AACN and ANA Host Congressional Briefing on the 2008 National Sample Survey of RNs

On Wednesday, September 22, 2010, AACN and the American Nurses Association (ANA), in collaboration with the Senate Nursing Caucus, hosted the Caucus’ inaugural briefing featuring Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, FAAN, Administrator, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Dr. Wakefield presented the final results of the 2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses (NSSRN), which is conducted every four years to collect key demographic information about the US nursing workforce. Survey data include basic factors (i.e. age, race, education level, etc.) to more complex data points (i.e. intentions on staying in the nursing profession, job satisfaction, distribution of racial/ethnic groups) and how the factors interplay. The survey reveals vital information necessary to develop sound nursing workforce policy.

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR), co-chair of the Senate Nursing Caucus, began the event by introducing Dr. Wakefield and explaining the important role nurses play in the healthcare delivery system. The event, which was widely attended by Congressional staff, nursing leaders, and organizational representatives, is timely as Congress and the Administration work to address workforce shortages in the nursing profession. In a joint press release from AACN and ANA, AACN President Kathleen Potempa, PhD, RN, FAAN remarked, “We are pleased to be a part of this historic event that highlights the intersection of nursing education, practice, data, and policy. On behalf of our members, we look forward to continuing our work with the Senate Nursing Caucus, HRSA, ANA, and members of the nursing community to ensure America’s patients have access to quality nursing care.”

AACN was honored to be involved in these two landmark events for nursing workforce policy; the inaugural event of the Senate Nursing Caucus and the release of the 2008 NSSRN. The Senate Nursing Caucus was officially launched on March 25, 2010 by the founding chairs, Senator Merkley, Senator Mike Johanns (R-NE), Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), and Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME). Since that time, an additional nine Senators have joined the Caucus. This event marks a conscious and continued investment by the Senate to thoughtfully consider solutions to nursing workforce challenges. The Senate has very few caucuses, and AACN applauds the Senate co-chairs and members for recognizing nursing as a critical component of health policy. Additionally, the data from the NSSRN is used by national nursing organizations, schools of nursing, patient care settings, and other stakeholders to inform policy decisions, and AACN is pleased to have been a part of the data’s release. For more information on the NSSRN see: http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/rnsurvey/2008/. For more information about the Senate Nursing Caucus see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/SenNursingCaucus.htm.
AACN’s Government Affairs Committee Events at the 2010 Fall Meeting

AACN’s Government Affairs Committee (GAC) is pleased to host a number of exciting events at the 2010 Fall Semiannual Meeting.

Saturday, October 30, 2010, 6:00-7:00pm: State Grassroots Liaisons Business Meeting
Current and new State Grassroots Liaisons (SGLs) should plan on attending this session to discuss the program, AACN’s advocacy efforts, and the role of the grassroots network.

Sunday, October 31, 2010, 4:45-6:00pm: GAC Program Session
A Look at State Health Policy
Hear remarks on the development and implementation of healthcare reform in the states. Of particular interest to AACN members, the presentation will address the anticipated impact on nursing practice, education, and workforce.

Monday, November 1, 2010, 7:15-7:50am: Informal Breakfast Discussion
Preparing for Your Capitol Hill Visits: Advice from the SGLs and GAC
Join State Grassroots Liaisons, the Government Affairs Committee, and members of the AACN staff as they review and discuss talking points for AACN’s Capitol Hill Visits.

Monday, November 1, 2010, starting at 1:00pm: AACN Capitol Hill Visits
Help support AACN’s advocacy by scheduling visits with your House and Senate members of Congress TODAY! While members of Congress will be home in their districts due to the November election, their Congressional staff will be in Washington, DC. Now is the ideal time to build existing contacts with your members’ offices and cultivate new relationships. AACN will provide a bus service to and from the J.W. Marriot and Capitol. If you are interested in scheduling a visit but need advice, contact your SGL. To identify your SGL see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/LegislativeStrategies/StateGRPrg.htm.

AACN Congressional Reception
Due to members of Congress campaigning in their states for the November election, AACN has cancelled the Congressional reception traditionally held on Monday evening after our advocacy day. As you know, AACN has been honored to have House Representatives attend our past receptions. Given their absence, the decision was made to resume the Congressional receptions in the Spring. In lieu of the reception, AACN strongly encourages members to schedule visits with Congressional staff.

Reminder: For those members attending the AACN Fall Semiannual meeting, don’t forget to submit your absentee ballot!

AACN Celebrates NINR by Attending the NightinGala
AACN is honored to join with nurse researchers, colleagues, and stakeholders to honor the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR). The Friends of NINR (FNINR) will host its annual NightinGala on Wednesday, September 29, 2010 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. This year’s gala is expected to be particularly memorable as the National Institute of Nursing Research celebrates its 25th year. FNINR is expecting over 1,000 nurse researchers, nursing school deans, presidents of medical schools, faculty, senior management of health-related associations, as well as members of Congress and their healthcare staff. The keynote speaker of the evening is the honorable Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Awards to be granted include the Pathfinder Award, the
President’s Award, and the Ada Sue Hinshaw Research Grant, all of which bestow recognition among outstanding nurse researchers. For more information on the 2010 NightinGala, please visit [http://www.fninr.org/events.html](http://www.fninr.org/events.html).

**NINR’s Bringing Science to Life Scientific Symposium**

On September 30, 2010, NINR will commence its 25th Anniversary by hosting the “Bringing Science to Life Scientific Symposium.” The event will feature such esteemed keynote speakers as:

- Francis S. Collins, MD, PhD, NIH Director
- Alan I. Leshner, MD, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, American Association for the Advancement of Science and executive publisher of the journal, *Science*
- William Novelli, distinguished professor with the Georgetown University McDonough School of Business; former Chief Executive Officer of AARP
- Gillian Gill, PhD, author of *Nightingales: The Extraordinary Upbringing and Curious Life of Miss Florence Nightingale*, a biography about four members of Florence Nightingale's family

Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius will provide a video message to the attendees. The afternoon session will include scientific presentations by several NINR-supported researchers and a panel discussion. Scientific speakers include:

- Ann Cashion, PhD, RN, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, panel moderator
- David Dinges, PhD, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
- Susan G. Dorsey, PhD, RN, University of Maryland School of Nursing
- Jillian Inouye, PhD, ARPN, University of Hawaii - Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene
- Bernadette Melnyk, PhD, RN, Arizona State University College of Nursing and Health Innovation

The Scientific Symposium event begins the year long celebration and recognition of NINR’s 25th Anniversary. For more information contact: NINR Office of Science Policy and Public Liaison, 301-496-0207, e-mail: info@ninr.nih.gov.

**AACN Members Help Protect Public Health/Prevention Funding**

Between September 13 and 14, 2010, over 100 messages were sent by AACN deans, faculty, students, and stakeholders to their Senators requesting they protect the Prevention and Public Health Fund. This fund, which was established through the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, represents a dedicated stream of resources for preventive services, community-level prevention, and public health. However, the fund was in jeopardy when an amendment was offered to the *Small Business Jobs and Credit Act* on September 14, 2010 that would have reversed this investment in order to cover non-health costs incurred in the small business bill. This action would have virtually eliminated the Fund. In Fiscal Year 2010, the Prevention and Public Health Fund invested in programs promoting tobacco cessation services and obesity prevention programs targeted at nutrition and physical activity. Money from the fund was also used to support nursing education and workforce expansion. AACN is pleased to announce that this amendment was defeated by a vote of 46-52, due in part to our member’s advocacy.

**HHS Seeks Input on a National Health Care Quality Strategy**

According to a press release issued on September 9, 2010 by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), HHS is seeking public input in the development of a National Health Care Quality Strategy and Plan. The *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the Affordable Care Act)* calls on HHS to establish a
National Quality Strategy, including a comprehensive strategic plan and the identification of priorities to improve the delivery of healthcare services, patient health outcomes, and population health. The Affordable Care Act requires that the strategy be developed in a transparent and collaborative process and also calls for a parallel National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy scheduled for release in March of 2011. For more information see: http://www.hhs.gov/news/reports/quality/nhcqsap.html.

To provide feedback, we encourage you to go directly to the HHS.gov website. Alternatively, you may submit comments electronically to national-quality-strategy@hhs.gov. Written comments may also be submitted and should be addressed to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Attention: Nancy Wilson - Room 3216,540 Gaither Road Rockville, MD 20850 or faxed to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Attention: Nancy Wilson at (301) 427-1210. All comments should be received no later than 5 p.m. on October 15, 2010.

AHRQ’s Effective Health Care Program Web Conference

The Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ) will be hosting a web conference called Integrating Comparative Effectiveness Research into Everyday Practice on October 12, 2010 from 2:00 pm ET – 3:30 pm ET. AHRQ Director, Carolyn M. Clancy, MD, as well as other speakers, will highlight AHRQ’s existing comparative effectiveness research and ways that it can be used by clinicians for day-to-day decision-making in their practices. The following speakers will address these issues:

- **The Role of CER in Health Care Improvement**, Carolyn M. Clancy, MD, Director, AHRQ
- **AHRQ’s Existing CER Resources on Diabetes and Cardiac Conditions**, Jean R. Slutsky, PA, MSPH, Director of AHRQ's Center for Outcomes and Evidence

Healthcare providers of all practices are encouraged to participate. To learn more and register please go to: http://www.academyhealth.org/knowledgetransfer/EHCWebConference/.

Nursing Faculty and the Intergovernmental Personnel Act

In March of 2010, the US government's Office of Personnel Management (OPM) hosted a half-day meeting with the agencies who retain the majority of the federal nursing workforce. The attendees included representatives from the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The purpose of the meeting was to review the attending agencies' perceptions of the nursing and nurse faculty shortage and gauge their use of the Nursing Faculty and the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), a program that allows temporary assignment of personnel between the federal government and colleges and universities-- among other eligible organizations. This program is well-suited to providing relief to our nation's nurse faculty shortage by allowing some of the thousands of federally employed nurses temporary assignments as nurse faculty for up to six years of their federal career. The nurse retains his or her benefits and federal employee status, while salary costs can be shared by the agency and the university or entirely absorbed by one of the two entities. However, at the time of the March OPM Report, none of the participating agencies had nurses on IPA assignments to schools of nursing. Several barriers to participation in the IPA were identified, and OPM announced they would host subsequent forums on this topic and continue to improve the promotion of this underutilized program. For more information, see the complete OPM report at http://www.opm.gov/programs/ipa/nursing.pdf.