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MINNESOTA NURSES ASSOCIATION MAIN MOTION

MNA Legislative Platform

For more than 100 years, Minnesota nurses have advocated for their patients and their profession inside the halls of the State Capitol. Our Legislative Platform provides legislators and political candidates with an overview of the issues that are most important to nurses. Our goals have not changed after more than a century of advocacy in the political arena. As nurses, we want to:

- create and maintain autonomy as patient advocates.
- guide nursing goals in health care reform.
- deliver safe, quality care while maintaining workers' rights.
- ensure a safe work environment.
- express advocacy for social justice issues.

We use our legislative platform to both educate *and* activate – it provides a quick reference point when nurses from all across Minnesota are needed to speak out against any legislation or regulatory action which could become a threat to our nursing profession, patient safety, and nursing activism.

As the most trusted profession in the United States, nurses have an important and influential position in the eyes of legislators and regulators. Over the past 100 years, countless MNA nurses have become involved in our advocacy efforts for precisely that reason – to create the change that we want to see!

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

1. Nursing Practice
2. Health Care Reform
3. Labor / Collective Bargaining
4. The Main Street Contract

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 health care 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 health care. As nurses, we know that in order to take exceptional care of our patients, we must care for ourselves as well!

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 health care system. Finally, we will oppose any attempts by employers to *inappropriately* utilize nursing and health care employee skill mixes in diverse practice settings.

The Minnesota Board of Nursing (MNBON)

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.

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 judgment to determine his or her own ability to accept or reject additional patient assignments.

National Nurse Licensure Compact

MNA vigorously opposes the National Nurse Licensure Compact 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 defining nurses' roles in telehealth and telenursing and will work toward breaking down barriers or perceived barriers in promoting new areas of health care delivery.

Health and Safety

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

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 rehabilitate health care professionals while maintaining patient safety. We will work to create a disciplinary record expungement process that allows nurses living in recovery an opportunity to make their disciplinary records private.

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. We encourage additional funding for nursing education programs and the funding of state and federal studies regarding nursing workforce trends.

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 health care 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 health care team.

AREA TWO: HEALTH CARE REFORM

The Minnesota Nurses Association will work to achieve a single payer delivery system which provides health care, 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 health care for all patients and the health and wellness of all Minnesotans.

HMO Transparency

MNA nurses will continue to demand the state's current managed care system is transparent and accountable and that health care reimbursement is based on health outcomes, not surveys.

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.

Medical Debt Collection

We will work to support data privacy and vehemently oppose patients being subjected to debt collection while receiving medical treatment or spending time in the hospital as a patient.

Public Programs

We will support efforts to protect and fully fund existing public programs that promote health, wellness, and quality care for all.

Corporatization of Health Care

MNA opposes any corporatization of the health care delivery system that puts profits before patients. Further, MNA supports holding nonprofit health care organizations accountable to their mission and defined legislative purpose of providing a community benefit to the public that includes uncompensated care.

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.

Erosion of Collective Bargaining Rights

We oppose all efforts by the legislature and employers to mandate terms and conditions of employment.

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, they can receive medical treatment and payment for lost time and disability. This includes expanding workers' compensation to cover any injuries that occur as a result of employer mandates.

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: MAIN STREET CONTRACT

The Minnesota Nurses Association, in our ongoing pursuit of social justice, endorses 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. MNA also supports the Financial Transaction 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 the Contract for Main Street.

Human Rights and Equal Rights

We work to guarantee human rights and equal rights for all Minnesotans.

Just Taxation

We support policies that work to raise revenue fairly and progressively. We believe a financial transaction tax should be passed on a federal level and that the state of Minnesota should develop a just taxation system.

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 health care for the homeless.

Immigration Reform

All persons, regardless of national origin or immigration status, are entitled to medical treatment. We reject immigration reform that formally or informally criminalizes the treatment of patients.

Child Care

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

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.

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 health care.

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 health care 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.

Submitted by the MNA Commission on Governmental Affairs
Endorsed by the MNA Board of Directors and the E and GW Commission
Adopted by the MNA House of Delegates October 15, 2012
Adopted by the MNA House of Delegates, October 13, 2014
Endorsed by the MNA Board of Directors, September 16, 2015
Adopted by the MNA House of Delegates, October 6, 2015