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STRENGTHENING NURSE RETENTION THROUGH PEER SUPPORT & PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY: THE WISPAN PEER SUPPORT MODEL

A Practical Partner for Magnet Alignment, Nurse Well-Being & Workforce Retention

1 THE MAGNET® CHALLENGE: Untreated Workforce Stress

Assisting Organizations in Supporting Their Nursing Workforce

- ❤ **The Overlapping Crisis:** Up to 10–15% of nurses struggle with Substance Use Disorder (SUD), while widespread depression, severe anxiety, compassion fatigue, and acute burnout remain untreated due to stigma and fear of career repercussion.
- $ **The Cost of Inaction:** High turnover drains hospital budgets ($5.19M average annual loss per facility; $60,090+ to replace a single staff RN) while eroding unit culture, psychological safety, and care quality.
- ● **Assisting Organizations:** WisPAN partners with healthcare systems to strengthen their workforce support structures, helping leaders safeguard staff well-being, mitigate turnover, and build a resilient clinical environment.
- ✓ **The Solution:** A non-punitive, nurse-led peer support network that provides confidential, early intervention for both mental health challenges and substance recovery.

2 HOW WISPAN FILLS MAGNET CRITERIA (Alignment Table)

Magnet Component	WisPAN Integration Strategy	Expected Impact & Outcomes
★ **Structural Empowerment**	Confidential, nurse-to-nurse peer support networks operating parallel to traditional EAPs.	Removes stigma around mental health and SUD; empowers nurses to seek help early.
♥ **Exemplary Professional Practice**	Fosters psychological safety, peer advocacy, and a culture of mutual care.	Reduces clinical errors, enhances communication, and restores trust across units.
📚 **New Knowledge & Innovation**	Implements an evidence-backed peer recovery and mental wellness framework (Foli et al., 2024).	Translates nursing research directly into workforce retention and wellness strategy.
📊 **Empirical Quality Results**	Measures unit retention, staff well-being scores, and cost-avoidance data.	Delivers clean, quantitative evidence required for Magnet designation and re-designation.

3 EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE & EXTERNAL RESOURCE INTEGRATION (Grounding External Partner Solutions in Current Nursing Science)

EBP Research Foundation: Grounded in recent evidence from Hayakawa et al. (2026) (*Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing*), demonstrating that structured, nurse-led storytelling and peer debriefing initiatives significantly enhance organizational culture, rehumanize care, reduce burnout, and foster psychological safety across clinical environments.

Seamless Integration of External WisPAN Resources:

💻 Confidential Virtual Peer Support

While health systems often have internal EAPs, nurses frequently hesitate to use them due to fear of discovery or reporting. WisPAN provides free, anonymous, weekly virtual peer support meetings as a trusted, independent external resource.

📚 "Nurses Caring for Nurses" (NCN) Repository

We collaborate with your hospital's Shared Governance or Nursing Wellness committees to embed the NCN repository into your internal intranet or nurse residency portals. **Learn more: wisconsinnurses.org/nurses-caring-for-nurses**

📋 Policy Consultation (SUD / Diversion / ATD)

We provide expert review and a structured overhaul of current drug diversion, employee health, and nurse support policies to transition from punitive practices to supportive, retention-focused pathways.

🎤 Educational Workshops & Grand Rounds

WisPAN delivers targeted presentations—such as "A Shift in Culture: Using Story to Replace Stigma with Support"—at Nursing Grand Rounds, leadership retreats, or nurse residency seminars to actively eliminate professional stigma surrounding mental health and SUD.

4 FINANCIAL ROI & MENU OF PARTNERSHIP OPTIONS

Direct Financial Savings: Retaining just 5 nurses through proactive mental health and recovery support saves an estimated **$300,000+** in replacement costs ($60,090 per staff RN).

Cultural & Operational ROI: Shifts organizational culture from reactive crisis management to a sustainable, resilient environment of psychological safety.

Flexible System Integration (Choose What Fits Your Organization)

- **Promote External Virtual Support:** Share WisPAN's weekly confidential virtual support groups across high-stress units or Employee Health portals.
- **Embed Wellness Toolkits:** Integrate the "Nurses Caring for Nurses" repository directly into your Shared Governance, intranet, or residency programs.
- **Host Educational Workshops:** Schedule WisPAN presentations for Nursing Grand Rounds, leadership retreats, or staff seminars.
- **Review Support Policies:** Partner with WisPAN experts to review and modernize your drug diversion, SUD, or Alternative-to-Discipline policy frameworks.

Reference Notes & Organization Information

Hayakawa J, Schuhler P, DeAnda R, Schomberg J, Patterson M. Our Stories, Our Strength: An Evidence-Based Practice Initiative to Enhance Healthcare Culture Through Storytelling. *Worldviews Evid Based Nurs.* 2026 Feb;23(1):e70113. doi: 10.1111/wvn.70113. PMID: 41510980.

Foli KJ, Wang Y, Adams N, Coto J. A middle-range theory of nurses in recovery from substance use. *J Nurs Regul.* 2024;15(3):33-46.

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STRATEGIC PARTNERS

WNA — Wisconsin Nurses Association

WONL — Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders

WLN — Wisconsin League for Nursing

WCN — Wisconsin Center for Nursing

HEALTHY NURSES, STRONGER PATIENTS.

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