

**INDIANA STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM**  
**Amended, Meeting of the Members, September 2004**

*One purpose of the Indiana State Nurses Association (ISNA) is to influence public policy consonant with the goals of the membership. ISNA members at the annual Meeting of the Members and the ISNA Board of Directors establish goals and policies. These goals and policies serve as the foundation for a variety of program activities, including ISNA's legislative efforts.*

*This platform identifies the public policy goals and positions of the membership of ISNA. This platform also provides the direction for ISNA's public policy initiatives. ISNA prioritizes issues for action based on potential impact, availability of Association resources, and existence of coalition or alternative advocacy group efforts.*

**ACCESS TO QUALITY CARE**

To assure access to quality health care services for all people.

To assure access to nursing care services with emphasis on the role of nurses as qualified providers of health care services.

**ISNA Supports:**

The constant collection and analysis of health care manpower data.

Efforts to increase general public awareness of legislation and consequent services, including those of the professional nurse, toward the elimination of adult and child abuse.

Provision of care to all people in need, regardless of the illness or severity of that illness.

Access of residents of long-term care facilities to quality nursing care.

Nurse retention strategies.

Access to comprehensive reproductive health services.

Opposition to prosecution of health care providers and facilities under the criminal neglect statute instead of through state boards of licensing and regulation or, for facilities, the Indiana State Department of Health.

Restructuring of the organizational arrangements for delivery of nursing services in hospitals and long-term care facilities.

The expansion of development of alternative non-institutional health care services such as home and community-based nursing services.

Direct access by consumers to services of nurses.

Continued access by students to registered nurses in primary and secondary schools.

Regulation of all assistive personnel who are performing nursing tasks delegated by registered nurses by the Indiana State Board of Nursing.

Collaboration with appropriate nursing groups to clarify the appropriate and safe delegation of nursing care to assistive nursing personnel and the accountability of the

registered nurse for the nursing care provided.

Working with appropriate groups to minimize, simplify, and coordinate the various titles and categories of assistive nursing personnel.

Opposition of all efforts to create or allow institutional licensure, certification, or registration of any type of assistive personnel.

Quality emergency medical services and initiatives to provide consumers with access to defibrillation services.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR NURSES**

**ISNA Supports:**

Voluntary continuing education for nurses.

That individual nurses accept primary accountability and responsibility for their own continuing education.

That continuing education continue to be a cooperative effort between individual nurses, schools of nursing, providers of continuing education, and employers of professional nurses.

That, should the Indiana General Assembly determine that continuing education become mandatory for registered nurse relicensure, ISNA be proactive and work collaboratively with the General Assembly and the Indiana State Board of Nursing in determining the requirements for nursing continuing education.

That, as it is similarly stated in the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommendations of 2003, ISNA encourage the Chief Nursing Officers (CNOs) to actively seek to dedicate budgetary resources equal to a defined percentage of nursing payroll to support nursing staff in their ongoing acquisition and maintenance of knowledge and skills, and that the amount be at least equal to the average training budgets across all industries; and

That the individual nurse is ultimately responsible to maintain competence and to continue professional growth.

## **FINANCING OF HEALTH CARE**

To assure that government maintains an appropriate role in determining the nature of basic health care services and the quality of those services.

To assure that the federal, state, and local governments work to provide a stable source of funding to meet the public's health care needs, including recognition of and remuneration for services rendered by nurses.

### **ISNA Supports:**

Funding to support prevention, education, research, and management of care to address major health conditions affecting our citizens.

Direct third-party reimbursement for nurses.

Cost containment incentives in the health care delivery system that apply to all providers, all payers and vendors, and those which are based on continued review of appropriateness of health care services and which serve to eliminate significant waste or inefficiency.

Professional peer review of health care services with regard to the appropriateness and quality of services rendered by all health professionals.

## **FUNDING BASIC NEEDS**

To assure state policies and programs dealing with health and human services promote the general health and welfare.

### **ISNA Supports:**

The improvement of health standards and the availability of health services for all people, especially vulnerable populations.

Appropriations providing adequate housing, nutrition, and a safe environment.

Appropriations to programs promoting optimum growth and development of children, particularly programs to reduce infant mortality and child abuse.

State policies and programs that increase access to health services across the life span.

Appropriations to programs promoting safety, respect, and dignity to vulnerable adults to reduce adult neglect/abuse.

## **FUNDING NURSING EDUCATION/NURSING RESEARCH**

To promote public funding for nursing education to assure the delivery of and access to quality nursing care services to improve the nation's health.

To promote public funding for nursing research to maximize nursing's contributions to the promotion and maintenance of the nation's health; the delivery of quality,

cost-effective health care services; and the expansion of the scientific base of nursing practice.

### **ISNA Supports:**

Encouragement of qualified candidates for education at all levels of preparation in nursing through public funding of educational loans.

Innovative legislative initiatives to fund nursing education.

Funding for education programs that prepare appropriate numbers of registered nurses with required skills and competencies needed to meet the changing public need for cost-effective nursing care.

## **HEALTH HAZARDS/TOBACCO MONIES**

To assure that the federal and state governments develop and maintain standards that protect the public health.

### **ISNA Supports:**

A united effort against the health hazards of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Social, environmental, and labor legislation which promotes the health and well being of all persons in their work place.

That the tobacco monies should directly and indirectly be used only for the improved health of the citizens of Indiana and not for unrelated, albeit worthwhile, projects or programs.

Work with other organizations and State legislators to assure the monies are put into a foundation or trust dedicated for the use of funding health services for the improvement of the health of the citizens of Indiana rather than being deposited in the State's General Fund.

The foundation or trust should have ongoing representatives of nursing, health care providers, public health interests, the public, and public officials to assure the monies are used in accordance with the specific limitations and directions in the organizational documents.

Funding that may include smoking cessation and prevention education, local health improvement initiatives, health research, and with some direct funding for elders and uninsured to obtain medications to aid in smoking cessation and for the Children's Health Insurance Programs that are expansions of the program and which will permit access to federal matching monies.

The use of the tobacco settlement fund for the improvement of the health of the citizens of Indiana.

Collaboration with State agencies and other organizations to develop and implement a plan to provide information and education for disaster preparedness.

Encouraging ISNA members to participate in local organizations such as the American Red Cross and local emergency management agencies.

Use of the *ISNA Bulletin*, the ISNA website, and the ISNA list-serves to disseminate information and to describe the role of nurses in responding to disasters.

## **HIV/AIDS AND NURSES**

To assure that the rights, dignity, and safety of all concerned with HIV/AIDS are maintained.

### **ISNA Supports:**

Opposition to mandatory testing and disclosure of nurses' and clients' HIV status.

Voluntary, anonymous, and confidential testing, informed consent, and appropriate counseling.

Mandatory annual education related to universal precautions and infection control procedures for all personnel in all health care settings.

Continued education of the public regarding the fact that HIV/AIDS transmission occurs primarily through unsafe sexual activity where body fluids are exchanged and through the use of shared needles and syringes and that a minimal risk of transmission exists from nurses and other nursing personnel.

Notification of patients who have had body fluid exposure to someone who is HIV positive without identification of the exposure source.

Establishment of a support system for members/nurses who are HIV positive and are confronting personal and professional tragedies and challenges, including the assessment and review of their health status and practice, to support them in making appropriate treatment and practice decisions.

Presumptive compensability legislation for all nurses who experience exposure to blood borne pathogens in the work place.

Legislative mandates that prevent insurance companies from canceling policies and limiting accessibility to adequate insurance for individuals who test positive for HIV.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

To support the basic right of all people to equality under the law.

To bring about a health care system in which services are provided in a manner that recognizes, values, and accommodates the differences among people.

### **ISNA Supports:**

Opposition to routine serologic screening for health

care workers.

Equal rights for women.

Information sharing with consumers regarding alternative health care providers, options for diagnostic procedures, and health care costs.

Prohibition of corporal punishment as a means of discipline in public and private schools.

A person's advanced directive choices be respected by all health care providers.

## **LICENSING, NURSING, AND EDUCATION**

To assure the delivery of nursing care by duly qualified providers as a mechanism to protect the consumer as well as the integrity of the nursing profession.

### **ISNA supports:**

Individual professional licensure, as opposed to institutional licensure.

Clear delineation of responsibility when nursing services are delivered by unlicensed personnel.

Measures to assure minimum standards are met in the delivery of nursing care relative to the competency of the individual practitioner and relative to staffing.

Professional nurse licensure for graduates of baccalaureate programs with a major in nursing.

Retention of the legal title "Registered Nurse" for the baccalaureate prepared nurse, with grand-fathering of all currently licensed as registered nurses.

Establishment of the legal title "Associate Nurse" for the person licensed to practice technical nursing.

Active opposition to legislative or regulatory action that would reduce standards for nursing education in Indiana.

Legislative and regulatory action to insure affordable professional liability insurance for nurses in specialty practice and for all registered nurses.

Active opposition to legislative or regulatory action that would restrict nursing practice and active support for mechanisms which would recognize and expand nursing practice.

Legislative and regulatory action to insure availability of reliable information regarding trends related to availability of nurses in Indiana.

The Indiana State Board of Nursing as the approving body for nursing education programs.

The responsibility of the Indiana State Board of Nursing to regulate the practice of nursing.

The accreditation of all nursing education programs by nursing discipline specific accrediting agencies.

The title "birth attendant" for non-nurse midwives and the legislation must cover accepted practices, list training requirements, cover supervisory and referral issues, and have clear methods of disciplining and removal from an approved list of birth attendants.

Regulation of "birth attendants" by the Health Professions Bureau and the Indiana State Board of Nursing.

## **MANAGED CARE**

### **ISNA Supports legislation:**

Protecting the affordability, access, and choice of consumers enrolled in managed care plans.

Recognizing professional nurses as qualified providers of health care services.

Encouraging cooperation and collaboration of physicians, professional nurses, and other qualified health care professionals in the delivery of services across the continuum of care.

To include advanced practice nurses and CRNA's on managed care provider panels.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### **ISNA supports**

Competitive salaries for public health nurses.

Investment in information systems technology, training, and public health nursing education to strengthen the public health infrastructure.

Schools of nursing to include in their curriculum contemporary preparation for the professional public health nursing role.

An increase in the number of public health nurses serving in local health departments and other public health settings.

Certification of public health nurses.

## **WORKPLACE ISSUES**

To promote and protect the economic and general welfare of nurses.

### **ISNA Supports:**

The right of nurses to organize and bargain collectively.

Administrative agency enforcement of laws that protect the rights of nurses to be represented as a separate group of health care professionals.

Promotion of the professional and educational development of nurses and advancement of their welfare.

Pay equity.

Examination and analysis by nurses of their own work place grievance procedures, reassignment policies,

and reassignment practices in terms of ethical, legal, regulatory, and economic considerations.

Development of work place reassignment policies in a joint effort between nursing staff and nursing management.

Support legislative action to protect nurses who report unsafe, incompetent, or illegal practices from harassment or retaliation by employers, including, but not limited to, termination of employment.

Promote the use of the American Nurses Association's Principles for Nurse Staffing, Code of Ethics for Nurses, and Community Health Quality Indicators in health care institutions and agencies.

Promote the use of adjustable nurse/patients levels based on nurses assessment of patients' acuity.

Promote the magnet healthcare concept.

Advocate for regulatory guidelines that require health care institutions and agencies, with staff nurse involvement, to develop systems to evaluate the adequacy of health care personnel staffing within their organizations.

Oppose mandatory overtime except in the case of defined emergencies.

Advocate for involvement by staff nurses providing direct care in developing agency specific guidelines related to mandatory overtime.

Request that the Indiana State Board of Nursing and the Attorney General's office develop an official opinion that delineates the definition of patient abandonment.

Collect information that examines the extent of mandatory overtime as it affects Indiana nurses.

That ISNA initiate a process to evaluate whether the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommendation that restrictions be placed on the number of hours that nurses work is a recommendation that ISNA should support and take steps to implement in Indiana, and that a report be made to ISNA membership at the 2005 Meeting of the Members as to the outcomes of that evaluation.

That the Indiana State Nurses Association (ISNA) support initiatives in facilities to implement technologies, such as computerized bar coding systems, designed to minimize medication administration errors;

That ISNA encourage facilities and regulatory bodies to cultivate a culture of safety that investigates and addresses latent systemic sources of medication errors.

That schools of nursing and education departments within facilities continue to promote safe medication administration by ensuring that nurses are knowledgeable of and follow not only the five rights of medication administration but also know and follow correct procedures to assure right vital signs, right lab values and proper documentation for medication administration.