(VOLUME 2, 2026 EDITION)

Newsletter

NIGERIAN NURSES ASSOCIATION OF NORTH CAROLINA (NNANC)



About Us

The Nigerian Nurses Association in North Carolina (NNANC) is a professional organization dedicated to promoting excellence in nursing practice, education, leadership, and community service among Nigerian nurses and nurse leaders within the state of North Carolina. NNANC is a recognized chapter of the National Association of Nigerian Nurses in North America (NNNANA), aligning with its mission to advance professional development, advocacy, and collaboration across nursing disciplines.

Through professional networking, continuing education, mentorship, and community outreach, NNANC strives to empower its members while contributing meaningfully to the health and well-being of the communities we serve. The association also serves as a cultural and professional bridge, fostering unity, collaboration, and visibility for Nigerian nurses within the broader healthcare landscape.

Mission Statement

To harness combined effort, knowledge and skill as we strive to achieve professional goals and promote optimal health for our communities in the United States and Nigeria.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to exercise the power to create and promote optimal health in the community, and to continue to advance the nursing profession.

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CHAIRLADY'S PREFACE

Welcome to Volume 2 of the Nigerian Nurses Association of North Carolina (NNANC) Newsletter.

Dr. Violet Smart

It is a pleasure to share another edition that celebrates the dedication, leadership, and service of our members. This newsletter reflects our commitment to professional excellence, community engagement, health education, and supporting one another as nurses and advocates.

Inside, you will find inspiring stories, valuable health information, and highlights of the meaningful work being done by our members. We hope these pages encourage continued learning, collaboration, and a renewed commitment to improving the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

On behalf of the Newsletter Committee, thank you to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and support to make this publication possible. Together, we continue to strengthen our profession and our community.

Thank you for being part of the NNANC family. We hope you enjoy this issue.

Dr. Violet Smart, Th.D., MSN, RN
Committee Chair, NNANC Newsletter





HEARTBEAT BY HEARTBEAT:

A Daughter's Perspective on Family, Healing, and the Importance of Caregiver Voices

Ukeme Ndon
RN, BSN, PCCN, LFP

Day of Surgery. When my father underwent open-heart surgery, unclear communication created unnecessary anxiety for our family. We arrived expecting to see him before the procedure, only to discover he had already been taken to surgery without notice. For my father, an immigrant unfamiliar with the U.S. healthcare system, this missed opportunity for reassurance added to an already frightening experience.

Recovery. Watching my once energetic father connected to tubes and monitors was overwhelming, but our presence brought him comfort and hope. Compassionate nurses and physicians cared for him with patience and respect, while our prayers, encouragement, and constant support strengthened his recovery. Although hesitant at first, he completed cardiac rehabilitation and now remains committed to regular exercise.

Communication Matters. My father humorously told a staff member, "I speak English, but I don't understand your accent. Speak slowly so I can read your lips." His comment highlighted how small adjustments—clear speech, eye contact, and patience—can greatly improve trust and patient-centered care.

The Role of Family. Families are not bystanders but essential partners in healing. Their presence before and after major procedures reduces fear, provides emotional support, and reinforces holistic care. Our journey began with fear but ended with gratitude, resilience, and a deeper appreciation for compassionate healthcare.

Reflection: The Elephant in the Room—Heart Disease Among Nigerians. Heart disease is a growing yet underrecognized threat in Nigeria, where limited access to preventive healthcare delays diagnosis for many. My father was fortunate that his condition was detected before a heart attack occurred. As diets become increasingly westernized and physical activity declines, prevention is more important than ever. Reducing salt intake, choosing minimally processed foods, staying physically active, and obtaining regular health screenings can significantly reduce cardiovascular risk. According to Ogah et al. (2023), cardiovascular disease accounts for approximately 10% of deaths in Nigeria, underscoring the urgent need for greater awareness, prevention, and accessible healthcare. The choices we make today can protect our health, our families, and future generations.

References: Ogah, O. S., Orimolade, O. A., & Jinadu, T. O. (2023). Cardiovascular diseases in Nigeria: Current status, threats, and opportunities.

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LONG COVID DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT





Chika Nwanedo,

DNP, FNP-BC, BSN, BA, APRN

What is Long COVID?

Long COVID, also referred to as post–COVID-19 condition, is a recently recognized clinical diagnosis associated with prior infection by SARS-CoV-2. It was assigned the ICD-10-CM code U09.9 in 2021 and represents a growing public health concern due to its prevalence and impact on quality of life. Although definitions vary slightly across organizations, there is consensus regarding its chronic, and multisystem nature, as well as viral etiology. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) define Long COVID as an infection-associated chronic condition that occurs after SARS-CoV-2 infection and persists for at least three months as a continuous, relapsing, remitting, or progressive disease affecting one or more organ systems (Ely et al., 2024). Similarly, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines Long COVID as a condition occurring in individuals with a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection, usually three months from COVID symptom onset, with symptoms lasting at least two months that cannot be explained by any alternative diagnosis (Gillan et al., 2024). Current estimates suggest that approximately 7% of adults and more than 1% of children in the United States have experienced Long COVID, representing 15–20 million individuals, with over 60 million cases reported globally (Ely et al., 2024).

Diagnosis of Long COVID.

Diagnosis is primarily clinical and relies on the evaluation of patient-reported symptoms in conjunction with a thorough medical assessment. At present, there is no single diagnostic test or definitive biomarker to

confirm the condition (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2026). Patient evaluations may include a thorough history taking, physical examination, imaging such as chest X-ray, and laboratory testing to rule out other upper respiratory Infection (URI) like RSV and Influenza. Lab test like complete blood counts and metabolic panels are completed to rule out alternative diagnosis. A positive SARS test is not needed at time of diagnosis of Long COVID; however, patients may have had unconfirmed, confirmed SARS or asymptomatic COVID infection. Long COVID can affect anyone regardless of age, sex, socioeconomic class.

Symptoms.

This disabling disease is characterized by a wide range of symptoms that can affect multiple organ systems. Common general symptoms include extreme fatigue, and intermittent fever. Neurologic manifestations include cognitive dysfunction, commonly described as "brain fog," (forgetfulness), impaired concentration and dizziness. Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) (Bjornson et al, 2025), a drop in heart rate from lying to sitting and standing position may be present. Research shows that POTS is more prevalent in women than men (Bjornson et al, 2025). Cardiopulmonary symptoms also include shortness of breath, chest pain, and palpitations, Gastrointestinal effect emanates as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, bloating.

Management of Long COVID

Treatment and management are patient-centered and typically coordinated by primary care providers. Referral to specialists is based on symptom presentation and complication. Given the absence of a definitive cure, treatment focuses on symptom relief, management, rehabilitation, supportive care and functional improvement. Preventive strategies include staying up to date with COVID Vaccine, practicing infection control measures such as hand hygiene, improving indoor air quality with fresh air, and lifestyle modification like regular physical exercise and eating balanced diet.

References

American Psychiatric Association. (2024). Resource document on the neuropsychiatric symptoms of subacute and chronic Long COVID. Gillan, A., Peace, M., Quinn, D., Levenson, J., & Thant, T.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2026, March). Clinical overview of Long COVID. https://www.cdc.gov/long-covid/hcp/clinical-overview/index.html

Ely, E. W., Brown, L. M., & Fineberg, H. V. (2024). Definition of Long COVID. New England Journal of Medicine, 391(18), 1746–1753. https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMsb2408466

Geng, L. N., Erlandson, K. M., Hornig, M., et al. (2025). 2024 update of the RECOVER-Adult Long COVID research index. Journal of the American Medical Association.

Thaweethai, T., Jolley, S. E., Karlson, E. W., et al. (2023). Development of a definition of postacute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Journal of the American Medical Association.

Björnson et al (2025). Prevalence and Clinical Impact of Postural Orthostatic,
Tachycardia Syndrome in Highly Symptomatic Long COVID.



NANNNA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The just concluded NANNNA Leadership Summit, held on April 17–19, 2026, in Delaware, was a very productive and informative session.

NNANC was well represented by:
Dr. Ngozi Nnaji, President
Dr. Ijeoma Orji, Vice President and National Working Committee Representative
Dr. Aloba, National APRN Committee Chair and NNA-NC Board Chair

The National Board of directors also held a check-in session with all Chapter Representatives and National Committee Chairs.

Key topics discussed included:
* Inspiring change and fostering innovation in leadership
* Review and updates on the implementation of the NANNNA Strategic Plan (2025–2030)
* Utilizing the organization's constitution to guide structure, governance, and processes for sustainable growth
* An interactive session on conflict of interest in not-for-profit organizations

A major highlight of the summit was the keynote presentation on the Impact of Poor Nursing Leadership, which emphasized the serious consequences of ineffective leadership, including:

* A toxic work environment
* Reduced patient safety
* High staff turnover
* Negative patient outcomes, such as:
* Increased length of stay
* Decreased client satisfaction, which can negatively affect hospital or organizational reimbursement
* Poor quality health indicators

The keynote speaker also shared important leadership tips and takeaways using the word LEADERSHIP:

L – Leading with Purpose
E – Emotional Intelligence
A – Assertiveness
D – Dedication
E – Empowerment
R – Responsiveness
S – Strength
H – Honesty
I – Integrity and Innovation
P – Prioritization

Overall, the summit was impactful, enlightening, and a great opportunity for growth, learning, and collaboration in nursing leadership.

The trip and participation were fully sponsored by the National body. We sincerely appreciate the NANNNA National Executives and Board Members for covering 100% of the travel and event expenses.

A big thank you to the host chapter, Delaware, for their warm hospitality. The food was excellent.

Thank you to our NNANC representatives for your dedication and for representing North Carolina with excellence at the NANNNA Leadership Summit. Wishing everyone a safe and smooth journey back to North Carolina.

Dr. Ngozi Nnaji (President)

NNANC
Nurses Week Celebration 2026:

Reflecting, Recognizing, and Reconnecting





Dr Ngozi Nnaji
DNP, FNP-C, PMHNP-BC.
President NNANC

The Nigerian Nurses Association of North Carolina (NNANC) held its vibrant Nurses Week Celebration on May 17, 2026, at Comfort Suites Walnut Creek in Raleigh, North Carolina. The event brought together members for an afternoon of reflection, celebration, appreciation, and fellowship in honor of the nursing profession.

The celebration began with member arrival, networking, refreshments, and orientation, creating an atmosphere of connection and camaraderie. This was followed by an official photo session featuring the founder, executives, board members, committee chairs, and general membership, capturing memorable moments of unity and pride.

The Opening Ceremony featured a warm welcome from the President, Dr. Ngozi Nnaji, DNP, FNP-C, PMHNP-BC, who acknowledged guests and visitors and reaffirmed NNANC's commitment to supporting nurses through leadership, mentorship, and community engagement. The ceremony also included an opening prayer and the Nurses Anthem, setting the tone for an inspiring and uplifting event.

A special recognition segment honored the founder, new members, executives, board members, past presidents, and general members for their dedication and contributions to the growth and success of the association. Committee chair leaders also provided important updates on their various committees, highlighting ongoing initiatives, accomplishments, and upcoming plans. These updates reflected the dedication of NNANC's committees in advancing the association's goals through education, outreach, mentorship, research, advocacy, and community service.

During the Conference and Leadership Update segment, members received important information about the upcoming 16th Scientific

Nurses Week Celebration 2026 Contd.

Conference of the National Association of Nigerian Nurses in North America (NANNNA) scheduled for November 5–7, 2026, in Connecticut. Members were encouraged to prepare, register early, and make plans to attend this important national gathering, which will provide opportunities for professional development, networking, leadership engagement, and scientific advancement in nursing.

Membership renewal reminders and dues updates were also shared, reinforcing the importance of active participation and sustaining the growth of the association.

The highlight of the evening included a lively dinner, committee games, social activities, and fun-filled Nurses Week activities that brought laughter and excitement to the gathering. Members enjoyed music, fellowship, and networking while strengthening their professional and personal relationships.

The celebration continued with gift presentations and Nurses Week appreciation gifts, followed by the symbolic Nurses Week cake-cutting ceremony, representing unity, growth, and appreciation for the nursing profession. The event concluded with high-energy dancing, joyful celebration, and closing remarks, leaving members inspired and motivated for the months ahead.

Overall, the NNANC Nurses Week Celebration reaffirmed the association's commitment to professional excellence, mentorship, cultural connection, and community service, while celebrating the resilience and dedication of nurses across North Carolina. The event also served as a reminder of the importance of national engagement through NANNNA and the collective strength of Nigerian nurses working together to make meaningful impacts in healthcare and the communities they serve.



Nurses Week Celebration 2026 Contd.







































As nurses, we must continually reflect on the importance of forgiveness in our personal and professional lives. Embracing forgiveness frees us from judgment and guilt, allowing us to extend grace, compassion, and understanding to every patient we encounter.

In the book Untold Pain, the author explores this powerful lesson, reminding us of the importance of looking beyond what we see and resisting the urge to rush to judgment. In his own words, Dr. Jeff stated: For generations, Job's wife has been remembered for nine words spoken at the lowest point of her life.

Yet **Unspoken Pain** asks an important question: What about everything that came before those words?She lost ten children in a single day, watched her husband suffer devastating illness and rejection, and endured overwhelming grief—yet she stayed beside him.

Dr. Jeff C. Innocent offers eleven scripture-based arguments challenging the traditional judgment of Job's wife and inviting readers to see her story through the lens of grief, compassion, and grace.

Unspoken Pain is not a rewrite of the book of Job, but a call to look again at a woman who may have been defined by her worst moment. It reminds us not to rush to judgment, because behind a person's words or actions may be pain we have never taken the time to understand.



Dr. Violet Smart,
Th.D, MSN, RN



What Next?

By Dr. Jim Osita Okeke

In his postscript, Dr Jim Osita Okeke reflects on the meaning of life, death, faith, and the human journey. He presents life as a temporary passage ordained by God, comparing it to a traveler waiting at an airport for a flight whose departure time is unknown. Just as a traveler must board when called, every person enters the world at a time chosen by God and eventually returns to the Creator when their earthly mission is complete. While birth is celebrated with joy, death is often met with sorrow, yet both are natural parts of life's cycle.

The author emphasizes the temporary nature of worldly possessions and achievements. He argues that people enter the world with nothing and leave with nothing, regardless of wealth, property, status, or relationships. According to Okeke, human beings often become consumed by ambitions and the pursuit of success, forgetting that material accomplishments are only temporary. Instead, he encourages readers to focus on what truly matters-faith, purpose, gratitude, and meaningful relationships.

A major inspiration for the book came from the death of the author's first wife, Mrs. Joy Okeke (Ochiora) an event that led him to reflect deeply on life and mortality. He expresses sincere appreciation for her love, support, and influence, acknowledging her role in helping him realize the project. He also extends gratitude to his children and stepdaughter for their encouragement and inspiration throughout the writing process.

In the *Postscript*, Okeke describes the stages of human development, from infancy through adulthood. He explains how children gradually gain independence as they learn, grow, and assume greater responsibilities. As people mature, they face educational, professional, financial, and family challenges while striving to establish themselves in society. Despite these accomplishments, the author reminds readers that life remains a temporary journey that ultimately leads back to God.

Overall, the central message of these sections is that life is a gift from God that should be lived with humility, gratitude, and purpose. By recognizing the temporary nature of earthly existence, individuals can focus less on material pursuits and more on faith, love, service, and the lasting impact they have on others.

NNANC CURRENT EXECUTIVES



Ngozi Nnaji,
DNP, APRN, FNP-C, PMHNP-BC
– President



Ijeoma Orji,
DNP, FNP-C
– Vice President



Timothy A. Ebhodaghe,
RN, BSN
– General Secretary



Ukeme Ndon,
RN, BSN, PCCN
– Assistant Secretary



Juliet Chinyere Obiora,
BS, LPN
– Treasurer



Ngozi Regina Eze,
PMHNP-BC
– Assistant Treasurer



Nneka Modilim,
PMHNP-BC
– Financial Secretary



Blessing Ugochi Uwa,
MSN, RN
– Assistant Financial Secretary



Eyefujirin Ukponmwan,
MSN, FNP-C
– (PRO)



Laura Afoma Ikeagu,
DBH, MSN-PH, CLPH, BSN
– Assistant PRO



Olachi Constance Martins,
RN, BSN – Social Director



Stella Oluchi Adima,
APRN, PMHNP-BC
– Assistant Social Director



Bolanle Onime,
FNP-C – Provost



Precious Uzoma-Opara,
FNP-C – Assistant Provost

2026 NNANC NEW MEMBERS



Dr. Victoria Ifedi,
PhD, FNP-C



Uzoma Ukwu
RN, BSN



Nneka Okehie,
RN



Joy Ugwu,
BSN, RN



Ireti Omoseebi
BSN, RN



Angela Okpara
RN, BSN



Grace Okechi
BSN, RN



Orobosa Oronsaye
RN, BSN



Angela Anuonye
LPN



Chioma Anochie - Anugom
BSN, RN



Dr. Chika Duru
DNP, FNP-C



Dorothy Ijeoma Ezekwe-Anya
PhD, MPH, BHSM, RN



Eke Jasper Onuoha,
RN, PMHNP Student

Oriyomi Awosanya,
MSN, RN, PMHNP-BC, CC



Dr. Ngozi Onoh
DNP, PMHNP-BC

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Stella Adima
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Dr. Ijeoma Orji
DNP, FNP-C

NANNNA 2025 PARTNER SCHOOLS AND DISCOUNT RATES

School Name	Discount Rate
Grand Canyon University	15%
Walden University	25%
Chamberlain University	10%
Kaplan (Purdue) University	18%
Phoenix University	10%
Abilene Christian University	10%
Aspen University	10%
Andrew University	27%
Southern New Hampshire University	15%
United States University	10%



The Nigerian Nurses Association of North Carolina (NNANC) honors the life and legacy of Dr. Florence Okoro, a remarkable nurse, scholar, mentor, and leader whose dedication to nursing, education, and service left an enduring impact on our organization and the profession at large. Dr. Florence served faithfully as the Chair of the NNANC Research Committee and as the National Representative to the NANNNA Research Committee, where her passion for advancing nursing research, education, and professional excellence was evident in all she did.

She was also a respected Professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where she played a vital role in shaping the next generation of nurses through teaching, mentorship, and academic leadership. Her commitment to education and her passion for excellence inspired countless students and colleagues.

A distinguished academic and healthcare professional, Dr. Florence was deeply committed to empowering nurses, improving patient outcomes, and strengthening the future of healthcare. Her wisdom, humility, and dedication to service made her a pillar within both the nursing profession and the community.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, she was a compassionate and kind-hearted woman whose generosity, strength, and grace touched the lives of many.

Though her passing leaves a great void, her legacy of leadership, scholarship, mentorship, and service will forever remain in our hearts.

The NNANC family extends its deepest condolences to her husband, children, grandchildren, and loved ones during this difficult time.

Your light will continue to shine through the lives you touched.

May your soul rest in perfect peace.

Submitted by
Dr Ngozi Nnaji
DNP, PMHNP-BC, FNP-C.

THE FINAL CELEBRATION OF LIFE OF DR. FLORENCE OKORO



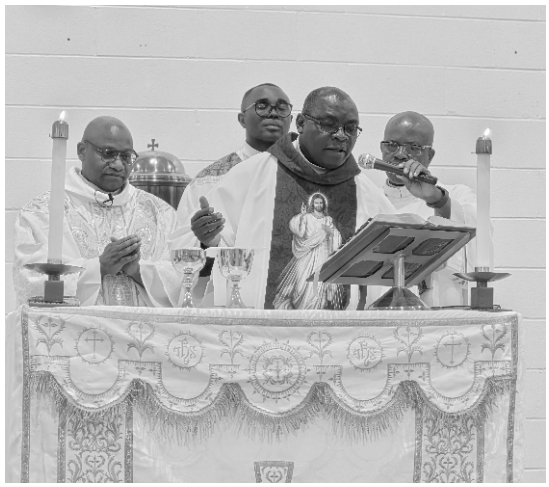
















NNANC CELEBRATES FIRST TMTYV MEDICAL/HEALTH MISSION PROGRAM COMPLETION

On behalf of the NNANC Board of Directors and Executives, I am proud and excited to announce the successful completion of NNANC's inaugural Chapter Medical/Health Mission Program, Take Me To Your Village (TMTYV), which culminated in an exceptionally organized and impactful webinar on August 22, 2026.

TMTYV is a three-phase effort that directly supports and promotes NANNNA's mission to enhance Nigerians' health and livelihoods—one life, community, and state at a time. The idea is simple yet powerful: find a Primary Health Care (PHC) center in your community, objectively assess its health and community needs, determine how NNANC can help through our grant application procedure, and then bring us to your village!

We take action on Nigeria's healthcare issues through this effort. We changed our communities with our knowledge, professional competence, talents, resources, and compassion. Structure upgrades and community empowerment projects were completed in five states—Abia, Imo, Enugu, Akwa Ibom, and Anambra—and Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory. What an astounding achievement and a testament to NNANC's dedication to service, community growth, and professional quality!

The 10 inaugural PHC/TMTYV award recipients deserve our thanks and congratulations. We applaud you for taking on the challenge, overcoming many challenges, and completing your projects. Your achievements showed our wonderful organization's strength, compassion, professionalism, originality, and individuality. More significantly, your devotion, compassion, and selflessness will forever affect the lives and communities you touched. Your work shows that true change begins when we act rather than talk.

The completion of this first TMTYV effort is a milestone, a testimonial, and the start of something greater. This first phase has set TMTYV up for the future and shown what can happen when committed professionals work together. First step by NNANC. The trip continues.

We will reach more places, touch more lives, improve more healthcare systems, and fulfilll our commitment to making a lasting difference—one person, one neighborhood, and one state at a time. Congratulations to everyone who helped launch TMTYV!

NNANC CELEBRATES FIRST TMTYV MEDICAL/HEALTH MISSION PROGRAM COMPLETION















