Petition Calls to Remove APRN Practice Barriers

On March 23, a new petition calling for the President’s support to remove scope of practice barriers affecting Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) was posted on the White House website. The petition states that given an anticipated 30 million newly-insured patients who will require nursing and healthcare services, APRNs can help to address the growing demand for home health and primary care—provided they are supported to the full extent of their education and training. The petition hopes to gain 100,000 signatures by April 22, 2013 before submitting it to the Obama Administration.

Those interested in signing the petition must click on “Create an Account” and follow the instructions posted here: https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/remove-barriers-prevent-advanced-practice-registered-nurses-practicing-their-full-scope/WJSdg1P3.

Federal Funding Update: Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014

Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the federal government through the remainder of Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. On March 20, 2013, the Senate approved the CR by a vote of 73-26. On the following day, the House of Representatives passed the bill by a vote 318-109. President Obama then signed the spending measure into law on March 26. The law funds government activities at $984 billion through September 30, 2013. This amount reflects the $85 billion in spending cuts enacted earlier this month through sequestration.

Under the CR, the Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act) are funded at the FY 2012 level ($231.099 million). However, the 5.1% sequester is still in place. Federal departments and agencies have been given 30 days to report how they plan to operate under sequestration’s across-the-board cuts. AACN has been collaborating with the broader healthcare community to educate Congress and the public about the impact of sequestration on healthcare and research programs. To understand how a 5.1% funding cut will affect Title VIII programs and the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR, National Institutes of Health), see AACN’s sequestration factsheet: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/AACN-Sequestration-Factsheet.pdf.

In FY 2014, AACN and the Nursing Community are requesting that nursing education and research receive critical support and request $251 million for the Nursing Workforce Development programs, $150 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research, and $20 million for the Nurse-Managed Health Clinics. AACN submitted FY 2014 testimony for the record to the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS-ED) Appropriations Subcommittee on these programs, which are critical to sustaining the nursing workforce and providing high-quality care to America’s patients. You can read the full testimony here: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/FY14-House-LHHS-Testimony.pdf.
AACN Advocacy at the Spring Meeting

This year’s Spring Annual Meeting convened nearly 400 AACN members in our nation’s capital. The Government Affairs Committee (GAC) program session featured a panel of senior federal advocates from national nursing organizations representing Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). Frank Purcell with the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, Patrick Cooney with the American College of Nurse-Midwives, and Dave Mason, who represents the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health, the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties provided AACN members with insight into their respective organizations’ work to remove APRN barriers to practice at the state and federal levels.

In addition, AACN was pleased to announce Nancy DeBasio, Dean of the Research College of Nursing as the 2012 Advocate of the Year. Chair of the GAC Teri Murray presented Dr. DeBasio with the award. Dr. DeBasio currently serves as a State Grassroots Liaison for the State of Missouri and has worked tirelessly to engage members in AACN’s advocacy efforts. Moreover, she was a top responder to AACN Action Alerts and a top participant in making Hill visits during 2012.

Virtual Advocacy Day

On March 18, 2013, AACN’s Virtual Advocacy Day allowed grassroots members to send a message to their legislators requesting them to protect nursing funding. An Action Alert titled, “I Urge You to Support Nursing Programs in FY 2013 and FY 2014” was sent to AACN’s Grassroots Network, and resulted in 65 participants sending 202 messages to Congress (144 to the House of Representative; 58 to the Senate). As Congress looks to make significant cuts to the budget, AACN hopes our grassroots network will continue to serve as strong advocates for nursing during this uncertain federal fiscal climate.

Logging Your Hill Visits into CapWiz

As a reminder, AACN members are highly encouraged to log their Spring Meeting Hill Day visits into CapWiz (http://capwiz.com/aacn/lrm/feedback.tt). When possible, please include the names of other AACN members who attended your visits as well as any students. The Government Affairs staff synthesizes this data to provide accurate reporting back to the membership about our advocacy activity and to follow-up with these Congressional offices. Your participation is much appreciated. If you have any questions about recording your visits, please email Lauren Inouye at linouye@aacn.nche.edu.

NINR Luncheon Briefing

AACN hosted a special advocacy luncheon on Capitol Hill to highlight nursing research and its impact on care delivery invited deans from AACN schools with doctoral research programs met with a bi-partisan panel of staff from the House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (LHHS-ED) Appropriations Subcommittees. Dr. Patricia Grady, Director of the National Institute of Nursing Research offered opening remarks about the vital role of nursing research in education and evidence-based practice.

Appropriations staff provided members insight into the unique fiscal climate and how decisions regarding the federal budget process, including sequestration, will impact funding for nursing research.
2013 Congressional Reception

On Monday evening, AACN held a Congressional Reception in the foyer of the Rayburn House Office Building. The event was held in collaboration with the House Nursing Caucus Co-Chairs Rep. Lois Capps, RN (D-CA) and Rep. David Joyce (R-OH). Other Members of Congress in attendance included Rep. Corrine Brown (D-FL), Rep. John Dingell (D-MI), Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), Rep. David McKinley (R-WV), Rep. Richard Nolan (D-MN), and Rep. Raul Ruiz (D-CA). AACN deans, faculty attending the Faculty Policy Intensive, and students attending the Student Policy Summit networked with legislators and their staff to discuss how nurses play a vital role in improving access to quality care while reducing cost.

More photos from the 2013 Spring Meeting will be made available soon.
This spring marked the launch of AACN’s inaugural Faculty Policy Intensive (FPI) program in Washington, DC. Eight faculty from AACN member schools were selected from a highly competitive applicant pool to attend this four-day conference. The program is designed to expand upon policy knowledge and advocacy skills. This fully-funded program coincided with AACN’s Spring Annual Meeting and hosted the following attendees:

**Patricia Brennan** PhD, RN, MS, DPNAP  
Assistant Professor  
Samuel Merritt University

**Camille Burnett,** PhD, MPA, RN, PHCNS-BC, BScN, DSW  
Assistant Professor and Roberts Scholar  
University of Virginia School of Nursing

**Melondie Carter,** DSN, RN  
Associate Professor  
University of Alabama

**Lilia A. Fuentes,** DNP, APRN, FNP-BC  
Assistant Professor – Department of Nursing  
Master of Science in Nursing Program Coordinator  
The University of Texas – Pan American

**Mary Garnica,** DNP, APNFNP-BC  
Assistant Professor of Nursing  
University of Central Arkansas

**Sharon Guthrie,** PhD, ARNP, CPNP, NCSN, RN-BC  
Assistant Professor  
Mount Mercy University

**Joanne Noone,** PhD, RN, CNE  
Associate Professor, Associate Dean, Ashland Campus  
Oregon Health & Science University

**Andréa Sonenberg,** DNSc, WHNP, CNM  
Assistant Professor  
Pace University

The program introduced the faculty to leaders in nursing and healthcare at the federal levels, including Director of the NINR Patricia Grady; RADM Parham Hopson, Senior Advisor for HIV/AIDS Policy at the Health Resources and Services Administration; and Barbara Damron, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellow with the Senate Labor, Health, Education, and Pensions Committee in the office of Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN). Participants engaged these policy experts in dialogue concerning the role of nursing leadership in federal agencies, Congress, and how the profession is currently involved in policies shaping healthcare delivery.

FPI attendees also met with Deborah Trautman, Executive Director of the Johns Hopkins Medicine Center for Health Policy and Healthcare Transformation to hone verbal advocacy messaging, Darlene Curley, Executive Director of the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence, and an interprofessional roundtable comprised of federal representatives from national healthcare organizations.

At the beginning of the program, FPI participants were recognized during AACN’s congressional reception. At the program’s commencement, the faculty were inducted as the inaugural class of FPI Fellows. The Fellows will hold quarterly calls with Government Affairs staff to continue the mission of developing and supporting AACN faculty as policy experts and advocates. For more information about the Faculty Policy Intensive, and to view the full agenda for the 2013 program, see: [http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/fpi](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/fpi).
Fourth Annual Student Policy Summit Graduates
New Class of Advocates

The 2013 Student Policy Summit (SPS) was a tremendous success! The SPS, which is attended by baccalaureate and graduate students from member schools across the nation, provides a comprehensive learning experience in health policy and advocacy. These student leaders, who represented 49 schools from 29 states, served as the student voice for the nursing profession during this three-day conference on Capitol Hill.

Attendees listened to Susan Hassmiller, Senior Adviser for Nursing for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, impart inspiring insight on the importance of being an advocate for the nursing profession. Other highlighted speakers included Director of NINR Patricia Grady; Mayra Alvarez, Director of Public Health Policy in the Office of Health Reform at Health and Human Services; and Former Congressman Alan Wheat.

Students made visits to Capitol Hill with deans attending the AACN Spring Meeting to advocate on behalf of nursing education, research, and practice for FY 2013 and 2014. This opportunity is consistently ranked among attendees as one of the most impactful aspects of the Summit. At the conclusion of the conference, AACN President Dr. Jane Kirschling and Government Affairs staff welcomed the students into the SPS Academy. The Academy’s members are included in AACN’s Grassroots Network and will receive items pertinent to our association’s advocacy, including Action Alerts. For more information about the Student Policy Summit, visit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/student-policy-summit.

Once again, AACN would like to sincerely thank the sponsors of the 2013 Summit for their generosity:

Platinum Level
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Loyola University New Orleans School of Nursing
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University of Texas Health Sciences Center San Antonio School of Nursing

Silver Level
University of Connecticut School of Nursing
University of Florida College of Nursing

Bronze Level
Indiana University School of Nursing
Seton Hall University College of Nursing
Thomas Jefferson University School of Nursing
University of Portland School of Nursing
Concerns about Shortages May Help Expand Nurses’ Scope of Practice Laws

New research by the Center for Studying Health System Change for the nonpartisan, nonprofit National Institute for Health Care Reform (NIHCR) reinforces a growing movement to increase primary care capacity by revising state laws governing nurse practitioners’ (NPs) scope of practice and easing restrictions for documented physician supervision. As the 2014 deadline for health insurance coverage expansions outlined in The Affordable Care Act (ACA) approaches, there is growing concern that the primary care workforce will not be able to meet the increased demand.

Currently, 25 states require NPs to have physician oversight to diagnose, create a treatment plan, or prescribe medications. Seven states require oversight for prescriptive privileges only, and 18 states allow NPs to practice independently, without physician oversight. Restrictive laws may prevent NPs from practicing in rural or underserved areas, where there is a dearth of physicians available to operate in an oversight capacity. The full report and more information can be found at: http://www.nihcr.org/PCP-Workforce-NPs.

Dr. Sochalski Appointed Principal Advisor for Health Workforce Policy

The following is a message from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions, Division of Nursing:

Julie Sochalski, PhD, RN, FAAN, a nationally and internationally recognized authority in health policy and the healthcare workforce has been appointed Principal Advisor for Health Workforce Policy for the Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Working directly with BHPr, the Office of Planning, Analysis and Evaluation, and the Immediate Office of the Administrator for HRSA, Dr. Sochalski will focus on the expansion of healthcare workforce policy issues as the Department of Health and Human Services moves to implement ACA. She will serve as the BHPr lead to collaborate with other Bureaus and DHHS including Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, focusing on workforce issues and will take the lead in working with the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation on the evaluation of the Health Care Innovation Awards projects and the workforce components of other CMS initiatives. Dr. Sochalski is currently serving as the Director for the BHPr’s Division of Nursing, providing national policy for nursing practice and education with the overall objective of improving the quality of health care and nursing service in the nation.

Alexis Bakos, PhD, MPH, RN, who is currently the Deputy Director for the Division of Nursing, will serve as the Acting Director in the interim while recruitment efforts are under way to fill the vacant Director position.

PCORI Workgroup Opportunity

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) will be holding a workgroup on obesity on April 16, 2013. Titled “Obesity Treatment Options in Diverse Populations,” the workgroup will be an opportunity for researchers, patients, and other stakeholders to offer feedback on research questions that should be answered within this topic. For more information about the webinar, see: http://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/funding-announcements/obesity-treatment-options-in-diverse-populations/. For a complete list of PCORI events and information on submitting input or registering to view the webinars associated with the workgroup, see: http://www.pcori.org/events/.