

2026 WCN Annual Nursing Workforce Summit

Friday, August 07, 2026
Glacier Canyon Conference Center
Wisconsin Dells, WI



Agenda

7:30–8:30 AM	Registration, Coffee, and Conversation Exhibits Open
8:30-8:45 AM	Welcome: Celebrating 20 Years of Nursing Workforce Leadership Kerri Kliminski, EdD, MSN, RN, WCN Board President
8:45-10:15 AM	<i>The State of the Wisconsin Nursing Workforce: RN, LPN, & Nursing Faculty</i> In this session, participants will receive an overview of the current LPN, RN and Nurse Educator Survey Reports from WCN Research Team leaders. Since 2010 findings from these reports have been used to inform nursing education, practice and workforce initiatives. Data is collected biannually at the time of RN and LPN license renewal on alternating years. Nursing education and nurse faculty data is collected every two years in collaboration with 2 and 4 year program administrators. 8:45 – 9:10 am 2025 LPN Survey Report – Katie Gillespie, DNP, RN, CPH, CNE, FAAN 9:10 – 9:30 am 2024 RN Survey Report – Roberta Pawlak, PhD, RN, NEA-BC 9:30 – 9: 50 am 2024 Educator & Education Faculty Report – Gail Hanson Brenner, PhD, RN, CNE <i>Wisconsin’s Nursing Workforce Forecast: Looking Ahead to 2040</i> The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) projects a severe structural deficit of between 12,000 and 23,000 registered nurses (RNs) by 2040. In this session, participants will receive an overview of the DWD <i>2040 Nursing Supply and Demand Report</i> and discuss the impact of an aging baby boomer population requiring higher levels of health care, coupled with a shrinking working -age labor force as major factors impacting Wisconsin’s nursing shortage. 9:50 – 10:10 am Analyst Tom Walsh -Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
10:15 – 10:45 AM	BREAK EXHIBITS
10:45 – 11:15 AM	<i>Workforce Topic 1: Recruitment, Retention and Wisconsin Nurses Generational and Diverse Differences</i> Five generations are now working side by side in healthcare, while workforce diversity continues to reshape how organizations recruit, engage, and retain talent. This session explores how generational and cultural differences can become a competitive advantage, helping organizations strengthen workforce stability, improve retention, and build more inclusive teams. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to support today's evolving workforce. Expert Overview: Michelle Hehman, MSN, RN, NEA BC Director of Nursing, Clinical Partnerships Health Carousel
11:15 AM -12:00 PM	Guided Table Discussion – How Does This Fit for Wisconsin
12:00-1:15 PM	WCN Nursing Workforce Awards Luncheon
1:15-1:45 PM	<i>Workforce Topic 2: Artificial Intelligence Use in Nursing Education & Practice</i> This session explores how artificial intelligence is shaping nursing education and clinical practice, with a focus on building AI literacy for nurse educators, clinicians, and leaders. Participants will examine

	practical frameworks, approaches to equitable and responsible AI use, and workforce implications, and engage in discussion about how AI is impacting nursing across Wisconsin. Expert Overview: Ann Wieben, PhD, RN, NI-BC Assistant Professor, Nursing Informatics University of Wisconsin Madison School of Nursing
1:45 PM-2:15 PM	Guided Table Discussion – AI Use in Nursing Education & Practice
2:15 – 3:00 PM	BREAK Ice Cream Social
3:00 – 4:00 PM	<i>Connecting Wisconsin Nursing Workforce to Organizational Decisions & Health Policy</i> Health policy defines the regulatory and financial frameworks that govern patient care and the nursing profession. Over the past year key pieces of nursing workforce legislation – the APRN Modernization Act, BSN Clinical Instructor, and eligibility of DACA recipients to hold a state nursing license - have been signed into law in Wisconsin. This session will describe the resulting health policy including changes in the Wisconsin Nurse Practice Act and steps for implementation. Participants will leave informed and able to make nursing workforce decisions that can strengthen nursing practice and education. State Leader: Secretary Dan Hereth Wisconsin Department of Safety & Professional Services
4:00-4:15 PM	Call to Action & Next Steps