

# The Heart of Healthcare: A Personal Reflection on Nurses' Impact



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Last year, I witnessed the nursing profession from a deeply personal perspective—at my father's bedside in the ICU, and later, in hospice care. Though I have spent eight years supporting the nursing profession through my work at the Florida Nurses Association, I had never truly understood the depth of a nurse's role until I lived it firsthand. In those moments of uncertainty—amid the chaos of machines, monitors, and medical jargon—the nurses became our anchors, keeping us informed and providing a sense of stability during an incredibly challenging time.

Our journey in the ICU was a roller coaster of ups and downs. Each morning, my sisters and I would anxiously await updates from the nurse, wondering where the day would lead. I witnessed firsthand how nurses truly are the heart of health-

care. While we scarcely saw the doctors who oversaw my father's care, his nurses were with us every step of the way—always available to answer questions, address our concerns, and provide reassurance. Over time, some nurses came to know us well. Even when not assigned to my father's care, they would check in or offer an encouraging smile in the hallway. Those small gestures of kindness carried immense weight. They celebrated the small victories with us and offered compassion during moments of defeat.

Nursing is about so much more than technical skills. It is about empathy, communication, and advocacy. Seeing nurses in action humbled me and deepened my respect for their profession. This personal experience gave me a new lens through which I view my work at FNA and it deep-

ened my commitment to honoring and supporting nurses in meaningful ways. As I watched the nurses caring for my father, I reflected on the many nurses I've interacted with through FNA. For the first time, I felt I truly understood their lives beyond the Zoom meetings and conference rooms where I usually connect with them. And I felt immense pride to be part of an organization that represents these incredible professionals.

Nurses' compassion, dedication, and expertise leave an enduring impact on the lives of those they care for, including the families of their patients. To the nurses who stood by my family in our time of need—and to all the nurses whose work often goes unseen—thank you. ■

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