



Opportunities abound



Riley Robinson, RN, ICU day-shift supervisor at OU Medical Center Edmond, says she appreciates the safety and security provided to patients and the nursing staff.

RN welcomes challenges in nursing

by James Coburn - staff writer

Riley Robinson doesn't believe she would like any other career as much as nursing.

"There are special aspects of nursing that were just made for me," said Robinson, RN, ICU day-shift supervisor at OU Medical Center Edmond. "It's the one-on-one with your patients, the communication between the different disciplines. I see what all the disciplines do and feel that is

very admirable. I love being the one in the room with the patient, the one closest to the patient. That's what's special about nursing to me and that's why I love it and continue to do it."

A nurse for five years, she recently earned her Bachelor of Science degree in

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Guilty verdict unnerves profession

*RaDonda Vaught
has warning*



by Bobby Anderson, RN - staff writer

The recent successful criminal prosecution of a former nurse has sent shockwaves throughout the nursing profession.

A jury convicted former Vanderbilt University Medical Center nurse RaDonda Vaught of criminally negligent homicide and impaired adult abuse after she mistakenly administered the wrong medication that killed a patient in 2017.

Days following the verdict, posts on nursing social media have been flooded with anger, support, and condemnation of the system that led to the verdict.

Multiple posts by travel nurses have noted a number of new, immediate contract positions at the hospital. There have also been posts regarding a potential town hall-type meeting at the facility and the possibility of a nursing walkout.

Nurse influencers have overwhelmingly come out in support of Vaught.

Nurse Erica (@[the.nurse.ERICA](https://www.instagram.com/the.nurse.ERICA) on Instagram) said she was crowdfunded by nurses to go meet

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ROBINSON

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Nursing from Capella University after receiving an Associate Degree in Nursing at Northern Oklahoma College, located in Enid. Her motivation to earn a Bachelor of Science degree was to become a supervisor.

Robinson balances the nursing shift schedules and creates the agenda for staff meetings. Daily shift huddles are led by her at the beginning of the day shift.

"One of the really big things I admire about our staff here is the feeling of teamwork and support," she said.

Robinson has worked in travel nursing and other intensive care units prior to joining the team at OU Medical Center Edmond in 2019. She found the degree of teamwork and support to not be as commendable as it is at the Edmond hospital.

"I mean you have back-up all the time, not only our nurses but our security. We recently had a situation with a very aggressive

patient, so we called a code purple," she said.

There was also a code blue alert in the hospital that prompted security, physicians, and a chaplain came to back-up Robinson and one other nurse in the room.

"That was such a good feeling, and it was so nice to know we had back-up. People cared about us and were going to make sure we were not hurt. That was really nice," Robinson said.

She is grateful to work in an environment that will not leave her in a dangerous and unsafe situation. Robinson said that sense of security and the following of protocols has also been helpful during the COVID pandemic.

"You know you can be safe here and that's a big reason to stay," she said.

The bottom line is that when the nursing staff feels safe and supported, they are empowered to take the best care of their patients and make them feel safe, too, she said. And hearing from patients and family members of the direct impact nurses have on their quality of life

has a major impact on Robinson in her choice of careers.

"It's just hearing that I helped them in a really vulnerable situation and that I was the person that was there for them," she continued. "That's another thing that keeps me going when it gets hard, but that's probably the nicest thing to hear and know."

Problems do not dissuade her in finding solutions. Robinson said she likes challenges and readily accepts opportunities benefitting patient care.

"I've always looked to be challenged. I don't stay stagnate and just do kind of the same mundane thing," Robinson said. "That's a real big part of nursing. It's something different every day, and the variety of patients you get is really neat because it is something different every day. The variety keeps me guessing, challenges me. I'm always learning something new. So that's a big reason that I don't feel the need to do something else, because I'm constantly learning and growing. And nursing provides that."

She recalled the mother of one of her friends being her mentor during her teenage years. Her mentor was "cool and very smart," Robinson continued. She did not know what the woman's job was. But the level-headed impression made on her by her friend's mother made Robinson think, "I want to be like her."

"And then later I found out she was a nurse and going to nurse practitioner school. And that is originally what made me look into nursing. Once I dug into it a little bit more, I realized that it actually is for me. I'm grateful that I had that kind of mentor," she said.

Robinson doesn't discount a moment when not at work. She keeps her mind fine-tuned by reading and enjoys spending time with her husband. The couple like to travel a lot. They don't have to leave Oklahoma to have fun. A road trip is always welcome.

"To just get away from the area and see something new is my favorite thing to do," she said.



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OMRF named a top US charity for 20th time

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation has received the highest possible rating from Charity Navigator for the 20th time.

Charity Navigator, the nation's largest charity evaluator, awarded a four-star rating to the Oklahoma City-based biomedical research institute, scoring 96.90 out of a possible 100. Points were awarded for demonstrating a strong commitment to accountability, transparency and financial health.

"This is our highest possible rating and indicates that OMRF adheres to sector best practices and executes its mission in a financially efficient way," said Charity Navigator President and CEO Michael Thatcher.

Only 9% of the organizations Charity Navigator evaluates have received at least seven straight four-star ratings, Thatcher said, "indicating that OMRF outperforms most other charities in America."

Founded in 2002, Charity Navigator promotes intelligent giving by preparing annual report cards on U.S. and international charities. It uses publicly available financial information to evaluate more than 195,000 organizations.

Charity Navigator measures performance in areas such as fundraising, program and administrative expenses, fundraising efficiency, revenue and expense growth and overall transparency. It then assigns a rating of zero to four stars to give donors confidence when making a charitable donation.

"Each year, thousands of people entrust OMRF with donations, and we take pride in being good stewards of those gifts," said OMRF President Andrew S. Weyrich, Ph.D. "That means we strictly adhere to the intent of each donation, which is to fund life-saving research."

VERDICT

Continued from Page 1

with Vaught after the trial.

Nurse Erica asked Vaught what her message would be to nursing students or those thinking of going into nursing following the decision.

"I would say that that's a valid concern," Vaught said in Nurse Erica's post on Instagram. "Just remember why you entered this profession in the first place, why you decided you want to go to school to be a nurse. It's a scary place we work in for a lot of reasons. More than just this there are risks every day in that field. Be cognizant. Be diligent in your job. Trust your gut and be the voice for change. You are more powerful than you realize."

The American Nurses Association and Tennessee Nurses Association released a joint statement following the verdict.

"We are deeply distressed by this verdict and the harmful ramifications of criminalizing the honest reporting of mistakes.

Health care delivery is highly complex. It is inevitable that mistakes will happen, and systems will fail. It is completely unrealistic to think otherwise. The criminalization of medical errors is unnerving, and this verdict sets into motion a dangerous precedent. There are more effective and just mechanisms to examine errors, establish system improvements and take corrective action. The non-intentional acts of individual nurses like RaDonda Vaught should not be criminalized to ensure patient safety.

The nursing profession is already extremely short-staffed, strained and facing immense pressure – an unfortunate multi-year trend that was further exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic. This ruling will have a long-lasting negative impact on the profession.

Like many nurses who have been monitoring this case closely, we were hopeful for a different outcome. It is a sad day for all of those who are involved, and the families impacted by this tragedy.

A scenario that plays out daily in U.S. hospitals - the override of an unverified medication - could send Vaught to jail for up to eight years,

with formal sentencing scheduled May 13.

Oklahoma Nurses Association Executive Director Jane Nelson, CAE, indicated the ONA would not have a formal statement until its next board meeting but echoed the ANA and TNA stance.

"The complexity of health care systems has long been recognized by the Institute of Medicine," Nelson said. "In the landmark study, To Err is Human, several recommendations outline strategies to make systems safer in a just culture. Without a culture that supports open transparency, silencing of errors may occur and create an environment where opportunities to mitigate or prevent harm are not identified."

The decision comes at a time when Vanderbilt's Magnet status is reportedly up for review.

Leading up to the verdict, the ANA predicted a guilty verdict could have a chilling effect on the profession for years to come:

ANA believes that the criminalization of medical errors could have a chilling effect on reporting and process improvement. The Code of Ethics for Nurses states that while ensuring that nurses are held accountable for individual practice, errors should be corrected or remediated, and disciplinary action taken only if warranted.

COVID-19 has already exhausted and overwhelmed the nursing workforce to a breaking point. Nurses are watching this case and are rightfully concerned that it will set a dangerous precedent. ANA cautions against accidental medical errors being tried in a court of law.

Health care is highly complex and ever-changing, resulting in a high risk and error-prone system. Organizational processes and structures must support a "just culture", which recognizes that health care professionals can make mistakes and systems may fail. All nurses and other health care professionals must be treated fairly when errors occur. ANA supports a full and confidential peer-review process in which errors can be examined and system improvements and corrective action plans can be

established. Swift and appropriate action should and must always be taken as the situation warrants.

Transparent, just, and timely reporting mechanisms of medical errors without the fear of criminalization preserve safe patient care environments. ANA maintains that this tragic incident must serve as a reminder that vigilance and open collaboration among regulators, administrators, and health care teams is critical at the patient and system level to continue to provide high-quality care.

Vaught began working at Vanderbilt in October 2015. In December 2017 she accidentally administered vecuronium - a paralytic - instead of the ordered Versed - a sedative - prior to a final scan in the hospital's radiology department.

Federal investigators ruled the error left the patient brain dead.

Vaught admitted the error and was originally cleared by the hospital and the Tennessee Department of Health.

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CAREERS IN NURSING

COMPREHENSIVE CARE: PATIENTS LEARN TO BREATHE BETTER

by James Coburn - staff writer

Having allergies and asthma is something Caroline Hoggatt knows a lot about. She lives with both conditions. That is why this registered nurse loves working at the Oklahoma Allergy and Asthma Clinic, located in Oklahoma City.

"I feel like I fit in with a lot of the patients," Hoggatt said.

Hoggatt earned her Bachelor of Science in nursing degree at Montana Technological University, located in Butte, Mont. She has worked nearly seven years in the field of allergy and asthma. She also has experience in family practice and pediatric mental health in a residential facility.

She enjoys clinical nursing because it enables her to experience the entire process from when patients first come to the clinic not feeling well. Patients are given the correct medications and allergy shots.

"You see them a year later and they are a completely different person. Their life has changed."

So, she has found her forte in a setting that offers a continuum of care that allows her to see patients for a longer period, than what would be the case if she worked on the floor of a hospital, she said.

"I like to have that continuing patient relationship. That's what I prefer. And it being an asthma allergy, I think it is very interesting and feel like I can help patients understand things a little bit better," she said.

Patients have different degrees of allergic reactions as well as asthma. Some are more serious than others. A physician or nurse practitioner sees everybody who has a little cough when exercising to patients who must take daily medications in order to breathe.

"We see and treat it all here," she said.

Hoggatt works with a nurse practitioner who currently sees only established patients. At times she will work with other providers.

Part of her work involves assisting with patients who have received a new medication. Throughout the day, she will give allergy shots, and provide allergy testing to confirm an allergy is the problem.

"Typically, what they'll do, you will meet with a physician, and they will see what symptoms are bothering you, and pick out what kind of testing best suits your needs," Hoggatt said. "More often than not, it's environmental testing, so grasses, trees, weeds, dust, cats, dogs — those things."

A panel is then placed on the skin for a prick test that feels like being poked by a toothpick, she said. They will check to see if there is a reaction after 15 minutes. Skin would turn a little bit red and itchy. At times a small bump appears.

"We measure the size of those bumps and that tells us what you're allergic to. If you don't have any of that, it means you don't have any allergies," she explained. "If you do

have a reaction, it shows that you are allergic to that specific thing."

Each day is a new learning experience for Hoggatt.

"You can have someone come in and complain of new symptoms, but their allergies are changed. They are completely different than somebody else's. Or I've learned there are a lot of people who think they have allergies, but they really don't. There are several other causes to their symptoms," she continued. "So that is what I love. It is the same type of procedures every day, but every patient is different. Everybody is different, so it keeps you intrigued. You are learning, and the physicians here are really good about teaching you all things and making sure you understand."

The Oklahoma Allergy and Asthma Clinic provides a personable staff of professionals working well together. There is effective comradery between

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CARE

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the nursing staff and the physicians, she said.

"You're not afraid to go up and ask the doctors a question if you don't understand," she said. "They have a great teaching mentality, because they want to make sure that you're also presenting the correct information to the patient. So, I feel like in a lot of other places you get issues with the nursing staff not wanting to talk the doctors about things, and I've never experienced that here. And I really appreciate that."

Providers allow her to express her thoughts on what is causing symptoms experienced by a patient, she said.

For their good work the patients often thank them for providing care. Hoggatt said a word of thanks reflects the staff's comprehensive understanding their patients.

"They come in and cannot breathe. They can barely do daily living things without issues. They can't go outside and play with their kids," she said. "And you see them with the right medications, and they get to live a life without boundaries. And I think that's really fulfilling."



Caroline Hoggatt, RN, helps many people with allergies and asthma live better lives.



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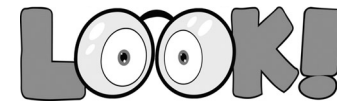
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Spring fling mixer set Legends at Riverdell invites professionals

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

LEGEND™ SENIOR LIVING

Healthcare professionals are invited to celebrate the arrival of spring at Legend Senior Living at Riverdell.

Gather among friends at the event hosted by Sarah MacAllister and Kristen Thomas at Legend Senior Living at Riverdell in Oklahoma City from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 19, located at 13170 S. May Ave., Oklahoma City.

Legend at Riverdell is a center for assisted living and memory care.

Festive activities for the spring fling professional mixer will include appetizers and prize raffles.

"I feel like we are so caught up sometimes in the day-to-day. So, we just wanted the opportunity for professionals to just kind of relax. You can talk about work; you can talk about raffles. We're just going to

have raffles, nothing too scripted just so they can relax and put their feet up," MacAllister said.

Legend at Riverdell has done similar events in the past prior to the pandemic. Healthcare is one of the most challenging industries to be part of with experiencing COVID-19, MacAllister continued. Their job of caring for millions of seniors across the US continues every day.

"We still need those connections and people outside our building to do their job. And we're relying on everyone else, and they are relying on us to do our job," MacAllister said.

While spring is a time of new beginnings, healthcare professionals continue their noble calling of carrying on their shifts with compassionate care and best practices in protecting lives and quality of life itself. Each day is a time of learning something new and to celebrate the human spirit.

The professional mixer is a time to gather with long-time colleagues and to make new personal connections. It is a time to leave your office space and social media to meet in person. Professionals will be able to enjoy the comfortable and relaxed environment.

"We'll be offering tours if people want to see our community," she said.

The campus offers assisted living and began offering memory care a few years ago as the need presented itself.


"I can hold 66 in assisted living and then in the memory care they can hold 75 residents," she said.

The memory care offers three separate neighborhoods, depending on the level of cognitive function of the residents, depending on what the family likes and what the nurses would prefer. They are safe in a home where they can best thrive and be with other residents of a similar mindset and physical level.

Legend Senior Living at Riverdell love community involvement. They are members of both the Newcastle and Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce.

"We believe in paying it forward and having everyone help out. The residents all have cardiologists and primary care doctors and all those things that are in the professional healthcare world," she said.

Please RSVP by calling or emailing. For more information, contact Sarah MacAllister, at 405-703-2300 or sarah.macallister@legendseniorliving.com. Visit www.legendseniorliving.com.



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Jeremiah Slatten, RN

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OK Wesleyan molding healthcare leaders



OKLAHOMA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Healthcare is changing and nurses are at the forefront.

That's why Oklahoma Wesleyan University is proud to offer a doctoral program designed to help create tomorrow's nursing leaders today.

Rosa Ketchum, DNP, RN is an associate professor and director of the school of nursing's new DNP program.

"One thing that is exciting is just the role of the DNP," Ketchum said. "It's becoming more evident in view of the pandemic that nurses have a very important voice in health care and they are a huge piece of the puzzle and their experience and value and perspective on health care is needed to help address practice and policy development."

Designed for working adults, this program offers two doctoral learning pathways: a Post Master's DNP and the BSN to DNP.

The Post Master's Pathway enables Advanced Practice Nurses, Nurse Informaticists, Nurse Educators, Nurse Administrators, and other master's prepared specialty nurses to obtain a DNP in Executive Leadership. Additionally, BSN-prepared nurses with a master's degree in a related field may also enter this pathway.

Similarly, the BSN to DNP

Pathway allows bachelor's prepared nurses to earn their doctorate of nursing practice.

Within this pathway, students choose a focus in either Nursing Administration or Nursing Education. OKWU has designed this curriculum for experienced nurses seeking terminal degrees in practice-focused areas. Moreover, OKWU prepares nurses to function as an advocate and leader, improving healthcare and patient outcomes through innovation and involvement in practice and policy.

Most importantly, both pathways provide graduates with advanced practice skills to serve as providers and organizers of the healthcare delivery process, or as faculty members in a nursing education program.

Translating that bedside knowledge and pairing it with evidence-based practice is the focus of the DNP program.

Ketchum completed her DNP in 2019.

"I wanted a degree that focused on patient outcomes. That's where my nursing heart is, helping the patient whether it's one patient or a population, I wanted to impact patient outcomes," Ketchum said.

"That is part of the focus of the



DNP and I wanted a piece of that. I wanted to be better able to do that whether it be through teaching students or through direct patient care."

OKWU's Doctor of Nursing Practice in Executive Leadership program is designed to equip nurses to serve at the highest level of nursing practice. The DNP program develops nurse leaders who improve patient outcomes and health systems by translating research into practice, all from a Christian worldview.

Enrollment for the program began last fall. A new group of students begins each semester, three times a year.

The initial 15 students came from a variety of backgrounds. While most programs only accept advanced practice nurses, Oklahoma Wesleyan accepts any kind of master's prepared nurse.

"Their ideas and perspectives may be a little broader because we have nurses that are coming from an administration background, or education background or advanced

practice background so we're getting to see them all together," she said. "The perspective is broader than some programs but they all want to impact health care and they all want to make our health care system a little bit better."

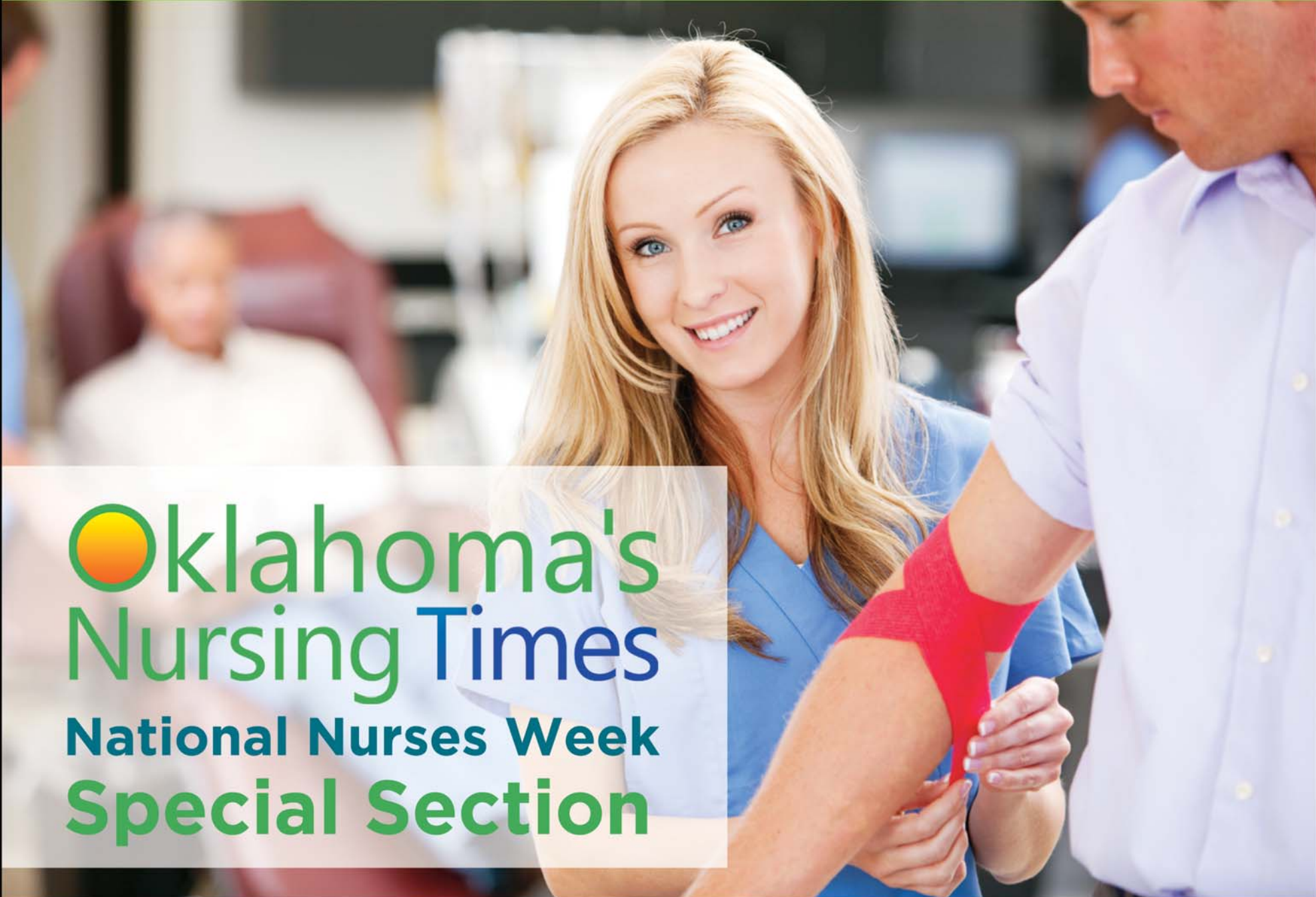
Delivery of the program is 100-percent online with no required visits to campus. Classes are delivered one at a time, eight weeks in length.

"Our program is designed for the working adult and that's better facilitated because they are only taking one class at a time. For eight weeks they can focus on one class at a time and I think that helps them be able to balance life, work, family, school better than if they were in a more traditional semester setting," Ketchum said.

The BSN to DNP program is 54 credit hours with anticipation of three years to graduate. The post-master's DNP is 36 hours allowing for completion in roughly two years.

Visit us here:
<https://www.okwu.edu>.

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Partnership serves Tealridge residents at home

story and photo by Bobby Anderson, RN, Staff Writer



An innovative partnership with Orthopaedic and Neurological Rehabilitation is serving Tealridge residents in the comfort of their own homes.

Rising gas prices, the ongoing fear of contracting the latest illness, and just parking and traffic in general.

Tealridge Retirement Community residents don't have to worry about any of it when it comes to receiving therapy services - all from the comfort of their own retirement community.

Tealridge Executive Director Melissa Mahaffey's, MHA, goal was to bring convenience and accessibility to the residents of Tealridge - something that currently is being done in other metro communities. However, her aim was to find something that was very unique and different. She found what she was looking for when she found Orthopaedic and Neurological Rehabilitation (ONR).

"I think overall everyone's aim is quality of life so people be independent as long as possible,"

Mahaffey said. "We're working together. The residents are top of mind of anything we do here and we want to make sure we have resources in place to make it easy and possible for each and every resident to access the care that they need."

The ONR TOUCH program works with continuing care retirement, assisted living, and senior living communities to establish and maintain innovative, onsite therapy and wellness programs.

Support is matched to each resident's ability to age gracefully by offering proactive, comprehensive therapy services across the continuum of care.

What that means for Tealridge residents is they are able to receive physician-ordered rehabilitative, physical, occupational, and even speech therapies without leaving their residence.

In addition to therapies, ONR also provides fitness, wellness, and educational programming from a full-time, onsite licensed physical therapist in Kate Glasgow, PT.

Glasgow previously worked in a home health setting. She likes the partnership with Tealridge, which gets her back into the residents' daily lives and into the halls at Tealridge.

"It's very beneficial," Glasgow said of being onsite. "Building rapport and relationships with residents here and getting to know them on different levels helps them improve in their environment as opposed to offsite where the skills we work on might not transfer as well to their environment.

"It really is a convenience factor being on-site full-time. We're here Monday through Friday."

Kaitlin Petrie, OTR/L, is ONR's director of business development.

She said Tealridge is the first ONR community partnership in the OKC metro area and one that's sure to be a hit with residents and their families.

She expects the model to be quickly adopted by others.

"It lends itself especially to independent living residents because they are out and about and they want to be out and about," Petrie said. "Our fitness classes allow us to connect with residents and build rapport and have more of an impact with fall reduction."

"We're so thankful and so blessed," she said. "We've experienced exponential growth and I think it's because our model is so unique. We've got the resource of a full-time director on campus Monday through Friday."

The partnership allows ONR to fulfill outpatient speech, physical and occupational therapy orders from providers in the comfort of a patient's own apartment or in the dedicated ONR therapy gym inside Tealridge.

Services are billed under Medicare part B outpatient services and covered under most insurance plans.

The ONR TOUCH program offers staff stability with the same dedicated director and therapists in the community daily.

Residents seeking enhanced mobility, greater independence and increased success with activities of



**TEALRIDGE
RETIREMENT
COMMUNITY**

daily living will enjoy the luxury of these onsite therapy services. With more than 30 years of experience providing personalized and specialized therapeutic care, ONR's core tenet is that life should be lived to the fullest at every stage.

Pain, weakness, or limited mobility should not prevent you from doing the things you love.

Petrie said ONR's program utilizes several evidence-based, research-based clinical programs that dictate plans of care and treatment programs.

"There are really very few ailments that exist that we don't have a matching clinical program," Petrie said. "It's always evolving with the research and that's where ONR dedicates its resources."

For Mahaffey, the partnership just made sense for Tealridge and its residents.

"It's convenience and accessibility," Mahaffey said. "They're going to be able to easily access these services. It keeps them independent for as long as possible and with a good quality of life and that's all we want to aim for. In addition to ONR, Tealridge has several partnerships with home health agencies, physician mobile services as well as ComForCare Home Care. "We want to have everything, hopefully, under one roof. For the most part, residents don't have to leave the community to get medical issues taken care of unless it's a specialist provider appointment."

Tealridge Retirement Community is a full-service retirement community located at 2100 NE 140th Edmond, OK 73013. Should you have any further questions, please call 405-546-2385.

For more information on Tealridge Retirement Community visit: <https://www.tealridge.com/>



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In 2021, the United Way of Central Oklahoma and our more than 19,000 donors and 600 workplace campaigns selflessly contributed to the United Way Campaign. And to share the gift of a better life for thousands of Oklahomans.

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