

Introduction: The Tennessee Nurses Association (TNA) is the professional association representing over 115,000 Tennessee registered nurses. This position paper outlines the basic philosophy of the TNA's Membership Assembly relative to health care policy, which may be addressed by the Tennessee General Assembly and the U.S. Congress.

Mission: To improve health and health care for all Tennesseans and residents of the state, advance nurse leaders, and the practice of nursing as essential to improvement efforts and transformational change and serve as the voice for professional nurses.

The American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics outlines foundational provisions that frame TNA's initiatives and actions.

Vision: TNA supports a transformed and modern health care delivery system that ensures that all Tennesseans and residents of the State have access to equitable and affordable essential services no matter where they live or when they are needed. The transformed modern system envisioned by TNA is patient-centered, where primary care and prevention are priorities, promotes inter-professional collaboration and care coordination, emphasizes values, and has expanded use of information technology to promote efficiency and effectiveness in improving patient outcomes for all Tennesseans.

Goals: TNA is supportive of initiatives that improve health and health care and advance the following goals:

Optimal health system performance, including:

- Improved patient care experiences; and
- Improved population health; and
- Expanded opportunities for technology such as telehealth; and
- Reduced per capita cost for health care.

Access to high-quality, affordable and acceptable care for all Tennesseans and residents of the state, including:

- Supporting the expansion of Medicaid in Tennessee; and
- Provision of a standardized package of essential health care services provided and financed by public and private plans with protection against catastrophic costs and impoverishment; and
- Expanding primary care capacity by allowing RNs to practice to the full extent of their license by diagnosing, providing chronic care management, care coordination, and preventive care in primary care settings; and
- Enhanced access to efficient, cost-effective, high-quality, equitable, and comprehensive healthcare services by allowing APRNs to practice to the full extent to which their education and training prepare them by removing the economic barriers and burden of collaborative agreements and allowing for full prescriptive authority; and
- Allow all APRNs with appropriate training to prescribe buprenorphine to increase access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) to combat the state's opioid crisis regardless of the medical setting;

Full practice authority and enhanced participation in the delivery of care and policymaking for all professional nurses, including:

- Support for the Tennessee Board of Nursing as the sole regulatory authority over nursing education and practice; and
- Adoption of the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education (2008); and
- Elimination of financial, regulatory, organizational, and institutional barriers to the practice of professional nursing; and
- Participation of registered nurses on all local, state, and national health care advisory, policymaking, and governing boards, committees, and task forces; and
- Inclusion of APRNs as licensed independent providers (LIPs) in hospital licensure rules, health plans, and health care facilities.

Assuring an adequate, competent and diverse nursing workforce to meet current and projected health care demands, including:

- Improved data collection and information infrastructure to inform policymaking, planning, and evaluation; and
- Promotion of higher levels of education and training through seamless academic progression, inter-professional education of health professionals, and lifelong learning; and
- Funding for nursing students and faculty, including loan forgiveness programs; and
- Support for nurse safety in the patient care environment, staffing effectiveness plans, whistleblower protection, and bans on mandatory overtime; and
- Protecting that nurse practice acts describe entry level qualifications such as education, practice standards, and code of conduct for continued privilege to practice nursing.

Protecting and advancing the nursing profession:

- Working with the Tennessee State Legislature and Local Governments to modernize their regulations, laws, ordinances and policies to include provider neutral language; and
- Continue to work with partners and stakeholders to prevent workplace violence and discrimination.