

## Nursing Leadership's 2022 Advocacy Priorities

### Strengthening the Nursing Workforce

A qualified, engaged, diverse workforce is health care's most precious resource. Patients cannot access health care without the people who provide patient care. The U.S. Department of Labor estimated there were about 200,000 open nursing positions before the COVID pandemic decimated nursing ranks, leaving many suffering from exhaustion, trauma and increased behavioral health challenges. Further, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics anticipates 500,000 nurses will leave the workforce in 2022, many through retirement, bringing the overall shortage to 1.1 million nurses.

That's why we need a national strategy to support health care workers today and prepare them for tomorrow, building a pathway for the future. In 2020, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing reported more than 80,000 qualified applicants were turned away due a shortage of faculty, classroom space and clinical training sites. Schools of Nursing are unable to pay nurse educators what they could make working clinically.

AONL is working collectively with national nursing and health care organizations to implement immediate solutions and long-term strategies to address these workforce challenges. We urge your support for efforts to ensure an adequate, sustainable nursing workforce including:

#### 1. **Support the Future Advancement of Academic Nursing (FAAN) Act (S.246/H.R.851)**

- Invest in schools of nursing to ensure nursing education pathways remain strong during public health emergencies
- Support schools of nursing, students, faculty and academic nursing infrastructure by providing needed resources to hire and retain a diverse faculty to educate the future nursing workforce and enroll and retain nursing students
- Modernize nursing curriculum, technology and educational infrastructure
- Establish nurse-led interdisciplinary and interprofessional educational partnerships

#### 2. **Appropriate \$530 million for Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs**

- Strengthen nursing education and fund institutions educating nurses to practice in rural and medically underserved communities
- Help increase diversity within the nursing workforce through grants, scholarships, stipend support, pre-entry preparation and loan forgiveness programs
- Addresses the critical nursing shortage via projects to increase the number of nurses, promote career mobility, provide continuing education and support retention

#### 3. **\$193 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research in FY 2023**

- Funds nurse-led research, which establishes the scientific basis for quality patient care
- Reduces chronic illness, improves quality of life and promotes patient-centered care

#### 4. **Support the Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act (H.R.7961)**

- The AHA has urged the Department of Justice to support legislation that would give health care workers the same legal protections against assault and intimidation as flight crews and airport workers have under federal law.

## Bolster Public Health

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) quickly moved to waive 1135 regulatory requirements, providing hospitals and health systems with critical flexibilities to increase capacity, expand testing and telehealth capabilities, and mitigate workforce challenges. These waivers served as a catalyst for establishing new, innovative and safe ways for delivering patient-centered care. Recognizing the potential long-term benefit of many of these waivers, we urge Congress to extend or make permanent the following flexibilities through legislation:

### 1. Support CONNECT for Health Act of 2021 (S.1512/H.R. 2903)

- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, hospital, health systems and providers used telehealth to care for patients virtually, reducing potential exposure to COVID-19 patients for health care professionals and the public
- Make permanent certain telehealth flexibilities allowed during the public health emergency, including expanding practitioners who can provide telehealth, lifting geographic and originating site restrictions that currently limit where patients can access telehealth, and allowing billing for audio-only telephone and video services

### 2. Support the Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act (S.3792/H.R.7053)

- Extends the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' 2020 Acute Hospital Care At Home waiver for two years after the COVID-19 public health emergency ends
- Allow treatment for common acute conditions to take place in home settings through a daily in-person or remote evaluation by a nurse
- Requires CMS to issue regulations that provide health and safety requirements for the approved hospital-at-home programs within one year of the bill becoming law
- Requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct research on the waiver that could lead to permanent adjustments to at-home services for Medicare patients

### 3. Strengthen Workforce Capacity

- Waive requirement that Medicare patients admitted to a hospital be under the care of a physician, allowing other practitioners to practice to the top of their licensure
- Remove federal barriers for states wishing to allow out-of-state providers to perform telehealth services

## About AONL

As the national professional organization of more than 11,000 nurse leaders, the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) is the voice of nursing leadership in health care. Our membership encompasses nurse leaders working in hospitals, health systems, academia and other care settings across the care continuum. Since 1967, the organization has led the field of nursing leadership through professional development, advocacy and research that advances nursing leadership practice and patient care. AONL is an affiliate of the American Hospital Association.

## Contact Information

If you have questions regarding AONL's policy or advocacy efforts, please contact Stacey Chappell, director, advocacy and external communications, at 202-321-2392 or [schappell@aha.org](mailto:schappell@aha.org).