



Emma Klimala, RN, BSN, DNP is a passionate primary care registered nurse at Rush University Medical Group and a recent Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduate from Rush University. Prior to her current role, she spent nearly four years as a medical-surgical nurse at Rush Oak Park Hospital (ROPH), where she found fulfillment in caring for diverse communities in their most vulnerable times. It was during this time that Emma became deeply frustrated by seeing patients hospitalized repeatedly for preventable diseases, which motivated her to focus on disease prevention and health promotion through lifestyle changes.

Based in Chicago, Emma is committed to leveraging evidence-based strategies, such as those outlined by the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM), to encourage healthier lifestyles through diet, exercise, and stress management techniques. Emma's work focuses on addressing health disparities in underserved populations, particularly individuals with type 2 diabetes (T2DM), a disease affecting over 37 million people in the United States. She recognizes that high medication costs and limited access to nutritious food are significant barriers to effective disease management. These challenges fuel her passion for improving resource access and empowering patients to achieve better health outcomes through sustainable, lifestyle-based interventions. In her volunteer efforts, Emma has been an active contributor to community health initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes. She has been involved with the Cardiometabolic Health Initiative (CHI) since June

2024, where she educates patients on lifestyle interventions designed to reduce blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose levels.

Emma is passionate about mentorship and professional development. As a THRIVE Student Mentor since March 2024, she supports students in navigating clinical challenges, career applications, and building professional confidence. In June 2024, Emma was one of two students selected to present at FNP Student Connect, sharing insights on her DNP project and offering guidance to first-year students on academic, clinical, and professional skills. Previously, Emma mentored new graduate nurses and nursing students as a medical-surgical nurse and also served as a mentor in the Rush Education and Career Hub (REACH), helping high school students develop professional skills and explore MedSTEM careers.

In her free time, Emma enjoys cooking, practicing yoga, and spending as much time outdoors as she can through golfing, skiing, hiking, and reading books next to Lake Michigan.