

# *Nurse Recognition Award*

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HELENE M. BURNS

DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FAONL, FAAN

AtlantiCare



Dr. Helene Burns is Chief Nursing and Operations Executive at AtlantiCare. In her role, she is responsible for the practice of nursing across the organization, including the oversight of all members of the nursing team. Dr. Burns has served as the President of the New Jersey Organization of Nurse Leaders and is a Board Member of the American Organization of Nursing Leadership (AONL), Region 2 (New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania). Her election to this vital board seat reflects peer awareness of her potential to effectuate change and guide nursing forward in our region.

She is an active national speaker on the role of nursing executives in creating healthy work environments in healthcare and specifically within nursing. Since 2019, she has actively participated in the Joint Commission Chief Nurse Executive Advisory Council. Additionally, she serves on the nursing advisory boards of Widener University and Rutgers University-Camden's Schools of Nursing.

Dr. Burns embraces the significance of connecting all levels of staff in problem-solving, building solid interprofessional relationships, and fostering a positive work environment. She has been instrumental in developing and supporting new-to-practice and transition-to-practice nurse/advanced practice nurse onboarding and residency programs while fostering mentoring throughout the nursing career. She champions patient and staff satisfaction initiatives through collaborative multidisciplinary practice models and professional governance for nursing through expanded nursing councils with staff nurse engagement.

Helene is an excellent clinical leader who embraces leading by example and exemplifies collaboration and transparency with her team. Frequently serving as a preceptor for nursing leadership students in master's and doctoral programs, her humble professionalism, genuine caring, and support foster a trusting and growth mindset environment for her entire nursing team. Her current academic positions include Teaching Assistant Professor at the Jefferson College of Nursing, Adjunct Continuing Education Program Faculty at Villanova University College of Nursing, and Visiting Clinical Professor at Rutgers University, Camden School of Nursing.

Dr. Burns is dedicated to serving the community and working to make a difference outside of her traditional roles as a nurse executive. She serves on the Garden State Council, Boy Scouts of America® Women of Achievement Committee, and the Rutgers School of Nursing Camden Dean's Leadership Circle.

In 2023 and 2024, Dr. Burns was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and the American Organization of Nurse Leaders, respectively. In 2023, Dr. Burns received the ONL-NJ Nurse Executive Award.

**A message from Helene:** Thank you to Dr. Dawn Mutchko, AtlantiCare's Assistant Vice President of Advanced Practice Providers for this nomination. I also want to thank my husband, Frank, for his unwavering support of me and my professional goals.