LEGAL NURSE
CONSULTING
PRINCIPLES AND
PRACTICES

Legal Nurse Consulting Principles and Practices, fourth edition provides foundational knowledge on the specialty nursing practice of legal nurse consulting. Legal nurse consulting is defined, and essential information about the practice is discussed (history, certification, scope and standards of practice, and ethical and liability considerations). The essentials of the law and medical records are explored. Analysis of the various types of legal cases on which legal nurse consultants work is provided, as are other practice areas for legal nurse consultants. The various roles and skills of legal nurse consultants are explored, and the textbook concludes with discussion of the ways in which legal cases are adjudicated.

This volume allows nurses to bridge the gap from their clinical experience to the unfamiliar territory of the legal world, with practical advice on topics including tactics for being cross-examined in the courtroom and investigative and analytical techniques for medical records. Individual chapters by subject-matter experts focus on the full range of legal, medical, and business issues that new or experienced legal nurse consultants and nurse experts will encounter in their work. A nuanced look at the realities and complexities of toxic torts, medical malpractice cases, civil rights in correctional health care, ERISA and HMO litigation, and other practice areas is offered.

Suitable for experienced nurses studying for certification as legal nurse consultants, and for expert witnesses, practitioners seeking to expand their current legal nurse roles, and other healthcare and legal practitioners.

Senior Editors:
Julie Dickinson, MBA, BSN, RN, LNCC is a Senior Claims Analyst at Allied World Assurance Company in Farmington, CT, where she handles healthcare professional liability claims. Prior to her current position, she worked for nearly 10 years as a legal nurse consultant at Fontaine Alissi, P.C., a defense law firm in Hartford, CT. After graduating as Valedictorian of the Washington Hospital (PA) School of Nursing Class of 1998, Julie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in 2000 from Waynesburg College (PA) and was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society. In 2007, Julie graduated from Yale University (CT) as a
member of the inaugural class of the Leadership in Healthcare MBA for Executives program. Julie was the founding president of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC), a past president of the AALNC, and a recipient of the AALNC’s Distinguished Service Award. She is board-certified in legal nurse consulting and has lectured and published on numerous legal nursing topics.

Anne Meyer, BSN, RN, LNCC received her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Marycrest College, Davenport (IA). She obtained board certification as a Legal Nurse Consultant Certified (LNCC) in 2010. Anne brings over 30 years of professional nursing experience to her work as a consultant and expert witness. She has worked as a hospital staff and charge nurse in medical-surgical, cardiac, and critical care areas, Director of Nursing in both long-term care and a national home health infusion company, and implemented and facilitated a vestibular diagnostic and rehabilitation program for an outpatient rehabilitation company. She is currently President of Med-Law Connection, Inc., a legal nurse consulting firm established in 2005. As an experienced legal nurse consultant, Anne provides consulting and expert witness services to both plaintiff and defense attorneys, insurance companies and corporations covering the areas of medical malpractice and negligence, workers’ compensation, personal injury, and long-term care. She is a member of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC), served as chair of the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB) for two years, and as an ALNCCB board member for an additional four years. Anne has also been an item writer for the Legal Nurse Consultant Certified (LNCC) examination and authored and edited learning modules for the AALNC online Legal Nurse Consulting course. She is a nurse educator and strong advocate for the nursing profession.
LEGAL NURSE
CONSULTING
PRINCIPLES AND
PRACTICES

Fourth Edition

Edited by
Julie Dickinson, MBA, BSN, RN, LNCC
Anne Meyer, BSN, RN, LNCC

Lead Associate Editors
Karen J. Huff, BSN, RN, LNCC
Deborah A. Wipf, MS, APRN-GCNS, LNCC
Elizabeth K. Zorn, RN, BSN, LNCC

Associate Editors
Kathy G. Ferrell, RN, BS, LNCC
Lisa Mancuso, BSN, RN, PCCN, CCRN, CLCP, LNCC
Marjorie Berg Pugatch, MA, RN LNCC, EMT-B
Joanne Walker, BSEd, RN
Karen Wilkinson, MN, ARNP, LNCC, CNLCP

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL NURSE CONSULTANTS

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Founded in 1989, the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) is a not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to the professional enhancement and growth of registered nurses practicing in the specialty of legal nurse consulting and to the advancement of the nursing specialty. The AALNC is the gold standard for professionals with an interest in the legal nurse consulting arena, including novice and veteran legal nurse consultants. The AALNC provides networking opportunities, educational advancement, and professional development and supports certification through the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB).

Additional information regarding the AALNC, the ALNCCB, and their offerings can be found at:

Website: www.aalnc.org
Email: info@aalnc.org
Phone: (312) 321–5177
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   DNP, MPA, RN, PHN, CEN, NE-BC, LNCC, CLCP, CCM, MSCC; and
   Martha Heath Beach, MS, M.Ed., RN, CNS, ARNP, CNP, CRC, CCM,
   CDMS, CLCP, CNLCP®, CCRN, CNRN, CNOR, LNCC, CCNS, ACNP-
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Acknowledgments

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The Associate Editors were instrumental in liaising with the authors, managing the chapters, editing the drafts, and keeping the project moving forward. They shared valuable ideas and suggestions for the project, and we are grateful for their vital contributions.

The peer reviewers were key to ensuring the chapter content was relevant, complete, and up-to-date. Their feedback ensured the textbook provided the necessary information to the readers.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the AALNC Board of Directors for entrusting us with this critical project. They backed our vision for the textbook, provided us with the resources to make it a reality, and encouraged and supported us along the way. Thank you for giving us this opportunity.

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We are also indebted to our families who provided never-ending encouragement, support, and patience throughout this project. Their sacrifices allowed us the freedom and time to see this project through, and we are so blessed and thankful for their love and support.

Lastly, we are grateful to have had the opportunity to serve together as Senior Editors of this textbook. We shared the same vision for this project, and our approach and leadership styles complemented each other perfectly. It was an honor to work together. We are proud to present this textbook to you, as it lays the foundation for the practice of legal nurse consulting.

Julie Dickinson, MBA, BSN, RN, LNCC
Anne Meyer, BSN, RN, LNCC
Senior Editors
Preface

Legal Nurse Consulting: Principles and Practices, fourth edition, provides foundational information on the practice of legal nurse consulting. Legal nurse consultants (LNCs) apply their nursing education, training, and clinical experience to the evaluation of medically related issues in legal cases or claims. The more LNCs learn and understand the legal context in which this evaluation is performed, the more valuable their work products become to their clients and employers.

This textbook offers a general overview of the basic legal concepts and processes common to medical-legal cases, thereby providing a framework for legal nurse consulting practice. While some state-specific examples are used to illustrate these concepts and processes, it is outside the scope of this textbook to delve into the nuances of each state’s laws and statutes. Therefore, it is imperative that LNCs gain an understanding of the relevant laws and statutes in the jurisdictions in which they work.

In addition to introducing nurses to these legal fundamentals and the practice of legal nurse consulting, this textbook is also a resource for experienced LNCs who are seeking to fine-tune their skills, expand into other legal nurse consulting practice areas, offer new services to their clients, enhance their value to existing clients or employers, or transition to a different practice setting.

The continuous evolution of legal nurse consultant practice and the legal arena necessitated an updated textbook to address these changes. This fourth edition also features a significant content adjustment and reorganization to allow readers to build their knowledge base as the textbook progresses from the essentials of legal nurse consulting and the law through the adjudication of medical-legal cases. Readers are introduced to the primary practice areas identified in the 2017 Legal Nurse Consultant Practice Analysis conducted by the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB). The analysis of cases in these practice areas is a significant focus of the textbook, and effort was made to ensure the broad applicability of this content regardless of the specifics of the underlying case (e.g., the clinical specialty of the medical malpractice case or the type of accident in the personal injury case).

To achieve an even higher-quality benchmark for this widely used textbook, content experts were utilized during every step of the process. Each chapter was written by an author or authors with extensive expertise and experience in the topic and was carefully vetted by another content expert(s) through a double-blind peer review process.

It is because of this consideration and attention to the thoroughness and quality of the content that this textbook is used by the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) and other providers of LNC education as the core for curriculum development. It is also used by the ALNCCB and its volunteers as a resource in developing questions for the Legal Nurse Consultant Certified (LNCC®) examination. As such, Legal Nurse Consulting: Principles and Practices is recognized as the pre-eminent resource on the practice of legal nurse consulting.

Julie Dickinson, MBA, BSN, RN, LNCC
Anne Meyer, BSN, RN, LNCC
About the Editors

Senior Editors

Julie Dickinson, MBA, BSN, RN, LNCC is a Senior Claims Analyst at Allied World Assurance Company in Farmington, CT, where she handles healthcare professional liability claims. Prior to her current position, she worked for nearly 10 years as a legal nurse consultant at Fontaine Alissi, P.C., a defense law firm in Hartford, CT. After graduating as Valedictorian of the Washington Hospital (PA) School of Nursing Class of 1998, Julie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in 2000 from Waynesburg College (PA) and was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society. In 2007, Julie graduated from Yale University (CT) as a member of the inaugural class of the Leadership in Healthcare MBA for Executives program. Julie was the founding president of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC), a past president of the AALNC, and a recipient of the AALNC’s Distinguished Service Award. She is board-certified in legal nurse consulting and has lectured and published on numerous legal nursing topics.

Anne Meyer, BSN, RN, LNCC received her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Marycrest College, Davenport (IA). She obtained board certification as a Legal Nurse Consultant Certified (LNCC®) in 2010. Anne brings over 30 years of professional nursing experience to her work as a consultant and expert witness. She has worked as a hospital staff and charge nurse in medical-surgical, cardiac, and critical care areas, Director of Nursing in both long-term care and a national home health infusion company, and implemented and facilitated a vestibular diagnostic and rehabilitation program for an outpatient rehabilitation company. She is currently President of Med-Law Connection, Inc., a legal nurse consulting firm established in 2005. As an experienced legal nurse consultant, Anne provides consulting and expert witness services to both plaintiff and defense attorneys, insurance companies and corporations covering the areas of medical malpractice and negligence, workers’ compensation, personal injury, and long-term care. She is a member of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC), served as chair of the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB) for two years, and as an ALNCCB board member for an additional four years. Anne has also been an item writer for the LNCC examination and authored and edited learning modules for the AALNC online Legal Nurse Consulting course. She is a nurse educator and strong advocate for the nursing profession.
About the Editors

Lead Associate Editors

Karen J. Huff, BSN, RN, LNCC is an in-house legal nurse consultant for Steptoe & Johnson, a defense firm in Charleston (WV). For over 20 years she has assisted attorneys with a variety of cases, primarily medical malpractice and long-term care litigation. She was the founding president of her local chapter and the WV Bar Association’s LNC Section. After two terms on the Certification Board, she was elected to the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) Board of Directors where she served as AALNC President in 2010.

Deborah A. Wipf, MS, APRN-GCNS, LNCC has been a legal nurse consultant (LNC) since 1999, working for a law firm for 15 years and as an independent LNC. She has been a nurse for nearly 50 years with varied experiences that include medical-surgical, emergency, flight nursing and flight clinical coordinator (USAF, fixed-wing), intensive care, ambulatory care services, management and administrative duties/positions, military officer position (USAF 20 years). Her editing and writing experience includes position descriptions, policies and procedures, efficiency reports, and American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) projects, including “Growing Your Practice,” Principles and Practices, fourth edition (Lead Associate Editor and co-author of two chapters), and authoring two e-books for the AALNC. Deborah has served as chairperson and/or member of numerous committees, including the AALNC’s Scope and Standards of Practice revision (2016–2017; chairperson); the AALNC’s Education Committee (2009–2011); quality/risk management, infection control, and pharmacy and therapeutics committees; and executive meetings.

Elizabeth K. Zorn, Rn, BSn, LnCC is a board certified legal nurse consultant with more than 30 years’ experience in the legal field. She is a member of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) and The American Association for Justice. From 2010 to 2014, she served on the AALNC Board of Directors, including one year as president. Elizabeth has contributed to multiple AALNC educational resources including Legal Nurse Consulting Principles and Practice (three editions), the Journal of Legal Nurse Consulting, the Online Course, the Code of Ethics, Scope and Standards of Practice, and the LNCC Review Course. She has presented at several AALNC forums and multiple AALNC webinars. Since 2006, she has served on numerous national AALNC committees. Elizabeth has mentored numerous LNC interns at her law firm and, in 2006, started LNCExchange, a national networking forum for LNCs. Elizabeth’s extensive experience in the medical legal field has allowed her to develop an advanced level of knowledge and skills to assist attorneys at Faraci Lange, LLP in the screening and prosecution of medical malpractice, wrongful death, and personal injury claims.

Associate Editors

Kathy G. Ferrell, RN, BS, LNCC has been a registered nurse for over 30 years and an independent legal nurse consultant since 2001. She graduated from Georgia Baptist Hospital School of Nursing in Atlanta, GA, where she obtained a nursing diploma. She then obtained a Bachelor of Science in Health Arts from the University of St. Francis in Joliet (IL). Her clinical experiences include medical/surgical and OB-GYN nursing, nursing education, and healthcare insurance. Kathy uses her unique knowledge and experiences to work with plaintiff and defense attorneys in cases involving medical malpractice, person injury, product liability, and insurance. She also
serves as an expert witness in cases involving insurance and billing issues. Kathy has been a member of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) since 2006 and has served on various committees and the Board of Directors. She has authored several articles and educational products for the AALNC.

Lisa Mancuso, BSN, RN, PCCN, CCRN, CLCP, LNCC has been a staff nurse in Boston since 1983. Her clinical focus is cardiology, nephrology, and progressive care nursing. She is a past recipient of the Massachusetts Nurses’ Association Award for Excellence in Nursing Practice. In 2010, Lisa started Mancuso Medical Legal Consulting. She does “behind-the-scenes” consulting for medical malpractice, workers’ compensation, and criminal cases. Lisa also provides expert witness testimony. In 2016, Lisa certified as a Life Care Planner and is busy expanding this aspect of her business. Lisa has been the chairperson of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC)’s Online Educational and Professional Development Committee since 2017 and has enjoyed being an Associate Editor for *Principles and Practices*, fourth edition.

Marjorie Berg Pugatch, MA, RN, EMT-B, LNCC, has been an LNC since 1998 with the defense firm of Lewis Johs Avallone Aviles with locations in New York City and Long Island. She joined the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) in 1998 and has served the AALNC on many committees and in many capacities over the years. She obtained her LNCC in 2007. She has authored journal articles and served as an author and associate editor to the fourth edition of the *Principles and Practices* textbook and has presented at previous forums, on the chapter level and in the webinar format for the AALNC. She has sat on the AALNC Board of Directors as a Director at Large since 2018.

Joanne Walker, BSEd, RN has been a nurse for over 40 years and has extensive clinical experience in the Perioperative area. She has worked as a legal nurse consultant (LNC) since 2007 and has testified as an expert witness at trial. She founded Clarity Medical Legal Consulting in 2009. Joanne’s interest in Nursing Research has developed over her career, both in the operating room and as an LNC. Her goal is to de-mystify the science of research for other LNCs. Joanne is a member of several professional organizations, keeping up to date in clinical advances to retain her RN license and assist her clients with their research needs.

Karen Wilkinson, MN, ARNP, LNCC, CNLCP® offers a broad 36-year expertise in all types of nursing. This includes 20 years as a nursing faculty member, being the author of numerous publications related to nursing practice, and having a paralegal degree.
Contributors

Tonia Aiken, RN, JD
Law Office of Tonia D. Aiken, RN, JD

Tracy Albee, BSN, RN, PHN, LNCC, CLCP, FIALCP
MediLegal, A Professional Nursing Corporation

Rachael Arruda, BA, RN, LNCC, CCM
StarLine

Marguerite Barbacci, BSN, RN, MPH, LNCC
Independent LNC

Patricia J. Bartzak, DNP, RN, CMSRN
Milford Regional Medical Center,
Milford, MA

Martha Heath Beach, MS, M.Ed., RN, CNS, ARNP, CNP, CRC, CCM, CDMS, CLCP, CNLCP, CCRN, CNRN, CNOR, LNCC, CCNS, ACNP-BC
Law Nurse, LLC—President

Peter I. Bergé, JD, MPA, PA-C Emeritus
Medicolegal Consulting and Education

Kathleen P. Buckheit, MPH, BSN, RN, CEN, COHN-S/CM, CCM, FAAOHN
NC OSHERC at UNC-Chapel Hill

Joannah Evans Budge, BSN, RN, CCRN, CLNC
Songer Evans Legal Nurse Experts

Rebecca Mendoza Saltiel Busch, MBA, CCM, RN, CFE, CPC, CHS-IV, CRMA, CICA, FIALCP, FHFMA
Medical Business Associates, Inc.

Kelly K. Campbell, RN, BSN, CP, CLNC, CLCP
CARDINAL LifeCare Consulting

Elena Capella, EdD, RN, CNL, CPHQ, LNCC
University of San Francisco

Flynn P. Carey, JD
Mitchell Stein Carey Chapman, PC

Nikki Chuml, MSN/Ed, RNC-OB, PRN
Nikki Chuml Consulting

Mariann F. Cosby, DNP, MPA, RN, PHN, CEN, NE-BC, LNCC, CLCP, CCM, MSCC
MFC Consulting

Sean Dennin
Precise, Inc.

Julie Dickinson, MBA, BSN, RN, LNCC
Allied World Assurance Company

Marian Ead, BSN, RN
Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine

J. Thaddeus Eckenrode, Esq.
Eckenrode-Maupin, Attorneys at Law
Contributors

Bruce Edens, MD
Kaiser Permanente

Deborah Enicke, RN, CEN, COS-C, HCS-D
Enicke and Associates, LLC

Karen E. Evans, BSN, JD
The Cochran Firm

Margaret M. Gallagher, RN, MSN, LNCC, CLNC
Patient Care Executive Consulting, LLC

Vicki W. Garnett, RN, CCRC, LNCC
Chesterfield, Virginia

William P. Gavin, Esq.
Gavin Law Firm LLC

Patricia Ann “Stormy” Green, RN, BSHS, RNFA
Green Legal Nurse Consultants

Sandra Higelin, MSN, RN, CNS, CWCN, CLNC
Sandra Higelin Nurse Consulting Services

Wendie A. Howland, MN, RN-BC, CRRN, CCM, CNLCP, LNCC
Howland Health Consulting

Karen J. Huff, BSN, RN, LNCC
Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

Patricia W. Iyer, MSN, RN, LNCC
President, LNC Academy

Todd A. Jennings, Esq.
Macfarlane Ferguson & McMullen

Katy Jones, MSN, RN
LNCtips.com

Moniaree Parker Jones, EdD, MSN, RN, CCM, COI
Samford University

Jennifer C. Jordan, Esq., MSCC, CMSP-F
Special Counsel to the Louisiana Association of Self Insured Employers

Irene Kniss, RN, BSN, LNCC
Kniss & Spencer Legal Nurse Solutions

Adam B. Kuenning, JD, LLM
Erickson Sederstrom

Corey G. Lorenz, Esq.
Habush Habush & Rottier S.C.

Mark A. Love, Esq.
Selman Breitman LLP

Linda Luedtke, MSN, RN
MLCS, Inc.

Cynthia A. Maag, BA, RN, LNCC
Eckenrode-Maupin

Joan Magnusson, BSN, RN, LNCC
JKM Consulting LLC

Sharon K. McQuown, MSN, RN, LNCC
Law Offices of Frank L. Branson PC

Anne Meyer, BSN, RN, LNCC
Med-Law Connection, Inc.

Phyllis ZaiKaner Miller, RN
In house Medical Legal Analyst, Retired

Grace Morse-McNelis, BSN, JD
Sands Anderson, PC

Elizabeth Murray, BSN, RN, LNCC
Elizabeth Murray Consulting, LLC

Andree Neddermeyer, RN, MBA, CPHRM, CSSGB
Nova Consulting

Stacy Newsome, MSN, RN, LNCC
Stacy Newsome, LNCC, LLC
Jennifer Oldham, BSN, RN, CEN, SANE-A  
Christiana Care Health System

Victoria Powell, RN, CCM, LNCC,  
CNLCP, CLCP, CBIS, CEAS®  
VP Medical Consulting, LLC

Marjorie Berg Pugatch, MA, RN   LNCC, EMT-B  
Lewis Johns Avallone Aviles

Diane L. Reboy, MS, BSN, RN, LNCC,  
CNLCP®, CCDS  
DLR Associates

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Hall Booth Smith, P.C.

Paul K. Reese, Esq.  
Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

Rebecca A. Reier, BS, RN, CRNA  
(Ret.), CCS-P  
Med-Econ, Inc.

Tracy Lynn Rodgers, RN, BSN, LNCC, RN-  
CLTC, WCC, DWC  
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PlanPoint LLC

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Cape Medical-Legal Consulting

Zakiya Sloley, JD  
The Cochran Firm

Anita Symonds, MS, BSN, RN, CFC, CFN,  
SANE-A, SANE-P  
Christiana Care Health System

Kelly Tanner, BSN, RN, CCRN-A, CNLCP  
Tanner Legal Nurse Consulting, PLLC

Diane Trace Warlick, RN, JD  
Nurse Attorney Institute, LLC

Cathy Weitzen, MSN, APRN  
Wichita State University School of Nursing

Tricia West, RN, BSN, MBA/HCM,  
PHN, CHN  
P J West and Associates, Inc.

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LHRM, LNCC, MSCC, DFSHRMPS  
Total Pain and Risk Consultants, LLC

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CEO, MKC Medical Management

Deborah A. Wipf, MS, APRN-GCNS, LNCC  
American Association of Legal Nurse  
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Law Office of Paula J. Yost

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Darla Adams & Associates, LLC

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Surber, Asher, Surber & Moushon, PLLC
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Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA

Sarah Barnes, RN, DNP
California State University

Jane E. Barone, BS, RN, LNCC
Medi-Law Solutions, LLC

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Clayton State University

Kristen Bishop, MSN, RN, NE-BC, CPPS, OCN
PA Department of Health

Colleen M. Blinkoff, JD
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Kelly K. Campbell RN, BSN, CP, CLNC, CLCP
CARDINAL LifeCare Consulting

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Pamela Chambers Consulting

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Mindy Cohen & Associates

Marlene Garvis, JD, MSN
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Retired

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Hafernick Legal-Nurse Consulting

James Hanus, MHA, BSN, RN, OCN
McKesson Corp/US Oncology

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Heron and Associates, LLC Medical Legal Consulting
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Howland Health Consulting

Gennifer J. Johnson, DHA, MSN, RN
Palm Beach Vocational Institute

Tamara Karlin, RN, LNCC
Hanover Insurance Group

Deana Kilmer, MBA, MSN, CRNP, FNP-CB, HNB-BC, CLCP, MSCC
DMK Medical Legal Consulting, LLC

William C. Krasner, Esq., RN, JD, MBA, BSN
Millville Rescue Squad

Julie A. Marlatt, MSN, RNC-NIC
MKC Medical Management

Cynthia Mascarenhas, RN, LNCC
Legal Nurse Consulting Matters, LLC

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McKinnon Legal Nurse Consulting

Veronica McMillan, JD, BSN
Mount Saint Mary College

Angela Renee Miller, RN
Garretson Resolution Group

Stacey A. Mitchell, DNP, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P, FAAN
Texas A&M University Health Science Center

Anita Beasley Ogle, BSN, RN, CCM, QRP
Anita Ogle & Associates

Jacqueline Olexy, JD, MSN, CCHP
Madison, Mroz, Steinman & Dekleva, PA

Rebecca Paley, BSN, RN
Independent Contractor

Deanna W. Parsons, RN, BSN, MBA, LNCC, CPHRM, CPPS
Cabell Huntington Hospital, Inc.

Kimberly M. Pearson, MHA, MBA, RN, CCHP
Kimberly M. Pearson, Consultant

Maureen T. Power, RN, MPH, LNCC
Farmers Insurance

Elizabeth Sassatelli, PhD, RN
University of Tampa

Jane Shufro, MS, BSN, RN, CPAN, LNCC
Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital

Gerrie M. Springston, BSN, RN, LNCC, CCM, CNLCP
Vocational Diagnostics, Inc.

Wendy L. Votroubek, RN, MPH
Integrity Legal Nurse Consulting PDX

Annette H. Weisgarber, BSN, RN, LNCC
Sanford Health

Julie Wescott, DNP, CNS, ACNS-BC, CNS-BC, CEN
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Judy A. Young, MSN, MHL, RN, LNCC
Florida Legal Nurse Experts, LLC