

Urgent Care Association
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2025 Urgent Care Award Winners Announced

The Urgent Care Association has announced the latest class of its industry Award recipients. These outstanding individuals are commended for their contributions to the advancement of Urgent Care. The winners, nominated by their peers and selected by the Urgent Care Association Awards Committee, will be recognized across eight categories at the 2025 Urgent Care Foundation Celebration in Dallas this May: Rising Star, Outstanding Achievement, Humanitarian, Quality & Safety, Advocacy, Sean M. McNeeley, MD, FCUCM Advancing the Specialty, Joseph Toscano, MD, FCUCM Inspiring Excellence Award and a new surprise award.

2025 Rising Star Award: Brenda Graham

The Rising Star Award recognizes an individual within their first 5 years of their career in Urgent Care and who is seen as having already “made a mark” within their organization or the industry through a proven track record of leadership, innovation and dedication to community.

In May 2022, Brenda Graham, MSN, RN joined MedWise Urgent Care as the Regulatory Compliance Manager. Under Graham’s guidance, MedWise became the only UCA-Accredited Urgent Care in Northeast Oklahoma and one of just four in the entire state. In February 2024, Brenda began serving as the Compliance Officer, providing leadership in health care regulatory compliance, organizational management, human resources, patient safety and quality of patient care. Brenda has implemented innovative training programs that empower employees at every level and her dedication and innovative approach have driven MedWise’s rapid growth and positioned the company as a model of quality care and operational excellence. Brenda has worked in cardiac ICU, inpatient and outpatient psychiatry, school nursing and academia as a nursing instructor.

2025 Outstanding Achievement Award: Surprise Recipient

The Outstanding Achievement Award recognizes an individual, organization or company with significant clinical, managerial and/or administrative achievements in the field of Urgent Care medicine that have had an impact on the field of Urgent Care. Award recipients are selected based on their creativity, unselfishness, compassion and cooperative attitude in seeking ways to make lasting contributions to Urgent Care.

The Outstanding Achievement Award winner will remain a surprise until they are announced at the Urgent Care Foundation Celebration on May 5 in Dallas, Texas.

2025 Advocacy Award: Gerry Cvitanovich, MD

The Advocacy Award recognizes an individual, organization or company for their outstanding contributions to the association's grassroots, state or federal Advocacy efforts.

Gerry Cvitanovich, MD, Chief Strategy Officer of Ochsner Urgent Care and Occupational Health and President-Elect of the UCA Board of Directors, has dedicated significant personal resources and leveraged multiple personal relationships to help advance UCA's work in federal payment reform for Urgent Care with the U.S. Congressional House of Representatives and Senate. He has taken multiple independent trips to Washington D.C. to participate in relationship-building activities (on top of his regular attendance at UCA lobbying events), worked with Senate and House staffers and was responsible for securing much of the early support in Congress to influence CMS toward payment reform. Dr. Cvitanovich has gone above and beyond, keeping UCA in the loop and goals for Urgent Care front and center.

2025 Humanitarian Award: Rachel Sossoman

The Humanitarian Award recognizes those providing significant medical volunteer work that has had a positive impact on a national or international cause or event.

Rachel Sossoman is the President and CEO of Mercy Urgent Care in Western North Carolina. When Hurricane Helene devastated Western North Carolina and the Asheville area this fall and local hospitals had to close due to lack of access and utilities, Rachel and her team were determined to serve their community. Although many Mercy facilities had no running water, they made sure they were accessible for their communities and set up generators and portable bathrooms in parking lots. Many of their staff had their homes and cars impacted, but still came to serve. They remained the central access point of healthcare in their community while it still rebuilds in the aftermath. Sossoman's leadership and her team's resilience was critical to keeping their community's access to care intact in the wake of Hurricane Helene.

2025 Quality & Safety Award: Jessica Higginbotham

The Quality & Safety Award recognizes an individual, organization or company engaged in quality/safety-improvement initiatives that focus on improved safety or patient outcomes in the field of Urgent Care medicine.

Jessica Higginbotham, PharmD, BCGP, BCCP serves as the Vice President of Clinical Services at American Family Care (AFC). Higginbotham is Board Certified in both Geriatrics and Cardiology and leads strategic goals across Radiology, Laboratory, Pharmacy, Clinical Research and Quality. She has spearheaded two transformative projects that have significantly enhanced patient care and operational efficiency at AFC. Project 1: Appropriate Treatment of Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) and Project 2: Formulary Optimization. With an exceptional ability to combine clinical expertise with operational acumen, driving meaningful improvements in both quality of care and organizational efficiency, her initiatives have had a lasting impact on AFC, setting new standards for quality and innovation.

2025 Sean M. McNeeley, MD, FCUCM Advancing the Specialty Award: Kevin Reiter, MD

First awarded Spring 2022 to Dr. McNeeley, this award is presented to a College of Urgent Care Medicine member with five or more years in Urgent Care or emergency medicine who has made significant and sustained contributions to advancing the specialty of Urgent Care medicine.

Kevin M. Reiter MD, Deputy Medical Director at Northwell Health Go Health Urgent Care, Assistant Professor Zucker School of Medicine Hofstra/Northwell has been practicing Urgent Care medicine for 25 years in various roles and settings. Among his work, he was the first to plan and incorporate a virtual visit platform during the pandemic to expand the reach of UC services to thousands of patients who were fearful of in center visits and is currently still being utilized and has since benefited thousands of patients. He has worked with a multidisciplinary team to create a credentialing and educational pathway to train physicians to take X-ray. He has created partnerships with X-ray schools to provide job exposure in the Urgent Care setting and to provide as a potential hiring platform. Dr. Reiter is active in collaborating with his organization's health system to ensure quality, education and patient safety.

2025 Joseph Toscano, MD, FCUCM Inspiring Excellence Award: Lindsey Fish, MD

First awarded Spring 2023 to Dr. Toscano, this award is presented to a College of Urgent Care Medicine member with five or more years of medical experience in Urgent or emergency medicine who has made significant and sustained contributions to the industry by inspiring excellence.

Lindsey E. Fish, MD is the Medical Director of Denver Health's Peña Urgent Care Clinic in Denver, CO. Additionally, she is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Dr. Fish has been working tirelessly to advance research in UC. With limited funding and a relentlessly positive attitude, she has organized, conducted and co-authored more UC research than anyone else over the past four years. She continues to provide direct patient care approximately 20 hours per week. In her Medical Director role, she is responsible for clinician supervision, clinic operations, nursing/support staff leadership supervision and collaboration with the greater organization. Additionally, Dr. Fish collaborates organizationally on other important Urgent Care topics to improve quality of care including antimicrobial stewardship, positive opioid prescriptive policies, value-based care and addressing/minimizing health disparities.

New Surprise Award: Surprise Recipient

A brand new award will be revealed at the College of Urgent Care Medicine Members Meeting on Tuesday, May 6 at the Urgent Care Convention at the Hilton Anatole in Dallas, Texas.

About the Urgent Care Association

Since 2004, the Urgent Care Association (UCA) has been the trade association for Urgent Care with a current membership of more than 4,000 Urgent Care centers representing clinical and business professionals from the United States and abroad.

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