



FRIDAY HUDDLE

Convene • Connect • Collaborate

A gathering of Oregon nursing workforce leaders to offer timely updates and share insights from peers and stakeholders.



NURSE WORKFORCE

Staffing Pressures & System Impact: Staffing continues to be a central challenge, but the conversation is shifting toward linking staffing to patient outcomes and system flow, like hospital capacity. There is growing recognition that staffing shortages are not isolated to bedside roles—cuts to support roles (educators, infection prevention, management) are also impacting care delivery and workforce sustainability. Nurses report ongoing difficulty raising staffing concerns within organizations. In some cases, staffing is treated as a “sensitive” or avoided topic, and connecting it to quality outcomes can feel risky. This can contribute to an “us vs. them” dynamic between frontline staff and leadership.

Communication & Leadership Skill Gaps: Huddlers discussed the need for nurses to develop fluency in both clinical and business/operational language. Clinical communication, focused on safety and risk, is often perceived as negative or aggressive by leadership. Success increasingly depends on the ability to translate clinical concerns into operational or financial terms. There is also recognition that this burden is uneven—nurses are expected to adapt, but leadership is not always trained to understand clinical perspectives.

NURSE EDUCATION

Transition to Practice Challenges (New Graduates): Graduating nursing students report anxiety about entering the workforce, citing a competitive job market, reliance on residency programs with limited slots, and the need for more innovative job search strategies beyond traditional applications. This reflects a broader shift where entry into the profession is less straightforward than in previous years.

Career Flexibility & Professional Identity: Experienced nurses emphasized that nursing offers diverse and evolving career paths, allowing movement across role like bedside, leadership, education, or consulting. This flexibility is seen as a strength of the profession, especially in preventing burnout.

Policy & Advocacy Opportunity – Nursing Education Funding: A federal policy classifies nursing as a graduate degree, which limits student loan access for advanced nursing education. Senator Jeff Merkley is seeking to reclassify nursing to expand loan eligibility, and organizations are being asked to [sign on in support by EOD TODAY!](#)

RESOURCES

Nurses Week Recognition & Community Support: Nurses Week experiences varied widely this year, but the Friday Huddle itself continues to serve as a consistent space for validation, connection, and shared experience across the state. [Douglas County](#) and [OHA](#) also released statements celebrating nurses this week.

Mental Health & Community Resources: The Oregon Family Support Network shared [child mental health support resources](#), highlighting the growing intersection between nursing and community mental health needs.

Health Care Workforce Committee Meeting: The [next HCWF committee meeting](#) is coming up on May 13 at 9:30am.

Rural Healthcare Infrastructure Concerns: [KFF released an article](#) with resources showing that rural nursing homes are closing at a significantly higher rate than their urban counterparts.



NEXT FRIDAY HUDDLE:

Friday, May 15th, at 8:00 a.m.

OregonCenterForNursing.org

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