Getting a Leg Up on Legislation

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Objectives

- Describe 2 ways to be informed & respond to legislation that affects APN practice.
- Discuss 2 key issues impacting APN practice & formulate an action plan to address them.

Health Reform and the National Agenda

President Obama at the White House Forum on Health Care Reform, March 5, 2009

Health reform is unlikely to be adopted if it is not at or near the top of the national political agenda.
Overview – Committees and Floor Debate

**HOUSE**
- Energy & Commerce
- Ways & Means
- Education & Labor
  - Hearings
  - Legislation
  - Cost estimate
  - Markup

Three Bills combined into One

**SENATE**
- Finance
- HELP
  - Hearings
  - Legislation
  - Cost estimate
  - Markup

Three Bills combined into One

**FLOOR CONSIDERATION**

- Regular Order
- Reconciliation

- Debate terms negotiated
  - Limited debate; no filibuster

- Full Senate vote on Bill (simple majority to pass)

- House-Senate Conference Committee

- House vote on Bill (simple majority to pass)

- Senate vote on Bill (simple majority to pass)

Overview – Conference

**HOUSE**
- Conference Report

**SENATE**
- Regular Order
- Reconciliation

- Debate terms negotiated
  - Limited debate; no filibuster

- Full Senate vote on Bill (simple majority to pass)

GAPNA Health Affairs Agenda 2008-2009

- Build consensus with the American College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP), American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), and other like-minded organizations such as the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) to ensure the inclusion of provider neutral language in all federal legislation and policy formation with special emphasis on Medicare and medical home legislation.

- Act strategically with American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), ACNP, AANP, and other like-minded organizations to ensure passage of appropriate levels of funding for academic programs under Titles VII and VIII to ensure availability of programs and faculty that prepare advanced practice nurses.

- Actively support legislation, regulation, and policy that address and impact scope of practice inclusive of home health, workplace compensation, managed care, and the like and do so in collaboration with ACNP and following updates from their legislative resource/experts.

- Evaluate and provide input into the design and passage of legislation that impacts quality of care issues and access most particularly the legislation introduced through efforts of American Geriatrics Society (AGS) and American Medical Directors’ Association (AMDA) and selected nursing organizations.

- Approved by NCGNP Membership September 26, 2008
APN Concerns for Health Reform:
- Include APNs as PCPs in all new & existing Care Delivery Models.
- Remove access barriers for pts who seek care from APNs.
- Ensure APNs are authorized to certify HH services under Medicare.
- Continued funding for Title VIII for nursing education, and grants for Schools of Nursing.
- Quality, affordable health care for all older adults without discrimination based on gender/health.

AARP’S Stand on Health Care Reform
- Stop insurers from charging more because of age.
- Stop exclusions for pre-existing conditions.
- Make insurance affordable for all.
- Make drugs affordable: narrow the MC donut hole, bring generics to market faster, negotiate better drug prices.
- www.HealthActionNow.org

GAPNA Health Affairs Work 2009
- Attend ACNP Summit in DC in 2/09
- Estab Health Affairs Summit Scholarship
- Monthly Conference Calls
- Legislative E-blasts
- Networking ACNP, AANP, AAHCP, AACN, ANSR, CGNO, NNCC, ACP, etc
- Monitoring bills
Health Affairs Scholarship

GAPNA Health Affairs Scholarship was established to provide assistance to a GAPNA member to attend the annual American College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP) National Nurse Practitioner Summit.

The recipient of the Health Affairs scholarship will receive an award of $1500.00 to be used for registration fees, travel, lodging, and other Summit related costs.

Eligibility:
• GAPNA membership for a minimum of 2 years; student membership applies
• Demonstrated interest in health affairs and policy legislation but cannot have previously attended the ACNP National Nurse Practitioner Summit
• The recipient agrees to commit to actively participate on the GAPNA Health Affairs Committee for the next 2 years and to participate in the planning of the Health Affairs Committee activities at the annual GAPNA conference
• The recipient will submit an article on the National Nurse Practitioner Summit for the next issue of the GAPNA newsletter

Application deadline: November 15, 2009:

Bills of Interest in 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill Name</th>
<th>Sponsorship</th>
<th>House Sponsorship</th>
<th>Congressmen</th>
<th>Legislative Status</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Name</td>
<td>Senate Committee</td>
<td>House Committee</td>
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<td>Affordable Health Care Act of 2009</td>
<td>Health, Education, Labor and Pensions</td>
<td>Energy and Commerce</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Replace and expand Medicare to cover all prescription drugs, end一刀切, expand Medicaid, increase access to health care, reduce costs, improve quality of care, study the long-term effects of health care reform.</td>
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What Can You DO?

- Stay informed
- GAPNA Health Affairs Forum
- Know your members of Congress:
  - www.senate.gov
  - www.house.gov
- Contact them and offer your expertise
- ACNP Advocacy tips handouts

Discussion & Plan for Action

- Case examples to share with legislators
- Ideas, suggestions
- What next?
Top Ten Tips for Grasstops Leaders

ACNP “grasstops” members are core to achieving legislative success. Grasstops are influential leaders in each community who, through established relationships with elected officials and their staff, can help positively influence public policy debates and outcomes to advance the ACNP health policy agenda.

A powerful way to influence legislation is through the "grassTOPS" approach — training, mobilizing, and empowering influential leaders in each community who can reach lawmakers at the federal, state and local levels, with facts tailored to their district's interests.

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What are Grasstops?

Influential leaders in each community who, through established relationships with elected officials and their staff, can help positively influence public policy debates and outcomes to advance the ACNP health policy agenda.

With “grassROOTS” work, the focus is about generating quantity – significant numbers of nurses who weigh-in on an issue with their elected officials. With “grassTOPS”, the focus is on quality.

How can you make the transition to being grasstops leaders? There are several routes to grasstops “status.” Some people do it through political contributions or volunteering/supporting a campaign, but most do it through status in the community. You already have a respected status because of your profession. You are influential in your community by virtue of your profession, with significant health care expertise, who can reach lawmakers with facts tailored to the district’s interests. Remember, nurses are already considered reliable and credible.

Attaining the designation of a grasstops leader can be a nebulous concept, but ACNP can provide you with the information and guidance you may need to support you in these


Information in this document kindly taken from Oncology Nursing Society documents.
important efforts. Being a grasstops leader also has a lot to do with attitude and action — you have to believe and act like one and take a few, but critical action steps.

STEP 1: Believe in yourself. Much of the success experienced by advocates in the legislative sphere comes from confidence. You are an expert in your profession and know first hand what the delivery of quality health care entails. That expertise, the advocacy you do for your patients every day, help give you standing as an influential leader in your community. Remember: nurses are consistently voted as the nation’s most trusted profession by the general public — that means elected officials and their staff will trust and value you as well.

STEP 2: Be a strong, knowledgeable advocate. Knowledge is power and you have information that will help the Member of Congress make informed decisions. You are on the front lines in America’s health care system. Utilize the information ACNP provides to support your efforts and ensure you have up-to-date facts.

STEP 3: Use the media. Beyond personal interaction, Members are shaped by what they read and see in the media. Press clips about you or ACNP showing up in Congressional office add to your credibility and status.

STEP 4: Build personal relationships. Like all business, relationships build the structure for success. Advocacy is all about knowing your elected officials, their key staff in Washington, DC and at home. These relationships can be developed by regularly reaching out to your Members of Congress and their staff through letters, phone calls, and attendance at town hall meetings or other events. Through regular communications and points of contact, you can develop a mutually beneficial partnership.

STEP 5: Show up. Half the game in politics is literally showing up. This sounds so simple, but it is often overlooked. It can mean scheduling a meeting at the local office, asking a question at the town hall meeting, going to a Member’s fundraiser, attending a local media event at which the Member is in attendance (e.g., dedication of a hospital wing).

STEP 6: Political action is key. Importantly, political action comes in many different manifestations. Sometimes it is a contribution to a campaign but it does not have to be. Attending political events, volunteering, or holding a fundraiser all add up and allow people to become better acquainted with legislators.

♦ It is important to note that ACNP is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that does not endorse candidates, advocate or support individuals to be elected to particular office, or make any contributions to political campaigns. Individuals may choose to, on their own time and with their own resources, participate in political...

STEP 7: Build relationships with community leaders. The public has a very positive view of the nursing profession. As such, you are starting with a strong base of influence and respect and already are a community leader yourself. Combining that status with your ACNP advocacy work gives you a solid foundation. Find opportunities to work with other community leaders in ways that advance your agenda and enhance your standing. Remember, you will bring credibility to coalitions or events in which you participate. Likewise, you can benefit from the stature of those with whom you work.

STEP 8: Provide a forum. Members of Congress are often looking for forums to present their agenda or discuss issues of interest to their constituents. By providing the place and the audience — such as at a local ACNP meeting, you are becoming known to the Member at a different level and they will appreciate your hospitality.

STEP 9: Be persistent, polite, but persistent. It takes a continuous effort to overcome institutional barriers to participation. Polite persistence wears down that resistance.

Members and staffers say that developing a relationship with policymakers “at-home” is more effective since you can see them in your own community. The more you engage in “at-home” advocacy – the more effective you will be!

STEP 10: Remember, grasstops advocacy is a process. Success does not happen overnight, but over time.
It is essential to go on record with your Member(s) of Congress. You never know when an issue will resonate with him/her or the staffs. Members who historically were not interested or supportive of nursing issues, often become our biggest advocates.

activities, such as campaigns. It is important that any ACNP events be devoid of electioneering or political fundraising activities.
TIPS FOR LOCAL ADVOCACY

Your advocacy at the local level with your Members of Congress and their staff is critical to advancing the public policy agenda for nurse practitioners as well as ensuring appropriate inclusion of nurse practitioners in health care reform initiatives. The following are tips to enhance your advocacy effectiveness.

Attend Town Hall Meetings

During the August district work period when Members are in their home states, a number of public events will be held during which you can participate and share your comments and issues. Contact your Senator/Representative’s local office to find out when these meetings or other public sessions will be held. Take the opportunity to participate in at least one town hall meeting and be prepared with your questions or comments. Be sure to introduce yourself to your Member and staff and follow up with an email or telephone call after the meeting. For more information on participating in Town Hall meetings, refer to “Effectively Using Town Hall Meetings” on the ACNP Advocacy Resources webpage.

Invite a Member of Congress or His/Her Staff to visit your clinical practice site: Inviting your Members of Congress, or congressional staff, to visit your clinical site and see you in action provides an ideal opportunity to educate them about the care you provide as a nurse practitioner and the issues you face. These visits could provide your Member of Congress with additional insight about the care needs in your particular district. Additionally, hosting a visit could provide for you valuable face-time with the Member of Congress or staff. Be sure to clear this activity with the appropriate persons at your worksite.

Offer your expertise as a healthcare provider resource: Contact your elected officials and their staff to identify yourself as a nurse practitioner and offer your services as an expert, knowledgeable resource about health care and especially the health care issues that are important in your district. With ongoing discussions about healthcare reform, volunteering as an expert healthcare resource could be vitally important to future Hill deliberations.

Additional advocacy opportunities:

Do your homework on the elected official: Review his/her voting record, read their bio, and spend a little time on their website. Familiarize yourself with their positions,
priorities, and orientation to issues regarding health care. For more information on particular NP related bills, refer to the Legislative Tracking Chart on the ACNP Advocacy Resources webpage.

Prepare your questions/comments in advance and bring materials to give to the elected official and his/her staff: Public speaking sometimes can be intimidating, so writing down the specific question you wish to ask, or jotting down a few notes to help you with your remarks, is advisable. Since you may only have a minute or two, it is best to focus your comments on one particular item and, “Cut to the chase.” Providing handout material to give to the policymaker and staff will give you the peace of mind that everything will be covered, especially in case you do not have the time to make (or you forget) some of your key points.

Sign-up for your Senators’ and Representative’s newsletters and mailing lists: Members of Congress like to keep in touch with their constituents to keep them up-to-date on key issues and inform them of their positions. They also send out notifications of town hall meetings and other events throughout the year. Sign-up for electronic newsletters through a portal on your elected officials homepages. When signing-up, make sure you provide contact information, such as; email, phone, or mailing address; always use your home/personal information.

Most of all – ENJOY participating in the process: Your voice will help elected officials understand the importance of nurse practitioners and the role they play in primary care.