

Center to Champion Nursing in America

The Center to Champion Nursing in America—a joint initiative of AARP, the AARP Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation—is committed to addressing the growing nursing and nursing faculty shortage that threatens access to health care and quality of care across the nation.

The Center is made possible by a \$10 million grant to the AARP Foundation from RWJF and dedicated funding from AARP.

With nearly 3 million registered nurses in the United States, nursing is the largest health profession. However, the nation has an estimated 118,000 currently unfilled nursing positions in hospital settings alone. Causes of this shortfall include increased demand brought on by the aging of our population, an inadequate number of nursing faculty and a lagging response by government.

Without aggressive efforts, by 2020 the nurse workforce will be as many as one million short of what's needed to provide Americans quality health care.

A consumer-driven, national force for change, the Center seeks to ensure that this country has the nurses it needs to care for all of us, now and in the future. The Center will focus its efforts on two main priorities: the education and retention of nurses.

ADDRESSING THE NURSING SHORTAGE

Specifically, the Center will address the nursing shortage by:

- Seeking funding at the state and national level to support expanded nursing education programs and to prepare more nursing faculty.
- Working with nursing leaders, education organizations, health care organizations, business leaders, and policymakers to devise a comprehensive strategy for bringing more nursing faculty into the pipeline and use the powerful voice of consumers to advocate for the resources to solve the nursing faculty shortage.
- Boosting nurse job satisfaction and retention by seeking ways to increase the involvement of nurses in decision making about care delivery and management. This will include empowering nurses by creating more prominent roles for nursing leaders, such as on the governing boards of hospitals and other health care institutions to provide critically needed perspective on improving the safety and quality of care.
- Promoting innovative strategies for retaining older nurses in the workforce, in roles that are satisfying and that honor their wisdom.

- Seeking regulatory changes and resources related to nurse residencies as a proven solution for reducing turnover among newly licensed nurses.

WORKING FOR CHANGE

The Center will use multiple strategies to create positive change. These include:

- **Building coalitions:** The Center will spearhead the development of multi-disciplinary health care, business and consumer coalitions at both the state and national level. These coalitions will explore ideas for addressing the nursing shortage, educate and advocate for effective programs and policies.
- **Developing a clearinghouse:** The Center will gather the information and research that can help drive action and develop a web-based clearinghouse of information for public reference.
- **Supporting state and grassroots efforts:** The Center will build public education and advocacy initiatives at AARP state offices nationwide and will provide advocacy training, communications support and assistance to stakeholders to help them communicate more effectively with policymakers and leaders in the private sector.

CALLING FOR ACTION

There is no more critical time than now for this message to be heard. With the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and AARP's own resources, this new public education and advocacy center will frame and highlight key issues—and present solutions for the nursing shortage that affects all Americans.