

NEW HAMPSHIRE NURSES' ASSOCIATION
POSITION STATEMENT ON DELEGATION AND THE NURSE PRACTICE ACT

SUMMARY:

The New Hampshire Nurses' Association strongly supports amending the New Hampshire Nurse Practice Act to clarify the definition of delegation and to broaden the authority and responsibility of nurses to use delegation to increase quality outcomes, improve access to healthcare, and to more effectively manage health care resources in New Hampshire.

At NHNA, we recognize that changes in Law should never be pursued without much thought or consideration. It is with clarity and purpose that we advocate amending the practice act at this time. The current practice act does not provide clarity with respect to *delegation*, and does not allow nurses to act with authority and confidence that they are meeting the requirements of law. In addition, the practice act has a near parallel and confusing definition of *direction* as another potential means of resolving the issue. The resulting law provides nurses with no more ability to delegate than would exist were the provisions of the law completely absent.

Providing a brief, clear, and understandable definition of delegation, and allowing further clarity through rule making by the board of nursing is exactly the relief needed by nurses in New Hampshire to move healthcare ahead, meeting the goals expected by the public consumer of healthcare. It is the position of NHNA that this change would accomplish the following:

- Advance professional nursing by creating broader authority to practice nursing and make decisions in daily practice;
- Provide some relief from the current nursing shortage by allowing nurses to use delegation to meet the needs of the patients more effectively;
- Create work environment that fosters increased salaries and compensation for nurses by allowing organizations to develop progressive staffing plans and models;
- Advance access to quality care while reducing cost;

The success of delegation hinges exclusively on the nurses of New Hampshire applying their individual best judgement to determine how, when, and to whom they delegate. It is essential that the Nurse Practice Act provide the individual nurse with the authority and responsibility to safely and effectively advance the practice of nursing for the benefit of New Hampshire's healthcare consumers.