

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Billie Lynn Allard, MS, RN, FAAN, is the Administrative Director of Population Health and Transitions of Care at Southwestern Vermont Health Care, a four-time ANCC Magnet-designated health system. As an exceptional nursing leader for the past 35 years, Allard has spent her career leading innovation in community hospital settings, serving as Director of Cardiopulmonary Nursing, Director of the Emergency Department, and Chief Nursing Officer. Her visionary leadership style inspired nurses to function at the height of their capabilities, achieving 100% certification, implementing cutting-edge evidence-based practice, transforming care delivery, and improving patient satisfaction and clinical outcomes. In the past decade, Allard has led the implementation of an Accountable Community of Health as part of an all-payer model in Vermont. Redeploying nurses from the inpatient setting and using Mary Naylor's Transitional Care Model as a foundation, her program has resulted in a 50% reduction in hospitalizations for patients. Expert nurses navigating across the continuum of care could clearly identify gaps in care coordination and communication as well as opportunities to improve quality and safety. Allard and her team have partnered with physicians, associate providers, inpatient and outpatient clinical teams, and community agencies to implement 10 innovative programs to meet the quadruple aim. Together they have successfully created an Accountable Community of Health that is laying the groundwork for a successful value-based payment model in the state of Vermont.

Allard received her undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and her master's degree from Russell Sage College in Troy, New York. She completed the Wharton Fellows Program for Nurse Executives at the University of Pennsylvania and Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics. She also completed the Johns Hopkins Patient Safety Practitioner Certificate Program. Allard has given 11 podium presentations at national conferences—including the American Organization of Nurse Leaders, ANCC Magnet Conference, American Hospital Association Rural Health Conference, American Association of Healthcare Improvement Conference, and Pathways to Excellence—and has led two regional conferences showcasing successful population health strategies. She and her team have published numerous articles in professional nursing journals about their work and are presently involved in a research project to be published soon. In October 2017, they were awarded the ANCC Magnet Prize for Innovation supported by the Cerner Corporation. This recognition afforded them the opportunity to partner with health systems across the country to support the implementation of the Accountable Community of Health

model utilizing the SVMC Tool-Kit. Allard has served as a consultant for multiple health systems seeking assistance with population health strategies. Barbara Richardson, one of the transitional care nurses, was nominated by Allard and received the 2016 Magnet Nurse of the Year Award for Structural Empowerment. Her expert team also designed and implemented a nursing curriculum focused on transitions of care, which is now a part of the BSN curriculum at a nursing school. Allard has been adjunct faculty for multiple nursing schools, including the University of Massachusetts, Berkshire Community College, and Southern Vermont College.

In June 2019, Allard received the Elaine K. Sherwood Award for outstanding commitment for her dedicated work with the Organization of Nurse Leaders for Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Vermont (ONL) Leadership Academy. She has served as faculty for the program for the past five years, providing education, coaching, and mentoring of nurses across New England. She presently serves on the AONE Continuum of Care Committee, working on a pre-conference related to the creation of a toolkit for population health and value-based care for the American Association of Nurse Leaders Conference in 2020.

In the past year, Allard was designated as an Edge Runner (recognition for nurse-designed models of care that impact cost, improve healthcare quality, and enhance consumer confidence and satisfaction) by the American Academy of Nursing and was recently inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

Allard is married to her high school sweetheart, Eddie, and has three children: Scott, Kate, and Jennifer. Their family has been blessed with 11 beautiful grandchildren to keep them busy!



CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

GAIL BALCH, RN

Gail Balch is the Director of Information Systems and Clinical Informatics for Southwestern Vermont Health Care. A registered nurse with 25 years of critical care experience, she transitioned to Information Systems 20 years ago and is currently responsible for the implementation, support, and maintenance of clinical and business IT operations, including telecommunications.

Balch has worked with multiple electronic healthcare vendors to optimize clinical workflow, standardize data entry, and improve the value of electronic data across care settings. She is trained in Six Sigma and project management processes and uses these strengths to develop innovative solutions to complex interoperability problems.

When not working, Balch enjoys training for Spartan obstacle course races and spending time with her family in Vermont.

KAREN COPPIN, MSN, RN, CCRN-K

Karen Coppin is a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Transitional Care at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC). She received her undergraduate degree from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, and her master's degree from Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois. Coppin has over 35 years of experience as a registered nurse in acute care settings, including medical-surgical and critical care. She served as SVMC's representative to the Capital District Region Critical Care Education Consortium, where she regularly taught a variety of classes and contributed to curriculum development. She was the proud recipient of an internal award that recognizes employees who exemplify the core values of the organization. She is a founding member of the transitional care team, for which SVMC won the 2017 ANCC National Magnet Award. She was an adjunct professor for nursing at Vermont Technical College, where she and her colleagues developed and taught an online BSN-level course on transitions of care and healthcare reform. She has published in the field of evidence-based practice and has presented at several national conferences on transforming the role of the CNS to improve patient outcomes during care transitions.

JENNIFER FELS, MS, RN

Jennifer Fels is a registered nurse with a master's degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She was most recently Director for the Bennington (Vermont) Blueprint for Health, a public-private statewide healthcare reform program. The Bennington Blueprint for Health includes 13 patient-centered medical home practices, six treatment sites for opioid substance use disorder, and a Women's Health Initiative.

Fels was chairperson of the Bennington Accountable Community for Health, a team of diverse community leaders and partners with the aim of "Building a Healthy Bennington." She has been on the nursing faculty at a local college.

Prior to her role with Vermont Blueprint for Health, Fels had clinical experience in critical care and held leadership roles in case management and performance improvement. She is known for her systems approach to program design.

Fels served as a Malcolm Baldrige National Examiner for five years. She is currently a trustee on several organizations' boards of directors.

Fels is engaged in the book arts, photography, art history, and puppetry. She has been a docent at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, and the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

KATHARINE H. GREEN, BSN, RN

Katharine H. Green is the Director of Clinical Services for the DH Putnam Medical Group at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center, a four-time Magnet-designated facility that provides primary, specialty, and dental care services to patients residing in Vermont, New York, and Massachusetts. She has nine years of experience in nursing as a registered nurse in medical-surgical, telemetry, quality improvement, transitional, and ambulatory care roles. She graduated from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts, in 2010 with her bachelor's degree in nursing and joined Southwestern Vermont Medical Center. Green is currently enrolled in a master's program pursuing a Clinical Nurse Leader degree. Her responsibilities include process improvement, application of evidence-based best practices, collaboration with provider leadership, patient safety, and regulatory readiness for the organization. She is passionate about the delivery of high-quality patient care, the professional development of nurses, and advocacy for the profession of nursing.

SUSAN PURCELL MONTIEL, JD, CHC, CHPC, CPHRM

Susan Purcell Montiel is a practicing attorney, licensed in Virginia and Massachusetts. In her first career, she was a principal in a general practice firm in northern Virginia, specializing in civil litigation. After relocating to New England, she was the Risk Manager, Compliance Officer, and Administrative Director of Corporate Compliance and Legal Services for Southwestern Vermont Health Care. Montiel currently serves as General Counsel to Clinical Providers Staffing, PC, a gap-staffing agency meeting the needs of healthcare organizations throughout New England and New York State. She is certified in healthcare compliance and privacy compliance as well as healthcare risk management. She is also a trained mediator with a special interest in performance improvement. Montiel believes that her experiences in healthcare leadership give her keen insight into the challenges faced by healthcare organizations. She feels fortunate to bring this insight into her practice and is committed to assisting the providers of healthcare services in a concrete and easy-to-understand fashion.

BARBARA RICHARDSON, MS, RN-BC, CCRN-K

Barbara Richardson is a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Transitional Care at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC). She received her undergraduate degree from the State University of New York at the Institute of Technology in Utica/Rome and her master's degree from Sage Graduate School in Troy, New York. Her clinical focus both at the bedside and as a CNS was in adult medical cardiology. She developed a course and taught new nurses about care of the cardiac patient, including rhythm identification and ACLS. She was an adjunct professor of nursing at Vermont Technical College, where she and her colleagues designed and taught a BSN-level course on transitions of care and healthcare reform. She is the winner of the 2016 ANCC Magnet Nurse of the Year Award for Structural Empowerment for her work in the development of the transitional care program at SVMC. She is a member of the transitional care team, for which her organization won the ANCC National Magnet Award for 2017. She has spoken widely on the topic of nurses and their impact on healthcare delivery change. She is published in the field of evidence-based practice, quality improvement, and care transitions.