

MELISSA T. FRITZ, DNP, RN, ACNS-BC, CENP, FAONL

CAREER PROFILE

High performing and relationship-oriented nursing leader with a strong work ethic and clinical skills to deliver results in fast paced matrixed environment. Suitably applies professional and academic experiences to drive the improvement of the overall health care experience for patients. Ensures delivery of high quality, mission driven, and safe patient care. Proven record of achieving high-level performance in all strategic focus areas by developing exceptional nursing leadership teams, developing an engaged workforce culture, and mobilizing subject matter experts to drive performance improvement.

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

HealthPartners

2021-Current

An \$8.8B integrated and not-for-profit health care provider and health insurance company that serves 1.8 million medical and dental health plan members nationwide, includes 8 hospitals and 90 clinics throughout the Twin Cities and Western Wisconsin. Health Partners system includes a multispecialty group practice of more than 1,800 physicians that serve more than 1.2 million patients and employs over 28,000 people.

Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Care- Methodist Hospital, St. Louis Park, MN (2021 to Present)

A 426-bed community hospital in Saint Louis Park and part of the HealthPartners system. Methodist Hospital is renowned for high quality patient care and is recognized as an area leader in cardiovascular care, maternity care, neurology, and cancer care. Methodist has been recognized as a Watson Health 100 Top Hospitals and a U.S. News and World Report named Methodist a 2024-2025 Best Regional Hospital.

Methodist sees about 40,000 patients annually and over 60,000 emergency center care patients are treated annually.

The Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Care provides administrative leadership and management oversight to departments, sites, and product lines reporting to this position. Provides strategic direction and consultation on nursing and patient care practice across the Health Partners System. Participates as a senior leader and hospital administrator.

- Served as the system's Nursing Executive Committee chair for 2024 and led the system in creating its first ever system nursing strategic plan
- Developed and launched the hospital's first shared governance program in 2023 and expanded to the system in 2024
- Improved hospital acquired pressure injuries (HAPIs) reportable injuries from 36 to 13 reportables from 2024 to 2025
- Improved communication about medications from 59.6% in 2024 to 64.5% in 2025 YTD
- Decreased CAUTI rate of 1,000 device days from .93 in 2024 to .62 in 2025 YTD and CLABSI rate per 1,000 device days from .54 in 2024 to .30 in 2025 YTD
- Established and launched the hospital's department safety huddle process, leading to an improvement in the culture of safety results from a 90% score on how you would rate your unit/work area on patient safety in 2022 to a 94% score in 2025

- Led Care without Delay efforts at Methodist Hospital to reduce actual length of stay as a percent of the geometric mean from 129% in 2022 to 118% in 2024 and reduced average length of stay from 4.35 in 2022 to 4.05 in 2024
- Initiated the hospital's recruitment and retention steering committee, which resulted in a 14% reduction in turnover and a 6.83% reduction in the vacancy rate from 2022 to 2023 leading to 4.8M in cost savings
- Spearheaded the development of a formal Collaboratory with the University of Minnesota School of Nursing to build a sustainable nursing workforce strategy, strengthen academic practice collaboration, and proactively address future staffing and retention challenges in 2025

Allina Health

2006 - 2021

A \$4.3B not-for-profit health care system with 12 hospitals, 90+ clinics, and 15 pharmacy sites in MN and western WI. Recognized by US News and World Reports in eight specialties with Abbott Northwestern as the number one ranked hospital in the Twin Cities. Allina Health has ~30,000 employees who support 109,722 inpatient admissions, 1.5M outpatient admissions, 336,019 emergency room visits, and a total of 94,343 inpatient and outpatient surgical procedures per year.

Director of Nursing Operations and Critical Care- Abbott Northwestern Hospital, Minneapolis, MN (2020 to 2021)

The largest non-for-profit hospital in the Twin Cities and part of the Allina Health Network, Abbott Northwestern Hospital is a \$1.4B 686-bed teaching and specialty hospital. It is recognized as an ANCC Magnet designated hospital and supports over 36,000 patient admissions, 60,000 emergency room visits, and 24,000 surgeries annually.

The Director of Nursing Operations and Critical Care oversight is responsible for strategic and operational leadership for 275 registered nurses, allied health professionals and 5 nursing leader direct reports. Accountable for critical care department budgets, ensures compliance in delivering high quality and safe patient care, oversees compliance with best practice guidelines, and works with physician partners to ensure continuity and care that is best practice. Plays a key role in actively running the daily operations of the ANW Nursing Department, specifically throughput and financial operations.

- Served as Operations Chief for Service Employees International Union (SEIU) contingency planning
- Developed ANW Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee
- Initiated a daily staffing tracking tool and nursing productivity biweekly meeting in February of 2021, which resulted in a 4% increase in ANW productivity index and ultimately 4M in savings
- Developed and delivered finance education presentations to all inpatient managers to enhance finance and business acumen
- Developed monthly Community Labor and Staffing meetings to allow leaders to review and present YTD data on productivity, total overtime, incidental overtime, hiring and agency
- Led the morning discharge rapid process improvement work that led to an increase in morning discharges from 11% to 18% in 1st month of initiation

Director of Critical Care and Telemetry - Abbott Northwestern, Minneapolis, MN, 2019 to 2020

The Director for the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit, Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit, Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit, Critical Care Float Pool, Rapid Response, Cardiac Surgery step-down Unit, Cardiac Intervention Unit, Cardiac Transplant and LVAD Unit, Cardiac Rehabilitation, and the Allina Health Remote Monitoring Center. Provided strategic and operational leadership for planning, implementation, and improvement of systems and processes that supported the patient care delivery model. Managed department budgets. In this role, direct reports included 8 Managers, 6 Supervisors, 1 Clinical Practice Coordinator, and responsibility for 600 FTEs of registered nurses and allied health professionals.

- Led the telemetry units in overall reduction of falls and a reduction of falls with harm by 10%

- Changed 100% of nursing variable staffing plans to meet benchmark guidelines while improving clinical outcomes.
- Expanded Vascular unit from 18 to 24 beds to enhance patient flow

Director of Patient Care - United Hospital, St. Paul, MN, 2016 to 2019

United Hospital is a 546 –bed tertiary care center with 24,000 inpatient admissions, 52,000 emergency room visits, and 15,000 surgeries per year with a \$570M annual budget.

Provided strategic and operational leadership for Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit, Neuroscience Step-Down Unit, Float Pool, Rapid Response, IV Resource, Administrative Supervisors, Staffing Office, Patient Placement, and Nursing Support Coordinators. Provided operational leadership to ensure the delivery of safe and high-quality patient centered care within all areas of responsibility, provided support to leaders to enable them to manage nursing department budgets, developed staff and leaders, led nursing practice, and promoted evidence-based practice. In this role, direct reports included 4 Managers, 3 Supervisors, and responsibility for 300 FTEs of registered nurses and allied health professionals.

- Developed span of control recommendations for United Hospital and ultimately rolled out to additional Allina Health sites. Recommendations led to hiring for administrative assistant support to patient care managers to allow them to have more time to establish relationships with their employees
- Led a multidisciplinary team in the creation of a Hospital Wide Capacity Management Plan for United Hospital with plan to spread to other metro facilities
- During tenure as co-chair and chair of the patient experience pillar, implemented and hardwired leader rounding, bedside shift report, and hourly rounding. United Hospital moved from the 43rd percentile to the 77th percentile for overall rating
- As a direct result of mentoring frontline nurse managers, responsible departments achieved Sustainable Engagement Rollup Score of 84% 2018 employee experience survey
- 100% Employee Engagement Manager Effectiveness on 2017 employee engagement survey
- Co-led the team to achieve Comprehensive Stroke Certification through the Det Norske Veritas (DNV) in 2016 and 2017
- Initiated neuroscience and patient care resources safety review
- Developed Nursing Leader Toolkit for United Hospital Nursing Leaders.
- Served as the lead for hourly rounding rollout process for all Allina Health Hospitals

Patient Care Manager, United Hospital, St. Paul, MN, 2013-2017

Patient Care Manager for Neuroscience Step-Down Unit. Responsibility for staffing and financial management of department. Developed nursing staff through ongoing coaching and mentoring. Managed clinical competence of nursing staff to ensure delivery of excellent patient care and achievement of quality outcomes.

- Moved patient experience communication with nursing domain from below the 20th percentile to above the 60th percentile and sustained improvement
- Unit received the Quarterly Award for Overall Rating in Q2 of 2017
- Significantly improved employee engagement scores and manager effectiveness
- Led hourly rounding initiative that was ultimately spread house wide, successful implementation was evidenced by improvement in staff responsiveness, RN communication, pain, and overall rating

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Includes employment as a Spine Clinical Nurse Specialist – Abbott Northwestern Hospital, Neuroscience Clinical Nurse Specialist – United Hospital, Neurology Program Leader – United Hospital, Staff Nurse/CV Same Stay Unit – United Hospital

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Baylor University, Waco, TX

Doctor of Nursing Practice - Executive Nurse Leadership

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Master of Science in Nursing

Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

BOARD & ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP:

2026	Collette Health Clinical Advisory Group
2023- Current	Minnesota Alliance for Patient Safety, Board Member
2022 – 2026	Normandale Advisory Council Member
2020 – Current	Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing, Board Member
2020 – 2022	Florence Health, Advisory Board Member
2019 - 2020	Minneapolis Heart Institute Executive Board, Board Member

PUBLICATIONS

2023	Fritz, M. & Gresham, A. (2024). Diversity, equity, inclusion: Where do you start? <i>Nursing Administration Quarterly</i> , 48(1), 5-10. https://doi.org/10.1097/naq.0000000000000614
2011	Fritz, M. & Fritzlar, S. (2012). Interdisciplinary emergency department acute stroke case review decreases door to needle times. <i>Stroke</i> . Abstract 3967: Interdisciplinary Emergency Department (ED) Acute Stroke Case Review Decreases Door to Needle (DTN) Times Stroke (ahajournals.org)

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

2025	A NuPath Forward: Reimagining the Student Nurse Role with Innovative Design Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing Conference, Duluth, MN.
2024	Creating Winning Alliances, A Workforce Strategy for Today's Reality Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing Conference, Duluth, MN.
2024	Creating Alliances Isn't Just for Winning a Reality Show! How to Create a Winning Strategy for Developing a Sustainable Workforce in the Post Pandemic Healthcare Environment American Organization for Nursing Leadership Conference, New Orleans, LA.
2012	Interdisciplinary Emergency Department Acute Stroke Case Review Decreases Door to Needle Times (D2N). International Stroke Conference, New Orleans, LA.
2011	The Effect of the Clinical Nurse Specialist: Utilizing Prescribing Authority to Influence the Quality and Cost Effectiveness of Outcomes. University of Minnesota, Nursing Research Day, Minneapolis, MN.

- 2011 **Optimizing the Full Potential of the CNS Role: Using Prescriptive Authority to Influence Quality and Cost Effectiveness of Patient Care.** Minnesota Affiliate of National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists, Minneapolis, MN.
- 2010 **Growing Your Own CNS.** American Nurses Credentialing Center National Magnet Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

MEDIA & ORAL PRESENTATIONS

- 2026 **Serving the Nursing Profession While Growing as a Leader: The Impact of AONL Engagement**
Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing Conference, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota
- 2026 **Hospital Matters: Can “discharge lounges” help ease hospital boarding?**
Minnesota Hospital Association Podcast
- 2025 **The Power of Partnering with Patients for Safe Care**
Minnesota Alliance for Patient Safety, Roseville, MN.
- 2025 **Creating Synergies: Aligning Cross-Departmental Goals Between Clinicians and Finance Leaders for Better Patient Outcomes**
CNO Congress Conference, Orlando, Florida
- 2025 **The Evolving Role of Nurses in Healthcare**
Park Nicollett Virtual Coffee and Chat Series, St. Louis Park, Minnesota
- 2025 **Collective Bargaining and Negotiations**
Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing Conference, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota
- 2023 **Looking Ahead: How Do We Address the Nursing Shortage in the US?**
Chief Nursing Officer Congress Conference, Orlando, Florida
- 2023 **Creating in Mentorship and Workforce Progression**
Chief Nursing Officer Congress Conference, Orlando, Florida
- 2023 **CNO Panel: Lessons Learned from Negotiations**
Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing 2023 Spring Conference
- 2012 **Door to Needle Initiative: IV tPA, Allina Best in Care Series**
Allina Hospitals & Clinics, Minneapolis, MN
- 2012 **Managing Atrial Fibrillation to Prevent Strokes,** National Stroke Association Lecture Series, United Hospital, St. Paul, MN
- 2011 **Stroke 101,** New Hire Series
United Hospital, St. Paul, MN
- 2011 **Different Strokes for Different Folks- Identifying Stroke Symptoms,** Community Education, United Hospital, St. Paul, MN
- 2010 **In House Stroke Code,** Hospitalist M & M Series
United Hospital, St. Paul, MN
- 2010 **Telehealth for Acute Stroke Codes,** Telehealth Education Series
River Falls, River Falls, WI
- 2010 **Intervening to Prevent Recurrent Stroke and TIA: Follow-up Management in the Primary Care Setting,** National Stroke Association Lecture Series, Allina Medical Clinic, Woodbury, MN

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing
American Organization for Nursing Leadership

AWARDS/HONORS

Personal

- Key Contributor Award, Allina Health, April 2020
- Nursing Excellence Award, Nursing Leadership, May 2016
- Key Contributor Award, Allina Health, September 2016
- Key Contributor Award, Allina Hospitals & Clinics, September 2011
- Key Contributor Award, Allina Hospitals & Clinics, February 2011

System

Allina Best Care Series, Stroke Door to Needle Times, 2011

CERTIFICATIONS/ACHIEVEMENTS

2025	American Organization for Nursing Leadership Fellow Designation, FAONL
2021 – 2022	American Organization for Nursing Leadership Director Fellowship
2019 - Present	Certified in Executive Nursing Practice
2016 - 2017	Clinical Pastoral Education Certification
2011	Allina Advanced Training Program Certificate
2011- 2015	Certified Neuroscience Registered Nurse, American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
2010-Present	Certified Clinical Nurse Specialist, American Nurses Credentialing Center
2006-Present	Registered Nurse, Minnesota Board of Nursing

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

2026	American Organization for Nursing Leadership, Publications Committee
2024- 2026	American Organization for Nursing Leadership, Conference Planning Committee
2023	American Organization for Nursing Leadership, Nurse Manager and Director Fellowship Selection Taskforce
2021- Current	Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing, Mentor Committee
2020-2024	Minnesota Organization of Leaders in Nursing, Marketing and Communications Chair
2020 - 2021	American Heath Association, Heart Walk, Executive Leadership Team