

**AONE Position Statement on the  
Scope of Practice Issues in Healthcare Reform**

**Background**

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, examines the nursing workforce and makes recommendations intended to support efforts to improve the health of the U.S. population through the contributions that nurses can make to the delivery of care. Coupled with the implications of healthcare reform on the health care system greater access to high quality health care will be needed. The first recommendation of the IOM report—nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training—focuses nursing's work in addressing access to care. However, in order to provide this care, nursing leadership must seek ways to advance nursing autonomy and accountability, and influence professional licensure.

AONE has advanced and supported initiatives on health care reform and policy, workforce supply and competency, leadership, and creating a strong and engaged membership. In order for nurses to continue to provide essential contributions to our profession, and shape the future of healthcare, AONE members, now more than ever, need to address statutory and regulatory barriers at the state and federal levels. Existing barriers must be lifted in order for health care reform to be fully realized.

Nurse leaders need to address the economic value of nursing care tied to scope of practice and outcomes of care. Suggested activities include but are not limited to determining "true" nursing intensity, resources, and costs for each patient, separating out nursing in patient billing mechanisms and aligning reimbursement for best nursing value, for example creating nursing pay for performance incentives, incorporating nursing care into new and emerging health care finance mechanisms such as Accountable Care Organizations and Medical Homes, and restructuring and reorganizing nursing care to achieve best value. In order to attain the highest quality and outcomes of nursing care to meet the spirit of the recommendations from the IOM report, nurse leaders must engage payers as well as policy makers and collaborate with a wide range of health care professionals to build consensus how nurses, through practicing to the fullest extent of their education, can achieve higher value in the nation's health care delivery system.

AONE acknowledges the ongoing work of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the intent of *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Nursing can fill new and expanded roles in a redesigned healthcare system. To take advantage of these opportunities nurses must be able to practice in accordance with their education and training. In order for nurses to be effectively deployed as partners in a health care team, changes in scope of practice, advances in education across all levels, improvements in the practice of nursing across the care continuum, and leadership at all levels, and across all boundaries, is needed.

**AONE Position Statement on the Scope of Practice Issues in Healthcare Reform**

1. Nurse leaders from each state should review current state nurse practice acts and rules to determine the degree to which nurses are able to practice to the full extent of their education and training within their respective state.
2. Nurse leaders in states that do not permit nurses to practice to the full extent of their education and training should advocate for regulatory changes; advocating for APRNs to practice independently, with full prescriptive authority. Scope of practice regulations should conform to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Model Nursing Practice Act and Model Nursing Administrative Rules (Article XVIII, Chapter 18).
3. Nurse leaders should advocate that nursing to be solely regulated by State Boards of Nursing.
4. Nurse leaders should engage payers for health care to address the economic value of nursing care to include: separate payment for nursing services delivered to patients and communities; payment parity with physicians for same services; costing nursing care and directly allocating to individual patients; billing and aligning reimbursement for nursing care for optimum outcomes; and incorporating nursing care into Accountable Care Organizations and Medical Homes.