HRSA Appoints New Division of Nursing Director

Julie Sochalski, PhD, RN, FAAN, a nationally and internationally recognized authority in health policy and the healthcare workforce, has been appointed Director of the Division of Nursing at the Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). As the Director of the Division of Nursing, Dr. Sochalski will serve as principal advisor to the BHPr Associate Administrator and to the HRSA Administrator on national policy for nursing education, practice, and research with the overall objective of improving the quality of health care and nursing service in the nation.

Dr. Sochalski is currently serving as the Associate Professor of Nursing, Faculty Associate in the Center for the Study of the History of Nursing, Senior Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, and Faculty Master of Hill College House at the University of Pennsylvania.

In a statement released August 25, 2010, Dr. Sochalski said: “Our healthcare system is only as strong as the workforce that supports it, and health reform has sounded the clarion call. It’s a great privilege to join the leadership at HRSA at this propitious moment and to work with them towards our common goal of assuring that the nation’s health care workforce, now and in the future, can meet its challenges. Building a highly skilled, effectively deployed, and fully-resourced nursing workforce is integral to achieving that goal, and to assuring that all people and communities have access to high-value health care. I look forward to delivering on that promise.”

Historic Funding Levels Proposed for Nursing Education

By a vote of 11-5, the House Labor, Health and Humans Services, (LHHS) Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee approved their draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 bill on July 15, 2010. This bill would provide $738.7 billion for LHHS, education, and related agency programs including nursing education. Chairman David Obey (D-WI) remarked in his opening comments:

"The new healthcare reform bill will make almost 30 million additional people eligible for health insurance coverage, increasing the demand for doctors, nurses, and other health professions. This bill includes $356 million for programs under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act, and $292 million for nursing education to alleviate shortages and help people prepare for well-paying careers. Most of the programs funded have a particular emphasis on encouraging students and graduates to enter primary care fields and to practice in medically underserved areas, in order to broaden access to quality healthcare."
Two weeks later, the Senate LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee reported their proposed spending levels for FY 2011. The LHHS bill was then passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee with a vote of 18-12. The Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs received $292.285 million, a 20% increase over FY 2010. For more information on other programs of interest see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/pdf/FY2011SenateChart.pdf

**Congress is still early in the appropriations process and these funding levels are not final.** AACN will continue to track the funding cycle and keep you apprised of the latest developments. For more information on FY 2011 appropriations see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/appropriations.htm

### President Proposes Budget Amendments for FY 2011

In an August 20, 2010 letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), President Barack Obama requested that Congress consider a set of budget amendments for the Department of Health and Human Services in FY 2011. These amendments would not change the overall amount requested in the President’s FY 2011 budget proposal that was released in February. Of importance to AACN members, the request proposes to increase the HRSA health workforce training programs by $250 million.

This proposed increase, along with increases to State AIDS Drug Assistance programs and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ state high-risk insurance pools, would be offset by reducing funding from such programs as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Disease Control, Research, and Training account and the National Institutes of Health’s Building and Facilities account. For more information regarding the President’s proposed amendments see: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/budget_amendments/amendment_08_20_10_0.pdf

### Efforts to Advance GNE through Report Language

When the Senate LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee reported out their FY 2011 spending levels last month, the bill also contained report language that supports the Graduate Nursing Education (GNE) demonstration program. The GNE program, which was included in the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (Public Law No: 111-148), will be implemented by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The language below suggests that the program be tested on a mix of geographically located Advanced Practice Registered Nursing (APRN) programs and a mix of hospital/clinical training sites. The language also requests that CMS consider all types of reasonable costs associated with APRN clinical education. AACN continues to work closely with the GNE coalition comprised of national APRN organizations and AARP to ensure this demonstration program is successful in producing more APRNs. To view the bill, see: http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/cpquery/T?&report=sr243&dbname=111&

Graduate Nursing Education Pilot. The Committee recognizes the value of advanced practice registered nurses [APRNs] for improving the accessibility, quality, and affordability of healthcare. *Section 5509 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act includes a demonstration project to test the establishment of a Medicare Graduate Nursing Education program. The Committee encourages CMS to begin the design of this initiative. In this design, the Committee encourages CMS to test a full geographically representative mix of small and large, rural and urban APRN educational programs utilizing different mixes of hospital and non-hospital community-based clinical training sites. In addition, the Committee encourages CMS to assure that reasonable costs for the demonstration take into account all types of clinical training regularly employed in and appropriate to the training of APRNs and are not reduced by a factor related to the proportion of hospital inpatient days that are Medicare inpatient days. The Committee requests a progress report in the fiscal year 2012 budget justification.*
2010 Division of Nursing Technical Workshop

Make plans now to attend a 2010 Division of Nursing Technical Assistance Workshop (TAW). Each year, TAWs are spread across the country (central and eastern) to allow easy access to participants from around the nation. The next TAW is scheduled for September 20-21, 2010 in Chicago, IL. Registration can be completed at: http://www.team-psy.com/nursingworkshop2010/home.asp.

HHS Announces Title VIII Grant Awards

On August 5, 2010, Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced $159.1 million in awarded grants to healthcare workforce training programs administered by HRSA. These awards build on the investment made through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and incorporate changes made to the programs through the new law. Of interest to AACN members, the announcement releases state-by-state information on Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Grants. Please note that the Nurse Education, Practice, and Retention program that was expanded under the ACA to include a quality component was incorporated in this award cycle.

- **Advanced Education Nursing** ($42 million) supports 153 infrastructure grants to increase advanced education to train nurses as primary care providers and/or nursing faculty.
- **Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship** ($16 million) supports 351 schools of nursing and individuals preparing for careers as nurse specialists, requiring advanced education.
- **Nurse Anesthetist Traineeship** ($1.3 million) funds 83 nurse anesthetist training programs to provide traineeships that pay tuition, books, fees, and a living stipend for registered nurses who have completed at least 12 months in a master’s or doctoral nurse anesthesia program.
- **Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention** ($29.9 million) supports 108 infrastructure grants to expand the capacity of the nursing pipeline, promote career mobility for individuals in nursing, prepare more nurses at the baccalaureate level, and provide continuing education training to enhance the quality of patient care.
- **Nursing Workforce Diversity** ($14.3 million) supports 44 grants that increase nursing education opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, including racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented among registered nurses.
- **Faculty Development: Integrated Technology into Nursing Education and Practice Initiative** ($2.5 million) supports nine grants for faculty development projects in information and other technologies to expand the capacity of collegiate schools of nursing to educate students for 21st century health care practice.

“We cannot build a healthier America if our country continues to face a growing health professions shortage,” said Secretary Sebelius. “A well-trained, educated and diverse workforce is critical to meeting future health care demands, and to reforming the nation’s health care system.”

2011 NIH Funding Opportunities

The National Institutes of Health has announced funding opportunities for the FY 2011 NIH Director’s Award Programs: Transformative Research Projects, Pioneer, and New Innovator Awards.

NIH Director’s Transformative Research Projects Award Program (T-R01)

• Exceptionally innovative, high risk, original and/or unconventional research
• Clinical, basic, and/or behavioral/social science research projects
• Up to $25 million total costs per year for a single project
• One-third of total funding budget geared to projects with more than $1 million in direct costs

The deadline for submitting Transformative Research Project applications is October 27, 2010 with Letters of Intent due by September 27, 2010. See the instructions in the RFA (RFA-RM-10-010). Additional information, including Frequently Asked Questions, is available at: http://commonfund.nih.gov/T-R01. Send questions to T_R01@mail.nih.gov.

NIH Director’s Pioneer and New Innovator Awards Program

NIH welcomes proposals for 2011 NIH Director's Pioneer Awards and New Innovator Awards for innovative approaches to major challenges in biomedical or behavioral research.

Pioneer Awards:
• Up to $2.5 million in direct costs over 5 years
• Open to scientists at any career stage

New Innovator Awards:
• Up to $1.5 million in direct costs over 5 years
• For early stage investigators (ESI), defined as those who have not received an NIH R01 or similar grant and are within 10 years of completing their terminal research degree

To continue its strong record of diversity in these programs, NIH especially encourages women and members of groups that are underrepresented in NIH research to apply. The deadline for submitting Pioneer Award applications is September 13, 2010. See the instructions in the RFA (RFA-RM-10-008) and http://commonfund.nih.gov/pioneer for more information. Send questions to pioneer@nih.gov.

The deadline for submitting New Innovator Award applications is September 20, 2010. See the instructions in the RFA (RFA-RM-10-009) and http://commonfund.nih.gov/newinnovator for more information. Send questions to newinnovator@nih.gov.

AHRQ’s Comparative Effectiveness Webinar

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) Effective Health Care (EHC) Program has multiple resources available online. The EHC program does comparative effectiveness research (CER); compares drugs, medical devices, tests, surgeries, or ways to deliver health care. The various EHC resources can be found at: www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov. The website has a variety of unique CER resources including guides for clinicians and students, self-paced continuing education modules, and a searchable database on disease topics. Additionally, AHRQ will be hosting an introductory Web conference on Comparative Effectiveness Research: Putting Effective Health Care into Practice on October 12, 2010 from 2:00-3:00 pm ET. More information on how to participate will be available on the AHRQ website soon.
**NINR’s 25th Anniversary Celebration**

NINR will begin celebrating its 25th Anniversary on September 30, 2011 by hosting the 2010 Scientific Symposium: "Bringing Science to Life." NINR is planning a number of enlightening events over the course of the year, and AACN looks forward to celebrating with our colleagues in the nursing research community the success and great achievements of the Institute.

For more information on the 25th Anniversary Celebrations, see: [http://www.ninr.nih.gov/NewsAndInformation/25years](http://www.ninr.nih.gov/NewsAndInformation/25years)

**$88 Million Awarded to Home Visiting Program**

In late July, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius announced the grant award of $88 million for evidenced-based home visiting programs that improve the well-being of children and their families. The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, established through the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, will enable nurses, social workers, and other professionals to meet the needs of at-risk families in their homes. The programs will “evaluate the families’ circumstances and connect families to the kinds of help that can make a real difference in a child’s health, development, and ability to learn - such as health care, developmental services for children, early education, parenting skills, child abuse prevention, and nutrition education or assistance,” said Secretary Sebelius.

The press release went on to say, “these investments will help states to create and support evidence-based home visiting programs that improve the well-being of children and families,” said HRSA Administrator Mary Wakefield. “States will be using these grants to design programs that best serve their residents, providing important help to at-risk families, while gathering more detailed information on which approaches work best to put young children on the path to a healthy life at an early age.”

The program, run by states and administered by HRSA, will be “formula based on the number of young children in families at or below 100% of the federal poverty level in the state as compared to the number of such children nationally.” For more information see: [www.hrsa.gov](http://www.hrsa.gov), [www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov).

**Last Call for Policy Luminary Award Nominations**

AACN created the Policy Luminary Award to recognize an outstanding nursing leader for his or her public policy achievements. The first recipient of the award was Dr. Mary Wakefield, Administrator of the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. Dr. Wakefield’s extensive career in nursing and health policy exemplifies the spirit of the AACN. AACN’s Government Affairs Committee is seeking nominations for this year’s award. **Nominations are due by 5pm ET on Monday, September 27, 2010.** Each nomination package should include two letters of recommendation from peers, the nominee’s CV, and a one-page biosketch. Nominations should be electronically submitted to Government Affairs Assistant Gene Throwe at gthrowe@aacn.nche.edu.
National Health Centers Week

On August 6, 2010, President Barack Obama released a proclamation announcing the establishment of a National Health Centers Week. In his statement he said, “My Administration has made significant investments in community health centers. Serving as an economic anchor in many low-income and economically struggling communities, community health centers are an integral source of local employment and economic growth. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has already provided unprecedented investments in the construction and renovation of community health centers so they can expand their staff and facilities, adopt health information technology systems, and meet their critical care needs.”

National Health Centers Week occurred the week of August 8-14. President Obama encouraged Americans to celebrate by visiting their local community health center and meeting the center’s providers.

For more information on the President’s proclamation see:


Dates Announced for the 2nd Annual Student Policy Summit

The second annual AACN Student Policy Summit is scheduled for March 20-22, 2011 in Washington, DC. Planning for this summit, which coincides with AACN’s 2011 Spring Annual Meeting, is currently underway. Last year’s summit was a rousing success! Though AACN projected that 75-100 students would attend the inaugural event, ultimately 135 students from across the nation registered for the summit. Baccalaureate and graduate students from 25 states and 51 schools of nursing took advantage of this unique opportunity to visit the nation’s capital and learn more about nursing’s role in health policy. According to the student evaluations, the “single best aspect” of the summit was attending Capitol Hill visits with their dean.

More information about the summit including registration and a preliminary agenda will be available on AACN’s website by late fall.

AACN Student Policy Attendees with Representative Lois Capps, RN (D-CA)