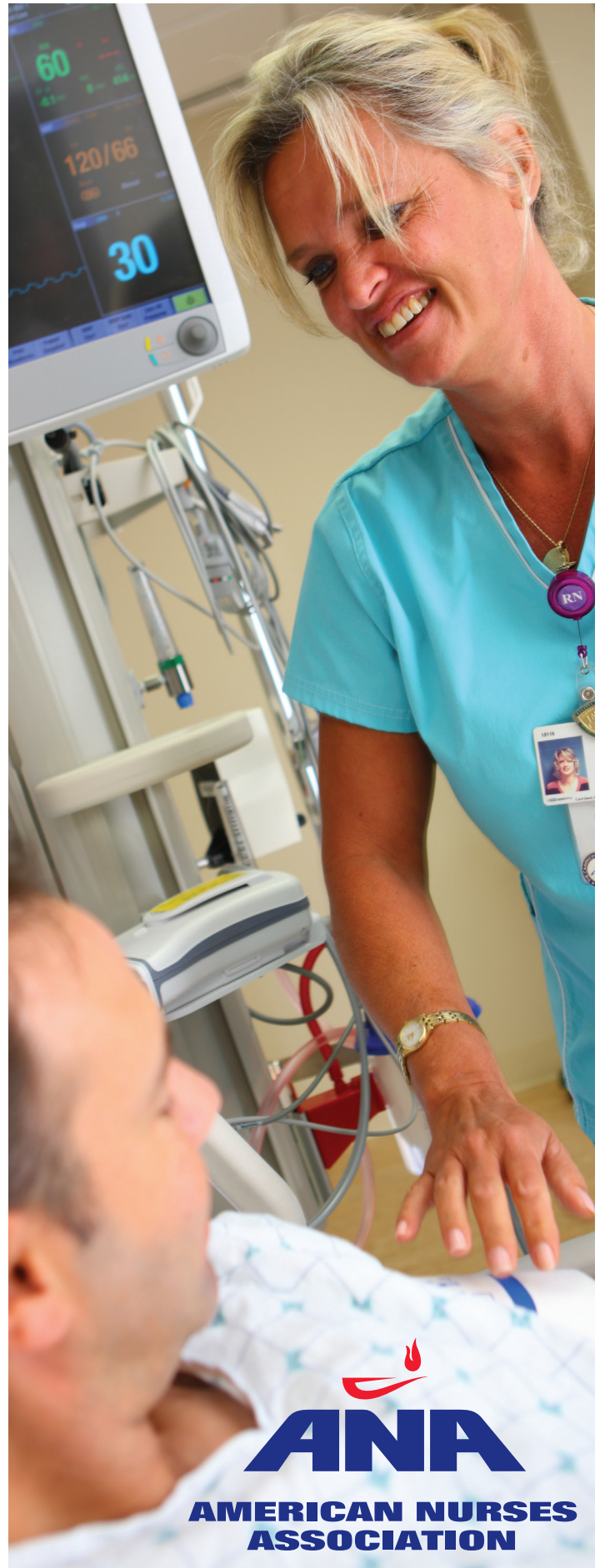


# Solutions to Advance Healthcare in Your State

- Registered Nurses (RNs) should practice to the full extent of their education and training; scope of practice barriers should be removed.
- Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other health care professionals, in redesigning health care in the United States.
- Better data collection and an improved information infrastructure are required for effective workforce planning and policy making.
- Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.

The October 2010 Institute of Medicine report – The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health — led by a committee of nationally renowned health care experts from nursing, medicine, and other disciplines resulted in a number of conclusions and recommendations which are highlighted here.



  
**ANA**  
**AMERICAN NURSES**  
**ASSOCIATION**

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## Advanced Practice Nurses

Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) have made significant contributions in meeting the nation's health care needs by improving access to healthcare services. APRNs include nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and clinical nurse specialist. Research conducted over decades demonstrates that APRNs provide high quality care.

There is no uniform approach to the regulation of APRNs across the states creating barriers for APRNs who may wish to move from state-to-state. Regulations in many states limit APRNs from practicing autonomously and decrease patient access to APRN care. The APRN Consensus Model was developed to address these problems. It includes a model to standardize the regulation of APRNs through licensure, accreditation, certification and education.

While APRNs in some states are able to practice and prescribe autonomously, the majority of states limit the ability of APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training. These restrictions include requirements for collaborative agreements with or supervision by a physician, prescribing limitations, and lack of third party reimbursement.

The 2010 Institute of Medicine report, The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health, recommended removing scope of practice barriers to allow APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training. The recommendations specifically called for reforming scope of practice regulations and requiring third-party payers that participate to provide direct reimbursement to APRNs who are practicing within their scope of practice under state law.

## Background

Nearly every health care encounter includes a registered nurse (RN).

RNs represent the largest segment of the health professions at 3.1 million in the U.S. Surveys tell us that nursing is the most trusted profession in America. They also tell us that Americans rank nurses above eight different health care providers in the United States for the quality of care they provide. Gallup survey of 1,500 opinion leaders\* said nurses should have more:

- Influence in reducing medical errors, increasing quality of care, promoting wellness
- Input and impact in planning, policy development and management



## Workforce Planning Solutions

**Better data collection and an improved information infrastructure are required for effective workforce planning and policy making.**

Support funding for research and collection of standardized health care workforce statistics.

## Background

Current research and workforce data collection is fragmented and is evidenced in failure to effectively plan for addressing the education needs and fluctuations in the health care labor force.

Planning for fundamental, wide-ranging changes in the education and deployment of the nursing workforce will demand comprehensive data on the entire health care workforce—the numbers and types of health professionals currently available and what will be needed in coming years.

With an improved infrastructure for collecting and analyzing data, systematic assessment and projection of workforce requirements by role, skill mix, region and demographics will inform future decisions about nursing education and practice.

## Education Solutions

**Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.**

**Specifically, increase the percentage of BSNs to 80 percent by 2020 and double of the number of nurses with a doctorate degree by 2020.**

Support efforts that result in a smooth transition between educational programs as well as recognition of non-traditional programs.

## Education Solutions

Support funding for scholarships and loan forgiveness programs.

Support legislation that amends the Nurse Practice Act, requiring RNs to attain a baccalaureate degree within ten years of licensure, grand-parenting currently licensed nurses and matriculated nursing students.

Many more approaches exist that are non legislative / regulatory.

## Background

There are multiple educational pathways that can lead to an entry-level nursing license, which is unique among the health professions.

The licensed practical nurse (LPN), licensed vocational nurse (LVN) diploma, and associate's (ADN) degree programs should smoothly transition students toward the bachelor's (BSN), master's, PhD and doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degrees.

Those higher degrees are key to supplying the advanced-practice nurses who will help overcome primary care shortages. Graduate degrees also are essential to increasing faculty ranks, thereby adding the necessary capacity to expand enrollment at all levels of nursing education.

Demands on nurses are growing as our health care delivery system grows more complex. This will require nurses to obtain an advanced education that expands their knowledge base and competencies.

Research supports this. Studies show that lower mortality rates, fewer medication errors, and positive outcomes are all linked to nurses prepared at the baccalaureate and graduate degree levels.

There's been an increase in the number of nurses pursuing advanced education, but the numbers are still too low. As a result, efforts to produce



adequate nursing faculty or advanced practice RNs to meet future demands will be seriously impeded – in fact, they already are.

A recent study released by the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence found that because of the shortage of nursing faculty, more than 52,000 qualified applicants were denied entry to nursing programs in 2010.

And the impact of this shortage on health care is profound. According to the same study, each nurse educator position left vacant could impact health care delivery for 3.6 million patients.

Over the next decade, more than half of current nursing faculty is expected to retire, along with as many as 500,000 experienced nurses from the clinical workforce.

For connection to state nurses associations, go to [nursingworld.org/FunctionalMenuCategories/AboutANA/WhoWeAre/CMA.aspx](http://nursingworld.org/FunctionalMenuCategories/AboutANA/WhoWeAre/CMA.aspx)