

South Dakota Nurses Association Annual Convention

The Balancing Act of Nursing

October 4–5, 2026

Dakota Event Center | Aberdeen, South Dakota

Nursing requires balancing compassion with resilience, advocacy with action, science with humanity, and professional excellence with personal well-being. Join nurses from across South Dakota as we explore the many roles nurses navigate every day while celebrating our profession and preparing for the future.

Sunday, October 4

10:00–11:30 AM	SDNA Board Meeting
10:30–11:30 AM	Registration Opens
11:30–11:40 AM	Opening Ceremony
11:40 AM–1:10 PM	Balancing the Heart of Nursing: Finding Purpose in a Complex Profession <i>LeAnn Thieman, RN • International Speaker • Co-author of Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul</i> Begin the convention with an inspiring keynote celebrating the heart of nursing. Through heartfelt stories, humor, and practical insights, LeAnn will explore how nurses can rediscover purpose, navigate the complexities of today's profession, and sustain resilience throughout their careers.
1:10–1:30 PM	Break • Silent Auction • Raffles
1:30–2:20 PM	Balancing Nursing and Public Policy <i>Democratic & Republican Candidates for Governor of South Dakota</i> Healthcare policy directly impacts nursing practice, patient care, and the future of our profession. Hear from South Dakota's gubernatorial candidates as they discuss healthcare priorities and engage in a moderated discussion focused on issues important to nurses and the communities they serve.
2:25–3:15 PM	Balancing Compassion and Advocacy: Nursing's Role in Identifying Human Trafficking <i>Mary Holzwarth • Human Trafficking Coordinator & Analyst • South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation</i> Human trafficking often goes unrecognized in healthcare settings. Learn how nurses can identify warning signs, respond appropriately, and advocate for vulnerable individuals through trauma-informed care and multidisciplinary collaboration.
3:15–3:30 PM	Break • Silent Auction • Raffles
3:30–4:30 PM	Balancing Caring for Others While Caring for Ourselves: Nurse Trauma & Incivility Panel <i>Moderator: Kathy Gaubin, RN</i> <i>Panelists: Myranda Becking, BSN, RN • Krystal Stuwe, MSN, RN • Quin Lund, RN</i> Nurses are expected to care for others while often carrying the weight of trauma, burnout, and workplace incivility. This interactive panel will share personal experiences, discuss evidence-based strategies to build resilience, and explore ways to foster healthier, more supportive work environments.

4:30–5:30 PM	SDNA Annual Business Meeting
5:30 PM	Networking Reception
6:00 PM	Dinner
6:30–7:30 PM	Evening Entertainment Magic Joe (Joey Barnett, RN) Enjoy an evening of laughter, storytelling, and world-class entertainment as nurse and magician Joey Barnett combines humor, inspiration, and illusion to celebrate the nursing profession.
7:30–9:00 PM	Live Auction Cap off the evening with one of convention's favorite traditions! Bid on exciting packages, experiences, and donated items while supporting the South Dakota Nurses Association's mission to advocate for nurses and strengthen the profession across South Dakota.

Monday, October 5

8:30 AM	Welcome & Morning Announcements
8:30–9:50 AM	Balancing Health Through Different Lenses <i>Moderator: Linda Burdette</i> <i>Panelists: Donna Linke – Medical Cannabis • Tiffany Hoeft – Minds Matter • Samantha Wipf – Optimal Performance • Ashley Geist – Brighter Day Counseling & Consulting</i> Healthcare extends beyond traditional treatment models. This multidisciplinary panel explores innovative approaches to physical, mental, and emotional well-being while highlighting the nurse's role in providing holistic, patient-centered care.
9:50–10:30 AM	Visit Exhibitors • Silent Auction • Raffles
10:30–11:15 AM	Balancing Access: Rural Nursing Innovation <i>Dr. Lea Neidebaumer</i> Expanding Access to Oral Health Resources: A School-Based Approach Discover how creative partnerships and school-based initiatives are improving access to oral healthcare in rural communities. Learn how nurses can lead collaborative efforts that reduce barriers and improve population health outcomes.
11:15–11:30 AM	Exhibitor Break
11:30 AM–12:30 PM	Balancing Resilience: Thriving Through Change <i>Ben Hylden</i> Close the convention with an engaging keynote focused on resilience, adaptability, and finding purpose through life's challenges. Leave inspired with practical tools to strengthen your mindset, embrace change, and continue making a lasting impact both personally and professionally.
12:30–12:45 PM	Last Call for Silent Auction • Exhibitor Break
12:45 PM	Lunch
1:15–2:15 PM	Closing Session President's Address • SDNA Awards • Raffle Drawings • Convention Closing Remarks
2:30–3:15 PM	SDNA Board Meeting