The Institute of Medicine and the Campaign for Action

The Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action, an initiative of AARP Foundation, AARP, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), has been building a healthier America through nursing since 2010. That’s when the then-named Institute of Medicine published The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health, a report designed to improve America’s health by strengthening its most-trusted profession. The Campaign has partnered with leaders in government, education, business, other health professions, consumer organizations, and communities to implement the report’s recommendations.

The results have meant a nursing force better prepared to build a Culture of Health and promote health equity.

Among the successes is the report itself. The Future of Nursing has spurred transformation of the profession and become a mainstay in nursing education curriculum. And it has been downloaded more than any other report from the IOM (now known as the National Academy of Medicine).

Campaign progress includes:

**Improving America’s Access to High-Quality Care**
Since 2010, 24 states have changed their laws so that consumers have better access to high-quality health care: Nine have fully modernized the laws that had prevented nurse practitioners from providing care to the full extent of their education and training; six have made substantial improvements; and nine have made incremental improvements. At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in 2016 improved veterans’ access to care by allowing most advanced practice registered nurses to practice without restrictions at VA facilities.

**Increasing the Diversity of Nursing’s Ranks**
The number of minority students enrolled in and graduating from RN programs is increasing, and so is the number of men, as the Campaign promotes ways to broaden the composition of the profession so that it matches the country’s diverse population. From 2010 to 2017, the number of minority RN graduates increased by 43 percent and the number of male RN graduates increased by 29 percent.

**Promoting Nursing Leadership**
To see that nurses’ vast experience is positioned to improve public health, the Campaign helped found the Nurses on Boards Coalition, which aims to place 10,000 nurses on boards and other influential bodies by 2020. NOBC comprises national nursing and other organizations, including AARP and RWJF. As of February 2019, more than 5,600 nurses report serving on boards. The Campaign’s Champion Nursing Coalition also leads by example: Of the nearly 60 businesses that are members of this advisory group, 45 have nurses on their boards.
Transforming Nursing Education for a Better-Prepared Profession

The last decade has seen a revolution in nursing education nationwide as the Campaign has brought together hundreds of experts in education, business, and government to agree on ways to improve and standardize expectations and demands. The result: streamlined options for nursing students have led to more nurses than ever graduating with bachelor’s degrees. In 2017, nearly 50 percent of U.S.-educated, first-time NCLEX takers had a bachelor’s of science in nursing (BSN)—up 10 percentage points from 2010. In the same period, the number of RN-to BSN graduates nearly tripled. The Campaign also helps incorporate population health ideals into nursing education.

Collecting Data About the Profession to Strengthen Its Impact

Consistent data are needed to know how nursing can grow. The Campaign brought together key parties to begin the process of creating a credible, comprehensive system by which to consistently measure every aspect of nursing. Three workgroups now carry out plans set at a May 2016 meeting of representatives from nursing, government, and universities.

Creating Change Through Partnership

Backed by AARP Foundation, AARP, and RWJF, the Campaign has built a strong network of leaders and organizations at the community, state, and national levels to fulfill its mission to build a healthier nation through nursing. Among advisers providing support to the Campaign are members of the Champion Nursing Council, comprising the nation’s nursing organizations; the Champion Nursing Coalition, comprising leaders in businesses, consumer, and health organizations; the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Steering Committee, which works to diversify the nursing workforce; and the Strategic Advisory Committee, which shapes the Campaign’s vision.

These allies bring the Campaign closer to its goal: that everyone in America can live a healthier life, supported by nurses as essential partners in providing care and promoting health equity and well-being.

Action Coalitions

The Campaign’s Action Coalitions, a nationwide network, are the heart of the Campaign. These state-level organizations tailor their work on The Future of Nursing recommendations to their local needs. As of December 2018, Action Coalitions have:

- Raised more than $54 million outside of RWJF funds
- Engaged with more than 2,200 nursing, consumer, and business organizations

Sparking the Conversation Nationally

In outreach efforts to over 165,000 supporters and through workshops, panels, and meetings with businesses, insurers, policymakers, and others, the Campaign continues to further a national conversation about nursing’s role in building a healthier nation.

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