

CANDIDATE FOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Michael Pelyak, MSN, RN, CCRN, NPD-BC

Nursing Professional Development

Specialist – Critical Care

University Hospitals Health System

Cleveland, OH



Experience and Activities

AACN Commitment and Involvement, 2022-present

Includes ways in which the candidate integrated the mission and work of AACN into their current role and practice. Local and national volunteer activities are listed, if applicable.

- Ambassador, 2023-present
- CCRN Review Course, University Hospitals, 2017-present
 - Instructor, Curriculum Design, Content Development
- Nursing Professional Development Specialist, AACN Synergy Model, 2017-present
- Member, Lake Erie Chapter, 2013-present
- ECCO Module Review Panel, 2023-2024
- Sepsis Micro-Credential Virtual Exam Pre-Testing Group, 2023-2024
- Speaker, National Teaching Institute & Critical Care Exposition, 2022

Key Professional Activities outside AACN, 2022-present

Includes involvement with other professional organizations, teaching and/or speaking engagements

- Honored alumnus, Newton Falls High School, 2025
- Presenter, “Using a Web-Based Resource Library for Just-in-Time Nursing Education,” Association for Nursing Professional Development (ANPD), Pentagon Affiliate, May 2024
- Ohio Nurse of the Year, 2020
- Member, ANPD, Ohio Nurses Association and American Nurses Association - Ohio
- President and founder, The Lost Ball Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit

Issues Statement

One of the most pressing issues affecting acute and critical care nursing today is the way that new nurses learn. The current generation of nurses is entering practice in an era defined by information overload, rapid change, and constant digital access. Traditional approaches to education—lengthy lectures, static modules, and annual competencies—do not align with how today’s nurses best retain knowledge or apply it in fast-paced clinical environments.

New nurses expect and need microlearning, point-of-care resources, and on-demand information at their fingertips. Without this alignment, there is a risk of disengagement, knowledge gaps and increased turnover among a workforce that is already strained.

I believe AACN and the AACN Certification Corporation have an important role in championing innovation in how competence is defined, developed and maintained. Certification and professional development must evolve alongside learning science, integrating strategies such as microlearning, scenario-based assessments and digital platforms that meet nurses where they are. In doing so, AACN can reinforce not only the rigor of certification, but also its relevance to real-time clinical practice.

This focus on modern learning strategies is not simply about convenience. It directly impacts patient safety, nurse retention and workforce sustainability. By helping new nurses build competence in a way that feels practical and accessible, AACN can strengthen professional identity, confidence and readiness for certification—fostering long-term engagement in critical care nursing.

As someone who has seen firsthand the power of microlearning and flexible education in engaging critical care staff, I believe this issue represents both a challenge and an opportunity. Addressing how new nurses learn is essential for preparing the next generation of acute and critical care nurses and for ensuring the future of our profession.