American Nurses Foundation to Educate Nurses, Patients On Health Problems Related to Shift Work Sleep Disorders

SILVER SPRING, MD – The American Nurses Foundation (ANF) has received a grant to educate registered nurses (RNs) and patients on the health effects of sleeping disorders caused or exacerbated by shift work, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders, and depression, conditions which often occur together.

ANF, the charitable and philanthropic arm of the American Nurses Association (ANA) that supports nurses’ initiatives to bring about change in health care, received a $226,000 grant from Teva Pharmaceuticals to work with ANA to develop educational materials by late this year on sleeping disorders related to shift work. Products will include a continuing education webinar, patient education toolkit, and a special section in American Nurse Today magazine.

Roughly 22 million Americans work shifts, which could involve overnight work, as part of their jobs, including some nurses, whose schedules are around the clock to meet the needs of patients. Nurses can typically work 10- to 12-hour shifts which may also include overtime hours, sometimes without adequate time for rest breaks or meals.

Researchers have identified shift work sleep disorders as a factor that negatively affects work performance, safety, and quality of life, in addition to the serious health burdens.

“The health consequences of shift work are something that affects nurses as well as their patients,” said ANF Chairperson Joyce Fitzpatrick, PhD, MBA, RN, FAAN, FNAP. “We are pleased that with the support of Teva Pharmaceuticals we can explore and explain how nurses and patients can be healthier.”

The educational resources will be designed to enhance nurses’ knowledge, competency, and performance in recognizing the symptoms of shift work sleeping disorders in their patients,
colleagues and themselves. The goal is to better enable nurses to implement changes, improve patient outcomes, and enhance their own self-care to improve the overall quality of care.

“Teva has a long-standing commitment to continuing education,” said Robert Kaper, MD, vice president of Global Medical Affairs at Teva Pharmaceuticals. “This initiative amplifies our overall efforts to support nurses in their efforts to improve their skills, confidence, and performance in managing shift work disorder in their patients as well as themselves and their colleagues.”

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The American Nurses Foundation is the charitable and philanthropic arm of the American Nurses Association (ANA), the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation’s 3.1 million registered nurses through its constituent and state nurses associations and its organizational affiliates. The Foundation supports programs that transform the nation’s health through the power of nursing.