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Mercy Hospital of Buffalo Receives Beacon Award for Excellence

National recognition honors Intensive Care Unit for outstanding teamwork and exceptional care

Buffalo, NY – March 30, 2026 – The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo has earned the bronze-level Beacon Award for Excellence from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). This national award recognizes top-performing hospital units that demonstrate excellence in professional practice, patient care, and measurable clinical outcomes.

“We are incredibly proud of our ICU team for this well-deserved recognition,” said Derek Drake, DNP, MBA, RN, FACHE, NE-BC, CNML, CNL, President of Mercy Hospital. “This achievement reflects the dedication, collaboration, and compassion our caregivers bring to every patient interaction. It underscores our ongoing commitment to delivering the highest standards of quality, safety, and patient-centered care.”

The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes hospital units whose nursing teams consistently set the national benchmark for exceptional care. To qualify, units must meet rigorous criteria across key performance areas, including leadership and staffing structures, staff engagement, effective communication, evidence-based practice, continuous learning, and patient outcome measurement.

“This award is a direct reflection of the teamwork and shared purpose that define our ICU,” said Agnes Dziadosz, RN, BSN, Nurse Manager of Mercy Hospital’s ICU and RR/VAT Team. “Our nurses and interdisciplinary partners are deeply committed to creating a healthy and supportive work environment that empowers our staff to deliver compassionate, high-quality care and achieve the best possible outcomes.”

Currently, both Mercy Hospital’s ICU and Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU) have earned Beacon national quality recognition. The Beacon Award includes bronze, silver, and gold designation levels, recognizing progressive efforts to continuously improve patient care and unit performance.

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About the Beacon Award for Excellence: Established in 2003, the Beacon Award for Excellence offers a road map to help guide exceptional care through improved outcomes and greater overall patient satisfaction. U.S. and Canadian units where patients receive their principal nursing care after hospital admission qualify for this excellence award. Units that receive the Beacon Award for Excellence meet criteria in six categories: leadership structures and systems; appropriate staffing and staff engagement; effective communication, knowledge management, and learning and development; evidence-based practice and processes; and outcome measurement. To learn more, visit www.aacn.org/beacon or call 800-899-2226.

About the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses: Founded in 1969 and based in Aliso Viejo, California, the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) is the largest specialty nursing organization in the world. AACN represents the interests of more than half a million acute and critical care nurses and includes more than 200 chapters in the United States. The organization's vision is to create a healthcare system driven by the needs of patients and their families in which acute and critical care nurses make their optimal contribution. To learn more about AACN, visit www.aacn.org, connect with the organization on Facebook at www.facebook.com/aacnface or follow AACN on Twitter at www.twitter.com/aacnme.

About Mercy Hospital:

Mercy Hospital of Buffalo is one of the largest hospitals in Western New York and serves as a regional tertiary care center. Along with a wide range of medical, surgical and maternity services, the hospital houses the Catholic Health Heart Center offering the latest surgical and interventional cardiac procedures, and the area's only Joint Commission-accredited Comprehensive Stroke Center with physician experts and capabilities to diagnose and treat the most complex stroke cases. The hospital is also home to the Mercy Emergency Center and a rooftop heliport, as well as providing a full spectrum of maternity care services and a Level II neonatal intensive care unit. In addition, the hospital's freestanding Mercy Ambulatory Care Center (MACC) in Orchard Park, NY, features a 24/7 Emergency Department and two-bed hospital. Founded in 1904 by the Sisters of Mercy, the hospital is committed to medical excellence with its ongoing Catholic Health Mission to reveal the healing love of Jesus to those in need. For more information, visit www.chsbuffalo.org.