

STRATEGIES FOR FUNDING TRAUMA NURSING EDUCATION



When healthcare budgets tighten, nursing education is often among the first areas targeted. Trauma leaders can safeguard funding by positioning education as essential to ongoing trauma center verification, nurse retention, and high-quality patient care.

Be clear with hospital administration that trauma nursing education is NOT optional

To achieve or maintain ACS verification, *“All trauma centers must provide trauma orientation to new nursing staff caring for trauma patients. Nurses must participate in trauma CE **corresponding to their scope of practice and patient population served.**”*

[ACS Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient, Standard 8.2, pg. 134, emphasis added.]

Redirect current training funds to courses tailored for inpatient trauma nurses

Injured patients are in your ED for only minutes or hours but may remain in your hospital for days or weeks. If your inpatient staff (OR, PACU, ICU, Acute care ward) is required to attend a resuscitation-focused course (e.g., TNCC, ATCN), consider whether those training dollars would be better directed toward post-resuscitation trauma education. TCAR and PCAR are the only inpatient-focused standardized trauma courses cited by the ACS.

Ensure that education is included in your annual operational budget

The most reliable way to secure funding is to include trauma nurse training as a defined line item in your annual departmental or organizational budget, rather than as an expense you must fight for each year. A strong business case should link education to measurable priorities such as trauma center verification, nursing satisfaction and retention, and patient outcomes.

Stretch your education dollars by adopting a more cost-effective training strategy

Do-it-yourself, in-person trauma training may seem cost-effective but carries many hidden expenses. Administrative and instructor time, classroom space, AV equipment, manikins, supplies, test proctoring, student manuals, indirect fees, and staff coverage can add up quickly. Shifting to self-paced online courses reduces or eliminates many of these costs.

Leverage hospital or health system foundations

Hospital and health system foundations may be able to direct philanthropic contributions toward educational initiatives. Partnering with foundation staff can help identify donor-supported opportunities for trauma nursing funding.

Collaborate with higher-level trauma centers

Level I and II trauma centers can be valuable educational partners for small or rural facilities. Outreach and education are essential components of their role. Therefore, these centers may provide training support that strengthens staff preparedness and trauma system relationships.

Explore grant opportunities

State trauma programs, regional trauma advisory committees, EMSC, Homeland Security, and other organizations have offered grants supporting trauma nursing education. Your organization's grants office or development department can help identify opportunities, strengthen applications, and align requests with funder priorities.

Funding is available, but securing it requires a clear business case, strategic partnerships, and persistence. By linking nursing education to trauma center verification, workforce stability, and patient care, leaders can build a strong case for sustainable support.