

## Introduction

The world of legislation can be very confusing and frustrating for those who live in a world driven by outcomes and results of a potentially life-threatening nature on a daily basis. It is also one that we as CNSs need to understand and move through with a sense of purpose and grace. The tools you will find in this toolkit will assist you in the world of the legislature and regulatory agencies as you endeavor to make policy and practice changes that will impact your patients, your peers, and your employer. There are many changes happening in health care and the CNS role may get lost if we don't stand up and articulate our contribution to patient outcomes and health system cost savings. The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) provides these selected tools to assist you as you start your journey toward rules and regulations governing the practice of CNSs as Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs).

### *Supporting You as You Lead the Way*

NACNS realizes that entry into national policy regulation and legislation may initially be intimidating. While many CNSs may be adept at policy creation and modification in their professional institutions, there is often a knowledge gap related to legislative processes. Once you get involved you will be excited to see how your talent and skills as a CNS transfer to your role as a policy advocate!

Recognizing this, the NACNS **Starter Kit for Impacting Change at the Government Level** was developed to assist you with this challenge. While not exhaustive, the Starter Kit is intended to provide the user with a better understanding of the legislative and regulatory process, to offer suggestions and guidelines on how the users can become involved, and to provide models and resources for quick reference.

### *Why Should I be concerned about the APRN Consensus Model?*

One of the legislative and regulatory issues you will be confronted with in your state, if you haven't already, is the APRN Consensus Model. In 2008, a collaborative group of nearly thirty (30) nursing organizations produced the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (The Joint Dialogue Workgroup). Endorsed by 48 professional nursing organizations, including NACNS. This proposed model will not take the place of individual state board of nursing (SBON) regulations but will strongly influence revisions to the scope of practice regulations impacting the APRN across the continuum of education, certification, licensure and accreditation. NACNS endorsed this document because a grandfathering clause was included in the APRN Consensus Model for CNS. The APRN Consensus Model also includes changes such as national title-protection and recognition as an APRN. This proposed model will have a positive impact on CNSs nationwide. However, there are many issues within the document that could present difficulty for the CNS. CNS must watch closely as states engage in adopting portions of the APRN Consensus Model. Unless the APRN Consensus Model is adopted with the CNS role in mind, the CNS may find the changes in licensure and certification called for in the APRN

Consensus Model may limit the ability of new and practicing CNS to work to the full extent of their education and experience.

National implementation of the Consensus Model is hoped to be achieved by 2015 This starter kit will help you be prepared when and if your state board decides to make changes to your state practice act legislation and/or regulation.

***Now more than ever, CNSs need to be politically motivated and engaged in public policy formation to address these issues.***