



Georgia Nurses Association 2010 Legislative Platform

CONSUMER ADVOCACY

As Georgia Registered Nurses, we endorse legislation, programs and funding which promote and enable individuals to achieve optimal quality of life across the continuum. This includes comprehensive health care, education and a safe environment, as well as the basic needs of nutrition and shelter.

Georgia Registered Nurses support:

- ❖ A restructured healthcare system that is accessible, affordable and aimed at community-based primary care, wellness and prevention services, as well as chronic disease management to reduce the need for more costly and technology-driven emergency, medical and surgical treatments in hospitals.
- ❖ Efforts to develop evidence-based health policy to ensure equal access to healthcare services that focus on quality and patient safety.
- ❖ Access to all nursing care services with emphasis on adequacy and appropriateness of nurse staffing as provided in the American Nurses Association's Principles for Safe Nurse Staffing.
- ❖ Ability of all citizens to select an appropriate health care provider of their choice.
- ❖ A health care system that treats with dignity and respect those individuals with mental illness, substance abuse, mental retardation and developmental disabilities.
- ❖ Continued funding for services provided to patients, families and vulnerable populations served by the state of Georgia.
- ❖ A public health system that remains prepared for disasters, pandemics and other statewide emergencies by being appropriately funded, staffed and educated.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN ADVOCACY

GNA believes that all children and families in Georgia should have accessible, affordable, quality health care.

Georgia Registered Nurses support:

- ❖ Health education to promote family stability.
- ❖ Health promotion, preventive care, disease prevention and health management for all.
- ❖ Expanding school health programs for all children, which includes providing Registered Nurses in all schools.
- ❖ Continued funding for health care coverage for children, including screening programs that detect and prevent birth defects and chronic conditions.
- ❖ Promoting the expansion of physical education in our schools, educating our children on proper nutrition and facilitating new behaviors that promote healthier life styles for future generations.

WORKFORCE ADVOCACY

GNA believes that workplace safety of nurses warrants special attention and supports programs designed to prevent job-related injuries, illnesses and deaths, including identification and correction of workplace hazards.

Georgia Registered Nurses support:

- ❖ Promotion of health and safety programs in the workplace including: ergonomics, safe patient handling, infection control, and prevention of workplace violence and work-related accidents.
- ❖ Safe levels of staffing, no-fault error reporting, protection from retribution for nurses reporting unsafe patient and work conditions.
- ❖ Adequate rest and number of hours between shifts to prevent medical errors and promote physical and mental health of the nurse.
- ❖ Appropriate access to substance abuse treatment for impaired nurses.

- ❖ An environment in which nurses are supported and appreciated, both professionally and financially for the work they do.
- ❖ Identification and elimination of those health hazards which can be removed from the work environment.

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

GNA believes that nursing has a unique role in bridging the gap between health care knowledge and providing cost-effective quality health care; that the responsibility for defining and regulating the practice of Nursing and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses rests solely with the Georgia Board of Nursing; and that all nurses should adhere to the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics.

Georgia Registered Nurses support:

- ❖ Funding for innovative undergraduate and graduate nursing education models that meet national accreditation standards; and for qualified nursing faculty.
- ❖ Recruitment of a diverse group of qualified students into programs of nursing education.
- ❖ Addressing issues in the supply, demand and retention of nurses in the state.
- ❖ Promotion of a positive nursing image.
- ❖ Nursing research and scholarship utilizing the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Magnet[®] Recognition Program model to focus health care organizations on achieving superior performance as evidenced by outcomes incorporating evidence-based practice, innovation, evolving technologies and patient partnerships.
- ❖ A scope of practice to promote the professional nurse commensurate with licensure, education and level of skill.
- ❖ Opposition to any legislation that would encroach upon professional nursing, including attempts to hire or substitute non-nurses to practice professional nursing as defined by the Georgia Nurse Practice Act.
- ❖ Promoting access to and utilization of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses and monitoring legislation, regulations and other issues affecting their practice.
- ❖ Advocating for nurses' appointments to state legislative health care commissions, task forces and study committees, the state Board of Nursing, local health care boards and insurance committees.
- ❖ Monitoring legislation relative to practice aspects of nursing specialties.

The Georgia Nurses Association is the only statewide, non-profit, multi-purpose professional membership organization for all Registered Nurses in Georgia. The primary purpose of GNA is to provide direction and a voice for the profession of nursing regardless of academic preparation, specialty/advanced education, or other professional organization affiliation.