How Nurses Contribute to the Healthcare System

As integral members of the healthcare team, nurses serve in a wide variety of settings and collaborate with other professionals to improve the quality of America’s healthcare system. Registered Nurses (RNs) comprise the largest group of health professionals with approximately 3.1 million licensed providers.¹ They offer essential care to patients in a variety of settings, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, community centers, schools, workplaces, and patient homes.

RNs also receive graduate degrees that allow them to provide vital healthcare services as Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs)-including nurse practitioners (NPs), certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs)-nurse faculty, nurse researchers, nurse administrators, and public health nurses. Their contributions are linked directly to the availability, cost, and quality of healthcare services.

Demand for a Highly-Educated Nursing Workforce

As our nation’s healthcare system transforms and more services are provided outside the hospital walls, nurses must be educated for these opportunities, challenges, and increasing demand for health services. Though efforts over the last decade have helped to improve the supply of RNs, recruitment and retention of these nurses to underserved areas is of national priority. Meeting the need for nursing professionals with advanced education to serve in this capacity remains a challenge. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment of CRNAs, CNMs, and NPs is expected to grow 31% from 2012 to 2022.² A constant focus must be placed on education to ensure a stable workforce, particularly in geographic regions that will continue to experience nurse supply shortages in the future.

Nurses are involved in every aspect of health care. The present and looming demand for RNs and APRNs limits access to care.

How Title VIII is Making a Difference

For over 50 years, the Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]) have helped to meet the nation’s demand for nursing services. Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration, these programs address all aspects of nursing workforce demand, including education, practice, recruitment, and retention. The Title VIII programs bolster nursing education at all levels, from entry-level preparation through graduate study, and also provide support for institutions and nurse faculty.

Title VIII recipients are direct investments in our nation’s health. The programs are designed to address specific needs within the nursing workforce and America’s patient populations. Therefore, strong support for Title VIII reinforces our healthcare delivery system’s ability to provide timely access to cost-effective care in all communities.

Increasing Diversity in Nursing

Developing a more diverse nursing workforce is essential to reflect an increasingly diverse population. Specific to nursing education, the Institute of Medicine calls for strengthening the diversity of the nation’s nursing workforce. The report recommends a renewed focus on diversity in nursing education as the nation looks to enhancing the workforce to meet future care challenges.4

Jasmine Alexis
BSN Student
Duke University, North Carolina

Recipient of the Nursing Workforce Diversity Program

“The financial aid I received has helped me to achieve my educational goals because it has allowed me to attend school full-time and be able to focus on my degree. When I graduate, I plan to serve as an RN in a community hospital. My ultimate goal is to become a family nurse practitioner and work with underrepresented populations.”

Ethnic Minorities Represented Among Nursing Students

Baccalaureate and graduate nursing students show consistent diversity across all levels of education. Over 30% of students at each level represent minority populations.5

3 Data aggregated from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees, Fiscal Years 2008-2016.
Preparing More Nurse Faculty

Faculty vacancy has been repeatedly identified as a primary factor that prevents nursing schools from maximizing student enrollment. According to AACN’s Special Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions for Academic Year 2014-2015, nearly 74% of responding schools report that they are in need of full-time faculty members. The average vacancy rate among schools reporting full-time vacancies is 6.9%, or 1,236 full-time faculty positions left unfilled. Title VIII programs help increase the number of faculty to alleviate this gap.

Kaori Donohue
PhD Student
Oregon Health & Science University, Oregon

Recipient of the Nurse Faculty Loan Program

“The Nurse Faculty Loan Program is critical for continuing full-time study toward my PhD. I am preparing to become a nurse educator and researcher. I am the primary breadwinner of my family; for over three years the loss of the household income due to my drastically reduced work hours has left us little to save for retirement. This program will dismiss a significant amount of my loans while serving as a full-time faculty member, and will make a big difference in my family’s life in a positive way.”

Providing Access to Care in Rural and Underserved Areas

A persistent challenge facing America’s healthcare system is providing timely access to care in rural and underserved areas. Title VIII programs assist in the recruitment and retention of nurses in areas in need of healthcare providers, including primary and specialty care services. Last year, approximately half of the recipients of the Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship and Nurse Anesthetist Traineeship programs received clinical training in primary care sites, and over half received training in medically-underserved areas. For some of these regions, APRNs serve as the sole provider of certain services to the community.

Katie Deshotel
Master’s Student
Northwestern State University, Louisiana

Recipient of the Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship

“Title VIII funding alleviated the financial burden that was impacting my ability to complete my program as a nurse practitioner student. When I graduate, I will practice in my rural hometown. My long-term aspiration is to open my own practice.”

“Strengthening the nursing profession strengthens the entire industry, because nurses are at the heart of healthcare—no matter where their expertise lies.”

~Kathleen Sebelius, Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services


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**TOTAL** $137,196,352

Grantees partnered with 5,100 Clinical Training Sites

Advanced Nursing Education (ANE) Grants
Number of students supported in 2013-2014: **10,504**

AEN Grants help prepare our nation’s nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, nurse midwives, nurse anesthetists, nurse educators, administrators, public health nurses, and other nurses requiring a graduate degree.

46% in underserved areas
40% in primary care settings

Nursing Workforce Diversity
Number of students and aspiring students supported in 2013-2014: **16,997**

Nursing Workforce Diversity Grants recruit and retain students from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds to the nursing profession. The funds may be used for educational progression such as stipends for diploma or associate degree nurses to enter bridge or degree completion programs, scholarship or stipends for accelerated degree programs, pre-entry preparation, advanced education preparation, and retention activities.

Advanced Education Nursing Traineeships (AENT) and Nurse Anesthetist Traineeships (NAT)
Number of students supported in 2013-2014: **5,650**

AEN Traineeships assist graduate nursing students by providing full or partial reimbursement for the cost of tuition, books, and program fees. NAT Traineeships provide similar support for certified registered nurse anesthetist students.

5,650 Students Trained
40% from minority or disadvantaged backgrounds

Where Students Received Training
56% in medically underserved areas
48% in primary care settings

Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention Program
Number of students supported in 2013-2014: **9,448**

The Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention Program helps schools of nursing, academic health centers, nurse-managed health clinics, state and local governments, and healthcare facilities meet current challenges by strengthening the RN workforce.

45 students supported through the new Veterans’ Bachelor of Science in Nursing program

900 health professions students trained at Nurse-Managed Health Clinics (NMHCs)

94% of NMHCs located in medically underserved areas
54% served as primary care setting for the community
40% served veteran populations and their families

NURSE Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program

Number of students supported in 2013-2014: 1,446

The NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program repays up to 85% of nursing student loans in return for at least three years of practice in a Critical Shortage Facility or teaching in an accredited school of nursing. The NURSE Corps Scholarship Program provides funds for full-time nursing students who agree to serve in a Critical Shortage Facility or accredited school of nursing for two years upon graduation.

667 new loan repayment awards and 412 continuation awards

242 new scholarship awards and 13 continuation awards

Nurse Faculty Loan Program

Number of students supported in 2013-2014: 2,401

The Nurse Faculty Loan Program supports graduate students to become nurse faculty members through loan repayment. Students who receive these funds agree to serve as faculty for four years in a school of nursing in exchange for cancellation of up to 85% of their student loans.

17% from disadvantaged backgrounds

25% were from underrepresented minorities

Comprehensive Geriatric Education

Number of students and trainees supported in 2013-2014: 19,627

These grants support the education of RNs and health professionals who will provide direct care to elderly Americans and may be used to develop and disseminate geriatric curriculum, prepare faculty members, and provide continuing education. They may also be used for traineeships for individuals pursuing advanced education nursing degrees in geriatric nursing, long-term care, gero-psychiatric nursing, or other nursing areas that specialize in the care of elderly populations.

62% received training in medically underserved communities

74% received training in primary care settings

2015 Nursing Community Members

Thank you to the generous sponsors of this brochure whose organizations’ names are in bolded blue.

ACADEMY OF MEDICAL-SURGICAL NURSES
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AMBULATORY CARE NURSING
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF NURSING
AMERICAN ASSEMBLY FOR MEN IN NURSING
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF NURSING
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CRITICAL-CARE NURSES
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HEART FAILURE NURSES
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NEUROSCIENCE NURSES
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ASSESSMENT COORDINATION
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSES
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NURSE-MIDWIVES
AMERICAN NEPHROLOGY NURSES’ ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN ORGANIZATION OF NURSE EXECUTIVES
AMERICAN PEDIATRIC SURGICAL NURSES ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC NURSES ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PAIN MANAGEMENT NURSING
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PERIANESTHESIA NURSES
ASSOCIATION FOR RADIOLOGIC AND IMAGING NURSING
ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING EDUCATORS
ASSOCIATION OF NURSES IN AIDS CARE
ASSOCIATION OF PERIOPERATIVE REGISTERED NURSES
ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES
ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION NURSES
ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NURSE ANESTHETISTS
ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN’S HEALTH, OBSTETRIC AND NEONATAL NURSES
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
DERMATOLOGY NURSES’ ASSOCIATION
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NURSES ASSOCIATION
EMERGENCY NURSES ASSOCIATION
GERONTOLOGICAL ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES ASSOCIATION
HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE NURSES ASSOCIATION
INFUSION NURSES SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC NURSES
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF NURSES IN GENETICS
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF PSYCHIATRIC-MENTAL HEALTH NURSES
NATIONAL AMERICAN ARAB NURSES ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC NURSES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NEONATAL NURSES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NEONATAL NURSES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS IN WOMEN'S HEALTH
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PEDIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONERS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL NURSES
NATIONAL BLACK NURSES ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE BOARDS OF NURSING
NATIONAL FORUM OF STATE NURSING WORKFORCE CENTERS
NATIONAL GERONTOLOGICAL NURSING ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL NURSING CENTERS CONSORTIUM
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONER FACULTIES
NURSES ORGANIZATION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ONCOLOGY NURSING SOCIETY
ORGANIZATION FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING
PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGY NURSING SOCIETY
PREVENTIVE CARDIOVASCULAR NURSES ASSOCIATION
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SECTION, AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
SOCIETY OF UROLOGIC NURSES AND ASSOCIATES
THE QUAD COUNCIL OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING ORGANIZATIONS
WOUND, OSTOMY AND CONTINENCE NURSES SOCIETY

The Nursing Community is a coalition of 61 national professional nursing organizations that builds consensus and advocates on a wide spectrum of nursing and healthcare issues, including practice, education, and research. The Nursing Community is committed to improving the health and health care of our nation by collaborating to support the education and practice of Registered Nurses and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses. For more information about the Nursing Community or Title VIII programs, contact Suzanne Miyamoto at SMiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

Visit: www.thenursingcommunity.org

March 2015