North Carolina Nurses Association Position Statement on Recruitment and Retention of Professional Nurses

This position statement does not imply endorsement of any piece of related legislation.

Issue:

The supply of professional nurses is not currently meeting the demand for nursing services throughout North Carolina and the shortage is expected to worsen in the future.

Background:

In 2000 a looming nursing shortage of Registered Nurses first began to be reported by hospitals (North Carolina Nurses Association, 2000). This shortage, if not corrected, will evolve into a statewide crisis by 2020 if measures are not taken to increase the nursing workforce (NC Center for Nursing, March 2003). The measures implemented to correct the shortage must increase the supply of nurses as well as retain those nurses who are currently active in the nursing workforce.

The demand for nursing services will also increase as the Baby Boomer Generation reaches retirement; this began in 2010 (North Carolina Center for Nursing, 2003a, North Carolina Nurses Association 2003). Although job opportunities overall are expected to be excellent, they may vary by employment and geographic setting (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). 581,500 new jobs are expected and employment of Registered Nurses is expected to grow by 22 percent from 2008 to 2018 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). A changing emphasis of care toward a more preventive approach will lead to an increase of jobs in outpatient based facilities versus the traditional hospital settings (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). A new focus on prevention and expanded health care coverage will require more advanced training and preparation to help meet the needs of North Carolina.

Nurses are entering the profession feeling less than adequately prepared for the scope of practice they are encountering (North Carolina Center for Nursing, 2002). Agencies employing nurses are staffed at levels that often cannot offer the long-term orientation these new nurses desire. Experienced nurses who have been through multiple nursing shortages are not always encouraging to those seeking information about nursing as a career option (Trossman, 2002).

Position

Therefore, it is the position of the North Carolina Nurses Association that:

- The attraction of nursing as a career choice is directly related to nurses spending time mentoring and educating youth about the profession;
- Healthy workplaces will positively impact the supply of nurses available to meet the health care needs of today’s consumer;
- Employers of nurses must be supportive of creating a positive nursing climate in order to stabilize the nursing workforce;
• Employers of nurses must be supportive of developing transition programs for the orientation of new nurses;
• Professional nurses must be accountable for educating employers to the benefits of professional practice models and the utilization of nursing resources; and
• Professional nurses must be accountable for actively promoting a positive workplace that promotes professional practice and therefore the best care delivery.

References


Adopted: 05/01/87 NCNA Board of Directors
Revised : 05/16/91 Cabinet on Practice; NCNA Board of Directors
Revised: 11/01/93 Cabinet on Practice; NCNA Board of Directors
Revised: 02/09/01 Commission on Standards and Professional Practice; NCNA Board of Directors
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Revised: 04/29/2011: Professional Practice Advocacy Coalition; Commission on Standards and Professional Practice; NCNA Board of Directors