Research that Improves Care
Nursing innovations change lives. Will you lead with us?
Duke University School of Nursing
Research that Improves Care

Duke nursing faculty members are researchers, educators, and clinicians who are developing innovations in care delivery based on evidence of what works best for patients. These innovations can promote health, facilitate treatment effectiveness, improve quality of life, and improve cost effectiveness. In other words, nursing research changes lives.

In 2014, Duke University School of Nursing ranked 10th in National Institutes of Health funding for research. Among America’s Best Graduate Schools of Nursing, Duke ranked sixth in 2016, according to U.S. News and World Report. Six Duke nursing master’s degree programs also ranked in the top 10, including nurse practitioner in gerontology acute care and pediatric primary care, which ranked second; anesthesia and nursing informatics ranked third; and nurse practitioner in gerontology primary care and family primary care, ranked seventh.

Our nurse researchers lead the way, innovating care for some of the most vulnerable populations, including the elderly, neonates and children, and the chronically ill. Through collaboration with Duke University Health System, investigators in the School of Medicine, and community and global partners such as the Durham Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Fudan University in Shanghai, China, we conduct research in both clinical and community settings.

We are committed to continuing a long tradition of educating leaders in nursing—men and women empowered to lead change in health and medicine.

With your investment in this partnership, we will move Duke Nursing forward for a healthier world.

“One thing I have learned about our School of Nursing, Duke Medicine, and Duke University is that, given the high caliber of talent here, a vista of endless possibilities exists for building knowledge to improve the care of vulnerable individuals.”

DEAN MARION E. BROOME, PHD, RN, FAAN
Improving Quality of Life in Chronic Illness
Novel Interventions Empower Patients to Overcome Cognitive and Affective Symptoms

Duke’s ADAPT Center, a Center of Excellence funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research/National Institutes of Health is pioneering better ways to treat cognitive and affective symptoms of disease. It promotes innovative research focused on managing and minimizing changes in cognition and emotional symptom responses to chronic illness.

The center supports researchers in furthering the science of cognitive and affective symptoms in chronic illness. All projects apply a new lens—the Adaptive Leadership Framework for Chronic Illness—to examine symptoms and gain insight into how to improve patient care. The ultimate goal is to empower patients and their caregivers to optimize symptom management and enhance quality of life.

We currently face a global crisis of care with regard to our current and projected capacity to provide safe, dignified, high-quality care to frail elders and their families. Faculty at Duke University School of Nursing are improving care quality through advancing fundamental research, translating evidence-based geriatric care into practice, and improving the availability and preparation of the professional nursing workforce. We aim to transform geriatric care with person-centered care values so that older adults and their family members are full partners in determining how care is provided.

CHRISTINA C. HENDRIX, DNS, GNP-BC
Duke Nursing’s Focus on Improving Community Health

Nurse practitioners at Duke University School of Nursing are improving care for individuals with HIV and AIDS in underserved North Carolina communities and inspiring the next generation of care providers to improve care for these people, including efforts to help end the stigma around HIV and AIDS. Researchers are also bringing to the forefront other community health issues such as hospital care and after-care of the homeless population.

“Many of the care providers who started practicing in response to the HIV epidemic 30 years ago are preparing to slow down or retire, so we need to find the next generation who can improve patients’ access to care and help them live healthy and productive lives.”

JAMES “LES” HARMON, MSN’97, DNP’12, RN, ANP-BC, AAHIVS
Nurses Forge Innovations in Pediatric Care

Duke nurse researchers are improving outcomes for high-risk preterm infants and their families by studying the effects of the intensive care unit environment on growth and development in these babies. The long-term outcomes for these at-risk babies and their families is dependent on a supportive care environment during and after discharge.

In addition, our researchers are using novel techniques to investigate vasospasms and other effects of traumatic brain injuries in children, to find out what neurological differences account for dramatically varying outcomes. Then the researchers hope to personalize treatment and achieve better outcomes for more children.

“We need to help parents and providers to work together to make health care decisions for infants and children with life threatening conditions with the central goal of maximizing their quality of life.”

DEBRA BRANDON, PHD, RN, CCNS, FAAN
A Leader in Improving Care for Sickle Cell Disease

Duke School of Nursing is a national leader in using evidence to improve care for patients with sickle cell disease, particularly the care of adult patients visiting the emergency department. In addition, each year the school co-hosts a sickle cell disease conference that brings together health care providers with patients and families living with sickle cell disease. The conference is a collaboration between the schools of nursing and medicine at Duke and UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke’s adult and pediatric sickle cell programs. In 2014, the event was acknowledged with proclamations presented by NC State Senator Floyd B. McKissick Jr., Durham Mayor Protemp Cora Cole-McFadden, and Durham County Board Commissioner Fred Foster Jr.
Improving Care for an Aging Population

Gerontology and the care of elders has been an area of strength in the Duke University School of Nursing for more than 50 years. The school is home to the Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence, which supports the development of clinical leaders, advanced practitioners and researchers; promotes clinical scholarship; and advances nursing science focused on the care of aging individuals.

Duke gerontology researchers have expertise in such areas as nursing home quality of care, intersection of care systems and chronic illness adaptation, theory building that will help us to understand healthier aging, and complexity science. In addition, there is a long history of studying elderly populations in China, including a current effort to document how families in China and around the globe care for family members with dementia, which has been called the next global pandemic. Collaborating with faculty and students from disciplines such as computer science and economics, these Duke researchers examine ways to develop a work force to care for people with dementia and learn how countries can sustainably pay for it.

“Just because the US has a more formal system of caregiver training doesn’t mean that the West has the issue all figured out. Our goal is to find out how we can facilitate collaboration between the two countries, as well as share our experiences and learn from those of caregivers in China.”

BEI WU, PHD
To learn more about how you can support Duke University School of Nursing, please contact this member of our professional staff.