

Introduction

The world of legislation is confusing and frustrating for those who live in a world driven by patient care and outcomes on a daily basis. Change in health care delivery not only occurs within the health care facility but occurs outside, in a legislative and regulatory arena. Therefore, it is essential, that we as CNSs understand and act on legislation with a sense of purpose for our practice. The tools in this kit will guide you in the legislative and regulatory world as you endeavor to make policy and practice changes that will impact patients, colleagues, and employers. There are many changes happening in health care and the CNS role may get lost if we are not able to stand up and articulate our contribution to patient outcomes, health system cost savings and ability to provide advanced practice care. The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) provides this tool kit to assist you on your journey of rule and regulatory change 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 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 Tool Kit for Impacting Change was developed to assist you with this challenge. While not exhaustive, the 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 user can become involved, and to provide resources for quick reference.

Now, more than ever, each CNS needs to become active in state legislation that sets the standards for APRN practice. The Institute of

Medicine's report on the *Future of Nursing*, set in motion an impetus to utilize all APRNs to the full extent of their educational training. Since that report, more and more APRN regulatory changes have been discussed and submitted for legislative change. So, now is the time for you, as a CNS, to become politically motivated and engaged in public policy formation.