

New York State Board of Regents

*Blue Ribbon Task Force*

**ON THE FUTURE OF NURSING**



***Protecting  
the Public***

**The Future of Nursing  
in New York State**

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**Addressing the Nursing Shortage**

**September 2001**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Members of the New York State Board of Regents  
Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing

A Message from Regent Diane O’Neill McGivern,  
Chair of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force

Highlights of Data from the New York State Board of Regents  
Report on the Nursing Shortage

The Work of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force

Recommendations of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force

*Next Steps: The Forum on the Future of Nursing*

New York State Board of Regents Report on the Nursing Shortage  
(*full report available at [www.op.nysed.gov/nursesshortage.htm](http://www.op.nysed.gov/nursesshortage.htm)*)

Resources

*Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing*

**MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE**

**Diane O'Neill McGivern, Task Force Chair**

New York State Board of Regents  
Division of Nursing, New York University

**Anthony S. Bottar**

New York State Board of Regents

**Barbara Boursiquot**

New York Downtown Hospital

**Susan Bowar-Ferres**

Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer  
New York University Medical Center

**Marie Castignaro**

Chief Executive Officer, St. Joseph's Hospital

**Mary Collins**

Dean, Decker School of Nursing  
Binghamton University

**Phyllis Collins**

President, New York State Nurses Association

**Walter Cooper**

New York State Board of Regents Emeritus

**Nancy Neveloff Dubler**

Director, Division of Bioethics  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine

**Johanna Duncan-Poitier**

Deputy Commissioner for the Professions  
New York State Education Department

**Richard N. Gottfried**

Chair, Health Committee  
New York State Assembly

**Kemp Hannon**

Chair, Health Committee  
New York State Senate

**Carl T. Hayden**

Chancellor, New York State Board of Regents

**Blair Horner**

Legislative Director  
New York Public Interest Research Group

**Eileen Lantier**

Associate Professor, College of Nursing  
Syracuse University

**Kenneth P. LaValle**

Chair, Higher Education Committee  
New York State Senate

**Paul F. Macielak**

President and Chief Executive Officer  
New York Health Plan Association

**Richard P. Mills**

President of The University of the State of  
New York and Commissioner of Education

**Antonia Novello**

Commissioner  
New York State Department of Health

**Rafael A. Olazagasti**

Senior Vice President of Medical Affairs  
Benedictine Hospital

**Patricia O'Brien**

Associate Vice President for Regulatory &  
Professional Affairs  
Greater New York Hospital Association

**Eileen Quinlan**

Geriatric Nurse Practitioner  
St. Luke's/Roosevelt Hospital Center

**Carol Raphael**

President and Chief Executive Officer  
Visiting Nurse Service of New York

**Joanna Scalabrini**

Past Chairperson, Council of Practical Nurse  
Programs of NYS  
Westchester Community College

**Edward C. Sullivan**

Chair, Higher Education Committee  
New York State Assembly

**Raymond Sweeney**

Executive Vice President  
Healthcare Association of New York State

**James R. Tallon, Jr.**

President  
United Hospital Fund

**A Message from the Chair, Regent Diane O'Neill McGivern, PhD, RN, FAAN**



Experts predict a nursing shortage so severe it is expected to significantly impact the health and safety of all New Yorkers. By 2005, the demand for registered nurses in New York is projected to exceed supply by over 17,000 nurses. By 2015, that gap is expected to almost double. This shortage will affect New Yorkers when they are most vulnerable; as they are recovering from debilitating illnesses, caring for elderly family members, or sitting at the bedsides of ailing friends and loved ones.

As predictions of an unprecedented nationwide nursing shortage began to materialize, the Board of Regents, charged since 1903 with oversight of the nursing profession, recognized the responsibility to take action. With over 303,000 licensed nurses, New York State has the second largest population of nurses in the nation. After a careful examination of the impending nursing shortage, Chancellor Carl Hayden recognized that we could not address this health care crisis alone. As a result of his leadership and vision, the Board of Regents called for the formation of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing.

Twenty-four leaders in health care, nursing and government convened to craft recommendations designed to strengthen recruitment, retention, education and data collection. The partnerships forged among these leaders are crucial to the sustainability of these action strategies and the future of nursing.

Resolving the nursing shortage will demand cooperation, foresight and thoughtful planning. In many cases, it will require changing the way we think and work. The Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force is pleased to present you with a comprehensive plan of action. Now we call upon others – consumers, health care practitioners, associations, legislators, educators, government leaders – to join us in preserving the integrity of the nursing profession and upholding high standards of public protection.

Your investment in this effort, and the participation of over 300 stakeholders in the health care community who will join us on October 29<sup>th</sup> at the *Forum on the Future of Nursing*, will advance this action plan and vitalize the recommendations.

## Highlights of the Regents Report on the Nursing Shortage

In April 2001, the New York State Education Department presented a report to the Board of Regents on the impending nursing shortage in New York State. The health and well-being of over 18 million New Yorkers is dependent upon the State's nursing workforce. Yet, reports point to a nationwide nursing shortage that, if left unaddressed, will be more severe and longer in duration than those previously experienced.

The full-length report (see page 25) presented to the Board of Regents by the Education Department provides a detailed orientation to the problem and proposed solutions. It describes the shortage, explains how the shortage differs fundamentally from previous shortages, and defines the relationship between nursing education and the supply of nurses. A summary of recommendations to address the problem includes proposed strategies described in the literature currently being explored by the broad health care, education and regulatory community. This report also includes specific actions that the Board of Regents and others may consider in addressing the impending nurse shortage and its

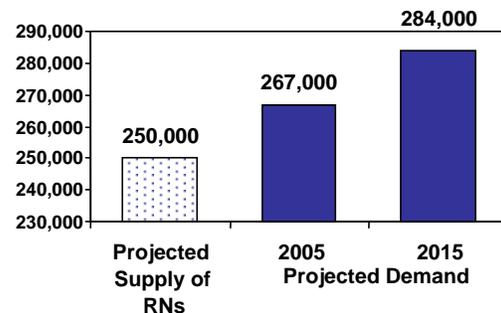
implications for the health care system as a whole.

### The National Outlook

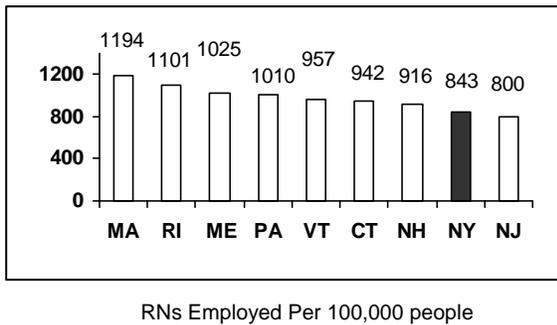
In 2001, a total of 2.7 million RNs are registered to practice in the United States. Of those, 1.6 million RNs are practicing full-time. By 2005, it is predicted that 2.6 million full-time practicing nurses will be needed. The need is expected to exceed the supply by over 1 million registered nurses. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the need for RNs will grow faster than the average for all U.S. occupations through 2008.

### New York State

In New York State, 303,732 RNs and LPNs are currently registered to practice. As nursing school enrollment continues to decline, by 2005, demand for RNs is expected to exceed supply by 17,000. By 2015, that gap may double.



It is estimated that there are approximately 843 registered nurses per 100,000 people in New York State. With 1,194 RNs per 100,000 people, Massachusetts was the first state to declare a nursing crisis.



Hospitals are already feeling the impact of the nursing shortage, primarily in acute care settings. Among the 260 hospitals in New York State, 92% have reported vacant RN positions and 71% are reporting vacant LPN positions. In New York City, 30% of 82 greater New York metropolitan area hospitals report taking over three months to fill vacated RN positions.

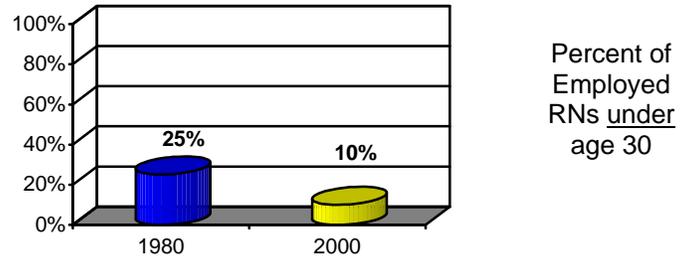
**Factors Affecting the Shortage**

The projected nursing shortage is inherently different from shortages of the past. Several distinct factors exacerbate this impending health care crisis.

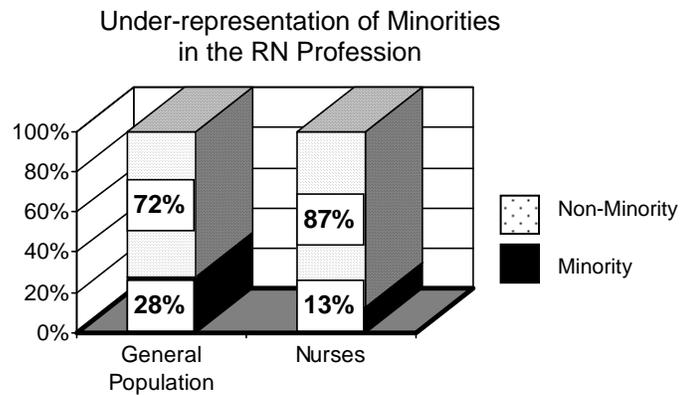
*1. Aging Work Force*

The nursing workforce is aging rapidly. In New York the average age of an RN is 46, while the average retirement age is 49. Today, fewer than 10% of practicing RNs are under 30 years old.

*2. Under-representation of Minorities*



Only 13% of practicing RNs in March 2000 were from minority populations; compared to 28% of the general population.



*3. More Career Opportunities for Women*

Nearly 95% of nursing professionals are women. However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, women have more career opportunities than ever before. Doors are wide open for women in economics, architecture, law, and other fields. Additionally, the current image of nursing as a career choice is not as appealing to young people as images and descriptions of other professions.

#### 4. *Inaccurate Projections of Need*

Previous inaccurate projections of need for nurses led to fewer nursing students; fewer faculty hired; consolidation and downsizing; and increased use of unlicensed personnel.

Due to these factors, we are now faced with:

- an unmet demand for nurses
- nurses leaving the profession
- smaller pools of potential students and less faculty

#### 5. *Workplace Environment*

55% of nurses surveyed nationwide by the American Nurses Association say they would not recommend nursing as a career for children and friends. 76% report an increased patient care load and 75% maintain that the quality of patient care has declined. Perceived downsides of nursing include:

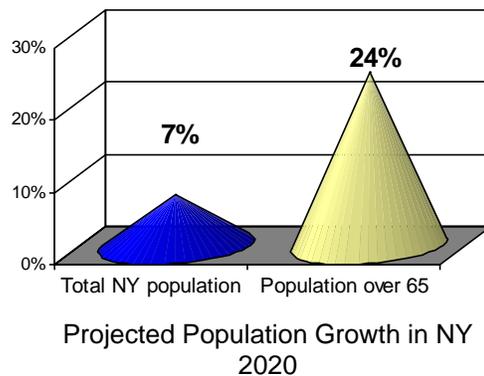
- Lack of respect for professional practice
- Night and weekend shifts
- Exposure to contagions
- Less time for patient care
- Higher patient to nurse ratio

#### 6. *Aging Population*

Nationwide, the population is aging. That means fewer young people entering the workplace and an increased aging population in need of health care. According to a recent report of the

University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Nursing, Nursing Institute, between 2010 and 2030, as the U.S. population age 65 and older is projected to increase 7%, the population between the ages of 18-64 is predicted to decrease 6%.

In New York State, as the total population is expected to increase 7% by 2020, the population over 65 is expected to climb 24%.



#### **Impact: Impending Crisis**

The combination of these multiple factors affecting the nursing workforce will have a profound impact on health care in New York State. Solutions are needed now!

After careful examination of the factors surrounding the impending nursing shortage in New York State, Carl T. Hayden, Chancellor of the Board of Regents, made the projected shortage a priority for the Regents requiring immediate action.

The Regents swiftly committed to several strategies within their purview including:

- Continue to uphold high professional standards
- Disseminate practice information for professionals and educate consumers
- Generate additional opportunities for students to learn about the nursing profession
- Continue to license nursing applicants promptly
- Benchmark other states and develop accurate data to determine the future need for nurses

Further, Chancellor Hayden called for the formation of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing. Chancellor Hayden and his colleagues on the Board of Regents acknowledged the complexity of the predicted health care crisis and recognized that significantly addressing the shortage would require collaboration among many diverse stakeholders. He tapped Regent

Diane O'Neill McGivern, a dedicated innovator in nursing education, to chair the Task Force. In addition to being the first nurse named to the Board of Regents in 1991, Regent McGivern is Head of the Division of Nursing at New York University.

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*“One important role of the Board of Regents is to identify public protection issues and to take action to address them swiftly. Nothing is more important to our future well being. Health care and education go hand-in-hand to make our State an economic leader and a good place to live.”*

Richard P. Mills  
President of the University  
of the State of New York and  
Commissioner of Education

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Regent McGivern invited twenty-four influential leaders in health care, education and government to participate in the Task Force. Members were selected to represent significant areas of responsibility uniquely positioned to contribute to the resolution of the shortage. Each individual is essential to the development of practical recommendations and to the implementation of solutions.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing has a critical role in addressing

the current nursing shortage, solutions to the problem, and the long-term future of nursing. Members assembled for two meetings, on June 28 and September 7, 2001, at the New York University Division of Nursing in New York City.

Regent McGivern convened the Task Force by calling upon members to take this unique opportunity to collaboratively develop solutions and strategically align them toward implementation and outcomes. The Task Force confirmed the factors leading to the shortage, detailed the intricate complexities of the shortage in diverse health care settings, and agreed upon the severity of the problem. Members acknowledged that addressing these comprehensive issues would require both long-term and short-term strategies.

*“The primary goal of the Task Force is to collaboratively pursue solutions to the nursing shortage that can be implemented by Task Force members. Both short and long-term solutions must be identified.”*

Regent Diane O'Neill McGivern, Chair

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As a result of an ambitious agenda and a steadfast commitment to a strong future for the nursing profession, the Task Force has unveiled a set of recommendations for

resolving this looming health care crisis. The recommendations are unique in that they cut across the health care, education and government sectors.

Many Task Force members have identified areas of collaboration within on-going initiatives to expand or pursue jointly. Identifying existing opportunities for alliances will advance targeted solutions, facilitate commitments for follow-up action, and make a difference quickly.

The New York State Education Department  
Office of the Professions  
Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing

**Recommended Actions to Alleviate the Nursing Shortage in New York State**

The critical shortage of qualified nurses projected within the next five years will have a profound effect on health care for New York's consumers well into this new century. By 2005, the demand for registered nurses in New York is projected to exceed supply by over 17,000 nurses. By 2015, the gap is expected to almost double. Failure to successfully address the problem will threaten the quality and safety of the entire health care system in this State, the welfare of consumers who depend on this system for patient care, and the future of the professionals who practice within this system.

Last April, Carl T. Hayden, Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents, appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing, chaired by Regent Diane O. McGivern, to develop solutions to this impending nursing shortage. The 25 Task Force members include a unique array of leaders from education, health care and government in New York State who are in positions to help build a strong future for nursing and address the impending nursing shortage. The Task Force met on June 28 and will meet again on September 7, at the New York University Division of Nursing in New York City. At their first meeting, the Task Force discussed the factors contributing to the shortage and explored many potential resolutions to the crises. They also heard an inspiring presentation from Dr. Claire Fagin, entitled, *When Care Becomes a Burden: Diminishing Access to Adequate Nursing*.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force on the future of nursing has recommended the following seven solutions to the impending crises:

- **Retention:** Support initiatives to retain current nursing workforce, including pursuit of best practice principles such as the magnet hospital model.
- **Recruitment:** Expand the nursing workforce by recruiting additional numbers of men, minorities, non-practicing nurses, and recent high school graduates.
- **Education:** Provide additional academic and financial support systems to increase the pool of nursing school graduates and create career ladders.
- **Technology:** Increase the application of labor-saving technology to eliminate unnecessary, duplicative paper work and improve access to and communication of patient information, thereby improving workplace conditions.
- **Data Collection:** Develop a reliable central source of data on the future need for nurses in the workforce upon which employers, policy makers, futurists, researchers and legislators may base public policy and resource allocations.

- **Clarify Existing Legal and Regulatory Framework:**

- **Patient Abandonment:** Familiarize field with existing Regents regulations which describe patient abandonment – clarifying that refusal to work a double shift or other mandatory overtime in ordinary circumstances does not necessarily constitute professional misconduct. This information will be provided to nurses, hospitals, nursing homes and home care agency administrators;
- **Scope of Practice for Nurses:** Issue practice guidelines to clarify the legal scope of practice of nursing, including those tasks which do not require licensure. These guidelines will reaffirm the individual practitioner’s responsibility for patient care, even within demanding workplace settings.

A myriad of solution options have been identified in the literature from experts around the country. The following criteria were used to select Task Force members’ recommended solutions:

- May be achieved by some Task Force Members
- Will have significant impact on the shortage
- Is cost-effective
- Capitalizes on work already being done
- Contains long term benefits
- Optimizes quality patient care

Having agreed upon these proposed solutions, the Task Force will discuss the many activities several Task Force member organizations have already initiated to achieve these solutions. In addition, members will discuss additional implementation strategies at their second meeting. The results of these discussions will be presented to over 300 invited participants representing all sectors of the profession of nursing, nursing education and health care at the Forum on the Future of Nursing on October 29<sup>th</sup> at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

This nursing shortage has developed over time as a result of many factors affecting the recruitment, retention and education of nurses as well as the conditions under which they work. Just as it has taken years for these factors to approach a crisis situation, the resolution of the problem will require collaborative efforts in all of these areas over time. The partnerships developed through the Task Force and the efforts initiated by them must endure and persist if the impending shortage of nurses is to be averted.

The text that follows is a detailed description of the activities currently underway by Task Force member organizations. In addition, for each recommended solution, there is a summary of approaches recommended in the literature by various experts to resolve the nursing shortage. These recommendations will be discussed by Task Force members.

## RETENTION

### Recommended Solution

**Support initiatives to retain current nursing workforce, including pursuit of best practice principles such as the magnet hospital model.**

#### **I. Approaches Underway by Task Force Member Organizations**

##### *Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA)*

- ◆ Designed and implemented a five-part series: *Nursing Leadership Seminar Series* for nurse managers that was attended by approximately 250 nurse managers
- ◆ With the Department of Health (DOH), developed Health Workforce Retraining Initiative (HWRI) to focus funds on providing workers with skills that will help them meet the demands of their jobs
- ◆ Founding member of the Coalition to Protect America's Health Care, an organization of hospitals, hospital associations, and businesses that successfully campaigned for relief from the Balanced Budget Act's Medicare and Medicaid cuts
- ◆ Identifying a pool of foreign-trained nurses to participate in a work-study program in collaboration with CUNY that would prepare nurses for R.N. or L.P.N. licensure examinations
- ◆ Formed a strategic alliance with NursingHands, Inc., which provides GNYHA member institutions with access to services including job postings, employer profiles, and a nurse resume database

##### *Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYNS)*

- ◆ Initiated the Workforce Investment Now (WIN) Coalition with other provider associations to promote collaboration on workforce shortage solutions focusing on research; educational support; promotion of health careers; regulatory barriers; and workplace environment
- ◆ Sponsoring a series of educational programs focused on the magnet hospital recognition program during this fall
- ◆ Sponsoring a series of educational programs highlighting successful strategies for communicating value and respect and providing recognition and reward for health care workers during this fall
- ◆ Introduced a special Workforce section to their Web site
- ◆ Developed an on-line Job Bank
- ◆ Published *Health Systems Strategist: Health Care Recruitment and Retention Best Practices*
- ◆ Published *Health Systems Strategist: The Crisis in Care*, which examines potential solutions to the nursing shortage

*New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)*

- ◆ Supporting appropriate legislation related to the nursing shortage and patient protection.

*New York State Department of Health (DOH)*

- ◆ Releasing Request for Proposals for the next round of Health Workforce Retaining Initiative (HWRI) grants to recruit, train and upgrade healthcare workers, including nurses. New York State has committed \$573 million for these grants.

*New York State Legislature*

- ◆ Propose relevant legislation to expand and retain the existing nurse workforce.

*New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA)*

- ◆ Convened an Invitational Roundtable on the Nursing Workforce which created four workgroups to deal with specific issues related to the nursing shortage:
  - Education Issues
  - Workplace/Employer Issues
  - Governmental Issues
  - Professional Associate Issues
- ◆ Actively supporting legislation to:
  - Create enforceable staffing standards in hospitals and other healthcare organizations
  - Establish staffing ratios in nursing homes
  - Protect the title “nurse”; require hospitals and nursing homes to disclose and report nurse-to-patient ratios and the mix of licensed and unlicensed personnel
  - Require *whistleblower* protection for nurses
  - Stipulate maximum number of consecutive hours during which a nurse may work
- ◆ Incorporating magnet hospital principles into contract negotiations

*New York Organization of Nurse Executives (NYONE)*

- ◆ NYONE will continue to partner with other groups in opposing legislation for staffing ratios.
- ◆ Commissioned two national experts, Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, and Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN, to develop seminal research on the nursing shortage.
- ◆ Committing educational programming to develop and enhance the characteristics demonstrated in the Magnet Hospitals study in order to improve the work place, retain expert staff and ensure patient safety.

*Syracuse University*

- ◆ Hosted a Central New York summit to coordinate efforts of regional stakeholders regarding the nursing shortage. Outcomes of the summit include:
  - Developing a regional recruitment video on nursing
  - Encouraging a Future Nursing Club
  - Supporting key Central New York leaders in recruitment and retention strategies

- Developing ways to recruit men into the profession by promoting the presence of technology within the profession

## **II. Possible Approaches Identified in the Literature to be Discussed by the Task Force\***

Decrease the wage gap between various health care providers and design salary and benefit packages to reward professional competency, including:

- higher wages
- bonuses
- flex time
- retirement plans
- education packages for workers' dependents
- subsidized loans for homes and cars

Develop clinical and administrative career ladders for nurses.

Establish recognition and reward programs.

Provide health care executives and nurse leaders with the skills for valuing employees so that the contributions of nurses will be appreciated.

Create organizational environments where:

- treatment is fair and respectful
- communication is open
- work is important and challenging
- schedules are predictable and flexible
- opportunities exist to learn and grow
- performance is recognized and rewarded
- job control is shared with employees

Give nurses control over their practice environment, including decentralized decision-making at the unit level.

Retain older RN's in the workforce, as

- preceptors
- mentors
- in-house consultants to other clinical nurses
- advisors to new RNs

Monitor patient outcomes that are affected by nursing/staffing.

Improve the quality of nurse staffing data by adopting definitions for calculating full and part-time equivalent employees; define patient acuity indicators and appropriate nurse staffing ratios

Report nurse staffing data by inpatient and outpatient setting, specific nursing unit and nursing practice team (primary, team, functional)

Encourage hospitals to adopt best practices associated with "magnet" hospitals as a mechanism for providing excellence in nursing

Organize nurses' clinical responsibilities at the unit level to promote accountability and continuity of care

Give RNs greater autonomy over their legal scope of practice

Provide more predictable and flexible work schedules

Provide incentives to attract nurses no longer practicing back into practice

Increase re-entry and refresher courses to tap nurses no longer practicing back into practice.

Some approaches from the literature are already being pursued by task force organizations

# RECRUITMENT

## Recommended Solution

**Expand the nursing workforce by recruiting additional numbers of men, minorities, non-practicing nurses, and recent high school graduates.**

### **I. Approaches Underway by Task Force Member Organizations**

#### *Healthcare Association of New York State*

- ◆ Conducting educational programs on best practices in recruitment strategies
- ◆ Published *Health Systems Strategist: Health Care Recruitment and Retention Best Practices*

#### *New York State Education Department*

- ◆ Expediting the licensure of nursing applicants from other countries
- ◆ Maintaining speakers' bureau
- ◆ Working with guidance counselors to better advise students regarding the profession of nursing
- ◆ Developing materials for use in recruiting students
- ◆ Utilizing the State Education Department Webpage to assist in recruitment
- ◆ Working with New York State Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) to promote careers in nursing and health care in general.
- ◆ Providing liaison support to co-educational student leadership organizations that assist students enrolled in health occupations education programs with leadership and healthcare skills.
- ◆ Requiring Home and Career Skills programs, which include an overview of careers in the health care field, at the middle school level.

#### *New York State Legislature*

- ◆ Proposed legislation creating scholarship and loan forgiveness programs

#### *New York State Nurses Association*

- ◆ Disseminating recruitment material titled *Nursing....The Career of Choice*
- ◆ Maintaining local speakers' bureaus
- ◆ Conducting local outreach to guidance counselors
- ◆ Actively supporting appropriate legislation
- ◆ Provided a NYSNA booth at the New York State Fair focusing on nursing as a viable and exciting career

#### *Greater New York Hospital Association*

- ◆ Maintaining public awareness campaigns
- ◆ Conducting outreach to immigrant and refugee populations

- ◆ Conducting health career education demonstration models
- ◆ Working with the New York City Board of Education to develop high school curricula that are consistent with industry standards
- ◆ Promoting nursing education to non-nurse employees in GNYHA member facilities

*St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, New York*

- ◆ Developed recruitment video aired by local television stations

## **II. Possible Approaches Identified in the Literature to be Discussed by the Task Force\***

- Publicize RN contribution to high-quality health care and health systems to convey an attractive and rewarding career option.
- Advise nurses of the image created when discussing their work in public.
- Combine health care organizational resources to raise the image of nursing. Partner with public relations firms to develop comprehensive recruitment campaign marketing plans. Encourage hospital and nursing education program partnerships to improve image.
- Work with media to provide a balanced view of nursing.
- Communicate nursing career benefits
  - expected increase in wages
  - job security
  - exciting new roles and opportunities
- Communicate with elementary, middle and high school teachers, counselors, librarians and parents about benefits, opportunities and scholarships in nursing.
- Recruit more non-traditional labor pools, such as
  - retired police
  - firefighters
- Introduce new and existing resources about nursing to students in elementary school through such approaches as “shadowing” opportunities and nurse speakers’ bureaus.
- Develop long-term student recruitment strategies
  - joint hospital systems funding for faculty and student slots
  - hospitals working with colleges
  - county government funding
  - offering credit to nursing students for recruiting activities

\* Some approaches from the literature are already being pursued by task force organizations

## EDUCATION

### Recommended Solution

**Provide additional academic and financial support systems to increase the pool of nursing school graduates and create career ladders.**

#### **I. Approaches Underway by Task Force Member Organizations**

##### *New York Organization of Nurse Executives (NYONE)*

- ◆ Supporting the development of for bills for the support for students in both AD and BSN programs, as well as graduate preparation for faculty
- ◆ Commissioned two national experts, Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, and Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN, to develop seminal research on the nursing shortage

##### *New York State Education Department*

- ◆ Supporting educational programs such as Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) to increase the number of historically underrepresented students who enroll in and complete undergraduate or graduate programs leading to professional licensure
- ◆ Developed and disseminated educational brochures on nursing and other health professions.
- ◆ Conducting educational program reviews to maintain quality standards
- ◆ Encouraging and supporting articulation agreements between licensed practical nursing programs and registered nursing programs to foster career ladders
- ◆ Disseminating practice information to nursing school programs

##### *New York State Legislature*

- ◆ Proposed legislation to establish scholarship and loan forgiveness programs

##### *New York State Nurses Association*

- ◆ Actively supporting legislation to:
  - Create scholarships for nursing students
  - Provide loan forgiveness
  - Provide aid to nursing schools to expand programs and retain/recruit nursing faculty
  - Mandate continued education as a condition for continuing licensure
  - Examine appropriate educational models and preparation of practitioners

##### *Greater New York Hospital Association*

- ◆ Supporting appropriate legislation to address the shortage
- ◆ Developed health career collaborative with NYC Board of Education and CUNY to discuss the educational preparation necessary to pursue nursing and other health careers

*Healthcare Association of New York State*

- ◆ Conducting a series of educational programs on best practices in recruitment strategies
- ◆ Supporting appropriate legislation

*Syracuse University*

- ◆ Planning to provide faculty appointments to nursing clinics in service provider affiliations.

**II. Possible Approaches Identified in the Literature to be Discussed by the Task Force\***

- Provide educational opportunities for LPNs to become RNs
- Provide educational opportunities for RNs to earn Bachelors and Masters degrees to meet workforce demands
- Provide educational opportunities for unlicensed personnel to become licensed
- Develop new models of education to better align education and practice demands
- Encourage baccalaureate and graduate degree preparation to meet changing market demands
- Increase capacity to provide nursing education via distance learning
- Recruit more faculty, in general, and more minority faculty specifically
- Recognize different educational routes to nursing and clearly define roles via licensure and certification
- Increase funding for clinical training costs in nursing education
- Connect forgiveness of loans and grants to working in nursing for periods of time
- Provide scholarships and grants as incentives to attend nursing school
- Provide non-financial support to potential nursing students, such as:
  - language remediation
  - science
  - math
  - day care assistance

\* Some approaches from the literature are already being pursued by task force organizations

## TECHNOLOGY

### Recommended Solution

Increase the application of labor-saving technology to eliminate unnecessary, duplicative paper work and improve access to and communication of patient information, thereby improving workplace conditions.

### **I. Approaches Underway by Task Force Member Organizations**

#### *Department of Health*

- ◆ Developed workgroup that is reviewing State and Federal regulations and policies that institutions develop to meet those requirements.

#### *Benedictine Hospital, Kingston, New York*

- ◆ Working with Lucent Technology to develop new instruments and technological devices for use in health care settings

#### *New York State Nurses Association*

- ◆ Collaborated on development of the American Nurses Association House of Delegates Action Report on the *Reduction of Unnecessary or Duplicative Documentation and Paperwork*

#### *Greater New York Hospital Association*

- ◆ Reviewing Minimum Data Sets (MDS), an assessment and care screening instrument required for nursing home residents, to make it less cumbersome and efficient permitting staff more time to provide direct care to residents

#### *Healthcare Association of New York State*

- ◆ Working with the Department of Health on the Nursing Documentation Workgroup
- ◆ Participating in State and Federal initiatives to reduce unnecessary paperwork

#### *New York State Education Department*

- ◆ Developed and disseminated a report providing guidance on the use of telepractice in the professions

### **II. Possible Approaches Identified in the Literature to be Discussed by the Task Force\***

- Design and test alternative delivery models and nursing processes using technology

- Design ergonomically sensitive work processes and clinical environments to meet needs of nurses
- Design ergonomically sensitive work processes to meet the unique needs of older nurses

\* Some approaches from the literature are already being pursued by task force organizations

## DATA COLLECTION

### Recommended Solution

Develop a reliable central source of data on the future need for nurses in the workforce upon which employers, policy makers, futurists, researchers and legislators may base public policy and resource allocations.

#### **I. Approaches Underway by Task Force Member Organizations**

##### *New York State Education Department*

- ◆ Completing a study of nurses currently registered in NYS to determine employment patterns, demographic information and other data relevant to resolving the nursing shortage
- ◆ Developed and disseminated study on the incidence and causes of medication errors of licensed nurses
- ◆ Coordinating with researchers and organizations that conduct similar studies on nursing to provide relevant data

Please note: Task Force members have agreed to work with the Education Department to provide input and assistance with the communication of this information to the field.

##### *Greater New York Hospital Association*

- ◆ Conducted and released Surveys of Staffing in Hospitals and Continuing Care Facilities in the New York City Region

##### *New York Organization of Nurse Executives (NYONE)*

- ◆ Commissioned two national experts, Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, and Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN, to develop seminal research on the nursing shortage.

\* Some approaches from the literature are already being pursued by task force organizations

## CLARIFY EXISTING LAWS AND REGULATIONS

### Recommended Solution

Issue practice guidelines to clarify the legal scope of practice of nursing, including those tasks which do not require licensure. These guidelines will reaffirm the individual practitioner's responsibility for patient care, even within demanding workplace settings.

AND

Clarify existing Regents regulations which describe patient abandonment – making it clear that refusal to work a double shift or other mandatory overtime in ordinary circumstances does not necessarily constitute professional misconduct.

This information will be provided to nurses, hospitals, nursing homes and home care agency administrators.

### **I. Approaches Underway by Task Force Member Organizations**

*New York State Education Department with the assistance of the State Board for Nursing*

- ◆ Issuing practice guidelines in accordance with New York State Education Law to clarify the existing nursing scope of practice for the field.
- ◆ Clarifying patient abandonment and Regents Rule Part 29 so that nurses are not inappropriately threatened with charges of professional misconduct.

Please note: Task Force members have agreed to work with the Education Department to provide input and assistance with the communication of this information to the field.

*New York Organization of Nurse Executives (NYONE) and New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA)*

- ◆ Collaboratively developed a document on the utilization of RNs, LPNs and UAPs.

### **II. Possible Approaches Identified in the Literature to be Discussed by the Task Force\***

- Advise nurses regarding tasks that can be assigned to non-licensed assistive personnel
- Clarify tasks that can be delegated to licensed practical nurses by registered nurses
- Assist nurses with time management
- Require hospitals to pursue options, other than mandatory overtime, when coverage gaps are anticipated and stipulate a maximum number of consecutive hours a nurse may work in a given time period
- Clarify patient abandonment in relation to professional misconduct and issue professional practice guidelines to clarify the patient care responsibilities of the licensee and licensed supervisor.

\* Some approaches from the literature are already being pursued by task force organizations

## Next Steps

### **The Forum on the Future of Nursing**

On Monday, October 29, 2001, the State Education Department and the State Board for Nursing will host *The Forum on the Future of Nursing*. The day-long event will be held at the Bar Association in New York City.

At the Forum, more than 300 invitees representing all aspects of nursing education and health care will convene to share their perspectives on the recommendations of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force and identify their roles in implementing the solutions.

This inclusive event will bring together members of the State Board for Nursing, nurses, government leaders, association representatives, educators, members of the health care community and others to forge partnerships for action.

Nurse experts, members of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force, and members of the State Board for Nursing will lead enlightening discussions on the impacts of the shortage and collaborate with

participants to identify opportunities for progress.

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*“This Task Force has proposed important recommendations that address critical aspects of the nursing shortage. By collaborating with our many partners, we can make a significant difference. The time for action is now.”*

Johanna Duncan-Poitier  
Deputy Commissioner for the Professions

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The Forum on the Future of Nursing is a unique opportunity for dialogue and cooperation among various stakeholders. Rarely do individuals in such diverse sectors of the health care community have the opportunity to come together in one room to freely discuss and work to address issues sure to impact on the landscape of professional practice and patient care.

### **Report to the Blue Ribbon Task Force**

It is the goal of the State Education Department to report back to the Blue Ribbon Task Force on baseline information reflective of the Task Force’s data collection recommendations later in 2002.

# **New York State Board of Regents Report on the Nursing Shortage**

*- full report -*

*Available on the Web at  
[www.op.nysed.gov/nursesshortage.htm](http://www.op.nysed.gov/nursesshortage.htm)*

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