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HASC Celebrates Nurse Paula Gallucci of Cottage Health as a 2026 My SoCal Hospital Hero

Award recognizes outstanding employees who transform healthcare in Southern California

SANTA BARBARA, CA—October 12 Cottage Health is proud to announce that Paula Gallucci, BSN, RN, CCRN Manager, Medical Intensive Care Unit, has been selected as a 2026 My SoCal Hospital Hero by the Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC). The honor recognizes employees across Southern California hospitals who contribute to outstanding patient care through embodying excellence, compassion and dedication in their work every day.

Paula was chosen for her extraordinary impact on patients, colleagues and the hospital community. She leads with a unique combination of clinical rigor, creative energy and boundless compassion. In a high-stakes environment, she brings the steady, inspired leadership that transforms a critical care unit into a place where people want to work – and patients and families feel genuinely cared for.

Among her many contributions is the culture she has built – visible not only in what her team produces, but in how they feel, how they show up, and how they treat one another. Paula is recognized as a steady, knowledgeable, compassionate leader who inspires everyone around her to strive for excellence.

The journey that defines Paula’s career reflects what the My SoCal Hospital Heroes Awards celebrate. Paula’s commitment to elevating staff input is one of her most impactful strengths. As a leader, she maintains consistent, supportive communication with her department, ensuring leaders and frontline staff stay informed and feel connected.

“Paula does not shy away from challenges,” said Laura Canfield, VP of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer. “Instead, she approaches them as shared responsibilities that require shared solutions. Paula models accountability without blame and sets a tone that encourages others to step forward, contribute and take pride in their work.”

Paula will be honored alongside other exceptional hospital employees at the My SoCal Hospital Heroes Awards Gala on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 6 to 9 p.m., at the Sheraton Grand Los Angeles. For more information about this year’s honorees and to purchase gala tickets, visit hasc.org/heroes.

“Every day, hospital employees across our region turn moments into meaningful care,” said HASC President/CEO George W. Greene. “The My SoCal Hospital Heroes Awards gives us the chance to recognize and celebrate those who inspire us all.”

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About Cottage Health | CottageHealth.org

Cottage Health is a not-for-profit health system providing advanced medical care on California's Central Coast. In the past year, its hospitals in Goleta, Santa Barbara and Santa Ynez Valley cared for 20,833 inpatient admissions, 93,281 emergency department visits and 1,971 newborn deliveries. With more than 700 physicians, including specialists typically found only at university medical centers, Cottage offers expert, comprehensive care. As a teaching institution, it trains physicians through residency programs in medical, surgical, pediatric and radiology specialties. Cottage Health is home to the Central Coast's only Level I adult and Level II pediatric trauma center and an advanced comprehensive stroke center. Its specialty services include Cottage Children's Medical Center, Cottage Rehabilitation Hospital, the Santa Barbara Neuroscience Institute, Cottage Heart & Vascular Center and Cottage Center for Orthopedics. Beyond its hospitals, Cottage expands care through primary and specialty clinics, urgent care centers and 24/7 provider access via Cottage Virtual Care.