



To enhance the health of our community through skilled, compassionate and family-centered care.

NURSING EXCELLENCE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Together We Rise, Together We Heal



UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER
OF EL PASO

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AT UMC
NURSING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Message from the CNO | 3 |
| Workforce Highlights | 4 |
| Nursing Turnover | 4 |
| Nurse Residency Program | 5 |
| Nurse Residency Program Advisory Board | 6 |
| UMC Surgical Hospital | 7 |
| Weekend Nurse Program: Supporting Flexibility & Stability | 8 |
| Emeritus Nurse Program: Bridging Generations | 9 |
| Shared Governance | 10 |
| Nursing Councils | 10 |
| Unit Councils In Action: Building Community & Collaboration | 11 |
| Annual Nursing Research & Quality Symposium | 14 |
| Annual Nursing Shared Governance Conference | 15 |
| Quality & Patient Safety | 16 |
| Nurse Sensitive Indicators FY 23 - 24 | 16 |
| Innovative Care Models: Virtual Nursing | 18 |
| Nursing Uniform Standardization | 20 |
| Tissue Analytics Implementation | 20 |
| Documentation Burden Initiatives | 21 |
| Designations & Accreditations | 22 |
| Professional Development | 23 |
| Nursing Certifications | 23 |
| Annual Nursing Leadership Summit | 24 |
| Professional Clinical Program (PCP) | 25 |
| Advancing Professional Collaboration in Critical Care | 26 |
| Awards & Recognitions | 27 |
| DAISY® Award Honorees | 27 |
| DAISY® Team Award | 28 |
| DAISY® Nurse Leader & UMC Emerging Leader Awards | 29 |
| Guiding Light Award | 30 |
| Future Outlook | 31 |

MESSAGE FROM THE CNO



As we reflect on the accomplishments and milestones of the past year, I am filled with immense pride in the work we have achieved together. All of our events this year were centered around the theme, *“Rising Together, We Will Lift Each Other Up,”* which perfectly embodies the spirit of unity, resilience, and collaboration that defines our nursing community. At UMC, we understand that the challenges of healthcare are best faced not as individuals, but as a collective—supporting one another, sharing knowledge, and embracing our shared commitment to excellence in patient care.

This year has been one of tremendous growth and progress. Our nurses have led the way in elevating standards of care and professional collaboration. The success of many of our endeavors is a testament to the unwavering dedication, creativity, and compassion of our nursing team. It is also a reflection of our commitment to fostering the professional development and growth of UMC nurses.

Our accomplishments are not only measured by the advancements in care delivery but also by the meaningful connections we create—with our patients, our community, and each other. Whether through volunteerism, fundraising efforts, or recognition programs that highlight the extraordinary contributions of our teams, we continue to demonstrate the power of lifting each other up. This collaborative spirit strengthens our shared governance structure and inspires us to keep striving for excellence.

As we look to the future, let us carry this momentum forward, embracing opportunities to innovate, support one another, and drive positive change. Together, we will rise to meet the evolving needs of our patients and community, always guided by the values that define us as UMC nurses. Thank you for your dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to the art and science of nursing.

Amyra Daher, MSN, RN, NE-BC
Chief Nursing Officer

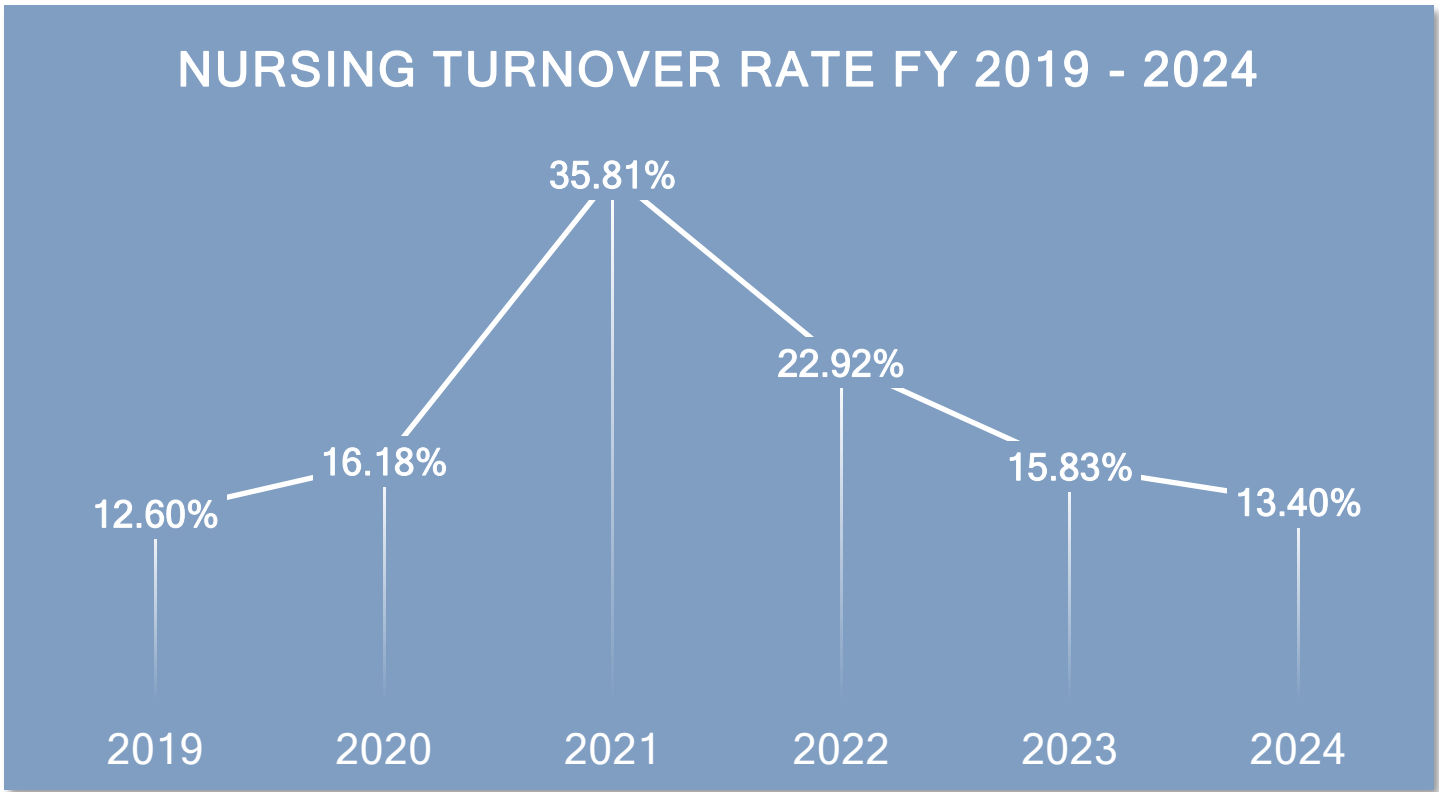


WORKFORCE HIGHLIGHTS

Nursing Turnover

Over the past two years, UMC has achieved significant strides in improving nursing retention, reflecting our commitment to fostering a supportive and engaging work environment.

At the close of FY 2024, the nursing turnover rate decreased to 13.40%, a remarkable improvement from previous years. This success underscores the effectiveness of our strategic initiatives, including enhanced shared governance, professional development opportunities, and targeted retention efforts.



Nurse Residency Program



NRP Cohort 25 - May 2024

UMC's Nurse Residency Program (NRP) has experienced significant growth, reflecting our dedication to supporting new graduate nurses as they transition into professional practice. The Nurse Tech Program continues to serve as a vital pipeline for the NRP, providing aspiring nurses with hands-on experience and a seamless pathway into residency.

As we look ahead, UMC is committed to further enhancing the program's excellence by pursuing accreditation through the Practice

Transition Accreditation Program (PTAP) in 2025, reinforcing our commitment to developing highly skilled nursing professionals.

2024 - A Year in Review:

- Nurse Residents Hired: 67
- Nurse Residents Graduated: 89
- Nurse Techs Hired: 39
- Nurse Techs Transitioned to NRP: 25



NRP Cohort 24 & 25 in Sim Lab Skills Training



Nurse Residency Program Advisory Board



Advisory Board January 2024: Cynthia Martinez, Jose Rodriguez, Claudia Vazquez, Nohemi Galindo, Amanda Vega, Amyra Daher, Dr. Stephanie Woods, Dr. Belinda Rincones, Dr. Amanda Anaya, Dr. Patricia Herbias, Dr. Hafid Guerrero, Dr. Leslie Robbins, Patricia Velazquez, Lorena Navedo, Marissa Amato, Art Macias, & Anthony Rosales.

Since its inception in March 2014, the UMC Nurse Residency Program (NRP) has been a cornerstone of our efforts to support newly registered nurses as they transition into professional practice. Over the course of its 12-month curriculum, the program has successfully guided 606 nurses, helping them build confidence and competence in their roles. As the program has evolved, it has expanded to include the Nurse Tech Program, strategically

designed to create a pipeline of future NRP candidates and further strengthen the foundation of nursing excellence at UMC.

In 2024, a new chapter began with the formation of the NRP Advisory Board, an initiative aimed at enhancing communication and collaboration among all stakeholders. This board brings together academic leaders, including deans from local nursing schools, presidents of current NRP cohorts, and key members of UMC leadership, to foster a dynamic partnership between education and practice.

The Advisory Board's objectives focus on bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and clinical application by devising innovative initiatives that address emerging challenges in nursing education and healthcare. Its inaugural meeting represented a significant milestone, signaling a shared commitment to advancing the UMC Nurse Residency Program and shaping the future of nursing practice through collaboration, innovation, and dedication to excellence.



UMC Surgical Hospital

UMC Surgical Hospital (UMC SH) proudly opened its doors to the El Paso community on January 2, 2024, marking a new chapter in UMC's commitment to delivering exceptional care. Strategically located on the East Side of El Paso, the facility features 40 licensed hospital beds, six operating rooms, two endoscopy suites, and a state-of-the-art Cath Lab. UMC SH offers a comprehensive range of inpatient, outpatient, and procedural services, including orthopedics, spine care, general surgery, ENT services, gynecological surgery, GI care, cardiac care, imaging, and emergency services. As UMC SH continues to grow, it remains dedicated to expanding its services to meet the evolving needs of patients and the community it serves.

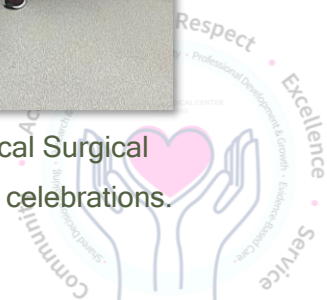


2024 - A Year in Review:

- ED Visits: 2,034
- Inpatient Visits: 1,870
- Endoscopy Procedures: 542
- OR Procedures: 1,922



UMC SH Telemetry & Medical Surgical staff participating in holiday celebrations.



Weekend Nurse Program: Supporting Flexibility & Stability

Last year, UMC introduced the Weekend Nurse Program, an innovative initiative aimed at offering flexibility to nurses while ensuring consistent staffing levels during weekends. This program allows UMC nurses to apply for six-month contracts in which they agree to work exclusively weekend shifts throughout the contract period. Designed to cater to nurses who benefit from a weekend-only schedule, the program aligns with their unique needs and availability, providing a balance between professional responsibilities and personal commitments.

"I enjoy being a weekend nurse because it worked really well during clinicals when I was in school for NP, but also, it allows for a more stable schedule, knowing I will work the same three days, so I can better make appointments. For me, it improved my work life balance with the consistency."
- Madison Trimbath, RN Weekend



A key feature of the program is its pay differential incentive, which not only rewards participating nurses for their commitment but also promotes stability in weekend staffing. By offering a reliable and motivated workforce during a traditionally challenging time to staff, the program ensures the delivery of high-quality patient care across all units.

Since its inception, the Weekend Nurse Program has demonstrated measurable success. To date, 14 nurses have applied to participate, highlighting its appeal and value to the nursing team. The program's positive reception underscores its ability to meet the needs of both nurses and the organization, serving as a testament to UMC's commitment to fostering innovative solutions that support its staff and enhance patient care.



Emeritus Nurse Program: Bridging Generations

Launched in 2023, the Emeritus (E-Nurse) Program has become a cornerstone of UMC's efforts to honor and utilize the invaluable expertise of retired nurses. By bringing retired nurses back into part-time roles, the program not only preserves the legacy and culture of nursing but also introduces experienced mentors and role models to support the current nursing workforce during these rapidly changing times.

Emeritus Nurses, or E-Nurses, play versatile and impactful roles tailored to the needs of their respective units and their own professional backgrounds. Currently, the program includes three remarkable E-Nurses: Gloria Contreras, who supports PI auditing and education in the Telemetry Unit; Mary Martinez, who serves as a discharge nurse for the East Surgical Unit; and Patricia Salas, who contributes to the Virtual Nursing Team. Their expertise enhances patient care, operational efficiency, and team development, making them an invaluable resource for UMC.

The E-Nurse Program exemplifies UMC's commitment to fostering intergenerational collaboration within the nursing profession. By reintroducing retired nurses as mentors and contributors, the program enriches the bedside experience for both patients and staff while ensuring that the wealth of knowledge and experience held by veteran nurses continues to benefit future generations.



"As an Emeritus Nurse, it has energized me in a way to reinvent the way I contribute my skills and knowledge. Additionally, the collaboration of the work environment has fostered a sense of camaraderie among administration, nurses and staff. This has led to a profound sense of fulfillment and satisfaction of my job duties as a discharge nurse. I have also witnessed many changes, new technologies and innovations. I love the challenges and the fact that I never stop learning. I have felt the support from my unit administrators and how well we work as a team to excel in challenging days is something I treasure. I have experienced the good and the bad but at the end of the day, it's a satisfaction to have impacted so many lives. The Emeritus Program has helped distribute the workload and reduce the burden on the nursing staff by utilizing retired nurses. It's been a joyful ride at UMC. Whoever invented this program is a genius!"

- Mary Martinez, Emeritus Nurse



SHARED GOVERNANCE



Nursing Councils

UMC's shared governance structure continues to exemplify a robust framework for nurse-driven decision-making, empowering nurses at all levels to contribute to organizational success and enhance patient care. Comprised of four overarching nursing councils—Clinical Practice and Staffing Council (CPSC), EMPOWER Council, Nursing Research and Quality Council (NRQC), and Performance Improvement and Patient Safety Council (PIPS)—as well as individual unit and department-based councils, this model fosters collaboration and innovation across the organization.

In 2024, UMC experienced remarkable growth in its shared governance efforts. Many areas that previously did not have a unit or department council established one, while existing councils expanded membership and launched new projects and initiatives. These councils allow nurses, including direct care nurses, to actively engage in key areas such as staffing, clinical practice, quality improvement, nursing research, and fostering a healthy work environment. Notably, many councils also excelled in creating opportunities for nurses to give back to the community through fundraising and volunteer efforts, further strengthening UMC's connection to the populations it serves.

2024 Council Initiatives:

- Quiet Time implementation
- Improving communication within the clinical team
- Facilitating patient & family education
- Standardizing the clinic discharge process
- Promoting “Back-to-Basics” approach to care delivery
- Improving role identification during codes
- Efficient use of supplies & waste reduction
- Confidentiality folders & standardizing hand-off report sheets
- Certification study groups
- Staff education targeting specific needs & gaps



Unit Councils in Action: Building Community & Collaboration



Peri-Anesthesia Council members delivered pet food & supplies to El Paso Humane Society.



ESU Council members volunteered at the annual Veteran's Health Fair.



ESU Council members held a school supply drive for the students of *Las Hormigas Comunidad en Desarrollo*.



Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, septiembre 2024

East Surgical Department
Unidad del Hospital
University Medical Center of El Paso

Presente. –

Quien suscribe la presente, **Luisa Adriana Chávez Sáenz** Coordinadora General de **Las Hormigas Comunidad en Desarrollo, A.C** ubicada en **C. Siluro #616 Col. Puerto Anapra Cp. 32107**. Quiero expresarle nuestro más sincero agradecimiento por su generosa donación de útiles escolares para las niñas y niños de nuestro Ambiente Educativo.

Valoramos profundamente su compromiso con nuestra misión, y esperamos seguir contando con su apoyo.

Cordialmente,

Luisa Adriana Chávez Sáenz
Coordinadora General





ASC staff members hosted Halloween celebrations to engage staff participation in their newly established council.



TT3 Council Chair, Joan Duran, & Co-Chair, Yolanda Hernandez, delivered donations to The Child Crisis Center of El Paso.



Peri-Anesthesia Council members held a popcorn fundraiser.



Emergency Nurses Week celebrations led by ED Council members & unit management.

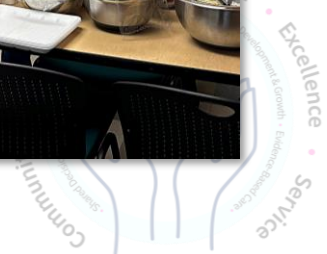




The medical surgical unit councils participated in their first annual Christmas Cookie Bake Off.



West Medical Surgical Unit Council members hosted a *chilindrinas* fundraiser.



Annual Nursing Research & Quality Symposium



NRQC Officers: Nancy Medina, Johanna Gallardo, Dr. Deborah Chasco, Mabel Toscano, Roxann Contreras

On Nov. 8, the Nursing Research and Quality Council (NRQC) proudly hosted its third annual symposium, continuing its tradition of fostering innovation and professional growth among nurses. This year's event featured esteemed speakers from local nursing schools and universities, who shared their expertise on a diverse range of topics critical to modern nursing practice.

Presentations included insights on navigating the pitfalls of simulation in nursing education, understanding the impact of social determinants of health on the community, and empowering nurses as drivers of change and quality care delivery. Additionally, real-world examples of applied research showcased how evidence-based practices are being used to improve patient outcomes.

The symposium not only highlighted the importance of research in advancing nursing excellence but also strengthened connections between academia and clinical practice, inspiring attendees to contribute to the profession's growth and the delivery of exceptional care.



Dr. Amanda Anaya, Dean of Nursing, Southwest University



Annual Nursing Shared Governance Conference

On December 6, 2024, the EMPOWER Council and Nursing Education hosted UMC's annual Shared Governance Conference, bringing together nurses and healthcare professionals under the inspiring theme, *"Rising Together, We Will Lift Each Other Up!"* The conference featured dynamic speakers who explored topics such as redefining the nursing care team, fostering inclusive learning environments for new nurses and other healthcare providers, addressing the pitfalls of learned helplessness, and reconnecting with the profound call to serve as nurses.

Attendees also had the opportunity to hear from council chairs who shared their councils' journeys throughout the year, highlighting success stories and impactful initiatives. The event also included an interactive session focused on the next steps in UMC's Journey to Pathway to Excellence.

The conference served as a celebration of shared governance, collaboration, and the collective efforts of UMC's nursing community to drive professional growth, improve care delivery, and support each other in advancing excellence in nursing practice.

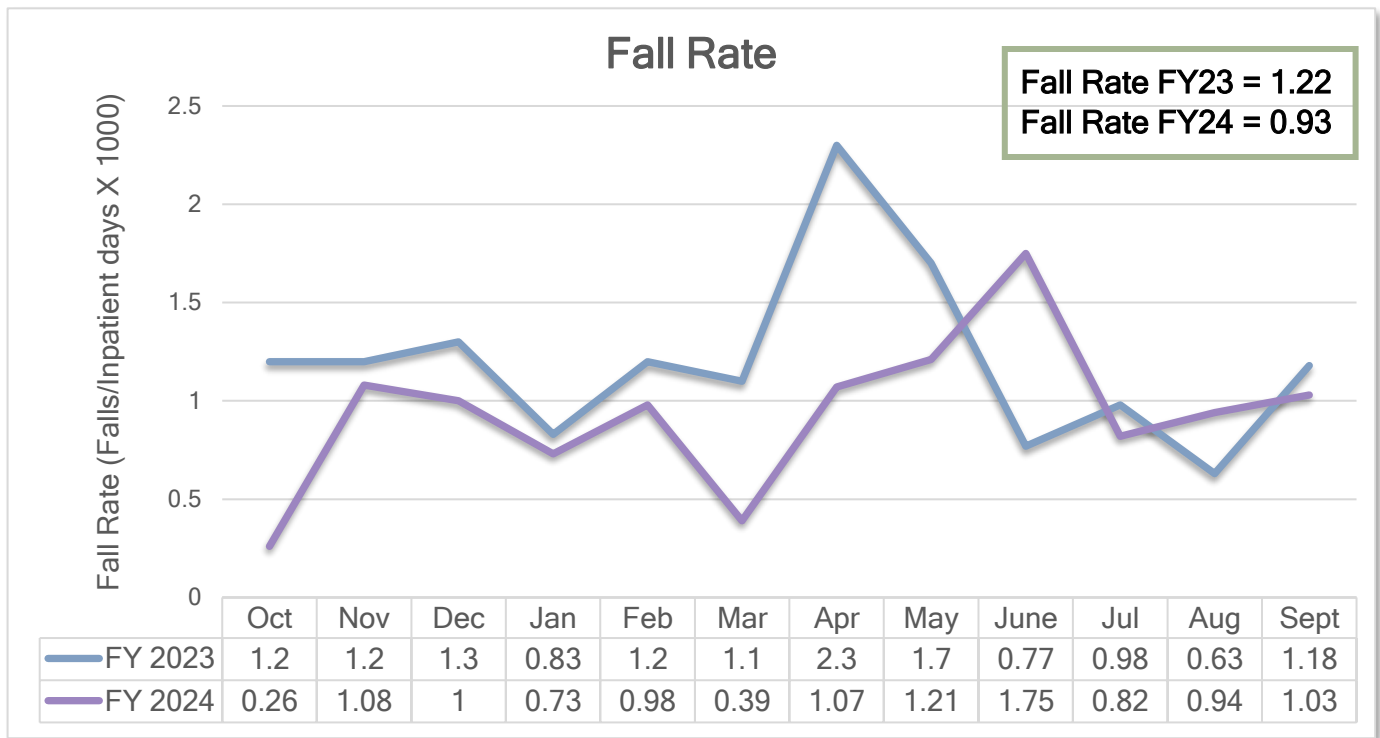


QUALITY & PATIENT SAFETY

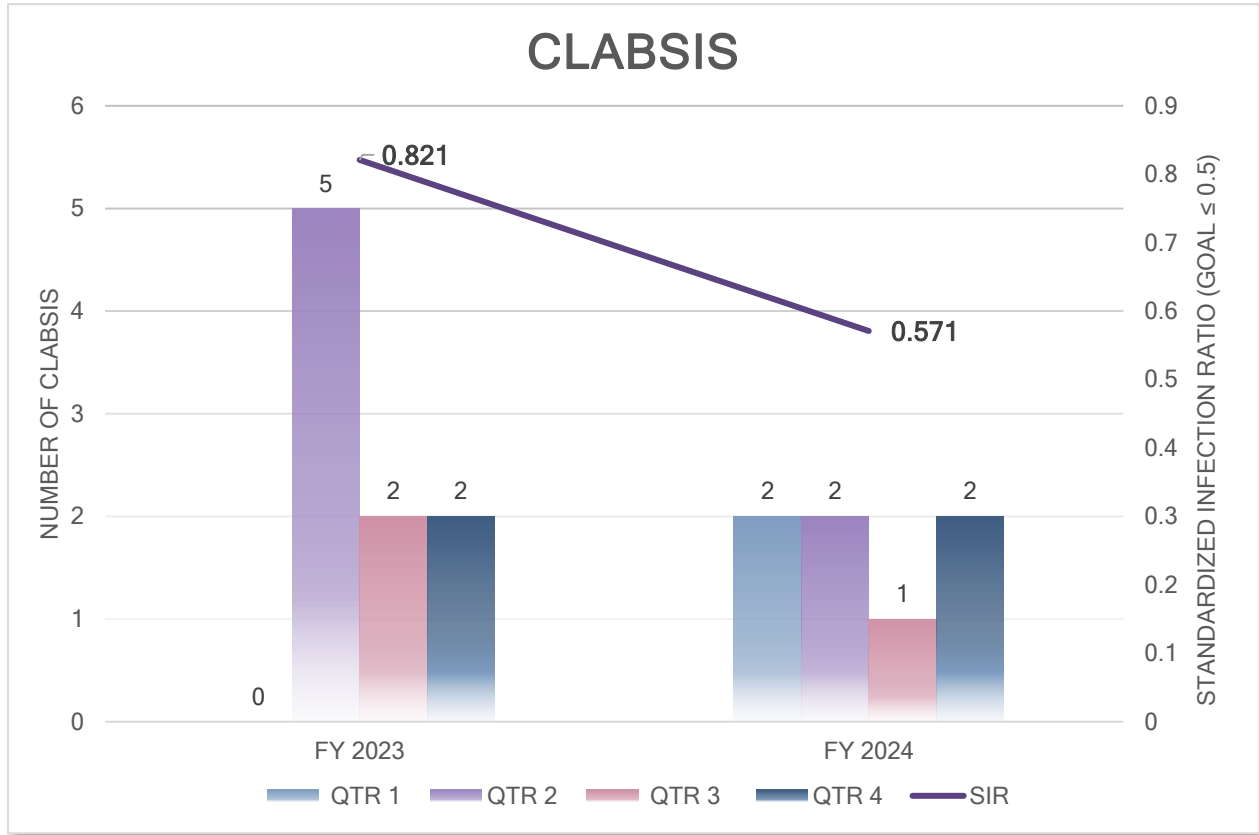
Nurse Sensitive Indicators FY 23-24

The Clinical Practice and Staffing Council (CPSC) actively monitors nurse-sensitive indicators to evaluate the connection between care delivery, patient safety, and changes in staffing or other influencing factors. By regularly tracking key outcomes in two-year cycles, the council has been able to identify trends and provide recommendations as needed. This data-driven approach ensures a continuous focus on improving patient safety and care quality through evidence-based strategies. The outcome indicators tracked by the council in FY 23-24 were: Patient Falls, CLABSI, and CAUTIs.

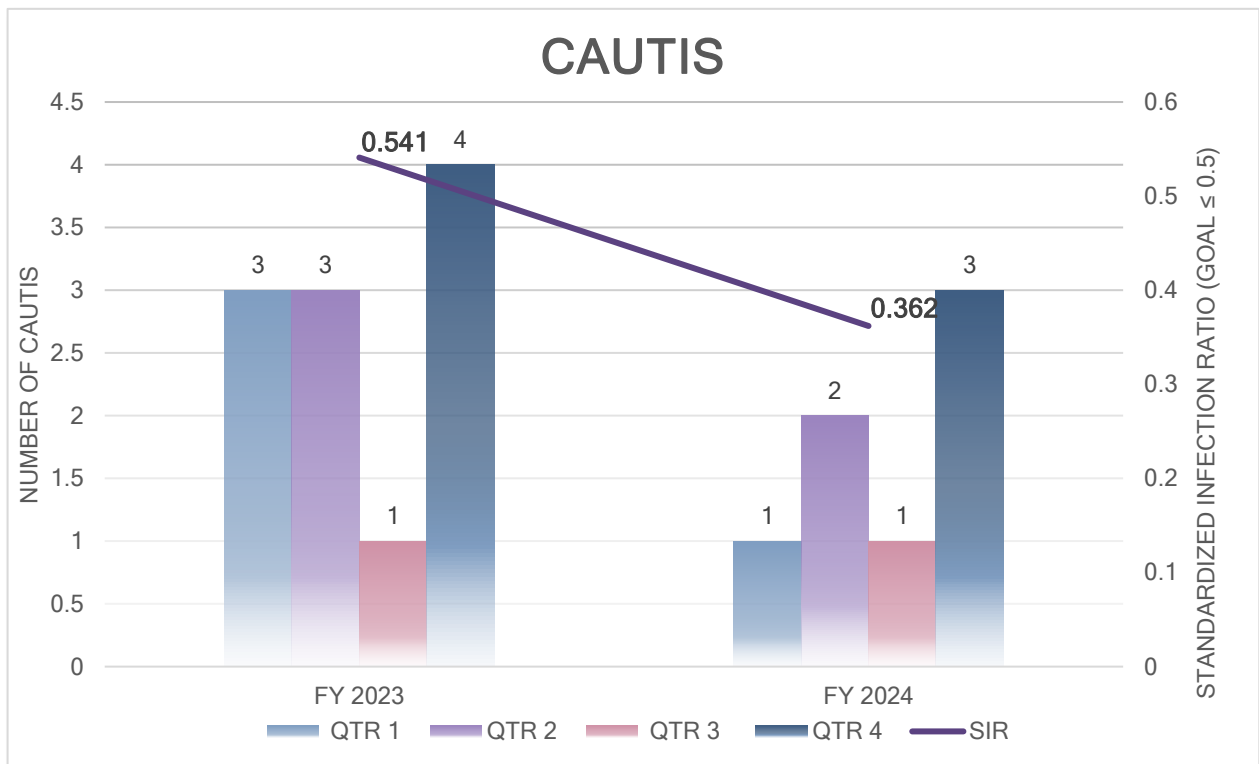
Patient Falls



CLABSIs



CAUTIs



Innovative Care Models: Virtual Nursing

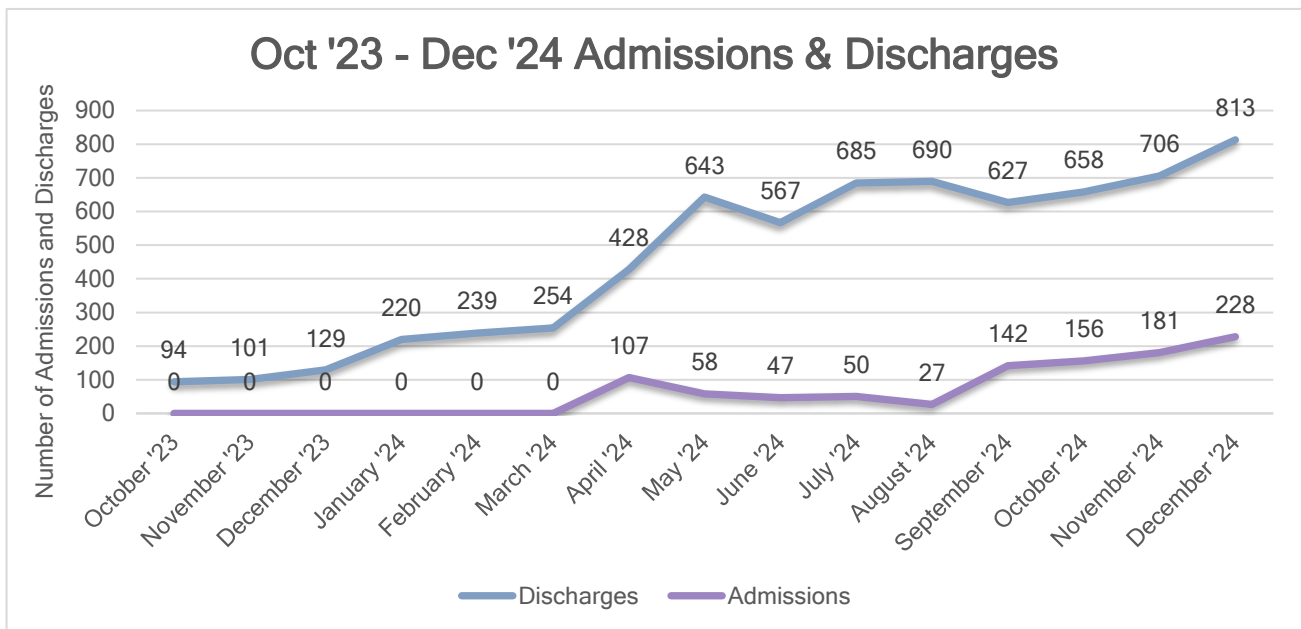


Virtual Nurses Claudia Soto, Bertha Alicia Huante & Adrian Monroy.

To address the increasing demands of patient care, UMC has embraced innovative nursing care models that leverage diverse roles and emerging technologies. Among these advancements is the implementation of a Virtual Nursing (VN) care model, which seamlessly integrates Virtual Nurses into the care team.

These Virtual Nurses play a critical role in supporting bedside nurses by managing tasks such as documentation and patient education, allowing direct-care nurses to focus more on hands-on patient care.

The pilot program for Virtual Nursing launched in September 2023 in the Emergency Surgical Unit (ESU), with an initial emphasis on creating a streamlined virtual discharge process. This required extensive collaboration and adaptability from both bedside and virtual nursing teams as workflows were meticulously developed and refined. Building on the success of virtual discharges, the program expanded to include virtual admissions and was eventually implemented across all medical-surgical units and the Emergency Department.





By introducing Virtual Nursing, UMC continues to demonstrate its commitment to leveraging technology and innovative practices to enhance patient care, reduce staff workload, and create more efficient workflows throughout the organization.

"It's a great feeling when you have a discharge order and it is there in the back of your head that it needs to be done, then the Virtual Nurse calls & says they have printed out the paperwork, it just needs to be taken to the patient. Then they give the instructions in that moment. The patients are able to go home quicker and I have more time with my other patients." - Raquel Montoya, RN III, ESU

Looking ahead, UMC will continue to explore ways to expand the Virtual Nurse (VN) role to further support bedside teams and enhance care delivery. Potential responsibilities under consideration include patient education, obtaining home medication lists, virtual rounding, chart reviews, and serving as a resource for new staff.

These opportunities align with UMC's commitment to innovation and adaptability in meeting patient care needs while optimizing nursing workflows. Through these efforts, UMC remains dedicated to advancing care models that improve both patient outcomes and staff experiences.

"Virtual nursing helps everyone by allowing individual time to teach our patients while giving bedside nurses more time to better care for them." - Bertha

Alicia Huante, VN



Nursing Uniform Standardization



In May 2024, UMC successfully transitioned to Royal Blue as the standardized uniform color for nurses across the organization. This decision was the culmination of years of thoughtful consideration and aligns with the uniform practices of other clinical departments within UMC. Adopting a standardized uniform color serves multiple purposes: it helps patients easily differentiate between members of the care team, streamlines communication, and reinforces the distinct professional identity of nurses at UMC.

The selection process was a collaborative effort, reflecting the voice of our nursing team. During Nurses Week in 2023, 472 nurses participated in the vote, with Royal Blue emerging as the clear favorite, securing 84% of the votes. This initiative emphasizes UMC's commitment to fostering unity, professionalism, and pride within the nursing community.



Tissue Analytics Implementation

In June 2024, UMC successfully implemented Tissue Analytics, a cutting-edge technology designed to enhance wound care processes. This initiative improves the accuracy and timeliness of wound assessments, streamlines documentation, and provides more effective tracking of pressure injuries. By leveraging advanced imaging and data capabilities, Tissue Analytics empowers clinical teams to deliver more precise, efficient, and consistent care, reinforcing UMC's commitment to excellence in patient outcomes and innovative healthcare solutions.



Documentation Burden Initiatives

In 2024, UMC implemented several initiatives aimed at reducing the documentation burden on clinical teams and streamlining workflows. These enhancements, including *Essential Clinical Datasets (ECD)*, *Clinical Leader Organizer (CLO)*, *Dynamic Documentation (Dyn Doc)*, and *ED Launch Point (EDLP)*, are designed to simplify processes for admissions, history and physical assessments, and discharges. These updates aligned UMC's electronic medical record (EMR) system with Cerner Model recommendations by eliminating duplicate sections and optimizing PowerForms, iView, and Mpages. These changes, informed by feedback from staff, were developed to enhance efficiency and improve the daily workflows of our clinical teams.

Other Key Initiatives for 2025:

- **Artisight Platform implementation**

This initiative will offer a platform for virtual sitter monitoring and set the infrastructure for other virtual monitoring applications.

- **Implementation of CARESCAPE™ Vital Sign Monitors**

Going live in early February, this new system will enable our teams to capture vital signs and seamlessly transmit them to the Cerner iView band with just one click.

- **Cerner Infusion Suite Launch**

This upcoming project will streamline IV orders and titrations by integrating them directly with IV pumps, enhancing workflow and patient care.

- **Addition of Rapid Response documentation into Cerner**

This modification will convert current Rapid Response and Code Blue documentation from paper into the electronic medical record.



Designations & Accreditations

In 2024, UMC continued to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to excellence in patient care, safety, and professional practice through the achievement of numerous designations and accreditations. These recognitions are a testament to the dedication, expertise, and collaborative efforts of our incredible teams and Associates, whose hard work and passion make these accomplishments possible. Each designation represents a step forward in our mission to provide exceptional healthcare services and uphold the highest standards of quality for the communities we serve. Below is a summary of the prestigious designations and accreditations earned this year.



2024 - A Year in Review:

- Level 1 Trauma Center Re-Verification
- 2024 Get With the Guidelines - Gold Plus Award
- American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) Quality Star Status
- Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA)
- IHI Age-Friendly Health System - Participant (all UMC clinics)
- IHI Age-Friendly Health System - Committed to Care Excellence (East & West Clinics)
- The Joint Commission Comprehensive Stroke Center Re-Certification
- The Joint Commission Triennial Hospital Re-Accreditation



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nursing Certifications



Over the past few years, UMC has intensified efforts to support nurses in achieving professional certification in their areas of specialty. Through initiatives like the ANCC's Success Pays® Program and other forms of financial and moral support, we have significantly increased the number of certified nurses across the organization. Currently, approximately *one in five bedside nurses* holds a professional certification, a testament to their dedication to advancing clinical expertise and excellence in patient care.

In FY 2024, **78 bedside nurses achieved certification for the first time**, marking a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to professional development. UMC remains steadfast in its goal to increase the number of certified nurses year over year, fostering a culture of continuous learning and exceptional care.



Annual Nursing Leadership Summit



Dr. Rose O. Sherman,
Keynote Speaker

On September 4, 2024, UMC hosted its third Annual Nursing Leadership Summit, centered around the theme *“Leading With Purpose.”* This year’s event featured Dr. Rose O. Sherman, Ed.D, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, as the keynote speaker. A best-selling author and editor of Nurse Leader journal, Dr. Sherman is nationally recognized for her expertise as an educator, researcher, and consultant. Her presentation offered invaluable insights on addressing key challenges in healthcare leadership,

including mentorship, retention, burnout, and navigating the evolving nursing workforce.

The summit also welcomed the return of Dr. Arthur Aguirre, Ph.D., who shared his expertise on Invitational Communication and its influence on team dynamics. To close the day, Training and Development Specialists, Tony Martinez and Monica Armendariz, delivered an engaging session on Emotional Contagion, highlighting its risks, potential benefits, and strategies to manage its effects effectively.

This annual event continues to serve as a cornerstone for the professional growth of our nursing department leaders, Educators, PI Coordinators, and Unit Council Chairs and Co-Chairs, fostering leadership development and collaboration within our nursing community.



Professional Clinical Program (PCP)



The Professional Clinical Program at UMC is dedicated to recognizing and rewarding nurses for their achievements and contributions throughout the year. This program not only celebrates excellence but also encourages nurses to engage in quality improvement initiatives and focus on their professional growth.

In 2024, the program achieved a significant milestone, with 62 nurses successfully completing it—the highest participation recorded to date. This accomplishment highlights our nurses' dedication to advancing their skills and enhancing patient care.



Advancing Professional Collaboration in Critical Care



In 2024, a dedicated group of UMC ICU nurses achieved a significant milestone by founding the first-ever El Paso Chapter of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). This chapter fills a long-standing gap in the city, creating a much-needed platform for critical care professionals to connect, collaborate, and advance their practice.

The chapter's current president, ICU Nurse Manager, Elida De Leon, has led this initiative with remarkable enthusiasm, actively recruiting new members and building a strong foundation for the chapter's success. By fostering professional collaboration, the chapter aims to provide critical care nurses in El Paso with access to valuable resources, networking opportunities, and educational events to enhance their skills and patient care outcomes.

This initiative not only highlights the leadership and vision of UMC's ICU nurses but also represents a significant step forward in uniting the critical care nursing community in the region. The El Paso AACN Chapter is poised to serve as a beacon of excellence and innovation in critical care nursing for years to come.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of CRITICAL-CARE NURSES

El Paso AACN Chapter

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About Us

El Paso AACN Chapter

AACN, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit association, is more than the world's largest specialty nursing organization - we are an exceptional community of acute and critical care nurses offering unwavering professional and personal support in pursuit of the best possible patient care.

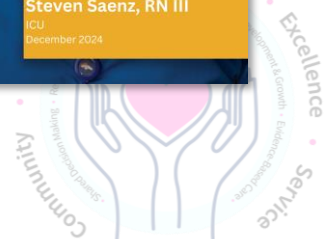
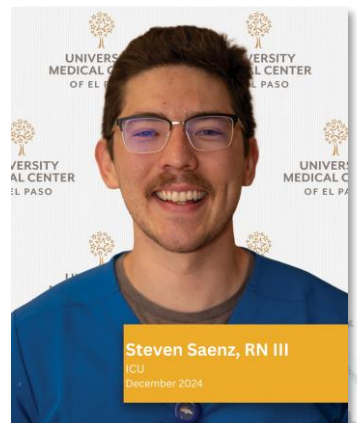
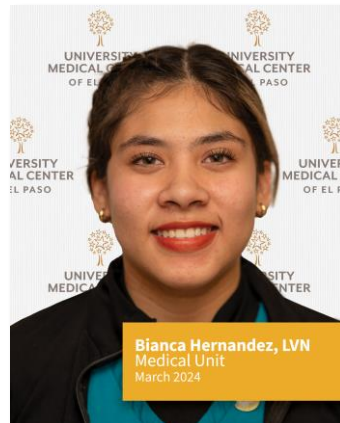
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AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

DAISY Award® Honorees

The DAISY Award® is a special honor given to extraordinary nurses for the compassionate contributions they make every day. It was created as a way to say “thank you” to nurses who have made a difference in the lives of patients and their families by going above and beyond in the care they provide.



DAISY® Team Award

The DAISY® Team Award is a special honor created to celebrate collaboration between two or more individuals, led by a direct-care nurse, who exceed the traditional role of nursing to make a meaningful difference in patient care.

The 2023 DAISY® Team Award, presented in early 2024, was awarded to a multidisciplinary team of ICU nurses and a respiratory therapist. This team was nominated by the father of a patient who was profoundly moved by the extraordinary care and compassion they demonstrated during his daughter's 35-day stay in the ICU.

This recognition highlights the incredible impact our teams have on the lives of our patients and their families every day. Their dedication and teamwork serve as a testament to the exceptional care delivered at UMC, where collaboration and compassion remain at the heart of everything we do.

"I will always be thankful for the men and women who dedicated their time and effort to save my daughter, although if not for that terrible accident, I would have never met them." -Cesar Arrellanes



Christopher Morales, Hugo Acosta Gasson, Matthew Contreras, Steven Saenz, Elida De Leon, Ashley Marinussen, Diana Lopez, Carolina Urbina, Fernanda Nevarez, & Miguel Reveles.



DAISY® Nurse Leader & UMC Emerging Leader Awards

A true leader is one who ignites the spark of leadership in those around them and serves as a constant guide toward growth and progress.

During the 44th Annual Service Awards, we had the privilege of recognizing two nursing leaders for their outstanding contributions. Vanesa Cruz-Armendariz, Director of the Medical Surgical Unit, exemplified exemplary leadership and service within her relatively short time in her role, earning UMC's Emerging Leader Award.



Cynthia Martinez, Director of Nursing Education, was honored with the DAISY® Nurse Leader Award. This award acknowledges those who, though not typically engaged in direct patient care, have created environments where compassionate and skillful care flourishes.

Vanesa and Cynthia have both demonstrated exceptional leadership, fostering growth and collaboration. Their dedication to advancing nursing excellence and creating positive, impactful change reflects their commitment to the advancement of our nursing community.



Guiding Light Award



The Guiding Light Award was introduced in 2024 to celebrate the exceptional contributions of nursing preceptors who play a vital role in shaping the future of the profession. Symbolizing the steadfastness of a lighthouse, the award recognized mentors who provided unwavering guidance, resilience, and expertise to new nurses as they navigated the complexities of healthcare. Like a lighthouse illuminating the way, these preceptors served as pillars of knowledge and support, fostering growth and confidence in the nurses they guided.

In May 2024, the inaugural Guiding Light Award was presented to Yolanda Hernandez from the Surgical Unit. Nominated by her former preceptee, Benjamin Vallejo, Yolanda was recognized for her “joyful personality, supportive attitude, and knowledgeable skills.” Benjamin described her mentorship as transformative, sharing, “She was like a mama bird caring for her baby. She watched over me during our shifts and gradually let me go on my own, letting the baby bird fly the nest.”



This new award marks the beginning of an annual tradition to honor preceptors who embody the qualities of mentorship and leadership, ensuring their vital contributions are celebrated for years to come.



FUTURE OUTLOOK

Rising to New Opportunities in 2025

As we look ahead to 2025, we are inspired by the progress we have made and the possibilities that lie before us. The coming year presents new opportunities for growth as we strive to meet the ever-increasing needs of our staff, patients, and community. Just as our patients remain at the heart of everything we do, so too does our commitment to creating a work environment where people feel valued, supported, and inspired to thrive.

In 2025, we will focus on advancing initiatives that prioritize staff well-being, professional development, and collaboration while continuing to innovate in patient care and safety. By building on the strong foundation of excellence established in previous years, we are poised to make meaningful strides in fostering a culture where every team member can contribute to and share in our collective success.

Together, we will rise to meet the challenges ahead, uplift one another, and continue our shared mission of delivering exceptional care to those who entrust us with their health.

Key Priorities for 2025

- ***Successful completion of the Pathway to Excellence® Survey***
- ***Conversion of the 8th Floor into an Observation Unit***
- ***Establishment of ECMO Service Line***
- ***Expansion of total number of Critical Care beds***
- ***Opening of an Urgent Care Clinic in East El Paso***

