

Matthew Harless, RN

Author of How Healthcare Dies. Advocate for moral-injury repair and hope-based healthcare reform.

ABOUT

Matthew Harless, RN is a registered nurse, author, and healthcare-reform advocate based in Covington, Indiana. He is the author of *How Healthcare Dies* and co-founder, with Ashley Chancellor, of The Business of Hope — a platform for making hope operational in healthcare workplaces. He writes and speaks on moral injury, the nursing workforce, Hope-Informed Care, and rural health access.

CREDENTIALS

Registered Nurse (RN), ASN — Illinois licensed

BS in Ministry · MA in Theology

Based in Covington, Indiana
(Fountain County)

CONTACT

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The Business of Hope

hopeassessment.org

SPEAKS ON

Moral Injury in Healthcare

The wound of knowing what care requires while the system prevents it — distinct from burnout, and why the distinction matters.

Hope-Informed Care

What care looks like when hope is treated as infrastructure — measurable, teachable, and defensible at the unit level.

The Nursing Workforce

Staffing, retention, and moral distress. "Not a shortage — a refusal."

Rural Health Access

What breaks first when hospitals close, and what it takes to hold ground in rural counties like Fountain County, Indiana.

FEATURED BOOK

How Healthcare Dies

and How Hope Brings It Back to Life

A working nurse's diagnosis of how the healthcare system fails patients and the people who care for them — and a map of what comes next when hope stops being a slogan and starts being a workplace practice.

ASIN

[BOH4L7H4T7 · amazon.com/dp/BOH4L7H4T7](https://www.amazon.com/dp/BOH4L7H4T7)

IN HIS OWN WORDS

"Burnout is what the system calls it when it wants the problem to be you. Moral injury is what it actually is when the problem is the setup."

— on why language matters

"Hope is not a mood. It's a method — with a number, a band, and one matched action."

— on Operational Hope

"The way healthcare is currently built is a choice. Choices can be unmade."

— on reform

The Details

Suggested angles, sample questions, and verified data points for interviews, articles, panels, and podcast appearances.

LONG BIO

Matthew Harless, RN is a registered nurse, author, and healthcare-reform advocate whose work joins bedside experience with public organizing. Trained as an ASN nurse with a BS in Ministry and an MA in Theology, he spent years in med-surg, addictions, and social-services settings before turning to healthcare-workforce analysis, assessment-tool development, and coalition building. He is the author of *How Healthcare Dies: and How Hope Brings It Back to Life*, and co-founder, with Ashley Chancellor, of The Business of Hope — home of the HOPE Assessment and the Operational Hope and Hope-Informed Care frameworks used to make hope measurable inside real workplaces.

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What's the difference between burnout and moral injury — and why does the distinction matter for hospitals?
- You say hope can be operational. What does that look like on a nursing unit at 3 a.m.?
- The book is called *How Healthcare Dies*. What's already dead, and what's still alive?
- Why start the coalition in rural Indiana instead of a major metro?
- What do hospital leaders most often get wrong about the workforce "shortage"?
- If a nurse reads this book on their worst shift, what do you hope they do on Monday morning?

FAST FACTS

Pronouns
he / him

Preferred credential line
Matthew Harless, RN

Do NOT use
Nurse Practitioner · BSN · Dr.

Home base
Covington, Indiana (Fountain County)

Co-founder (Business of Hope)
Ashley Chancellor

Signature frameworks
Operational Hope · Hope-Informed Care · The HOPE Assessment

Availability
In-person (IN/IL) and virtual; podcasts, panels, keynotes

VERIFIED DATA POINTS FOR SEGMENTS

Use these figures with attribution. All from peer-reviewed or government sources — Matthew can speak to each on the record.

Data point	Source
Moral injury names a systemic wound — the distress of knowing what safe care requires while the system prevents it — that clinicians and researchers argue should not be reduced to individual burnout.	Dean, Talbot & Dean, <i>Reframing Clinician Distress: Moral Injury Not Burnout</i> , Federal Practitioner (2019)

The average cost of a single bedside RN turnover reached \$60,090, and the average U.S. hospital lost \$5.19M to RN turnover.	2026 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report
153 rural hospital closures and conversions since 2010; 196 since January 2005.	Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, UNC (2025)
About 1 in 5 Americans lives in a rural area, and rural communities face persistent primary-care and nursing workforce shortages.	HRSA Bureau of Health Workforce, <i>State of the Primary Care Workforce</i> (2025)

USAGE

Journalists, podcasters, and event organizers may reproduce the bios and quotes on this sheet verbatim. High-resolution headshots and additional materials available on request via matt@hopeassessment.org.