



In an unprecedented collaboration, members of the Ohio Nurses Association (ONA), the Ohio Hospital Association (OHA) and the Ohio Organization for Nurse Executives (OONE) have been bringing their experience and intellect together toward one important goal—to recommend strategic directions, objectives, and tactics that will enhance the profession of nursing in Ohio. On September 26, 2006, the over 14-month collaboration culminated in a kick-off event with almost 250 mostly registered nurses but also representation from Ohio policy advisors; healthcare facility designers; and membership organizations were in attendance.

Four strategic goals lead this kick-off event, entitled Nursing 2015: Race to the Future. Each of the strategic goals included measurable objectives that were discussed during the event. The four directions for the collaboration are:

- Highly educated nurses are prepared to fulfill evolving roles in a dynamic health care system, and nursing resources meet increasing health care demands.
- Worksite standards support quality nursing care in an ergonomically safe environment with the end result being better consumer outcomes.
- Nurses are independently and collectively recognized for the leadership and value they bring to achieving high quality care and positive outcomes.
- Practice culture conditions and benefits provide a win-win for nurses, consumers, and the organizations.

Teams will be meeting over the next year to develop their plans of action around the strategic objectives, and participants were asked to take the next step and join one of the teams. A coordinating group, made up of 10 representatives from ONA 10 from OONE, will work with OHA staff to oversee the teams and assure that teams are headed in the right direction.

In addition to the work going on in the strategic objective teams, Jonathan Archey is facilitating a small group to work with Congressman LaTourette, co-chair of the federal nursing caucus, on reallocating unspent workforce investment act funds to the Health Resources Services Administration of Health and Human Services. Using the strategic objectives as a model, Congressman LaTourette will be asked to consider these funding opportunities to help states across the country consider these objectives and use the accomplishments seen in Ohio as a model. Initial reports indicate that LaTourette's office is pleased to see the three groups, which have not always agreed on solutions to nursing and staffing problems, collaborate on the issues and believed that the Ohio effort could serve as a model for other states in addressing nurse staffing and workforce shortages.

State policy makers have also taken note of the activities begun through the Nursing 2015 collaborative. The Governor's Workforce Policy Board's Healthcare task force has made recommendations for three phase-one and priority-one recommendations from the Governor's Jobs Cabinet's nine recommendations. Their recommendations include increasing the numbers of nurse faculty and developing incumbent worker training at satellite educational programs located in hospitals. The task force identified these as only the beginning and acknowledged that additional actions must be taken to develop long-term solutions for ensuring an adequate health care workforce for Ohio's future.

OHA staff and their partners will continue to taken action aimed at creating an adequate nursing and healthcare workforce for Ohio. Continued support and leadership from hospitals will be essential to the success of such initiatives.