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Finding Our Voice Through Interdisciplinary Policy Teams: Strategies for Compelling Change

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Author Conflicts/Disclosures

- The authors have no conflicts of interest.
- Materials presented today are intended for educational purposes only.

Learner Objectives

- Identify strategies for involving nurses on policy teams.
- Describe the benefits of forming policy teams.

Introduction and Background

- Policy-making in healthcare is at an all time high (Goudreau & Smolenski, 2018).
- Policy changes that impact nurses and patient populations are occurring at all levels:
 - Details may be confusing or perplexing;
 - May occur without stakeholder input.
- Nursing has not consistently been involved in policy discussions.
- Multidisciplinary contributions are imperative to advance the health of our nation.
- University faculty are a rich resource for the research that supports policy work in all disciplines and remain an untapped resource to policy makers.

“...nurses must see policy as something they can shape rather than something that happens to them.”

-Institute of Medicine (2011)

Policy Team Formation

- Policy work is best accomplished by teams.
- Team sizes vary based on the work to be accomplished.
- Multidisciplinary teams can be extremely beneficial.
- Policy teams can serve a variety of functions.

. **“Leadership and policy reform are both benefited by a multidisciplinary and diverse team.”**

. (K. Siebineck, 2015)

Barriers to Faculty and Student Involvement in Policy Work

- Limited knowledge of the policy process;
- Limited experience in advocacy;
- Limited appreciation for disciplinary value;
- Time commitment (real and perceived); and
- Lack of knowledgeable and available mentors.

Professional Responsibility for Advocacy

- Advocacy is the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal (Merriam-Webster, 2013).
- An advocate is a person who supports a cause in the interest of others (Merriam-Webster, 2013).
- Despite major medical advances and large health expenditure, many Americans are still unable to reach their health potential.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter”.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

Code of Ethics for Nurses

(American Nurses Association, 2015)

Provision	Statement
1	The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth and unique attributes of every person.
2	The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community or population.
3	The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
4	The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
5	The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Code of Ethics for Nurses

(American Nurses Association, 2015)

Provision	Statement
6	The nurse, through individual and collective efforts, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
7	<i>The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.</i>
8	The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
9	<i>The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.</i>

Advocacy Competencies (Patton, Zalon & Ludwick, 2015)

- Based on the Code of Ethics for Nurses (2015) and the ANA Scope and Standards of Practice (2010a):
 - Problem Solving
 - Communication
 - Influence
 - Collaboration
 - Resource Identification

“Health policy affects every nurse’s daily practice. Policy determines who gets what type of health care, when and how they will get it, from whom, and at what cost.”

(O’Grady, Mason, Hopkins, Outlaw & Gardner, 2016, p.4)

Chapter Initiatives

- Survey

- Members reported policy initiatives they were involved in;
- Formed basis for CEU activity that connected students with community leaders and faculty actively engaged in policy work.

- Continuing Education

- *Get Your A Game On*
- *Legislative Ambassador Program*

- Results

- Member engagement;
- Active involvement in Nurses Day at the Statehouse;
- Active involvement in policy issues:
 - Full practice authority, and
 - State Practice Act;

Student Initiatives

- **Nursing Student Lead Debates**

- Issue 2 Affordable Prescriptions in Ohio (Fall, 2017)
- The Role of Government in the Opioid Crisis (Spring, 2018)
- Medical Marijuana (Fall, 2018)

- **Preliminary Interdisciplinary Work**

- Regulation of Essential Oil Prescription (Exercise Physiology Initiative, 2017-2019)

- **Results**

- Students accessed credible sources of information;
- Students learned the value of understanding both sides of issues;
- Students gained experience with defending their position in a public forum;
- These events raised the profile of the College of Nursing on campus and in the community.

Faculty Initiatives

- Forming a Policy Network
 - Team Development
 - Team Member Roles
 - Communication
 - Issues Addressed
- OBN rule change regarding pediatric/OB Clinical

“I think one’s feelings waste themselves in words; they ought all be distilled into actions, and actions which bring results.”

-Florence Nightingale

Team Development

- Started with faculty
 - Actively involved in policy work
 - Teach health policy
 - Had concerns about policy issues
- Expanded to administration
 - College
 - University

Team Member Roles

- Nurse-Attorney: Procedural and Legal Expert
- Dean: Liaison to University Administration
- PhD Faculty: Research and Content Expert
- DNP, MSN Faculty: EBP, Clinical Content & Interface Expert
- Students: Literature Review & Document Construction
- Office of Government Affairs: Political & Community Outreach and Stakeholder Development

Nurse Attorney Value

- Integrating the leadership role of an experienced nurse-attorney assists in:
 - building faculty confidence,
 - advising on formal proceedings and hearing processes,
 - coaching persuasive writing,
 - engagement and
 - team work.
- Through integration in a cohesive faculty environment, the nurse attorney is positioned and empowered to guide the team in their understanding and maximize faculty contribution to the policy process.
- In order to be effective, the nurse attorney leader must appreciate the unique skills and disciplinary contributions of colleagues.

Compelling Opportunities

- Administrative Board Actions & Rule Changes;
- Professional Practice Change Review;
- White Paper Production;
- Faculty & Student Education;
- Education of Political & Community Stakeholders on Issues Proceeding Through Legislative Process;
- University and Partner Agency Policy Development.

“Things do not happen. Things are made to happen.”

-John F. Kennedy (1963)

Benefits of Policy Teams

- Forum to Raise the Voice of Nursing in Policy Work;
- Create an Environment to Drive Policy:
 - Support Clinical and Policy Research;
 - Application of Recent Research to Establish Policy;
- Provision of Recent Research to Establish Practice;
- Faculty and Student Engagement in Policy Development;
- Role Development in Policy and Advocacy for Faculty and Students;
- Develop a deeper understanding of the policy process;
- Resource sharing.

Professional Policy Involvement Highlights

- Hold seats on professional organization boards:
 - Local;
 - State;
 - National;
- Provide testimony before regulatory bodies and state legislature on policy issues;
- Serve on regulatory body boards;
- Speak at local, state and national forums on policy topics;
- Author commentaries and articles on policy issues.

Implications for Advancing Policy Discussions

“Transformation in health care will only occur when advocacy is embraced by health care professionals and seen as an inherent part of their practice.”

-Patton, Zalon & Ludwick (2015, p. 71)

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Questions?





Thank You!

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