Provision 7

The nurse, whether in research, practice, education, or administration, contributes to the advancement of the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and generation of nursing and health policies.

7.1 Contributions through Research and Scholarly Inquiry

All nurses must participate in the advancement of the profession through knowledge development, evaluation, dissemination, and application to practice. Knowledge development relies chiefly, though not exclusively, upon research and scholarly inquiry. Nurses engage in scholarly inquiry in order to expand the body of knowledge that forms and advances the theory and practice of the discipline in all its spheres. Nursing knowledge draws from and contributes to corresponding sciences and humanities. Nurse researchers test existing and generate new nursing knowledge. They may involve human participants in their research, as individuals, groups, or communities. In such cases, nursing research conforms to national and international ethical standards for the conduct of research employing human participants.

Where research is conducted with the use of animals, all appropriate ethical standards are observed. In every situation care is taken that research is soundly constructed, significant, and worthwhile. Dissemination of research findings, whether positive or negative, is an essential part of respect for the participants. Knowledge
development also occurs through the process of scholarly inquiry, clinical and educational innovation, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Dissemination of findings is fundamental to ongoing disciplinary discourse and knowledge development.

Nurses remain committed to patients/participants throughout the continuum of care and during their participation in research. Whether the nurse is data collector, investigator, or care provider, patients’ rights and autonomy must be honored and respected. Patients'/participants’ welfare may never be sacrificed for research ends.

Nurse executives and administrators must develop the structure and foster the processes that create an organizational climate and infrastructure conducive to scholarly inquiry. In addition to teaching research methods, nurse educators also teach the moral standards that guide the profession in the conduct of its research. Research utilization is an expected part of nursing practice in all settings.

### 7.2 Contributions through Developing Maintaining, and Implementing Professional Practice Standards

Practice standards must be developed by nurses and grounded in nursing’s ethical commitments and body of knowledge. These standards must also reflect nursing’s responsibility to society. Nursing identifies its own scope of practice as informed, specified, or directed by state and federal law, by relevant societal values, and by The Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements, and Nursing: Scope and Standards of
Practice. Nurse executives establish, maintain, and promote conditions of employment that enable nurses to practice according to accepted standards. Professional autonomy and self-regulation are necessary for implementing nursing standards and guidelines and for assuring quality care.

Nurse educators promote and maintain optimal standards of education and practice in every setting where learning activities occur. They must also ensure that only students possessing the knowledge, skills, and moral dispositions that are essential to nursing graduate from their nursing programs.

7.3 Contributions through Nursing and Health Policy Development

Nurses must lead, serve, and mentor on institutional or agency policy committees within the practice setting. Nurses ought to participate in civic activities related to healthcare through local, regional, state, national, or global initiatives. Nurse educators have a particular responsibility to foster and develop students’ commitment to professional and civic values and to informed perspectives on nursing and healthcare policy. Nurse executives and administrators must foster institutional or agency policies that support and reinforce a work environment committed to nurses’ ethical integrity and professionalism. Nurse researchers must contribute to the body of knowledge by translating science, supporting evidence-based nursing practice, and advancing effective, ethical healthcare policies, environments, and a balance of patient–nurse interests.