

# 2024 Nursing Year in Review

Downey Medical Center



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# Downey Medical Center

Welcome to the Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center, conveniently located near the heart of southeast Los Angeles County. This six-story hospital opened in 2009 in the city of Downey. In 2022, the latest expansion for the hospital added a new North Tower, which brings Downey's bed count to 424 beds and 16 operating rooms. This expansion also brings the total square footage of the hospital to more than 823,000 square feet—making Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center one of the largest hospitals in Southeast Los Angeles and within Kaiser Permanente Southern California. Its modern emergency department serves nearly four hundred thousand members in southeast Los Angeles. It specializes in pelvic acetabular surgery, spine surgery, facial feminization surgery, da Vinci Robotic-assisted surgery, gastro EDU/Advanced Endoscopy, and endobronchial ultrasound. It is a designated Children's Hospital (KPPC Hub) with a Level IIIB NICU. As a medical center specializing in acute specialty and high-risk care, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center looks forward to serving your healthcare needs and helping you be well and thrive.





Total licensed beds: 424

Number of emergency department beds: 88

Members in service area: 403,742

Number of employees: 3,784

Number of registered nurses: 1,549

Annual registered nurse turnover rate: 7.2%

Emergency department visits: 113,201

Admissions: 20,497

Discharges: 29,642

Number of births: 3,699

# A message from the Chief Nurse Executive

It is my privilege to present the Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center's Nursing Annual Report. The year 2024 has been marked by significant progress at our facility as we remained focused on delivering exemplary, safe, and patient-centered care.

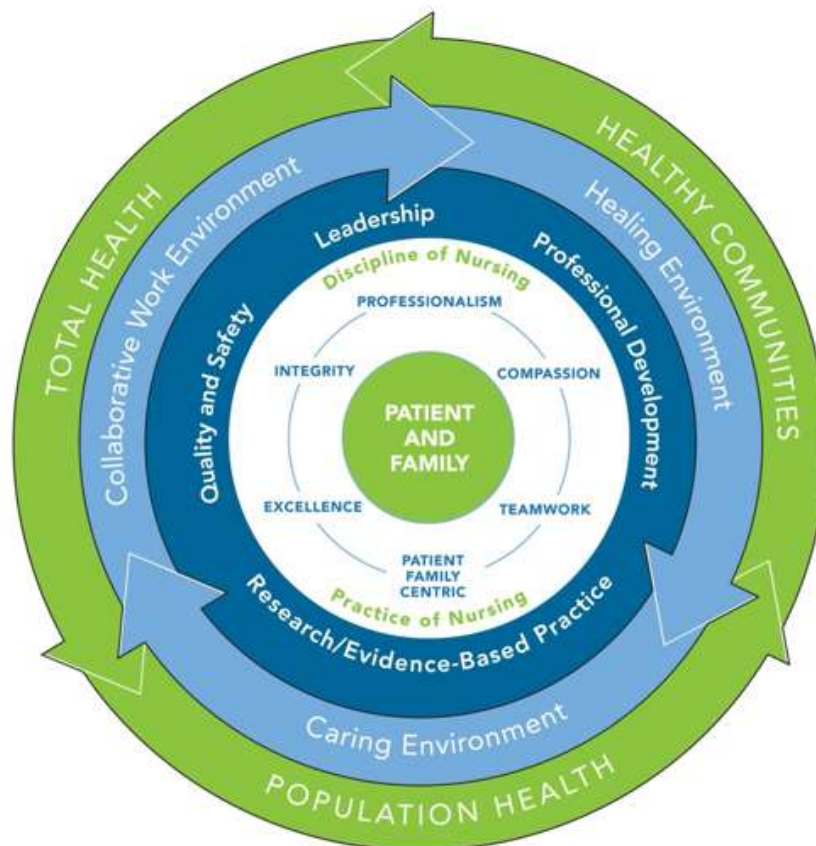
This report highlights key achievements and provides examples of how our nursing staff have demonstrated exceptional expertise, adhering to evidence-based practices while supporting patients during their most critical moments. Our nurses are actively engaged in ongoing professional development and shared governance initiatives, enabling them to make meaningful contributions to clinical practice and organizational decision-making.

Since achieving Magnet® designation in 2021, our team has maintained a consistent standard of excellence, as reflected in outstanding regional quality composite scores throughout 2024. Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center continues to uphold high standards in nursing, resulting in strong care experience metrics and prioritizing patient safety. I am honored to serve alongside this distinguished community of nurses whose professionalism and commitment are evident in every aspect of patient care. The following pages offer additional insight into our team's commitment to elevating the standards of nursing excellence.



**Barbara Murphy, MSN,  
RN, CENP, CNML**  
**Chief Nurse Executive**

# Foundation of Nursing Practice



## Mission

Our mission is to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and improve the health of our members and the communities we serve.

## Nursing vision

As leaders, clinicians, researchers, innovators and scientist, Kaiser Permanente nurses are advancing the delivery of excellent, compassionate care for our members across the continuum, and boldly transforming care to improve the health of our communities and nation.

## Nursing values

- Professionalism
- Excellence
- Patient and Family-Centric
- Teamwork
- Integrity
- Compassion

# 2024 Awards & Accolades



## Best Health Insurance Company by Insure.com

Kaiser Permanente has been ranked as the nation's top rated "Best Health Insurance Company" for 2024 in a study of more than 70 leading healthcare companies across the United States. Insure.com also rated Kaiser Permanente as the country's highest-ranked health insurance company for customer satisfaction, price, affordability and most trustworthy.



## U.S. News & World Report 2024-2025 Best Hospitals

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center is among the best in the nation for delivering high-quality care based on US News & World Report's 2024-2025 Best Hospital rankings. The Downey Medical Center – was rated "high performing" — among the top 10% to 20% in the nation — for 3 types of care in 2024-25: heart failure, pneumonia & stroke.



## U.S. News & World Report 2024 Best Hospitals

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center is recognized as one of America's Best Hospitals in 2024 for Maternity Care by Newsweek.

## Best Maternity Hospitals 2024 list for exemplary patient care by Newsweek

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center is recognized as one of America's Best Maternity Hospitals in 2024 for exemplary patient care by Newsweek.

## Leapfrog Hospital "A" Safety Grade

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center received an 'A' Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade for spring 2024 for its achievement in protecting patients from preventable harm and errors while receiving hospital care.

# 2024 Awards & Accolades



## American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke Gold Plus Award

- Target: Stroke Elite Plus Honor Roll
- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll



## Magnet® Recognition

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center received Magnet® Recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) in June 2021. The honor was bestowed in recognition of its high standards of nursing excellence, quality patient care, and innovations in professional nursing practice.



## Practice Transition Accreditation Program®

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center is recognized as an accredited Practice Transition Program by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) for its registered nurse residency program that meet the highest standards of excellence.

# Nursing quality and safety





## Preemie for a day and throughout

At Kaiser Downey Medical Center, something truly special happened on July 26, 2024. Nurses and respiratory therapists gathered for a unique, immersive experience called “Preemie for a Day,” and what unfolded was a day filled with laughter, learning, and heartfelt connection.

The event welcomed nearly 40 participants across two sessions, each designed to give staff a hands-on, eye-opening look into the world of preterm infants. From the moment the sessions began, the energy was electric. Nurses weren’t just learning, they were stepping into the tiny shoes (or booties) of their patients, experiencing firsthand what it feels like to be a preemie in the NICU.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Participants loved the interactive approach, especially the use of props and real-life scenarios that brought developmental care concepts to life. Many commented on how powerful it was to “be the baby” and see the impact of everyday care from a new perspective. The presenters, Suzanne Nugent, clinical improvement delivery consultant and Audrey Green, occupational therapist, were praised for their compassion, knowledge, and engaging style, making complex topics feel approachable and meaningful.

The goals of the session were ambitious, covering everything from neuroprotective family-centered care to feeding strategies and developmental positioning but the results spoke for themselves. Nearly every participant left feeling more confident and inspired to implement what they learned. The hands-on demonstrations, interactive models, and thoughtful discussions helped bridge the gap between theory and practice in a way that traditional training often can’t.

For a unit that has grown from a nursery into a Level III NICU caring for peri-viable infants, this event was more than just a class. It was a celebration of progress, a reaffirmation of purpose, and a joyful reminder of why this work matters. As one nurse put it, “Everything! Great info, awesome presentation.” Another summed it up perfectly: “Very interactive and informative.”

“Preemie for a day and throughout” wasn’t just a success, it was a milestone in the journey toward even better care for the tiniest patients. And judging by the smiles, laughter, and heartfelt reflections, it’s a day that won’t soon be forgotten.



# A new chapter in heart care

When it comes to heart health, every second truly matters. We're excited to share that patients with heart conditions can now receive crucial diagnostics right here at Downey Medical Center, thanks to the opening of our brand-new Cardiac Catheterization Lab in 2024.



Cardiac catheterization, also known as an angiogram or heart cath, is a remarkable procedure that allows our skilled interventional cardiologists to take a close look at the heart and its blood vessels. This minimally invasive technique is essential for diagnosing heart conditions without the need for surgery, helping us spot artery blockages that could lead to heart attacks or other serious cardiovascular problems.

Our Cath Lab, located in the North Tower, represents a significant leap forward in heart care for our community. In the past, patients had to travel to the Los Angeles Medical Center, Irvine Medical Center, or other facilities outside of Kaiser Permanente for this specialized care. Now, with the Cath Lab right here in Downey, we can provide advanced cardiac care close to home.

“This new service at Downey Medical Center allows us to provide advanced cardiac care right here in our community,” said Danielle Heisser, MSN, RN, department administrator for the Cath Lab. “The Downey Cath Lab ensures our members receive timely and effective treatment for heart conditions, ultimately saving lives and improving overall health outcomes.”

Patients are referred to the Cath Lab by their physicians from inpatient units, outpatient clinics, and other Kaiser Permanente medical centers. Depending on the complexity and severity of each case, the procedure can take as little as 20 minutes or up to two hours. Looking ahead, our Cardiac Cath Lab will not only diagnose heart diseases and blockages but also treat them through interventional procedures.

The opening of the Cath Lab at Downey Medical Center marks a new era in heart care for our region. We are incredibly proud to offer this life-saving service and look forward to continuing to provide exceptional care to our community.

# Flooded with Care: NICU's Heroic Response

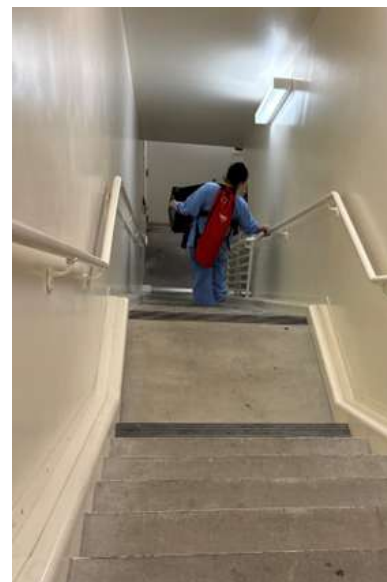


In April 2024, the NICU at Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center faced an unexpected flood. The NICU team swiftly executed a partial horizontal evacuation, moving infants in their isolettes to safer areas within the unit. However, the flood exposed challenges in their preparedness for vertical evacuation, particularly for infants requiring oxygen.

Recognizing the critical need for improved evacuation equipment, the NICU staff took proactive steps to address this gap. In June 2024, 95% of the NICU staff participated in a symposium on disaster relief, where they shared their experiences and identified the difficulties of using existing equipment during the flood. This feedback underscored the necessity for a more effective solution to ensure the safety of high-risk infants during emergencies.

The NICU Unit-Based Team (UBT) conducted extensive research to find published best practices and recognized solutions for vertical evacuation. Their efforts led them to Ethos Evacuation Strategies LLC, a trusted partner, and the innovative Med Sled® Evacuation Basket and Rack System. This system is designed for quick deployment, accommodating up to six evacuation baskets, and includes essential components like IV poles and O2 tank holders.

Linda Wynsma, MSN, CNS, RNC-NIC, C-ELBW, a neonatal clinical nurse specialist, coordinated with Ethos Evacuation Strategies to evaluate the feasibility of the Med Sled® system. On July 17, 2024, a demonstration was conducted with clinical nurses, nurse leaders, respiratory therapists, and physicians. The staff was trained on the deployment and use of the new system, ensuring everyone was prepared for emergencies.





The Med Sled® system proved to be a game-changer, allowing safe and efficient vertical evacuation of infants. It improved workplace safety by enabling staff to carry infants and equipment down the stairs and care for them at waist height, preventing the need to stoop on the ground. The system's cost-effectiveness was notable, with one system including six baskets and one rack priced at \$5,300.



On October 31, 2024, Linda presented the Med Sled® system to the Environment of Care Committee. Funding was requested for three systems, capable of holding up to 18 babies on oxygen, and they were approved. This innovative solution addressed the immediate challenge and

enhanced the overall emergency preparedness and care delivery in the NICU at Downey Medical Center.

The introduction of the Med Sled® system significantly improved the safety and care of NICU patients during emergencies. Infants requiring life support could be transported securely and efficiently, ensuring their well-being even in the most challenging situations. This innovation demonstrated the NICU staff's unwavering commitment to patient safety and their proactive approach to problem-solving.

The NICU team's dedication to enhancing emergency preparedness reflects their exceptional professionalism and resilience. Their ability to identify gaps, advocate for necessary resources, and implement effective solutions underscores their role as leaders in neonatal care. The successful adoption of the Med Sled® system is a testament to their relentless pursuit of excellence and their unwavering commitment to the health and safety of their patients.

# Professional development



# Celebrating Excellence in Nursing

## **Bachelor's degree: Nursing**

Jasmin Olicon, BSN, RN

Leah Santos, BSN, RN

Rajasree Krishnamoorthy, BSN, RN

Elizabeth Nguyen, BSN, RN

Fritzie Ting, BSN, RN

Ashley Alvarado, RN

Jennifer Robles, RN

## **Master's degree: Nursing**

Jalee Chew, MSN, RN, PCCN, SCRNP

Jessica Phillips, MSN, RN

Angelica Bermudez, MSN, RN

Mary Joy Alvarez, MSN, RN

Margaux Torrez, MSN, RN

Jhea Abellana, MSN, RN

# Celebrating Excellence in Nursing

## Advanced Practice RN

Mary Grace Espinosa, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC

Alice Johnson, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC

## Doctorate of Nursing Practice

Kimberly Humbert, DNP, RN

# A Celebration to Remember!

On Tuesday, March 19, 2024, we rolled out the red carpet for our incredible certified nurses, and what a celebration it was!

More than 50 amazing nurses joined us for a morning filled with appreciation, laughter, and a whole lot of heart. Our leadership team brought their A-game, trading their usual roles for aprons and big smiles as they served up breakfast to our frontline heroes. It was a joy to see them working the buffet line, showing their gratitude one plate at a time.

Each nurse walked away with a small gift, a token of our deep appreciation for the expertise and compassion they bring to patient care every single day.



# Celebrating Excellence in Nursing

## Specialty Certified

Delia Bortis, BSN, RN IBCLC

Leanna Cervantes, BSN, RN, CWON

Mayra Arrieta, MSN, RN, RNC-NIC

Mayra Flores, BSN, RN, SCRNP

Nayely Cruz, MSN, RN, CCRN, FNP-BC, FNP-C

Nilo Reyes, DNP, MSN, RN, FNP-C, CPAN, CCRN

Rajasree Krishnamoorthy, BSN, RN, PCCN

Starla Tubbs, BSN, RN, PCCN

Su Yang, MSN, RN, PCCN

Tae Won, MSN, RN, FNP, CPAN

Workabeba Shawel, MSN, RN, PCCN, SCRNP

“The Progressive Care Certified Nurse certification allows me to assess my patients better, provide best practice methods, ensure their safety , and implement the best care provided by using evidence-based practices.”

Su Yang, MSN, RN, PCCN

Charge Nurse

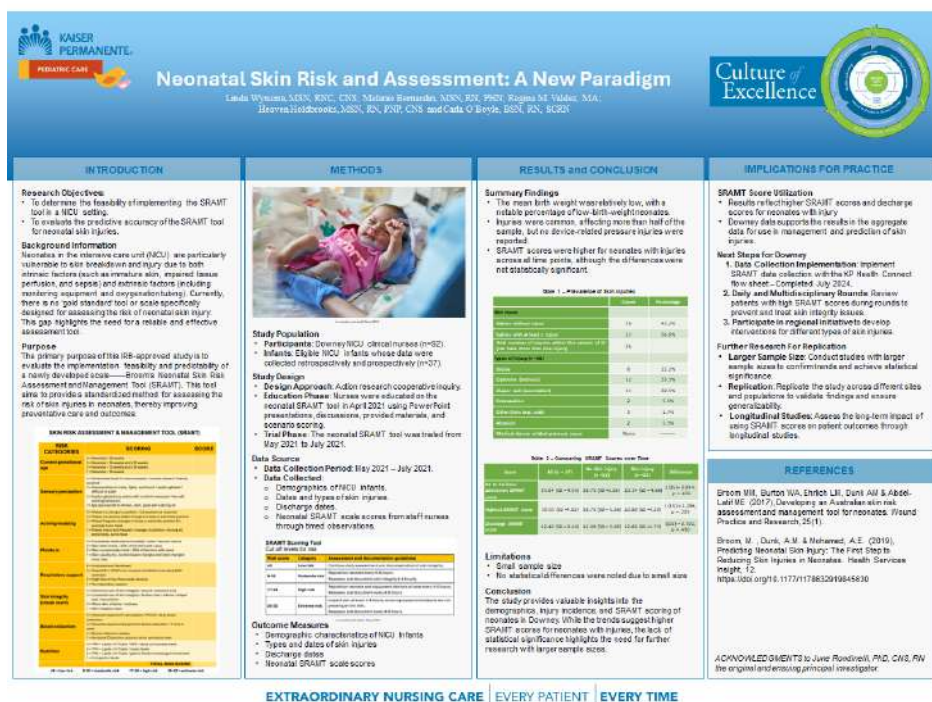
5 North Unit



# Nursing research/evidence-based practice



# Neonatal Skin Risk and Assessment



Neonates in the NICU face a heightened risk of skin breakdown due to both intrinsic vulnerabilities, such as immature skin and impaired perfusion, and extrinsic factors like medical equipment. Recognizing the absence of a validated tool to assess this risk, a team of dedicated NICU nurses and specialists—including Clinical Nurse Specialist Linda Wynsma, MSN, CNS, RN, RNC-NIC, C-ELBW—initiated a multi-center, IRB-approved study to evaluate the Neonatal Skin Risk Assessment and Management Tool (SRAMT). This study, completed in March 2023, aimed to determine the tool's interrater reliability, predictive value, and feasibility of implementation across KPSC NICUs. The research team found that while over half of the neonates experienced skin injuries, none were device-related. Higher SRAMT scores were consistently observed in neonates with injuries, suggesting the tool's potential to identify at-risk patients, particularly those with low birth weight. Although the differences in scores were not statistically significant, the findings support the tool's clinical relevance. The team's work culminated in the development and presentation of a research poster at the Southern California Association of Neonatal Nurses Conference in November 2024. Linda Wynsma, alongside Clinical Nurse Melanie Bernardin, presented the findings, marking a significant milestone in the dissemination of nurse-led research. This achievement was made possible through strong support from NICU leadership, who ensured the nurses had the time and resources to share their findings. The initiative not only contributed valuable knowledge to neonatal care but also highlighted the impact of collaborative, evidence-based nursing practice in advancing patient outcomes.

# Collaborative work environment





## All Fired Up: Team Downey is Drill Ready

It started early on a cool November morning, but the energy at Kaiser Downey was anything but sleepy. By 7 a.m., nurses, emergency staff, and a few brave volunteers were already in place, transforming the hospital into the scene of a simulated disaster. This wasn't just any drill, it was the 2024 LA County Medical Response & Surge Exercise, and the focus was on something close to our hearts: pediatric burn care.

The scenario was intense, a catastrophic event had overwhelmed the county, with thousands injured and hundreds needing specialized burn treatment. Our team was tasked with stabilizing and caring for up to 25 pediatric burn patients for 72 hours. But what could have felt like a high-stress simulation quickly turned into something more meaningful.

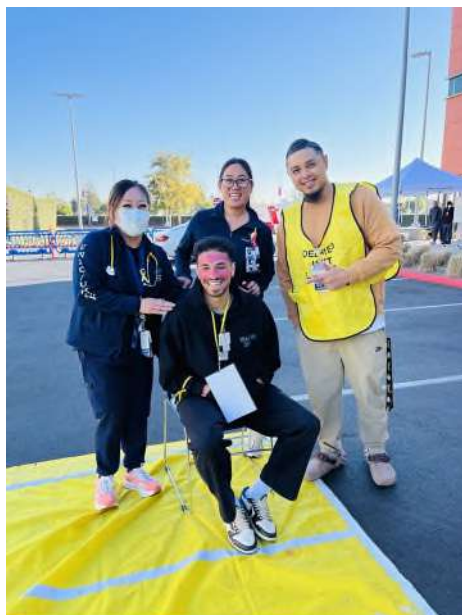
There were actors playing patients, complete with realistic makeup and emotional backstories. There were nurses stepping into roles as responders, caregivers, and coordinators. And there was laughter, yes, laughter, amid the seriousness, as colleagues supported one another, adapted on the fly, and found joy in the challenge.

The Hospital Command Center buzzed with activity, and the Emergency Department became a hub of collaboration. Nurses triaged, treated, and comforted their “patients” with the same compassion they bring to every real-life shift. It was a powerful reminder of just how ready and resilient our team is.



What stood out most wasn't just the clinical precision or the seamless teamwork. It was the heart. The way everyone leaned in, supported each other, and brought their full selves to the moment. One nurse summed it up best: "It felt real—but we knew we had each other's backs."

This drill wasn't just a test of our systems. It was a celebration of our people their skill, their spirit, and their unwavering commitment to care, no matter the circumstances.



# Unit-Based Teams Take Flight

Unit-Based Teams are integral to fostering collaboration and improving patient care within hospital settings. These teams bring together staff from various disciplines to work on quality improvement projects, enhance communication, and implement best practices. By leveraging the diverse expertise of team members, UBTs aim to create a more efficient, patient-centered environment.



Congratulations to 6 North who officially launched its Unit-Based Team in 2024! Their first meeting took place on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, and the energy from the team was electric. The team is led by manager co-chairs, John Kang, BSN, RN, and Jalee Chew, BSN, RN, PCCN, SCRNP, along with our labor co-chairs Scarlett Garcia and Dayne Nishijima, MSN, RN, PCCN. Their combined expertise and passion position the 6 North UBT for

significant achievements. We look forward to the innovative projects and initiatives that will emerge from this team.

Congratulations to 5 North who officially launched its Unit-Based Team (UBT) in July 2024! The team is led by our dedicated manager co-chair, Reeva C. Van Brunt, MSN, RN, PHN, CNL, PCCN, along with our labor co-chairs Su Yang, MSN, RN, PCCN, PHN and Runeet Bhasin, MSN-I, RN, SCRNP, PHN. They achieved level 5 UBT status December 2024, making them the first unit in Downey Medical Center to achieve level 5 UBT status.



## Welcome to Comfort: Hospitality Center

On August 9, 2024, Downey Medical Center announced the grand opening of its newly relocated and redesigned Hospitality Center. This celebration marks a significant milestone in the hospital's ongoing commitment to enhancing patient care and experience.

The Hospitality Center is now conveniently located on the hospital's first floor near the 24-hour pharmacy and main entrance. This strategic placement aims to provide discharged patients easy access to a comfortable waiting area as they prepare to leave the hospital.

The newly redesigned Hospitality Center is thoughtfully designed to provide patients with a comfortable and supportive environment. The space features:

- **Comfortable Seating:** Patients can relax in plush chairs while waiting.
- **Refreshments and Food:** Various snacks and beverages are available to keep patients nourished.
- **Warm Blankets:** To ensure comfort, especially for those who feel chilly after discharge.

Hospitality Center staff and volunteers are dedicated to assisting patients with various post-discharge needs. Services include:

- **Post-Hospital Care:** Staff can provide detailed information about care instructions and follow-up appointments.
- **Medication Pickup:** Volunteers can assist in picking up prescriptions from the pharmacy, ensuring patients have everything they need before heading home.



The Hospitality Center offers numerous advantages to Kaiser Permanente members:

- **Secure and Monitored Area:** Patients can wait in a safe environment, monitored by staff.
- **Smooth Transition:** The center helps facilitate a seamless transition from hospital to home, reducing patient stress.
- **Comfortable Setting:** Patients can read, ask questions, and feel supported during their final moments at the hospital.

The Hospitality Center is open daily from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., providing ample time for patients to utilize its services. Kaiser Permanente is committed to improving patient care and experience, and the new Hospitality Center is a testament to this dedication. By offering a welcoming and supportive space for discharged patients, Kaiser Permanente continues to prioritize the well-being and comfort of its members.



# Recognizing nursing excellence





## The DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses

The DAISY Award is a global initiative that celebrates and recognizes nurses who provide excellent and compassionate care to their patients and families. The award was created in 1999 by the family of J. Patrick Barnes, who passed away from a rare autoimmune disease; the award honors the kindness and extraordinary care of nurses who made an impact during his hospitalization.

The DAISY Award is given to nurses who go above and beyond their duties and make a difference in the lives of those they serve. Today, over 5,800 healthcare facilities and schools of nursing across the United States and in 37 other countries are committed to honoring nurses with the DAISY Award.

Nurse nominations are submitted by patients, family members, peers, and managers. In 2024, the following nurses at Downey Medical Center received the DAISY Award for their outstanding contributions and unwavering dedication to their patients and families. Their work not only reflects the core values of the DAISY Award but also highlights the exceptional standard of care provided at Downey Medical Center.

# DAISY Award Winners



## Roberto Castanon, RN Intensive Care Unit

*Roberto's caring and compassion for his patients radiates through the ICU. He never once made us feel ignorant of the situation at hand. He explained medications and possible scenarios with an empathetic tone and gave us best-case scenarios. His professionalism and expertise didn't let us down. My 81-year-old dad had just been released the day before from a different hospital too early and against our will. When my dad got to the ICU, Roberto was kind and caring and walked us through*

*every step he was taking and calmed our nerves when he saw us worried. He felt like a distant cousin rather than a stranger we had just met. He explained things on our level and made sure to translate when other specialists spoke to us using medical terminology. He even invited us to join the "rounds" during my father's time just in case we had questions we could speak to the direct specialist. We want to express our gratitude and appreciation; thank you, Roberto, for taking great care of the family.*

## Ana Sales, RN Post-Anesthesia Care Unit

*I could tell as soon as I saw her smile that Ana was a caring and dedicated nurse. She ensured I was comfortable and had what I needed or wanted. She just didn't come to check in on me, we actually talked! She sat there and explained to me what was going on with my body after the surgery. She said a lot of women have this type of surgery and she wanted to make sure that my recovery time was lessened. She ensured I had everything I needed from blankets to food and drink. She talked to me like a person not a dictated nurse trying to get her patient out of there so she could go and do other things. She spent quality time with me and my husband. I felt comfortable being in her care.*



# DAISY Award Winners

*Ana noticed my urine outtake and was not happy with it. She discussed with me what I had to do not only there at the hospital but also when I got home so that my outcome would benefit me more. I feel she went above and beyond her nursing skills. I have never had this kind of care before. This treated me like a person. She made me feel comfortable. She make sure My family and I understood what was going on with me and how to care for myself after I got home. Something no other nurse or medical staff have ever done with rare exception. Everyone should be as caring and loving with their patients as Ana was to me. She truly cares for her patients and she's good at her job. No, she's great at her job. She made me feel like I was the only one there that she had to care for. I had 100% of her attention at all times. That is one fantastic nurse you have working for you. Not only am I a patient there but I am also an employee. I just had to hug her before I left. I felt loved when I left.*



## Nicole Marquisee, BSN, RN 6 North Telemetry Unit

*I refer to Ms. Nicole as my "Nurse Angel." She exudes love and compassion, and I was blessed to have been in her care. Her professionalism as a nurse was exemplified by her coming to see me shortly after her shift began. She warmly introduced herself, asked how I was feeling, and proceeded to administer my medication. She subsequently disinfected my table, brought me my breakfast, and made my bed without me asking! Before leaving, she asked if there was*

*anything I needed, all with a smile on her lovely face. She checked on me periodically, always asking how I was. When I pressed the call button, she answered right away and came immediately if I needed her. When it appeared that my health had taken a turn for the worse, and I was clearly panicked, Ms. Nicole took the time to speak words of encouragement by reassuring me that I was in the best place and helped me to relax by soothingly rubbing my shoulder as a nurturing mother would. Even though my family was not there with me at that moment, I did not feel alone. I had Ms. Nicole there, who truly sought to comfort me. I felt blessed, encouraged, and genuinely cared for. Ms. Nicole embodies the excellence in nursing that those in her care are fortunate enough to experience.*

# DAISY Award Winners



## Susana Bush, BSN, RN Labor & Delivery Unit

*I was 20 weeks pregnant and was in labor and delivery to deliver my stillborn daughter. The situation is not an easy one to deal with personally, and I can only imagine how hard it is as a nurse. I was blessed to have been placed with Susana as my nurse. She made me and my husband feel very comfortable the entire time we were there. The whole experience was new for me having previously delivered at KP Downey via a c-section 5 years prior. I did not know what to expect from*

*a vaginal delivery to being able to hold my miscarried baby. Susana was constantly there checking up on me and my family. She even offered support by lending a hand during difficult moments. Susana reassured me that I would be okay and that my baby would be OK. I received a box of items as a keepsake, and this touched my heart. I will be able to look back on my short time with my baby and remember her, and I have Susana to thank for that. She deserves recognition, and I hope that others will be placed under her care and have the same welcoming feeling she brought to my family and me during our difficult situation.*

## Nancy Lopez-Fiandach, BSN, RN Intensive Care Unit

*My grandfather, 91 years old, on dialysis, with a pacemaker, and was in ICU after falling and breaking his left hip, post his partial hip replacement, had very low blood pressure that required a special IV medication that needed to be monitored 24/7. This nurse was a tremendous GOD-SEND. I had never seen a nurse with her amount of energy, attention to detail, and bedside manners. This nurse did her job above and beyond the call of nursing. I kept calling her the "Bentley/*

*Rolls-Royce" of nurses because I've seen my fair share of hospitals between two elderly grandparents*



# DAISY Award Winners

*and never came across someone like her. Even the other nurses who tended to my grandfather in the ICU weren't like this nurse.*

*Due to our distrust of hospital systems when it comes to my grandfather (who is also hard of hearing, and comprehension low due to early onset Alzheimer's) my sister and I would rotate to ensure things were being done properly (which meant as much as possible overlapping the times we were visiting to show our familial presence). My first introduction to this nurse was the morning I walked in shortly after the night shift change. When I came into the room Nancy was wiping down every surface in my grandfather's room - the chair, the counters, the sink, the bedside drawers, the remote...there wasn't an inch in that room she didn't wipe down. As a self-proclaimed germaphobe, I appreciated this level of attention to detail because sometimes thorough cleanings can be overlooked. Nancy is an exemplar when it comes to taking pride in one's work environment.*

*She exhibited a unique attention to detail while caring for my grandfather because, after the wipe down, she did an assessment and started realizing things were missing in my grandfather's room that would make his stay in ICU more comfortable and brought them into the room. I HIGHLY appreciated this because you don't know 'what' is missing if the nurses don't provide you with it. Mind you, my grandfather had been in the ICU for three days and we hadn't seen this level of detail prior. Nancy cared for my grandfather with respect, empathy, and awareness of "what can I do to help this patient's recovery." Nancy is seriously built differently. Nancy became someone whom our family trusted, and we would even skip a couple of hours and not overlap our visiting when we found out the nurse was his day shift nurse – we trusted her work, care, and attention to my grandfather. Nancy was rotating my grandfather every two hours, and would do light upper body movement, and lung exercises to help his muscles stay active (she was the ONLY nurse that did this). On the days this nurse cared for my grandfather, we saw such a vibrancy, and I knew it was because of the work Nancy was doing. He even did well with Physical Therapy on the days she was caring for him. She helped improve my grandfather's health – and that meant so much. Nancy truly embodies what it means to be part of a patient's journey that doesn't begin and end with giving medication and checking vital signs, but rather she took into consideration the whole person of my grandfather.*

# DAISY Award Winners

*I can't overstate how DIFFERENT the nurse was from other nurses. I remember the first day I met Nancy, she reminded me that I needed to take care of myself and offered me an opportunity to take a break to get water. She wanted to make sure while I was taking care of my grandfather that, I was also taking care of myself. She never rushed when she came in the room to do checks on him, and she provided a paper that listed out the TV stations (though minor, it meant a lot because it was painful flipping through channels without knowing which channel was which one). I don't have the words to describe a nurse because she supersedes the generic phrases of praise for someone who goes above and beyond. She's a diamond in the rough, 24k gold, a priceless jewel that a collector wouldn't sell for anything in the world. She's someone who took care of my grandfather so well he became spoiled by her, and even with early onset Alzheimer's, he remembers Nancy. When he was downgraded and moved to a non-ICU room, he complained that the nurses he had weren't like Nancy and asked for her. I have to admit when she wasn't my grandfather's nurse I watched her having the same care and concern for other patients in ICU. We would be so bummed when she wasn't assigned to my grandfather, but we understood that everyone deserved greatness. All we have is thanks to Nancy for doing her job x10. I thank Nancy for the days when I heard she was on duty for my grandfather, which allowed me a moment to "breathe again" and take care of myself.*

*Thank you, Nancy, for providing high-quality healthcare to my grandfather and myself by taking my mental health and well-being into consideration (I've never experienced that). Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center would do well to allow nurses the opportunity to train other nurses on what it looks like to do their job, in excellence, and be exceptional – Nancy is THAT good.*

# DAISY Award Winners



## Paola Villegas, RN 4 West Medical Surgical Unit

*My father had emergency surgery due to a hernia and bowel obstruction. The first night was very rough as the pain medication caused my 91-year-old father (the patient) to be extremely agitated and aggressive. He was at a point where he argued, and refused to allow Paola to get close to him. He even resisted physically by swinging and grasping the nurse, who was doing her best to calm him and service his needs. Apparently, he was experiencing post-surgery delirium in a bad way. I felt for Paola*

*and the difficult position she was in. Paola maintained her composure throughout the night; she continued to assist under difficult circumstances. I was there to witness Paola's perseverance in keeping my father safe from harming himself even though, given the opportunity, he would have tried to hurt her. Through Paola's skill, he made it through the night and is recovering well. Paola deserves recognition!*

## Sheila Madjus, BSN, RN Post-Anesthesia Care Unit

*Before I forget, I want to acknowledge Sheila's amazing kindness toward me today. Knowing that I came from the ER in pain and silently nervous about my procedure, Sheila washed my hair and wiped me down thoroughly so I would feel better! Despite being loopy under morphine, I felt a genuine compassion that was above and beyond any experience I have received as a patient. It felt more like a motherly touch. Earlier as Sheila was putting socks on my feet, she mentioned that my feet are like that of her 22-year-old daughter. Thank you so much, Sheila. Thank you for reminding me why I love nursing at KP. Thank you for easing my anxiety and pain through your kindness, even though you might have just been doing your job. Deepest gratitude.*



# DAISY Award Winners



## Khldon Alomari, RN Pediatric Intensive Care Unit

*My son, L, was intubated for 7 days for the first time at age 15 in March 2024. Khldon Alomari was his first Registered Nurse at the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Kaiser Downey, California. L was intubated a second time in August 2024; Khldon remembered L and how he was able to communicate with him, though L could not speak. They had developed a form of communication with hand signals, and L became so comfortable that he wanted to remain awake while intubated! L was*

*appreciative of all the quality care that Khldon gave; it truly helped him keep fighting to recover. Both times, Khldon was patient, understanding, kind, sweet, compassionate, and very attentive to all of L's needs and L was very needy due to his illness. Yet, Khldon's work ethic showed his passion for his career to give patients, such as L, the best experience possible, though he was fighting for his life. Khldon even made sure I, L's mother, ate by bringing me food while reminding me to take care of myself so I could continue to care for my son, and I needed that reminder.*

*Although every person in the PICU was excellent in providing genuine care, Khldon stood out for his knowledge in utilizing his resources, going above and beyond as he often did. L had a difficult time sleeping before his extubation. Khldon went out of his way to bring L a "Quiet Pac," which contains an eye mask, ear plugs, etc.... He also played Lullaby soothing music for L. These may seem like little things, but they are what got L to sleep well and set him up for a successful extubation. Khldon took the time to explain things to calm L down when he would get anxious. Khldon's care made L's day light up and, in the end, gave him a positive experience in a critical situation on two different occasions. L said to Khldon as we said goodbye, "Thank you for everything Poppa Khldon" and L left happy instead of traumatized.*

*I hope Khldon's hard work is recognized. Thank you Khldon, your outstanding teamwork with your wonderful colleagues will never be forgotten because people will always remember how you made them feel.*

# DAISY Award Winners



Victor J. Barcarse, MSN, RN,  
CCRN, FNP-BC

## Post-Anesthesia Care Unit

*I'm a 53 y/o female, a health care worker, recently diagnosed with breast cancer. It was devastating to hear about this life-changing illness. It made me anxious and worried. And even more nervous on the day of surgery. The doctor reassured me and made me feel better during prep time. The surgery went well. When I woke up at the recovery area a couple of nurses were attending to me, monitoring*

*vitals and giving medication. One nurse stood out to me as he was very diligent, patient, and attentive to my needs during recovery. He made me feel better and less anxious. He was very caring, encouraging, and thorough in explaining post-op care, such as pain management, drain care, surgical wound care, dressing change, signs and symptoms to watch for, and reportable conditions. He provided me with supplies to take home for dressing change. He helped me get dressed and ensured I could walk safely before going home. He never rushed. He took his time to assist me to get ready for discharge home. He was calm and reassured me several times. Within those few hours during recovery, I felt very well taken care of. He is exemplary. He truly showed KP's core values: Compassion, Commitment, and Care! I really appreciate the service he rendered. Thank you!*

## Daisy Rubalcava, RN 5 West Medical Surgical Unit

*Daisy went above and beyond to provide the utmost compassionate patient and family center care. She treated my transitioning mom with the greatest level of respect and helped our family understand the transitioning process. She patiently and graciously answered all our questions. After my mom passed, Daisy lovingly cleaned her up and provided us with compassionate emotional support. We couldn't have asked for a better nurse for my mom's transition.*



# DAISY Award Winners



## Stephanie White, BSN, RN Pediatrics Unit

*Nurse Steph is what we call her, she is an amazing nurse. My daughter was admitted to the hospital due to a blood infection that later that day turned into meningitis. Unfortunately my daughters health was rapidly declining. But thankfully after 3 days she started to get better within hours. Nurse Steph has been taking care of my 4-month-old baby girl and my family for 3 days and more since my daughter is due to be here for the remainder of 3 weeks but we specifically ask for her. The*

*reason as to why I am nominating her and why she deserves this nomination is because, at the time when we first met I was a mess. Crying, stressed, anxious and overall in bad shape. She helped me by talking and listening to my worries and concerns. She would take her time with me and my daughter. Constantly checking in and reassuring me, bringing me snacks just because, playing and being interactive with my daughter, and coming within 2 mins or less after putting the call light. She has been here by my side thru thick and thin and she made my days lighter. Never has she made me feel uncomfortable, or if I'm not important what so ever. She takes her time with us and makes me and my daughter feel seen. She connects with my family as well and just overall is an amazing human being who deserves nothing but the best in life. I love her so much and my baby does too. We will forever have a special spot for her in our hearts and she will have a reserved spot for her in heaven*

# Healthy communities



# Shaping Futures: Inspiring the Next Generation

On Tuesday, March 19, 2024, our dedicated shared Governance Quality and Outreach Council members took a meaningful trip to Los Alisos Middle School for their Career Day event. This community event was nothing short of spectacular, as our passionate nurses shared their love for the profession and inspired the young minds of tomorrow.

The event was a resounding success, with our council members engaging with students and providing valuable insights into the world of nursing. The students were captivated by the stories and experiences shared by our nurses, who highlighted the importance of healthcare and the rewarding nature of the profession.

We are incredibly proud of our council's efforts and their positive impact on the next generation. The event was a testament to the power of community engagement and the importance of nurturing future healthcare leaders. A special shoutout to our amazing volunteers who made this event possible: Felicia Fantroy, RN, Sarah Kichler, RN, Jenna Federico, BSN, RN, Yoshiari Nakamura, RN, and Alicia Padilla, BSN, RN. Your dedication and enthusiasm are truly inspiring!

Let's continue to engage with our community and inspire greatness. Together, we can make a difference and shape a brighter future for healthcare!



# Natasha's Mission



At Downey Medical Center (DMC), we believe in the power of community and the importance of giving back. This year, we are thrilled to highlight the inspiring story of Natasha Martin, RN, whose unwavering commitment to service has touched countless lives both locally and globally.

Natasha's passion for nursing and community service is deeply rooted in her own journey through adversity. Growing up, she faced significant challenges that could have easily derailed her future. Her determination to rise above her circumstances and give back to others facing similar struggles is truly remarkable.

For the past eight years, Natasha has volunteered extensively in her community, working with at-risk children, individuals experiencing homelessness, and families in need. Her dedication to service is not just something she does; it is a vital part of who she is. Natasha's life is a testament to the strength of perseverance and the profound impact of kindness.

When an anonymous donor, a retired Kaiser Permanente nurse, approached "A Way Out Ministries" to extend their services to Mindoro, Philippines, Natasha eagerly embraced the opportunity. The organization constructed a community center and a church building with plumbing facilities in San Jose, Mindoro. It began weekly services providing food, clothes, school supplies, medications, health education, and other needs to the local community.

Natasha participated in the mission trip from October 8-17, 2024. She helped deliver food and supplies and organize health events for the people of San Jose. Her enthusiasm and dedication to making a difference in the lives of others are truly inspiring.

This level of commitment highlights our dedication to fostering a culture of compassion and community involvement. We believe in empowering our staff to pursue meaningful volunteer opportunities without compromising their professional responsibilities. Natasha's story is a shining example of how our commitment to community service extends beyond the hospital walls.

Natasha Martin's journey is a heartwarming reminder of the power of perseverance, kindness, and community support. Her dedication to service, both locally and globally, embodies the values we hold dear at Downey Medical Center. As we celebrate her achievements, we are reminded of the profound impact that one individual can have on the lives of many.



## Fall Into Wellness

To kick off the fall season, KP Downey brought wellness to the community with its first ever Fall Into Wellness event at the Promenade at Downey! This festive, health-fair-style gathering gave community members a chance to connect with Kaiser Permanente physicians and staff, ask questions, and learn about our unique approach to care.

Attendees enjoyed free blood pressure screenings and flu vaccines—nearly 40 screenings and 95 flu shots were provided! Our teams also shared valuable health education on topics like stroke awareness, sepsis prevention, and healthy eating.

A big shoutout to the incredible teams who made it all happen, nursing, pharmacy, flu clinic, volunteer services, PAC, enrollment, Dr. Jose Yakushi, and our facilities crew. Your teamwork made this event a fall favorite!





## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Watts Juneteenth Street Fair

Kaiser Permanente (KP) proudly joined the celebration at the 4th Annual Watts Juneteenth Street Fair on June 15, 2024, partnering with the ThinkWatts Foundation to honor a powerful day in history and uplift the community.

Our KP booth was buzzing with activity, from free blood pressure screenings to the ever popular “Wheel of Health” game, where attendees spun for a chance to win KP branded goodies and learn something new about their health. Whether answers were right or wrong, everyone walked away with knowledge and a smile!

Massage therapists offered relaxing, no-cost massages, while the Watts Counseling and Learning Center led fun kids’ crafts. Guests also toured the brand-new KP Watts Medical Offices, which opened earlier this year.

A huge thank you to all the amazing volunteers from KP Watts Medical Offices, KP Downey, KP Regional, and the Counseling and Learning Center who made this event a joyful success.

# From L.A. to Samoa: Aristotle's Journey



In May 2024, Aristotle Marasigan, MSN, RN, joined a team from Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center to conduct a Pediatric Critical Care Support (PCCS) course at LBJ Tropical Medical Center, the only hospital in American Samoa.

The connection to LBJ Tropical Medical Center was established through Mike Favazza, M.D., a PICU intensivist at Kaiser Permanente Downey, who trained at LBJ Tropical Medical Center a decade ago. At Kaiser Permanente Downey, PCCS training is provided twice a year to PICU and Emergency Department (ED) RNs, Respiratory Therapists (RTs), and

Pediatricians, coordinated by Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Nanette Ancheta.

Initially, the course was to be taught solely by PICU Intensivists. However, when Aristotle Marasigan expressed interest in joining, he was graciously included in the team. Supported by manager Martha Martinez, MSN, RN, C-NPT and unit Charge RNs, arrangements were made for Aristotle's participation. The initiative was funded by an education and training grant from LBJ Hospital, which covered flights, accommodation, and food.

The two-day course included lectures, discussions, and simulations, with half of the hospital's critical care staff participating. Each participant passed pre-tests and post-tests to receive certification from the Society of Critical Care Medicine. The event was covered by local news, highlighting the community's interest.

Aristotle's dedication and enthusiasm were instrumental in the success of this mission. His willingness to volunteer and contribute his expertise exemplifies the spirit of collaboration and commitment to global health. Aristotle's participation not only enhanced the training experience but also fostered meaningful connections with the local medical practitioners.

Kaiser Permanente Downey's support for these efforts demonstrates its commitment to global health initiatives and healthcare education in developing regions. By contributing to the training and development of healthcare professionals in American Samoa, the team improved the immediate capabilities of the local medical staff and established a lasting partnership for future collaboration.



## NICU Superhero Reunion

Capes were flying and smiles were shining at Kaiser Permanente Downey's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Superhero Reunion, where our tiniest graduates returned for a day of celebration, connection, and joy! Families reunited with the incredible physicians and staff who once cared for their little fighters in the NICU, now thriving and growing stronger every day.

The superhero-themed event was packed with fun: carnival games, photo ops with Star Wars stormtroopers, hands-on animal encounters, and even a few surprise characters! Laughter echoed through the day as families shared stories, snapped photos, and celebrated the amazing journeys of their little heroes.

This unforgettable day reminded us all of the strength, resilience, and love that define our NICU families and the powerful impact of compassionate care.



# Shaping Futures: Inspiring the Next Generation

In celebration of Nurses Week, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center awarded a \$40,000 community health grant to Los Angeles Unified School District's Maxine Waters Employee Preparation Center on May 10, 2024. This generous contribution supports the center's free Vocational Nursing Program, which primarily serves students in the Watts community.

The grant will fund the purchase of advanced training equipment, including Smart Scopes, Integrated Diagnostic Systems, CPR mannequins, and virtual reality medical training tools. These resources will enhance hands-on learning and better prepare students for careers as Licensed Vocational Nurses.

Additionally, Kaiser Permanente's HR talent acquisition team provided students with valuable career development support, including resume-building and interview preparation. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to investing in the next generation of healthcare professionals and strengthening community health.





## Downey's Jolly Holiday

Kaiser Permanente Downey brought the holiday spirit to life as the official Health Partner at the Promenade at Downey's Jolly Holiday event! With festive vibes in full swing, our team handed out over 300 giveaways, provided 23 flu vaccinations, and shared health education with a smile.

Dr. Jose Yakushi from Whittier Medical Offices hosted our popular "Ask a Doctor" booth, giving attendees a chance to connect directly with a physician and get their health questions answered.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who helped spread cheer and wellness.



# Wellness campaign:

## Self-care apps for your everyday life



### Calm

The number one app for sleep and meditation — designed to help lower stress, anxiety, and more.

- More than 100 guided meditations
- Sleep Stories for deeper, more restful sleep
- Exclusive music tracks for focus, relaxation, and sleep



### myStrength

Build a personalized plan to strengthen your emotional health whenever, wherever you need to.

- A personalized support plan
- Tools to manage stress, depression, sleep, and more
- Hundreds of activities, articles, and videos



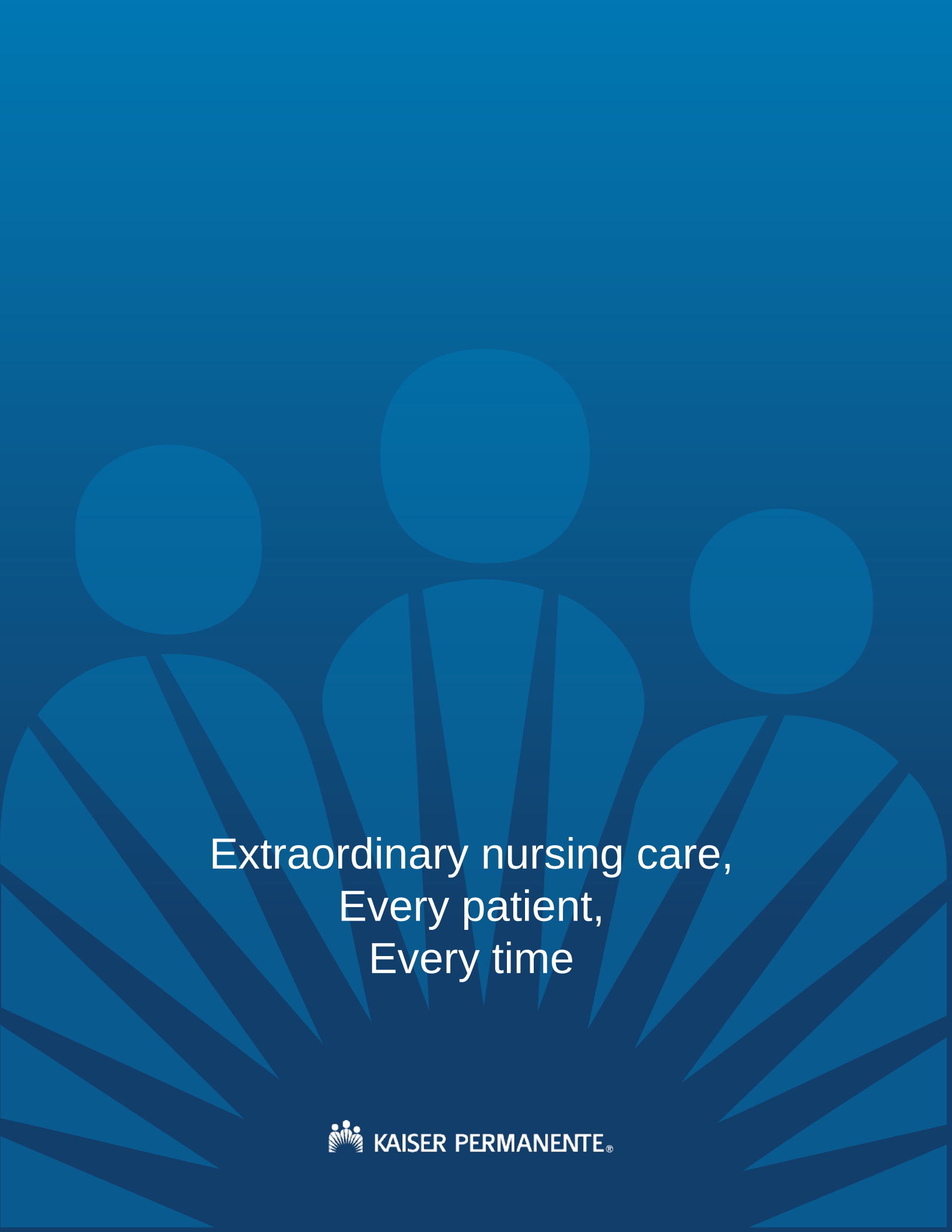
### Headspace Care (formerly called Ginger)

Text 1-on-1 with an emotional support coach anytime, anywhere.

- 24/7 text-based emotional support coaching
- Discuss goals, share challenges, and create an action plan with a coach
- Self-care resources recommended for identified needs

Everyone needs support for total health — mind, body, and spirit.

These wellness apps can help navigate life's challenges, and make small changes to improve sleep, mood, relationships, and more. Its self-care made easy, designed to help each nurse live well and thrive.

The background of the entire image features a stylized graphic of human figures in various shades of blue. The figures are composed of circular heads and trapezoidal bodies. The central figure is the largest, with its body divided into several vertical segments. It is flanked by two smaller figures. Below these, there are more stylized, overlapping shapes that resemble a sunburst or a fan, also in shades of blue. The overall composition is centered and balanced.

Extraordinary nursing care,  
Every patient,  
Every time



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