

## Nurses are key to managing the ever-changing COVID-19 situation

By Stacy Collier,  
President, S.C. Organization of Nurse Leaders

When the World Health Organization designated 2020 as the year of the nurse and midwife, no one could have imagined just how much we would be depending on nurses this year. I saw it earlier than many, as my hospital had the state's first COVID-19 patient and Kershaw County became an epicenter.

That was six weeks ago, and since then we have learned much about the virus. We've also had to unlearn many ingrained procedures and change some standard practices. For example, we now provide and launder scrubs so that staff don't have to wear them home.

We've had to be flexible and adaptable as official recommendations change. Keeping up with the latest information and communicating it to front-line staff is challenging because of the speed at which messages are outdated. We're grateful for the ongoing and frequent communication from the Centers for Disease Control, the state Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the South Carolina Hospital Association. We appreciate the daily communication we receive from SCHA and the collaborative efforts to procure personal protective equipment, plan for the surge and support our healthcare workforce.

We're also grateful for the community's support. What has really kept me going are the countless cards, phone calls, social media posts, prayers, posters and sidewalk chalk messages of support. One Sunday we had a prayer vigil in our parking lot full of people sitting in their cars, flashing lights to show their love and support. It energizes our front-line team. Thank you, and stay safe.

Stacy Collier has been with Kershaw Health for 22 years, serving as Chief Nursing Officer for six. She also serves as president of the S.C. Organization of Nurse Leaders, a professional organization affiliated with the South Carolina Hospital Association.