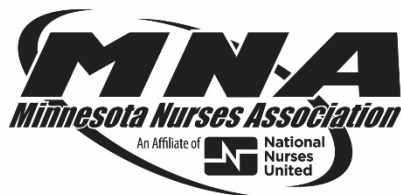


2024 MNA Legislative Platform (no changes were made in 2024)



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MINNESOTA NURSES ASSOCIATION 2023 MAIN MOTION

MNA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Since 1905, Minnesota Nurses Association members have advocated for their patients and their profession. This advocacy takes place not only at the bedside and in our workplaces but also in political forums including city halls, state regulatory boards, the Minnesota Legislature, and the U.S. Congress. Too often, employers and other powerful interests dominate the political discussion. Nursing -- considered the most trusted profession in the U.S. -- must have its voice heard as well.

According to MNA's bylaws, our purpose as a union is to:

- Advance the professional, economic, and general well-being of nurses.
- Promote the health and well-being of the public.

The Legislative Platform provides MNA members and policy makers an overview of the issues that matter most to our nurses. It reflects the values of our nurses as represented by more than 100 years of MNA House of Delegates resolutions. It is a living document, updated yearly by the elected members of the House of Delegates.

The current MNA Legislative Platform is divided into four key areas:

1. Nursing Practice
2. Healthcare Reform
3. Labor / Collective Bargaining
4. Social Justice and Health Equity

Each area has guiding principles derived from more than 100 years of MNA House of Delegates resolutions.

The goal of the MNA Legislative Platform is to provide a window into the Minnesota Nurses Association's legislative agenda and to serve as a guide for future ideas and advocacy efforts that will continue to move nursing forward in Minnesota.

AREA ONE: NURSING PRACTICE

Nurses are invaluable, irreplaceable members of healthcare delivery, regardless of where care is provided. We maintain nurses have a responsibility as patient advocates, as well as responsibility to self, that includes advocating for workplace safety and the necessary resources to provide the best possible healthcare. As nurses, we know that in order to take exceptional care of our patients, we must care for ourselves as well!

Scope of Practice

We will oppose all efforts to diminish the role of the professionally-licensed Registered Nurse. We support and recognize the role of the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) within the healthcare system. We support Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) and advocate for their ability to work to the top of their scope. Finally, we will oppose any attempts by employers to *inappropriately* utilize nursing and healthcare employee skill mixes in diverse practice settings.

Safe Staffing

MNA advocates for maximum Registered Nurse-to-patient assignment limits. National research studies continue to demonstrate the effectiveness and importance of Registered Nurse-to-patient ratios in ensuring both patient safety and the highest quality nursing care. These limits must be based on patient acuity and nursing intensity, and it is ultimately within the Registered Nurse's professional judgement to determine their own ability to accept or reject additional patient assignments. Because of their strong role in protecting the public, MNA seeks a stronger partnership with the Minnesota Board of Nursing (MNBON) in ensuring that hospitals are appropriately and safely staffed by nurses and nurses are not punished for negative outcomes that are a result of unsafe staffing.

The Minnesota Board of Nursing (MNBON) and RN Licensure

The Minnesota Nurses Association supports the MNBON as a regulatory agency that upholds nursing education and practice standards in their regulatory and accountability role of protecting the public. We support the Minnesota Board of Nursing's mission of ensuring that nurses are practicing with the necessary knowledge and skills appropriate to their title and role. We also seek and support a stronger partnership with the MNBON so that we are working in a more collaborative manner to address these issues.

Nurse Privacy and Rehabilitation

MNA works to protect Registered Nurses' privacy, including our right to privacy in rehabilitation. We support the State of Minnesota's Health Professionals Services Program (HPSP) and its efforts to monitor healthcare professionals while they work towards recovery, maintaining patient safety during the process. We will work to create a disciplinary record expungement process that allows nurses living in recovery an opportunity to make their disciplinary records private. We also support ensuring that nurses are treated no differently than other healthcare professionals with respect to issues of substance abuse and its impact on healthcare professionals' ability to perform their assigned duties.

Nurse Discipline

MNA advocates the Minnesota Board of Nursing include at least three board members in making discipline review panel recommendations before they are sent to the full board for final action. We will work to ensure that every discipline review panel includes two Registered Nurse Board of Nursing members at every disciplinary meeting.

Expungement of Nursing Records

MNA supports legislation or rulemaking that would require the Board of Nursing to develop administrative rules or guidelines for expunging certain actions from nurses' public records after a given period of time has passed without further violation.

National Nurse Licensure Compact

MNA vigorously opposes the Enhanced National Nurse Licensure Compact, as revised in 2017, and as advocated for by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). This national

licensure would compromise Minnesota's high-quality nursing standards by issuing an open invitation to any nurse practicing anywhere in the country to come to Minnesota, while ignoring our specific academic and clinical requirements.

Telehealth and Telenursing

MNA supports education and research into the role of nurses in telehealth and its potential applications in safe and effective nursing care. MNA supports the concept of telehealth to increase access to healthcare, but not at the cost of decreasing the standards of nursing practice. MNA believes that nurses must be involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of telehealth technology. Lastly, MNA believes that telehealth ought to be advanced in a manner that addresses healthcare disparities.

Health and Safety

MNA works to inform all RNs and healthcare workers about their right to demand and also works to demand protections from hazardous drugs and other substances, biohazards, infectious disease, and to advocate for ergonomics in the workplace. We will maintain and uphold safe patient handling requirements and work to nationalize those standards.

Workplace Violence Prevention

Nurses experience workplace violence in the form of physical and verbal assault at a higher rate than most other professions. This comes from patients, visitors, and unwelcome guests. Too often nurses are told that no serious action can be taken against the aggressor and many hospitals refuse to act to increase security or staffing. Additionally, there is a significant lack of data to measure the rate of these incidents in Minnesota's hospitals. MNA will work to protect ourselves and our patients from all violence and intimidation in the workplace and to train workers to intervene when witnessing such behavior. MNA supports legislation that protects patients and nurses from all violence and intimidation in the workplace. This legislation should also train workers to intervene when witnessing such behavior.

Nursing Education

MNA wants to increase accessibility to and affordability of nursing education, as well as support efforts to recruit and retain top-notch nursing faculty. We support all efforts by nurses to continue education, whether in person or online, according to their professional goals, and we will work to remove barriers that inhibit such education. MNA supports efforts for the legislature to appropriate money to state agencies to create and administer loan forgiveness programs for registered nurses to recruit and retain nurses in all geographic regions. We also support funding for nursing faculty to continue their education so that we have an adequate supply of highly qualified educators. We encourage additional funding for nursing education programs and the funding of state and federal studies regarding nursing workforce trends.

Recruitment and Retention of Nurses

MNA supports policies and programs that incentivize individuals to become nurses as well as those that retain them in the field of nursing. MNA also supports policies that recognize and hold employers accountable for poor retention as well as policies that compel these employers to do more to retain nurses.

Public Health

We support the role of Registered Nurses as Care Coordinators and promote the role nursing plays in facilitating recovery, creating wellness, and promoting health in communities.

Long-Term Care and Assisted Living

Registered Nurses are essential in both traditional and non-traditional healthcare settings, including, but not limited to: in-home care, transitional care, assisted living, long-term care, and group home care. We promote the use of practice standards and coordination and continuity of care by requiring RNs to be part of the interdisciplinary team that develops personal support plans and care plans.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

MNA nurses work to remove barriers, standardize credentialing, and encourage the appropriate utilization of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses as essential partners on the healthcare team.

Nurse Emeritus Status

MNA supports allowing the Board of Nursing to grant emeritus status to nurses in good standing who wish to retain their licenses and titles but voluntarily give up their right to practice.

Mental Health

MNA recognizes the escalating moral injuries that nurses face as they are expected to do more with less. MNA advocates for policies that support nurses experiencing mental health injuries and PTSD while practicing. We support policies that hold employers to recognize and be accountable for all injuries suffered in the workplace.

AREA TWO: HEALTHCARE REFORM

The Minnesota Nurses Association will work to achieve a single payer delivery system which provides healthcare, including mental health, reproductive, and preventative care, as a right for all Minnesotans regardless of ability to pay. This ensures affordability and accessibility to all while preserving the right of healthcare for all patients and the health and wellness of all Minnesotans.

Single Payer

MNA believes that a single payer healthcare delivery system is the only way to ensure that all patients, regardless of income and health status, will receive appropriate care. We will work towards a single payer system by building pillars of the single payer system, which include ensuring that all Minnesota residents are covered for all necessary care, including dental, vision and hearing, mental health, chemical dependency treatment, prescription drugs, medical equipment and supplies, long-term care, and home care. This plan must allow patients to choose their providers and set premiums based on ability to pay. A single payer system should also include payment reform and removing HMOs and private insurance companies from public programs so that the state contracts directly with providers for services.

HMO Transparency

MNA nurses will continue to demand the state's current managed care system is transparent and accountable and that healthcare reimbursement is based on health outcomes, not surveys. This demand for transparency includes transparency in the pricing of healthcare services.

Observation Status

MNA supports efforts to prevent misuse and abuse of observation status as a cost savings means by healthcare facilities and providers. Additionally, we support all efforts to ensure that patients are aware of the financial impact of being on observation status.

Accountable Care Organizations

We support the goal of Accountable Care Organizations: delivering high-quality care that puts the interest of the patient first. However, we believe that the Registered Nurse is central to delivering high-quality care and we will monitor implementation of ACOs to make sure that the fundamental role of the Registered Nurse is recognized and protected. We will also monitor ACO's to make sure patient care is actually improved, any recorded savings is real, and evidence clearly demonstrates their value related to financial incentives that improve patient outcomes, not financial disincentives that increase health disparities.

Medical Debt Collection

We will work to support data privacy and vehemently oppose patients being subjected to debt collection while receiving healthcare or spending time in the hospital as a patient. Additionally, we oppose healthcare delivery system ownership of and partnership with debt collection agencies.

Public Programs

We will support efforts to protect and fully fund existing public programs that promote health, wellness, and quality care for all. This includes working to reinstate the provider tax, an important source of revenue for Minnesota public healthcare programs.

Corporatization of Healthcare

MNA opposes any corporatization of the healthcare delivery system that puts profits before patients. MNA also opposes increased hospital consolidation, which leads to necessary services being stripped from rural communities and shuttled to larger facilities for the purposes of profit. Further, MNA supports holding nonprofit healthcare organizations accountable to their mission and legislative purpose of providing a community benefit defined as evidence-based public health outcomes to which hospital leadership is held directly accountable to the appropriate state and federal regulators and offices, including uncompensated care. MNA supports the Public Notice Initiative for disclosing plans for hospital closures to communities impacted along with other protections for maintaining access to existing healthcare facilities and services. MNA supports legislation for increased transparency and better public interest protections when it comes to the stewardship of public assets within the state healthcare delivery system, including strengthened regulations around the transfer of assets during mergers or other healthcare transactions.

Prescription Drugs

MNA believes that no one should have trouble affording their lives — and the cost of prescription drugs is a major factor in that. MNA supports legislation that would increase accessibility to and affordability of prescription drugs. MNA also believes that it will take a broad variety of legislation to start to fix this problem: licensing Pharmacy Benefit Management companies; drug price transparency, programs that provide access to prescription drugs, including insulin, in emergency situations; state-wide drug price setting commissions, Attorney General authority to prosecute excess price hikes, and a tax on excess profits earned by pharmaceutical companies.

Pandemic Response

As nurses are at the frontline of this pandemic and take on incredible amounts of stress and risk, MNA backs legislation that supports nurses as they protect and guide society through public health crises. In accordance with nursing best practice, any pandemic response should be proactive and preventative, and based on the precautionary principle, which asserts we should not wait for scientific proof of harm before taking action to protect people's health. This includes policy that creates safe working conditions, especially proper staff levels and personal

protective equipment that is immediately available when needed; safeguards for families, including on-site showers and hospital issued scrubs; and protections if nurses get ill or injured at work, including paid leaves, workers comp, and mental health services for nurses who contract viruses or suffer a moral injury at work. Nurses need complete transparency from employers, so they understand the conditions in which they are working. This work also includes protecting the Governor's public health emergency powers.

AREA THREE: LABOR / COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The Minnesota Nurses Association believes in the workers' right to organize a union and collectively bargain a contract. We will oppose any and all efforts to silence employees' collective voices in their workplace, including the anti-union effort to make Minnesota a "right to work" state.

Strike Breakers

We oppose any efforts by employers to hire workers who replace union workers in a work stoppage. This includes resisting attempts to make Minnesota a Nurse Licensure Compact state, which would allow nurses to more easily be brought in to replace striking nurses.

Erosion of Collective Bargaining Rights

We oppose all efforts by the legislature and employers to restrict or interfere with the right to bargain collectively.

Workers' Compensation Policy Reform

While nursing is a rewarding profession, it can also be dangerous. Therefore, we continue to advocate for a robust workers' compensation insurance program so that when workers get hurt or sick, they can receive medical treatment and payment for lost time and disability. This includes expanding workers' compensation to cover any injuries or illnesses that occur as a result of employer mandates. We also support the expansion of presumptive eligibility for nurses suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Employee Voice in the Workplace

MNA supports the rights of all workers to organize a union. Workers organizing a union should be free from employer intimidation, coercion, threats, and lies. We believe in stronger legal protections for workers who want to organize.

AREA FOUR: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HEALTH EQUITY

The Minnesota Nurses Association, in our ongoing pursuit of social justice, calls for jobs at living wages, guaranteed healthcare, equal access to quality education, a secure retirement, good housing and protection from hunger, a safe and clean environment, and a just taxation system where corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share. MNA's support for social justice issues stems from their intimate understanding that access to benefits like those listed above lead to better health outcomes for all. These benefits also help promote health equity for all.

Human Rights and Equal Rights

We work to guarantee human rights and equal rights for all, regardless of age, color, creed or religion, disability, genetic information, gender, gender identity or expression, health status, lifestyle, national origin, race, relationships, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or familial status.

Responsible Police Reform

We support responsible policing reforms including appropriating law enforcement funding for improving social safety nets in marginalized communities, reform around excessive force, corruption, forfeiture abuse, militarization and search and seizure. This includes polices that advocate for greater collaboration with and inclusion of community stakeholders; support for ending police-only responses to mental health crisis calls, hiring and inclusion of appropriate professionals in responding to and mitigating emergent situations, improved training, policies, and practices to reduce the use of force; the end of no knock warrants; stronger mechanisms for transparency and accountability, such as strengthening independent civilian review boards with disciplinary authority, the establishment of an independent investigatory and prosecutorial body for police critical incidents, end prosecution for reporting police misconduct; transparency; access to body worn camera footage in police critical incidents within 48 hours; reforming of arbitration structures in police misconduct cases that make it harder for police to evade discipline; the end to the statute of limitations for lawsuits for wrongful deaths caused by police; end of qualified immunity for police misconduct cases; and accountability in law enforcement's use of civil asset forfeiture laws and funds.

Main Street Contract

We endorse the Main Street Contract for the American People, which calls for jobs at living wages, guaranteed healthcare, equal access to quality education, a secure retirement, good housing and protection from hunger, a safe and clean environment, and a just taxation system where corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.

Just Taxation

We support policies that work to raise revenue fairly and progressively. We believe in the development of a just taxation system. We also support a Financial Transaction Tax, also known as the Robin Hood Tax, which will establish a small fee on each Wall Street trade of stocks, credit default swaps, derivatives, or other financial transactions as a means to achieve our goals for social justice, health equity, and the Contract for Main Street. We oppose constitutionally dedicating portions of the General Fund budget that would tie the Legislature's hands and prevent it from directing these funds where they might be needed most.

Protecting the Environment

We support the elimination of any and all environmental health hazards and believe we all have a responsibility to protect our environment.

Affordable Housing

We work for affordable housing and reject the idea that eviction will help with financial rehabilitation. We support funding for emergency shelters and healthcare for the homeless.

Immigration Reform

America was built on the idea that no matter who you are or where you come from, if you work hard, you can build a life for yourself and your family. We need immigration reform that turns productive taxpaying immigrants into American citizens. MNA believes that all persons, regardless of national origin or immigration status, are entitled to access to healthcare. We also believe that all individuals living in our country are healthier and more productive citizens when they have the same rights, including access to healthcare and the ability to fully participate in a community. Any policy that violates a person's right to remain in and contribute to our communities damages the freedom we cherish.

Child Care

We work to support the health, wellness, and education of children by increasing access to affordable child care, healthcare, and early childhood education. In addition, we support community-based family educational programs (e.g., Early Childhood Family Education).

Child Safety

MNA supports efforts to promote child safety and well-being. MNA will support efforts to eliminate sexual exploitation of children.

Chemical Dependency

We believe that all citizens should be given the opportunity and resources to conquer addiction. We support efforts to increase funding for chemical dependency treatment and enact public policy changes to help further the goals of reducing chemical dependency for all populations including neonates.

Mental Health

MNA will work to assure the provision of a full range of mental health services (i.e., prevention, early intervention, and treatment) for people of all ages and their families in a variety of settings, from independent living to regional treatment centers, according to the specific needs of the client and respecting the client's potential for growth and change. This includes promoting equitable public reimbursement for services provided to clients as well as continued and expanded reimbursement in the private sector. In particular, MNA will work to ensure full funding of children's mental health services as well as support nursing's creativity in designating new approaches to promote access to mental healthcare.

Safe and Sick Time

Access to earned safe and sick time promotes safe and healthy work environments by reducing the spread of illness and workplace injuries, reduces healthcare costs, and supports children and families by helping workers to fulfill their caregiving responsibilities. We believe that all employees, regardless of income or employment level, should be entitled to earned safe and sick time.

Minimum Wage

MNA will work to increase the minimum wage to at least \$15 an hour. Raising the minimum wage will help lift many individuals out of poverty. When minimum wage workers get a raise, they often spend those new wages on basic necessities, goods, and services. Raising the wage can also help address racial and economic inequities.

Paid Family Leave

Nearly everyone needs paid family or medical leave at some point in their lives, whether it's to care for a new child, an aging parent, or themselves. MNA believes that individuals should be able to work *and* care for themselves and their families, and that a paid family and medical leave insurance program is a fair, common-sense solution that would let them do both. We advocate for a state-administered program where everyone contributes – both employees and employers – and everyone benefits – workers, families, businesses, and our economy.

Gun Violence Prevention

MNA supports comprehensive legislation that would address the solution to gun violence in its many forms. This includes legislation requiring background checks on all gun sales, no matter how purchased. This also includes legislation adopting Gun Violence Protective Orders that allow family and law enforcement to petition a civil court for an order that removes guns from a high-

risk situation through due process and not based merely on psychological diagnosis. As a means to reduce gun violence, MNA also supports addressing the availability and funding of mental health and substance abuse treatment so that all individuals who are in need of help have sufficient access to these services.

Child Marriage

MNA supports prohibiting marriage of children under 18 in any circumstance. In Minnesota, the minimum age of marriage is 18. Most child marriages are between young women/girls and older men. Girls who enter/are forced into marriage often experience high rates of physical and sexual abuse, while at the same time having limited rights as they are considered minors.

Equal Rights Amendment

MNA supports legislation that would ensure that all people in Minnesota are treated equally under the law. The Minnesota Human Rights Act currently incorporates prohibitions on discrimination based on sex and gender identity (as a component of “sexual orientation”) in employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit transactions, and business. If this proposed amendment passed, it would supplement those statutory protections with a state constitutional guarantee of gender equality and include all aspects of state law.

Vote by Mail

MNA supports free and fair elections in Minnesota by ensuring every registered Minnesota voter is mailed an absentee ballot application, including pre-paid postage for return. Because of the unknown long-term impact of the coronavirus or other disease outbreaks, or anything that might require physical distancing, and because democracy is a core principle of the labor movement, MNA believes that Minnesotans must not be forced to choose between exercising our right to vote and putting ourselves, our families, and communities at risk.

Rank Choice Voting

MNA supports election reform legislation that will strengthen our democracy through education and advocacy with Rank Choice Voting. MNA believes allowing voters to rank their choices is good for democracy and allows candidates to lead with ideas rather than political party.

Student Loan Forgiveness

MNA recognizes the predatory student lending practices of both the private and public sector that disenfranchises future learners based on race, class, and social status. MNA supports changes in policy and law that make earning an education more equal and equitable so all workers can financially prosper.

Women’s Rights to Reproductive Justice

MNA supports legislation that would ensure caring for the health of our communities including supporting women’s rights to reproductive justice and healthcare access. MNA will support state legislation that codifies, expands, and protects women’s reproductive healthcare.

Human Rights of All Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People

MNA will oppose all state and federal legislative efforts that impair the human rights of transgender people, including those that limit transgender people’s access to gender-affirming healthcare, school activities, employment, and public facilities.

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