

## NEWS RELEASE

Contact:

Dawn M. Kappel  
NCSBN Director of Marketing and Communications  
312.525.3667 direct  
312.279.1032 fax  
[dkappel@ncsbn.org](mailto:dkappel@ncsbn.org)

Mary McNamara  
ANA Sr. Public Relations Specialist  
301.628.5198 direct  
301.628.5340 fax  
[mary.mcnamara@ana.org](mailto:mary.mcnamara@ana.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **NCSBN and ANA issue joint statement on Nursing Delegation**

CHICAGO – The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and the American Nurses Association (ANA) have issued a joint statement on delegation designed to reinforce that delegation is an essential nursing skill and to support the practicing nurse in using delegation safely and effectively.

The escalating shortage of nurses, greater acuity of patient illnesses, technological advances and increased complexity of therapies contribute to today's current chaotic and multifaceted health care environment. The recognition that registered nurses (RNs) need to work effectively with assistive personnel and the abilities to delegate, assign, and supervise are critical competencies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century nurse led both NCSBN and the ANA to separately adopt papers on delegation in 2005. These delegation papers were conceptually similar thus providing the impetus for NCSBN and ANA to approach this important topic from both regulatory and professional practice positions and work toward a joint statement that distills the best work of both organizations and advances the common ground between the two.

NCSBN and the ANA recognize the following policy considerations:

- State nurse practice acts define the legal parameters for nursing practice. Most states authorize RNs to delegate.
- There is a need and a place for competent, appropriately supervised nursing assistive personnel in the delivery of affordable, quality health care.

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## NEWS RELEASE

- The RN assigns or delegates tasks based on the needs and condition of the patient, potential for harm, stability of the patient's condition, complexity of the task, predictability of the outcomes, abilities of the staff to whom the task is delegated, and the context of other patient needs.
- All decisions related to delegation and assignments are based on the fundamental principles of protection of the health, safety and welfare of the public.

To support nurses in making decisions related to delegation both organizations have developed resources designed to make the delegation process easier to understand and utilize. Two such resources are the "ANA Principles of Delegation" and NCSBN's "Decision Tree on Delegation" that reflects the four phases of the delegation process.

Both NCSBN and the ANA believe that mastering the skill and art of delegation is a critical step on the pathway to nursing excellence and, when used appropriately, can result in safe and effective nursing care. As a nursing shortage of epic proportions looms, delegation becomes an even more vital tool that can free the RN to attend to more complex patient care needs; develop the skills of nursing assistive personnel; and promote cost containment for health care organizations.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN) is a not-for-profit organization whose membership comprises the boards of nursing in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and four United States territories. Mission: The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), composed of Member Boards, provides leadership to advance regulatory excellence for public protection

The American Nurses Association (ANA) is the only full-service professional organization representing the nation's 2.9 million registered nurses through its 54 constituent member nurses associations. The ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the rights of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public.

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