AACN Commends the President’s Proposed Funding Levels for Nursing Education in FY 2013

On February 13, 2012, the Obama Administration demonstrated continued support for nursing education by proposing an increase to the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII, Public Health Service Act) in the President’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Budget. As outlined in the funding recommendations for the Department of Health and Human Services, the President proposes $251.099 million (8.3% increase) for Title VIII. AACN applauds the proposed increase of $20 million for Title VIII in this tight fiscal climate.

“The demands on America’s healthcare system are mounting, and a sustainable investment in the nursing workforce is essential to ensure patients receive high quality care,” said AACN President Kathleen Potempa. “While the nation’s economic climate has required the federal government to take action to reduce the deficit, AACN appreciates President Obama proposing increased funding for the programs needed to support the next generation of registered nurses.”

The proposed increase for Title VIII is reflected in the Advanced Education Nursing program (31.3% increase). Level funding is proposed for the Nurse Education Loan Repayment and Scholarships. All other programs saw a 1% cut.

Not all programs of interest to AACN members fared as well as Title VIII in the President’s budget. Near-level funding was proposed ($144.153 million) for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR). AACN is disappointed that there was not a proposed increase. Nurse researchers supported by NINR funding directly contribute to national efforts aimed at increasing quality of life, enhancing preventative care delivery, and promoting healthcare sustainability. Currently, NINR receives less than one-half of one-percent of the total National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) Budget. In regards to the NIH budget request from the President, level funding was proposed. As reported by the Association of American Medical Colleges, “…NIH budget has failed to keep pace with biomedical inflation for 10 consecutive years, a situation that would have dramatic consequences on the pace of medical innovation and harm communities around the nation.” For more information, see: https://www.aamc.org/newsroom/newsreleases/273718/120213.html.

Additionally, the President recommended a $40 million decrease (15% decrease) to the Health Professions Programs (Title VII, Public Health Service Act). The budget proposes $228.088 million for Title VII with the elimination of funding for the Health Careers Opportunity Program and the Area Health Education Centers.

For funding details, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/FY13-President-Budget.pdf.
AACN fully recognizes the difficult decisions Congress must make to reduce the federal deficit. As Congress begins to prepare their FY 2013 budget and appropriations, AACN is committed to raising awareness of the significant impact federal dollars make in supporting schools of nursing, their students, faculty, and researchers. AACN will provide updates as the budget and appropriations process continues to unfold.


For more information on the President’s Budget, see: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget

For more information on the HHS Budget in Brief, see: http://www.hhs.gov/budget/budget-brief-fy2013.pdf

Preparing Capitol Hill Visits for Spring Meeting

AACN members are encouraged to schedule their Capitol Hill visits well in advance of the 2012 Spring Meeting. Congressional staffers are extremely busy during this time of year, and their schedules tend to fill quickly. It is crucial that Members of Congress and their staff understand the importance of maintaining critical funding levels for nursing education and research. More than ever, it is crucial that the AACN membership relay the need for Title VIII and NINR support at a time when Congress will be making difficult decisions on how to reduce the federal deficit. This year, nursing students attending the AACN 2012 Student Policy Summit will join deans and directors during breakfast scheduled for the day of the Hill visits (March 26) to ensure that AACN membership presents a unified front on Capitol Hill. Members experiencing difficulty with scheduling their visits are encouraged to reach out to their State Grassroots Liaisons for guidance.

Register Now for AACN’s 2012 Student Policy Summit

This year’s AACN Student Policy Summit (SPS) will be held March 25-27, 2012 in Washington, DC. The summit is a three-day conference centered on nursing policy, research, and advocacy. The SPS is open to undergraduate and graduate nursing students of AACN member schools who are interested in the opportunity to engage in policy and advocacy. Summit attendees will make visits to Capitol Hill to meet with Members of Congress and their staff to discuss issues vital to nursing education, research, and practice alongside nursing school deans and directors from their state. Registration is first-come, first-serve, so sign up today!

AACN would like to thank our generous sponsors:

Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence
Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)

University of Kentucky College of Nursing
Loyola University New Orleans School of Nursing
For more information regarding the Summit, visit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/2012-student-policy-summit.

To register online for the 2012 Student Policy Summit, visit: https://apps.aacn.nche.edu/Registration/registration.asp.

AACN Announces Student Policy Summit Scholarship Winners

AACN is pleased to announce the winners of the 2012 Student Policy Summit scholarship contest. This year’s scholarship winners are Laura Posluszny, BSN student at Texas Christian University, and Michael Bumbach, PhD candidate at University of Florida College of Nursing. The scholarships include the cost of registration for the Summit, airfare, and hotel accommodations. Additionally, the winning scholarship application essays will be featured in the conference materials for the Summit. AACN received several outstanding essays submitted from students across the nation, making the selection process extremely difficult. In their essays, applicants were asked to discuss their interest in nursing policy, why they believe nurses should be engaged in health policy, and their vision for the nursing profession. In her essay, Laura envisions that “With organized planning, receptive nurses, and well-educated leaders, I see my profession improving rapidly along the lines of the IOM report recommendations for years to come.” Michael noted that “…as political constituents, patient advocates and human resources of the largest workforce in health care, we must be able to understand and campaign for our nurses; for ourselves. We must be able to appreciate our political institutions and recognize that health care policy directly affects our careers. If we do not get involved, who else will?” AACN congratulates this year’s winners and thanks all students who applied.

PCORI National Patient and Stakeholder Dialogue

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) will host a National Patient and Stakeholder Dialogue on Monday, February 27, 2012, 9:30am-5:00pm ET in Washington, DC. The purpose of this public gathering is to present PCORI's Draft National Priorities and Research Agenda and allow the public to provide input. PCORI is an independent organization tasked with helping the public make informed health care decisions and improving health outcomes through evidence-based, patient-focused research. A portion of the session will be open to public comment by individuals attending in person and by phone. Two moderated discussion panels featuring patient advocates, patient-family caregivers, health providers, and other community stakeholders will discuss PCORI’s priorities and agenda.


To register for this event or to provide public comment, see: http://www.pcori.org/dialogue-registration/

Indian Health Service Loan Repayment Program Cycle Now Open

The Indian Health Service Loan Repayment Program (LRP) provides loan forgiveness for health professionals in exchange for a two-year full-time service commitment in Indian health programs. The LRP aims to increase access to care to American Indian and Alaska Native communities. The program awards up to $20,000 per year for the repayment of qualified undergraduate and graduate student loans. This year, LRP is expected to support approximately 453 competing awards. Applicants must be licensed and in their final year of a health professional school, if not already in post-graduate training. For additional criteria, see: http://www.ihs.gov/loanrepayment/eligibility_criteria.cfm.
Important Dates:
February 17, 2012: First Award Cycle Deadline
August 17, 2012: Last Award Cycle Deadline
September 4, 2012: Last Award Cycle Deadline Date for Supplemental Loan Repayment Program Funds
September 30, 2012: Entry on Duty Deadline Date

For more information on this funding opportunity, visit: https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2012/01/23/2012-1211/loan-repayment-program-for-repayment-of-health-professions-educational-loans-announcement-type.

To view the application, visit: http://www.ihs.gov/loanrepayment/.

**National Health Service Corps Virtual Job Fair**

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) is hosting its first Virtual Job Fair on Thursday, February 23, 6:00-9:00pm ET. Administered under the Health Resources and Services Administration, the NHSC provides education loan repayment and scholarship programs to primary care providers in exchange for serving in areas designated as experiencing a shortage of health professionals.

The Virtual Job Fair will allow NHSC-approved sites to feature current job openings for a multitude of health professions, including nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, physicians, and physician assistants. Health professionals looking to serve as primary care providers at a designated NHSC site will have the opportunity to seek more information from site representatives.

Currently, the job fair is limited to NHSC-approved sites located in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee (Region 4). To participate in the fair, sites must:

- Be an approved primary care NHSC site, located within the identified pilot area;
- Be in good standing with the NHSC;
- Be looking to fill primary care positions (including Nurse Midwife and Nurse Practitioner) in 2012; and
- Have access to a computer, Internet connection, and a phone line the day of the job fair.

If you wish to participate in the Virtual Job Fair, contact the National Health Service Corps for further registration information at NHSCVirtualJobFair@hrsa.gov.

**Nursing Represented Among CMS Innovation Advisors**

This past December, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Innovation Center chose 73 individuals to serve as participants in its new Innovation Advisors Program. Developed under the Affordable Care Act, the Innovation Center will utilize the expertise of the advisors to improve the delivery of Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP services. The advisors comprise a multi-disciplinary team of health professionals, whose primary functions aim to improve the accessibility and sustainability of care delivery models. Innovation Advisors will also collaborate with local organizations and groups to structure models tailored to specific patient populations. The following individuals will bring nursing’s expertise to the Innovation Advisor Program:

Christine Baker, PhD, MBA, RN  
Barbara Blakeney, MSN  
Laura Beth Brown, MSN, RN  
Beverly Christie, DNP, RN, PHN  
Diane Curley, MSN, RN, CNOR, CBN  
Erin Denholm, MSN, RN  
Kellie Hamblin, BSN, BARN, CPHQ  
Jeanne McAllister, BSN, MS, MHA, RN  
Margaret Namie, BSN, MPH, RN, CPHQ  
Deborah Peartree, RN, MS
Nursing’s representation in the Innovation Advisors Program serves as yet another example of how nursing leadership continues to grow in the healthcare reform arena.

For more information on CMS Innovation, see: http://innovations.cms.gov/.


**Nurse to Serve as New Member on U.S. Preventative Services Task Force**

On February 7, 2012, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) announced the addition of four new members to its U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF). Comprised of 16 non-federal experts in prevention and evidence-based health care representing an array of primary care professions, the USPSTF creates recommendations for primary care providers and the health community at large through review of preventative care delivery services. Each of the new members will serve a 4-year term.

Among the new members is Linda Ciofu Baumann, PhD, RN. Dr. Baumann is a nurse practitioner and a professor emerita at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Nursing, as well as a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. She is a past president of the Society of Behavioral Medicine. Dr. Bauman’s research areas of interest include chronic disease management, global public health, and behavioral health promotion.