When nurses ask me, “Why should I be a member of the Florida Nurses Association and American Nurses Association?” I hear their words as an echo of my own from just a short decade ago. While I can recite the various concrete benefits bought with membership dues, I wonder if they know... Who speaks for the broader nursing community in state and national legislatures? Who sets the clinical standards and guidelines for nursing practice, nursing environments, and certifies nursing specialists? Who creates and interprets the ethics of nursing acts and behaviors? I could go on, but my point is that our professional nursing associations provide the infrastructure that enables each of us to live on our respective nursing streets and assures that our profession endures.

The Florida Nursing Association (FNA) and its umbrella, the American Nurses Association (ANA), are the core professional associations for nursing in Florida and nationally. ANA attends to nursing’s broad infrastructure, including setting standards and guidelines, providing the ethical framework of our practice, and channeling the collective voice of nurses into the health policy arena. ANA and FNA give voice to the issues that affect our profession and our patients. When your voice joins with those of other members, the collective voice gives strength to our positions in the world of health care delivery and health care policy. Nationally and in Florida, when questions about nursing arise, it is the professional association that they turn to first for guidance.

Certainly you are not required to join your professional association when you become a registered nurse. Membership is not linked with licensure as it is in some other professions. Nor is there elite status linked with your professional association membership like there is with some associations. Membership in your professional association is simply part of your responsibility as a nurse. As to benefits, members are kept informed on issues that affect our profession and our patients, alerted to threats that may be lurking on various nursing streets, and provided multiple opportunities for involvement in shaping our profession.

Ours is a voluntary member association that attracts nurses who want to be part of a larger group, who want to contribute to the nursing profession beyond their clinical or academic practices, and who want an opportunity to make a lasting difference. My question then is, “Why would you NOT want to be a member of your professional association?”

For more information on joining FNA, please visit www.floridanurse.org or see page 4 for the application.
FNA Transition Team Holds First Historic Meeting

In 2007, the FNA House of Delegates passed a motion that mandated that a task force be formed to look at the structure and function of FNA. With changing times and a rapidly evolving environment, these leaders saw the need to examine how the organization currently functioned and to make recommendations for transforming the organization into a more agile and effective organization to meet the needs of its members. A Futures Task Force was formed and met twice to make recommendations to the Board. Bylaws were crafted to move forward the recommendations and the members were noticed as required. Several meetings and calls were held to solicit local leader and member input on the recommended changes. An Exploration Team was called together to look at some of the details of the potential changes. The bylaws were passed at the Centennial Convention last September and a Transition Team composed of volunteers as well as the current district presidents was formed. This past February, the board met to determine what aspects of the restructuring were the boards responsibility vs. the charge of the Transition Team. The first decision was to determine the composition of the Transition Team. The board decided to accept all volunteers. The board approved a new regional structure based on the Florida Center for Nursing Structure. This structure is composed of eight regions throughout the state. This structure will facilitate the formation of both statewide and regional groups with varied interests and concerns to work on projects and activities related to the core function of FNA as identified by the original Futures Task Force. Those core functions are:

- Evidenced Based-Practice
- Legislative, Policy Regulatory
- Scope of Practice
- Workforce Research
- Membership Development (added at the Transition Team meeting)

In the new model, the dues that were previously sent to local districts will be kept in a fund at FNA headquarters and groups will request “grants” for these projects. The projects would have to address one of the core functions listed above. A process for this distribution of funds will be developed by the finance committee. It was expressed by the group that it was important for those funds to be easily accessed by those seeking to initiate these activities. Current district funds would have to be utilized for district activities or donated to non-profit organizations as required by law. The Board and Staff will assist districts in this process. The current board liaisons to the districts will continue to function in that capacity until the transition is complete. The current district presidents will function as a leadership council and maintain communication with the board of directors through their board liaison. This will allow for a seamless transition and no interruption.
The Most Valuable Commodity
by Leah Nash, Florida Nurses Association

Nowadays, it seems that whenever you ask someone how they are doing, they automatically answer with “Busy!” Our culture has come to accept a packed schedule and list of things to do as the norm, which makes prioritizing essential in-well, survival.

Time is also no longer something that we can count on having because of our busy schedules. It is no longer simply a resource. Instead, time is a commodity. Between work and all of your other personal obligations, YOUR time is a commodity. MY time is a commodity. Not only is time a commodity, it’s a valuable commodity. It’s the one thing that we never seem to have enough of. It may even be our most valuable commodity, simply because it’s something that we can never get back.

Why am I writing about how valuable time is? Because I want you to know that we here at FNA realize it. We are so grateful for the volunteers that we have who are dedicating their valuable time to FNA. We are grateful for our Board members, our Foundation Trustees, our District Presidents. We are grateful for task force members and for members who volunteer to review clinical excellence exemplars, scholarship/research grant applications and anything else that we need to get done to promote the nursing industry.

I would also like to extend an invitation to those of you who may be teetering on the edge of doing volunteer work to really consider how rewarding it is. I’ve just done, smiling and, most importantly, realizing that the time was not wasted. I did make a difference.

You can make a difference too. If you can commit one hour of your time to doing something that you believe in for your profession, you are making a difference. And if you can commit one hour and that’s making a difference, imagine the changes you could make if were able to commit to more.

Volunteerism should not be a chore. It should be something that you look forward to and want to be a part of. There are lots of ways to get involved with FNA and the Florida Nurses Foundation… you don’t even have to leave the comfort of your house or office to participate in some of our volunteer opportunities such as reviewing or advising.

The bottom line is YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE in your professional association. It is up to you how you do so. I encourage you to look at your own strengths and experiences to determine where your level of volunteerism can most be felt. Your time is valuable. Thank you in advance for your commitment to your profession!

For volunteer opportunities with FNA and the Florida Nurses Foundation, please contact info@florianurse.org.

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FNA Welcomes New Staff Members

FNA is pleased to announce two new additions to the FNA family: Linda Hull and Christen Nesta. Linda has taken the position of Executive Assistant. Originally from Miami, Linda spent the first half of her working life in the travel industry. After years of sending others and herself around the world, she settled in Orlando. There, she went back to school to pursue more stationary interests. She received an A.S. in Theater and Entertainment Technology from Valencia Community College and then a B.A. in English and Writing from Rollins College. An enthusiastic writer, Linda’s work has been published on Associated Content and she has written, produced and directed at the Orlando Fringe Festival and Universal Studios, Florida. She has over 20 years of experience in customer service and client relations and is happy to be able to apply her variety of skills as an Executive Assistant at the Florida Nurses Association.

Christen will be the new Receptionist/Programs Specialist, focusing on Membership and Conference Planning. She has a B.A. in English from the Florida State University and an M.A. in Mass Communication from the University of Central Florida. Christen enjoys spending time with her family and friends, working out, reading and has an interest in event planning. With experience in editing, writing, planning and sales, Christen is excited to see what the Florida Nurses Association has in store for her.

Lastly, Lael Jones (former Executive Assistant) has left the FNA staff to embark on new adventures and will be greatly missed.

There have been several times that I thought to myself, “I would like to volunteer for that organization!” and have not because I thought that I did not have the time to do it. But I am finding that when I make the commitment to volunteer for something that I believe in, I end up gaining the most from it. Most of the time, I walk away from that experience feeling really good about what I’ve just done, smiling and, most importantly, realizing that the time was not wasted. I did make a difference.

You can make a difference too. If you can commit one hour of your time to doing something that you believe in for your profession, you are making a difference. And if you can commit one hour and that’s making a difference, imagine the changes you could make if were able to commit to more.

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MEMBERSHIP

2010 Star Campaign “Starship FNA”

The Star Campaign has officially launched for 2010! Please see below for FNA superstars who are on board with the Star Campaign. The results below only reflect the number of recruits made by September 1, 2009.

Thank you to those of you who have been working hard to recruit new FNA members. Remember, FNA only gets stronger with the more members that we have. As we grow in numbers, we grow in strength and voice! Keep recruiting so that you may be eligible for prizes in 2010!

- Alice Laxton 1
- Mary Sapp 1
- Teresa Leo 1
- Zilla Thompson 1
- Judith Nuland 1
- Diane Mayes 5
- Maria Seidel 2
- Sara Rosado 1
- Anmarrie J. Farro 1
- Marsha Martin 6
- Pamela Westling 2
- Beverly Fry 1
- Laureen Fleck 6
- Virmari Fuentes 1
- Tunala Stark 1
- Susan Fountain 1
- Gina McLain 7

**District Listing**

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The Florida Nurse

March 2010

MEMBERSHIP

Florida Nurses Association

Membership Application

Membership is open to all registered nurses (RN). Please check the appropriate dues category.

- **FULL MEMBERSHIP DUES** $279.00
- **SEMI-ANNUAL DUES** $140.75
- **REDUCED MEMBERSHIP DUES** $139.50
- **FULL MEMBERSHIP DUES** $279.00
- **REDUCED MEMBERSHIPS** $69.75
- **SPECIAL RETIREMENT DUES** $279.00
- **FNSA STATE ONLY MEMBERSHIP** $190.00

**Choose the payment plan you desire:**

- Full payment
- Semi-annual (Full and Reduced payment only)
- FNA State Only Membership

Credit Card Information

- Discover
- American Express
- Master card
- Visa

Credit Card Number ___________________________ 3 digit security code ___________

Card expires: __________________ Signature on Card _________________________

Please make your check payable to Florida Nurses Association, P.O. Box 536985, Orlando FL 32853-6985.

I was referred by:

- Graduate Nurse/FNSA ID #
- District Number: ___________________ Amount enclosed ________________
- Last Name __________________________ First Name ____________________
- Middle Initial ____________________
- Address ____________________________ City __________________________
- State ____________________________ Zip Code _________________
- Telephone (___) ____________________ Email address __________________
- Circle one:  RN  ARNP  FNSA First Time Renewal
- Major Area(s) of Practice __________________________
- Employer __________________________
- Address ____________________________ City __________________________
- Zip ____________________________ Date of graduation (student) __________
- License number ____________________ Date of Birth ____________________

Note: Membership dues are not deductible as a charitable contribution, rather they may be deductible as a business expense if you itemize your deductions. The exception is that a portion of your FNA and ANA dues used for lobbying purposes that is estimated to be twenty five percent (25%). A portion of a members annual dues ($5) is automatically contributed to the Florida Nurses Political Action Committee unless by written request, the member designates this amount be paid to the FNA General Fund.

How You Were Represented:

It is the responsibility of your FNA Board of Directors and staff to represent FNA at meetings throughout the state. As a member, this is also one of your member benefits. Your membership dollars support these initiatives, making the voice of FNA stronger. Here is how you were recently represented:

- Constituent Assembly Executive Committee
- Workforce Advocacy Meetings
- LERC Meetings
- FNSA Meetings
- State Nurse Negotiations
- Unit Negotiations
- FNA District Meetings

- ANA Constituent Assembly (made up of State Presidents and Executive Directors)
- Florida Nurses Foundation Meetings
- FCNEA Meeting
- FNA Transition Team Meetings
- QUIN Council

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR: FNA MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**SAVE THE DATE FOR FNA’S MEMBERSHIP MEETING:**

While you’re there, meet about Association business, network with nurses from around the state and earn continuing education credit hours!

New Member/Recruitment Winner

- **CONGRATULATIONS TO FNA MEMBER ANNAMARIE J. FARRO!**
  All members who recruited during the months of December 2009 and January 2010 were automatically registered to win a 6 day/5 night beach getaway at the TradeWinds Island Resort in St. Pete Beach.

- **CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW FNA MEMBER REBECCA GRIFFIN!**
  All new members who joined in the months of December 2009 and January 2010 were also entered to win special prizes. Rebecca will receive a weekend stay for two at the Hyatt Regency Bonaventure Conference Center & Spa in Weston, FL as well as prize packs to attractions from throughout the state of Florida.

- **Would you like to win prizes like these for recruiting new members or joining FNA? Email lnash@floridanurse.org with your input!**

The Florida Nurse newspaper is being sent you courtesy of the paying members of the Florida Nurses Association. Receipt of the newspaper is not an assurance of membership. To join, please complete and mail the application on this page or go to our website at www.floridanurse.org to join online.
in leadership and service to the members. A toolkit will be developed to assist districts with this and the timeline will be sent to district presidents.

The future structure will be comprised of elected regional directors who will hold a position on the Board of Directors. This election will occur in September of 2011. A Leadership Council will then be appointed from among members within each region.

The dissolution of districts will be complete before the Annual Member Meeting in September. Any bylaw changes that need to be made to further develop the new structure will be noticed in the June issue of The Florida Nurse.

None of these decisions prevent existing groups from forming social networks and continuing to meet for both social and professional gatherings. However, it is the intent of the leadership that association activities focus on the core work of the association. Other functions of the association will remain unchanged, including the standing committees and other structural units. Options for communication were explored such as web space for regions, social networking sites for members as well as increased email communication.

The Board and the Transition Team Members are still seeking input and ideas from the membership. Feel free to access the Members Only section of the website to email the Board or you can email or call the staff via the Members Only toll-free number.

We appreciate the work of all of the members who have worked on this challenging but exciting undertaking.
Welcome New Grads!

FNA extends a warm welcome to those new graduates who have chosen to take the step to join their professional association. We wish you a great start to your career and look forward to working with you in the future! Your voice is important to us. Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions. Please find the number for the Members Only toll free line in your new member packet or email info@floridanurse.org.

Jeanette Ferrick, Bradenton
Dawn Tucker, Orlando
Sarah C. Lindley,
Sarah Lindley
Sarah Lindley, FSNA President
fnsapresident@yahoo.com

UF Nursing Student Helps ‘Miracle’ Baby

Hunt found Loretta Cromwell crouched over the front seat of the van, struggling with pain. She had labored all day and was sent home from her doctor’s office because she wasn’t dilated enough. But by 4 p.m., her water broke, and she didn’t get there soon enough. As Hunt approached, Cromwell’s husband was delivering the baby.

Hunt asked the driver in the truck behind them to give her a towel. After she found a towel, she started vigorously massaging and stimulating the baby. She started massaging the baby’s face and nose to remove any secretions or blockages to promote breathing, too.

Coincidentally, Sandra Citty, Ph.D., A.R.N.P., a College of Nursing clinical assistant professor, was next to the car when one of the family’s older children, who was four, offered help. Citty, a family nurse practitioner, called 9-1-1 and assisted the delivery in the early moments, though her only recent labor experiences were her own children. She coached the father on what to do, but Emily’s experiences were the births of her own children. She coached the father on what to do, but Emily’s experiences were the births of her own children.

Emily Hunt, was on her way to work and sitting in traffic when she noticed the commotion ahead of her. When she discovered a woman in a van was in distress, she hastened to the front of the line of cars.

At almost 4 weeks old, Miracle Cromwell coos and cries like any newborn baby. However, her story into the world was anything but ordinary. Thanks in part to a quick-thinking University of Florida College of Nursing student.

FNA believes that new grads are amazing resources and wants you to be a part of FNA. If you were a FNSA member, FNA is giving you your very first year of membership absolutely FREE! To receive your free membership, all you have to do is visit www.floridanurse.org and click on the “Join or Renew” button on the FNA homepage. Fill out the short online application and be sure to select the “Free Membership Due” option [do NOT enter a credit card number]. Joining the voice of thousands of your fellow nurses in Florida is just a few clicks away!

FNA Lobby Days are fast approaching. March 16th and 17th! FNSA will be attending in conjunction with FNA. We are excited to talk to several key representatives and to network with lobbyists and nurses from all over the state of Florida. It is extremely important to get our voices heard as Nurses, so if you weren’t planning to attend, you should certainly rethink that decision. If we don’t fight for our profession, who will?

Have a wonderful Spring! Sarah C. Lindley, FSNA President
fnsapresident@yahoo.com

Monthly Membership Deduction Now Available for New Grads

BUT WAIT, THERE’S MORE! If you graduated last year, and were a FNSA member, FNA would also like to offer you a special membership price as well... half off! That’s only $139.50 for the second year of FNA membership.

BUT WAIT, THERE’S MORE! FNA heard from new grads and we are listening. One of the requests that the FNA membership department heard repeatedly was the option to pay membership dues monthly. If you were a FNSA member, your new grad renewal is now available through ADP with a monthly automated bank withdrawal. That’s only $12.61 per month to be a part of your professional association.

BUT WAIT, THERE’S MORE! If you are a new FNSA grad and would like to sign up for your two years of FNA membership now and start paying, you can! That stretches your membership fee of $139.50 over two years AND you have the ability to pay monthly through ADP with a monthly automated bank withdrawal. It’s all about making your monthly fee only $6.81 each month!

Can you spare less than $7 a month to be part of your professional membership and make the voice of nursing in Florida stronger? To take advantage of the ADP monthly automated bank withdrawal, fill out the membership application on page 4 and send to FNA Headquarters or visit www.floridanurse.org and fill out the online application.

When you join FNA, FNA encourages you to be a part of your professional membership... go to conferences, join committees, get involved with the legislative program... Select an area of your profession that you are passionate about and concentrate on that area. You will see that your work will reap results, you will make a difference! If you have any questions about FNA membership, please email membership@floridanurse.org.
Our Trip to Haiti – A Medical Perspective

by Jennifer Townsend, RN, CCRN, BSN, JD

On the early morning of January 22, 2010, just after midnight, a flight of over 100 doctors, nurses and paramedics, traveling from Miami, got to Haiti’s airspace and could not land. There were four airplanes waiting ahead of us in the air. We had to wait in line. The tension among us was high. We were parked up ‘in the air’, in the middle of nowhere. When we eventually landed, I had to practice my jumping technique in order to get from the plane onto the ground.

Our team of doctors and nurses arrived at the two buildings that we would be staying. In the front yard, was a huge concrete area with crowds of homeless-like individuals that were already asleep on the ground. We stepped over them, and worked our way into the buildings. There was not enough space for us to sleep on the floor inside. That was when we realized that the homeless people sleeping outside were the doctors and nurses from the previous flights. We chose a spot on the ground where we would sleep. It was about 2 a.m.

Later that morning, we arrived at Haiti General Hospital. Sick patients were laying along the sidewalk. They were sweating profusely from the boiling hot sun. Many were groaning with pain. Others were grimacing. The leg and knee stumps, head wounds and general body wounds were too many to count. Mentally traumatized patients stripped themselves naked in the street. The wounds smelled. The dressings were stale. The flies that swarmed the sidewalk did not make the situation any better. Some medical personnel looked overwhelmed and confused. The rest of us were fired up to work. We removed old and stale dressings, cleaned the wounds and then applied new dressings. We gave antibiotics and pain medication. We then inserted IVs and gave IV fluids.

The next morning, before leaving on our bus back to the hospital, a group of nurses, doctors and paramedics rushed down the narrow dusty non-asphalted street to attend to a young man who had head wounds with sutures that were bleeding and needed immediate attention. The young man, who had previously been in the hospital after being traumatized by the earthquake, did not follow-up at a hospital or clinic because he had no way of getting there. He had no transportation, he said. After caring for the young man, we all got on the bus and again headed to the hospital. We were so fired up to cure the sick. We fell into a work routine and the rest was history.

Our mission was to save as many lives, and prevent fatalities from wound infections. Towards the end of our trip, we felt that we had accomplished that mission. The lives that we touched were precious. We wish that we had the opportunity to do more. So, we would like to encourage our American healthcare professional colleagues to do more—volunteer in Haiti and touch a life.

Celebrate Nurses Week: May 6-12

The work of America’s 2.9 million registered nurses to save lives and maintain the health of millions of individuals is the focus of this year’s National Nurses Week, to be celebrated May 6-12 throughout the U.S.

Using the theme, “Caring Today For A Healthier Tomorrow,” the American Nurses Association (ANA) and its constituent associations—including FNA–will highlight the diverse ways in which registered nurses, the largest healthcare profession, are working to improve health care. From acute bedside nursing to long term care, the depth and breadth of the nursing profession is meeting the expanding healthcare needs of American society.

National Nurses Week begins on May 6, marked as RN Recognition Day. The week ends on May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, founder of nursing as a modern profession. ANA and the FNA, through the members, advance the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting economic and general welfare, promoting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and preventing Congress and regulatory agencies on healthcare.

Here are some simple ways to celebrate Nurses Week at your location:

- Designate a Nurse Week Planning Committee.
- Obtain a proclamation from the mayor of your town proclaiming May 6-12 Nurses Week for your community.
- Plan a special event to honor nurses in your community.
- Write an article for your organization’s newsletter about Nurses Week.
- Plan a trip to the Marlins game for National Nurses Week: May 6-12. The Marlins will be playing the New York Mets. The event will include a free baseball hat, ticket to the game and a free concert with fireworks and $5 food coupon (all for $49).

These are just a few easy ways to celebrate and honor nurses during this special week. For more ideas, please visit www.floridanurse.org.
FNF Offers Research Grants and Scholarships

The Florida Nurses Foundation (FNF) is pleased to announce that the 2010 research grant and scholarship applications are now available online. Please visit www.floridanurse.org/foundation/grants for the applications and upload instructions. Only applications uploaded through the FNA website will be considered. The deadline to upload completed applications is June 1, 2010.

FNF exists to promote nursing and delivery of healthcare through the advancement of research, education and practice. Each year, funds are provided to registered nurses and students for research grants and scholarships.

Eligibility criteria includes:

• Be enrolled in a nationally accredited nursing program;
• Have completed at least one (1) semester of a nursing program in Florida (must be completed by June 1st application deadline);
• Must reside in Florida throughout the term of the scholarship; and
• Be a resident of Florida for at least one (1) year.

Selection criteria includes:

• Unless otherwise designated by an individual fund, GPA requirements are: 2.5 minimum for undergraduate and 3.0 minimum for graduate.
• Potential for contribution to the nursing profession and society.
• The principal investigator must be a registered nurse and be licensed to practice in Florida.
• The principal investigator must not have received more than a cumulative of $5,000 in research funding during the past three years;
• The principal investigator must not have received an FNP Research Grant award in the past 3 years; and
• Priority for research grants are based upon the scientific merits of the proposal.

REVIEWERS NEEDED
Qualified scholarship and research grant reviewers (quantitative and qualitative) are needed for the 2010 cycle. If you have submitted your CV as a reviewer for the 2009 cycle, FNF will keep it on file for 2010. The blind review process occurs June 15-July 30 via email.

Applying for a FNF Scholarship:

To apply for a FNF scholarship, you must:

1. Complete your application online. Please visit www.floridanurse.org and scholarship application instructions. Only applications uploaded through the FNA website will be considered. The deadline to upload completed applications is June 1, 2010.
2. Following the instructions. Only applications uploaded through the FNA website will be considered. The deadline to upload completed applications is June 1, 2010.
3. For donating to the Paula Massey Nurses In Need Fund.
4. In today's unsure economic times, there are several nurses that need the financial assistance that this fund can provide. The Foundation has already had to turn away Nurses In Need applicants this year because the fund has not yet reached its endowment goal. Please donate today—You can make a real difference in someone's life!

Friends and Colleagues Tribute:
Contribute AND Help Nurses In Need

Thank you to Raquel Pasaron for donating to the Paula Massey Nurses in Need Fund, honoring the Advanced Practice Nursing Council – Miami Children’s Hospital.

Have you had a nurse friend and/or colleague make an impact on you? Would you like to recognize this person AND make a difference in nursing? The Florida Nurses Foundation (FNF) Friends & Colleagues Tribute is the perfect way to do this.

FNF encourages you to take this opportunity to recognize someone who has made a difference in your world. By participating in the Friends & Colleagues Tribute, you are letting others know how special this person is. When you recognize someone through the Friends & Colleagues Tribute, your mentor or supporter will be honored in FNA material such as The Florida Nurse, Members Only, FNA QuickNews and the FNA website.

Not only are you recognizing your friend or colleague, you are donating to the Paula Massey Nurses In Need Fund. In today’s unsure economic times, there are several nurses that need the financial assistance that this fund can provide. The Foundation has already had to turn away Nurses In Need applicants this year because the fund has not yet reached its endowment goal. Please donate today—You can make a real difference in someone’s life!

To contribute, please fill out this form or visit floridanurse.org/senddonationgrants.

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Please send to FNA, P.O. Box 536985, Orlando, FL 32853-6985 or fax credit card payments to 407.896.9042. Questions? Email foundation@floridanurse.org

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The Florida Nurse March 2010
As the Florida legislature begins the arduous task of hashing out a budget, we are faced with a significant Medicaid shortfall. The program has already been trimmed during the last few years as the overall budget was cut by seven billion dollars. Each year the Medicaid budget gets cut which means that services to Medicaid recipients are cut. Now the problem is compounded by a struggling economy and there are more of Florida’s citizens than ever who qualify for Medicaid.

Nurses should make an effort to contact their legislators and oppose the Medicaid cuts. Some proposals simply fail to make good sense. For example, some of the initial proposals in 2009 included cutting hospice services for all Medicaid patients, cutting eye and dental services for long term care residents and cutting cleft lip and palate repairs for newborns. Would this mean that our elders would be unable to see properly or have inadequate dentition during their last years of life? Would Operation Smile have to come to Florida on a medical mission to repair one of the most frequently occurring, but essentially repairable, birth defects? Would dying Medicaid recipients be pushed into emergency rooms and hospitals because of the lack of support by hospice? No nurse would advocate for such results.

Of course, the legislators know that cuts are painful and even seem inhumane at times. But they need solutions. Like many of Florida’s citizens, the legislature must tighten its belt and determine financial priorities. So while we oppose proposed cuts, we must try to offer viable solutions.

We support Representative Homan’s medical home pilot program. This program is a practice design where comprehensive primary care is provided the way primary care should be provided. Over time, there is significant cost savings due to preventative care taking the place of costly emergent and acute services. Nurses play a significant role in a properly developed medical home program. ARNPs are key to the provision of preventative services and primary care. Each medical home should also have an RN who serves as a clinical care coordinator for the practice and insures that the patients get the care they need. The RN reviews each chart before the patient is seen, follows up with the patient and educates and counsels the patient. A successful medical home requires that each provider involves practice to the full scope of their education, training and experience.

We advocate for the increased use of ARNP services by Medicaid recipients. Not only are ARNPs cheaper to the program, but with their holistic approach, the care they provide is cost effective and is of very high quality and with high patient satisfaction.

We urge the legislature to re-evaluate some long-standing public policies regarding scope of practice issues. Every year, there are numerous bills filed which would permit a variety of non-physician healthcare providers to practice to the full extent of their education, training and experience. An obvious example is SB 1886 HB 677 by Senator Mike Bennett and Representative Juan Carlos Zapata which would permit ARNPs to prescribe controlled substances. Year after year, these bills go nowhere because the legislature refuses to even give these proposals a hearing. Healthcare policy is determined in our state without fully evaluating all of the ways in which we can, in a cost effective manner, increase access to healthcare. Now is the time to reconsider. Our Medicaid system is failing our citizens. Permit providers who want to help with Florida’s health care crisis do their jobs and give these bills a fair hearing.

Join the FNA E-ROLL By Donating Today!

$20 to EMPOWER. Think of all of the things that you purchase each day for $20. Now just think what you can achieve for Florida if you donate $20 to the FNA Political Action Committee (FNPAC). The dollars raised could truly make a difference in the future of nursing!

$160 to ENABLE. When you contribute to FNPAC, you are making an effort to educate your legislators and others about FNA legislative priorities and how these efforts not only help nursing but help make the lives of their constituents and themselves better. Your contribution will ENABLE others with valuable information to make informed decisions!

$250 to DISCOVER. FNPAC is not just about endorsements and education, it is the political arm of FNA that helps to make things happen. When you contribute to FNPAC, you are helping nurses, legislators and YOURSELF to create a brighter future for nursing!

YES! I would like to order Centennial Cookbook (s)!

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Please include my name, address and phone number on the label.

Thank you for supporting the Florida Nurses Foundation (FNF) and our Centennial Cookbook project.

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Florida Nurse
March 2010

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Medicaid Legislation Needs RN Support

by Anna Small, CNM, JD
FNA Legislative Counsel

Contact info: fna@florida nurses.or g or visit fna. nurses.org and click on Legislative Activites.

Don’t Bet On It...

Legislative District Coordination (LDC) are the face of FNA’s legislative program and the voice of Florida nurses. LDCs meet with leg ieslators, see the inc oses, and make sure that the nursing issues are the forefront of political issues.

If you care about the legislative future of nursing in your district and in the state of Florida, don’t place your bet on someone else. Take the future of nursing into your own hands and become FNA LDC today!

How Do You Become a FNA LDC?

Contact gwn@flori danurse.org or visit flori danurse.org and click on Legislative Activities.

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Join the FNA E-ROLL By Donating Today!
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

What If There Was No FNA?

by Janice B. Hess, ARNP

There are about 238,000 registered nurses licensed in the state of Florida with around 13,000 being advanced practice nurses. Nurses are the largest group of health care professionals in Florida with a tremendous opportunity for political advocacy for the good of the public and the nursing profession. Unfortunately, many Florida nurses choose to remain uninvolved and in doing so are on the sidelines in the discussions that affect the well being of patients, communities and the nursing profession.

Florida Nurses Association (FNA) has stood vigil for a hundred years, acting as an effective political advocacy agent for all Florida nurses... not just their members. The evidence of their dedication to the public and Florida nurses is archived within the pages of The Florida Nurse, FNA's publication to all Florida nurses. Years of political advocacy and efforts to keep Florida nurses informed and engaged in national and state legislation are hidden within the pages of this periodical. The face of both healthcare delivery and nursing might have been drastically changed had not FNA been diligent in their political action efforts.

Here are just a few examples:

• Had the first FNA legislative committee not been formed in 1913, the first bill to establish the criteria for registration of nurses would not have been passed four months later. Without this bill, there would have been no education requirements and anyone could have practiced as a nurse. Additionally, the Board of Nursing would not have been established, leaving the control of nursing practice to some other regulatory board without nursing values or interests.
• The first Nurse Practice Act, recommended by FNA, task force would not have been signed into law in 1939. Nor would needed amendments of 1939, 1950 and present revisions to the Nurse Practice Act been passed to accommodate evolving nursing practice roles. Standards and scope of practice guidelines would not be in place to guide the safe practice and delivery of patient care.
• Had FNA not continued to support education funding through effective political advocacy (especially in times of economic downturns and Presidential veto), the present grants, scholarships and state budget allotments for nursing education programs would be missing--adding to the nursing shortage.
• Even worse, perhaps nursing would now be partly replaced with the medical model of Registered Care Technicians (RCTs) proposed by the American Medical Association (AMA) in the late 1980s. Through the combined efforts of FNA and Florida Medical Association (FMA) working in collaboration, AMA's RCT training programs in Florida were blocked.
• Without FNA and the American Nurses Association (ANA) fighting for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, exempting non-profit hospitals from having to bargain with their nurses over personnel policy and salary, nurses employed by the State of Florida and other hospitals would not have received the raises and improved benefits awarded them through collective bargaining by the FNA.
• Without FNA, fighting for scope of practice issues at times alone--and other times in coalition--with advanced practice specialty groups, Advanced Practice Nurses would most likely not be licensed to practice or be regulated by the Board of Nursing, but rather the Board of Medicine would regulate their practice as well as control licensure of Advance Practice Nurses in Florida.

Had any or all these changes occurred in the nursing profession, patient and/or community centered care as well as safety would have been adversely affected.

Recognizing this historical potential for a drastically different nursing profession had not FNA been present, the question arises, “What will the future of Florida nursing hold if nurses don’t become politically engaged as members of their professional organization?” Des Jardin (2001) answers this question saying, “If nurses do not become involved and employ values-laden approach to politics, they have no power over their own future and health care will suffer from their lack of participation (p. 468).” To gain power over nursing’s future, as well as maintain nursing’s ethical responsibility to community and patients, nurses need to unite forming a coalition for political action. Local and state governments will continue to enact laws that affect health care, changing the system for better or worse. Each individual nurse has a choice to make: Sit on the side lines and complain OR become politically engaged. Politics is a complex conundrum of factors that requires patience and understanding. Getting legislation passed isn’t just about winning or losing a battle over a bill. Rather, it is about staying in the game to be heard in order to achieve change that will benefit the public, not special interests.

FNA offers a powerful and influential coalition for professional nurses in the state to become involved in political action. Through membership, there is an opportunity to network with other nurses involved in political advocacy, as well as gain skills through educational programs that will assist in developing political competency. FNA Lobby Days Conference, held March 16 & 17th in Tallahassee, is an excellent opportunity for experiencing state government in action, as well as meeting with nursing colleagues for networking and mentoring in the political action. Visit floridanurse.org and click on “Conferences” for more information.

For those of you who aren’t FNA members or for who you are members but not involved in political advocacy, the missing ingredient to forming a unified voice for effective political advocacy could very well be YOU. As Patrick Henry commented years ago, “United we stand, divided we fall.” Professional nurses cannot afford to let other professions speak for nursing, we must stand together and speak for ourselves.

Reference:
I entered through the front door of the nursing home just after 8 am on a February morning in 1996. I was there to admit a new female patient, Roberta, to hospice.

As I took the chart from the rack that morning I was told that Roberta “was easily agitated and had always been that way... it was just her personality.” Roberta, at over 100 years old, had a myriad of comorbidities including a history of breast cancer that the family had not elected to treat. She was on several medications which included Tylenol for pain.

What I learned over time of Roberta’s story may seem irrelevant from a nursing perspective to some, but when providing comfort to Roberta at the end of her life, the details were essential. Her life as an African American woman from southern Indiana who became a famous Parisian fashion model in the early 1900’s was rich with stories of success as well as unspeakable tragedy. As she spent her last weeks and days reviewing her life to herself and to others she talked, yelled, laughed and cried. I listened and learned as she celebrated and also grieved her life. No, she was not hallucinating as some commented. This was important work for her. I listened and learned as she celebrated and also grieved her life. No, she was not hallucinating as some commented. This was important work for her. I had the privilege of witnessing it while not doubting for a second that it was real. I was there to listen and support her as best I could—providing comfort.

The week before I had held an educational in-service at this facility on pain management, emphasizing how untreated pain affects the patient emotionally, spiritually and physically. The staff held onto their old beliefs about morphine—that the M WORD, “Morphine hastened death.” I obtained orders for a low dose of scheduled sub lingual Roxanol. The next day I found the patient asleep, more peaceful. The staff was not open to the possibility that she had been sleep deprived due to intractable pain and was getting much needed rest.

When it seemed that Roberta had reached a level of physical comfort, I obtained orders for a 25 mcg Fentanyl Patch, explaining to staff the ease of administration as well as its pain relieving properties. I also knew it would help insure her comfort because of its steady delivery and that doses would not be held because she was asleep and therefore “not in pain.” Over the next month, the Fentanyl was increased to 50 mcg. A bowel regimen had also been put in place effectively.

I hope that at least one staff nurse in that facility was able to provide comfort to her next patient and the next using some of the tools I had been given and passed on during my care of Roberta. Coaching and teaching, I believe, is the essence of nursing.

Roberta died in less than a year after I joined her on the last weeks of her journey. She was 102. It seemed to be a “good death.” Roberta gave me much more than I gave to her. This was true with most of my hospice patients. Life is a gift. Live today—someday is today. Life is a journey full of good and bad. It begins and ends with a process both painful and beautiful. To have been a part of this intimate time with Roberta was truly an honor.
District 5 –
Dade County
by Jill Tahmooressi, RN

Transition from District to Region update: Robyn Dayton, Jill Tahmooressi and Gene Majka, members of the District 5 Transition Team met with FNA leaders across the state in Orlando on February 8th for a day of planning and decisions. To summarize the meeting and the future plans for the district, there will be a conference call. All District 5 Officers and Board of Directors from term 2008 to district close are expected to participate in the conference call. In addition, District 5 members interested in the transition from districts to regions are welcome to participate in the conference call. The District 5 conference call will take place on Thursday April 29, 2010 at 4 pm. Estimated length of call is 60 minutes. Contact President Jill Tahmooressi at 954.254.4762 or jill.tahmooressi@mch.com prior to April 20th for phone in instructions.

District 21 –
Broward County
by Hector Cintron, ARNP

FNA District 21 members gather to celebrate the Holiday Season and support local Toy Drive

District 21 Collects toys for Kids in Distress

On December 14, 2010 FNA District 21 members took time out of their busy holiday schedules to celebrate the season and support those less fortunate. District 21 President, Peggy Davis, was instrumental in securing a site for our annual holiday gathering at NOVA Southeastern University’s beautiful Terry Building. On their way to the meeting room, District members walked through an interesting exhibit of memorabilia and artifacts from various healthcare disciplines. The exhibit touted an impressive array of vintage items related to nursing, including some nursing caps from the not so distant past. Does anyone remember those?

As is tradition, members brought a variety of appetizers and desserts that added to the festivities. The evening provided a chance for members to enjoy each other's company and celebrate the common bond we all share as members of the Nursing profession. In the spirit of the season, District 21 collected toys for “Kids in Distress” of Broward County. District 21 Board Member Barb Pritchard delivered our contribution to Broward General Medical Center’s PCCU, where the toys were added to their stash of goodies! Thanks to everyone who contributed… our efforts brightened the holidays for many children!

District 21 Board Members met on January 11, 2010 to strategize and map-out the coming year. High on the list of priorities is the upcoming transition of FNA from a “district” structure to a streamlined “regional” structure. This will be a 2 year process with input from all districts. District 21 has several members who have been appointed to the state transition team. Also of importance was the decision to change meeting days to the 2nd Wednesday, instead of Mondays, in the months we meet. District 21 will also attempt to provide CE presentations for all our general membership meetings this year. Visit our website at FNA21.org or email FNA21@comcast.net for more information on these and other topics!
FNA has always tried to keep our members informed of any action, activity or challenge that we face and that will have an impact on them. As we begin a new year, I believe it is important to update you on some of the challenges FNA will be facing in 2010. Some of you may or may not be aware of recent activities at the national level.

Before I discuss the changes that have occurred and how they change members’ relationship with FNA, I feel I should provide some background history. In 2000, the United American Nurses (UAN) was formed by an action of the American Nurses Association. The Florida Nurses Association bargaining units became members of the UAN, AFL-CIO and thus became a part of the larger house of labor. For years several of our bargaining unit members, have been active in the UAN on the national level.

In December 2009, a group of UAN delegates voted to affiliate with the California Nurses Association acting against the advice of their President and without the participant of the majority of states form a new “super union”, the National Nurses United (NNU). After much research, discussion and deliberation, the labor leadership determined that it was not in the best interest of our members to become a part of the new National Nurses United in its current form, due to issues with governance style and without ethical considerations. As a result of that decision, FNA Bargaining Units withdrew from the UAN and are not a member of NNU. FNA LERC is exploring a relationship with another national union that better meets the needs of our members. For the majority or our bargaining unit members, the relationship with FNA and ANA has not changed.

The creation of the National Nurses United (NNU) has impacted our VA members quite differently. FNA represented the RNs employed at Lake City VA, Miami VA, and James A. Haley VA for many years. Working with UAN, the VA represented by State Nurses Association were brought together under UAN in a consolidated unit. Working with UAN, the VA units created their own governance structure, the National VA Council (NVAC) and successfully negotiated a Master Agreement. While UAN held the certification for all the VA units, FNA continued to service the three Florida VA units on a day-to-day basis.

The creation of the NNU forced changes to their relationship. NNU has not notified the VA’s that they will be serviced directly. With the change in representation, nurses employed at Lake City VA, Miami VA and James A. Haley VA no longer have a relationship with FNA or ANA. Our hope, here at FNA, is that the VA nurses will consider continuing their professional association with FNA. We need the input, participation and leadership of members from every sector of the workforce. We provide many options of payment to make it easier for the members as well as several membership options.

We will continue to keep you updated on the ongoing developments regarding these issues.

For additional information please contact Leslie Homsted at lhomsted@floridanurse.org or call (407) 896-3261.
Continuing Education Offerings at Your Finger Tips
by Christen Nesta, FNA

We all know how hectic a nurse’s life can be and just when you think it couldn’t get any crazier, you remember your mandatory continuing education credit hours. But continuing your education doesn’t have to be a daunting task that rips you away from your busy schedule. FNA provides low-cost ($20 for FNA members, $35 for non-members) webinars to battle your credit hour blues. FNA’s webinars allow you the convenience of interacting with a live speaker and other nurses (via phone or chatroom)... all from the comfort of wherever your computer is!

FNA’s webinars provide useful information on current and relevant topics, not only arming you with fresh knowledge but also allowing you to engage in political processes and lobbying for nurses’ issues. With an easy-to-use chatroom and phone conference, FNA Webinars are an interactive way for you to gain information and connect with other nurses. Stop wasting time searching the web for legitimate and practical continuing education programs! Choose a convenient and useful webinar from a provider you trust.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming FNA webinar sessions. Visit www.floridanurse.org and click on “Conferences” for more information or to register. You may also email conferences@floridanurse.org with inquiries.

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The Nurse Role in Health Literacy
by Dorothy J Dunn PhD, ARNP, FNP-BC

Nearly half of all American adults, 90 million people, have difficulty understanding and using health information. Also, there is a higher rate of hospitalization and use of emergency services among patients with limited health literacy. Limited health literacy may lead to billions of dollars in avoidable health care costs (IOM, 2004).

Most persons will encounter health information when they seek health care and most persons will encounter health information that they cannot understand. More than a measurement of reading skills, health literacy also includes writing, listening, speaking, arithmetic and conceptual knowledge. Health literacy is commonly defined as the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic information and services needed to make appropriate decisions regarding their health (IOM, 2002; Rootman, 2002). Nurses must accept the challenge to screen and assess for health literacy levels at each health care encounter. By identifying those at risk for misunderstanding instructions and the ability to adhere to recommendations in all aspects of care, nurses will enable a positive impact on health promotion, prevention strategies and treatment adherence successes for individuals who seek health care.

Improving the ability of individuals to obtain, process and understand basic health information is essential for health promotion, prevention of illness and optimization of injury prevention and health in acute and chronic illnesses. Understanding the scope and prevalence of the problem and ways nurses can effectively empower patient’s health literacy is critical.

The extreme levels of health literacy poses a challenge for many individuals to successfully navigate today’s complex health system. An important responsibility of nurses is to effectively provide and promote understanding of health information to patients and their families as well as address barriers of adequate health literacy to advocate for the delivery of quality health care. Understanding health literacy enhances the nurses’ ability to assess their patient’s levels of health literacy, thus identifying those at risk for misunderstanding instructions and the inability to adhere to recommendations.

Health literacy includes the ability to understand instructions on prescription bottles, appointment slips, health education brochures, consent forms, and the ability to navigate complex health care systems. Health literacy is not simply the ability to read. It requires a complex group of reading, listing, analytical and decision making skills, and the ability to apply these skills to the health care situation. A person who functions adequately at home may have marginal or inadequate health literacy. Currently, health care reform is part of the overall effort to improve the quality of health care and reduce costs; therefore, individuals need to take an active role in their health care reform efforts. Thus, individuals need strong health information skills. The professional nurse hears and answers this call.

References

FNA Position on Healthcare Reform Legislation

The Florida Nurses Association supports any legislative reforms that accomplish the following:

1. Increases access to health care through meaningful insurance reform that provides each United States citizen with the opportunity to purchase affordable health insurance that meets his or her individual needs. The Florida Nurses Association supports health care reform that improves healthcare access and delivery. In response to proposed federal legislation that will affect healthcare delivery, the Florida Nurses Association has consistently supported health care legislation that improves healthcare access and delivery.

The Florida Nurses Association believes that fundamental changes are needed to create a health care system that focuses on health promotion and disease prevention, is affordable and accessible to all.

FNA Position statement adopted at Centennial Convention.

The Florida Nurses Association has a strong tradition of advocating for legislation that improves healthcare for the citizens of the state of Florida. The Florida Nurses Association, in coordination with the American Nurses Association, has consistently supported health care legislation that improves healthcare access and delivery. In response to proposed federal legislation that will affect healthcare delivery, the Florida Nurses Association has developed the following position statement:

The Florida Nurses Association believes that fundamental changes are needed to create a health care system that focuses on health promotion and disease prevention, is affordable and accessible to all.

The Florida Nurses Association supports any legislative reforms that accomplish the following:

1. Increases access to health care through meaningful insurance reform that provides each United States citizen with the opportunity to purchase affordable health insurance that meets his or her individual needs and allows access to necessary healthcare services.

2. Eliminates insurance discrimination based on pre-existing conditions, ensures that all insurers provide a meaningful set of benefits to the insured that includes essential primary care and preventative services and protects citizens of the United States from bankruptcy resulting from medical expenses.

3. Improves the quality of health care by recognizing that nursing is an integral component of the healthcare delivery system and increases the nursing workforce by improving public funding for primary nursing and advanced practice nursing education programs, encourages utilization of advanced practice nurses and encourages greater utilization of Registered Nurses in the inpatient and community settings.

4. Improves the quality of health care by recognizing that nursing is an integral component of the healthcare delivery system and increases the nursing workforce by improving public funding for primary nursing and advanced practice nursing education programs, encourages utilization of advanced practice nurses and encourages greater utilization of Registered Nurses in the inpatient and community settings.

5. Contains health care costs through system improvement and elimination of waste without limiting access to necessary healthcare services.
The new law mandates that health care practitioners, including all licensed nurses and certified nursing assistants, who are convicted of drug offenses, or enter a plea of guilty or no contest for certain crimes, for the first time, as of the effective date, the respective licensing boards will be prohibited from renewing the licenses of practitioners who are convicted or enter a plea to a fraud or controlled substances felony, and from issuing a license to those who apply with such charges in their past. Early indications are that nursing has been the most affected profession. According to the Florida Department of Health, more than 50 cases of denied or withdrawn license applications were considered by the Florida Board of Nursing in the first few months following the law’s implementation.

Members of the Florida Legislature have complained that the new law is not stringent enough. They promise changes in the upcoming legislative session to expand the list of offenses which result in the inability to hold a health care license in Florida. With the passage of the new law, the Florida Department of Health is required to report all criminal pleas or convictions entered on or after July 1, 2009. Licensees with earlier pleas or convictions to the Department of Health statutory obligation to report all criminal pleas or convictions entered on or after July 1, 2009. Licensees with earlier pleas or convictions to the Department of Health.

The new law leaves intact the nurse’s statutory obligation to report all criminal pleas or convictions to the Department of Health within thirty (30) days of entering the plea or being convicted. The entering of certain felony pleas or convictions, including felony drug pleas, automatically triggers an emergency suspension of the nurse’s license until the facts and circumstances of the plea or conviction are considered by the licensing board. Previously, the nurse may return to practice if the nurse complies with the requirements of the Intervention Project for Nurses, the impaired practitioner consultant, which routinely monitors its members under five (5) year contracts. However, under the new law, at best the nurse might be returned to practice when the suspension is lifted, but only until the next licensure renewal date. At that time, the Department would be prohibited by law from renewing the license. Consequently, the health care practitioner who suffers from drug addiction and is involved in a criminal act may be barred from continuing their professional career even after rehabilitation.

BEWARE THE PLEA:
New Law Mandates Loss of License

with drugs as well as Medicare and Medicaid. Similarly, the new law prohibits licensing boards from licensing or renewing licenses for individuals who are terminated from Florida’s or other states’ Medicaid program, and those who are terminated from the Medicare program. Generally, individuals are ineligible for licensure for a period of fifteen (15) to twenty (20) years following the end of their probation or exclusion. Similarly, such individuals may not participate as an owner, officer, or managing employees in an entity which is licensed in Florida as a health care facility.

For example, after July 1, 2009, if a nurse licensed in Florida pleads no contest to possession of marijuana (a charge which is likely to be a felony under Chapter 893, F.S.) or engages in credit card or mortgage misrepresentation (one of many felonies under Chapter 817, F.S.), the nurse will be unable to renew his or her nursing license in the next upcoming biennium. Adjudication of guilt is not considered. Therefore, even if no criminal conviction ensued from the plea, the license may not be renewed. The licensure board has no discretion to consider the facts surrounding the event; the plea itself is the triggering event for licensure loss. Further, the nurse may not reapply for licensure in Florida for at least fifteen (15) years after the end of the nurse’s probationary period or sentencing conditions. Obviously, a health care practitioner who had not actively practiced their profession for fifteen (15) years would not be safe to competently practice at the time they became eligible for re-licensure. So, in many situations, the nurse will be essentially permanently removed from the profession in Florida.

Florida continues to find itself at the epicenter of health care fraud with Medicare publications documenting extraordinarily high amounts of HIV medications, home health visits and other Medicare services furnished in Florida, particularly in South Florida. The Florida Legislature responded to the national outcry. During last year’s session, the Legislature passed a 160 plus page bill, known as Senate Bill 866, which addressed health care fraud in the Medicaid arena, with a number of provisions aimed at decreasing fraud and increasing enforcement. One part of the bill became known as Section 456.0635, Florida Statutes (2009), entitled “Medicaid fraud; disqualification for license, certificate, or registration.” However, the law governs more than Medicaid fraud.

The New Law

The new law mandates that health care licensing boards refuse to issue a license or to renew licenses to applicants who are convicted or entered a plea of guilty or no contest to a felony under Chapter 409, F.S. (the Social and Economic Assistance chapter, which administers Medicaid). Chapter 817 F.S. (the Fraudulent Practices chapter which covers credit card fraud, false pretenses, false statements, etc.), Chapter 803, F.S. (the Drug Abuse Prevention and Control chapter dealing with improper possession of controlled substances) band particular federal laws dealing with drug offenses. The Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nursing Assistants, etc., are considered health care practitioners in Florida.

Conclusion

Nurses, or any licensed health care practitioners, who are accused of fraud, whether billing or otherwise, illegal drug activity or removed from participation in health care programs must consult not only with criminal counsel, but with an attorney familiar with the licensure ramifications of criminal pleas or termination from health care programs. Failure to do so may result in the inability to practice one’s profession in Florida on a long term or permanent basis. Moreover, individuals with licenses to practice a profession in multiple states must evaluate the effect of Florida’s actions on the remaining licenses.

Those who are motivated to seek changes to the new law should participate in the upcoming legislative session to advocate for their positions. The Florida Nurses Association lobbying team, Anna Small and Robert M. Levy will be watching pending bills and may be contacted through the association.

Cynthia Mikos is a nurse-attorney who practices health care law in Tampa as a partner in the firm of Allen Dell, P.A. She regularly represents nurses before the Florida Board of Nursing.
Nurse Demand and Nursing Education During the Recession

Jennifer Nooney, PhD
Angie Ross, EdM

Since December 2007, the nation has endured an economic recession that cost millions of jobs. Nursing employment and nursing education in Florida have also been affected, according to some nurse executives and nursing program directors. Anecdotal reports of hospital hiring freezes, budget cuts for nursing programs, and new graduate difficulty in finding employment have circulated around the state’s nursing community over the past two years. At the same time, other nurse executives and employers reported a continuing struggle to find nurses for open positions.

To gauge the status of the nursing shortage in a systematic way, rather than relying on anecdotal reports, the Florida Center for Nursing conducted new surveys of the state’s nurse employers and nursing programs. Results from the 2009 Nurse Employer Survey suggest an easing of the shortage but continued strong demand for nurses and expectations of substantial job growth over the next two years. Results from the 2009 Annual Report and Workforce Survey for Nursing Programs indicate that the state’s nursing education system faces barriers to train new nurses, we must focus on retaining the nurses we have. Employers are enjoying lower turnover rates during the recession, as nurses delay retirement or movement to another profession due to economic uncertainty. As the economy improves, creative and effective ways to retain nurses of all ages will be increasingly critical for resolving the shortage. The Center’s Retention and Recruitment Funded Projects Initiative awards grant funding for the study of retention or the implementation of innovative programs designed to increase retention.

The Center is excited to announce that our 2010 Retention & Recruitment Projects have been selected! This year’s projects include:

- Pilot Project: The Results of a Structural Empowerment Internship on Nurse Satisfaction and Retention (Orlando Health-Orlando)
- Florida Nurse Leadership Academy (Nursing Consortium of South Florida)
- Pilot Project: The Results of a Structural Empowerment Internship on Nurse Satisfaction and Retention (Florida Hospital for Children-Orlando)
- Improving Work-Life Balance for Nurse Managers (FADONA)
- The Impact of Monthly Structured Professional Development Symposia on Nurse Retention in the Acute Inpatient Setting (Walt Disney Pavilion at Florida Hospital for Children-Orlando)
- Unit-Based Lift Resource Team: Improving the Nursing Environment (St. Joseph’s Hospital-Tampa)
- Home Health Specialization for Professional Nurses (Palm Beach Community College-Lake Worth)

In August 1989, the leadership from professional nursing groups that have a state level of organization met with a mission to develop and demonstrate unity in nursing in Florida. To facilitate meeting this mission, they established the QUIN Council. The members of QUIN, an acronym for Quality and Unity in Nursing, included the following nursing organizations:

- Florida Nurses Association
- Deans and Directors of Nursing Education Programs
- Florida Hospital Association Center for the Promotion of Nursing
- Florida League of Nursing
- Florida Organization of Nurse Executives
- Florida State Board of Nursing

Representatives of these organizations identified the objectives for QUIN Council and established meeting and operational structures. QUIN was designed using the National Tri-Council, an organized meeting of the American Nurses Association, the American Organization of Nurse Executives, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the American Association of State Boards of Nursing as a model. Each organization is permitted to send up to three representatives to QUIN meetings.

QUIN has remained active since that time to varying degrees, usually depending on what was occurring in nursing. At the most recent meeting in December, the organizational representatives reviewed the Operational Guidelines and made some changes. Members voted to expand membership to other interested groups to continue to foster unity and open communication within diverse community of nursing. Recent issues of concern have driven home the point that nursing MUST present a unified front, not only to protect and preserve the profession, but also to strive for the highest quality of care for the communities we serve.

Recently, QUIN has added Florida Association of Directors of Nursing Administrators (FADONA), Florida Association of College of Nurses of Florida (ACF), and Florida Organization of Nurse Executives (FONE) as new members.

The Florida Center for Nursing hosts the QUIN Council meetings and operational structures. QUIN has voted to keep the meeting central in the Orlando area.
Greetings from the Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists
by Jeanne M. Antolchick, CRNA, MS, ARNP
Chair, FANA Communications Committee, 2009–2010

Over 300 members gathered for the FANA 2010 Winter meeting at the Hilton Orlando/Alamonte Springs conference center on January 30, 2010. A day of presentations included lectures regarding volatile anesthetic agents, fires in the operating room, anesthesia for pediatric orthopedic procedures, an examination of the Ph.D versus the DNP and conducting cardiovascular evaluations prior to administering anesthesia. Find information on future FANA meetings at www.FANA.org.

CRNAs (Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists) and SRNAs celebrated their profession during the January 24–30, 2010 National Nurse Anesthetist Week. CRNAs and SRNAs across the country promoted the profession with posters, billboards, table tents, brochures, and buttons and by requesting proclamations from local and state government officials seeking to bring awareness to our profession.

As our nation’s legislators continue to reconcile differences between the House-passed “Affordable Health Care for America Act” (HACA, HR 3962) and the Senate-passed “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” (PPACA, HR 3990), the nursing community has been working with multiple organizations to ensure all Americans can visit the health care professional of their choosing. Our state and national nursing associations continue to promote comprehensive healthcare reform that expands patients’ access to high quality healthcare coverage and services that individuals, employers, and our country can afford.

America’s CRNAs and Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (ARNPs) are part of the solution to many of the challenges facing the U.S. healthcare system. We play critical roles in ensuring patient access to high quality healthcare services. We appreciate the effort of both the House and Senate, who seek to expand healthcare coverage to millions of Americans who currently lack it, end the denial of coverage based on preexisting conditions, and include provisions that support our professions and our service to our patients. They need our help to get it right! Now, more than ever, your associations need your support and participation. Visit www.FANA.org and www.AANA.com for information on how you can be a part of a winning team of healthcare professionals!

SAVE THE DATES...
The Florida Organization of Nurse Executives and the Central Florida Organization of Nurse Executives Conference!!

FONE & CFONE will host another superb conference on June 17 & 18, 2010 in Orlando. You will have an opportunity to hear about important and the latest issues concerning nursing in Florida. What more can you ask for? The registration cost is extremely affordable, CE’s will be provided and the location is excellent. Sponsorship and vendor opportunities are available.

FONE will celebrate its 40th anniversary; join us for this memorable event. The 2010 Nurse Leader of the Year will be awarded. Research Poster Presentations will be displayed.

For more information, please call 407-377-5515 or visit our website at www.fonedo.com. Don’t forget… Mark you calendar!!

FPHA Announcement: Upcoming Conference

The Florida Public Health Association Annual Conference will be held August 10-12, 2010 at the Sarasota Hyatt. Mark your calendar, details forthcoming.

FADONA Introduces Annual Excellence Awards for Director of Nursing, LPNs & CNAs

Florida Association Directors of Nursing Administration/LTC (FADONA) President Bonnie Cruz is pleased to announce that, this year for the first time, the organization will provide 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards of excellence to LPNs (Licensed Practical Nurses) and CNAs (Certified Nursing Assistants), in addition to the annual Award of Excellence to a director of nursing. All the honors recognize professional responsibility and commitment to high standards in caring for residents of long-term-care (LTC) facilities.

This year, FADONA members can nominate candidates from all three segments of LTC professionals by completing for each nominee a comprehensive form that will include a short essay from the nominees. Submissions should be received in the FADONA office by March 31. Visit www.fadona.org for more information.

The Florida Organization of Nurse Executives Invites You!


Philippines Nurses Association Central Florida

Ghie Alagano–PNACF President welcome address.

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**FIU Nursing Dean Divina Grossman named Vice President for Engagement**

*Florida International University College of Nursing and Health Sciences Dean Divina Grossman has been appointed the university’s founding vice president for engagement. FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg explained that in her new role, Grossman will provide leadership for the development and coordination of partnerships with key local, state, national and global stakeholders and will spearhead a university-wide effort to coordinate and expand internship opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students. She also will have major responsibility for coordinating FIU’s effort to receive the Community Engagement classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for Teaching. The classification recognizes institutions of higher education that form partnerships with their larger communities to share knowledge and resources.*

**FIU Nursing Professor Dr. Sandra Gracia Jones Wins Second “Article of the Year” Award from the Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care**

Dr. Sandra Gracia Jones, an Associate Nursing Professor at Florida International University (FIU) College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS), was honored with the Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care’s (JANAC) 2009 Article of the Year Award for an article she co-authored on the SENORITAS HIV/AIDS Prevention Project at FIU, Jones, who was the 2002 Article of the Year award recipient for her “Life in a Pill Bottle” article on the experience of HIV-positive nurses, will receive the award at the Annual Conference of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care held November 19-22 in Jacksonville, Fla.

**FIU College of Nursing & Health Sciences Receives FNA’s 2009 Faculty Membership Award**

FNA presented Florida International University College of Nursing (FIU CNHS) with the Faculty Membership Award at the Association’s Centennial Convention in St. Petersburg Beach, Fl, this past September. CNHS was recognized for having the highest rate of faculty membership in the FNA among all nursing schools in the state at 83% (30 out of 36 nursing faculty).

**UCF Instructor Inducted Into American Academy of Nursing**

Christina Stewart-Amidei, a UCF College of Nursing instructor, was inducted into the American Academy of Nursing as one of the Academy’s 2009 new Fellows on November 7, 2009. Amidei was recognized for her substantial contributions to the field of neuroscience nursing through both practice and publication. As co-author of the first book to focus on stroke nursing, and author of more than 60 additional chapters, texts, and journal articles related to neuroscience nursing, she has set the course for neuroscience nursing practice.

**Chase Appointed Associate Dean of Graduate Affairs**

Dean Jean Leuner of UCF’s College of Nursing is pleased to announce Dr. Susan Chase has been appointed the college’s new Associate Dean of Graduate Affairs effective January 1, 2010. Chase is replacing Dr. Jean Kijek who will be vacating the position to focus on her passion for teaching. Kijek has played a pivotal role in the growth and development of the college’s graduate program and will continue to lend her expertise in teaching graduate-level courses.