



Vitruvian Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MEDIA INFORMATION

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Hamilton Medical Center hosts symposium for nursing students

DALTON, Ga. (September 2, 2026) – Hamilton Medical Center (HMC), part of Vitruvian Health, recently hosted its student symposium for nursing students across the region. The event, held twice a year since 2016, is designed to help future nurses confidently transition from student to professional practice.

Nearly 80 RN and LPN students from Dalton State College and Georgia Northwestern Technical College attended.

This year's racing-themed symposium focused on "starting your engines," equipping students with the skills, insight and momentum needed as they prepare to enter the healthcare workforce. Sessions included interview preparation, mental-health resilience, communication excellence and leadership development – each tailored to support students as they prepare for their first "laps" as new nurses.

Judean Guinn, chief nursing officer, provided strategies for navigating interviews and early career decisions. Rachel Houghton, with HMC's Employee Assistance Program, emphasized the importance of mental-health maintenance throughout a nursing career. Hamilton's cardiovascular team offered a rare look inside open-heart surgery through a pre-recorded case study, highlighting the precision and teamwork that define high-quality patient care. Rhonda Townsend, clinical resource nurse, elaborated on the 12-week nurse residency program that HMC offers. The nurse residency program is tailored to each nursing department and designed to assist in the transition from nursing school to professional practice with a focus on building critical thinking and professional practice skills. Additional sessions led by Ashley Broadrick, dietitian; Tina Bendock, patient satisfaction consultant; and Chris Levan, organizational learning consultant; connected nutrition, communication and professional growth to long-term nursing success.

Students also participated in a nursing panel and networking sessions, giving them opportunities to engage directly with HMC's nurse leaders, ask questions and build early professional connections.

"Our commitment is to support new nursing graduates as they make the vital shift from students to trusted caregivers in our community," said Hannah Holland, Surgical Services clinical manager. "Through this symposium, we offer graduating students a dedicated space to build lasting professional relationships with nursing leaders and navigate the transition to practice with clarity. We are proud to foster a learning culture that prepares the next generation of nurses to deliver exceptional, compassionate care from day one."

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Photos:

- Katie Chance, surgical nurse navigator, talks with nursing students at the recent Hamilton Medical Center nursing symposium.
- Hannah Holland, Surgical Services clinical manager

About Hamilton Medical Center

The flagship affiliate for Vitruvian Health's Northwest Georgia region, Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) is a 255-bed regional acute-care hospital that offers major medical, surgical and diagnostic services, including accredited stroke and chest pain centers. Advanced technology and wellness are two significant areas of focus for HMC. Services include the freestanding Hamilton Ambulatory Surgery Center, Hamilton Diagnostics Center, and Bradley Wellness Center, as well as a Level II trauma center, Peeples Cancer Institute, Heart & Vascular program (including open heart surgery), Hamilton Spine Health and Sport, Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and more.

About Vitruvian Health

Vitruvian Health, formerly Hamilton Health Care System, is a not-for-profit, fully integrated health system serving the Northwest Georgia and Southeast Tennessee regions. Vitruvian includes Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton, Ga., and Bradley Medical Center in Cleveland, Tenn., affiliated physician practices, walk-in care centers, retirement and skilled nursing centers, a diagnostic center, a cancer institute, an institute for children with developmental delays, and more. Known for its advanced care and personalized service, Vitruvian Health offers innovative treatment options in state-of-the-art facilities while maintaining a compassionate, friendly and tranquil healing environment.

The Vitruvian name draws from the organization's recognizable da Vinci-inspired Vitruvian Man icon, which has been a prominent part of Hamilton's logo since 1976. Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man represents harmony, balance, and the interconnectedness of all aspects of health, perfectly aligning with Hamilton's integrated system of care.