

Brenda Oehler, MSN, RN, NE-BC

Director, Nursing Operations

Professional Summary

Experienced and dedicated nursing leader with over two decades of progressive leadership in acute care settings. Passionate about mentoring future nurse leaders, advancing evidence-based practices, and creating exceptional patient and family experiences through innovation and operational excellence.

Education

Master of Science in Nursing – Nursing Leadership
Allen College, Waterloo, IA — December 2008

Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Mount Mercy College, Cedar Rapids, IA — May 1995

Certifications

Nurse Executive – Board Certified (NE-BC)
American Nurses Credentialing Center — Since September 2020

Licensure

Registered Nurse, State of Iowa — License #093755 (Since 1995)

Professional Experience

UnityPoint Health – St. Luke's Hospital
Cedar Rapids, IA

- Director, Emergency Services and Nursing Operations (October 2025-Present)
 - Oversight of 2 Emergency Departments, Air Ambulance, Outpatient Infusion Center, and several operational departments. Responsible for strategic planning, budgeting, and operational leadership.
- Director, Nursing Operations (Nov 2013 – October 2025)
 - Oversight of 21+ acute adult inpatient and operational departments. Responsible for strategic planning, budgeting, and operational leadership.

- Nurse Manager, 5 West – Urology/GYN/ENT (Feb 2011 – Nov 2013)
- Advanced Practice Nurse, Nursing Outcomes (Dec 2008 – Feb 2011)
- RN Supervisor, Hospice (Jul 2008 – Dec 2008)
- RN Supervisor, 3 West (Aug 2000 – Jul 2008)
- Staff RN, 3 West – Surgical (Jun 1995 – Aug 2000)

Leadership & Key Skills

- Leadership Mentorship
- Project Management
- Nursing Productivity and Budget Management
- Crisis Management
- Accreditation Writing
- Strategic Planning
- Policy & Procedure Development

Major Accomplishments

- Oversight of transition of the centralized staffing office to a system-wide Workforce Optimization Center
- Presenter, Magnet & Pathways Conference in 2025.
- Created and implemented a centralized staffing office for hospital departments
- Led the transformation of two surgical units into a 46-bed Surgical Specialty Unit
- Developed Clinical Nurse Leader roles to support bedside care
- Spearheaded COVID-19 response, including opening a 25-bed COVID unit and expanding hospital capacity
- Executive sponsor for enterprise-wide productivity software standardization
- Implemented AvaSys TeleSitter® system, reducing patient falls and sitter costs
- Expanded float pool from <10 to >40 team members across three pools
- Transitioned inpatient dialysis from vendor-based to hospital-owned service
- Revamped policy oversight and competency assessments using the Donna Wright Model

Awards & Recognition

- 2022 – Nancy Skogsbergh & Edna Lamb Nursing Leadership Award
- 2019 – Iowa Organization of Nursing Leaders, Nurse Leader Award
- 2005 – 100 Great Iowa Nurses Recognition

Professional Affiliations

- American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) – Member since 2015
- Iowa Organization of Nurse Leaders (IONL) – Member since 2008
- - Secretary/Treasurer, District B (2019–2022)
- - President, District B (2023)
- - State Board Member (2023–Present)
- - Secretary/Treasurer, State Board (2024)

- American Nurses Association – Member since 2020
- Iowa Nurses Association – Member since 2020
- Great Iowa Nurse Selection Committee (2022–Present)

References

Available upon request.