

# Preparing the nursing workforce for future public health challenges: nurse wellness

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Rush Wellness | Rush University System for Health

# Objectives

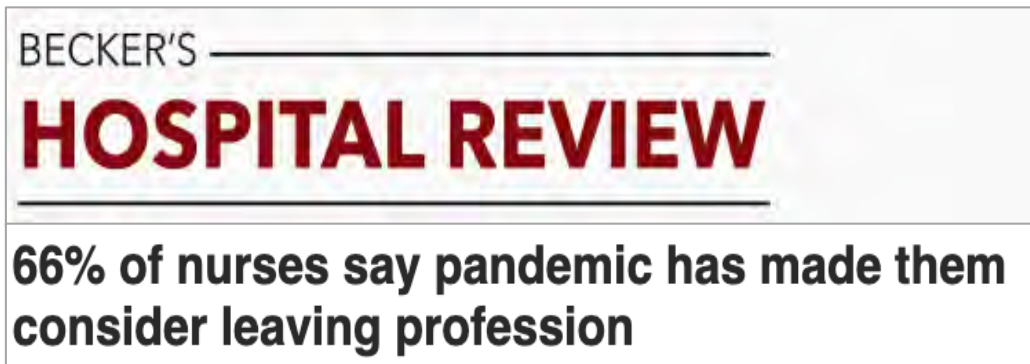
1. Provide background on why wellness is critical to ongoing nurse success.
2. Discuss RUSH nursing and how RUSH has moved to address the well-being of nurses.
3. Propose investment in nursing education, research, and wellness to prepare our workforce for future public health challenges.



# What has happened...



# The 'Great Resignation' in healthcare



Employee turnover is on the rise across the country and is hitting the healthcare space extremely hard.

- There are 50% less applicants for healthcare roles<sup>1</sup>, despite surging rates of health care education applicants
- Existing nurse personnel are targeted by travel nursing roles that pay up to twice as much as typical hospital salaries for same levels of experience and education

Fewer health care workers compromises care – it is difficult to maintain quality, safety and patient experience when facing increasing demand with staffing shortage.

1. ["How Baylor Scott & White Hires & Retains Permanent Nurses"](#). November 2021.

# Nurses need our support now

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According to a recent survey by the American Nurses Foundation<sup>1</sup>:

- More than a third of 9,572 nurses polled said they do not believe their organization really cares about their well-being or responds to their complaints;
- 42% of nurses answered they had an extremely stressful, disturbing or traumatic experience due to COVID-19; and
- When asked if they had sought professional mental health support since March 2020, just 31% of nurses surveyed said they had, while 68% said they had not.

Given the incredible hardship many nurses have endured through the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with a national nursing shortage, **it is critical to invest in our nurses' ongoing health and well-being now ahead of future public health challenges.**

1. <https://www.advisory.com/daily-briefing/2021/10/19/nurse-mental-health>

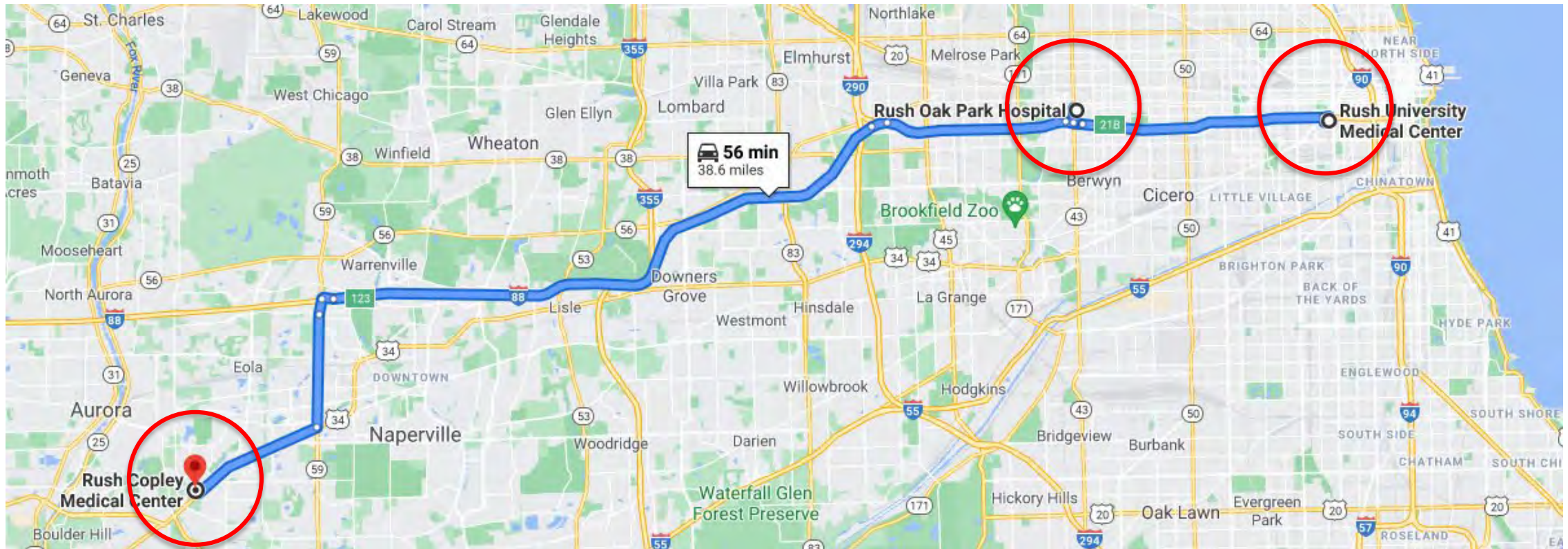
# What we have done...





# Rush University System for Health (RUSH)

RUSH is comprised of three hospitals, a university, a provider network, and outpatient sites in the Chicagoland area. It has 14,059 employees and 3,016 students.

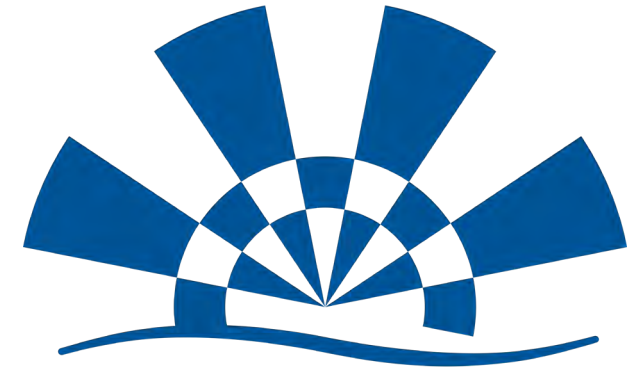


# Nursing excellence across RUSH (1 of 2)

All three RUSH hospitals have received **Magnet designation**, the highest honor in nursing.

- Rush University Medical Center received **its fifth consecutive Magnet designation** in 2020. It is one of only 30 hospitals in the world with five designations
- Rush Oak Park Hospital received its second Magnet designation in 2021
- Rush Copley Medical Center achieved Magnet designation in 2020

Eight critical care units across the Rush system have received the **Beacon Award for Excellence** — the highest honor in intensive care nursing — from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.





# Nursing excellence across RUSH (2 of 2)

Seven nurses at Rush University Medical Center (including Rush University faculty members) and Rush Oak Park Hospital are included in the 2021 list of **40 Under 40 Emerging Nurse Leaders** chosen by the Illinois Nurses Federation.

Thanks in large part to nurses, Rush University Medical Center was recently recognized by the National Safe Sleep Hospital Certification Program as a **Gold Safe Sleep Champion** for our commitment to best practices and education regarding infant safe sleep.

Rush University Medical Center's **patient experience scores were in the 90th and 75th percentiles** for inpatients and outpatients, respectively.



# Nursing excellence in education

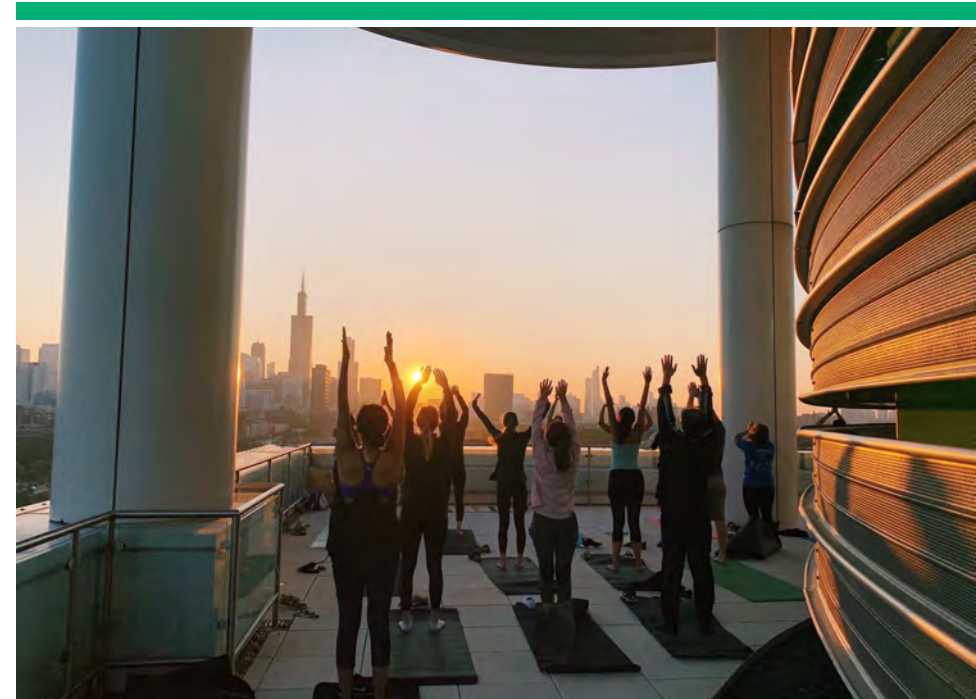
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- Rush University College of Nursing (CON) is comprised of three academic departments with 1,345 active students
- Of nearly 600 assessed nursing schools, CON received **four top rankings** in *U.S. News and World Report's 2022 Best Graduate Schools* ranking
- Rush CON ranked **first in the U.S. News' best online programs** list, as well as top five in nursing administration, adult / gerontology nurse practitioner – primary care, adult / gerontology nurse practitioner – acute care, and family nurse practitioner



# What is Rush Wellness?

**Rush Wellness is a philosophy.** It is based in the simple belief that advances in quality patient care are directly tied to the well-being and vitality of providers, students, and staff.



Free sunrise yoga on Rush University Medical Center Tower rooftop for RUSH employees and students

# COVID-19 wellness efforts



- Assembled an interdisciplinary team of behavioral health professionals to support frontline staff
- Deployed four primary interventions across the system: wellness rounds, wellness consult service, wellness plus, and wellness resource hub / wellness rooms
- Recognized by the [American Medical Association](#) and the [New England Journal of Medicine](#)

# Some nursing wellness activities...

- PNS Work-Life Balance committee
- SOSs / Mini-SOSs
- “Exploring Ethics” support teams
- “Growing Forward” program on 7N
- Urgent support for struggling nurses
- Wellness days
- Wellness talks / workshops
- Critical incident group debriefs
- Wellness rounds
- Wellness pager
- Mental Health Forums
- Counseling, mini wellness retreats, and coaching at the Center for Clinical Wellness





# Rush Center for Clinical Wellness



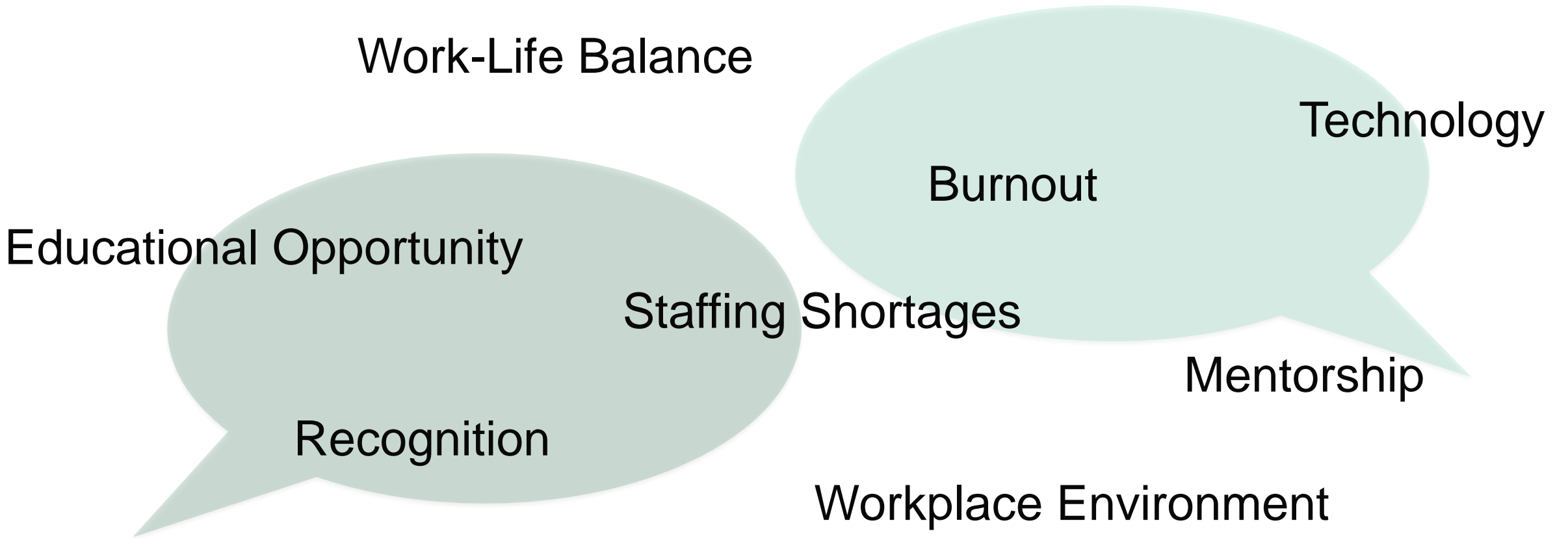
Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and First Lady Amy Eshleman visit Rush Center for Clinical Wellness

- Opened July 2020, exclusively serves Rush employees, students, and house staff
- Services include counseling, coaching, and other wellness-related services
- Enrolled over 1,100 clients in its first year, 20% of clients identified as nurses
- Averaging ~90 counseling appointments weekly
- Staffed by an interdisciplinary team of health care professionals (LCSW, PhD, MD, DNP)



# More work to do...

While RUSH is a national leader in workplace support for our nurses, there is always more we can do. These are some of the challenges at the forefront for our nurses:



# What now?



# Preparing for the future...

## 2021 Future of Work in Nursing Mitigation Strategies

- 1) Integrate workforce well-being & health into organization culture
- 2) Increase workforce flexibility
- 3) Reimagine delivery models
- 4) Strengthen talent pipelines and build skills for the future

[McKinsey Institute](#)

- How do we leverage technology to create dynamic educational and professional opportunities for nurses?
- How do we attract the best and brightest to this critical component of the healthcare workforce?
- How do we create and normalize a formal infrastructure to encourage and preserve nurse health and well-being, despite external strains?
- How do we help a predominantly female workforce to support both our patients and their loved ones?



# Policy recommendations



1. Support innovation in nursing through funded research
2. Create scholarship and grant opportunity for nursing education and training
3. Reduce barriers around nursing licensure and practice
4. Address pay and flexibility gap between traditional healthcare roles and agency nursing
5. Promote nursing health and wellness through formal infrastructure

# Questions & Thank You

