

FUTURE OF NURSING™
Campaign for Action



CFA Action Coalitions: A Message Primer

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Introduction

This primer is intended to help you communicate about the *Campaign for Action* (CFA) with the goal of building greater engagement among constituents. Messages are aligned with the mission of CFA.

Advocates crafted the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* recommendations into a “call to arms.” Over the nearly five years since its inception, *Campaign* messages have been honed, and in some cases tested, to resonate with audiences who are essential to the success of state Action Coalitions (ACs). This guide provides direction for AC leadership, volunteers, and staff to support membership drives and outreach efforts to new and diverse sectors of nurses, business leaders, policymakers, health care leaders, and other audiences.

Use this message primer to help you prepare talking points, speeches, news releases, and other written content, and engaging formal or informal audiences. Whether you are traveling on the stump or writing a blog post, having one-on-one conversations or pitching business leaders, the messages should give your voice greater impact and help extend your reach.

This primer includes:

- CFA’s mission statement and vision
- Topline findings from market research of nurses and top stakeholders
- Winning messages tested during focus groups and by communications experts
- Messaging tips and techniques
- Talking points for specific audiences
- A message evaluation checklist
- Guidance to craft your personalized elevator speech

We hope this handbook will be a tool to empower you and your colleagues as you advance the future of nursing.

CFA Mission & Vision

Everyone in America can live a healthier life, supported by a system in which nurses are essential partners in providing care and promoting health.

Nursing is the largest sector of the health care workforce, yet there is a critical shortage of nurses and nursing faculty in the U.S.—an increasingly serious problem as the population ages. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) conviction that strengthening the nursing field is crucial to improving health in our country led it to partner with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to produce a report on the future of the profession.

The IOM's recommendations, released in the landmark *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, prompted the Foundation to join forces with AARP to launch the Future of Nursing: *Campaign for Action* (CFA), a nationwide initiative to improve health through nursing. CFA's mission—to promote implementation of the IOM recommendations—is rooted in a vision that everyone in America can live a healthier life, supported by a system in which nurses are essential partners in providing care and promoting health.

CFA works at both the national level and in the states, engaging consumers, nurses, other clinicians, insurers, health care systems, employers, educators, funders, and policymakers, whose involvement is crucial to system change. CFA's goal is to engage nurses from a wide field of health and health care, as well as other core constituencies and allies who are crucial to the achievement of patient-centered care.

The Action Coalitions, in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, are vital to fulfillment of the CFA mission. Each AC is empowered to pave the way for needed changes at the state level. The ACs were designed to form grassroots networks of diverse stakeholders, all working to transform health care through nursing. Engagement of new partners will require sustained outreach and communications by the forces on the ground. The Action Coalitions are the voice and vital link to a wide range of health care providers, consumer advocates, policymakers, and business, academic, and philanthropic leaders.

Opinion Research Overview

“You have to reach your audience where they are before you can take them to where you want to go.”

The qualitative research that informs this message primer was conducted by Lake Research Partners in coordination with a team of communications specialists supporting the CFA. Lake is a public opinion research firm with a long history of serving health care organizations and nonprofits that focus on health care issues. In addition to the messages tested by the Lake team, talking points and other message guidance have been gathered by a consortium of communications professionals (CFA Communications Team) in consultation with the CFA and RWJF nursing programs and initiatives.

The opinion research was conducted to develop insight and direction, rather than generate precise or absolute measures. Through focus groups and one-on-one interviews, the research was designed to understand the respondents' views, identify barriers, and help address their concerns in the public square. While qualitative research is limited due to biases inherent in the focus group setting, the data provides a frame of reference about the knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and opinions of respondents that help to inform, check, and refine the delivery of public messages.

Lake spoke to a diverse group of nurses—from African-American RNs in Atlanta to Latino RNs in Phoenix to rural white nurses from across the country. The probe also included student nurses, early-career nurses, and RNs with decades on the job, as well as APRNs. Cognizant that the AC messaging must reach beyond the core constituency groups of nurses, the group sessions were followed by 12 one-on-one interviews with leaders of business, labor, and health care organizations.

Summary & Snapshot

A snapshot of the wide-ranging market research project:

- Message testing conducted between April and June 2014
- Total of four traditional focus groups that included 54 female and 10 male nurses representing the full spectrum of the profession
 - Two focus groups, mixed races/genders, <45 years old in Chicago and Richmond
 - Two focus groups, mixed races/genders, >45 years old in Chicago and Richmond
- Nurses from across the country attending national conferences
 - Association of Public Health Nurses
 - National Rural Health Association
 - National Student Nurses' Association
- National Black Nurses Association—Atlanta Chapter
- National Association of Hispanic Nurses—Arizona Chapter
- Individual in-depth interviews with leaders of business, health care organization, and labor unions

The messages informed by this research can be integrated into talking points you are currently using to advance the work of your ACs. This guidance is not intended to replace or dilute the messages you use now; rather, it should complement and strengthen language to win wider public support. Like all messaging, when used consistently and over time, you will be more effective in influencing more stakeholders to support your efforts.

Toplines & Takeaways

The nurses and stakeholders interviewed were unanimous in the view that the nursing profession is essential to improving consumer care and advancing health reform.

Nurses love their profession, but express concerns about budget-driven decisions, an inordinate amount of paper work, and the growing demand to do more with less. A generational divide between newly licensed and veteran nurses points to perceptions that a new generation of nurses lacks passion for the job. The push for greater formal education and advanced degrees, in line with the IOM recommendations, is embraced by a large core of the profession, especially younger nurses. But the challenges and issues of cost, compensation, and derived benefits are concerns. Such views were expressed by nurses across generations, most frequently among older and established RNs—especially those who have practiced for years and entered the profession with ADNs. The commonly expressed view from this sector is that experience trumps education.

A point of unity among all nurses, regardless of age or educational status, is the importance of lifelong learning as a key to effective nursing and patient-centered care.

Two messages emerged as the most resonant among all groups probed:

- *Health care is changing. Nurses can improve care: in your home; in your community; in the classroom; in the boardroom; in the laboratory; in the operating room; in the emergency room.*
- *Nurses, more than 3 million strong and composing the largest sector of the health care workforce, can and should play a fundamental role in the transformation of the nation's health care system.*

Nurses across the spectrum share consensus on key issues:

- Hesitation on BSN requirement for all nurses, especially older ones.
- Agreement on the emerging importance of ambulatory care and community health.
- Concern about the requirement to do more with less.
- Highly value prevention and wellness to improve care for consumers and their families.
- Money and time are major barriers to education progression.
- IOM references are useful in some circles, but do not resonate with rank-and-file nurses, laypeople, and others not engaged in health policy work.

Stakeholders see nurses as a trusted resource:

- Nurses serve as the strongest bridge between consumers, their families and the care they need.
- Nurses are critical to administering preventive care that focuses on wellness.
- The health care workforce and nursing need more diversity to provide people with better care.

Recommendations for Message Themes & Engagement

- **Be Inclusive**—Highlight the many roles and settings in which nurses operate.
- **Show Diversity**—Underscore efforts to attract nurses from a wide range of backgrounds, and reflect this visually in your outreach material.
- **Highlight Leadership**—Encouraging nurses to create pathways for leadership in the profession requires repetition and concrete examples of the benefits, mechanisms, and possibilities. Many nurses do not feel confident or empowered to assume leadership roles outside of their jobs, or even know that leadership opportunities exist. Information, guidance, and mentoring will help nurses prepare for leadership.
- **Education: Prepare for Pushback**—Older nurses believe education requirements push them out because the benefits do not outweigh the costs; most believe education requirements should be limited to newer nurses; almost all believe in lifelong learning. Be mindful of how education progression is framed to avoid offending or excluding important sectors of your core constituency.
- **Key Value: Empowerment and Respect**—Nurses know the public trusts them more than most professions, but also do not feel their value is embraced by authority figures; they respond strongly to messaging that highlights improving respect for their profession.

Messaging Tips & Techniques

KISS

Successful messaging is exemplified by the KISS Principle: *Keep It Short and Simple*.

Effective messages are clear, convey the most important information in language that is easy to grasp and repeat, and include a straightforward call to action. Simple concepts, concise words, and plain language carry the day.

Language Matters

A well-worn tenet of communications is that it's not what you say; it's what your audience hears. People notice when the language in your message is exclusionary. They respond to words and themes that convey acceptance, understanding, and inclusion, and reject language that makes them or their peers feel that they've been dismissed and discounted.

The message testing focused mostly on nurses because ACs are charged with building their ranks and should consider nurses from the wide spheres of the field as their core constituency. Ultimately, if you have been successful in advancing your themes, nurses will be both the audience and future messengers for your cause.

Nurses gravitated to messages that highlighted the myriad roles and settings in which they operate, and linked *all* of these to providing people with care. It's important to communicate the idea that nurses are at the forefront of improving health care—no matter their age, experience, or level of educational attainment.

"Inclusion" extends to racial, ethnic, age, and gender diversity as well. Nurses recognize that diversity is lacking in their profession and want to see a concerted effort to include people from other ethnic and racial groups, diverse viewpoints, and cultural competency in everything from policy decisions to collateral materials.

What's in a Name?

The breadth of the nursing profession can create communications challenges. The array of roles nurses play—at the bedside, in the boardroom, in homes, schools, and communities as well as other settings—results in different terminology based on varying activities, services, and frames of reference.

For example, nurses who work in places other than hospitals, clinics, and private practice settings may not refer to the people they serve as "patients." In their varied roles, nurses frequently work with people, families, and communities—not patients. Convenient care clinics call those they serve guests or sometimes customers; public health nurses call them clients; long-term care nurses serve residents; school nurses care for students. And in most instances, those who receive health and health services can also appropriately be called consumers.

We have varied the terminology in this primer, but use “patient” as the default term, reflecting the language we heard in the research process. However, we urge you to use the nomenclature that best suits the audience you are addressing. Remember that this primer is a guide for your messaging rather than a script, so you should adjust your messages accordingly.

Stream of Consciousness; Tell a Story

Along the same lines, build your messaging from talking points provided later in this handbook. While we provide some tested and recommended language, the content can be tailored to specific circumstances. Each messenger must feel comfortable “owning” the words and articulating themes in her/his voice.

In developing clear messages, we begin with a stream of consciousness that incorporates the sense and meaning of what should be conveyed. It is then refined and narrowed, often emerging with three succinct points. Your messages will be most compelling if you also tell a story that connects your theme to something your audience will see as tangible and relatable. Resonance is achieved when you connect the dots between your voice and the values that make your audience care.

Listen, Frame, Pivot, Bridge

Effective messaging requires study and practice. You should be comfortable with the messages and develop ease in delivering them. Try out messages on people you trust. Do practice runs in the mirror. Though written messaging is very different from oral delivery, use the talking points provided in this guide to develop your spoken messages. Whenever time and opportunity allow, repeat your core message. Repetition wins acceptance: the more a listener hears a message, the greater the likelihood he or she will internalize it.

Engaging audiences through oral communications also entails *active listening*. Hearing your audience and understanding where they are is a vital step to taking them where you want to go through your messaging.

Delivery of strong messages requires context, background, and perspective. Like the frame that surrounds a picture, a message framework gives meaning. *Framing your message* will also give consistency and increase the likelihood of audience acceptance. This primer provides essential components to help make framing easier. While the frame will provide the context, be sure to adapt messages to conform to the circumstances and particulars of your audience. Depending on the needs, you may choose to focus on one or several key messages. In all cases, however, frame your delivery around the importance of nurses in patient-centered care and the role they can play in transforming the health of the nation.

Here are a few examples of message framing:

Message 1: The audience might be policymakers, employers, or the general public

Health care is changing. Nurses can improve care: in your home; in your community; in the classroom; the boardroom; the laboratory; the operating room; the emergency room.

- Nurses are a constant link to the patient/consumer in an ever-changing health care system.
- Patient-centered care depends on nurses playing a central role where people are—in hospitals, schools, laboratories, communities, and the board room.
- Our goal is to ensure that people get the care they need, when and where they need it.

Message 2: The audience might be colleagues or potential AC foot soldiers

Nurses, more than 3 million strong and the largest sector of the health care workforce, can and should play a fundamental role in the transformation of the nation’s health care system.

- We need you to join us in building our Action Coalition. As you know, nursing is one of the most respected and trusted professions. The more the public hears our voice, the better able we are to advance our future, our profession, and patient-centered care.
- We are 3 million strong. Join our AC ranks and we can make a difference together.
- As the largest segment of the health care workforce, nurses can help transform the health care system, and we will have a better chance of success by working together.

Pivot to the Point

Audience engagement is not always a simple act of stating your message and winning acceptance. Sometimes during the process of delivering your message, you will be distracted and thrown off by a response or rebuttal—whether unintended or deliberate—that takes you away from your goal. Bring the conversation back to your core messages and pivot to that point. This also requires active listening and awareness that you are being taken “off-message.” Then the rest is an easy return to the point. Pivoting to your message is especially important when dealing with opposing or confrontational views. Rather than arguing with their point, reconnect the audience to *your* point.

Here’s an example:

AC Co-Lead: Nurses are the largest segment of the health care workforce. They should play a fundamental role in the transformation of America’s health care system.

Consumer: But doctors are the primary caregivers. They should lead, and nurses should follow.

AC Co-Lead: Well, nurses have a unique viewpoint when it comes to patient care. They’re the first, and often the only, health care provider a patient sees.

Consumer: I trust my doctor. I’ve known him for years.

AC Co-Lead: But when you can't get an appointment to see your doctor, who treats you at the walk-in clinic? Or at the community health clinic? Who does your kid see when she's not feeling well at school? It's a nurse.

Consumer: Still, nurses are nurses and doctors are doctors.

AC Co-Lead: It's not *either/or*, it's *and*. Doctors *and* nurses are part of the same health care continuum. We all work together to put patient care first.

Bridge Between

Your audience comes to the enterprise with their own predispositions, beliefs, and attitudes that may often overlap with or complement the messages you convey. Just as active listening will help you pivot to your point, you should also use this skill to discern connecting points between you and your audience. Bridging is a powerful technique that acknowledges and validates your audience view and connects it to your message.

To move from your listener's point back to your message, use connective bridge words: *Of equal importance; In addition to your example; In the same way, we also agree; Just as you pointed out...* When not engaged in confrontational debate, avoid the use of contrasting connectors that widen the divide between you and your audience such as *but, however, and on the other hand*, as they tend to negate the thoughts that preceded them.

Sample Messages & Talking Points

These talking points are intended to help you communicate more effectively. Use Action Coalition and CFA interchangeably, as the ACs are the state apparatus of the *Campaign*. When appropriate, also emphasize that your work is in partnership with the *Campaign* and other AC counterparts across the country.

The growth and sustainability of state Action Coalitions requires that they engage nurses in all aspects of the profession. The goal is to communicate based on the needs of each audience—and not all nurses have the same needs. Hospitals, physicians, and funders are also important to your Action Coalition's success, and you'll make more headway if your messages can resonate with each of these groups based on their unique vantage point.

Keep in mind that human nature dictates self-interested attention, known as the *WIIFM (What's In It For ME)*. Your task is to help audiences understand why your work matters, how it affects them, and why you are worthy of their support. Incorporate real-world examples or stories that illustrate these messages whenever possible.

The following bullets provide message concepts for Action Coalitions to use in outreach and engagement to specific audiences. The guidance provides elements to help craft messages—tuned to specific and varied circumstances—that resonate for engagement of key audiences.

Core Audiences

- Nurses
- Hospitals
- Physicians
- Funders
- Retail Clinics
- Insurers

NURSES

General

Nurses are the heart and lifeblood of the health care system.

- We are nurses. We are 3 million strong.
- Nurses are the largest and most trusted health profession.
- America's health care system is changing. Nurses have a vital role to play in its transformation.

Nurses are critical to administering preventive care that focuses on wellness.

- Nurses value prevention and wellness as strategies to improve care. We believe the future of health care will be more reliant on preventive care, and less on care within a hospital setting.

Nurses put patient care first across the myriad roles and settings in which we work.

- Nurses are part of a continuum of care.
- We are vital to improving the quality of patient care in the home, community, classroom, boardroom, operating room, and emergency room.
- We wear many hats, and are doing more with less to the benefit of our patients, consumers, and health systems.

Action Coalitions are working to empower nurses.

- All nurses have a say in the future of the profession—young, older and experienced, African-American, Latino.
- Our voices are many and diverse. Now we need to turn them into a single, resounding voice that conveys a clear message to [your audience].
- As an Action Coalition, nurses and stakeholders can leverage our collective strength and influence to guarantee that each of us has the opportunity to practice to the full extent of our capabilities, delivering high-quality, patient-centered care.

Young Nurses

We welcome the next generation of health care professionals.

- Health care is changing. We are poised to lead the transformation.
- We need an influx of new and energetic nurses who can contribute to the innovative and changing landscape of the profession.
- Our nursing workforce can benefit from technological savvy to take advantage of cutting-edge health care tools.
- We are multitaskers—an asset in an increasingly fast-paced health care system.

Established Nurses

Experience and knowledge are valuable.

- Longstanding, established nurses have earned their stripes. The profession has grown and changed, largely because of their dedication.
- Established nurses are passionate about their work and are advocates for their patients.
- Nurses are on the front lines of the health care profession and have earned and deserve respect.
- Health care can't work unless experienced nurses have a voice in decision-making at all points within the health system.

Diversity

Action Coalitions must be inclusive of nurses from different backgrounds and experiences.

- America is becoming more diverse. Although the face of the nursing profession has changed, it hasn't progressed enough to reflect the growing diversity of the nation.
- We are committed to recruiting and mentoring nurses of different ages, experiences, races, ethnicities, genders, and backgrounds to pursue leadership roles in the profession and to seek opportunities for advancement.
- Latino nurses are health care professionals with a passion for their patients. They provide an important link to their community—but they're more than translators for colleagues who aren't bilingual.
- African-American nurses deserve the same opportunities to advance in the profession as their white colleagues.
- ***Consumers want health care professionals who look and sound like them.*** We recognize that consumers are more comfortable with health professionals of similar racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds.
- Different cultures have different ways of looking at health and health care, and it's important to enlist nurses with similar cultural understanding.
- We want to expand the ranks of nurse faculty to reflect their increasingly diverse student populations.

Diversity and inclusion signify more than race and ethnicity. The Action Coalitions are working to reflect the totality of the nursing profession.

- Patient care is not just women's work. Just as we need more racial and ethnic diversity, we need more men in the profession.
- We need to move past the stigma of nursing as a female job by creating a health profession that welcomes and encourages men into its ranks.

Action Coalitions have to look beyond the “usual suspects” and build relationships and partnerships with organizations that represent the community.

- We all need a voice—African-American, Latino, male, disabled, LGBTQ—in the decisions and policies that affect our profession and our patients.
- Mentoring is vital to helping nurses in all aspects of the field to grow and nurture their talents. We encourage culturally diverse nurse leaders to recruit new nurses to the profession from their communities.
- Action Coalitions are collaborating with people who come from the communities that we are committed to serving through partnerships with African-American, Latino, American Indian, Asian, disabled, and male nursing organizations.

Leadership

Action Coalitions are working to help nurses become leaders.

- Leadership extends beyond the job. We are preparing nurses to take on leadership roles on management teams, in boardrooms, and during policy debates.
- Nurses have a unique viewpoint when it comes to patient care that should be reflected in all levels of decision-making about health care.
- Nurses who serve on boards can help balance the business of health care with successful clinical outcomes.
- We need to hear from nurses who represent all aspects of the profession, from neighborhood clinics to schools to laboratories. Their range of experience—in clinical settings, in the community, in the classroom, in the boardroom, in the laboratory, in the operating room, in the emergency room—makes nurses uniquely qualified to help shape health and health care delivery of the future.
- Be a leader. It begins by harnessing the same skills you use in your workplace to share at decision-making tables.
- Join our Action Coalition and let your voice be heard!

HOSPITALS

Nurses are essential partners in hospitals' efforts to improve quality and safety, and to meet increased patient demand.

- Hospitals can better manage an influx of older and sicker patients and millions more insured if we maximize the role of nurses.
- Our AC is working to meet increased patient demand and control health care costs by positioning nurses to bridge gaps in our health care workforce and ensuring that all providers can practice at the top of their education and training.
- As hospitals face new payment and reimbursement systems, nurses, empowered and supported by hospital leadership, are better positioned to implement best practices, help manage complex systems in a variety of settings, and achieve measurable results.

When nurses' opinions are valued, we can reduce medical errors, readmission rates, mortality rates, and costs.

- Our Action Coalition, in partnership with CFA, is working to position nurses as valued partners in health care improvement. When nurses are encouraged to speak up, we see reductions in medical errors, readmission rates, falls, and mortality rates, all of which directly affect a hospital's bottom line.
- Hospitals that don't include nurses on their boards are missing out on the frontline clinical perspective only nurses can provide.

A highly educated nursing workforce can deliver more efficient, coordinated health care.

- The *Campaign for Action* is working to strengthen education and training so nurses are positioned to make maximum contributions to health care teams and deliver highly coordinated care.
- Studies show that a more highly educated nursing workforce leads to care improvements in acute care settings.
- Nurses at every education level are advocates of lifelong learning, and value experience as much as advanced education. A balance of older, experienced nurses and younger, more educated nurses is the best of both worlds.
- Nurses express willingness to pursue higher education, but money and time are barriers. We are looking to hospitals to provide incentives to nurses who increase their training.

Hospitals that implement the IOM recommendations on nursing will be leaders in health care delivery.

- Our Action Coalition can help you to improve health care delivery quickly and efficiently by implementing the IOM's evidence-based recommendations on nursing. You can also make important changes now by ensuring that all hospital boards have at least one nurse.
- Hospitals can meet increased patient demand by removing institutional barriers to advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) care, credentialing APRNs to the full extent of their education and training, and providing admitting privileges to nurse practitioners and nurse midwives.

PHYSICIANS

Nurses can be essential partners with physicians in expanding access to care, ensuring quality and safety, and using limited resources wisely.

- We can meet increased demand for patient care more efficiently if we reexamine our roles and responsibilities and maximize our time and skills.
- New payment and reimbursement systems mean we need to rethink how we deliver care. One of the ways we can improve health care delivery is to use nurses and physicians more effectively.
- Our AC, in partnership with the *Campaign for Action*, is working with physicians, nurses, and other health care stakeholders to manage the influx of aging and sicker patients, and to provide quality care for patients when and where they need it.

We need to think less about the professions and more about the patients.

- With increased demand and provider shortages, we need to be smarter about how we use our resources and how we train, recruit, and retain physicians and nurses who can care for patients when and where they need it.
- When nurses are valued members of the health care team, we are all better able to improve quality and safety, and reduce medical errors and costs.
- It's about transforming health care by using nurses more effectively and positioning them to help manage complex systems in a variety of settings.

When we put patients first, we all win.

- Health care transformation is already underway. If physicians and nurses join together to put patients first, we will all win.
- With more and sicker patients and a shortage of providers, all clinicians need to be able to practice to the top of their education and training.
- To better meet the needs of patients, we need to change how providers are educated, trained, and practice. That means interprofessional education and collaboration, better-coordinated care, and a partnership between physicians and nurses that enables all of us to use our skills and resources more wisely.

We encourage physicians to support the Campaign for Action.

- Join the movement. Visit www.campaignforaction.org, read the evidence-based IOM report on the future of nursing, and get involved.
- Participate in your state Action Coalition. For the sake of better patient care, help us to remove practice barriers, strengthen nurse education and training, and promote interprofessional collaboration.
- Value nurses in your everyday practice and benefit from their unique insights and perspectives.

FUNDERS

PLEASE NOTE: This messaging will depend entirely on which funder you are approaching. Please be sure to check the funder's mission and priorities, and tailor your messaging and "ask" accordingly.

We're working to change health care to better meet the needs of patients and populations.

- Our state/community is grappling with an aging and sicker population, more patients needing care, soaring health care costs, and a provider shortage. The *Campaign for Action* is working to expand our ability to provide care, improve quality, and control costs.
- As the largest group of frontline health care providers and the ones who spend the most time with patients, nurses are essential to any effort to improve health care delivery and public health.
- CFA is working to prepare and position nurses to transform health care, improve public health coordination, and recruit and train the next generation of nurses.

The Campaign for Action is working to prepare nurses to expand access to care, improve quality, and contain costs.

- To expand access to care, CFA is working to remove outdated barriers that limit fully qualified nurses from providing primary and preventive care.
- As we face severe primary care shortages, we need nurse practitioners who can provide care in underserved areas, and a more diverse nursing workforce to provide culturally competent care.
- We need to bring together diverse stakeholders—nurses, physicians, other providers, hospitals, health care systems, insurers, employers, consumers, and the business community—to work in the best interests of patients and populations.

Nurses must be prepared to help the health care system of the future move into the community.

- The *Campaign for Action* is helping to rethink health care delivery and advocates advancing the evidence-based IOM recommendations on the future of nursing.
- People want and need to stay in their homes whenever possible; when not able to do so, they need to be able to access quality care close to home.
- To better manage more patients with more chronic conditions in more complex health care systems, we need to change how nurses are educated, trained, and practice.

Here's how you can help:

- If you are interested in improving patient care and access to health care, advancing nurse leadership, strengthening nurse education and training, promoting health care teams, or recruiting a more diverse culturally competent nursing workforce, we should talk.
- Learn more at www.campaignforaction.org and see what is happening across the country through our state Action Coalitions and in our online community.

OTHER IDEAS

- If you approach a community-based foundation, make sure to connect your work to how it will help your local community.
 - Example: The Action Coalition in Wisconsin won funding from a local foundation that had nothing to do with health or health care, but was very interested in diversity, leadership, and economic development. The AC framed its project in those terms and was successful.
- Check the following for possible funding or in-kind support:
 - Office of Rural Health
 - Corporations and large employers
 - In-kind support
 - Communications counsel

RETAIL CLINICS

I represent the Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action. We are part of a nationwide effort to improve health care through nursing.

- Our mission is aligned with your business goals: ensuring that you have access to a strong pool of well-trained nurse practitioners who can care for increasing numbers of customers.
- We are working to increase the number of nurses with advanced degrees and the leadership skills to manage your clinics.
- Your business and clients will do better when nurses can work to the full extent of their education and training. Our work to modernize state laws to enable full practice authority for nurses will help you to increase the efficiency, productivity, and cost-effectiveness of retail clinics.
- We know that your customers are increasingly diverse, which is one reason why we are working to increase diversity in nursing.

Our goals are substantial, and they benefit your business. As a major employer of nurse practitioners and a provider of primary care and preventive services, we have a better chance of achieving these goals sooner by working together.

- Our state Action Coalition, which is part of the national campaign, brings together a range of health care stakeholders from across the state.
- We would like you to join our Action Coalition, specifically to:
 - Support our work to enable full practice authority for nurses.
 - *Alternative ask:* Support efforts to increase the number of nurses with advanced degrees.
 - *Alternative ask:* Support efforts to have nurses appointed to decision-making bodies.
 - Provide financial support for coalition activities to strengthen nursing education.
 - Share your expertise and perspective in our Action Coalition meetings and strategic planning.
- We would like to schedule a lunch or breakfast in the next few weeks to talk about our shared interests and explore how we might work together. When would be convenient?

INSURERS

I represent the Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action. We are part of a nationwide effort to improve health care through nursing, and I'd like to talk to you about why you should join us.

- Our mission is aligned with your business goals: to keep patients healthy by ensuring access to quality, affordable care.
- You employ a substantial number of nurses in a range of critical jobs, so our work to increase the supply of highly educated nurses aligns closely with your corporate need for a strong labor pool.
- We understand that access to affordable, quality preventive care is good for your customers and your bottom line. Nurses provide a common-sense business solution to improve access and affordability.

We are also working to remove outdated barriers that limit advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) from expanding access to affordable care. This effort should be part of your business plan.

- A growing body of evidence clearly shows that APRNs provide quality care and are highly effective in helping patients to manage chronic conditions. Better and wider use of nurse practitioners is good for your customers' health and your business goals.
- Innovative nurse-led practice models such as retail clinics and chronic care management have been demonstrated to lower costs and improve patient outcomes.

To achieve these goals, our state Action Coalition, which is part of the national Campaign for Action, has brought together a range of health care stakeholders—and we want you to join us.

- Our work benefits payers, employers, providers, and patients alike. By working together, we can achieve a better, more affordable system of care sooner.
- We hope you will work with us to:
 - Support our work to enable full practice authority for nurses.
 - *Alternative ask*—Support efforts to increase the number of nurses with advanced degrees.
 - *Alternative ask*—Support efforts to have nurses appointed to decision-making bodies.
 - Provide financial support for coalition activities to strengthen nursing education.
 - Share your expertise and perspective in our Action Coalition meetings and strategic planning.
- We would like to schedule a lunch or breakfast in the next few weeks to talk about our shared interests and explore how we might work together. When would be convenient?

ACTION COALITIONS AND BUILDING A CULTURE OF HEALTH

- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is working to help build a “Culture of Health” in America. In a Culture of Health, all in our diverse society will live healthier lives, now and for generations to come.
- In a Culture of Health, promoting health is as important as treating illness, and high-quality health care is available to everyone—where, when, and how they need it.
- The Foundation realizes that building a Culture of Health will take all of us working together: health professionals, parents, business and civic leaders, neighbors, policymakers.
- RWJF sees nursing as absolutely central to achieving a Culture of Health. Nursing is the largest segment of the professional health care workforce—and nurses are the providers who spend the most time with individuals and their families.
- The Foundation has a proud history of investing in nursing. Its leaders have long recognized that strengthening the nursing field is crucial to improving health in our country. This conviction led RWJF to partner with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to produce a report on the future of the profession.
- The IOM’s recommendations in the landmark report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, prompted the Foundation to join forces with AARP to launch the Future of Nursing: *Campaign for Action* (CFA).
- The CFA is a nationwide initiative to improve health through nursing. Its mission is to promote implementation of the IOM recommendations so that everyone in America can live a healthier life, supported by a system in which nurses are essential partners in providing care and promoting health.
- The *Campaign for Action’s* work is integral to achieving a Culture of Health.
- Nurses are working on the front lines every day. They’re trained to view individuals and families holistically and to take an all-inclusive view of health.
- Nurses’ vast knowledge and experience in patient care can also help us improve quality of care and lower health care costs.
- When nurse leaders serve on hospital and health system boards, they can help to improve the patient experience, quality of care, and safety.
- Nurses around the country can inspire and help their communities work together to help all people live the healthiest lives possible. This community collaboration is at the heart of a Culture of Health.

- The *Campaign* has established a nationwide network of Action Coalitions in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. These Action Coalitions are working each day to help Americans live healthier lives as the CFA strives to transform health and healthcare through nursing.
- Building a Culture of Health will take time. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation firmly believes that America can and will achieve this goal, and that when nurses can contribute to the full extent of their capacity and training, we will achieve the goal sooner.

Message Evaluation Checklist

The following checklist will help you apply the CFA Action Coalitions message strategy to your own work, including the outreach materials you produce.

- Have you practiced, practiced, practiced delivery of your message?
- Do you have your own personalized elevator speech?
- Have you identified real stories and anecdotes to spice up your messages?
- Did you KISS your way through the message development?
- Are materials written in simple language, understandable to broad audiences?

- Can you eliminate any jargon or “inside baseball” language?
- Have you checked all facts and figures for accuracy?
- Is the message focused? Are the most important points covered?
- Are extraneous information, clauses, and caveats avoided?
- Is the message constructed with appropriate tone and appeal for specific audience engagement?

- Is the information relevant to the audience’s concerns? Does it have a WIIFM?
- If using graphics or imagery, do you reflect racial, ethnic, and generational diversity?
- Do the materials include websites and other contact for more information?
- For print, is the phone number, website URL, or email address prominently listed?
- Do you repeat your core message to win acceptance?
- Does your message convey urgency and a call to action?

Crafting an Elevator Speech

An elevator speech is the formal message in your informal voice. Person-to-person contact, one of the most powerful communication forums, provides an opportunity to engage audiences and gain immediate feedback on whether your message resonated and you've won new support. Your elevator speech should be easy for anyone to understand, and potent enough to move people to care and then to action. This is when you take pen in hand to craft your elevator speech. The last page of this primer is blank. Use it for that purpose.

But first a few tips:

- Active listening is first step so you are sure of your audience.
- KISS—Keep It Short and Simple.
- Frame your words around the core message.
- Use inclusive language that brings your audience on your team.
- Use anecdotes, color, and real stories.

Ask these important questions:

- What do you want people to know?
- What is your key takeaway?
- Why should anyone care?
- What values drive your work?
- What fact(s) bolster your case?
- Is there a call to action?

You hop on an elevator and press the button for the 35th floor...before the door closes a woman joins you. She notices you are carrying your message primer. She says, "I'm familiar with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and AARP, but never heard of CFA or your Action Coalition. Tell me what this is about." The elevator closes, and you say...

To give you a start, here's our stab...make it yours with the guidance above.

Our Action Coalition is part of the Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action, a partnership between RWJF and AARP; our partners include similar coalitions in every state. We're working to transform health care, to create patient-centered care by engaging nurses, other health providers, consumers, educators, and businesses. Nurses are the largest segment of the health care workforce, and spend the most time with patients and their families across the continuum of care. Our goal is really to ensure that people get the care they need when and where they need it. But nurses can't do it alone. We need support of everyone who cares about this goal. Oh, this is my floor! Here's my card; please give me a call. I'd love to talk more about my Action Coalition's upcoming event..."

Your Elevator Speech