Dear Colleagues:

The Arkansas Nurses Association and the ARNA Grassroots Coalition wants to keep you up to date about how you can impact legislative issues facing health care in our state. We are focusing our energy on three specific grassroots efforts and need all nurses to get informed and involved quickly!

**GRASSROOTS EFFORT #1 – LEGISLATION FOR INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE FOR MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREAS**

**WHAT:** HB 1160

**WHY SUPPORT HB 1160:** This bill would recognize certified nurse practitioners (CNPs) to *practice within their full scope*, so that Arkansans who live in Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) can have access to the high quality healthcare they need. Under this permit program, CNPs who have fewer than 2000 hours/2 years working in a MUA with a collaborative practice agreement would have a collaborative agreement until those requirements are met. Then, he/she could apply to the BON to remove the collaborative agreement (see attached copies of the bill and talking points for your reference).

**EXCITING NEWS ABOUT THIS BILL...** Representative Kim Hammer has arranged that HB 1160 will be first on the Agenda at the House Public Health, Welfare, and Labor Committee meeting on February 26th, 2015, at 10 am. This happens to be the *same day as NURSES DAY AT THE CAPITOL!* We have an opportunity to visibly show our legislators that nurses *want* a major voice in decision affecting health care by being there in force!

**GRASSROOTS EFFORT #2 – LEGISLATION FOR SCHEDULE II PRESCRIBING AUTHORITY**

**WHAT:** HB 1165

**WHY SUPPORT HB 1165** - This bill authorizes Schedule II-V prescriptive authority for APRNs to restore patient access to these providers. The committee members need to hear from a lot of APRNs whose ability to provide care is being hindered by lack of Schedule II authority. If passed, this bill restores access to timely care and provides Arkansas patients with the level of care that patients in forty-three states are already authorized to receive. Other states that do not presently include Schedule II-V prescribing authority for NPs are considering legislation to authorize Schedule II-V in their state sessions this year (see attached copies of the bill and talking points for your reference).

*Please DO NOT confuse this bill with HB 1136, which extends Schedule II prescriptive authority to hydrocodone combination products only...we do not support HB 1136. We need to educate all legislators about why this bill does not adequately meet the needs of patients in Arkansas.*

**GRASSROOTS EFFORT #3 – LEGISLATION REGARDING INSULIN ADMINISTRATION BY NON-NURSES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**WHAT:** HB 1395

**WHY OPPOSE HB 1395:**

- **Arkansas State Board of Nursing’s School Nurse Practice Guidelines do not** allow school nurses to delegate the administration of insulin. Tasks that involve ongoing assessments, interpretations or decision making cannot be delegated.
Helping a student with diabetes manage their care requires ongoing assessment through blood sugar monitoring, assessing the trends of these readings and providing care based on the Doctor's orders. It may also include knowing when to communicate with the Doctor for adjustments in insulin.

Student safety is at risk if volunteers with minimal training are allowed to give insulin because of the absence of assessment skills of the volunteers. No student with diabetes should be subjected to substandard care simply because he/she is in school.

All children with healthcare needs should have the services of a full-time school nurse. Anything less is dangerous for the student, the employee and the school district. The best solution for providing safe and effective health care needs of school children is to have a nurse on every campus all day every day.

NOTE: Please visit the Arkansas School Nurses Association’s website for talking points about the need to oppose HB 1395 at https://asna.nursingnetwork.com/page/24591-proposed-insulin-legislation

NOW....HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Ask the members of House Public Health, Welfare and Labor to please support HB 1160 and 1165...AND communicate with and educate all legislators about how these bills can help meet the needs of patients.

- Contact as many legislators as you can to oppose HB 1136. It has already been passed in committee and we don’t want it to get passed on the floor of the House.

- Educate legislators, colleagues, parents of school-age children, and community members about why we all need to oppose HB 1395...a better option is to legislate funding for more school nurses!

- Share this message with at least five of your colleagues, asking them to do the same.

- Come and help us make a visible show of support for nursing in Arkansas by being present at Nurses Day at the Capitol (even if you can only come for part of the day)...

AND.... Let’s “Flood the Capitol with Nurses” on 2-26-2015!

Thank you all for your help! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at arnagrassroots@gmail.com. We can accomplish great things by working together! Please make an effort to improve access to safe quality health care in Arkansas!

Sincerely,

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