



Oklahoma Nurses Association Legislative Agenda

Oklahoma Nurses Association is the professional association representing the state's registered nurse population. ONA is involved in the shaping of public policy relating to health care, which is consonant with the goals of nurses, nursing and public health. ONA is committed to ensuring that the registered nurse is an essential provider in all practice settings and advocates for access to quality health care services for all individuals.

Therefore, Oklahoma Nurses Association will support legislation and health care policy which:

- Facilitates the development of a system of health care delivery that emphasizes prevention, health promotion and appropriate monitoring of quality and user satisfaction
- Supports a basic core of essential health care services that are accessible to all citizens of Oklahoma
- Incorporates nurses at all levels of policy-making and decision making regarding the health care system
- Assures funding to meet health care needs including recognition and appropriate and sufficient remuneration for services rendered by nurses
- Assures the delivery of health care by appropriately educated duly qualified providers as a means to protect the consumer
- Recognizes the Oklahoma Board of Nursing as the sole regulatory authority for professional nursing practice, including adequate resources for the agency
- Promotes funding for professional nursing education and research at both the basic and advanced levels

2023 Legislative Priorities

Nursing Practice and Workforce

- Nursing is vital to the survival of a quality health care system. Competent nursing practice improves the health, safety and state health rankings for all Oklahomans.
- Consistently ensuring adequate numbers of appropriately educated and licensed nurses to care for patients in hospitals, long term care and other healthcare settings is critical in alleviating our long-term nursing shortage and current staffing crisis. Nursing education is a critical component in the development of Oklahoma's nursing workforce.
- Providing sufficient quality care to Oklahomans year-round, and ensuring enough nurses to provide testing, immunizations and quality care needed during a Pandemic is of vital importance to both the short-term and long-term health and well-being of all Oklahomans.
- Removing barriers to safe practice such as inadequate staffing and resources.
- Ensure the role of the registered nurse and the profession of nursing is preserved to safeguard the health of every Oklahoman. Quality health care is supported when ALL licensed Nursing professionals can practice at the full extent of their education and role.

Improving Oklahoma's Health Status

- A healthy Oklahoman is a productive Oklahoman.
- Promote nurses' role in improving Oklahomans' health outcomes.
- Promote the use of evolving scientific and evidence-based data-driven solutions to provide access to health care for the well-being of all Oklahomans.
- Advocate for the use of vaccines and social behaviors to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases.

Funding

- Adequate funding for nurse staffing, vital health care related services, mental health, direct care, illness prevention and nursing education is critical to improving Oklahomans' health outcomes.
- Oppose privatization of state health related agencies and health services. Privatization increases costs, destroys healthcare infrastructure, safe staffing, and competent care, while reducing access to health care. Shifting public dollars to support private companies and insurers will endanger the health and well-being of all Oklahomans, while increasing costs to taxpayers.
- Nursing is one of the few professions in Oklahoma providing care to our citizens from conception to grave.

Governance

- Preserving the Board of Nursing's oversight and regulation of nursing practice. Nursing is the largest group of healthcare providers including LPN, RN and APRN, each one with its own unique scope of practice. The Oklahoma Board of Nursing is already a consolidated licensure and regulatory entity governing nursing practice. Ensuring professional nursing oversight of this board provides for the critical health and safety of the public. This self-sustaining, non-appropriated Board contributes revenue to the state general fund while providing for efficient, focused regulation of the nursing profession.