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The IOM Report on the Future of Nursing

Many of you are familiar with the Institute of Medicine’s report, “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health,” issued in October of 2010. The report was the culmination of a two-year initiative undertaken in collaboration with The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to assess and transform the nursing profession. The report states: “With more than three million members, the nursing profession is the largest segment of the nation’s healthcare workforce. Working on the front lines of patient care, nurses can play a vital role in helping realize the objectives set forth in the 2010 Affordable Care Act... A number of barriers prevent nurses from being able to respond effectively to rapidly changing healthcare settings and an evolving healthcare system. These barriers need to be overcome to ensure that nurses are well positioned to lead change and advance health.”

Four key recommendations to overcome those barriers were identified in the report:

• Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training.
• Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.
• Nurses should be full partners with physicians and other healthcare professionals in re-designing health care in the United States.
• Effective workforce planning and policy-making require better data-collection and information infrastructure.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Association of Retired Persons have joined forces to assist states in implementing these recommendations. This initiative, called The Campaign for Action, is a collaborative effort to implement solutions to the challenges facing nursing, and build on nurse-based approaches to improve quality and transform the way Americans receive care. The goals put forth by this alliance, in direct response to the IOM recommendations, include:

• doubling the number of nurses with doctorate degrees by the year 2020
• ensuring that nurses engage in life-long learning
• preparing and enabling nurses to lead change to advance health
• building an infrastructure for the collection and analysis of inter-professional healthcare workforce data

In September of 2011, Massachusetts was accepted as an action coalition state, and since then, the Massachusetts Action Coalition has established a... continued on next page
The future is now. The call to action is upon us.
If nurses are truly to play a part in shaping the future of health care, we must marshal our thoughts, actions, and resources to meet this challenge. I hope every MGH nurse will join me in committing to advance the recommendations of the IOM report on The Future of Nursing.

number of short- and long-term goals, including:

- working with nurses and colleagues in all practice settings to disseminate the recommendations of the IOM report
- building a statewide consensus for academic progression, including plans to increase diversity
- developing a plan for statewide adoption of the Nurse of the Future Nursing Core Competencies®
- implementing the plan for academic progression to increase the number of BSN-prepared nurses throughout the state
- removing scope-of-practice barriers for advanced practice nurses and strengthening inter-disciplinary collaboration
- utilizing data to understand healthcare workforce needs and demographics

To achieve these goals, several projects are underway, such as developing a survey to determine which institutions use the Nurse of the Future Nursing Core Competencies® and what barriers may exist to adopting them. Funds have been allotted to hire a part-time Action Coalition project director. And a number of fund-raising events are planned to support this investment in the future of nursing.

On March 19th and 20th, a special two-day event was held to kick off the Massachusetts campaign. MGH was fortunate to sponsor sessions where Susan Hassmiller, RN, senior advisor for Nursing at The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and director of the Campaign for Action, presented an overview of the national outreach and education activities. Dr. Hassmiller stressed the need for nurses to take an active role in transforming healthcare, saying, “The IOM recommendations are for the benefit of our patients and families. We need to ensure that quality care is accessible and efficient and results in improved patient-care outcomes.”

If you’re asking yourself what you can do to support this important work, here are a few thoughts:

- Know the scope of your own practice. Work with your nursing director to identify barriers in practice
- Look for opportunities to work across disciplines to develop new ways of providing care
- Share your practice. If you enjoy teaching and mentoring, help new nurses (at all levels) transition into practice
- Learn about educational opportunities that would help advance your practice
- Participate in collaborative governance
- Be sure to answer the questions on your nursing-license renewal form and respond to questionnaires and surveys you’re asked to complete

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