

How to Use the Starter Kit for Impacting Change at the State Level

This is an exciting time of change in our health care system, as well as an opportunity for the greater use of Clinical Nurse Specialists to meet the growing health care needs of our population.. In the coming months and years we will see many changes at the federal and state level. In order to prepare CNSs to have a strong voice in those changes, this Starter Kit was developed to assist the CNS in having her/his voice heard in the development of legislation and regulations.

Since the legislative and regulatory area can be unfamiliar for those who are not involved on a daily basis, the Starter Kit provides Fact Sheets and Guides to the many facets of the process. It begins with a Guide to Meeting with Congressional and State Representatives that describes how to prepare, what to say during the visit and important follow-up activities. There is also a Guide on developing legislation if there happens to be a need for legislation to protect the practice of CNSs or to enhance the use of CNSs.

One of the biggest challenges to CNSs in the states is the implementation of the APRN Consensus Model. Each state will approach this slightly differently and it may involve both legislative and/or regulatory efforts. There are several Guides about how to influence regulations. Background materials on the Model, as well as NACNS's position are provided.

Since several states have needed to take the legislative route in the implementation of the APRN Consensus Model, state practice acts from Oregon, Indiana and Pennsylvania have been included. You will also find tools that describe the benefit of writing to the editor of your local newspaper and how to get appointed to the State Board of Nursing.

Several resources have been added to the Starter Kit including a list of states that recognize the title of the CNS and those that provide prescriptive authority. Letters written by the Federal Trade Commission in support of advanced practice nursing and the IOM Report on the Future of Nursing several of which recommendations are supportive of APRNs.

The last section contains articles on the regulation of CNS practice, which provide additional information on working at the state level to influence the practice act for CNS.

We hope that this Starter Kit will be helpful to you in enhancing the practice of the CNS and we look forward to hearing of your successes.

Legislative and Regulatory Committee

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