

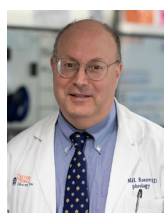
# ASPIRE

Transforming health and inspiring hope for all Virginians and beyond



Spring 2025

## Looking Ahead Together: A Message From Dr. Mitch Rosner



I want to begin by sharing my heartfelt thanks to all 18,000 team members at UVA Health for your support as I have stepped into the role of Acting Executive Vice President for Health Affairs. It's a true privilege to serve this remarkable organization.

Over the past two decades, I've had the fortunate opportunity to learn from and collaborate with hundreds of you. Since arriving as a physician faculty member in 2005 and later as Chair of the Department of Medicine, I've seen firsthand the strength of our shared commitment to our mission and values. As a practicing nephrologist, I continue to hold regular clinic hours, and that time with patients and fellow care providers inspires and drives me to do my best for our institution.

Looking ahead, I feel a deep sense of optimism and purpose. Our leadership team is focused on continuing to deliver exceptional and compassionate patient care while also building on our work in our other mission areas: educating the next generation of healthcare professionals, performing research that improves the human condition, and connecting with the community in meaningful ways.

UVA Health is filled with incredible people who help others in times of need and vulnerability. In this ASPIRE newsletter, you will read about some of their contributions, including:

- Medical Emergency Team, working with different areas within our University Medical Center to provide the most urgently needed care to our patients.
- The multi-disciplinary team involved in launching and staffing our new Mobile Care Unit in Charlottesville.

- UVA Health Haymarket Medical Center Nursing Supervisor Hilary Woodier, RN, MSN, CCRN, whose legacy of mentorship has positively impacted many to join healthcare, including her daughter and grandson, also part of the UVA Health family.

I'm truly honored to serve alongside these outstanding team members and all of you. Please know I am committed to open and frequent communication and feedback from team members and patients alike. My door is always open and I welcome you to send your thoughts and ideas to **OfficeoftheEVPforHealthAffairs@uvahealth.org**.

Mitch

**Mitchell H. Rosner, MD, MACP, FRCP**  
*Acting Executive Vice President for Health Affairs, University of Virginia Henry B. Mulholland Professor of Medicine*

## UVA Health Launches Mobile Care Unit

By Eric Swensen

To make it easier for patients who have trouble accessing traditional healthcare facilities, UVA Health has launched a mobile care unit to bring care to communities that have challenges to access.

The mobile care unit is designed to help patients if they don't yet have a regular care provider and/or would like to be seen for a non-emergent situation.

### Services include:

- General health check-ups
- Chronic disease management
- Pediatric care
- Care for minor illnesses and injuries
- Women's health
- Lab tests



UVA Health Mobile Care currently has standard appointment times in Fifeville and Southwood. For locations and times, scan the QR code (right) or call 434.297.7800. Walk-in patients also are welcome.





# MET: Delivering Critical Care — and Calm — Across UVA Health University Medical Center

By Jenny Fernandez

You’ve likely seen them running by in their red shirts — bags full of medical supplies. You’ve probably heard the stories about their lifesaving care, or maybe you were even around some time when they arrived on scene to help stabilize a rapidly deteriorating patient. These highly skilled and dedicated critical care nurses that you know and trust are members of UVA Health’s Medical Emergency Team (MET).

### Ready to Act

“We are 11 very experienced nurses with diverse experiences and a broad understanding of different patient populations,” explains Nurse Manager Matt Henrich, MSN, RN. “Our mission is to provide critical care and emergency treatment to University Medical Center’s procedural, acute care, and intermediate care areas that don’t have critical care and emergency treatment.”

Sometimes referred to as a “rapid response,” “in-hospital paramedic,” or “SWAT” team — MET is contacted hundreds of times a month by other clinicians, patients, and family members. Calls or pages come in for unresponsiveness, critical lab values, respiratory distress, hypotension, hypertension, chest pain, cardiac arrhythmias, and cardiac arrest. Depending on what other calls they have, one or two team members are dispatched. But no matter who responds or what they find at bedside — MET nurses are ready to act.

“When we walk into a situation, it can be very stressful for caregivers, family members, and the patient,”

says **Sarahbeth Thomas, BSN, RN**. “We strive to be the calm in all of that, especially for staff members who may be encountering a critical situation for the first time. We quickly get a feel for the patient’s main complaints and try and stabilize them and get them comfortable. We are the patient’s biggest advocate in that moment, so we always make sure we understand and align with their goals.”

MET nurses then help determine if the patient needs to be transferred to a higher level of care. And then they’re off — getting ready for the next call.

### Forward-Thinking Strategy

MET often is recognized for quick, lifesaving responses — but that proactive approach is just as vital in preventing medical emergencies.

“We round on all the adult acute care units in the hospital once a shift,” explains **Lauren Brill, BSN, RN**. “We ask if they have any patients they’re concerned about.”

Beyond her clinical duties, Brill tracks several key metrics including number of calls per month, type and source, average call length, and interventions performed. She then collects all the data and reports out to the team on their activities and impact on patient outcomes.

Henrich adds that another way MET stays ahead of the curve is by connecting with new bedside nurses. “Anytime a new nurse starts at the organization, we work with their departments to set them up for a three-hour shadow experience.”



Are you an advanced practice nurse curious about precepting?

Scan the QR code to learn more.



### Taking Care of the Care Team

As experienced clinicians, MET nurses know they need to take care of themselves and each other to continue to succeed in their roles. “Coming out of a really serious situation can feel heavy,” explains Henrich. “We may have different coping mechanisms, but we all need to decompress and take a breath.”

**Miranda Scott, BSN, RN**, agrees. “It’s honestly really nice to be on a small team where we all make each other laugh and support each other.”

### Greatest Reward

A strong team dynamic is crucial to MET’s resilience and ability to deliver the best patient care. But it’s gratitude from patients, families, and colleagues that is their greatest reward. “I was in the elevator on my way to work last week,” recalls Wood, “and a woman in there must have seen my red shirt peeking out from under my jacket. She said, ‘Oh, are you one of the red shirts? Wow, thank you so much. You guys are so great. You saved my husband!’”

“We get that a lot — and it’s amazing!”



# UVA School of Nursing: Powered by Preceptors

By Christine Kueter

Finding enough preceptors, clinical instructors, and clinical space for pre- and post-licensure students is only getting harder. As one of seven UVA Health entities, UVA School of Nursing enjoys proximity and access for students at UVA Health hospitals and clinics. But to satisfy its clinical practice needs, it still requires strategic approaches, especially in light of the school’s goal to transform educational offerings that meet the demands of the marketplace and students.

Fewer preceptors and clinical practice spaces have created opportunities to build and strengthen the Mary Morton Parsons Simulation Learning Center, which, over the last decade, has dramatically expanded its capacity and offerings. The school’s now four-year-old simulation collaborative established with UVA School of Medicine centralized efforts and offered even more learning spaces.

Four new simulation faculty have arrived, with two more positions to be filled, to run a growing array of practice scenarios for pre- and post-licensure students, part of Simulation Director and Assistant Professor **Ryne Ackard**’s strategy to broaden experiences that count toward students’ required clinical hours of learning.

But there’s no replacement for preceptors and on-unit clinical rotations, which has meant Associate Dean **Shelley Smith** and Program Director **Lynn Corbett** are getting creative in how they recruit and retain preceptors: traveling to new sites to cultivate relationships, leaving behind “swag bags” that pitch the benefits and rewards of precepting, and honoring current preceptors.

Where have they turned? In part, to alumni. And nurse practitioners like **Hania Bushnaq-Aloul** (MSN ’13), an acute care NP who works at UVA Emily Couric Cancer Center, are raising their hands to help. “I saw the email, and thought, ‘Oh, I’d like to do that!’” says Bushnaq-Aloul, whose NP-run unit cares for patients receiving stem cell transplants. “It’s wonderful to work with these young nurses, and ones that aren’t so young, to pass on our experiences. I mean, the curiosity they have, the energy, the sharp minds they have — and the fact that, when you precept, you’re also learning.”

# UVA Health Neuroscience, Spine Teams Earn National Award for Quality Care, Research

By Eric Swensen

UVA Health has been honored on Becker’s Hospital Review’s 2024 list of 100 health systems with great neuroscience and spine programs, which “celebrates exceptional patient outcomes, advanced surgical techniques, and groundbreaking research.”

Becker’s highlights UVA Health Department of Neurosurgery for “innovative treatments and leading research,” including a pediatric neurosurgery program and a Gamma Knife Center that has treated more than 10,000 patients since 1989. The publication also cited the groundbreaking work of the UVA Health Focused Ultrasound Center, a high-tech treatment approach that replaces scalpels with focused sound waves. Research from a team headed by UVA Health’s Jeff Elias, MD, led to federal Food and Drug Administration approval of focused ultrasound to treat essential tremor, a common movement disorder,

and symptoms of Parkinson’s disease. “I am honored to be part of a team that provides excellent care for patients from around the world, and I am happy to see our team’s work recognized by Becker’s,” says Dr. Elias, Interim Chair, UVA Department of Neurosurgery. “Our team will continue to seek new and better ways to care for our patients.”

Becker’s also highlighted UVA Health epilepsy care, designated as a level 4 epilepsy center — the highest possible designation — by the National Association of Epilepsy Centers. Founded in 1977, the F.E. Dreifuss Comprehensive Epilepsy Program provides comprehensive care that ranges from inpatient monitoring and surgical evaluation to medication management and nutrition counseling.

“The care provided by our epilepsy specialists is just one example of the highly specialized, high quality care

provided by our neurologists at UVA Health,” says **Xuemei Huang, MD, PhD**, Chair, UVA Department of Neurology. “I am proud to see our dedicated team honored by Becker’s Hospital Review.”

Also, according to Becker’s, UVA Health Spine Center — a partnership between UVA Health neurosurgeons and orthopedic surgeons — is “at the forefront of minimally invasive and robotic-guided surgeries, with spine specialists participating in major national clinical trials.” UVA Health’s spine team performs more than 1,500 procedures annually.

“Our team is on the cutting edge of spine care, providing comprehensive options for patients while seeking the next wave of breakthrough treatments,” says **Francis Shen, MD**, Division Director for Spine Surgery in the UVA Dept. of Orthopedic Surgery. “I am proud of our team for this well-earned recognition.”



# Hope at Work | Inspiring Generations at UVA Health:

## Hilary Woodier, RN, MSN, CCRN



Cameron Haynes and his grandmother and fellow UVA Health team member, Hilary Woodier.

By Stacey Sepp

Hilary Woodier's decades-long nursing career almost didn't happen. As she prepared to graduate high school at the top of her class, her guidance counselor called her in and asked, "What do you want to do for college — do you want to be a nurse, a teacher, or a secretary?"

"Those were the choices for women back then," Hilary says. "That's how it was in the '60s. Things were changing, but not that fast at the time."

### Head of the Class

Considering that she didn't know anything about nursing and hated typing, she decided to pursue her love of history and become a history teacher. When her long-time boyfriend returned from Vietnam, they got married. Shortly after, she started working and going to college part-time. It wasn't until her first child was born, that her career path took a turn.

"I had a really rough experience with delivery and aftercare," Hilary recalls. "The nurses who took care of me were gruff and rough. That should be a very happy time and I thought, 'I can do better than that!' I was interested [in this field] because I had a child to take care of, so I was reading a lot of medical books, learning about different diseases, and so on."

### Career Switch

Hilary applied to the new nursing program at a community college, and despite heavy scrutiny about how she would balance nursing school along with being a wife and a mother, she was accepted. She excelled in nursing school, graduated, and began her career just as she had hoped — as an obstetrics (OB) nurse. Over the next three decades, Hilary earned her associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees.

Hilary gained nursing experience in specialties including orthopedics and neurosurgery, intermediate care, cardiac critical care, and women's care across the country — finally landing in Virginia. She spent 24 years at a hospital in Northern Virginia, where she helped open cardiac and women's centers, led the effort for Epic integration and go live for the nursing staff, and became the nursing director for the women's center. After more than two decades, she was ready for her next chapter.

"I decided to take a leap and just fell in love with the people and culture at UVA Health Haymarket Medical Center," Hilary recalls. "I welcomed the chance to start something new with a new culture and be the 'heart of Haymarket' as I call it, serving our community."

### Paying It Forward

Hilary has been promoted to Manager of Acute Care Service, Associate Chief Nursing Officer, and now, Nursing Supervisor. And she's inspired family members to join the healthcare field. Her daughter, **Caroline Mastrangelo, RN, BSN**, is part of the nursing staff at UVA Health Prince William Medical Center Cardiac Catheterization and Electrophysiology Lab. Hilary's

grandson, **Cameron Haynes**, works in the Materials Management Department at Haymarket Medical Center.

Hilary remembers other women who have supported her along the way, including **Barbara Hocking, EdD, MPA, BSN**, the beloved former Chief Nursing Officer for UVA Health's community medical centers and clinics in Northern Virginia and Culpeper who passed away in 2023. "Barbara asked me to be Associate Chief Nursing Officer. I never would've applied for that otherwise," Hilary says. "I told her, 'For you, I'll do it!'"

### 'Absolute Best'

There's still so much Hilary wants to accomplish: "My biggest personal goal is to make UVA Health the absolute best and serve our community as it grows. We want to be the place people trust, where they know they're going to get great care. Since we opened, our culture has been one of attracting good people and keeping them — it's a place I can be proud of!"



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