



♥ A Union of Nurses &
Health Professionals

August 2026



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Workplace Violence

Safety in Healthcare Requires Leadership, Resources, and Accountability

On July 28, 2026, nurses and health professionals from Mary Rutan Hospital and their family, friends, and supporters [packed the city council chambers](#) at Bellefontaine City Hall, to raise serious concerns about workplace violence at Mary Rutan Hospital and to call for greater collaboration between hospital leadership, law enforcement, and city officials to protect those providing patient care.

In just the first six months of this year, nurses at Mary Rutan reported a dozen workplace violence incidents, including harassment, intimidation, verbal threats, and physical assaults.

Frontline nurses reported a series of disturbing incidents that demonstrate the growing safety risks facing healthcare workers, including:



- A patient who arrived in the emergency department without being searched by hospital security and was later found to be carrying a loaded firearm.
- A separate incident in which a patient who had already been searched by law enforcement was later discovered to still be armed.
- A patient became violent and destructive in the emergency department, requiring three separate calls to law enforcement before an officer remained with the patient until transfer to another facility.

Nurses from the hospital felt compelled to bring their concerns to city council because no one else seemed to be acting as though ensuring a safe environment at the hospital was their responsibility. For example:

- Mary Rutan Hospital employs a single security guard to patrol its entire campus, including the hospital and outlying buildings.
- Members of the Bellefontaine Police Department told nurses that the city prosecutor had directed them not to arrest or charge anyone committing offenses inside the hospital.
- Neither the city prosecutor nor hospital administration was meaningfully responsive to requests from nurses and the Ohio Nurses Association to meet to discuss concerns about workplace violence.

At the meeting, Bellefontaine City Councilmembers listened with compassion, but did not seem to realize they could be -- and should be -- part of the solution.

Ensuring that hospitals and other healthcare facilities are safe for everyone who works and seeks care is not the responsibility of a single person or entity. It is a complex issue, and it will take all of us -- frontline caregivers, hospital administration, facility security, local law enforcement, and local elected officials -- working together toward solutions that work in each community and facility.

Unfortunately, workplace violence in healthcare facilities is not unique to Mary Rutan Hospital. According to the ONA's [2026 Workforce Safety Report](#), nearly 70% of direct-care nurses across Ohio experienced workplace violence in the past year and more than half are considering leaving their direct-care roles due to that violence.

At Mary Rutan Hospital and at nearly every hospital across Ohio, there are serious gaps in the policies, procedures, and emergency response protocols intended to protect nurses, health professionals, patients, and visitors. It's time we all work together to fix them.



Advance Your Nursing Career with a Graduate Degree from WGU

Graduate nursing education prepares nurses to lead, teach, and expand access to care. WGU's flexible, competency-based MSN programs help working professionals advance their careers while continuing to serve their communities.



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Legislative Update

Summer & Fall Festivals Key Opportunity to Connect with State Legislators

The Ohio legislature is in recess until after the November general election, but now is the perfect time to engage with your state representatives and state senators about important healthcare issues. Look for your legislators (and state legislative candidates) at county fairs, parades, festivals, or around town.

Below, you will find brief descriptions of legislation the Ohio Nurses Association has prioritized, but you don't need to be familiar with specific legislation when you talk to your state legislators. What legislators most need is information from their constituents (you!) about what's really happening in healthcare settings.

When you have an opportunity to speak with your state legislator, simply tell them your story. What is staffing like at your facility? Are you concerned about workplace violence? What do you need to provide the level of healthcare your patients need? What do your patients need to be able to access high-quality, local healthcare services?

Armed with information about what their constituents—both nurses and patients—are experiencing in their districts, legislators will better understand and appreciate the importance of healthcare legislation when they return to Columbus.

Safe Staffing

[House Bill 521](#), sponsored by Rep. Lett (Columbus) and Rep. Cockley (Columbus), is known as the Ohio Nurse Workforce and Safe Patient Act. HB 521 would establish enforceable minimum nurse-to-patient staffing standards in Ohio hospitals, while also investing in workforce recruitment and retention through initiatives such as a nursing student loan-to-grant program. The legislation is built around a core principle that nurses across Ohio consistently describe in testimony and advocacy meetings: understaffing is not only a workforce shortage issue, but also a patient safety issue.

[House Bill 535](#), sponsored by Rep. Lorenz (Powell), and [Senate Bill 373](#), sponsored by Sen. Blessing (Colerain Township) and Sen. Antonio (Lakewood), would strengthen hospital staffing committees and accountability. These bills take a complementary approach to HB 521, by strengthening hospital staffing committees and ensuring direct-care nurses have meaningful authority in staffing plan development. The legislation would strengthen transparency, accountability, and oversight to ensure that staffing plans are consistently implemented at the unit level.

APRN Practice Authority

[House Bill 508](#), sponsored by Rep. Gross (Sylvania Township) and Rep. Baker (Cincinnati), is known as the Better Access to Health Care Act. This legislation would allow certain experienced Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to practice independently without a Standard Care Arrangement (SCA) after meeting specified education, certification, and practice requirements. It would also update numerous statutes to recognize APRNs in areas historically limited to physician authority, including aspects of admissions, follow-up care, and other healthcare decision-making functions.

Whether the issue is staffing, workplace violence, scope of practice, workforce retention, or healthcare access, the voices of frontline caregivers must continue to shape the future of healthcare policy in Ohio.



Be Part Of A Different Health Care System With Army Medicine

The Army Nurse Corps provides unmatched care to military members, families, and retirees worldwide, while also supporting humanitarian missions, and natural disasters in one of five specialties: Critical Care, Mental Health, Perioperative, Emergency.



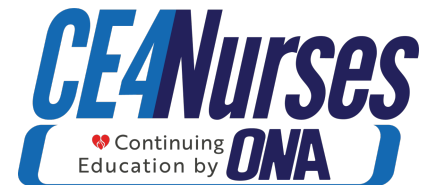
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Continuing Education

Fitting Continuing Education into a Demanding Schedule: A Guide for Ohio Nurses

Continuing Education (CE) is an essential aspect of professional development for nurses. It ensures that healthcare professionals remain knowledgeable about the latest evidence-based practices, clinical guidelines, and new technologies. Fitting CE into an already busy schedule can be challenging, but there are ways to make doing so easier.



How to Earn Continuing Education Contact Hours

Continuing education contact hours can be earned through a variety of learning formats, including:

- Online courses and webinars: Self-paced courses can be completed at your convenience, while live webinars offer the opportunity to participate at a scheduled time.
- Conferences and in-person sessions: These opportunities provide a chance to learn and network in person and may range from brief educational sessions to multi-day conferences.

For nurses in Ohio, there is no limit on how many required contact hours can be completed through self-paced versus live learning. Nurses can also earn contact hours through the Ohio Nurses Association (ONA) without becoming an ONA member.

To access ONA's continuing education offerings, nurses can create a free account through [CE4Nurses](#). Creating an account does not enroll you as an ONA member. Once an account is created, individual courses can be purchased, including many CE4Nurses courses that meet the Category A requirement.

Nurses can also earn contact hours by attending ONA's live continuing education events.

Importance of Continuing Professional Development

Pursuing continuing professional development is important for several reasons:

1. **Maintaining Licensure:** In Ohio, nurses are required to complete 24 contact hours of CE during every 2-year reporting period to renew their license. This includes at least one hour of CE directly related to the Ohio Nurse

Practice Act and the administrative rules of the Ohio Board of Nursing (Category A). APRNs are also required to complete 24 hours of CE for each APRN license held in addition to the RN CE requirements. This ensures that nurses are up to date with current standards and practices.

2. **Compliance, Safety, and Evidence-Based Practice:** Staying informed about new regulations and safety protocols helps ensure compliance with state and federal laws, protecting patients and healthcare providers. Continuing Education also helps nurses stay updated about the latest treatments, technologies, and best practices, leading to improved patient outcomes.
3. **Personal and Professional Growth:** Nurses can use CE time to seek out new skills that help refine their practice and further develop their career.

Strategies for Fitting CE into an Overloaded Calendar

Balancing work, personal life, and continuing education can be challenging, but with the right strategies, it is achievable. Here are some tips to help you integrate CE into your routine:

1. **Be Proactive:** Schedule your CE activities in advance. Look for courses and events that fit your schedule and add them to your calendar.
2. **Apportion Your Time:** Divide your CE requirements into smaller, manageable sessions. Don't exhaust yourself trying to complete them all at once.
3. **Utilize the Digital Option:** Online courses and webinars offer flexibility, allowing you to learn at your own pace and at times that suit you best.
4. **Get Employer Support:** Many hospitals offer paid time off for attending CE courses and reimbursement for CE-related expenses. Check with your employer to see what options are available.
5. **Set Goals and Prioritize:** Set specific CE goals for yourself and prioritize them alongside your other responsibilities. Treat CE as an integral part of your professional development.

CE is a vital component of nursing practice in Ohio, ensuring that nurses remain competent and knowledgeable in their field. By being proactive, utilizing online resources such as [CE4Nurses](#), and leveraging employer support, you can successfully integrate CE into your packed schedule. Investing in professional education not only benefits you but also enhances the quality of care you provide for patients.

For questions about ONA's CE4Nurses, email info@ce4nurses.org.

The Ohio Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. (OBN-001-91)



Graff & McGovern, LPA

Attorneys & Counselors at Law 604 E. Rich Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. Contact us today at 614-228-5800.

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Nursing in the News

[43% of Ohio counties lack labor and delivery services for pregnant women, report says](#)

[New Bill Would Ban Forced Nurse Overtime Nationwide](#)

[Stop Saying There's a Nursing Shortage](#)

[Readers remember Grady Memorial's maternity unit through stories of birth, compassion and community](#)

[OhioHealth closes Delaware maternity unit amid concerns over newborn, emergency care](#)

[‘The fight doesn’t end here’: Community leaders reflect as Grady’s maternity unit prepares to close](#)

[Ohio Nurses Association asks Justice Department to review closure of Grady Memorial maternity unit](#)

[Ohio Nurses Association urges federal review of Grady Memorial maternity unit closure](#)

[Ohio Nurses Association sends letter to DOJ, asks for 'expanded antitrust review' of OhioHealth](#)

[Delaware residents hope for last-minute save as hospital service set to end](#)

[Ohio Attorney General remains publicly silent as Grady Memorial maternity unit closure nears](#)

[Nurses raise safety concerns at Bellefontaine City Council meeting](#)

Resources

Affordability

Temporary Reduction in Student Loan Interest Rate

In June, the U.S. Department of Education announced that federal student loan borrowers who enroll in autopay will receive a 1% interest rate reduction from July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2028.

Borrowers must enroll in autopay by September 30, 2026 to be eligible. Those already enrolled in autopay should have their rates automatically reduced by their loan servicer.

You can find additional information, including instructions on how to enroll in autopay, in the Department's [announcement](#).



Fight for Affordability

The Fight for Affordability campaign is rooted in a simple, powerful truth: workers deserve to thrive. Workers deserve to be able to care for their families without being bled dry by price gouging, junk fees, surprise or unfair medical bills and predatory corporate practices. Workers deserve access to quality healthcare without surprise bills and workers deserve to retire with dignity. Fight for Affordability.

AFT's Fight for Affordability Campaign

Earlier this year, AFT (American Federation of Teachers, the national union that the Ohio Nurses Association is part of) launched its [Fight for Affordability](#) campaign. The campaign website offers a library of how-to videos and resources for those struggling financially.

ONA members can access the AFT members-only Affordability resources.

Support the Ohio Nurses Foundation



The Ohio Nurses Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide funding to advance nursing as a learned profession through education, research, and scholarship.

Founded in 2002, ONF has awarded more than \$125,000 in scholarships and grants to Ohio students, nurses, and researchers.

You can support the Ohio Nurses Foundation by [making a donation](#) or by purchasing SUPPORT NURSING Ohio license plates for your vehicles.

To purchase a specialized plate, go to [the Ohio BMV website](#), choose organizational plates, and click Ohio Nurses Association.

Thank you for helping us support current and future nurses across Ohio!

[Get Your Plate Here](#)

Caring For Your Mental Health

In healthcare, you give so much of yourself: long hours, emotional moments, and the weight that isn't always visible. Stress, exhaustion, and burnout are real, but you don't have to face them alone.

A small act can make a big difference. A quick message, a genuine check-in, or a simple “I’m here for you” can lift someone’s day more than you know.

Need someone to talk to?

Call or text 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24/7, free, and confidential.

ONA members can also access AFT's [counseling](#) and [trauma](#) services.

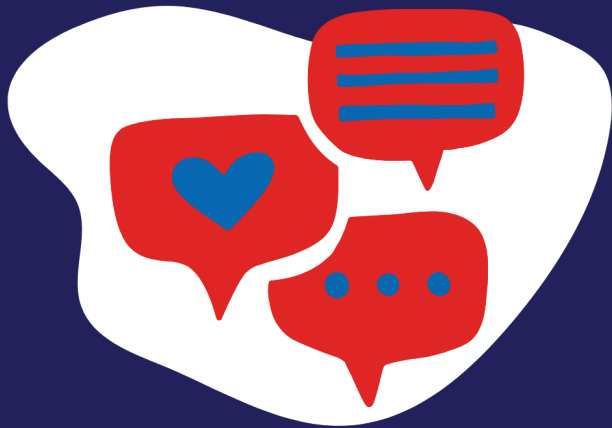
Remember, caring for yourself is just as important as caring for others.

Your wellbeing matters.



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YOU CARE FOR EVERYONE ELSE. WE CARE FOR YOU.
IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE. LET'S SHAPE THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE TOGETHER!

<https://ohnurses.org/members/>

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