



Interim Health Services Committee Testimony
July 27, 2016
Bismarck, ND

Senator Lee and committee members, thank you for the invitation to present a brief summary of our three policy briefs that I mentioned at the April meeting and our recommended bills. I am Dr. Patricia Moulton and I am the Executive Director of the ND Center for Nursing. I have invited several nurses from different parts of the state and from different sectors to provide their brief comments after I am finished.

The North Dakota Center for Nursing is a non-profit, 501c3 organization that was developed in 2011 to represent over 18,000 nurses and over 40 nursing organizations across North Dakota. The mission of the North Dakota Center for Nursing is through collaboration to guide ongoing development of a well-prepared and diverse nursing workforce to meet health care needs in North Dakota through research, education, recruitment and retention, advocacy and public policy.

Over 50 nurses have been working since last fall on developing some concrete action steps as we have developed three policy briefs. These policy briefs have gone through an approval process at the ND Center for Nursing to ensure agreement across the participating 40 organizations including nursing associations, nursing education programs, state government and regulation and other stakeholders. All three policy briefs are included in this testimony and are also available on our website at the links below:

[Behavioral Health Nursing Policy Brief](#)

[Faculty Recruitment Policy Brief](#)

[APRN Preceptor Reimbursement Policy Brief](#)

Our Behavioral Health Policy Brief outlines fifteen action steps in which the nursing community could assist with the state's behavioral health shortages. Nurses serve in the front line of North Dakota's healthcare system and provide a key safety net for the behavioral health system. Several of these actions are already under development by our and other nursing organizations across the state. There are some actions that will require legislative assistance. This includes improvements to the Health Professional Student Loan Repayment Program and a change in wording to include APRNs in detoxification holds.

Student Loan Repayment Program Improvement Bill Draft Components

An ACT to provide changes to health care professional student loan repayment program (North Dakota Century Code Chapter 43-12.3). These changes include expanding eligible health professionals, increased funding and removal of barriers related to community matching.

- *Student Loan repayment program- Contract. (Century Code 43-12.03-06)*

Remove matching funds requirement for behavioral health professionals as this was found to be a substantial barrier to full implementation of this program as many of these providers are located in state agencies with budget cuts.

Add Registered Nurse and Licensed Practical Nurse as eligible providers for loan repayment with similar loan repayment amounts to other providers.

- *Increase overall funding of health professional loan repayment program to accommodate inclusion of additional nursing providers and mental health professionals. House Bill 1396 passed in 2015 did not include increased funding for this program which will be critical with increased shortages of nurses, advanced practice registered nurses and mental health professionals.*

Inclusion of APRNs in Detoxification Holds Bill Components

Current Century Code allows a licensed physician of a local hospital or a licensed addiction counselor of a detoxification center to have the authority to hold a person for treatment up to seventy-two hours. In many rural areas, APRNs are the primary care provider on duty at the hospital and should be added to this list of those authorized for a public intoxication hold. (NDCC § 5-01-05.1. Public intoxication - Assistance - Medical care). This is also being forwarded by Department of Human Services Mental Health Professions definition group.

North Dakota is currently experiencing shortages of Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses. I provided more information about these shortages in my testimony in April and this information is available in our [2016 Education, Supply and Demand Chartbook](#). A key component to increasing the number of nurses in the state is increasing the capacity of our nursing education programs. The College and University Nursing Education Administrators (CUNEA) have been working on ways to ensure that available slots are filled by greater communication amongst programs regarding open slots and encouraging students to apply. Dr. Carla Gross who is the Chair of CUNEA will share more information about these efforts. Critical to increasing capacity is having an adequate supply of faculty and preceptors. More information is available in our Faculty Recruitment Policy Brief and APRN Preceptor Reimbursement Policy Brief, but we have two suggested bills below to address this issue:

Faculty Loan Forgiveness Program Bill Draft Components

An ACT to develop a new nursing faculty loan forgiveness program for public, private and tribal nursing education program faculty to obtain Master's and Doctorate degrees while serving as faculty. The program would provide support while faculty are teaching and would include a service requirement. Faculty could attend in-state or out-of-state programs to obtain their advanced education.

This program is especially important for those nursing faculty teaching behavioral health at the undergraduate level at all nursing programs and faculty teaching in the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program at UND. Faculty shortages are a critical barrier to increasing capacity across all programs. Minnesota offers a nursing faculty loan forgiveness program at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/loans/nursfac.html>. The program provides for the establishment of a health professional education loan forgiveness program account that it utilized to establish a loan forgiveness program for nurses that agree to teach at least 12 credit hours or 720 hours per year in the nursing field in a postsecondary program at the undergraduate or graduate level. Faculty serve a minimum two-year full-time service

obligation. This program is described in detail in Minnesota Statute 144.1501 Health Professional Loan Forgiveness Program which also includes other health professionals.
<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=144.1501>

Income Tax Credit for APRN Preceptor Bill Components

An act to create an income tax credit of \$1,000 for each clinical rotation of at least 160 hours for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses that serve as a preceptor for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse students attending the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University or University of Mary. The maximum income tax credit is \$10,000 for serving as a preceptor for 10 rotations.

I would now like to invite to the podium representatives from the University of North Dakota, North Dakota Nurses Association, the College and University Nursing Education Administrators and the North Dakota Nurse Practitioner Association to provide more information from their perspectives of the three policy briefs and our recommended bills. Thank you.