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For Immediate Release

AACN Applauds the New Institute of Medicine Report Calling for Transformational Change in Nursing Education and Practice

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 5, 2010 – Today, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) applauds the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for their visionary report on the *Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, which includes among its recommendations removing regulatory barriers to nursing practice, raising the education level of the nursing workforce, enhancing nursing's leadership role in healthcare redesign, and strengthening data collection efforts. The IOM is calling for policymakers, educators, and leaders across the health professions to take collective action to reform education, strengthen nursing roles, and amplify nursing's voice in transforming the healthcare system.

“The IOM’s focus on the future of nursing comes at a time when healthcare reform presents new challenges and opportunities for the nursing workforce,” said AACN President Kathleen Potempa. “AACN stands ready to work with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and other stakeholders to ensure the report’s recommendations are implemented to enhance patient safety and the quality of care available to our nation’s diverse patient population.”

The four key messages that structure the recommendations outlined in the *Future of Nursing* report include:

- Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training.
- Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.
- Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other healthcare professionals, in redesigning healthcare in the United States.
- Effective workforce planning and policy making require better data collection and an improved information infrastructure.

Specific action steps requiring a collaborative response include:

- Increasing the number of nurses with baccalaureate degrees from 50% to 80% by 2020 and encouraging nurses with associate degrees and diplomas to enter baccalaureate programs within five years of graduation.
- Doubling the number of nurses with a doctorate by 2020.
- Addressing the faculty shortage by creating salary and benefits packages that are market competitive.

- Moving to have at least 10% of baccalaureate program graduates enter a master's or doctoral degree program within five years of graduation.
- Removing scope of practice barriers that inhibit Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) from practicing to the full extent of their education and training and serving in primary care roles.
- Enhancing new nurse retention by implementing transition into practice nurse residency programs.
- Embedding leadership development into nursing education programs and increasing the emphasis on interdisciplinary education.
- Ensuring that nurses engage in lifelong learning to gain the competencies needed to provide care for diverse populations across the lifespan.

“Implementing these recommendations will propel the nursing profession forward and better position nurses to become full partners in reforming our healthcare delivery system,” added Dr. Potempa. “AACN is committed to leveraging our influence, data resources, and extensive network of nurse educators to advance these recommendations to better meet the health needs of the nation.”

The new report is the product of a study convened under the auspices of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing, at the Institute of Medicine, and is the result of the committee's review of scientific literature on the nursing profession and a series of public forums to gather insights and evidence from a range of experts. The expert committee leading this work was chaired by Dr. Donna Shalala, president of the University of Miami, and included among its members Dr. Michael Bleich, dean of the Oregon Health & Science University School of Nursing. AACN was pleased to provide testimony, consultation, and assistance with data requests to the IOM Committee while the report was in development.

For more details on the Future of Nursing report, see the following links:

- IOM Press Release: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health/Press-Release.aspx>.
- Future of Nursing Report Brief: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health/Report-Brief.aspx>.
- The entire 620-page report can be downloaded for free as a PDF file or purchased as a print publication from the National Academies Press at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12956.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the national voice for university and four-year college education programs in nursing. Representing more than 650 member schools of nursing at public and private institutions nationwide, AACN's educational, research, governmental advocacy, data collection, publications, and other programs work to establish quality standards for bachelor's- and graduate-degree nursing education, assist deans and directors to implement those standards, influence the nursing profession to improve health care, and promote public support of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, research, and practice. www.aacn.nche.edu

AACN Response to the IOM's Future of Nursing Report

In January 2011, AACN's Board of Directors convened a strategic planning retreat in conjunction with our annual Doctoral Education Conference to consider how best to leverage the organization's unique strengths to advance the IOM report recommendations. The Board identified four strategic priorities for AACN:

- Developing leaders for the future of nursing education
- Advancing the educational preparation of the nursing workforce at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels
- Leveraging the academic-practice interface to drive change
- Providing leadership to facilitate interprofessional education

Following this meeting, AACN President Kathleen Potempa led a discussion at the association's Spring Annual Meeting in March 2011 about the Board deliberations related to the IOM report. Member deans expressed strong agreement with the Board's priorities and asked for additional opportunities to provide feedback. In May 2011, Dr. Potempa and AACN President-Elect Jane Kirschling each presented Webinars to collect input on the four strategic priorities. More than 500 deans and faculty attended these Webinars. AACN staff then worked to integrate this feedback into the organization's tactical plan for FY 2012-2014.

The following activities are currently underway at AACN, which illustrate strong synergy between AACN's priorities and the IOM recommendations:

- As nursing's representative to the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) AACN has joined with five other national associations representing medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and public health advance interprofessional education (IPE) and collaborative practice. Last year, IPEC released a new set of IPE competencies that has sparked a wave of implementation efforts as schools nationwide.
- AACN is partnering with the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence to increase the number of doctorally prepared nurses available to teach at schools in all 50 states. Funding through this \$2.5 million program expansion will be allocated by schools to students in research- and practice-focused doctoral programs.
- Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, AACN serves as the National Program Office for the New Careers in Nursing program, which serves as an effective mechanism for expanding the pipeline of minority students in accelerated baccalaureate and master's degree programs
- With support by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, AACN is working to engage hospital leaders in the San Francisco area in the innovative work underway to improve healthcare quality and patient safety through the national QSEN project. Building strong partnerships between nursing schools and hospitals is an effective mechanism for fostering collaboration and innovation around shared educational interests.
- AACN continues its work with the University HealthSystem Consortium to add new nurse residency programs at practice sites nationwide. Post-baccalaureate nurse residencies are now active in more than 30 states in a wide variety of health systems.