

# MICROSCOPE



**BREAKING  
GROUND.  
BREAKING  
DOWN  
BARRIERS.**

**WakeMed Hosts  
Garner Whole  
Health Campus  
Groundbreaking**

In November, members of WakeMed’s leadership team, stakeholders, government officials and supporters gathered to signify the start of the WakeMed Whole Health Campus project in Garner.

More than 300 people attended the ceremonial ground-breaking event, which included remarks by President & CEO **Donald Gintzig**; NC Governor Josh Stein; Sheppard Pratt President & CEO Harsh K. Trivedi, MD; WakeMed Mental Health & Well-Being CMO **Micah Krempasky**, MD; Garner Mayor Buddy Gumpton and the WakeMed Foundation *Courage to Confront Crisis* Campaign Cabinet Chairs **Margaret Bratton**, **Gloria Becker** and **Michael Painter**.

“WakeMed has a history of stepping up to meet the needs of our vibrantly growing community – it’s in our DNA,” said Gintzig. “This project sets a new standard in mental health care by providing a holistic environment that breaks down barriers to care, reduces stigma and provides hope for those in need of mental health services.”

“I want to thank WakeMed for recognizing [the need for greater access to mental health care] and for stepping up for the people of this state,” said Governor Stein.

When completed in early 2029, the campus will include WakeMed’s fourth acute care hospital – the 45-bed WakeMed Garner Hospital – and a 150-bed Mental Health & Well-Being Hospital. The Mental Health & Well-Being Hospital and the WakeMed Foundation’s ambitious \$50 million *Courage to Confront Crisis* philanthropic campaign were the event’s primary focus. The outstanding efforts of the Campaign Cabinet and Foundation leadership during the past few years has yielded nearly \$35 million in private donations from the community and another \$18 million from Wake County, North Carolina and federal services.

To learn more about the project and the campaign that will transform mental health care for our community, visit the WakeMed Foundation’s *Courage to Confront Crisis* Campaign page.



## WakeMed Receives Joint Commission Certification

WakeMed has received Advanced Certification – Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement from The Joint Commission. This is a new certification for WakeMed and highlights our commitment to providing high-quality care to patients needing total joint replacements – from the pre-surgical consultation to the intraoperative experience through rehabilitation and follow-up care.

“We’re proud to be recognized for setting a new benchmark in joint replacement care for patients across our community,” said **Michael Ruffolo**, MD, medical director, WakeMed Orthopaedics, Total Joints. “This achievement reflects our commitment to the highest standards of safety, quality and patient-centered care in joint replacement. Our orthopaedic and surgical care teams are dedicated to helping patients restore mobility, relieve pain and return to the activities that bring meaning to their lives.”



The certification, offered in collaboration with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, encompasses all phases of care. The breadth of this accreditation underscores the importance of the entire process needed to provide exemplary care for joint replacement patients. Kudos to the many physicians, Surgical Services staff, nurses, clinical and support staff who helped make this achievement possible!



## WakeMed’s First EMT Training Program is a Success



WakeMed recently celebrated the graduation of our first cohort from the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Training Program. The program combines classroom instruction, skills labs and clinical field experiences. With the support of WakeMed instructors and mentors, participants become well prepared for the state EMT certification exam.

“I would tell any WakeMed employee who’s considering participating in the program to go for it. It’s an excellent program, and the instructors are awesome,” said **Charlene Mazon** (Laundry & Linen Services) a program graduate.

This lifelong learning and development program is a partnership between Mobile Critical Care Services and Organizational & Workforce Development with support from Nursing Education. “I wanted to explore other opportunities in health care,” said **Pam Grady**, NA (Heart Center Pre- & Post-Procedure Care) another graduate. “This class has prepared me to work as an EMT in the future.” The program also serves as a gateway for employees to enter the health-care field and puts graduates on track to participate in other programs like advanced EMT, paramedic and nursing pathways.



“These programs demonstrate WakeMed’s commitment to internal talent development and workforce sustainability,” said **Jeronica Goodwin**, SVP & Chief People Officer. “They foster employee loyalty, professional pride and a culture of growth that benefits the entire organization.”

The EMT Training Program not only benefits employees but has a significant impact on the organization. “It was exciting to see our participants build confidence, clinical competence and a strong foundation for career advancement. At the same time, we are creating a strong internal talent pipeline for Mobile Critical Care Services while hardwiring a consistent standard of exceptional care from day one,” commented **Dana Woodard** (Mobile Critical Care), who leads the program.

Recruiting, retaining and developing an extraordinary team is one of WakeMed’s Aspirational Goals – and providing innovative learning opportunities reflects this commitment. Whether that is through expanding clinical knowledge, building upon obtained certifications or opening doors to new positions, WakeMed wants each employee to feel they have room to grow. “When employees invest in their education and professional growth, they not only enhance their own career satisfaction but also contribute to the overall excellence of patient care at WakeMed,” said **Lindsey Hollis** (Workforce Development).

To learn more about professional development and career growth opportunities, check out the Learning & Development page on MyWakeMed.



## CULTIVATE COMPASSION THE 2026 EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING THEME

The WakeMed family is more than 12,800 strong and we are all focused on the top of “The Pyramid” – caring for patients and families. To be compassionate caregivers, you must also demonstrate compassion for yourself. The Employee Well-Being Committee deems 2026 the year of cultivating compassion – care for yourself as you care for others. We know that exercise and eating right are the building blocks for a healthy body; cultivating compassion for yourself, gratitude and human connection are building blocks for mental well-being and resiliency. Watch for opportunities to learn about how to cultivate compassion for yourself in the coming months.



Bill Lagarde, MD, Named EMD & PI of PreciselyYou



**Bill Lagarde, MD**, has been named Executive Medical Director & Principal Investigator of PreciselyYou. In this new role, Dr. Lagarde will help develop and implement the system’s precision medicine strategy, which includes not only our PreciselyYou research study, but also implementation of additional diagnostic and pharmacogenomic tools. As our use of precision medicine grows, he will help guide responsible use of genetic and genomic data across clinical departments and serve as a key Principal Investigator of WakeMed’s genomics-based studies. Dr. Lagarde continues to lead the Clinical Research Institute and provide care as a pediatric endocrinologist. Congratulations, Dr. Lagarde!

Starla Wilkes Named Executive Director of Surgical & Procedural Services



After serving in the interim role since May 2025, Starla Wilkes recently assumed the permanent role of executive director of Surgical & Procedural Services. Wilkes oversees Surgical Services, the Interventional Labs and Anesthesia Services at both Raleigh Campus and North Hospital. She works closely with clinical teams, surgeons, and system leaders to drive strategic planning, enhance care delivery and support process improvements. Wilkes will share dyad leadership responsibilities with **Osi Udekwu, MD**, the medical director of Trauma & Operative Services, and actively participate in system-wide nursing committees and initiatives. Please join us in congratulating and celebrating her continued contributions to our organization.

Revenue Cycle Leadership Updates



WakeMed recently welcomed **John Groves** as interim vice president of Revenue Cycle. Groves is an employee of B.E. Smith Leadership Solutions, and has extensive experience directing revenue cycle systems and operations. During his time with WakeMed, Groves will work with our existing leadership team to focus on improving processes and productivity, policy review, work queue management and collaboration as needed across Revenue Cycle, Finance, Reimbursement and Managed Care. Additionally, as part of the interim leadership plan, **Shameka Hooks**, executive director of Midcycle Operations, and **Kathleen Davis**, executive director of Patient Financial Services, have taken on additional areas of oversight. This team will operate as co-leaders of Revenue Cycle, with all three leaders reporting to **Stephanie Sessoms**, EVP & CFO.

Happy Retirement, Deb Laughery



After 28 years of service and commitment to the WakeMed mission, **Deb Laughery**, MBA, vice president, Marketing & Communications, has retired from full time work. Laughery joined WakeMed in 1997, shortly after the organization transitioned from being a county-owned hospital to a private, not-for-profit health system. She was integral in the development and rollout of the WakeMed brand and logo, which has since become one of the most recognized brands in the region. Under her leadership, WakeMed has developed a unique marketing voice and presence, setting us apart from others in a highly competitive market. In her retirement, Laughery plans to spend more time with her family and doing the things she loves, such as cooking, traveling and playing tennis.

2026-2027 Medical Executive Committee Leaders

Please join us in welcoming our new Medical Executive Committee (MEC) leaders for Raleigh Campus and Cary Hospital. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to WakeMed and our mission.

Raleigh Campus

- > President: **Branson Page**, MD
- > President-Elect: **Angela Gantt**, MD
- > Members-at-Large: **Scott Hultman**, MD; **Thomas Bernard**, MD

Cary Hospital

- > President: **Sanjay Jagannath**, MD
- > President-Elect: **Alden Maier**, MD
- > Members-at-Large: **Kevin Trapani**, MD; **Aman Luther**, MD



CLABSI- & CAUTI-free for Four Years!

Congratulations to North Hospital for going four

straight years without a patient enduring a central line-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI) or catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI)! This is a huge WakeMed Chasing Zero achievement in our efforts to avoid preventable patient safety issues. The Chasing Zero trophy will rotate through North Hospital nursing units to celebrate this milestone.



Nurses Advance Workplace Safety

**Melissa McAllister**, RN, manager (1C Clinical Evaluation Area), **Sarah Crowley**, RN, nursing director (Mental Health & Well-Being at WakeBrook), and **Jaime Penninger**, RN, manager (5C Medical/Surgical) presented a poster on reducing workplace violence through psychiatric nursing skills applied on a medical-surgical unit at the American Psychiatric Nurses Association national conference in New Orleans. Their work highlights the power of interprofessional collaboration and the rare inclusion of a med-surg perspective at the conference.

The team’s pilot led to 20 consecutive months without a workplace violence incident on Penninger’s med/surg unit. It also led to a 30% increase in nurses’ confidence with de-escalation skills and a 70% increase in nurses’ comfort with agitation management medication order sets. Interested? Feel free to contact McAllister, Crowley or Penninger with your questions.

NEWS FROM WakeMed Physician Practices

Welcome New Physicians



**Connor Bailey, DO**  
Primary Care



**Ashley Cairns, MD**  
Breast Surgery



**Arinudh Gajjala, DO**  
Primary Care



**Joshua Herb, MD**  
Surgical Oncology



**Suchitra Joshi, MD**  
Psychiatry



**Christina Kunycky, MD**  
Urogynecology



**Scott Sexton, MD**  
Neonatology



**Sarah Weiner, MD**  
General Surgery

Welcome New Advanced Practice Providers

**Alex Avdashenko, PA**  
Heart & Vascular

**Giuliana Ballaben, PA**  
Wake Orthopaedics

**Erica Boerth, PA**  
Heart & Vascular

**Jessica Bonnelly, NP**  
Urology

**Malyssa Chanthasoto, PA**  
Wake Orthopaedics

**Jacqueline Costello, NP**  
Neonatology

**Connie Dao, PA**  
Cancer Care

**Jon Frickey, NP**  
Heart & Vascular

**Shayne Geil, NP**  
Neonatology

**Bailey Godwin, NP**  
Neonatology

**Alyssa Gowdy, PA**  
Heart & Vascular

**Victoria Gutierrez, NP**  
MyCare 365

**Jacob Handy, NP**  
Pulmonology & Critical Care Medicine

**Jessica Harner, PA**  
General Surgery

**Dana Johnson, NP**  
Heart & Vascular

**Edyta Koczela, NP**  
Psychiatry

**Alexandra Lewis, PA**  
MyCare 365

**Angela Liszewski, PA**  
Heart & Vascular

**Josh McConaghay, NP**  
Cancer Care

**Giselle Monahan, NP**  
Primary Care

**Hannah Pedersen, PA**  
General Surgery

**Zachary Powers, PA**  
General Surgery

**Caitlin Quinn, PA**  
Hospital Medicine/Critical Care/Pulmonology

**Mark Scales, PA**  
Wake Orthopaedics

**Earl Stansell, PA**  
Neonatology

**Laura York, PA**  
Gastroenterology

**William York, PA**  
Urology

**Christopher Van Ooteghem, PA**  
MyCare 365

**Kimberly Wehner, NP**  
Cancer Care

Vascular Surgery – Midtown Adds Moderate Sedation Services

WakeMed Heart & Vascular – Vascular Surgery has expanded their capabilities to perform more invasive procedures using moderate sedation in their angiography suite at the Midtown office in Raleigh. They have become the first WakeMed Physician Practices’ site to offer outpatient adult moderate sedation services.



Led by practice manager **Jennifer Donaldson**, RN, BSN, the Vascular Surgery nursing staff received training and licenses needed to provide moderate sedation to patients in support of the vascular surgeons performing procedures. Moderate sedation provides more pain control and comfort for patients. Prior to having moderate sedation available, limited types of procedures using a local anesthetic were performed in the procedure room and more advanced interventional cases were scheduled in the hybrid operating room at WakeMed’s Raleigh Campus.

NOW OPEN

WakeMed Urology – Morrisville Medical Park

101 Holly Creek Road, Suite 203  
Morrisville, NC 27560  
919-350-1570  
Monday – Thursday, 8 am to 5 pm

MyCare 365 – Middle Creek Crossing

16126 NC Highway 50 N.  
Garner, NC 27529  
919-235-1425  
Monday - Friday: 8 am to 8 pm  
Saturday & Sunday: 8 am to 4 pm



WakeWell Rewards encourages and provides incentives for WakeMed employees who take steps toward a healthier life. For 2026, participants who complete all program elements have the opportunity to earn **\$500** (full-time employees) or **\$250** (part-time employees) that can be used for out-of-pocket medical costs in 2027. Employees enrolled in WakeMed’s Blue Cross NC medical plan as of January 1, 2026, should follow the steps below. With questions, contact Bob Nelson (Wellness) at **919-350-6903** or [wakewell@wakemed.org](mailto:wakewell@wakemed.org).



**New to the Medical Plan in 2026:** Employees who join the WakeMed Medical Plan (administered by Blue Cross NC and Brighton Health Solutions) between January 2 and September 1, 2026, can qualify for *WakeWell* Rewards simply by taking the Online Health Assessment by September 30, 2026.

**There are no points associated with WakeWell Rewards this year.** If you do not earn credit for all four Biometric Standards, you can make it up by completing an Alternate Standard. You can check your progress on the Asset Health wellness portal, accessible via MyWakeMed or the Asset Health mobile app.

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Required Activities</b> | <b>Biometric Standards</b>  |
| ➤ Biometric Screening      | ➤ LDL Cholesterol Below 130 |
| ➤ Online Health Assessment | ➤ BMI Below 30              |
|                            | ➤ Glucose Below 120         |
|                            | ➤ Non-tobacco User          |

**Make Your Appointment**  
BY FEB 3



- Register for your Biometric Screening via WakeMed MyChart.
- To get a MyChart account, visit [mychart.wakemed.org](http://mychart.wakemed.org).
- If you need help logging in, call the MyChart helpline at ext. 02288.
- Pregnant & postpartum employees, see note below.

**Take the Online Health Assessment**  
JAN 12 – SEPT 30



- Participants can take the Online Health Assessment any time between January 12 and September 30.
- The Online Health Assessment takes about 15 minutes and provides a snapshot of your current health status.
- To access the assessment, visit the Asset Health wellness portal via MyWakeMed or the Asset Health mobile app. Call 1-855-444-1255 for technical support.

**Complete the Biometric Screening**  
FEB 3 – MAR 20



- Biometric Screenings are held at most hospitals, healthplexes and WakeMed Corporate Center.
- The screening consists of height, weight, waist circumference, basic cholesterol panel with glucose.
- Eight hours fasting required unless prohibited for medical reasons.
- Participants who have had labs drawn since July 1, 2025, can bring their results and skip the fasting and finger stick. Results must include LDL and a glucose or HbA1c.
- Biometric Screening results will be available in Asset Health around May 1.

**Meet Alternate Standard (If Necessary)**  
BY SEPT 30



- If you have one or more Biometric Standards out of range, you will need to meet ONE of the following Alternate Standards by September 30, 2026. It’s a good idea to get a head start to avoid scheduling conflicts or delays. For details, visit the *WakeWell* page on MyWakeMed.
- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| • Case/Disease Management    | • Physical Exam (between 7/1/25 and 9/30/26)      |
| • Health Coaching            | • Resilient Physical (between 1/1/26 and 9/30/26) |
| • Remote Patient Monitoring  | • Registered Dietitian Nutrition Counseling       |
| • Tobacco Cessation Coaching | • Sleep Education Session                         |
| • LiveWell Program           | • Lyra Well-being Course                          |
| • Diabetes Education         |   |

**A Note about Pregnancy** – Employees who are pregnant or gave birth on or after July 1, 2025, do not need to schedule or attend a biometric screening. These participants should complete the Asset Health Online Health Assessment AND submit a completed Pregnancy Physician Statement Form to Asset Health by September 30, 2026. For more information, visit the Asset Health wellness portal or the *WakeWell* page on MyWakeMed.

**BENEFIT REMINDERS FOR THE NEW YEAR**

As we enter the new year, here are some helpful reminders from the Benefits team to help you make the most of the benefits available to you. With any questions, or for more information, please email [benefits@wakemed.org](mailto:benefits@wakemed.org) or call ext. 08143.

**Medical Plan Administrator & ID Cards**

As of January 1, 2026, the WakeMed medical plan is offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield (Blue Cross NC), administered by Brighton Health Plan Solutions (BHPS). New medical insurance cards were mailed to plan members in December 2025. To streamline your next appointment with a WakeMed provider, we recommend updating your insurance information in MyChart. Log into your account, then click “Your Menu” > “Insurance Summary” > “Add a Coverage.”

**Network Changes**

As part of our transition to Blue Cross NC/BHPS, there are changes to medical plan network tiers. For 2026, the WakeMed Preferred Tier offers lower copay, coinsurance and deductibles for WakeMed services. The Other In-Network Tier (Blue Cross NC) offers a network of providers to meet the health care needs of your family. The Duke Health/UNC Health tier includes physicians and services provided at locations owned and operated by Duke Health or UNC Health. Services at this tier will have higher out of pocket costs when compared to

WakeMed Preferred Tier or Other In-Network providers.

**Activate Your Resilient with WakeMed Benefit**

Medical plan members and dependents aged 7+ have access to a Resilient with WakeMed benefit at no cost beginning January 5, 2026. Resilient with WakeMed offers concierge primary care and specialty care via tele-health and in-person at conveniently located Resilient with WakeMed CloudClinics. Your benefit includes:

- Coverage for medical plan members (including enrolled dependents aged 7+)
- \$0 copay and \$0 deductible for primary care, urgent care and specialty care consults
- Access to Resilient’s hands-on care coordination to help you get high-quality, low-cost health care within the WakeMed Preferred Tier

Learn more and activate your account at [resilienthealth.com/activate/wakemed](http://resilienthealth.com/activate/wakemed).



**Keep Your Address Current**

If you moved in the past year, be sure to update your address information in The HUB by clicking on the Edit Profile Quick Link. Keeping your home address and phone number in the HUB Employee Space current is important to ensure you receive timely communication.

**Flexible Spending Accounts**

Unused amounts from your 2025 Health Care FSA between \$5 and \$660 will be carried over to be used in 2026. All unused funds under \$5 and over \$660 will be forfeited. All unused Dependent Care Spending Account funds will be forfeited.

**Accessing 1095c Forms**

Due to changes in Affordable Care Act requirements, WakeMed is no longer required to mail 1095c forms to employees. Instead, employees will be able to access these forms online. More information will be shared when the forms are available.

**WHAT AN EMPLOYEE!**

WakeMed SVP & Chief Quality Officer **Karen Chilton**, MD, was recognized as one of The Top 25 Chief Quality Officers of 2025 by *Women We Admire*.

**Amantia Kennedy**, MD, (OB-GYN) represented WakeMed as a guest speaker during the Town of Cary’s World Menopause Awareness Month event.

**Natalie Walker**, RN, (Staffing Resources) was inducted into the Marquis Who’s Who Registry, a nationally recognized honor celebrating outstanding professional achievement and leadership.

Corporate Compliance congratulates **Barbara Jones** for earning a master’s degree in healthcare administration and **April Richardson** for earning a bachelor’s degree in business administration.

**Allison Dean-Woody** (WPP Administration) was promoted to practice administrator for WPP Primary Care & Urgent Care.

**Tyler Wall** (Revenue Cycle) was promoted to education specialist.

Congratulations to the recent recipients of the APP Spotlight Award. **Erin Taylor**, CNS, RN, (Clinical Nursing Resource Services) was recognized for October, **Bailey Underhill**, PA, (Pulmonology) was recognized for November, and **Laura Barton**, PA-C (Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery) was recognized for December.

Volunteer Services – Raleigh Campus congratulates **Lorraine Shapcott** for 23 years of service and 11,500 service hours as a volunteer in the Critical Care Waiting Room.

**COMINGS & GOINGS**



Imaging Services wishes a happy retirement to **Keely Stone**, pictured, who retired in November after 26 years of service to WakeMed.

Mother-Baby – North Hospital welcomes **Emilie Buckis**, RN as their new evening and night clinical educator/ supervisor.

Urology – Fuquay-Varina Medical Park welcomes **Eduanny Rodriguez Manzueta**.

Urology welcomes several new patient registration representatives at multiple locations; **Kiana Kirkland** at Raleigh Medical Park; **Tia Evans** at Oberlin and **Kimberly Williams** at Medical Park of Cary.

Urology – Medical Park of Cary welcomes **Frank Desiderio**.

Primary Care – Brier Creek welcomes new practice manager **Damonta Burch**.

6C Surgery & Trauma welcomes **David Bungei**, RN; **Maranda Mason**, RN; **Stephany Pawling**, RN; **Katie Johnson**, RN; **Hannele Smith** and **Josh Argueta**.

3B CVIC welcomes **Shelby Kirwin**, RN; **Jeralyn Robinson**, RN; **Olivia Hargreave** and **Davin Moore**.

5 West Surgery & Trauma - Cary Hospital welcomes **Donna Kumar**, RN; **Yesmin Abouzeid**, RN; **Jneisha Ashley**, **Jasmin Smith**, and **Vivian Takla**.

2E CVICU welcomes **Emily Cantillano**, BSN, RN.

Cary Patient Case Management welcomes **Darshee Sanjanwala**, RN, and **Mikali Smith**.

Primary Care – Oberlin welcomes **Nicole Monk** and **Rebecca Crews**.

MyCare 365 – Brightleaf welcomes **Lily Johnson**.

**ADDITIONS & ATTACHMENTS**

Congratulations to **Paige Williamson Utley** on her marriage to Jordan Utley.

**IN MEMORIAM**



Our WakeMed family mourns the loss of Officer **Roger Smith**, who proudly served our community as a WakeMed Campus Police officer for 14 years. Officer Smith lost his life while serving and protecting others – and we will forever remember and honor his memory. Officer Smith will be remembered for his compassion, his dedication to others, his kind smile, his friendship and his heroism.





# enhancing PATIENT CARE AND EMPLOYEE WELL BEING

For 31 years, the WakeMed Foundation has played a vital role in engaging our community and providing opportunities for donors to support innovative programs, building the skills and knowledge of WakeMed employees and investing in the health and well-being of our community.

The WakeMed Foundation Board of Directors recently approved \$4,675,000 in Fiscal Year 2026 funding to support WakeMed’s mission. The Foundation’s annual spending plan is developed in cooperation with the Operational Leadership Team.

“We are proud to be the philanthropic partner of WakeMed to support its growth, advancements and vibrancy through strategic investments that make a difference for patients and their families and our extraordinary team,” said **Hank Woods**, vice president, WakeMed Foundation.

## FY26 Investment Support Areas

Continued implementation of **Your Whole Health**, our social determinants of health screening program, along with additional dollars to help address patient needs through strategic population health initiatives.

**PreciselyYou**, our community health research project that aims to transform health outcomes by improving disease detection and prevention, supporting local health research efforts, and making innovative, individualized care more accessible.

**Enhanced Spiritual Care support** for patients and staff through Tea for the Soul and expanded chaplain coverage at healthplexes and the Center for Community Health, among other initiatives.

Employee well-being initiatives like **Mental Health Mini Grants** and **Schwartz Rounds**.

Helping children thrive through **Pediatric Weight Management**, **ENERGIZE** and **Pediatric Endocrinology** services. Funding also supports **Project LAUNCH**, an intervention delivered through Pediatric Primary Care.

The **Employee Emergency Assistance Fund**, which provides employees facing unforeseen hardships with support to help cover transportation, housing and utility costs, among other needs. Yearly funding for this program has more than doubled in recent years.

## Opportunities to Learn, Grow, and Advance

Additionally, each year, Foundation funding supports the education and skill-building of employees through:

- **Helton Awardee** For WakeMed groups of employees (department or collaborative) that seek education and training to prepare for a new certification exam. Groups are defined as three or more. Awards can be up to \$3,000 per individual. Application deadline February 27.
- **Helton Scholars** For WakeMed employees who are completing a higher education degree. Applicants must be accepted and enrolled in a program when they apply. Awards can be up to \$10,000 per individual, with a maximum of \$20,000 for the same degree. Application deadline April 26.
- **Megan Champ Morgan Scholarship Fund** This fund supports employee dependents seeking to complete post-secondary education, vocational training or certification in the fields of health sciences, elementary or secondary education and computer sciences or information technology. Applicants and their parent(s) must meet some eligibility requirements. Application deadline May 1.
- **Enterprise Education and Small Awards** Overseen by WakeMed enterprise leaders, this resource supports strategic efforts that may not be funded by hospital operational dollars. Examples include the development of a new service line or an interdisciplinary effort to expand a service or launch a new program to better serve our community. Applicants must tie their request to WakeMed’s mission and goals for patient care and improving the health of our community.

If you have an idea for a project that the WakeMed Foundation may be able to fund, contact Karen Simsen at [ksimsen@wakemed.org](mailto:ksimsen@wakemed.org).

## “A” Grades from The Leapfrog Group

Raleigh Campus, Cary Hospital and North Hospital all received As on the latest Hospital Safety Grades, which were released in November by The Leapfrog Group. These scores mirror the A grades that we received in spring 2025.

The Leapfrog Group is a national nonprofit organization that works to initiate improvements in the safety, quality and affordability of health care for all citizens by promoting transparency and value-based hospital incentives. The group publishes Hospital Safety Grades twice a year based on information reported from government agencies and other sources. This program focuses exclusively on safety (accidents, injuries and errors).

## Maternity Care Recognition from U.S. News

WakeMed has again been named among the best hospitals for maternity care by *U.S. News & World Report*. Cary Hospital, North Hospital and Raleigh Campus all earned High Performing designations – the highest ranking a hospital can earn – in the 2026 list of Best Hospitals for Maternity Care (Uncomplicated Pregnancy).

The annual evaluation is designed to assist expectant parents, in consultation with their doctors, in making informed decisions about where to receive maternity care. U.S. News evaluated over 900 hospitals that provide high-quality labor & delivery services for uncomplicated pregnancies for this year’s list.

## Forbes Top Hospital

Cary Hospital was named to *Forbes* Magazine’s inaugural list of Top Hospitals. The list provides consumers with information on choosing hospitals that offer high-quality, high value services. The publication evaluated a number of health care quality measures that assess patient outcomes, hospital best practices, value and patient experience. Cary Hospital was one of just 253 hospitals in the nation to receive a five star overall rating.

## N&O’s Raleigh’s Best

WakeMed was proud to receive six “Raleigh’s Best 2025” awards from *The News & Observer*. The awards were voted on by News & Observer readers and members of the community. WakeMed won “Gold” in the following categories:

- **Best Hospital:** WakeMed
- **Best Place to Have a Baby:** WakeMed

WakeMed and our physician practices won “Silver” in the following categories:

- **Best Cardiology:** WakeMed Heart & Vascular - Cardiology
- **Best Cancer Treatment Center:** WakeMed Cancer Care
- **Best Urgent Care / Walk-In Clinic:** WakeMed Urgent Care
- **Best Orthopedics:** Wake Orthopaedics



## 2025 Wellbeing First Champion

WakeMed has been named a 2025 Wellbeing First Champion by ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare. This is the second year in a row WakeMed has received this honor, which recognizes that our medical staff credentialing applications are free from stigmatizing and intrusive language around mental health care and treatment.

WakeMed’s credentialing applications were independently verified by ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare, a national coalition of leading health care organizations that works to eliminate barriers for health care workers to obtain needed mental health care.



# Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.

## RECENT WAKEMED KUDOS!

## Highest Ethics & Standards Award Recipients

Corporate Compliance recently recognized 11 WakeMed family members who are excellent partners to the compliance program. An awards reception was held to thank these individuals for their assistance throughout the year. Thank you for all you do to support our Aspirational Goal of the Highest Ethics & Standards!

Congratulations to the following award recipients: **Annie Brito** (Patient Safety/Risk Management), **Demetrius Campbell** (Supply Chain), **Taylor Childress** (Precision Medicine), **Ruby Floyd** (Patient Accounting Administration), **Julia Holzen** (Information Services), **Kristin Hoover** (Health Information Management), **Tarsha Joyner** (Information Services) **Keisha Kee** (Information Services), **Mary Ellen Stevens** (Raleigh Campus Administration), **Anna Wall**, (Nursing Administration), and **Portia Washington** (WakeBrook Hospital).

## Congrats, Top Docs!

Numerous WakeMed Physician Practice physicians were recognized by their peers in December’s issue of *Business NC Magazine* as the state’s best in their fields. Congratulations to these outstanding providers:

- **Peter Heetderks**, MD, Pulmonology & Critical Care
- **Daniel Fox**, MD, Pulmonology & Critical Care
- **Jonathan Chappell**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Kristin Alves**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Ryan Gentry**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Casey Jenkins**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Curtis Hanson**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Michael Ruffolo**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Mark Wood**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Gurvinder Deol**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Conor Regan**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Chad Greer**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Justin Kauk**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Sami Mardam-Bey**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **G. Aman Luther**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Timothy Harris**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Ryan Li**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Lincoln Pratson**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **Corey Thompson**, MD, Wake Orthopaedics
- **J. Duncan Phillips**, MD, Pediatric Surgery
- **Gabriel Winberry**, MD, Pediatric Gastroenterology
- **Mark Leo Graham**, MD, Cancer Care
- **Scott Hultman**, MD, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
- **Ann Chung**, MD, General & Bariatric Surgery
- **Lori Lilley**, MD, Breast Surgery
- **Robert Nunoo**, MD, Colorectal Surgery
- **Jeffrey Abrams**, MD, General Surgery
- **Chelsea Ngongang**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Judson Williams**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Bryon Boulton**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Trevor Upham**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Brian Go**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Matt White**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Damian Marycz**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Peter Chan**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Marc Silver**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Jason Haag**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Jacek Paszkowiak**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Ellen Dillavou**, MD, Heart & Vascular
- **Monica Oei**, MD, Primary Care
- **John Holly**, MD, Primary Care
- **Micah Krempasky**, MD, Mental Health & Well-Being





### PARADE FUN

WakeMed employees and their families participated in the annual Raleigh Christmas Parade to kick off the holiday season.



### SUGAR & SPIRIT

Cary Hospital hosted a gingerbread house decorating contest in December. Staff, patients and visitors all cast their ballots to determine the winners. Congratulations to:

- 1st Place – The Hobble Inn, Acute Rehab (pictured)
- 2nd Place – Whoville, MPDC
- 3rd Place – WakeMed Cary, FNS



### MARKET & MERRIMENT

WakeMed Rehab Hospital staff and volunteers put together a festive Holiday Market. Thanks to the generosity of WakeMed Volunteer Services, all Rehab Hospital patients had a chance to shop for holiday gifts for their loved ones.



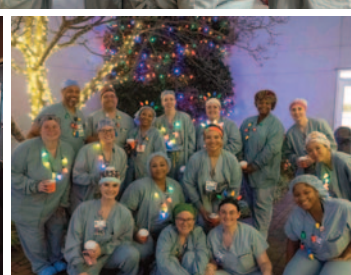
### GIVING BACK

WakeMed employees embraced the spirit of giving by bringing warmth and nourishment to our community this season. The Accounts Payable department, top left, raised funds to purchase items for the system-wide food drive. WakeMed Heart & Vascular - Vascular Surgery team, bottom left, collected food and delivered Thanksgiving meals to 12 patients who needed a little extra support this season.



### MEALS & MEMORIES

Members of the WakeMed family enjoyed many opportunities to share in holiday cheer and spend time with colleagues. Holiday meals, year-end socials and tree lighting events provided an opportunity for staff to take time out of their busy schedules to spend time with colleagues.



### HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Items received through WakeMed Children's annual holiday drive will be given to pediatric patients across WakeMed throughout the year to help lift their spirits during their hospital stay. Many thanks to everyone who contributed toys and gifts to the Children's Hospital, and to all the volunteers and staff who helped coordinate this successful event!





# Focus On Nursing

EXCELLENCE IN THE ART AND SCIENCE OF NURSING CARE AND CARING



CINDY BOILY  
MSN, RN, NEA-BC  
Senior Vice President &  
Chief Nursing Officer

*Cindy Boily*



## A NOTE FROM OUR CNO

### Celebrating a Year of Insight, Innovation, and Impact!

What a wonderful way to sum up another outstanding year by featuring many of the posters from the 16th annual Clinical Nurse Council Poster Day that we held in October. With 51 professionally presented posters, it was one of the greatest showings in the history of the event.

This annual showcase also signals the beginning of our new CNC year because it offers new CNC unit representatives the opportunity to see the outcomes of their predecessors' efforts. It's important to know that there is a clearly defined scholarly process that CNC representatives follow to solve a unit-based opportunity throughout the year.

Work begins this month with a review of CNC Poster Day and theme selection for the year ahead. In February, unit representatives, together with their leadership and unit councils, begin the work to identify their topic.

With data from literature searches and other research in hand, each unit council decides on their improvement strategy, implementation plan, and data collection methods. This occurs in April.

In June, teams review data to determine if their strategy is working or if they need to try a different approach. And in August – the last CNC meeting before Poster Day, unit council members attend a special session on building effective posters – a skill they can use in the future when they potentially have the opportunity to present at state and national conferences.

Just think of how many improvements positively impacting patient care and work environments unit-based councils have made throughout our 16 years of defined, EBP-based project work! I hope you enjoy this look back at our CNC Poster Day. Your work continues to amaze!

As always, I am proud to be a WakeMed nurse.



STICU – Baby Don't Burn!



3 West – Team Talks!



5W Surgery & Trauma – No Pressure, No Problem

## Our Winning Posters

### Best & Most

All 51 posters could not be displayed at one time, so CNC split them into four different groups so they could all be shared the same day. Nurses in attendance were asked to evaluate posters based on innovation, representation of quality and performance improvement, use of pre- and post-data, and evidence-based practice application were presented in four different groups so all could be displayed throughout the day.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Most Innovative	STICU	3 West	Wound Ostomy	5B
Best representation of QI or PI	5 West Surgery & Trauma	Adult Diabetes Management	6C & North Mother Baby	5B
Best Utilization of Pre- & Post- Data	5 West Surgery & Trauma	5C	3C/4E Rehab	5B
Best Application of EBP	5 West Surgery & Trauma	5C	3C/4E Rehab	5B & 1 East



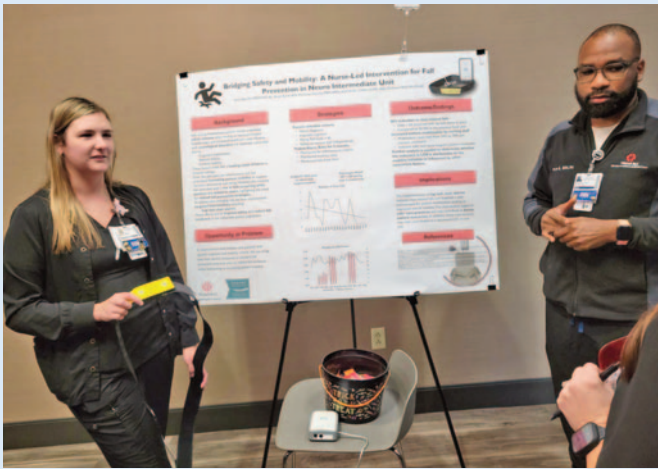
Wound Ostomy – Exudates, Odor & Maggots...OH NO!



Adult Diabetes Management – Tell Me Why!



Mother/Baby, North Hospital – Under Pressure: Improving Outcomes for Postpartum Hypertension Disorders



5B – Bridging Safety & Mobility: A Nurse-led Intervention for Fall Prevention





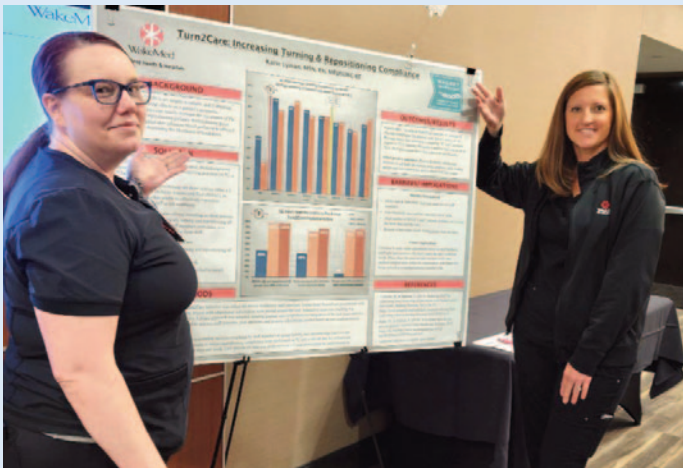
Raleigh Campus NICU – From Barriers to Bonding  
Transforming Kangaroo Care in the NICU



Ambulatory Professional Practice Council –  
On the Road to Change Conscious  
Habits and Nurse Education



MICU – MICU on the Move



5C – Turn2Care: Staff-driven Initiative to Increase  
Turning & Repositioning Compliance



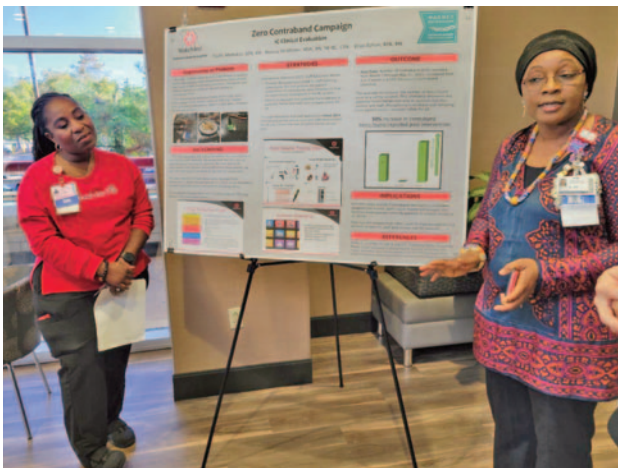
CVICU – No Butt Left Behind



Home Health – Stop the Drop Team  
Collaboration for a Steady Foundation



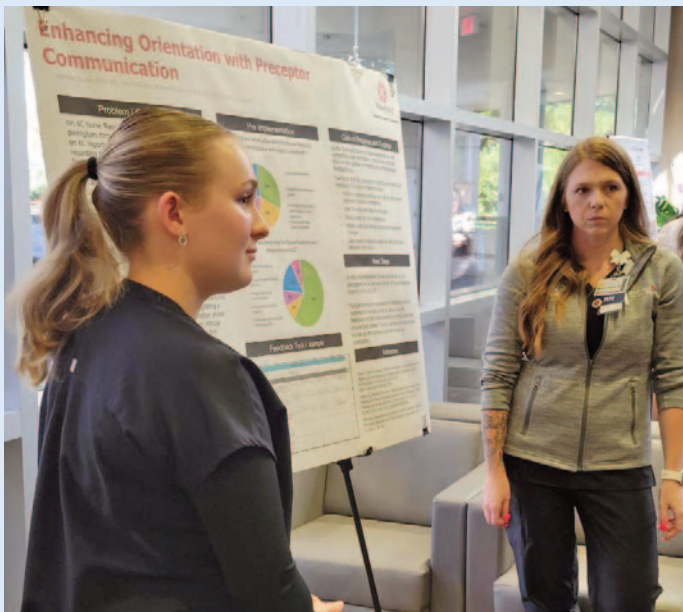
1 East CEA – Turn up for Turns



1C – Zero Contraband Campaign



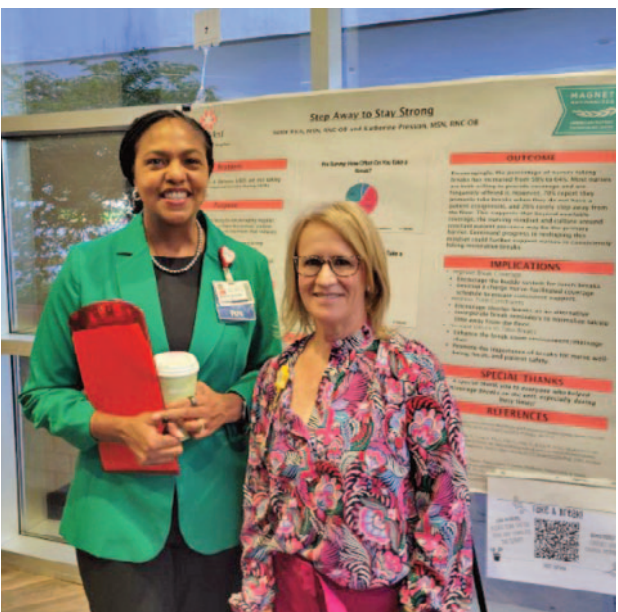
ED, Raleigh Campus – Time Is Brain A Reduction  
in Stroke Activation Times from Triage



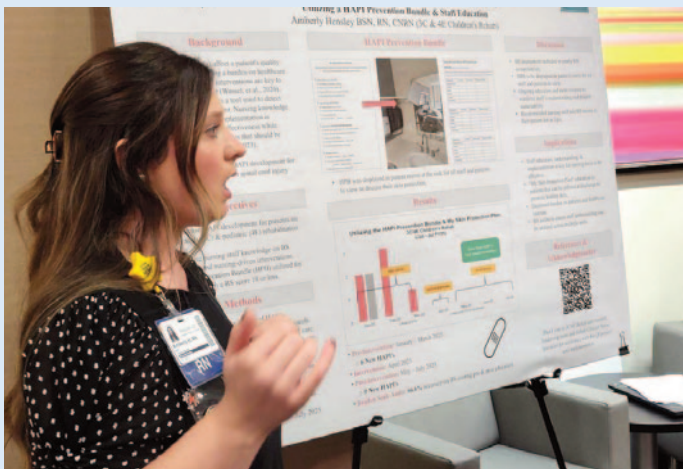
6C – Enhancing Orientation with  
Preceptor Communication



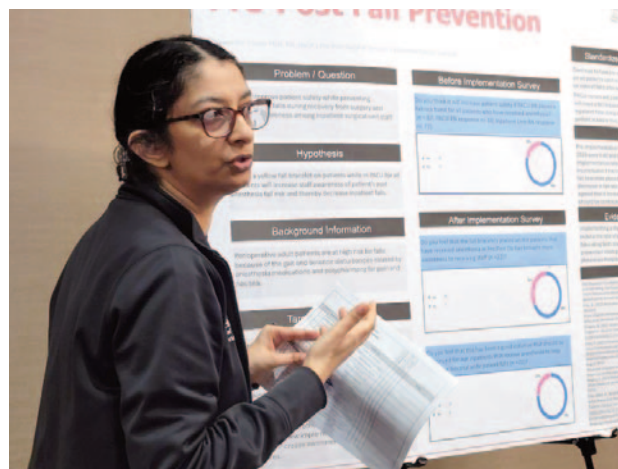
Labor and Delivery, North Hospital – Closing Gaps  
in BP Treatment and Magnesium Documentation



Labor and Delivery, Raleigh Campus –  
Step Away to Stay Strong



3C/4E Rehab – Saving Tissue One  
Braden Score at a Time



Pre- and Post-Surgical Services  
Raleigh Campus – Pre Post Fall Prevention



1B Emergency Services – Airing out  
Our Clean Laundry Focusing on Gratitude,  
Positivity and Mental Health



# MICROSCOPE

Microscope is a monthly newsletter written by and for the employees of WakeMed. Our goal is to provide employees and friends of WakeMed with the most up-to-date news on all of the hospital system's activities. The Marketing & Communications department thanks all of the employees who contributed to this publication.

We welcome comments and suggestions on this publication and its content. Call (919) 350-8120, e-mail [microscope@wakemed.org](mailto:microscope@wakemed.org), or write Microscope, WakeMed Marketing & Communications, 3000 New Bern Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27610.

Kate Wilkes Editor  
WakeMed Employees, Photos

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## MORE THAN A MAMMOGRAM

WakeMed, Siemens Healthineers and Raleigh Radiology teamed up again to provide no-cost 3D mammograms to uninsured women in our community. This year we served 330 women – bringing our total to more than 1,200 mammograms provided in the past four years. The screenings took place in the Siemens Healthineers state-of-the-art mobile mammography unit parked at Raleigh Medical Park. Our thanks and gratitude to all of those involved in bringing this incredible event to life each year!

HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR  
2026

**FOLLOW US** TO WELLNESS!  WakeMed & WakeMed Children's  @WakeMedHospitals   @WakeMed

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

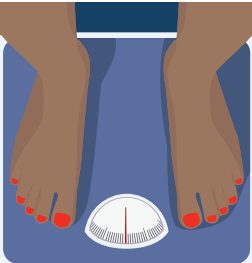
**Scoop on Nutrition: Why is My Diet Not Working?**  
Jan. 13, 21 & 22

Many diets are unsuccessful in the long term. In January's class, we'll discuss some of the common problems plaguing these diets and learn ways to more sustainably improve our nutrition and health. See MyWakeMed for dates and details to join the discussion and get recommendations and tips to make eating out a healthier experience.

### ONE TEAM. MANY VOICES.

**Register Now: Beyond Our Walls**

In alignment with our mission to serve our community, WakeMed provides a multi-session, comprehensive health equity curriculum. The purpose of this curriculum is to increase knowledge and awareness of health inequities that impact our community and to work together to identify strategies to address them. Throughout the program, participants – called Health Equity Scholars – explore the impact of health inequities on various sectors of health and health care and learn best practices for facilitating high-quality and equitable health outcomes for our patients. Registration is now open for the next two cohorts of the program, which begin in January. To learn more or register, visit WakeMedU and search "Beyond Our Walls."



### ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All programs and classes can be found in WakeMedU and are offered by Organizational Development. These support and advance WakeMed's mission, vision, and aspirational goals and Wake Way Every-Time Behaviors. For more information or questions, please email [orgdevelopment@wakemed.org](mailto:orgdevelopment@wakemed.org)

- **Unconscious Bias** – Jan. 16, 9am to 1 pm: This work session establishes a connection between unconscious bias, also referred to as implicit or cognitive bias, and individual, team and organizational performance.
- **Authentic Listening & Powerful Questioning** – Jan. 29, 9 am to noon: Discover the power of authentic listening to build stronger relationships with colleagues and uncover the way in which to help others realize their own knowledge through powerful, mediative questioning.
- **The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People** – Friday, January 27, 9 am to 3 pm: This course helps you build habits that foster personal effectiveness, strengthen relationships, and create lasting impact.

### WAKE AHEC EVENTS

**Beyond Our Walls**  
January 29

- For a complete list of events, please visit [www.wakeahec.org/courses-and-events](http://www.wakeahec.org/courses-and-events)

### GET YOUR TICKETS: 2026 SHINE CONFERENCE



The WakeMed 2026 SHINE Conference will take place April 16 & 17 in the Andrews Center. This event represents 25 years of igniting health care providers to improve their practice and inspire excellence while focusing on the newest innovations, research and evidence-based practices in neuroscience. Scan the QR code to purchase tickets.