

Government Affairs Goals 2004

The Government Affairs Committee (GAC) and AACN staff have identified the issues below as AACN's legislative priorities during the second session of the 108th Congress, and requests board endorsement. Recommended issues are in priority order and the GAC suggests that energy and resources are to be directed in that order. AACN staff will report on the top five priorities at meetings and in Board Reports unless there is action on issues of lesser priority. **The designation of "Lead", "Actively Participate", and "Monitor" are given to identify AACN staff, GAC, and membership level of involvement on each issue. They are defined as follows:**

Lead - Take a prominent position for AACN on the Hill and in the Federal Agencies. Efforts may include evaluating legislation, signing on to supportive bills, actively lobbying and leading efforts in coalition, signing on to coalition letters, and developing and implementing a grassroots strategy in support of these issues.

Actively Participate - Take a position on issues, but work within the nursing community allowing another organization to take the leadership role. Efforts may include signing on to legislation, attending coalition meetings, and signing on to coalition letters. Minimal efforts should be spent on evaluating/analyzing legislation and grassroots dissemination strategy.

Monitor - Invest minimal efforts to stay aware of issues. Sign on to coalition letters and minimal attendance at meetings. No grassroots efforts involved.

1. Public Health Service Act Title VII and VIII Budget and Appropriations

Lead in increasing funding levels for Title VII and VIII programs including the Nursing Workforce Development Programs, Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students, Area Health Education Centers, and Curriculum Development and Training Grants for Preparedness. Advocate for a significant funding increase for these programs for FY 2004 and FY 2005. Attend meetings and participate in the work of various coalitions in the nursing community and the health community such as the Nursing Network, Tri-Council for Nursing, Coalition for Health Funding, Friends of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the House Nursing Caucus. Engage in strategic educational efforts with the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education and Practice (NACNEP), Division of Nursing, and other pertinent HRSA divisions. Identify appropriate nursing education initiatives to lobby for as report language in House, Senate, and conference reports. Develop grassroots strategy, member letters for website, and talking points to address appropriations.

2. Funding for National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)

Lead in advocating for a budget increase for FY 2004 and FY 2005. NINR reached its doubling over five years in FY 2003 along with the rest of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Participate in the executive committee of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding and other advocacy efforts with Research America!, Coalition for Health Funding, House Nursing Caucus, and Tri-Council for Nursing. Identify appropriate nursing research initiatives to lobby for as report language in

House, Senate, and conference reports. Continue to take a leadership role with the Friends of NINR and attend National Advisory Council on Nursing Research (NACNR) meetings.

3. Reauthorization of Title VII and VIII Programs

Lead efforts with Hill staff, the nursing community, health care community, and in the appropriate federal agencies in addressing modifications and improvements to Title VII and VIII programs that were initially up for reauthorization in 2002. Work with Federation of the Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP), Tri-Council for Nursing, Health Professions and Nursing Education Coalition (HPNEC) and other coalitions on an expedited and rational reauthorization process. Actively lobby members of Congress for AACN goals in reauthorization.

4. AACN Member Education

Lead in creating the “State Grassroots Liaison” initiative; a grassroots structure that capitalizes on the relationships of AACN members with their federal legislators. Provide services and programs for AACN members that stress the importance of political, legislative, and regulatory advocacy on the federal and state levels in the deanship role. Build AACN members’ knowledge and skills to focus on funding for nursing education in programs operated on the state level such as Medicaid GME, Workforce Investment Act, etc. Work with outside organizations such as National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and American Nurses Association (ANA) to achieve these goals.

5. Patient Safety

Actively Participate in appropriations funding for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and seek opportunities for nursing education and research. Monitor patient safety legislation and regulation for opportunities for colleges of nursing. Participate in the Friends of AHRQ Coalition. Lobby for increased FY 2005 funding.

6. Diversity

Actively Participate in coalitions and other collective efforts to promote the need of a diverse nursing workforce in Title VII and VIII Public Health Service Act programs. Work with the HPNEC, the Black Nurses Association, Hispanic Nurses Association, Friends of Indian Health, and other organizations to address issues related to creating a healthcare workforce that is sufficient to meet the needs of diverse populations.

7. Develop Nursing Leaders in Policy, Legislation, Regulation

Actively Participate in sponsoring nurse interns; in speaking engagements for external audiences such as Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellows, American University Graduate School, George Mason University, and host student groups from colleges of nursing. Nominate AACN members and nurse leaders to positions on federal advisory boards and committees regarding health and education issues.

8. Higher Education Act Reauthorization

Monitor the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Work with FASHP and the American Council on Education coalitions to follow developments in the reauthorization process.

9. Medicare Graduate Medical Education (GME)

Monitor Medicare GME for potential of clinical nursing education funding for baccalaureate and graduate preparation in any health care setting. Participate in quarterly MedPAC meetings on behalf of nursing education.

EVALUATE EMERGING ISSUES

Throughout the year, AACN staff continuously monitor and evaluate legislation and regulations to identify emerging issues that may impact nursing education and research. Once these issues are identified, they are brought to the GAC for evaluation and recommendation for AACN Board or Executive Committee approval. Staff reevaluate priorities based on this final recommendation.