



**Testimony of the Nursing Community**  
**Prepared for the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies**

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Health Resources and Services Administration**

**National Institutes of Health**

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The Nursing Community is a coalition comprised of 61 national professional nursing associations that builds consensus and advocates on a wide spectrum of healthcare issues surrounding education, research, and practice. These organizations are committed to promoting America's health through the advancement of the nursing profession. Collectively, the Nursing Community represents over one million Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs-including certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), nurse practitioners (NPs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), and certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs)), nurse executives, nursing students, faculty, and researchers.

For FY 2016, our organizations respectfully request \$244 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Nursing Workforce Development programs (authorized under Title VIII of the *Public Health Service Act* [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]) and \$150 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), one of the centers and institutes within the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

**Nurses are Essential to Ensuring Access to High-Quality Care**

As integral members of the healthcare team, nurses collaborate with other professions and disciplines to improve the quality of America's healthcare system. RNs comprise the largest group of health professionals with approximately over three million licensed providers in the country. The reach of their care is vast: they offer essential patient care in a variety of settings, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, community centers, state and local health departments, schools, workplaces, and patient homes.

Factors including an aging nursing workforce, an aging Baby Boomer population, and growth in newly-insured individuals are driving the demand for nursing services. Additionally, as our nation's healthcare system transforms and more services are provided outside of hospital

walls, nurses must be educated for these challenges and opportunities. Therefore, the recruitment and retention of RNs and APRNs to underserved areas are a national priority. Moreover, increasing the number of nursing professionals with advanced education to serve in this capacity is of critical importance.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects that employment of CRNAs, CNMs, and NPs is expected to grow 31% between 2012 and 2022.<sup>1</sup> A constant focus must be placed on education to ensure a stable workforce, particularly in geographic regions that will continue to experience health provider shortages in the coming years. A significant investment must be made in the education of new nurses to provide the nation with the services it demands.

### **Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs: Ensuring a Pipeline of Highly-Educated Nurses to Serve Across the Nation**

For over 50 years, the Nursing Workforce Development programs, authorized under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, have helped to build the supply and distribution of qualified nurses to meet our nation's healthcare needs. Title VIII programs bolster nursing education at all levels, from entry-level preparation through graduate study, and provide support for institutions that educate nurses for practice in rural and medically underserved communities. Today, the Title VIII programs are essential to ensure the demand for nursing care is met.

Title VIII programs target specific aspects of America's nursing workforce and patient populations that require federal support in order to ensure efficient and effective delivery of healthcare services. For example, in academic year 2013-2014, the Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention (NEPQR) program supported 9,448 students. Among them, 45 were recipients of the innovative NEPQR Veterans' Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, which assists America's servicemen and women in pursuit of a nursing career. In addition, 900 health professions students received clinical training at NEPQR-supported Nurse-Managed Health Clinics, of which 94% were located in medically underserved areas; 54% served as primary care settings for the community, and 40% of which served veteran populations and their families.<sup>2</sup>

As noted, the BLS projects a high need for APRNs due to increasing patient care demands. The Advanced Nursing Education (ANE) grants program supported 10,504 students in academic year 2013-2014. ANE grants help prepare NPs, CNSs, CNMs, CRNAs, nurse educators, administrators, public health nurses, and other nurses requiring a graduate degree. The settings in which these students were educated reflect the national effort to immerse providers into delivery settings where they are most needed. During this same year, ANE grantees partnered with 5,100 clinical training sites, and 46% were located in underserved areas and 40% were in primary care settings. Students are afforded the opportunity to serve the unique needs of these

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014). Occupational Outlook Handbook. *Registered Nurses*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015). Health Resources and Services Administration Fiscal year 2016 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees. Retrieved from: <http://hrsa.gov/about/budget/budgetjustification2016.pdf>.

communities, thus provided care for regions of our nation that struggle to recruit and retain highly-educated clinicians. Federal dollars allocated to Title VIII programs are a lifeline to the nursing profession that yields a high return on investment for communities across the country.

***The Nursing Community respectfully requests \$244 million for the Nursing Workforce Development programs in FY 2016.***

### **National Institute of Nursing Research: Foundation for Evidence-Based Care**

The care that RNs and APRNs provide must be rooted in evidence. As one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at the NIH, NINR funds research that lays the groundwork for evidence-based nursing practice. NINR examines ways to improve care models to deliver safe, high-quality, and cost-effective health services to the nation. Our country must look toward the prevention aspect of health care as the vehicle for saving our system from further financial burden, and the work of NINR embraces this endeavor through research related to care management of patients during illness and recovery, reduction of risks for disease and disability, promotion of healthy lifestyles, enhancement of quality of life for those with chronic illness, and care for individuals at the end of life. NINR addresses these challenges through its Strategic Plan, which includes the following key themes:

- Symptom science to improve personalized health strategies for individuals living with chronic illness and pain;
- Wellness to promote health and prevent illness across health conditions, settings, the lifespan, and in minority and underserved populations;
- Patient self-management to improve quality of life while reducing the burden for caregivers and the health care system; and
- End-of-life and palliative care science to improve symptom management, coordination, and informed decision-making for patients, families, and healthcare professionals.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, NINR recognizes the need for improving global health and promotes research to reduce communicable diseases such as HIV, and improve public health and wellness such as maternal-newborn care. Moreover, NINR allots a generous portion of its budget towards training new nursing scientists, thus helping to sustain the longevity and success of nursing research. Training programs at NINR develop future nurse researchers, many of whom also serve as faculty in our nation's nursing schools.

***The Nursing Community respectfully requests \$150 million for the NINR in FY 2016.*** The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research requests at least \$32 billion for NIH in 2016, and the request level of \$150 million for NINR denotes the same percentage increase for NIH applied to NINR.

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<sup>3</sup> National Institutes of Health. National Institute of Nursing Research. *Implementing NINR's Strategic Plan: Key Themes*. Retrieved from: [http://www.ninr.nih.gov/aboutninr/keythemes#.VRVhGWZ\\_SSU](http://www.ninr.nih.gov/aboutninr/keythemes#.VRVhGWZ_SSU).

## **Members of the Nursing Community Submitting this Testimony**

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses  
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 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 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 Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Dermatology Nurses' Association  
Developmental Disabilities Nurses Association  
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
Infusion Nurses Society  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses  
National American Arab Nurses Association  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of Neonatal Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
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