

Institute of Medicine:

The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health

IOM Recommendations This report is really about the future of health care in our country. It points out that nurses are going to have a critical role in that future especially in producing safe, quality care and coverage for all patients in our health care system. - Donna E. Shalala, Ph.D., chair of the Committee on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing, at the Institute of Medicine (IOM)

As a result of its deliberations, the committee formulated four key messages that structure the discussion and recommendations presented in this report:

1. Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training.
 2. Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.
 3. Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other health professionals, in redesigning health care in the United States.
 4. Effective workforce planning and policy making require better data collection and an improved information infrastructure.
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Recommendation 1: Remove scope-of-practice barriers.

Advanced practice registered nurses should be able to practice to the full extent of their education and training.

Recommendation 2: Expand opportunities for nurses to lead and diffuse collaborative improvement efforts.

Private and public funders, health care organizations, nursing education programs, and nursing associations should expand opportunities for nurses to lead and manage collaborative efforts with physicians and other members of the health care team to conduct research and to redesign and improve practice environments and health systems. These entities should also provide opportunities for nurses to diffuse successful practices.

Recommendation 3: Implement nurse residency programs.

State boards of nursing, accrediting bodies, the federal government, and health care organizations should take actions to support nurses' completion of a transition-to-practice program (nurse residency) after they have completed a prelicensure or advanced practice degree program or when they are transitioning into new clinical practice areas.

Recommendation 4: Increase the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80 percent by 2020.

Academic nurse leaders across all schools of nursing should work together to increase the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree from 50 to 80 percent by 2020. These leaders should partner with education accrediting bodies, private and public funders, and employers to ensure funding, monitor progress, and increase the diversity of students to create a workforce prepared to meet the demands of diverse populations across the lifespan.

Recommendation 5: Double the number of nurses with a doctorate by 2020.

Schools of nursing, with support from private and public funders, academic administrators and university trustees, and accrediting bodies, should double the number of nurses with a doctorate by 2020 to add to the cadre of nurse faculty and researchers, with attention to increasing diversity.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that nurses engage in lifelong learning.

Accrediting bodies, schools of nursing, health care organizations, and continuing competency educators from multiple health professions should collaborate to ensure that nurses and nursing students and faculty continue their education and engage in lifelong learning to gain the competencies needed to provide care for diverse populations across the lifespan.

Recommendation 7: Prepare and enable nurses to lead change to advance health.

Nurses, nursing education programs, and nursing associations should prepare the nursing workforce to assume leadership positions across all levels, while public, private, and governmental health care decision makers should ensure that leadership positions are available to and filled by nurses.

Recommendation 8: Build an infrastructure for the collection and analysis of interprofessional health care workforce data.

The National Health Care Workforce Commission, with oversight from the Government Accountability Office and the Health Resources and Services Administration, should lead a collaborative effort to improve research and the collection and analysis of data on health care workforce requirements. The Workforce Commission and the Health Resources and Services Administration should collaborate with state licensing boards, state nursing workforce centers, and the Department of Labor in this effort to ensure that the data are timely and publicly accessible.