



COUNCIL ON
PHYSICIAN AND
NURSE SUPPLY

AMN HEALTHCARE®

For Immediate Release:

**NEW COUNCIL CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE INCREASE
IN PHYSICIAN AND NURSE EDUCATION**

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PHILADELPHIA, PA --

The Council on Physician and Nurse Supply concluded its first meeting in Philadelphia with the statement that shortages of physicians already exist in certain geographic areas and that nursing shortages are widespread. At current levels of training, these shortages will deepen and there will be too few physicians and nurses to meet the future needs of the nation. The Council called for immediate efforts to expand medical and nursing education.

The Council, which is based at the University of Pennsylvania and is supported by AMN Healthcare, a national health care staffing organization, expressed concern that persistent shortages of nurses and physicians could have a number of adverse consequences, including the following:

- inadequate access to care, particularly in rural and inner city locations.
- lack of the necessary capacity for emergency preparedness.
- decreased ability to accomplish planned expansions of health care services, with attendant negative effects on local and national economies.
- increased dependence on foreign nurses and physicians, worsening the brain drain that already is crippling a number of developing countries, while young people in the US are deprived of the opportunity to become high-level health professionals.

With respect to physician supply, the Council concluded that, at current levels of training and under current conditions of the health care system, there would be too few physicians to meet the nation's future needs. Given the long period required to train physicians, measures should be undertaken immediately to expand medical school capacity and increase the number of graduate medical education (residency) training positions. As is true for nursing education, these initiatives in medical education will require substantial private and public investment.

In considering the nursing shortage, the Council noted that a growing body of research supports the relationship between the level of nursing education and both the quality and safety of patient care. Therefore, in expanding nursing education, the emphasis should be

at the baccalaureate (BSN) level. However, nurse education is currently balanced toward associate degree nursing (ADN) programs, which receive the bulk of federal funding for nurse education, yet few ADN graduates progress to advanced practice and faculty roles, both of which are needed. The Council urged a national effort to substantially expand BSN training.

While the Council emphasized the need to address the issues of shortages of supply, it also urged continued efforts to change the structure of the health care system and noted that the ultimate dimensions of the health care workforce would be influenced by the changes that will occur.

Finally, the Council called attention to the fact that nurses and physicians are interdependent and that shortages in either discipline would aggravate shortages in the other. It concluded by calling for dual efforts to expand the infrastructure for nursing and medical education.

About the Council on Physician and Nurse Supply

The Council on Physician and Nurse Supply is an independent, multi-disciplinary group dedicated to studying trends in the demand for physicians and nurses and to propose ways to better align training capacity with the nation's needs. It is based in the University of Pennsylvania's Leonard Davis Institute of Health Care Economics. Funding for the Council is provided by AMN Healthcare, a leading national health care staffing firm.

Council members include:

Linda Aiken, Ph.D., RN (Co-Chair), University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

Richard "Buz" Cooper, M.D. (Co-Chair), University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

James Bentley, Senior Vice President, American Hospital Association

David Blumenthal, MD, MPP, Director, Inst of Health Policy, Mass General Hospital

Peter Budetti, MD, Chair, Dept of Health Adm. and Policy, U. of Oklahoma

Joyce Clifford, PhD, RN, Pres and CEO, The Inst. for Nursing Healthcare Leadership

Robert Graham, M.D., Professor of Family Medicine, University of Cincinnati

John Iglehart, MD, Founding Editor, *Health Affairs*

William Jesse, M.D., President and CEO, Medical Group Management Association

Michael Johns, M.D., Executive Vice President for Health Affairs, Emory University

Kathleen Long, RN, PhD, Dean, College of Nursing, University of Florida, Gainesville

Mark Kelly, M.D., CEO, Henry Ford Medical Group

Barbara Ross-Lee, DO, Dean, New York College of Osteopathic Medicine

Marla Salmon, ScD, RN, Dean, Emory University School of Nursing

George Sheldon, M.D., Professor of Surgery, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Ralph Synderman, M.D., Chancellor Emeritus, Duke University

Michael Whitcomb, M.D., Editor-in-Chief, *Academic Medicine*

Supporting Members are:

Susan Nowakowski, President and CEO of AMN Healthcare

James Merritt, President of The MHA Group

About AMN Healthcare

Based in San Diego, California, AMN Healthcare is the nation's largest health care staffing firm, specializing in the permanent and temporary placement of nurses, physicians and allied health care professionals.