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July 18, 2023

Information for the Oklahoma Nursing & Health Care Professional

www.oknursingtimes.com

Vol. 24 Issue 28

Norman Regional Health System is working to identify and help victims of human trafficking. Left to right: Karen Wells BSN, RN, Debbie Brown RN, Sheila Monson BSN, RN, Dr. Jessica Meador DO, MS, Dr. Zachary Fowler DO. Photo provided

by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

Globally, it's estimated there are more than Health System's Sheila Monson, BSN, RN. 27 million human trafficking victims at any

These victims often pass by unseen every day. Unfortunately, those victims also pass through our healthcare system at an alarming rate, undetected by nursesand doctors.

That was alarming for Norman Regional

A comment by a travel nurse actually got Monson thinking about the epidemic in a different way.

Monson was charging in the emergency room one shift and working triage.

"You know you kind of have a feeling that something is wrong but (this patient) wasn't talking, wasn't telling me anything. I just knew something was off," Monson said.

The travel nurse went to see the patient next and agreed something was amiss. That's when she asked Monson about the system's human trafficking

She explained several major systems she had worked for had human trafficking protocols that

See JONES Page 2

#### **JONES Continued from Page 1**

began with a screening tool.

That's when Monson got to thinking - and researching.

Monson found research that showed some 88 percent of victims reported they had received medical treatment some time during their ordeal. Of those encounters, 64 percent occurred in an ER setting.

None of those encounters resulted in the patient being detected as being trafficked.

"I thought holy cow, ER is the biggest," Monson said. "We probably need to do something."

Monson created a PowerPoint presentation and took it to her emergency department's Unit-Based Council as part of the hospital's shared governance system.

"We're not even looking for these people and they're right in front of us and we're not helping them," Monson said. "We took a vote and said this is what we wanted to do. We took it to leadership and they supported us and told us (we had) whatever we needed."

Monson called ERs around the state and tried to get their protocols to help shape the health system's.

"Nobody knew what I was talking about," she said. "I feel like this is something every ER nurse should have (access to)."

With four ERs in the system, Monson realized something needed to be streamlined for NRH nurses.

While researching, she discovered the Department of Health and Human Services coordinates its Blue Campaign to increase awareness of the problem.

The American Hospital Association did a study with emergency medicine to identify a list of top 10 red flags for trafficking.

"They said usually these top 10 are identified in the triage setting," Monson said. "The triage setting is a six-minute process and they're in and out. Within that six-minute interaction nurses are identifying red flags."

Monson was able to get the top 10 indicators loaded into the hospital's triage software with one crucial question asking the triage nurse if they suspect trafficking. If that question is marked yes an immediate notification is put up on the system's internal tracking system.

"Everybody in the back can see it when it pops up," Monson said. "It cues the staff in the back to do further testing and look for further red flags."

From there, Monson and her

nurses visited departments that would further interact with the patient such as lab, radiology, and transportation

"Now we're looking for it and we're acutely aware of what could be going on," Monson said.

A space within each emergency department was identified as a location where staff could separate the patient from their suspected trafficker in order to give the patient an opportunity to receive additional help if they chose.

The patient is provided with resources for local shelters and the human trafficking crisis center. Staff were educated on these methods at monthly meetings, and the Emergency Medicine residents received specific training by the local human trafficking crisis center on how to identify potential victims.

In the first month implementation, 14 potential Human Trafficking Victims were identified in triage.

Unfortunately, staff reported many barriers to further screening and interventions- including patient and staff safety, inability to separate the potential victim from the trafficker, difficulty distinguishing between domestic violence and HT, and staff concern for creating more trauma for victims.

Going forward, Monson said several system-wide changes were made to address these barriers. Staff created a discrete information sheet (available in English and Spanish) disguised as a Chapstick container that can be given to potential

An easily accessible, printable sheet was placed in the electronic health record that contains information and resources for labor and sex trafficking available in 23 languages.

Now, all new employees in the hospital are required to complete education on human trafficking during the onboarding process.

The hospital system is currently partnering with several internal and community resource providers to raise awareness on the importance of identifying and intervening on this often-overlooked human rights issue.

"Even if you suspect it, just give the resources," Monson said. "Our goal now is to just pass off the resources, give them the tools they need so when they're ready for help they've got it."

For more information about Norman Regional Health System, visit https://careers.normanregional.com/careers-home/.



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#### UCO Announces Spring 2023 Honor Roll Students

The University of Central Oklahoma recently announced the students named to the university's honor rolls, a distinction given to those who achieve the highest academic standards.

For the spring 2023 semester, 1,414 students were named to the President's Honor Roll, an honor achieved by those who recorded a "straight-A" or 4.0 GPA.

In addition, 1,334 students were named to the Dean's Honor Roll, a list of those who achieved a 3.5 GPA or better for the semester and no grade lower than a B.



To be eligible for the President's or Dean's lists, students must complete at least 12 hours of on-campus class credit for the semester.

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Founded in 1890, Central connects its students to unmatched value found in 119 undergraduate degrees and 81 graduate majors from its main campus in Edmond and facilities throughout the metro area. The university is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. For more information about Central, https://www.uco.edu/cms/academics/nursing/.

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# CAREERS IN NURSING:

#### CONVERSATION AND CARE - NURSE PRACTITIONER RELATES TO PATIENTS

story and photo by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Elisa Thompson gets at the root of what causes problems for patients with allergies and asthma. Thompson is a nurse practitioner at the Oklahoma Allergy & Asthma Clinic, located in Edmond. She also sees patients at the Oklahoma City clinic location.

"I grew up with asthma and allergies. And so, I understand the misery of my patients," Thompson said. "But what was attractive to me about this specialty is that it is one of few specialties that offers a shot at disease modification."

A lot of medicine involves treating symptoms. Allergy treatment involves immunotherapy which impacts allergic disease such as asthma and quality of life. This long-standing impact allows patients to cut down on their medications and invigorate their lifestyles with what they choose to do.

The last couple of months of wet weather has been a difficult

season for allergies. Pollen from grass, weeds and trees mix with mold levels resulting from damp surfaces.

"We've had some days with some pretty significant levels in all categories and it certainly impacts people from a symptomatic standpoint — eyes, ears, nose, throat, lungs, and sometimes even skin, especially those patients with eczema or broken-down skin barrier," she said.

Having a varied level of nursing experience brings to the table a different level of nursing expertise in patient care. In 2005 she earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma. Additionally, Thompson earned her nurse practitioner degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2012. Her career as a registered nurse began in a surgical intensive care unit where she fell in love

with critical care medicine.

"It was very thought provoking and definitely encouraged me to use critical thinking," Thompson said. "It also really fostered independence which I loved. I felt very prepared for my role as an RN. I liked the fact that I was fully able to utilize my skills."

She expanded her horizon by working in the ER, and the PACU before accepting the role of a critical care float nurse for the hospital. She would staff units when needed but would also respond to Code Blue emergencies.

"During that time frame I realized I really wanted to continue my learning journey and become even more independent in my role as a nurse," she said.

Asthma does not always begin as an allergy, being that there is allergic and non-allergic asthma. But most of Thompson's asthma patients live with allergic asthma. Allergies manifest in the body

and put forth an allergic cascade that begins impacting the lungs as asthma. Non-allergic asthma is treated similarly in terms of conventional care with inhalers and oral medication. Biologic therapy is medication delivered by a shot.

Metropolitan areas with increased population density have a higher prevalence of asthma because of air pollution and negative environmental factors are magnified, Thompson said.

It's also been found that excrement from mice and cockroaches, dust, and mold in old buildings can make asthma more problematic to control.

Thompson said many of her patients have significant allergies accompanied by auto-immune diseases.

It's common for children to get many viruses. Thompson has worked in general pediatrics. Seventy-five percent of her visits

continued next page



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Elisa Thompson understands patient care and has the empathy and resources to do it at the Oklahoma Allergy & Asthma Clinic-Edmond.

#### THOMPSON Continued from Page 4

involved children with viruses. A virus works its way out over time while medicine helps keep a child comfortable.

"But if that runny nose is accompanied by an itchy nose, sneezing, itchy watery eyes, itchy throat, that can be more of a sign of allergies — especially the pattern of it — if they go outside or go around an animal," she said. "That's always good to pay attention to."

Antihistamines are very effective for allergies. There are also prescription medications to treat symptoms.

"I think nasal sprays are highly effective and are greatly underutilized," Thompson said.

Her experiences as a registered nurse and a nurse practitioner have been an avenue of love. Thompson loves people and working with them. Being a nurse practitioner allows Thompson to be more of a team with her patients, she said. They think through critical issues together about what's best for individual care. Thompson takes a personalized approach to patient care.

"I don't give everyone the same regiment. Everyone has different needs. We're all built differently," she

Being a nurse practitioner is more than conducting a series of tasks, Thompson continued. "As a nurse practitioner it's more of a conversation. It's more of a long-term relationship and follow-up."

She builds these patient relationships overtime and the outcome for her is rewarding.

Thompson lives life to the fullest by spending time with her husband and kids. She has a vegetable garden that she harvests

"I do jujitsu martial arts. It's a good way to get some energy out and challenge my brain."

### For more information about the Oklahoma Allergy & Asthma Clinic, visit

https://oklahomaallergy.com/about/join-our-team/



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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2023 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

## **Simulation Suite Prepares OBU Alumna For Various Challenges of Pandemic**

The simulation suite of Oklahoma Baptist I could have fought through the University's nursing program is not only why Abbie Richardson came to OBU, but also why she has returned.

Richardson graduated from OBU in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in nursing and has returned to the School of Nursing as an Instructor of Nursing and the Director of Nursing Simulation.

"I started as a brand-new nurse during COVID, and it was the hardest thing I have ever done in my life," Richardson said. "People were so sick, and I was devastated by loss every day. I thought back to simulation so often during that time because the patients in the simulation lab prepared me to take care of my real patients that desperately needed safe nursing care."

More than that, the students' conversations with faculty in debriefing about caring for grieving families, holistic patient care, and the integration of faith into practice gave Richardson the tools she needed to survive as a nurse in the pandemic.

The simulation experiences enabled her to care for critically ill patients, cope with loss and challenges, and provide hope to others in the darkest

"Without the foundation that our faculty and simulation program gave me, I don't think Pandemic alongside my fellow nurses," Richardson said. "That is why I returned as the simulation director at

OBU is not only preparing students for success in the classroom, but also equipping them for a meaningful career in the medical field.

Home to this cutting-edge OBU program is the Jane E. and Nick K. Stavros Hall, a 31,600-squarefoot nursing education facility.

OBU's simulation suite has six functioning hospital rooms. The program's three standardized adult mannequins, birthing mother, and pediatric mannequins are the top-tier of high-fidelity simulators. They react like a real patient, capable of breathing, talking, sweating, bleeding and reacting to medications. These display vital signs such as blood pressure, pulse and respiration, preparing students for a full range of healthcare situations they will encounter as nurses. These mannequins are limitless in the disease processes they can portray, meaning faculty can place students in almost any nursing situation and expose them to more complex patient scenarios.

The OBU simulation lab is meant to function like a hospital.



During simulation experiences, students get to be the nurse. What is incredible about that is by the time they leave our program, they have spent over 70 hours in simulation thinking like a nurse, making the decisions, and providing patient care. The decisions they make regarding nursing care are their own and that is where the best learning happens. We have audio and visual technology within our simulation rooms that allow observing students to watch the scenario, while actively providing feedback and problem-solving with their peers.

After a scenario is complete, the students and faculty come together for a time of de-briefing.

Richardson said, "As faculty, this is where we see the lightbulbs go off and we get to watch them turn into compassionate, safe, and caring nurses. I owe so much to our simulation program, and I am thrilled to have a front row seat to the student transformations that take place in our program."

For more information about OBU's nursing programs, visit https://www.okbu.edu/nursing.



(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2023 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

# Health Care Training is a Core Area of Francis Tuttle

Among the most highly regarded career training programs at Francis Tuttle Technology Center are those in the health sciences. From programs for adults looking for a new career to those designed to prepare high school students to earn a living while exploring other health career options, many are available to help people considering pursuing a career in the helping professions of health care. Francis Tuttle has experienced faculty who have worked extensively in the industry, with state-of-the-art equipment used in health and medical facilities throughout the metro area and around the country and a dedicated focus to help fill a looming skills gap. Below is a

Tuttle's program offerings.

The **Pre-Nursing** program for adult and high school students is an exciting opportunity to explore a healthcare pathway and see what careers are available with additional training. Students gain knowledge about the broad spectrum of health professions. Students can obtain certification as a Nurse Aide (CNA) and an Advanced Unlicensed Assistant (AUA) through the program.

experienced faculty who have worked extensively in the industry, with state-of-the-art equipment used in health and medical facilities throughout the metro area and around the country and a dedicated focus to help fill a looming skills gap. Below is a brief description of each of Francis

The unique Respiratory Care program for adult students works cooperatively with Oklahoma City Community College. Upon completion, students receive a Certificate of Completion from Francis Tuttle and an Associate of Applied Science degree from OCCC. Students are trained to



assist with treating individuals with pulmonary and cardiac disorders and obtain eligibility to take the national examinations to earn a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential and apply for an Oklahoma Respiratory Care Practitioners License.

The **Practical Nursing (LPN)** program prepares adult students to provide quality health care in various settings. Three enrollment options are available to best-fit student needs: full-time, blended online, and the 1+1 program. Upon completion, students can take the

National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) to become a **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**.

Each program offers the potential for a high-paying career, and Francis Tuttle is dedicated to serving the growing demand for a highly qualified workforce in the healthcare industry. If you're interested or know someone looking to expand their horizons through the expanding medical care field, check out these and other programs at:

https://www.francistuttle.edu/ and get started on your future today!

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# OMRF named a top US charity for 21st time

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation has again earned the highest rating from the nation's largest charity evaluator.

For the 21st time, Charity Navigator awarded a four-star rating to the Oklahoma City-based biomedical research institute. OMRF scored 97 out of a possible 100. Charity Navigator awards points for demonstrating a strong commitment to accountability, transparency and financial health.

The rating designates the foundation as an official "Give with Confidence" charity, indicating that OMRF is using its donations effectively and meets or exceeds industry standards.

"Every time someone gives to OMRF, it's an expression of hope for a better tomorrow," said OMRF President Andrew Weyrich, Ph.D. "We strictly adhere to the intent of each donation, which is to fund life-saving research. Every penny of every donation goes directly to that purpose."

Founded in 2001, Charity Navigator promotes intelligent giving by preparing annual report cards on U.S. and international charities. It uses publicly available financial information to evaluate nearly 200,000 organizations and provide unbiased information for more than 11 million donors.

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.

"We are delighted to provide OMRF with third-party accreditation that validates their operational excellence," said Michael Thatcher, president and CEO of Charity Navigator. "The four-star rating is the highest possible rating an organization can achieve. We are eager to see the good work that OMRF is able to accomplish in the years ahead."

To learn more about OMRF, visit:

https://omrf.org/about-omrf/human-resources/

#### **WORD SEARCH: What is Dementia?**

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# Skingting Skingt

If you could be an animal for a day, which one would you choose?



Oklahoma ER & Hospital "I would be a giraffe because they are leaders. They stand tall. They all have their unique spots which makes their personality trait."



Judy Farrar, RN, CNO

"I would choose some type of bird so I could fly because I think that would be really cool."



Keith Curran, RN

"I would probably choose a chameleon because it would require me to be flexible with my surroundings, and go with the flow and hide when I need to."



Lauren Funke, RN





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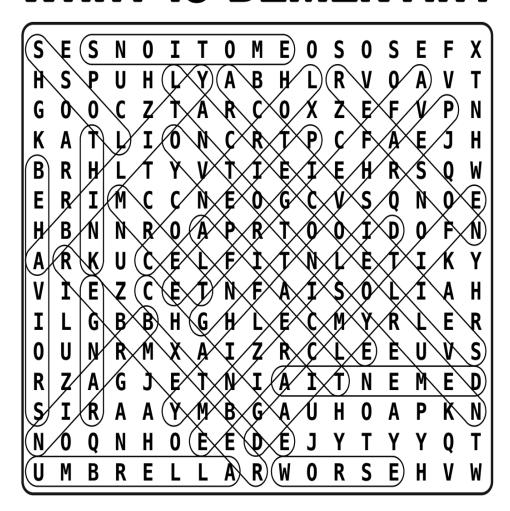
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### American Nurses Association Underscores Urgency for Safe Staffing Solutions, Including Minimum Nurse-to-Patient Ratios

Today, the American Nurses Association (ANA) underscores the urgency for Congressional leaders, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and other key stakeholders to advance efforts in the implementation of safe staffing standards, including minimum nurse-to-patient ratios.

The nurse staffing crisis continues to demand a national dialogue with nurse-led approaches to help ease longstanding work environment challenges that nurses are facing across numerous specialties and health care settings. ANA supports minimum nurse-to-patient ratios enacted by nurse-centered committees dependent upon key factors such as patient acuity, intensity of the unit practice setting, and nurses' competency among other variables.

"ANA's goal is to empower nurses and position them for success. Embracing setting specific ratios for nurses should be viewed as only one piece of a much larger solution. We're still working to address other longstanding workforce challenges that have dramatically worsened the nurses staffing crisis such

as burnout, workplace violence, mandatory overtime and barriers to full practice authority, said ANA President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN.

"Studies have shown unsafe staffing negatively affects patient care outcomes and the well-being of nurses. According to the American Nurses Foundation's national workplace survey of nurses, 31% of nurses are required on a weekly basis to work beyond their scheduled shift to provide adequate care to patients. And the National Council of State Boards of Nursing says a quarter to half of nurses reported feeling emotionally drained (50.8%), used up (56.4%), fatigued (49.7%), burned out (45.1%), or at the end of the rope (29.4%) "a few times a week" or "every day."

"We urge health care leaders and policymakers at all levels to effect the necessary change, but we must not underestimate the power of nurse advocacy. Direct care nurses have special relationships with their patients imparting unique insights on patient care and the dynamics of the practice setting. That is

knowledge that can't be matched. Nurses are the most trusted professionals in the U.S., especially among health care consumers, so we should both trust and empower them to be the decision makers on how to improve their work environment and deliver the best patient care," said ANA Enterprise CEO, Loressa Cole, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN.

ANA's call for staffing solutions that include ratios was voted on and approved at its 2022 Membership Assembly, the official voting and governing body of the association, which led to nearly 400 members of ANA convening on the U.S. Capitol to petition Congress to address the national nurse staffing crisis last month. ANA is not only advocating, but seeking solutions, launching the Nurse Staffing Think Tank in 2022 in partnership with other leading organizations which produced a series of actionable strategies that health care organizations could implement within 12 - 18 months. In May 2023, the Nurse Staffing Task Force identified another 65 proposed long term recommendations designed to spur innovation, policy and regulatory action, encourage new care models, and effectively support direct care nurses and nurse leaders.



ANA President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN.

ANA continues to advocate on behalf of nurses, remain a collaborative partner, and to call on Congress to enact meaningful legislation and policies that improve nurse staffing and their work environments. ANA provides nurses at all levels key resources to help inform advocacy as well as approaches to address the nurse staffing crisis.



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