



2015-2017 LEGISLATIVE AND HEALTH POLICY STATEMENTS

Introduction: The Tennessee Nurses Association (TNA) is the professional association representing Tennessee’s approximately 100,000 registered nurses. This position paper outlines the basic philosophy of the TNA’s Membership Assembly relative to health care policy which may be addressed by the Tennessee General Assembly and the U.S. Congress.

Mission: *To improve health and health care for all Tennesseans and residents of the state, advance nurse leaders and the practice of nursing as essential to improvement efforts and transformational change, and serve as the voice for professional nurses.*

The American Nurses Association’s *Code of Ethics* outlines foundational provisions that frame TNA’s initiatives and actions.

Vision: TNA supports a transformed health care delivery system that ensures that all Tennesseans and residents of the state are able to access equitable and affordable essential services when and where they need them. The transformed system envisioned by TNA is *patient-centered*, promotes *inter-professional collaboration* and *care coordination* to improve patient outcomes and experiences, *primary care* and prevention are priorities, *value* is emphasized, and there is *expanded use of information technology* to promote efficiency and effectiveness.

Goals: TNA is supportive of initiatives that improve health and health care and advance the following goals:

Optimal health system performance, including:

Improved patient care experiences;

Improved population health; and

Reduced per capita cost for health care.

Access to high-quality, affordable and acceptable care for all Tennesseans and residents of the state, including:

Provision of a standardized package of essential health care services provided and financed by public and private plans with protection against catastrophic costs and impoverishment; and

Direct access to a full range of professional registered nurses and other qualified providers in a variety of settings

Full practice authority and enhanced participation in the delivery of care and policymaking for all professional nurses, including:

Support for the Tennessee Board of Nursing as the sole regulatory authority over nursing education and practice;

Adoption of the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education* (2008);

Elimination of financial, regulatory, organizational, and institutional barriers to the practice of professional nursing;

Participation of registered nurses on all local, state, and national health care advisory, policymaking, and governing boards, committees, and task forces; and

Inclusion of APRNs as licensed independent providers (LIPs) in hospital licensure rules, health plans, and health care facilities.

Assuring an adequate, competent and diverse nursing workforce to meet current and projected health care demands, including:

Improved data collection and information infrastructure to inform policymaking, planning, and evaluation;

Promotion of higher levels of education and training through seamless academic progression, inter-professional education of health professionals, and lifelong learning;

Funding for nursing students and faculty, including loan forgiveness programs; and

Support for nurse safety in the patient care environment, staffing effectiveness plans, whistleblower protection, and bans on mandatory overtime.