The Future of Nursing and You!


**Recommendation 1:** Remove scope of practice barriers

**Why It Matters:** This is not just about advance practice nurses (nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, midwives). Practicing to the full extent of your education and licensure affects your ability to improve health care quality and access for your patients. It affects your ability to work effectively with other healthcare providers and how all nurses are perceived within the health care provider spectrum.

**What You Can Do -** Know what your scope of practice is! Work with your nurse manager and chief nurse executive to identify barriers to your practice and increase your voice and responsibility within your system. Communicate issues with the NM Board of Nursing, the NM Nurses Association, or other nursing organizations.

**Recommendation 2:** Expand opportunities for nurses to lead and diffuse collaborative improvement efforts

**Why It Matters:** Nurses are on the front line in patient care; we know what is working and where improvements need to be made. We need to work together at all levels of nursing and health care to develop communication and collaboration networks to create effective models to improve the care environment. We need to take a leadership role to ensure that the best patient outcomes are possible.

**What You Can Do -** Talk with your managers and chief nurse executive about opportunities for collaboration within your organization. Look for opportunities to work with other providers to develop new ways of providing care. Get involved in developing research projects for practice improvement. Get involved in shared governance and other opportunities to affect policy and procedure within your area.

**Recommendation 3:** Implement nurse residency programs

**Why It Matters -** Residencies increase retention and expand opportunities for nurses at all levels of experience and training, not just new graduates. Such opportunities for further education increase the skills and knowledge for all involved by offering preceptor opportunities for experienced nurses and learning opportunities for others.

**What You Can Do –** If you have a residency program at your facility, get involved. Even if you don’t want to be a preceptor, there are other ways to be involved in a residency program. If you don’t have a residency program, talk with your managers and chief nurse executive about bringing one to your facility. The NM Center for Nursing Excellence can assist in getting the Rural Nurse Residency started. Being a preceptor or other leadership roles develops a whole new knowledge and skills set. Identify your own goals and desires around further education.

**Recommendation 4:** Increase the proportion of nurses with a BSN to 80% by 2020.

**Why It Matters -** It’s not about skill and experience- or whether one degree is better than another. It’s about a continuously changing healthcare environment that will require different skill sets than nurses have today. We develop those skill sets through continuing our formal education. Advance practice nurses can, and will, have a significant impact on health care access. We need educators to mold the nurses of tomorrow. We need nurses to lead innovation at all levels – from nursing units to the nation’s capitol.
What You Can Do - Examine your own needs, priorities and goals. Where would you like your nursing career to go? Look at what needs to happen for you to get there, and how that might happen. Talk with your manager and other colleagues about what is possible. Get involved in NM Nursing Education Consortium and shape the future of nursing education; make your voice heard.

Recommendation 5: Double the number of nurses with a doctorate by 2020

Why It Matters: A continuation of the above discussion – there is a need for more nurses in education, research, and policy. What would it take for you to get there?

What You Can Do – Same as above. What is your dream? There are ways to make it come true.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that nurse engage in lifelong learning.

Why It Matters - Population demographics, care needs, health policies, care concerns- all are constantly changing. New research and evidence based practice are regularly shifting standards of practice. To be at the top of our “game” we need to be up on the latest information - it leads to better patient care and outcomes!

What You Can Do - Do it!! Find what interests you and explore all the possible ways to engage in that field. Consider getting certified in your area of interest, join professional organizations, go to conferences when you can, do courses online. And take it to the next step – share what you learned with your colleagues!

Recommendation 7: Prepare nurses to lead change and advance health

Why It Matters - What we have to offer matters to the health of everyone. We have a unique and valuable perspective, based on a wealth of knowledge and experience, to which not enough voice is being given.

What You Can Do - Get involved- the NM Board of Nursing, NM Nurses Association, other nursing associations. Participate in your facility’s committees, shared governance, and other groups. Make your thoughts and needs known and ask for help in developing your ideas and realizing your goals. Are there nurses on your facility’s board of directors? On the community’s school board or city council? Do nurses attend these meetings to bring up or support issues related to health? Remember, you have a respected voice!

Recommendation 8: Build data collection and analysis infrastructure.

Why It Matters - Very simply- without reliable data we cannot effectively identify and address issues such as nursing shortages, nursing education and nursing demand. On a larger scale, data helps identify pressing health care concerns in an area. What is often needed is information to drive decisions – data can provide sound information.

What You Can Do - Support initiatives on data collection. Complete surveys; answer all the questions on your licensure renewal form. If you have a strong interest in data, talk to Pat Boyle at NMCNE about ways to get involved in our statewide efforts in this area.