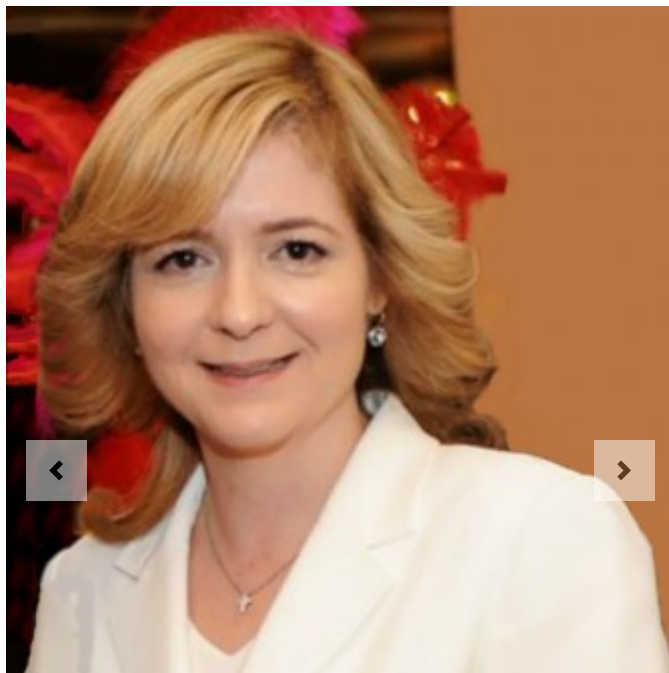


# FAU Dementia Care Model Designated 'Edge Runner' by the American Academy of Nursing



*Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing's Dementia Care Model Designed to Protect Vulnerable Communities*

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Florida Atlantic University

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Newswise — “A Caring Science Model of Specialized Dementia Care for Transforming Practice and Advancing Health Equity,” created by [Florida Atlantic University's María de los Ángeles Ortega](#), DNP, APRN, GNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, CDP, FAANP, FAAN, in the

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American Academy of Nursing. Edge Runners are nurse-designed, innovative models of care or interventions with significant, demonstrated outcomes to improve health, impact cost, and influence policy.

Through its Edge Runners program, the Academy recognizes the nursing profession’s contributions to new, innovative ideas that transform the health system. Edge Runners represent the powerful connection nurses have to the healthcare system, the public, and society as they mark the essence of the profession – science and compassion.

As life expectancies continue to grow and more families are supporting individuals living with Alzheimer’s Disease or Related Dementias (ADRD), nurses and caregivers are at the forefront of facilitating healthy environments for these patients.

“The Academy is proud to recognize this unique and timely program as an Edge Runner. The focus of this model, adults with special needs, highlights the vital role nurses play in supporting all members of the public to advance wellness and health equity,” said Kenneth R. White, Ph.D., AGACNP, ACHPN, FACHE, FAAN, Academy president. “Dr. Ortega’s expertise in specialized dementia work will continue to transform the system of dementia care delivery with its focus on personalized services and community-based resources. Through the power of social connection and authentic engagement, Dr. Ortega is a leader in making Florida a healthier place to live for individuals with ADRD and their families.”

“A *Caring Science Model of Specialized*

### CHANNELS

- Alzheimer's and Dementia
- Healthcare
- Nursing

### KEYWORDS

- Nursing
- Dementia
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Vulnerable Populations
- edge runner
- American Academy Of Nursing
- Dementia Care Model
- Adrd
- Health Equity
- Memory Disorders
- Caregivers

*Dementia Care for Transforming Practice and Advancing Health Equity*” creatively guarantees delivery of effective, high-quality programs and services dedicated to aging individuals, including those living with intellectual and developmental disabilities, specifically those with Down syndrome, who also exhibit ADRD symptoms, or those at risk for developing ADRD. In addition, through evidence-based behavioral symptom management training and expert consultation, the program provides family caregivers and staff with the resources and education to support patients’ health and their own well-being.

“The objective of this program, which is grounded in caring, is to create a healing environment to assist individuals with ADRD and their families be as physically, socially, and emotionally healthy as possible,” said Ortega, director of the FAU [Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center](#), where the program is housed. “Our focus is on opening, advancing, and expanding the specialized dementia work needed to increase access to and meet the complex needs of individuals with memory disorders and their families and caregivers. Through a comprehensive array of personalized services and programs of care, support, research, education, and community outreach, our model is advancing the future of dementia care.”

During the pandemic, the program successfully transitioned almost all services offered pre-COVID-19 to virtual telehealth and telemedicine-based platforms and tele-social work services. In addition, during the pandemic, the program opened access to include out-of-state and out-of-country participants. In the last two years, the program has expanded to include behavioral and

mental health services for patients and caregivers, integrating psychiatry and psychotherapy consultations and treatment. The project has expanded to meet the needs of individuals who are unable to come to the facilities and those who are uninsured.

“We are extremely proud of Dr. Ortega for receiving this well-deserved designation for her innovative nurse-led program that addresses the complex needs of persons with or at risk for ADRD and their families,” said [Safiya George](#), Ph.D., dean, Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing. “More than 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s disease and the current healthcare system is not equipped to adequately meet the needs of an aging diverse population. In particular, Latino and Haitian communities are often unable to access dementia-specific care. Many dementia-specific programs in place fail to provide support for Latino and Haitian families, who provide the majority of the care.”

Ortega is a board-certified gerontological and psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner who continues her practice as a clinician. She specializes in caring for the older adult through diagnosis, treatment and management of acute and chronic conditions that are generally associated with aging. Her practice experience encompasses nursing rehabilitation facilities (skilled nursing, post-acute, and long-term care) and memory disorder clinics. Her scholarly accomplishments have focused on improving health outcomes of older adults transitioning from the hospital to the skilled nursing facility following open-heart surgery and with cognitive impairment. The focus of her doctoral work was aimed at enhancing care in skilled nursing facilities through excellence in clinical practice and care coordination.

In 2019, Ortega was appointed by the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services to the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services, and invited to take a leadership role as the chair of the Clinical Care subcommittee, beginning summer 2021. The advisory council was established in 2011 and meets quarterly to continue development and progress on the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease by HHS, Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and the National Science Foundation to address the disease.

**- FAU -**

***About the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing:***

*FAU's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is nationally and internationally known for its excellence and philosophy of caring science. The College was ranked No.11 nationwide by U.S. News and World Report in 2021 for "Best Online Master's in Nursing Administration Programs" and No. 32 for the "Best Online Master's in Nursing Programs." In 2020, FAU graduates earned a 95.9 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN®) and 100 percent AGNP Certification Pass Rate. FAU's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). For more information, visit [nursing.fau.edu](https://nursing.fau.edu).*

***About Florida Atlantic University:*** *Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the*

University serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students across six campuses located along the southeast Florida coast. In recent years, the University has doubled its research expenditures and outpaced its peers in student achievement rates. Through the coexistence of access and excellence, FAU embodies an innovative model where traditional achievement gaps vanish. FAU is designated a Hispanic-serving institution, ranked as a top public university by U.S. News & World Report and a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. For more information, visit [www.fau.edu](http://www.fau.edu).



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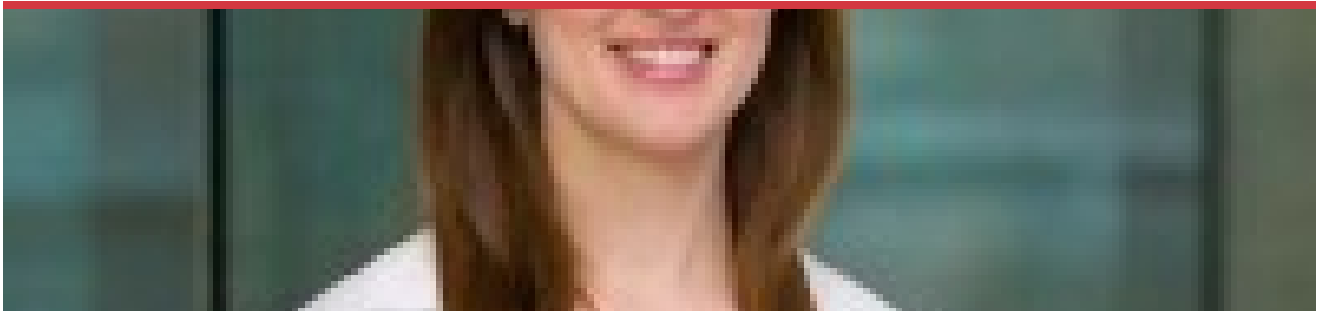
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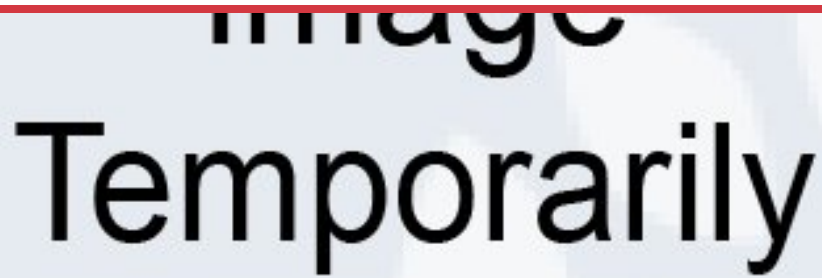
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