January 2026

WISPAN WELLNESS

Wisconsin Peer Alliance for Nurses Quarterly Newsletter

President's Corner

By Kristin Waite-Labott, BSN RN
President and Founder

Welcome back to our newsletter and HAPPY 2026!

The BIGGEST NEWS for late 2025 was about our collaborative event: "A Time for Change – Prioritizing Nurse Wellbeing", held on November 19th, 2025. See more information and photos on page 2 of this newsletter!

- It was an impactful educational gathering focused on nursing workforce sustainability and wellbeing. The event successfully achieved its objective, which was to directly confront the critical gap in professional development by providing missing tools and peer-led support for self-care and stress management, thereby enhancing the stability of the Wisconsin nursing workforce.
- We want to extend our deepest gratitude to all of our incredible speakers for generously sharing their experience and knowledge at this event.
- I personally want to offer special recognition and heartfelt thanks to our dedicated planning committee—Jenny Klug, Jenny Baker, Chris Wojnar, Heidi Paquette, and Liesette Rendell—for their hard work, commitment, and effort in making this event an impactful, meaningful, and memorable experience for every attendee.
- Our goal is to host similar events annually, creating a vital space for nurses to connect, learn, and focus on personal wellbeing. We hope the insights gained on the importance of prioritizing wellbeing will be carried back to practice areas and shared with colleagues, staff, friends, and family, ensuring everyone can be our best selves always!

WisPAN Meeting Quarter 4 Updates:

Nurse Mental Wellness:

- We held 14 meetings this quarter and had 59 nurses attend.

Substance Use Meeting:

- We held 31 meetings this quarter and had 147 nurses attend.

SEE **PAGE 5** FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WHEN AND HOW TO ATTEND THESE MEETINGS

WisPAN Events

By Jennifer Klug
WisPAN Vice President

On November 19th, 2025, WisPAN, in collaboration with the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment (AHW), hosted a **free educational event, "A Time for Change – Prioritizing Nurse Wellbeing."**

This half-day gathering worked to directly address the urgent gap in professional development surrounding self-care, mental health, and workforce sustainability within the nursing profession.

We had 123 nurses in attendance! The majority of attendees were from Wisconsin (92%) and were Nurses, students, and healthcare leaders.

The event was kicked off by Kristin Waite-Labott, Founder and President of WisPAN, and a message from Dr. Ugwuji Maduekwe of the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment who provided the grant funding to make this event possible.

Morning activities included "Yoga: A Channel for Self-Care" (Samantha Foster) and "Tai Chi / Breathwork" (Elizabeth Brink) and were well-received as actionable, immediate stress-management tools. The Storytelling sessions were particularly powerful in connecting the audience to the core issue. Christopher Wojnar's presentation, "Storytelling—Turning Pain into Purpose," and Steph Shannon Kelley's "Storytelling - Lived experience" were both noted for their honesty and effectiveness in validating the shared challenges of the nursing profession and inspiring positive change.

The afternoon sessions were just as inspiring: “Exploring Stress, Flourishing, and Wellbeing Tools for Your Workday“ (Megan Dethlefs, Robin Valley-Massey), “Integrative & Plant (Herbal) Medicine” (Rebecca Schultz), “Qigong Gentle Movement” (Elizabeth Brink), "Nurse Resiliency Rounds" (Dr. Stefani Magnowski) and "Owning Your Practice: How to Drive Change" (Maria Stephans) provided valuable insights into systemic and institutional support structures.

The final "Breakout Groups" (including the Peer Support Group, Meditation, and Writing exercises) were praised for providing necessary space for open dialogue and practice.

WisPAN Events (continued)

Post-event surveys indicate overwhelming success, with 98-100% of attendees reporting improved understanding of wellbeing's impact on mental health and workforce sustainability, the acquisition of specific, actionable self-care tools, and significantly increased confidence in their ability to proactively manage professional stress.

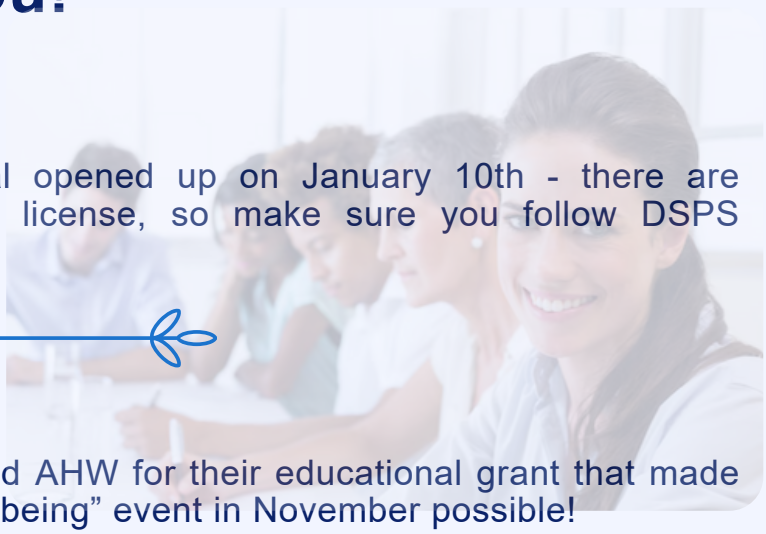
The high engagement, with 123 total attendees (74 virtual, 49 in-person), demonstrated the urgent need for this type of programming. The success was bolstered by key partners including the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) Endowment, Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA), and Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders (WONL).

We have received some very positive and amazing feedback:

- “Great resources & loved the interactive style.”
- “Thank you for today’s wellness conference. The information was truly helpful and gave me a lot to think about as I work on building a wellbeing council in the ED. I appreciated the new perspectives and found several parts eye-opening.”
- “Enjoyed the physical sessions, especially chair yoga!”
- “Very different kind of conference. Not just learning about something I can take back to my team but also just a great wellness day for myself!”
- “The presentations were excellent, the members delightful. I will reach out to become more involved in WisPAN! Thank you for a wonderful day!!”

On November 8th, 2025, WisPAN attendedthe WLN Fall Conference at Carroll University in Waukesha.
WisPAN was represented at the Aurora St. Luke's South Shore Health and Wellness Fair on October 9th, 2025.

Reminders and Thank You!



~LICENSE REMINDER~
Wisconsin's Registered Nurse license renewal opened up on January 10th - there are approximately 130,000 nurses renewing their license, so make sure you follow DSPS instruction to renew your license on time!

~GRANT THANK YOU~
WisPAN wants to thank the Medical College and AHW for their educational grant that made our "A Time for Change – Prioritizing Nurse Wellbeing" event in November possible!

MCW MEDICAL SCHOOL | AHW ADVANCING A HEALTHIER WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT

ON AIR

Healing Tapestry Podcast

The Collective Stories of Nurses

NEW EPISODES COMING SOON!

We are so excited to announce that we've recorded two episodes of the Healing Tapestry: The Collective Stories of Nurses podcast! We are working on the final touches and will be releasing them soon.

These powerful new stories are a testament to the resilience of nurses, and we can't wait for you to hear them. We're also currently seeking sponsors to support the growth of the podcast and help us share more stories that heal. If you know a business or organization that aligns with our mission, please have them contact us!

Please share "The Healing Tapestry" with your network!

Peer Support Connections: Nurse to Nurse

WisPAN offers nurse confidential peer support services in TWO WAYS

- Mental Wellness Virtual Meetings
- Substance Use Virtual Meetings

Both are open to any nurse or student nurse who wants or needs to connect with other nurses for support.

See meeting dates and times listed below.

WisPAN has been offering confidential support for substance use challenges and navigation of monitoring programs since September 2021 - offering a safe and confidential space for recovery, growth and healing.

Mental Wellness Peer Support Meetings are held virtually every Wednesday at 7pm CST
Email for meeting link: wispan2021@gmail
Open to ALL nurses, nursing students - we practice a 5-minute wellness exercise that nurses can take with you and then engage in peer to peer sharing on topics related to nursing and wellness. Free resources are also offered.

Substance Use Peer Support Meetings are held virtually every 1st and 3rd Monday at 12pm CST and every Tuesday and Thursday at 7pm CST
Email for meeting link: wispan2021@gmail.com
Designed for nurses in recovery, seeking recovery, and/or who are going through a monitoring program. There is nothing like the connection we feel together as we talk about issues surrounding substance use, licensure issues, monitoring programs, return to work, and work stressors. Join us in a non-judgmental environment with like-minded peers to talk about the issues that matter to you.

All peer support meetings are free, confidential, anonymous, and a safe space to share.
No attendance is taken and there is no obligation to attend, come once or come often.
Nurses can sign in anonymously using an alias (or just their first name) if they prefer.
You can participate or just listen. We want everyone who comes to feel comfortable and safe.

SCAN ME!

BROUGHT TO YOU IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: WISPAN, WLN, WNA, WONL

ATTENTION VALUED HOSPITAL AND ACADEMIC LEADERS

📢 **Call to Action: Invest in Your Nursing Community's Wellbeing**

Nurse Leaders:

The health and resilience of your nurses and nursing students are paramount to the quality of care and educational outcomes your institution provides. At WisPAN, we offer proven, confidential resources designed to directly address the unique stressors faced by the nursing community. We invite you to partner with WisPAN to strengthen your internal support systems.

🤝 How Leadership Can Engage with WisPAN:

Promote Confidential Peer Support:

- Integrate WisPAN's free, confidential peer support services into your organization's existing wellness and staff support resources.
- Provide an immediate, external resource for nurses and students experiencing stress, burnout, or critical incident trauma, thereby improving retention and reducing stress-related absence.

Partner for Specialized Education:

- Engage with us to offer specialized wellbeing education sessions tailored to the challenges faced by your staff and students.
- Equip your nursing workforce and future nurses with practical, evidence-based strategies for prioritizing self-care, enhancing resilience, and fostering a culture of peer support within your facility or campus.

In 2025 we conducted 32 educational presentations reaching 2,738 nursing students, nurses, and nurse leaders!

Ready to enhance the wellbeing and resilience of your nursing teams?

Contact us to schedule a brief consultation to discuss implementation and educational opportunities using QR code below or this link.

Invest in the wellness of your nurses—it is an investment in the future of healthcare.

WisPAN Board Member Thank You!

Best wishes to Lindsay for time served on the Board

We wish to formally recognize and thank **Lindsay Wills** for her dedicated service and commitment as a member of our Board of Directors.

Lindsay served a term as our Board Secretary, where she helped keep the Board running smoothly. Her contributions have left a lasting positive impact on our organization.

While she is stepping down from her duties on the Board, we are delighted that Lindsay will remain actively involved as a Peer Support Meeting Facilitator. We look forward to continuing to benefit from her experience and passion in this capacity.

Thank you, Lindsay, for your time and dedication!

Help Us Grow and Support Every Nurse in Need!

Your ideas matter! WisPAN is committed to continuous growth and reaching every nurse who needs support. If you have ideas on how we can expand our services or resources, please reach out to us at wispan2021@gmail.com.

Spread the word!

Do you know a organization, company, or school that would benefit from WisPAN's education on substance use disorder in nursing? We know they all would!
Share our information with them and help us reach more nurses.

Get Social!

Please "like" and "share" our posts on social media - the more people that see and hear about Wisconsin Peer Alliance for Nurses, the more people we can help!

Outside of Wisconsin? That's great, because our REACH IS EXPANDING!
WisPAN is starting similar programs in other states, so we can provide more care and support to all nurses in the United States.

Like, Comment, and Share our posts!

Join the movement!
Are you a nurse or nursing student seeking support?
We're here for you.

Email us at wispan2021@gmail.com to inquire about attending a peer support meeting or learning more about our services.

Together, we are making a difference.

With your help, WisPAN can continue to expand its reach and ensure every nurse in Wisconsin has access to the support they deserve.