Provided through a collaboration among academic and rural practice partners, SOAR-RN (Supporting Onboarding And Retention of Rural Nurses) is an evidence-based, customized rural nurse residency program that provides rural organizations with the tools they need to help new nurses acquire the knowledge and skills to autonomously deliver safe care.

Through evidence-based training of educators, mentors, and preceptors, and delivery of a 12-month, rural-based curriculum, new nurses are provided with psycho-social and professional development support to meet the role challenges of rural nursing practice.

There is a great deal to learn and master when a newly graduated nurse enters practice in a rural hospital. The guidance that new nurses receive during their transition from student to independent practitioner can significantly impact their success and retention and influence patient outcomes.

For more information or to register for the SOAR-RN program, call:

- **MARY JANE CLARK**  
  ICAHN SOAR-RN Coordinator  
  (309) 331-4472

- **ANGIE CHARLET**  
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The Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network works in collaboration with rural healthcare partners in Wisconsin, and Illinois, including Rend Lake College, and the McKendree University nursing faculty and graduate nursing students.

The evidence-based program is sponsored by Marquette University and funded through a federal grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services.
Program Outcomes

The SOAR-RN program provides resources and builds nursing staff capacity across the organization. Through nursing staff professional role development and supportive educational components, the program aims to build cultures that foster learning and delivery of quality care. Through participation in the program:

**Nurse residents will have increased:**
- Organizational integration and retention
- Competency in quality care delivery
- Critical thinking ability
- Skill in using evidence-based information
- Clinical decision-making capability
- Commitment to life-long learning

**Organizations will have enhanced:**
- Safety climate
- Work environments
- Nurse recruitment and retention
- Mentor and preceptor role competency, commitment and satisfaction
- Best practice implementation and delivery of quality care

Celebrating three years of successful nurse residency program implementation in Illinois (based on the Wisconsin program), ICAHN’s exciting SOAR-RN program includes a seamless support system through several key components that build nurse capacity.

**RURAL NURSE RESIDENCY CURRICULUM:** To advance knowledge and skill essential to rural nursing care delivery, nurse residents participate in a 12-month curriculum delivered through monthly sessions, meeting one day a month. Those sessions begin on Tuesday, October 21st, and will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Advocate Eureka Hospital, Eureka, IL. ICAHN is working on an approved and integrated technology to provide this program. This program will include face-to-face meetings and webinar trainings, as well as a hands-on simulation day.

**PRECEPTORS:** Trained preceptors are another critical element that fosters clinical competency development and shapes professional practice for nurse residents during the orientation period. Utilizing rural specific, evidence-based research, the SOAR-RN program provides a two-day workshop or a self-paced online program aimed at providing preceptors with tools to use in real-time practice to assist nurse residents to deliver autonomous and safe care.

**CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COACH:** ICAHN will continue its alignment with Marquette University to provide skills and a toolkit to build clinical coaches within the network. This day-long workshop is structured in two parts: the theoretical framework of professional development coaching and practicing the skills necessary to become a Professional Development Coach. PDCs will receive specialized training focusing on the formation of authentic and trusting relationships with employees, fostering self-awareness and learning, and forwarding action and achieving results.

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Registeration Fee: $1,800 per nurse resident

Interested hospitals will need to provide the following in order for their nurse residents to participate:
- Identify new graduate nurses recently hired, or newly hired nurses that are transitioning to inpatient care from another care setting, such as ambulatory or long-term care, or from an urban setting
- Dedicate a staff member to be the point person to coordinate with ICAHN staff on this nurse residency project
- Participate in or send speakers (if identified at the hospital) and facilitators to assist with a one-day training session and participate in a phone conference
- Schedule nurse residents so they can attend the monthly, day-long education sessions on paid time throughout the 12-month residency period
- Identify nurses interested in serving as preceptors for three months who are committed to the completion of the required face-to-face and online training sessions

ICAHN is partnering with McKendree University nursing faculty and graduate nursing students and Rend Lake College to provide the SOAR-RN program.