interactions that allow innovations to spark and grow."

The Baker Hughes/OU Health Sciences Center collaboration has indeed flourished. Baker Hughes had advanced the technology to achieve mixed reality, which allows the person wearing the headset to see what is around him, as well as 3D images that appear as if they were part of real life. The technology became a virtual field visit for the oil and gas industry, providing extensive information about rock, like how porous it was.

"There were obvious analogies to the healthcare sector," said Jeff Potts, Advanced Analytics Leader for Baker Hughes. "We talked at length with Dr. El Amm and others from the OU Health Sciences Center and began a collaboration agreement. There were several key challenges that we needed to solve to move forward with a prototype that could be used in a surgical setting."

During the year-long collaboration, the team created solutions for those challenges which, until that time, were unsolved. Using artificial intelligence techniques, they "taught" the device how to recognize features of a human face, which was necessary to be able to superimpose 3D models on the patient in real time. The team also enhanced the accuracy of that process in order to meet the precision needed for surgery, and they enabled the device to track the surgeon's instruments in real time.

Since the official collaboration ended, El Amm has continued to develop the device, with significant input from Mohammad Abdul Mukit, Ph.D., a graduate fellow in electrical and computer engineering on the OU-Tulsa campus. Notably, they have programmed the device to respond to voice commands. That allows the surgeon to keep his focus on the patient rather than turning away to look at a computer screen or clicking a mouse. They also developed "markerless tracking," which allows the CT scan or other images to be superimposed using artificial



**OU Health plastic and reconstructive surgeon Christian El Amm, M.D., holds a model of a skull as he demonstrates the surgical visualization device that he developed from a collaboration with energy technology company Baker Hughes.**

intelligence instead of cumbersome markers to guide the way. El Amm compares the headset to what a fighter pilot wears -- both need ready access to a lot of complex information, especially if they must make a split-second decision.

El Amm has begun using the device during surgical cases to enhance the safety and efficiency of complex reconstructions. Many of his patients come to him for craniofacial reconstruction after a traumatic injury; others have congenital deformities. Thus far, he has used the device for several cases, including surgery on a patient who was born without a right ear. The system took a mirror image of the patient's left ear, then the device overlaid it on the right side, allowing El Amm to precisely attach a reconstructed ear. In the past, he would cut a template of the ear and aim for precision using the naked eye.

In another surgical case, which required an 18-step reconstruction of the face, the device overlaid the patient's CT scan on top of his real bones. "Each one of those bones needed to be cut and moved in

a precise direction," he said. "The device allowed us to see the bones individually, then it displayed each of the cuts and each of the movements, which allowed the surgeon to verify that he had gone through all those steps. It's basically walking through the steps of surgery in virtual reality."

The OU Office of Technology Commercialization is pursuing intellectual property protection for the invention. In addition, El Amm has begun partnering with his colleagues in neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery and OB-GYN to develop further applications. The future is promising for a groundbreaking device that was launched from a conversation and a desire to collaborate.

"This was a highly complex and challenging project, which made it exciting for everyone involved," Potts said. "We solved technical problems that no one else has, and we've done it right here in Oklahoma City. Our partnership was mutually beneficial, and it was only possible because the Innovation District provided the forum where we could discuss and collaborate."



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See SWOSU page 11

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## SWOSU

Continued from Page 10

SWOSU also offers online professional programs in Health Information Management, Healthcare Informatics and Information Management (graduate).

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# Coping with re-entry anxiety

As summer approaches, the U.S. is returning to something that looks like normal.

But after more than a year of masks, physical distancing and staying home, more than half of U.S. adults have experienced anxiety about returning to in-person interactions, according to the American Psychological Association.

Experts at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation have tips for those feeling uneasy about returning to a world without pandemic precautions.

**Start small**

If the thought of being in a busy store or with a large group of people makes your stomach churn, start slowly, said OMRF physician-scientist Hal Scofield, M.D. But don't bet on anxiety completely disappearing on its own.

"Find small ways to increase the time you spend around people and build up gradually," said Scofield. "A little discomfort can be a good thing. You'll slowly train yourself to relax in larger social situations over time."

But, added Scofield, if anxiety persists, speak to your doctor.

**Unmasking not required**

"If you're fully vaccinated and are not immunocompromised, masks are not necessary," said OMRF immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D.

Any of the Covid-19 vaccines approved for use in the U.S. offers robust protection from severe illness or death. But after a



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation physician-scientist Hal Scofield, M.D.

year of masks, says Chakravarty, there's no harm in continuing to wear one. And they could protect against other respiratory viruses.

"Masks work. If you aren't ready to go without in every situation, continue to wear one. They may come back into fashion in the winter if influenza returns to pre-Covid levels, so you'll be ahead of the game," she said.


**Focus on full-body wellness**

In addition to high levels of anxiety, the APA study found since the start of the pandemic, 61% of American adults experienced unwanted weight change, 35% are sleeping less than they would like, and 23% coped with stress by drinking more alcohol. "Many people managed the stress of the last year in ways that can leave a lasting impact if they're allowed to persist," said Scofield.

Chakravarty agreed, adding that for those who became more sedentary or relied heavily on processed foods and takeout over the last year, a pivot in both areas can make an impact on anxiety.

To get moving, start with low-impact exercises like walking or yoga. And in the kitchen, fill your plate with vegetables, fruits and whole grains.

"When you take care of your body, you're taking care of your mind," Chakravarty said. "Your physical wellness should not be overlooked when trying to reduce overall anxiety about re-entry."



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# Caregivers Experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

June is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Month. It is intended to raise public awareness about issues related to PTSD, reduce the stigma associated with PTSD and help ensure that those suffering from unseen wounds receive proper treatment.

The American Psychiatric Association describes PTSD as a “psychiatric disorder that can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, a serious accident, a terrorist act, war/ combat, rape or other violent personal assault.”

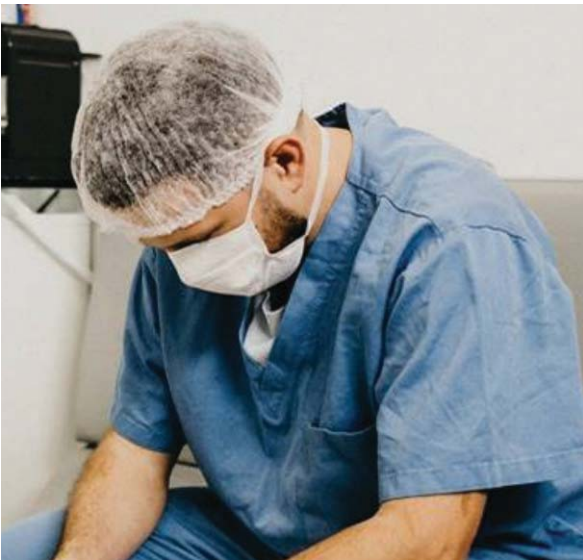
At INTEGRIS Health, we recognize the toll the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on caregivers, especially those on the front lines. National surveys report that health care workers are experiencing:

- Emotional exhaustion
- Trouble sleeping
- Physical exhaustion
- Work-related dread
- Physical symptoms
- Compassion fatigue
- Anxiety (generalized)

Kerri Bayer, the Chief Nurse Executive at INTEGRIS Health, says these are natural responses to all they have witnessed in the past year. “Because of COVID-19 our caregivers have seen more death, more isolation and more fear than what is typical. They have worried about and mourned patients, family members and friends. It’s been difficult and demanding but they were so busy they were able to suppress and push through.”

She adds, “Now that things are starting to relax, many caregivers are finally able to release what they have kept bottled up inside. This can be therapeutic but also unsettling.”

You don’t have to be in health care to be feeling this way. Symptoms should not be ignored and cannot be expected it to go away on their own. Addressing trauma from COVID-19 is



a crucial step to returning to our pre-pandemic lives.

INTEGRIS Health offers a variety of resources to aid caregivers and physicians who might be suffering from any of the symptoms listed above including:

- Well-being workshops
- RISE – Resilience In Stressful Events (physicians)
- Weekly Zoom meditations, Monthly Health Essentials, Mindfulness Stress Reduction
- Wellness Wednesdays
- Elevating for Excellence
- Suicide Prevention Programs
- Podcasts, outdoor events and leader toolkits coming soon

If you think you or a loved one may be suffering from PTSD or if your PTSD symptoms have worsened due to the pandemic, contact an INTEGRIS Health professional today.

At INTEGRIS Health, treatment and counseling are available for those who have been diagnosed with PTSD. The first step is identifying the problem and speaking with a trusted health care professional about your options.

The staff at INTEGRIS Decisions Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Programs is available if you need help. Decisions offers treatment for both adults and adolescents. Simply call them at 405-717-9840 to learn more about the mental health services offered.

## SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

COVID-19 Cases	454,216
New Cases	122
New Cases 7 day Average	117
Active Cases	935
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	8,526
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location*	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
	Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)	1 (0)
Region 2 (NE)	4(2)
Region 3 (SW)	8 (4)
Region 4 (EC)	7 (1)
Region 5 (SE)	0 (0)
Region 6 (Central)	6 (2)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	53 (20)
Region 8 (OKC)	26 (2)
Total	105 (31)
Other Types of Facilities	
Focus Facilities	0 (0)
Rehabilitation Facilities	0 (0)
Tribal Facilities	1 (1)
Other Facilities Total	1 (1)

Focus, Rehabilitation and Tribal Facilities numbers are not assigned to a specific region as their patient populations reside across the state. Information provided through survey of Oklahoma hospitals as reported to HHS as of the time of this report. Response rate affects data. Facilities may update previously reported information as necessary.

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. \*As of 2021-06-10 at 7:00 a.m.





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