

2026-2028 Nursing Strategic Plan

Our nursing commitment: To provide the foundation for nursing practice at St. Louis Children's Hospital, a member of BJC HealthCare and an academic partner of WashU Medicine.





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April 2026

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Our Mission, Vision, Values, and Philosophy



Mission

- To “do what’s right for kids”
- To reflect a commitment to improve the health and well-being of children and the communities we serve through our BJC values of Kindness, Respect, Excellence, Safety, and Teamwork.

Values

Team members across St. Louis Children’s Hospital, and throughout BJC Health’s hospitals and service organizations, follow a set of shared, core values that guide our behaviors and set consistent expectations for how we hold each other, and ourselves, accountable.

- Kindness–We promise to care about you.
- Respect–We promise to treat you with dignity.
- Excellence–We promise to be our best.
- Safety–We promise to keep you safe.
- Teamwork–We promise to partner with you.

Vision

We are one team, with a passion for children, committed to creating a safe and healing environment through living our BJC values of Kindness, Respect, Excellence, Safety, and Teamwork. We help families build on their strengths to achieve their best health at home, in the hospital, and in their community. We will be known as a world leader in pediatric health care through our use of evidence-based and innovative practice models.

Philosophy

The philosophy of care at St. Louis Children’s Hospital is to provide exceptional patient- and family-centered care. Doing what’s right for families is doing what’s right for kids. Our patients and families will experience innovative medicine, compassionate care, and unbiased access to resources. We will do this by:

- Promoting equitable, safe, and quality family-centered care experiences.
- Reducing health care disparities.
- Building trust in the communities we serve.

Message from Chief Nursing Officer

Dear Patient Care Services Team,

As we look ahead, I am proud of the strength and excellence of nursing at St. Louis Children's Hospital. Our collective accomplishments reflect the extraordinary impact St. Louis Children's nurses and patient care teams have on children and families every day.

Our mission to do what's right for kids continues to guide all that we do. Through our shared commitment to quality, safety, professional practice, and patient- and family-centered care, we remain focused on supporting the growth and well-being of our teams and delivering an exceptional experience across every setting of care.

I am thrilled to share that following our recent Magnet® site visit, St. Louis Children's Hospital was designated as Magnet *with Distinction*®—a truly exceptional achievement that reflects the dedication and expertise of our nursing teams. This is St. Louis Children's fifth Magnet designation, placing us among an elite group of hospitals nationally and reinforcing our position as a leader in pediatric nursing excellence. Combined with our recognition as the No. 1 pediatric hospital in Missouri and St. Louis by *U.S. News & World Report*, this milestone underscores the extraordinary care delivered by our teams every day.

During the Magnet site visit, St. Louis Children's Hospital received 11 exemplars, highlighting the measurable impact of nursing practice across the organization. These exemplars recognized:

- Advancements in central line infection prevention and leadership through initiatives such as the Central Line Resource RN role.
- High rates of RN professional board certification and baccalaureate-prepared nurses.
- Exceptional performance in patient safety, surgical outcomes, and patient experience—consistently outperforming national benchmarks.

Our teams were also recognized for excellence in patient experience scores for care coordination, pain management, patient engagement/patient-centered care, and safety, as well as for innovative care delivery models that support pediatric liver and kidney transplant patients and their families. These accomplishments reflect a culture grounded in evidence-based practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a deep commitment to children and families.

As we launch the 2026–2028 Nursing Strategic Plan, we remain focused on strengthening communication and supporting professional governance through active participation that shapes nursing practice and patient care. Together, we will continue to elevate the nursing practice and build on this remarkable momentum.

Every day, I am inspired by your unwavering commitment to excellence. Thank you for the care you provide, the leadership you demonstrate, and the difference you make for our patients, families, and one another.

With deepest appreciation,



Carrie Lee, DNP, MBA/HCM, RN, NE-BC

Vice President, Patient Care Services

Chief Nursing Officer

St. Louis Children's Hospital



Professional Practice Model

Patient, family, community: The Gateway Arch, unique to St. Louis, reflects the spectrum and continuity of care provided to patients and families who receive care at St. Louis Children's Hospital, whether in the hospital, through ambulatory services, or through community outreach.

Patient-and family-centered equitable care: This is the foundational philosophy that St. Louis Children's Hospital used to develop its framework for care delivery. It is an approach that promotes partnerships with the patient and families to achieve optimal health outcomes, ensuring all patients, regardless of race, ethnicity, or primary language spoken, receive exceptional care.

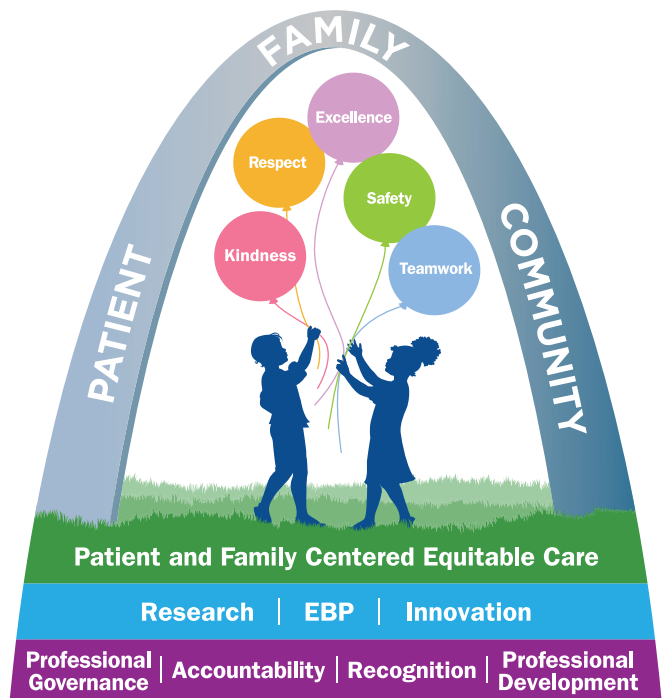
Our BJC Values: The children are holding balloons that represent Kindness, Respect, Excellence, Safety, and Teamwork.

Research, evidence-based practice (EBP), and innovation: This represents the scientific aspect of nursing and our commitment to advancing nursing practice at St. Louis Children's Hospital. Without a scientific base, there would be no improvement.

- Research is the generation of new knowledge through scientific inquiry.
- EBP is the thoughtful use of scientific knowledge, encompassing external research and internal data combined with clinical expertise and patient preferences. At St. Louis Children's Hospital, EBP is the standard of care, and the organization strives to create a culture that sustains the use of evidence for direct care decision-making.
- Innovation is using a novel approach to solve an existing problem in a different way.

Across the Base

Professional governance comprises five interprofessional working councils that promote interprofessional collaboration, decision-making, autonomy, and accountability in our practice environment. The councils, made up of representatives across all disciplines, including nursing, are led by clinical team members. Staff are empowered to work together through these councils to advance professional and evidence-based care, staff engagement, professional growth, and patient, family, and workforce experience.



Professional Practice Model



Accountability refers to being "answerable" to yourself and others for your own choices, decisions, and actions when compared to standards such as the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses (2015a, p. 41). Nurses must be accountable for their own knowledge and skills as they provide patient care (Farquharson, 2004).

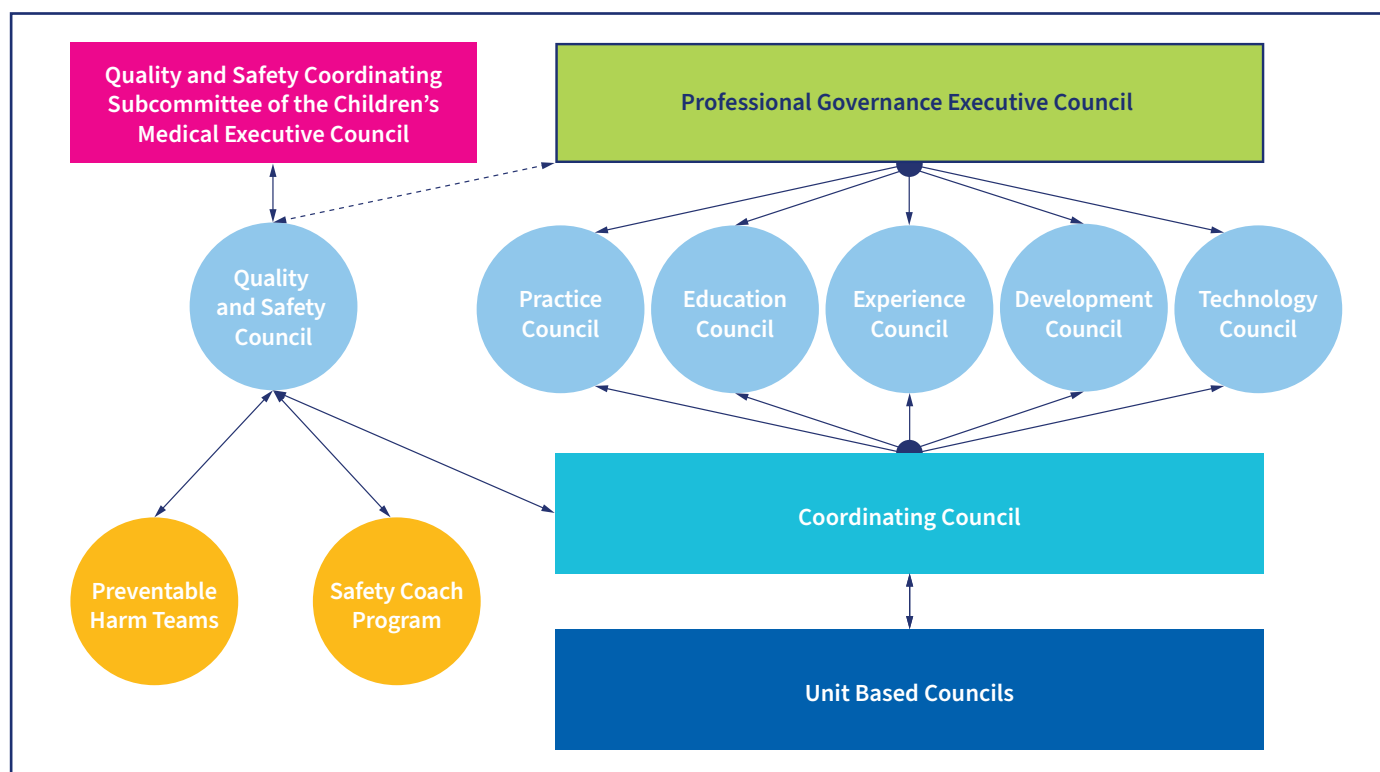
Recognition represents how nurses at St. Louis Children's Hospital are rewarded and recognized for their outstanding achievements and contributions to nursing practice.

Professional development is a phase of lifelong learning where nurses develop and maintain competence, enhance nursing practice, and support the achievement of their career goals.

Professional Governance Structure

Shared decision-making is a key component of professional governance (PG), involving clinicians and leaders working together on decisions that impact patients, families, and nursing practices. This is accomplished through the structure of the PG councils.

There are five interprofessional working councils that promote interprofessional collaboration, decision-making, autonomy, and accountability. The councils, made up of representatives across many disciplines and led by frontline team members, including clinical nurses, empower staff to work together to advance professional and evidence-based clinical care, staff engagement, professional growth, patient outcomes, and patient, family, and staff experience.



The **Executive Council**, led by the chief nursing officer, provides guidance to all councils to ensure that council work supports the mission, vision, and values of the organization and aligns with organizational strategic priorities.

The **Coordinating Council** is the connection point between the unit-based councils and the working councils. It serves as a project intake forum and coordinates all council activities.

- **Development Council** promotes professional development and career growth for all team members.
- **Education Council** ensures staff receive the education and support needed to be successful in their roles.
- **Experience Council** promotes a healthy, inclusive environment and exceptional experience for patients, families, and team members.

- **Practice Council** ensures team members throughout the organization provide safe, ethical, equitable, evidence-based care to all patients and families.
- **Technology Council** evaluates, improves, and optimizes the use of technology as it applies to nursing and clinical practice.

Unit-based councils serve as the voice of team members and as the foundation for PG. The unit councils provide a forum to work on department specific projects or to discuss improvement ideas as they relate to clinical practice, the practice environment, and unit or institutional culture.

The **Quality and Safety Team** acts as a liaison to refer topics for discussion or project work to the Professional Governance Coordinating Council.

Promote a Culture of Safe, Effective, and Equitable Care to Ensure an Exceptional Patient Experience

Provide safe patient care by using evidence-based practice, high-reliability principles, and standard work, while promoting autonomous practice, fostering innovation and technological advances, and using quality data to prevent hospital-acquired conditions and improve patient outcomes.

St. Louis Children's Hospital and BJC Health's Strategic Plan Alignment:

- People
- Clinical excellence
- Stewardship

Magnet Alignment:

- Transformational leadership
- Structural empowerment
- Exemplary professional practice
- New knowledge, improvements, and innovation
- Outcomes

Nursing Practice:

- Reliably deliver safe and effective evidence-based patient-and family-centered care.
- Accelerate adoption of evidence-based nursing practices.
- Promote a safe-to-speak Just Culture environment.
- Proactively identify, evaluate, and mitigate safety events.
- Continue alignment with organizational dyad and triad leadership and key stakeholders to drive performance of key indicators.
- Foster an interprofessional approach across departments to enhance safety practices.
- Establish standard work for reviewing quality and safety data to identify and reduce disparities.
- View the patient as a whole person, respecting the differences among people.
- Provide culturally and socially sensitive care to all patients and ensure resources are available to meet unique needs.
- Partner with the national Pediatric Experience Collaborative and BJC Quality and Patient Experience leaders to improve the overall patient experience.
- Collaborate with patients and families to evaluate and respond to care needs.

- Prioritize family-centered rounds to support patients and caregivers.

Outcomes:

1. Nurses lead and participate in activities to improve patient outcomes, such as preventable harm measures or other quality and safety initiatives.
2. Improve the BJC Culture of Safety Pulse Survey score for the questions:
 - “When a change is made to improve patient or employee safety, the change is evaluated to see how the change is evaluated to see how it improved.”
 - “If I make a mistake in this team, I know it will not be held against me.”
 - “I experience good cooperation when working with other departments or teams.”
3. Improve the Patient Experience Net Promoter Scores (NPS)–Rollup-all Venues to > 82.5%.
4. Eligible ambulatory care settings and inpatient units will outperform the mean, median, or other measure of central tendency for a majority of categories in a nationally benchmarked patient experience surveys assessing:
 - Care coordination
 - Careful listening
 - Courtesy and respect
 - Pain
 - Patient education
 - Patient engagement or patient centered care
 - Responsiveness
 - Safety

Professional Governance:

- Experience Council
- Practice Council

Partners:

- Patient Experience Team
- Quality and Safety Team

Executive sponsor: Joan Smith, PhD, RN, NNP-BC, FAAN

Enhance Employee Engagement and the Practice Environment

Continue to improve nursing engagement by maintaining a strong emphasis on the correlation between employee engagement and a healthy work environment.

St. Louis Children's Hospital and BJC Health's strategic plan alignment:

- People
- Clinical excellence
- Stewardship

Magnet alignment:

- Transformational leadership
- Structural empowerment
- Exemplary professional practice
- New knowledge, improvements, and innovation
- Outcomes

Nursing practice:

- Promote a healthy work environment.
 - Enrich the well-being of our workforce through utilization of BJC Health's and St. Louis Children's Hospital's wellness resources: Employee Assistance Program, Wellness Program Manager
 - Cultivate resilience practices across the organization.
- Support a culture of on-going professional development using the BJC Nursing Career Ladder rubric to guide and support activities.
- Foster an environment of psychological safety, inquiry, continuous improvement, and innovation.
- Sustain a framework of professional governance that provides nurses with ownership and autonomy over clinical practice and outcomes.
- Develop nurses through precepting, mentoring, succession planning, and role-modeling.
- Maintain American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) Magnet *with Distinction*[®] and Practice Transition Accreditation Program with Distinction designations, and Continuing Education Approved with Distinction provider units.

- Support the advancement of nursing practice through research, EBP, and quality improvement.
- Enhance the employee experience through ongoing leader engagement.
- Promote clinical expertise at the bedside through mentoring, ongoing formal and informal education, and certification.
- Explore innovative models of care.

Outcomes:

1. Promote availability of resources to support mental health services for nurses.
2. Achieve a 0.5% reduction in the organizational All RN Turnover Rate (2-year goal).
3. Maintain the organizational goal for $\geq 80\%$ of RNs holding a baccalaureate or higher degree in nursing.
4. Maintain the organizational professional board certification rate for eligible nurses at $\geq 51.0\%$.
 - Units or departments with $\leq 51.0\%$ should establish a plan with annual or two-year goals to achieve incremental increases towards the organizational target.
5. For each two-year cycle of the Registered Nurse Career Ladder program, maintain $> 80\%$ of clinical nurses in levels III, IV, and Team Lead 2 (TL2), and increase promotions to levels III, IV, and TL2 by 2%.
6. Increase participation in the nursing research fellowship program by 10% by Dec. 31, 2027.
7. Improve the BJC Culture of Safety Employee Engagement Pulse Survey score for the questions:
 - "I receive meaningful recognition when I do a good job."
 - "I can see a clear link between my work and this company's strategic objectives."
8. Successfully achieve a sixth ANCC Magnet designation and maintain Magnet *with Distinction*[®].

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Outcomes (continued):

9. Successfully achieve a third ANCC PTAP with Distinction for the clinical nurse Support for Success program.
10. Maintain ANCC Provider Approval with Distinction for RN nursing continuing professional development.
11. Explore ANCC accreditation for an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) PTAP program.
12. Outperform the mean, median, or other measure of central tendency for a majority of categories in a nationally benchmarked RN satisfaction or engagement survey assessing:
 - Adequacy of resources and staffing
 - Autonomy
 - Fundamentals of quality nursing care
 - Interprofessional relationship (all disciplines)
 - Leadership access and responsiveness
 - Professional development
 - RN-to-RN teamwork and collaboration

Professional governance

- Development Council
- Education Council
- Experience Council

Partners

- Missy Lynch, MBA, SPHR
- Paris Jackson, LCPC, LPC, NCC

Executive sponsor: Laurely Fusilero, DNP, MBA, RN, NE-BC



Support Growth and Optimize Access to Health Care

Optimize organizational and system capacity management through an evidence-based, patient-centric approach to patient movement along the care continuum.

St. Louis Children's Hospital and BJC Health's strategic plan alignment:

- Growth
- Stewardship

Magnet alignment:

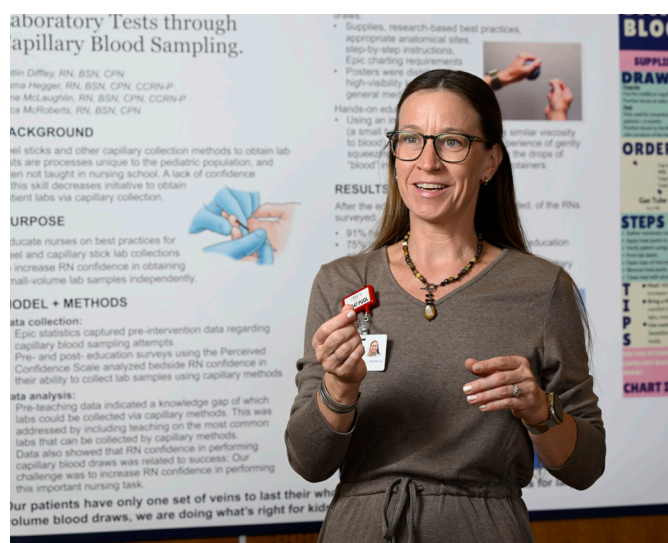
- Transformational leadership
- Structural empowerment
- Exemplary professional practice
- New knowledge, improvements, and innovation
- Outcomes

Nursing practice:

- Optimize placement needs for all transfer requests to ensure the smooth transition of ambulatory admissions.
- Optimize patient throughput and placement across the organization using the following tools and resources:
 - Leverage Epic Grand Central
 - Capacity surge plans
 - Develop a Throughput Hub to maximize bed and resource utilization
- Build and sustain community partnerships to improve resources, support, and access to health care for children:
 - KVC Missouri Children's Mental Wellness Campus
 - St. Louis Children's at Cox Health

Outcomes:

1. Sustain one bed ahead for transports, even when at full capacity.
2. Following implementation, evaluate the effectiveness of the Throughput Hub.



3. Decrease ED lengths of stay (LOS) from arrival to disposition (departure or hospital admission) by 5%.
4. Reduce labor costs.
5. Nursing care is established at the following sites:
 - Cox Health in 2026
 - KVC in 2027
 - Children's Specialty Care Center-Wentzville in 2027

Professional governance

- Practice Council

Partners:

- Throughput Team

Executive sponsor: Carrie Lee, DNP, MBA/CHM, RN, NE-BC



■ **Contact us**

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