



2011-2013 LEGISLATIVE AND HEALTH POLICY STATEMENTS

The Tennessee Nurses Association (TNA) is the professional association representing Tennessee's 83,101 registered nurses. This position paper outlines the basic philosophy of the TNA's House of Delegates relative to health care policy which may be addressed by the Tennessee General Assembly and the U.S. Congress.

Mission: *The mission of TNA is to improve health and health care for all Tennessean, to promote and protect registered nurses and to advance the practice of nursing.*

TNA supports initiatives that assure the protection of human rights as outlined by the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics. (2010)

TNA supports a restructured health care system that ensures:

- Equitable and affordable access to essential health care services for all citizens and residents of the state;
- A standardized package of essential health care services provided and financed by public and private plans, including protection against catastrophic costs and impoverishment; and
- Direct access to a full range of professional registered nurses and other qualified health care providers who offer their services in a variety of delivery systems.

TNA supports the development and implementation of health policies that reflect the six Institute of Medicine aims; (safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable healthcare, 2001) and involvement of professional nurses in all aspects of policymaking related to health and health care.

TNA supports initiatives to remove barriers that prevent nurses from being able to respond effectively to rapidly changing health care settings and an evolving health care system through:

- Assuring an adequate and competent nursing workforce to meet current and projected health care demands;
- Collaboration with other professional and regulatory bodies to protect and advance nursing practice and quality patient care;
- Support of the Board of Nursing's role as the sole regulatory authority over all nursing education and nursing practice;
- Elimination of financial, regulatory, and institutional barriers to the practice of professional nursing;
- Participation of registered nurses on all local, state, and national health care advisory and policymaking boards and committees; and
- Oppose any activities intended to restrain the ability of professional advanced practice registered nurses from providing quality, cost-effective, and accessible health care to all citizens and residents of Tennessee to the full extent of their education and training.

TNA supports and advocates that both Federal and State dollars be made available to address the shortage of nurses with the following funding priorities:

- Funding of additional slots for nursing students;
- Funding for additional faculty positions for nursing schools in the state of Tennessee;
- Continued funding for the loan forgiveness program for graduate nurses.

TNA supports the implementation of the Institute of Medicine's *Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* recommendations (2010), including but not limited to the following priorities:

- Ensure that nurses can practice to the full extent of their education and experience in the delivery of health care and decision-making about health care.
- Promote higher levels of education and training through seamless academic progression, interdisciplinary education of health professionals, and lifelong learning.

TNA supports the adoption of the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education*. (2008)

TNA supports efforts to have at least one school nurse available for every 750 students in Tennessee, consistent with ANA recommendations.

TNA supports initiatives that encourage adoption of the principles of the Magnet Recognition® leading to nurse excellence.

TNA supports programs and initiatives that provide a safe work environment, and advocates for facility rules that are consistent with ANA's *Principles of Staffing and Handle with Care* programs (2009), including but not limited to the following priorities:

- Promotion of nurse safety in the patient care environment;
- Staffing effectiveness plans;
- Whistleblower protection;
- Ban on the use of mandatory overtime; and
- Advocacy to protect nurses from workplace violence

TNA supports ANA's *Scope and Standards of Practice* (2010) for registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses through:

- Enactment of statutory and regulatory revisions that will remove barriers to practice and enhance the role of RNs and APRNs in the care of people in Tennessee;
- Inclusion of APRNs as licensed independent provider (LIPs) in hospital licensure rules, health plans, and health care facilities;
- Support "any qualified provider" legislation; and
- Enforcement of insurance laws in public and private sectors.

TNA is committed to increasing the participation of registered nurses in policymaking activities through:

- Promotion of continuing education to prepare registered nurse to become candidates for state and local elective offices and political appointments;
- Efforts to seek key appointments for qualified registered nurses as members of policymaking committees, commissions, boards and other entities; and
- Initiatives to educate, engage, and activate registered nurses across the state.