Pathway to Excellence®

EMPOWERED NURSES. STRONGER TEAMS. BETTER CARE.

A proven framework for positive practice environments where nurses and midwives thrive.

ANCC International

Contact: **ancc.international-middleeast@ana.org**

WHAT IS PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE®?

The Pathway to Excellence® Program, developed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), is a globally recognized designation for healthcare organizations committed to creating **positive practice environments where nurses and midwives thrive.**

The program focuses on strengthening workplace culture, promoting nurses and midwives well-being, empowering their voice, and ensuring that frontline clinical teams are actively engaged in improving care delivery. Organizations that achieve Pathway designation demonstrate a sustained commitment to supporting nurses, strengthening teamwork, and delivering high-quality patient care.

Pathway-designated organizations show that nurses and midwives:

- Have a **voice in decision-making**
- Work in **safe and supportive environments**
- Have opportunities for **professional growth**
- Are empowered to influence **patient care outcomes**

By embedding these principles into everyday practice, Pathway organizations create the foundation for sustainable excellence in nursing, midwifery and patient care.

WHY PATHWAY MATTERS FOR HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

Pathway is NOT just a nursing credential: It's a **Culture Strategy** that Results in Organization-wide transformation

- **Staff engagement driver**
  The designation process includes direct input from frontline staff, making it a powerful tool for engagement
- **Requirements align with what today's workforce values most**
- **Aligned with organizational priorities**
  Health systems are increasingly focused on workforce retention as a strategic imperative
- **Is NOT about perfection**
  It's about intentional, sustained culture change
- **Global Marker of Excellence**
  Be a part of an elite group of top-performing organizations
- **Universally applicable**
  Framework can be adapted to diverse settings and cultures
- **Designation can be attainable in two years;** Transformation and improvement are immediate

HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND WORLDWIDE FACE GROWING CHALLENGES

- Nurse and midwife burnout and workforce shortages
- Rising turnover and recruitment pressures
- Increasing complexity of patient care
- Growing demand for employee well-being and engagement

What makes Pathway to Excellence® distinct

- Requires majority nurse and midwife agreement through a confidential survey
- Captures the lived experience of nurses and midwives across the organization
- Closes the gap between organizational intent and employee experience
- Have a dedicated standard for Well-Being of the healthcare team

STUDIES SHOW THAT ORGANIZATIONS THAT IMPLEMENT THE PATHWAY FRAMEWORK REPORT IMPROVEMENTS IN:

- Nurse and midwife engagement and retention
- Nurse and midwife perception of the practice environment and quality of care
- Patient experience, safety and willingness to recommend the hospital
- Operational and financial performance

When nurses and midwives feel supported and empowered, the entire healthcare system benefits.

THE PATHWAY FRAMEWORK FOR POSITIVE PRACTICE ENVIRONMENTS

The program is built around six standards that define healthy nursing workplaces. These standards form the foundation of the Pathway model.

1. **Shared decision-making:** Nurses and midwives actively participate in decisions that impact their practice.
2. **Leadership:** Nursing and midwifery leaders foster a culture of collaboration, trust, and professional empowerment.
3. **Safety:** Organizations protect the physical and psychological safety of staff and patients.
4. **Quality:** Care improvement initiatives are evidence-based, focused on measurable patient outcomes, and supported by interprofessional teams as active partners in driving improvement.
5. **Well-being:** Workforce well-being is embedded in organizational strategy and daily operations.
6. **Professional development:** Organizations invest in continuous learning, mentoring, and career advancement opportunities.

BENEFITS FOR HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Stronger Workforce Stability:** Pathway organizations demonstrate improved nurse and midwife engagement, satisfaction, and retention.
- **Stronger Organizational Culture:** The framework fosters collaboration, shared governance, and professional accountability across teams.
- **Competitive Advantage**: Pathway designation signals a commitment to workforce well-being and quality care, strengthening reputation and recruitment.

BENEFITS FOR NURSES AND MIDWIVES

Pathway creates workplaces where nurses and midwives:

- Feel **heard, valued, and respected**
- Participate in **decision-making and governance**
- Experience **strong leadership support**
- Receive support across the **career continuum through continuous professional development**
- Empowered to deliver high-quality care in a **safe and collaborative environment**

BENEFITS FOR PATIENTS

Patients benefit from the culture created by the Pathway framework:

- Higher quality and safer care
- Better coordination among healthcare professionals
- More engaged clinical teams
- Improved patient satisfaction



THE PATHWAY JOURNEY

Achieving Pathway designation involves a structured process that validates the presence of a positive practice environment for nursing and midwifery.

Typical steps include:

1. Organizational self-assessment
2. Applicant registration and preparation of documentation
3. Submission of the **Pathway Standards Document** demonstrating that the criteria are embedded in their organization structure, processes, and employee experience
4. Independent appraisal review
5. **Confidential Pathway Survey** validating the work environment
6. Designation decision by the Commission on Pathway to Excellence

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Organizations establish their timelines based on the results of their self-assessment, taking into account the number of gaps identified, the effort required to address them, and the resources available to support the work.

The process includes:



Designation is granted for **four years**

> *"The Pathway to Excellence journey strengthened our nursing culture by empowering nurses, elevating leadership accessibility, and embedding quality, safety, and well-being into daily practice. With clear guidance and strong collaboration from the ANCC Pathway team, our nurses felt supported, engaged, and valued throughout the journey. Pathway has helped us create a healthy, positive practice environment that drives excellence in patient care."*
>
> Kholoud Khalil, Program Director, Pathway to Excellence, Madinat Zayed Hospital, Abu Dhabi.

GLOBAL GROWTH AND IMPACT

The Pathway to Excellence® Program continues to expand internationally as healthcare organizations recognize the importance of positive practice environments.
The framework is designed to be **scalable and adaptable across healthcare systems, cultures, and organization sizes**, making it suitable for hospitals and care facilities in the Middle East and worldwide.

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION READY FOR PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE®?

Organizations pursuing Pathway designation have access to resources including:

- Pre-Intent Membership Program providing early guidance and preparation
- Access to Pathway program experts and analysts
- Pathway Learning Community for knowledge exchange
- Return on Investment (ROI)
- Pathway Applicant Resource Guide
- Educational workshops and webinars
- Tools for self-assessment and gap analysis

Start your Pathway to Excellence® journey by assessing your program readiness and reviewing application requirements.
Visit: **anccinternational.org**

To begin your Pathway to Excellence® journey or request information, contact:
ancc.international-middleeast@ana.org

All official Pathway to Excellence® program materials and required documentation are provided in English and must be submitted in English.



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