

Promoting Patient-Centered Team-Based Health Care

The United States spends more on health care than any other country, and the outcomes are not representative of that investment. It is evident that the current health care infrastructure is insufficient to meet the needs of health care consumers today and in the future. A fundamental change in health care delivery is needed to achieve what the Institute for Healthcare Improvement describes as the “Triple Aim”:

- Improving the patient experience of care (including quality and satisfaction);
- Improving the health of populations; and
- Reducing the per capita cost of health care.

The high-performing team is now widely recognized as an essential tool for constructing a more patient-centered, coordinated, and effective system of health care delivery. The American Nurses Association (ANA) supports patient-centered, team-based health care that values each and every team member for his or her own unique abilities, training, and expertise. Formulation of health care teams based on the individual needs of patients requires unencumbered, highly functioning team members to coordinate care and improve the nation’s system of health care delivery. To foster health care teams, all health care professionals need to practice to the full extent of their education and training, unburdened by outdated, baseless, and costly restrictions.

Solutions

- **Encourage policy makers, the nursing community, and other stakeholders to work together with consumers to reform outdated scope of practice laws.**
Government regulation’s sole purpose is to protect the public, and this should guide scope of practice reform, not safeguard the self-interests of professional groups. Scope of practice reform is necessary as a profession’s practice evolves.
- **Support the collection of data and application of evidence to advocate for payment models that are consistent with team-based care and acknowledge that the most qualified leader may not be a physician, depending on the specific situation.**
Decades of research have established the safety and effectiveness of care by advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), and that body of evidence has led institutions and organizations from the Institute of Medicine to the National Governor’s Association to AARP to call for the lifting of barriers to APRN practice.
- **Educate patients about team-based care and about team members’ unique qualifications and roles while exercising sensitivity to care recipients’ perceptions and concerns about this shift in delivery. Assist patients in becoming active participants in managing their care.**