Welcome to 2016! I hope your holidays were enjoyable and relaxing. I know that for some of us the holidays were challenging. Parts of our state experienced extreme cold and others are now dealing with flooding. I extend warm thoughts of strength for those of you who may have been and are still being affected.

Just as some of us have faced challenges in coping with our extreme weather conditions, the nursing profession is also facing many challenges. Technological advances have created the potential to obtain a wealth of information that assists us in providing better care to our patients, but also requires us to be willing to learn new processes. Technology has become an integral component of patient care. It is incumbent for us, as nurses, to be involved in the development and implementation of this new technology. In our own state, we are facing the challenge of increasing access to health care by eliminating the requirement for a formal collaborative agreement between advanced practice nurses and physicians. It is also crucial that the nursing profession continue to nurture and develop its leaders. We have to be willing to mentor our colleagues, share ideas, and strive for implementing full practice authority. You are all aware of the focus that MNA has placed on this issue and the legislation that has been introduced over the past several years. This year, we are joined by a cross-section of nursing organizations working in unison for passage of this critical legislation.

If you’re like me, resolutions for the New Year stem from a need for self-improvement. I would like to ask you to make a resolution that does not involve becoming a member of a gym. Rather, I hope you will join with MNA to continue to ensure that the nursing profession’s voice is loud, present, and heard in today’s ever-evolving health care discussions.

For resolutions to be successful, they should be specific and attainable. MNA is resolved to promote, advocate, and lobby for the nursing profession in Mississippi. MNA is honored to be the Voice of Nursing in Mississippi. The nursing profession is one of the most trusted and respected professions - together we can make an impact! Together we can address challenges! Together we can shape the future of health care in Mississippi!

Welcome New MNA Board of Directors

Debra (Debbie) Allen of Greenville, MS is the newly elected President of the Mississippi Nurses’ Association. Debbie serves as a faculty member for the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing at Delta State University, as well as Delta State’s SNA Advisor. Through years of involvement with MNA, Debbie brings a unique understanding of the necessity of membership, policy positions, and programs for the continued development of our vital organization.

Tonya Moore of Brandon, MS has been appointed by the Board to serve as Vice President of the Mississippi Nurses’ Association. Prior to her appointment as Vice President, Tonya served as Secretary of the Board. Tonya is Administrator for Community Health Services at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, and has a track record of success in creating and expanding programs to achieve organizational goals.

Sandra (Sandi) Arnold of Hattiesburg, MS has been appointed by the Board to serve as Secretary of the Mississippi Nurses’ Association. Prior to her appointment, Sandi served as Director of the Council on Nursing Practice. Sandi is the Director of Clinical Education at Hattiesburg Clinic. She brings to the Board a wealth of experience, and a strong passion for improving the nursing practice.
### Gulf Coast Mental Health Center

Gulf Coast Mental Health Center has immediate openings for full-time and PRN nurses in our Crisis Stabilization Unit. Two years' experience is required, preferably with the SMI population. For more information or to complete an application, visit [www.gcmhc.com](http://www.gcmhc.com).

### Mississippi Nurses Foundation

Mississippi Nurses Foundation offers various courses and events for nurses. For more information, visit [www.msnursesfoundation.com](http://www.msnursesfoundation.com).

### Mississippi Center for Nursing

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### MNA District Presidents

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Executive Director’s Column

Get ready for another exciting year with MNA! With the Mississippi Legislature in session, we are honored to continue our tradition of hosting a Lobby Day and Legislative Nursing Summit. MNA’s Lobby Day was held on January 27th with nurses from throughout the state gathering at the Capitol. We appreciate the many Senators and Representatives who welcomed us and took time from their hectic schedules to discuss issues impacting the nursing profession.

MNA’s Legislative Nursing Summit, renowned for providing a unique experience for registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses, and nursing students to learn more about the importance of the nursing profession being engaged in health policy and leadership, was held on February 9th at the Jackson Convention Complex. The Summit began with an inspirational rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner” sung by the talented performers of the Bailey Magnet Choir, directed by Martha Stoulig. We were honored to be joined by Governor Phil Bryant who provided encouraging words and expressed support of the nursing profession. Attendees were engaged by charismatic Keynote Speaker, Dr. Samuel Jones whose presentation “The Power to Make a Difference” resonated with the attendees. Dr. Jones’ presentation encouraged audience participation in his thought provoking discussion of the importance of individuals recognizing and embracing opportunities to improve their profession, interpersonal relationships, and their overall outlook on life. Representative Becky Currie, a registered nurse and advocate for the nursing profession, provided attendees a view from the front-line of politics and an update on the issues facing the Legislature this year. MNA Political Action Committee (PAC) Chair, Gayle Harrell, discussed the significance of the PAC and championed a call to action for all attendees to assist in increasing the PAC’s funds. The luncheon presentation by Dr. Johnnieue Wijewardane, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC focused on one of the most important aspects of the nursing profession - leadership. Nurses must be leaders at all levels of nursing from entry level to doctoral preparation for the nursing profession to stay at the forefront of health policy. Led by Dr. Kate Fouquier, student attendees presented their perspective of the Lobby Day experience. The students confirmed the importance of exposing registered nurses to the political process early in one’s nursing career. I was honored to provide an overview of MNA’s activities relative to expanding stakeholder relationships and discuss the many bills being followed by MNA to ensure that the Voice of the Nursing Profession remains strong. A new addition to the Summit was a Voter Registration Booth coordinated by MNA Vice President, Dr. Tonya Moore. Nursing students were provided the necessary forms for voter registration with instructions for submitting forms to the appropriate County Circuit Clerk. Thank you to the many attendees, volunteers, and exhibitors who made the Legislative Nursing Summit a success!

In addition to Lobby Day and the Legislative Nursing Summit, MNA held its second annual Legislative Reception at the Fairview Inn in Jackson. The Legislative Reception provided an opportunity for members to talk directly with representatives and senators. MNA extends its sincere appreciation to the senators, representatives, community leaders, and members who attended. “Meeting your needs where you live and work” continues to be our focus. MNA is working diligently to host events throughout the state. Our APRN Conference will be held in Meridian at the MSU Riley Center. MNA extends our appreciation to our many friends and colleagues in the Meridian area for their support! You may recognize some of the individuals you see on our “Welcome to My Meridian” video clips! Don’t miss this chance to meet your colleagues and take part in this premier event in Meridian. In addition, we are honored to be co-hosting a leadership and quality series at North Sunflower Medical Center in Ruleville. Numerous events are scheduled for this year - don’t miss a one! Check our website and Facebook frequently to see the latest offerings!

Teresa Malone, Executive Director

MNA 2016 Spring Conference
April 21-23

Nursing Excellence - Leadership, Education, Innovation

For more information and to apply online, visit the DCH website at www.dchsystem.com

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Mississippi Nurses Foundation

The Mississippi Nurses Association congratulates the following participants in the first MNF Nurses Leadership Institute:
- Alice Austin, MSN, BSN
- Holmes Community College, Assistant Director
- Lucas Barnes, MS RN, BLS
- Forrest Health, Patient Care Manager
- Mollie Cieglo, MSN, BSN
- Forrest General, Patient Care Manager
- Latisha Houze-Reed, MSN, BSN
- SEMRHI, Nurse Practitioner
- Julie Priscoe, RN
- MS Baptist Health Systems, NICU Peds Nurse Manager
- Leigh Ann Puckett, MSN, RN
- MS University for Women, Online Instructor
- Wendy Tate, RN
- MS Home Care (LHC Group), Director of Nursing/Administrator
- Megan Hastings, RN, BSN
- North MS Medical Center, Nurse Manager
- Wendy Tracey, BSN, ADN
- North MS Medical Center, Nurse Manager
- Laura Shank, RN, MSN, CEN
- Forrest General, Director of Education
- Crystal Blair, RN
- University of MS Medical Center, Staff Nurse
- Neurology, Neurosurgery
- Elizabeth Stewart, RN
- MS Home Care, Director of Nurses

The first session was held on January 12 at the Mississippi Center for Nursing in Madison, MS. A special thanks goes to Rebecca Edwards RN, MSN - Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer, at Greenwood Leflore Hospital, for providing participants with information on “Manager Competency Assessments.” Also, we extend our appreciation to Johnnie Sue Wijewardane, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC – Associate Professor, Chair, Department of Graduate Nursing, Mississippi University for Women, for providing participants an introduction to leadership based on the book titled “Creating the Future of Nursing.”

This hands-on leadership series provides an opportunity to work together and enhance their leadership skills and knowledge. MNF is proud to host this innovative program to enhance their leadership skills and knowledge. Attendees an opportunity to work together and promote professional nursing and better health in Mississippi. In particular, the funds raised will be used to support nurses throughout the state with scholarships, grants and continuing education events.

The Mississippi Nurses Foundation announces deadline for $1,000 School of Nursing Scholarship. The Mississippi Nurses Foundation is proud to offer every School of Nursing in Mississippi a $1,000 scholarship made possible by the Nurses Car Tag Program - Nurses Touch Lives. The students will be selected by the School of Nursing Leadership based on criteria set forth by the Mississippi Nurses Foundation Scholarship Committee. Please contact your school of Nursing for student forms and additional information.

The deadline is March 18, 2016.

Mississippi Nurses Foundation announces deadline for $6,000 Car Tag Stipends. The Mississippi Nurses Foundation will award twelve stipends, made possible by the Nurses Car Tag Program - Nurses Touch Lives. The stipends will be awarded to nursing students enrolled in an accredited Associate, Baccalaureate, Masters or Doctoral Nursing Program in Mississippi.

Deadline for application is June 17, 2016. Stipends will be awarded by July 15, 2016.

Mississippi Nurses Foundation announces deadline for “up to” $2,000 Research Award. Applicant must be a member of MNA, enrolled in master’s or doctoral graduate program in Mississippi, or a clinician, educator or administrator working in a health care facility in Mississippi.

Deadline for application is July 17, 2016. Award date is August 15, 2016.

For application information and forms, please visit www.msnursesfoundation.com or contact: MS Nurses Foundation 31 Woodgreen Place Madison, MS 39110 601-898-0850 Email: foundation@msnurses.org

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#NursesShare-YourStethoscopes in 2015 became a popular social media tool to tweet information about what nurses do every day. Today at the Capitol, nurses are advocating for our profession! MNA supports nurses by our presence at the Capitol, and with our Lobbyist and CEO, Teresa Malone. Teresa is well known around the Capitol. Legislators know that nurses are an active voice as our population numbers approximately 48,700 RNs and advanced practice registered nurses in Mississippi. Registered Nurses, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, and Student Nurses converged at the Capitol to interact with legislators and discuss issues of importance in the nursing profession. We were delighted to be joined by the Mississippi Council of Deans and Directors of Schools of Nursing, and the Mississippi School Nurse Association. We would also like to extend our appreciation to the many schools of nursing that encouraged their student nurses to attend. Attendees met with legislators and were honored to be recognized in the House Chamber at the request of Representative Becky Currie, R.N.

Wearing stethoscopes and proud to represent the nursing profession, experienced nurses, new nurses, and nursing students – no matter how many years of experience attendees had, all considered Lobby Day a rewarding experience. We were privileged to meet with numerous legislators and discuss the legislation we are supporting. We want Mississippi to be the next state to implement full practice authority by removing the formal collaborative agreement that is currently required between advanced practice registered nurses and physicians. APRNs had the opportunity to discuss with legislators the importance of Mississippi joining with other states in adopting full practice authority. Information was also disseminated to encourage legislative support for the removal of the current limit on the number of school nurses eligible for a salary supplement upon acquiring a certificate from the National Board for Certification of School Nurses.

We extend our deepest appreciation to the many legislators who took time to join us in the Rotunda, schedule meetings with us, and welcome us to the Capitol. Lobby Day is an exciting event. We enjoy interacting with legislators at the Capitol, but we also need to be active and vocal year-round regarding those issues that impact our patients and profession. Join MNA and let your voice support the nursing profession in our state!

Let’s be a presence at the Capitol with our unified Voice & Make A Difference! MNA needs you to join and support your MNA professional organization! Membership application can be found at www.msnurses.org.

Tonya Harbison, RN, MSN, MNA Health Affairs Board Director

2016 Lobby Day at the Capitol

22nd Annual Legislative Nursing Summit

Welcome Mississippi Nurses Awareness
Welcome to the new 2016 MASN Board Members!

Cheryl Jackson Cooper, BA, MS, MBA, of Ocean Springs, MS Marketing & Communications Consultant – CC Cooper Communications. Cheryl brings excitement and energy for fundraising and public relations. She is an award winning marketing professional with excellent credentials in all areas of communication as well as business management and administration.

Olivia Martin, BA, M.Ed., of Madison, MS President, LivMore Consulting. Olivia is also a motivational speaker, and brings extensive experience in organizational cultural development, strategic planning, and training. Olivia is a member of the International Coach Federation.

Betty Young-Cryer, RN, MSN, NE-BC, CCRN, of Daleville, MS Administrator/Chief Nursing Officer, Anderson Regional Medical Center-South. Betty brings program development skills to MNF to help support MNF’s current programs, and a wealth of knowledge in leadership development and team building. She is a past president of Eliza Pillars State Organization and a lifelong supporter of MNA.

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Previous articles have provided information regarding speaking with one voice, professionalism in nursing, and collaboration between nurse practitioners and physicians.

In my housing development there are two bald eagles that everyone wants to photograph. Often they will sit on a tree on the spillway road, but not always. Last week the spillway was lined with cars waiting on this bird to land in a tree. My son looked out his window and there was the bald eagle sitting in the tree. He immediately texted his neighbor who was sitting on the spillway to tell him the bird is sitting in your back yard. This story demonstrates two elements: first, it identifies the technology resources that we have available to us and second, the answer to our needs is often right in front of us, we do not have to go searching for it.

Nursing is an eclectic and evolving profession and, as professionals, it behooves us to keep an open mind and utilize the tools that are being provided to us. As professionals, we communicate and collaborate through the electronic medical record (EMR), and by doing so we are able to provide continuity of care and patient safety to a higher standard than previously imagined. Patients with severe chronic conditions are monitored in their homes, allowing them a quality of life with their families that they would not experience if in a nursing home or hospital. Medicare, Medicaid, and insurance companies are able to determine the quality of care being provided to the patients. As a result of patient outcomes, health care practices are changing.

The nursing consensus model recommended by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) is endorsed by nearly four dozen nursing organizations and a host of other expert bodies, such as: the Institute of Medicine, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors Association, and the Federal Trade Commission. Millions of Americans choose NPs as their primary care provider, and two out of three patients favor updating laws to allow them improved access to NP service. What does this mean?

There is a disconnect between the higher level of care that nurse practitioners (NPs) are prepared to provide and the limited level of care that outdated state practice laws authorize them to deliver to patients. Closing this gap between clinical preparation and regulated practice authority will help remove some obstacles patients encounter when they seek the quality health care that NPs provide. Mandated licensure laws integrate care elements and space costs associated with dated bureaucratic requirements that do nothing to enhance safety or quality.

Under a Full Practice Authority model, NPs are still required to meet educational requirements for licensure, maintain national certification, consult and refer to other health care providers as warranted by patient needs, and remain accountable to the public and the state board of nursing for meeting standards of care.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)’s recommended practice model provides NPs with the authority to practice at the level of their education and training, meaning that NPs are allowed to be accountable to the public and their state board of nursing for meeting the same standards of care as other health care providers. This enhances the quality of care provided by NPs to patients. The NCSBN model includes the authority to order, perform, and interpret diagnostic and therapeutic services, perform procedures, and prescribe medications.

Nurses are a vital component of any health care system. By providing patients with quality care, NPs can help reduce hospital stays and reduce costs to both patients and insurers. However, in order for NPs to practice to the full extent of their education and training, they must be able to function independently, with the ability to order, perform, and interpret diagnostic and therapeutic services, and prescribe medications. The current state of practice laws in many states does not allow NPs to practice at this level, which results in a disconnect between the care that NPs are prepared to provide and the care they are legally allowed to provide.

There is an urgent need to modernize state practice laws and remove unnecessary barriers to practice. Full Practice Authority allows NPs to practice at the level of their education and training, providing patients with access to high-quality, cost-effective care. This model is supported by a wide range of organizations and experts in the field of nursing.

MNA and a cross-section of nursing associations are working diligently to improve access to health care and to allow full practice authority in Mississippi. Please join with us!
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Thomas V. Alonzo, Attorney At Law
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www.thomasvalonzo.com
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Medication Reconciliation

Sandra (Sandi) Arnold, MSN, BSN, RN
Secretary, MNA Board

Health care is in a whirlwind of change. Technological advances from the introduction of the electronic medical record (EMR) are making health care providers, including nurses, implement changes in their “I have always done it this way” mentality, especially regarding medications. With the help of EMR, we need to recognize the importance of maintaining an accurate medication record for each patient.

According to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) May 2014, medication reconciliation (Med Rec) is “the process of identifying all medications that the patient is taking by comparing the medical record to an external list of medications obtained from a patient, hospital or other provider.” It is important to understand how Med Rec is critical to the overall health and well-being of our patients. All health care facilities and nurses should be focused on safeguarding patients by ensuring each patient has an accurate medication list. We can see that when a patient is admitted to the hospital, the patient’s home medications are usually ordered to be resumed. If the medication list is incorrect, the patient is at risk for a potential medication error that can cause harm to the patient.

A 2015 article in American Nurse Today stated the U.S. health care system spends more than $21 billion on preventable medication errors each year, and this number continues to rise. According to the Institute of Medicine report, To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System, medication errors cause more deaths in one year than motor vehicles, breast cancer and AIDS (Karch, 2015, p.18). Therefore, it is critical for all clinical staff in every health care facility across the state to perform thorough Med Rec on each patient at every encounter. Remember, the overall health and safety of the patient depends on an accurate medication list.

As nurses, it is our responsibility to take the time to communicate valuable information that equips our patient as well as the patient’s family members and caregivers to be actively involved in the patient’s health care. Med Rec is a critical component when discussing care with the patient. All medical staff, including providers and nurses, need to portray to the patient the importance of bringing their medications, in the original containers, to each office and hospital visit. If the patient is in a long-term facility, it is the responsibility of the nursing staff to send an updated medication list to each outpatient and hospital visit.

Author Karch lists the following key patient teaching points whenever educating patients about his/her medications: “Always keep a current list of all medications (prescription, over the counter (OTC) and herbs, including vitamins) with you at all times. The list must include the name of the drug, the dosage, route and frequency of how each medication is taken. Teaching should also include whenever a medication is stopped or changed; the list must reflect the most up-to-date medication list for each outpatient and hospital visit.”

As health care continues to change, and it will, nurses need to be willing to improve workflow processes regarding the importance of medication reconciliation. Nursing staff must begin performing complete and thorough medication reconciliation for each patient at every visit to ensure patient safety. It is imperative to know these efforts will only be successful if every provider and nursing staff work together to achieve an accurate medication list for every patient at every encounter.

References


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Because there’s Merit in opportunity.
The Mississippi Nurses' Association is anticipating an incredibly busy legislative session! Once again, MNA is continuing its work to improve Mississippi citizens' access to health care by passing legislation to eliminate the requirement for a formal collaborating agreement between APRNs and physicians. MNA is joined by a cross-section of the nursing profession, including the Mississippi Association of Nurse Anesthetists, Mississippi Council of Deans and Directors of Schools of Nursing, and Mississippi Association of Nurse Practitioners, to effect this much needed change. MNA extends its gratitude to long-time supporters of nursing, Senator Terry Burton, President Pro Tempore, and Representative Jeff Smith for introducing bills that would remove the requirement for a formal collaborating agreement. MNA is also appreciative of the many stakeholders who have voiced their support of this legislation.

School nurses are critical to Mississippi’s school children, providing health care services, preventative care services and education for all children, impacting the whole child, the whole school and the whole community. School nurses are vital for students at the point of care whether it is a skilled nursing procedure or a chronic care management issue. There have already been more than 430,000 student health encounters during the fall semester of this school year. Every child deserves a school nurse every day, all day. We extend our appreciation to Senator Brice Wiggins, Representative Sam Mims, and Representative Becky Currie for introducing bills that would increase the current limit on the number of school nurses eligible for salary increases upon receipt of certification from the National Board for Certification of School Nurses. MNA is honored to work in a collaborative relationship with the Mississippi School Nurse Association and its President, Diane Chaney, RN, BSN, NCEN.

The Mississippi Nurses' Association understands the importance of interaction with our legislators. The MNA 2016 Legislative Reception sponsored by the MNA Political Action Committee was crowded with legislators, business leaders, and nurses from across the state. We extend our appreciation to all who made the reception a success.

As always, MNA will continue to monitor the many bills that could impact the nursing profession and continue to provide you updates throughout the 2016 Legislative Session.
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